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Understanding AI Anxiety: How Sociodemographic Characteristics Predict Fear of AI-Based Job Replacement

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ABSTRACT

Present discussion about Artificial Intelligence (AI) portrays AI as a considerable threat to job security. A substantial portion of the American population agrees with this sentiment; however, little research has been done to determine which people specifically. Therefore, it is essential to understand how sociodemographic variables affect an individual's levels of concern about AI-based job replacement. This study analyzed data collected from a nationally representative survey of the U.S. population in 2024. Specifically, I used a multivariable regression model, with factor-level omnibus Wald F tests, and later a robustness check using a survey-weighted ordinal regression model, after recategorizing and weighting data from the 2024 iteration of the General Social Survey by NORC at the University of Chicago. My findings reveal that the sociodemographic characteristics of age and sex, and the characteristics of employment status and political views, all significantly affect an individual's level of fear about AI-based job replacement. Specifically, my study finds that people ages 40-49 and 60-69, women, and temporarily non-active workers have the most elevated fear of job replacement because of AI.

INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be broadly defined as human-designed technology that emulates the cognitive abilities of the human mind to execute tasks that would otherwise require human input (Tai 2020). AI-based technology has been improving rapidly, transitioning from simple processes that could only execute a narrow set of defined tasks, like facial recognition and self-driving cars, to now excelling in accomplishing complex goals in non-defined environments, like learning how to solve problems in a human-like manner (Acharya 2025; Tai 2020). Since the publication of generative AI models like ChatGPT in 2022, the possibility of machines working in areas that require human cognitive input has transformed into a reality.

The rapid development of AI has created considerable public concern, to a point where the American people are equally concerned as they are excited about increasing AI implementation in daily life (Kennedy et al. 2024). The percentage of Americans more excited than concerned about increases in AI use fell from 18% in 2021 to 10% in 2025, and the percentage of Americans more concerned than excited

about increases in AI use rose from 37% in 2021 to 50% (Kennedy et al. 2024). Anxiety about new advances in technology is to be expected: previous advances in technology–factory automation and the internet, to name a few–created both excitement and hesitation (Veras 2025). However, AI's ability to replace cognitively-focused positions as opposed to mechanically-inclined positions has garnered more attention, as previous innovations had only impacted mechanically-inclined positions.

The extant literature reaches different conclusions regarding if and how the level of worry about AI-based job replacement differs by sex. A number of studies found that men worry about AI more than women (Uğur and Dursun 2025; Kaya et al. 2022). Other studies found that sex is not a statistically significant predictor of worry about AI, and therefore men and women worry the same amount about AI (Cremaschi et al. 2025; Kaya et al. 2022; Wysiński 2025; Dahlin 2024; Makridis 2026; Morikawa 2017). However, a considerable portion of the literature finds that women worry more than men (Ebrahimi and Lee 2026; Stephany and Duszynski 2026; Novozhilova et al. 2024; Bergdahl et al. 2023; Zhang and Dafoe 2019). Fewer studies had the exact variable of AI-based job replacement as an outcome. Of the ones that do, some found that women worry about jobs being replaced by AI (Ebrahimi and Lee 2026). Others found no correlation (Cremaschi et al. 2025; Wysiński 2025; Dahlin 2024; Morikawa 2017).

The impact of age on the level of worry about AI-based job replacement is not defined by one consensus, as the extant literature reaches different conclusions. While not definitive, the literature seems to lean towards younger people being more fearful of AI-based job replacement. A number of studies found that younger people worry more about AI than older people (Ebrahimi and Lee 2026; Dahlin 2024; Wysiński 2025; Morikawa 2017). At the same time, many studies found that age is not a statistically significant predictor of worry about AI (Kaya et al. 2022; Wang and Sun 2025; Makridis 2026). On the other hand, select studies found that older people worry more than younger people (Zhang and Dafoe 2019; Castelo and Ward 2021). A portion of the literature examined the exact variable of AI-based job replacement as an outcome. Many reported that younger people are more worried about losing their jobs to AI (Ebrahimi and Lee 2026; Dahlin 2024; Wysiński 2025; Morikawa 2017). Others, however, found that there was no correlation (Wang and Sun 2025). Others found that older people were more worried about job replacement because of AI (Zhang and Dafoe 2019). Because more studies report that younger people are more concerned about AI-based job loss, I believe the literature leans towards the suggestion that younger people have elevated fears of AI-based job replacement.

The existing literature indicates that lower income levels coincide with higher levels of worry about AI. Not many studies reported on this characteristic, but a portion of the ones that do have concluded that lower income is positively correlated with fear of AI-based job replacement (Zhang and Dafoe 2019; Wysiński 2025; Dahlin 2024). Other studies, though, found that income is not a statistically significant predictor of worry about AI-based job replacement (Castelo and Ward 2021).

People who work part-time, are self-employed, or unemployed (people without stable, full-time employment) have the highest levels of worry, according to the literature. A sizable portion of the literature finds that people without full-time employment hold higher levels of worry about AI, and that

employed people are less worried (Wysiński 2025; Makridis 2026; Zhang and Dafoe 2019; Dahlin 2024; Morikawa 2017). Of the studies that used fear of AI-based job replacement as an outcome, many found that non-stable employment was linked with higher fear of job replacement (Wysiński 2025; Zhang and Dafoe 2019; Dahlin 2024). A number of studies, however, found that there was no significant relationship between employment status and level of worry about AI-based job replacement (Uğur and Dursun 2025; Wang and Sun 2025).

