

AI, firms and wages: Evidence from India

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²University of Oxford

³World Bank

How is AI affecting services hiring in India?

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- India is a key case: archetype of services-led growth; large + young popn.
 - ⇒ E.g. IT + Business Process Outsourcing sector employs 4M people, contributes 8% of GDP (SESEI 2019)
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- **What we do:**

- ⇒ Investigate the impact of AI on service sector jobs using vacancy posts from India's largest jobs website.
- ⇒ Measure establishment-level demand for ML skills and document a rapid take-off in ML demand from 2015.
- ⇒ Exploit plausibly exogenous variation in exposure to advances in key AI technologies to examine the impacts of ML adoption on non-ML jobs.

- **What we find:**

- ⇒ $\uparrow 1\%$ in the ML vacancy growth rate $\Rightarrow \downarrow 3.6\text{pp}$ in establishment non-ML vacancy growth + $\downarrow 2.6\text{pp}$ in non-ML median wage offers over time.
- ⇒ These negative effects on wage growth appear across the wage distribution.

- **Clarifications:** (i) ML, (ii) job-level exposure & adoption, not broader systems; (iii) 'posts/wage offers' not 'hiring/wages'; (iv) direct establishment-level effects.

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3.6 (96 Reviews)

3-8 years

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Job description

Roles and Responsibilities

Use Machine Learning and AI to model complex problems, discover insights, and identify opportunities. Integrate and prepare large, varied datasets; architect specialized database and computing environments; and communicate results.

Research new approaches/methods to improve, optimize, and test targeted questions. Work closely with business analysts to gain an understanding of client business and problems.

Required Skills:

M.S., or PhD in a quantitative discipline: computer science, statistics, operations research, applied mathematics, engineering, mathematic or related quantitative fields.

Proficient in programming environment and languages such as: Node.js, Python, R, Javascript, SQL, and deep knowledge of analytic packages available for above languages.

Prior research or development experience working with data, solving problems with data, and experience building advanced analytic models.

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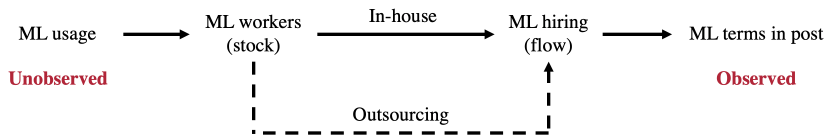
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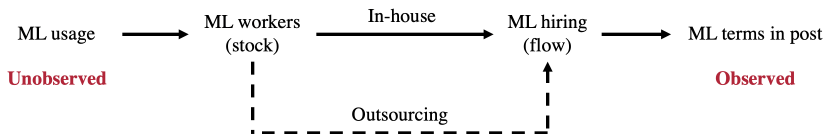
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Measuring demand for machine learning skills



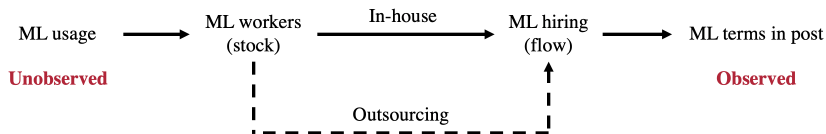
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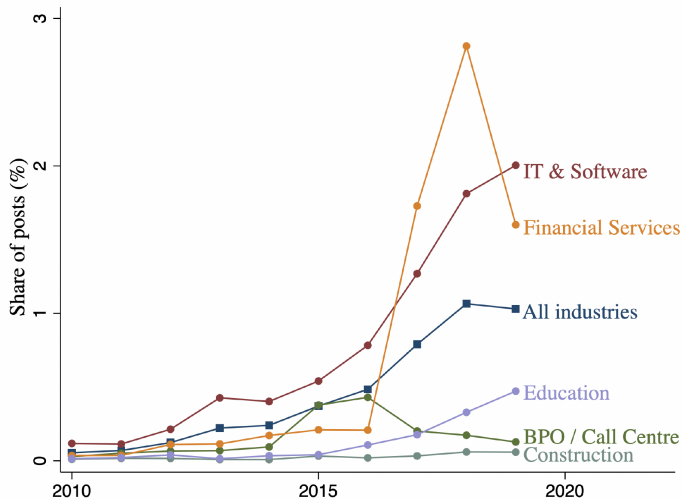
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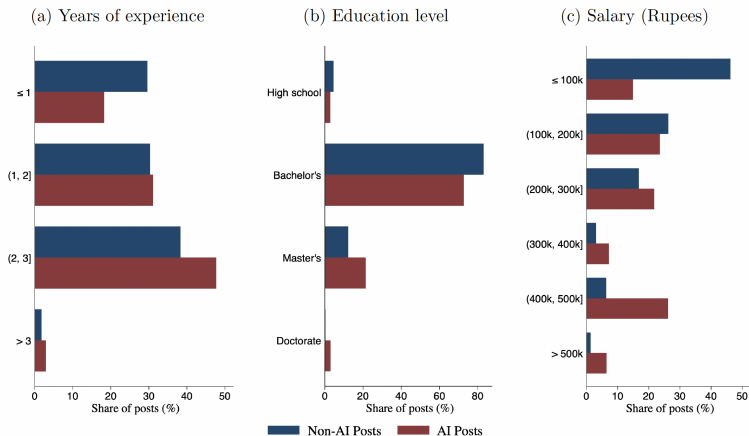
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ML share of total posts, by industry



