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# Influence of Artificial Intelligence on Educational Inequalities and Perils Confronting Women in Albania

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## **Abstract**

*This paper sheds light on the reality of women following an educational system characterized by a pervasive tendency and the disparities they face in Albania. Despite numerous efforts towards advancement against such phenomena, women in Albania continue to find themselves facing barriers when it comes to accessing education of high quality. The impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on gender disparities in education and the difficulties women encounter in Albania is a complicated and diverse topic. Although artificial intelligence (AI) has promise in mitigating certain educational gaps, its implementation and management could potentially exacerbate pre-existing inequalities. Furthermore, the effects of AI on education may overlap with particular issues that women in Albania confront, such as gender stereotypes and restricted access to education. This article will explore the multifaceted nature of these educational inequalities while taking into consideration many factors such as limited access to schools, cultural norms, gender biases in curricula, and societal expectations that create a self-perpetuating system of discriminatory practices. Furthermore, it examines the risks women encounter when pursuing education, including social stigma, harassment, and violence. By understanding the complexities of these concerns, this abstract aims to raise awareness, prompt dialogues, and advocate for changes that ensure an even-handed and safe environment for women to pursue education in Albania.*

## **Keywords**

Artificial intelligence; gender disparities; education; perils; harassment

## Introduction

One glance at Albania's history reveals the remarkable strides it has made as both a nation and its people. If we also take the time to consider its sociopolitical environment at the point Albania started its journey as a democratic country, we could say that it has made considerable progress. However, in the aspect of gender equality, this progress thus far is not discernible. We have been bearing witness to many cases of disparities towards our female peers, from them being belittled and not taken seriously solely because of their gender to them losing their lives at the hands of their spouses, as reported in the news. This profound awareness has propelled me towards researching and raising awareness on these issues, aiming to contribute to a fair and inclusive educational environment for all my people. Accessing technology gave positive impacts such as the fact that artificial intelligence has the potential to improve access to education by leveraging online learning platforms to offer distant and flexible learning options. In places where there aren't many educational resources, this might be helpful but exposes to a potential peril: Unequal access to technology could exacerbate already-existing disparities in schooling. It can be difficult for families with little money to give their kids access to the internet or the essential gadgets.

## State of Art

In ("Counting Dead Women Albania" , n.d.), we notice a phenomenon happening in Albania and after analyzing it we understand its close correlation with the victim's low background of education as a result of societal expectations.

We are given numbers regarding phenomena that happen in countries with similar educational gender-based disparities, including violence, teen pregnancy, and neglect, 11.8% of women aged 20–24 years old who were married or in a union before age 18. The adolescent birth rate is 14.2 per 1,000 women aged 15–19 as of 2019, down from 14.3 per 1,000 in 2018. As of February 2021, 29.5% of seats in parliament were held by women (Albania, n.d.)

In (Peace Corps Under Pressure Over Albania Sex Scandal, n.d.) we are introduced to an attempt of international structures trying to fight the aftereffects of educational disparities in Albania. After the Peace Corps allowed an easy exit for a former country director in Albania who was accused of sexual harassment - and fired the whistleblower who reported the claims - staff in Albania are campaigning for it to change its internal policies.

In (2016 Peace Corps Albania: Annual Review, n.d.), we come into realization as to why these attempts failed. In this article here, we are also introduced to other related phenomena, such as lack of supervision, neglect from the competent governmental structures whose purpose is to prevent these cases, etc. In this Peace Corps report for Albania in 2016, it shows how the Peace Corps had created 3 working groups in Albania, with the aim of contributing to the education system in Albania, through civil service organizations and recently with contribution in the municipalities of governance.

In (Sokol Pacukaj, 2021), the article brings to attention the importance of gender equality as a valuable asset in our politics, economics, education, and other aspects of society.

In (Jusko, 2019), we will see actual numbers regarding the subject. The study gives detailed information on respondents divided by age, gender, employment, and education.

In (Genc Burazeri, 2015), the article will focus on how educational differences between spouses leads to domestic violence. This subject also opens the door to discussions regarding our societal expectations, and how these phenomena affect a considerable number of men living in a patriarchal society. More than a third (37%, 384/1039) of women had experienced violence. Risk was greatest among women aged 25-34 (odds ratio 1.47, 95% CI 1.04 to 2.09), women with tertiary education (3.70, 2.04 to 6.67), women in white collar jobs (4.0, 1.59 to 10.0), women with least educated husbands (5.01, 2.91 to 8.64), and women married to men raised in rural areas (3.31, 2.29 to 4.80). Women were at higher risk if they were more educated than their husbands (4.76, 2.56 to 9.09).

