AI and
Policy Analysis

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AI in Policy-Making

Agenda Setting

Providing early warnings and prioritization of critical topics

Formulation and Decision Making

Enabling evidence-based decisions through simulations, scenario modeling, and optimization techniques

Implementation

Enhancing efficiency and people satisfaction

Evaluation

Offering real-time feedback and identifies areas for improvement

AI as a Tool for Government Policy Analysts

Data Processing: Machine learning systems process vast datasets, identifying trends and patterns that inform policy options.

Scenario Modeling: AI simulates potential outcomes of policy decisions, allowing for risk analysis.

Briefing Note Automation: Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT draft policy briefs, saving time for higher-order analysis.

Real-Time Feedback: AI systems monitor and evaluate policy impacts in real time, enhancing adaptive decision-making.

AI and Policy Analysis Outside the Government

- **Track Public Sentiment:** Sentiment analysis tools gauge public opinion on key issues, shaping advocacy strategies.

- **Improving Evidence-Based Advocacy**: AI tools enable civil society to analyze complex datasets, identifying trends and crafting data-driven arguments.

- **Craft Persuasive Campaigns:** AI identifies influential narratives to support policy recommendations.

- **Track and Monitor Policy Changes:** Automated systems track and policy developments and their implications.

- **Facilitating Stakeholder Engagement**: AI-powered platforms enhance communication with citizens, donors, and policymakers, building support for policy initiatives.

Policy Analysis Platforms with AI

Key Features

- Real-Time Legislative and Policy Tracking, Monitoring, and Updates
- Policy and Legislative Summaries
- Comprehensive Coverage
- Predictive Insights and Trends
- Collaboration, Workflow, and Stakeholder Engagement

The end of policy analysts?

Policy advising in government centers on the analysis of public problems and the developing of recommendations for dealing with them. In carrying out this work, policy analysts consult a variety of sources and work to synthesize that body of evidence into useful decision support documents commonly called briefing notes. Advances in natural language processing (NLP) have led to the continuing development of tools that can undertake a similar task. Given a brief prompt, a large language model (LLM) can synthesize information in content databases. This article documents the findings from an experiment that tested whether contemporary NLP technology is capable of producing public policy relevant briefing notes that expert evaluators judge to be useful. The research involved two stages. First, briefing notes were created using three models: NLP generated; human generated; and NLP generated/human edited. Next, two panels of retired senior public servants (with only one panel informed of the use of NLP in the experiment) were asked to judge the briefing notes using a heuristic evaluation rubric. The findings indicate that contemporary NLP tools were not able to, on their own, generate useful policy briefings. However, the feedback from the expert evaluators indicates that automatically generated briefing notes might serve as a useful supplement to the work of human policy analysts. And the speed with which the capabilities of NLP tools are developing, supplemented with access to a larger corpus of previously prepared policy briefings and other policy-relevant material, suggests that the quality of automatically generated briefings may improve significantly in the coming years. The article concludes with reflections on what such improvements might mean for the future practice of policy analysis.

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- Is contemporary NLP technology capable of producing public policy relevant briefing notes that expert evaluators judge to be **plausible, useful, and persuasive**?
  - NLP generated
  - human generated
  - NLP generated/human edited
- AI is not capable of independently performing policy analysis that is objectively plausible, persuasive, and useful.

A hybrid approach to policy analysis

Transition to Strategic Roles

Ethical Oversight: Ensuring AI applications in policy-making align with ethical standards.

Stakeholder Engagement: Facilitating discussions between AI systems, policymakers, and the public.

Policy Design and Evaluation: Using AI insights to develop and assess complex policy frameworks.

Collaborative Roles with AI

AI systems generate initial analyses, which analysts refine and contextualize.

Analysts act as intermediaries, translating AI insights into actionable recommendations for policymakers.

Media and AI Potentials for Policy Analysis

Tracking Public Policy Developments

Simplifying Legislative and Policy Analysis

Investigative, Data-driven Journalism

Audience Engagement and Transparency