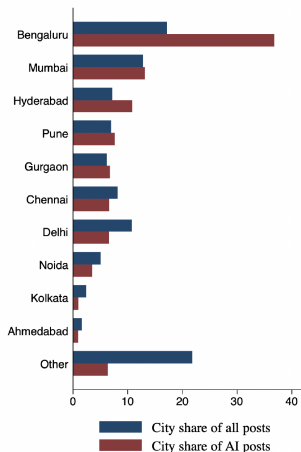
2. ML roles require more education, but offer substantially higher wages than other white-collar services jobs



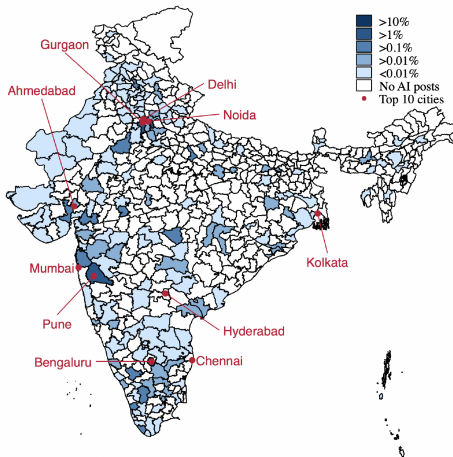
⇒ ML posts pay a 13% salary premium, even after controlling for education, experience, and detailed fixed effects (industry-region, industry-year, region-year, firm, occupation).

