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Phone : +91 94896 71437 - info@iledu.in / Chairman@iledu.in

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EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF GENERATIVE AI ON EFFICIENCY AND ETHICAL PRACTICES IN CORPORATE LEGAL DIVISIONS

AUTHOR- MANYATA DAVE* & DR MAYURA SABNE**,

* STUDENT AT FACULTY AT UNITEDWORLD SCHOOL OF LAW, KARNAVATI UNIVERSITY

** ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT UNITEDWORLD SCHOOL OF LAW, KARNAVATI UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The influences of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) on corporate legal divisions form the core subject of this research paper through an assessment of efficiency alongside ethical implications. AI adoption within the legal sector has done away with conventional practices through its ability to automate standard operations which include contract assessment and compliance oversight and legal investigation tasks. The deployment of Generative Artificial Intelligence brings essential legal and ethical complications because it affects data security along with creating biased algorithms and demands protocols for responsibility and system clarity. The research design incorporates doctrinal and empirical methods to analyze the two-sided effects that GenAI generates in legal operational systems. This study examines GenAI benefits and challenges along with governance requirements for legal settings by analyzing industry data and case law as well as regulatory guidelines and survey insights. Reliable governance policies together with ethical rules and permanent human control systems must exist to allow responsible GenAI technology integration into legal workplaces.

Keywords - Generative AI, Corporate Legal Divisions, Legal Ethics, AI Efficiency, Legal Compliance, AI Governance

1. Introduction

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has shifted corporate legal divisions to a new era of legal service delivery. The combined power of OpenAI's GPT-4 and Anthropic's Claude along with Kira Systems performs demanding legal functions which generates better productivity and faster results and economic savings. General Artificial Intelligence serves to transform legal department operational models across business tasks that include contract automation and regulatory compliance assessment.

Businesses using GenAI need to consider multiple dangers that accompany their operational benefits. Conditional AI usage creates ethical problems about data privacy vulnerabilities and system biases together with technical privacy violations yet professionals in law work to define who bears responsibility for wrongful AI output. This document evaluates the potential benefits alongside the potential risks which emerge from GenAI application with an aim to understand proper governance practices in modern times.

In addition to its core functionalities, GenAI is also being leveraged to enhance due diligence, streamline litigation discovery, and provide predictive analytics on case outcomes based on historical precedents. These tools can

analyze thousands of legal documents in a fraction of the time it would take a human team, significantly improving turnaround times and minimizing clerical errors. As corporate legal departments face increasing pressures to optimize legal spend and drive business value, GenAI presents itself as a powerful solution that aligns legal operations with broader organizational goals.

However, the use of AI-generated legal content, while efficient, raises fundamental concerns around transparency and explainability. Most GenAI tools function as "black boxes"—they offer outputs without fully disclosing how decisions are made. In legal contexts, where reasoning, interpretation, and accountability are paramount, this opacity creates uncertainty. Legal professionals must now grapple with not just what the AI recommends, but whether it can be trusted and validated under applicable legal standards. This is particularly problematic in high-stakes areas such as employment law, mergers and acquisitions, and compliance with jurisdiction-specific regulations.

The regulatory landscape, both in India and internationally, is still evolving in response to GenAI's rise. While jurisdictions like the European Union are advancing risk-based frameworks through the AI Act, others—including India—are still exploring the contours of AI governance under existing laws like the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. In the absence of specific statutory guidance on legal AI, corporate legal divisions must take a proactive approach, combining internal policies with industry best practices to ensure ethical use.

Ultimately, the question is no longer whether GenAI will be adopted in legal departments—it already has. The critical challenge is ensuring that such adoption is intelligent, responsible, and well-regulated. This research paper proceeds to analyze the efficiency benefits GenAI offers to legal divisions, the ethical and legal risks it introduces, and the governance mechanisms that must be built to harness its potential while safeguarding legal integrity.

