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From "*Wu Wei*" to AI Empowerment: Breakthrough and Innovation in Internet Economic Management

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Abstract: This paper explores the value of Laozi's thought on "*Wu Wei*" (non-action or effortless action) in the construction of spontaneous order within the internet economy in the age of artificial intelligence. It first analyzes the impact of AI on the internet economy and the challenges it presents, including technological characteristics, economic transformations, and issues related to ethics, data security, employment structure, and market monopolies. It then discusses the application pathways of "*Wu Wei*" thought, such as policy design and regulatory innovations that minimize excessive human intervention, using AI to optimize resource allocation, and establishing fair and transparent market rules. These pathways are illustrated through case studies. Subsequently, the paper presents implementation strategies and policy recommendations, including technology innovation and standards setting, education and talent cultivation, and international cooperation. Finally, it summarizes the research findings, highlighting the theoretical contributions and practical implications of "*Wu Wei*" thought, and forecasts future research directions, such as integration with other management theories, tracking AI's impact on market structure, exploring ethical practices, and cross-cultural applications.

Keywords: *Wu Wei*; Artificial Intelligence; Internet Economy; Spontaneous Order; Application Pathway

1. Introduction

In today's era of rapid technological advancement, artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged with unprecedented momentum, profoundly reshaping the global economic landscape, particularly influencing the internet economy [1]. With its powerful data processing capabilities, intelligent algorithms, and automation, AI brings numerous transformations and opportunities to the internet economy. It has significantly boosted productivity, optimized resource allocation, and accelerated the growth of the internet economy. For instance, in the e-commerce sector, AI achieves precise user profiling and personalized recommendations through big data analysis, greatly enhancing user experience and purchase conversion rates [2].

However, the deep integration of AI in the internet economy also brings a series of serious challenges. In terms of resource allocation efficiency, although AI has improved resource utilization to some extent, market imperfections and improper human interventions still result in misallocation of resources. Market fairness is also under scrutiny, as certain enterprises exploit technological advantages and data monopolies to gain unfair benefits, disrupting the competitive market environment [3]. Additionally, transparency issues are becoming increasingly prominent; the complexity of AI algorithms and the opacity of data make it difficult for market participants to understand decision-making processes and information sources, affecting trust and stability in the market [4].

Against this backdrop, examining the value of Laozi's concept of "*Wu Wei*" (non-action or effortless action) in building spontaneous order in the AI-driven internet economy is both necessary and urgent. Laozi's "*Wu Wei*" thought emphasizes conforming to nature, minimizing excessive human intervention, and allowing things to develop according to their own laws. This thought provides profound insights into addressing current issues in the internet economy. From a modern perspective, Laozi's philosophy offers us a new governance viewpoint, helping us to reexamine the relationship between government and the market and how to achieve natural and

harmonious development in a technology-driven economic environment.

In terms of market self-regulation theories, Adam Smith's "invisible hand" concept emphasizes how the market automatically regulates resource allocation through supply and demand [5], showing some commonalities with Laozi's idea of "*Wu Wei*." However, while studies on the convergence of AI and the internet economy focus on technology's impact on economic models, relatively few explore how traditional wisdom can help construct a robust economic order within this convergence.

This paper aims to explore how Laozi's concept of "*Wu Wei*" can guide the construction of spontaneous order in the internet economy during the age of AI. Specific research questions include: How can Laozi's idea of "*Wu Wei*" be integrated with modern market economic theory to meet the needs of the AI era? How can AI technology embody the principle of "*Wu Wei*" in the internet economy, promoting efficient resource allocation and market fairness? How can we establish a governance mechanism based on Laozi's thought to ensure that the AI-driven internet economy remains dynamic while preserving fairness and transparency?

To achieve the above research objectives, this paper employs a combination of literature analysis, case studies, and theoretical construction. Through an in-depth analysis of relevant literature, the study reviews the essence and modern applications of Laozi's thought; it also explores practical cases of AI in the internet economy and examines existing issues. Based on this, the paper constructs a theoretical framework that elucidates the mechanisms of Laozi's philosophy in building spontaneous order.

