

Artificial Intelligence: Emphasis on Ethics and Education

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ABSTRACT

Artificial Intelligence doubtlessly will lead to several changes in today's world. There will be massive shifts in employment markets with more and more automated jobs and others newly created. Many, if not all employees, will have to acquire new skills if they do not want to end jobless and be replaced by a machine. On an international scale, artificial intelligence might lead to a new world order with China and the US fighting a cold tech war in which Europe is not even part of the picture. Regulation, international cooperation and diplomacy will aim to remedy adverse effects. In this scenario, two areas will be of particular importance: Ethics and Education.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence; AI; Education; Ethics; Higher education

INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence [1], defined as a system's ability to correctly interpret external data, to learn from such data, and to use those learning's to achieve specific goals and tasks through flexible adaptation [2] will lead to significant changes in today's world. There will be huge shifts in employment markets with more and more jobs being automated and others newly created. Many, if not all, employees will have to acquire new skills if they do not want to end jobless and be replaced by a machine. On an international scale, AI might lead to a new world order with China and the US fighting a cold tech war which Europe is not even part of the picture. Regulation, international cooperation and diplomacy will aim to remedy negative effects [3]. In this scenario two areas will be of particular importance: Ethics and Education.

ETHICS FOR A BETTER WORLD

First, an AI system will do whatever task it has been ordered to do - even if these tasks are unethical, illegal, or lead to adverse outcomes. This is highly problematic and hence requires strict regulation and laws.

However, there is a second, more complicated issue related to ethics and AI: Humans are of ten imprecise in their commands, which might lead to misinterpretations and counterproductive outcomes. An AI system that is tasked with protecting, say Donald Trump, could be tempted to lock him into the Oval Office forever. Admittedly, not much can happen to The

President in this case. But that was probably not what was intended in the first place. To perform as desired AI systems need to have some understanding of human values and ethics to enable them to correctly interpret fuzzy commands. We will need to develop ethical guidelines and consequently implement them within AI-driven systems. For the moment, this may not sound urgent. But as AI systems will become more powerful and capable in the future, the need for ethics will become more critical [1].

Third, AI systems are trained to learn from data. If this data is already biased, the error will be formalized and potentially amplified by AI. In the corporate world, an increasing reliance on artificial intelligence will make existing company rules and actions more accentuated. If, for example, your company previously had a small bias toward hiring a particular type of applicants, then the newly introduced AI system will go all the way. This is what happened to Amazon, which had to discontinue a recruiting tool that systematically favored male candidates.

Ethical behavior can indeed be enforced or at least strengthened by regulations and guidelines. However, when regulators apply AI themselves, this discussion becomes all the more important. China already today broadly embraces AI to track and monitor its citizens. The Chinese government is collecting big data on individuals from a variety of sources, which is then used to calculate an individual's "social credit score" intended to incentivize lawful behavior and good citizenship. The score goes

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up for good practice, such as donating blood, or down, for example, when obtaining a speeding ticket. Loan approvals, hiring decisions, and alike, are all based on the citizen's score.

EDUCATION FOR A NEW WORLD

The fact that ethical leadership becomes an imperative will also impact the educational system. Teaching ethics in schools and universities will become crucial [4,5]. Topics such as the combination of Artificial Intelligence and Humanities may become as important as mathematics or geography [6]. Course on such topics should be taught to everyone independently of the area of studies they focus on. But this is not the only domain where (higher) education will have to evolve, and as Rector and Dean of a business school such as ESCP Business School, I continuously ask myself on how to prepare the future generations for the changes to come [7-9].

Currently, curricula are created as if the world had barely changed. Surveys recurrently show that employers do not think career readiness is linked to academic achievement. However, for the moment, this is a somewhat subjective opinion and rarely supported by hard facts. Yet, in an AI-equipped workplace based on big data, such claims could rapidly become objective when linking job performance to academic achievements, extracurricular activities, or courses attendance. This could help universities and schools around the world to revise both contents and pedagogy.

What skills will be needed in a world of AI which we only know little of today? Adaptability to new contexts and an entrepreneurial mindset are undoubtedly useful [4]. A thrive for lifelong learning as well. Basic knowledge in programming and data analytics will prepare future collaborations between men and machines – just like it helps to know some words in Chinese when working with China. Social skills and social perceptiveness are part of this list since they make employees less likely to be replaced by AI-powered robots. Managers will need to adopt an open, human, and highly ethical leadership style that brings confidence from employees who will be afraid of losing their jobs. Successful managers of the future will need to act as empathetic mentors and data-driven decision makers at the same time.

Yet, to make room for such courses in students' weekly timetables, others will have to be scratched. And those might not be the ones you would think of first. Why should one learn mathematics if AI can do it faster and better anyway? If it is to train the brain to think in a structured way, or to enhance cognitive processing power, there might be better ways of

achieving the same goal. Higher education needs to reflect upon this. Efficient 21st century education should be built upon the hypothesis of the human-machine entanglement and focus on skill that will really be needed.

ENDING FOR A HAPPY WORLD

Given the many uncertainties surrounding AI, its future development and potential, it is not surprising that the viewpoints on it range from outright alarmist as often expressed by Elon Musk to highly euphoric like the vision of inventor and best-selling author Raymond Kurzweil. Recently deceased theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking called AI "either the best, or the worst thing, ever happen to humanity". Without a crystal ball, it will be impossible to foresee where, when, and how artificial intelligence will evolve and in how far it will change the world. However, in order to prepare an evolution toward a happy world as well as a happy ending, ethics and education certainly play a major and highly significant role.

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