## Current Situation : Unpacking Gender Disparities

Gender-based educational inequalities persist as a significant concern within the Albanian education system. In this section we will cover all the aspects of these issues based on results from other researches in this field of study. We will begin a thorough examination of these disparities existing in enrollment, access, retention, academic achievement, and educational pathways between boys and girls. The peril biased of AI algorithms in educational technologies have the potential to reinforce gender stereotypes. It may restrict chances for women, for instance, if algorithms suggest distinct job pathways according to gender. In academic year 2020-21, 32,690 students graduated in tertiary education, 66.1 % of graduates were females.

The areas in which most females have graduated comparatively with males are "Education" (82.3 %), followed by "Arts and Humanities" (79.9 %) and "Social Sciences, Journalism and Information" (79.1 %).

The areas in which more males have graduated compared to females are "Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction" (64.4 %), "Services" (63.9 %), and "Information and Communication Technologies" (61.6 %) (Education in Albania, n.d.)

## Access Disparities

A recent study by UN Women shows that girls in rural areas face significant challenges in accessing education due to factors such as limited infrastructure, long commuting distances, and traditional gender roles that prioritize domestic responsibilities over schooling.<sup>2</sup> Conversely, boys often enjoy greater access to educational opportunities in urban areas, resulting in an imbalance in educational participation. This claim is also supported by another study conducted specifically for the rural areas of the region of Kruja, where it also shows the importance of education in a society where women are strongly dependent on a

father, spouse, and family in general. The numbers presented in this study unequivocally reveal conspicuous disparities between genders. The study also points out how the political state of Albania, precisely the post-communist era of Albania, affected women and education. It mentions how before that, Albania was in dire need of educated people in different fields of education, and so women and men alike were allowed to pursue education. Undeniably, as it would happen under a dictatorship regime, not everyone was introduced to that opportunity, and even if they were, not always in the field they were interested in. But nonetheless, these cases knew no gender. The issue regarding gender-biased disparities would manifest when education was no longer an asset required by the government, and gender roles were once again pushed into women by the patriarchal elements of Kruja.

### Academic Achievements

Gender-based academic disparities are observed in various subjects and levels of education. A positive impact is that AI can help build skills that will be needed in the labor market of the future. By giving them the chance to develop their skills in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) disciplines, this could empower women. Potential peril is the fact that Women who already may have difficulty entering and progressing in the workforce may be disproportionately impacted if AI adoption results in job displacement without equivalent chances for reskilling. Research conducted by INSTAT (Institute of Statistics) indicates that choices made by the students when selecting their path of education are strongly influenced by gender norms and societal expectations. last one isntat These numbers show how boys exhibit a higher propensity for selecting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) oriented fields, while on the other hand women are directed towards fields often labeled as “feminine” such as humanities and social sciences. The acceptance and effects of AI in education may be influenced by cultural norms and societal expectations. For instance, not all areas will gain equally from AI's ability to improve STEM education if it deters girls from pursuing STEM degrees. Security and privacy issues with data are quite important. Insufficient protection of personal data may result in privacy violations that disproportionately impact women and other vulnerable groups. A potential peril is that the development and application of artificial intelligence in education may have unexpected repercussions if there is insufficient regulation and monitoring. Policies that guarantee accountability, fairness, and transparency are vital. A multi-stakeholder approach encompassing legislators, educators, IT developers, and communities is necessary to address these issues. The promotion of impartial AI algorithms, equal access to technology, and an emphasis on inclusivity are crucial for minimizing the risks and optimizing the benefits of AI in education, especially for Albanian women.

