



Centre for Digital Transformation at IIM Ahmedabad

Policy Briefing:

Purpose-Driven AI

• Executive Summary

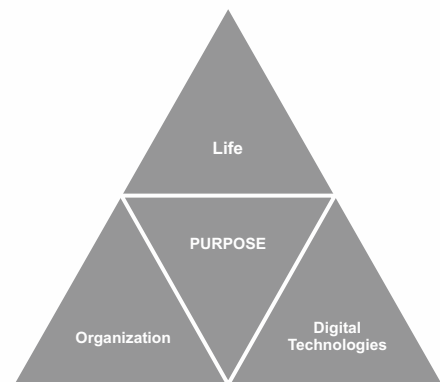
This brief argues that India's approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) must be grounded in a deep understanding of life and its purpose, integrating these insights with digital technologies. We knowingly or unknowingly make assumptions about individuals – whether as consumers, citizens, or something more profound. This assumption significantly shapes the direction and impact of digital transformation. This brief recommends that India's AI policies move beyond purely utilitarian perspectives and incorporate broader economic, social, and philosophical considerations of human purpose in line with the Indian ethos of life and existence.

• Introduction

AI has great potential to transform various sectors. However, as AI becomes increasingly integrated into our lives and work, it is crucial to consider its broader impact on our lives. This policy brief draws upon the insights from the book "Purpose", emphasizing how we build digital technologies using AI and how these influence our life.

• Key Insights from "Purpose"

- **Digital technologies and AI make us rethink Life:** As they fundamentally alter communication, social interaction, and our experience of time and space, digital technologies and AI are making us look for deeper reflections on the essence of life.
- **Underlying assumptions about individuals driving AI-led Digital Transformation:** Leaders, including policymakers, operate with implicit or explicit views of who an individual is (e.g., a consumer, a rational agent, a victim, and so on). These views profoundly influence how digital technologies, including AI, are developed and implemented.
- **Computational freedom as a goal:** The concept of "computational freedom" suggests that AI should be leveraged to enable individuals to pursue higher-level purposes.
- **The limitations of employment-centric policies:** A focus of policy on jobs alone may not be very effective, as the deeper question of human purpose in an AI-driven society (positively and negatively) influences many aspects of jobs.
- **The importance of rhythm and human element:** As new AI-driven technologies become mainstream, doing many activities traditionally done by humans, policymakers have to rethink the human elements and rhythm of work.
- **A Purpose-Driven view is essential for responsible digital transformation:** Digital leaders must adopt an apt view of "what is life" and its purpose to ensure that digital transformation aligns with the ethos and contributes to the next generation of society, economy, and polity that may help us harness the potential of millions and billions of lives.
- **Purpose-based digital transformation unleashes a strong force:** Purpose may be understood as interactions between human life, digital technologies, and organizations.



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● Policy Recommendations for AI Management in India

Based on the book, A Purpose-Driven View of life, India may think about the following policy recommendations for managing AI:

- **Establish a National AI-Framework rooted in human purpose:**
 - o While there is much thinking about AI and its impacts, there is less deliberation about the broader purpose that should guide us to leverage AI. So, inputs from different members of society should be sought to build a framework to leverage AI for human purpose.
- **Experimental programs for alternate ways to work:**
 - o The government should think about conducting pilot programs to assess the feasibility and impact of different work and non-work-based incentive systems, beyond traditional employment.
- **Invest in education and skills development for a Purpose-Driven Life:**
 - o Support initiatives that promote community engagement, creative expression, lifelong learning, and other activities that contribute to broader purpose, consistent with the AI framework.
- **Promote public discussions on the future of work, organization, life, and technology:**
 - o Enable public dialogues to explore the implications of AI for the future of work and the meaning of life. It is imperative to encourage critical reflections on societal values and the role of technology, assessing how it shapes human purpose.
- **Incorporate assessments for AI on their impacts on Purpose:**
 - o Ensure that AI deployments do a "purpose impact assessment" to assess how AI is influencing human purpose.
- **Promote a culture of human and AI collaboration:**
 - o Incentivize the development of AI that augments human capabilities and promotes human/AI collaboration.

● Conclusion

Based on the idea of 'Purpose-driven transformation', India can govern AI to prioritize human well-being. This approach requires fundamentally rethinking work, education, and social structures. Appropriate policies would ensure that AI serves as a tool enabling individuals to pursue meaningful lives beyond the constraints of survival-driven labor.

● For More Information

Please contact Prof. Pankaj Setia, chr-cdt@iima.ac.in for more information.

Based on :

Setia, Pankaj (2024). PURPOSE: Digital Transformation of Individuals, Organizations, and Societies. IIMA Best Business Book Series. Penguin India.

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