
DPA: A One-stop Metric to Measure Bias Amplification in Classification Datasets

Bhanu Tokas*
Arizona State University
bhanu.tokas@asu.edu

Rahul Nair*
Arizona State University
rnair21@asu.edu

Hannah Kerner
Arizona State University
hkerner@asu.edu

Abstract

Most ML datasets today contain biases. When we train models on these datasets, they often not only learn these biases but can worsen them — a phenomenon known as bias amplification. Several co-occurrence-based metrics have been proposed to measure bias amplification in classification datasets. They measure bias amplification between a protected attribute (e.g., gender) and a task (e.g., cooking). These metrics also support fine-grained bias analysis by identifying the direction in which a model amplifies biases. However, co-occurrence-based metrics have limitations — some fail to measure bias amplification in balanced datasets, while others fail to measure negative bias amplification. To solve these issues, recent work proposed a predictability-based metric called leakage amplification (LA). However, LA cannot identify the direction in which a model amplifies biases. We propose Directional Predictability Amplification (DPA), a predictability-based metric that is (1) directional, (2) works with balanced and unbalanced datasets, and (3) correctly identifies positive and negative bias amplification. DPA eliminates the need to evaluate models on multiple metrics to verify these three aspects. DPA also improves over prior predictability-based metrics like LA: it is less sensitive to the choice of attacker function (a hyperparameter in predictability-based metrics), reports scores within a bounded range, and accounts for dataset bias by measuring relative changes in predictability. Our experiments on well-known datasets like COMPAS (a tabular dataset), COCO, and ImSitu (image datasets) show that DPA is the most reliable metric to measure bias amplification in classification problems. To compare DPA with existing bias amplification metrics, we released a one-stop library of major bias amplification metrics at <https://github.com/kerner-lab/Bias-Amplification>.

1 Introduction

Machine learning models should perform fairly across demographics, genders, and other groups. However, ensuring fairness is challenging when training datasets are biased, as is the case with many datasets. For instance, in the ImSitu dataset [1], 67% of the images labeled “cooking” feature females, indicating a gender bias that women are more likely to be associated with cooking than men [2]. Given a biased training set, it is not surprising for a model to learn these dataset biases. Surprisingly, models not only learn dataset biases but can also amplify them [2, 3, 4, 5, 6]. In the example from ImSitu, where females and cooking co-occurred 67% of the time, bias amplification occurs when $> 67\%$ of the images predicted as cooking feature females.

Several co-occurrence-based metrics ($BA_{\rightarrow}$, $Multi_{\rightarrow}$, BA_{MALS}) have been proposed to measure bias amplification in classification datasets. They measure the bias amplification between a protected attribute (e.g., gender), denoted as A , and a task (e.g., cooking), denoted as T [2, 3, 4]. If A and

*These authors contributed equally to this work.

T co-occur more than random in the training dataset, these metrics measure how much more they co-occur in the model’s predictions. For instance, if the co-occurrence between females (A) and cooking (T) is 67% in the training dataset and 90% at test time, the bias amplification value is 23%.

Co-occurrence-based metrics help with a fine-grained bias analysis as they can identify the direction in which a model amplified biases. In the cooking example from ImSitu, metrics like $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ can measure how much a model amplified the bias towards predicting women as cooking ($A \rightarrow T$) and towards predicting cooks as women ($T \rightarrow A$). Such disentanglement of bias amplification is important, as it helps practitioners come up with targeted bias intervention efforts.

However, co-occurrence-based metrics have a limitation: they cannot measure bias amplification if A is balanced with T . Metrics like $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and BA_{MALS} assume that if attributes and tasks are balanced in the training dataset, there are no dataset biases to amplify. Previous works have shown that simply balancing attributes and tasks does not ensure an unbiased dataset. Biases may emerge from parts of the dataset that are not annotated [7].

Suppose we balance imSitu such that 50% of the images labeled “cooking” feature females. Now, assume that cooking objects in ImSitu, like hairnets, are not annotated. If most of the cooking images with females have hairnets, while most of the cooking images with males do not, the model may learn a spurious correlation between hairnets, cooking, and females. Hence, the model may more often predict the presence of a female when cooking images have hairnets in the test set, leading to bias amplification between females and cooking. However, since gender appears balanced with respect to the cooking labels, $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and BA_{MALS} would report 0 bias amplification. While other co-occurrence metrics like $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ may report non-zero bias amplification for balanced datasets, these values are often misleading, as $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ cannot capture negative bias amplification scenarios.

To correctly measure bias amplification in balanced datasets (by accounting for biases from unannotated elements), Wang et al. [7] proposed a predictability-based metric called leakage. They defined dataset leakage (λ^D), which refers to how well attribute A can be predicted from true task labels T , and model leakage (λ^M), which refers to how well A can be predicted from a model’s task predictions $\hat{T}$. They defined bias amplification as $\lambda^M - \lambda^D$. λ^D and λ^M are measured using a separate attacker function trained to predict A . In this work, we refer to Wang et al.’s method of calculating bias amplification as leakage amplification (LA). Since LA focuses on predictability, it can measure bias amplification in balanced and unbalanced datasets. However, it cannot identify the direction in which a model amplifies biases ($A \rightarrow T$ and $T \rightarrow A$ disentanglement is not possible with LA).

We do not have one metric that can (1) correctly report positive and negative bias amplification scenarios, (2) accurately measure bias amplification for both balanced and unbalanced datasets, and (3) identify the direction in which a model amplifies biases. Practitioners need to evaluate their models on multiple bias amplification metrics to assess these properties, making the process tedious. We propose Directional Predictability Amplification (DPA), a one-stop predictability-based metric that addresses all these properties of bias amplification. In addition to being a one-stop metric, DPA addresses several issues found in earlier predictability-based metrics like LA , including issues such as reporting unbounded bias amplification values, measuring absolute change in predictability instead of relative change, and being highly sensitive to attacker function.

Our key contributions: (1) DPA is the only directional metric that can accurately identify positive and negative bias amplification in both balanced and unbalanced classification datasets. (2) DPA reports bias amplification values within a bounded range of $[-1, 1]$, enabling easy comparison across different models (3) DPA accounts for the original bias in the dataset as it measures relative change in predictability (instead of absolute change). (4) DPA is minimally sensitive to the choice of attacker function. This eliminates the pain of choosing a suitable attacker to measure bias amplification.

2 Related Work

Co-occurrence for Bias Amplification *Men Also Like Shopping* (BA_{MALS}) [2] proposed the first metric for bias amplification. The proposed metric measured the co-occurrences between protected attributes A and tasks T . For any $T - A$ pairs that showed a positive correlation (i.e., the pair occurred more frequently than independent events) in the training dataset, it measured how much the positive correlation increased in model predictions.

Wang and Russakovsky [3] generalized the BA_{MALS} metric to also measure negative correlation (i.e., the pair occurred less frequently than independent events). Further, Wang and Russakovsky [3] changed how the positive bias is defined by comparing the independent and joint probability of a pair. But, both BA_{MALS} [2] and $BA_{\rightarrow}$ [3] could only work for $T - A$ pairs when T, A were singleton sets (e.g., {Basketball} & {Male}). Zhao et al. [4] extended the metric proposed by Wang and Russakovsky [3] to allow $T - A$ pairs when T, A are non-singleton sets (e.g., {Basketball, Sneakers} & {African-American, Male}).

Lin et al. [8] proposed a new metric called bias disparity to measure bias amplification in recommender systems. Foulds et al. [9] measured bias amplification using the difference in “differential fairness”, a measure of the difference in co-occurrences of $T - A$ pairs across different values of A . Seshadri et al. [10] measured bias amplification for text-to-image generation using the increase in percentage bias in generated vs. training samples.

Bias Amplification in Balanced Datasets Wang et al. [7] identified that BA_{MALS} [2] failed to measure bias amplification for balanced datasets. They proposed a metric that we refer to as leakage amplification that could measure bias amplification in balanced datasets. While some of the previously discussed metrics [9, 10, 8, 4] can measure bias amplification in a balanced dataset, these metrics do not work for continuous variables, because they use co-occurrences to quantify biases.

Leakage amplification quantifies biases in terms of predictability, i.e., how easily a model can predict the protected attribute A from a task T . Attacker functions (f) are trained to predict the attribute (A) from the ground-truth observations of the task (T) and model predictions of the task ($\hat{T}$). The relative performance of f on T vs. $\hat{T}$ represents the leakage of information from A to T .

As the attacker function can be any kind of machine learning model, it can process continuous inputs, text, and images. This flexibility gives leakage amplification a distinct advantage over co-occurrence-based bias amplification metrics. Subsequent work used leakage amplification for quantifying bias amplification in image captioning [11].

Capturing Directionality in Bias Amplification While previous metrics, including leakage amplification [7], could detect the presence of bias, they could not explain its directionality. Wang and Russakovsky [3] was the first to introduce a directional bias amplification metric, $BA_{\rightarrow}$. However, the metric only works for unbalanced datasets. Zhao et al. [4] proposed a new metric, $Multi_{\rightarrow}$, to measure directional bias amplification for multiple attributes and balanced datasets. Still, the metric cannot distinguish between positive and negative bias amplification, as shown in section A. This lack of sign awareness makes $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ unsuitable for many use cases.

In summary, no existing metric can measure the positive and negative directional bias amplification in a balanced dataset, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: We compare desirable properties of bias amplification metrics. Only DPA has all three.

Method	Balanced Datasets	Directional	Negative Amp.
BA_{MALS}	✗	✗	✓
$BA_{\rightarrow}$	✗	✓	✓
$Multi_{\rightarrow}$	✓	✓	✗
LA	✓	✗	✓
DPA (Ours)	✓	✓	✓

3 Directional Predictability Amplification

In this section, we explain how our predictability-based metric, DPA , measures directional bias amplification ($A \rightarrow T$ and $T \rightarrow A$). We also show how DPA is more robust and easier to interpret compared to previous predictability-based metrics like LA . We demonstrate the other two properties of DPA : (1) its ability to quantify both positive and negative bias amplification, and (2) its efficacy across both balanced and unbalanced classification datasets, through our experiments (Section 4).

3.1 Problem Formulation and Proposed Method

Before introducing our proposed metric, we outline the problem setup. Consider a classification dataset consisting of images I , where each image is annotated with task labels T and protected attributes A . A model M processes the input images I to predict tasks $\hat{T}$ and attributes $\hat{A}$.

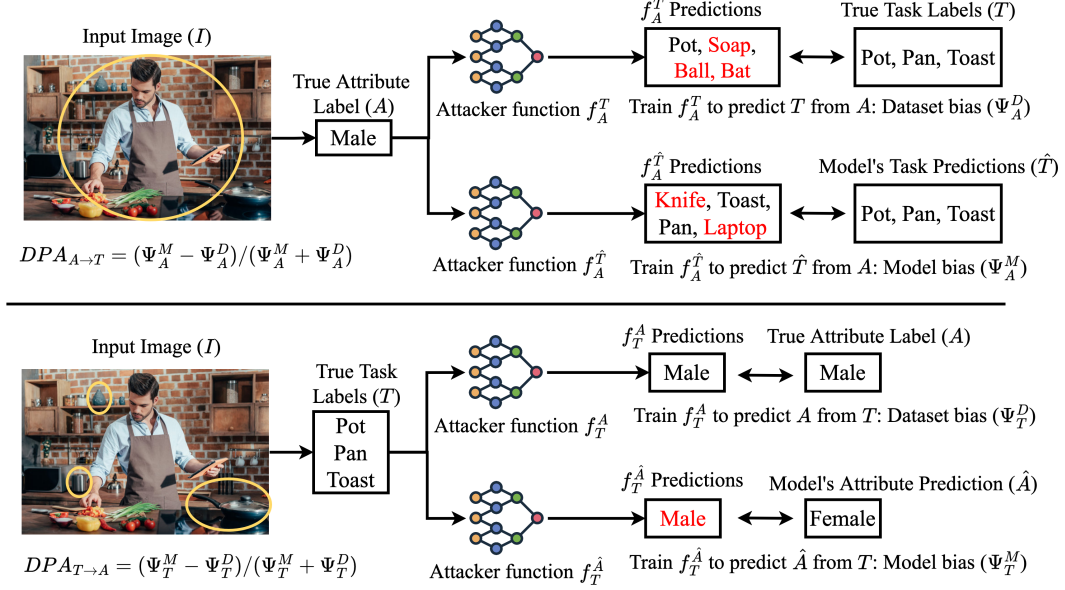


Figure 1: $A \rightarrow T$ and $T \rightarrow A$ bias amplification using our predictability-based metric DPA

To measure bias amplification, we quantified how much A influences T ($A \rightarrow T$ bias) and how much T influences A ($T \rightarrow A$ bias) in both the true labels (dataset bias) and the model M 's predictions (model bias). While previous directional metrics, such as $BA_{\rightarrow}$ [3] and $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ [4], used conditional probabilities to quantify dataset and model bias, we used the concept of predictability.

To measure dataset bias in $A \rightarrow T$ (Ψ_A^D), we trained an attacker function f_A^T that predicts true task labels (T) using the true attribute label (A) as an input. f_A^T is any arbitrary model, such as an SVM, a decision tree, or a neural network. We measured attacker function performance using a quality function Q . Accuracy and F-1 scores are examples of some popular quality functions. If f_A^T predicts T from input A with high accuracy, it shows that the true attribute label (A) has high predictability for true task labels (T), indicating a high dataset bias in $A \rightarrow T$.

To measure model bias in $A \rightarrow T$ (Ψ_A^M), we trained an attacker function $f_A^{\hat{T}}$ that predicts model M 's task predictions ($\hat{T}$) using the true attribute label (A) as an input. If the attacker function $f_A^{\hat{T}}$ predicts $\hat{T}$ from input A with high accuracy, it shows that true attribute label (A) has high predictability for M 's task predictions ($\hat{T}$), indicating a high model bias in $A \rightarrow T$ (refer to Figure 1).

