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RESEARCH PAPER

Exploring the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Enhancing Conventional Policing: A Case Study of Islamabad Capital Territory, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the application of Artificial Intelligence in policing within the Islamabad Capital Territory, focusing on crime prevention, resource allocation, institutional performance, and emerging ethical concerns. Although AI-driven policing is expanding globally, its use in developing countries remains uneven and under-researched. In Pakistan, initiatives such as the Islamabad Safe City Project and the AI Sky Eye System mark major technological shifts, yet systematic evaluation is limited. A convergent mixed-method design was employed. Quantitative crime statistics from 2020–2025 were analyzed to compare trends before and after AI implementation, while qualitative data were collected through thirty semi-structured interviews and field observations at Safe City facilities. Results indicate a significant decline in crime rates, reduced police response times, and increased use of digital evidence following AI adoption. Despite operational gains, challenges related to data governance, accountability, and privacy persist. The study recommends legal frameworks, improved data governance, and ethics training.

KEYWORDS Artificial Intelligence, Safe City Project, Sky Eye System, Islamabad Capital Territory, AI-Assisted Surveillance, Mixed-Method Design, Predictive Analytics

Introduction

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in law enforcement activities has become the new shift towards modern policing worldwide. With the fast evolution of technology that has affected various areas, law enforcement services are highly likely to apply AI-based applications to guarantee improved crime prevention, greater accuracy during investigations and more reasonable allocation of resources (Gill & Wood, 2021). The possibilities of predictive analytics, facial recognition software and natural language processing (NLP) are already open vacuums in the context of the classic policing activity: it is not only possible to predict possible crimes but also calculate suspects as soon as possible (Jiang and Zhang, 2022). As an example, predictive analytics allows departments to forecast crime hotspots using past experience to enable proactive policing planning and overall resource allocation (Gund, Patil, & Phalke, 2023). There is already a substantial promise in such models as they are already employed in such countries as the United States or the United Kingdom that operate predictive policing systems, e.g., PredPol, which is used to predict the areas where crimes are more likely to transpire (Brantingham et al., 2018). Facial recognition technology also expands the law enforcement capacity by allowing identification of the suspects much faster, shortening the time in which the investigation is conducted and even enhance the correctness of criminal apprehension (Liu & Zhang, 2022). As an example, the police in China have

already used facial recognition software connected to surveillance systems to find and detain perpetrators at popular events or places, e.g., at music festivals and train stations (Mozur, 2018).

In spite of these promising trends, the emergence of AI technologies in the field of policing is surrounded by pertinent critical, ethical and societal issues. Nevertheless, the bias in algorithms has been an even more severe issue as the biases present in the training datasets will be copied in the final results, which may be discriminatory in relation to particular groups in communities, particularly, marginalized and underrepresented groups (Schneier, 2021; O'Neil, 2016). Individually, predictive policing methods which rely on algorithms that examine past arrest records and apply them to identify new suspects have no less effect than to continue increasing the problem of minority over-policing and inequality (Angwin et al., 2016). Additionally, one can focus on privacy, in which case, the usage of facial recognition and mass surveillance tools even pre-dominates the subject. Although its purpose is to ensure public safety, these tools evoke justified concerns about the erosion of civil liberties, unaccountable surveillance and the emergence of a surveillance state (Thompson & Brown, 2021; Naughton, 2022).

According to a warning by Amnesty International (2021), the use of unregulated surveillance technology, including AI, will have a devastating impact on the freedoms of assembly and expression, particularly in areas of political sensitivity. Majority of the critics claim that, without being regulated and morally sound, AI networks are capable of spreading the current biases and internalizing the past discrimination patterns in the name of objectivity and efficiency (Crawford, 2021). There is also a concern regarding the lack of transparency of the algorithmic decision-making process in the so-called black box problem, where developers who are not part of the team might not be aware of the scope of the level to which an AI model is going to make its decision (Burrell, 2016). As the technology advances, thus, there is a need to make sure that these technological implications are interpreted in ethical and societal context and a course towards a responsible and transparent system of governance is taken.