3. ML roles are highly concentrated in a few key technology clusters, particularly Bangalore

(a) Shares of posts across cities

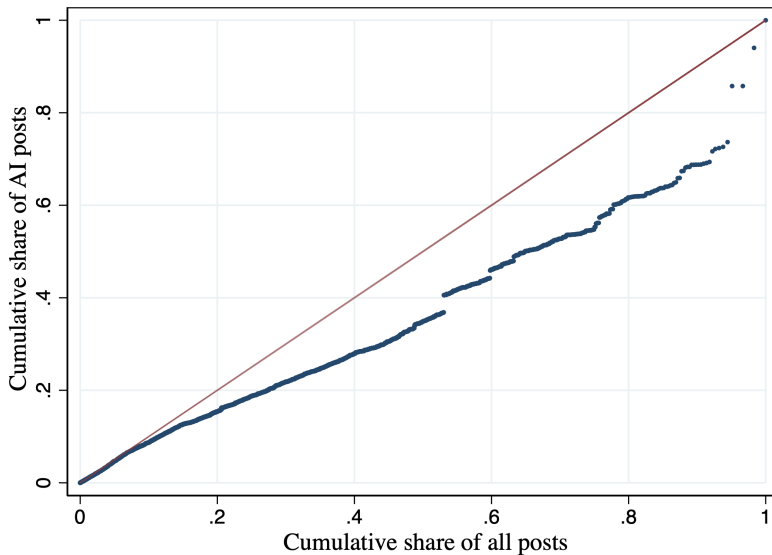


(b) Share of all AI posts, by city, 2010-2019

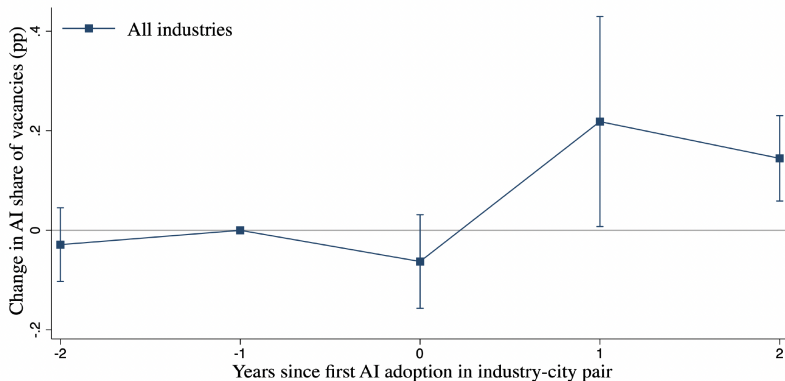


4. ML roles are highly concentrated in the largest ‘superstar’ firms

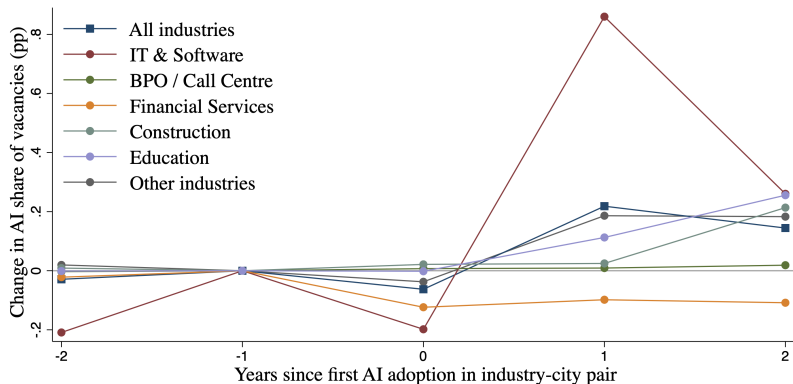
Distribution of ML posts across all firms, 2010-2019



5. ML adoption can spur local ML diffusion, over and above industry and region trends



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2SLS: *ML exposure* \Rightarrow *ML adoption* \Rightarrow *#Posts + Wage offers*

First stage:

$$\Delta Adoption_{fr,t-t_0} = \gamma \cdot Exposure_{fr,t_0} + \alpha_r + \alpha_i + \alpha_{f10} + \epsilon_{fr,t-t_0} \quad (1)$$

- We instrument demand for ML skills (our proxy for adoption) with Webb (2020) AI exposure measure

Second stage:

$$\Delta y_{fr,t-t_0} = \beta \cdot \Delta Adoption_{fr,t-t_0} + \alpha_r + \alpha_i + \alpha_{f10} + \epsilon_{fr,t-t_0} \quad (2)$$

- Final sample: 2M vacancies from 25k establishments across 2010/12–2017/19
- Our primary unit of analysis are **firm-city pairs** (‘establishments’); we cluster standard errors at the firm level and take IHS of *Adoption* and *y*
- Increasing the growth rate of ML demand by 1% between 2010-12 and 2017-19 (long difference) leads to a **β percentage point rise in the growth rate** of the outcome variable across the same time period

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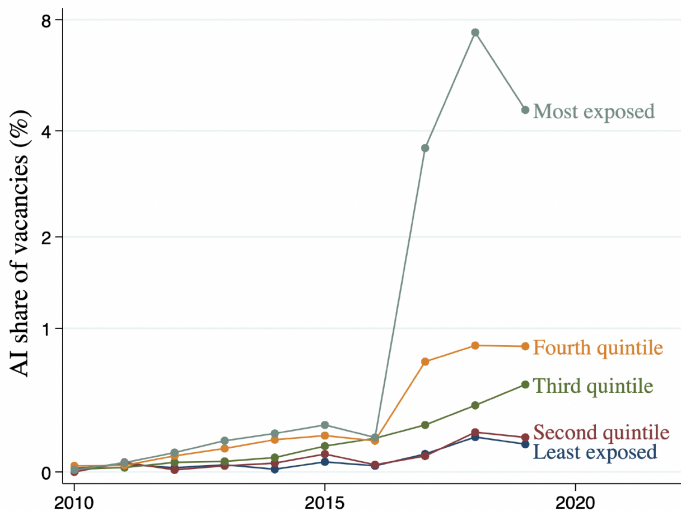
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First stage: ML exposure predicts ML demand



