

Navigating the Nexus of AI Revolution and Copyright Law: Innovation and Implication

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Abstract

The rapid development in artificial intelligence led to algorithms that were more sophisticated as well as capable of inventing original artistic creations. Hence, this paper attempts to understand the complex interplay between the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence into the current copyright law developed after its invention into the digital world. This led to problems such as the ownership of the content being provided by a computer-controlled robot. As AI technologies increasingly generate creative works ranging from literature, art, music, culture to visual art-the traditional frameworks of copyright face significant scrutiny. This study examines key issues such as authorship, ownership, and originality in the context of AI-generated content. It discusses the implications for creators, industries, and legal systems, highlighting the need for adaptive legal frameworks that balance innovation with protection of intellectual property rights. Through an inferential analysis of theories entitled as Modicum of Creativity, Test of Skill and Judgment, and Sweat of the Brow, current case law, emerging trends, and potential policy reforms, this paper aims to provide insights into how stakeholders can navigate the evolving landscape of copyright in the age of AI, ultimately fostering a sustainable environment for creativity and innovation.

Under the conventional copyright legal system, human writers are afforded protection for their creative works. However, AI challenges established legal principles since it lacks awareness and the capacity to assert rights. The study investigates the substantial human input perspective, which holds that AI is a tool and that the person who codes or controls the AI should own the copyright, with a focus on the Indian setting. It does this by analysing global viewpoints and Indian copyright law¹.

Keywords: AI-generated content, Indian Copyright Act, Authorship, Moral Rights, Test of Skill and Judgment, Modicum of Creativity, Sweat of the Brow, Significant Human Input

Introduction

From just automating repetitive chores, artificial intelligence (AI) has advanced to produce creative pieces of music, literature, and art. With AI systems like OpenAI's GPT-4 able to produce material on their own, a new area of intellectual property rights has emerged. Artificial intelligence (AI)-generated material may imitate the inventiveness usually attributed to human writers, but it also poses a threat to the current legal system, especially concerning copyright law. Copyright law has always placed a strong emphasis on the "author" as a human being who conveys unique ideas or creative vision, and as such, it has been created to safeguard human creativity. In this situation, the issue of whose copyright applies to an AI-generated creative work emerges. The evident problem is that AI cannot possess intellectual property since it is a

¹ Copyright Act, 1957 (India).

computer-based technology and does not have awareness, intent, or legal standing. However, AI-generated art is often indistinguishable from human-created art, whether it be software code, paintings, or poetry. The complexity of establishing authorship and ownership under conventional copyright rules increases with the integration of AI systems into creative processes. Who is the true proprietor of the work—the person who created the AI, the user using it, or someone else?

Significant legal and scholarly discussions have been sparked by this conundrum, especially in countries like India where copyright rights are governed by the Copyright Act of 1957. Like many other national copyright regimes, Indian law is predicated on the idea of safeguarding human intellectual labour. Although the Act's Section 17 designates the "author" as the first copyright holder, the act makes no mention of non-human creators². When it comes to circumstances in which AI-generated works must be copyrighted, this legal loophole produces uncertainty. The major human input approach, which contends that AI should be seen as a tool rather than a creator, is an important idea that is gaining popularity in these talks. This hypothesis states that the person who contributes significantly to the operation of the AI through programming, data input, or other creative direction would be the owner of the copyright. This strategy guarantees that human input stays at the center of the legal system while bringing AI-generated works into compliance with established copyright doctrines³. Examining the major theories that influence the notion of originality in copyright protection is essential to comprehend the intricacies of AI and copyright law. The Modicum of Creativity, Test of Skill and Judgment, and the Sweat of the Brow are among the doctrines that have traditionally been used to assess whether a work is eligible for copyright protection. These theories concentrate on the level of imagination, diligence, and discernment needed to create a piece of art. However, as AI does not use the same creative processes as humans, applying these theories to work made by AI presents some difficulties. This research paper explores the complex link between AI and copyright law by investigating how ownership of AI-generated work might be addressed via the application or modification of these established doctrines. The study presents a paradigm that strikes a compromise between the preservation of human creativity and the reality of AI's expanding involvement in content production using academic research and real-world case law. The study attempts to give a thorough grasp of how copyright law must change to accommodate AI technology by concentrating on the Indian legal landscape and taking into account global viewpoints.

