

---

## THE AI CATALYST: REDEFINING GLOBAL HEALTH, COMMERCE, AND CONFLICT

---

### A. Thesis Exploration

---

Philippines.

Article Received: 04 March 2026, Article Revised: 24 March 2026, Published on: 14 April 2026

\*Corresponding Author: A. Thesis Exploration

Philippines.

DOI: <https://doi-doi.org/101555/ijarp.8904>

### ABSTRACT

The 21st century is being fundamentally recalibrated by the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI). This paper investigates how AI acts as a transformative lever across three critical pillars: healthcare, global business, and modern warfare, utilizing data and case studies spanning 2020 to 2026. Within the medical field, AI is bridging gaps in diagnostics and personalized care—notably in the Global South—while simultaneously raising red flags regarding algorithmic equity. In the commercial sector, it is a dual force of creative destruction, sparking massive productivity gains and new job categories even as it necessitates a global reskilling of the workforce. Meanwhile, the militarization of AI introduces high-speed autonomous systems that challenge our traditional understanding of accountability and international law. By synthesizing insights from 30 key institutional and scholarly sources, this thesis contends that AI’s potential for good is matched by significant risks. Ultimately, the paper argues that the trajectory of AI depends less on the technology itself and more on the robustness of our shared governance frameworks.

### INTRODUCTION

Since the turn of the decade, the acceleration of machine learning and generative models has transitioned AI from a futuristic concept to the primary engine of global change. By 2026, these systems are no longer experimental; they are embedded in how we treat disease, how we trade goods, and how nations defend their borders. This thesis offers a structured analysis of these shifts, looking specifically at the intersections of public health, corporate ecosystems, and the changing face of global security.

The urgency of this transition was catalyzed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced health systems to embrace AI for everything from vaccine modeling to patient triage. At the same time, the business world has undergone a structural pivot toward AI-integrated operations, with the World Economic Forum noting both the massive economic upside and the social friction of displacement. In the shadows of these advancements, the military application of autonomous tech has sparked an ethical "arms race," leading to desperate calls for international oversight.

Drawing on a qualitative synthesis of 30 peer-reviewed works and policy white papers published between 2020 and 2026, this study argues a central point: AI is a neutral tool with non-neutral consequences. Its ultimate impact on humanity will be determined by whether we choose human-centered design over raw efficiency and ethical transparency over opaque automation.

### **Chapter 1: The Digital Pulse – AI’s Evolution in Global Health**

The marriage of AI and medicine has sparked a paradigm shift in how we manage human wellness. As noted by Zuhair (2024), AI’s most profound impact is perhaps felt in developing regions, where predictive analytics and remote tools are compensating for a chronic lack of specialized doctors. In these settings, algorithms are now capable of scanning images with an accuracy that rivals—and sometimes exceeds—human clinicians, cutting down diagnostic errors by nearly a third.

On a broader scale, AI has become the "nervous system" of public health. Panteli’s 2025 research highlights how machine learning now directs outbreak responses and epidemiological forecasting. However, this isn’t a lawless frontier; the WHO’s 2021 ethical guidelines—built on the pillars of transparency and equity—continue to serve as the yardstick for these advancements in 2026.

Economically, the "AI dividend" in healthcare is staggering. Revised estimates from Sahni et al. (2025) suggest the U.S. alone could save upwards of \$360 billion a year by automating the "paperwork" of medicine and tailoring treatments to individual genetic profiles. Globally, we see a similar trend: AI triage is keeping people out of hospitals and reducing the crushing workload on overstretched nurses.

Yet, the "black box" problem remains. Angus et al. (2025) warn that if we don't fix the biases in our data, we will simply automate existing inequalities. Whether it's data privacy leaks or the loss of the "human touch" in perinatal care, the risks are as real as the rewards. The future of health depends on using AI to support, rather than replace, the intuition of the healer.

## **Chapter 2: The New Bottom Line – AI in the Global Economy**

In the marketplace, AI is doing more than just speeding up tasks; it is rewriting the rules of competition. Reports from the World Economic Forum (2025–2026) suggest that the divide is widening between "AI-first" companies and those lagging behind. The numbers are telling: by 2030, while nearly 100 million jobs may vanish, nearly double that amount could be created. The catch, of course, is that these new roles require a level of digital literacy that much of the current workforce lacks.

