

CONFERENCE REVIEW

Emerging Voices, Shared Frameworks: Student-Led AI Legal Reflections Within Indo-Russian Student Panel “Navigating the Legal Challenges of Artificial Intelligence in the Digital Age: Ethics and Regulations”

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1. Introduction: BRICS and the Imperative of Inclusive AI Governance

In today's globalized world, transnational academic collaboration has become a crucial driver in shaping adaptive and equitable regulatory approaches to rapidly evolving technologies. This is particularly relevant for the BRICS countries—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—where accelerating technological development demands urgent interdisciplinary strategies for the governance of artificial intelligence (AI). Across these jurisdictions, significant growth is evident in both research output and educational performance, with notable increases in the volume and quality of academic publications, particularly in high-impact journals.¹

A recent bibliometric analysis of 3,580 publications on STEM education between 2014 and 2023 identified China, South Africa, India, Brazil, and Russia as the leading contributors, with China occupying a dominant position.² Similar patterns are evident in higher education and online learning. In 2023 alone, publication counts related to online higher education reached 366 for China, 267 for India, 254 for South Africa, and 94 for Brazil, while Russia was represented by only two publications.³ These figures underscore both the dynamism and the unevenness of research engagement among BRICS nations in key areas of digital and educational transformation.

Academic and institutional networks within the BRICS framework further enhance cooperation. The BRICS Universities League now includes approximately 60 leading universities from member states, while the BRICS Network University brings together over 1,000 higher education institutions and research bodies, increasingly integrating affiliated institutions from partner countries.⁴ The recommendations of the 16th BRICS Academic Forum (2024) highlight strategic priorities such as promoting academic mobility, expanding digital learning, ensuring mutual recognition of qualifications, and advancing both technical and humanistic education.⁵

¹ Kim, E., Ramakrishnan, S., & Chiu, J. L. (2025). Polarization in BRICS and G7: Scopus-indexed journal production trends (2013–2023). *Publications*, 13(1), 9–25.

² Fayzullina, A. R., et al. (2024). A review of STEM education research in BRICS countries: An analysis of research trends. *Frontiers in Education*, 9, 1410069.

³ Masalimova, A. R., et al. (2024). Analyzing trends in online learning in higher education in the BRICS countries through bibliometric data. *Frontiers in Education*, 9, 1409013.

⁴ TV BRICS. (2024, August 30). *BRICS cooperation in the field of education*. <https://tvbrics.com/en/bricslife/brics-cooperation-in-the-field-of-education/>

⁵ BRICS Think Tanks Council. (2024, May). *Recommendations of the 16th BRICS Academic Forum 2024 to the Leaders of BRICS Countries*. <https://bricsthinktankscouncil.org/knowledge-base/recommendations-of-the-16th-brics-academic-forum-2024-to-the-leaders-of-brics-countries/>

2. Youth Scholarship as Vectors of Context-Sensitive Insight

Within this broader context, the III International Youth Law Forum *Law Afterknown: Law Beyond the Ordinary*, held on May 16, 2025 at the University of Tyumen, underscores the growing importance of international academic dialogue. The **Indo-Russian student panel “Navigating the Legal Challenges of Artificial Intelligence in the Digital Age: Ethics and Regulations”** offered a compelling illustration of the urgent need for coordinated legal paradigms capable of addressing both technological disruption and ethical imperatives. The panel’s discussions reinforced the call for interdisciplinary scholarship and culturally informed legal frameworks – an area where BRICS countries can offer unique perspectives through shared experience and collaborative knowledge production.

The scholarly contributions of emerging researchers, presented during this forum, highlight context-sensitive insights that can enrich policy dialogues in both domestic and international arenas.

3. Metaphors, Misconceptions, and the Need for Linguistic Precision

Ilya Levin’s (University of Tyumen, Russia) research is profoundly relevant within the rapidly evolving domain of artificial intelligence. The metaphorical constructs employed to represent AI are more than rhetorical devices—they actively shape conceptual frameworks adopted by policymakers, organizations, and the public. Such metaphors may engender either unwarranted alarm or unrealistic expectations, thereby skewing discourse and influencing regulatory decisions. For instance, depicting AI systems as “therapists” implies emotional comprehension that current algorithms demonstrably lack, potentially placing vulnerable individuals—particularly those seeking mental health support—at risk of misplaced reliance.