Copyright Law in India and AI

The Copyright Act, of 1957, which established copyright law in India, is predicated on the idea of preserving human intellectual innovation. According to Section 13 of the Act, among other things, "original" literary, dramatic, musical, and creative works are protected by copyright. But under copyright law, originality has generally been associated with human creation, which arises the question: can AI, devoid of human mind, own copyright?

The author, who is referred to as the person who develops the work, is the original owner of the copyright, under Section 17 of the Act. In AI, the work is created by the system itself; nonetheless, it is neither a

² "Ananth, Prashanth, and Tanvi Apte. "Balancing Indian Copyright Law with AI-Generated Content: The Significant Human Input Approach." *Indian Journal of Law and Technology*, 2023. <https://www.ijlt.in/post/balancing-indian-copyright-law-with-ai-generated-content-the-significant-human-input-approach> (Last accessed: October 9, 2024)

³ *Feist Publications, Inc. v. Rural Telephone Service Co.*, 499 U.S. 340 (1991). <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/499/340/> (Last accessed: October 9, 2024)"

human being nor a recognized legal entity with the ability to own property. The legal framework's gap becomes crucial when talking about material created by AI.

The Human Input Approach

Several legal discourses propose the considerable human input approach as a justification for the ownership of information created by artificial intelligence. According to this method, copyright should only be awarded in cases where a human has a substantial creative role in the AI-generated work. The article "Balancing Indian Copyright Law with AI-Generated Content" highlights that humans who design or oversee AI systems should be regarded as the work's author, and AI systems should be seen as tools rather than creators⁴. The substantial human input method is consistent with the conventional copyright ideas, which state that the author is the one who uses judgment, inventiveness, and control throughout the creative process. This method may be used as a starting point to define authorship in works produced by AI.

Doctrines Relevant to AI-Generated Content

1. Modicum of Creativity

The Modicum of Inventiveness Doctrine, which is relevant in India but is mostly adopted in U.S. copyright law, stipulates that a work must possess a minimum degree of inventiveness in order to be protected by copyright. *Feist Publications, Inc. vs. Rural Telephone Service* recognized that compilations or bare facts lacking originality are not eligible for copyright protection⁵. This concept becomes complicated when it comes to AI. Though material produced by AI systems like GPT-4 may seem innovative, can it measure up to human creativity? For example, AI-generated poetry or picture may have unique qualities, but it still has to demonstrate the author's intellectual labour in order to meet the Modicum of Creativity requirement. Given that AI is devoid of human aim and mind, it is unclear whether works produced by AI can live up to this expectation. This necessitates a more sophisticated view of the meaning of "creativity" under copyright law and the question of whether AI systems are capable of exhibiting the required creative spark.

2. Sweat of the Brow Doctrine

The Sweat of the Brow concept, which was historically widely accepted in Indian law and U.K. law, asserts that the labour and effort put into making a work might be enough to grant copyright. In decisions like *Walter v. Lane*⁶, this was upheld. This argument states that a work may still be protected by copyright simply because a great deal of labour was put into its creation, even if the work does not exhibit much originality. However, the applicability of this philosophy becomes controversial when discussing material created by AI. The AI, not the human operator, is the one who is putting in most of the "sweat" in AI-generated works. We would have to recognize AI as the creature doing the work if we were to rigorously follow the Sweat of the Brow theory. However, present rules prohibit AI from owning property or rights⁷. The work done by the human programmer to create the AI and define its parameters might thus be seen

⁴ "Barraclough E, 'Who Owns AI-Generated Content? Modifying the Modicum of Creativity Test for Artificial Intelligence' (2020) 10(3) *Queen Mary Journal of Intellectual Property* 145. Available at: <https://www.aoshearman.com/en/insights/ownership-of-ai-generated-content-in-the-uk> accessed 9 October 2024".

⁵ "Feist Publications, Inc. v. Rural Telephone Service Co., 499 U.S. 340 (1991). <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/499/340/> (Last accessed: October 9, 2024)

⁶ *Walter v. Lane* [1900] AC 539.

