

## Reimagining global economy in the age of artificial intelligence: A critical thematic interpretation of *The Age of AI and Our Human Future*

**Roohollah Kohanhoosh Nejad\***

Department of West Asian Studies, Faculty of World Studies, University of Tehran,  
Tehran, Iran. (\*✉ [kohanhoosh@ut.ac.ir](mailto:kohanhoosh@ut.ac.ir),  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4871-6588>)

| Article Info                                                                                                                         | Abstract                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Original article                                                                                                                     | <p><b>Background:</b> Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming global economic systems, reshaping labor markets, industries, and geopolitical power structures. <i>The Age of AI and Our Human Future</i> by Kissinger, Schmidt, and Huttenlocher (2021) offers an influential perspective on these transformations, warranting systematic academic analysis.</p> <p><b>Aims:</b> This study aims to examine the major economic and societal themes emerging from <i>The Age of AI and Our Human Future</i> and to interpret their implications for the future of the world economy in the age of AI.</p> <p><b>Methodology:</b> Using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis, the book was analyzed as the primary qualitative data source. The theoretical framework combined the concept of Disruptive Technologies and Schumacher's human-centered perspective to interpret how AI influences global economic and ethical structures.</p> <p><b>Findings:</b> Four key themes were identified: (1) Transformation of Industries, (2) Labor Market Shifts and Economic Inequality, (3) AI and Global Power Dynamics, and (4) Regulation and Ethical Frameworks. The findings show that AI drives innovation and productivity while intensifying inequality and geopolitical competition. Ethical and regulatory frameworks are essential to balance technological progress with social justice and human welfare.</p> <p><b>Conclusion:</b> AI's rapid development is reshaping the world economy, necessitating interdisciplinary approaches and global cooperation. Human-centered and ethically governed AI development is vital to ensure that technological progress contributes to equitable and sustainable global prosperity.</p> |
| Main Object: Humanities & Social Sciences                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Received: 27 September 2025                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Revised: 12 November 2025                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Accepted: 16 November 2025                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Published online: 15 December 2025                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p><b>Keywords:</b><br/>artificial intelligence (AI),<br/>human future,<br/>Kissinger,<br/>thematic analysis,<br/>world economy.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

**Cite this article:** Kohanhoosh Nejad R. (2026). "Reimagining global economy in the age of artificial intelligence: A critical thematic interpretation of *The Age of AI and Our Human Future*". *Cyberspace Studies*. 10(2): 433-448. doi: <https://doi.org/10.22059/jcss.2025.403187.1183>.



Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License  
Website: <https://jcss.ut.ac.ir/> | Email: [jcss@ut.ac.ir](mailto:jcss@ut.ac.ir) |  
EISSN: 2588-5502  
Publisher: University of Tehran

## 1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming the relationship between technology and humanity, influencing economic structures, governance, and even the nature of human agency. The book *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* by Henry Kissinger, Eric Schmidt, and Daniel Huttenlocher provides a multidisciplinary exploration of these transformations, emphasizing the profound implications of AI for society, politics, and ethics. The authors argue that the accelerating integration of AI into human systems challenges traditional concepts of privacy, decision-making, and identity, urging a reconsideration of what it means to be human in the digital age (Kissinger et al., 2021).

Understanding these transformations requires systematic analytical frameworks. Thematic analysis provides a structured approach for examining patterns and meanings across complex texts, offering insights into the philosophical and economic underpinnings of AI's societal influence (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method enables scholars to identify how key themes—such as automation, ethics, and global governance—interact within the narrative presented by Kissinger and his co-authors (2021). Such an approach aligns with the growing literature emphasizing the need to interpret AI not merely as a technological innovation but as a socio-political and economic phenomenon (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014; Bryson et al., 2017; Winfield & Jirotko, 2018a).

The importance of analyzing *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* lies in its intersectional perspective on AI's impact. As researchers have noted, AI has emerged as both a driver of economic growth and a disruptor of established labor markets, governance structures, and ethical systems (Frey & Osborne, 2017; Agrawal et al., 2018). Kissinger et al. (2021) highlight how AI challenges traditional human judgment and political order, echoing concerns from scholars who argue that unchecked AI expansion could exacerbate inequality and concentrate power within a few dominant actors (West, 2018; Binns, 2018).

