

DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY AND GLOBAL EQUITY IN THE ERA OF AI DRIVEN IP EXPANSION THE OWNERSHIP PARADOX

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ABSTRACT

DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY AND GLOBAL EQUITY IN THE ERA OF AI-DRIVEN IP EXPANSION: THE OWNERSHIP PARADOX

The modern AI era is shaped by a central paradox, that while digital technologies empower nations to strengthen their digital sovereignty and reinforce intellectual property protections, these same legal frameworks can hinder global equity and restrict the realization of fundamental human rights. The existing scholarship has largely failed to interrogate this paradox. The dominant literature treats digital sovereignty as a defensive strategy against foreign surveillance or data extraction, while IP scholarship focuses narrowly on AI inventorship and copyright ownership. The research gap exists because researchers have not yet established a systematic method which connects AI-based IP growth to the decline of digital sovereignty experienced by developing nations together with their loss of economic and cultural human rights. This paper aims to fill that gap. The issue is whether the global push for stronger AI-related IP protections, driven by tech giants and enforced through trade agreements, effectively transfer sovereign control over knowledge assets from states and communities to private corporate entities? The transfer process proceeds to violate human rights which protect access to scientific knowledge and cultural heritage together with fair participation rights in digital economic activities. According to this study's findings, the Global South faces systematic disadvantages from current IP frameworks which treat AI-generated and AI-assisted outputs as their legal basis. The paper proposes a radical redefinition of digital sovereignty as "distributive knowledge sovereignty", a framework that prioritizes equitable access, compulsory licensing for AI training data, and binding human rights impact assessments for any IP law affecting digital ecosystems. This research offers a missing human rights-centric intervention into the AI-IP-sovereignty trilemma.

Keywords: Digital Sovereignty, Artificial Intelligence, Intellectual Property, Global Equity, Human Rights, TRIPS Agreement

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