



AI and its Role in Shaping Global Narratives

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI), a concept that gain surged over recent years was a relatively new and alien concept. In the 21st century or the digital age, the role of AI has been increasing rapidly, which is evident from its usage and involvement in various sectors. Artificial Intelligence has its own pros and cons, but no one can deny its increasing role in our daily lives and especially when it comes to constructing and shaping narratives. Its significance and influence can be seen in Media and Journalism, geopolitics, economics and other sectors. Looking at the trends it can be certainly agreed that the 'global arms race of the cold war era' has now been replaced by 'a global AI race' wherein countries give primacy to information and treat it valuable. This paper seeks to examine the role of AI in constructing global narratives by examining its role in geopolitics and in the economic sector. It also traces the history of AI and aims to assess whether there are any disparities when it comes to harnessing the technology between the so-called Global South and Global North. Countries such as India, are taking initiatives to develop the technology and play their part in the Global AI race. The discussion on AI is incomplete without mentioning its ethical and unethical uses and this chapter attempts to explore the same. It also discusses the way forward and the need to create 'AI for All' which involves global cooperation. Overall, it discusses the advantages and disadvantages of AI while simultaneously examining the role it will play in the present and future years.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Digital Age, Media and Journalism, Geopolitics, Global Narratives.

Introduction

It is important to understand the history of Artificial Intelligence to understand its role in shaping narratives. The journey of AI has come a long way from the Turing Test of the 1950s to the current usage of Generative AI (gen AI) (Stryker & Kavlakoglu, 2024). The conceptualization of the idea had been done by Alan Turing when he tried to assess whether a machine can think on par with humans through his imitation game which is now popularly known as the Turing Test. It was John McCarthy who later coined the term artificial intelligence in 1956, not knowing that this is what it would be called forever, by defining it as the concept of human-like machines.

The next two decades then witnessed significant developments which were evident through the creation of ELIZA, a chatbot which simulated therapy which led users calling it as a human professional. Another development was the creation of Shakey the Robot which was used to navigate different environments. After the creation of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence in 1979, there were significant advancements in AI in certain parts of the world (Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence, n.d.).

For instance, the first driverless car, deep blue, kismet and Nasa rovers were examples of the strides being made in AI. The most accessible and convenient use of the technology was developed through Siri and Alexa by Apple and Google respectively. In 2017, we witnessed Saudi Arabia granting citizenship to Sophia, a human like robot which generated a lot of criticism for the country as Sophia possessed certain rights which the Saudi Arabian women were not entitled to. These developments truly demonstrated that the nature of technology which had certainly changed over the years but the true gamechanger in the field of AI is considered to be ChatGPT developed by OpenAI and launched in 2022. It is a chatbot which has now become a household name and is credited with bringing the AI boom.

This milestone marked the beginning of what came to be known as Generative AI (gen AI). In the simplest language, Generative AI can be considered a tool that allows users to create professional sounding text and interesting images using prompts (Euchner, 2023).

AI and Shaping Narratives

Narratives are something which are found everywhere and often leave an impact on people for a long period of time. It is not something which people think about consciously, but it is something which goes on in our minds even when we don't think of it always. AI, a technology which is still developing and evolving rapidly has already become so powerful that it is leading to digital wars between nations. It has the potential to construct narratives which can later become causes for which nations go to war. For instance, China launched DeepSeek in 2025 which many consider it to

be a move to show its technological prowess. The chatbot created a lot of buzz as soon after it was launched it became the undisputed number one free app on the App Store (Helmy, 2025).

Some also believe that DeepSeek can be considered China's response to ChatGpt which sparked a DeepSeek vs ChatGpt debate. This debate while focusing on which chat bot is better also brought forward a concern of data protection. Several countries such as Italy, India, US, Australia and South Korea have imposed restrictions on its users on using DeepSeek AI. This highlights how powerful the technology is as countries are concerned with the data of their users being shared with the Chinese government.

Those days have gone when countries accumulated weapons and indulged themselves in an arms race during the cold war when being a nuclear power for a country was of extreme importance. The times have certainly changed now as countries give significance in improving their technological capabilities and AI has truly turned out to be a game changer. Information warfare, which is defined by NATO as an operation conducted to gain an information advantage over the opponent, is now becoming heavily reliant on the use of AI (NATO, n.d.).

