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Student Views in AI Ethics and Social Impact

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***Abstract*-- The evolution of information systems and artificial intelligence has profoundly reshaped modern society, leading to significant ethical and social impacts across various dimensions of daily life. Key technological trends, such as increased computing power and advanced data analysis, have introduced moral concerns regarding privacy, intellectual property, and the appropriate use of personal information. Research into student perspectives specifically highlights that artificial intelligence is expected to have the greatest influence on domains such as medicine, education, and media. Major societal threats identified across these technologies include job displacement due to automation, the spread of misinformation and deep fakes, and potential health risks associated with prolonged system use. Gender-based analysis reveals that while perceptions of threats are largely similar, men often show higher awareness of chatbots and military applications, whereas women demonstrate a stronger inclination toward ethical considerations and using technology to help others. To address these growing complexities, the sources recommend the development of comprehensive ethical codes, enhanced educational curricula on information society conduct, and robust government legislation to ensure accountability and data integrity.**

***Keywords*-- Computer Science, AI, Ethics, Study, Students, Opinion, Threat, Benefit, Survey**

I. Introduction

The rapid evolution of information systems and artificial intelligence (AI) has ushered in an "information age" that fundamentally reshapes the landscape of student life, offering both unprecedented opportunities for civilizational flourishing and significant ethical challenges. As students transition into their roles as future workers and decision-makers, they are increasingly confronted with the need for a deep understanding of AI ethics to ensure they can design and use these systems responsibly.

For the modern student, these technological advancements have a direct impact on several key areas of their daily existence:

- *Democratic Access to Knowledge and Education:* The rise of the internet and AI has made learning more democratic, allowing students to access a practically limitless supply of knowledge in seconds. AI models are envisioned as "brilliant friends" that can act as collaborative participants in education, providing real-time information and expertise across diverse fields like medicine, law, and science.
- *Health and Psychological Risks:* Prolonged use of information systems introduces specific health concerns relevant to students, such as technostress, Repetitive Stress Injury, and Computer Vision Syndrome. Furthermore, there is a growing concern among students that over-reliance on AI could lead to a "loss of human abilities," where individuals become dependent on technology and lose their capacity for independent critical thinking.
- *Professional Identity and Future Careers:* Students today recognize that AI will significantly impact domains like medicine, programming, and media, leading to both the creation of new tools and the potential for job displacement through the automation of repetitive tasks. Research shows that students' perspectives on these changes often vary by gender; for instance, women often show a stronger inclination toward ethical considerations and helping others, while men may be more aware of technical shifts in chatbots and autonomous driving.
- *Ethical Integrity and Human Agency:* As AI becomes more capable, maintaining human epistemic autonomy—the ability for people to be smarter and saner rather than manipulated—is critical. Frameworks like "AI constitutions" aim to ensure that these systems remain honest, non-deceptive, and helpful, protecting users from misinformation and deep fakes that can distort reality.

In response to these complexities, the sources emphasize the importance of developing curricula on ethical and professional codes of conduct within higher education. By engaging with these ethical dimensions now, students can prepare to navigate a future where technology is not just a tool, but a core component of the quality of life and societal structure.

II. Literature Review

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III. AI And Student Lives

A detailed survey of computer science students in Romania and analysis of broader ethical frameworks, reveal that students view AI not just as a technical tool, but as a transformative force with significant moral weight. They are increasingly aware that as future developers and decision-makers, they must have a high level of understanding of AI ethics to design and implement these systems responsibly.

Personal reasons for not choosing	**Men — Women**
Complex/Difficult	13.95% — 12.33%
Math	13.95% — 10.96%
Boring	5.43% — 1.33%
Constantly evolving	0.00% — 4.11%
No interest	6.20% — 8.22%
Other career	6.98% — 17.81%
Personal reasons for choosing	**Men — Women**
Interesting	30.47% — 31.51%
Great impact	5.47% — 6.85%
AI is the future	9.38% — 9.59%

The following is a detailed review of students' views based on the data and research provided:

1.Domains of Greatest Impact:

Students believe AI will fundamentally alter daily life, with several key sectors identified as the most affected. A survey of 230 computer science students provided the following distribution of perspective based on gender:

