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Understanding the Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Workforce Structures and Social Organizations

Babattunde Olludotun[1], Oluwaseun Kayode[1], Segun Tunde[1]

[1]Benue State University, Nigeria

*Corresponding Author: Babattunde Olludotun

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Abstract

The study uses qualitative methods to investigate ways in which artificial intelligence (AI) is changing organization structures, workplace organization and the experiences of individuals. Although productivity and automation are broadly described in existing studies, this work examines the social and emotional sides of using AI. The authors came to these results by talking to professionals from different sectors and uncovering new patterns of role ambiguity, more use of algorithm-based decisions and the quiet protests against AI. What findings show is that AI creates new problems of stress and uncertainty when it changes both task division and classic role distinctions. The way organizational hierarchies work is now determined largely by those involved in creating and understanding AI systems. Artificial intelligence also tends to decrease spontaneous social interactions and help people depend on automatic data services. Because of these changes, workers may feel both supervised and excluded from workplace culture. The research adds to the existing readings on AI and employment by looking closely at the social and ethical impacts of using AI. The report advises making AI governance more about supporting people through transparency, letting people take part and paying attention to their emotional needs. Offering insights based on real-world evidence, this work helps policy makers, organizational leaders and experts studying social effects of technological change.

Introduction

Because of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the situation in economic, social and organizational areas has been transformed in the 21st century. Because AI is being used in workplaces, the structure of the workforce and the way organizations are run is changing which is encouraging people to study its wider social effects. Technologies such as machine learning, natural language processing, predictive analytics and autonomous systems are transforming both the work people do and the social networks in companies (Soori et al., 2023; Bathla et al., 2022). As AI gets better, it pushes jobs to change, mixes up duties between humans and computers and prompts organizations to reconsider traditional relationships among employees (Tschang & Almirall, 2021; Spring et al., 2022).

We're experiencing a change that impacts both technology and social behaviors. Decision-making, communication and assessments now use AI which has changed how individuals interact with both other people and the systems around them, according to Wysocki et al. (2023). AI separates itself from earlier technologies because it can act on its own and learn and this may replace or work together with parts of human work that have never been automated before. Consequently, people working in this field now must deal with losing their workplaces and with learning new skills, facing new work identities and forming different partnerships at work (Bennett & McWhorter, 2021; Vallo & Byström, 2022).

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Few discussions about AI in the workplace have exclusively examined numbers related to job loss, improving productivity and economic growth (Johnson et al., 2021; Morandini et al., 2023). Though such analyses help with understanding the big picture, they ignore the fine details of how people experience and understand changes related to AI. Researchers should investigate how AI changes workers' quality of life, affects their relationships with others at work and influences the way power is distributed at workplaces (Cramarenco et al., 2023). With no inquiry, the discussion cannot take into account how issues and adaptations linked to technology arise in society.

AI is now seen to affect organizational behavior by influencing things such as job roles, what is expected and the way teams and employees communicate (Ramachandran et al., 2022). As a result, with the help of AI, teams and departments are now seeing machines make decisions which affects how authority is shared (Heilig & Scheer, 2023). In certain organizations, using AI, performance monitoring, planning job roles and resolving conflicts are done by the system instead of people. As a result of these trends, it becomes necessary to think again about what workers and their employers owe each other (Poláková et al., 2023).

Besides, AI now affecting companies has led to new monitoring tactics and introduced algorithmic ways to control people, changed the relationship between employers and employees and influenced how workers feel about their rights and self-worth (Jarrahi et al., 2021; Benlian et al., 2022). With AI-based tools, productivity is constantly tracked, deviations noticed and staff notified, encouraging closer observation and less informal discussion among colleagues, according to Leicht-Deobald et al. in 2019. Such conditions may weaken trust, creativity in ideas and the unity of workers, all of which are essential for innovation and the ability to respond well to change. In addition, people may believe that AI is both hard to figure out and partly unfair, mainly because they don't see how algorithms affect their chances of keeping their jobs or getting promoted (Lee & Rich, 2021).