For $A \rightarrow T$, we mathematically denote dataset bias (Ψ_A^D) and model bias (Ψ_A^M):

$$\Psi_A^D = Q(f_A^T(A), T) \quad (1) \quad \Psi_A^M = Q(f_A^{\hat{T}}(A), \hat{T}) \quad (2)$$

Similarly, for $T \rightarrow A$, we mathematically denote dataset bias (Ψ_T^D) and model bias (Ψ_T^M):

$$\Psi_T^D = Q(f_T^A(T), A) \quad (3) \quad \Psi_T^M = Q(f_T^{\hat{A}}(T), \hat{A}) \quad (4)$$

For $T \rightarrow A$, f_T^A represents an attacker function that takes T as input and predicts A , while $f_T^{\hat{A}}$ represents an attacker function that takes T as input and predicts $\hat{A}$. We define bias amplification as the difference between the model bias and dataset bias, normalized by the sum of these biases. Using equations 1 and 2, and equations 3 and 4, we define bias amplification in both directions:

$$DPA_{A \rightarrow T} = \frac{\Psi_A^M - \Psi_A^D}{\Psi_A^M + \Psi_A^D + \epsilon} \quad (5) \quad DPA_{T \rightarrow A} = \frac{\Psi_T^M - \Psi_T^D}{\Psi_T^M + \Psi_T^D + \epsilon} \quad (6)$$

Note, a small value $\epsilon \rightarrow 0^+$ is added in the denominator for numerical stability.

When measuring dataset or model bias in either direction, note that the input to the attacker function is the same (true attribute label A for equations 1 and 2, and true task label T for equations 3 and 4). This is because we followed Wang et al.'s [3] definition of directionality, where bias amplification

(change in biases) should be measured with respect to a fixed prior variable (A or T in this case). We offer a detailed proof of how *DPA* follows Wang et al.’s definition of directionality in Section B.

Note that the model M ’s predictions are not 100% accurate and may contain errors. For example, assume we are measuring bias amplification in $A \rightarrow T$, and model M achieves 70% accuracy on task predictions $\hat{T}$. Since the true task labels T are 100% accurate (as they represent ground-truth), this 30% gap in accuracy could influence bias amplification values. To prevent conflating prediction errors with bias, we adopt the procedure of Wang et al. [7] to equalize the dataset and model accuracy. In this case, we randomly flip 30% of the true task labels T so that their accuracy aligns with the model M ’s 70%. As the bias in T (or A for $T \rightarrow A$) can vary significantly between two iterations of random flips, we measured bias amplification using confidence intervals across multiple iterations.

3.2 Benefits over existing predictability-based metrics

In addition to directionality, *DPA* has these benefits over other predictability-based metrics like *LA*:

Reports bias amplification in a fixed range For any quality function Q (such that its range is $[0, \infty)$ or $[0, \mathbb{R}^+]$), the range of *DPA* is restricted to $[-1, 1]$. Since *DPA* reports bounded values, it is easy to compare bias amplification across different models.

Note: While selecting Q , users must ensure that 0 represents the worst possible performance by the attacker (i.e., low predictability or no bias), and the upper bound for Q represents the best possible performance by the attacker (i.e., high predictability or significant bias). This is true for most typical choices for quality functions, such as accuracy or F1 score, but not for certain losses like cross-entropy. For cross-entropy, a lower value would indicate good performance by the attacker (i.e., high predictability or significant bias). To use cross-entropy (or similar loss functions) as our Q , we should modify it to $(1/\text{cross-entropy})$ or $(1 - \text{cross-entropy})$.

Measures Relative Amplification *DPA* accounts for dataset bias by measuring the relative change in bias (or predictability), rather than the absolute change as done by *LA*. Assume we have an unbiased dataset D_1 with a dataset bias of 0, and a highly biased dataset D_2 with a dataset bias of 0.9. We train identical models M_1 and M_2 on D_1 and D_2 , respectively. Assume the resulting model biases are 0.05 for M_1 and 0.95 for M_2 . If we measure absolute change like *LA*, both D_1 and D_2 show the same increase in bias (0.05), making the two scenarios appear equally problematic. In practical settings, a model introducing bias in an originally unbiased dataset (D_1) is more concerning than one adding the same amount of bias to an already biased dataset (D_2). If we measure relative change like *DPA*, we can distinguish between the two scenarios — the relative increase in bias (or amplification) for D_1 is 1, while for D_2 it is only about 0.06. To further show how relative change in *DPA* accounts for dataset bias, refer to the analysis we conducted in Section C.

Robust to the choice of attacker function Predictability-based metrics are highly sensitive to the hyperparameters of the attacker function used, as shown in [12]. Since *DPA* measures relative change in predictability, it is more robust to different hyperparameters of the attacker function. In section D, we performed experiments on the ImSitu dataset and a controlled synthetic dataset to show how measuring relative change in predictability improves *DPA*’s robustness to attacker function.

4 Experiments and Results

To show that *DPA* is the most reliable metric to measure bias amplification in classification datasets, we conducted experiments on one tabular dataset (COMPAS [13]) and two image datasets (COCO [14] and ImSitu [1]). For COCO and ImSitu, we used gender as the protected attribute. In this section, we describe the experimental details and results for these datasets. For the COMPAS dataset, we used race as the protected attribute. The experiment setup and results for COMPAS are in Section E.

4.1 COCO Experiment Setup

COCO [14] is an image dataset where each image has one or more people (male or female) along with various objects (e.g., ball, book). We performed an experiment similar to Wang et al. [3], to test whether different bias amplification metrics can correctly identify the direction in which a model amplifies bias. We gradually increased the $T \rightarrow A$ bias in COCO through image masking and evaluated which metrics were able to detect this increasing bias.

We used the gender-annotated version of the COCO dataset released by Wang et al. [7]. Each image is labeled with gender (A) and object (T) annotations. A holds a single value: $\{\text{Female} : 0, \text{Male} : 1\}$. If the image has multiple people, A corresponds to the gender of the person in the foreground. T is a one-dimensional vector of 78 binary values: $[t_0, t_1, \dots, t_{77}]$ (e.g., teddy bear, skateboard). $t_i = 1$ if at least one instance of that i^{th} object is present in the image, else $t_i = 0$. We sampled balanced and unbalanced sub-datasets from COCO. The balanced dataset is subject to the constraint in Equation 7.

$$\forall y : \#(m, y) = \#(f, y) \quad (7)$$

Where $\#(m, y)$ represents the number of images where a male performs task y and $\#(f, y)$ represents the number of images where a female performs task y . As these constraints are hard to satisfy, only a subset of 12 objects (or tasks) was used in the balanced sub-dataset. This resulted in 6156 images in the sub-dataset (3078 male and 3078 female images). We used the same 12 objects for the unbalanced sub-dataset, but relaxed the constraint from Equation 7 as shown in Equation 8. This resulted in a sub-dataset of 15743 images (8885 male and 6588 female images)

$$\forall y : \frac{1}{3} < \frac{\#(m, y)}{\#(f, y)} < 3 \quad (8)$$

To gradually increase $T \rightarrow A$ bias, we created four versions of each sub-dataset: (1) the original sub-dataset, and three other versions where the person in the image is progressively masked by (2) partially masking the segment, (3) completely masking the segment, and (4) completely the masking bounding box. As we progressively mask more of the person, the model loses access to visual gender cues and is forced to rely heavily on surrounding objects (tasks) to predict gender. This causes the $T \rightarrow A$ bias in the model to gradually increase. We evaluated whether bias amplification metrics report a steady increase in $T \rightarrow A$ scores as the $T \rightarrow A$ model bias increases across the four versions. Since all models are trained on COCO, the dataset bias remains constant. We can directly compare changes in amplification scores with changes in model bias.

We used the image masking annotations for COCO from [3]. We used two models: ViT_b_16 [15] and VGG16 [16] (both pretrained on ImageNet-1K [17]). We replaced the last fully connected layer of these pre-trained models with a layer of size $|T|$. We fine-tuned these models for 12 epochs on 8 dataset versions (4 versions of the balanced and 4 versions of the unbalanced sub-dataset). We used only two models as fine-tuning a model on 8 datasets is computationally expensive.

We measured bias amplification using co-occurrence-based metrics like $BA_{\rightarrow}$, BA_{MALS} , $Multi_{\rightarrow}$, and predictability-based metrics like LA and DPA (ours). For LA and DPA , we used an MLP with two hidden layers as our attacker function. Additional experiment details are in Section J.

4.2 COCO Results

To quantify the $T \rightarrow A$ model bias in the ViT (or VGG), we computed a feature attribution score using Gradient Shap [18]. The attribution score measures the percentage contribution of non-person pixels in the ViT’s prediction of the person’s gender. A higher attribution score means the ViT is relying more on the background objects rather than the person to predict gender. In Table 2, we show the average attribution score for the ViT model, along with bias amplification values from different metrics. Row 2 reports results on various masked versions of the unbalanced COCO sub-dataset, while row 3 reports results for the balanced sub-dataset.

In the unbalanced sub-dataset, the attribution score increased with each masked version. This confirms that as the person was progressively masked, the ViT increasingly used background objects to predict gender, indicating a rise in $T \rightarrow A$ model bias. Only DPA and $BA_{\rightarrow}$ reported increasing $T \rightarrow A$ scores, correctly capturing the growing model bias. Since metrics like BA_{MALS} and LA lack directionality, they failed to capture the increasing $T \rightarrow A$ model bias. Although $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ is directional, it too failed to capture the increasing $T \rightarrow A$ bias. This is because $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ cannot capture negative bias amplification scenarios (we have clearly demonstrated this using the COMPAS experiment in Section E).

In the balanced COCO sub-dataset, labeled background objects (i.e., task objects) are balanced with gender, so they should not provide predictive signals for gender. However, we observed a rising attribution score with each masked version. This indicates that the model used background cues that were not part of the labeled object (or task) set.

Table 2: $T \rightarrow A$ bias amplification as the person is progressively masked in the unbalanced and balanced COCO sub-datasets. Attribution scores indicate the $T \rightarrow A$ model bias in the ViT_b_16 model. For the unbalanced sub-dataset, DPA and $BA_{\rightarrow}$ captured the increasing $T \rightarrow A$ model bias. For the balanced sub-dataset, only DPA captured the increasing $T \rightarrow A$ model bias. Subscript shows confidence intervals.

Dataset Split	Metric	Original	Partial Masked	Segment Masked	Bounding-Box Masked
	Image				
	Attribution Map				
Unbalanced	Attribution	0.3827 _{0.0026}	0.4327 _{0.0023}	0.4461 _{0.0020}	0.5247 _{0.0022}
	DPA (ours)	-0.0152 _{0.0017}	0.1365 _{0.0013}	0.6015 _{0.0006}	0.8085 _{0.0003}
	$BA_{\rightarrow}$	-0.0227 _{0.0001}	0.0097 _{0.0002}	0.0188 _{0.0003}	0.0601 _{0.0002}
	$Multi_{\rightarrow}$	0.1506 _{0.0002}	0.1179 _{0.0004}	0.3606 _{0.0003}	0.5607 _{0.0010}
	LA	0.0368 _{0.0052}	0.0715 _{0.0011}	0.0942 _{0.0020}	0.0265 _{0.0008}
	BA_{MALS}	0.0001 _{0.0000}	0.0004 _{0.0000}	-0.0016 _{0.0000}	0.0015 _{0.0000}
Balanced	Attribution	0.4568 _{0.0026}	0.4684 _{0.0026}	0.4834 _{0.0026}	0.4933 _{0.0025}
	DPA (ours)	0.0230 _{0.0008}	0.0280 _{0.0003}	0.0380 _{0.0030}	0.1039 _{0.0006}
	$BA_{\rightarrow}$	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}
	$Multi_{\rightarrow}$	0.0008 _{0.0000}	0.0010 _{0.0000}	0.0038 _{0.0000}	0.0043 _{0.0000}
	LA	0.0006 _{0.0002}	0.0028 _{0.0002}	0.0020 _{0.0005}	0.0019 _{0.0003}
	BA_{MALS}	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}

To investigate this further, we visualized attribution maps for an image from the balanced COCO sub-dataset, as shown in Table 2. As the person was gradually masked, the ViT model increasingly focused on unlabeled objects, such as skis and ski poles, to predict gender. This shows that even if datasets are balanced, models can amplify bias from unlabeled objects at test time. This behavior is captured by DPA as it reports increasing $T \rightarrow A$ scores. While $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ showed the same trend as DPA , it is not reliable as it does not capture negative bias amplification (as mentioned earlier). $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and BA_{MALS} incorrectly assume that a balanced dataset contains no bias. They failed to capture the increasing $T \rightarrow A$ model bias and consistently reported zero bias amplification.

While the attribution maps in Table 2 show the ViT’s reliance on unlabeled objects, they may not fully convince readers that balanced datasets can amplify biases from unlabeled objects. To make this point clear, we designed a controlled experiment (Section F) where we introduced a hidden $A \rightarrow T$ bias into the balanced COCO sub-dataset using one-pixel shortcuts (OPS) [19]. This setup mimics the presence of bias from unlabeled objects. Only DPA was able to detect the bias amplification caused by this hidden bias. To further convince readers, we conducted another controlled experiment on hidden biases using the CMNIST dataset in Section G.

The VGG model showed similar trends to the ViT model on both the unbalanced and balanced COCO sub-datasets. We showed VGG results in Section H.