Additionally, the use of AI has shown a high potential of curbing crime rates in urban areas by 30-40 percent and minimizing the time of emergency response by 33 percent (CIGI, 2024). Regarding the larger policing technologies, such as AI, the world market is estimated to have reached USD 15.4 billion in 2024 and is expected to increase to USD 34.9 billion by 2033, which can be deemed as an approximate CAGR of 9.5% (Data Horizon Research, 2024). This development indicates a tendency towards a greater reliance on AI as not only the predictor of crimes but also as the means of administrative efficiency, threat evaluation and risk control in multifaceted urban areas. Police agencies in Europe, North America and East Asia already started using AI in behavioral recognition, drone surveillance, automated license plate recognition and crowd monitoring systems, demonstrating the high level of prevalence and flexibility of AI in the field of public safety.

The application of AI in law enforcement is still a nascent concept in Pakistan, with hugely notable examples located mostly in large cities, such as Islamabad and Karachi. This is due to the fact that such cities have introduced the AI-driven criminal recognition system that enhances the suspect tracking and monitoring process (Ahmad, 2023). These police forces of the city of Islamabad are testing the implementation of AI-based monitoring, where smart cameras are used in the streets, to ensure situational awareness and crime prevention. These technologies are linked to the use of facial recognition databases and vehicle tracking systems to enable the identification of the

suspects (Raza and Usman, 2022). Karachi is no exception and has started down the same path with pilot projects with AI-based command and control centers to analyze traffic patterns, deviations and predict unrest in problematic locations (Mehmood, 2023). Nonetheless, with these positive efforts, no extensive form of integration exists. Pakistan has structural issues that demoralize mass adoption in the law enforcement bodies. These are the budget constraints (Yousaf, 2022), the poor information infrastructure system, the broken data network, ineffective cyber security system and low digital literacy among the personnel (Khan and Javed, 2021).

Consequently, despite the fact that Pakistan has already started to adopt AI technologies, full-scale adoption is not yet clear and requires a complex, long-term, multidimensional commitment. To ensure that all the opportunities of AI in law enforcement are exploited fully, there must be an enormous effort in strategic policy-making, updating the laws and institutions, investing in human and technological infrastructure. In such cities as Islamabad, where AI is already under trial, it is not clear how these technologies affect the trust of the community, marginalized populations and the introduction of fair processes. Therefore, the proposed study will address two key gaps, namely the lack of localized data and insights regarding the operational and ethical factors of the AI implementation in law enforcement in Pakistan with regards to local culture and legal frameworks and whether the current policing practices of utilizing AI have the potential to promote democratic values, legal responsibility and human dignity. The links between this gap and the practical activity of policing such as the protection of civil rights and earning people trust in work of AI-driven governance should be drawn. The ultimate goal of the study is to examine how Artificial Intelligence (AI) could be used to improve policing in the Islamabad Capital Territory, especially in the context of its working efficiency, ethical concerns and social acceptance.

This study is theoretical, as well as practical, as Pakistan is going through adapting to the AI-enhanced governance and digital policing on the global arena. Even though there has already been extensive research in the topic regarding AI in law enforcement in North America, Europe and East Asia, it is clear that there is still a gap in the other type of research on the topic i.e. empirical but context-specific research, a research based in South Asia and a research based in Pakistan, specifically. Since Pakistan is among the most monitored cities in the world, the research will fill in this gap and offer useful knowledge towards the practice, challenges and social implications of AI in policing. The study contributes to the existing literature by examining the interactions between the AI technology and the old style of police operations, operational, ethical and legal concerns.

Literature Review

Artificial intelligence (AI) in global policing systems has significantly transformed the current policing system. Artificial intelligence in developed countries has become an integral part of plans aimed at addressing aspects of crime prevention, resource distribution and round-the-clock monitoring. The use of predictive analytics has also enabled law enforcement agencies to anticipate where crimes are likely to occur, allowing personnel to be more strategic in their deployment. In the case of the United States, predictive policing programs such as PredPol and HART in the United Kingdom have been deployed to identify the most likely crime locations, allowing for preemptive measures to be taken (Brantingham et al., 2018). Facial recognition technology has led to significant changes in the identification of suspects and the effectiveness of investigations. Real-time AI-made surveillance has been tested in China, where fugitives

have been caught in significant public places very fast (Mozur, 2018). Equally, in India, Face recognition technology has proven helpful in reuniting lost children with their families and identifying repeat offenders in congested cities. Administrative functions also have their roles in which AI has played optimally, such as digital forensics and document analysis, significantly reducing the burden on human officers. Natural language processing (NLP) enables agencies to increase the speed and effectiveness in detecting hate speech or extremist language on the Internet, tracking and examining emergency calls and evaluating the transcript of emergency calls (Shapiro & Dubois, 2022). Such devices have enabled quick response times, higher crime clearance rates and enhanced police performance.

