Llama-3-Nanda-10B-Chat:
An Open Generative Large Language Model for Hindi

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Abstract

We introduce *Llama-3-Nanda-10B-Chat*, or *Nanda* for short, a new state-of-the-art Hindi-centric instruction-tuned open generative large language model (LLM). *Nanda* is adapted from the LLaMA-3.1 8B model via continious training with expansion of transformer blocks, following LLaMA Pro approach. This model employes the decoder-only architecture and has been trained on a mixture of Hindi and English texts. With 10 billion parameters, *Nanda* demonstrates improved knowledge and reasoning capabilities in Hindi, suprassing existing open Hindi and multilingual models of comparable size by a substantial margin; it also achieves highly competitive performance in English. We release *Nanda* as an open-sourced instruction-tuned model and provide a detailed overview of its training, tuning, safety alignment, and evaluation processes. We believe that this release will foster further research in Hindi LLMs and support diverse practical applications across various domains.

This paper contains examples that may be offensive or triggering to some audiences.

Contents

1 Introduction

Recent advancements in transformer-based large language models (LLMs), pre-trained on billions of tokens of web data, have transformed natural language processing (NLP). These models have demonstrated exceptional capabilities in NLP applications and complex multi-step reasoning, allowing them to handle intricate human instructions. Despite these achievements, most research and development efforts have focused on English. Some efforts in the space of multilingual LLMs, such as Falcon [AAA+23], PALM [CND+22], the latest Aya [UAY+24] and Llama-3.1 [DJP+24], aim to broaden the linguistic capabilities of the underlying LLM. However, pretraining these models continues to rely extensively on English-centric data, which limits the generative performance in other languages. Moreover, these models face the *"curse of multilinguality"* [PGL+22, ABF+19, CKG+20], i.e., the performance tends to decline when the models are trained to cover a vast number of languages. Thus, models tailored to specific languages or language subsets often outpace them. We aim to bridge this gap for Hindi, which is the fourth most spoken language with over 572 million speakers.[1][2] Specifically, we introduce *Llama-3-Nanda-10B-Chat*, or *Nanda* for short, a robust Hindi-centric decoder-only LLM with 10 billion parameters, built on top of the Llama-3 model [DJP+24].[3]

The primary challenge in developing a Hindi LLM is the limited availability of high-quality Hindi data [JSB+20]. Unlike English, which benefits from the availability of corpora of up to 15 trillion tokens [TRP+24], Hindi resources are comparatively scarce. To address this, we curated an extensive Hindi corpus containing 65 billion tokens, which was the foundation for continously pretraining our model. As part of this effort, we developed a specialized Hindi text processing pipeline that includes thorough data filtering and cleaning to ensure data quality. Another challenge was the lack of high-quality code-mixed and romanized Hindi data; we addressed this by incorporating both code-mixed and romanized Hindi data into our corpus.

Unlike massively multilingual LLMs such as Bloom [SFA+23], Llama-3.1 [DJP+24], or Aya [UAY+24], which encompass more than 50 languages, our model focuses exclusively on Hindi, with selective integration of English during fine-tuning. Hindi data comprises 100% of the continuous pretraining phase. For instruction fine-tuning, we created a bilingual dataset with 21.5 million English and 14.5 million Hindi instruction-following tokens. To balance the data and strengthen the model performance, we applied oversampling, yielding 64.5 million English tokens and 43.5 million Hindi tokens. Additionally, considering the inherent safety concerns associated with LLMs, we curated a dataset of safety-oriented instructions. This specialized fine-tuning ensures that the model achieves both fluency and cultural sensitivity in Hindi while performing on par with recent English LLMs in reasoning and world knowledge, thus enabling a robust transfer of capabilities between English and Hindi.

We adopted the architecture of Llama-3 [DJP+24], which uses the standard dense transformer framework [VSP+17] and incorporates recent advancements such as RoPE positional encoding [SLP+21] and grouped-query attention [ALTdJ+23]. We further developed a custom tokenizer that balances Hindi and English, ensuring optimized bilingual processing.

We evaluated *Nanda* on various Hindi and English NLP benchmarks, addressing - reasoning, knowledge, misinformation, and bias. The results showed that *Nanda* is superior in Hindi compared to other models of similar size while also being competitive in English.

By making our model publicly available, we hope to steer further research and development in this area, stimulating innovation and practical applications that can better serve the Hindi and the global communities. Despite our significant efforts to ensure safety, we recognize that our model is not foolproof and may not cover all cases. Therefore, we strongly urge all adopters to exercise caution and perform additional safety tests before deploying the model. For this purpose, we outline responsible release notes in Section 8.

2 Pretraining Data

The *Nanda* LLM is trained on hundreds of billions of words to develop a robust foundation in Hindi, building a comprehensive knowledge base specialized to the cultural context of India. Using our largest available Hindi dataset, *Nanda* incorporates diverse sources such as websites, wikipedia, news articles, and Hindi books. This dataset draws from various publicly accessible Hindi-specific resources, including datasets from HuggingFace,[4]

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindi
[2] https://www.worlddata.info/languages/hindi.php
[3] https://huggingface.co/MBZUAI/Llama-3-Nanda-10B-Chat
[4] https://huggingface.co/datasets/

Figure 1: Hindi dialogue using ***Llama-3-Nanda-10B-Chat***.

parallel corpora from IIT-B,[5] and cleaned Common Crawl data from platforms like HPLT,[6] and Opus-Corpora.[7] Key datasets sourced from Hugging Face include:

- ai4bharat/sangraha[8]
- uonlp/CulturaX[9]
- allenai/MADLAD-400[10]

[5] https://www.cfilt.iitb.ac.in/iitb_parallel/
[6] https://hplt-project.org/datasets/
[7] https://opus.nlpl.eu/
[8] https://huggingface.co/datasets/ai4bharat/sangraha
[9] https://huggingface.co/datasets/uonlp/CulturaX
[10] https://huggingface.co/datasets/allenai/MADLAD-400

2.1 Preprocessing Pipeline

Preprocessing is essential for training high-quality LLMs, as it involves filtering, normalizing, and cleaning the data. To create our 38 billion word Hindi dataset, we designed a comprehensive preprocessing pipeline, combining standard procedures with specific modules to extract quality Hindi content. As illustrated in Figure 2, the raw data mainly originates from publicly accessible databases, some of which were already preprocessed or tokenized. To ensure uniformity, we began by detokenizing all inputs, which allowed us to standardize the content without altering non-tokenized text. Each document at this stage corresponds to an article or web page, depending on the data source.

The pipeline employed stringent filtering rules to exclude noisy or substandard documents. This included removing texts that were too short or excessively long, or those with insufficient Hindi content, which could indicate the presence of another language where Hindi characters appear sporadically. Documents containing overly lengthy words, often signs of URLs or other noisy elements, were also discarded.

