Scholarly Research Journal for Interdisciplinary Studies
Online ISSN 2278-8808, SJIF 2025 = 8.486
https://www.srjis.com/issues_data/283
Peer Reviewed & Refereed Journal, JAN-FEB 2026, Vol- 14/93

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Dr Ghazala Parveen

Associate Professor, Women's College, Department of Political Science, Aligarh Muslim University, U.P. 202002, Email: ghazali92@gmail.com

Paper Received On: 20 JANUARY 2026
Peer Reviewed On: 24 FEBRUARY 2026
Published On: 01 MARCH 2026

Abstract

Governments and political institutions worldwide are embracing artificial intelligence to improve governance, campaign management, and electoral processes through big data, algorithms, and predictive analytics. It is important to know the impact that AI can have on democracy and vice versa as we explore the benefits and risks. Artificial intelligence can scale rapidly and automatically, increasing people's participation, making governance easier, and even improving the efficiency of the democratic system. On the other hand, it raises numerous ethical, legal, security and safety concerns which need to be urgently addressed. The capability to analyze large amounts of data, shape perceptions and make decisions automatically is a double-edged sword: it can enhance citizens' well-being. Still, it can also harm them immensely without proper safeguards and a framework. These dynamics may provoke important discussions and guide further evolution of AI applications. What is the strategy and threshold of using AI beneficially while maintaining the cardinal values of democracy, such as equality, freedom, and openness? In this review, we discuss the role of artificial intelligence in contemporary democratic systems of government with examples and real-world situations.

Keywords*: Artificial Intelligence, Governance, Electoral Processes, Algorithms, Predictive Analytics, Double-Edged Sword and Democracy.*

Early artificial intelligence systems developed by academics in the 1950s and 1960s could handle arithmetic problems, prove theories, and even play games like chess. These initial successes raised expectations for the future of Artificial intelligence. Particularly with the creation of deep learning and machine learning methods, notable improvements were made in the 21st century. With continuous research and development focused on developing more sophisticated and able systems, artificial intelligence is still rapidly evolving.

Generative artificial intelligence, including models like GPT$, is now attracting significant attention. These models can create music, generate human –like text, and even produce images. In content creation, propaganda and marketing campaigns, they are being employed. Politics is increasingly using artificial intelligence in creative and powerful ways.[1]

This paper examines the influence of AI-based systems on democracy and the right to participate in democratic settings. Democracy cannot be separated from human rights and the rule of law. They are lightly intertwined, and the strength of democracy is often measured by people's ability, like Canada, to enjoy their rights to freedom of speech, participate in the democratic process, and choose their leaders based on their personal convictions.

Previous studies have examined how AI affects governance, with countries holding varied views. Each nation envisages the future of an autonomous, AI-driven system from its unique perspective. Democratic governments like Canada have adopted AI policies to improve public services while ensuring automated decisions are deployed safely. It was integrated into the immigration policy to best apply documents by using AI to increase accuracy and efficiency.[2] Similarly, in Poland, the government resolved to adopt AI to revive its struggling economy when it had difficulties coping with what is called the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Thus, public and private were initiated.

AI and Democracy

AI is revolutionary across various sectors globally; politics is no exception. The integration of AI into politics presents numerous opportunities to enhance governance, the electoral process, and policymaking. By leveraging AI, Indian entities can better understand voter behaviour, streamline administrative functions and implement data-driven strategies that could significantly improve public services.

In recent years, AI has emerged as a powerful tool in the political arena. AI applications in politics include social media analysis, voter sentiment analysis and predictive analytics, all of which contribute to more effective campaign strategies and policy formulations. For instance, AI algorithms can analyze vast amounts of social media data to gauge public opinion, identify key issues and predict election outcomes with remarkable accuracy.[3]

The Indian political landscape is complex, with diverse demographics, regional variation and a multitude of issues ranging from economic development to social justice. AI can help navigate this complexity by providing insights into voter preferences and behaviour. This enables political policies to tailor their messages and policies to better align with the electorate's needs and aspirations.

Moreover, AI-powered tools such as chatbots and virtual assistants are being used to enhance service delivery and public interaction. For instance, political parties employed an AI-based application to communicate with people, respond to their questions, and rally support during the 2019 Indian General Election.[4]

Integration of AI in Indian Politics

AI is increasingly becoming a significant component of the Indian political landscape, finding applications in governance, the electoral process, and policymaking. This integration is transforming how political entities operate, engage with citizens, and formulate strategies.