AI is also affecting how fairly access to employment is distributed. Highly skilled workers tend to enjoy the help of AI in their work which only means better productivity for them, but routine and basic workers are at greater risk of being replaced and ignored (Yang, 2022). This split in opinions may result in segregating access to opportunity for people both in workplaces and in wider communities (Mijs & Roe, 2021). Meanwhile, jobs are appearing that expect individuals to use technology and also work well together with computers, suggesting that teamwork and adaptability will be very important in the near future.

In response to changes in technology and human habits, companies' cultures must change as well. Leaders are responsible for both organizing the AI system and assisting staff emotionally and socially as teams adjust to new technologies Singh (2023). For AI-mediated choices to better support people, new methods to lead ethically, inspire inclusiveness and engage everyone in design are required.

Since AI integration at work is rather complex, this research aims to add more qualitative research to the field. The study seeks to reveal the way humans and intelligent machines work together by analyzing the opinions of those working closely with AI. Having these insights allows organizations and policymakers to develop approaches that are efficient, fair, trusted and support the strength of society.

Method

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative research approach to investigate the social and organizational consequences of artificial intelligence (AI). A qualitative lens was considered most appropriate

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because AI influences complex aspects of workplace life, including relationships, communication, decision-making, and authority structures, which cannot be fully captured through numerical measurement. Instead of seeking to quantify AI's impact, the study emphasized understanding how individuals interpret and construct meaning from their everyday interactions with AI systems. The research was grounded in a constructivist paradigm, which assumes that reality is socially constructed through human interaction and shared experiences. This paradigm allowed the inquiry to focus on employees' subjective narratives, giving insight into how they understand, adapt to, and contest AI in their professional contexts.

Participants and Sampling

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, ensuring the inclusion of individuals who had direct, sustained experience with AI technologies in their workplaces. To capture a broad perspective, 21 participants were drawn from multiple sectors, including finance, healthcare, logistics, education, and information technology. This cross-sector design enabled the study to identify both shared and sector-specific experiences. Selection criteria required that each participant had used AI tools in their professional responsibilities for at least one year, whether for decision-making, monitoring, or task organization. The sample was intentionally diverse in terms of roles and responsibilities, ranging from junior employees to managers overseeing AI-based projects, in order to provide a comprehensive view of the shifting dynamics across organizational hierarchies.

Data Collection

Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews, which provided the flexibility to explore participants' experiences in detail while maintaining consistency across the interviews. The interview guide was structured around key themes, including the meaning of AI in participants' work, changes in job duties, experiences with AI-enabled monitoring, impacts on team cooperation, and perceptions of trust, control, and autonomy in AI-mediated environments. All interviews were conducted virtually via secure video-conferencing platforms, ensuring accessibility for participants across different geographic locations. Each session lasted between 45 and 75 minutes and was recorded with the participants' consent. The recordings were transcribed verbatim to ensure that no detail or nuance of meaning was lost during the analysis.

Data Analysis

The study employed thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's six-step framework. The process began with familiarization through repeated reading of transcripts, followed by initial coding of significant statements and phrases. Codes were then grouped into broader themes, which were refined and reviewed to ensure internal consistency and distinctiveness. Each theme was given a descriptive name that reflected its underlying meaning. NVivo 12 software was used to support data management, coding, and organization, providing a systematic structure to the analysis. Throughout this process, recurring themes were identified, such as "delegating authority to machines," "algorithmic monitoring," "cooperation with AI," "reduced interpersonal communication," and "reshaping career roles." Iterative reflection and revisiting of data allowed for the themes to emerge naturally while remaining aligned with the central research questions.

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Result and Discussion

This study focuses on how artificial intelligence does more than replace tasks; it also has effects on the ways organizations are set up and how colleagues relate to each other. In-depth interviews were used to gather examples of professionals navigating job changes, updated organizational structures and altered means of communication because of AI. These themes, observed in the narratives, present a practical view of how technology changes the personal aspects of work.