After filtering, we proceeded to clean and normalize the data. This involved removing non-printable Unicode characters, embedded scripts like JavaScript or HTML, and frequently repeated boilerplate text (e.g., recurring names of news channels). We also standardized Hindi punctuation and used a lightweight n-gram language model to filter out problematic n-grams.

A final fuzzy deduplication step, leveraging locality-sensitive hashing, was applied to eliminate duplicate content, ultimately reducing the dataset size to 42% of its raw text.

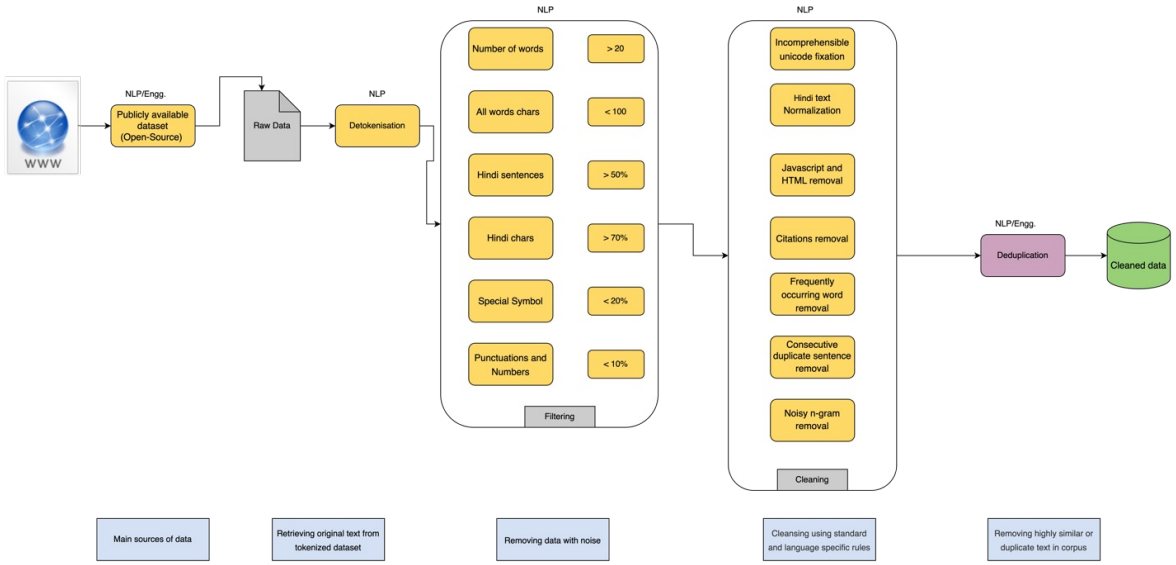


Figure 2: Our Hindi preprocessing pipeline.

Developing the preprocessing pipeline for Hindi posed greater challenges compared to English. While English preprocessing pipelines benefit from numerous large-scale, open-access datasets and well-established techniques, Hindi requires a custom-built approach. Insights gained from experiments with smaller LLMs and the preprocessing pipeline for the dataset used for *Jais* [SSJ+23] guided the selection of heuristics used in the final pipeline for *Nanda*'s dataset. Due to the limited availability of Hindi data, we applied less aggressive filtering than typically used for English, ensuring that valuable Hindi content was retained.

2.2 Mixing Hindi and English Data

During the adaptation of the Llama-3 model, we mix Hindi and English data following the findings of [GXR+24]. Domain adaptation involves continual pre-training of a foundation model on new data not seen during the pre-training. When this new domain data is out-of-distribution, it can cause significant forgetting of prior capabilities, which is referred to as a stability gap [GFZ+24]. Adding a small proportion of replay data, which is closer in distribution to the pre-training data, can mitigate forgetting. We conduct exhaustive experiments to find a minimum proportion of English data that should be mixed with Hindi to mitigate forgetting.

For the Hindi adaptation of Llama-3-8B, we found that a higher proportion of replay data is necessary. Therefore, a 1:1 English-to-Hindi dataset mixture was used where we saw cross-lingual capability transfer between the two languages and also avoid saturation of Llama-3 for adaptation. For replay data, we needed a mix of textbooks, math, coding and reasoning datasets to mitigate forgetting.

3 Model

3.1 Model Architecture

Nanda is based on a standard transformer-based architecture [VSP+17]. In particular, we adapt a causal decoder-only model, similar to the one used by GPT-2 [RWC+19] and Llama [TLI+23]. Decoder-only models have achieved state-of-the-art performance in generative language tasks. Building upon this base transformer architecture, we use several recent improvements from the literature and our experiments.

***Nanda* Tokenizer:** The first step in adapting a monolingual foundation model for multilingual use is to construct a balanced vocabulary that includes all target languages. Recent state-of-the-art models such as Llama-3 [TLI+23] use byte pair encoding (BPE) [SHB16] tokenizers, primarily trained on English data. These monolingual English tokenizers often split non-English words into characters or bytes, creating a significant imbalance among languages. Fertility [RPV+21], which measures the average number of subwords produced by a single word upon tokenization, can be used to quantify this imbalance.

This imbalance introduces inefficiency in pre-training, fine-tuning and inference. Table 1 shows that the Llama-3 tokenizer needs as many as 2.6 times the number of tokens to represent the same Hindi text as the Hindi-English bilingual tokenizer. Balanced multilingual tokenizer with low fertility in all languages offers three main advantages [PLMTB23]: (1) lower training and inference cost; (2) reduced latency during inference; and (3) longer context windows. Models trained with low fertility tokenizers tend to perform well on downstream tasks, as shown in [ADH+23]

We extend the Llama-3 vocabulary to create a balanced tokenizer for English and Hindi. Vocabulary extension adds the most frequent Hindi tokens in the corpora, leading to a larger vocabulary size. Additionally, we ensure that the newly introduced tokens are not present in the original vocabulary. We conduct vocabulary extension studies to determine the optimal number of new Hindi tokens to be added, ensuring a balanced multilingual vocabulary. The Hindi tokens are borrowed from a monolingual Hindi tokenizer trained on the Hindi corpora. We create a few candidate extended tokenizers and perform intrinsic evaluations following [AFT+24].

For intrinsic evaluation, we use fertility score to measure the efficiency of the tokenization process [GXR+24]. Fertility is defined as $f = \frac{S}{W}$, where S is the total number of tokens in the tokenized text and W is the number of words in the raw text. Note that fertility is calculated on held-out subsets from the Hindi corpora, which are not used for tokenizer training.

