

Ethics in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Challenges for Organizations

Afia Shabi¹ and Tulsi Aggarwal²

¹Research Scholar, University School of Business, Chandigarh University, Mohali,
Punjab

²Assistant Professor, IIMT, Greater Noida

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the leading technology that has changed the whole idea of the decision, making process, the performance of the organizations, and their strategic competitiveness. AI is a great tool that can be used for innovation and value creation in an entirely new way; however, its speed of implementation has resulted in a loud chorus of ethical concerns that organizations must now recklessly face. Algorithmic bias, lack of transparency, data privacy violations, accountability gaps, and workforce displacement are some of the critical challenges faced by organizations carrying out AI, driven systems. This review paper organizes the entire scholarly literature on the ethics of AI with a particular focus on the ethical issues faced by organizations. Based on the latest research on ethical AI, governance frameworks, and responsible innovation, the paper locates organizations which confront the most significant ethical challenges and examines the challenges' impact on trust, legitimacy, and sustainable performance. The research examines the rise of ethical governance mechanisms and managerial strategies aimed at enabling responsible AI adoption. This paper, by bringing together scattered insights, is a significant contribution to the discourse of ethical AI. It offers a comprehensive framework that helps organizations navigate through ethical risk while utilizing AI for long, term value creation.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, Organizations, Responsible AI, Governance, Algorithmic Bias

INTRODUCTION

The increasing utilization of AI in the internal processes of organizations clearly indicates one of the major technological shifts of the modern era (Stahl et al., 2022).

Improvements in machine learning, natural language processing, and data analytics have enabled organizations to automate complex tasks that were previously dependent on human judgment (Bankins & Formosa, 2023). Computers and automatic systems have become the main source of information in companies to the hiring, appraising, credit rating, customer relationship management, supply chain optimization, and strategic decision, making areas. These usages have no boundaries as they are being implemented in diverse sectors such as banking, healthcare, manufacturing, education, and public administration, which is a sign of AIs deep penetration into the changes of the modern organizational world (Stahl et al., 2022; Bankins & Formosa, 2023). Organizations have been using AI to get the work done faster, bring down the operational costs, improve accuracy, and obtain a competitive advantage that is lasting and that is in line with the business environment that is driven by data and is increasingly complex (Obrenovic et al., 2024).

Despite the benefits, the fast integration of AI has been a major source of concern in terms of issues like fairness, transparency, accountability, and privacy (Bankins & Formosa, 2023). The bias of algorithms in hiring and lending decisions, mysterious black, box models, data collection beyond what is necessary, and the replacement of human labor are some of the issues that have gained the attention of a wide spectrum of scholars, policymakers, and practitioners (Stahl et al., 2022). These ethical problems become even more problematic due to the extent and speed with which AI systems are able to operate and thus affect a very large number of people who have only a few or no opportunities to complain or expect human intervention. Because AI, based decisions are becoming the main factor behind who gets access to jobs, credit, health care, and essential services, ethical failures may create social and reputational risks that are very significant for organizations. Compared to typical information systems, AI systems have the features of learning, adapting, and making autonomous or semi, autonomous decisions on the basis of large volumes of data (Obrenovic et al., 2024). The dynamic learning of such systems, which is quite strong from a technical point of view, however, worsens the problem of responsibility for the ethics of the AI as in such cases the processes of decision, making become so obscure that it is difficult to audit or explain them. Not being transparent about many AI models

causes the stakeholders to lose their trust and also it goes against the already existing principles of responsibility and governance, which are the bases of the management system in organizations (Stahl et al., 2022; Bankins & Formosa, 2023). We can say more on that, if the AI systems break down, it becomes very difficult to say that the source of accountability as making a decision processes become opaque and problems to audit or also to explain it. The lack of transparency in many AI models undermines trust among stakeholders and challenges established principles of responsibility and governance within organizations (Stahl et al., 2022; Bankins & Formosa, 2023). Moreover, when AI started manipulating or produce discriminatory results, it becomes very unclear whether the accountability lies with developers, managers, data providers, or even if it was the organization itself (Stahl, 2021).

