

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN INDIA: TRENDS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Article History

Received : 10 June 2025; Revised : 13 July 2025; Accepted : 19 July 2025; Published : 25 November 2025

Abstract: The rising prominence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has ignited a global discussion on its far-reaching implications for human society. AI applications have revolutionized various industries, presenting both opportunities and challenges. In India, the impact of AI on the labor market is a pressing concern, particularly given the country's high unemployment rates among educated youth. This study provides a comprehensive analysis of AI's implications on the Indian labor market through a systematic literature review. The findings reveal that while a significant portion of studies anticipate a positive impact, many focus on primary survey-based research with descriptive methodologies. The study identifies sectors and job types vulnerable to AI's impact, assesses India's AI preparedness, and benchmarks it against peer economies. The results suggest that employees in sectors with routine and repetitive tasks are more susceptible to AI's impact. In contrast, professionals in creative fields requiring skills, interpersonal communication, and innovation are less affected. To thrive in this evolving landscape, professionals must cultivate innovative thinking, a willingness to learn, and a commitment to stay updated with emerging technologies and knowledge developments.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Labour Market, Nature of Job

JEL Classification: O33, J2, J6, J24

1. INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has revolutionized human livelihood, transforming industries and daily life. With its capability to exhibit intelligent behaviour, AI has sparked worldwide debate on its implications. Recent advancements,

To cite this paper:

Enakshi Sinha Ray Chaudhury (2025). Artificial Intelligence in India: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities. *Journal of Indian Economy and Business*. 2(1-2), 37-52.

such as the launch of ChatGPT, have demonstrated AI's rapid evolution and vast potential. The global AI market, valued at \$454 billion in 2022, is expected to grow sixfold by 2032, with the Asia Pacific region leading the charge. As investment and data availability increase, AI is poised for further rapid development, unleashing unprecedented capabilities and power.

The rising investments by various organisations towards AI developments boosting the demand for AI technology (Mohanty et al., 2025). In 2024, the demand for AI talent in India is reaching new heights with various industries harnessing AI to drive innovation and efficiency and expected to play pivotal role in shaping India's technological environment. The top AI jobs (viz., Machine Learning Engineer, Data Scientist, AI Research Scientist, Computer Vision Engineer, Natural Language Processing (NLP) Engineer, AI Product Manager, AI Ethicist, AI Solutions Architect, Robotics Engineer, and AI Marketing Specialist) reflect this expanding trend, offering lucrative opportunities for skilled professionals. Fig. 1 shows that the share of AI implementers that are deploying AI at various scales across sectors. Even though the increasing integration of AI has debatable implication in labour market, history suggests that the technological advancements usually lead to the creation of new, more specialized roles, despite initial job displacements (Mohapatra et al., 2024). However, the key lies in adapting to dynamic changes and acquiring the appropriate skills to remain relevant in the continuously evolving job market.

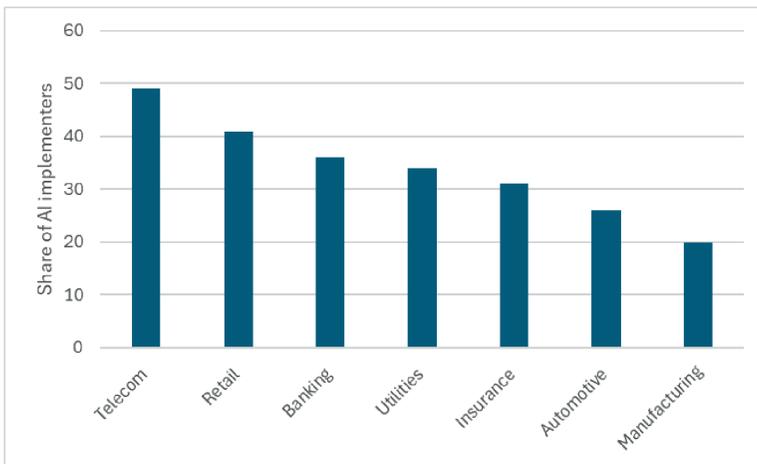


Fig. 1: Share of AI Implementers that are Deploying AI at Scale (by sector)