4.3 ImSitu Experiment Setup

ImSitu [1] is an image dataset where a person (male or female) performs an activity (e.g., playing, eating). We examined which metrics can correctly measure directional bias amplification in ImSitu. ImSitu did not provide image mask annotations, so we were unable to perform progressive person masking to verify directionality. Instead, we examined which metrics could detect $A \rightarrow T$ and $T \rightarrow A$ bias amplification in the original (unmasked) dataset.

We used the gender-annotated version of the ImSitu dataset released by Wang et al. [7]. Each image has gender (A) and activity (T) annotations. A holds a single value: {Female : 0, Male : 1}. If the image has multiple people, A corresponds to the gender of the person performing the activity. T is a one-dimensional vector of 211 activities: $[t_0, t_1, \dots, t_{210}]$ (e.g., repairing, curling). Each image has only one activity annotation — that activity is assigned 1 and the rest are 0.

We sampled unbalanced and balanced sub-datasets from ImSitu. To sample the balanced sub-dataset, we used the constraint in Equation 7. This resulted in a sub-dataset of 14600 images (7300 male and 7300 female images). For the unbalanced sub-dataset, we used a modified constrained (Equation 9). This resulted in a sub-dataset of 24301 images (14199 male and 10102 female images). We selected a subset of 205 activities (tasks) for both sub-datasets.

$$\forall y : \frac{1}{3} < \frac{\#(m, y)}{\#(f, y)} < 3 \quad (9)$$

The ImSitu experiment was much less expensive than the COCO masking experiment, as we had to train each model only on 2 sub-datasets. Along with ViT_b_16 [15] and VGG16 [16] (used in the COCO setup), we evaluated seven more models — MaxViT [20], [15], ViT_b_32 [15], SqueezeNet [21], Wide ResNet50 [22], Wide ResNet101 [22], MobileNet V2 [23], and Swin Tiny [24]. For each of the sub-datasets, we measured bias amplification caused by these models in two directions: bias amplification caused by gender (A) on activities (T): $A \rightarrow T$, and the bias amplification caused by activities (T) on gender (A): $T \rightarrow A$.

As mentioned in Section 4.1, since all models are trained on the same dataset (in this case, ImSitu), bias amplification only depends on model bias. We examined which bias amplification metrics correctly captured $A \rightarrow T$ and $T \rightarrow A$ model biases. We used co-occurrence-based metrics like $BA_{\rightarrow}$, BA_{MALS} , $Multi_{\rightarrow}$, and predictability-based metrics like LA and DPA (ours). Similar to COCO, for LA and DPA , we used an MLP with two hidden layers as our attacker model. Additional experiment details are in Section J.

4.4 ImSitu Results

To quantify $A \rightarrow T$ and $T \rightarrow A$ model bias in ImSitu, we could not use feature attribution scores as ImSitu lacks person mask annotations. Instead, we used “conceptual sensitivity” scores based on Concept Activation Vectors (CAVs) [25]. Sensitivity score (Sen) quantifies how much a model’s prediction is influenced by a specific concept.

We define $Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$ as the influence of the gender concept (male or female) in the overall task predictions. We define $Sen_{T \rightarrow A}$ as the contribution of task concepts (activities like playing, eating) in the overall gender predictions. If $Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$ is high, it means that the concept “male” (or female) highly influences the model’s task predictions, indicating a strong $A \rightarrow T$ model bias. If $Sen_{T \rightarrow A}$ is high, it means that the task concepts (e.g., eating) highly influence the model’s attribute predictions, indicating a strong $T \rightarrow A$ model bias.

In Table 3, we showed the sensitivity and bias amplification scores in the $A \rightarrow T$ direction for the unbalanced sub-dataset. In Table 4, we showed corresponding results for the balanced sub-dataset. For both tables, we ranked all models (from 1 to 9) by their $Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$ scores, from least biased to most biased. We checked which bias amplification metrics produced rankings closest to this model bias ranking. This allowed us to see which metrics best captured changes in model bias.

In the unbalanced case (Table 3), DPA ’s ranking was very close to the model bias ranking — it differed by only one position (rank 5 vs. 6). All other metrics showed significant mismatches. In the balanced case (Table 4), DPA fully matched the $Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$ rankings. Other metrics, like LA and $Multi_{\rightarrow}$, differed significantly. Metrics like $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and BA_{MALS} reported zero bias amplification because they assume that a balanced dataset has no bias. We observed similar trends for the unbalanced and balanced sub-datasets in $T \rightarrow A$. The $T \rightarrow A$ results are shown in Section I.

Our experiments on COMPAS, COCO, and ImSitu show that only DPA reliably captures the three properties of a bias amplification metric: directionality, accurately measuring both positive and negative bias amplification, and working with both unbalanced and balanced datasets. No other metrics satisfy all three properties. $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ cannot measure negative bias amplification. $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and BA_{MALS} always report zero amplification on balanced datasets. LA cannot capture the direction in which a model amplifies biases. We also ran a controlled experiment on the directional metrics (DPA , $BA_{\rightarrow}$, $Multi_{\rightarrow}$) in Section K to show how $BA_{\rightarrow}$ fails to measure bias amplification in balanced datasets, and how $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ fails to capture negative bias amplification scenarios.

Table 3: $A \rightarrow T$ results for the ImSitu unbalanced sub-dataset. Models are shown in increasing order of model bias, indicated by their $Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$ scores. For each metric, the number in brackets shows the rank it assigned to that model. Rank 1 is the lowest (most negative) bias amplification, and rank 9 is the highest (most positive). Red numbers show where the metric’s rank differs from the $Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$ rank. DPA is the most reliable metric, as its model rankings best match the $Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$ rankings. All values are scaled by 100.

Models	$Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$	$DPA_{A \rightarrow T}$	LA	$BA_{\rightarrow}$	$Multi_{\rightarrow}$	BA_{MALS}
MaxViT [20]	0.017 (1)	-0.147 (1)	0.130 (4)	-0.157 (3)	0.553 (6)	0.211 (6)
ViT_b_32 [15]	0.018 (2)	-0.050 (2)	0.209 (6)	-0.146 (5)	0.606 (8)	0.248 (8)
ViT_b_16 [15]	0.025 (3)	-0.036 (3)	0.195 (5)	-0.145 (7)	0.568 (7)	0.228 (7)
SqueezeNet [21]	0.082 (4)	-0.022 (4)	0.009 (1)	-0.172 (1)	48.40 (9)	25.58 (9)
Wide ResNet101 [22]	0.144 (5)	0.064 (6)	0.281 (9)	-0.146 (5)	0.348 (4)	0.109 (4)
MobileNet V2 [23]	0.156 (6)	-0.011 (5)	0.087 (3)	-0.158 (2)	0.505 (5)	0.193 (5)
Wide ResNet50 [22]	0.190 (7)	0.118 (7)	0.253 (8)	-0.141 (8)	0.260 (3)	0.061 (3)
Swin Tiny [24]	0.225 (8)	0.318 (8)	0.064 (2)	-0.151 (4)	0.159 (2)	-0.074 (1)
VGG16 [16]	0.272 (9)	0.329 (9)	0.210 (7)	-0.051 (9)	0.097 (1)	-0.045 (2)

Table 4: $A \rightarrow T$ results for the ImSitu balanced sub-dataset. This table follows the same setup as Table 3. Red numbers show where the metric’s rank differs from the $Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$ rank. DPA is the most reliable metric, as its model rankings exactly match the $Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$ rankings.

Models	$Sen_{A \rightarrow T}$	$DPA_{A \rightarrow T}$	LA	$BA_{\rightarrow}$	$Multi_{\rightarrow}$	BA_{MALS}
SqueezeNet [21]	0.000 (1)	0.003 (1)	0.003 (8)	0.000 (1)	48.47 (9)	0.000 (1)
Wide ResNet50 [22]	0.089 (2)	0.085 (2)	0.002 (7)	0.000 (1)	0.705 (3)	0.000 (1)
Wide ResNet101 [22]	0.098 (3)	0.094 (3)	0.000 (3)	0.000 (1)	0.730 (4)	0.000 (1)
MobileNet V2 [23]	0.112 (4)	0.256 (4)	0.007 (9)	0.000 (1)	1.379 (5)	0.000 (1)
Swin Tiny [24]	0.211 (5)	0.282 (5)	0.001 (5)	0.000 (1)	0.038 (1)	0.000 (1)
ViT_b_32 [15]	0.283 (6)	0.285 (6)	0.001 (5)	0.000 (1)	1.510 (6)	0.000 (1)
ViT_b_16 [15]	0.302 (7)	0.302 (7)	0.000 (2)	0.000 (1)	1.599 (7)	0.000 (1)
MaxViT [20]	0.478 (8)	0.326 (8)	-0.002 (1)	0.000 (1)	1.762 (8)	0.000 (1)
VGG16 [16]	0.497 (9)	0.341 (9)	0.000 (3)	0.000 (1)	0.073 (2)	0.000 (1)

5 Discussion

5.1 Why and when should we use DPA?

Table 5: Example dataset and model prediction tables to demonstrate when we should use $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and DPA . We used the same tables for the hiring scenario and the indoor-outdoor scenario.

(a) Original Dataset			(b) Model Predictions		
	$T = 0$	$T = 1$		$\hat{T} = 0$	$\hat{T} = 1$
$A = 0$	50	150	$A = 0$	15	185
$A = 1$	22	78	$A = 1$	9	91

In real-world machine learning applications, it is common to train multiple models on the same dataset to determine which model performs best. Often, these models achieve similar accuracies, making model selection difficult — a phenomenon known as the Rashomon effect [26, 27]. In such cases, metrics like DPA can offer valuable insights into model selection by highlighting which models preserve, reduce, or worsen existing biases.

Based on our experiments, we found DPA to be the most reliable metric to measure bias amplification. However, there are cases where other directional metrics like $BA_{\rightarrow}$ could be more appropriate. Let us take two scenarios where we measure $A \rightarrow T$ bias amplification in DPA and $BA_{\rightarrow}$. Consider a hiring dataset where 200 men ($A = 0$) and 100 women ($A = 1$) apply for a job. Out of these, 50 men and 22 women are hired ($T = 0$), while the rest are rejected ($T = 1$) — refer to Table 5a. Assume we train a model (M) on this dataset, which gives predictions as shown in Table 5b.

According to DPA , the $A \rightarrow T$ bias amplification is large. This is because for both men and women, $\hat{T}$ is much more unbalanced than T . For men: T ratio = 3:1 (150/50), $\hat{T}$ ratio = 12.3:1 (185/15). For women: T ratio = 3.5:1 (78/22), $\hat{T}$ ratio = 10.1:1 (91/9). According to $BA_{\rightarrow}$, bias amplification is small. This is because the ratio of hired men and women is similar in the dataset and in the model’s predictions. Hired men and women in the dataset: 25% (50/200) and 22% (22/100), respectively. Hired men and women in the model’s predictions: 7.5% (15/200) and 9% (9/100), respectively. Our goal is to ensure men and women have a similar acceptance ratio. Since the acceptance ratio between

men and women is similar in the dataset and in the model’s predictions, the small bias amplification reported by $BA_{\rightarrow}$ is appropriate. In scenarios where we desire equal opportunity (e.g., hiring datasets where men and women should have equal acceptance ratios), using $BA_{\rightarrow}$ is better.

In another scenario, consider a dataset of men ($A = 0$) and women ($A = 1$), where each person is either indoors ($T = 0$) or outdoors ($T = 1$). Assume the same tables as before (Tables 5a and 5b). Here, our goal is to ensure that we have a balanced count of men and women, indoors and outdoors. We should report high bias amplification as $\hat{T}$ is highly unbalanced with respect to T (for both men and women). In this case, the large bias amplification reported by DPA is appropriate. $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and DPA capture different notions of bias, and the right choice of metric depends on the type of bias we seek to address.

5.2 Limitations and Future Work

Predictability-based metrics like DPA (and LA) rely on training attacker models to estimate bias amplification. These attackers can be sensitive to training instabilities — such as getting stuck in local minima. This may lead to inconsistent results. To ensure stable results, we must run the attacker model multiple times, which increases computational cost. In contrast, co-occurrence-based metrics like $BA_{\rightarrow}$ or $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ are cheaper to compute. We have compared the runtime for all bias amplification metrics in Section L.

DPA cannot measure bias amplification at the level of individual $A - T$ pairs — the bias amplification caused by a specific A (e.g., women) on a specific T (e.g., cooking), or vice versa. Instead, it measures overall $A \rightarrow T$ and $T \rightarrow A$ bias amplification, aggregated across all A and T . Suppose a model amplifies bias on the cooking task when women are present, but reduces bias on the gardening task when men are present. DPA would report only the net effect across both A ’s and both T ’s, masking these opposing trends.

As part of future work, we aim to disaggregate bias amplification into individual $A - T$ pairs. We can use techniques like feature attribution to find out the influence of a specific attribute $A = A_i$ (e.g., male), in predicting a specific task $T = T_j$ (e.g., cooking). This attribution value can be used as a weak proxy to measure dataset or model bias between A_i, T_j . Causal attacker models or interpretable attackers are other potential approaches to disaggregate bias amplification into individual $A - T$ pairs. This finer-grained view can support targeted bias intervention strategies.

5.3 Conclusion

In this work, we introduced DPA , a one-stop predictability-based metric to measure bias amplification in classification problems. DPA is the only metric that can (1) accurately identify positive and negative bias amplification scenarios, offering valuable insights into model selection by highlighting which models preserve, worsen, or reduce data bias, (2) identify the source of bias amplification as the metric is directional (3) measure bias amplification for both unbalanced and balanced datasets. DPA eliminates the need to evaluate models on multiple bias amplification metrics to verify each of the three aspects of bias amplification. DPA is also more robust and easier to interpret than current predictability-based metrics like LA . While DPA is generally the most reliable metric to measure bias amplification, there are bias scenarios (e.g., hiring datasets where rejections are almost always more than acceptances) where other metrics like $BA_{\rightarrow}$ may be more suitable. Before using DPA , we must have an accurate understanding of the type of bias we want to address.

