

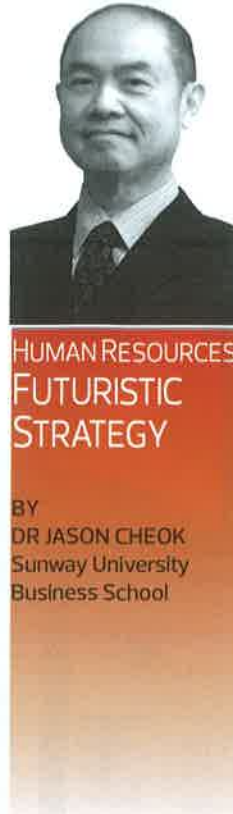
Human Resource Management (HRM) and AI

We are in the midst of yet another “disruption”, this time involves the disruption of machine learning and neural networks, better known as AI (artificial intelligence) and robotics technologies. To name a few, big corporations from Banking- JPMorgan Chase, Retail- Amazon to Auto- Toyota, Volkswagen had already embarked on the AI and robotic adventure.

Although, not yet prevalent but definitely proliferating, AI and robotics technologies presences are preponderating since 2012. Predictions on its exponential scale are supported with strong, negative and positive statistical projections. For example, McKinsey Global Institute in their late December report in 2017, had pointed out that between 39 and 73 million jobs will be robotized by 2030 in the US; and approximately 375 million could be impacted potentially. On a more positive note to potential human job loss, Gartner Worldwide had estimated that 2.3 million jobs could be created as a result of AI by 2025.

Regrettably, ongoing debates tend to center on the concern of large-scale human job losses to robots (Frey and Osborne, 2017); or downplayed potentially affect by AI by mitigating the occurrence rate to only 9% of jobs in the OECD economies (Arntz et al 2016). But thankfully, Deloitte (2017), Robert Walter and increasingly countries, such as UK and US are paying attention to the effect of AI and robotics technologies on future human capital and its impact on traditional HRM practice. Particularly, KPMG and Ernst and Young have highlighted AI and robotics technologies’ influence in the workplace and the importance of HRM’s preparedness and embracement of the phenomenon in their recent discourses.

For the foresighted, one point is clear, that- there



will be an exponential demand for AI and robotic human capital talents in the coming future. And forward planning country such as Canada has set up prominent AI research centers attracting talents around the globe and recruited technology celebrities such as Prof Geoffrey Hinton and Richard Sutton to develop the talents.

Additionally, given the critical role of HRM in ensuring that AI and robotic transformation experience is positive for the organization, there's a need for HRM professionals to strategically address issues on how to manage HR managers who will be managing robots. For this new talent and people with this new skill, the main challenge for HRM is to recognize the changing HR expectations, identifying and addressing the skills gap, championing agile recruitment and selection practice. At the meantime, HR managers need to proactively engage with critical internal and external stakeholders in regards to the discussion surrounding the phenomenon. One of which is to address the lack of domestic AI and robotic human capital talents. And in the case where such talents need to be imported, response to the government's concern that imported talents and the implementation of AI and robotic technology might leave its citizens with no jobs.

There is no doubt that AI and robotics shifting from emergent technology to become mainstream is going to dominate the 2020's with its omnipresent. However, just like the previous technological revolution, we are currently at the “adoption” stage of the technology curve. Typically, many issues pertaining to HR in relation to managers who manage AI and robotic technologies remain unknown waiting to be explored. Whereby with invested time, tacit research and quantitative-qualitative data supports can help provide answers-understandings. Here, perhaps an immediate HRM inquiry appropriate for further research will be:

What are the challenges faced by HRM on managers managing AI and robots? (with a focus in relation to workforce intelligence planning, recruitment and selection, global shortage, training and personal development, performance evaluation factors).

Consequently, unlike automation managers, which monotonous and repetitive technology first introduced in 1785 by Oliver Evans or IT programming; today's AI (machine learning and cognitive computing) and robotics (service robots, robot-assisted procedures, and robotic process automation (RPA)) are multiplex and capricious. Leading to a very relevant question of “Are managers who manage robots different from managers who manage people?”. If so, then managers who manage AI and robots are a unique workforce who are not only sound in algorithmic but emotionally to be equipped with human-like patience for machines. Which researchers have pointed out the potentially high stress-level in AI and robotic related job. Nonetheless, holistic understandings on AI and robotic job environment and impact on managers are lacking per Professor Hislop (2017).

Naturally, perhaps another immediate HRM inquiry appropriate for further research will be:

What are the challenges faced by managers who manage robots? (with a focus in relation to emotional, demographic and cultural factors).

The main intention of this article is to spark attention to HRM on putting their focus on managers or talents dealing with AI and robotics technologies. As the great Peter Drucker said - “The best way to predict the future is to create it.” As most “disruption” phenomenon is known to race against time, HRM needs to initiate soon the necessary actions concerning managers of AI and robotic technologies. All this, hopefully before what Prof Sutton's prediction of the arrival of “The technology singularity” around 2040, the moment whereby AI surpass human intelligence. E