⁷ Chhabra H and Pandey KG, 'Balancing Indian Copyright Law with AI-Generated Content' (2020) 25(5) *Journal of Intellectual Property Rights* 298. Available at: <https://www.ijlt.in/post/balancing-indian-copyright-law-with-ai-generated-content-the-significant-human-input-approach> accessed 9 October 2024".

as pertinent "sweat." According to this understanding, the human is once again in the driver's seat and may legally claim ownership of the work produced by AI.

3. Test of Skill and Judgment

The Test of Skill and Judgment emphasizes whether enough skill and judgment were used in the creation of a work, presenting a balanced approach between creativity and labour. The Modicum of Creativity and Sweat of the Brow theories were rejected by the court in the *CCH Canadian Ltd. v. Law Society of Upper Canada* decision, where the court suggested a middle ground instead. It is difficult to apply this criterion to AI-generated content as, once designed, AI systems may create material on their own without the need for human expertise or judgment⁸.

But if we take into account the human operator's involvement in the creation, programming, or curation of the AI's output, their expertise and discernment may serve as the foundation for copyright ownership. According to the Test of Skill and Judgment, this would imply that the person who exerted influence over the AI's operation by choosing datasets, setting settings, or altering algorithms could be regarded as the creator.

Challenges of Applying Traditional Copyright Doctrines to AI

The application of traditional copyright doctrines to AI-generated content presents several challenges:

- 1. Lack of Human creation:** While AI is not cognitively capable of engaging in creative ideas, traditional copyright rules place a strong emphasis on human creation. This makes the application of theories that depend on human cognition, such as the Modicum of Creativity, challenging.
- 2. Autonomous Generation:** AI systems are capable of producing material on their own with little assistance from humans. This calls into question the validity of beliefs that rely on human labour and judgment, such as the Sweat of the Brow and the Test of Skill and Judgment.
- 3. Ownership and Liability:** There are many intricate legal issues when it comes to granting AI ownership. AI cannot be held legally liable or possess property, hence it is hard to decide who should have a copyright. Who should do it—the user, the programmer, or another person?
- 4. Moral Rights:** The application of moral rights, which defend the author's individual rights including the right to credit and the right to preserve the integrity of the work, is another important topic. Further issues result from AI's inability to assert moral rights as an entity devoid of moral awareness.

The Global Perspective: AI and Copyright Laws

AI-generated material is a problem that some nations are now facing. A restricted remedy is offered by the Copyright, Designs, and Patents Act, 1988 in the United Kingdom, which grants copyright to the individual who arranges for the production of computer-generated works. Like in the *Monkey Selfie* case, where the court denied copyright protection to an animal photo on the grounds that copyright protection is meant for humans, U.S. courts have struggled to determine whether AI-generated content satisfies the creative threshold necessary for copyright protection⁹.

Research Objectives

To explore the amended copyright laws in India.

⁸ *CCH Canadian Ltd. vs. Law Society of Upper Canada*, 2004 SCC 13, [2004] 1 S.C.R. 339.

⁹ Samuelson P, 'AI, Copyright, and Creativity: Implications for Indian and Global Copyright Law' (2021) 74(1) *Stanford Law Review* 67. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/jiplp/article-abstract/16/2/124/6010436> accessed 9 October 2024.

To scrutinize the issues related to ownership and authorship in AI generated content with reference to various doctrines/tests.

To assess the implications of copyright law in AI generated content.

Research Questions

What are the amended copyright laws in India?

What are the issues related to ownership and authorship in AI generated content referencing various doctrines/tests?

How is copyright law applied to AI-created content?

Analysis

AI technology has brought a new wave of innovation, changing various industries and the way creativity is expressed. The possibilities range from automatically generated content to algorithmically composed music. AI technologies are more and more capable of creating works that challenge traditional concepts of authorship and creativity. While it is true that such improvements are proliferating, which raises important questions about applying existing copyright law designed pre-AI to this relatively new phenomenon, AI may not adequately address the specific content complexities that AI-generated items introduce.

This paper investigates the complex interaction between the AI revolution and copyright law, how these two spheres intersect and influence one another. It is here that lies the central question of authorship: who owns rights in works created by AI, and what is originality in a world where machines can mimic human creativity? But the meaning of the questions goes deeper than only being pure and legal questions affecting creators, industries, and society themselves.