Source: Stancombe et al. (2017)

Sector-wise influence of AI

The schematic diagram below (fig. 2) indicates sectors which are expected to have major and minor effect of AI application. The diagram clearly indicates that the sectors where creativity or continuous improvisation of technique is required, AI is less expected to replace their importance. However, where repetitive and mechanical skills prevail, AI has larger potential to execute the job more efficiently compared to human employees. For example, the queries and issues raised by customers are in general common, high emotional or social intelligence are not required to address such common queries. Thus, AI can easily respond to those frequently asked questions. On the other hand, a surgeon or medical specialist/practitioner need to be engaged with each patient for individual specific various minor and major complications and provide patient specific solutions. To address their issues, vast number of factors need to be considered simultaneously. Other than skill, experience, knowledge, and inter-personal communication play crucial role

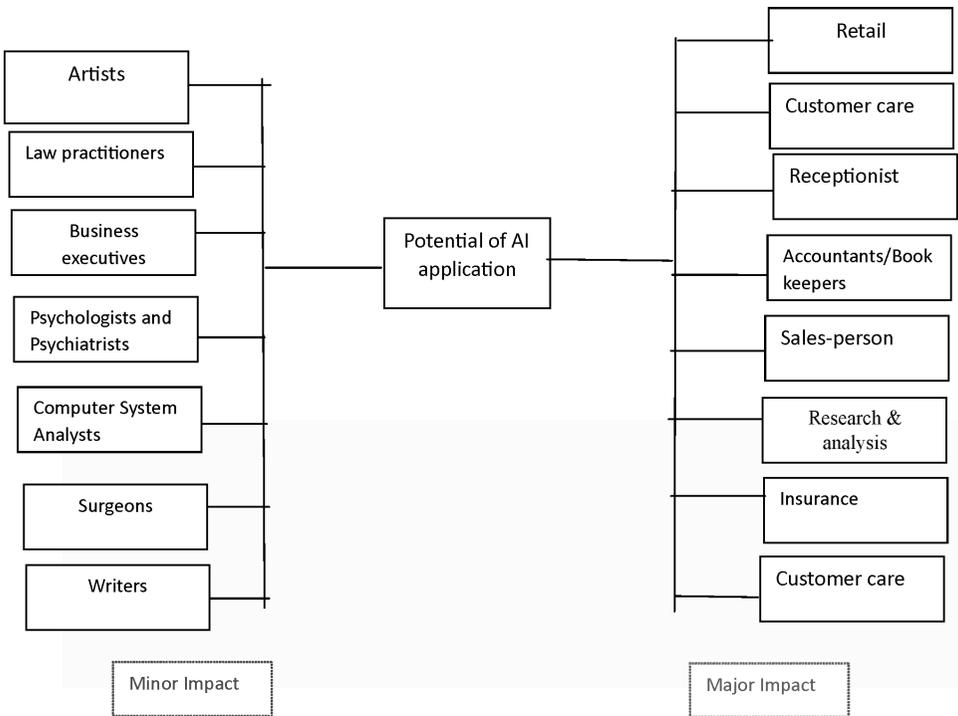


Fig. 2: Sectors with major and minor effect of AI application

Source: Author’s representation based on secondary literature

in this profession where mechanical AI capability is not suitable. Similarly, in case of law practitioners or teachers, inter-personal communication and person as well as issue-specific modification are important while in case of artists or writers, creative intelligence play crucial role rather than common repetitive techniques.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The advent of AI presents a growing challenge, yet the dearth of relevant data constrains in-depth empirical analysis of its effects. The existing body of research is predominantly comprised of grey literature, often focusing on specific industries or facets, and based on limited primary survey data. Consequently, forecasts of AI's impact tend to be perception-driven and subjective. However, a recent OECD report (OECD, 2021) sheds light on emerging trends in AI skill demand across 14 OECD countries from 2019 to 2022. Notably, the study finds a 33% increase in AI-related online job postings in most countries, with Austria and Sweden being exceptions. Despite this growth, AI-related vacancies remain relatively scarce, accounting for less than 1% of total online job postings in all countries examined.

