ETHICAL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming ubiquitous and a lot of lives are affected by the advancement of the field. Apart from direct effect to humans, it is also touching people through businesses, environment, healthcare, economy and our daily lives. Therefore, to design and implement any AI solutions, certain principles of morality have to be considered. These are known as Ethical AI.

AI is considered ethical when it obeys some clearly-defined ethical rules and guidelines concerning fundamental values like privacy, security, and individual rights. This becomes important looking at the purposes of AI in our society. Some AI solutions can be used in good ways while others can be used in bad ways. So, if used without regarding ethics, AI can trigger severe and dangerous consequences to our environment, society and human lives. Ethical AI is aimed at protecting human dignity and at the same time protect people from harm. Amongst few examples of situation where AI systems have caused harms include, but not limited to, denial of autonomy, bias and discrimination, privacy invasion, isolation and disintegration of social connection, deep fakes, and so on.

Many AI-driven technologies are vulnerable to causing harm to humans and the environment such as self-driving cars, anti-weaponisation, and deep fakes. Adoption of AI ethics would most probably make us safe from the possible harm from AI-driven products. Adoption of AI ethics has been an issue of discussion by many researchers. People are still skeptical whether AI ethics would be widely adopted anytime soon. According to a research carried out by Pew Research Center and Elon University [1], 68% of the technology innovators surveyed believed it cannot be globally achieved earlier than 2030. In my opinion, awareness of the importance of AI ethical principles should be made to companies developing AI-driven technologies and as a result, the consequences of not adopting it becomes clear to all.

Failure to consider adoption of AI ethical principles would affect vast majority of people due to the effect of its harm on several social domains [2] such as government, manufacturing, insurance, science, agriculture, energy & utilities and communications among others. Many ethical issues arise especially from machine learning methodologies. The unpredictability, opacity and the need for huge dataset to power the AI technologies are few among many issues that can arise from machine learning. AI ethics should be operationalised by organising procedures tailored to some specific business and regulatory needs.

Recently, Blackman [3] has enumerated some practical guide to building ethical AI in products, companies and workplaces. He explained that regulating how to use data to develop AI-driven products without falling into ethical pitfalls can mitigate risks. He added that this should not be left to people in academics alone. Programmes propagating AI ethics should be sustained in an attempt to achieve operational AI ethics. The following have been presented by Blackman as steps towards building AI ethics programme:

- Identify existing infrastructure that a data and AI ethics programme can leverage.
- Create a data and AI ethical risk framework that is tailored to your industry.
- Change how you think about ethics by taking cues from the successes in health care.
- Optimise guidance and tools for product managers.

- ❖ Build organisational awareness.
- ❖ Formally and informally incentivise employees to play a role in identifying AI ethical risks.
- ❖ Monitor impacts and engage stakeholders.

The procedure mentioned above can be applied to any industry by adapting them to suite the structure of the industry. I believe if adequate awareness and enforcement is in place, AI ethics can be achieved by any AI-driven development companies.

References:

[1] L. Rainie, J. Anderson, and E. Vogels, "Experts Doubt Ethical AI Design Will Be Broadly Adopted as the Norm Within the Next Decade | Pew Research Center," 2021.

[2] B. C. Stahl, "Ethical Issues of AI," *Artif. Intell. a Better Futur. Springer, Cham*, pp. 35–53, 2021.

[3] R. Blackman, "A Practical Guide to Building Ethical AI." [Online]. Available: https://hbr.org/2020/10/a-practical-guide-to-building-ethical-ai. [Accessed: 16-Mar-2022].