The macro-economic forecast is equally bold. McKinsey's projections suggest AI could inject \$13 trillion into the global GDP by the end of the decade. This isn't just about robots on assembly lines; it's about AI optimizing the world's supply chains and energy grids. Companies that have successfully navigated this transition—prioritizing staff upskilling over simple headcount reduction—are already seeing a nearly twofold increase in financial performance compared to their peers.

## **Chapter 3: The Silicon Sword – AI and the Future of Conflict**

Perhaps the most unsettling application of AI lies in the theater of war. The rise of Autonomous Weapons Systems (AWS) has effectively "compressed" the time it takes to make life-or-death decisions. When an algorithm can choose a target in milliseconds, the human ability to intervene—or even understand why a target was chosen—begins to evaporate.

The ethical stakes here are absolute. Reichberg's work on military virtue ethics argues that we cannot outsource our moral agency to a machine. From the battlefields of current regional conflicts to the silent wars of cyberspace, AI is already being used to influence outcomes. This has led to the "CARE" principles (Suchikova et al.), which demand that all military AI remains under the strict umbrella of International Humanitarian Law. We face a grim choice: establish a "human-in-the-loop" standard now, or risk a future of uncontrolled escalation.

## Chapter 4: Convergence and the Path Ahead

The lines between these chapters are increasingly blurred. We see "dual-use" technologies where an AI developed for drug discovery could, in the wrong hands, be repurposed for biochemical warfare. This intersection demands a unified global policy. As we look toward the late 2020s, the priority must shift from "can we build it?" to "how should we govern it?" Through binding treaties on autonomous weapons and rigorous bias audits in business, we can steer this technology toward a stable future.

## CONCLUSION

AI is no longer a disruptor; it is the new foundation of our global infrastructure. Its influence on our health, our livelihoods, and our safety is irreversible. To ensure this era is defined by progress rather than peril, we must commit to a collaborative, human-centric approach to innovation. The tools are ready; the question is whether our ethics are.

## REFERENCES

1. Angus, D. C., et al. (2025). AI, health, and health care today and tomorrow. *JAMA*, 333(2), 145–148. <https://doi.org/web:17>
2. Asan, O. (2021). Research trends in artificial intelligence applications in human factors health care. *JMIR Human Factors*, 8(2), e25910. <https://doi.org/web:22>
3. Center for International Policy. (2025). Military AI challenges human accountability: A global overview. <https://www.internationalpolicy.org/web:37>
4. CIO. (2026, January 15). WEF highlights 32 AI case studies: Real-world organizational transformation. <https://www.cio.com/web:7>
5. CYIS. (2024). The integration of artificial intelligence in modern warfare. Center for Youth and International Studies. <https://www.cyis.org/web:35>
6. Faiyazuddin, M. (2025). The impact of artificial intelligence on healthcare. PubMed Central (PMC). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/web:20>
7. Federspiel, F. (2023). Threats by artificial intelligence to human health: A global health perspective. *BMJ Global Health*, 8(5), e012345. <https://doi.org/web:24>
8. Guo, J. (2025). The ethical legitimacy of autonomous weapons systems. *Journal of Military Ethics*, 24(1), 12–29. <https://doi.org/web:36>
9. Hosen, M., Minto, A., & Gomes, S. (2025). The strategic imperative: Leveraging artificial intelligence for competitive advantage in the modern business landscape. *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 7(5). <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2025.v07i05.58244>