Educational attainment does not consistently affect levels of worry about AI-based job replacement, as the extant literature reaches different conclusions. A number of studies found that educational attainment is not a significant predictor of AI-based worry (Kaya et al. 2022; Wang and Sun 2025; Morikawa 2017; Novozhilova et al. 2024; Castelo and Ward 2021). At the same time, a number of studies that examined job replacement as an outcome found that lower educational attainment is associated with higher levels of worry about AI-based job replacement (Ebrahimi and Lee 2026; Wysiński 2025; Smith and Anderson 2017; Cremaschi et al. 2025). Other such studies found that there was no correlation between AI-based job replacement anxiety and educational attainment (Wang and Sun 2025). Another category of these studies found that lower levels of education were associated with lower levels of worry about AI-based job replacement (Dahlin 2024). More studies associate lower levels of educational attainment with elevated fear of AI-based job replacement, and as such, I believe the extant literature–while not definitive–plausibly suggests that AI-based job replacement is associated with lower levels of educational attainment.

The extant literature reaches different conclusions regarding whether and how the level of worry about AI-based job replacement differs by political views. Some studies found that Democrats feel more worried about AI-based job replacement (Zhang and Dafoe 2019). Other studies found that there is no statistically significant difference between Democrats and Republicans concerning levels of worry about AI (Bloom and Makridis 2026). A portion of studies also found that centrists were the least worried about AI-based job replacement (Cremaschi et al. 2025).

Existing studies on the levels of worry about AI-related job replacement, however, have their own limitations. To begin with, much of the literature was written before the era of generative AI (Zhang and Dafoe 2019; Brougham and Haar 2017; Morikawa 2017; Castelo and Ward 2021; Smith and Anderson 2017). As a result, this category of literature does not include the worry caused by the development of generative AI. Secondly, many surveys did not use nationally representative data; instead they drew upon select sectors and demographics–notably students, or members of one industry (Kaya et al. 2022; Wang and Sun 2025; Uğur and Dursun 2025)–oftentimes with subsequently hindered demographic ranges (Wysiński 2025). Third, nationally representative data from the U.S. are presently descriptive, reporting characteristics on an individual basis, instead of all at once (Kennedy et al. 2024). Fourth, many studies examined general concern about AI, and/or used worry of AI-based job replacement as a variable, instead of an outcome (Bergdahl et al. 2023; Uğur and Dursun 2025; Stephany and Duszynski 2026; Makridis 2026; Bloom and Makridis 2026; Novozhilova et al. 2024; Morikawa 2017; Castelo and Ward 2021; Alkhalifah et al. 2024; Kaya et al. 2022; Novozhilova et al. 2024; Stephany and Duszynski 2026). Lastly,

the majority of studies did not examine income and political affiliation as predictors of worry of AI-based job replacement.

My study aims to address these gaps by using the 2024 General Social Survey (GSS), a nationally representative survey of U.S. adults, to assess differences in the level of worry about AI-based job replacement by sociodemographic characteristics. This study combines nationally representative U.S. data, collected recently–2024–in a multivariable regression model, for the specific worry about AI taking away jobs, rather than general worry about AI, while also including income and political views. The remainder of the paper will review the preexisting literature, my hypotheses, methods, results, discussion, and strengths and limitations.

Based on the literature, I hypothesize that the level of worry about AI-related job replacement will: be significantly higher in younger age groups; be higher in groups with lower educational attainment; be higher among unemployed and part-time workers than full-time workers; and be higher in lower income groups. I also hypothesize that sex, and political views will cause this level of worry to vary substantially. These results will provide a national baseline to assess future trends and patterns in the level of worry about AI-related job replacement as AI and the labor market continue to evolve.

METHODS

Data

My study utilizes data from the 2024 General Social Survey (Total N = 3,309), a nationally representative survey of adults in noninstitutional housing. The NORC at the University of Chicago developed this survey by utilizing the Kish grid–a statistical sampling method used to select an individual interviewee from a given household–to choose housing units and select an adult individual as its representative (Davern et al. 2025). Data were collected through a mix of face-to-face field interviews (34.7%), self-administered questionnaires via the web (54.5%), phone calls (7.6%), and a multimode survey (3.3%). The survey employs a full-probability sample, derived from the United States Postal Service metropolitan statistical area (Davern et al. 2025). In order to improve the representativeness of the sample, the survey was weighted, redistributing percentages of demographics of the selection, adjusting for total adults per household. The sample weights were readjusted to align with population metrics from the U.S. Census Bureau (Davern et al. 2025).

Outcomes

The main outcome was respondents' worry that AI will take over jobs done by humans. The survey asked respondents to answer the question, "Overall, how worried, if at all, are you that in the next 10 years machines, computer programs, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will take over many of the jobs done by humans?" Respondents were given a variety of options to gauge their worry: 'Very worried', 'somewhat worried,' 'neither worried nor unworried,' 'not very worried,' 'not at all worried.' The original AIWORRY variable was included in the ISSP Digital Society Module of the GSS 2024, which was only

given to a subsection of respondents, not the entire GSS sample (Substantive responses = 1,536). It was coded with 'very worried' corresponding to 1, on a 1–5-point scale, and 'not at all worried' corresponding to a 5. I recategorized this on the same 1–5-point scale, where 5 corresponded to 'very worried,' and 1 corresponded to 'not at all worried,' as I believed it felt more logical and intuitive. Responses that did not originally fall onto this 1–5-point scale (N/A, don't know, no answer, skipped on web) were excluded, and not treated as legitimate values on the worry-scale. This scale was then used as the outcome for a variety of predictors in a survey-weighted linear regression model, which incorporated 1,196 respondents in the sample.

