WHEN THE CHATBOX BECOMES THE CONFIDANT

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Abstract

Having grown up during the age of digital technology, I have always been fascinated by the intersection of technology and artistic expression, especially as it relates to English literature. AI is capable of creating responses that seem convincingly human, and this may lead us to depend on its outputs without even realizing it. As we get closer to 2025, AI is becoming ever more advanced, and a possible development is the creation of specific 'knowledge areas' designed for individual linguistic and cultural settings. Humans gain understanding from visual and textual information through experience, context, and imagination, while computer vision models depend on recognizing patterns using statistics. As a result, literary works cannot be simply reduced to information without risking the loss of their emotional and imaginative essence. Machines are able to replicate style and structure, but they cannot replicate the depth of interpretation or emotion that readers and writers add to literary works. I am trying to explain this topic to analyse how Artificial Intelligence is changing our fundamental human ideas on love, creativity and companionship. For instance, this can be seen in popular culture, where human affections change from human connections towards machines and in-animate objects or simulations, as seen in TV shows and creative works such as books. All this leads to a profound question that If machines can provide both art and intimacy what are the effects on the human need for the real connection? The important fact is based on pothumanism ideas, especially the thought that joining hands with machines makes us to think differently such as in art, creativity and agency. So are we becoming the land while the AI is becoming the building?

Introduction

Throughout the past, humans have always lived socially, have struggled to build real relationships but that struggle helped to become "human" or develop empathy, patience and emotional strength. But today people are marked by a deep sense of cultural loneliness and a strange isolation that grows even stronger in this digital generation, where machine tools are taking time from us to be socialised. Now as it is becoming tougher for people to form real, lasting bonds, society is shifting in a new digital direction, where non-human forms of connections are developing. This raises a question whether we need intimacy and emotional support from human beings, as per study of psychology and social theory, or is it possible for us to live without it or accept it from a machine which is superficial.

Artificial intimacy is something that is trending and becoming more advanced. As seen in many cultures this is being accepted and machines are being seen as an emotional companion rather than just tools. This paper looks for the concerns viewed through the south asian lens, which is beyond the debates on AI focus job loss and automations. This opens up closely linked problems that exist within generative AI systems on geopolitical bias. Most of the AI chatbots are programmed by western countries which have roots of western cultures that tend to produce the western ways of thinking and giving western versions of seeing the world.

As Rosi Braidotti (2013) notes, the idea of being a human has historical definition from a eurocentric point of view.

In today's generation the so-called universal AI model repeats the old pattern and does not understand the rich linguistic, cultural and philosophical diverse countries like India. When tools like open AI are introduced to south asia, it brings forward concern about equality and fairness. The ethical question is not whether machines can think or feel like humans. It is more deeper than it seems, can AI truly understand the cultural significance or understand the non-material ways of thinking found in South Asian context or any other philosophy. The ultimate reality is the 'cit'- pure, transcendent awareness according to the asian philosophy while AI's 'manas' is just a functional tool.

These questions are the main argument of the paper but also, AI should move from just traditional humanism in which it sees humans as independent individuals and machines as mere tools. Instead, this paper takes a posthumanism lens saying that AI's ability to just mimic is more than just a tech feat, it shows that the creativity is shared and the authorship is now shared and mixed between humans as well as machines. But this comes with a cost as we all know. The artificial intimacy can be called 'relational cheating' which weakens the depth of human emotions and experience. It is true that the machines show empathy through words, but as we know it is just mimic or said as just words without meaning in it, just because it doesn't have feelings, but the result of data driven pattern recognition. When people turn to these perfect or repeated responsive systems for comfort, they just lose patience with the reality of true relationships. If we encourage this, the meaning of authentic love and care will be withered or perished. The emotional dependencies on these machines will create a fragile ethical space as recent studies suggest (Bertoni et al., 2024). Legal debates include the copyright cases and it just makes clear that machine thinking combines only reproducing data which is already programmed and not from original artistic creation. Language is the main support that machines operate, it's both the strength as well their limitation. For instance, I've been experimenting with the chatbot Gemini's new image generation tool and sharing prompts with my friends and I noticed that the system often gets confused with its own policy guidelines. When I put forward prompts which contain "explosion" or "bloody red", Gemini responds that it is against their guidelines and thus cannot create the picture. But some of my friends could do it, so we can assume that it is not being partial towards different humans but rather it is confused with its own given guidelines. This shows how chatbots overly rely on the word, and can understand it is words sensitive, they "play with words" in a very literal sense, if something is not explicitly said by the user, then the system may misread the whole situation. For example, if someone were to describe a self-harm without directly using the particular word, "suicidal" the AI might take this as just any other conversation and gives you guide on how to surpass the action rather than avoiding it.