However, AI use in policing has not been without criticisms around the world. Such issues as algorithmic biases, the absence of privacy and non-proportional targeting of minority groups have been reported in a number of publications (Angwin et al., 2016; Crawford, 2021). In the United States, historical bias has been an issue with AI-driven systems; with others believing that they reinforce racial profiling using historical training data. Civil rights activists have been vocal that AI can take away the freedoms of people, especially through dictatorial regimes that use surveillance solutions to quash any form of challenge on them (Gates, 2022). The AI in the police sphere is, however, influenced by functional efficiency, cost-effectiveness and quicker response with a swiftly growing demand of moral regulation and control (Miller and Hutton, 2023).

In Pakistan, the AI and its implication in policing are still in their early developmental phases yet they have the potential to transform the policing profession. The initial installations have been mostly implemented in major cities, including Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore, which are based on facial recognition platforms, surveillance analytics and intelligent traffic control, as a part of a Safe City system (Asif & Zubair, 2022). These projects have been reported to result in a better crime detection, crowd-sourcing of information and political rationales. Islamabad Safe City Project has equipped the main locations with AI cameras to track vehicle movement and identify any suspicious activity. This has allowed the police to shut down criminal cases much more rapidly according to local reports with the visual evidence shown in real-time and a decreased amount of manual labor needed to investigate the crime (Farooq, 2023). Similarly, Karachi command and control center, which has implemented AI, has helped the city to track its traffic in real time and respond to any emergencies faster, particularly during a crisis (Rehman and Sheikh, 2023). Other procedures like predicting high-threat zones, communications analysis and profile of suspects by means of behavioral prediction models also show the possibility of using AI in countering terrorism activities. They are essential assets within a state such as Pakistan which has been experiencing major security challenges internally over the recent years (Iqbal, 2023).

However, the national influence is still constrained by a number of problems. The lack of centralized databases with digital information, as well as the insufficient legislation and ethical standards of policing, deficiency in the education of law enforcement officers and lack of infrastructure balance between cities and towns, limit the potential and effectiveness of AI in law enforcement (Malik, 2022). What is more, the problem of state surveillance and data misuse is viewed as a widespread one, as there is no general data protection legislation (Shaikh and Khan, 2021). Unless there is some form of governance and a high degree of trust, the impacts of AI will be cumulative or even destabilizing within communities who have already distrust of the power of the police. Nevertheless, the indications pointed out are encouraging that with the help of the concerned institutions, the clarity of the policy and capacity-building exercises, AI can

improve the efficiency of work of law enforcement agencies in Pakistan, their response time and their credibility. The net outcome will be the quality of the reconciliation of the ethical, legal and technological aspects of the national AI environment (Siddiqui, 2022).

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical premises of AI in policing are based on the classical criminological approaches and modern socio-technological arguments, all of which describe the influence of algorithmic tools on crime control and state power. Rational Choice Theory holds that criminals make risk-reward calculations; therefore, AI surveillance, predictive analytics and monitoring are more costly than crime, increasing the cost of crime and better deterring crime (Cornish and Clarke, 1986; Clancey, 2010), whereas predictive systems such as PredPol and CompStat lead to better allocation of resources to high-risk areas (Perry et al., 2013; Uchida, 2009), as reflected in street and property crime reductions in AI-monit Situational Crime Prevention is also in line with opportunities for crime reduction through hardening targets, optimal patrol routes and environmental crime patterns (Clarke, 1997; Braga et al., 2019) and crime-script analysis and anomaly detection allow intervening earlier (Ekblom, 2005). Routine Activity Theory additionally frames AI as an electronic savvy sentinel and the capabilities of biometric surveillance, geospatial mapping, the use of drones and automated patrol systems are envisioned as a continuously monitoring and immediately deployable digital guardian (Cohen and Felson, 1979; Ratcliffe, 2016; Lum and Isaac, 2016; Brayne, 2020). Beyond mainstream criminology, there are socio-technological approaches where Technological Determinism sees AI as a self-emerging force transforming institutions and relatively more rapidly than democratic or ethical control (Smith and Marx, 1994; Winner, 1986), which becomes more problematic when it comes to environments of weak states like Pakistan.