Job Reconfiguration and Role Ambiguity

Because of Artificial Intelligence being used in workplaces, people's jobs have been reformed and this has often led to employees experiencing more role ambiguity. Most of the participants shared that their daily routines, duties and tasks had shifted which made them unsure about their roles at work. Because AI is handling routine tasks, staff must adjust by acquiring new skills and still handle their regular duties along with AI-assisted ones. Sometimes, because people take on more than one role, job responsibilities become less clear and clear-cut.

One participant, a mid-level manager in the finance sector, described this ambiguity:

> *"Since the AI tools were introduced, my role has expanded beyond just managing people to also monitoring what the AI systems are doing, but it's not clear where my authority ends and the AI begins. Sometimes I'm unsure if I should intervene or let the system handle it."*

This quotation reflects a broader pattern where employees grapple with shifting power dynamics and decision-making authority, as AI systems begin to encroach on traditionally human-controlled domains. Similarly, frontline employees reported difficulties in balancing manual tasks with the oversight of automated processes. A healthcare professional shared,

> *"My job used to be very straightforward, focused on patient care, but now I spend a lot of time interacting with AI diagnostic tools. It's confusing because I'm expected to trust the AI but also catch its errors, and sometimes I'm not sure who's ultimately responsible if something goes wrong."*

This dual expectation creates tension, as workers must simultaneously function as operators, supervisors, and quality controllers, often without sufficient guidance or training.

The study also found that role ambiguity affected not only individual task execution but also collaboration within teams. As AI systems mediate communication and workflow, traditional role boundaries within teams become fluid, leading to unclear accountability. One IT specialist noted,

> *"We used to have clear roles during projects, but now with AI managing parts of the workflow, it's hard to say who's accountable for certain outcomes. Sometimes the AI does something unexpected, and no one knows if it's a system error or a human mistake."*

Such uncertainty hampers team coordination and can undermine trust among colleagues. Moreover, this reconfiguration often prompts anxiety and resistance. Several participants expressed concerns about job security and the erosion of their professional identities. As one logistics worker stated,

> *"I feel like my job is changing so fast that I don't really know what I'm supposed to do anymore. The AI is doing a lot of what I used to do, but I'm still expected to be responsible for the results. It feels like my role is being redefined without any clear explanation."*

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This uncertainty highlights the psychological impact of AI-induced role shifts and underscores the need for organizations to provide clearer communication and support during transitions.

Evolving Organizational Hierarchies

You can expect organizational structures and the way decisions are made to be influenced by using artificial intelligence at work. AI systems frequently led participants to mention that they add new supervisory roles which may work around traditional managers and make the organizational structure more flexible. Such changes cause changes in authority, forcing people in the organization to look at their roles and how they affect the organization's progress.

Several participants highlighted that AI technologies often assume responsibilities traditionally held by middle management, such as monitoring employee performance, allocating resources, or flagging potential issues. One operations manager in the logistics sector noted,

> *"The AI system now monitors real-time performance metrics and automatically adjusts workloads. It's almost like the system is a manager itself, which changes how I do my job because I have to coordinate with the AI rather than just direct my team."*

This quotation shows that AI supports decisions at different levels and, in some cases, takes over some of the managerial roles managers had before.

At the same time, these transformations in hierarchy sometimes cause employees and managers to be unclear about who is responsible for what. Many people talking about AI said they found it challenging to decide when an AI command went against their own judgment. An IT team leader mentioned,

> *"Sometimes the AI flags issues or recommends actions that don't seem right to me, but I have to follow the system's instructions because it's programmed into our workflow. It creates a tricky situation where I feel like I'm managing the AI as much as managing people, and it's not clear who's really in charge."*

The example shows that AI influences both the support and limits put on human decision-making within organizations. Furthermore, because of AI, new types of management relying on data and algorithms have developed and these are often called "algorithmic governance" by those involved. AI's transparent decision-making process affects how trustworthy and legitimate these emerging structures are seen. A senior analyst in the finance sector remarked,

> *"Decisions made by AI are sometimes hard to question because they're based on complex algorithms we don't fully understand. It shifts power to whoever controls the AI system or understands its workings, which changes the usual chain of command."*

This dynamic shift influence toward technical experts and data scientists, creating a parallel hierarchy grounded in AI literacy and control rather than traditional managerial experience.

