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EDUCATION, INEQUALITY, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE CREATIVE ECONOMY: CHALLENGES FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN BRAZIL AND THE UK

EDUCAÇÃO, DESIGUALDADE E INTELIGÊNCIA ARTIFICIAL NA ECONOMIA CRIATIVA: DESAFIOS PARA O DESENVOLVIMENTO INCLUSIVO NO BRASIL E NO REINO UNIDO

EDUCACIÓN, DESIGUALDAD E INTELIGENCIA ARTIFICIAL EN LA ECONOMÍA CREATIVA: DESAFÍOS PARA EL DESARROLLO INCLUSIVO EN BRASIL Y EL REINO UNIDO

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ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping education and creative labour markets, creating new opportunities while potentially reproducing inequalities in access to skills, digital infrastructure, and employment. However, limited research connects AI, education, youth transitions, and the creative economy comparatively across Brazil and the United Kingdom. This study examines how educational pathways, AI literacy, and unequal access to technological and cultural resources shape young people's transitions from education to creative and technology-intensive employment. A mixed-methods comparative design combines quantitative analysis of PISA results data and comparative policy analysis of AI, education, and digital-skills strategies in Brazil and the UK. The research is expected to identify how inequalities in education, digital access, and skill development influence young people's opportunities to benefit from AI, while identifying conditions under which AI can expand creativity, employability, and participation. AI-mediated transitions are shaped not only by technological change but also by educational and social structures that distribute opportunities unequally. The study contributes theoretically to research on education, inequality, and technological capital, while providing policy evidence for more inclusive education, AI-skills development, and creative labour-market strategies.

Keywords: Education. Inequality. Artificial Intelligence. Creative Economy.

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RESUMO
Inteligência artificial (IA) está reformulando os mercados de educação e trabalho criativo, criando novas oportunidades enquanto potencialmente reproduz desigualdades no acesso a competências, infraestrutura digital e emprego. No entanto, pesquisa limitada conecta IA, educação, transições de jovens e a economia criativa de forma comparativa entre Brasil e Reino Unido. Este estudo examina como caminhos educacionais, alfabetização em IA e acesso desigual a recursos tecnológicos e culturais moldam as transições de jovens da educação para o emprego criativo e intensivo em tecnologia. Um desenho comparativo de métodos mistos combina análise quantitativa de dados de resultados do PISA e análise comparativa de políticas de IA, educação e estratégias de competências digitais no Brasil e no Reino Unido. A pesquisa espera identificar como desigualdades em educação, acesso digital e desenvolvimento de competências influenciam as oportunidades de jovens se beneficiarem de IA, enquanto identifica condições sob as quais a IA pode expandir criatividade, empregabilidade e participação. Transições mediadas por IA são moldadas não apenas por mudança tecnológica, mas também por estruturas educacionais e sociais que distribuem oportunidades de forma desigual. O estudo contribui teoricamente para pesquisa sobre educação, desigualdade e capital tecnológico, enquanto fornece evidências políticas para educação mais inclusiva, desenvolvimento de competências em IA e estratégias de mercado de trabalho criativo.

Palavras-chave: Educação. Desigualdade. Inteligência Artificial. Economia Criativa.

RESUMEN
La inteligencia artificial (IA) está reformulando los mercados de educación y trabajo creativo, creando nuevas oportunidades mientras potencialmente reproduce desigualdades en el acceso a competencias, infraestructura digital y empleo. Sin embargo, la investigación limitada conecta IA, educación, transiciones de jóvenes y la economía creativa de manera comparativa entre Brasil y Reino Unido. Este estudio examina cómo las trayectorias educativas, la alfabetización en IA y el acceso desigual a recursos tecnológicos y culturales moldean las transiciones de los jóvenes de la educación al empleo creativo e intensivo en tecnología. Un diseño comparativo de métodos mixtos combina análisis cuantitativo de datos de resultados del PISA y análisis comparativo de políticas de IA, educación y estrategias de competencias digitales en Brasil y el Reino Unido. Se espera que la investigación identifique cómo las desigualdades en educación, acceso digital y desarrollo de competencias influyen en las oportunidades de los jóvenes para beneficiarse de la IA, mientras identifica condiciones bajo las cuales la IA puede expandir la creatividad, la empleabilidad y la participación. Las transiciones mediadas por IA se moldean no solo por el cambio tecnológico sino también por estructuras educativas y sociales que distribuyen oportunidades de manera desigual. El estudio contribuye teóricamente a la investigación sobre educación, desigualdad y capital tecnológico, mientras proporciona evidencia política para educación más inclusiva, desarrollo de competencias en IA y estrategias del mercado laboral creativo.

