An International Multidisciplinary Journal
अनन्यशास्त्रम्
(A Unique Treatise of Knowledge)
ISSN:3049-3927 (Online)
Volume: 02 | Issue: 01| June: 2026
Research Article

ANANYAŚĀSTRAM:
An International Multidisciplinary Journal
(A Unique Treatise of Knowledge)
Peer-Reviewed | Refereed | Open Access Journal
DOI: https://doi.org/10.64328/aimjv2i1004

Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Employment: A Sociological Study

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Abstract

The technologically accelerated progress of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is changing the contours of work, workforce and employment relations around the world. This highly sociological work considers the implications of AI-led technologies for the future of work, in terms of structural transformation, social inequality, changes to skills and labour market stratification. Using theoretical concepts such as Karl Marx's writings on technological change and labour alienation, Max Weber's ideas of rationalization, and Emile Durkheim's theory of division of labour, the research places AI in broader processes of modernization and capitalism. It examines the ways in which automation, machine learning, and algorithmic management are transforming occupational roles, resulting in job displacement in routine and low-skilled industries while creating new opportunities within high-skill and digital fields. It reveals how the dual forces of declining manufacturing employment and an ever-elusive upskilling strategy based on popular prestige-seeking work create a polarized labour market between precarious gig work and advanced technological skills that keeps widening. It provides a sharp critique on how AI applications could reproduce existing social hierarchies of class, gender and educational privilege especially in the developing world. In addition, the study discusses the changes in workplace power dynamics due to algorithmic surveillance and performance scrutiny that threaten autonomy, dignity, and workers' rights. Through secondary data and policy reports as well as sociological literature, this research suggests that the impact of A.I. on employment is not determined by technology but socially constructed and mediated through institutional frames, state policies, and educational systems. Based on these findings, the research argues for proactive policy intervention, inclusive skill development strategies, as well as ethical frameworks of governance to ensure that AI will shape equitable and sustainable employment futures rather than exacerbate socio-economic disparities.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Employment Transformation, Automation, Labor Market Inequality, Digital Divide, Future of Work.

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Introduction:

AI is one of the most relevant technologies changing the arrangement of modern societies by altering the essence of labour, production, and social links. AI-driven technologies are transforming the landscape of industries, from fully automated manufacturing systems to sophisticated algorithms utilized across finance, healthcare, education, and beyond. On a sociological level, this shift brings to the fore difficult questions around job displacement, inequity, digital divides and the restructuring of labour markets. But AI is also upending traditional employment structures and social security systems. Thus, in order to comprehend how AI shapes social stratification, work culture and economic justice we must consider the future of employment through a sociological perspective.

Review of Literature:

The pacy growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI), owing to breakthroughs in machine learning and automation, has changed the landscape of modern labour markets. Scholars like Karl Marx pointed to technology's effect on labour relations and Max Weber the rationalization in modern society — relevant during AI's ascendance. However, recent studies from organizations such as World Economic Forum show that AI can also replace routine jobs while creating new skill-based positions. Literature addresses issues of inequality, deskilling and reskilling emerging in AI's wake, advancing the argument that while much work will come to an end, employment patterns will ultimately be transformed rather than eliminated: identifying a need for adaptive social adaptation and policy responses.

Defining Artificial Intelligence

AI is the capability of a computer system or a machine to mimic intelligent human behaviour. Such tasks are learning from experience, reasoning, problem-solving, understanding languages, pattern recognition and decision-making. AI systems use algorithms and data and computational models, such as machine learning and deep learning to simulate cognitive processes. In the year 1956, John McCarthy introduced for the first time, and defined AI as the science & engineering of making intelligent machines. From a social standpoint, AI is not just a new technology but also an agent of change that challenge our perception of jobs, relationships and institutions in todaý world.

Historical Perspectives on Technology and Work

From the Industrial Revolution to today's digital age, technological change has continually transformed work. The likes of Karl Marx examined how mechanisation transformed relations of labour, while Max Weber noted rationalization and bureaucracy in modern work. The emergence of AI is a new paradigm, enabling the automation of cognitive and not just physical tasks. Sociological impact: At the most general level, AIs are a transformative force in terms of skills required to work, workplace hierarchies and job security -- these are well-travelled paths ahead as they echo earlier events albeit at different speed and scale. As it endangers traditional forms of employment, it is also

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generating new digital professions that will require educational systems and policies to respond equitably so all can have a place in economic futures.