Thus, conducting a thematic analysis of this book provides an opportunity to connect its insights with broader academic debates surrounding AI ethics, global power shifts, and the future of human labor. It allows for a critical understanding of how AI reshapes economic and moral foundations of modern society. The guiding research question is therefore: What themes emerge from *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* regarding the future of the world economy in the age of AI, and how do these themes reflect broader debates on AI's societal, ethical, and political implications?

Despite extensive discussions on AI's transformative potential, existing scholarship has not sufficiently examined how the themes presented in *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* specifically relate to the evolving structure of the global economy. While prior studies

have explored AI's ethical, technological, and governance dimensions, few have conducted a systematic thematic analysis linking these insights to economic transformation, labor dynamics, and global power redistribution. This study addresses these gaps by offering a thematic analysis that investigate economic implications, thereby illuminating how AI reshapes global economic relations, workforce structures, and ethical governance in the twenty-first century.

## **2. Theoretical background: Disruptive technologies and schumacher's perspective**

This study draws on two complementary but distinct theoretical perspectives—Christensen's theory of disruptive technologies and Schumacher's human-centered critique of large-scale systems—to interpret how AI reshapes the world economy and human agency. However, rather than simply juxtaposing these frameworks, this research seeks to critically integrate them to illuminate the tensions between technological innovation and ethical sustainability in the age of AI.

Christensen's concept of disruptive innovation (1997) explains how emerging technologies overturn established industries and value systems by introducing novel efficiencies, capabilities, and markets. Within the context of AI, disruption manifests not only in economic terms—through automation, labor displacement, and industrial transformation—but also in epistemic and political domains, where traditional decision-making, knowledge production, and governance structures are destabilized. Kissinger, Schmidt, and Huttenlocher's *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* portrays AI as both an economic disruptor and a civilizational threshold, aligning with Christensen's framework insofar as it redefines competitiveness, value creation, and institutional adaptability.

Yet, disruption alone offers an incomplete account of AI's global significance. To complement this, Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* (1973) provides a normative counterpoint that re-centers the human being in discussions of technological progress. Schumacher's critique of large-scale, efficiency-obsessed systems highlights the moral and existential costs of technologies that outpace human comprehension or erode meaningful labor. When applied to AI, Schumacher's lens exposes a critical paradox: while AI expands productivity and knowledge, it simultaneously risks alienating individuals from work, judgment, and ethical responsibility. His insistence that "technology must serve people, not dominate them" becomes especially relevant when evaluating AI's capacity to displace or subordinate human agency.

Integrating these two perspectives clarifies that the tension between innovation and human welfare is not accidental but structural. AI's disruptive character, as framed by Christensen (1997), must be

interrogated through Schumacher's ethical vision to assess whether its transformative potential aligns with human-centered values. In the thematic findings of this study—particularly those related to labor inequality, global power asymmetry, and ethical governance—this integration enables a richer interpretation: AI's economic promise cannot be meaningfully understood apart from its ethical implications. While Kissinger et al. (2021) gesture toward this duality, their treatment often remains rhetorical, invoking “the human future” as a moral horizon without systematically reconciling it with the economic logic of disruption.

Therefore, the theoretical synthesis proposed here serves a diagnostic purpose. It allows the study to question whether the framework presented in *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* genuinely reflects Schumacher's ethical humanism or merely echoes it at a superficial level. This alignment—or lack thereof—becomes a key analytical thread throughout the interpretation of themes. In doing so, the framework moves beyond rhetoric, offering a critical structure for examining how technological disruption and human-centered ethics intersect and conflict in shaping the future world economy.

### 3. Literature review

The intersection AI and the future of the global economy has become a highly debated area within academic and policy circles. The book *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* by Henry Kissinger, Eric Schmidt, and Daniel Huttenlocher (2021) serves as a significant contribution to this discourse by offering a multifaceted examination of how AI is likely to reshape society and governance, with direct implications for economic systems, political power, and human agency. While there is an emerging body of literature that builds on the themes explored in this book, many scholars have also expanded the conversation to include issues such as the potential for economic disruption, ethical challenges, and societal transformation driven by AI. This literature review will synthesize key articles related to the authors' arguments, with a focus on AI's role in disrupting the global economy, its ethical implications, and its societal consequences.