Covariates

My study measures the sociodemographic characteristics of respondents. In this study I focus on the characteristics of age, sex, educational attainment, occupation, political views, income, and status of work. See Appendix Table 1 for details of survey questions for each characteristic, original levels, and levels used in my analysis. The 18-19 age group was dropped because its range of possible ages did not align with the roughly 10-year age groups that the rest of the sample is grouped into, and it made up a small fraction of the total analytical sample.

The sample was described and the survey-weighted mean of AIWORRY was computed for individual categories of the predictors with 95% confidence intervals. Then, a single survey weighted linear regression of AIWORRY based on simultaneous predictors was then used to calculate the respective worry by each covariate. The model then employed svyglm to make interpretable the variation in AIWORRY against each covariate with a linear regression model, along with 95% confidence intervals, and p-values. Survey-adjusted omnibus Wald F tests were also utilized to better determine the statistical significance of each predictor. It involved simultaneously evaluating non-reference coefficients while controlling for the remaining covariates. The analysis incorporated the final survey weight WTSSPS, specified VSTRAT as the design-based stratification variable, and VPSU as the primary sampling unit. Single-PSU strata were handled using the adjustment method from the survey package, and the confidence intervals, p-values, and variance estimates were calculated by using the survey specifications. The R packages survey and srvyr were also used to perform analyses on the model. For a covariate to remain statistically significant, the p-value had to stay below 0.05. As a robustness check, I ran a survey-weighted ordinal logistic regression. It kept the AIWORRY variable as an ordered outcome, and the same predictors and model formula as my primary linear regression, as well as using the same analytical sample.

RESULTS

Characteristics of Sample

The sample included 1,196 respondents and consisted of 51.6% female and 48.0% male respondents (respondents who reported none of these, or redacted information made up an additional 0.4% of the

sample; Table 2). The age ranges consisted of 16.3% 20-29 years old, 17.6% 30-39 years old, 19.4% 40-49 years old, 16.6% 50-59 years old, 16.5% 60-69 years old, 9.6% 70-79 years old, and 4.0% 80 years and older. Roughly two-thirds of respondents had at least some college education (66.8%), about a quarter were high school graduates (25.0%), and 8.2% of respondents had education less than a high school diploma. Respondents in school consisted of 1.0% of the sample, those keeping house made up 7.9%, retirees were 18.9%, those with a job, but not at work because of temporary illness, vacation or strike made up 1.8%, those who were unemployed, laid off, or looking for work made up 4.7%, respondents who replied 'other' were 2.1%, those who were working part-time were 13.1%, and those who were working full time made up 50.4% of the sample. 5.8% of respondents were extremely liberal, 11.5% were liberal, 11.3% were slightly liberal, 36.5% were moderates, 11.0% were slightly conservative, 16.8% were conservative, and 7.0% were extremely conservative. About twenty-two percent of respondents had an annual income between $0 and $34,999, 19.4% had an annual income between $35,000 and $59,999, 24.8% between $60,000 and $109,999, 17.5% between $110,000 and $169,000, and 15.9% earned $170,000 or over. See Appendix Table 2 for specific values for each characteristic.

Unadjusted Level of Worry about AI-Related Job Replacement by Characteristic

Across all demographics, worry about AI job displacement was high. The means of level of worry about AI-based job replacement ranged from a low of 3.04 (people with military specific occupations), to a high of 4.34 (respondents with 'other' status of work). This means that the actual mean levels of worry ranged from 'somewhat worried' to 'very worried' (Table 3). Unadjusted differences by sex were high, with women averaging 3.93 and men averaging 3.58. Differences in worry based on age varied, with the highest scores being reported by 40–49-year-olds and 60–69-year-olds, at 3.93. The lowest scores were reported by 80+ year olds and 20–29-year-olds (3.42 and 3.54, respectively). Those with an annual income of between $0-$34,999 reported the highest worry among income groups, with a weighted mean of 3.91. The lowest-scoring income group was those with incomes $170,000 and above, 3.58. These scores demonstrate a trend of higher income correlating negatively with worry about AI-based job replacement. Educational attainment also demonstrated a trend of higher education correlating with less worry: The level of worry about AI-related job replacement decreased from 4.02 among those without a high school diploma, to 3.87 among high school graduates, to 3.69 among individuals with at least some college education. Differences by political views were minimal, with the lowest score being 3.68 (among liberals and moderates), and the highest being 4.11 (extreme conservatives).

Survey-Weighted Linear Regression: Level of Worry About AI

Results from the survey-adjusted omnibus Wald reveal four covariates to be statistically significant: age ($F(6, 32)=3.427$; p-value=0.010), sex ($F(2, 32)=13.058$; p-value<0.001), political views ($F(6, 32)=2.932$; p-value=0.021), and work status ($F(7, 32)=3.116$; p-value=0.013). The remaining covariates (income, occupation, and educational attainment) were not statistically significant. (Table 5).

Results from the individual regression categories from the model reveal how only three of the four significant covariates have categorically significant results: sex, age, and work status. The remaining

characteristics (i.e., income, education, occupation sector, and political views) do not have any categories that pass significance (Table 4).

By sex, men reported notably lower worry about AI-based job replacement than women. The point estimate (P. est.) was -0.43, with a 95% confidence interval (CI) of -0.60, -0.26, and a p-value < 0.001 (Table 4). As lower scores refer to lower worry, and higher scores refer to higher worry, this result elucidates how women are more worried independent of other characteristics. This finding supports the non-directional hypothesis that worry about AI-based job replacement varies depending on sex. Additionally, it goes beyond the non-directional hypothesis, reporting that men have lower fears of AI-based job replacement than women.