The overall structure of this paper is as follows: first, an in-depth analysis of the theoretical foundation of Laozi's "*Wu Wei*" thought and its modern implications; next, an exploration of the features and challenges of the internet economy in the AI era; then, an investigation of the application pathways of Laozi's thought in constructing spontaneous order within the internet economy; followed by the presentation of specific implementation strategies and policy recommendations; and finally, a summary of the research findings and an outlook on future research directions. This structure is intended to offer a comprehensive and systematic exploration of the value and applications of Laozi's philosophy in the internet economy within the AI era.

2. Characteristics and Challenges of the Internet Economy in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

With the deep integration of artificial intelligence (AI) technology, the internet economy has exhibited new characteristics and dynamics, while also facing a multitude of complex challenges. An in-depth analysis of these characteristics and challenges is essential for understanding and addressing the development issues of the internet economy in the AI era.

2.1 Technological Characteristics and Applications

AI technology, with its unique core attributes, is profoundly shaping the landscape of the internet economy. Deep learning, one of the key fields in AI, employs multilayered neural networks to simulate the learning processes of the human brain, enabling deep understanding and analysis of data [6]. In the internet economy, deep learning is widely used in areas such as image recognition, speech recognition, and natural language processing. For example, e-commerce platforms utilize deep learning technology to recognize user-uploaded images, accurately identifying product categories and features to enhance search accuracy and efficiency.

Big data analysis is another critical support for AI. With the proliferation of the internet, a massive amount of data is generated and collected, and big data analysis technology can extract valuable insights and patterns from these extensive datasets. In the internet economy, companies analyze user behavior data, transaction data, and more to understand user preferences and consumption habits, thereby enabling precise marketing and personalized services. Social media platforms, for instance, recommend content and advertisements aligned with users' interests based on their browsing history and interactions, increasing user engagement and loyalty.

Automated decision-making is another important application of AI in the internet economy. Leveraging machine learning

algorithms and intelligent systems, companies can make real-time decisions based on data and pre-defined rules, enhancing decision-making efficiency and accuracy [7]. In the financial sector, AI algorithms analyze market data in real-time and make automated trading decisions to optimize investment portfolios. In logistics, automated decision-making systems can plan optimal delivery routes based on order information, traffic conditions, and other factors, improving delivery efficiency.

2.2 Changes in Economic Structure

(1) Transformation of production models

AI has driven a shift in the production model of the internet economy. Traditional production often relies on human expertise and large-scale standardized production, while AI enables a more intelligent and personalized production process. Companies can use AI algorithms to optimize production processes, enhancing efficiency and product quality. For instance, manufacturing companies can automate and optimize production through intelligent robotics and automated production lines, reducing labor costs while improving precision and stability in production. Additionally, AI supports customized production, allowing for production tailored to users' individual needs and meeting the increasingly diverse demands of consumers.

(2) Changes in consumer behavior

AI has also profoundly impacted consumer habits. On the one hand, it provides consumers with more convenient and intelligent ways to access information. Intelligent recommendation systems enable consumers to discover products and services that meet their needs more quickly, saving time on searches and filtering. On the other hand, AI enhances the consumer experience. For example, intelligent customer service can address consumer inquiries in real-time, offering 24/7 support. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies offer immersive shopping experiences, allowing consumers to try on products and view effects in a virtual environment.

(3) Reshaping of market competition

AI has transformed the competitive landscape of the internet economy. Companies that adopt AI technology early gain a competitive edge, increasing their market share and profitability. AI has also lowered market entry barriers, allowing new companies with innovative technology and business models to enter the market, intensifying competition. For example, some small internet companies have developed unique products and services with AI technology, quickly rising in the market and challenging traditional large companies. Furthermore, AI promotes industry convergence and cross-industry competition, blurring the boundaries between different industries. To thrive, companies need a broader range of technologies and capabilities.

2.3. Challenges

(1) Ethical issues

AI brings a series of ethical issues, some of which have significant impacts on market order. For instance, algorithmic bias may lead to unfair decisions, affecting market fairness. If AI algorithms exhibit bias in hiring, credit approvals, or other processes, certain groups may be disadvantaged, harming both market equity and social harmony [8]. Additionally, the application of AI in fields such as healthcare and military raises ethical concerns, such as medical data privacy and the morality of autonomous weapons, which must be addressed in the development and application of technology.