Not only state actors but also non-state actors use AI driven warfare to leverage their interests. They have the capability to manipulate and shape public opinion to suit their own advantage. In an era where data and information are treated as gold and are used as weapons against countries this poses a serious threat (Sandamal, 2025). An instance of the capability to shape public opinion can be understood by Deepfakes. The image of Pope Francis in a puffer jacket and a video of Donald Trump in a scuffle with police are all examples of deepfakes, incidents that never occurred in real life. (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025). Deepfake is an AI driven technology which has now become so realistic that it often leaves users puzzled about the occurrence of such events.

Another important narrative or rather a threat which has been created by AI is its ability to take over certain jobs. AI now has the power to create art, and this was brought forward when users started creating their Ghibli images using AI. Termed as an 'insult on life itself' by Hayao Miyazaki, the founder of Ghibli, demonstrates how the hard work of a 40-year-old Japanese film studio is being overshadowed. The Ghibli AI trend turned into a global sensation as users created multiple Ghibli edits. It highlights that the threat of AI is not limited to a single country but rather to all the countries across the globe, as the world is currently grappling with information and digital warfare. The time is not far away when AI will be included alongside issues of terrorism, human rights and climate, all of which have a common underlying factor, that is the need for global cooperation to deal with them effectively.

The capability of AI is not only limited to starting wars, stealing jobs and creating deepfakes but it also plays a very crucial role in Media and Journalism, creating a geopolitical influence and creating an Economic narrative. Many a times, AI is seen as a threat but in some instances, it has proven to be a reliable factor or rather an advantage. For instance, it has made notable contributions in the field of healthcare as we can see the benefits of AI powered monitoring systems and virtual health assistants. But on the other hand, there are concerns over privacy and bias in AI models (Singh, 2025).

AI and Geopolitical Influence

Geopolitics has always been a messy affair as countries decide to change their alliances faster than weather conditions. Modern warfare has certainly evolved which is evident from the recent conflicts of India-Pakistan, Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas. Digital warfare has now become heavily reliant on the use of AI and countries are investing in huge amounts to counter digital threats. For instance, Germany aims to build a cyber dome in collaboration with Israel which is a comprehensive digital shield designed to protect national infrastructure from increasingly sophisticated cyberattacks. This shows that now countries are collaborating on AI to bring out the best possible use of technology (Kaur, 2025).

The role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has certainly increased in warfare. Countries have exploited the technology for their own advantage which can be understood by the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. Ukraine, for instance has been using AI augmented systems for its drones which have been domestically produced (Hunder, 2024). Additionally, both Russia and Ukraine are actively engaged in what scholars point out to be a 'technological race' to develop and deploy drones based on Artificial Intelligence and machine learning capabilities. This brings out an interesting aspect of AI as technology, it's tendency to be looked at both as an answer to all minute and major problems and as a threat to data protection and surveillance.

The issue of surveillance has been brought into the limelight by citizens. AI is being used to surveil citizens, and this is being done by the governments. Several countries have already started collecting data of their citizens, for instance, US has started to develop into a surveillance state. This surveillance state can also be understood in the form of a security state, which deploys an intensified surveillance system and is subjected to increased levels of control and policing. This impacts the civil liberties of citizens and leads to an infringement of their rights (Regilme & Beller, 2020). AI companies have started increasing their presence and work across departments, government agencies, and countries which can be seen through the work of Palantir (Hornberger, 2025).

Palantir is making strides when it comes to data analysis and artificial intelligence and has the military of Israel as its consumer. An interesting aspect of AI

is that it is being deployed both for terrorist activities and to counter them. Generative AI is being used by terrorist groups for their own advantage, and they can make the best use of the technology to spread their propaganda (Makuch, 2025).

It has now become easier to spread fake videos, messages and audio and these groups use it in their favor to influence the masses. Spreading disinformation and manipulating people is now becoming the new trend among these groups. The image with the text All Eyes on Rafah, which was shared by millions of people across the globe, was an AI generated image which became a social media trend. There are several organizations that are using AI as a means for counter terrorism practices. The potential applications of Artificial Intelligence include drone detection, automated surveillance and facial recognition, monitoring of social media apps and deradicalization programs, and financial intelligence among others.

The Global AI Index was launched in 2019 and measures countries based on level of extent of Artificial Intelligence. AI index report of 2025 found US to be the top producer of AI models and China at the second position. The development of AI models is global as countries of the Middle East, Latin America and Southeast Asia are actively involved in it (Stanford Institute for Human-Centered AI, 2025). In earlier times several indicators were used to measure a country's strength which included its military capabilities, Gross Domestic Product, soft power and diplomatic ties with other countries to a certain extent. But now technology and especially AI plays a major role in determining a country's strength. This narrative of measuring a country's strength has truly been changed by AI.