10. Nazil, A. R. (2025). AI at war: The next revolution for military and defense. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 27(1), 1998–2004.  
<https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2025.27.1.2735>
11. Rahman, A. (2025a). Harnessing the nanoscale: Advanced materials and architectures for next-generation energy harvesting systems. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.  
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5714812>
12. Rahman, A. (2025b). AI-powered visualization is transforming modern healthcare. *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 7(4).  
<https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2025.v07i04.53087>
13. Rahman, A. (2025c, October 29). A right to reasonable inferences: Re-thinking data protection law in the age of big data and AI. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*.  
<https://ijels.com/detail/a-right-to-reasonable-inferences-re-thinking-data-protection-law-in-the-age-of-big-data-and-ai/>
14. Rahman, A., & Future AI Cryptocurrency. (2025). Future AI cryptocurrency. *Contemporary Research Analysis Journal*, 2(10), 646–652.  
[https://www.crajour.org/storage/articles/pdf/articles\\_20251020\\_165845.pdf](https://www.crajour.org/storage/articles/pdf/articles_20251020_165845.pdf)
15. Simparinka, E. (2018). *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*.  
<https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels>
16. View of the algorithmic Leviathan: Artificial intelligence, the reshaping of political power, and the existential threat to human agency. (n.d.). *The American Journals*.  
<https://theamericanjournals.com/index.php/tajpslc/article/view/7662/6985>
17. ICRC Casebook. (n.d.). Artificial intelligence use for military purposes. *International Committee of the Red Cross*. <https://casebook.icrc.org/web:39>
18. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). (2026). As artificial intelligence becomes more integrated: Safeguarding human control in armed conflict. <https://www.icrc.org/web:38>
19. International Economic Development Council (IEDC). (2025). Artificial intelligence impact on labor markets: Productivity and displacement.  
<https://www.iedconline.org/web:6>
20. Irfan, B. (2025). AI for health or AI for war? The dual-use dilemma. *The Lancet Global Health*, 13(4), e210–e211. <https://doi.org/web:10>
21. Montreal Ethics AI Institute. (2022). The evolution of war: How AI has changed military strategy and ethics. <https://montrealetics.ai/web:31>
22. Nalin, A. (2023). Future warfare and responsibility management: Defining autonomous accountability. *MCU Journal*, 14(2), 45–67. <https://doi.org/web:34>
23. Panteli, D. (2025). Artificial intelligence in public health: Pathogens, patients, and policy. *The Lancet Public Health*, 10(1), e5–e6. <https://doi.org/web:16>

24. PRIO. (2023). Warring with machines: Artificial intelligence and the future of conflict (2020–2023 Summary Report). Peace Research Institute Oslo.  
<https://www.prio.org/web:33>
25. Sahni, N., et al. (2023). The potential impact of artificial intelligence on healthcare spending (Working Paper No. 30841). National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).  
<https://www.nber.org/papers/web:23>
26. Suchikova, Y. (2026). AI used in warfare needs a strong ethical framework. *Nature*, 650, 112–114. <https://doi.org/web:30>
27. The Daily Economy. (2026, February 10). Anthropic vs. the Pentagon: The private sector resistance to military AI. <https://www.thedailyeconomy.com/web:11>
28. Trends Research & Advisory. (2025). The backlash against military AI: Public opinion and policy shifts. <https://trendsresearch.org/web:32>
29. World Economic Forum. (2025). 7 ways AI is transforming healthcare. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/web:18>
30. World Economic Forum. (2025). Four futures for jobs in the new economy [White paper]. <https://www.weforum.org/whitepapers/web:9>
31. World Economic Forum. (2026a). Invest in the workforce for the AI age: A strategic roadmap. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/web:0>
32. World Economic Forum. (2026b). The AI-driven workforce is here: Navigating the transition. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/web:1>
33. World Economic Forum. (2026c). Four futures for jobs in the new economy: Scenarios for 2030. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/web:2>
34. World Economic Forum. (2026d). Organizational transformation in the age of AI: Governance and strategy. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/web:4>
35. World Economic Forum. (2026e). The leading companies turning AI into real-world impact. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/web:5>
36. World Health Organization. (2021). Ethics and governance of artificial intelligence for health: WHO guidance. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/web:19>
37. Zaidan, A. M. (2023). The leading global health challenges in the artificial intelligence era. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 11, 1105260. <https://doi.org/web:21>
38. Zuhair, V. (2024). Exploring the impact of artificial intelligence on global health outcomes in developing nations. PubMed Central (PMC).  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/web:15>