Studies examining the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on employment yield disparate findings. Saini et al. (2024) suggest that AI will simultaneously displace and create jobs, contingent upon the nature of the work and employee skill sets, as underscored in the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2020. Furthermore, they stress the importance of hybrid teams that integrate human and machine capabilities. Research has also investigated AI's influence on labor productivity and economic growth. For instance, Damioli et al. (2021) analyzed 5,257 companies with AI-related patents between 2000 and 2016, revealing that AI's impact is pronounced in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and service industries. Bonsay et al. (2021) explored the nexus between GDP, high-technology exports, and unemployment rates in China, India, Japan, and Singapore, finding a positive correlation between labor productivity and GDP across all countries. Notably, AI significantly contributed to Japan's economic growth acceleration through technology transfer and foreign direct investment. Conversely, Kopernaik (2020) presents an optimistic perspective, positing that AI will augment human capabilities, giving rise to "super-minds" that combine cognitive and physical abilities. These studies underscore

the intricate and multifaceted nature of AI's impact on employment and economic growth, highlighting the need for nuanced comprehension and strategic planning.

Multiple studies indicate that India is poised to emerge as a global leader in AI adoption. Ernst et al. (2019) advocate for a proactive approach to AI's opportunities and challenges, highlighting the crucial role of government and social partners in shaping its impact. They recommend strategic skill development policies and digital regulations to maximize AI's benefits while mitigating its risks. A survey by Stancombe (2017) across nine countries, including India, found that 58% of Indian companies have already implemented AI, positioning India as a potential frontrunner in AI adoption. The establishment of innovation centers and government initiatives like "Digital India" have contributed to this growth. Küpper et al. (2018) revealed that India has the third-highest percentage of early AI-adopting companies (19%), with 96% of Indian companies planning to implement AI within the next three years, outpacing the USA and China. According to Accenture (2017), AI could add \$957 billion to India's economy by 2035 without negatively impacting long-term employment. Additional studies have reported positive outcomes, including Infosys (2018) finding that 75% of Indian enterprises are experiencing positive returns on AI investments, and CIS (2018) predicting an increase in employment opportunities in the organized manufacturing and services sector. However, PwC (2018) cautioned that AI may significantly impact the IT/ITES sector. Recent research reinforces these findings, with ICRIER (2020) reporting a positive relationship between AI adoption and Total Factor Productivity (TFP) growth, and NASSCOM (2020) estimating that AI and data could boost India's GDP by \$450-500 billion by 2025. A study by Copestake et al. (2023) found that while the current district-level impact of AI is limited, its effects are expected to intensify as adoption increases across sectors.

In contrast, according to MEIT (2019), digital interventions, including AI, are expected to generate approximately 20 million new jobs in India, primarily in sectors such as IT-BPM, manufacturing, agriculture, transportation, and logistics. Additionally, around 40-45 million workers may require relocation through retraining and re-skilling. A joint study by Microsoft and IDC (2019) found that 64% of Indian business leaders and 63% of workers hold positive views about AI's impact on future jobs,

based on a survey of over 400 respondents across various sectors. Similarly, Intel's (2020) study, based on two employee surveys, observed that 70% of employees across sectors perceive AI as a potential job creator. PwC's (2019) study, based on nearly 1,000 responses from Chief Experience Officers and decision-makers, concluded that AI can foster a competitive environment and help capture global markets. However, the study also identified key constraints to AI investment in Indian organizations, including budget/financing availability, uncertainty about efficiency gains and revenue enhancement, and a lack of market-leading innovations.