- Medicine: This was the most mentioned domain, with over 50% of both men and women identifying it as a primary area for AI impact. Students believe AI will excel at recognizing flaws unseen by humans and providing predictive medical diagnostics.
- Computer Science and Programming: Men (30.47%) were more likely than women (21.79%) to see AI's impact here, viewing it as a tool to help developers with repetitive code and error detection.
- Autonomous Driving: A significant gender gap exists here; 21.88% of men mentioned self-driving cars compared to only 10.26% of women.
- Education: Women (25.64%) were slightly more likely to highlight education than men (21.09%), envisioning AI as a "virtual tutor" providing democratic access to knowledge.

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2. Identified Ethical and Societal Threats:

Students identified five main classes of threats: economic, information-related, general ethical, military, and the potential loss of human abilities.

- Economic Threats (Job Displacement): This was the top concern. 34.25% of women and 26.56% of men believe AI will lead to major job cuts by replacing humans with robots. Some specifically noted that entry-level IT jobs, such as testing, might be the first to disappear.
- Misinformation and "Deep Fakes": Students expressed deep concern over mass manipulation. Roughly 21% of men highlighted misinformation and fake news, while women were less focused on this at 11%. They worry that "deep fakes" will become so convincing that they will lead to political instability and "information war".
- Loss of Human Abilities: Students fear that over-reliance on AI will lead to a "decrease in the level of intelligence of humanity". 15.07% of women and 10.16% of men expressed concern that humans might lose their independent ability to think.
- Military and Surveillance: Approximately 14.84% of men and 10.96% of women mentioned the risks of AI-controlled drones and mass destruction in military applications.

3. Ethical Compromise: Money vs. Values

The sources explored whether students would sacrifice ethical values for financial gain or social status.

- Gender Divergence: Research indicates that women are more averse to ethical compromises in business scenarios than men. In the student survey, women were more likely to cite "helping others" (9.59%) as a reason for a career in AI, such as "saving people from a rare disease".
- Financial Motivation: Men showed a higher preoccupation with financial aspects, such as pay and job availability (18.75%) compared to women (12.33%).
- Conscientious Objection: A small but notable percentage (~2.7%) of students explicitly stated they do not want a career in AI specifically due to the negative effect on people and job cuts.

4. Perspectives on AI Safety and Autonomy:

The sources also touch upon the "epistemic autonomy" of humans—ensuring that AI makes people smarter rather than manipulating them.

- Human-Centric Design: Students advocate for "human-in-the-loop" mechanisms, particularly in high-stakes decisions like medical diagnostics or military force, to prevent unintended harm.
- Trust and Transparency: Students believe that transparency in how AI makes decisions is essential for public trust. They view the "black box" nature of AI as a significant ethical hurdle.

5. Recommendations for Future Education:

Given these views, the sources recommend several changes to how students are prepared for the information age:

- Ethical Curricula: Educators should develop specific curricula on ethical and professional codes of conduct within information systems.
- Virtue Ethics and "Honor Codes": Some suggest that instead of just technical detection tools, students should be trained under an "honour code" to encourage responsible use of AI.
- Interdisciplinary Exposure: While technical computer science teams are increasingly taking on "societal AI" research, there is a call for more distinct perspectives from the social sciences to be integrated into their training.

This data illustrates a generation of students that is technically optimistic but ethically cautious, recognizing that the benefits of AI in fields like medicine must be balanced against the risks of misinformation and societal displacement.

IV. Key Insights

The research involving computer science students, global AI safety reports, and corporate CEO surveys, several key insights emerge regarding the intersection of technology, ethics, and society.

The Student Perspective:

Students, as future "decision makers," require a deep understanding of AI ethics to implement these systems responsibly. The survey highlights a generation that is technically literate—familiar with machine learning, neural networks, and deep learning—yet deeply concerned about the moral trajectory of their field.