2. Understanding Generative AI in Legal Practice

2.1 Definition and Core Functionalities

Generative AI (GenAI) is a branch of artificial intelligence that employs deep learning models—particularly large language models (LLMs)—to create new content based on existing data. These models, including GPT-4 by OpenAI and Claude by Anthropic, are capable of generating coherent legal documents, drafting clauses, summarizing case law, and answering complex legal questions.[1229] The core technologies powering these capabilities include:

Natural Language Processing (NLP): Helps GenAI understand and respond in human-like legal language.

Deep Learning & Neural Networks: Enables pattern recognition and content generation at a granular level.

Transformer Architecture: The foundation for most modern LLMs, facilitating context-aware responses and relevance.

These features allow GenAI to mimic legal reasoning, extract precedent-based logic, and automate repetitive legal tasks, improving efficiency and output accuracy in legal departments.

2.2 Historical Development and Legal Sector Adoption[1230]

AI's roots in the legal profession can be traced back to the 1970s, beginning with early expert systems like the Taxman Project at Stanford. This was followed by the digitization of legal databases such as Westlaw and LexisNexis in the 1980s and 1990s, which marked the first practical use of AI for legal research.

[1229] Deloitte, *Generative AI: A Guide for Corporate Legal Departments*, Deloitte (2023), https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/legal/articles/generative-ai-corporate-legal.html.
[1230] LeewayHertz, *Generative AI for Legal Operations* (2023), https://www.leewayhertz.com/generative-ai-for-legal-operations/.

By the 2010s, legal tech began using machine learning for predictive analytics. Applications such as Lex Machina allowed legal professionals to predict case outcomes based on historical data—an early demonstration of AI's potential in strategy-building.

The revolutionary transition during the 2020s introduced Generative AI as a paradigm shift. Modern legal AI tools help lawyers by conducting research along with creating contracts and summarizing court depositions and identifying clauses that violate regulations. Corporate law firms have experienced rapid adoption of GenAI technology which primarily benefits their legal operations department and M&A practices as well as litigation analytics and risk management units. Data from Thomson Reuters indicates that GenAI technology exists in the daily workflows of more than 60% of top legal firms which operate in the U.S., U.K, and India.

2.3 Current Use Cases in Corporate Legal Divisions

The contract lifecycle management systems operated by Ironclad and DocuSign CLM utilize automation to write contracts and perform reviews besides identifying potential risk areas. The platform Compliance.ai tracks all regulatory changes in particular jurisdictions to alert corporate legal teams through its notification system.

Legal Research and Summarization: Harvey AI and Lexis+ AI offer instant case summaries, citations, and risk assessments. Early-career legal workers have adopted GenAI platforms at the fastest rate since they perceive these tools as essential for decreasing project durations while enhancing supportive decision-making capabilities.

3. Efficiency Enhancement through Generative AI

3.1 Legal Research and Case Law Analysis

Three AI research tools namely Lexis+ AI and ROSS Intelligence as well as Casetext have completely transformed how lawyers access legal information. Legal databases can be searched by these tools within seconds which provides users with appropriate precedents along with summaries. A 2024 Deloitte report revealed that GenAI cut down research time for legal departments by approximately 40% as observed in more than 70% of reviewed departments.[1231]

However, caution is warranted. In the Mata v. The crowning of the Mata v. Avianca Inc. case (2023) featured AI-generated references which contained fake legal citations leading the court to underline the importance of human involvement.[1232]

Beyond faster search capabilities, many GenAI-powered legal research tools now offer **conversational interfaces**, allowing users to pose legal questions in natural language and receive contextual summaries with direct links to authoritative case law. For instance, **Harvey AI**, recently adopted by global law firm **Allen & Overy**, allows lawyers to receive instant insights into multijurisdictional law queries.[1233] These capabilities are particularly useful in complex practice areas such as international arbitration or securities regulation, where lawyers require consolidated answers from multiple jurisdictions.