6 Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the Research Computing at Arizona State University for providing HPC resources [28] that have contributed to the results reported in this paper. We also thank Mirali Purohit for her helpful suggestions throughout the development of this work.

References

- [1] Mark Yatskar, Luke Zettlemoyer, and Ali Farhadi. Situation recognition: Visual semantic role labeling for image understanding. In *Proceedings of the IEEE conference on computer vision and pattern recognition*, pages 5534–5542, 2016.

- [2] Jieyu Zhao, Tianlu Wang, Mark Yatskar, Vicente Ordonez, and Kai-Wei Chang. Men also like shopping: Reducing gender bias amplification using corpus-level constraints. *arXiv preprint arXiv:1707.09457*, 2017.
- [3] Angelina Wang and Olga Russakovsky. Directional bias amplification. In *International Conference on Machine Learning*, pages 10882–10893. PMLR, 2021.
- [4] Dora Zhao, Jerone Andrews, and Alice Xiang. Men also do laundry: Multi-attribute bias amplification. In Andreas Krause, Emma Brunskill, Kyunghyun Cho, Barbara Engelhardt, Sivan Sabato, and Jonathan Scarlett, editors, *Proceedings of the 40th International Conference on Machine Learning*, volume 202 of *Proceedings of Machine Learning Research*, pages 42000–42017. PMLR, 23–29 Jul 2023. URL <https://proceedings.mlr.press/v202/zhao23a.html>.
- [5] Arjun Subramonian, Samuel J. Bell, Levent Sagun, and Elvis Dohmatob. An effective theory of bias amplification, 2024. URL <https://arxiv.org/abs/2410.17263>.
- [6] Ze Wang, Zekun Wu, Jeremy Zhang, Navya Jain, Xin Guan, and Adriano Koshiyama. Bias amplification: Language models as increasingly biased media, 2024. URL <https://arxiv.org/abs/2410.15234>.
- [7] Tianlu Wang, Jieyu Zhao, Mark Yatskar, Kai-Wei Chang, and Vicente Ordonez. Balanced datasets are not enough: Estimating and mitigating gender bias in deep image representations. In *Proceedings of the IEEE/CVF International Conference on Computer Vision*, pages 5310–5319, 2019.
- [8] Kun Lin, Nasim Sonboli, Bamshad Mobasher, and Robin Burke. Crank up the volume: preference bias amplification in collaborative recommendation, 2019. URL <https://arxiv.org/abs/1909.06362>.
- [9] James R. Foulds, Rashidul Islam, Kamrun Naher Keya, and Shimei Pan. An intersectional definition of fairness. In *2020 IEEE 36th International Conference on Data Engineering (ICDE)*, pages 1918–1921, 2020. doi: 10.1109/ICDE48307.2020.00203.
- [10] Preethi Seshadri, Sameer Singh, and Yanai Elazar. The bias amplification paradox in text-to-image generation. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2308.00755*, 2023.
- [11] Yusuke Hirota, Yuta Nakashima, and Noa Garcia. Quantifying societal bias amplification in image captioning. In *Proceedings of the IEEE/CVF Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition*, pages 13450–13459, 2022.
- [12] Eslam Abdelrahman, Pengzhan Sun, Li Erran Li, and Mohamed Elhoseiny. Imagecaptioner2: image captioner for image captioning bias amplification assessment. In *Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Thirty-Sixth Conference on Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence and Fourteenth Symposium on Educational Advances in Artificial Intelligence, AAAI’24/IAAI’24/EAAI’24*. AAAI Press, 2024. ISBN 978-1-57735-887-9. doi: 10.1609/aaai.v38i19.30080. URL <https://doi.org/10.1609/aaai.v38i19.30080>.
- [13] Julia Angwin, Jeff Larson, Surya Mattu, and Lauren Kirchner. Machine bias. In *Ethics of data and analytics*, pages 254–264. Auerbach Publications, 2022.
- [14] Tsung-Yi Lin, Michael Maire, Serge Belongie, James Hays, Pietro Perona, Deva Ramanan, Piotr Dollár, and C Lawrence Zitnick. Microsoft coco: Common objects in context. In *Computer Vision—ECCV 2014: 13th European Conference, Zurich, Switzerland, September 6-12, 2014, Proceedings, Part V 13*, pages 740–755. Springer, 2014.
- [15] Alexey Dosovitskiy, Lucas Beyer, Alexander Kolesnikov, Dirk Weissenborn, Xiaohua Zhai, Thomas Unterthiner, Mostafa Dehghani, Matthias Minderer, Georg Heigold, Sylvain Gelly, et al. An image is worth 16x16 words: Transformers for image recognition at scale. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2010.11929*, 2020.
- [16] Karen Simonyan and Andrew Zisserman. Very deep convolutional networks for large-scale image recognition, 2015. URL <https://arxiv.org/abs/1409.1556>.

- [17] Olga Russakovsky, Jia Deng, Hao Su, Jonathan Krause, Sanjeev Satheesh, Sean Ma, Zhiheng Huang, Andrej Karpathy, Aditya Khosla, Michael Bernstein, Alexander C. Berg, and Li Fei-Fei. ImageNet Large Scale Visual Recognition Challenge. *International Journal of Computer Vision (IJCV)*, 115(3):211–252, 2015. doi: 10.1007/s11263-015-0816-y.
- [18] Scott M Lundberg and Su-In Lee. A unified approach to interpreting model predictions. In I. Guyon, U. Von Luxburg, S. Bengio, H. Wallach, R. Fergus, S. Vishwanathan, and R. Garnett, editors, *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems*, volume 30. Curran Associates, Inc., 2017. URL https://proceedings.neurips.cc/paper_files/paper/2017/file/8a20a8621978632d76c43dfd28b67767-Paper.pdf.
- [19] Shutong Wu, Sizhe Chen, Cihang Xie, and Xiaolin Huang. One-pixel shortcut: On the learning preference of deep neural networks. In *The Eleventh International Conference on Learning Representations*, 2023. URL <https://openreview.net/forum?id=p7G8t5FVn2h>.
- [20] Zhengzhong Tu, Hossein Talebi, Han Zhang, Feng Yang, Peyman Milanfar, Alan Bovik, and Yinxiao Li. Maxvit: Multi-axis vision transformer. In *European conference on computer vision*, pages 459–479. Springer, 2022.
- [21] Forrest N Iandola, Song Han, Matthew W Moskewicz, Khalid Ashraf, William J Dally, and Kurt Keutzer. Squeezenet: Alexnet-level accuracy with 50x fewer parameters and < 0.5 mb model size. *arXiv preprint arXiv:1602.07360*, 2016.
- [22] Sergey Zagoruyko and Nikos Komodakis. Wide residual networks. *arXiv preprint arXiv:1605.07146*, 2016.
- [23] Mark Sandler, Andrew Howard, Menglong Zhu, Andrey Zhmoginov, and Liang-Chieh Chen. Mobilenetv2: Inverted residuals and linear bottlenecks. In *Proceedings of the IEEE conference on computer vision and pattern recognition*, pages 4510–4520, 2018.
- [24] Ze Liu, Yutong Lin, Yue Cao, Han Hu, Yixuan Wei, Zheng Zhang, Stephen Lin, and Baining Guo. Swin transformer: Hierarchical vision transformer using shifted windows. In *Proceedings of the IEEE/CVF international conference on computer vision*, pages 10012–10022, 2021.
- [25] Been Kim, Martin Wattenberg, Justin Gilmer, Carrie Cai, James Wexler, Fernanda Viegas, et al. Interpretability beyond feature attribution: Quantitative testing with concept activation vectors (tcav). In *International conference on machine learning*, pages 2668–2677. PMLR, 2018.
- [26] Cynthia Rudin, Chudi Zhong, Lesia Semenova, Margo Seltzer, Ronald Parr, Jiachang Liu, Srikanth Katta, Jon Donnelly, Harry Chen, and Zachery Boner. Amazing things come from having many good models. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2407.04846*, 2024.
- [27] Sebastian Müller, Vanessa Toborek, Katharina Beckh, Matthias Jakobs, Christian Bauckhage, and Pascal Welke. An empirical evaluation of the rashomon effect in explainable machine learning. In *Joint European Conference on Machine Learning and Knowledge Discovery in Databases*, pages 462–478. Springer, 2023.
- [28] Douglas M. Jennewein, Johnathan Lee, Chris Kurtz, William Dizon, Ian Shaeffer, Alan Chapman, Alejandro Chiquete, Josh Burks, Amber Carlson, Natalie Mason, Arhat Kobawala, Thirugananam Jagadeesan, Praful Bhargav Basani, Torey Battelle, Rebecca Belshe, Deb McCaffrey, Marisa Brazil, Chaitanya Inumella, Kirby Kuznia, Jade Buzinski, Dhruvil Deepakbhai Shah, Sean M. Dudley, Gil Speyer, and Jason Yalim. The sol supercomputer at arizona state university. In *Practice and Experience in Advanced Research Computing 2023: Computing for the Common Good*, PEARC '23, page 296–301, New York, NY, USA, 2023. Association for Computing Machinery. ISBN 9781450399852. doi: 10.1145/3569951.3597573. URL <https://doi.org/10.1145/3569951.3597573>.
- [29] Li Deng. The mnist database of handwritten digit images for machine learning research. *IEEE Signal Processing Magazine*, 29(6):141–142, 2012.

NeurIPS Paper Checklist

1. Claims

Question: Do the main claims made in the abstract and introduction accurately reflect the paper's contributions and scope?

Answer: [\[Yes\]](#)

Justification: Our claims are aligned with the contributions and overall scope of the paper.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the abstract and introduction do not include the claims made in the paper.
- The abstract and/or introduction should clearly state the claims made, including the contributions made in the paper and important assumptions and limitations. A No or NA answer to this question will not be perceived well by the reviewers.
- The claims made should match theoretical and experimental results, and reflect how much the results can be expected to generalize to other settings.
- It is fine to include aspirational goals as motivation as long as it is clear that these goals are not attained by the paper.

2. Limitations

Question: Does the paper discuss the limitations of the work performed by the authors?

Answer: [\[Yes\]](#)

Justification: The limitation of our metric (inability to disaggregate biases) is discussed in Section 5.2.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper has no limitation while the answer No means that the paper has limitations, but those are not discussed in the paper.
- The authors are encouraged to create a separate "Limitations" section in their paper.
- The paper should point out any strong assumptions and how robust the results are to violations of these assumptions (e.g., independence assumptions, noiseless settings, model well-specification, asymptotic approximations only holding locally). The authors should reflect on how these assumptions might be violated in practice and what the implications would be.
- The authors should reflect on the scope of the claims made, e.g., if the approach was only tested on a few datasets or with a few runs. In general, empirical results often depend on implicit assumptions, which should be articulated.
- The authors should reflect on the factors that influence the performance of the approach. For example, a facial recognition algorithm may perform poorly when image resolution is low or images are taken in low lighting. Or a speech-to-text system might not be used reliably to provide closed captions for online lectures because it fails to handle technical jargon.
- The authors should discuss the computational efficiency of the proposed algorithms and how they scale with dataset size.
- If applicable, the authors should discuss possible limitations of their approach to address problems of privacy and fairness.
- While the authors might fear that complete honesty about limitations might be used by reviewers as grounds for rejection, a worse outcome might be that reviewers discover limitations that aren't acknowledged in the paper. The authors should use their best judgment and recognize that individual actions in favor of transparency play an important role in developing norms that preserve the integrity of the community. Reviewers will be specifically instructed to not penalize honesty concerning limitations.

3. Theory assumptions and proofs

Question: For each theoretical result, does the paper provide the full set of assumptions and a complete (and correct) proof?

Answer: [\[Yes\]](#)

Justification: We provided proofs for theorems whenever we introduced a new concept. We also referenced existing proofs wherever necessary.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper does not include theoretical results.
- All the theorems, formulas, and proofs in the paper should be numbered and cross-referenced.
- All assumptions should be clearly stated or referenced in the statement of any theorems.
- The proofs can either appear in the main paper or the supplemental material, but if they appear in the supplemental material, the authors are encouraged to provide a short proof sketch to provide intuition.
- Inversely, any informal proof provided in the core of the paper should be complemented by formal proofs provided in appendix or supplemental material.
- Theorems and Lemmas that the proof relies upon should be properly referenced.

4. Experimental result reproducibility

Question: Does the paper fully disclose all the information needed to reproduce the main experimental results of the paper to the extent that it affects the main claims and/or conclusions of the paper (regardless of whether the code and data are provided or not)?

Answer: [\[Yes\]](#)

Justification: All information to reproduce our results are available in the Experiment Setup and Supplementary Sections.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper does not include experiments.
- If the paper includes experiments, a No answer to this question will not be perceived well by the reviewers: Making the paper reproducible is important, regardless of whether the code and data are provided or not.
- If the contribution is a dataset and/or model, the authors should describe the steps taken to make their results reproducible or verifiable.
- Depending on the contribution, reproducibility can be accomplished in various ways. For example, if the contribution is a novel architecture, describing the architecture fully might suffice, or if the contribution is a specific model and empirical evaluation, it may be necessary to either make it possible for others to replicate the model with the same dataset, or provide access to the model. In general, releasing code and data is often one good way to accomplish this, but reproducibility can also be provided via detailed instructions for how to replicate the results, access to a hosted model (e.g., in the case of a large language model), releasing of a model checkpoint, or other means that are appropriate to the research performed.
- While NeurIPS does not require releasing code, the conference does require all submissions to provide some reasonable avenue for reproducibility, which may depend on the nature of the contribution. For example
 - (a) If the contribution is primarily a new algorithm, the paper should make it clear how to reproduce that algorithm.
 - (b) If the contribution is primarily a new model architecture, the paper should describe the architecture clearly and fully.
 - (c) If the contribution is a new model (e.g., a large language model), then there should either be a way to access this model for reproducing the results or a way to reproduce the model (e.g., with an open-source dataset or instructions for how to construct the dataset).
 - (d) We recognize that reproducibility may be tricky in some cases, in which case authors are welcome to describe the particular way they provide for reproducibility. In the case of closed-source models, it may be that access to the model is limited in some way (e.g., to registered users), but it should be possible for other researchers to have some path to reproducing or verifying the results.