This concern resonates in the Indian context, where AI-based mental health chatbots face criticism for fostering therapeutic misconception. Users may overestimate the system’s understanding and emotional capacity, while professionals caution that reliance on such tools could delay access to licensed care and exacerbate psychological distress.⁶

The implications of linguistic imprecision extend directly into the legal sphere. Legislation formulated on the basis of metaphor-induced misconceptions may fail to address genuine hazards or, conversely, stifle innovation. This tension is particularly salient in India and Russia, where rapid AI expansion coincides with complex social and regulatory frameworks, as well as cybersecurity concerns. India’s establishment

⁶ Halder, S. (2025). Developing mental health support chatbots in India: Challenges and insights. *Annals Indian Psychiatry*, 9(1), 99–101; Chowdhury, A. (2025, July 22). *AI therapy in India: Mental health solution or digital Pandora’s box?* Boom Live. <https://www.boomlive.in/decode/ai-therapy-india-mental-health-solution-risks-benefits-29081>

of the IndiaAI Safety Institute under the Safe and Trusted Pillar of the IndiaAI Mission reflects an effort to ensure AI systems remain contextually appropriate, ethically aligned, and socially reflective.⁷

Russia, recognizing the risks of unregulated AI deployment, has enacted legislation introducing liability for harm caused by experimental AI systems. The law mandates civil-liability insurance, investigative commissions to assess AI-related incidents, and safeguards to enhance transparency and accountability when AI technologies cause harm to individuals or property.⁸

Together, these case studies reinforce Levin's thesis: imprecise AI metaphors are far from innocuous. They distort public understanding, and legal frameworks grounded in metaphor rather than empirical reality risk both failing to protect citizens and impeding ethical innovation.

4. Legal Ambiguities Around Digital Continuity

Equally compelling is **Ekaterina Nazarova's** (University of Tyumen, Russia) examination of digital immortality and its juridical uncertainties. Her analysis of the commercialization of posthumous digital identities and the lack of robust frameworks for digital inheritance exposes psychological, social, and legal risks. These include unauthorized data exploitation, commodification of identity, and deprivation of "algorithmic oblivion." Beyond individual rights, these issues carry implications for mourning processes, collective memory, and human dignity.

In India, the absence of explicit legal frameworks governing digital inheritance has created tangible distress. Families have often been barred from accessing a deceased relative's Gmail or WhatsApp accounts despite features such as Google's Inactive Account Manager.⁹ Legal experts have called for reforms, including amendments to the *Indian Succession Act* and recognition of digital assets in wills. Yet, such measures remain overdue.¹⁰

⁷ Agrawal, A. (2024, October 13). *Govt mulls setting up artificial intelligence safety institute*. Hindustan Times. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/govt-mulls-setting-up-artificial-intelligence-safety-institute-101728833433153.html>; Jeevanandam, N. (2024, October 15). *MeitY hosts consultation for establishing India AI safety institute under IndiaAI mission's safe and trusted pillar*. IndiaAI. <https://indiaai.gov.in/news/meity-hosts-consultation-for-establishing-india-ai-safety-institute-under-indiaai-mission-s-safe-and-trusted-pillar>

⁸ TAdviser. (2025, June 19). *Regulation of artificial intelligence*. https://tadviser.com/index.php/Article:Regulation_of_artificial_intelligence

⁹ Legal Service India. (n.d.). *Who inherits your data? The legal gap in India's digital legacy*. <https://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-21052-who-inherits-your-data-the-legal-gap-in-india-s-digital-legacy.html>

¹⁰ NLIU Law Review Blog. (2025). *Digital estate inheritance law: A need of the hour to balance the rights of posthumous privacy and legal heirs*. <https://nliulawreview.nliu.ac.in/blog/digital-estate-inheritance-law-a-need-of-the-hour-to-balance-the-rights-of-posthumous-privacy-and-legal-heirs/>

In Russia, President Putin's 2019 law formally recognized "digital rights" within the Civil Code, acknowledging that such rights can be transferred or exercised. However, practical mechanisms for managing posthumous digital legacies remain underdeveloped.¹¹ Studies show that heirs frequently struggle to identify and access online accounts. Proposals for both state-supported and private-sector models to manage "digital heritage" demonstrate that current legislation, while symbolically significant, is insufficient without functional structures.¹²

These BRICS-specific developments affirm that Nazarova's concerns are not merely theoretical but urgent. Without enforceable laws and institutional mechanisms, survivors navigate a digital afterlife fraught with ambiguity and ethical risk.