(2) Data security

Data is a crucial asset in the AI era, but data security issues are increasingly prominent. In the internet economy, vast amounts of data are collected, stored, and transmitted, containing sensitive information like users' personal data and companies' trade secrets [9]. If data security measures are inadequate, it may lead to data breaches and misuse, causing significant losses to users and companies. For example, some internet companies have experienced data breaches due to security vulnerabilities, leading to a trust crisis among users. Data security issues can also disrupt market order.

(3) Changes in employment structure

AI has altered the employment structure, with certain traditional roles likely to be replaced by automation, while new positions require higher technical and innovative skills [10]. This shift may put some workers at risk of unemployment, increasing societal employment pressure. For instance, repetitive tasks in manufacturing may be taken over by

intelligent robots, while roles in data analysis and AI development are in high demand. Addressing changes in employment requires collective efforts from government, businesses, and society to alleviate job pressures and ensure a balanced transfer of labor through education, training, and industrial upgrades.

(4) Market monopoly

AI applications may intensify market monopolies. Companies with advanced technology and large amounts of data could leverage their advantages to establish monopolistic positions, restrict competition, and impact market order and resource allocation efficiency [11]. For example, some large tech firms expand their market share by acquiring competitors and controlling data resources, which can stifle competition. Market monopolies harm consumer interests and may inhibit innovation and economic growth, requiring strengthened antitrust regulation to maintain fair competition.

In conclusion, the internet economy in the AI era has undergone significant changes in technology and economic structure, while also facing numerous challenges. These challenges require careful consideration, and efforts must be made in various areas, including technological innovation, policy development, and ethical standards, to foster the healthy development of AI and the internet economy, preserving market order and social stability.

3. The Application Path of the "*Wu Wei*" Philosophy in Constructing the Spontaneous Order of the Internet Economy

Laozi's philosophy of "*Wu Wei*," or governance through non-intervention, embodies profound wisdom, offering unique guidance for building the spontaneous order of the internet economy in the age of artificial intelligence. This chapter delves into how this philosophy can be practically applied to promote a healthy and orderly development of the internet economy.

3.1 Reducing Excessive Human Intervention

(1) Policy design

Government policy in the internet economy should embrace the principle of "*Wu Wei*" by avoiding excessive interference with the market's natural functioning. As Laozi says, "Governing a large country is like cooking a small fish" [12] (*Dao De Jing*, Chapter 60), indicating that the government must act cautiously and avoid excessive market disruption. The government should focus on providing public services and maintaining market order rather than directly engaging in specific business activities. For instance, investing in internet infrastructure, such as high-speed networks and data centers, will create a robust environment for internet economy growth. Additionally, a rational tax policy that encourages innovation and growth in internet enterprises can help prevent excessive tax burdens that may stifle enthusiasm and development.

In terms of industrial policy, the government should guide rather than mandate. By issuing development plans and guidelines, the government can provide general direction without specifying technical routes or product choices. For example, while encouraging research and development in AI, the government can avoid micromanaging research processes, allowing companies to independently decide based on market demand and their own strengths.

(2) Regulatory innovation

Traditional regulatory approaches are often based on pre-approval and post-punishment, which can lead to delays and inefficiency. In the age of the internet economy, regulatory innovation should incorporate the philosophy of "*Wu Wei*" by emphasizing process supervision and dynamic adjustment. Laozi states, "When the government is bland, the people are simple; when the government is exacting, the people are lacking" [12] (*Dao De Jing*, Chapter 58), suggesting that regulation should not be overly stringent or complex but instead foster a relatively relaxed environment. For example, establishing regulatory platforms based on big data and AI can allow for real-time monitoring of transactions and market dynamics in the internet economy [13]. This data-driven approach enables early detection and management of risks and issues.

Implementing "light-touch regulation" can further reduce interference in business operations while ensuring market safety and fairness. For emerging internet business models and technologies, such as shared economy platforms or digital currencies, regulators can adopt a more inclusive and cautious approach, allowing room for growth and experimentation rather than imposing rigid

restrictions.