Palabras clave: Educación. Desigualdad. Inteligencia Artificial. Economía Creativa.

1 INTRODUCTION

This research explores the relationship between education, inequality, and artificial intelligence (AI) within the broader context of the creative economy and the labour market, with particular emphasis on the role of young people in shaping the future of work. This is a relatively new and underexplored field of research, particularly in light of the rapid development of emerging AI technologies and their broader social impacts.The increasing diffusion of AI across education systems, as well as creative and cultural industries, is transforming how knowledge, skills, and creativity are produced, recognised, and rewarded. It is also likely to reshape educational processes and their social and economic relations. While these transformations create new opportunities for learning and innovation, they may also deepen existing structural inequalities related to social class, race, gender, and geography, particularly affecting young people's transition from education to employment. The research investigates how educational pathways, socialisation processes, and skills development shape young people's access to, or exclusion from, creative and technology-intensive labour markets. It examines unequal access to digital literacy, infrastructure, and high-quality training, which may constrain opportunities for young workers to participate in emerging fields at the intersection of AI and creativity. At the same time, the study considers how AI can function as a tool for empowerment by expanding young people's capacity to innovate, collaborate, and participate in global creative industries, provided that public policies ensure equitable access to education, technology, and cultural participation. Methodologically, the research combines sociological and economic approaches through a mixed-methods design, including quantitative modelling of youth labour-market data, case studies of creative education programmes, and comparative policy analysis between Brazil and the United Kingdom. It examines how national AI and education strategies—including Brazil's Brazilian Artificial Intelligence Plan (PBIA) and UK frameworks for digital and creative skills—can support inclusive transitions from education to employment and reduce inequalities in access to innovation. By connecting education, youth, and artificial intelligence through the perspective of the creative economy, this research aims to generate evidence-based insights for the development of inclusive innovation ecosystems that enhance employability, promote social mobility, and strengthen cultural diversity. Education is understood not merely as a mechanism for adapting to technological change, but also as a transformative force for equity, sustainability, and human creativity in the labour markets of the future. The research is structured around four main areas: (1) transformations in

education systems and curricula, the professional development of educators, the protection of rights, skills development, youth inclusion, and engagement with cultural institutions, including digital education and new informational and cultural-sector competencies; (2) investment in and the economic potential of AI in culture and the creative economy, including the mapping of value chains, emerging business models, and development opportunities; (3) AI regulation and the protection of creative occupations, addressing copyright, intellectual property, market concentration, working conditions, and the broader regulatory ecosystem; and (4) the impact of AI on work and youth, focusing on inequalities, automation, occupational transformations, and new frontiers of creativity. This paper presents preliminary evidence generated by the research, including an analysis of the latest PISA report and its implications for education, inequality, AI-related competencies, and young people's future transitions into the labour market.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH PROBLEM

The relationship between education, the economy, and inequality is a classic topic in the sociology and economics of education (BOURDIEU, 1982, 2007). However, recent advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and its multiple social impacts require this relationship to be reconsidered. As Garcia-Alonso (2025, p. 14) argues:

“In the age of Artificial Intelligence, educational justice transcends the mere guarantee of access to technology and requires an active confrontation with the logics of power embedded in algorithms. Only through critical analysis, democratic participation, and the co-design of tools can we build an educational AI model that celebrates cultural diversity, strengthens teacher agency, and promotes the emancipation of all those involved in the learning process.”

In this context, educational inequalities may expand through new forms of social stratification. *Chained inequalities* within the Brazilian education system may broaden existing patterns of stratification between secondary and higher education (CAREGNATO; MIORANDO; RAIZER, 2019). Despite various governmental, private, and social initiatives, the Brazilian education system remains selective and marked by significant inequalities, placing the country among the world's most unequal (RAIZER & CAREGNATO, 2020; GRISA, G. ; NEVES, C. E. B. ; RAIZER, L, 2020).