5. Linguistic Diversity and Algorithmic Bias in Machine Translation

Anton Gordeev's (University of Tyumen, Russia) critical analysis of censorship in neural machine translation (NMT) highlights how ideological and jurisdictional bias can infiltrate AI systems. Language conveys meaning but also embodies cultural identity and political nuance. When NMT systems impose ideological or regulatory filters—whether overtly or covertly—there is a risk of eroding linguistic diversity and distorting minority voices, especially in multilingual states like India and Russia.

In India, where linguistic plurality is central, NMT systems often struggle with under-resourced languages and biased representations. The absence of comprehensive parallel corpora for many of India's 22 constitutionally recognized languages hinders equitable translation. Even for widely spoken languages such as Hindi and Bengali, NMT systems frequently misinterpret idioms, producing literal or erroneous translations that undermine local dialects and expressions. These distortions carry ideological consequences by privileging dominant norms over minority voices.

In Russia, ideological filtering and narrative control influence AI-driven translations of politically sensitive content. Russian NMT models—shaped by state-mandated censorship through institutions such as Roskomnadzor—risk perpetuating systemic bias and erasing dissenting voices.

Gordeev's call for transnational standards to mitigate algorithmic bias is therefore critical. In India, equitable NMT demands investment in diverse datasets and community-driven frameworks, while in Russia, safeguarding plurality requires transparent model governance and protections for linguistic freedom. Cross-BRICS collaboration could reconcile cultural specificity with technological integrity, ensuring AI respects rather than overrides linguistic diversity.

¹¹ Suberg, W. (2019, March 13). *Russia adopts Digital Rights Law that forms the basis of digital economy development*. CoinTelegraph. <https://cointelegraph.com/news/russia-adopts-digital-rights-law-that-forms-the-basis-of-digital-economy-development>

¹² Sergeeva, A., Gerlit, R., & Krcmar, H. (2020, May 27). *Digital inheritance: A comparative analysis of legal frameworks in civil law jurisdictions*. Jusletter IT. https://author.weblaw.ch/magnoliaAuthor/jusletter-it/en/issues/2020/27-Mai-2020/9_5_digital_inherita_d5b9cdd9ae.html

6. Cultural Intelligence and Justice: AI in Literary-Legal Contexts

Viacheslav Shilov's (University of Tyumen, Russia) interdisciplinary study applies AI models to the literary-property dispute surrounding Chekhov's "*Uncle Vanya*." His analysis illustrates both the transformative potential and inherent limitations of AI in legal-cultural contexts. While AI can efficiently process large volumes of precedent data, it lacks the capacity to discern cultural nuance, ethical complexity, and emotional resonance—factors essential to informed adjudication. This underscores the imperative of hybrid models of justice in which AI complements, rather than supplants, human judgment.

In India, the judiciary's experiments with AI case prediction and legal research raise similar concerns. Studies demonstrate that AI systems developed in Western contexts may fail to capture cultural nuances central to Indian jurisprudence, potentially leading to biased outcomes. Brazil has faced comparable challenges, where AI-driven adjudication struggles with the country's diverse cultural and legal traditions.

These examples reinforce Shilov's argument: while AI can be a valuable tool in legal proceedings, it must not replace human judgment. In culturally diverse societies, integrating contextual and ethical sensitivity is indispensable.

7. Legal Personality and Autonomous Agency: Personhood & Liability

The works of **Egor Kucherenko** and **Nikita Kalashnikov** (University of Tyumen, Russia) address foundational issues of AI personhood and liability. The attribution of legal personality to non-human entities raises profound theoretical and practical challenges, while existing tort frameworks are inadequate for the consequences of autonomous AI agents such as self-driving vehicles. Their analyses emphasize the need for forward-looking legislation capable of accommodating decentralized decision-making and novel responsibility structures.

