Discussion 5 AI Regulations

Discussion Topic:

1. Context
There are many reasons that bad ethical behavior can hurt the advancement of technology in the United States. There has been an increase in trade and security risks posed by other nations that support unencumbered AI research and data-collection services.

2. Discuss
In this discussion, consider:

How rigorous should domestic regulation of AI adoption be? Support your statements by drawing on peer-reviewed research in this area.

My Post:

In the U.S., AI is being enthusiastically adopted. This rapid adoption creates new ethical and safety risks, as AI is a novel and fast-evolving technology that many organizations deploy before they fully understand its risks. Therefore, the U.S. should rigorously regulate AI adoption, especially where systems can significantly affect people's rights and compromise their safety. Moreover, AI is not one single product; when implemented through software, it can take various forms. These AI software systems can be used for hiring purposes and credit decisions in education and healthcare, affecting every aspect of daily life, and must be regulated with enforceable safeguards and consequences for noncompliance.

1. These regulations need to be based on strong ethical guidelines; however, without enforceable rules, they are not enough. Radu (2021), in her comparative analysis of national AI strategies, finds that most countries have more ethics-oriented approaches than rule-based systems to guide AI governance, which leaves public protections vague and easy to ignore. This suggests that the U.S should go further than just encouraging voluntary implementation of ethical principles and best practices for AI adoption. Instead, it should require the application of concrete safeguards/regulation especially in fields such as employment screening, housing, lending, policing, and infrastructure.

2. These regulations should be implemented within an enforceable framework. Based on her analysis findings, Radu (2021) describes how hybrid governance AI adoptions are being implemented by various nations. These hybrid governances are a mix of public-governmental agencies and private actors co-designing AI governance, including the creation of new AI oversight organizations and institutions. For the U.S., this translates to implementing practical requirements such as independent audits for high-risk systems, documentation of training data and testing results, clear accountability for AI vendors and adopters, and real penalties when organizations deploy harmful or deceptive AI systems.

3. These regulations should avoid being so open-ended that they end up being ineffective. Radu (2021) notes that, today, a preferred strategy is for functional indetermination, meaning that the roles and rules are deliberately designed to be unclear. This is especially risky in the context of an extremely competitive AI development and adoption global race, where other nations, such as China, are pushing faster adoption with almost no constraints. However, unclear rules can hurt U.S. trust and adoption over time, as the public and businesses will hesitate if they believe that there is no accountability for harm generated by AI. Therefore, a risk-based approach evaluating high-risk usage and low-risk uses is a good compromise as it protects people while still supporting AI innovation and computation with other nations.

These guardrails are not about stifling progress; they are designed to protect the public while promoting the adoption of a technology that has the potential to transform humanity in unprecedented ways.

-Alex

References:

Radu, R. (2021, June). Steering the governance of artificial intelligence: national strategies in perspective. *Policy and Society*, *40*(2), 178–193. https://doi.org/10.1080/14494035.2021.1929728