However, the results from the model on the characteristic of age report higher scores (relative to the 20–29-year-old age group), from respondents in the 40–49-year-old age group (P. est.=0.31; 95% CI=0.06, 0.57; p value=0.018) and 60–69-year-old age group (P. est.=0.43; 95% CI=0.08,0.78; p-value=0.019) (Table 4). This finding reveals that worry does not decline as age increases, contradicting my hypothesis.

The characteristic of work status reveals that those in the status of 'other' (P. est.=0.50; 95% CI=0.09, 0.90; p-value = 0.017), and those holding a job but not currently at work due to temporary illness, vacation or strike (P. est.=0.44; 95% CI=0.07, 0.82; p-value=0.021), report significantly higher levels of worry (Table 4). Respondents who reported their work status as unemployed (P. est.=0.34; 95% CI=-0.03, 0.71; p-value=0.070), and those who reported their status as keeping house (P. est.=0.23; 95% CI=-0.04, 0.51; p-value=0.090) also scored higher worry, but as their p-values are marginally higher than the cutoff for significance (0.05), so these results cannot be treated as significant (Table 4). Respondents who reported their status-of-work as working part time reported less fear, but failed to reach the threshold for significance (P. est.=-0.07; 95% CI=(-0.40, 0.27); p-value=0.7). Therefore, my hypothesis is not supported by the results from regression, as it finds no significant association between unemployed individuals and part-time workers and worries about AI-based job replacement. Instead, it reports that people not at work for various reasons–but with a job–and people who marked 'other,' have the highest levels of fear of AI-based job replacement.

The characteristic of political views, while deemed significant by the omnibus Wald tests, did not have any individual categories that were significantly distinct from the reference category (lowest p-value was extremely conservative (P. est.=0.33; 95% CI=-0.08, 0.75; p-value=0.11)). As a result, this does not support my non-directional hypothesis–political views will cause levels of worry about AI-based job replacement to vary–as no claims as to the specific variations can be made using the present analysis. It doesn't specify the individual categories that are statistically significant, limiting the conclusions that can be drawn about which political views correlate with higher worry.

The remaining covariates–income, educational attainment, and occupation–did not reach significance through either omnibus Wald test or individual linear regression. There was no significant difference

between income groups, as the lowest p-value was 0.14 for the $170,000+ category when compared to the $60,000-$109,999 category (Table 4). This does not support the tenet of my hypothesis on income–that lower income groups have higher worry. There wasn't any significant difference between different educational attainment levels, because the lowest p-value was 0.11 for high school graduates compared to respondents with at least some college (Table 4). This does not support my hypothesis, that worry would be higher in groups with lower educational attainment. Differences across occupational sectors also failed to reach significance, with the lowest p-value of 0.061 (for sales and office occupations against computer, engineering, and science occupations) not passing the 0.05 threshold, These results do not align with my hypothesis. Information, however, can still be discerned from these findings.

Robustness Check: Level of Worry About AI

Consistently across the variables, the direction of the robustness check and the results of the linear regression all remained similar, however statistical significance varied for several predictors.

DISCUSSION

The results from my regression model answer the question this study initially asked: which Americans have the highest levels of worry about AI replacing human jobs. Women have a significantly higher degree of worry than men, even after controlling for other statistical predictors. Additionally, adults ranging from 40-49 and from 60-69 have notably higher levels of worry than younger demographics (20-29). Furthermore, respondents holding a job but not currently at work due to temporary illness, vacation or strike, and people in the 'other' category in terms of work status maintain substantially more worry than those with full-time employment. Moreover, the characteristic of political views, while deemed to have a significant association with fear of AI-based job replacement, does not have any statistically significant individual categories. As a result, it is suggested that the worry about jobs being taken by AI is associated with select individual sociodemographic characteristics–age and sex–and the characteristic of employment status, and the characteristic of political views (even though no individual political view categories were independently significant).

The influence of sex on worry about AI-based job replacement is not definitively concluded by the literature. My study finds that sex is significantly correlated with worries about AI-based job replacement, and finds that women, in particular, have significantly higher levels of worry about AI-related job replacement, which agrees with some recent studies. Ebrahimi and Lee (2026) utilized recent data between 2016 and 2025 and found that women consistently had higher levels of anxiety about job replacement by AI. Another recent study, Stephany and Duszynski (2026), similarly reported that general worry about AI–albeit not specifically job replacement anxiety–was substantially higher in scores reported by women than among men. Additionally, other studies concluded that women are less comfortable with AI and are hesitant about advances in AI (Novozhilova et al. 2024; Bergdahl et al. 2023; Zhang and Dafoe 2019). Other studies, though, suggested that there is no statistically significant correlation between sex and worry about AI-related job replacement (Cremaschi et al. 2025; Kaya et al.

2022; Wysiński 2025; Dahlin 2024; Makridis 2026; Morikawa 2017). However, some studies reported the opposite, where men are more worried than women. Uğur and Dursun (2025) and Kaya et al. (2022)–independent, unrelated studies–initially found that men are slightly more worried than women; however, this finding did not survive statistical testing, and the finding was deemed statistically insignificant. The skewed datasets utilized by these studies are plausible reasons for why my results deviate from them. Furthermore, the exact questions, sampling methods, and the exact scales used often vary from the exact questions and scales used by the GSS, and as such, any deviation between my results and the literature can be attributed to these differences. Furthermore, the age of previous studies is also a potential cause for deviation. AI is, has been, and will continue to develop rapidly, changing the lens through which the public views AI. Therefore, responses concerning worry about AI-based job replacement will be inconsistent depending on the study's age. This is another plausible reason for why my study doesn't align with all of the literature.