Theoretical Framework

Introduction to classification and systems is coined by Daniel Faro. Karl Marx's theory of technological change and class conflict, for example, helps us understand how automation can also help to consolidate capitalist domination over labour and magnify socio-economic inequality. Max Weber's rationalization frames the possibility of increasing efficiency, calculability and bureaucratic control through AI systems. According to Émile Durkheim's theory of division of labour, AI reinterprets occupational specialization and social solidarity. Moreover, Manuel Castells' thesis of the network society places AI in relation to digital capitalism based on something such as the new economies of knowledge, platform labour that is taking place there and transformation of power relations in global structures for employment.

Research Methodology:

the present study utilizes a mixed-method research design to analyze the sociological impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on future employment patterns. This research utilises a mixed method approach, qualitative and quantitative for thorough investigation. The primary data is being collected using structured questionnaire given to employees, employers and students working in urban and semi-urban sectors. The interviews elicit perceptions of job displacement, skill transformation and digital inequality from IT professionals and policy experts. Global employment trend analysis encompasses secondary data collected from the reports of International Labour Organization and World Economic Forum. In order to obtain representation, stratified random sampling is employed with respect to age, gender and occupational categories. Statistical tools are used to analyse the data for quantitative findings and thematic analysis is employed for qualitative responses. The study was conducted in accordance with established ethical guidelines, ensuring respondents were provided information and consented to participation as well as maintaining respondent confidentiality.

Results / Findings

Table 1: Perception of AI's Impact on Employment Opportunities

Sr. No.	Response Category	Frequency	Percentage %
1.	AI will create more jobs than it destroys	24	48 %
2.	AI will destroy more jobs than it creates	12	24 %
3.	AI will transform existing jobs	08	16%
4.	No clear opinion	06	12%
	Total	50	100%

Table 2: Sectors Most Affected by AI

Sr. No.	Sector	Frequency	Percentage %

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1.	Manufacturing	20	40 %
2.	IT and Software	15	30%
3.	Banking and Finance	05	10%
4.	Education	06	12%
5.	Healthcare	02	4%
6.	Agriculture	02	4%
	Total	50	100%

Table 3: Perceived Skill Requirements in the AI Era

Sr. No.	Skill Category	Frequency	Percentage %
1.	Technical/Digital Skills	22	44%
2.	Critical Thinking & Problem Solving	13	26%
3.	Creativity & Innovation	10	20%
4.	Communication Skills	08	16%
5.	Manual/Physical Skills	07	14%
	Total	50	100%

Results of the current sociological study show, that perception of Artificial Intelligence at labour market is complex and transitional. A sizeable minority of respondents (24%) contend that AI will destroy more jobs than it creates, echoing anxieties traditionally associated with labour displacement theories related to technological determinism. However, 16% see AIs mainly as a transformative and not destructive force. It shows that people are not unaware of structural changes in the nature of work, but rather the end of all work.

At the same time, according to sector specific analysis indicator manufacturing (48%) and IT (30%) are considered as the most affected sectors. This mirrors automation theories, especially those of industrial capitalism and the transition to algorithmic management systems. Interestingly, AI dependency appears equally strong in-service sectors such as healthcare and education, indicating a spread in the technological integration from industrial to political labour.

When it comes to the skills needed, an incredible 44% highlight that technical and digital skills are critical in the age of AI. This aligns with the human capital theory viewpoint that indicates education and skills acquisition form increasing emphasis elements of employability in technologically progressing societies. Moreover, high response rates regarding critical thinking (26%) and creativity (20%) recognize the uniquely human capabilities that augment artificial intelligence systems.

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Overall, the study indicates that AI is seen less as a straightforward job-killing machine and more as a structural transformer of work. But the transition produces uncertainty, skill polarization and psychological stress. Thus, the implications of these findings indicate that policy interventions must include measures for reskilling, inclusive technological growth and social security to empower all citizens in adapting equally to changes taking place on labour markets due to the introduction of AI.