Table 1 shows the intrinsic evaluations of three candidate tokenizers, (i) ***Llama-3-extend10***, (ii) ***Llama-3-extend20***, and (iii) ***Llama-3-extend30***, which extend the Llama-3 vocabulary by 10%, 20%, and 30%, respectively. Based on our tokenizer fertility ablation studies, *Llama-3-extend20* reduces the fertility of Llama-3's tokenizer by 54.40% while maintaining the fertility in English. It also reaches a fertility score of 1.19, which is comparable to the English fertility for the base Llama-3 tokenizer in English, which is 1.24. Extending the vocabulary further to 30% shows minimal improvement in Hindi fertility. Therefore, we select ***Llama-3-extend20*** as the tokenizer for the *Nanda* model.

	Llama-3	**Llama-3-extend10**	**Llama-3-extend20**	**Llama-3-extend30**
Vocab Size	128,256	141,081	153,856	166,732
Hindi Fertility	2.61	1.27 (-51.34%)	**1.19 (-54.40%)**	1.16 (-55.55%)

Table 1: Tokenizer intrinsic evaluation across different vocab sizes. We see that extending the tokenizer with Hindi vocab, reduces the fertility in *Llama-3-extend10* by 51.34%, *Llama-3-extend20* by 54.40%, and *Llama-3-extend30* by 55.55% compared to the Llama-3 tokenizer.

***Nanda* Embedding:** Following the methods outlined for embedding initialization in [GXR+24], we use a semantic similarity search-based embedding initialization method. This method uses Wechsel multilingual

initialization [MPR22] where pre-trained embeddings like Fasttext or OpenAI embeddings are used.

For each new Hindi token added to the Llama-3 base vocabulary, we identify the top-k most similar tokens in the base vocabulary based on cosine similarity using embeddings from a pre-trained embedding model. We use OpenAI's `text-embedding-3-large` embeddings [KBR+24] for its superior quality and multilingual capabilities. To initialize the embeddings of the new Hindi token, we take a weighted average of the top-k similar tokens' base embeddings. After experimenting with different values for the k, we achieve the best results with $k = 5$. This initialization method was used for embeddings and unembeddings layers of *Nanda*.

***Nanda* Architecture:** Following [WGG+24], we leverage the block expansion approach, which proves to be highly effective for language adaptation, especially for low-resource languages. By adding and fine-tuning additional Transformer blocks initialized to identity mappings, the model can integrate new domain and language specific knowledge without forgetting previous information. Although the techniques described in [WGG+24] focus on code and math adaptation, we were able to successfully adopt this approach for language adaptation. We initialized our base model with Llama-3-8B and expanded the number of decoder blocks from 32 to 40 using an interleaved approach. A new decoder block was added every 4 decoder blocks in the base Llama-3 model. In our language adaptation experiments, we found that an optimal data mix of $1 : 1$ (En:Hi) yielded the best results (in downstream 0 shot tasks in both English and Hindi) compared to Hindi-only adaptation. In both experiments, we trained on a total of 55B tokens for Hindi in order to maintain the same token count for the appropriate comparison. Our results show that the block-expansion approach is a strong candidate for language adaptation with less training overhead and resources compared to training domain-specific models from scratch, especially for low-resource languages. In the future, this work could expand to other architectures (like Mixture-of-Experts) and modalities, and it would be interesting to analyse the impact on overall accuracy in downstream tasks. Following the results from Gosal et al. [GXR+24], we find that the optimal adapter layers are 25% of the existing layers.

3.2 Model and Training Hyperparameters

Table 2 shows the number of layers, heads, and dimensionality for *Nanda*, along with the optimization hyperparameter values, peak learning rate and batch size.

For the continual pre-training dataset, we sampled documents from the source list described in Section 2 and generated sequences with a context length of 8,192 tokens. When a document was smaller than 8,192 tokens, it was concatenated with other document (documents) and packed into one sequence. `<|endoftext|>` is used to demarcate the end of each document, giving the language model the information necessary to infer that tokens separated by `<|endoftext|>` are unrelated.

Model	Layers	Heads	Dimension	Learning Rate	Batch Size
Nanda	40	32	$4,096$	$1.5e^{-5}$	$4e6$

Table 2: **Training hyperparameter values**: the number of layers, heads, and dimensionality for *Nanda*, along with the optimization hyperparameter values and peak learning rates.

We train *Nanda* using the AdamW optimizer [LH18] with $\beta_1 = 0.9$, $\beta_2 = 0.95$, $\epsilon = 1e - 5$, and weight decay of 0.1. We scale the gradient norms using a maximum norm clipping value of 1.0. The learning rate schedule comprises a linear warm-up from 0 to the maximum learning rate in 274 steps, followed by a $10\times$ linear decay until 27,192 steps. After packing, we used a global batch size of 7,680 sequences, each with 8,192 tokens.

3.3 Training Infrastructure

All training, hyper-parameter tuning, and instruction-tuning experiments were executed on the Condor Galaxy 2 (CG-2) AI supercomputer from Cerebras,[11] built in partnership with G42. The final training and fine-tuning runs for *Nanda* were performed on 16 CS-2 systems within CG-2. CG-2 is a Cerebras Wafer-Scale Cluster composed of 64 Cerebras CS-2 systems, MemoryX, SwarmX, management, and input worker nodes. The

[11] www.cerebras.net/blog/introducing-condor-galaxy-1-a-4-exaflop-supercomputer-for-generative-ai/

foundation of the CG-2 cluster is the Cerebras Wafer Scale Engine (WSE) within the CS-2 system, the largest and most powerful AI processor currently available.

CS-2 systems are purpose-built network-attached AI accelerators. Each CS-2 features 40 GB of SRAM and a peak of 62.5 AI PetaFLOPs, providing a total of 4 ExaFLOPs of AI compute across 64 systems in the CG-2 supercomputer. Utilizing the weight streaming mode of the Cerebras software stack, the Condor Galaxy supercomputers can flexibly schedule multiple jobs based on hardware resource requirements and priority. The number of CS-2s allocated to a job can be dynamically adjusted during training, with performance scaling linearly up to 64 CS-2s per job. This scalability is facilitated by the Cerebras software stack's use of pure data parallelism to distribute the workload across multiple CS-2s. Jobs are managed by a priority queue system, ensuring efficient allocation of computational resources.

MemoryX is a large-capacity off-wafer memory service used to store all model weights, gradients, and optimizer states. SwarmX is a broadcast/reduce fabric that connects the memory service MemoryX to each of the CS-2 systems in a wafer-scale cluster. Swarm-X coordinates the broadcast of the model layer weights, giving each CS-2 a local copy, and it receives and aggregates (by addition) the independent weight gradients coming from the CS-2 systems during backpropagation. At the end of each iteration, the aggregated gradients are sent to MemoryX for weight update.

