

Poll finds women more worried about losing jobs to trade and offshoring than artificial intelligence

July 18 2019, by Khalida Sarwari



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As many as 160 million women around the world could lose their jobs over the next decade because of the impact of automation, and a recent

study by the McKinsey Global Institute shows that women will have a harder time adjusting to the automation of jobs and development of artificial intelligence than men.

Despite this, however, a new [Northeastern University-Gallup poll](#) shows that [women](#) are more concerned about losing their [jobs](#) to trade and as a result of companies moving jobs overseas to cut costs.

The survey asked both men and women in the U.S., Canada, and the U.K., how worried they are about losing their job in the next 10 years to immigration, artificial intelligence, trade, and the outsourcing of jobs to other countries. Sixty-five percent of women indicated that they see offshoring and outsourcing as a threat to their livelihood, compared to 56 percent of men.

Both men and women rated artificial intelligence as a greater threat than immigration (37 percent of women and 34 percent of men).

An Institute for Women's Policy Research [study](#) shows that more than half of working women today are vulnerable to losing their jobs to advancements in technology, as their jobs will be easier to automate than jobs dominated by men.

According to the Women's Policy Research study, Hispanic women—32 percent of whom work in occupations that are at risk of being eliminated—will be most affected. That's because, the study finds, women of color are less likely to have the time and resources to learn new skills.

Not surprisingly, the survey found that service industry positions that are more likely to be occupied by women, including cashiers, cooks, and retail sales workers, are most at risk of being replaced by artificial intelligence. Slightly better-paying jobs—secretaries, office clerks, and

tellers—will also be affected as simple computational tasks become increasingly automated. What may come as a surprise, as the survey indicated, is that even women in well-paying jobs stand on shakier ground than men in high-paying roles.

One sector that likely won't be negatively affected as a result of automation is healthcare, which is projected to grow, and could account for one-quarter of women's jobs.

Women are less likely to study science and engineering and therefore learn skills that are essential to succeed in the modern workplace, according to the McKinsey study. At the same time, the Women's Policy Research study shows that knowing digital skills such as user experience design and network security doesn't yield as big of a pay bump for women as it does for men.

So what does all this mean for women? They will need to be skilled, mobile, and tech-savvy to stay employed in the modern economy. For women especially, it has never been more important to embrace lifelong learning throughout their careers. Now is the time to bone up on skills required for fields that are projected to grow, such as professional, scientific, and technical services.

One solution may lie in programs that would make it easier for employees to retrain or learn new skills over the course of their careers. As the Northeastern University-Gallup poll shows, U.S. respondents overwhelmingly prefer that employers take on the burden of making lifelong learning more affordable, while in Canada and the U.K., those polled expressed a preference that governments help pay.

Despite concerns that they are not prepared for the new era and the job losses that will result from [automation](#), the Northeastern University-Gallup poll indicates that most people believe that advancements in

machine learning will do more good than harm overall.

When asked to assess the impact that artificial intelligence "will have on how people work and live in the next 10 years," large majorities said the consequences will be "very" or "mostly" positive.

More information: The future of women at work: Transitions in the age of automation. [www.mckinsey.com/featured-insi ... he-age-of-automation](https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/the-future-of-women-at-work-transitions-in-the-age-of-automation)

Provided by Northeastern University

Citation: Poll finds women more worried about losing jobs to trade and offshoring than artificial intelligence (2019, July 18) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2019-07-poll-women-jobs-offshoring-artificial.html>

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