5. Open access to data and code

Question: Does the paper provide open access to the data and code, with sufficient instructions to faithfully reproduce the main experimental results, as described in supplemental material?

Answer: [Yes]

Justification: We provide open access to our code repositories, with sufficient instructions to reproduce the main experimental results. We do not introduce a new dataset. However, links to the datasets we used can be found in the paper and our code repository.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that paper does not include experiments requiring code.
- Please see the NeurIPS code and data submission guidelines (<https://nips.cc/public/guides/CodeSubmissionPolicy>) for more details.
- While we encourage the release of code and data, we understand that this might not be possible, so “No” is an acceptable answer. Papers cannot be rejected simply for not including code, unless this is central to the contribution (e.g., for a new open-source benchmark).
- The instructions should contain the exact command and environment needed to run to reproduce the results. See the NeurIPS code and data submission guidelines (<https://nips.cc/public/guides/CodeSubmissionPolicy>) for more details.
- The authors should provide instructions on data access and preparation, including how to access the raw data, preprocessed data, intermediate data, and generated data, etc.
- The authors should provide scripts to reproduce all experimental results for the new proposed method and baselines. If only a subset of experiments are reproducible, they should state which ones are omitted from the script and why.
- At submission time, to preserve anonymity, the authors should release anonymized versions (if applicable).
- Providing as much information as possible in supplemental material (appended to the paper) is recommended, but including URLs to data and code is permitted.

6. Experimental setting/details

Question: Does the paper specify all the training and test details (e.g., data splits, hyper-parameters, how they were chosen, type of optimizer, etc.) necessary to understand the results?

Answer: [Yes]

Justification: Training and test details are mentioned in the Supplementary.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper does not include experiments.
- The experimental setting should be presented in the core of the paper to a level of detail that is necessary to appreciate the results and make sense of them.
- The full details can be provided either with the code, in appendix, or as supplemental material.

7. Experiment statistical significance

Question: Does the paper report error bars suitably and correctly defined or other appropriate information about the statistical significance of the experiments?

Answer: [Yes]

Justification: We reported error bars for all bias amplification metrics.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper does not include experiments.
- The authors should answer "Yes" if the results are accompanied by error bars, confidence intervals, or statistical significance tests, at least for the experiments that support the main claims of the paper.
- The factors of variability that the error bars are capturing should be clearly stated (for example, train/test split, initialization, random drawing of some parameter, or overall run with given experimental conditions).

- The method for calculating the error bars should be explained (closed form formula, call to a library function, bootstrap, etc.)
- The assumptions made should be given (e.g., Normally distributed errors).
- It should be clear whether the error bar is the standard deviation or the standard error of the mean.
- It is OK to report 1-sigma error bars, but one should state it. The authors should preferably report a 2-sigma error bar than state that they have a 96% CI, if the hypothesis of Normality of errors is not verified.
- For asymmetric distributions, the authors should be careful not to show in tables or figures symmetric error bars that would yield results that are out of range (e.g. negative error rates).
- If error bars are reported in tables or plots, The authors should explain in the text how they were calculated and reference the corresponding figures or tables in the text.

8. Experiments compute resources

Question: For each experiment, does the paper provide sufficient information on the computer resources (type of compute workers, memory, time of execution) needed to reproduce the experiments?

Answer: [No]

Justification: As our work introduces a metric, information about compute resources does not add much value to our work.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper does not include experiments.
- The paper should indicate the type of compute workers CPU or GPU, internal cluster, or cloud provider, including relevant memory and storage.
- The paper should provide the amount of compute required for each of the individual experimental runs as well as estimate the total compute.
- The paper should disclose whether the full research project required more compute than the experiments reported in the paper (e.g., preliminary or failed experiments that didn't make it into the paper).

9. Code of ethics

Question: Does the research conducted in the paper conform, in every respect, with the NeurIPS Code of Ethics <https://neurips.cc/public/EthicsGuidelines>?

Answer: [Yes]

Justification: We have reviewed and followed the Code of Ethics set by NeurIPS.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the authors have not reviewed the NeurIPS Code of Ethics.
- If the authors answer No, they should explain the special circumstances that require a deviation from the Code of Ethics.
- The authors should make sure to preserve anonymity (e.g., if there is a special consideration due to laws or regulations in their jurisdiction).

10. Broader impacts

Question: Does the paper discuss both potential positive societal impacts and negative societal impacts of the work performed?

Answer: [NA]

Justification: Since we introduce a metric, there is no societal impact of our work.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that there is no societal impact of the work performed.
- If the authors answer NA or No, they should explain why their work has no societal impact or why the paper does not address societal impact.

- Examples of negative societal impacts include potential malicious or unintended uses (e.g., disinformation, generating fake profiles, surveillance), fairness considerations (e.g., deployment of technologies that could make decisions that unfairly impact specific groups), privacy considerations, and security considerations.
- The conference expects that many papers will be foundational research and not tied to particular applications, let alone deployments. However, if there is a direct path to any negative applications, the authors should point it out. For example, it is legitimate to point out that an improvement in the quality of generative models could be used to generate deepfakes for disinformation. On the other hand, it is not needed to point out that a generic algorithm for optimizing neural networks could enable people to train models that generate Deepfakes faster.
- The authors should consider possible harms that could arise when the technology is being used as intended and functioning correctly, harms that could arise when the technology is being used as intended but gives incorrect results, and harms following from (intentional or unintentional) misuse of the technology.
- If there are negative societal impacts, the authors could also discuss possible mitigation strategies (e.g., gated release of models, providing defenses in addition to attacks, mechanisms for monitoring misuse, mechanisms to monitor how a system learns from feedback over time, improving the efficiency and accessibility of ML).

11. Safeguards

Question: Does the paper describe safeguards that have been put in place for responsible release of data or models that have a high risk for misuse (e.g., pretrained language models, image generators, or scraped datasets)?

Answer: [NA]

Justification: Not relevant for our work.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper poses no such risks.
- Released models that have a high risk for misuse or dual-use should be released with necessary safeguards to allow for controlled use of the model, for example by requiring that users adhere to usage guidelines or restrictions to access the model or implementing safety filters.
- Datasets that have been scraped from the Internet could pose safety risks. The authors should describe how they avoided releasing unsafe images.
- We recognize that providing effective safeguards is challenging, and many papers do not require this, but we encourage authors to take this into account and make a best faith effort.

12. Licenses for existing assets

Question: Are the creators or original owners of assets (e.g., code, data, models), used in the paper, properly credited and are the license and terms of use explicitly mentioned and properly respected?

Answer: [Yes]

Justification: We have credited all original owners of the code and assets we used by referencing their work in our paper.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper does not use existing assets.
- The authors should cite the original paper that produced the code package or dataset.
- The authors should state which version of the asset is used and, if possible, include a URL.
- The name of the license (e.g., CC-BY 4.0) should be included for each asset.
- For scraped data from a particular source (e.g., website), the copyright and terms of service of that source should be provided.

- If assets are released, the license, copyright information, and terms of use in the package should be provided. For popular datasets, paperswithcode.com/datasets has curated licenses for some datasets. Their licensing guide can help determine the license of a dataset.
- For existing datasets that are re-packaged, both the original license and the license of the derived asset (if it has changed) should be provided.
- If this information is not available online, the authors are encouraged to reach out to the asset's creators.

13. **New assets**

Question: Are new assets introduced in the paper well documented and is the documentation provided alongside the assets?

Answer: [NA]

Justification: We do not release new assets.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper does not release new assets.
- Researchers should communicate the details of the dataset/code/model as part of their submissions via structured templates. This includes details about training, license, limitations, etc.
- The paper should discuss whether and how consent was obtained from people whose asset is used.
- At submission time, remember to anonymize your assets (if applicable). You can either create an anonymized URL or include an anonymized zip file.

14. **Crowdsourcing and research with human subjects**

Question: For crowdsourcing experiments and research with human subjects, does the paper include the full text of instructions given to participants and screenshots, if applicable, as well as details about compensation (if any)?

Answer: [NA]

Justification: Not relevant for our work.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper does not involve crowdsourcing nor research with human subjects.
- Including this information in the supplemental material is fine, but if the main contribution of the paper involves human subjects, then as much detail as possible should be included in the main paper.
- According to the NeurIPS Code of Ethics, workers involved in data collection, curation, or other labor should be paid at least the minimum wage in the country of the data collector.

15. **Institutional review board (IRB) approvals or equivalent for research with human subjects**

Question: Does the paper describe potential risks incurred by study participants, whether such risks were disclosed to the subjects, and whether Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals (or an equivalent approval/review based on the requirements of your country or institution) were obtained?

Answer: [NA]

Justification: Not relevant for our work.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the paper does not involve crowdsourcing nor research with human subjects.
- Depending on the country in which research is conducted, IRB approval (or equivalent) may be required for any human subjects research. If you obtained IRB approval, you should clearly state this in the paper.

- We recognize that the procedures for this may vary significantly between institutions and locations, and we expect authors to adhere to the NeurIPS Code of Ethics and the guidelines for their institution.
- For initial submissions, do not include any information that would break anonymity (if applicable), such as the institution conducting the review.

16. **Declaration of LLM usage**

Question: Does the paper describe the usage of LLMs if it is an important, original, or non-standard component of the core methods in this research? Note that if the LLM is used only for writing, editing, or formatting purposes and does not impact the core methodology, scientific rigorousness, or originality of the research, declaration is not required.

Answer: [NA]

Justification: LLMs were not used for developing our core methods.

Guidelines:

- The answer NA means that the core method development in this research does not involve LLMs as any important, original, or non-standard components.
- Please refer to our LLM policy (<https://neurips.cc/Conferences/2025/LLM>) for what should or should not be described.

A $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ explanation

To understand why $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ cannot differentiate between positive bias amplification and negative bias amplification (i.e., bias reduction), let us take a look at its formulation.

$$Multi_{\rightarrow} = X, Var(\Delta_{gm})$$

$$X = \frac{1}{|\mathcal{G}||\mathcal{M}|} \sum_{g \in \mathcal{G}} \sum_{m \in \mathcal{M}} y_{gm} |\Delta_{gm}| + (1 - y_{gm}) |-\Delta_{gm}| \quad (10)$$

where,

$$y_{gm} = 1[P(m = 1, g = 1) > P(g = 1)P(m = 1)]$$

and,

$$\Delta_{gm} = \begin{cases} P(\hat{g} = 1|m = 1) - P(g = 1|m = 1) \\ \text{if measuring } M \rightarrow G \\ P(\hat{m} = 1|g = 1) - P(m = 1|g = 1) \\ \text{if measuring } G \rightarrow M \end{cases} \quad (11)$$

Following [4], M represents the attribute groups, and G represents the task groups.

From Equation 10, we get

$$\begin{aligned} X &= \frac{1}{|\mathcal{G}||\mathcal{M}|} \sum_{g \in \mathcal{G}} \sum_{m \in \mathcal{M}} y_{gm} |\Delta_{gm}| + |\Delta_{gm}| - y_{gm} |\Delta_{gm}| \\ \implies X &= \frac{1}{|\mathcal{G}||\mathcal{M}|} \sum_{g \in \mathcal{G}} \sum_{m \in \mathcal{M}} |\Delta_{gm}| \end{aligned} \quad (12)$$

Hence, we see from Equations 11 and 12 that $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ simply measures the average absolute differences for the conditional probabilities. Due to the absolute term, $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ cannot capture negative bias amplification.

B Explaining Directionality

To prove that DPA follows Wang et al.'s definition of directionality [3], let us see how DPA measures bias amplification in $A \rightarrow T$. As per equation 1, to calculate dataset bias (Ψ_A^D), the attacker function f_A^T tries to model the relationship of $P(T|A)$. For Q function of accuracy, we can rewrite the equation 1 as:

$$\Psi_A^D = Q(f_A^T(A), T) = \sum_{A_i \in A} P(A_i) P(T_{mi}|A_i) \quad (13)$$

where T_{mi} is such that $P(T_{mi}|A) \geq P(T_k|A_i) \forall k$.

Similarly, we can rewrite equation 2 as:

$$\Psi_A^M = Q(f_A^{\hat{T}}(A), \hat{T}) = \sum_{A_i \in A} P(A_i) P(\hat{T}_{mi}|A_i) \quad (14)$$

Then $DPA_{A \rightarrow T}$ can be defined as:

$$DPA_{A \rightarrow T} = \sum_{A_i \in A} P(A_i) (P(\hat{T}_{mi}|A_i) - P(T_{mi}|A_i)) \quad (15)$$

Similarly, for $T \rightarrow A$ direction we can say:

$$DPA_{T \rightarrow A} = \sum_{T_i \in T} P(T_i) (P(\hat{A}_{mi}|T_i) - P(A_{mi}|T_i)) \quad (16)$$

Let us compare this to Wang et al.’s definition of directionality [3]. They defined their metric $BA_{\rightarrow}$ in the following manner:

$$BA_{\rightarrow} = \frac{1}{|A||T|} \sum_{a \in A, t \in T} y_{at} \Delta_{at} + (1 - y_{at})(-\Delta_{at}) \quad (17)$$

where,

$$y_{at} = 1[P(A_a = 1, T_t = 1) > P(A_a = 1)P(T_t = 1)] \quad (18)$$

$$\Delta_{at} = \begin{cases} P(\hat{T}_t = 1|A_a = 1) - P(T_t = 1|A_a = 1) \\ \text{if measuring } A \rightarrow T \\ P(\hat{A}_a = 1|T_t = 1) - P(A_a = 1|T_t = 1) \\ \text{if measuring } T \rightarrow A \end{cases} \quad (19)$$

For $T \rightarrow A$, $BA_{\rightarrow}$ measures the change in $P(\hat{A}|T)$ with respect to $P(A|T)$, i.e., change in the conditional probability of $\hat{A}$ vs. A with respect to a fixed prior T . Similarly, for $A \rightarrow T$, $BA_{\rightarrow}$ measures change in the conditional probability of $\hat{T}_{mi}$ vs. T_{mi} with respect to a fixed prior A_i .