Furthermore, international cooperation is crucial to address the cross-border regulatory challenges posed by the internet economy. With increasing globalization, cross-border e-commerce and digital trade require governments to coordinate policies related to regulation and data flow, helping to prevent market distortions and unfair competition due to regulatory differences.

3.2 Using AI to Optimize Resource Allocation

(1) Enhancing resource allocation efficiency

AI can leverage precise data analysis and intelligent algorithms to optimize resource allocation in the internet economy. For instance, in logistics, AI algorithms can optimize transportation routes and warehouse layouts, significantly reducing costs and enhancing delivery efficiency [14]. Through real-time monitoring of traffic conditions and demand, intelligent dispatching systems can efficiently arrange vehicles and personnel, minimizing resource waste and idle capacity.

In the energy sector, AI can manage energy production and consumption intelligently. By analyzing supply and demand relationships and market price fluctuations, AI can optimize energy production schedules to improve efficiency. For example, smart grids can adjust power distribution in response to real-time user demand, achieving a balance between supply and demand and reducing energy waste.

(2) Market trend prediction

AI's big data capabilities give it a considerable advantage in predicting market trends. By mining and analyzing vast amounts of market data, AI systems can predict changes in consumer demand, pricing trends, and more. Businesses can adjust production schedules, product designs, and marketing strategies based on these predictions to respond to market changes, creating a natural balance in the market.

For instance, e-commerce platforms use AI algorithms to analyze user purchase behaviors and search history, predicting future consumption trends and adjusting inventories accordingly. By doing so, they enhance inventory turnover and make targeted marketing suggestions to help merchants better meet consumer needs.

(3) Personalized services

AI can provide personalized services that improve user experience and further support the spontaneous balance of the market. By analyzing personal information and preferences, AI can create tailored product recommendations and services.

In financial services, AI-based robo-advisors can create investment portfolios based on users' risk preferences and financial situations. In education, AI platforms can design personalized learning paths based on students' learning characteristics, improving learning outcomes. This approach not only meets diverse consumer needs but also enhances resource allocation efficiency in the market, creating a more natural match between supply and demand.

3.3 Establishing Fair and Transparent Market Rules

(1) Rule concepts based on Laozi's philosophy

Laozi emphasized "following the natural way." Thus, market rules should be crafted to ensure fair competition and consumer protection, respecting the natural logic and needs of the internet economy.

In data management, for instance, rules must ensure the lawful collection, use, and sharing of data. Companies should be transparent with users about data usage, following Laozi's principle that "truthful words are not beautiful; beautiful words are not truthful" [12] (*Dao De Jing*, Chapter 81). Building robust data protection mechanisms to prevent data leakage and misuse is essential.

(2) Fostering market vitality and ensuring fair competition

To foster market vitality, rules should encourage innovation and entrepreneurship by lowering entry barriers and streamlining administrative processes. For example, providing tax incentives and policy support for innovative internet companies can encourage them to conduct R&D and explore new business models.

To ensure fair competition, anti-monopoly regulations must prevent companies from gaining unfair advantages. Monitoring and penalizing unfair practices like false advertising and malicious competition help maintain a level playing field. For example, e-commerce platforms must offer equal opportunities to all vendors rather than

favoring large businesses with exclusive promotional opportunities.

(3) Transparency and enforceability of rules

Market rules must be transparent so that participants clearly understand the requirements. The rule-making process should be open and fair, allowing input from diverse stakeholders. Moreover, effective enforcement mechanisms are essential. Penalties for rule violations must be timely to maintain the integrity of the rules. For instance, strengthening intellectual property protection and penalizing violations fosters a pro-innovation market environment.

3.4 Case Studies

(1) Blockchain-based transparent supply chain management

Blockchain's decentralized, tamper-resistant, and transparent features make it an ideal solution for supply chain management [15]. In a blockchain-enabled supply chain, information on each transaction and logistic step is recorded on an immutable ledger.

In the food supply chain, for instance, blockchain can track each step from raw material sourcing to final sales. Consumers can access detailed information about the product's origin, quality checks, and transportation history by scanning a QR code. This enhances supply chain transparency and builds consumer trust.