A critical theme explored in *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* is the potential for AI to disrupt labor markets and the global economy at large. This disruption is largely driven by automation, which threatens to replace large segments of the workforce, particularly in low-skill industries. Scholars such as Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2014) have highlighted the “second machine age” in which AI and automation create a profound shift in how work is organized and performed. This phenomenon is widely acknowledged in *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* as the authors discuss how AI might impact employment, with high-skill jobs being augmented and low-skill jobs becoming increasingly automated (Kissinger et al., 2021).

Supporting this view, Frey and Osborne (2017) predict that a substantial percentage of jobs across various sectors may be at risk due to advances in AI, from manufacturing to services. This aligns with the concerns raised in Kissinger et al.'s work (2021), where the authors suggest that the future of human labor could be defined by a dramatic transformation, pushing humans into roles that require complex decision-making and emotional intelligence, areas where AI still struggles to compete. According to Bryson et al. (2017), the resulting changes in labor structures will require global economies to rethink labor policies and ensure that displaced workers are not left behind in the age of AI.

AI's disruptive capabilities come with significant ethical challenges, which are also a central theme in *The Age of AI and Our Human Future*. One major concern raised by the authors is the potential loss of privacy and autonomy as AI technologies become integrated into every facet of human life, from personal data to decision-making processes (Kissinger et al., 2021). This issue has been widely discussed in the literature, particularly regarding the need for ethical governance frameworks to ensure AI is developed and implemented in ways that are aligned with human rights and societal welfare.

Bryson et al. (2017) argue that AI presents unprecedented challenges to existing ethical frameworks, calling for new approaches that balance innovation with privacy, fairness, and accountability. In a similar vein, Winfield and Jirotko (2018b) advocate for ethical governance structures in the development of AI systems, arguing that regulations are necessary to ensure that AI systems adhere to moral values that prioritize human dignity and autonomy. These ethical concerns are echoed in Kissinger et al.'s book (2021), where they warn of the need for global cooperation in creating international frameworks that guide AI's development to avoid its exploitation by authoritarian regimes or powerful corporations.

Another prominent theme in the literature on *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* is the shifting balance of power between nations in the wake of AI-driven economic and geopolitical changes. Kissinger et al. (2021) highlight how AI could become a central tool in global governance, where nations that lead in AI innovation and deployment may gain disproportionate influence in the global order. This notion aligns with the findings of Agrawal et al., (2018), who argue that the economic and strategic advantages of AI will be disproportionately concentrated among leading nations, creating new divisions in the global political landscape.

For instance, China's aggressive pursuit of AI technology is often cited as an example of how AI could become a powerful tool of statecraft. As noted by West (2018), China's AI development strategy is not only about economic growth but also about enhancing national security and global influence. In response to these geopolitical shifts,

scholars like Kissinger et al. (2021) warn that nations must take care to prevent AI from becoming a tool of digital authoritarianism, advocating for international cooperation to balance technological advancement with democratic values.

A central concern in *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* is the impact of AI on human agency and decision-making processes. The authors argue that as AI systems become more capable, there is a risk that human decision-making will be supplanted or undermined by machine-driven processes, leading to questions about the nature of human autonomy and judgment in a world dominated by algorithms (Kissinger et al., 2021). This concern resonates with broader debates in AI ethics, where scholars like Binns (2018) argue that human agency must be safeguarded in the face of increasingly autonomous systems.

Moreover, scholars have explored the implications of AI in terms of decision-making in areas such as healthcare, justice, and governance. Winfield and Jirotko (2018b) discuss how AI can be a powerful decision-making tool, yet they also highlight the risks of AI systems that are opaque or lack accountability. Similarly, Bryson et al. (2017) caution that decisions made by AI must be explainable and aligned with ethical principles, ensuring that human judgment remains at the forefront in critical areas.

This article offers a comprehensive thematic analysis of the book *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* by Henry Kissinger, Eric Schmidt, and Daniel Huttenlocher (2021). By conducting a thematic analysis, it unravels the complex relationship between AI and various sectors such as governance, economy, ethics, and societal implications. The article underscores how AI is poised to disrupt global economic structures, shifting labor markets, creating new sectors, and transforming existing industries. It highlights both the opportunities and challenges of AI, including the transformation of global power dynamics, its impact on decision-making processes, and the growing need for regulatory frameworks to govern its ethical use. By incorporating Schumacher's perspective (1973) on disruptive technologies, the article critically examines the societal consequences of AI, advocating for human-centered technological development. It also serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, technologists, and scholars seeking to engage in meaningful discussions on the future of AI and its broader societal, ethical, and economic ramifications.