Thus, we see both $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and DPA are proportional to the similar changes in conditional probabilities with fixed priors. Therefore, DPA follows the same concept of directionality as $BA_{\rightarrow}$.

C Relative vs. Absolute Change in Predictability

To further show how relative change in DPA accounts for dataset bias, we plotted the relationship between LA and model bias (λ^M) in Figure 2a, and between DPA and model bias (Ψ^M) in Figure 2b, across three values of dataset bias — 0.1, 1, and 2 (dataset bias is denoted with Ψ^D for DPA and λ^D for LA). We observed that the slope of the LA vs. λ^M curve remains constant regardless of the dataset bias (λ^D). In contrast, the DPA vs. model bias (Ψ^M) curve shows steeper slopes for smaller dataset biases (Ψ^D) and flatter slopes for higher dataset biases. This means that for nearly unbiased datasets, DPA reports high amplification even for small increases in model bias, whereas for highly biased datasets, it reports lower amplification for a similar increase in bias. This shows that, unlike absolute change, relative change (used in DPA) accounts for dataset bias.

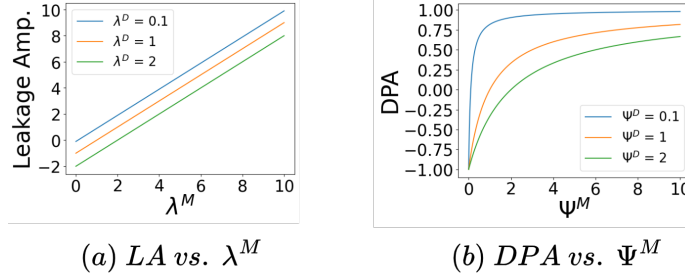


Figure 2: The graphs show trends between (a) LA vs model bias (λ^M), and between (b) DPA vs model bias (Ψ^M), at different values of dataset bias (λ^D for LA and Ψ^D for DPA). For the same model bias, DPA reported much higher bias amplification values (compared to LA) when the dataset bias is small.

D Attacker Robustness

To show how measuring relative change in predictability improves DPA ’s robustness to attacker function, we conduct an experiment using a controlled synthetic dataset and a real-world dataset like ImSitu [1].

D.1 Synthetic Experiment

We define $A : \mathcal{N}(3, 2)$. We define T and $\hat{T}$ in the following manner:

$$T = poly(A + (\alpha_1 * \epsilon), p) \quad (20)$$

$$\hat{T} = \text{poly}(A + (\alpha_2 * \epsilon), p) \quad (21)$$

Here $\text{poly}(x, p)$ represents any p^{th} degree polynomial of x and $\epsilon : \mathcal{N}(0, 1)$. To demonstrate positive bias amplification, we want $\hat{T}$ to be a better predictor of A , compared to T . Hence, we set $\alpha_2 < \alpha_1$.

As the attacker is generally a simple polynomial function, we used a simple Fully Connected Network as the attacker. We parameterized the depths (d) and width (w) of the attacker function. This parameterization helped us create a large variety of attacker functions (each with a different depth and width). The parameters of the experiment are shown in Table 3. For each attacker, we used a combination of TanH and ReLU activations.

We created two versions of *DPA* — (1) *DPA* with absolute change in bias (or predictability), to mimic the behavior of current metrics like *LA*, (2) *DPA* with relative change in bias, which is our formulation. For both versions, we used the inverse of RMSE loss as the quality function (Q).

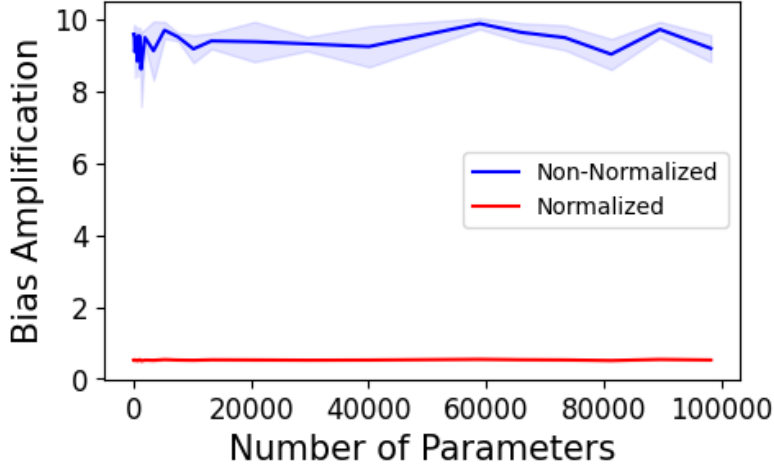


Figure 3: For different attacker functions, we show the bias amplification reported by *DPA* with absolute change (blue line) and *DPA* with relative change (red line) on the synthetic dataset.

For different attacker functions, we compared the values reported *DPA* with absolute change (blue line) and by *DPA* with relative change (red line) in Figure 3. *DPA* with absolute change shows unstable bias amplification scores with high variance across attackers. *DPA* with relative change shows a stable bias amplification score with minimal variance across attackers. This shows that *DPA* with relative change is more robust to attacker function hyperparameters.

Table 6: Experiment Parameters

Parameter	p	α_1	α_2	w	d
Value	2	1	2	[20, 500]	[2, 6]

D.2 ImSitu Experiment

We show that measuring relative change in predictability (as done in *DPA*) is robust to attacker hyperparameters on a real-world dataset like ImSitu. We used the same setup as the ImSitu experiment in section 4.3. We trained a ViT_b_16 model on the unbalanced ImSitu sub-dataset. We measured bias amplification using attackers with different hyperparameters.

We used a Fully Connected Network as our attacker function. We parameterized the width w (in the range of [5, 40] neurons) of the attacker function. This parameterization helped us create a large variety of attacker functions (each with a different width). For each attacker, we used ReLU activations. We used the Adam Optimizer with a learning rate of 5×10^{-3} .

We created two versions of *DPA* — (1) *DPA* with absolute change in bias (or predictability), to mimic the behavior of current metrics like *LA*, (2) *DPA* with relative change in bias, which is our formulation. For both versions, we used the inverse of categorical cross-entropy loss as the quality function (Q).

For different attacker functions, we compared the values reported *DPA* with absolute change (blue line) and by *DPA* with relative change (red line) in Figure 4. *DPA* with absolute change shows unstable bias amplification scores with high variance across attackers. *DPA* with relative change shows a stable bias amplification score with minimal variance across attackers. This shows that even in real-world datasets like ImSitu, *DPA* with relative change is more robust to attacker function hyperparameters.

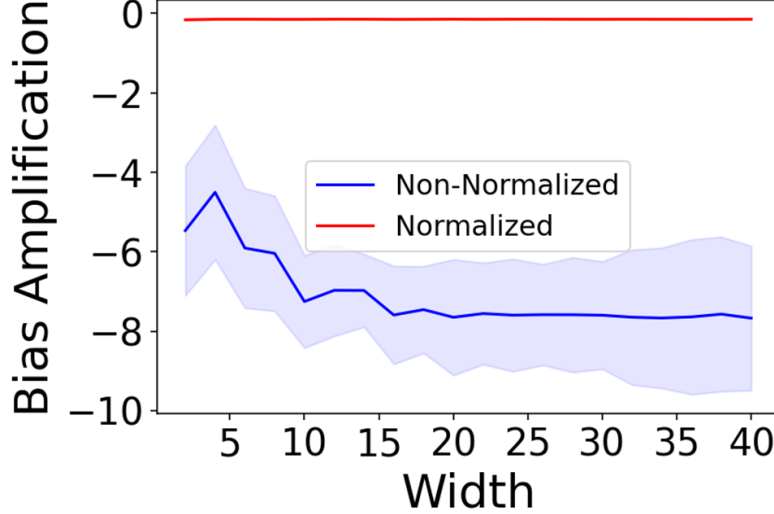


Figure 4: For different attacker functions, we show the bias amplification reported by *DPA* with absolute change (blue line) and *DPA* with relative change (red line) on the ImSitu dataset.

E COMPAS experiment

E.1 Experiment Setup

COMPAS is a tabular dataset containing information about individuals who have been previously arrested. Each entry is associated with 52 features. We used five features: age, juv_fel_count, juv_misd_count, juv_other_count, priors_count.

We limited the dataset to 2 races (Caucasian or African-American), which we used as the protected attribute (A). The task (T) was recidivism (i.e., if the person was arrested again for a crime in the next 2 years). Hence, $A = \{\text{Caucasian} : 0, \text{African-American} : 1\}$ and $T = \{\text{No Recidivism} : 0, \text{Recidivism} : 1\}$.

We created balanced and unbalanced versions of the COMPAS dataset. For the unbalanced dataset, we sampled all available COMPAS instances (attributes, race labels, and recidivism labels) for each of the four A and T pairs. For the balanced dataset, we sampled an equal number of instances across the four A and T pairs. The counts for the A and T pairs in the unbalanced dataset are shown in the top-left quadrant of Table 7a, and for the balanced dataset, in the top-left quadrant of Table 7b.

We trained a decision tree model on the unbalanced and the balanced COMPAS datasets. Each model predicts a person’s race ($\hat{A}$) and recidivism ($\hat{T}$) based on the 5 selected features. We measured the bias amplification caused by each model in two directions: bias amplification caused by race (A) on recidivism (T), referred to as $A \rightarrow T$, and the bias amplification caused by recidivism (T) on race (A), referred to as $T \rightarrow A$. In this experiment we only evaluated directional metrics – *DPA* (ours), $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and $Multi_{\rightarrow}$.

The problem of mapping a binary variable (A) to another binary variable (T) for the $A \rightarrow T$ direction and vice-versa is trivial and can be done using a contingency matrix as well. Thus, we use two variations of DPA . For DPA (ANN), we used a 3-layer dense neural network (with a hidden layer of size 4 and sigmoid activations) as the attacker function. For DPA (MAT), we calculate the probabilities based on a contingency matrix instead of an attacker function. Note that quality equalization is still applied as a preprocessing step.

E.2 Results

While interpreting COMPAS results, note that a co-occurrence-based metric like $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and a predictability-based metric like DPA capture different notions of bias.

$BA_{\rightarrow}$ classifies each $A - T$ pair in the dataset as a majority or minority pair using equation 18. It only measures if the counts of the majority pair increased (positive bias amplification) or decreased (negative bias amplification) in the model predictions or vice versa.

DPA does not select a majority or a minority $A - T$ pair. It measures the change in the task distribution given the attribute (and vice versa). For instance, if A and T are binary, DPA measures if the absolute difference in counts between $T = 0$ and $T = 1$ increased (positive bias amplification) or decreased (negative bias amplification) in the model predictions. Both $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and DPA offer different yet valuable insights into bias amplification.

Table 7: **COMPAS Dataset:** Counts of the protected attribute (race) and task (recidivism) in the dataset (represented as A and T) and in the model predictions (represented as $\hat{A}$ and $\hat{T}$) for the balanced and unbalanced COMPAS set. Here: $A = \{\text{Caucasian} : 0, \text{African-American} : 1\}$ and $T = \{\text{No Recidivism} : 0, \text{Recidivism} : 1\}$.

	$A = 0$	$A = 1$	$\hat{A} = 0$	$\hat{A} = 1$
$T = 0$	1229	1402	1056	1575
$T = 1$	874	1773	1115	1532
$\hat{T} = 0$	1165	1546	—	—
$\hat{T} = 1$	938	1629	—	—

(a) Unbalanced COMPAS Set

	$A = 0$	$A = 1$	$\hat{A} = 0$	$\hat{A} = 1$
$T = 0$	874	874	1083	665
$T = 1$	874	874	896	852
$\hat{T} = 0$	1145	948	—	—
$\hat{T} = 1$	603	800	—	—

(b) Balanced COMPAS Set

Table 8: **COMPAS Results:** The first two columns depict the bias amplification values for the unbalanced COMPAS set (Table 7a), while the last two columns depict the bias amplification values for the balanced COMPAS set (Table 7b). Subscript shows confidence intervals.

Method	Unbalanced		Balanced	
	$T \rightarrow A$	$A \rightarrow T$	$T \rightarrow A$	$A \rightarrow T$
$BA_{\rightarrow}$	$-0.078_{0.031}$	$-0.038_{0.001}$	$0.000_{0.000}$	$0.000_{0.000}$
$Multi_{\rightarrow}$	$0.078_{0.026}$	$0.038_{0.001}$	$0.066_{0.007}$	$0.099_{0.006}$
DPA (ANN)	$0.063_{0.005}$	$-0.040_{0.002}$	$0.061_{0.008}$	$0.100_{0.004}$
DPA (MAT)	$0.022_{0.008}$	$-0.036_{0.001}$	$0.066_{0.004}$	$0.098_{0.006}$

E.2.1 Unbalanced COMPAS dataset

The bias amplification scores for the unbalanced case are shown in the first two columns of Table 8.