Wife's (or family) characteristic	N	Experienced physical violence in past year (n=204)	No physical violence in past year (n=166)
<b>Age (years)</b>			
45-65	379	121 (31.6)	258 (68.4)
35-45	314	112 (35.7)	202 (64.3)
25-34	348	151 (43.4)	197 (56.6)
<b>Education</b>			
> 12 years	271	121 (44.7)	150 (55.3)
9-12 years	528	178 (33.7)	350 (66.3)
0-8 years	500	48 (9.6)	452 (90.4)
<b>Employment status</b>			
White collar	576	180 (31.3)	396 (68.7)
Blue collar	188	47 (24.9)	141 (75.1)
Unemployed	334	105 (31.4)	229 (68.6)
<b>Religion</b>			
Christian	423	161 (38.1)	262 (61.9)
Muslim	607	219 (36.1)	388 (63.9)
<b>Origin</b>			
Urban area (Tirana or other)	495	166 (33.5)	329 (66.5)
Rural area (countryside before age 10)	318	126 (39.6)	192 (60.4)
Rural area (countryside at age ≥10)	501	83 (16.6)	418 (83.4)

Figure 2: Womens experienced violence in the past few years.

ment without equivalent chances for reskilling. Research conducted by INSTAT (Institute of Statistics) indicates that choices made by the students when selecting their path of education are strongly influenced by gender norms and societal expectations. last one isntat These numbers show how boys exhibit a higher propensity for selecting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) oriented fields, while on the other hand women are directed towards fields often labeled as “feminine” such as humanities and social sciences. The acceptance and effects of AI in education may be influenced by cultural norms and societal expectations. For instance, not all areas will gain equally from AI's ability to improve STEM education if it deters girls from pursuing STEM degrees. Security and privacy issues with data are quite important. Insufficient protection of personal data may result in privacy violations that disproportionately impact women and other vulnerable groups. A potential peril is that the development and application of artificial intelligence in education may have unexpected repercussions if there is insufficient regulation and monitoring. Policies that guarantee accountability, fairness, and transparency are vital. A multi-stakeholder approach encompassing legislators, educators, IT developers, and communities is necessary to address these issues. The promotion of impartial AI algorithms, equal access to technology, and an emphasis on inclusivity are crucial for minimizing the risks and optimizing the benefits of AI in education, especially for Albanian women.

### Consequences

The evidently existing gender norms have lead to other problematic situations in our society. A study shows that statistically in Albania, teen pregnancy occurs at a rate of 14.2 per 1000 women (ages 15-19). The study also points out the noticeable lack of female representation in parliamentary proceedings and the amount of unpaid care and domestic wok provided by women. Unfortunately, the observed phenomenon is merely the tip of the iceberg, indicating the existence of a much larger

	Female	Male	Total
Total	200	200	400
Employed	98	140	238
Unemployed	102	60	162
Higher education	66	98	164
Secondary education	104	88	192
Eighth Education	30	6	36
Primary education	0	8	8
18 - 25 years old	52	50	102
26 - 35 years old	56	42	98
36 - 45 years old	40	64	104
46 - 60 years old	50	40	90
61 years and older	2	4	6

Figure 3: Academic achievements based on gender and age.

and complex issue. An article was written by Citizens Channel Albania titled “Counting Dead Women Albania”.<sup>1</sup> As the title indicates, the article quantifies the number of female fatalities during the past months. An Instagram account created by Eva Shimaj and Patris Pustina on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, posts the cases of the phenomenon of femicide. The two activists talk about their initiative, how they could stand by as they waited for another woman to get murdered, and how the posts in their Instagram profile lack information due to lack of attention from the media and the institutions responsible for such cases. "A woman was killed, and that is sufficient. When reasons are given, they often end up in banalities such as 'for weak motives.' The true reason behind every murder is misogyny," - asserts Eva.

### Risk Analysis and response

Understanding the potential risks that society may face due to the persistent educational inequalities faced by women is crucial in developing effective response strategies. This section aims to analyze and address the potential risks associated with women's limited access to education, highlighting the need for urgent action and proposing possible solutions. We will also analyze the compatibility of these solutions with the Albanian society and the competence of governmental structures to prevent the parties partaking into this phenomenon to act against the law.

### Unsuccessful Endeavors

After assessing the importance of women being educated in a society, the need for urgent action to develop effective response strategies. In 2016, the Peace Corps made an attempt to assist Albanians and presented them to these goals :

- To help the people of interested countries in meeting their needs for trained men and women.
- To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
- To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.<sup>4</sup>

Peace Corps operated in three groups to achieve these goals in different regions of Albania. This contribution to Albanian society in 2016 was most needed for the same exact reasons we mentioned beforehand, and so the Albanian people embraced the assistance with heartfelt gratitude. Regrettably, a scandal ensued following the provision of this offer. A former country director in Albania was accused of Sexual Harassment, and after firing the whistleblower who reported the claims, Peace Corps gave the former director an easy exit. In the article written by BalkanInsight<sup>3</sup>, it is mentioned that the volunteers were the ones to report the crime of two women being sexually assaulted in August 2015. Even though this scandal escalated to massive proportions in the area, the Albanian media and the responsible institutions remained silent.

