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The Rise of Artificial Intelligence: A New Threat to the Right to Privacy in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is growing fast. It now powers many systems around us. From mobile apps to public surveillance, AI is everywhere. But this growth also brings serious privacy problems. AI systems collect and analyze personal data without people knowing. This article looks at how AI threatens the basic human right to privacy. It highlights the legal, ethical, and social issues that come with it. It also points out the gaps in current laws. The article uses real-life cases and laws to show how urgent the problem is. It ends with practical steps to protect privacy in an AI-driven world. This study critically examines the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies as a potential threat to the right to privacy in Pakistan (Qureshi, 2023). Utilizing a qualitative research design grounded in thematic content analysis of secondary data including peer-reviewed articles, constitutional and legislative texts, policy papers, and media reports this work identifies patterns and gaps in the current discourse (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis reveals pervasive AI-driven surveillance practices operating without meaningful consent (Batool, 2024) and significant legal and regulatory inadequacies under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act and the stalled Personal Data Protection Bill (Ahmad, Hussain, & Mir, 2024). Ethical and socio-technical challenges, notably algorithmic bias and data misuse, disproportionately affect vulnerable communities (Galaz et al., 2021). Comparative review of international frameworks—such as the Council of Europe's Framework Convention on AI—highlights essential principles of transparency, accountability, and data-minimization that could guide Pakistan's legal reforms (Council of Europe, 2024). The findings underscore the urgent need for comprehensive legislative overhaul,

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strengthened institutional capacity, and inclusive governance mechanisms to safeguard privacy rights amidst AI proliferation.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence (Ai) is a very a very fast growing field these days. As we know that world is getting modern day by day, Things are getting interesting. Machines made by humans operated by machines where Ai is playing an important role. It now helps run homes, businesses and governments. AI means machines that learn, think and act like humans. Psychologists generally characterize human intelligence not by just one trait but by the combination of many diverse abilities such as

Learning, Reasoning, Problem Solving, Perception and using Language

While Ai brings convenience, it also collects a lot of personal data. This affects our right to privacy. Privacy is a basic right, universal declaration of human rights and Constitution of Pakistan 1973 also deal with this basic right of every individual. But today AI systems ignoring this right. Ai is into our lives without our knowledge. Machines become able to hear us, been able to watch us been able to act like humans and moreover been able to access our personal data without our permission. We have data privacy rights which involves our right to manage, access and view your personal information. This basics right to privacy of humans in computer field is in question these days. This article explores How Ai puts privacy at risk and it also suggests what we can do about it .

Privacy is a basic right. It is in documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But today, AI systems often ignore this right. This article explores how AI puts privacy at risk. It also suggests what we can do about it.

Objectives:

- To study how AI systems affect privacy.
- To check if current laws can handle these problems.
- To suggest new rules and steps for safe use of AI.

We are in a Goddamn golden age of technology, specifically fueled by Artificial Intelligence. What was once science fiction is now part of our daily routine. From smart assistants to facial recognition, AI is everywhere. It's definitely making our lives easier — but at what cost? As AI grows in sophistication and becomes more embroiled in decision-making, it's beginning to provoke serious questions. A major worry

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is how it comes to acquire and use our personal data. In nations like Pakistan, as law struggles to keep pace with fast-tech, the sanctity of privacy is gradually falling victim. Protecting our privacy faces real difficulties because AI has transformed it into an essential challenge while we try to determine essential measures for security. rights. Fast changes in the world can be attributed to Artificial Intelligence (AI). The technology enables multiple sectors to advance. healthcare, business, national security, and government systems. But while AI brings a lot The benefits generated by AI also produce specific large-scale problems that primarily affect privacy aspects. In The rise of AI in Pakistan poses a challenging situation because the country still develops its laws while public awareness about privacy remains insufficient. serious challenge. The public remains uninformed about how their private information gets gathered by various sources. The existing rules for personal data protection remain unenforced or insufficient while insufficient monitoring of data collection occurs.