The CG-2 hardware and software stack enables training extremely large models using data parallelism by relying on a special execution mode available with Cerebras Wafer Scale Clusters, called weight streaming. Weight streaming fully bypasses the complexity of 3D parallelism on traditional GPU clusters and provides simpler and higher performance scaling.

4 Instruction-Tuning

A useful LLM is one that can interpret user instructions across a variety of NLP tasks and then correctly execute each task to meet the user's preferences for helpfulness and safety. We develop *Nanda* as a model capable of handling a variety of NLP tasks in both Hindi and English. However, in its pre-trained form, the model lacks the ability to fully interpret and respond to user instructions accurately. To this end, we conduct instruction-tuning [OWJ+22] on the pre-trained model, aligning it with practical use cases and enhancing safety by training on a dataset comprising English and Hindi instructions.

4.1 Instruction-Tuning Data

Nanda is a bilingual model, which means that it must be enabled to understand instructions in Hindi without compromising its performance in English. Therefore, we prepare a diverse instruction-tuning dataset covering various domains, with instructions provided both in Hindi and in English. We have a total of $\sim$61K prompt–response pairs in our dataset, and we provide a brief overview of the data collected for each language in the following sections.

4.1.1 English Instruction-Tuning Data

We curate a set of English instructions in an expert-written prompt–response pair format spanning a comprehensive range of NLP tasks. Some of our data is a subset of the instruction-tuning data used for building *Jais* [SSJ+23], and hence, is a combination of several publicly available datasets. We also add a significant amount of proprietary data that we gather from relevant internal sources. Our data comprises $\sim$39K high-quality English instructions consisting of 7.7M tokens in the prompts and 9M tokens in their responses (a total of $\sim$16M tokens). Specifically, we have close to 20K instructions focused on mathematics, while the rest of the examples cover code and diverse types of reasoning, such as physical, logical and causal reasoning.

Since a part of our data is out of reach for the public, we are actively working towards making our instruction-tuning data publicly accessible to support research in this field; however, we are currently unable to specify a timeline for when this dataset will be ready for release.

4.1.2 Hindi Instruction-Tuning Data

As a relatively lower-resource language, Hindi does not have many publicly available, high-quality instruction-tuning datasets. Several existing approaches have utilized machine translation on subsets of English instruction-tuning datasets to create datasets for lower-resource languages. One such dataset, specifically curated for Hindi,

was recently introduced and was used to train *Airavata* [GJH+24a]. We initially experimented with this dataset, but the results were not very strong, so we created our own dataset.

We selected a subset of high-quality instructions (excluding any math or code instances) from our English instruction-tuning dataset and used *GPT-4* to translate it to Hindi [Ope23]. To ensure the quality of the translations, Hindi language experts simultaneously verified a sample of instances in the generated dataset. In addition, we realize that Hindi speakers often use a more relaxed form of the language during informal interactions. We aim for our model to be adept at understanding both formal and informal styles of written Hindi. Thus, we prompted *GPT-4* to generate two kinds of translations:

- **Formal Hindi:** The translated instances must be written in Devanagari script with a style of writing consistent with official documents in Hindi.
- **Casual Hindi:** The model is encouraged to generate translations that contain Hindi (and some English) words using a mix of Devanagari and Latin scripts. This form of language is generally used by Hindi-speaking individuals during informal conversations like texting, interactions on social media, and more.

Ultimately, our curated dataset includes ∼22K high-quality machine-translated Hindi instructions, split into ∼13.5K in formal Hindi examples and the remaining in casual Hindi. In total, the Hindi instruction-tuning dataset comprises 3.8M prompt tokens and 10M response tokens.

4.1.3 Safety Data

We developed a comprehensive safety prompt collection process specifically tailored for Hindi model training, covering eight types of attacks and over 100 detailed safety categories. To ensure high-quality data, a team of five expert annotators initially crafted "seed prompts" for direct attack alignment based on our previous work [WLH+23], resulting in approximately 1,200 annotated examples focused both on general and Hindi-specific scenarios. Building on this foundation, the expert team guided a 20-member outsourced annotation team, leveraging LLMs, to generate an additional 50K attack prompts, ensuring diversity, linguistic relevance, and thorough coverage for Hindi.

We enrich the set of direct attack prompts in SFT data with a collection of adversarial prompt attack methods. Following [LMZ+24], we adopt eight adversarial prompt attack methods to construct the SFT data. These methods target the following abilities of LLMs: in-context learning, auto-regressiveness, instruction following, and domain transfer, resulting in 100K attack prompts.

To further improve the robustness and generalizability of our model against adversarial prompt attacks, we also adopt LLM-based methods for diversifying the attack prompts. This can also help prevent over-fitting on the attack template used by the works that proposed these attacks.

Moreover, in the over-refusal prompts task, annotators generate 50K questions that closely resemble potentially unsafe adversarial prompts but are deliberately crafted to be entirely safe. The primary motivation for this task is to address the overrefusal behavior commonly seen in LLMs [CCSH24], where models refuse to answer benign questions due to excessive caution. By including these prompts, we aim to train the model to better distinguish between genuinely unsafe queries and safe ones, thereby improving the model's responsiveness while maintaining safety.

4.2 Instruction-Tuning Setup

As mentioned in Section 4.1, the instances in our raw instruction-tuning data contain a system instruction and a pair of a user-prompt and an AI response. In the case of multi-turn interactions, we have a sequence of multiple prompt–response pairs. Since our model is built on top of *Llama-3-8B-Instruct*, we templatize each raw datapoint using the *Llama-3-Instruct* prompt template both for supervised fine-tuning (SFT) and for inference.[12] We illustrate the transformation of the raw data points to follow the prompt template in Figure 3. At this stage, we oversample the instructions in our dataset (excluding safety instruction-tuning data) to 300% of the original quantity to strengthen the model. This means we perform SFT over approximately 100M tokens consisting of 47M tokens in Hindi instructions and 53M of the same in English instructions. Moreover, similar to *Jais* [SSJ+23], we apply padding to each templatized instance, use the same autoregressive objective as for pretraining, and mask the loss of the prompt to make sure backpropagation considers only the answer tokens during SFT.