## 4. Methods

### 4.1. Data collection

This qualitative study used Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis procedure to explore the world economy themes presented in the book *The Age of AI and Our Human Future*. The book, authored by Henry Kissinger, Eric Schmidt, and Daniel Huttenlocher (2021), was selected as the primary data source because it provides a

comprehensive and influential perspective on the societal, political, and economic implications of AI. Data collection involved a systematic close reading of the text, with careful attention paid to sections addressing economic structures, global trade, labor markets, innovation, and governance in the AI era. Relevant passages were highlighted, coded, and categorized to capture recurring ideas and arguments about how AI is reshaping the world economy. By focusing on a single but significant text, the study aimed to gain a deep understanding of the economic narratives and assumptions embedded within elite discourse on AI. The data were organized thematically to allow for rigorous interpretation, ensuring that the identified themes reflected both explicit arguments and implicit concerns in the text. This process enabled the extraction of meaningful patterns that could inform broader discussions about the intersection of AI and global economic transformation.

#### 4.2. Data analysis

We analyzed the data using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis procedure. Thematic analysis is a qualitative method for systematically identifying and interpreting recurring themes within a dataset, and it provides a rich, detailed understanding of the content (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Following this approach, author became familiar with the transcripts and iteratively coded the data to label significant concepts or features. Codes with similar content were then grouped into potential sub-themes and reviewed in context to ensure they accurately reflected the narratives.

To ensure methodological rigor and transparency, the thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework in full. During Phase 1 (Familiarization), the entire text of *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* was read multiple times to identify preliminary meaning patterns. In Phase 2 (Initial Coding), significant statements, concepts, and passages related to the economic, ethical, and societal implications of AI were highlighted and coded manually in a qualitative matrix. Codes were recorded with corresponding textual excerpts. In Phase 3 (Theme Development), these codes were grouped into higher-order categories through iterative comparison and refinement. Subsequent phases (Reviewing, Defining, and Naming Themes) involved constant reference back to the source text to ensure that each theme accurately reflected the authors' perspectives rather than the researcher's assumptions. Representative quotations from the book were retained in an internal codebook to preserve context and establish an audit trail of interpretive decisions. This process ensured that the identified themes emerged inductively from the text rather than being imposed deductively.

## 5. Findings

Findings are as follows:

**Phase 1. Familiarization with the Data.** This stage involved reading through the document to get a clear understanding of how AI will influence the future of the world economy. Key ideas from various sections, such as the application of AI across industries like finance, manufacturing, and even national security, were noted.

**Phase 2. Generating Initial Codes.** From the reading, the following codes were identified:

- AI as an Enabler of Growth. AI is transforming various sectors (e.g., healthcare, finance, manufacturing).
- Labor Displacement and Job Creation. Automation and AI are expected to replace many traditional jobs while creating new roles.
- Global Economic Inequalities. The divide between nations or corporations that lead in AI development and those that do not.
- Shifting Workforce Dynamics. Changing skill requirements due to AI's involvement in decision-making processes.
- AI in Governance and Policy. The role of governments and regulatory frameworks in managing AI's economic impact.

**Phase 3. Searching for Themes.** Based on the initial codes, the themes around AI's impact on the economy emerged as follows:

### a) Main theme 1. Transformation of industries

AI is not just a tool for enhancing existing processes but is fundamentally transforming entire industries. From healthcare to finance, AI is reshaping how businesses operate, leading to more efficient systems and new opportunities for growth.

#### *Subtheme: Healthcare and Biotech*

AI is driving innovation in fields like drug discovery, health diagnostics, and treatment personalization. The book mentions how AI in medicine is already producing groundbreaking outcomes, like the discovery of halicin—a new antibiotic identified by AI that outperforms traditional research methods. The researchers used AI to analyze thousands of molecules in a fraction of the time it would take using traditional methods, demonstrating AI's potential to revolutionize the pharmaceutical industry.

The book notes: "MIT invited AI to participate in its process... [and] identified a novel antibiotic... which would have been prohibitively expensive through traditional methods" (p. 13).

#### *Subtheme: Finance and Automation*

In finance, AI's capacity to process and analyze vast datasets is leading to more sophisticated financial models, investment strategies, and automated trading systems. AI is optimizing decision-making and revealing market patterns humans cannot easily detect.