AI is going to shift alliances between countries and play a role in shaping global politics. Trade is an important factor in determining relations between countries and AI is leading to collaborations between countries. For instance, Taiwan has proved its dominance as a leading producer of semiconductors and the industry is leveraging the use of AI. It is important to note that both India and Taiwan have collaborated for manufacturing of chips in India. With China-Taiwan relations already tense, this collaboration can prove to be crucial aspect in India-China relations. Countries are aware of the threat posed by digital networks which is why US and China are biased towards indigenous technology (Mohney, 2025).

AI and Economic Narratives

In a world where people depend on their skills for their livelihood, AI is truly changing this narrative as it has the tendency to takeover jobs and replace human beings. It is ironic when the CEO of Open AI, Sam Altman, himself feels less skilled in front of AI, something which he created himself. Open AI is soon going to release GPT-5 and after it's testing. They agreed that speed and capability are growing faster than ever, and humans are themselves unsure of what they have created when it comes to the use of AI (The Economic Times, 2025).

Even Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, agrees that AI is progressing at a rate that is both alarming and surprising. However, this technology also has the potential to create more jobs. For instance, it has created a new role of a prompt engineer, a role that did not exist before. Prompt engineering is all about creating effective prompts for models like ChatGpt to obtain the best outputs. Prompts act as inputs and yield the best quality of results which is why a good prompt goes a long way (Ekin, 2023).

Let us try to understand the dependency which we have on AI as different sections of society use it for their own reasons. For instance, students use it on a regular basis when they need any help in understanding a concept or writing an assignment. Educational institutions have now started prioritizing AI based competencies among students. This can be demonstrated by the model adopted recently by the top school of management, IIM, as it is going to replace its regular hall-based examination with AI integrated problem-solving projects.

There is a long debate on whether AI acts as an aid for human beings or does it really have the potential to replace human beings. The debate also spans into the ethical and unethical use of AI. Some argue that heavy reliance on AI could pose some serious consequences as it negatively impacts the ability of human beings to think. For instance, several companies such as TCS, Microsoft, Intel, Meta and Panasonic have laid off thousands of employees due to the growing influence of AI (Agrawal, Gans, & Goldfarb, 2019). It can be agreed to an extent that AI has made our lives easy and helped us in navigating complex tasks but isn't life about figuring things out for yourself and not relying on a chat bot to do the simplest tasks for you.

We can see how countries are making policies and launching projects which cater to the integration of AI. The IndiaAI mission aims for an inclusive and responsible growth of AI ecosystems (Government of India, 2024). India has always prioritized a digital economy which was evident through the Digital India Mission, launched in 2015 and now through the recently launched IndiaAI mission. India's digital infrastructure is remarkable and sets global standards for other countries as the country's model of Unified Payment Interface (UPI) was adopted by other countries such as Nepal.

The Way Forward

We can see that AI no longer remains a fancy word but something which has now become a reality to deal with and understand. There are differences in accessibility and harnessing technology between the countries of Global South and Global North. The wealthier nations have initiated the development of AI, and it can be said that US, European Union (EU) and China have been at the forefront of its development. They have raised concerns for regulation of AI and are in the process of creating norms for the same. For instance, the EU passed a comprehensive AI act in

2024, and US has policies that focus on maintaining their dominant position in AI and several other acts are in the pipeline for the same. The policies on AI in Canada also impose restrictions on the federal government on the usage of automated decision-making systems. There is a need to create AI for all and look beyond the Global North narrative.

India has also taken an initiative to dominate the Global AI race, and the technology is revolutionizing India's digital economy and is playing a pivotal role in improving consumer experiences across various sectors. Initiatives such as the Open AI Academy, help in broadening the usage of AI (The Economic Times, 2025). Going forward, the debate on ethical and unethical usage of AI will shape the nature of technology. The unethical usage of AI certainly poses challenges which are evident through deepfakes and voice cloning and spread across various other domains. AI is slowly taking over us or at least has the potential to do so sooner than we can imagine. It will shape the future of all industries as with each passing second, its new versions and abilities are being explored. It is certain that it has become a significant topic of debate, discussion and collaboration among various countries and has the potential to make or break ties.

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