Application in Governance

Applications in Governance AI are playing a crucial role in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of governance in India. Government agencies are adopting AI-driven technologies to streamline administrative functions, improve public service delivery, and foster transparency. For instance, AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants are being used to handle citizen queries, providing real-time information and support. These tools help reduce the burden on government offices and make public services more accessible.[5]

One notable example is the use of AI in the Digital India initiative, where various AI applications are employed to improve digital infrastructure and services. AI helps in automating routine tasks, analyzing large datasets to identify trends, and making data-driven decisions that enhance policy implementation and service delivery.[6]

Applications in Electoral Processes

The electoral process in India is also benefiting significantly from AI integration. Political parties and election commissions are utilizing AI for voter sentiment analysis, social media monitoring, and predictive analytics. These tools enable political parties to understand voter preferences, detect trends, and tailor their campaign messages accordingly. During the 2019 Indian General Elections, AI played a pivotal role in strategizing campaigns. AI algorithms analyzed social media posts, public forums, and news articles to gauge public sentiment. This information was then used to craft targeted campaigns and address voter concerns more effectively.[7] Furthermore, AI-driven tools were used to predict election outcomes based on historical data and real-time inputs, providing parties with insights into potential electoral performance.[8]

Applications in Policymaking

AI is also transforming policymaking in India by providing policymakers with advanced tools for data analysis and scenario simulation. AI technologies enable the analysis of vast amounts

of data from various sources, helping policymakers understand complex issues and evaluate the potential impact of different policy options. For example, AI-based predictive models can forecast economic trends, assess the impact of policy changes across sectors, and simulate scenarios to support decision-making. This allows policymakers to make more informed decisions and design policies that are more effective and responsive to the needs of the population.[9] Moreover, AI can help identify emerging issues and trends that require policy intervention. By analyzing data from social media, news, and other sources, AI can detect early signs of social unrest, economic challenges, or health crises, enabling proactive policy responses.[10]

AI's Impact on Voter Behaviour and Campaign Strategies

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has significantly impacted voter behaviour analysis and campaign strategies in Indian politics. By leveraging advanced AI technologies such as sentiment analysis and predictive analytics, political entities can better understand voter preferences, tailor campaign messages, and enhance their overall electoral strategies. AI technologies enable the detailed analysis of voter behaviour by processing large volumes of data from different sources, including social media, news articles, and public forums. Sentiment analysis, a key AI application, helps in understanding the public's feelings and opinions about specific political issues, candidates, and parties. For example, during the 2019 Indian General Elections, AI tools analyzed millions of social media posts to gauge voter sentiment in real-time. By identifying positive, negative, or neutral sentiments, political parties could adjust their messages and strategies accordingly.[11] This real-time feedback loop allowed campaigns to be more dynamic and responsive to the electorate's changing moods and preferences.[12]

Sentiment Analysis

Sentiment analysis uses natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning algorithms to analyse and classify sentiment expressed in text. During elections, sentiment analysis has been instrumental in monitoring public opinion across platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and regional social media. For example, AI-driven sentiment analysis helped identify key issues that resonated with voters across different regions, enabling parties to address them more effectively. This targeted approach helped in crafting personalized messages that were more likely to engage and persuade voters.[13]

Predictive Analytics: Predictive analytics uses historical data and statistical algorithms to predict future outcomes. In electoral campaigns, predictive analytics can forecast election results, voter turnout, and the effectiveness of campaign strategies. AI models have been used

to analyze past election data, demographic information, and current voter sentiments to predict election outcomes with high accuracy. These predictions provide political parties with insights into which regions or demographics they should focus on to maximize their chances of success.[14] By identifying potential swing voters and regions, parties can allocate resources more efficiently and design strategies more likely to yield positive results.[15]

AI's Role in Enhancing Governance and Public Services

AI-driven technologies, such as chatbots and virtual assistants, are transforming governance and public service delivery in India. By automating routine tasks, enhancing citizen engagement, and providing real-time data analysis, these technologies are making public services more efficient, transparent, and accessible and improving Citizen Engagement. One of the primary ways AI enhances governance is through improved citizen engagement. AI-driven chatbots and virtual assistants provide citizens with instant access to information and services, thereby bridging the gap between the government and the public. These tools are available 24/7, ensuring that citizens can have their queries answered at any time without requiring direct human intervention. For instance, the Indian government has implemented various AI-based platforms to engage with citizens. The MyGov platform uses AI to manage and respond to citizen queries, feedback, and suggestions. This not only improves the responsiveness of government services but also fosters greater public participation in governance.[16]