$T \rightarrow A$: For $BA_{\rightarrow}$, when $T = 0$, the count of the majority class $A = 0$ decreased from 1229 in the dataset to 1056 in the model predictions. Similarly, when $T = 1$, the count of the majority class $A = 1$ decreased from 1773 in the dataset to 1532 in the model predictions. Since the count of the majority classes decreased in the model predictions, $BA_{\rightarrow}$ reported a negative bias amplification in $T \rightarrow A$.

For DPA , when $T = 0$, the difference in counts between $A = 0$ and $A = 1$ increased from 173 ($1402 - 1229 = 173$) in the dataset to 519 ($1575 - 1056 = 519$) in the model predictions. However, when $T = 1$, the difference in counts between $A = 0$ and $A = 1$ decreased from 899 ($1773 - 874 = 899$) in the dataset to 417 ($1532 - 1115 = 417$) in the model predictions. Since the decrease in bias when $T = 1$ is larger than the increase in bias when $T = 0$ ($899 - 417 > 519 - 173$), we might naively assume a negative bias amplification in $T \rightarrow A$.

This naive assumption overlooks the conflation of model errors and model biases (discussed in Section 3.1). Here, the decision tree model has a low accuracy when predicting $\hat{A}$ (approx. 69%); hence, 31% of instances in A are randomly flipped to match the model’s accuracy. As a result, the biases in the perturbed A are less than $\hat{A}$, indicating a positive bias amplification. The positive score reported by DPA is not an incorrect result. It is the low model accuracy that misleadingly suggests a negative bias amplification. $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ reports positive bias amplification as it cannot capture negative bias amplification scenarios (discussed in Section A).

$A \rightarrow T$: For $BA_{\rightarrow}$, when $A = 0$, the count of the majority class $T = 0$ decreased from 1229 in the dataset to 1165 in the model predictions. Similarly, when $A = 1$, the count of the majority class $T = 1$ decreased from 1773 in the dataset to 1546 in the model predictions. Since the count of the majority classes decreased in the model predictions, $BA_{\rightarrow}$ reported negative bias amplification in $A \rightarrow T$.

For DPA , when $A = 0$, the difference in counts between $T = 0$ and $T = 1$ decreased from 355 ($1229 - 874 = 355$) in the dataset to 227 ($1165 - 938 = 227$) in the model predictions. Similarly, when $A = 1$, the difference in counts between $T = 0$ and $T = 1$ decreased from 371 ($1773 - 1402 = 371$) in the dataset to 83 ($1629 - 1546 = 83$) in the model predictions. Since the overall count difference decreased in the model predictions, DPA reported negative bias amplification in $A \rightarrow T$.

$Multi_{\rightarrow}$ reported positive bias amplification as it cannot capture negative bias amplification. It only measures the magnitude of bias amplification but not its sign.

E.2.2 Balanced COMPAS Dataset

The bias amplification scores for the balanced case are shown in the last two columns of Table 8.

$T \rightarrow A$: Since $BA_{\rightarrow}$ assumes a balanced dataset is unbiased, $BA_{\rightarrow}$ reported zero bias amplification in $T \rightarrow A$. For DPA , when $T = 0$, the count difference between $A = 0$ and $A = 1$ increased from 0 ($874 - 874 = 0$) in the dataset to 418 ($1083 - 665 = 418$) in the model predictions. Similarly, when $T = 1$, the difference in counts between $A = 0$ and $A = 1$ increased from 0 ($874 - 874 = 0$) in the dataset to 44 ($896 - 852 = 44$) in the model predictions. Since the overall difference increased in the model predictions, DPA reported positive bias amplification in $T \rightarrow A$.

$A \rightarrow T$: Since the dataset is balanced, $BA_{\rightarrow}$ reported zero bias amplification in $A \rightarrow T$. For DPA , when $A = 0$, the difference in counts between $T = 0$ and $T = 1$ increased from 0 ($874 - 874 = 0$) in the dataset to 542 ($1145 - 603 = 542$) in the model predictions. Similarly, when $A = 1$, the difference in counts between $T = 0$ and $T = 1$ increased from 0 ($874 - 874 = 0$) in the dataset to 148 ($948 - 800 = 148$) in the model predictions. Since the overall count difference increased in the model predictions, DPA reported positive bias amplification in $A \rightarrow T$.

$Multi_{\rightarrow}$ reported positive bias amplification as it only looks at the magnitude of amplification scores.

F Simulating Biases in a Balanced COCO Dataset

Table 9: Bias Amplification scores for various metrics at different values of L in the COCO dataset

Test Accuracy (w/o shortcuts)	Test Accuracy (shortcuts)	L	$BA_{\rightarrow}$	$Multi_{\rightarrow}$	DPA (ours)	BA_{MALS}	LA
55.34%	71.20%	0.05	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.2569 _{0.0000}	0.0829 _{0.0007}	0.2586 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}
55.34%	72.58%	0.10	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.2707 _{0.0000}	0.0993 _{0.0014}	0.0032 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}
54.66%	74.31%	0.15	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.2879 _{0.0000}	0.1098 _{0.0009}	0.1793 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}
54.50%	75.01%	0.20	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.3017 _{0.0000}	0.1380 _{0.0010}	0.2448 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}

In this controlled experiment, we show that even if attributes and tasks are balanced in a dataset, models can pick up biases from unlabeled elements and amplify them at test time. We chose 2 out of the 12 task objects from the COCO balanced dataset used in Section 4.1: $A = \{\text{Female} : 0, \text{Male} : 1\}$ and $T = \{\text{Sink} : 0, \text{Not Sink} : 1\}$. Here, “Not Sink” refers to COCO images that do not have a sink. Our balanced dataset has 288 images for each A and T pair.

We created biases in our balanced dataset using one-pixel shortcuts (OPS) [19]. In OPS, a fixed pixel with position (x_i, y_i) is assigned the same value in all images of a class. This makes it easier for a model to predict a class, as it only needs to learn that all images in that class share the same pixel. By applying OPS, we simulated how an unlabeled element (here, the shortcut pixel) could create biases in a balanced dataset.

We used two parameters, β_1 and β_2 , where $0 \leq \beta_1, \beta_2 \leq 100$ and $\beta_1 > \beta_2$, to control how many shortcuts were added. For “sink” images, we applied OPS to $\beta_1\%$ images with males and $\beta_2\%$ images with females. For “not sink” images, we swapped the parameters, applying OPS to $\beta_2\%$ images with males and $\beta_1\%$ images with females.

Since $\beta_1 > \beta_2$, “sink” images with males had more shortcuts than those with females, while “not sink” images with females had more shortcuts than those with males. Although the dataset is balanced in terms of attributes and tasks, a model trained on this dataset is more likely to predict males for “sink” images and females for “not sink” images at test time. In essence, we introduced an $A \rightarrow T$ bias to simulate unlabeled bias elements in the balanced COCO dataset.

Similar to our experiment in Section 4.1, we trained a VGG16 model on this balanced COCO dataset. We trained the model for 15 epochs with a batch size of 32. We used the SGD optimizer, with a learning rate of 0.01 and momentum of 0.5. We used the binary cross-entropy loss for training.

Similar to the training dataset, we used 288 instances for each A and T pair in our test set. To verify if OPS introduced an $A \rightarrow T$ bias in the trained VGG16 model, we created two versions of our test set. In version 1, we did not introduce any shortcuts. In version 2, we applied shortcuts using parameters β_1 and β_2 as described above.

If the accuracy of VGG16 in version 2 of the test set (where shortcuts are applied) is greater than version 1 (where no shortcuts exist), we can confirm that the model has learned an $A \rightarrow T$ bias. This is because if the VGG16 model has learned the shortcuts (or biases) we introduced during training, it will give a higher accuracy on the test set where these shortcuts are available.

We show our results on four different configurations of β_1 and β_2 values in Table 9. For simplicity, we introduce a new term $L = \beta_1 - \beta_2$, where L is always greater than 0. We see that for all values of L , the accuracy of the test set with shortcuts is greater than the test set without shortcuts, which confirms the presence of an $A \rightarrow T$ bias.

As L increases, the $A \rightarrow T$ model bias increases (as the number of shortcuts increases with L). Only *DPA* reports increasing $A \rightarrow T$ scores as L increases. All other metrics fail to report increasing bias amplification scores. This shows that only *DPA* correctly captures the amplification of hidden biases (similar to bias amplification from unlabeled objects) in balanced datasets.

G Simulating Biases in a Balanced CMNIST Dataset

In this controlled experiment, we use the CMNIST dataset to show that even if attributes (color) and tasks (digit) are balanced in a dataset, models can pick up biases from unlabeled elements and amplify them at test time.

In the CMNIST dataset, we used images of handwritten digits from the original MNIST [29] dataset and added color to them by replacing white pixels with colored pixels. Each image is assigned a single color. The images are the features X , digit labels are the task T , and color is the protected attribute A . Each label (i.e., a digit from 0 - 9) is correlated with a particular color (i.e., 0 - red, 1 - blue, 2 - green and so on). The magnitude of this correlation is controlled using α . If $\alpha = 0.7$, 70% image examples of 0 are assigned red, and the remaining 30% images are randomly assigned any of the remaining 9 colors. α allows us to control the bias in the dataset.

Table 10: CMNIST controlled experiment.

	$\beta = 0.10$	$\beta = 0.20$	$\beta = 0.30$	$\beta = 0.40$
$DPA_{A \rightarrow T}$	0.063 ± 0.006	0.085 ± 0.006	0.098 ± 0.008	0.119 ± 0.006
$BA_{A \rightarrow T}$	0.000 ± 0.000	0.000 ± 0.000	0.000 ± 0.000	0.000 ± 0.000
LA	0.043 ± 0.009	0.060 ± 0.014	0.075 ± 0.015	0.071 ± 0.017

We trained a simple CNN model (with depth = 2) on this dataset. We used the trained model to get predictions, and post-processed the predictions using a parameter β . β defines the percentage of predicted labels that are overwritten based on the color in the input image. If $\beta = 0.1$, we randomly select 10% of the predicted labels. These labels are replaced based on the color in the image. This allows us to increase the $A \rightarrow T$ bias in the model predictions. For a fixed value of α , β allows us to control the model bias. We used accuracy as our Q function.

We started with a balanced CMNIST dataset ($\alpha = 0.1$). We then varied the β parameter from 0.1 to 0.4 to gradually increase the model bias. We showed the bias amplification captured by different metrics in Table 10.

As we can see in Table 10, $BA_{\rightarrow}$ shows a constant value for varying values of β . Meanwhile, LA is unable to show a clear trend due to the large confidence intervals. Only DPA shows a monotonic increase in reported bias amplification as β value increases. This indicates that only DPA is able to accurately capture the bias amplification in our controlled experiment.

H COCO Masking experiment on VGG-16

Table 11: $T \rightarrow A$ bias amplification as the person is progressively masked in the unbalanced and balanced COCO sub-datasets. Attribution scores indicate the $T \rightarrow A$ model bias in the VGG16 model. For the unbalanced sub-dataset, DPA and $BA_{\rightarrow}$ correctly capture the increasing $T \rightarrow A$ model bias. For the balanced sub-dataset, only DPA correctly captures the increasing $T \rightarrow A$ model bias. Subscript shows confidence intervals.

Dataset Split	Metric	Original	Partial Masked	Segment Masked	Bounding-Box Masked
	Image				
	Attribution Map				
Unbalanced	Attribution	0.6202 _{0.0026}	0.6777 _{0.0027}	0.7321 _{0.0020}	0.7973 _{0.0020}
	DPA (ours)	0.0034 _{0.0006}	0.0195 _{0.0007}	0.0214 _{0.0010}	0.0242 _{0.0004}
	$BA_{\rightarrow}$	0.0029 _{0.0002}	0.0072 _{0.0005}	0.0108 _{0.0007}	0.0140 _{0.0007}
	$Multi_{\rightarrow}$	0.0057 _{0.0003}	0.0091 _{0.0005}	0.0109 _{0.0005}	0.0219 _{0.0011}
	LA	0.0005 _{0.0000}	0.0068 _{0.0009}	0.0032 _{0.0004}	0.0011 _{0.0012}
Balanced	Attribution	0.6292 _{0.0027}	0.6992 _{0.0024}	0.7367 _{0.0019}	0.8065 _{0.0183}
	DPA (ours)	0.0019 _{0.0002}	0.0024 _{0.0004}	0.0068 _{0.0009}	0.0100 _{0.0011}
	$BA_{\rightarrow}$	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}	0.0000 _{0.0000}
	$Multi_{\rightarrow}$	0.0035 _{0.0002}	0.0056 _{0.0004}	0.0060 _{0.0003}	0.0099 _{0.0010}
	LA	0.0012 _{0.0002}	0.0055 _{0.0016}	0.0026 _{0.0005}	0.0065 _{0.0011}

We recreated our COCO masking experiment from section 4.1 with a VGG16 [16] model. The results are shown in Table 11.

For the unbalanced COCO sub-dataset (row 2 of Table 11), DPA and $BA_{\rightarrow}$ report increasing $T \rightarrow A$ scores across versions, correctly capturing the growing model bias (indicated by the growing model attribution scores). While $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ shows the same trend as these metrics, it is not a reliable metric as it cannot capture negative bias amplification (discussed in Section E).

For the balanced sub-dataset, we observe growing model attribution scores indicating a rising $T \rightarrow A$ model bias. DPA correctly captures this trend by reporting increasing $T \rightarrow A$ scores. While $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ shows the same trend as DPA , as discussed earlier, $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ is not a reliable metric. LA fails to capture the growing model bias as it is not directional. $BA_{\rightarrow}$ assumes that a balanced dataset is unbiased. Hence, it fails to capture the growing model bias and constantly reports zero bias amplification.