AI systems function based on large volumes of data which includes facial recognition patterns and speech patterns together with position-related information as well as behavioral signature information. The frequency of usage for facial recognition alongside automatic tracking and data prediction systems continues to increase. Projecting tools possess the ability to both monitor our activities and develop knowledge about us without showing any indications. The concern about digital rights remains genuine in Pakistan since most citizens remain uninformed about their online rights. The Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) 2016 fails to address the new problems that AI technology introduces. Article 14 of the Constitution gives Pakistanis a right to privacy yet it fails to specify the extent of data collection capabilities that modern artificial intelligence systems possess. When the government implements AI systems for national safety or public services there is a risk of such systems being abused due to a lack of clear legal framework. The surveillance system can unintentionally hurt specific groups unfairly and can monitor individuals without proper cause. Programs that target journalists alongside activists as well as other average citizens result in serious harm. The transition toward digital government and smart systems in Pakistan requires stronger legislative measures which will protect citizens while benefiting from AI technology. The investigation examines the impact that Artificial Intelligence has on privacy protections within Pakistan. The study examines both legal shortcomings along with social dangers

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while providing solutions which address these shortcomings. The objective involves establishing methods that enable AI to serve the public population while safeguarding privacy fundamentals..

Literature Review

Zuboff (2019) explained how tech companies profit from user data. She called it "surveillance capitalism." Tufekci (2018) and Pasquale (2015) showed how secret algorithms shape our behavior. The main issue is that laws like GDPR and CCPA were made before AI became powerful. They do not fully cover the risks. There is also little research on how AI affects poor countries. This article fills that gap.

1. Global Perspectives on AI and Privacy

The proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies has sparked significant discourse on their implications for privacy rights worldwide. AI systems, particularly those leveraging big data and machine learning, often rely on extensive personal information, raising concerns about the erosion of individual privacy (Lawful Legal, 2024). Facial recognition technologies, for instance, have been criticized for enabling mass surveillance and potential misuse by state and non-state actors (Lawful Legal, 2024).

Internationally, efforts have been made to address these concernsSome international efforts are being made to make sure AI follows basic human rights. For example, the Council of Europe has a special framework that focuses on AI and its connection to human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. It talks about the importance of transparency, fairness, and accountability. The Toronto Declaration also pushes for responsible AI, especially in machine learning, and warns about the risks of bias and unfair treatment in AI systems.

AI's Effect on Privacy Laws

As AI becomes more common in different areas of life, it's clear that our current privacy laws are falling behind. AI systems require large volumes of data for functioning which includes facial expressions alongside vocalize audio signals as well as tracking our position and detecting our conduct patterns. Many software solutions that perform facial recognition or automatic tracking and data prediction features are increasing in use. Projecting tools possess the ability to both monitor our activities and develop knowledge about us without showing any indications. The concern about digital rights remains genuine in Pakistan since most citizens remain uninformed about their online rights. The

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Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) 2016 fails to address the new problems that AI technology introduces. Article 14 of the Constitution gives Pakistanis a right to privacy yet it fails to specify the extent of data collection capabilities that modern artificial intelligence systems possess. When the government implements AI systems for national safety or public services there is a risk of such systems being abused due to a lack of clear legal framework. The surveillance system can unintentionally hurt specific groups unfairly and can monitor individuals without proper cause. Programs that target journalists alongside activists as well as other average citizens result in serious harm. The modernization toward digital governmental operations and smart systems in Pakistan requires rigorous regulations to convert AI-powered advancements into beneficial tools for citizens. The investigation examines the impact that Artificial Intelligence has on privacy protections within Pakistan. The study examines both legal shortcomings along with social dangers while providing solutions which address these shortcomings. The objective involves establishing methods that enable AI to serve the public population while safeguarding privacy fundamentals.

Ethics, Human Rights, and AI

The rapid processing ability of AI creates ethical issues specifically regarding consent together with personal freedom. problems, especially about consent and personal freedom. Using AI for surveillance and The ability of predictive systems to reach unethical levels damages the freedom of life and expression. International Surveillance operations must adhere to three criteria according to the established guidelines which determine their legal validity and essential requirement alongside their appropriate boundary. go too far. The established rules function to safeguard people from unreasonable observation and surveillance practices. Certain AI systems develop biased behaviors because biased training methods were used to construct them. on unfair or unbalanced data. The resulting discrimination targets primarily people with less power or lower privileged positions. less privileged groups. AI development requires careful use of systems which ensures fairness towards all groups of people. The system requires fairness throughout its development to ensure equal inclusion of all participants.