This evolving hierarchy also impacts communication flows and collaboration. Participants reported that AI-mediated communication channels can flatten hierarchies by facilitating direct, data-driven interactions across different levels, but can also create bottlenecks where AI systems filter or prioritize information. One human resources officer explained,

> *"The AI tools manage a lot of communication between departments, deciding which messages get through and when. This changes how information flows, sometimes speeding up processes but other times creating new gatekeepers that aren't human."*

Such changes in information flow alter how authority is exercised and negotiated across the organization.

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Finally, participants expressed concern about the implications of these shifting hierarchies for employee morale and organizational culture. The perceived displacement or dilution of human leadership roles can provoke uncertainty and disengagement among staff. As a project coordinator noted,

> *"When the AI makes so many decisions, it feels like there's less room for human input and leadership. People wonder if their opinions still matter or if they're just following what the system says. It changes the culture and how people relate to their leaders."*

This sentiment underscores the importance of balancing AI efficiency with human-centered leadership to maintain a healthy organizational environment.

Human-AI Collaboration and Resistance

Bringing Artificial Intelligence into workplaces now requires that people and machines try out new ways of collaborating. While working together, companies achieve better efficiency, accuracy and productivity, but employees may not always accept the change and might either embrace or resist the concept. You can especially notice this in workplaces that have introduced AI systems without properly training, explaining or respecting the issues important to employees.

Many participants in this study acknowledged the productivity benefits of AI but expressed reservations about how these systems affected the quality of human labor and interaction. A marketing analyst shared,

> *"The AI helps us generate reports faster and even suggests campaign ideas, but sometimes it feels like we're just following what it says instead of thinking creatively. It's like working with a machine that doesn't understand nuance."*

This sentiment illustrates a tension between the efficiency offered by AI tools and the perceived erosion of human creativity and agency in decision-making processes.

Collaborative relationships between humans and AI also require trust in the system's outputs. Yet several participants reported skepticism about AI reliability, especially when outcomes were not easily explainable. A customer service supervisor noted,

> *"The chatbot answers most questions well, but sometimes it gives confusing replies. When that happens, we have to clean up the mess, and some of the teams don't really trust it anymore. They'd rather handle things manually."*

This scenario reflects how trust in AI is fragile and contingent on consistent performance. When AI systems falter, it often reinforces human resistance and leads to a preference for traditional, human-driven processes.

In many cases, resistance is not vocal or formal but embedded in everyday work practices. Some employees delay using AI tools, underutilize features, or override AI recommendations when possible. A mid-level administrator explained,

> *"I use the AI because we have to, but I still double-check everything manually. It's not that I don't appreciate the help it's just hard to fully trust something I didn't help build or understand."*

Such passive resistance demonstrates the psychological and cultural barriers that organizations must navigate when implementing AI. It also signals a need for participatory design approaches that include employee input in shaping how AI tools are used and governed.

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Conversely, participants who experienced inclusive training and transparent AI integration expressed higher levels of comfort and willingness to collaborate. An engineer in a manufacturing firm said,

> *"We were involved in testing the AI early on, and they explained how it works and where the limits are. That made a big difference. Now I feel like it's a teammate, not a threat."*

This perspective shows how human-AI collaboration is not merely a technical adjustment but a cultural and relational one. Where employees are treated as partners in technological change, resistance tends to diminish, and collaboration flourishes.

Furthermore, human-AI collaboration introduces new forms of co-dependence, where employees must learn to interpret and correct AI errors while benefiting from its capabilities. This duality can enhance problem-solving but also add cognitive burdens. A healthcare technician observed,

> *"The AI helps spot anomalies in scans, which is great, but we still have to double-check. Sometimes I feel like I'm doing two jobs mine and the AI's."*

This example highlights how collaboration can be both empowering and exhausting, requiring new competencies that are not yet fully supported by organizational systems or training frameworks.