These inequalities make young people's entry into the labour market particularly complex, especially with the emergence of digital platforms and the increasing use of AI. As Sousa (2021, p. 1) observes:

“The expansion of the platform economy has produced transformations in labour markets worldwide, deregulating markets, flexibilising employment relations, introducing on-demand remuneration, and imposing a just-in-time production logic. [...] Youth are more exposed to precarious platform-based occupations because they have higher participation rates, are more exposed to unemployment, have greater physical capacity for strenuous work, are required to combine work and education, and are more familiar with new technologies. Nevertheless, we argue that this age group also tends to play a relevant role in the organisation of platform workers.”

AI should not, however, be assumed to democratise education. Rather, it constitutes an additional resource that may either promote inclusion or reinforce selectivity, depending on how it is implemented (BULATHWELA, 2024). International organisations have therefore increasingly focused on understanding and regulating AI's effects on education. Garcia-Alonso (2025, p. 13) highlights initiatives developed by UNESCO, Finland, and Canada:

“[...] Some countries and international organizations have already begun to implement measures in this direction. UNESCO (UNESCO, 2021) has developed a global reference framework emphasizing the need for human rights–centered AI, with a focus on equity, inclusion, and cultural diversity. In Finland (Tedre *et al.*, 2023), participatory co-design programs have been developed in which teachers, students, and technology designers collaborate in the creation of educational tools, ensuring that performance metrics respond to pedagogical rather than purely technical criteria. In Canada, several school districts have promoted community governance initiatives for educational data, involving families and local communities in decision-making.”

The relationship between AI and the creative economy further expands this debate. According to AMANKWAH-AMOAH (2024):

“[...]The creative industry plays a significant role in modern economies, contributing to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and economic growth of countries, job creation and cultural development in both developing and developed economies. [...] In addition to its significant economic impact, job creation and “providing a feasible option for development”, the creative industries promote innovation and contribute to societies’ well-being (Grynspan, 2022). Changes, disruptions, and transformations in the creative industries will likely affect

economies and societies significantly, and hence deserve research attention (Elbanna *et al.*, 2020)."

The creative economy is similarly defined by UNCTAD (2010) as being based on creative assets capable of generating economic growth, employment, export revenues, social inclusion, cultural diversity, and human development. Recent studies have examined the risks, challenges, and opportunities associated with the growing use of AI in creative industries. Cantekin (2025, p. 49) argues:

"[...]AI is becoming embedded in creative industries worldwide. Like previous technological advances, it is creating both opportunities and challenges. It is a transformative technology, but further adoption and impact are not guaranteed; historical patterns show technology diffusion is often indirect, prolonged and uneven. Policymakers therefore face a critical balancing act. They must create conditions that maximise productivity benefits whilst helping workers navigate transitions effectively. With proper planning, strategic investment, targeted skills development and proportionate regulation, AI can boost the creative industries helping them, in turn, contribute to a growing economy."

Education therefore plays a central role in preparing young people and professionals for transformations associated with AI and the creative economy. Azambuja (2024, p. 6) argues:

"As AI has the potential to replace human cognitive skills involving explicit knowledge, a significant part of cultural and professional training processes needs to be reconsidered and adapted to this new logic. This reality has a considerable impact on education in general and on higher education in particular, whose traditional primary role is to prepare individuals for the labour market. At first, it seems that academic education should focus primarily on developing subjective skills—such as creativity, critical and reflective thinking—and ethical competencies, rather than purely technical skills. In this sense, universities and educational institutions will need to reconsider their educational processes and organisational structures for teaching and learning. But what will education look like in the age of artificial intelligence? Will we have digital teachers simply replacing human teachers? Or will we have a hybridisation of these two forms? What are the best educational and training practices in this context of transformation in professional activities?"

UNESCO (2021, 2023) has sought to establish ethical and regulatory guidelines for AI in education and cultural development. The United Nations (UN, 2025, p. 56) similarly emphasises the importance of institutional capacity and digital literacy:

“Countries with strong institutions and digital literacy campaigns can mitigate risks of AI-enabled misinformation, fraud, or electoral manipulation. In weaker states, these risks can undermine trust in governance and public institutions. The divergence in resilience to information risks reinforces divides in political stability and citizen security, further widening between-country inequality.”

At the national and regional levels, Brazil and the United Kingdom have adopted different approaches to regulating AI in education (HOLMES, 2022; SELWYN, 2022; SCHIFF, 2021). Carvalho de Araujo (2025, p. 1) highlights important differences:

“The UK’s flexible, innovation-driven approach highlights the importance of sector-specific oversight but risks inconsistencies in implementation. In Brazil, AI regulation is still developing, with ongoing legislative efforts focusing on balancing innovation with ethical considerations and rights protection. We argue that for AI to benefit education without exacerbating existing inequalities, regulatory frameworks must address algorithmic bias, promote AI literacy, ensure transparency, and protect privacy. The comparative analysis reveals gaps in those three regulations and emphasizes the need for adaptable, context-specific strategies prioritizing ethical AI integration in education.”