What This Means for Pakistan

In Pakistan, AI is being used more and more—especially in government and security. But there's a big concern: we don't have strong privacy laws to protect people. Without

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proper legal protection, it's hard for citizens to do anything if their rights are violated. PECA (the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act) covers some online crimes, but it's not strong enough to deal with AI-related privacy issues.

Even though our Constitution, in Article 14, says every citizen has the right to privacy, enforcing that right in this fast-moving digital world is tough. If the government starts using AI tools to watch people without clear checks and balances, it could seriously affect people's freedoms—especially those who are already vulnerable.

Methodology

This research adopts qualitative study methods. The study utilizes academic articles as well as legal cases and relevant laws for assessment. The research evaluates and analyze legal frameworks across multiple geographic areas. The research examines the Cambridge Analytica situation together with China's social credit system. Analytica and China's social credit system. The research applies a qualitative investigation method. A secondary data analysis examines the way artificial intelligence (AI) relates to privacy rights within Pakistan. and the right to privacy within the Pakistani context. By examining existing literature, legal The investigation uses existing literature and policy papers and case studies alongside documents to find recurring themes and patterns which help understand privacy right implications for Pakistan. The study investigates still unexplored issues in how artificial intelligence affects privacy rights across the nation of Pakistan

Data Sources

In collecting the research data, the study uses a variety of secondary source of information to include:

- **Academic Journals and Books:** Peer-reviewed articles and scholarly books that delve into different areas of interest linked with AI, the focus is on privacy and human rights, and the necessary theories empirical findings relevant to the study.
- **Legal Documents:** National and international legal texts, such as Pakistan's Constitution, the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) 2016, and global Constitution, several human rights treaties, in order to determine the legal rights that privacy possesses than. Politics, provided through governmental and nongovernmental sources that are aimed at evaluating and interpreting policies of artificial intelligence and data protection laws or reports that reflect the current situation with AI technologies and

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their implementation. is an important issue that people of Pakistan and of the world perceive.

- **Policy Papers and Reports:** Official papers and reports created by governmental and non-governmental organizations that elaborate on the existing AI policies, the laws regarding data protection and threats to privacy in Pakistan and in the rest of the world.
- **Media Articles**: News reports and opinion pieces that highlight recent developments, public debates, and case studies related to AI and privacy in Pakistan.

In addition, all these sources are social, legal, and academic sources that were retrieved from social platforms, government databases, and other online sources.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection process involved systematic searches using specific keywords such as "Artificial Intelligence," "Privacy Rights," "Data Protection," and "Pakistan." Inclusion criteria were established to select sources that are:

- Relevant to the research questions.
- Published within the last ten years to ensure contemporaneity.
- Authored by credible scholars, institutions, or organizations.

The analysis employed thematic content analysis to identify recurring themes, arguments, and perspectives across the selected sources. This method allowed for the synthesis of diverse viewpoints and the identification of consensus or divergence in the discourse on AI and privacy.

Results

The present study reveals that AI-driven surveillance in Pakistan operates at scale without meaningful user consent, creating profound privacy risks (Qureshi, 2023; Khan et al., 2025) Legal and regulatory frameworks—most notably PECA 2016 and the stalled Personal Data Protection Bill—fail to address automated decision-making and large-scale data harvesting, leaving a significant governance vacuum (Noorani, 2024; Chambers and Partners, 2025). Ethical issues such as algorithmic bias and non-transparent profiling practices disproportionately impact marginalized communities, undermining both trust and social equity (International Rasd, 2023; Data Privacy Loss, 2025). Finally, comparative models like the EU's GDPR and proposed AI Act offer critical design features—data-minimization, rights to explanation, and enforceable sanctions—that could

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guide Pakistan's policy reforms (RSIL, 2024; AEMagazine, 2024).

Interpretation of Findings

The widespread deployment of facial-recognition and predictive-analytics tools by both state and private actors indicates a shift toward constant, automated monitoring, effectively nullifying any reasonable expectation of privacy in public and digital spaces (Qureshi, 2023). In Pakistan's socio-legal environment—characterized by low digital literacy and limited public awareness—these technologies exacerbate power asymmetries between data collectors and data subjects (Khan et al., 2025).