In India, the legal status of AI remains underdeveloped, with no explicit recognition of AI as a legal person. However, Indian jurisprudence has demonstrated flexibility in granting legal personhood to non-human entities. For instance, the Supreme Court has recognized the legal personality of Hindu idols in the case of *Yogendra Nath Naskar v. C.I.T.*, allowing them to own property and represent themselves in court. Additionally, the Uttarakhand High Court in *Mohd. Salim v. State of Uttarakhand* granted legal personhood to the Ganga and Yamuna rivers to facilitate their protection. These precedents suggest a potential pathway for extending legal personhood to AI systems, particularly those with significant autonomy and impact on human affairs.¹³

¹³ Fastrack Legal Solutions. (2025, March 21). *Balancing AI and algorithms: Assessing the Indian constitution's compatibility*. <https://fastracklegalsolutions.com/ai-and-indian-constitution/>; Vats, K. (2025). Beyond human hands: Rethinking legal status and responsibility for AI in India. *IJLSSS*, 3(4), 115–130;

Regarding autonomous vehicles, India's existing legal framework is ill-equipped to address the complexities introduced by AI-driven transportation. The *Motor Vehicles Act*, 1988, does not account for self-driving technologies, leading to regulatory gaps.

In Russia, while policymakers have initiated debates on AI regulation, comprehensive legislation addressing AI personhood and liability is still lacking. This gap underscores the necessity of new legal frameworks to balance accountability, innovation, and public protection.¹⁴

These examples from BRICS countries highlight the urgent need for legal reforms that recognize the evolving role of AI in society. Establishing clear legal personhood and liability frameworks for AI systems is essential to address the challenges posed by autonomous technologies and to ensure that responsibility is appropriately assigned in cases of harm or misconduct.

8. Indian Student Contributions

The Indo-Russian forum also featured numerous insightful contributions from Indian students, underscoring the value of bottom-up perspectives in global AI governance debates.

Ms. Rupal Devi, a law student at Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya University, India, presented on the topic "Wired for Justice: AI, Ethics, and the Law in a Digital World." In her presentation, she emphasized the expanding role of artificial intelligence in diverse aspects of life, particularly within the justice delivery system. She highlighted that the Supreme Court of India employs SUVAS (Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software), an AI-powered platform translating judgments from English into vernacular languages to enhance access to justice. She also drew attention to SUPACE (Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Court Efficiency), a portal designed to assist judges and judicial officers with legal research, case status management, and data mining of case law to reduce pendency and delays. In addition, she noted that numerous Indian start-ups now employ AI-driven technologies for dispute resolution, with online dispute resolution portals proliferating over the last decade.

Rupal further examined pressing concerns associated with AI deployment. She discussed the 2018 Uber self-driving car accident, which illustrates unresolved questions of liability in AI-driven systems. She also raised the issue of mass surveillance through facial recognition, increasingly used for crime prevention, detection, and evidence gathering, and underscored the risks of algorithmic bias in digital technologies. For example, Amazon withdrew an AI-based hiring tool

Kunhambu, A., & Rohatgi, A. (2021, September 9). *Artificial intelligence and the shift in liability*. iPleaders. <https://blog.iplayers.in/artificial-intelligence-shift-liability/>

¹⁴ ApniLaw. (n.d.). *An analysis on legal challenges for autonomous vehicles in India*. <https://www.apnilaw.com/legal-articles/acts/an-analysis-on-legal-challenges-for-autonomous-vehicles-in-india/>; Vats, 2025.

that systematically discriminated against women candidates, while the COMPAS (Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions) algorithm, widely used in U.S. courts, has been criticized for producing racially biased bail and sentencing decisions.

She additionally emphasized the disruptive potential of deepfakes and related technologies, which may undermine the credibility of electronic evidence in judicial proceedings and erode public confidence. Referring to the principle that “justice must not only be done, but also appear to be done,” she warned that deepfakes threaten to compromise this foundational tenet. Finally, she considered regulatory frameworks, including European legislation, India’s *Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023*, and *Russia’s National AI Strategy, 2019*, concluding that the integration of AI into justice systems must ensure accountability, transparency, and fairness, while recognizing that justice cannot be fully automated without meaningful human oversight.

The second presentation, delivered by **Ms. Mouli Singhal** of Symbiosis Law School, Noida, India, was titled “Towards Transparent and Ethical AI: Legal Challenges of Algorithmic Bias and Data Privacy in Cross-Border Regulation of AI.” She examined in depth the ethical and legal biases inherent in AI systems, focusing particularly on algorithmic discrimination and data privacy. She observed that in BRICS nations, legislation governing AI and data protection remains underdeveloped, leaving citizens’ rights vulnerable. As BRICS countries account for approximately 42% of global pollution and are also among the largest providers of digital services, the absence of robust legal safeguards is particularly concerning.