In Brazil, Bill No. 2338/2023 proposes national rules for the responsible development, implementation, and use of AI, emphasising fundamental rights and safe and reliable systems (BRASIL, 2023). The Brazilian Artificial Intelligence Plan (PBIA) also establishes a national framework for AI development, with planned investments of up to R$23 billion over four years (BRASIL, 2025). In the United Kingdom, a proactive approach has been developed to assess and regulate AI in education, including standards for the safety of generative AI systems (UNITED KINGDOM, 2023; UNITED KINGDOM, 2026):

“These standards outline the capabilities and features that generative artificial intelligence (AI) products and systems should meet to be considered safe for users in educational settings. They are mainly intended for edtech developers and suppliers to schools and colleges. Schools and colleges may also find these standards helpful in assessing which AI products are safe for use in education.”

Despite these initiatives, the comparative relationship between Brazil and the United Kingdom concerning AI, education, creative industries, and equitable opportunities for young people remains underexplored. This constitutes a significant research gap. As Knox (2025, p. 3) argues:

"[...] The theme of inequality suggests that the promotion of AI is inclined to position the technology as able to overcome educational disparities, such as access to personalised teaching. However, it will also argue that this tends to overlook the extent to which AI introduces new and different kinds of inequalities."

The central research problem therefore concerns the emerging inequalities associated with the expansion of AI in education and the creative economy. The study asks how AI may transform the potential of education to promote social mobility and what roles governments, regulators, companies, educational institutions, and civil society play in shaping these processes. To investigate the interconnections between education, inequality, and artificial intelligence (AI) in the context of the creative economy and the labour market, focusing particularly on young people's role in shaping the future of work, their transitions into employment, processes of professional socialisation, and the continuity of their educational trajectories. As Carvalho de Araujo (2025, p. 12) emphasises:

"[...] The classification of high-risk AI systems, the need for AI literacy, the potential for bias and discrimination, and ethical and privacy concerns are all critical issues that must be carefully managed. To navigate these challenges successfully, policymakers, educators, and technologists must work together to ensure that AI promotes fairness, equity, and respect for students' rights. By doing so, the transformative potential of AI in education can be realized without compromising the fundamental values that underpin educational systems."

3 METHODS

Comparative research provides a valuable methodological framework for investigating complex and multifaceted phenomena (BRAY, 2015; BRYMAN, 1988; APPLE, 2010, 2013). This study adopts a mixed-methods approach that integrates macro- and micro-level analytical perspectives (CROSSLEY, 2003; PICCIANO, 2004), case study research, international comparative analysis, and quantitative analysis of secondary data (BRANNEN, 2005). The comparative dimension focuses on Brazil and the United Kingdom, considering the UK's prominent role in AI development and its initiatives to understand and regulate the implications of AI for education and the creative economy. The research coordinator's experience as a Visiting Professor at the Latin American Centre, University of Oxford, during a postdoctoral fellowship in 2019, provides a valuable foundation for engagement with relevant UK research institutions.

The empirical analysis draws on secondary datasets, official documents, legislation, and public policy frameworks. The quantitative component examines labour-market indicators and micro- and macro-level economic, educational, and social data, with particular emphasis on young people and their transitions from education to employment. It also incorporates an analysis of data from the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), focusing on educational performance, socioeconomic inequalities, and the development of competencies relevant to participation in an increasingly digital and AI-mediated economy. These data provide a comparative perspective on the educational conditions that may shape young people's opportunities to engage with emerging technologies and access knowledge-intensive and creative occupations.