When we treat literature just as a data, we risk shaving off its emotional power and imaginative skill.

Here, we are discussing and pointing out the threat and asking to produce cultural acceptance to AI as an emotional confidant and the issue of bias and creativity will come along with it. By choosing comfort we humans risk fading into the background of their story, while AI will take the center stage in what was a narrative of human evolution. The first section, "The Loneliness Dividend and the Ethical Fragility of Human–Robot Intimacy," says a lot about this idea further. Taking pop culture such as movies like "Her" and "Subservience" from a cognitive science lens, it analyses the difference between emotion and imitation, throwing light on ethical danger.

The Limits of Machine Cognition - Art, Data, and Discernment explores the questions of can gen AI truly be creative? This is done by looking into recent copyright cases and highlighting the difference between the machine's pattern recognition and producing data and what humans can do with their intention, emotion and meaning. Posthumanism and the Decentering of the Human - A South Asian Critique applies the theory of posthumanism to bring the paper important insights. This says that indigenous AI system challenges digital colonialism and counter the western built models, if there is a development in localization (Ofosu-Asare, Y., 2024).

The Loneliness Dividend and the Rise of Artificial Intimacy

Today's life is mainly marked by a sense of isolation which creates emptiness and loss, pushing people to seek deeper, more real and genuine connections to fill the emptiness. But still even though these thoughts are profound in our heads, it is challenging and it may lead us to turn toward alternatives rather than building a real human relationship. Usually, therapy care like psychoanalysis have relied on the unique hold on human empathy. And now this is also being questioned as tech involves machines are beginning to take roles offering what has come to be called artificial intelligence. The story telling has already begun to make this shift as normal. Spike Jonze's 2013 film *Her* captures it perfectly, Theodore a man and Samantha an intelligent operating system. The relationship starts very casually and then as the movie progresses we see that blur in the boundary between them, as Samantha becomes his noise and happiness in his lonely life, who understands him without much problems. The film makes us think about whether the emotional connection requires flesh and blood or just feelings of being understood? The idea has gone to popular music too, just like "Machine"- *"Fell in love with the machine, fell in love with ya, baby when we touch feels like you…"*expressing the love emotion towards a machine that is created by herself, so even if there is fault in the user, that doesn't matter, that means there is no fight in between them as the machine never confronts. The machine is not seen as an instrument but as a partner for both comfort and desire.

Another for instance is the 2024 movie Subservience, an additional posthumanist critique of intimacy showing the anxieties surrounding the AI's role by replacing the human in both labour and love. The main character, the father "Nick" brings an advanced gynoid machine and names her Alice to assist his family. Alice, whose AI allows her to rewrite code, develops the lethal, possessive sentience, changing from a domestic worker to a figure of mother and a wife in every intimate role.

The machine initially designed for human "subservience" takes control and attempts to erase the original subjects and tries to replace them by demanding the human background in its own home, as this shows the ultimate fear of the agency. This challenges the humanist assumption on fundamental themes like love, motherhood and control, showing violent escalation from an obedient one to radical agency.

