
Technology Is Taking Over Humans

Technology is taking over our jobs and our minds. The use of technology will increase over the coming years so much so that we might not even realize what we are relying on - A human or a robot?

Technology rules a human's life. Mobile phones, laptops, tablets- we cannot imagine day without them. In a very short period technology has taken over the labor market; and why shouldn't people prefer robots over humans? Robots are efficient, save time, less prone to mistakes while humans cannot ever live up to that capacity. To understand how this concept of technology evolved it is important to know where it came from and why it matters.

Purpose and need drives an evolution. All technologies were born out of purpose. For example, trains were built to build connectivity and then automated trains were introduced to make that connection stronger and faster. It was just a few decades ago that people struggled to dial on a handset phone and now buttons are nothing but a finger touch. The lightning fast speed that technology has evolved with guarantees an even faster development in absolutely no time. Today, there is an app for everything- from tracking food options to sending huge amounts of money, all in a click of a button. How we communicate also evolved. Meeting a friend or a relative face to face is no more important. Not long-ago meetings changed to texting via messages to Instagram story broadcasts. Social media was introduced for people to connect people and build better connections, but it only made us lose connections and drift apart from friends and family. Netflix was only a DVD-delivering company before it started streaming videos and binge-watching wasn't even a word. Video and movie streaming websites are so much in demand that when it comes to cable connection, people are cutting the cord and preferring a television with an internet connection. Even movie theatres are getting less and less popular when there are short films and online tv series to watch at home. Flash drives are almost extinct with the prevalence of cloud storage, like iCloud, Google Drive, Dropbox and FTP sites. With so many new technologies permeating the way people access information and access each other, the forward momentum looks promising for future technological developments. Technology is not only taking over our lives but also our jobs. It's present in every sector. About a hundred years ago majority of the people earned their living through farming. The invention and growth of technology has made it possible that only a few number of farmers can easily provide food for a country. Back then there were hundreds of jobs to provide transportation locally like horse carts, trishaw driving, etc. all those jobs have disappeared due to the invention of trains and planes. Now only 1% of the population is involved in the transportation business yet the level of work is three times faster. The toll-collection points were manned by a person who would manually collect toll payment, but now an electric number plate recognition does that job. Travel websites like Expedia and Trivago have eliminated the need of human travel agents. Tax softwares and websites no longer require the tasks of an accountant. Newspapers have seen their circulation numbers decline rapidly, replaced by online news websites and blogs. Increasingly, computers are actually writing news stories, especially local news and sports event results. We often take for granted the fact that all bowling alleys have machines to pick up our fallen pins and rearrange them (as well as keeping a tally of our scores on a screen). In earlier times, a bowling alley pinsetter would be waiting at the end to pick up all the knocked-down pins and put them back in place. The requirement of a worker here has

totally vanished. Even a simple task like operating a lift had to be done manually by a person who would pull down a lever, but today its done by just pressing the desired button. Secretaries, personal assistants are being replaced by virtual assistants like Siri by IOS and Alexa by Amazon. Online bookstores have closed the doors of real life book shops completely. No one really visits a library now to issue classic hard bound novels after the invention of E-books line Kindle. Analyzing and sale purchase of market shares was the job of a stock broker. But today there are millions of websites doing that job for no additional cost and with increased convenience. Many banks are giving customers the ability to deposit checks via mobile apps or directly at ATMs, reducing the need for human bank tellers. Payment systems like Apple Pay and PayPal make obtaining physical cash unnecessary. The system of job recruitment was a detailed procedure carried out by several members of the recruiting company. With the introduction of LinkedIn, Indeed.com, etc. the whole process is just the task of one expert.