Additionally, newer GenAI platforms offer **automated citation validation**, helping users identify outdated or overturned precedents—thus reducing the risk of relying on faulty legal foundations. Platforms like **Casetext's CoCounsel**, recently acquired by Thomson Reuters, integrate real-time statutory updates with predictive analysis to improve case strategy planning.[1234]

[1231] LawFuel, *The Impact of Generative AI on Corporate Law Departments*, LawFuel Blog (2024), https://www.lawfuel.com/blog/the-impact-of-generative-ai-on-corporate-law-departments/.
[1232] Mata v. Avianca Inc., No. 22-cv-1461 (S.D.N.Y. 2023), https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/63167761/mata-v-avianca-inc/.
[1233] Harvey AI, *Generative AI Platform for Legal Professionals*, https://www.harvey.ai.
[1234] Press Release, Thomson Reuters, *Thomson Reuters Acquires Casetext* (June 2023), https://www.thomsonreuters.com/en/press-releases/2023/june/thomson-reuters-acquires-casetext.html.

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3.2 Contract Drafting and Risk Mitigation

GenAI performs two tasks by creating structured forms of standardized agreements and by checking documents for potential risks.[1235] Tools like Kira Systems and ThoughtRiver flag inconsistencies and ambiguous terms. Thomson Reuters Institute reports that 79% of CLOs report AI technology enhances contract delivery speed by an average of 50%.[1236]

GenAI tools not only assist with drafting but also provide **risk scoring mechanisms**, assigning risk values to specific clauses based on historical disputes, litigation trends, and jurisdictional differences. This feature enables legal teams to **quantitatively assess the enforceability or contestability** of contract terms in advance.

Furthermore, tools such as **Ironclad AI** integrate with existing document management systems and CRM software, creating **automated contract workflows** that flag deviations from pre-approved templates in real time. These tools help reduce human error in high-volume contract environments like procurement, SaaS licensing, or employment onboarding.[1237]

In emerging markets, several start-ups have begun localizing contract AI tools to accommodate regional languages and legal norms. For example, India-based **MikeLegal** provides AI-assisted contract analysis that includes Indian Contract Act compliance flags and customized due diligence reports for startups and SMEs.[1238]

3.3 Corporate Compliance and Due Diligence

AI systems aid in AML, GDPR, and KYC compliance. For instance, **Compliance.ai** continuously monitors regulatory changes and alerts legal teams of updates. In the finance sector, AI helped **RAZE Banking** reduce fraudulent transactions by 45%.[1239]

Modern GenAI tools are now being programmed to **automatically generate compliance reports**, identify regulatory gaps, and cross-check company activities against multiple national and international frameworks. These tools offer dashboards that legal teams can use to visualize exposure across **anti-corruption laws (like FCPA)**, **ESG compliance**, and **cybersecurity mandates**.

Some GenAI platforms also assist in **automated ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) compliance monitoring**, which is gaining significance in MNCs. By tracking ESG-related policy updates globally and integrating with in-house legal tools, AI enables companies to adjust internal compliance strategies rapidly.[1240]

Furthermore, in due diligence for mergers and acquisitions, GenAI now helps **cluster and classify documents**—such as leases, employment contracts, NDAs, and litigation records—by relevance and risk exposure. Tools like **Luminance Diligence** and **Ayfie Inspector** provide heat-maps for data room analysis, enabling lawyers to spend time on red-flag issues instead of document sorting.[1241]

4. Ethical and Legal Implications of Generative AI

4.1 Legal Ethics and Algorithmic Bias

The biases found in training data will be reproduced by AI systems during operation. The reproduction of biased datasets creates racially discriminatory decisions that can negatively affect criminal justice operations alongside recruiting practices. According to Al-Kfairy et al.'s study there are significant risks that unethical usage of GenAI technology would

