

Research Article Summary

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). (2023). *Skills trends in the Arab region in the wake of ChatGPT (Generative AI)*. Retrieved from https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/skills-trends-arab-region-wake-chat-gpt-english_1.pdf

Core Concept(s)

The purpose of preparing this summary document is to analyze skill demand trends in the Arab region and to use the findings to analyze the labor market and human resource development in Qatar. The analysis shows that while demand for skills related to the Fourth Industrial Revolution is steadily increasing in the Arab region, existing business skills such as business management and customer relations remain important. This suggests that the Arab region will require an even more balanced mix of old and new skill sets in the future. These findings should provide information that will contribute to the development of a human resource development strategy for Qatar.

Scope of Research

The analysis in this document covers the virtual job market in the Arab region from June 2020 to March 2023, based on the ESCWA Skills Monitor (United Nations ESCWA, n.d.). A total of 2,555,147 jobs were analyzed, based on which the required skills were classified into 16,765 technical skills and 411 human skills, and demand trends were analyzed in detail.

Implications of Findings

The findings of this document suggest that while countries in the Arab region are making steady progress in adapting to the 4th Industrial Revolution, more work is needed to keep pace with the global pace of technological innovation. For example, less than 5% of all jobs are related to the 4th Industrial Revolution, which is a low percentage compared to developed countries.

On the other hand, while utilizing AI and automation, there will continue to be an emphasis on human skills, and the balance between hard and

soft skills will be a challenge in this area. Soft skills, such as customer relations and communication skills, in particular, are difficult to replace with AI and are expected to remain in high demand.

Therefore, an urgent issue for countries in the Arab region is to develop human resources that combine digital and human skills, and to reform the education system to support these skills. It is essential that the public and private sectors work together to put in place a system for skills development that is consistent from school education to adult education.

Limitations

The analysis in this document relies on online job data, which may differ from actual hiring trends in the Arab region. Also, the analysis is limited by the fact that it does not take into account differences in industrial structure and technology levels in each country, since it analyzes the entire Arab region as a whole.

Summary

In summary, although the demand for skills is diversifying in the Arab region, jobs related to the 4th Industrial Revolution account for less than 5% of the total, indicating that existing industries still account for a high proportion of the jobs. The challenge for the region is to combine technological innovation and human resource development.

Possible use cases in Qatar's LMIS

It would be useful for Qatar's Labor Market Information System (LMIS) to use the findings of this document to continuously monitor trends in demand for Fourth Industrial Revolution-related skills and human skills. This will enable policy making and investment decisions necessary for upgrading the industrial structure while balancing the need to respond to AI and automation with the need to develop human resources. For example, educational institutions and industry could collaborate to develop human resource development programs that combine digital and soft skills based on LMIS data.

Reference List

United Nations ESCWA. (n.d.). ESCWA SKILLS MONITOR. <https://skillsmonitor.unescwa.org/>

Related Readings

Jaradat, Y., Masoud, M., Jannoud, I., Manasrah, A., & Zerek, A. (2021). Popularity of current technology trends in Arab countries. *2021 IEEE 1st International Maghreb Meeting of the Conference on Sciences and Techniques of Automatic Control and Computer Engineering MI-STA*. <https://doi.org/10.1109/mi-sta52233.2021.9464437>

Rizk, N. (2020). Artificial intelligence and inequality in the Middle East. *The Oxford Handbook of Ethics of AI*, 624-649. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190067397.013.40>