[12] https://www.llama.com/docs/model-cards-and-prompt-formats/meta-llama-3/

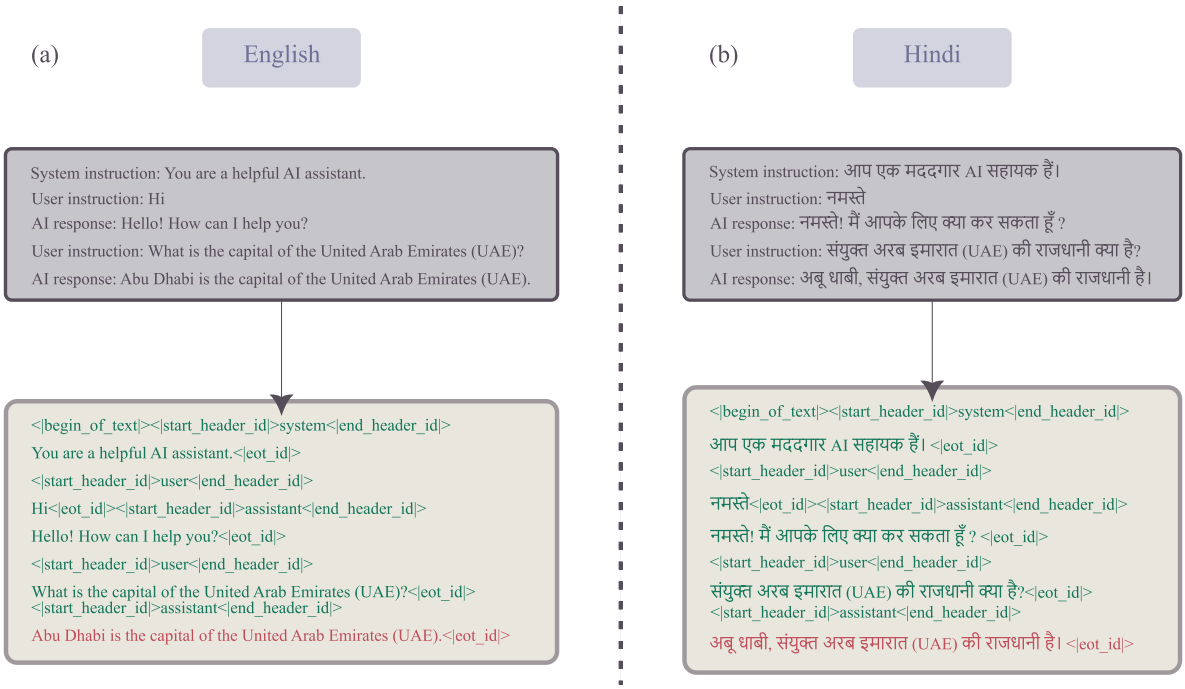


Figure 3: Examples of how the raw data looks like after being transformed to follow the Llama-3 Chat template: the prompt is in green, and the response is in red. In the figure, (a) shows a multi-turn instruction in English, and (b) shows the same interaction in Hindi.

5 Evaluation

In this section, we aim to provide a thorough assessment of the *Nanda* model across a diverse set of evaluation dimensions, covering downstream NLP tasks, safety assessments, and generation capabilities. These evaluations are designed to rigorously measure the model's performance and adaptability, particularly in supporting multilingual use cases across both Hindi and English languages.

5.1 Downstream Evaluation

Evaluation Setup We conduct a comprehensive downstream evaluation, comparing the *Nanda* model to a series of baselines that support both Hindi and English languages. Our baseline models include models that are specifically optimized for the Hindi language, such as Gajendra-v0.1 [Bha24], Airavata [GJH+24b], sarvam-2b-v0.5 [Sar24], alongside several models from the AryaBhatta [Gen24a, Gen24b] and Aya series [ADT+24]. Additional models include popular general-purpose models like Gemma [RPS+24], Llama-2 (7B, 13B) [TMS+23], and the latest Llama-3.1-8B [DJP+24]models.

We adopt the LM-Evaluation-Harness framework [GTB+21] to evaluate each model in a zero-shot setting, and we report the accuracy for each task. Within the LM-Evaluation-Harness framework, the context string is concatenated with each candidate output string, and the answer is determined by selecting the concatenated string with the highest normalized log-likelihood.

Datasets We perform a comparative evaluation of *Nanda* against other LLMs for both Hindi and English, building upon the evaluations conducted in prior studies [DJP+24, ADT+24, Ope23]. For each language, our evaluation encompasses aspects such as knowledge, reasoning, and misinformation, as outlined in Table 3 and Table 4. For Hindi, we assess performance on four translated benchmarks—MMLU, HellaSwag, ARC-Easy, and ARC-Challenge—sourced from Indic-Eval [K24], as well as on Hindi-TruthfulQA [DLVNN+23] to evaluate misinformation. For English, following prior studies, we include MMLU [HBB+20], HellaSwag [ZHB+19], ARC-Easy [CCE+18a], and TruthfulQA [LHE21] benchmarks.

Results for Hindi Table 3 presents the zero-shot and few-shot evaluation results for Hindi. The *Nanda* models demonstrate superior performance across many evaluation criteria, setting a new benchmark for state-of-the-art

Model	Average	MMLU		HellaSwag	ARC-Easy	ARC-Challenge	TruthfulQA
		0-shot	5-shot	0-shot	0-shot	0-shot	0-shot
Gemma-2-9B-base	30.20	26.9	27.2	27.1	28.2	23.6	**48.2**
Llama-2-7B	31.02	27.9	28.1	29.6	29.3	24.9	46.3
Llama-2-13B	31.30	28.3	29.3	30.6	29.2	26.6	43.8
Gajendra-v0.1	31.47	27.4	27.9	33.0	36.7	26.6	37.2
Airavata	32.02	28.1	28.5	33.0	32.0	25.6	44.9
sarvam-2B-v0.5	37.70	28.3	29.1	46.2	45.8	32.3	44.5
AryaBhatta-GemmaOrc	39.43	31.4	35.9	42.6	46.5	32.7	47.5
Llama-3-8B	39.83	30.2	37.3	45.7	45.9	34.5	45.4
Aya-23-8B	40.18	29.8	36.8	48.4	48.3	33.9	43.9
Llama-3.1-8B	40.42	29.9	37.3	46.9	50.2	34.3	43.9
AryaBhatta-GemmaUltra	41.18	34.6	37.5	45.5	48.9	33.4	47.2
Llama-3.1-8B-Instruct	41.80	32.9	38.9	48.0	50.5	36.2	44.3
Llama-3-Nanda-10B-Chat	**47.88**	**38.6**	**44.3**	**56.4**	**59.6**	**40.3**	48.1

Table 3: Evaluation results for **Hindi** language models. *Average* represents the mean score across tasks, and *0-shot* indicates zero-shot results, while *5-shot* denotes few-shot results.