Talking about the automobile industry, technology has posed a great threat to the jobs of taxi drivers and other local transportation workers. With apps like Uber and other cabs-on-call apps the concept of traditional taxis have long faded away. Now the introduction of fully-autonomous or self-driving cars will put the jobs of millions, earning a living driving cabs, at a serious threat. In fact, personal self-driving cars are expected to be on the market by 2018, with commercial applications not far behind. Self-driving cars will gain even more popularity as Uber plans to acquire 24,000 autonomous Volvo SUVs. Not very soon we will see people being dropped off at places by cars with no driver. Though it is completely putting the transportation business at stake, Morgan Stanley(American multinational investment bank) predicts that driverless cars will save the United states \$1.3 trillion a year by 2040. These cars are being introduced with a perspective of increased road safety but at the same time it poses a threat due to sudden technological malfunction. These cars have several pros and cons that are being debated since the launch. The cons are life threatening and overcome the advantages. But technology can be improved and so it will happen. The few drawbacks of these cars can be mended and they can be put to action in no time. This will, undoubtedly bring about a wave of unemployment in every country.

The other employment sector that is heavily being uplifted due to technological innovation is the food and beverage sector. The main motive behind food chains replacing humans with AI or technology is the need for efficiency. Technology has reduced costs majorly and saves time. AI is being used to automate inventory management which has proven to be safer than having human labor do it. Vending machines are everywhere. The concept of general stores for buying a drink is long gone. Along with machines for dispensing food and beverages they also have ordering kiosks at most fast food corners. The role of a manual cashier is slowly vanishing and the efforts of taking orders verbally are being channelized in providing faster services. This saves time for the customers as well as the staff. The very recent addition to this technologically computed food industry are the tray-return robots. These robots are present in many local hawker centers that assist the cleaning staff and make sure all food trays are returned. Several people have lost their jobs to these robots but it has benefited the industry. The technological trends discussed here do not impact every individual in the same way. The affect is also based on age, gender, income, race and ethnicity. It is quite clear that those with few technical skills are at a higher risk of losing their jobs. Young people will be prepared for these coming changes as they are at the start of their careers and can be trained in this new environment. While on the other hand, the backward classes are very prone to this risk as they are not educated to work digitally due to the limited access they have to computers and internet. There are still some people who cannot afford a smart phone living in the 21st century. Technology always puts

existing jobs under threat but this does not mean human labor as a whole is under threat. More professions will grow and develop to recover those lost to technology. Right now there is a confluence of robotics and artificial intelligence that seem to put a large number of jobs under strain. The sharp pressure of aggregate employment is surely there but apart from technological overpowerment it also depends on whether a) the unemployed people will be able to adapt to the new employment opportunities and/or b) there is requirement for all adults to work forty hours a week for forty years of their lives. The changes in employment will happen during the working lifetime of many current workers but this is a multidecadal change which will not just take place in 2018 but will continue till 2038 (when current workforce will still be employed) and onwards. Given the possibility of persistent unemployment or underemployment, some have suggested it is time for a basic income guarantee. Economist Philippe Van Parijs proposes that we should “pay each citizen a basic income that would guarantee access to basic necessary goods.” That would help those with few employment prospects obtain basic necessities without suffering from homelessness or poverty.

However, before we all lock arms together for a massive Global Group Hug and embrace new age of unlimited abundance, we need to be very aware about how this change caused by new technology can be the root cause of global conflict.

The emerging economic system points towards the fact that we will not need all the workers we have currently. New technologies will make these workers obsolete and unemployed. In this situation, it is important to consider the dangers of disruptions and unrest from the unemployed groups that can completely wreck the peace of the world. There have to be ways for people to live fulfilling lives even when the society needs a lesser number of workers or a different kind of workforce. This change of policy has to bring about before there is a whole class of permanently unemployed people. A few ways this can be made possible is by introducing new learning avenues, opportunities for arts and culture and mechanisms to support a life without a fulltime job. Encouraging paid volunteerism for a good cause can also make sense from the view point of a society. Implementation and adoption of these set of skills and policies will help people adapt to the upcoming economic realm guided by technology.