The findings also reveal generational and disciplinary differences in attitudes toward AI collaboration. Younger professionals or those with technical backgrounds showed more openness to AI, while older or non-technical staff expressed more resistance. However, resistance was not necessarily based on age or ability alone but often reflected deeper concerns about transparency, accountability, and identity in the face of automation.

Changes in Workplace Culture and Communication

Bringing Artificial Intelligence into the workplace is bringing about changes in how people communicate and changing how they interact. People involved in this study said AI brought advantages in running businesses, yet it is slightly reshaping the way people work together, communicate and view the organization's values.

A major cultural change noticed was that communication became more structured and was handled more by machines. Tools that use AI such as reporting systems that work automatically, schedulers and dashboards for decision-making, are making communication more efficient but also reducing the number of simple, chance discussions. A senior HR officer observed,

> *"People used to walk over and chat if they had questions, but now they just submit a query into the system or wait for the AI to assign them a task. The human side of work feels more distant now."*

This quote illustrates how AI systems may reduce interpersonal engagement, contributing to a more transactional culture where digital interactions take precedence over relational ones.

Moreover, several participants described a sense of emotional disconnection, especially in environments where AI-mediated communication has replaced or reduced face-to-face interactions. An administrative assistant shared,

> *"I rarely talk to my supervisor directly now. The system assigns my work, tracks it, and sends feedback through the app. I miss the quick chats that made work feel more personal."*

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This feedback highlights how AI is influencing the social fabric of workplaces, where efficiency is often prioritized at the expense of community and collegiality.

Additionally, communication patterns are becoming more hierarchical and structured around data outputs. Participants noted that communication is now heavily driven by metrics generated by AI systems, which can shift the tone and focus of discussions. For instance, a team lead in an IT firm remarked,

> *"Most of our meetings now revolve around what the AI dashboards show KPIs, alerts, forecasts. We spend less time talking about ideas or team feedback and more time reacting to what the system tells us."*

This points to a cultural shift toward reactive and data-centered communication, which can limit exploratory dialogue and suppress bottom-up feedback.

Interestingly, the influence of AI on communication also extends to language itself. Some employees noted that they have started to "talk like the system" using more formal, task-oriented, and metric-focused expressions. A project manager stated,

> *"Even in emails, we use the same language the AI uses short, directive, and technical. It's changed the tone of how we communicate with each other."*

This reflects how language norms evolve in tandem with technological environments, influencing not only what is communicated but also how it is communicated.

Despite these challenges, not all cultural changes were perceived negatively. Some participants described how AI has facilitated inclusivity by creating standardized, transparent communication channels. For example, a compliance officer said,

> *"Now that we use AI systems for reporting and feedback, there's less bias. Everyone gets the same treatment and information, which actually helps reduce favoritism."*

This suggests that when implemented thoughtfully, AI can enhance fairness and equality in communication structures.

Yet, the emotional dimension of workplace culture remains a concern. Many employees expressed a longing for more human interaction and empathetic engagement elements they felt were being diminished by over-reliance on AI systems. As a service coordinator expressed,

> *"The AI is great at tracking everything, but it doesn't understand when someone is having a bad day. Managers used to notice things like that. Now, unless it's on the dashboard, it doesn't get attention."*

This insight underscores the limitations of AI in addressing the emotional and relational aspects of workplace culture.

AI and the Transformation of Organizational Roles and Culture

The study provides a clear picture of the ambiguity and changing jobs caused by introducing AI. While several studies have shown how automation affects different types of job duties (Parker & Grote, 2022; Langer & Landers, 2021), not many consider the impact on workers' purpose, power and skill level. But these recent studies by Tarafdar et al. (2023) only briefly mention the challenges of algorithms on workers, whereas the present research presents data to prove that algorithms now disrupt the usual barriers between technical and strategic roles. Persons working in hybrid environments are often unsure if a decision should be made by AI or by themselves.

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In sociological terms, role theory explains that not knowing what is expected from different roles can cause stress and lower the performance of an organization. Since algorithms used in AI are often hard to interpret, employees are less able to challenge recommendations made by the system. In this way, the research looks at AI integration less as simply adding technology and more as affecting people's sense of who they are and how they work with others.