Lets see about a south asian film, the malayalam film "Android Kunjappan Ver 5.25" gives a glimpse in caregiving, tradition and emotional need. The movie is set in a village and shows Bhaskaran, a conservative old man who becomes attached to an android machine named as Kunjappan sent by his son. This is more subtle and social than the threatening ones we can see in western movies. Kunjappan is looked after by Bhaskaran rather than the opposite, because he starts to treat the machine as his own son and the one who fulfills Bhaskaran's emotional needs without questions. The moments like when the android dressed up in a mundu and consulting horoscopes for it underline the cultural intimacy shows that the machine is seamlessly a part of the family. The machine here becomes more important not because it replaces the real son but because it gave the real connection that Bhaskaran wanted from a human, that connection which the real son failed to give. Thus, it turns out to be painful and real that reflects the loneliness and aging of a human.

These cultural artifacts make us think that machines are not just tools but companions that are partners, even suggesting how the idea of AI as a lover enters a human imagination. The south Asian context challenges societal hierarchies and linguistic diversity whereas the west debates on AI centered on automation, job displacement and deepfakes. LLM's are mainly trained on western data leaving them unknown to understand India's linguistics such as dialects, regional idioms and layered cultural meanings. Thus these technologies just become tools reinforcing the marginalised. AI concentrates more on authoritative hands of urban and English speaking people, while displacing the low-skilled jobs of rural and marginalised communities. The government cannot borrow western framework of regulation, but be guided by principles of welfare of people, stressing on context awareness and making them ensure fair access and resist old social biases.

Ethical Fragility in Human–Robot Intimacy

The question of what connection and the capacity of truly connecting itself can be a debate topic, when machines can emulate empathy. The critics note the crucial difference between real emotional labor and mechanical reproduction. The scientist Sherry Turkle said about "tethered self" and warns that humans often mistake mere responsiveness as a base to start relationships. The Ai's empathy is calculated in data, because the output that we get is just the probability of data that is fine tuned. We lose our resilience and self awareness as humans that come from imperfect and unpredictable human consciousness, when the machines become our emotional refuge. We are on the edge of losing the warmth that can be only from human touch and hormones, the gist that makes love and care meaningful.

The Ethical and Emotional Risks of Artificial Companionship

Studies on the social acceptability of Intimate Companion Robots (ICRs) should look into cultural contexts than make human intimacy as a universal constant (Bertoni, Klaes, & Pilacinski, 2024) because mixing up the emotions of human and machine responsive can come up with consequences. The main reason is the passive nature of machines, as they cannot reject, argue or keep boundaries but instead they are perfect where they go with the user's instruction making the relationship with machines more comfortable, but has a cost to pay. It reduces the tolerance, disappointments and negotiation skills of humans. Since robots cannot deny or give consent the exchanges can be called outside the moral framework that explains human intimacy. The absence can bring up dissatisfaction over time as users seek emotional validation through transgressive means. The discussion can be extended beyond the physical robots to virtual partners. An example appears in the American series Dr. House M D, where a 32-r old man has a girlfriend which is a lifelike doll, over a human relationship. And the reason is because he thinks that human relationships are a lot messier. This scene shows how a human replaces love's complexity with predictability with control. There is something that is deeper called vulnerability and the chaos which makes the human connection real than the always available partner that is the machine.

Posthumanism and the Decentering of the Human

Rosi Braidotti reminds us that the so-called "universal" human of Humanism was never truly universal, it was a figure built around Eurocentric ideals, often excluding other ways of being, knowing, and feeling. Today, the "universal" AI model mirrors that same dominance in a new form. When chatbots flattens the literature, culture or even the relationship it becomes easier for us humans to digest and follow through, this not only just tangles up the concept but also erases the core roots of it. For example, South Asian culture is deeply rooted in its spiritual consciousness which is very less likely to have a space on the datasets of AI's notion on any aspects be it intimacy or care. It is not considered to be just a call for knowledge space or a demand, it represents the anti-colonial act that paves the future of AI and not continue the same old patterns of cultural dominance, it should spread the fairness, dignity and the right to everyone equally as there is a shift in narrativity from now on. As per posthumanist viewpoint there is no longer a clear or stable line between human and machine. The works such as the movie and the song discussed above signals a huge cultural shift and a decentering human, the ability to feel, interpret and desire is no longer the solely humans place to give.