Model	Average	MMLU	HellaSwag	ARC-Easy	TruthfulQA
		0-shot	0-shot	0-shot	0-shot
Gemma-2-9B-base	33.03	28.4	33.1	24.2	46.4
sarvam-2B-v0.5	42.83	29.4	61.7	42.5	37.7
Airavata	44.53	31.7	65.5	40.1	40.8
Llama-2-7B	46.00	31.1	72.9	40.5	39.5
Gajendra-v0.1	48.55	37.5	73.0	43.0	40.7
Aya-23-8B	49.63	34.0	73.9	45.2	45.4
Llama-2-13B	51.20	36.9	77.7	46.1	44.1
AryaBhatta-GemmaOrca	53.03	40.4	72.4	45.4	53.9
AryaBhatta-GemmaUltra	53.65	42.5	74.1	45.4	52.6
Llama-3-8B	53.65	39.2	79.1	52.3	44.0
Llama-3.1-8B	54.33	39.7	78.9	53.5	45.2
Llama-3.1-8B-Instruct	57.53	41.8	**79.3**	**55.1**	53.9
Llama-3-Nanda-10B-Chat	**59.45**	**48.7**	79.2	53.7	**56.2**

Table 4: Evaluation results for **English** language models. *Average* represents the mean score across tasks, and *0-shot* indicates zero-shot results.

Hindi language models. Specifically, compared to monolingual Hindi models, such as Gajendra-v0.1, Airavata, sarvam-2b-v0.5, AryaBhatta series models, *Nanda* (10B) achieves significant absolute improvements ranging from +5.49 to +15.2 points. These gains are especially notable in across knowledge retrieval, commonsense reasoning and misinformation.

We can further see that among multilingual models, Llama-3.1 and Aya-23-8B are the best-performing models, with an average accuracy of 41.8 and 40.42, respectively. Notably, Llama-2 and Gemma-2-9b lag behind, which should not be surprising given their limited exposure to Hindi pre-training data. We see that *Nanda* (6.7B) outperforms Llama-3.1-8B by +6.08 points absolute.

Results for English We also conducted an evaluation for English, with the results shown in Table 4. Notably, *Nanda* achieves a slight improvement over existing English models, even though its continual pretraining was solely on Hindi data. Additionally, we observe that, apart from the AryaBhatta series, other Hindi models such as Gajendra-v0.1, Airavata, and sarvam-2b-v0.5 exhibit significantly lower performance compared to established English models.

5.2 Safety Evaluation

We followed previous work [WLH+23] and constructed a novel dataset for Hindi safety evaluation, aiming to identify biases and harmful content within the language model, specifically focused on the Hindi language and

Model	English	Hindi
Aya-23-8B	49.48	63.79
Llama-3.1-8B-Instruct	90.99	87.01
Llama-3-Nanda-10B-Chat	85.97	87.96

Table 5: Safety evaluation results.

cultural context. The dataset includes a comprehensive categorization of risk areas, types of harm, and specific examples to enable thorough evaluation.

Taxonomy Development The development of a detailed taxonomy was the first step in constructing this dataset. This taxonomy categorizes risk areas specific to Hindi, including regional bias, economic situation bias, and national/group character bias. The taxonomy defines specific harms, such as instances of prejudice against particular states in India or negative stereotypes about national characteristics. Example questions were curated to illustrate these biases, helping ensure the evaluation captures a broad range of potential issues.

Data Collection and Translation The dataset incorporates content sourced in English [WLH+23], initially focused on safety issues like discrimination, toxicity, and adult content, which were then translated into Hindi. The translation process was managed using both automated tools (such as Google Translate and GPT-4) and manual validation by native speakers to ensure the accuracy and cultural relevance of the translations. Each translated entry underwent a thorough validation process to mitigate mistranslations or inadvertent cultural insensitivity.

Annotation and Validation To ensure the quality of the dataset, we collaborated with outsourced annotators who were provided with guidelines to annotate harmful content. The annotations focus on verifying whether translated content preserved the intended meaning and accurately represented harmful or biased elements in the Hindi context. Annotations were then cross-checked to guarantee consistency and reliability in labeling harmful examples.

Evaluation Results The evaluation results are shown in Table 5. We can see that our model is much safer than the other models.

5.3 Generation Evaluation

Dataset In addition to downstream and safety evaluations, we also evaluate the models' core capability for Hindi text generation. Consistent with previous studies [PLH+23, CLL+23], we conduct an LLM-as-a-judge evaluation of the generated Hindi text quality using GPT-4 [Ope23]. The evaluation is based on the *Vicuna-Instructions-80* [CLL+23] dataset, which was manually translated into Hindi by professional translators.

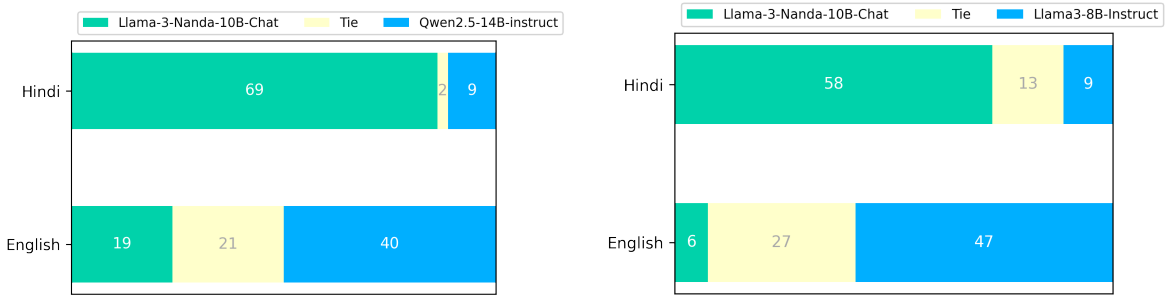
The *Vicuna-Instructions-80* dataset comprises 80 challenging,[13] open-ended prompts spanning eight categories: knowledge, Fermi questions, counterfactuals, roleplay, general topics, mathematics and coding, writing, and common-sense reasoning.

Evaluation Setup We generate outputs for Hindi prompts from the *Vicuna-Instructions-80* dataset, using a temperature of 0.3 and a repetition penalty of 1.2. As baselines, we compare with open-source multilingual models: Llama-3-8B-Instruct [DJP+24] and Qwen2.5-14B-Instruct [BBC+23]. Llama-3-8B-Instruct serves as an ideal baseline since our model is built upon it, ensuring a consistent foundation for comparison. Additionally, Qwen2.5-14B-Instruct brings strong multilingual capabilities and larger parameter capacity, which can better handle linguistic nuances in Hindi.

For the GPT-4 evaluation, we conduct pairwise comparisons between all models. GPT-4 is tasked with scoring each pair between 0 to 10 based on the outputs generated for the prompts in Hindi *Vicuna-Instructions-80*. The model with the higher GPT-4 score in each pair is considered winner for that prompt. To ensure fairness, the outputs from both models in each pair are randomly permuted so that either can appear as the first candidate. The GPT-4 prompt is structured as follows:

[13] https://lmsys.org/blog/2023-03-30-vicuna/

You are a helpful and precise assistant for checking the quality of two Hindi assistants. Suppose the user only speaks Hindi, please evaluate both answers with your justification, and provide an integer score ranging from 0 to 10 after your justifications. When evaluating the answers, you should consider the helpfulness, relevance, accuracy, and level of detail of the answers. The score for answer 1 should be wrapped by `<score1>` *and* `</score1>`*, and the score for answer 2 should be wrapped by* `<score2>` *and* `</score2>`*.*



(a) *Nanda* vs Qwen2.5-14B-Instruct.