Multiple global studies have assessed the impact of automation, including AI and other technologies, on job displacement. Frey and Osborne (2017) predicted that 47% of US jobs are at high risk of displacement within 10-15 years due to automation. Similarly, McKinsey (2017) found that approximately one-third of activities in 60% of jobs are susceptible to automation. A subsequent McKinsey study (2018), based on 400 case studies across 19 industries, concluded that AI is likely to redefine job roles and enhance productivity in suitable sectors. However, other research suggests that AI will also generate new job opportunities. According to the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2018), technological advancements, including AI, are expected to lead to a decline of 0.98 million jobs by 2022, but also create 1.74 million new jobs. The Future of Jobs Report 2020 (WEF, 2020) projects that while 85 million jobs may be displaced by 2025, 97 million new roles may emerge, adapted to the changing division of labor between humans, machines, and algorithms. Gent (2017) also noted that AI implementation may lead to significant job losses in the IT sector, but highlighted the potential for new job creation in emerging fields such as data science, AI programming, and big data analysis.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study is grounded in a comprehensive review of peer-reviewed research papers, web articles, and news/company reports. The analysis relies on secondary data from publicly available reports and articles. To synthesize the evidence quantitatively, a systematic review technique (table A.1) is applied, aggregating results from multiple studies while considering the size and variability of efforts in each study. This approach facilitates the derivation of broader conclusions. The study examines existing data and

presents arguments on how artificial intelligence can facilitate employment in various countries.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Analysis based on systematic review of literature

This study examines the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) implementation by identifying relevant indicators and conducting a systematic review of selected papers. Based on the Table A.2, the analysis reveals that a majority (54%) of the studies focused on the post-2010 period, when AI became increasingly prominent, and the general public began interacting with AI implementations directly. The studies employed varied methodologies, with 46% conducting primary surveys, albeit with limited sample sizes. Most studies relied on secondary data or reports, and only a quarter conducted detailed empirical analysis, such as regression. In contrast, 60% of the studies employed descriptive analysis. Geographically, 28% of the studies focused exclusively on India, while 25% considered India alongside other economies. Sectorally, one-third of the studies concentrated on specific sectors, whereas two-thirds explored cross-sectoral impacts. The study's findings indicate that 46% of the studies anticipated a positive impact from AI implementation, while 29% reported mixed impacts. Only 7% concluded that AI would have adverse societal impacts, and 18% remained inconclusive. In terms of impact measurement, 46% of the studies assessed employment impacts, 18% examined impacts on GDP, value added, or economic growth, and 18% explored impacts on variables like labor productivity. It's worth noting that these categories are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive, as several studies have examined multiple variables simultaneously, such as employment and productivity, to assess the potential impact of AI implementation. Finally, 82% of the studies provided specific forecasts about AI impacts at various levels, including job creation, affected sectors, and job nature.

4.2. Are we all ready to welcome AI?

Recently IMF has developed AI preparedness index for 174 countries and selected regions for the year 2023 to know the current status of AI in different countries. Fig. 3 indicates AI preparedness score and rank (among 174 countries) for selected countries. As per the AI preparedness index,

top three countries who are most prepared to welcome AI are Singapore, Denmark, and USA. On the other hand, India's rank is 72nd where rank of China, Brazil, Germany, and Japan are 31st, 66th, 9th, and 12th respectively.

