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Abstract

One of the primary fears in the current global community is the exponential growth and continued sophistication of artificial intelligence. Fundamental to this concern is the wide-ranging impact that this growth will not only leave on the world as we currently know it, but on the place of humans in that world. This has become termed as 'the singularity' — the point in time when machines will become self-learning, and more importantly, self-aware. It is at this point that machines and robotics will be elevated from current monotonous job operations to more high skilled areas. This study examines the drive towards advanced automation, and the increased sophistication of artificial intelligence in conjunction with the cloud, in order to assess the manner in which this growth may eventually lead to technological unemployment. Some economists anticipate up to a 50% job loss or more. Predicting the future typically means extrapolating the past. It often fails to forecast breakthroughs. But it is precisely that unpredictable deviant behaviour in computing that could have the biggest impact on the workforce. Education and up-skilling current workers will be the only way to guarantee continued relevance within an automated workforce. Focusing on education will ensure that people are best placed to take advantage of this new age of advanced automation. This dissertation concludes that innovation through creativity will allow for continuous employment opportunities to present themselves to those best prepared for such changes.