A one s.d. rise in establishment ML exposure is associated with a 1.93% increase ($p < 0.01$) in growth rate of ML vacancies between 2010-12 and 2017-19.

Second stage: ML demand lowers growth in non-ML demand

	Growth in Non-AI Vacancies			Growth in Total Vacancies		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Growth in AI Vacancies	-5.942*** (-3.66)	-3.605*** (-3.16)	-9.944* (-1.84)	-5.909*** (-3.64)	-3.566*** (-3.14)	-9.923* (-1.84)
<i>Fixed Effects:</i>						
– Region	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
– Firm Decile	✓	✓		✓	✓	
– Industry		✓			✓	
– Firm			✓			✓
First Stage F-Stat	26.31	27.17	4.185	26.31	27.17	4.185
Observations	22,251	22,251	19,383	22,251	22,251	19,383

A 1% increase in the establishment growth rate of ML vacancies results in a 3.6pp decrease ($p < 0.01$) in the growth rate of non-ML vacancies between 2010-12 and 2017-19, controlling for region, firm size and industry fixed effects.

Second stage: ML demand lowers growth in non-ML demand

	Growth in Non-AI Vacancies			Growth in Total Vacancies		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
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There is a similarly-sized decrease of 3.57pp in the growth rate of total vacancies
 ⇒ the negative effect on non-ML vacancies far outweighs the rise in ML vacancies.

Second stage: ML demand lowers non-ML wage growth

	Growth in Non-AI Median Wage			Growth in Overall Median Wage		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Growth in AI Vacancies	-3.101*** (-3.47)	-2.599*** (-3.43)	-5.973* (-1.83)	-3.017*** (-3.50)	-2.527*** (-3.46)	-5.696* (-1.87)
<i>Fixed Effects:</i>						
– Region	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
– Firm Decile	✓	✓		✓	✓	
– Industry		✓			✓	
– Firm			✓			✓
First Stage F-Stat	25.64	26.39	4.294	26.84	27.71	4.602
Observations	22,064	22,064	19,217	22,071	22,071	19,223

Likewise, a 1% higher growth rate in ML vacancies between 2010-12 and 2017-19 reduces the growth rate of non-ML wage offers by 2.6 percentage points ($p < 0.01$).

Second stage: ML demand lowers non-ML wage growth

	Growth in Non-AI Median Wage			Growth in Overall Median Wage		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Growth in AI Vacancies	-3.101*** (-3.47)	-2.599*** (-3.43)	-5.973* (-1.83)	-3.017*** (-3.50)	-2.527*** (-3.46)	-5.696* (-1.87)
<i>Fixed Effects:</i>						
– Region	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
– Firm Decile	✓	✓		✓	✓	
– Industry		✓			✓	
– Firm			✓			✓
First Stage F-Stat	25.64	26.39	4.294	26.84	27.71	4.602
Observations	22,064	22,064	19,217	22,071	22,071	19,223

Again, the negative effects are hardly changed when considering all posts (inclusive of ML-posts).

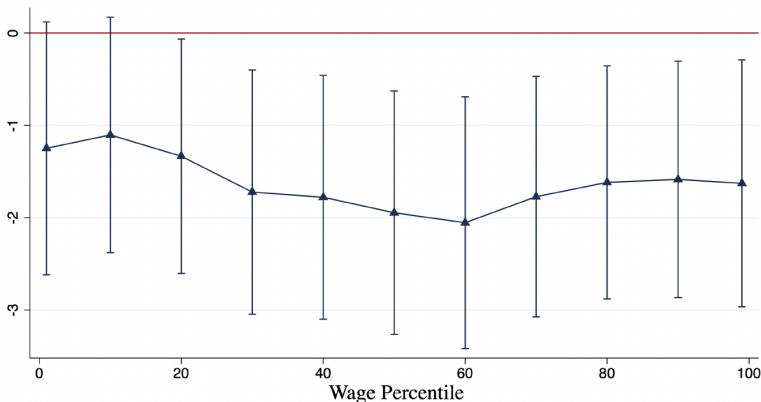
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<i>Fixed Effects:</i>						
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– Firm Decile	✓	✓		✓	✓	
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First Stage F-Stat	25.64	26.39	4.294	26.84	27.71	4.602
Observations	22,064	22,064	19,217	22,071	22,071	19,223