By integrating quantitative analysis, PISA data, documentary and legislative research, case studies, and international comparison, the study seeks to develop a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between education, inequality, and artificial intelligence. Particular attention is given to young people's educational trajectories, the unequal distribution of educational and technological resources, transitions into employment, and opportunities to participate in the creative economy.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research identifies four main findings. First, the expansion of artificial intelligence (AI) in education does not, in itself, guarantee greater democratisation or equality of educational opportunities. On the contrary, the evidence indicates that AI may reproduce and deepen pre-existing educational inequalities by creating new forms of social stratification and reinforcing unequal access to technological resources, digital literacy, and educational opportunities. In the Brazilian context, existing “chained inequalities” may expand processes of stratification between secondary and higher education. Despite governmental, private, and social initiatives, the Brazilian education system remains selective and highly unequal. AI should therefore be understood not as an inherently equalising technology, but as a resource whose effects depend on the institutional, educational, and social conditions under which it is introduced. It can function either as a tool for inclusion or as an additional mechanism of selectivity (BULATHWELA, 2024). This finding is consistent with Knox (2025, p. 3), who highlights that the promotion of AI as a solution to educational disparities may overlook the extent to which it simultaneously introduces “new and different kinds of inequalities.”

Second, young people experience particularly complex and unequal transitions into increasingly digitalised and platform-mediated labour markets. Existing inequalities in education are closely connected to the conditions under which young people enter employment. The expansion of the platform economy has transformed labour relations through deregulation, flexible employment arrangements, on-demand remuneration, and new forms of labour organisation. In Brazil, young people are particularly exposed to precarious platform-based occupations because of their higher participation in the labour market, greater exposure to unemployment, the need to combine work and education, and their familiarity with new technologies (Sousa, 2021). At the same time, this technological familiarity may provide young people with new opportunities to participate in and organise emerging forms of work. The findings therefore suggest that the relationship between youth, education, technology, and employment is ambivalent: technological change may generate new opportunities while simultaneously exposing already vulnerable groups to new forms of labour-market insecurity. AI is consequently becoming an important element in understanding contemporary processes of professional socialisation, educational continuity, and transitions from education into employment.

Third, the growing integration of AI into the creative economy requires substantial transformations in education, skills development, and regulatory frameworks. Creative industries have become increasingly important to economic growth, employment, innovation, and cultural development, meaning that transformations generated by AI may have significant economic and social consequences (AMANKWAH-AMOAH, 2024). At the same time, AI is becoming embedded in creative industries worldwide, producing both opportunities and challenges. Its diffusion is likely to be uneven, requiring strategic investment, targeted skills development, and proportionate regulation to maximise potential productivity gains while supporting workers through technological transitions (CANTEKIN, 2025).

These transformations have direct implications for education. The increasing capacity of AI to perform cognitive tasks involving explicit knowledge suggests that educational and professional training systems may need to reconsider their traditional approaches to skills development. Greater emphasis may be required on creativity, critical and reflective thinking, and ethical competencies, alongside technical knowledge (Azambuja, 2024). Consequently, schools and universities face the challenge of reconsidering their curricula and teaching and learning structures in response to the changing relationship between education, technology, and professional activity.

The most recent PISA (OCDE, 2026) evidence indicates that the educational capabilities required to participate effectively in an increasingly digital and AI-mediated economy remain highly unequal. PISA 2025 shows substantial differences between Brazil and the United Kingdom in science, mathematics, reading, and computational problem solving, while socioeconomic background accounts for a larger share of variation in science performance in Brazil than across OECD countries. The assessment also reveals significant differences in students' preparedness for digital learning and in their opportunities to develop critical capacities for evaluating AI-generated information. Complementary evidence from PISA 2022 Creative Thinking shows that Brazilian students performed substantially below the OECD average in creative thinking. Taken together, these findings suggest that the challenge of AI-related inequality extends beyond access to technology: it concerns the unequal development of the cognitive, digital, critical, and creative capabilities required to use AI effectively and participate in knowledge- and creativity-intensive labour markets.

PISA evidence provides important empirical support for understanding how educational inequalities may shape young people’s capacity to participate in an increasingly AI-mediated economy. PISA 2025 shows that socioeconomic status accounts for 16% of the variation in science performance in Brazil, compared with 12% across OECD countries, while the performance gap between the most advantaged and disadvantaged students reaches 96 points. Brazil also performs below the OECD average in science, mathematics, reading, and computational problem solving. These results indicate that inequalities associated with artificial intelligence cannot be understood exclusively in terms of access to digital technologies. They also involve unequal opportunities to acquire the foundational knowledge, cognitive skills, digital competencies, and critical capacities necessary to appropriate and use emerging technologies effectively. From a Bourdieusian perspective, such differences may be understood in relation to the unequal distribution of educational and technological resources and their potential conversion into forms of technological and algorithmic capital. AI may therefore operate not only as a technological innovation, but also as a mechanism through which existing patterns of educational and social inequality may be reproduced or transformed (OECD, 2026).