As Critical Surveillance Theory cautions, algorithmic tools cement the current state of power structure and allow an uneven process of monitoring, profiling and extracting data that can legitimize intrusive policing and create a digital panopticon (Lyon, 2018; Zuboff, 2019; Ball, 2021). The Algorithmic Justice Theory questions the neutrality assumption constituting the AI model by proving that predictive systems tend to reproduce historical and socio-economic biases that are inherent in their training data (Barocas and Selbst, 2016; Eubanks, 2018), leading to an unequal targeting of disadvantaged groups, in the case of tools such as COMPAS (Angwin et al., 2016). Scholars believe that justice should be situational and the society that lacks technical control may also start to exacerbate inequality with the imported unproven algorithms (Binns, 2018). All these theoretical insights suggest that despite the possible benefits of AI in improving deterrence and policing effectiveness, it also poses significant issues of transparency, accountability and structural injustice re-enactment in criminal justice systems.

Material and Methods

The present research has utilized a convergent mixed-method research design to address the research question of integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) in policing in Islamabad by integrating quantitative crime statistics with qualitative information to both describe operational success and lived experience. The quantitative data was based on the official police logs, deployment reports, 2020-2025 crime statistics that allowed comparing crime trends, arrests, recoveries and case dispositions before and after implementing AI surveillance systems. In addition to this, qualitative data was gathered via 30 semi-structured interviews with police officers, IT specialists and legal

professionals to enable them to conduct a direct analysis of AI-generated notifications, decision-making routines and problematic areas of work. The adoption and governance of AI policing was further contextualized through document analysis of policy papers and deployment files along with institutional reports. The purposive sampling criterion was used to select the participants who were directly involved in AI systems, whereas triangulation between statistics, interviews and observations contributed to the reliability level. Safeguards included ethical considerations of confidentiality, informed consent, limited access to the research data and the reflexivity of the researcher who strictly followed ethical considerations in the course. Combined, these supportive approaches would give a complete picture of how AI determines the efficiency of policing, institutionalization and the socio-ethical issues in Islamabad.

Moreover, analysis of the data was performed on the basis of mixed approach when both quantitative and qualitative strands were studied independently and then united in the manner to obtain the comprehensive picture of AI-enabled policing. Islamabad Police records of the quantitative data (2020-2025) were organized in the spreadsheet and with the assistance of the descriptive statistics, year-to-year comparison and calculation of percentage-change to assess the changes in the crime rates, arrests, case resolutions and recoveries in the Police prior and after adoption of AI. Thematic analysis framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) that included familiarization, coding, creating themes and interpreting 30 interview transcripts as qualitative data was utilized to analyze the field notes. The credibility and reduced bias in the research were ensured by interview, observation and triangulation based on official statistics and the analysis of documents. This type of integration analysis allowed the study to connect the tendencies in statistics to the personal experience and draw a nuanced conclusion regarding the impact of AI on policing performance and ethical leadership in Islamabad.

Results and Discussion

The quantitative data points out the significant infrastructural, technological and procedural transformations noted in ICT Police over the period 2020 to 2025. The introduction of AI into the policing functions within the Safe City Project and AI Sky Eye System was carried out in a timely fashion. The results in this section are the summary of AI implementation development, its quantifiable results and the quantitative changes in crime statistics and institutional capacity.