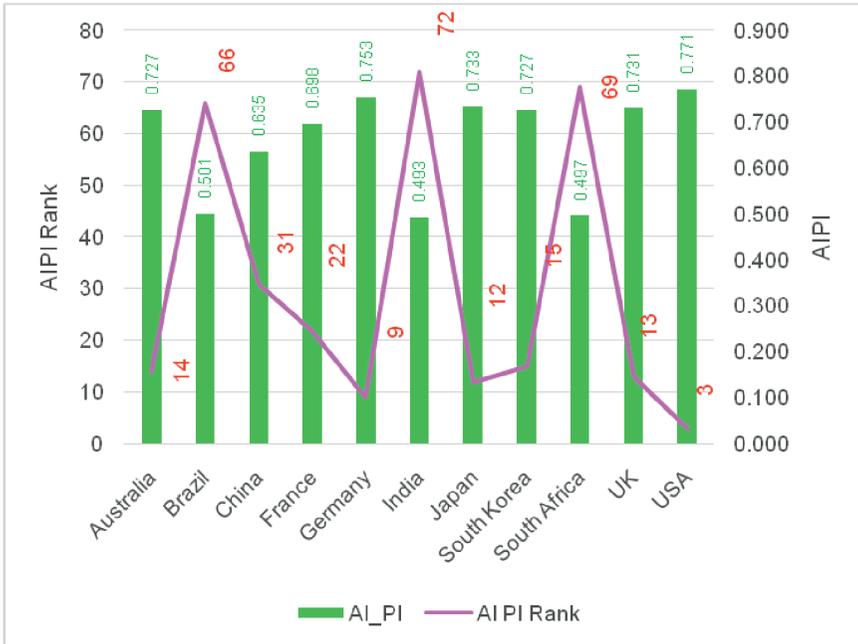


Fig. 3: AI Preparedness and corresponding Rank

Source: <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/datasets/AIPI>

AI preparedness score comprises of four broad indicators. These indicators measure various aspects of AI preparedness from regulation to human capital to infrastructure for AI implementation. The indicators considered to measure AI preparedness are 'Digital Infrastructure (DI)', 'Innovation & economic integration (IEI)', 'Regulation & ethics (RE)', and 'Human Capital & Labor Market Policies (HCLMP)'. Individual scores in all of these four indicators are also provided by IMF.

Fig. 4 indicates the decomposition of AI preparedness score across indicators for selected countries and regions. According to the data source, India's performance is average for IEI and HCLMP. But in terms of Regulation and ethics (RE), India's score is relatively better compared to China or Brazil. On the other hand, in terms of Digital infrastructure (DI), India is lagged behind most countries.

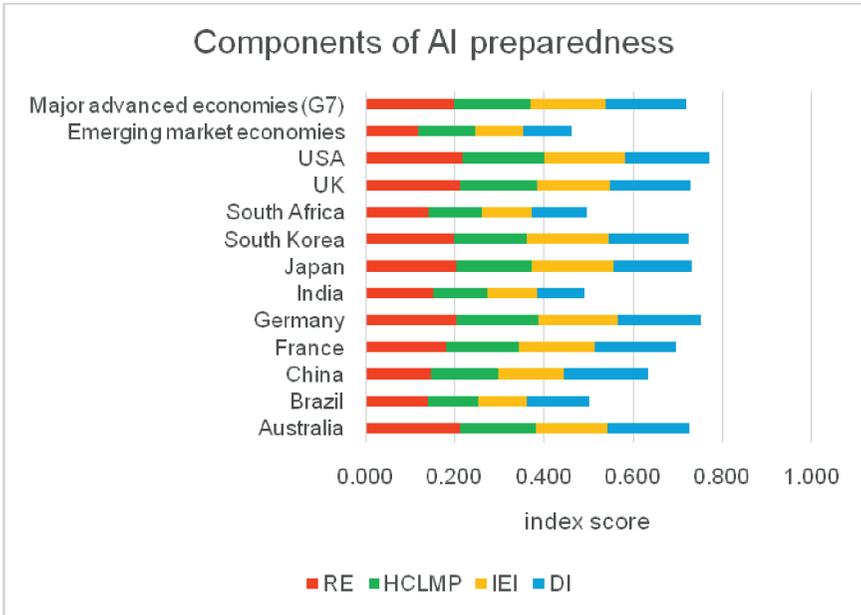


Fig. 4: Components of AI preparedness

Source: <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/datasets/AIPI>

5. CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

Exploring the various studies through systematic review analysis method, it can be expected that increasing application of AI may put millions of job at risk especially in sectors with repetitive and routine work. However, it can bring new opportunities for those who can embrace the challenges and update themselves with update of knowledge and up-skilling. AI is expected to provide huge opportunity for business through increase in productivity and widening of revenues by automation of manufacturing process. Even small business can also reap sizable benefit through AI adaptation in their business. For example, creation of speech recognition software using AI for mobile devices can earn huge profits using the advantage of technology progress.