[1235] Mousa Al-Kfairy et al., *Ethical Challenges and Solutions of Generative AI*, 11 Informatics 58 (2024), https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9709/11/1/58.
[1236] Francesco Contini, *Unboxing Generative AI for the Legal Professions*, 15 Int'l J. Ct. Admin. 1 (2024), https://www.iacajournal.org/articles/10.36745/ijca.461/.
[1237] Ironclad AI for Contract Lifecycle Management, https://ironcladapp.com
[1238] MikeLegal – India's Legal AI Platform, https://www.mikelegal.com
[1239] Andrew Perlman, *Generative AI and the Future of the Legal Profession*, Harv. L. Sch. Ctr. on the Legal Profession (2023), https://clp.law.harvard.edu/knowledge-hub/magazine/issues/generative-ai-and-the-future-of-the-legal-profession/.
[1240] Deloitte, *AI and ESG Compliance: Deloitte Insights* (2023), https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/public-sector/esg-and-ai-risk-assessment.html.
[1241] Luminance, *AI for M&A Due Diligence*, https://www.luminance.com.

increase social prejudices as well as false information spread across society.[1242]

Survey data from 2024 reveals that:

- 68 percent of those working in legal fields show significant worries about transparency levels.
- Responsibility accountability stands out to 54% of surveyed professionals as one of the significant ethics problems.
- 46% worry about client data privacy[1243]

4.2 Accountability and Liability

Is the system operator accountable for AI-issued incorrect legal recommendations? Developers? Legal users? Or the organization?

The legal academic community now supports developers and users in sharing accountability for their system designs.[1244] In the Thaler v. Copyright protection for AI-generated content depends on having a living human creator according to the U.S. Perlmutter case judgment which requires human authorship participation.[1245]

4.3 Data Privacy and Confidentiality

Most General Artificial Intelligence tools maintain their data storage in cloud infrastructure. Data confidentiality becomes compromised because of the storage method which exposes information to unauthorized entities. Organizations must strictly follow the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) together with India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 because compliance requirements are essential.[1246]

Best practices include:

- Data anonymization process should take place on client information before AI system input occurs
- Using domain-specific, on-premise GenAI tools
- Regular audits and legal tech training

5. Regulatory Framework and Governance

5.1 Global Overview

European Union

The upcoming EU AI Act (2025) defines AI system classification according to their risk categories. Law-related applications at high risk require open oversight and human monitoring as well as accountability measures.[1247]

The upcoming EU Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act), expected to come into force in 2025, is the world's first comprehensive legal framework for regulating AI. The Act classifies AI systems into four risk categories—unacceptable, high-risk, limited-risk, and minimal-risk—based on their potential societal impact.[1248] Applications used in legal services, law enforcement, or biometric identification fall under the high-risk category, requiring:

- Mandatory risk assessments
- Data quality audits
- Human-in-the-loop oversight mechanisms
- Robust documentation for algorithmic decision-making

For corporate legal departments using GenAI for due diligence, compliance, or legal opinions, this means implementing transparent and traceable AI governance systems. Non-compliance could attract fines of up to €30 million or 6% of global annual turnover, whichever is higher.[1249]

[1242] Andrew Perlman, *Generative AI and the Future of the Legal Profession*, Harv. L. Sch. Ctr. on the Legal Profession (2023), https://clp.law.harvard.edu/knowledge-hub/magazine/issues/generative-ai-and-the-future-of-the-legal-profession/.
[1243] Yogesh K. Dwivedi et al., *So What If ChatGPT Wrote It? Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Opportunities, Challenges and Implications of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Research, Practice and Policy*, 71 Int'l J. Info. Mgmt. 102642 (2023), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2023.102642.
[1244] Thaler v. Perlmutter, No. 23-5233 (D.C. Cir. 2025), https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/66721557/thaler-v-perlmutter/.
[1245] OECD, *Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence* (2019), https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0449.
[1246] European Commission, *Proposal for a Regulation on Artificial Intelligence (AI Act)*, 2021
[1247] UNESCO, *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence* (2021), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381137.
[1248] European Commission, *Proposal for a Regulation on Artificial Intelligence (Artificial Intelligence Act)*, https://artificial-intelligence-act.eu.
[1249] European Commission, *Regulatory Framework on AI – Summary of Fines and Penalties*, https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/regulatory-framework-ai.

