

Different Perspectives

The vector of change I will be exploring will be the internet and its downstream relationship on how we work. I will focus on rural and urban populations by examining how they have been affected by the proliferation of the internet, Both now and in the years to come.

Delving into the intricacies of the internet's effects in a rural setting is tough as there were many ancillary factors. The first point I'd like to highlight is the rising unemployment and displacement of work as a result of the internet. Some examples of this include the textile, manufacturing, and automotive industries, all of which have seen sustained job losses due to automation and a shift toward globalization, a trend that, in my opinion, was accelerated by the internet. The internet also caused a shift from more manufacturing based jobs to more service oriented jobs as time progressed. Many of these new jobs emerged along the coasts in metropolitan cities like San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Boston, Seattle, and Miami, further accelerating the demographic shift away from rural America. The factors that explain this are numerous, but I will consider two key ones: access to adequate internet infrastructure and the disparate educational outcomes between urban and rural populations. As for how things will look going forwards, I would surmise that they will likely remain much the same as in the past two decades, with these issues continuing to be deeply entrenched.

For urban metropolitan cities the story is much brighter as jobs in these regions continue to see growth. Both before and well beyond the conception of the internet, urban areas have continued to experience job growth as well as a subsequent rise in standards of living. Some examples of this include greater access to the internet in and

around urban city centers, higher paying inflation adjusted jobs, and overall better infrastructure. These contributing factors paved the way for the adoption of the internet in metropolitan areas, further increasing their standards of living. As for what the future holds for these urban metropolitan areas, I would assume it will continue to be much the same as jobs continue to move away from rural America towards the coasts & city centers.

19th vs 21st Century

Some immediate similarities I noticed between factories and the internet was the urbanization that happened during both periods. Another similarity would be automation, which has impacted employment in both factories and rural areas, particularly through agricultural technologies and precision farming in the 21st century. These developments have led to significant unemployment and social issues. A difference I would note is that the distribution of wages and consequently wealth in the city centers seemed much less equitable than it is now in a lot of cities when it comes to work. The similarities are fairly easy to explain as there are a lot of similarities in the internet and factories, both led to increased productivity and both were centralized in urban areas, which would require people to move there in order to participate. The similarities in how both processes automate tasks are evident, as increasing productivity gains are tethered to the ability to automate and iteratively improve the process as much as one can. The differences in the distribution of capital can be explained by the contrasting legal frameworks that were present in the 19th and 21st centuries. Modern labor laws require severance, minimum wage, and defined pay ranges. These ideas did not exist during the 19th century, when labor rights were less regulated.

Citations

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["The response that elicited my interest the most was one talking about precision agriculture and ag tech, the other was mentioning how rural communities tend to not have high population densities therefore the internet could provide these people with access to more people" Extrapolations #5 Exploring Context and Difference, Ethan perera](#)

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