From a "*Wu Wei*" perspective, blockchain reduces uncertainty and risk in supply chain management, as governments and regulators can monitor operations without direct intervention. Businesses will voluntarily uphold quality standards, guided by the transparent environment.

(2) AI-driven personalized recommendation systems

Many platforms use AI-based personalized recommendation systems, such as e-commerce, streaming, and music platforms. In e-commerce, for instance, AI algorithms analyze users' browsing and purchasing behaviors to suggest relevant products [16].

This system enhances users' shopping experience while optimizing product sales and resource allocation. According to the principle of "*Wu Wei*," it aligns with users' preferences, allowing them to find products more efficiently. For merchants, AI-driven recommendations improve targeting accuracy, boosting sales and resource utilization.

Through reducing excessive intervention, utilizing AI for resource optimization, establishing fair and transparent market rules, and drawing from case studies, we see that the "*Wu Wei*" philosophy provides meaningful pathways for creating a spontaneous and self-sustaining order within the internet economy. These strategies maximize the market's potential and technological strengths, fostering a healthy and sustainable internet economy.

4. Implementation Strategies and Policy Recommendations

To better promote the application of Laozi's philosophy of "non-action governance" in the Internet economy of the AI era, practical implementation strategies and policy recommendations must be developed. These strategies will span multiple dimensions, including technological innovation, talent development in education, and international cooperation, thereby providing strong support for the sustainable development of the Internet economy.

4.1 Technological Innovation and Standardization

(1) Encouraging technological innovation

In the AI era, technological innovation is the core driver of Internet economy development. As Laozi states: "Difficult problems in the world must be solved while they are easy; great tasks must be accomplished through small actions" [12] (*Dao De Jing*, Chapter 63). This insight encourages starting with fundamentals and details in promoting innovation. The government should increase investment in AI research and development, support enterprises and research institutions in tackling key technical challenges, and enhance China's capability for independent innovation in the AI field [17].

For instance, establishing dedicated research funds could encourage universities and companies to conduct research on core technologies like deep learning algorithms and intelligent chips. Creating a favorable policy environment, such as tax incentives and intellectual property protection, also inspires innovation, aligning with the principle of "non-action governance" in creating conducive conditions for natural development.

Enterprises should actively invest in technological innovation, strengthen collaboration with universities and research institutions, and establish collaborative innovation mechanisms between industry, academia, and research. Through technological innovation, they can continuously improve AI applications within the Internet economy, thus driving industrial upgrading and transformation. For example, Internet companies could leverage AI technologies to optimize business processes and innovate business models, thereby enhancing market competitiveness—this approach mirrors Laozi's philosophy of following trends to achieve growth.

(2) Establishing a standards framework

With the widespread adoption of AI, establishing an ethical and data protection framework for AI is crucial. Laozi emphasizes that "honest words are not beautiful; beautiful words are not honest" [12] (*Dao De Jing*, Chapter 81). Therefore, AI ethics should include guidelines that align AI development with human values and ethical standards [18]. For example, clear standards should mandate that AI algorithms avoid discriminatory decisions, ensure fairness, and guarantee system security and reliability, thereby protecting against harm and applying principles of trust and authenticity in AI development.

In terms of data protection, stringent data management and protection systems must be established. Enhancing regulations for data collection, storage, usage, and sharing can help ensure user data privacy [19]. Enterprises should comply with relevant regulations, implement effective data security measures like encryption and access control, and prevent data leakage and misuse. This aligns with Laozi's idea of minimal interference while ensuring basic order and safety. Promoting data standardization further facilitates data circulation and sharing, thus enhancing data resource utilization efficiency and supporting orderly development.

4.2 Education and Talent Development

(1) Cultivating interdisciplinary talent

To meet the demands of an intelligent economy, the education system should focus on cultivating interdisciplinary talent with a grounding in Laozi's philosophy and modern technological knowledge. Laozi advocated "attaining utmost emptiness and steadfast quietude" [12] (*Dao De Jing*, Chapter 16). By incorporating the philosophy of "non-action governance" into the educational process, students' dialectical and systemic thinking abilities can be developed, helping them to understand and apply natural and social principles in complex Internet economy environments.