As we step through this fluid nexus, it is clear that there is a need to rebalance the copyright frameworks and ensure that innovation occurs on an equal footing with human creator rights. This paper is an attempt to comprehensively analyse the current state of copyright law in the presence of AI, outlining various challenges, possible solutions, and the need for adjustments in legal principles to reconcile the facts of this revolution. This analysis will help to dissect the digital universe, and bring forth a more balanced approach to creativity and intellectual property considerations in the digital age.

The rapid development and wide application of AI technologies have transformed many sectors of society, economy, and daily life. This revolution encompasses a few key aspects such as technological advancement, application across industries, and economic transformation.

The Artificial Intelligence Revolution will represent a basic change in the way we engage with technology and its possible implications for our lives and the world.

Section 17 of the Copyright Act specifically deals with the issue of "copyright ownership" under such jurisdictions as the United States.

Understanding Section 17 is very important to the creators, employers, and those involved in publishing or distributing works because it decides who owns the rights of a creative work and when those rights may change. Similarly, the "idea-expression dichotomy" is an essential principle of copyright law that distinguishes between ideas and the expression of those ideas. To understand the ownership of AI-generated content, it is crucial to highlight the above-noted laws.

This study invests in a very fast-changing area where copyright law intersects with artificial intelligence, giving prominence to the question of ownership of copyright of work produced by AI. Traditional

copyright theories like "modicum of creativity," "test of skill and judgment," and "sweat of the brow" are hard to apply to AI-generated works because they rest on the concept of human authorship.

Artificial intelligence technologies, especially those based on machine learning and neural networks, have advanced to the point where they can produce material on their own that is often identical to human-created works, including text, photographs, music, and videos.

It is essential to investigate how current legal systems, especially those in India, can handle the ownership issue around such artificial intelligence-generated material. The subject matter of this paper addresses a "modicum of creativity," which is the criteria according to which a work is required to have some quantum of creativity and at the same time must be independent creation to qualify for copyrights.

Although artificial intelligence (AI) may produce material that seems very creative and complex, it can be difficult to decide if a machine's repurposing of previously collected data qualifies as "creative." AI systems' outputs lack the spontaneity and originality often associated with human writing since they are trained to analyse data and adhere to present algorithms. This makes it more difficult to apply the "modicum of creativity" criteria to works created by AI. Similar difficulties arise with the "test of skill and judgment" philosophy, which evaluates the level of skill and judgment required to create a work. Even if AI systems may not be able to make decisions with the same competence and judgment as humans, the programmers and users who help shape these systems' operating guidelines and design certainly do. It's still unclear, however, if the machine, its human developers, or the people who engage with it are the canters of innovation. An alternative viewpoint is provided by the "sweat of the brow" theory, which traditionally provided copyright protection based on the effort expended in the production of a work. This idea implies that the substantial work needed to create and train AI systems may be compared to the work involved in more conventional kinds of creative expression, even if it is no longer generally recognized¹⁰. However, this strategy goes against contemporary copyright laws, which value creativity above everything else. As the study goes on, it becomes evident that there are several difficulties in applying conventional copyright theories to work created by AI, including issues with authorship, uniqueness, and the creative process itself. The inability of AI systems to own copyright in the conventional sense due to their lack of legal personality is a significant challenge. Furthermore, it's unclear whether AI-generated works satisfy the originality requirements for copyright protection since they often draw on enormous databases of previously published material. Moreover, the decision-making process of AI is often opaque, which makes evaluating originality and creativity more difficult. Finally, by restricting the public domain, too wide protection for work created by AI may discourage innovation. The report suggests the "significant human input" requirement as a possible remedy to these problems. According to this concept, the level of human engagement in the creative process should determine whether copyright protection is awarded for material created by AI. According to this criterion, eligibility for copyright would be determined by several elements, including the AI system's design and development, training data selection, and degree of human supervision over the content creation process. This strategy finds a compromise between solving the particular difficulties presented by AI-generated works and ensuring that human creativity and invention are acknowledged¹¹. The flexibility of the major human input method is one of its main benefits. It can

¹⁰ "Narayan S, 'The Role of Human Input in AI-Generated Content: Legal and Ethical Considerations' (2023) 18(4) Indian Journal of Intellectual Property Law 87. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/jiplp/article/18/12/841/7331468> accessed 9 October 2024.