The characteristic of age has a varying impact on the level of worry about AI-related job replacement. My study finds age to be significantly associated with worry of AI-based job replacement, and finds that people 40 and 49 and 60 and 69 had elevated levels of worry. The results of my study disagree with recent studies that find that younger people are more worried about AI replacing human jobs. One recent study, Ebrahimi and Lee (2026), found that younger adults between ages 18-29 reported significantly higher levels of fear about losing their jobs to AI than the 30-44, 45-59, and 60+ age groups. Furthermore, Dahlin (2024) found that those between 18 and 24 were statistically more concerned about losing their job to AI when compared to the study's 25+ age group. A number of studies also reported that younger people are generally fearful of AI (Wysiński 2025; Morikawa 2017). Additionally, other studies found no statistically significant correlation between age and level of worry about AI-related job replacement, or worry of AI in general (Kaya et al. 2022; Wang and Sun 2025; Makridis 2026). On the other hand, Zhang and Dafoe (2019) reported that 85% of respondents aged 73 and older considered AI governance challenges to be "very important," in contrast to only 40% of respondents younger than 38 reporting the same. Similarly, other studies found that older people were more fearful of AI–not AI-based job replacement–than younger people (Castelo and Ward 2021). The specific age categories utilized by the studies are potential reasons for why my study's findings deviate from parts of the literature, as they often are different from those in this study: while this study categorizes age in 10 year increments, other studies might use different categorizations, which potentially causes my results to deviate from the literature-derived consensus.

Those with lower incomes tend to have elevated levels of fear of AI-based job replacement, according to the literature. My study finds that income is not a significant predictor of worry. This finding disagrees with studies like Zhang and Dafoe (2019), which found that 19% of those making under $50,000 annually believed they were likely to lose their jobs to AI and automation, compared to 8% of those making over $100,000 annually. Additionally, Wysiński (2025) reported that individuals with higher savings–comparable to individuals with higher income–are generally less likely to fear AI. They posited that the reason for this is because they may feel more secure in their ability to withstand the plausible disruptions to the job market that AI might create, as their savings create a safety net. Dahlin (2024)

reported similar trends, in which low-income individuals reported higher levels of worry about losing their job to AI. At the same time, however, some studies found income to be an insignificant predictor of worry about AI-based job replacement (Castelo and Ward 2021), which my study agrees with. Curiously, many studies did not report on the effect of income on fear of AI-based job replacement at all. It is plausible that this underrepresentation causes income to be an unreliably reported variable, potentially contributing to deviations between my findings and the findings from the literature. Additionally, the categorizations of income utilized by my study–differing from those used by previous studies–could be a potential explanation for why my results do not align with the literature. Furthermore, a number of the studies are several years older than my study. Given how the global economy is not static, it is possible that the ages of several of these studies means that their results may vary from mine.

People who work part-time, are self-employed, or are unemployed have the highest levels of worry, according to the literature. My study disagrees with this conclusion: while I find work status to be significantly associated with worry of AI-based job replacement, I specifically find that people who had a job but were not at work and those who marked 'other' were the most fearful of their jobs being taken by AI, not part-time or unemployed people. This disagrees with studies like Wysiński (2025), which found self-employed workers, specifically, to be the most fearful of replacement by AI. Similarly, Makridis (2026) also found that employed individuals perceived their risk of being replaced by AI as lower. Other studies found that employed people were less worried about AI in general (Zhang and Dafoe 2019; Makridis 2026). Other studies came to similar conclusions, finding that those without stable employment were more worried about AI (Dahlin 2024; Morikawa 2017). Some studies, however, found that there were no significant relationships between status of work and level of worry about AI-based job replacement (Uğur and Dursun 2025; Wang and Sun 2025). The exact sampling methods, questions, and ages of the studies are potential reasons for why my study differs from other studies that found no correlation between working status and level of worry about AI-based job replacement.

The influence of educational attainment on worry about AI-related job replacement is not entirely clear. The findings of my study on education reveal that educational attainment cannot be used to significantly predict worry about job loss due to AI. While my study–through omnibus Wald tests and category-specific linear regression–found that educational attainment was not a significant predictor, some studies reported that lower educational attainment is correlated with higher levels of worry of replacement by AI. Others claimed that educational attainment is not a statistically significant predictor of worry about AI-based job replacement. One study, Ebrahimi and Lee (2026), reported that over a decade, respondents without a high school diploma had the highest levels of worry of AI taking their job, whereas those with a bachelor's degree and higher levels of educational attainment had the lowest levels of worry. Additionally, Wysiński (2025) reported that individuals with higher levels of educational attainment had roughly 30% lower chances of being worried about AI replacement than individuals with only a primary education. Other studies reported similar findings (Smith and Anderson 2017; Cremaschi et al. 2025). On the other hand, some studies found that there was no correlation between educational attainment and worry about AI in general (Kaya et al. 2022; Wang and Sun 2025; Morikawa 2017; Novozhilova et al. 2024; Castelo and Ward 2021). Some studies found that lower levels of education were correlated with

less fear of AI-based job replacement (Dahlin 2024). While there is no obvious consensus, my study agrees with the studies that claim that educational attainment is not a significant predictor of worry about AI-based job replacement. My study, however, disagrees with a number of studies. This may be because of different options of educational attainment presented from these studies' data collection. While my study groups all people who attended some college in one group, it is possible that many other studies do not do the same, potentially leading to differences between my results and theirs.