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The EU AI Act is likely to set a global precedent, prompting organizations—including those outside the EU—to voluntarily align their internal AI policies to avoid future regulatory shocks.

United States

United States policy makers continue without an established AI regulation while working to implement both an AI Bill of Rights and NIST AI Risk Management Framework.[1250]

The United States currently lacks a comprehensive federal law specifically governing AI. However, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy introduced the Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights (2022), which outlines five guiding principles:

- Safe and effective systems
- Algorithmic discrimination protections
- Data privacy
- Notice and explanation
- Human alternatives and fallback options[1251]

In parallel, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) released the AI Risk Management Framework (RMF 1.0) in 2023, providing voluntary best practices for responsible AI use. The framework emphasizes transparency, fairness, accountability, and security in AI lifecycle management.[1252]

While these instruments are non-binding, they influence federal agencies, public sector procurement contracts, and industry standards. Several U.S. states—like California, New York, and Illinois—have begun drafting AI accountability bills, signaling a patchwork of regional compliance obligations.

India

Through the #AIFORALL strategy India supports AI systems which embrace both inclusivity and responsible practices. The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 forms the cornerstone of AI privacy compliance.[1253]

India is yet to enact a unified AI regulatory framework, but its strategic intent is evident through the #AIFORALL initiative launched by NITI Aayog. This strategy aims to harness AI for inclusive growth in sectors such as healthcare, agriculture, and education, while emphasizing ethical considerations and socio-economic equity.[1254]

The recently enacted Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023 serves as India's foundational law on data privacy, impacting AI indirectly. It mandates:

- Explicit consent before personal data processing
- Right to data correction and erasure
- Obligations on data fiduciaries to ensure fairness and purpose limitation.[1255]

AI tools processing legal documents, client contracts, or sensitive corporate data in India must comply with this framework. The DPDP Act applies both to Indian and foreign companies dealing with personal data of Indian citizens, making it vital for cross-border GenAI applications used in legal functions.

NITI Aayog has also proposed the creation of IndiaAI, a national AI platform that will include datasets, guidelines, and model governance policies to foster trustworthy AI development and usage in both public and private sectors.

5.2 Institutional Recommendations

AI transformation of legal practices throughout jurisdictions demands institutional framework development which ensures both ethical deployment and responsible innovation as well as legal compliance. Various international

[1250] American Bar Association, *Resources on AI and the Practice of Law*, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_practice/resources/ai/.

[1251] White House, *Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights* (2022), https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/ai-bill-of-rights/.

[1252] National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), *AI Risk Management Framework 1.0* (2023), https://www.nist.gov/itl/ai-risk-management-framework.

[1253] The Law Society, *Lawtech and the Legal Profession* (2022), https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/research/lawtech-and-the-legal-profession.

[1254] NITI Aayog, *#AIforAll: National Strategy for AI in India*, https://www.niti.gov.in/national-strategy-artificial-intelligence.

[1255] Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), *Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023*, https://www.meity.gov.in/content/digital-personal-data-protection-bill-2023.

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groups and national organizations have started implementing guidelines even though significant progress needs to be made.

(a) OECD Principles on AI: Human-Centric and Accountable AI

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released its essential Principles on Artificial Intelligence during 2019 and these principles now receive support from more than 40 nations including India, the United States, and all EU members.[1256]

These five principles call for:

- Inclusive growth and sustainable development via AI
- Human-centric values and fairness
- Transparency and explainability
- Robustness, security, and safety
- Accountability of AI actors

The legal principles demand AI functionality that assists human judges rather than replacing them during decision-making processes. Legal GenAI tools require development to aid lawyers in preserving rights and standards of fair trials and procedural protections together with data safety protocols. OECD guidelines will help corporate legal departments properly use artificial intelligence models that maintain public trust and follow democratic principles.

