Gendered creative careers in software development

Extended Abstract

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ABSTRACT

While women has been shown to be vital in contributing to collective intelligence of a team, they are also marginalized in many respects. The field of software development is an area with especially strong male dominance. In this article, we analyze the paths to success for men and women based on activity traces on GitHub. We collected data on more than ten million users, active in more than ten million repositories. We analyze the careers of the most active ten thousand women, men, and users of unidentified gender. We found that women can succeed to the extent if they adopt a collaboration and activity pattern characteristic of men.

Keywords
Agender bias, career, segregation, success, software development, GitHub

The empirical basis of this study is a data set acquired via GitHubarchive.org about the activities on the social coding platform GitHub, encompassing the following types of events that took place between 2009-02-19 and 2016-10-21: creation of repository, addition of new member to a repository, push to a repository, opening, closing and merging a pull request, user watching a repository, user following another user. To collect information about users’ name, e-mail address, number of followers, number of people they follow, number of public repositories and the date they joined GitHub, we sent calls to the official GitHub users API Since users do not list their gender directly, we infer each person’s gender based on their first name. We take an approach pioneered by Wachs and coauthors [Wachs et al. 2017], to operationalize the extent to which someone’s behavior follows a gendered pattern, as opposed to operationalize gender as a binary hard-encoded category. For gender prediction we ran a logistic regression model. Success is defined as the number of stars on users’ own repositories.

1. REFERENCES