My study finds that there is a significant correlation between political views and level of worry about AI-based job replacement, however none of the individual categories of the political views covariate reached significance when tested independently. This is consistent with previous studies that found political views to be a significant covariate, but the analysis does not highlight any individual categories as significant. Political views is the characteristic that the literature touches upon the least, and the few sources that did report on the effect of political views on the level of worry about AI-based job replacement did not arrive at a consensus. Older studies like Zhang and Dafoe (2019) reported that Democrats viewed job replacement by automation as a bigger issue than Republicans, but it wasn't a particularly strong correlation. More recent studies like Bloom and Makridis (2026) found that there was no statistically significant difference between Democrats and Republicans when reporting concern about whether their job would be replaced by AI (14.1% of Democrats vs 13.1% of Republicans). Additionally, Cremaschi et al. (2025) found that centrists, as opposed to members of extremes on the political spectrum, were the least worried about AI. It is possible that the deviation between my results and the results of studies that found no correlations can in part be attributed to the limited reporting done on how political views affect worry of AI-based job replacement. Furthermore, the sampling methods used differ between my study and previous studies, thus creating another potential cause for differences between my results, and the results of the literature. The age of other studies' samples could also cause variation between my results, and theirs, given by how much the political climate changes from year to year.

Recent federal policies demonstrate different tactics used to address AI-related challenges. In June 2026, Executive Order 14409 was issued, focusing on regulating AI innovation and cybersecurity (Fadel 2026). It demonstrates a connection between the government and AI corporations, including voluntary pre-release access to select large learning models, in order to determine their cybersecurity extents and limitations (Fadel 2026). This order, however, is not built to specifically address worries about AI-based job replacement, nor does it establish mandatory licensing for corporations, rather it is a voluntary limitation on AI companies in order to address the challenge of cybersecurity.

Another policy, the AI Action Plan is tailored to AI-based challenges in the workforce, specifically (The White House 2025). Released in July 2025, it outlines training that involves AI infrastructure, as well as expanding AI literacy among the workforce (The White House 2025). It also proposes studying AI's effects on the labor market, and retraining for affected workers (The White House 2025). This policy addresses concerns relevant to the contents of this paper, being concerns about employment and the job market, but the actual effectiveness of this policy cannot be evaluated by present analysis.

Because GSS data was collected in 2024, the results from this study–how different sociodemographic variables predict fear of job loss due to AI–cannot be used to evaluate the effectiveness and implications of the policies discussed. This study cannot make a claim as to whether these policies have impacted public perception of job loss due to AI.

My study utilizes 2024 data from the nationally representative General Social Survey. It also uses multivariable analysis to adjust political views, income, sex, age, occupation, working status, and educational attainment. At the same time, the study has its limitations. To begin with, the variable used for determining worry of job replacement by AI (AIWORRY) fails to specify which jobs, in particular, respondents are worried will be taken away. Instead, it asks about whether AI will replace humans jobs, generally. Additionally, I do not incorporate data from multiple time periods to analyze multiple sets of data like other studies (Cremaschi et al. 2025; Ebrahimi and Lee 2026). Instead, I use a single timeframe, which minimizes the extent to which my findings can be generalized. Lastly, the survey does not specify specific types of AI when ascertaining level of worry (e.g., agentic AI, generative AI).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a considerable portion of Americans have developed worries about AI, specifically about AI replacing humans in their jobs. My study finds that worry of job replacement by AI is contingent upon individual sociodemographic characteristics (age, sex, employment status, and political views). Research on worry about AI-based job replacement will continue to grow in importance as AI becomes more prevalent in the job market, and further attention to the topic is crucial.

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APPENDIX

Table 1: Questions

Covariate	Question	Original Levels	Levels Used in Study
Respondent's Age	"Respondents age"	10-19 years old 20-29 years old 30-39 years old 40-49 years old 50-59 years old 60-69 years old	20-29 years old 30-39 years old 40-49 years old 50-59 years old 60-69 years old 70-79 years old

		70-79 years old 80 years old or over	80 years old or over
Respondent's Sex Now	"R's sex now (3 category)"	Male Female Redacted/None of these	Male, Female, Redacted/None of these
Respondent's Educational Attainment	"Respondent's Education"	No formal schooling 1st grade 2nd grade 3rd grade 4th grade 5th grade 6th grade 7th grade 8th grade 9th grade 10th grade 11th grade 12th grade 1 year of college 2 years of college 3 years of college 4 years of college 5 years of college 6 years of college 7 years of college 8 or more years of college	Less than high school graduate, High school graduate, At least some college
Respondent's Occupation Sector	"Respondent's occupation" (OCC10… [is] coded using the U.S. Bureau of the Census occupation (2010) and Census occupation codes (2010)) (Uses Census occupation codes)	Census occupation codes (10-9830)	Management, Business, and Financial Occupations (10-960) Computer, Engineering, and Science Occupations (1005-1980); Education, Legal, Community Service, Arts, and Media Occupations (2001-2970); Healthcare Practitioners

			and Technical Occupations (3000-3550); Service Occupations (3601-4655); Sales and Office Occupations (4700-5940); Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations (6005-7640); Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations (7700-9760); Military Specific Occupations (9800-9830)
Respondent's Political Views	"I'm going to show you a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal--point 1--to extremely conservative--point 7. Where would you place yourself?"	Extremely liberal; Liberal; Slightly Liberal; Moderate, Middle of the Road; Slightly Conservative; Conservative; Extremely Conservative	Extremely liberal; Liberal; Slightly Liberal; Moderate, Middle of the Road; Slightly Conservative; Conservative; Extremely Conservative
Respondent's Total Family Income	"In which of these groups did your total family income, from all sources, fall last year? That is, before taxes."	Under $1,000; $1,000 to $2,999; $3,000 to $3,999; $4,000 to $4,999; $5,000 to $5,999; $6,000 to $6,999 $7,000 to $7,999 $8,000 to $9,999 $10,000 to $12,499;	$0 to $34,999; $35,000 to $59,999; $60,000 to $109,999; $110,000 to $169,999; $170,000 or over

