**The rise of AI**

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The entry of artificial intelligence (AI) has generated a wider debate on the impact of this cutting-edge technology. People are not sure whether AI is going to augment and complement humans in their work or completely replace it.

And while AI is a revolution in itself and has garnered a lot of attention across the world, the most pressing question is how to regulate its use. There are concerns that the technology may pose a threat to human existence if not properly regulated and utilized. The lack of critical thinking in machine intelligence is a real threat to humanity, which has to be taken care of.

Bill Gates’ prediction that “AI is about to supercharge the innovation pipeline” clearly outlines the edge this new technology has over other technological revolutions. There is no doubt that AI can perform several human functions with greater ease, accuracy and speed. However, it is up to humans to decide how to control this technology and how to achieve optimum results. Many CEOs and researchers suggest controlling and regulating AI to prevent the technology from posing a threat to humanity. AI has the potential to turn dangerous for human existence in the future if it is not regulated and properly controlled by governments.

According to various surveys and research, “If science continues undisrupted, the chance of unaided machines outperforming humans in every possible task is estimated at 10 per cent by 2027 and 50 per cent by 2047.” AI-related discussions are more focused on exploring whether the use of AI is going to complement and augment human efficiency or replace it. An MIT project titled ‘Shaping the Future of Work Initiative’ is precisely about the use of AI as a tool to aid and support human efficiencies, not to replace them. However, AI could prove to be a double-edged sword.

The labour market could possibly be hit by developments in AI as pointed out by the managing director of the IMF on the occasion of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. During the meeting, she warned that the world might lose almost 40 per cent of its jobs due to AI development, giving rise to inequality, insecurity and social unrest. Chinese Premier Li Qiang on the occasion emphasized that ‘red lines’ should not be crossed when using AI technology. Goldman Sachs has already warned that AI technology could lead to the loss of 300 million jobs worldwide, but it also says that the technology is likely to boost economic growth by 7.0 per cent. Many countries, unfortunately, do not have a skilled workforce to get the benefits of the AI technological revolution.

AI technology can boost human efficiency in almost all sectors of the economy right from industry to investment and climate change. The education and health sectors can achieve optimum results by utilizing AI-driven tools. The WHO has also outlined five broad areas where the technology could be applied to benefit humanity at large. AI could be a game changer for the knowledge economy, boosting economic growth and development. It can take care of the impact of climate on economic growth for countries like Pakistan by forewarning the government and the people about possible climate disasters.

AI has an edge over humans as its fast workmanship mechanism is almost error-free. Data today has gained prime importance and is, in fact, a goldmine, giving strength to security and business promotion. Generative AI is the main data tool being used for robots and chatbots including Midjourney and ChatGPT. There is a race to control the world and hi-tech businesses through AI-backed social media platforms. Companies are investing billions of dollars to develop such platforms to capitalize on big businesses. The future lies in AI-backed platforms like Xai and Eleven Labs, which have gained unicorn status after their latest round of fundraising.

AI has gained such high importance in the context of business promotions that the CEO of OpenAI is planning to invest billions of dollars in the network of AI chip factories. One can imagine the importance of AI from the fact that the US edutech platform ‘Coursera’ adds a new user every minute on average for its AI courses. There is another feature of AI, especially for art lovers – to generate AI art using Google Labs. There are millions of possibilities for AI-generated features for business promotions.

Cyber security is another feature of such platforms. However, there are some drawbacks. It is believed that the rise of AI will lead to an increase in cyberattacks, which is why companies are more invested in securing their businesses from cyberattacks.

Other fears that people have regarding the rise of AI are related to the use of this tech in war. If military robots are used in future wars, they could trigger unending conflicts without understanding the consequences of large-scale human destruction. That is why AI’s use needs to be regulated worldwide.

AI has also become the most important tool to disseminate information – genuine or fake. Pakistan, like almost 60 per cent of the world, is conducting elections this year. Policy experts believe that AI-backed disinformation may impact election results. Social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, X (formally Twitter), YouTube, etc can easily be used to spread misinformation.

AI tools are also being effectively used by world leaders in their favour to get the desired results. Now that the world has started using AI for their election campaigns, the election scenario has changed.

The future is AI. The technology will upgrade and assist humans in almost all fields: right from education to health, climate change to aviation, the hotel industry to the automobile sector, due to its fast and accurate generative capabilities. While emphasizing the importance of open access to AI to facilitate and enhance human capabilities is essential for growth, accountability and transparency in AI development and deployment is a must.

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