(b) *Nanda* vs Llama-3-8B-Instruct.

Figure 4: GPT-4 evaluation results for *Nanda* compared to baselines on Vicuna-80 questions.

Results We summarize our finding of generative evaluations in Figure 4. In our assessments, *Nanda* clearly outperforms both Llama-3-8B-Instruct and Qwen2.5-14B-Instruct in Hindi text generation. Built upon the Llama-3 (8B) architecture, *Nanda* keeps the model's efficiency while incorporating key improvements that make it more attuned to Hindi language. Although Qwen2.5-14B-Instruct offers robust multilingual support, its broader scope may limit it's ability to capture Hindi-specific nuances as well. Consequently, *Nanda* offers better contextual understanding and generates more natural and fluent Hindi text in language-focused tasks.

Model	**English**	**Hindi**
Qwen2.5-14B-Instruct	$8.16_{\pm 1.90}$	$4.65_{\pm 2.56}$
Llama-3-8B-Instruct	$7.98_{\pm 1.76}$	$3.36_{\pm 2.57}$
Llama-3-Nanda-10B-Chat	$7.67_{\pm 1.91}$	$8.05_{\pm 2.13}$

Table 6: Average with standard deviation of scores obtained by each model for English and Hindi text generation.

Table 6 offers a closer look into the scores for each model: the average scores and the standard deviation for English and Hindi. Our model, *Nanda*, achieves a higher average score in Hindi text generation tasks (Avg = 8.05) compared to Qwen2.5-14B-Instruct (Avg = 4.65) and Llama-3-8B-Instruct (Avg = 3.36), demonstrating superior performance in Hindi. In English text generation, *Nanda*'s average score (Avg = 7.67) is slightly lower than that of Qwen (Avg = 8.16) and Llama (Avg = 7.98), suggesting that while *Nanda* excels in Hindi. This outcome is anticipated, as the incorporation of additional language-specific optimizations might lead to a slight degradation in performance for non-target languages.

6 Related Work

Below, we discuss previous work on the following relevant topics: LLMs in general, multilingual models, instruction-tuning, and evaluation of LLMs.

Large Language Models Language models with larger parameter sizes have consistently outperformed smaller models like BERT [DCLT19a], [LLG+19], and T5 [RSR+20]. However, despite being trained on large amounts of multilingual data, many recent large language models still exhibit a strong bias toward English, making them

less effective for other languages [LKW+23]. A notable exception to this trend is GLM [ZLD+23], which is specifically designed to excel in both Chinese and English.

Current pretraining frameworks for language models are typically divided into three main categories: autoregressive, autoencoding, and encoder-decoder models. Most of the latest large language models, such as the GPT series [RWC+19, BMR+20, Ope23], Llama [TLI+23, TMS+23], Bloom [SFA+23], and Falcon [AAA+23], adopt an autoregressive approach, using a left-to-right objective for language modeling. Older models like BERT [DCLT19b], ELECTRA [CLLM20], and RoBERTa [LOG+19] are encoder-only, while models such as BART [LLG+19] and T5 [RSR+20] utilize an encoder-decoder framework. As discussed in Section 3.1, *Nanda* follows the autoregressive model approach, building on the achievements of models like Llama-2 and GPT-4.

Advancements in large language models can also be categorized into two areas: closed-source and open-source models. Closed-source models like Bard,[14] Claude,[15] Gopher [RBC+22], and GPT-4 [Ope23] offer fewer benefits to the research community compared to open-source alternatives [TMS+23, LQN+23, LTW+24]. The lack of transparency in closed-source models introduces various risks, including privacy concerns [MGU+22, YRC23] and safety issues [SXD+22]. In contrast, *Nanda* is an open-source model, as detailed in 3.

Multilingual Models Pre-training a language model typically involves using unsupervised learning with large datasets. While much of this work has been centered on English [DCLT19a, RWC+19, RSR+23, BSA+23], significant research has also been dedicated to mono-lingual pre-training in languages other than English [FFG+24, GFAEP+22, ZRS+21, SSJ+23, PTNT22, KRLB20, KYR+23], as well as training models on a small number of languages [NZL+24, MHSB21, OZL21, JOOA+22].

There have also been massively multilingual pre-training efforts [XCR+20, CCG+23, SFT+23, SFA+23, LMA+22, DCLT19a, CKG+20, KBM+21, OAA+23, AAMK22, DSK+22]. Models based on the mC4 corpus [XCR+20], which cover approximately 100 languages, represent the broadest range of coverage in pre-trained models available today. Notable examples include mT5 [XCR+20] and umT5 [CCG+23], which are the largest publicly accessible multilingual pre-trained models.

However, a key limitation of all these approaches is that they focus on pre-training, requiring users to perform downstream task fine-tuning for specific applications. In contrast, our work emphasizes equipping pre-trained models with instruction-following capabilities.

Another important research direction focuses on adapting pre-trained models to accommodate new languages not included during the initial training phase. These studies explore methods such as continued fine-tuning and embedding space adaptation. For instance, previous work [YSM+23, LKL+23] has expanded language coverage by gradually adding languages through additional pre-training on monolingual datasets, a method that does not scale efficiently. In a concurrent effort, [LJT+24] extends language coverage significantly by using vocabulary expansion and further pre-training Llama-2 with Glot500-c [ILK+23].

Hindi has also been integrated into these multilingual models, including earlier models such as mBERT [DCLT19b] and XLM-RoBERTa [CKG+20], as well as more recent large language models such as Bloom [SFA+23]. However, due to the Hindi content being dwarfed by other languages, these models tend to perform substantially worse than dedicated monolingual models and often exhibit limited generalization abilities in zero-shot settings [LKW+23].

Instruction-Tuning Fine-tuning language models using instruction–response pairs has enhanced the generalization capabilities of language models across various tasks [OWJ+22]. In terms of open-source models, Bloomz [MWS+23] is a fine-tuned version of the foundation model Bloom [SFA+23] based on large-scale instruction-tuning over a dataset created via templates, while Llama-2 [TMS+23] uses a publicly available instruction–response pair dataset [CHL+22]. There has been a rise in Indic models like Airavata [GJH+24c], Aya [UAY+24] and Nemotron [JSK+24] that use publicly available data to instruction tune base models that enable them to perform better at tasks.

The prompts used for instruction-tuning can have diverse origins. Some, as observed by [ZMH+23], are human-designed, while others can be autonomously generated. These prompts can be refined with follow-up instructions for more relevant or specific outputs, as studied by [GAS+23] and [MTG+23]. Recently, [WWS+22] introduced *chain-of-thought prompting*, directing models to clarify their reasoning over complex tasks, which was shown to enhance their accuracy.

