

Hey, Siri, why are you talking in a woman's voice? Gender bias in digital applications and AI

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Abstract

Today, women make up around 15% of students and professionals in IT. This almost complete lack of gender diversity has implications not only for gender equality in employment, but also for the inclusivity and performance of digital applications.

The highly homogeneous population of developers and business managers (white, middle- and upper-class males) tends to overlook the needs and characteristics of other populations, particularly women.

What's more, artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms are fed with billions of pieces of training data (voice, text, images, videos, etc.). The quality of the data produced by the programs depends first and foremost on the quality of this training data. Most datasets are automatically generated and reflect an unequal society: women are underrepresented or represented in traditional roles.

The aim of this conference is to explain the gender bias in artificial intelligence and then to identify possible ways to ensure that everyone is better represented in the digital transformation.

Bio

Isabelle Collet is Professor of Education at the University of Geneva. She heads the Gender - Intersectional Relations, Educational Relations team (G-RIRE). She has been working on the issue of gender in science and technology for 20 years. In 2006, she was awarded the Académie française de sciences morales et politiques prize for the book based on her PhD: *L'informatique a-t-elle un sexe?* published by Éditions l'Harmattan.

She is a member of the Advisory Board of the Impact IA Foundation (<https://www.impactia.org>) in Geneva, and in 2019 she published "Les oubliées du numérique", published by Éditions Le Passeur.