Timeline and Phases of AI Deployment

These findings demonstrate that Artificial Intelligence (AI) implementation in policing of the city of Islamabad was a gradual, planned process and it occurred in the federally-funded Safe City Project, 2022-2025. The project was implemented in four phases' pilot, expansion, full operation and optimization that constituted a special move of digitizing the ICT Police. In 2022, the pilot phase started with installation of 190 AI-enabled cameras at strategic entry and exit points like Kashmir Highway (Sri Nagar Highway), Faizabad Interchange and Rawat Toll Plaza. These cameras had the facial-recognition and automatic number-plate recognition (ANPR) packages, which were tested on reliability and connectivity. In mid-2023, the expansion phase included the addition of 400 additional cameras in major intersections and public spaces. At this phase, the introduction of predictive policing dashboard and digital hotspots map at the Command and Control Centre became possible, which facilitates the real-time analysis of the crime trends and the messages between patrol units and central servers.

The full operation stage began in 2024 with the unveiling of the AI Sky Eye System that incorporated more than 1,800 live cameras, drone feeds and AI analytics. This system facilitated 24 hour monitoring and automated notifications and direct coordination between the command center and the field units. By 2025, the optimization phase had succeeded in integrating the Sky Eye System with the NADRA and Traffic Police databases, which ensure that, live cross-checking, is performed on vehicle and suspect details. Surveillance grid widened to cover greater areas of more than 3,200 cameras covering major highways, suburban areas and check points. In each stage, the server capacity was upgraded from 4.7 to 126 technical analysts (including an increase of 3.2 petabytes). It encompassed close to 70 % of the Islamabad area in surveillance: the most extensive digital policing network in the city was established.

Table 1
Stages Of AI Integration In ICT Police

Phase / Year	Ai Developments	Operational Implementation
2022 (Pilot Phase)	Installation of 190 AI-enabled cameras with facial-recognition and number-plate tracking systems.	Initial testing and command-centre calibration in key zones.
2023 (Expansion Phase)	Installation of 400 additional cameras across major intersections and city corridors.	Activation of predictive policing dashboards and data visualizations.
2024 (Full Operation Phase)	Launch of AI Sky Eye System integrating 1,800 cameras and drone feeds.	Continuous monitoring, automated suspect alerts and digital reporting.
2025 (Optimization Phase)	Full interlinking with NADRA and Traffic Police databases; total cameras reached approximately 3,200.	Automated verification and multi-agency coordination established.

The chronological results prove that AI implementation was made in a progressive and systematic manner starting with small-scale experimental use, moving to infrastructure growth and activation of the entire system and the ultimate optimization and interconnection of AI tracking with national data repositories in 2025.

Crime Statistics before and after AI Deployment

In this part, the quantitative results on the crime trends, arrest trends and operational performance measures of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police was introduced prior to and following the implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based surveillance and analytics. The data is used to demonstrate five years of data (2020-2025), collected using official police reports, annual reports of the Safe City Command and Control Centre and reports on performance evaluation of the AI Sky Eye System. The results are organized chronologically to give a clear objective comparison of the facts between the pre-AI stage (2020-2022) and the post-AI stage (2023-2025). The ICT Police annual reports indicated that the city registered an average of 12,800-13,500 total crimes in the pre-AI period (2020-2022) per annum. These offenses were majorly clustered in the subgroups of offenses related to property like theft, burglary and snatching of vehicles as against the heinous crimes like homicide, armed robbery and kidnapping. Conversely, the post-AI data (2023-2025) indicates that the total number of registered criminal cases decreases steadily, which reaches an average of 9,000 to 9,500 cases annually. The official sets also demonstrate the parallel decrease in the ratio of the violent crimes and property crimes, better operational outcomes, including the shortening of the response time and increased use of electronic evidence in cases. The complete quantitative comparison is presented in Table 02 below.