The book notes how AI's application in financial markets is making decision-making more efficient and sophisticated, though it does not delve deeply into specifics about market transformations.

### **b) Main theme 2. Labor market shifts and economic inequality**

AI's increasing role in automation is expected to significantly alter the global labor market. While it will replace many traditional jobs, particularly those in manual or low-skill sectors, it will also create new roles and industries. However, the rapid change poses challenges for education systems and workforce reskilling programs.

#### *Subtheme: Job displacement*

Automation is expected to replace many routine jobs in industries like manufacturing, logistics, and customer service. AI technologies will perform these tasks more efficiently and at lower costs than human workers. This could lead to massive job losses, particularly in low-skill and manual labor sectors.

The book notes: "AI's promise of epoch-making transformations — in society, economics, politics, and foreign policy — portends effects beyond the scope of any single author's or field's traditional focuses" (p.9).

#### *Subtheme: New job creation*

While AI will displace some jobs, it will also create new jobs, particularly in fields like data science, machine learning, AI ethics, and AI development. As industries adapt to new technologies, workers with the skills to design, manage, and work alongside AI systems will be in high demand.

The book notes: "AI is transforming industries and creating new sectors and job opportunities... increasing numbers of students are specializing in it" (p.9).

#### *Subtheme: Economic inequality*

AI's benefits may not be equally distributed. Wealthier nations and corporations that have access to cutting-edge AI technology will likely see significant economic advantages, further deepening the global economic divide. Developing countries that cannot afford AI technology may fall further behind.

The book discusses how "American AI start-ups raised almost \$38 billion... while Asian counterparts raised \$25 billion" (p.9), illustrating the disparity in AI investments and the economic divide between regions.

### **c) Main theme 3. AI and global power dynamics**

The rise of AI is altering global power structures. Nations with advanced AI capabilities will hold more influence over global affairs, while others will face new geopolitical and economic challenges.

*Subtheme: Military and Cybersecurity implications*

AI is expected to play a critical role in military strategy and defense systems, as AI-powered technology can enhance decision-making, predict outcomes, and even autonomously engage in military actions. Nations that harness AI for defense will gain an upper hand in global security.

The authors mention the “AI-powered systems [that] are informing growing aspects: the design of political messages... and the tailoring and distribution of those messages to various demographics” (p.21), which shows how AI is shaping not only military power but also influencing the global political landscape.

*Subtheme: Geopolitical rivalries*

The book emphasizes how nations are engaging in a “race” to dominate AI, as evidenced by AI investments in countries like the U.S., China, and the European Union. This competition could lead to new alliances or conflicts, with countries vying for AI supremacy.

The book notes: “Three governments— the United States, China, and the European Union— have all convened high-level commissions to study AI” (p.9).

**d) Main theme 4. Regulation and ethical frameworks**

As AI’s capabilities expand, so too does the need for ethical considerations and regulation. Governments and international bodies must address AI’s impact on the economy, society, and individual rights to ensure its responsible use.

*Subtheme: Ethics in AI*

AI systems must be designed with ethical considerations in mind to avoid biased decision-making or the exploitation of vulnerable populations. The book discusses the potential ethical issues surrounding AI’s role in society and how these technologies must be developed in alignment with human values.