✓ Robust to changes in education and experience profiles (-1.933***, -1.891***)

Second stage: ML demand lowers non-ML wage growth

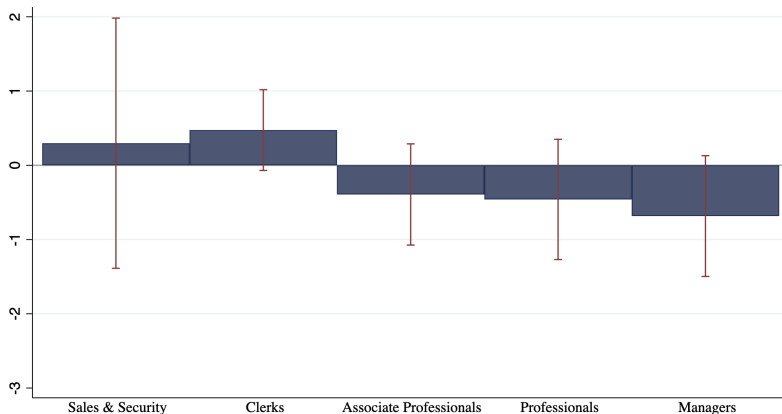
Impact of 1% higher establishment ML demand on non-ML wage growth:



The reduction in the growth rate of non-ML wage offers in response to increased ML demand occurs across the wage offer distribution ($p < 0.05$ from 20th pctl).

Second stage: Wage effects driven by high-skill occupations (early)

Impact of 1% higher establishment ML demand on non-ML wage growth:



Re-run for wage offers within broad occupational categories: smaller samples → not significant, but effects focused in high-skill occupation categories.

Results are robust to:

1. Alternative exposure measure (Felten et al. 2018) ✓
2. Alternative baseline period ✓
3. Weighting by baseline establishment size ✓
4. Alternative data sources (NSS/PLFS, Prowess) ✓

Conclusion

Our paper:

- ⇒ Rich new data on ML demand and wage offers in a developing country
- ⇒ ML jobs pay a substantial wage premium, but they are highly concentrated in certain industries, cities and firms.
- ⇒ Incumbent establishments that adopt ML disproportionately lower their number of non-ML posts + the associated wage offers
- ⇒ Early evidence that these displacement effects are driven by high-skilled occupations

Key open questions:

- ⇒ To what extent does ML adoption generate new tasks &/or firms?
- ⇒ How do 'creative' vs 'destructive' effects compare?
- ⇒ GE: is overall 'creation' > 'destruction'?

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AI, firms and wages: Evidence from India

Alexander Copestake¹, Ashley Pople², Katherine Stapleton³

December 19, 2021

¹International Monetary Fund

²University of Oxford

³World Bank

Posts are categorised as ML-related if any of the following terms appear in either the ‘job description’ or ‘skills required’ fields:

Machine Learning, Computer Vision, Machine Vision, Deep Learning, Virtual Agents, Image Recognition, Natural Language Processing, Speech Recognition, Pattern Recognition, Object Recognition, Neural Networks, AI ChatBot, Supervised Learning, Text Mining, Support Vector Machines, Unsupervised Learning, Image Processing, Mahout, Recommender Systems, Support Vector Machines (SVM), Random Forests, Latent Semantic Analysis, Sentiment Analysis / Opinion Mining, Latent Dirichlet Allocation, Predictive Models, Kernel Methods, Keras, Gradient boosting, OpenCV, Xgboost, Libsvm, Word2Vec, Chatbot, Machine Translation and Sentiment Classification

(Acemoglu et al. 2021)