The absence of explicit provisions for algorithmic accountability in PECA 2016 and the pending Personal Data Protection Bill creates an enforcement gap: entities using AI face no clear duty to explain, justify, or obtain consent for their data-driven decisions (Noorani, 2024). Moreover, research shows that data-processing pipelines in Pakistan routinely repurpose information for secondary uses—such as profiling for political or commercial gain—without users' knowledge or recourse (Data Privacy Loss, 2025).

Ethical analyses highlight that biased training data and opaque algorithmic logics lead to discriminatory outcomes, especially against religious minorities and women, reinforcing existing social inequalities (International Rasd, 2023). Activists like Nighat Dad emphasize that without transparency and participatory oversight, AI systems will continue to operate as black-box infringements on individual dignity (Dad, 2024).

Implications for Policy and Practice

Comparative review of international frameworks suggests several actionable design principles. First, **data-minimization**—collecting only what is strictly necessary—can be codified as a legal obligation, as in the EU's GDPR (RSIL, 2024). Second, **right to explanation** mandates that affected individuals receive understandable reasons for automated decisions, fostering both trust and accountability (AEMagazine, 2024). Third, **independent oversight bodies**, empowered to audit AI systems and impose sanctions, are essential; Pakistan's newly formed National Commission for Personal Data Protection can fulfill this role if granted sufficient autonomy and resources (Chambers and Partners, 2025).

Beyond legislation, **capacity building** for regulators, judiciary, and civil society is necessary to interpret and enforce AI-specific rules (Noorani, 2024). Public-private

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partnerships should promote **algorithmic transparency**, such as publishing model-cards and impact assessments, to demystify AI operations (Khan et al., 2025). Finally, targeted **awareness campaigns**—especially among rural and low-literacy communities—will empower citizens to understand and assert their privacy rights (Data Privacy Loss, 2025). Given the reliance on secondary data, future studies should incorporate **empirical investigations**—surveys, interviews, and field experiments—to capture lived experiences of AI-enabled privacy invasions (International Rasd, 2023). Longitudinal research can track the real-world efficacy of newly enacted regulations, such as the Personal Data Protection Bill once it passes, and the NCPDP's enforcement outcomes (Chambers and Partners, 2025). Comparative work with other Global South nations; India, Indonesia, Nigeria could uncover context-specific lessons for balancing innovation and privacy (RSIL, 2024).

Conclusion

The present study has demonstrated that AI-enabled surveillance in Pakistan has expanded rapidly into both public and private spheres, eroding the reasonable expectation of privacy without informed consent (Batool, 2024). Thematic analysis confirms that existing legislation—most notably PECA 2016—lacks provisions for algorithmic accountability, leaving AI-driven data harvesting and automated decision-making effectively unregulated (Ahmad et al., 2024). This regulatory vacuum enables unbridled data repurposing, profiling, and potential discrimination, disproportionately impacting marginalized groups (Tribune News Agency, 2024).

Apart from weak laws, there are also big ethical problems when it comes to AI. Many AI systems work in ways that are hard to understand. They make decisions based on hidden logic, and sometimes the data they're trained on includes unfair or biased information. This can lead to results that are not fair to everyone and can even hurt people's freedom and equality. These worries relate to a larger problem called "surveillance capitalism," in which businesses gather and sell information on people's personal activity, potentially harming our democratic principles and sense of dignity.

The Council of Europe and other international organizations are already working on this. To help guide the safe use of AI, they have created regulations that emphasize the need to have appropriate checks in place, utilize less personal data, and be open about how AI operates. Pakistan can take inspiration from these and use comparable concepts here.

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The following actions should be made in order to address the current issues and make AI safer:

1. Create a robust data protection regulation that explains in detail how AI gathers and utilizes personal information. Additionally, it should grant people the right to complain if something goes wrong and to know how decisions are made
2. . Establish a separate organization with qualified professionals to oversee the operation of AI systems and ensure that they adhere to regulations
3. Educate judges, attorneys, government representatives, and even civil society organizations on how to handle legislation and issues using artificial intelligence.
4. Launch public awareness initiatives to help individuals understand and defend their right to privacy, particularly in rural and low-literate areas.

Also, future research should try to include real stories and feedback from people in Pakistan. This can be done through surveys, interviews, or field visits to find out how AI is really affecting their daily lives. It will also help us understand if new laws or rules are actually working or not.

If Pakistan takes these steps and follows international best practices while listening to its people, it can use AI in a smart and safe way—without compromising the basic right to privacy promised in our Constitution.

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