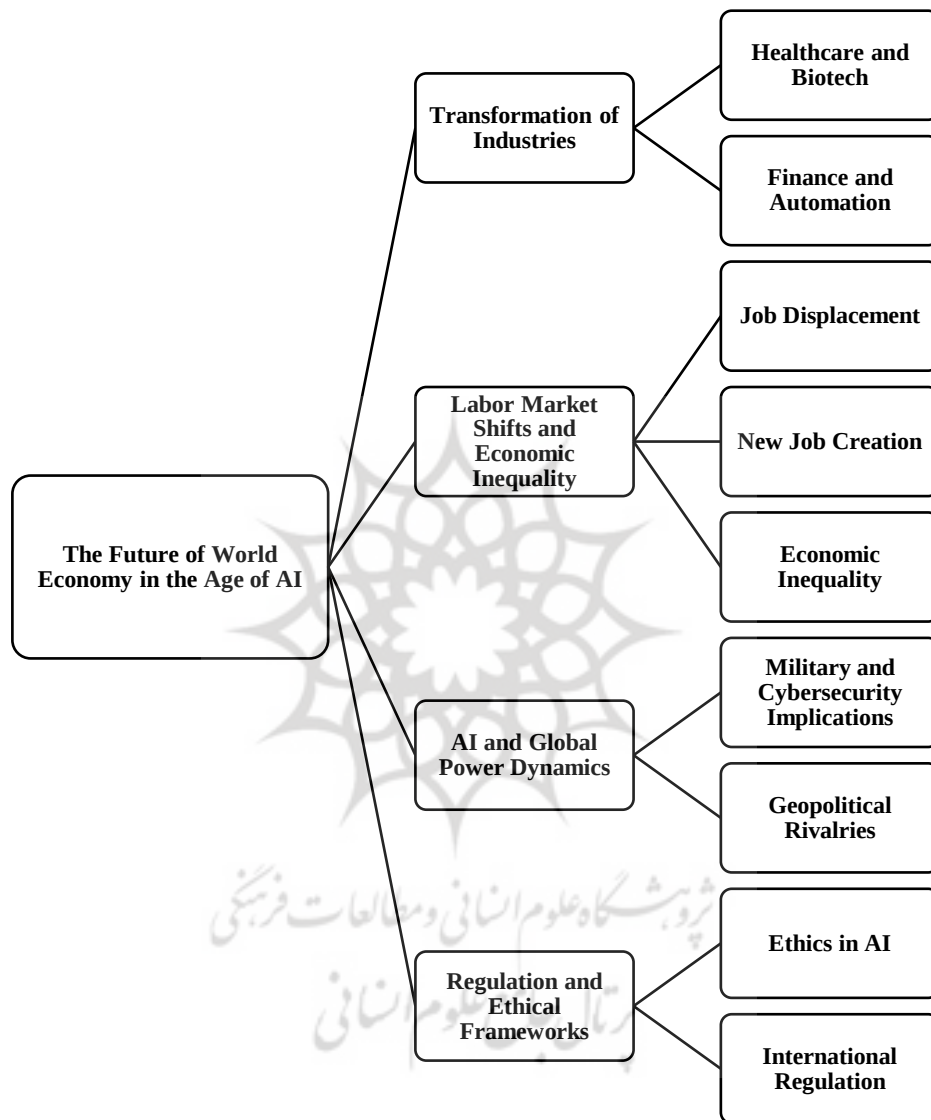
The book discusses the importance of considering how AI “transforms human thought, knowledge, perception, and reality” (p.10), indicating that while AI can bring great advancements, it must be governed by ethical frameworks that reflect human values.

*Subtheme: International regulation*

Given AI’s cross-border impact, international cooperation is necessary to establish standards and regulations that can govern its development and use. Global regulatory bodies may be needed to ensure that AI technologies are used responsibly and do not exacerbate existing inequalities.

The authors note the potential for nations to develop “diverging concepts or applications of AI... with varying goals, different training

models, and potentially incompatible operational and moral limits with respect to AI” (p.21).



**Figure 1.** Thematic Map of The Future of World Economy in the Age of AI

## 6. Discussion

The thematic analysis of *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* reveals several pivotal themes that shape the discourse surrounding AI and its influence on the future world economy. One of the most significant findings is AI's dual role as both an enabler of growth and a catalyst for

disruption. While AI presents immense opportunities for innovation, particularly in sectors like healthcare, finance, and manufacturing, it simultaneously threatens traditional economic structures and labor markets. The implications of these shifts are multifaceted, requiring a nuanced understanding of both the positive and negative outcomes of AI deployment in various industries.

A key theme in the book revolves around AI's transformative effect on industries, which, although positive in terms of economic growth and technological advancement, also triggers substantial shifts in workforce dynamics. The displacement of low-skilled workers through automation has been widely recognized as a potential consequence, with sectors like manufacturing, retail, and logistics facing significant job losses. On the other hand, the emergence of new sectors, particularly those centered around AI development, data science, and machine learning, offers a counterbalance. However, these new opportunities tend to favor highly skilled labor, exacerbating existing economic inequalities. The concern here is that AI-driven job displacement may disproportionately affect lower-income individuals and regions, deepening global economic divides.

This economic divide, as explored in the book, is another significant theme. The increasing concentration of AI resources among wealthy nations and corporations raises critical questions about equity in the global economy. For example, countries like the United States and China, which have invested heavily in AI research and development, are likely to lead the economic race in AI, leaving developing nations further behind. This concentration of AI power could also result in a redistribution of economic influence, with nations controlling AI technologies wielding disproportionate geopolitical power. As the book emphasizes, AI is not just an economic force but a geopolitical one, capable of reshaping global power structures and creating new sources of conflict.

