

Education for a Future with Uncertain Employment

Paper submitted to Panel 9 (Education for Full Employment) of the 3rd International Conference on Future Education, Rio de Janeiro, November 12-14, 2018

Neantro Saavedra-Rivano

The fourth industrial revolution is advancing inexorably towards a future where most occupations will be performed more economically and efficiently by non-human entities, complexes of robots, artificial agents and data centers, seamlessly connected by a variety of protocols and constantly improving their ability by means of artificial intelligence tools. Precious few jobs, only those heavily relying on human creativity, will be still held by humans, and those will include some occupations that do not yet exist. As technology spreads throughout the world we will face a situation where there will be little left for humans to do, at least in terms of work.

At least three issues present themselves when looking at this future. One has to do with the distribution of the wealth which will continue to be generated by the economy. A second with the necessary preparation of individuals for an extremely challenging job market. And a third involves planning for a situation when individuals will have more free time than they may wish. The first issue, though very important, does not fall within the scope of this panel. But the other two lead us to focus on education. This paper will present some ideas on how to prepare new generations to deal with the challenges brought to us by technological prowess. One important concept is fostering creativity from early childhood, a key to preserving human control in that future world. Another is an education that values all human activities, not only economically productive activities but also those which emphasize self-discovery and artistic endeavors.