		\$12,500 to \$14,999; \$15,000 to \$17,499; \$17,500 to \$19,999; \$20,000 to \$22,499; \$22,500 to \$24,999; \$25,000 to \$29,999; \$30,000 to \$34,999; \$35,000 to \$39,999; \$40,000 to \$49,999; \$50,000 to \$59,999; \$60,000 to \$74,999; \$75,000 to \$89,999; \$90,000 to \$109,000; \$110,000 to \$129,999; \$130,000 to \$149,999; \$150,000 to \$169,999; \$170,000 or over	
Respondent's Status of Work	"Last week were you working full time, part time, going to school, keeping house, or what?"	Working Full Time; Working Part Time; With a Job, But Not At Work Because of Temporary Illness, Vacation, Strike; Unemployed, Laid Off, Looking For Work; Retired; In School; Keeping House; Other	Working Full Time; Working Part Time; With a Job, But Not At Work Because of Temporary Illness, Vacation, Strike; Unemployed, Laid Off, Looking For Work; Retired; In School; Keeping House; Other

Table 2: Characteristics of the Analytical Sample (Unweighted N = 1,196)

Characteristic	Unweighted N (Weighted %)
Respondent's Age (Years)	
20-29	144 (16.3%)

30-39	217 (17.6%)
40-49	222 (19.4%)
50-59	186 (16.6%)
60-69	229 (16.5%)
70-79	149 (9.6%)
80+	49 (4.0%)
Respondent's Sex Now	
Female	657 (51.6%)
Male	533 (48.0%)
Redacted/None of these	6 (0.4%)
Respondent's Educational Attainment	
At least some college	828 (66.8%)
High school graduate	274 (25.0%)
Less than high school graduate	94 (8.2%)
Respondent's Occupation Sector	
Computer, Engineering, and Science Occupations	70 (5.5%)
Education, Legal, Community Service, Arts, and Media Occupations	143 (12%)
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	72 (5.3%)
Management, Business, and Financial Occupations	228 (18.8%)
Military Specific Occupations	6 (0.5%)
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations	84 (7.4%)

Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations	154 (14.4%)
Sales and Office Occupations	262 (21.4%)
Service Occupations	177 (14.7%)
Respondent's Political Views	
Extremely Liberal	82 (5.8%)
Liberal	154 (11.5%)
Slightly Liberal	140 (11.3%)
Moderate, Middle of the Road	405 (36.5%)
Slightly Conservative	146 (11.0%)
Conservative	204 (16.8%)
Extremely Conservative	65 (7.0%)
Respondent's Total Family Income (USD)	
$0 to $34,999	323 (22.4%)
$35,000 to $59,999	233 (19.4%)
$60,000 to $109,999	303 (24.8%)
$110,000 to $169,999	169 (17.5%)
$170,000 or over	168 (15.9%)
Respondent's Status of Work	
Working Full Time	567 (50.4%)
Working Part Time	133 (13.1%)
With a Job, But Not At Work Because of Temporary Illness, Vacation, Strike	22 (1.8%)
Unemployed, Laid off, Looking for work	57 (4.7%)
Retired	282 (18.9%)

In School	16 (1.0%)
Keeping House	90 (7.9%)
Other	29 (2.1%)

Table 3: Unadjusted Level of Worry about AI-Related Job Replacement by Characteristic

Characteristic	Survey-weighted Mean	Confidence Interval	N (unweighted)
Age (Years)			
20-29	3.54	(3.30, 3.78)	184
30-39	3.81	(3.63, 3.98)	270
40-49	3.93	(3.76, 4.10)	265
50-59	3.72	(3.55, 3.89)	225
60-69	3.93	(3.78, 4.07)	281
70-79	3.80	(3.61, 3.99)	178
80+	3.42	(3.00, 3.84)	66
Respondent's Sex Now			
Female	3.93	(3.83, 4.03)	874
Male	3.58	(3.47, 3.69)	649
Redacted/None of these	3.63	(2.97, 4.29)	11
Respondent's Educational Attainment			
At least some college	3.69	(3.60, 3.78)	1028
High school graduate	3.87	(3.73, 4.01)	376
Less than high school	4.02	(3.77, 4.28)	128

graduate			
Respondent's Occupation Sector			
Computer, Engineering, and Science Occupations	3.59	(3.25, 3.94)	87
Education, Legal, Community Service, Arts, and Media Occupations	3.71	(3.51, 3.91)	166
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	3.77	(3.40, 4.15)	86
Management, Business, and Financial Occupations	3.73	(3.54, 3.91)	249
Military Specific Occupations	3.04	(1.95, 4.14)	6
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations	3.74	(3.50, 3.98)	96
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations	3.83	(3.62, 4.04)	190
Sales and Office Occupations	3.71	(3.53, 3.89)	314
Service Occupations	3.89	(3.73, 4.06)	212
Respondent's Political Views			
Extremely Liberal	3.87	(3.58, 4.16)	89
Liberal	3.68	(3.48, 3.88)	194
Slightly Liberal	3.91	(3.75, 4.06)	170
Moderate, Middle of the Road	3.68	(3.55, 3.82)	520
Slightly Conservative	3.74	(3.53, 3.94)	180