The advent of AI demands a proactive and adaptable workforce. To remain relevant, individuals must develop soft skills like creativity, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal communication. Embracing lifelong learning, specializing in expertise, and cultivating agility will be crucial in differentiating themselves from AI capabilities. By doing so, the

workforce can not only co-exist with AI but also thrive in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

In this context, the policy makers could play an important role to welcome and compete with AI in various sectors/industries through labour market monitoring and making suitable policies. In India, where business entrepreneurs are usually risk averse and employees are efficient and intelligent but not economically strong, the government must take a proactive approach to ensure stability and reduce disparity in the labour market. The government must invest in skill development programs which will equip and train employees to cope up with AI and work using AI. Providing training of digital skill is one of the highlighted aspects to be covered in such programs as it was observed that employees in OECD countries generally lack behind of digital skill. Along with providing training and skill development through training, workshop, and appropriate courses for individuals, the government need to ensure social protection mechanism in labour market. Regular research needs to be conducted by public funds regarding the measures to improve employability and promote constructive social dialogue related to future job market and work environment.

Acknowledgement

The author would like to express her sincere gratitude to Dr. Saswata Chaudhury for encouragement and continuous support.

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APPENDIX

Table A.1: Systematic Review of Literature

Srl. (A)	Study details (B)	Study period (C)	Data and Methodology (D)	Sectors considered (E)
1	Accenture (2017)		Survey based on India	Across sectors
2.	Accenture (2018)	November 2017 to January 2018	Insights from the Technology Vision External Advisory Board, comprising over two dozen experts from industry, academia, venture capital, and entrepreneurship	Selected sectors
3.	Küpper et al. (2018)	Feb-March, 2018	Insights from a global survey of 1,000+ executives in 12 countries, including India	Across sectors
4.	Bonsay et al. (2021)	1988 up until 2019	Analysis based on online data from key Asian countries: China, India, Japan, and Singapore	Selected Sectors
5.	Stancombe et al. (2017)	The research was conducted between March and June 2017.	Insights from a global survey of 993 senior executives in 9 countries, covering various industries with \$500M+ annual revenues	Across selected industry sectors
6.	Jujjavarapu et al. (2018)	December 2017	Research informed by diverse sources: news, company websites, industry reports, policy documents, interviews, and roundtable discussions	Selected Sectors

Srl. (A)	Study details (B)	Study period (C)	Data and Methodology (D)	Sectors considered (E)
7.	Copestake et al. (2023)	2010-2019	Analysis based on multi-source data: online job vacancies, Prowess financial data, and national labour surveys (NSS & PLFS)	Across Sectors
8.	Damioli et al. (2021)	2000-2016	Global study of 5,257 companies with AI patent activity (2000-2016)	SMEs and service industries
9.	Ernst et al. (2019)		Descriptive analysis	Across Sectors
10.	Frey and Osborne (2017)		Analysis of 702 occupations' computerization risk using Gaussian process classifier and O*NET	Across Sectors
11.	Gent (2017)			IT Sector
12.	ICRIER (2020)	2007-08 to 2016-17	Analysis based on fixed effects multivariate panel-data regression of 1,553 firms (2007-08 to 2016-17)	Across Sectors
13.	India Skills Report 2024	2019-2022	Analysis based on online job vacancy data from Lightcast	Selected Sectors
14.	Infosys (2018)		Insights from a survey of 1,053 C-level executives and IT leaders in 7 countries, including India	IT sectors
15.	Intel (2020)		Insights from dual surveys: SML (3,099 employees) and AI & Future of Work (301 Indian firms)	Across Sectors
16.	Kathuria et al. (2020)	2007-08 to 2016-17	Dual approach: econometric analysis (1,553 firms) and case study research	Across Sectors
17.	Kopernaik (2020)			
18.	McKinsey (2017)			Across Sectors
19.	McKinsey Global Institute (2018)	June 20 to July 10, 2017 (online survey)	Analysis combining two independent surveys and 400 industry case studies (19 sectors)	Across Sectors
20.	MEIT (2019)		Insights gathered from consultations with 90+ organizations, including companies, experts, NGOs, and academics	Across Sectors