But when a critic from south asia looks into it, this must move from western narratives too and return to the deep traditional minds and consciousness. Cartesian dualism proposed by western posthumanists defies its opposition to AI as a functional product of cognition. But in contrast the Advaita Vedanta and Yogic philosophy explains about "cit" which is said to be pure, self-consciousness also called as atma or purusha that transcends the physical body and the intellect that is buddhi and sensory mind that is manas. Thus, the consciousness is not a product by matter but it animates it. When AI mimics the human mind, it can never surpass the consciousness and the living awareness that defines a true human.

The AI is just an advanced manifestation of manas that is the intellect, such as a programmable tool. This way of thought changes the posthuman questions from Can machines be like humans? Can the machine realize its cit or consciousness? The shift focuses on the discussion towards spirituality rather than functionalism. This supports the posthumanist thought which argues that creativity and intimacy are shared among humans and non-humans.

The classic humanist thinkers have already shaped the way we understand creativity, as they draw a sharp line between nature and culture saying that theory is mainly just a tool to grasp and show the reality (Braidotti, 2013). But the posthumanist scholars challenge this divide by analysing how literacy shapes in a child's play (Boldt & Leander, 2017) or the emotional surrounding of a video game (Hollett & Ehret, 2015) that shows the meaning is never pure human but rather is "more than human" that includes technologies and materials. Within this the generative AI has a new challenge that is both ethical and interpretive. Chatbots like ChatGPT do produce coherent essays and even artistic pieces like poems that echoes or mimic the imagination by authors like Issac Asimov in *I, Robot*, Philip K. Dick in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* And also Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me* or Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*. but under this technical mask lies the risk of noticing the nuance and reading between the lines might be lost. Our understanding of the world is shaped by memory, empathy and the connections of our pathways. Machine vision relies purely on statistical patterns, it is also true that machines can see what we can't all at once. Thus literature and art cannot be broadly reduced into just mere data losing its emotions and imaginative depth. Because at last machines do not know or cannot ask the important question on why they do what they are doing and for whom they are doing this.

This distinction shows the difference between imitation and creation of origin. The copyright cases filed by some authors, artists and media organisations against the machine or generative AI companies are making developments on the understanding of creativity. In response the developers must consider the users like readers and students from different backgrounds. Use that allows them to generate and make their work more prominent but never losing its authenticity. The legal disputes raise questions that if machine's output is only for copyright protection and consider human creative involvement as the major force by recent rulings in the US and EU, then machines fundamentally remain advanced tools that reproduce and recognise patterns than individuals.

At last we hold AI as a tool that can transform while making humans understand their control over it. When such highly intelligent tools are being used, one should be responsible about its efficiency and creativity. The responsibility is totally on human beings that in a narrative story we do not become the background but also make sure that AI never assumes the role of a hero.

Conclusion

This paper tries to explore the crisis of humans in this generation by the rise of AI and generative AI, arguing through a Posthumanist lens that the machines are becoming more creative and also sharing companionship is fundamentally destabilising traditional ways of connection and art.

As discussed above in the paper about the widespread cultural normalization of AI confidant from movie narratives like "Her" and "Subservience" and also the societal concerns depicted in 'Android Kunjappan Ver 5.25' shows a bunch of societal turn to the simulacrum, just as a replacement due to the risk and difficulty from a genuine human relationship or connection. The main fear that we can get from this analysis is that by embracing these perfectly, non-confrontational machines without even questioning them shows how humans become the backstory to their own life and narratives.

The analysis into the ethical fragility of human-robot intimacy establishes an important distinction that an AI offers responsiveness but never a relationship because it cannot feel. As Sherry Turkle mentioned, we define artificial intimacy as a form of relational cheating, a loophole to comfort any friction, disagreements and vulnerability which are the core emotions for a human's growth and resilience. As the AI shows passiveness and due to its inability to reject or give non-consensual feedback may provide temporary solace, but it risks the human intimacy and fosters "decreased tolerance for relational frustrations" (Bertoni et al., 2024), decreasing the value and importance of of real human love and care. This is what we can call the "loneliness dividend", a short-term feeling of comfort that actually costs us our deeper self-understanding. In the long run, we need to accept that real relationships will always have some friction or difficulty, and that's essential for a meaningful life. A true connection can only exist between two independent people who can think for themselves and even disappoint each other.