Conservative	3.77	(3.58, 3.95)	246
Extremely Conservative	4.11	(3.79, 4.43)	78
Respondent's Total Family Income (USD)			
$0 to $34,999	3.91	(3.77, 4.04)	409
$35,000 to $59,999	3.83	(3.61, 4.04)	264
$60,000 to $109,999	3.73	(3.57, 3.89)	334
$110,000 to $169,999	3.71	(3.54, 3.87)	180
$170,000 or over	3.58	(3.41, 3.74)	183
Respondent's Status of Work			
Working Full Time	3.65	(3.53, 3.76)	684
Working Part Time	3.69	(3.47, 3.91)	173
With a Job, But Not At Work Because of Temporary Illness, Vacation, Strike	4.18	(3.84, 4.52)	31
Unemployed, Laid off, Looking for work	3.81	(3.49, 4.12)	75
Retired	3.78	(3.64, 3.92)	357
In School	3.74	(3.40, 4.08)	37
Keeping House	4.17	(3.96, 4.39)	130
Other	4.34	(3.95, 4.74)	46

Table 4: Survey-Weighted Linear Regression: Level of Worry About AI

Note: Analytic N = 1196. Estimates account for the GSS survey weight (WTSSPS), strata (VSTRAT), and primary sampling units (VPSU). AI worry is measured on a 1–5 scale, with higher scores indicating greater worry about AI-based job replacement (1 = not at all worried; 5 =

very worried).

Characteristic	Point Estimate	Confidence Interval	P-value
Age (Years)			
20-29	–	–	–
30-39	0.14	(-0.13, 0.42)	0.3
40-49	0.31	(0.06, 0.57)	0.018
50-59	0.05	(-0.24, 0.33)	0.7
60-69	0.43	(0.08, 0.78)	0.019
70-79	0.28	(-0.07, 0.63)	0.12
80+	–0.17	(-0.68, 0.35)	0.5
Respondent's Sex Now			
Female	–	–	–
Male	-0.43	(-0.60, -0.26)	<0.001
Redacted/None of these	-0.83	(-2.2, 0.56)	0.2
Respondent's Educational Attainment			
At least some college	–	–	–
High school graduate	0.16	(-0.04, 0.37)	0.11
Less than high school graduate	0.10	(-0.19, 0.40)	0.5
Respondent's Occupation Sector			
Computer, Engineering, and Science Occupations	–	–	–
Education, Legal, Community	-0.24	(-0.60, 0.12)	0.2

Service, Arts, and Media Occupations			
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	-0.35	(-0.72, 0.02)	0.066
Management, Business, and Financial Occupations	-0.12	(-0.48, 0.23)	0.5
Military Specific Occupations	-0.84	(-1.7, 0.05)	0.063
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations	-0.01	(-0.38, 0.36)	>0.9
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations	-0.03	(-0.35, 0.30)	0.9
Sales and Office Occupations	-0.31	(-0.63, 0.02)	0.061
Service Occupations	-0.05	(-0.38, 0.28)	0.8
Respondent's Political Views			
Extremely Liberal	–	–	–
Liberal	-0.14	(-0.47, 0.19)	0.4
Slightly Liberal	0.15	(-0.19, 0.48)	0.4
Moderate, Middle of the Road	-0.21	(-0.52, 0.10)	0.2
Slightly Conservative	-0.08	(-0.40, 0.25)	0.6
Conservative	0.01	(-0.35, 0.38)	>0.9
Extremely Conservative	0.33	(-0.08, 0.75)	0.11
Respondent's Total Family Income (USD)			
$60,000 to $109,999	–	–	–
$0 to $34,999	0.06	(-0.18, 0.31)	0.6
$35,000 to $59,999	0.06	(-0.20, 0.32)	0.7

$110,000 to $169,999	0.04	(-0.21, 0.28)	0.8
$170,000 or over	-0.19	(-0.46, 0.07)	0.14
Respondent's Status of Work			
Working Full Time	–	–	–
Working Part Time	-0.07	(-0.40, 0.27)	0.7
With a Job, But Not At Work Because of Temporary Illness, Vacation, Strike	0.44	(0.07, 0.82)	0.021
Unemployed, Laid off, Looking for work	0.34	(-0.03, 0.71)	0.070
Retired	0.01	(-0.26, 0.28)	>0.9
In School	-0.39	(-1.0, 0.27)	0.2
Keeping House	0.23	(-0.04, 0.51)	0.090
Other	0.50	(0.09, 0.90)	0.017

Table 5: Survey-Adjusted Omnibus Wald F Tests

Note: Analytic N = 1,196. Assesses the significance of each variable while controlling for all other covariates in the multi-variable linear regression. Utilizes WTSSPS, VASTRAT, and VPSU. Degrees of freedom (df) reports the number of coefficients (first item), and degrees of freedom used by the test (second item).

Characteristic	**Wald F**	**Degrees of Freedom (coefficients, residual degrees of freedom)**	**P-value**
Age	3.427	(6, 32)	0.010
Respondent's Sex Now	13.058	(2, 32)	<0.001
Respondent's Educational	1.373	(2, 32)	0.268

Attainment			
Respondent's Occupation Sector	1.591	(8, 32)	0.167
Respondent's Political Views	2.932	(6, 32)	0.021
Respondent's Total Family Income (USD)	1.177	(4, 32)	0.340
Respondent's Status of Work	3.116	(7, 32)	0.013