Recent academic discussions have highlighted that the morality of AI is not solely a technical problem but rather organizational and managerial issues of a deep kind. The use of AI in a morally acceptable way calls for a great number of explicit decisions concerning data governance, system design, control mechanisms, and organizational culture (Obrenovic et al., 2024). An organization is the one that bears the responsibility for the creation, the deployment, and the effects of AI regardless whether the company itself is the developer or these technologies are acquired from a third party. Therefore, the inclusion of ethical issues in AI policies has become the top managerial concern (Bozdog, 2025). Managing AI ethics in organizations is closely linked to compliance with laws and regulations, and it's a prerequisite for the continuous trust of stakeholders, the safeguarding of corporate reputation, and the long-term legitimization of AI-based decision-making by society. The study of the paper discusses the ethical issues that come along with the degrading of artificial intelligence in an organizational point of view. It seem like the attention on ideas from the modern and current research devoted with the AI ethics, organizational governance, and responsible innovation give answer for the following questions:

1. What are the big and major ethical problems that posed by AI for organizations?
2. How do these challenges affect organizational trust, legitimacy, and performance?
3. What governance mechanisms can organizations adopt to ensure ethical AI use?

The paper employs an organized literature review methodology for systematically exploring the body of research related to the ethical issues of AI adoption in the business sector. By integrating interdisciplinary research from management, information systems, ethics, and technology studies, the study uncovers the most significant ethical dimensions, recurrent themes, and theoretical voids in the published works. Detailed mapping of the ethical issues emerging in different organizational roles and decision-making situations is done through this approach. The paper presents a new perspective on AI ethics that is comprehensive and offers a chance for the accountability of managers, the setting up of governance mechanisms, and the incorporation of ethics into the strategy. The study, therefore, creates a significant contribution in the field by explaining the concepts and giving a basis for future empirical research and the growth of policies for the management of ethical AI.

CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF AI ETHICS

The conceptual basis of AI ethics is based on moral philosophy, legal theory, human rights discourse, and responsible innovation principles (Stahl, 2021). Fundamentally, AI ethics is about making sure that societies design, deploy, and govern artificial intelligence systems in ways that reflect their values, that safeguard human dignity and that contribute to the social good (Bozdog, 2025). Their bases handles the ethical problems that initiates from algorithmic decision-making power, automation, and data, given intelligence for both organizations as well as for the societies. One of the major philosophical origins of AI ethics is normative ethics, which involves deontological (duty, based), utilitarian (outcome, based), and virtue ethics (character, based) concerns. These ideas that gives the ethical structure for problems of fairness, accountability, lack of harm, and giving the right moral agents in AI systems (Chakraborty et al., 2019). Besides this is the human, centric approach that strongly recommends respect for autonomy, human control, and the non, occurrence of AI, driven discrimination or exclusion. The figure 1 illustrates the grounding of AI ethics in philosophical theories, human, centric values, and regulatory frameworks. These helps to constitute the major ethical concerns of fairness, transparency, and

accountability, which are at the nerves of trustworthy and socially responsible AI results.

