Event Report:
GPAI SUMMIT 2022 "The Future of Work" Side Event – Student Community Gathering

Date: Tuesday, November 22, 2022
Time: 15:30-17:00 (JST)
Venue: Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo / Online webinar (hybrid)
Host: Institute for Future Initiatives, The University of Tokyo

Established in June 2020, the Global Partnership on AI (GPAI) is an international initiative dedicated to the responsible development and use of AI, based on human-centric approaches. The GPAI has several working groups, including one that discusses the future of work. As part of a project by this working group, we conducted interview surveys worldwide to determine how work modes will change as AI is introduced into the workplace. A unique feature of this project was that the interviews were conducted by the students themselves.

This event brought together student members from Europe, India, and Japan, who are participating in the project to introduce their activities from their respective regions and share their experiences and findings. It was held as a side event of the GPAI Summit 2022 on November 22, 2022.

In the opening remarks, Professor Yuko Harayama from Tohoku University, former co-chair of the "Future of Work" Working Group from 2020–2021, highlighted the background and aims of promoting student participation in this project: in order to identify potential impacts of AI in work environments, observing what is happening in the actual workplace is essential. In addition, having students who will be directly affected by the future work environment involved in this observation will lead to some proactive, forward-looking initiatives. Participants expressed their expectations for networking and knowledge sharing with students across the regions through the event.

In the first half of the session, representatives from each student team (Europe, Japan, and India) introduced their activities, starting with European team leader Professor Yann Ferguson (Toulouse Institute of Technology), who reviewed the first year of research through the AI Observation Platform on behalf of students. Five doctoral students in the social sciences participated in the survey, which collected 30 use cases from seven countries, including Spain, France, Canada, Italy, and Mexico. The team analyzed these use cases from the perspective of OECD Principles.

Next, Mr. Takahiro Saito and Ms. Misuzu Horii, both fourth-year students in the Department of Social Studies at Doshisha University, presented the Japanese team's activities. This second year of their annual project has seen an increase in the number of participating universities and students, including Tohoku University and Toyo University in addition to Doshisha University, as well as from other parts of Asia with the participation of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. They

shared that the project helped them learn a great deal, more specifically in terms of communicating with company employees, and reported a gap between departments promoting the introduction of AI and the actual sites of use. They also stated that there were many attempts to incorporate AI effectively in workplaces, which differed from their initial negative expectations.

Finally, from the Indian team, Athira Krishnan, a PhD student, and Mudia Dubey, a master's student from the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad, introduced the research activities being conducted under this project. Challenges around the future of work and AI include issues such as power consumption, trust, data privacy, bias, and human rights. We must consider how to combine technologies to design open and accessible systems for the future of AI. They also emphasized the importance of collecting best practices and efficiently linking them to higher-performing solutions.

The second half was a panel discussion, facilitated by Professor Arisa Ema from the University of Tokyo, with the student panel exchanging their experiences and insights gained from participating in the project.

The first discussion topic was "What issues do you think are unique to your country?" Ms. Alejandra Rojas from the Department of Business Development and Technology at Aarhus University commented on the current situation in Mexico, where the interviews from her project were conducted, saying that regulations have not yet been outlined and that the current attitude is to watch how other countries will regulate AI. In Spain, where she also conducted interviews, how to apply an appropriate monitoring system is an issue being faced by several companies. Based on her experience in interviewing Canadian companies, Ms. Justine Dima commented that while AI development is advancing rapidly in Canada and expectations are high, ethical aspects are not fully considered until a problem arises.

From the Japan team, Ms. Nao Shiino, a first-year master's student at Tohoku University's Graduate School of Engineering, commented on the Japanese tendency to shield employees from drastic changes as well as the concept of craftsmanship, which she felt had an impact on the slow adoption of technology. Ms. Yuko Kamakura, a third-year student at Doshisha University's Department of Sociology, mentioned that some people appreciate the benefits of AI technology more than others, citing the generation gap where, for example, Generation Z is not resistant to AI usage while the elderly often are. This will be a challenge for Japan as it is experiencing a rapidly aging population. Next, Ms. Haiyu Li, who has just finished the Master of Public Management program at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, explained her team's research on leading companies in Hong Kong and mainland China for the use of AI in fields related to sustainability. She mentioned that AI has been widely introduced in various sectors in China, particularly in the energy and environmental sectors, and that AI usage is making significant impacts on promoting more comprehensive solutions to societal challenges.

Ms. Dubey, from the India team, shared her impression that AI penetration in India is more advanced than in Europe and the US, but also that the technology is not yet broadly understood. Mr. Tadipatri Uday, also from IIT Hyderabad, emphasized that while India is diverse and has a large population, the lack of regulation is a challenge. Mr. Pranay Kumar commented that it is a problem that many people do not have technical backgrounds, and few understand what is happening with AI or use the technology.

In response to comments from students, Professor Ema stated that each scenario has its own cultural background, which is also an important factor for GPAI to take into account in future projects.

Following this, the participants exchanged views on what they had learned from GPAI activities. Ms. Dubey commented that it was interesting to see how each country handled the social aspects, and that it helped her realize the importance of thinking globally and applying it to society. Ms. Rojas said the use of AI made her question what user skills and experience levels were needed. Ms. Shiino mentioned that the survey experience gave her an idea of what future AI technology could look like and the prospects for its applications, and that she hoped to see more of it from GPAI moving forward. Ms. Dima commented on the importance of understanding the context, stating that even if the best AI is developed, it will not be useful unless workers adopt it effectively.

Finally, in response to the question "What are your suggestions for future GPAI activities?", Ms. Kamakura said efforts should be made to advocate the importance of including the opinions of the younger generation, who will be responsible for future work, as well as to create an infrastructure to share information globally, such as between developed and developing countries. Regarding information sharing, many other students agreed on the importance of creating opportunities for them to share knowledge and engage in discussions, especially through global connections, and they expressed a common desire for GPAI to play a role in promoting such opportunities.

At the end of the panel discussion, an audience member praised the diversity in the approaches and outcomes of the student communities, further suggesting that similar interviews could be conducted with policymakers working on AI regulation.

In closing remarks on the event, GPAI expert members Professor Harayama (Tohoku University) and Professor Ferguson (Toulouse Institute of Technology) gave their overall impressions. Professor Harayama commented that it exceeded her expectations and that she realized the importance of expanding the community and working on a global scale in the future. She also encouraged participating students to make the most of this network.

Professor Ferguson added that this was a meaningful initiative in line with the purpose of GPAI, which is to examine global practices in the field. Developing social expertise

as well as technical perspectives is important, and considering technology interactions from a more human standpoint will lead to more efficient applications. In this regard, he expressed expectations regarding the future activities of participating students. In addition, a new program was introduced connecting the AI Observation Platform and the Living Lab, providing a platform where members can enter information on each region in the form of a game, which then compiles case studies from various regions. Professor Ferguson ended his remarks expressing his hopes that the student community also join these efforts, and the event was closed.