

Opacity as a feature, not a flaw: Role-sensitive explainability, institutional trust, and the LoBOX ethics governance framework for AI

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Abstract-

This paper introduces the LoBOX (Lack of Belief: Opacity & eXplainability) ethics governance framework, a governance-centric approach for managing artificial intelligence (AI) opacity when full transparency is infeasible. While transparency-centric approaches treat transparency as the social/ideal goal and therefore opacity as a design flaw, LoBOX suggests opacity is a condition which should be ethically governed through role-sensitive explanation and institutional accountability. The LoBOX framework comprises a three-stage pathway: reduce accidental opacity, bound irreducible opacity, and delegate trust through institutional oversight. Integrating the stakeholder-sensitive explanation described in the RED/BLUE XAI model, which is aligned with emerging legal instruments such as the EU AI Act, LoBOX offers a scalable and context-aware alternative to transparency-centric approaches. LoBOX reframes trust as an outcome of institutional credibility, structured justification, and stakeholder-sensitive accountability, and it is designed to remain aligned with evolving technological contexts and stakeholder expectations while ethically governing opacity. In the end, to ensure responsible AI systems, LoBOX moves from transparency ideals to ethical governance, emphasizing that trustworthiness in AI must be institutionally grounded and contextually justified.

Index Terms- Explainable artificial intelligence (XAI) Algorithmic opacity AI governance Institutional trust Role-sensitive explainability Accountability

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