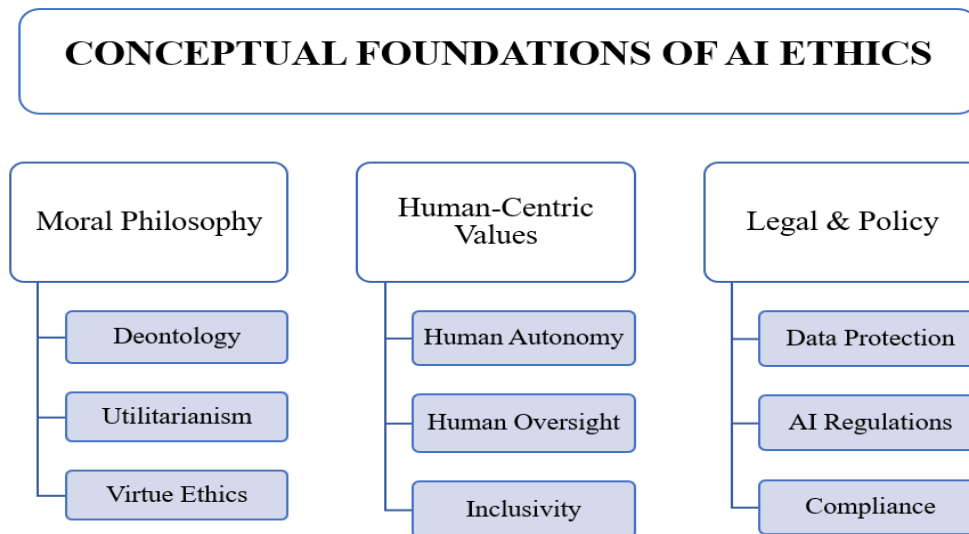


Fig. 1 Conceptual Diagram: Foundations of AI Ethics

Source: Author's own work

In line with governance, the ethics of artificial intelligence are based on fundamental concepts such as transparency, explainability, accountability, and, responsibility, which collectively ensure that human agents can understand, audit, and challenge AI decisions (Chakraborty et al., 2019). Judicial and regulatory provisions such as data protection laws and nascent AI regulations serve as pillars infusing moral conduct into binding norms. The sum of these conceptual bases presents a structured ethical viewpoint to the organizations for the responsible integration of artificial intelligence, thus not only promoting the technological evolvement but also trust, the welfare of the society, and sustainability of the future.

ETHICAL CHALLENGES OF AI IN ORGANISATIONS

The ethics, related issues of AI in organizations focus primarily on bias and fairness (discriminatory results of biased data), transparency and explainability (the issue of the "black box"), data privacy and security (extensive data collection), accountability (who takes the blame for AI mistakes), job displacement, and possible threats to

human autonomy, which altogether call for the implementation of governance measures, uninterrupted auditing, inclusion of diverse development teams, and establishment of moral principles to guarantee the AIs proper use (Khan et al. , 2021).

Algorithmic Bias and Discrimination

Algorithmic bias is probably one of the most prominent AI ethics dilemmas that is widely debated. In order to learn, AI systems rely on past data, which may contain inequalities in society and discriminatory practices. Biased algorithms, therefore, when affected to recruitment, credit assessment, or performance evaluation may result in unfair outcomes being reinforced (Robert et al., 2020). As for organizations, algorithmic bias is a legal, ethical, and reputational hazard that may result in them facing the risks of law violation, losing their credibility, and facing public backlash. Discriminatory AI decisions can undermine diversity and inclusion initiatives and expose firms to regulatory sanctions. Addressing bias requires not only technical solutions but also organizational commitment to ethical data practices (Stahl et al., 2022).

Lack of Transparency and Explainability

Many AI systems, particularly those based on deep learning, are often labelled as "black boxes," meaning that their operation is not clearly understood, and therefore it is hard to tell how a particular decision was made. This opacity leads to a situation where none of the traditional system's legitimacy traits, like accountability and informed consent, can be applied to the AI system. In the first place, if we are to look at it from the organisation's perspective, knowing is very important for the proper governance of the organisation internally, compliance with regulations, and the organisation being trusted by the stakeholders (Khan et al., 2021). The managers find it hard to communicate about AI, the decision's power to employees, customers, and regulators, which can lead to a situation where they are faced with resistance and mistrust.

Data Security and Surveillance

Vast amounts of data are dependent with the AI system, which might be include sensitive personal data. Organizations that use the AI in customer analytics, employee the monitoring, and also a future behaviour analysis is a cause of serious security concerns. Over and above, instrumenting the data of collection and their surveillance can tend to a loss of loyalty and even a violation of any individual rights. The adoption and awareness of ethical AI that calls for organizations to strike a balance between the given data, driven insights and respecting privacy or safety and data protection principles (Robert et al., 2020).

Environmental Impact of AI

The creation and implementation of large, scale AI models necessitate a lot of computational resources, thus, leading to a high, energy usage and a large carbon footprint. The way of a proper sophisticated model, when especially it takes place in the data centres which is contributing a major factors to the degradation of environmental and arise problems about sustainability. When we use the AI, it becomes more and more popular in the organizations, the environmental effect on digital technologies remains to be one of the major as well as vital ethical issues (Bankins & Formosa, 2023).