The shift in power dynamics brought about by AI also brings attention to the role of governance. The authors stress the importance of establishing ethical and regulatory frameworks that can guide the development and implementation of AI technologies. These frameworks are essential in mitigating the risks associated with AI, including issues related to privacy, autonomy, and accountability. Without robust governance, there is a significant risk that AI could be exploited by authoritarian regimes or large corporations for purposes that undermine democratic values. This concern is particularly pertinent as AI begins to influence political processes, such as elections and public policy, through the manipulation of information and the use of predictive analytics. Ensuring that AI serves the public good rather than exacerbates inequalities or consolidates power in the hands of a few is a major challenge.

Another point raised in the discussion is the evolving role of human

judgment in decision-making processes. As AI becomes more integrated into decision-making, particularly in high-stakes areas like healthcare, justice, and defense, questions arise about the balance between machine intelligence and human agency. While AI systems are adept at processing vast amounts of data and identifying patterns that may elude humans, they lack the moral and ethical reasoning that humans bring to complex decisions. The authors of the book highlight the potential dangers of over-reliance on AI in situations where human values, empathy, and intuition are crucial. The loss of human oversight in decision-making could lead to outcomes that are technically optimal but ethically questionable, such as biased hiring practices or the erosion of privacy.

In line with this, the analysis emphasizes the importance of creating AI systems that are transparent, explainable, and accountable. This is particularly critical in sectors like healthcare, where AI's influence could directly impact lives. In these areas, AI should be used as a tool to augment human decision-making, not replace it entirely. The book urges that as AI technologies become more prevalent, policymakers must prioritize human-centered design to ensure that the values and needs of society are upheld.

Furthermore, the analysis highlights the growing importance of international cooperation in addressing the global implications of AI. AI is not confined by national borders, and its impact on the economy, governance, and human rights transcends geographic limitations. The authors advocate for the development of international standards and regulations to prevent a "race to the bottom", where nations prioritize technological advancement at the expense of ethical considerations. The creation of global AI governance structures that promote collaboration, rather than competition, could foster a more equitable distribution of AI's benefits and mitigate its risks.

Lastly, the analysis touches on the ethical considerations surrounding AI's role in reshaping human identity. As AI continues to evolve, it raises profound questions about the nature of human agency, creativity, and consciousness. AI systems are increasingly capable of performing tasks traditionally considered uniquely human, such as creating art, composing music, and even engaging in complex conversations. This, challenges traditional notions of what it means to be human and raises concerns about the potential devaluation of human labor and creativity. The authors of the book emphasize that as AI progresses, it is essential to maintain a focus on the human element, ensuring that technology serves humanity rather than diminishes it.

In conclusion, the discussion on AI's impact on the world economy underscores the complexity of the challenges and opportunities posed by this transformative technology. The book calls for a balanced approach to AI development, one that considers both its potential to drive economic growth and its capacity to disrupt societal structures.

By addressing issues related to labor, governance, ethics, and global power, society can better navigate the rapidly evolving landscape of AI and ensure that it contributes to a more equitable, ethical, and human-centered future.

## 7. Implications for research and practice

The rapid advancement of AI has wide-ranging implications across research and practice in multiple fields such as economics, governance, ethics, and labor. The book *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* argues for an interdisciplinary approach that integrates technology, social science, ethics, and policy-making to address these challenges.

### a) Research implications:

- Interdisciplinary research is essential to understand AI's societal impacts beyond technology, including effects on labor, governance, and social power structures.
- Ethical governance frameworks are needed to ensure AI systems are transparent, accountable, and aligned with societal values, preventing misuse in areas like surveillance and justice.
- Research should explore AI's effect on labor markets, focusing on mitigating job displacement through reskilling and economic policies.
- International cooperation is crucial to harmonize AI regulations globally and prevent AI from exacerbating inequalities or being used authoritarily.
- Long-term impacts on human identity and agency require study, as AI challenges traditional notions of creativity, intelligence, and work.

### b) Practice implications:

Industries must integrate AI carefully, prioritizing workforce reskilling to help workers adapt and viewing AI as augmentation rather than replacement.

Ethical practices must be embedded in AI design to avoid bias and protect human rights, especially in sensitive domains.