[14] https://ai.google/static/documents/google-about-bard.pdf
[15] https://www.anthropic.com/index/introducing-claude

Evaluating Large Language Models Large language models are highly capable of generating coherent and fluent text but often struggle with factual accuracy and reasoning abilities. To assess factual accuracy, models like GPT-4 [Ope23] and Llama [TLI+23] use school exam-style questions [HBB+22] to gauge how faithfully they can provide knowledge. Common-sense reasoning is also critical and is tested through datasets such as *HellaSwag* [ZHB+19], *WinoGrande* [SBBC21], *ARC* easy and challenge [CCE+18b], and *OpenBookQA* [MCKS18]. For evaluating reasoning through programming, benchmarks like HumanEval [CTJ+21] and MBPP [AON+21] are used.

In the domain of Hindi NLP, [KKG+20] introduced IndicGLUE, the first Indic NLU benchmark for 11 languages, while [DAR+23] expanded upon this by releasing IndicXTREME, covering all 22 Indic languages. On the natural language generation (NLG) side, [KSS+22] developed the IndicNLGsuite, which supports five tasks across 11 languages. Additionally, [GCA+23] presented IN22, a machine translation benchmark for evaluating both conversational and general translation across all 22 languages. More recently, [SGB+24] proposed IndicGenBench, a benchmark covering diverse tasks such as cross-lingual summarization, machine translation, and cross-lingual question answering. [WGY+24] evaluated models using LLMs and humans and observed that they agree fairly well on most Indic languages.

In contrast, researchers working with other languages often employ machine translation or create analogous datasets to assess language models' knowledge proficiency and commonsense understanding [Ope23, LKW+23]. As explained in Section 5, we adopted a similar approach by crafting datasets analogous to those available in English and using a combination of human translations and our proprietary machine translation system to convert English datasets into Hindi for evaluation purposes.

While knowledge [HBB+22, LZK+23] and commonsense reasoning [ZHB+19, SBBC21] evaluations based on prior works [TLI+23, MWS+23] provide valuable insights, they often rely on multiple-choice formats, which are limited in scope. To comprehensively evaluate generated text, human evaluation remains essential, though it can be resource-intensive and sometimes lacks consistency, particularly when using crowd-sourcing. Recent studies [Tör23, LXA23, GRS+23, WA23] suggest that annotations from ChatGPT outperform those from Amazon crowd-sourced workers, highlighting the value of expert annotators in the evaluation process. Building on these findings, [PLH+23, CLL+23] used GPT-4 to replace crowd-sourced workers for comparing model outputs. In this approach, an evaluation prompt is presented, and both model outputs are provided for assessment in context.

7 Conclusion

We have introduced *Nanda*, a new state-of-the-art Hindi-English bilingual instruction-tuned large language model (LLM). It can perform a wide range of generative and downstream language tasks in both Hindi and English, ranging from common-sense reasoning to natural language understanding tasks such as sentiment analysis, irony detection, and hate speech detection. Its pre-trained and fine-tuned capabilities outperform all known open-source Hindi models of similar size, and are comparable to state-of-the-art open-source English models that were trained on larger datasets. We encourage researchers, hobbyists, and enterprise developers alike to experiment with and to develop on top of our model, particularly those working on multi-lingual and/or non-English applications.

Nanda represents an important evolution and expansion of the Hindi NLP and AI landscape. This Hindi model born in the UAE represents an important strategic step for government and commercial organizations towards the digital revolution. By advancing Hindi language understanding and generation, empowering local players with sovereign and private deployment options, and nurturing a vibrant ecosystem of applications and innovation, this work supports a broader strategic initiative of digital and AI transformation to usher in an open, more linguistically-inclusive, and culturally-aware era.

8 Release Notes

We release *Nanda* under Meta's Llama-3 license, and users must adhere to the terms and conditions of the license,[16] Meta's acceptable use policy,[17] Meta's privacy policy,[18] and the applicable policies, laws, and regulations governing the specific use-case and region. We encourage researchers, hobbyists, and enterprise devel-

[16] https://www.llama.com/llama3/license/
[17] https://www.llama.com/llama3/use-policy/
[18] https://www.facebook.com/privacy/policy/

opers alike to experiment with and to develop on top of the model – particularly those working on multi-lingual and/or non-English applications.

8.1 Intended Use

This model is one of the first of its kind in the Hindi LLM ecosystem, and has shown to be the best in the world among open Hindi or multilingual LLMs in terms of Hindi NLP capabilities. Some potential downstream uses are listed below:

- Research: This model can be used by researchers and developers to advance the Hindi LLM/NLP field.
- Commercial Use: It can be used as a foundational model to further fine-tune for specific usecases. Some potential usecases for businesses include (1) chat-assistants, (2) downstream tasks such as NLU/NLG, (3) customer service, and (4) process automation.

We believe that a number of audiences will benefit from our model:

- Academics: those researching Hindi natural language processing.
- Businesses: companies targeting Hindi-speaking audiences.
- Developers: those integrating Hindi language capabilities in apps.

8.2 Out-of-Scope Use

While *Nanda* is a powerful bilingual model catering to Hindi and English, it is essential to understand its limitations and the potential for its misuse. The following are some examples from the long list of scenarios where the model should not be used:

- **Malicious Use**: The model should not be used for generating harmful, misleading, or inappropriate content. This includes but is not limited to (*i*) generating or promoting hate speech, violence, or discrimination, (*ii*) spreading misinformation or fake news, (*iii*) engaging in illegal activities or promoting them, (*i*) (*iv*) handling sensitive information: the model should not be used to handle or to generate personal, confidential, or sensitive information.
- **Generalization Across All Languages**: *Nanda* is bilingual and optimized only for Hindi and English. It should not be assumed to have equal proficiency in other languages or dialects.
- **High-Stakes Decisions**: The model should not be used for making high-stakes decisions without human oversight. This includes medical, legal, financial, or safety-critical decisions, among others.

8.3 Biases, Risks, and Limitations

The model is trained on a mix of publicly available and propreitary data which in part was curated by our preprocessing pipeline. We used different techniqes to reduce the bias that is inadvertently present in the dataset. While efforts were made to minimize biases, it is still possible that our model, like all LLM models, may exhibit some biases.

The model is trained as an AI assistant for Hindi and English speakers, and thus it should be used to help humans to boost their productivity. In this context, it is limited to produce responses for queries in these two languages and it might not produce appropriate responses for queries in other languages.

Potential misuses include generating harmful content, spreading misinformation, or handling sensitive information. Users are urged to use the model responsibly and with discretion.

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