Accountability and Responsibility Gaps

The boundaries of accountability between developers, users, and organizations are blurred by AI systems. It's becoming complicated to determining accountability when an AI system rise harm. Is this true that the algorithm itself, the organization, or the software developer person at fault? Many companies are is facing ethical and legal hurdles as a outcome of this ambiguity. Organizations run the problem of ethical behaviour and make a deal with governance in the absence of explicit accountability structure. Scholars stress the necessity of "human-in-the-loop" models in that way to guarantee meaningful oversight.

Warning to Human Autonomy

The AI tools and methods are quite show but it is making sure that altering human interaction and behaviour with the help of personalization, algorithmic nudging and

recommendation systems. For better experience that user capability with the system and still they are creating concerns about the manipulation and the loss of personal independence. The content that one consumes, the purchases one makes, or the political news one is exposed to could be unintentionally influenced so that one's preferences and behaviour change without one's conscious knowledge (Bankins & Formosa, 2023). This kind of influence could overpower free will, informed consent and democratic values; therefore, it is imperative that there is transparency and that the user is in control in AI, conversed interactions. The ethical conditions connected with AI that tends to a very responsible as well as human-centric approach to AI development as well as its deployment too. Problems like bias, dirtiness, can cause the privacy issue, and a unclear responsibility that shows the social and organizational ramifications of AI adoption that is not properly regulated (Robert et al., 2020). We can say more that concerns about losing the job, independence of humans, and environmental sustainability that shows that AI ethics is barely matters of technicalities but also it raises a big question for our society. The addressing of these matters calls for the existence of ethical principles that are strong, appropriate governing structures, and constant stakeholder engagement. When companies incorporate ethical norms in the AI life cycle, they can win users' confidence, offer unbiased service, and lead the innovation of AI that is responsible, environmentally friendly and socially acceptable.

ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF ETHICAL AI CHALLENGES

The ethical issues of AI have a very strong influence on the organization in different ways such as strategic, operational, and reputational. As a result, algorithmic bias and discrimination related issues may lead to lawsuits, fines and reputational damage of companies, for example, if AI technologies are used for hiring, lending, or profiling customers (Obrenovic et al., 2024). If organizations fail to respond to these issues, they may lose the trust of the stakeholders and thus their legitimacy.

Insufficient transparency and interpretability of AI tools hinder management control and accountability of decisions (Maiti et al., 2025). In case the company cannot provide explanations of AI outputs, it is almost impossible to obtain decision approval from the regulators, clients, and employees and, in turn, governance risks get heightened.

Besides, in this darkness the managers opportunities to monitor the systems, fix mistakes, or ensure that the systems conform to the company's moral principles and ethical norms are very limited (Bozdag, 2025).

On top of that, issues related to data privacy and security put extra pressure on internal operations as well due to the increased compliance costs and the vulnerabilities to cyber threats. If the data are not properly handled, it may result in data breaches, economic loss, and the process of regaining customer loyalty may take a long time (Maiti et al., 2025). Furthermore, the problem of accountability regarding AI deployment that is not clearly structured leads to the ethical and legal question of responsibility for AI, caused damage thus the need for the formulation of clear governance frameworks and role assignments arises.

From the perspective of human resources, AI, driven automation has an impact on workforce planning, skill requirements, and employee morale. Companies need to allocate resources to reskilling and implementation of changes in order to alleviate the fear of job displacement and create a positive atmosphere around the use of AI technologies (Memarian & Doleck, 2023). Besides that, the questions about ethics, especially issues of autonomy and environmental sustainability, call for organizations to implement responsible AI practices which not only meet the performance goals but also take into account the social and environmental aspects, thus, ethical AI becoming a crucial element of the organization's strategy.