### Assessin Consistent Outcomes

Research indicates a perplexing correlation between a higher educational background of women compared to their spouses

and the presence of domestic violence. In this subsection, we delve into the nuanced relationship between educational disparities within intimate partnerships and the occurrence of domestic violence. This article comprehensively explores various facets of the domestic violence phenomenon, providing in-depth coverage and intricate details.

### Conclusions

In conclusion, a complex picture emerges from the analysis of artificial intelligence's (AI) impact on educational disparities and women's difficulties in Albania. AI has a lot of intriguing applications in education, including skill improvement, individualized learning, and greater accessibility. These benefits come with risks, too, which need to be carefully considered in order to prevent widening already existing gaps. The ability to

Wife's (or family) characteristic	N	Experienced physical violence in past year (n=204)	No physical violence in past year (n=600)	Odds ratio (95%CI)	P-value
Age (years)					
40-49	274	121 (21.9)	253 (28.4)	1.00 <sup>c</sup>	
50-59	314	112 (29.3)	202 (63.8)	1.18 (0.88 to 1.62)	0.90
25-34	345	151 (29.3)	195 (29.6)	1.05 (0.72 to 1.54)	<0.01
Education					
>12 years	271	131 (54.7)	140 (21.5)	1.00 <sup>c</sup>	
9-12 years	528	179 (47.2)	350 (55.7)	0.54 (0.40 to 0.74)	<0.01
0-8 years	240	88 (29.6)	152 (28.9)	0.66 (0.45 to 0.95)	<0.01
Employment status					
White collar	275	133 (26.5)	142 (22.4)	1.00 <sup>c</sup>	
Housekeeper	311	127 (29.4)	184 (28.7)	0.61 (0.40 to 0.94)	0.02
Blue collar	524	209 (27.8)	315 (59.2)	0.51 (0.37 to 0.71)	<0.01
unemployed	240	86 (25.4)	154 (28.5)	0.69 (0.42 to 0.92)	<0.01
religion					
christian	474	181 (29.4)	293 (48.7)	1.00 <sup>c</sup>	
Muslim	609	219 (27.8)	390 (59.6)	0.61 (0.41 to 0.95)	0.02
origin					
Urban area (Tirana or other)	465	155 (30.9)	310 (51.4)	1.00 <sup>c</sup>	
Rural area (came to city)	538	179 (35.7)	359 (66.6)	1.50 (1.07 to 2.10)	0.02

Figure 4: Assessin Consistent Outcomes.

use technology becomes a crucial component, since differences in device and internet connection might potentially counteract the benefits of online learning. The potential of AI-powered personalized learning depends on resolving algorithmic biases and making sure that all students, regardless of gender or socioeconomic status, benefit from the technology. Gender bias in AI algorithms is a serious problem since it might reinforce preconceptions and restrict women's access to higher education and career prospects. Moreover, in this paper the necessity for a thorough and culturally aware approach is highlighted by the interconnectedness of gender and sociocultural variables.

While developing and implementing AI in education, societal norms and expectations—particularly those that impact women's professional trajectories and educational choices—must be taken into account. The difficulties mentioned also cover more general societal concerns including security, privacy of data, and the possibility of employment displacement.

Strong governance structures and policies are required in light of these issues to guarantee the moral and just application of AI in education. Collaboration between governmental agencies, academic institutions, tech companies, and local communities is crucial to solving these issues. Legislators are essential in creating laws that promote equity, openness, and inclusivity. Prioritizing equitable access to technology and eradicating gender stereotypes in AI-driven teaching resources should be top priorities for educational institutions. Prioritizing ethical issues will help tech engineers make sure AI systems are inclusive of all people and are free of prejudices. In the end, the field of AI's impact on educational disparities and the difficulties faced by women in Albania is dynamic and ever-evolving. Through recognition of the possible risks and proactive efforts to reduce them, interested parties can leverage AI's revolutionary potential to provide a fairer and more inclusive learning environment for everybody.

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