At the same time, education in modern technological knowledge should be emphasized, offering courses in AI, big data, blockchain, and other related fields to improve students' technological literacy and practical skills. Universities should encourage interdisciplinary education to cultivate talent with expertise in both technology and management ethics. For instance, establishing majors in AI and philosophy or AI and law can cultivate well-rounded talent with a multidisciplinary background. As Laozi notes, "few can achieve clarity, many will be confused" [12] (*Dao De Jing*, Chapter 22), and focusing on fostering a fusion of knowledge aligns well with Laozi's teaching to adapt to complex societal needs.

(2) Integrating education and practical training

Strengthening cooperation with enterprises and establishing internships and training platforms can provide students with hands-on experience. Laozi said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step" [12] (*Dao De Jing*, Chapter 64). Through practical teaching, students can apply theoretical knowledge in real-world projects, improving their problem-solving abilities. Enterprises can also participate in talent development by providing industry insights and practical experience, thereby integrating education and practice to foster the natural growth and development of talent.

Furthermore, continuous education and training for current professionals should be promoted to enhance their skills and competencies. For workers in the Internet economy, activities like AI technical training and ethics seminars will help them to keep pace with knowledge updates and industry developments, exemplifying Laozi's concept of constant self-improvement to align with the demands of the times.

4.3 International Cooperation

(1) Addressing global challenges collectively

The global challenges posed by AI require international cooperation. Laozi stated, "Blend your light with others, become one with the dust" [12] (*Dao De Jing*, Chapter 56). Countries should strengthen exchanges and cooperation in AI technology research and development, data security, and ethical norms, sharing experiences and achievements to promote healthy AI development globally. For instance, creating an international AI research alliance can support collaborative efforts on major scientific research projects and technical challenges, embodying the philosophy of uniting under a common goal.

In handling issues like cross-border data flows and cybersecurity, countries should collaborate on setting common rules and standards. Through international cooperation, a global data security protection system can be established to protect users' data privacy and national security. Moreover, international discussions on AI ethics can yield unified ethical guidelines, ensuring that AI development serves the collective good of humanity, echoing Laozi's principle of "non-action governance" by establishing rules for orderly global AI development through cooperation.

(2) Promoting open and inclusive development

Advocating open cooperation among nations promotes inclusivity in the development of the Internet economy. Laozi said, "Only because it does not compete, there is no one in the world who can compete with it" [12] (*Dao De Jing*, Chapter 22). Countries should reduce trade barriers, strengthen digital trade cooperation, and encourage the globalization of the Internet economy. Businesses should be encouraged to engage in cross-border e-commerce and digital service trade, expanding into international markets with an open, inclusive attitude that fosters mutual growth.

Additionally, attention should be paid to the development needs of emerging economies in the AI era. By providing technical assistance and talent training, developed countries can support the growth of digital economies in developing countries, helping to bridge the digital divide. International organizations can play a coordinating role, fostering cooperation projects between developed and developing countries to promote balanced development in the global Internet economy, reflecting Laozi's "non-action governance" ideal of accommodating all parties and pursuing balanced, harmonious growth.

In conclusion, through strategies for technological innovation and standardization, education and talent development, and international cooperation, we can better apply Laozi's philosophy of "non-action governance" to the Internet economy in the AI era, achieving sustainable development and global prosperity.

5. Conclusion and Outlook

Through the in-depth research conducted in the previous chapters, we have gained a comprehensive understanding of the value and application of Laozi's philosophy of "*Wu Wei* er zhi" (governance through non-action) in the context of the Internet economy in the age of artificial intelligence. This chapter will summarize the research findings, discuss their theoretical contributions and practical significance, and outline future research directions, providing a pathway for further exploration in this field.

5.1 Research Summary

This study has deeply examined the value and application of Laozi's "*Wu Wei* er zhi" thought in the construction of a spontaneous order in the Internet economy during the age of artificial intelligence. Through multifaceted analysis and research, we have discovered that "*Wu Wei* er zhi" is not a passive non-action, but a wise principle that aligns with natural laws and reduces excessive human intervention. In the context of the deep integration of artificial intelligence and the Internet economy, this philosophy plays an important role.