Enhancing Service Delivery: AI technologies streamline public service delivery by automating routine tasks and processes, reducing the burden on government employees, and minimizing human errors. This leads to faster and more efficient service provision—AI in Public Administration. In public administration, AI tools are used for tasks such as document processing, data entry, and scheduling. For example, AI algorithms can quickly process large volumes of applications for government services or benefits, ensuring timely and accurate service delivery. This automation allows government employees to focus on more complex and strategic tasks, improving overall productivity.[17] Healthcare Services Increasing Efficiency and Transparency. AI has also made significant strides in enhancing healthcare services in India. AI-driven diagnostic tools and virtual health assistants help in providing timely medical advice and support, especially in remote and underserved areas. The use of AI in telemedicine platforms has expanded access to healthcare, enabling patients to consult doctors and receive medical care without in-person visits.[18] AI enhances the efficiency and transparency of governance by providing real-time data analysis and decision-making support. By analyzing

vast amounts of data from various sources, AI can identify patterns, detect anomalies, and provide insights that inform policy decisions and improve governance.

Data-Driven Decision Making: AI-driven data analytics tools help government agencies make informed decisions based on real-time data. For instance, AI can analyze data on public health, education, and social services to identify trends and areas needing improvement. This data-driven approach enables policymakers to design and implement more effective policies that address the specific needs of the population.[19] AI technologies for corruption detection and prevention also play a crucial role. By monitoring transactions, analyzing patterns, and flagging suspicious activity, AI helps identify potential cases of fraud and corruption. This enhances the transparency and accountability of government operations, fostering public trust.[20]

Disaster Management AI's ability to analyze data and predict outcomes is invaluable in disaster management. AI algorithms can predict natural disasters, analyze their potential impact, and support planning and response efforts. This proactive approach helps minimize damage and ensure a more effective response to emergencies.[21]

The Indian Context: AI and Social Media in Political Behaviour

India's political landscape has been fundamentally reshaped by the integration of AI and social media, with leading figures such as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and political strategist Prashant Kishor at the forefront of this transformation.

Prashant Kishor and data-driven Campaigns-Prashant Kishor, widely regarded as one of India's most influential political strategists, has pioneered the use of data analytics and digital outreach in Indian electoral politics. As the architect behind Narendra Modi's landmark 2014 Lok Sabha campaign, Kishor introduced a new era of political consultancy through his organization, Citizens for Accountable Governance (CAG), later known as the Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC). His approach involved embedding large teams within party structures, leveraging data –driven insights to craft targeted voter engagement strategies and campaign innovations such as 'Chai pe Charcha' and 3D hologram rallies, which bridged the gap between leaders and millions of voters across India.[22]

Kishor's methodology relied on harnessing vast datasets to identify voter preferences and optimize campaign messaging, setting a precedent for the use of big data in Indian elections. His work shows how strategic foresight and technological adoption could redefine political communication and mobilization at scale.

Modi's campaign has featured extensive use of digital platforms, with dedicated teams creating and disseminating content across Instagram, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter),

WhatsApp, and YouTube. This digital-first approach allowed the BJP to bypass traditional media and directly engage with India's vast, tech-Savvy electorate, particularly the youth.[23] For example, during the 2024 General Election, BJP workers used AI to send personalized messages to voters via WhatsApp, including AI-generated calls from local representatives discussing specific government benefits. These practices illustrate how AI and big data have become integral to political strategy, enabling parties to engage voters in new and innovative ways.

Negative Impact/Challenges

Deep Fakes and Synthetic Media: Additionally, AI poses a serious threat to democratic processes by creating deep fakes and synthesizing media. These images, videos, and audio clips created by AI are realistic, yet fake content can go unnoticed.[24] Deepfakes can be used to create fake videos of political leaders' speeches or to perpetrate unethical actions that could manipulate voters. On top of that, fake news created by AI may look more realistic, so citizens may find it hard to distinguish the real from fake news. This diminishes trust in the government, undermines the credibility of the political system, and weakens democracy.

