

Socio-economic determinants of implementing job-killing technology innovations in retail

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Abstract

Already in 1996 Ch. Richardson wrote that new technologies are increasingly common in workplaces and the pace of technological change can be expected to increase in the future. He also pointed out that the impacts of technological change include not only loss of jobs, but also effect many other important aspects like changes in skills, health and safety. According to W. Wallach we have reached a tipping point where technology is now destroying more jobs than it creates and if the trend continues we could face a serious crisis. Technological unemployment is the concept of technology killing more jobs than it produces. J. Edwards argues that at worst, there is no correlation between the invention of new technologies that come into wide consumer use, and the employment rate. He also claims that tech companies employ fewer people directly. But they create ecosystems that employ more people indirectly.

The aim of the article is to compare basic assumptions of theories regarding the impact of new technologies on the labor market and to confront them with economic data. The article also presents examples of technological upgrades in retail and discusses the reasons for their introduction and customer perception of such innovations. The main research question is whether introducing job-killing technology innovations in retail is a tool for building a competitive advantage or is it a strategic necessity.

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