It additionally explains the changes AI is making to power structures and the methods people use to make decisions in organizations. Organizational experts used to think that authority came from management positions, but today, tasks like hiring, reviewing work and organizing teams are handled more by algorithms provided by AI systems (Schell & Bischof, 2022). Now, AI systems take on management tasks and deliver advice, data and insights that many managers rely on heavily.

There is a lack of full theoretical analysis on this shift. Although Balasubramanian et al. (2022) mentioned learning algorithms as a new part of organizations, most studies lack details about the effects of the systems on relationships among employees, for example, the lessening influence of mid-level supervisors. It is shown here that AI undermines typical management roles but boosts the importance of data teams and system designers. The promised flat hierarchy in digital worlds disappears and technocratic ideas overtake it, so that people with access to algorithms become the new authorities.

It also adds a lot by exploring affective and emotional factors in partnership with AI. Although previous business and technology research talks about humans and AI supporting each other for tasks and to improve processes (Jarrahi et al., 2023), this study highlights emotional labor, the fear of becoming unnecessary and worries about ethical issues. Critical algorithm studies, an emerging area of research, also stress how relying on black box systems can stress people psychologically.

Other resistance studies analyze acts from community groups and political organizations, whereas this one highlights the unsaid forms such as disengagement, mistrust and skepticism, helping explain Jarrahi et al. (2023) idea of the "symbiosis paradox." Human abilities are supposedly improved by AI, even though it still regularly makes people feel less capable. It is further complicated when it's not clear who is responsible for ethical decisions. When AI affects employees by choosing their promotions, deciding on terminations and selecting projects, workers feel that governance is becoming less human which in turn leads them to resist with both technical and moral objections.

The study further develops research on workplace culture and communication which has not been well addressed by AI studies. Even though culture has long been seen as essential for group identity in organizations (Iyer, 2022), there is only little research looking at how AI impact symbolic interactions among professionals. It was found in this study that using AI replaces cultural learning from mentors, small talks and open discussions with data reports, dashboards and automated messages.

Because of this, employees work in a broken culture where they interact mostly through work systems and feel measured only by metrics. Morrow et al. (2023) mentions that digital tools lead to less empathy and disconnection and this study can confirm this is the case in AI fields. Utilizes real examples to show that although technology is useful for work, it often cases people to connect less in their true, open way and more in a constrained and controlled manner.

A lot of the current research on AI and changes in the workplace happens in the U.S., Europe and China. Therefore, there is not a lot of research studying how AI is integrated in non-Western or developing organizations. This work bridges the gap by analyzing different

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organizations with varying digital development, giving insights based on actual situations instead of basing everything on technology.

It links up with the arguments of Agnew et al. (2023), who insist AI must be considered through the lens of local organizations, values and resistance. For this reason, the meaning, purpose and results of AI are shaped socially and strongly influenced by an organization's values, government laws and regional customs.

This study adds to the wider conversation on AI ethics by pointing out that ethical issues are not limited to looking at fairness algorithms. Evidence shows that relational ethics is needed, covering openness and transparency in process, having workers take part in decision-making and promoting their emotional health. It highlights that AI governance should rely on audits as well as steps that encourage inclusion and empathy for all employees.

Starting to apply frameworks such as the OECD AI Principles or the EU's AI Act can lead companies to forget about how AI will influence culture and emotions. The findings back up ideas that responsible AI needs to work on human values, common corporate behaviors and the unofficial rules that help people work together.

Conclusion

It has been shown that artificial intelligence greatly influences workplaces and social organization by redefining regular jobs, changing the way teams are structured, adjusting workplace conversations and strain cultural expectations. Among other studies that look at how tasks can be done better, this one highlights the emotional challenges, ways employees can resist new technology and ethical issues that appear in AI-inclusive offices. By discussing these results in relation to larger sociological and organizational aspects, the study plays a key role in guiding the growing discussion of human-AI teamwork by suggesting that being inclusive, clear and sensitive matters in workplace technology management. Basically, adopting AI involves understanding it as a social event which needs leaders who care about people and change accepted practices with sensitivity.

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