¹¹ Yanisky-Ravid, Shlomit. "Generating Rembrandt: Artificial Intelligence, Copyright, and Accountability in the 3A Era—The Human-Like Authors Are Already Here—A New Model." *Michigan State Law Review*, vol. 2017, no. 4, 2017, pp. 659-726. <https://digitalcommons.law.msu.edu/lr/vol2017/iss4/3/> (Last accessed: October 9, 2024)"

handle different levels of human engagement, from little to no contact with AI systems that have already been taught to comprehensive supervision and editing of AI-generated results. Because of its versatility, it may be used in a variety of AI content generation use cases. Additionally, by emphasizing human input, this strategy preserves the creative incentives at the heart of copyright law while acknowledging the crucial role that users and developers play in influencing work created by AI. The strong human input strategy has drawbacks in addition to its benefits. It may be difficult to define what is "significant" human input without doing a case-by-case study, especially when numerous people are involved in the development of an AI system or its results. Furthermore, more openness in the creation of AI and content could be required to enable regulators and courts to determine how much human intervention there is. However, this strategy offers a viable foundation for resolving copyright concerns brought up by AI-generated material, particularly in India. The article also takes into account several strategies that have been used or suggested in various legal systems¹². The "work-for-hire" philosophy, for instance, views AI as a tool and considers the entity in charge of the AI system to be its creator. For copyright reasons, some academics have even suggested giving AI limited legal personality, opening the door to the prospect of AI and humans co-authoring works. Alternative suggestions include releasing AI-generated compositions into the public domain or developing a novel, sui generis kind of intellectual property safeguarding only AI-generated material. These worldwide viewpoints draw attention to the need for international coordination and discussion as AI technologies advance. In conclusion, the report suggests that in order to handle the copyright issues raised by AI-generated work, India should use a modified version of the substantial human input method. This strategy gives the flexibility required to adjust to the quickly changing environment of AI technology while remaining consistent with India's Copyright Act, of 1957, which emphasizes originality and authorship. The substantial human input approach, which emphasizes human contributions, may strike a balance between the rights of AI developers, users, and the general public, guaranteeing that copyright law will continue to encourage innovation and creativity in the AI era. The report proposes legislative clarification of the Copyright Act to specifically target AI-generated material and provide standards for evaluating considerable human contribution in order to facilitate successful adoption. Judicial interpretation and regulatory guidelines will also be essential in order to improve this framework and make sure it can be adjusted to various use cases. More openness standards for AI's role in content production might also help to improve the accuracy of evaluations of human contribution. In summary, the nexus between AI and copyright law poses new problems that call for creative solutions. The substantial human involvement approach preserves the fundamentals of copyright law while adjusting to the reality of AI-assisted production. It provides a flexible and equitable framework for assessing copyright ownership of material created by AI. India can guarantee that its copyright laws stay applicable and functional in the face of rapid technology advancements by using this strategy.

Conclusion

It will become more and more important to modify our copyright rules to account for these technical improvements as AI develops. By highlighting human participation in the development of AI-generated content, the major human input approach as proposed in the Indian context offers a viable remedy. We may bring AI-generated works into compliance with the established norms of copyright law by mandating that a human maintain control over the AI and its outputs. But there are several difficulties with this

¹² Nguyen M, 'AI Creativity and Copyright Ownership: A Global Perspective' (2019) 44(3) *Journal of International Law* 210. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/jiplp/article-abstract/15/7/536/5837190> accessed 9 October 2024".

solution. Courts will have to establish precise rules on what "significant" human contribution is and how to evaluate the amount of effort or ingenuity put into producing AI-generated works. Additionally, as AI systems lack the moral agency to assert such rights, the subject of moral rights in material created by AI remains unanswered.

In the end, a mix of human labour, imagination, and control will probably determine who owns information created by AI. We may start addressing the legal issues of AI and copyright law by improving current copyright doctrines like the Modicum of Creativity, Sweat of the Brow, and the Test of Skill and Judgment. AI is still a tool in the hands of humans for the time being, and as such, humans are still in charge of the work it produces.

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