

Blog post(rationale for my public facing artefact)

The articles on government policy intervention and changes in people's work lives due to increased damage from natural disasters would be accurate for the following reasons. The first background is the high vulnerability of Japanese peripheral areas. Increased natural disasters due to global warming have been foreseen worldwide (Heyck-Williams, 2019). In particular, the potential that people would get injured and killed would be higher in the countryside in Japan because many elderly people who are said to be vulnerable to natural disasters (National Institute of Aging, 2022), live in mountainous regions, which are next to the danger of several disasters. In 2050, the proportion of older people aged 75 and over will exceed 20% in all prefectures except Tokyo (Sekine, 2023). Not only the direct damage of the disaster but the chaos that follows would put the lives of many older people at risk. In short, Japan's periphery has the potential for long-term catastrophes.

Such a dark state mentioned above is undoubtedly a crisis; from a different perspective, it is also an opportunity to change society. Crises are an essential trigger for transforming social institutions, and if the public perceives the state as a crisis, it can significantly impact the policy-making process (Keeler, 1993). In addition to the features of the crisis pushing for reform, recent claims that the market alone does not provide for a fair distribution of wealth and equal work opportunities would encourage the government to address the intervention written in the article. Tanzi (2000, P. 4) says that capital redistribution of income and job creation have been added to the role of the government since the 20th century. Recently, the pandemic ignited the debate on basic income (Standing, 2020), drawing attention to how

capital is redistributed. At the same time, the importance of critical workers, including healthcare workers, has also become apparent (Kinder, 2020), as well as the fact that their wages and work environment are not commensurate with their contribution to society (International Labour Office, 2023). Surveys conducted in South America (Seligson, 2008) show that, with the exception of some wealthy citizens, people believe that governments should take a role in job creation; the International Trade Union Confederation (2021, P. 2) states that temporary payment to citizens after the pandemic was not sufficient to stabilise their livelihoods and that the government should also be responsible for job making. Given these rising arguments, it is foreseeable that during crises like the pandemic, governments would move to provide long-term financial support to those stuck in an unfair environment and have an essential role in society, such as healthcare workers, and produce jobs. Although job creation related to climate change has already begun (Environmental and Energy Study Institute, 2024), crises caused by natural disasters and the current momentum would accelerate the trend.

Finally, as a rationale for my public artefact, I would like to explain that the Japanese government would have a motivation to increase the number of people and jobs involved in local communities. Data shows that ordinary people rescued more than 80% of victims stuck in debris in the past significant earthquake (Kawata, 1997, cited in Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, 2014). It shows the culture of people in the same community supporting each other, which has protected many lives from disasters. However, this system will likely cease to function because the local population is rapidly ageing, and more people do not have the power to support others. In addition to the ageing population, rural areas are also at risk of further population outflow. Technology companies, led by the 'big five', which have their branches in Tokyo, have leveraged socially and economically (Howcroft and Taylor, 2022, P. 363). If they continue to get

more powerful, young people may leave the countryside to get employed by such companies, pursuing higher income. Furthermore, if automation replaces labour, as the World Economic Forum report (2010, P. 3) introduces that, 'there is a 50% chance that machines will outperform human beings at "every task" within 45 years,' rural areas would be highly exposed to the threat. Their high share of repetitive labour and lack of diversity would make them vulnerable (OECD, 2020). It would also make a certain number of people lose their employment, motivating them to migrate out.

For the above reasons, I suggest that the proposed scenario, which is that the crisis of natural disasters in the rural areas in Japan would provoke governmental interventions and change people's work lives, is reasonable.

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*The translation of the relevant section was added to the dropbox

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Pre-intensive task for formative assessment

1. Which of these automation-related changes (e.g. mass unemployment; new digital jobs, AI at workplace (ethical and surveillance concerns); inadequate digital skills, poor working conditions) worry you the most? Why?

After reading the designated literature, it seems beyond doubt that changes will occur in society along with automation, although it will be impossible to predict which one will happen, and is most frightening.

However, the possibility that automation will increase the disparities that are caused by mass unemployment and new digital jobs made me worry the most.

I thought that SST(Howcroft and Taylor, 2022) was a realistic and multi-faceted approach to seeing society after automation. Adopting this and looking at the current world, it is clear that the widening of these disparities is causing unrest. The tendency to widen the gap between rich and poor and between genders and to polarise the left and right is scary. For example, as a result of the worsening living conditions of the socially vulnerable (the economically poor, women, etc.), there would be secondary damages, such as loss of educational opportunities and mental disease. If the citizen's state is unstable, the state may move in a radical direction, such as introducing a basic income, which may cause a significant backlash from capitalists and others who are forced to share profits, causing strife and confusion.

2. Is a world without work possible?

A future without jobs as a result of automation cannot be envisaged for me. Similarly to the above, imagining the future happening on the ground from the present, for many people, work means more than earning capital currently. Moreover, the future with no jobs needs a system to maintain citizens' lives, such as basic income, which would cause considerable resistance to introduction. Additionally, I could not find any system, except for UBI, to support our lives after our jobs disappear. Therefore, It seems impossible to imagine a future without jobs.

3. If you were given all the powers in the world, what changes would you like to see in the world of work?

In the Cambridge dictionary, I found the two definitions of "Job".

1. The regular work that a person does to earn money
2. Something that is your responsibility

I would like to see a world in which the former meaning is weakened. I want to see a world where the forces that concentrate wealth in the hands of a few capitalists are restrained and where people take responsibility for the betterment of society without being overly concerned about how much capital they can earn.

4. Complete this sentence: The future of work is...

The future of work is an extension of the present, though unpredictable. It is essential to look at what we can do now (not just think about how to deal with the problems in the future, but take action now to create the future) to ensure people's happiness.

Howcroft, D., & Taylor, P. (2022). Automation and the future of work: A social shaping of technology approach. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 38(2), 351–370. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12240>