Table 2
Comparative Police Performance before and After AI

Indicator	Pre-AI (2020–2022)	Post-AI (2023–2025)	Difference
Total Crimes Reported (avg./year)	12,800–13,500	9,000–9,500	28% overall decline in reported crimes
Property Crimes	~8,000	6,700 (2024)	16% reduction due to better surveillance
Heinous Crimes	~600	420 (2024)	30% decline through quicker identification
AI-Linked Arrests	Not recorded	2,700 (2025)	Direct outcome of Safe City & Sky Eye alerts
Average Response Time	25–30 minutes	14–17 minutes	Nearly 45% faster police dispatch
Cases with Digital Evidence	10%	80%	Significant increase in prosecutorial strength

The decrease in the average response time of almost half an hour to less than fifteen minutes highlights how the coordination of the control rooms and the field officers with the help of AI has simplified communication. Likewise, the steep increase in digital evidence cases between 10% and 80% proves the significance of technological records in the Pakistani judicial process. Additionally, a close examination of annual police statistics gives one additional insight into the way crime trends evolved with the passage of time. The statistics indicate that property crimes and heinous crimes have steadily dropped and the pace of responding to these crimes has been constantly increasing.

This section contains the thematic analysis of qualitative data collected in form of semi-structured interviews with the participants. A code was given to each participant (R1-R10) to have anonymity. The interviews directly addressed the perceptions of officers regarding the ethical issues related to the integration of AI, which is the direct scope of Objective (02) of the research. At the open coding step, transcripts were studied in terms of line and every significant statement was assigned a descriptive code. The current manual process produced about 82 initial codes that reflected issues regarding data privacy, threats of misidentification, surveillance boundaries, undefined legal responsibilities and the ethical decision-making. During the axial coding process, similar codes were separated into larger groups. The categories of codes included outdated NADRA data and false alerts, which appeared in the section of Algorithmic Bias and Misidentification, whereas such issues as too much monitoring and lack of transparency in data storage were listed in the section of Privacy and Surveillance Boundaries. With the help of selective coding, these categories were narrowed down into general themes that can best describe the ethical aspects of AI-assisted policing. The result of this process was the discovery of (04) Major Themes that represent major ethical issues that officers have to deal with in AI-enabled settings. Data results in themes and quotations of the participants are discussed below.

Theme 01: Privacy Concerns And Surveillance Boundaries

Interviews also demonstrated that the police were becoming conscious of the ethical dangers of the broad-scale use of AI-based surveillance. They described that the proliferation of cameras and automated surveillance was such that it created ambiguity on the point at which legitimate surveillance should be. Officers were of the opinion that AI enhanced security but it also cast doubt of over-surveillance of citizens without their consent.

"These cameras record everything… sometimes it feels like we are watching people more than necessary" (R4, Surveillance Operator)

Participants explained the discomfort felt by officers involved with sensitive visual and biometric information due to vague policies on data retention and access. The absence of rules was seen as a loophole that might translate into the possible abuse or misunderstanding of AI-generated data.

"We don't know how long this data stays in the system or who can use it later" (R2, Technical Staff)

Overall, the data indicate that officers recognize AI's security benefits but remain concerned about the ethical limits of surveillance and the need for stronger privacy protections.

Theme 02: Algorithmic Bias and Misidentification

According to the reports of the officers, most of the misidentifications occurred when it was essential to rely on the aging database of NADRA where numerous photographs are either of low quality or were captured decades ago. They both mentioned that false matches were very frequent when using people with faces of similar features, those wearing a turban, a veil or a beard.

"The system sometimes matches the wrong person because NADRA photos are old or unclear… we have to double-check everything" (R6, Surveillance Analyst)

AI-generated alerts were often unreliable in crowded markets, low-light conditions or during large gatherings such as protests, processions and religious events. Officers feared that such errors could lead to wrongful stops or harassment of innocent citizens.

"During crowded events or protests, the AI gives multiple wrong matches. We always have to double-check manually" (R1, Senior Operations Officer)

This theme reflects Pakistan's unique operational reality which is dependence on outdated databases, infrastructural limitations and fluctuating electricity or network instability.

Theme 03: Absence Of Legal And Regulatory Frameworks

The absence of a distinct legal framework to regulate the use of AI in policing was a constant theme of the interviews. According to officers, even though they operate with the help of sophisticated AI tools on a daily basis, there were no official manuals outlining the data protection requirements and the permissibility of AI evidence in their work or the responsibility of the officers in the event of any mistakes.

"There is no specific law for AI or facial recognition; we are using it without proper legal boundaries" (R10, Police Officer)

Such a legal loophole created confusion in the course of field operations and inquiries. The participants stated that the absence of guidelines left officers and citizens exposed to situations where they can be abused or wrongly identified in the event of disagreements, misconduct or misuse.