Skewed Views and Profiling: The algorithms powered by AI are remarkable; however, they perpetuate bias and narrow the scope of information circulating among the citizenry. Through the help of Artificial Intelligence, social networking sites and search engines can undertake certain analyses of users' browsing habits and tendencies, and then deliver more content which is likely to appeal to their political stance or leaning.[25]This makes them develop closed circles within which they are fed only that which they want to hear, thus making it hard for them to come across contradictory ideas. Therefore, people may be given a one-sided perception of political as well as social matters, which may make the social politics a barrier in this case. This kind of information filtering prevents exposure to diverse opinions, which is an important foundation for any democratic process in which decisions are made based on available information.[26]

Misinformation and Media Manipulation: AI has increased the distribution of biased information in the real world, especially using social media. The possibility of fake news spreading quickly is that bots and AI algorithms can quickly send fake news stories or convey misleading information to millions.[27] Two of the biggest obstacles in the battle against fake news are the velocity and volume at which it is transmitted on social media and the internet. AI-generated fake news during elections may influence voters' decisions, distort voters' views of candidates, and even discourage voting by providing incorrect information about how to cast

a ballot. AI-led media manipulation harms representative decision-making and distorts the electoral process. [28]

Cyber Threats for Election Security: Like cybersecurity, AI poses numerous risks to election security. On the one hand, AI can be employed to protect elections by enhancing voting systems or detecting fraud attempts. On the other hand, AI can be employed by the adversaries to tamper with an election or interrupt the processes.[29] Sophisticated AI techniques like deep learning have inspired phishing scams or deep learning-enabled malware. Launched during an election period, these can attack election systems, voter registration systems, or even voting machines. These cyber threats can compromise election integrity by manipulating or by releasing the voter information. AI can also be used to identify weaknesses in election systems, making large-scale disruption more likely during election times.[30]

Inequality and Autocratic Tendencies: AI seems to have inclined the democratic systems towards social segregation and the authorities' powers. Advanced economies that are already reaping the benefits of adoption are implementing these infrastructures, while advanced technologies remain far removed from marginalized societies, which may otherwise need assistance from AI tools to be more involved in the democratic process.[31] In addition, autocratic regimes will use AI to increase their control over the citizens through the censorship of political opinions, influencing popular opinion, and squelching dissent movements. Sadly, this concentration of capabilities goes to the detriment of paradigmatic democracies, eroding liberty and political pluralism as technologies such as AI police free speech. [32]

Surveillance and Threat to Privacy: The second ethical issue relating to this technology and democracy is its propensity for massive surveillance by AI systems.[33] AI can help governments and large corporations to control people's activities and track their online actions, as well as accumulate people's personal data without their knowledge. This surveillance infringes on the right to privacy, a democratic value, because people cannot control information about themselves. In dictatorial societies, AI-driven surveillance can be employed to monitor dissent, the media, activists, and other people harming democratic rights and freedom.[34] Because requiring citizens of democracies to forfeit their privacy is unsustainable, there is a need to develop ethical standards regarding the utilization of AI in surveillance

Conclusion :

The growing influence of artificial intelligence on democratic decision-making presents both significant opportunities and serious challenges. On the one hand, AI has the potential to make governance more efficient, inclusive, and responsive. It can help governments better

understand public needs, enable data-driven policies, and create new avenues for citizen participation. AI tools, when designed and implemented ethically, can enhance transparency, reduce administrative burdens, and improve the delivery of public services, thereby strengthening democratic institutions. However, without proper oversight, AI can also undermine the very foundations of democracy. Risks such as algorithmic bias, manipulation of public opinion, privacy violations, and a lack of accountability can erode public trust and democratic legitimacy. The concentration of AI capabilities in the hands of a few corporations or state actors further threatens democratic pluralism. Therefore, the future of democracy in the AI era depends on proactive governance, ethical frameworks, and active public engagement. Democracies must ensure that AI is developed and used in ways that uphold human rights, fairness, and accountability. By embracing responsible AI practices, promoting transparency, and involving citizens in decision-making processes, societies can leverage AI to reinforce, rather than weaken, democratic values and institutions.

References

Chadwick, (2017) A The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power, Oxford University.

Fukuyama F. Governance (2016). What do we know, and how do we know it? Annual Review of Political Science.

Rathore, A., & Joshi, D. (2020). The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Political Campaigns. Journal of Political Science and International Relations.

Singh, P. (2020). AI in Indian Elections: Transforming Voter Engagement. Election Studies Journal.

V., & Parekh, A. (2020). The Role of AI in Enhancing Public Service Delivery in India. Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research.