From a theoretical perspective, "*Wu Wei* er zhi" complements artificial intelligence technology. The intelligent and automated characteristics of artificial intelligence can help achieve natural regulation in the Internet economy; for example, through big data analysis and intelligent decision-making, enterprises can better grasp market demands and naturally adjust their production and operational strategies, reducing resource waste and market imbalances. While spontaneous order exists in the Internet economy, it also faces challenges such as information asymmetry and unfair competition. Laozi's

philosophy of "*Wu Wei* er zhi" provides a unique perspective to address these issues. By reducing excessive government intervention and utilizing artificial intelligence technology to optimize market self-regulation, it can promote the healthy development of the Internet economy.

Practically, the concept of "*Wu Wei* er zhi" significantly contributes to fairness and transparency in the Internet economy. It helps achieve fair market competition, curbing excessive corporate desires, and fostering an equitable competitive environment. Additionally, in the context of data processing in the age of artificial intelligence, drawing on Laozi's philosophy can enhance the transparency and interpretability of data, strengthening data regulation while ensuring market innovation and development. Grounded in Laozi's moral perspective, this approach can better address ethical challenges in the digital economy, promoting sustainable market development.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions and Practical Significance

(1) Theoretical innovations

This study expands the application of Laozi's thought into modern economic fields, integrating it with the Internet economy of the artificial intelligence era and endowing traditional philosophical concepts with new contemporary significance. It reveals the inherent connections among "*Wu Wei* er zhi", modern market economic theories, and artificial intelligence technologies, proposing a new theoretical framework that enriches and perfects the theoretical system of economic governance.

(2) Practical guidance

For governments, recognizing the value of "*Wu Wei* er zhi" is essential to avoid excessive intervention in the development of the Internet economy. In policy-making, emphasis should be placed on providing clear rules and guidance for market participants while reducing direct interference in specific business activities, thus creating a favorable environment for innovation. In market regulation, integrating "*Wu Wei*" philosophy with intelligent regulatory technologies to establish an intelligent regulatory framework can ensure market fairness and public trust.

For enterprises, a profound understanding of Laozi's concepts of aligning with nature and self-restraint is crucial. In utilizing artificial intelligence technology to enhance competitiveness, it is important to focus on user needs and market rules, avoiding excessive pursuit of short-term profits that may disrupt market order. Additionally, enterprises should actively fulfill social responsibilities, addressing data privacy and ethical issues to achieve sustainable development.

For individuals, understanding the application of Laozi's thought in the Internet economy can help them adapt better to changes in the intelligent economy, enhancing their digital literacy and ethical awareness, and enabling them to make more informed decisions when participating in Internet economic activities.

5.3 Future Research Directions

Future research can be explored in the following aspects:

Further investigate the integration of Laozi's philosophy with other management theories. For instance, studying the combination of "*Wu Wei* er zhi" with lean management and agile management concepts to explore how to leverage their combined advantages in different economic scenarios and industries.

Long-term tracking of the impact of AI technologies on market economic structures, and examining the adaptability and guiding role of Laozi's philosophy in different developmental stages. As AI technologies continue to evolve and apply, market structures will keep changing. Researching how to dynamically adjust "*Wu Wei* er zhi" strategies to accommodate these changes will ensure the stable development of the Internet economy.

Conduct in-depth studies on the specific practical pathways for ethics and moral norms in the Internet economy. Based on Laozi's philosophy, operational ethical guidelines can be developed that integrate legal regulations and industry standards to address ethical dilemmas posed by artificial intelligence, such as algorithmic bias and data misuse.

Explore the application of Laozi's thought in global Internet economic governance from a cross-cultural perspective. Given that different countries and regions have varied cultural backgrounds and economic systems, it would be valuable to investigate how to merge Laozi's philosophy with local cultures to

promote collaborative development and shared prosperity in the global Internet economy.

In summary, Laozi's philosophy of "*Wu Wei* er zhi" holds vast potential for application and research value in the Internet economy during the age of artificial intelligence. Through continuous and in-depth research and practical exploration, we can better harness the wisdom of this philosophy to provide robust theoretical support and practical guidance for the healthy and sustainable development of the Internet economy.

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