ETHICAL GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS FOR ORGANISATIONS

Ethical governance mechanisms for organizations are systems of policies, procedures, and culture that aim at the specific qualities of accountability, transparency, fairness, and a focus on the stakeholders. They include, among other things, effective leadership, clear codes of conduct, ongoing ethics training, sound compliance, stakeholder involvement, and ways of reporting illegal or unethical behaviour (whistleblowing), all being regulated by laws and principles such as honesty and being considerate ultimately to create trust and endurance over time (Bozdag, 2025).

Ethical Leadership and Organisational Culture

Ethical leadership is the main factor of ethical governance, which is done by setting the moral tone at the top. Through their actions, decisions, and communication leaders substantially influence ethical behaviour, hence, they have a major say in shaping organisational norms and expectations. As a result of senior management regularly exemplifying integrity, fairness, honesty, and social responsibility these principles are getting deeply ingrained into the organisational culture (Maiti et al., 2025). Besides that, ethical leadership provides a guarantee that ethical issues are addressed at the strategic and operational levels thus, the occurrence of misconduct is minimized and the trust of both employees and external stakeholders is increased. Moreover, an ethical culture characterized by high levels of shared values, ethical norms, and behavioural standards is strengthened through commitment to the organisation's collective identity of ethical conduct.

Code of Conduct and Ethical Policies

A well, structured code of conduct is essentially a formal declaration of the ethical expectations, values, and behavioural standards of an organisation. It defines what is acceptable and what is not, deals with conflicts of interest, and sets the standards of professional behaviour for each level of the organisation. Typically, ethical policies articulate their positions on issues like anti, corruption, data privacy, workplace diversity, and the use of technology in a responsible way (Memarian & Doleck, 2023). These documents make a end of reference for the employees when Moral dilemmas are faced and facilitate consistency in decision, making by them. The frequent revisions and unambiguous conveying of these regulations to the employees ascertain that they are still applicable in a dynamically regulated and technologically developed environment (Batool et al., 2023).

Ethical Advisory Framework and Board Oversight

The BOD is instrumental in looking into serious ethical governance by directing the establishment of ethical concerns into risk management and corporate strategy. Guiding at the big level ensures that problems related to ethics put the appropriate concentration that they need and are not, for instance, bottled out by the pursuit of short-term monetary profits. Compensation of firms appoint advisory boards as well

as ethics committees to receive ethical and unbiased response on intricate ethical problems, which includes those raising from the use of artificial intelligence and various digital technologies. The competent board oversee raise the organisation's accountability, solves governance standards, and, most importantly, communicates to the investors and regulators that the organisation is ethically responsible.

Ethics Training and Development

Ethics training and development programs are the main tools responsible for the translation of ethical principles into viable behaviour. Frequent training sessions for directors, managers, and employees contribute to the development of ethical awareness, make organisational values clearer, and help acquire skills necessary for making ethical decisions. These programs usually have this or that case study, taking pieces of their analysis from different scenarios, as well as discussing compliance, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and digital ethics. The continuous learning programs guarantee that employees keep up with the changing standards of ethics, the requirements of the law, and the best practices of the industry, thus mitigating the risk of unethical conduct (Batool et al., 2023).

Accountability and Transparency Mechanisms

One of the major elements of ethical governance are accountability and transparency, which, among others, guarantee that decision, makers are answerable for their actions. Having clear lines of reporting, systems for performance evaluation, and ethical audits help organisations in the compliance monitoring of ethical standards. Being transparent in communication, about policies, decisions, and organisational performance, creates a feeling of trust in stakeholders and gives more viability to the organisation (Memarian & Doleck, 2023). Moreover, the disclosure of the organisation's ethical practices, sustainability initiatives, and governance structures is the way it lets the world know it is a responsible conductor.

Stakeholder Engagement

Effectively engaging stakeholders helps firms to detect, investigate, and even solve ethical issues that exist within different stakeholder groups. These groups can be

employees, customers, investors, suppliers, regulators, and local communities (Memarian & Doleck, 2023). When organisations involve stakeholders feedback in their operational processes, they become able to foresee ethical risks and set their practices in line with society's expectations. Open communication and participatory tools create trust, get closer relationships, and help to maintain the organisations sustainability in the long run.