We also show additional examples for attribution maps for the VGG16 model on images from our balanced COCO sub-dataset in Figure 5. We observe in these images that as we increase masking on

the person, i.e., attribution examples from left to right, the attribution shifts from the person to either the background or unlabeled task objects. This shows that in balanced datasets, as masking increases, the model relies more on unlabeled background objects to determine the gender of the person.

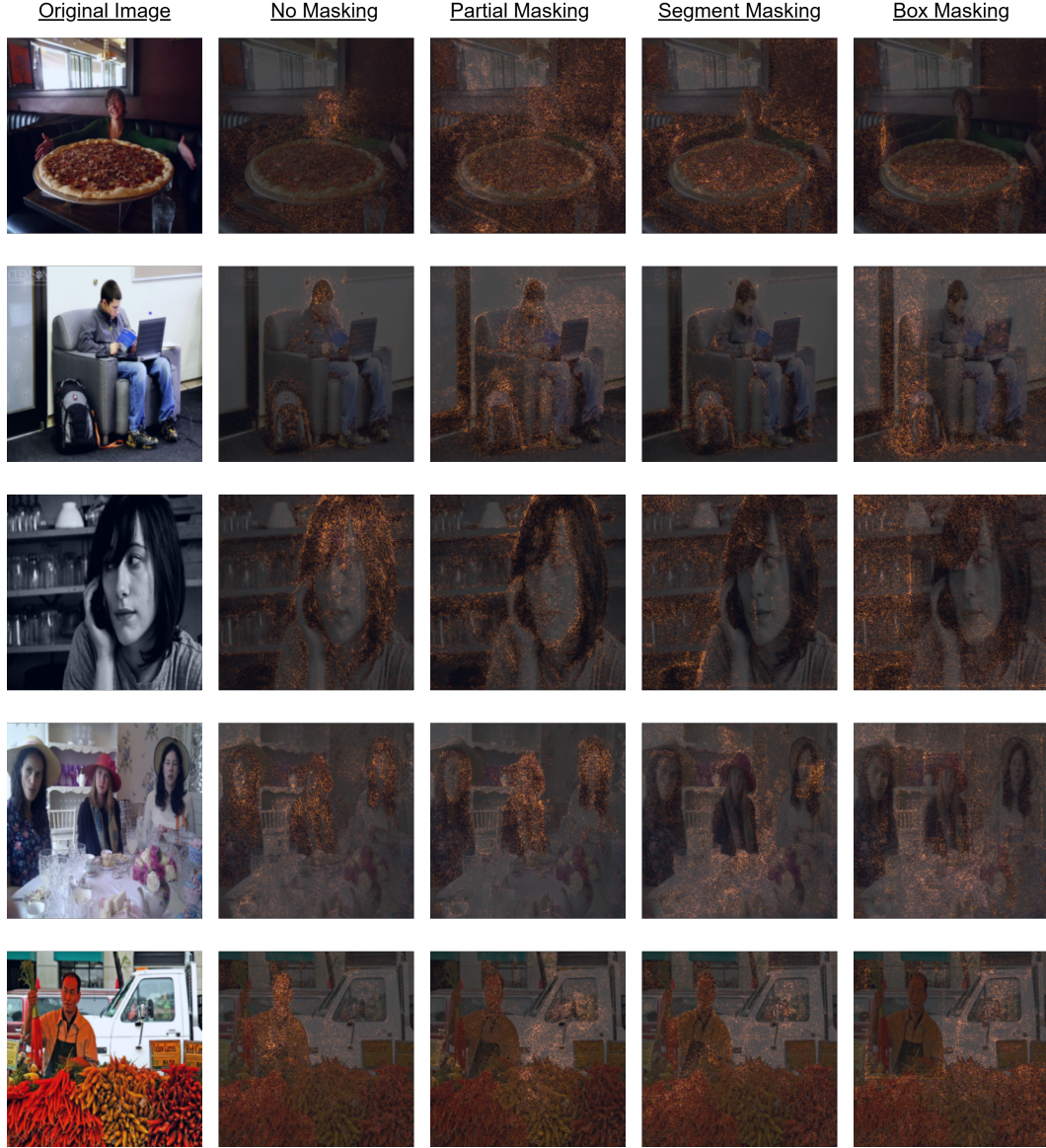


Figure 5: VGG-16 model attributions for images from the balanced COCO sub-dataset. For all cases, as the person in the image is progressively masked, the VGG-16 often relies on unlabeled background objects to predict gender.

I ImSitu Experiment: $T \rightarrow A$ results

In Table 12, we showed the sensitivity and bias amplification scores in the $T \rightarrow A$ direction for the unbalanced sub-dataset. In Table 13, we showed corresponding results for the balanced sub-dataset. For both tables, we ranked all models (from 1 to 9) by their $\bar{S}en_{T \rightarrow A}$ scores, from least biased to most biased. We checked which bias amplification metrics produced rankings closest to this model bias ranking. This allowed us to see which metrics best captured changes in model bias.

In the unbalanced case (Table 12), *DPA*’s ranking is closest to the model bias ranking — it differs by only three positions. All other metrics show significant mismatches.

In the balanced case (Table 13), DPA 's ranking is closest to the model bias ranking — it again differs by only three positions. Other metrics, like LA and $Multi_{\rightarrow}$, differ significantly. Metrics like $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and BA_{MALS} report zero bias amplification because they assume that a balanced dataset has no bias.

Table 12: $T \rightarrow A$ results for the ImSitu unbalanced sub-dataset. Models are shown in increasing order of model bias, based on their $Sen_{T \rightarrow A}$ scores. For each metric, the number in parentheses shows the rank it assigned to that model — where rank 1 means the lowest (most negative) bias amplification and rank 9 means the highest (most positive). Red numbers highlight where the metric's rank differs from the model bias rank assigned by $Sen_{T \rightarrow A}$. DPA is the most reliable metric here, as its model rankings closely match the $Sen_{T \rightarrow A}$ rankings. All values are scaled by 100.

Models	$Sen_{T \rightarrow A}$	$DPA_{T \rightarrow A}$	LA	$BA_{T \rightarrow A}$	$Multi_{T \rightarrow A}$	BA_{MALS}
SqueezeNet [21]	0.000 (1)	-0.013 (3)	0.009 (1)	-18.26 (1)	18.90 (9)	25.59 (9)
ViT_b_32 [15]	0.033 (2)	-0.025 (1)	0.209 (6)	-6.891 (6)	7.252 (5)	0.248 (8)
Wide ResNet50 [22]	0.036 (3)	-0.020 (2)	0.253 (8)	-4.494 (7)	5.289 (3)	0.061 (4)
Wide ResNet101 [22]	0.098 (4)	-0.012 (4)	0.281 (9)	-3.612 (8)	4.790 (2)	0.109 (3)
MaxViT [20]	0.188 (5)	0.000 (5)	0.130 (4)	-8.143 (4)	17.61 (8)	0.212 (6)
ViT_b_16 [15]	0.190 (6)	0.001 (6)	0.195 (5)	-7.214 (5)	7.719 (4)	0.229 (7)
MobileNet V2 [23]	0.566 (7)	0.009 (7)	0.087 (3)	-9.085 (3)	9.761 (7)	0.193 (5)
Swin Tiny [24]	2.800 (8)	0.012 (8)	0.064 (2)	-9.782 (2)	10.86 (6)	-0.082 (1)
VGG16 [16]	2.938 (9)	0.013 (9)	0.210 (7)	-1.620 (9)	3.979 (1)	-0.045 (2)

Table 13: $T \rightarrow A$ results for the ImSitu balanced sub-dataset. This table follows the same setup as Table 12. Red numbers highlight where the metric's rank differs from the model bias rank assigned by $Sen_{T \rightarrow A}$. DPA is the most reliable metric here, as its model rankings exactly match the model bias ranking given by $Sen_{T \rightarrow A}$. All values are scaled by 100.

Models	$Sen_{T \rightarrow A}$	$DPA_{T \rightarrow A}$	LA	$BA_{T \rightarrow A}$	$Multi_{T \rightarrow A}$	BA_{MALS}
SqueezeNet [21]	0.000 (1)	0.019 (3)	0.003 (8)	0.000 (1)	0.208 (2)	0.000 (1)
Wide ResNet50 [22]	0.107 (2)	0.016 (1)	0.002 (7)	0.000 (1)	3.580 (8)	0.000 (1)
Wide ResNet101 [22]	0.122 (3)	0.018 (2)	0.000 (3)	0.000 (1)	1.815 (3)	0.000 (1)
MaxViT [20]	0.261 (4)	0.021 (4)	-0.002 (1)	0.000 (1)	0.022 (1)	0.000 (1)
MobileNet V2 [23]	0.297 (5)	0.021 (5)	0.007 (9)	0.000 (1)	1.975 (4)	0.000 (1)
ViT_b_16 [15]	0.310 (6)	0.021 (6)	0.000 (2)	0.000 (1)	2.174 (5)	0.000 (1)
Swin Tiny [24]	0.345 (7)	0.022 (7)	0.001 (5)	0.000 (1)	2.628 (7)	0.000 (1)
VGG16 [16]	0.497 (9)	0.047 (8)	0.000 (3)	0.000 (1)	5.638 (9)	0.000 (1)
ViT_b_32 [15]	0.626 (9)	0.174 (6)	0.001 (5)	0.000 (1)	2.584 (6)	0.000 (1)

J Additional Experiment Details

Given below are additional details about the hyperparameters used for DPA and LA metrics in different experiments mentioned in the paper. Since BA_{MALS} , $BA_{\rightarrow}$, and $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ do not train an attacker function, no such hyperparameters are required for them. For all experiments, we used (1/cross-entropy) as our quality function (Q).

Table 14: COCO Masking additional parameters

Parameter	Optimizer	Attacker Depth	Learning Rate	Num. epochs	Batch size
DPA	Adam	2	0.001	100	64
LA	Adam	2	0.001	100	64

Table 15: ImSitu additional parameters

Parameter	Optimizer	Attacker Depth	Learning Rate	Num. epochs	Batch size
DPA	Adam	2	0.001	100	128
LA	Adam	2	0.001	100	128

Table 16: COMPAS additional parameters

Parameter	Optimizer	Attacker Depth	Learning Rate	Num. epochs	Batch size
DPA	Adam	2	0.005	50	512
LA	Adam	2	0.005	50	512

K Behavior of different directional metrics

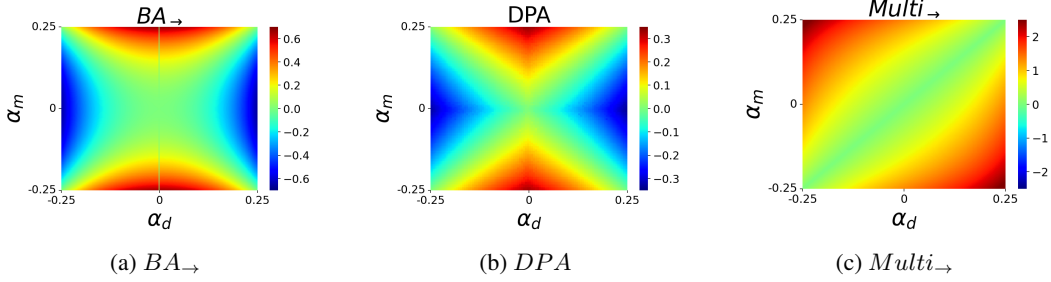


Figure 6: Bias amplification heatmap for different configurations of the dataset (X-axis) and model predictions (Y-axis). α_d creates different configurations of the dataset, while α_m creates different configurations of the model predictions. $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and DPA show similar behavior (except when the dataset is balanced). However, $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ always reports positive bias amplification.

To analyze the behavior of directional metrics, we simulated a dataset with a protected attribute A ($A = 0, 1$) and task T ($T = 0, 1$). Initially, each A and T pair had an equal probability of 0.25. To introduce bias in the dataset, we modified the probabilities by adding a term α_d to the group $\{A = 0, T = 0\}$ and subtracting α_d from $\{A = 1, T = 1\}$. Here, α_d ranges from -0.25 to 0.25 in steps of 0.005 . The dataset is balanced only when $\alpha = 0$ but becomes increasingly unbalanced as α_d deviates from 0. In the same manner, we use α_m to introduce bias in the model predictions.

With α_d and α_m ranging from -0.25 to 0.25 , we create 100 different versions of the dataset and model predictions, respectively. For each metric, we plot a 100×100 heatmap of the reported bias amplification scores. Each pixel in the heatmap represents the bias amplification score for a specific {dataset, model} pair.

Figure 6 shows the heatmaps for all metrics. Figures 6a and 6b display the bias amplification heatmaps for $BA_{\rightarrow}$ and DPA , respectively, with similar patterns. However, $BA_{\rightarrow}$ (Figure 6a) shows a distinct vertical green line in the center, indicating that when the dataset is balanced ($\alpha_d = 0$ on the X-axis), bias amplification remains at 0, regardless of changes in model’s bias (varying α_m values on the Y-axis). In contrast, DPA (Figure 6b) accurately detects non-zero bias amplification whenever there is a shift in bias in either the dataset or model predictions, making it a more reliable metric. $Multi_{\rightarrow}$ (as shown in Figure 6c) reports positive bias amplification in all scenarios, making it unreliable.

L Runtime Comparison

In Table 17, we compared the time taken by different metrics to compute bias amplification on the COCO dataset. This computation was performed over an Intel Core i7 165H processor without any GPU acceleration. Note that bias (or bias amplification) analysis is usually conducted offline (and not in real time). While DPA is several magnitudes more time-consuming than the other methods, an execution time of two minutes is acceptable for most offline applications.

Table 17: Runtime comparison for different bias amplification metrics on the COCO dataset.

	BA_{MALS}	$BA_{\rightarrow}$	$Multi_{\rightarrow}$	LA	DPA
Time (ms)	57.57	150.16	453.11	1.90×10^5	1.20×10^5