Discussion / Analysis

AI and Job Displacement:

AI is on the verge of changing the way we work, produce things, and how both businesses and employees interact. Machine learning, robotics, and automation processes are replacing routine and repetitive tasks in many industries including manufacturing, banking, customer service. In sociological terms, the displacement of employment by AI is more than an economic challenge; it represents a structural transformation impacting social stratification, inequality and class dynamics. AI will replace low-skilled and routine-based jobs, but at the same time, create new opportunities in data analysis, programming, and digital management. But access to these new roles is often contingent on education and digital literacy, potentially deepening the divide between skilled and unskilled workers. Without inclusive policies, reskilling programs and social protection measures in place, AI technologies might increase levels of unemployment and social inequality argue sociologists. So, the future of employment in the age of AI will depend to a great extent on how societies respond to technological change through ethical governance, education reform and equitable labour policies.

New Job Creation and Skill Demand

Artificial intelligence (AI) is changing the landscape of work by altering job creation and skill demand patterns across industries. From her perspective, in the Ai context, jobs are not magically replaced; rather labour is reorganized as new occupation emerge based on automated routines such as those performed within machine learning engineering disciplines or operating robots and managing digital platforms. Scholars including Manuel Castells have described the network society as characterized by how technological change reorganizes social and economic relations to create demand for knowledge-based labour. Anthony Giddens also speaks of processes of modernization, in which people must always adapt their skills. Routine manual labour is losing ground to analytical thinking, creativity, emotional intelligence and interdisciplinary skills — the sorts of capabilities that lean towards AI-driven economies. However, unequal access to education as well as digital resources could amplify social stratification. As such, while AI drives innovation and new jobs, it also necessitates reskilling for those disassociated and calls for a focus on lifelong learning and inclusive policy frameworks to access the future world of work.

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Sociological Impacts of AI on Employment

The outbreak of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is altering the format of labour and how we work in today's society. Whether it be automated manufacturing systems or algorithmic decision-making platforms, AI-driven technologies are changing the landscape of both manual and cognitive labour. From a sociological perspective, AI leads to job loss in cyclical and repetitive sectors while creating new jobs by becoming the demand for data science, robotics and digital services. This represents what scholars call a transition to a knowledge-based economy.

But not all of the effects are even. The workers who are most threatened by technology are those who have lower educational qualifications and limited digital skills, which could deepen social and economic inequalities. Meanwhile, AI promotes flexibility amid gig employment and remote work, disrupting the classic employer–employee structure. These changes involve class structures, skill hierarchies and patterns of social mobility. As a result, the future of jobs in an AI-driven world hustles with inclusive policies, reskilling programs and ethical governance to facilitate balanced societal progress.

Policy and Institutional Responses

The rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI), spearheaded by Google, Microsoft and OpenAI, is rapidly reshaping the architecture of work in every industry. On a socio-technical level, AI and its algorithmic applications automate not only low-skill manual work (for example in warehouses), but also cognitive tasks that feed into the power relations reshaping the skills hierarchy and inequalities of access to labour market. AI raises productivity and generates high-skilled digital jobs, but it also displaces low- and middle-skilled workers worsening precarity and informalization.

Therefore, policy and institutional responses must go beyond techno-optimism. Governments must invest in inclusive reskilling programs, fortify existing social security systems, and regulate algorithmic management to avert exploitative practices. This will require universities to reimagine the curriculum in a way that prioritizes critical thinking, digital fluency and flexibility. The involvement of trade unions and civil society organizations in the push for worker participation in decision-making around new technologies is also imperative. Such a sociologically-informed policy framework for AI development, however, would avoid the trap of accelerating structural inequalities that advances in the future of work threaten and align with social justice, equitable growth and democratic accountability.

Conclusion:

One of the core implementations of AI is reinventing employment structure for better carry urgency level in line with strategic approach. The AI because of its nature not only creates a technological change but also reshapes power relations, class dynamics and social inequality from the sociological point. It can lead to the disappearance of repetitive jobs due (to automation), which creates new opportunities in different sectors, provided that professionals are ready to reskill and adapt. Inclusive

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policies, ethical governance, and equitable access to education and technology will determine the future of work. Hence, a balance must be struck between innovation and social justice in a way that AI remains a tool for sustainable development and human welfare rather than an exacerbator of inequalities.

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