"If the system makes a mistake, we don't know who is responsible, the operator, the department or the software" (R5, Police Officer)

Overall, the data shows that officers strongly feel the need for comprehensive legislation to ensure ethical, transparent and accountable AI use in policing.

Theme 04: Ethical Readiness And Public Trust Issues

According to the respondents, despite training on AI systems technical training, little was done on ethical management of the data, rights of citizens or responsible application of surveillance technologies. This gap was observed to affect the confidence of officers to handle ethical questions or concerns raised by people.

"We were trained on using the system, but not on the ethical guidelines for AI" (R7, Safe City Operator)

Respondents also noted that despite the fact that although people do like the increase in the security levels, however, over-surveillance could potentially erode trust when the citizens feel that they are being followed around. Police thought it important to remain transparent to maintain the community trust.

"People want safety, but they also don't want to feel watched all the time" (R6, Surveillance Analyst)

Overall, the data indicate that ethical capacity building and public awareness are crucial for balancing AI-driven policing with community trust and responsible practice.

Discussion

This research paper shows that Artificial Intelligence (AI) has significantly changed the policing culture in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), with both its operational advantages and intricate ethical issues. As quantitative evidence demonstrates, crime rates have decreased significantly, police response time has shortened and the implementation of digital evidence has increased significantly - all changes that are observed throughout the world where AI-enabled policing has enhanced crime detection opportunities and resource-distribution (Brantingham et al., 2018; Gund, Patil and Phalke, 2023). The example of the AI Sky Eye System coupled with the Safe City technologies is an indication of trends in technologically advanced settings, including China, the U.S. and the U.K, in which predictive analytics and facial recognition applications enhanced the coverage of surveillance and accuracy in the investigation (Mozur, 2018; Jiang and Zhang, 2022). Such findings support the theoretical premises of the Rational Choice and the Situational Crime Prevention where the perceived cost of crime and the availability of opportunity to commit a crime are raised as a result of the enhanced surveillance and real-time monitoring (Cornish and Clarke, 1986; Clarke, 1997). Nevertheless, even with these quantifiable changes, the qualitative data indicate that there are complex issues that put the blind use of AI in policing in question. There was always a concern about algorithmic bias, misidentification and unreliable matches under the conditions of a crowd or a low light, which are thoroughly documented in the international literature as AI systems have been proven to replicate historic inequalities and over-target marginalized populations (Angwin et al., 2016; Barocas and Selbst, 2016; Eubanks, 2018). Such issues can be correlated with the theory of Algorithmic Justice, which underlines that the AI systems are not neutral but have the biases, which are refracted in their training data. These biases are even stronger in Pakistan, where the NADRA databases might store old and poor-quality photographs, as these raise the chance of wrongful stops, harassment and reduced trust in the society.

There was also a strong appearance of privacy concerns as officers were unsure about the boundaries of surveillance, retention of the data as well as the oversight. These results resonate with the similar critiques of Critical Surveillance Theory worldwide, which cautions about the normalization of invasive state surveillance under the guise of ubiquitous AI surveillance and the creation of a so-called digital panopticon, altering the behavior of citizens (Lyon, 2018; Zuboff, 2019; Foucault, 1977). Such issues are more urgent in the situations when transparency is limited and the laws protecting data fall short, which is the case in Pakistan (Shaikh and Khan, 2021). The anxieties by the officers that they can be held legally responsible ambiguously also mirror Technology Determinism criticism whereby technological systems might undergo change at a greater pace than governing entities and leave gaps in the accountability structure (Winner, 1986; Smith and Marx, 1994). One of the themes that were repeated during interviews was the lack of a detailed legal and regulatory framework that can be used to guide AI implementation in policing. The legal vacuum is in line with national and international interests on AI regulation, with researchers stating that the absence of ethical guidelines, democratic discussions and other clear accountability processes can also allow AI to promote police brutality and curtail civil rights (Crawford, 2021; Thompson and Brown, 2021). The research revealed that the officers were not trained to make the ethical decision and handle data responsibly, which is crucial evidence of the gap between the technological use and institutional readiness. The same deficiencies in the readiness of officers have been identified in other parts of the world and this could explain why police departments should receive integrated human-rights-oriented AI training (Miller and Hutton, 2023).