Srl. (A)	Study details (B)	Study period (C)	Data and Methodology (D)	Sectors considered (E)
21.	Microsoft and IDC (2019)		Survey of 1,605 business leaders and 1,585 workers, including 200 leaders and 202 workers from India	Across Sectors
22.	NASSCOM (2018)	May, 2018 to July, 2018	Research informed by public data and case studies	Selected Sectors
23.	NASSCOM (2020)			Across Sectors
24.	PwC (2018)		CGE model analysis	IT/ITES sectors
25.	PwC (2019)		Insights from a survey of ~1,000 CXOs and decision-makers globally, including India	
26.	Saini et al. (2024)		Descriptive analysis of WEF's 2020 Future of Jobs Report	Across Sectors
27.	WEF (2018)		Insights from a global survey of 15 million workers across companies	Across industries
28.	<i>Future of Jobs Report 2020</i> (WEF, 2020)		Analysis based on data from LinkedIn, Coursera, ADP, and Future Fit	Across industries

Srl. (A)	Impact (F)	Nature of jobs affected (G)	Forecast (H)	Recommendation (I)
1.	Positive impact on Economic Growth/GVA	No long-term effect	Yes (2035)	
2.	Increase in labor productivity	Not specified. Varies across occupation		
3.	Adverse impact on job opportunity	Impact varies across countries (China-low skill & Germany-High skill work force)	Three years	Yes
4.	Mixed impact	Impact varies across countries (unemployment in China & India & new job creation in Japan)		Yes
5.	Positive impact	Job creation		Yes
6.	Negative impact on Job	Stagnation & Job loss	Yes (2022)	Yes
7.	Negative impact	Reduce job opportunity in various sectors		
8.	Positive impact	Productivity increase in SMEs and service industries		Yes
9.	Mixed impact	Decline in manufacturing and increase in service sector		Yes
10.	Negative impact	Low skilled workers will be affected		Yes

Srl. (A)	Impact (F)	Nature of jobs affected (G)	Forecast (H)	Recommendation (I)
11.	Mixed impact	Job loss in IT but new opportunity in emerging sectors (data science)		Yes
12.	Mixed impacts	Varies across sectors		Yes
13.	Mixed impact	Adverse impact for technical jobs but not for creative jobs.		Yes
14.	Positive impact	Varies across sectors		
15.	Positive impact		Yes (two years)	
16	Positive impact on economic growth	routine and non-cognitive jobs are affected but net positive job creation	Yes (2025)	Yes
17.	Positive impact			
17.	Negative impact	Automation would reduce jobs in many sectors	Yes (10-15 years)	
19.	Positive impact on value creation			Yes
20.	Positive impact on job creation	Varies across sector	Yes (2025)	Yes
21.	Positive impact in terms of higher margin and competitiveness			Yes
22.	Positive impact	Positive impact on IT/ITeS companies	Yes (three years)	Yes
23.	Positive impact on GDP & value added	Varies across sectors	Yes (2025)	Yes
24.	Positive impact on GDP growth	manual and repetitive in IT/IRES sector	Yes (2030)	
25.	Positive impact			Yes
26.	Mixed impact on jobs	Varies across sectors based on nature and skill of jobs	Yes (2025)	
27.	Mixed impact in job creation	Varies across sector based on skill		Yes
28.	Mixed impact	Varies across sector based on skill	Yes (2025)	Yes

Source: Author's original work

Table A.2: Analysis based on systematic review of literature

		<i>No. of studies</i>	<i>% of studies</i>
Study duration	Others/NA	10	35.71
	2000-10	3	10.71
	Post 2010	15	53.57
Data source	primary survey	13	46.43
	others/NA	15	53.57
Methodology	Descriptive	17	60.71
	Empirical	7	25.00
	N A	4	14.29
Impact	Mixed	8	28.57
	positive	13	46.43
	negative	2	7.14
	others/inconclusive	5	17.86
Sectoral coverage	across sectors	19	67.86
	specific sectors	9	32.14
Geographical coverage	India only	8	28.57
	incl India	7	25.00
	NA	13	46.43
Forecast	Specific Forecast	23	82.14
	NA	5	17.86
Impact variables	Employment	13	46.43
	GDP/growth	5	17.86
	Productivity/Other	5	17.86
	NA	10	35.71
	Total	28	100.00

Source: Author's Estimation