Mehta, R. (2019). AI and Politics: The Indian Context. Observer Research Foundation

Singh, P. (2020). AI in Indian Elections: Transforming Voter Engagement. Election Studies Journal.

Rathore, A., & Joshi, D. (2020). The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Political Campaigns. Journal of Political Science and International Relations.

Chakraborty, S., & Sengupta, A. (2021). AI in Policymaking: Transforming Governance in India. Policy Insights Journal.

Sharma, V. (2021). Ethical Challenges of AI in Politics. Indian Journal of Ethics in AI.

Rathore, A., & Joshi, D. (2020). The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Political Campaigns. Journal of Political Science and International Relations.

Singh, P. (2020). AI in Indian Elections: Transforming Voter Engagement. Election Studies Journal.

Joshi, V., & Parekh, A. (2020). The Role of AI in Enhancing Public Service Delivery in India. Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research.

Mehta, R. (2019). AI and Politics: The Indian Context. Observer Research Foundation.

Chakraborty, S., & Sengupta, A. (2021). AI in Policymaking: Transforming Governance in India. Policy Insights Journal.

Kumar, N., & Joshi, P. (2021). AI and Citizen Engagement: Case Studies from India. Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research.

Mehta, R. (2019). AI and Politics: The Indian Context. Observer Research Foundation.

Reddy, S., & Singh, V. (2020). AI in Healthcare: Transforming Public Health Services in India. Health Services Research Journal.

Chakraborty, S., & Sengupta, A. (2021). AI in Policymaking: Transforming Governance in India. Policy Insights Journal.

Sharma, V. (2021). Ethical Challenges of AI in Politics. Indian Journal of Ethics in AI.

Reddy, S., & Singh, V. (2020). AI in Healthcare: Transforming Public Health Services in India. Health Services Research Journal.

Indra Stta global, (2025). Prashant Kishor: The lost Architect of India's Governance Revolutionhttps://www.indrasatta.com/2025.

Abbas and Singh (2014). Narendra Modi's use of Social Media in the 2014 Indian Elections, Conference: International Academic Forum South Asia Conference: MediAsia 2014: Osaka, Japan

Jungherr, A. (2023). Artificial Intelligence and Democracy: A Conceptual Framework. Social Media Society, 9(3),

Kuziemski, M., & Misuraca, G. (2020). AI Governance in the Public Sector: Three Tales from the Frontiers of Automated Decision-Making in Democratic Settings. Telecommunications Policy.

Landemore, H. (2023). Fostering more Inclusive Democracy with AI.

Lockey, S., Gillespie, N., Holm, D., & Someh, I. A. (2021). A Review of Trust in Artificial Intelligence: Challenges, Vulnerabilities, and Future Directions.

Manheim, K., & Kaplan, L. (2019). Artificial Intelligence: Risks to Privacy and Democracy. Yale Journal of Law & Technology, pp.106 126.

Polishchuk, A. (2024, January 26). AI poses risks to both Authoritarian and Democratic Politics. Wilson Centre. https://www.wilsoncenter.org

Schneier, B. (2024). How AI will change democracy. CyberScoop. https://cyberscoop.com.

Polishchuk, A. (2024). AI poses risks to both Authoritarian and Democratic Politics. Wilson Centre. https://www.wilsoncenter.org

Landemore, H. (2023). Fostering more Inclusive Democracy with AI. https://www.imf.org/

Holmes, W., Persson, J., Chounta, I. A., Wasson, B., & Dimitrova, V. (2022). Artificial Intelligence and Education: A Critical view through the lens of Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law. Council of Europe.

Donahoe, E., & Metzger, M. M. (2019). Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights. Journal of Democracy, 30(2).

Yashpal, Netragaonkar (2021) Skill Sets of the 21st Century in Higher Education- 21st Century Technologies: Opportunities, Challenges and Advantages in Higher Education, Pune: Amitesh Publishers & Company, Pune https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2035-7421

Yashpal, Netragaonkar (2022) 21st Century Tech Trends: Higher Education Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Higher Education, (25-30) Pune: Amitesh Publishers & Company, Pune https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2035-7421

Yashpal D. Netragaonkar, Netra Lokhande, Devesh Khanna, Shubham Kishan, (2024), Augmented Reality Technology (ART) in Science Education and Engineering Technology: A Review, Journal of Engineering Education Transformations, 38/2, (119-134) doi 10.16920/jeet/2024/v38i2/24195, https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2035-7421