Policymakers and governance bodies should build regulatory frameworks promoting transparency, innovation, fairness, and global standards for AI.

Public awareness and engagement are critical to build trust and ensure AI development aligns with societal values.

AI offers opportunities for global collaboration to address challenges like climate change and healthcare through cooperative international policies.

Overall, the book highlights AI's transformative power on society and human identity, urging careful, collaborative efforts across disciplines and sectors to maximize benefits while mitigating risks.

## 8. Conclusion

In conclusion, *The Age of AI and Our Human Future* offers a profound exploration of how AI is poised to reshape the world economy and society. Through thematic analysis, the book highlights AI's potential to drive economic growth, revolutionize industries, and improve human well-being. However, it also underscores the significant challenges and risks associated with the rapid advancement of AI, particularly concerning labor market disruption, economic inequality, ethical considerations, and shifts in global power dynamics. The dual nature of AI— as both an enabler of progress and a disruptor of established structures— requires careful thought and action from researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.

AI's impact on the future of work, the economy, and governance will be profound, but it is essential that these transformations occur in a way that prioritizes human dignity, equity, and sustainability. Ethical governance, transparency, and accountability in AI development are critical to ensuring that these technologies benefit all of humanity rather than entrenching power imbalances or causing harm. By addressing the societal, economic, and political consequences of AI, we can guide its development in a way that maximizes its positive potential while mitigating its risks.

The implications of this analysis for research and practice are clear: AI development must be approached from an interdisciplinary perspective, integrating insights from technology, ethics, economics, and governance. Researchers must focus on the long-term societal impacts of AI, exploring its role in transforming labor markets, economic systems, and political structures. Practitioners, particularly in industries facing significant disruption from AI, must prioritize workforce reskilling and ethical AI deployment. Policymakers and global leaders must collaborate to create regulatory frameworks that govern AI technologies and ensure they are used responsibly across borders.

Ultimately, the future of AI is not predetermined; it will be shaped by the choices we make today. By fostering collaboration, ethical development, and inclusive policies, we can ensure that AI serves as a force for good, enhancing human lives and contributing to a more just and equitable world economy.

## Conflict of interest

The author declared no conflicts of interest.

## Ethical considerations

The author has completely considered ethical issues, including informed consent, plagiarism, data fabrication, misconduct, and/or falsification, double publication and/or redundancy, submission, etc. This article was not authored by artificial intelligence.

### Data availability

The dataset generated and analyzed during the current study is available from the author on reasonable request.

### Funding

This research did not receive any grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or non-profit sectors.

### References

- Agrawal, A.; Gans, J. & Goldfarb, A. (2018). "Introduction to 'The Economics of Artificial Intelligence: An Agenda'". In *The Economics of Artificial Intelligence: An Agenda* (pp. 1-19). University of Chicago Press.
- Binns, R. (2018). "On the ethical implications of artificial intelligence". *Journal of Ethics in Technology*. 12(3): 45-59.
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). "Using thematic analysis in psychology". *Qualitative research in Psychology*. 3(2): 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a>.
- Brynjolfsson, E. & McAfee, A. (2014). *The Second Machine Age: Work, Progress, and Prosperity in a Time of Brilliant Technologies*. WW Norton & company.
- Bryson, J.; Diamantis, M. & Grant, T. (2017). "Of, for, and by the people: The legal and ethical implications of artificial intelligence". *Journal of Artificial Intelligence Research*. 58(1): 79-102.
- Christensen, C.M. (1997). *The Innovator's Dilemma: When New Technologies Cause Great Firms to Fail*. Harvard Business Press.
- Frey, C.B. & Osborne, M.A. (2017). "The future of employment: How susceptible are jobs to computerisation?". *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*. 114: 254-280. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2016.08.019>.
- Kissinger, H.A.; Schmidt, E. & Huttenlocher, D. (2021). *The age of AI: and Our Human Future*. Hachette UK.
- Schumacher, E.F. (1973). *Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered*. Harper & Row.
- West, D.M. (2018). *The Future of Work: Robots, AI, and Automation*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Winfield, A.F.T. & Jirotko, M. (2018a). "Ethical governance is essential for building trust in autonomous systems". In *Proceedings of the 27th International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence* (pp. 5168-5174).
- Winfield, A.F.T. & Jirotko, M. (2018b). "Ethical governance of autonomous systems". *Computer Science Review*. 27: 1-17.