Compliance and Ethical Reporting

Compliance tools are implemented to guarantee that the organization adheres to the laws, regulations, and ethical standards stipulated. Strong internal controls, compliance monitoring systems, and regular audits promote prevention of misconduct and also help in early detection of violations. Reports on ethics and sustainability such as ESG disclosures provide the stakeholders with a lucid view of the organization's ethical performance, governance practices, and social impact. Open reporting is a means of accountability and very helpful for stakeholders in making informed decisions (Batool et al., 2023).

Whistleblower Protection Mechanisms

Whistleblower systems provide a secure and private way for workers and other parties to notify about conducting wrongfully or illegally without fear of countermeasures. Correctly put into the practice whistleblower initiative save the whistleblowers who make concerns honestly and to make sure that the generated problem is looked impartially (Memarian & Doleck, 2023). These practices forecast a favourable environment of ethics in the company itself and let the organization know about ability governance issue much faster.

Ethical Conflict Resolution Processes

Moral dilemmas and conflicts of interest are a part of every business practice. Ethical governance, however, makes the organization take such problems through the defined procedures. Conflict resolution measures, like ombudspersons, ethics committees, and mediation processes, help organizations to solve their ethical conflicts in a fair and consistent way. By providing the procedures for resolving ethical dilemmas,

organizations reduce uncertainty, promote justice, and maintain ethical standards in their daily activities (Khan et al., 2021).

Technology Integration for Ethical Governance

Technological innovation integrated into systems that are ethically governed leads to more efficient, effective, and secure government. Artificial intelligence and other compliance management tools driven by digital technology can spot large data sets for the signs of unethical practices; therefore, organizations are enabled to be compliant with regulations and at the same time evade fraud and improper conduct (Memarian & Doleck, 2023). However, to gain full benefits from such machines, the above-mentioned issues of transparency, bias reduction, and privacy of data must be dealt with. Consequently, technological tools, if rightly used, are not merely supportive means but also powerful instruments of ethical governance and risk management. To sum up, ethically governed organisations constitute the primary structures via which the latter are able to infuse moral congruence, openness, and accountability in their modes of decision, making. By applying ethics in leadership, implementing well, functioning policies, exercising good governance, and engaging with stakeholders, organisations become capable of handling the risks of ethics proactively and, also, of increasing the trust placed in them. Moreover, education, disclosure, and the existence of a safeguarded whistleblower system are the factors that contribute to the integrity being prevalent in all strata of an organisation. Besides this, technology when used appropriately, enhances agency's ability to monitor and comply with their requirements. In short, these mechanisms provide organizations with the means to attain long, term success while being compliant with the societal and ethical standards in the context of innovation and growth.

CONCLUSION

AI has been a major factor in changing the way organizations operate, however, the ethical issues that it raises are a stumbling block. This review emphasizes the main ethical problems that the first five of which are bias, transparency, accountability, privacy, and workforce impact which constitute a kind of moral code that organizations have to follow if they want to use AI in a responsible way (Chakraborty et al., 2019).

Implementing an ethical AI system is not only a technical challenge but also a serious strategic and organizational issue. Those companies, which consider the ethical side of AI as part of their governance, are in a position to benefit from more trust, legitimacy, and long, term performance. As the technology gets more advanced, the role of leaders in making ethical decisions and fostering innovation in a responsible way will be the key factors that determine which organizations will thrive in the digital era (Robert et al., 2020).

Although interest in the topic has grown substantially, a number of issues were raised regarding the completeness of the research work on AI ethics in organizations. First, there exist only a few empirical investigations designed to examine the performance of different mechanisms of ethical AI governance. Research in the future has to look at the way ethical frameworks impact organizational results. Second, there is a lack of awareness and understanding of AI ethics from the global perspective and the matter has not yet been sufficiently discussed at the cultural level. The differences in ethics standards among various societies and the issue of AI in organizations are mutually dependent. Third, scholars suggest the need for longitudinal studies that will reveal the social consequences of the prolonged usage of AI in organizations especially in terms of changes in the organizational culture and workforce dynamics.

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