

Occupation Insecurity: Defining a Contemporary Phenomenon

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The Future of Jobs

The 4th Industrial Revolution is changing occupations at a faster pace than those previous. 47% of jobs in the U.S. are estimated to be automatable (Frey & Osborne, 2013). Artificial intelligence and robotics will undeniably transform occupations, but the pace and extent will depend on people's perceptions, and if they will adopt or resist change. Yet little is known about how employees perceive the future of their jobs in light of technological advancements and we lack a validated scale for measurement.

Research Aims

1. Define occupation insecurity
2. Develop and validate scale
3. Examine implications for different age groups, genders, positions, etc.



Methodology

- We conducted 4 focus groups with a total of 11 participants in Oxford in February 2019.
- Age: 50 years on average, ranging from 24 – 77 years
- Gender: 88% male participants
- Occupations: University of Oxford and Oxford University Press

Preliminary Findings

- Potential gender effect: Women experience higher levels of occupation insecurity?
- Potential age effect: Younger employees more adversely affected as they may need to retrain?
- Impact of occupation insecurity: Finding meaning in personal mission rather than job
- Future work skills: Creativity and social skills
- **Next research steps:** Replication of focus groups in Belgium and China; expert interviews; cross-cultural scale validation

Reference: Frey, C. B., & Osborne, M. A. (2013). *The future of employment: How susceptible are jobs to computerization?* Oxford, UK: Oxford Martin School Study.

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