(b) UNESCO's Global Ethical AI Framework

In 2021 UNESCO became the first global body to adopt the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence as this new instrument emerged.[1257] The document features 28 pages which outline steps for ethical AI implementation.

- Protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms
- The use of AI applications is prohibited when they degrade human dignity or privacy or generate discriminatory results.
- International cooperation in AI research and deployment
- Ethical impact assessments (EIA) for AI systems before deployment

AI governance policies in corporations require professionals in law to implement these ethical standards in their structures. Legal professionals from multiple countries should conduct UNESCO's impact assessments to determine whether their GenAI usage leads to social exclusion together with algorithmic discrimination and legal misinformation.

(c) Bar Councils and Law Societies: The Need for Domain-Specific Guidelines

National bar councils alongside legal societies need to create functional standards for AI usage which target specific domains. As of now:

- The American Bar Association (ABA) forms working groups to study legal ethics of AI through groups that explore AI competency and AI confidentiality maintenance and professional ethical standards involving artificial intelligence in practice.[1258]
- The Law Society in the United Kingdom issued its Technology and the Law report where they advocated for legal AI systems that must remain under human supervision while stating duties for practitioners who use AI for client work.[1259]
- The country lacks complete regulatory oversight regarding legal technologies. The Bar Council of India (BCI) remains inactive regarding the development of specific guidelines for legal AI applications.

There is an urgent need for:

[1256] OECD, *Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence* (2019), https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0449.
[1257] UNESCO, *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence* (2021), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381137.
[1258] American Bar Association, *Resources on AI and the Practice of Law*, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_practice/resources/ai/.
[1259] The Law Society, Lawtech and the Legal Profession (2022), https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/research/lawtech-and-the-legal-profession.

- A Model Code of Conduct for AI Use in Law
- All lawyers and intern law students need to receive compulsory training coupled with certification in AI usage.
- The legal establishment must establish rules regulating both liability and confidentiality when AI provides assistance to lawyers.
- AI development in legal applications would progress properly through ethical and constitutional frameworks because of these initiatives.

6. Conclusion and Final Reflections

Corporate legal operations gain both advantages and risks when they implement Generative Artificial Intelligence technology. Different aspects exist separating increased efficiency from quick service along with decreased legal expenses from the ethical problems and unclear regulations that coexist in the same sphere.

The New Legal Normal

The entire legal community worldwide has surpassed the discussion about adopting Generative Artificial Intelligence and now focuses on developing responsible deployment frameworks. GenAI technology provides improved legal research speed and automated document analysis capabilities and risk evaluation services however it diminishes core human elements of evaluation and moral conduct and legal compliance verification.

When trained on data sets the technology develops capabilities which remain unclear to auditors because of its hidden learning mechanisms. The improper use of GenAI systems achieves discriminatory results for the public and destroys their faith in judicial institutions.

Looking Ahead

Future developments will likely include:

- The legal domain needs special explainable artificial intelligence models that are designed for its specific requirements
- Enterprise tools need mandatory legal certifications demonstrating AI system capabilities.
- A push for global harmonization of AI governance

The major future development will consist of integrating human legal professionals with AI technologies through a hybrid model that uses AI capabilities to enhance legal function. Applications of this model preserve professional accountability together with human artistic abilities and operational computational advantages.

Final Thought

The main obstacle involves implementing Generative AI into legal practice so it does not weaken legal standards rather than the capacity to use it in this field. An approach combining innovative techniques and ethical boundaries turns Generative AI into a force which supports the development of fair legal systems with high efficiency and easy accessibility.