

**TITLE: THE GEOPOLITICS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: COMPETITION,
CONTROL, AND ETHICS**

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Abstract: Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a pivotal element in global strategic competition, reshaping power dynamics among nations. This paper explores the geopolitical ramifications of AI development and deployment, focusing on the rivalry between major powers, governance challenges, and ethical concerns associated with unchecked AI proliferation. By examining recent initiatives in the United States, China, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the European Union (EU), the study highlights strategic motivations behind AI investments. It also explores responses from international institutions and the Global South in establishing ethical AI norms. The paper argues that fostering global cooperation, inclusive governance, and ethical commitments is essential to ensure AI contributes positively to international peace and development.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Geopolitics, Ethics, Global Governance, Strategic Competition, AI Regulation

Introduction:

In the contemporary era, Artificial Intelligence has transitioned from a technological innovation to a strategic asset influencing geopolitical landscapes. Nations worldwide recognize AI's potential to enhance national security, economic prowess, and global influence. The intensifying rivalry between global powers, notably the United States and China, has accelerated AI advancements, prompting debates on ethical standards, digital sovereignty, and governance frameworks. This paper investigates the global competition surrounding AI and its implications for international relations, sovereignty, and collaborative efforts.

Literature Review:

Existing literature presents diverse perspectives on AI's geopolitical impact. Scholars like Allison (2021) and Lee (2018) emphasise AI's role in economic dominance and military superiority. Floridi et al. (2020) discuss governance challenges, highlighting the regulatory gap between rapid innovation and control mechanisms. Ethical considerations, particularly concerning surveillance, bias, and labour displacement, are addressed in reports by international bodies such as the UN, OECD, and UNESCO. However, a comprehensive framework integrating power dynamics and normative concerns remains underexplored.

Theoretical Framework:

This study employs a multidisciplinary theoretical approach:

- **Realism:** Explains state behaviour in pursuing strategic advantages through AI capabilities.
- **Liberal Institutionalism:** Highlights the role of global norms, laws, and cooperative institutions in shaping AI governance.
- **Constructivism:** Considers how ideas, values, and ethics influence national AI strategies and policies.

These perspectives collectively provide a nuanced understanding of AI as both a tool for power projection and a subject of ideological and ethical contestation.

Methodology:

A qualitative, case-based methodology underpins this research, utilizing:

- Policy documents and AI strategies from the US, China, UAE, and EU.
- Reports from institutions like the OECD, UN, and World Economic Forum.
- Peer-reviewed academic literature.
- Public statements and official partnerships, such as OpenAI's collaboration with the UAE.

This approach facilitates the identification of patterns in state-driven AI development and governance models.

Case Studies and Discussion:

1. United States vs. China:

The US emphasizes private sector innovation, leveraging companies like OpenAI and Nvidia to advance AI capabilities. Conversely, China adopts a state-led model, integrating AI into defense, surveillance, and economic sectors. This dichotomy reflects broader geopolitical rivalries and differing governance philosophies.

2. Emerging Players – UAE and Saudi Arabia:

The UAE's Falcon model has demonstrated significant performance, benefiting from centralized governance and substantial investments. Saudi Arabia's \$10 billion investment in AI, aiming to handle 7% of global AI workloads, raises concerns about governance and ethical oversight, given the country's limited democratic frameworks.

3. Ethical Governance and the Global South:

Emerging economies in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia are actively influencing AI development and governance. These nations are setting regulatory precedents and contributing diverse datasets, enhancing AI models' adaptability. China's expansion in these regions through affordable AI solutions contrasts with the US and its allies' efforts to offer compelling alternatives.

4. The European Union's Role:

The EU's AI Act, effective from August 2, 2024, represents the world's first comprehensive legal framework on AI, emphasizing human-centric and responsible development. While setting global standards, the EU faces challenges in maintaining technological competitiveness amid

stringent regulations.

Conclusion:

AI is fundamentally reshaping geopolitical dynamics, influencing power relations and regulatory landscapes. While strategic competition dominates the discourse, the imperative for inclusive and ethical governance is paramount. Avoiding a fragmented AI future necessitates fostering international cooperation, safeguarding data sovereignty, and upholding universal values. The trajectory of global stability hinges not only on leadership in AI but also on the principles guiding its development and deployment.

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