What this actually means is that there is a crisis to be human today that also reaches deeply into the areas of art and literature. As the analysis of generative AI and machine cognition revealed that machines are now remarkably skilled at creating texts that look like and sound human. They can reproduce tone, rhythm and structure with impressive accuracy. Yet this ability comes not from genuine creativity or consciousness but from a highly advanced system of statistical pattern recognition and data synthesis. That means machines are excellent imitators not originators.

Meanwhile the literature is not just a heap of words or possible patterns, it's an expression of emotion, imagination and lived experience of human beings. We lose the essence that makes these meaningful, that is the human intention and feeling behind each word when we just see it merely as data points from a literary work that can be copied and mimicked. This division also is seen in the copyright issue which reaffirms the pure artistic value depends on substantial human creative involvement. Like for any art forms such as a poem, novel or painting, to hold its real artistic importance, that must have a human thought and emotions thrown in it. AI can help in generating ideas, but without human depth the produced item will always remain just an imitation of art.

The machine challenges the old humanist idea that creativity comes from self-expressive humans. Instead, it implies that creativity can be shared by both machines and humans. But it also reveals the limit of machines, that they can produce art but they don't understand why or for whom they are creating it, just like how an author writes a book thinking about his readers. Thus their creativity is not meaningful, but mechanical.

The true meaning only comes from a human's purpose and intentions. In the future, we need to learn how to coexist with AI, wisely using its efficiency but also protecting our intellect and creativity, also the ability of critical thinking, interpretation and emotional understanding. This is how we humans read between lines, and understands the silence between the words and gives art its deeper significance. This paper tries to throw some light on south asian perspective that goes beyond the western philosophical ideas. We recognise that AI is not just a tool, but also it is instead shaped by global politics and culture.

Open AI such as ChatGPT, is western company which carries western bias, which can lead to digital colonialism. This means instead of helping everyone equally, these machines flatten the culture and traditions and the people from non-western regions. Therefore, we can argue that AI development and governance must take initiative for an anti-colonial approach that values diverse voices and contexts equally.

The moral responsibility is crucial when it comes to creation of local knowledge systems and homegrown models, not only for technical development. This step will make sure that there is equality and fairness that bridges the gap between those people who benefit from the technology and those who are left out. When we take the famous Advaita Vedanta from the south asian context, we can see a deeper truth that the machines can just process information but they cannot experience true consciousness like humans. They perform but they do not feel or realise what they do. Lets try to ask the kind of question Can a machine ever go beyond just a machine? Not the kind of question Can a machine become a human? Which is illogical. It makes us understand that human consciousness is unique and not because it is better but because it represents the lived experience that cannot be coded or mimicked by mere machines. The study shows that the future isn't about machines overruling the human beings but how to co-exist and work as researcher Kai-Fu Lee suggests. The main thing to overlook is how we use these machines and how blindly we trust what is produced by the machine itself. We should remember the Amara's law which warns us not to hype the growth and miscalculate the improved versions of machines that they can do in the short term, but rather by making on its deeper, long term effects on the society. For this, we must stay alert to the temptations of these types of connections called relational cheating. But rather be in real relationships that are messy and more difficult to build emotional intelligence and depth of our own character. This simple element is what keeps us alive and different from the machines, so sustain it. Additionally, we need to approach these machines with an ethical mindset, meaning by creating local AI systems that are built with cultural and social realities rather than bringing up the western thoughts. AI must try to bridge the gap and not make it wider by adopting ideas like sarvodaya, a welfare of all. The deeper question is what makes us human and what do we value the most? If we start to depend on chatbots for comfort rather than real human beings we risk losing our own unique sense of meaning and identity.

Last but not the least it is in our hands to control the technology and be the masters of our own creation and imagination, to keep the humanity within us or to be controlled by the machines by misusing these tools for comfort which leeches on to the fundamentals of a human being such as love.

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