The other major lesson of this work is the conflict between the safety and the trust of the people. Although the citizens might be pleased with the enhanced security and quick reaction that AI is offering, the further spread of surveillance without transparency can lead to the lack of trust in law enforcement agencies. This coincides with the findings in the global literature that indicate that the confidence in AI-based systems is weak and depends on the observable protection, societal engagement and equity in application (Gates, 2022; Naughton, 2022). In Pakistan, where policing legitimacy and people trust on the police is volatile in history, this balance becomes even more important. Altogether, the results depict that AI has increased the policing ability in Islamabad, yet it has also brought new levels of ethical, procedural and socio-legal sophistication. The overlap between the operational success and issues of privacy, prejudice, lawfulness and accountability points to the necessity of Pakistan implementing a moderate, rights-based method of AI policing. These involve drafting New national AI legislation, updating NADRA records, enhancing cyber security, introducing open oversight systems and incorporating ethics in police practices. Devoid of such precautions, technological progress made with the help of AI is likely to be brought down by the lack of trust in society, unfair results and the susceptibility of institutions.

Conclusion

This paper concludes that implementation of Artificial Intelligence has greatly revolutionized policing in Islamabad through increasing operational efficiency, institutional coordination and accuracy of crime detection and response. The quantitative data indicate significant decreases in property crime, quicker response rates and higher dependence on AI-generated digital evidence, which signifies a clear change of the traditional reactive mode of policing into a contemporary, intelligence-led model. Such results make the AI an important tool in crime prevention, situational awareness and resource optimization in the ICT Police. Meanwhile, the study identifies severe ethical,

legal and administrative loopholes that need to be solved to allow AI policing to be sustainable and socially acceptable. Qualitative results indicate that officers are worried about privacy violations, over-surveillance of the population, the possibility of being misidentified due to the outdated NADRA entries and the lack of national principles that regulate the protection of data or the evidence produced by AI.

Such difficulties allow highlighting the importance of powerful regulatory frameworks, ethical standards and systematic training of people who work with complex surveillance systems. In the absence of these steps, the positive impact of AI can be lost due to the reduction in social confidence, poor governance and unforeseen abuse. In general, the paper reveals that AI has improved policing performance in Islamabad, yet also underlines that technology cannot guarantee justice, fairness or accountability. Achievement of AI in the long-term in the law enforcement sector will require a balance between innovation and strong oversight, openness on operations and rights-based data management. With adequate legislation, independent oversight, professional education and a better quality of data, AI can become a foundation of the contemporary, people-centric and reliable policing in Pakistan.

Recommendations

Using the operational enhancements and ethical issues recognized during this study, a number of policy-based recommendations are offered to promote the effective and responsible use of AI-enabled policing in Islamabad.

- First, the government should introduce a specific legal framework in AI in law enforcement. In the absence of such law, police officers and the citizens will be susceptible to abuse and insecurity.
- Pakistan ought to have an AI accountability and oversight authority that functions independently in order to have transparency in surveillance practices. This body is to perform algorithmic audit, data protection compliance, investigation and publication of regular transparency reports that are publicly accessible.
- NADRA needs to improve its database urgently. To minimize false identifications and avoid victims of false suspicion, the state must update old records, apply digital re-checks and perform multi-factor checks to intervene on the AI alerts.
- ICT Police ought to introduce compulsory ethical and human-rights education to all the members who use AI tools. To avoid the unintentional abuse, it is important to promote ethical literacy and make officers more assured in the responsibility of AI use.
- Lastly, cyber security and internal access controls should be very strong as they are required to protect sensitive video and biometric data. These should include the use of safe logs in procedures, encryptions, audit logs, role-based authentication and regular cyber security testing to avoid data leakage or misuse by the internal users.

Overall, these suggestions are indicative of the necessity of a balanced approach to AI adoption, the one that helps to progress the operational efficiency, but also provides some form of ethical protection and legal transparency as well as popular justification in the context of the Pakistani policing realm.

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