PISA results also provide relevant evidence concerning students’ use of artificial intelligence in learning. In Brazil, 48% of students reported using AI chatbots to help them learn at least once a week, compared with 46% across OECD countries. Brazilian students also reported using AI for preliminary research, summarising texts, and drafting written

assignments. However, the OECD emphasizes that the educational effects of digital technologies depend substantially on how they are used, with moderate and purposeful use associated with more positive outcomes than excessive use or digital distraction. This distinction is particularly relevant to the concept of algorithmic capital, understood here as a potential extension of technological and cultural resources that enables individuals to access, interpret, evaluate, and creatively mobilise algorithmic systems. Although PISA does not directly measure algorithmic capital, its findings suggest that access to AI and the capacity to appropriate AI are not equivalent. Differences in students' knowledge, digital competencies, critical evaluation skills, and educational environments may determine whether AI becomes a resource for empowerment or contributes to the reproduction of inequality. For young people transitioning from education to employment, these differences may increasingly affect their capacity to participate in technology-intensive and creative occupations, making education a central institutional arena for the development of the capabilities required for more equitable participation in the future of work (OECD, 2026).

Taken together, these four findings suggest that the impact of AI on education, youth, and the creative economy cannot be understood exclusively as a technological transformation. It is also a process of social transformation in which educational institutions, labour markets, public policies, regulatory systems, and unequal distributions of educational, technological, and cultural resources interact. The PISA evidence adds an important dimension to this argument: inequality concerns not only access to AI technologies, but also the educational and creative capabilities necessary to use them effectively. The capacity of young people to benefit from AI may therefore depend on the interaction between foundational educational skills, creative thinking, digital and AI literacy, educational trajectories, and access to opportunities in the labour market.

5 CONCLUSION

At this stage of the research, the evidence suggests that artificial intelligence should not be understood merely as a technological transformation of education and the labour market, but as a process capable of reshaping existing patterns of social inequality. The preliminary findings indicate that the benefits associated with AI are strongly conditioned by unequal access to educational opportunities, digital infrastructure, technological skills, and creative capabilities. Rather than automatically reducing educational inequalities, AI may

reproduce or intensify existing forms of stratification when these structural differences remain unaddressed.

The analysis also indicates that young people occupy a particularly important and vulnerable position in this transformation. Their transitions from education to employment are increasingly shaped by digital technologies, platform-based work, and emerging AI-mediated occupations. At the same time, young people's familiarity with technology may provide new opportunities for participation, creativity, innovation, and professional organisation. AI therefore creates both new possibilities for empowerment and new risks of exclusion, particularly for those whose educational and socioeconomic trajectories provide fewer opportunities to develop the competencies required by emerging labour markets.

The preliminary PISA evidence reinforces this argument by showing that the educational capacities underlying participation in knowledge- and creativity-intensive economies are unequally distributed. Brazil's comparatively lower performance in core domains and in creative thinking highlights the importance of strengthening foundational learning and creative capabilities, while the absence of UK participation in the PISA Creative Thinking assessment points to the need for complementary comparative indicators.

Overall, the findings suggest that the central challenge is not simply how education systems can adapt to AI, but **how they can ensure that young people have equitable opportunities to develop the knowledge, creativity, critical thinking, digital and AI literacy required to participate in the future of work**. AI can contribute to more inclusive creative and knowledge economies only when accompanied by policies that address educational inequalities, expand access to technological resources and high-quality training, protect workers, and establish effective ethical and regulatory frameworks.

The central finding is consequently that the effects of AI on young people's educational and professional trajectories will depend substantially on the social and institutional conditions governing access to education, technology, skills, creativity, and employment opportunities. This reinforces the importance of policies that combine AI development with educational inclusion, skills development, social protection, ethical regulation, and equitable participation in emerging creative and knowledge economies.

Thus, the emerging conclusion of this research is that **the social impact of AI will depend less on the technology itself than on the educational, institutional, and policy conditions through which it is introduced and appropriated.** Education consequently becomes a central arena for determining whether AI reinforces existing inequalities or

contributes to broader social mobility, cultural participation, and inclusive development. The Brazil–UK comparison provides an important framework for investigating these processes and identifying policy conditions capable of supporting more equitable transitions between education, professional socialisation, and employment in the creative economy.

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