Mouli emphasized the significance of the *DPDP Act, 2023*, recently enacted in India, as a step toward addressing privacy concerns. Nonetheless, she argued that algorithmic bias, often rooted in flawed datasets, continues to pose risks of discrimination in critical areas such as dispute resolution, economic policymaking, and welfare distribution. Drawing a comparison to the European Union, which mandates transparency in algorithmic processes, she noted that most BRICS+ nations are still in the process of developing enforceable standards to prevent bias and discrimination. She further discussed challenges of digital sovereignty, data colonialism, and localization, which complicate cross-border regulation. Highlighting divergences in legal approaches across BRICS countries, she underscored the difficulties these present for multinational corporations and the establishment of unified governance frameworks. Her presentation concluded with a call for innovative legal tools – such as algorithmic impact assessments, enforceable transparency requirements, and cooperative data governance models – as essential to aligning AI development with democratic principles, human rights, ethics, and fairness.

Ms. Vrinda Mandal and Ms. Srishti Agarwal presented a paper entitled “Reassessing Informed Consent in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: A Legal Paradox?” They explored how patients can make rational and informed decisions about medical care in contexts increasingly shaped by AI. The paper addressed challenges arising

from AI's "black box" problem and its tendency toward hallucination, which highlight issues of opacity, unpredictability, and reliability. This epistemic gap complicates disclosure obligations and threatens the substantive validity of consent. Their analysis drew on frameworks including the EU AI Act, GDPR, the Personal Data Protection Law (PDPL), and sector-specific health regulations, revealing significant limitations in addressing the lifecycle risks of AI-powered healthcare. They proposed an adaptive consent management system and a shared accountability model, stressing jurisprudentially that no technological innovation should erode fundamental rights, particularly those connected to healthcare and the right to life.

Astitva Kumar Rao, from Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Law University, Sonapat, Haryana, India, presented "The Digital Dilemma: Ensuring Human Rights in the Regulation of Artificial Intelligence." He emphasized the rapid expansion of AI across multiple domains of life and the urgent need for a coherent legal framework in India. Although some states have adopted preliminary AI-related legislation, the country lacks a comprehensive national law. The *DPDP Act*, 2023 addresses certain privacy-related issues, yet gaps in consistency and the absence of international standards continue to hinder effective governance. He highlighted the potential implications of AI for international humanitarian law, healthcare regulation, gender rights, and cybercrime.

Finally, **Ms. Reeve Rana** (Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya University, India) presented "AI's Negative Impact on Our Well-Being and Lives." She analyzed AI's adverse consequences for human rights, including privacy violations, cybercrime, racial discrimination, and gender-based inequalities. She cited the use of facial recognition technologies in China's Xinjiang region, where surveillance systems have been employed to monitor the Uyghur Muslim population, raising serious concerns of mass discrimination and cultural repression. She further highlighted the dual-use nature of AI technologies, noting their potential to facilitate ethnic cleansing. Additional examples included Amazon's gender-biased hiring system and the COMPAS algorithm in U.S. courts, which has been shown to disproportionately classify Black defendants as high risk. These cases, she argued, reveal systemic risks that demand urgent regulatory attention.

9. Conclusion: Harmonizing BRICS Institutional Narratives with Grassroots Scholarship

In an era characterized by profound technological transformation and evolving geopolitical dynamics, the BRICS consortium emerges as a pivotal platform for developing inclusive, culturally attuned, and resilient frameworks for AI governance. By leveraging shared objectives and pooled regulatory capacities, BRICS nations are uniquely positioned to articulate normative alternatives to prevailing Western-centric or unilateral models.

Within this broader geopolitical context, student-led research emerging from forums such as the University of Tyumen's *Youth Law Forum* illustrates the significance of bottom-up, context-specific scholarship. By addressing critical issues—ranging from metaphorical misrepresentations of AI and digital inheritance to translation bias, algorithmic personhood, and liability—these contributions not only enrich academic debates but also provide valuable input for policy dialogues in both India and Russia. Their interdisciplinary insights demonstrate the capacity of young scholars to refine regulatory discourse, introduce pragmatic considerations into governance proposals, and contribute to the creation of a genuinely pluriversal AI agenda grounded in local realities rather than externally imposed frameworks.

In sum, the synergy between BRICS-level institutional coordination and student-driven intellectual inquiry holds considerable promise. It fosters innovation across multiple levels, bridges institutional ambition with ethical responsibility, and supports the development of AI governance models that are technologically advanced while remaining socially and culturally responsive. As BRICS nations chart their collective trajectory, the integration of emerging scholarship into governance structures will be essential to realizing the potential of technology for inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development.

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