Identified Benefits and Impacted Domains

Both students and global leaders

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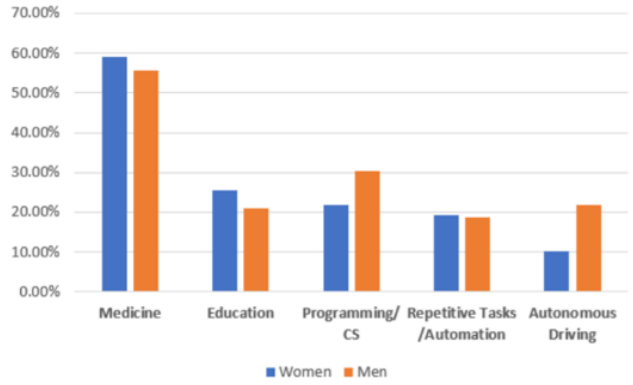

Fig 1 Domains affected by AI gender perspective

Major Threats and Ethical Concerns

The sources identify several high-stakes threats that necessitate robust ethical frameworks:

- Economic Displacement: Job cuts are a primary concern; 34.25% of female students and 26.56% of male students believe AI will replace humans in various sectors.
- Misinformation: The rise of "deep fakes" and mass manipulation is cited as a significant risk to political stability and public trust.
- Loss of Human Agency: There is a growing fear that over-reliance on AI will lead to a "loss of human abilities" and a decrease in collective human intelligence.
- Safety and Control: Global reports emphasize the risk of AI systems becoming uncontrolled or being used for illegitimate power grabs.

Recognize profound benefits and transformative potential in AI:

- Medicine and Healthcare: Students overwhelmingly view medicine as the domain most affected by AI (over 50%), citing its ability to recognize flaws unseen by humans and provide predictive diagnostics.
- Education: Students envision AI as a "virtual tutor" that provides democratic, limitless access to knowledge.
- Business Efficiency: According to a PwC CEO survey, 30% of leaders report increased revenue due to AI, with 26% seeing lower costs through the automation of complex workflows.
- Programming: AI is seen as a tool to help developers by handling repetitive code and detecting errors.

The Evolution of Ethics in Computer Science The landscape of AI ethics is shifting. While interdisciplinary collaboration was once the norm, computer science-only teams now account for a growing share of research into the societal impacts of AI, such as fairness and safety. To address these issues, frameworks like "Claude's Constitution" have been developed to ensure AI remains helpful, honest, and harmless.

Gender-Based Insights from the Survey

The student survey revealed notable differences in how genders perceive AI:

- Men: Tend to be more aware of shifts in autonomous driving, chatbots, and military applications. They are also more likely to prioritize financial gain and job availability.
- Women: Demonstrate a stronger inclination toward ethical considerations and using AI for "helping others," such as saving people from rare diseases. Women were also found to be more averse to ethical compromises for the sake of money or status.

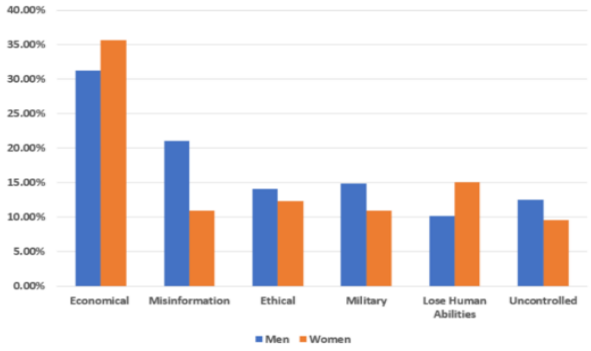

Fig. 2 Major threats due to AI through Gender Perspective

These combined insights suggest that while AI offers immense civilizational benefits, its responsible development depends on integrating transparency, fairness, and privacy into the core curriculum of computer science education.

V. Conclusion

- The Transition to the "Control Phase": One study concludes that the evolution of information systems has reached its third and most significant stage: the control phase. In this era, the most serious social, political, legal, and ethical questions are presenting themselves on a large scale, necessitating a shift from technical development to societal regulation.

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- Global Policy Divergence: Analysis of international AI frameworks reveals significant variations in priorities. For instance, the European Union emphasizes stringent regulatory oversight and individual rights, while the United States adopts a more flexible, innovation-centric approach. China, conversely, prioritizes state security and social harmony.
- The Narrowing of Research Perspectives: A striking shift in academic research shows that while interdisciplinary teams were once the standard for societal AI research, computer science-only teams now account for a growing share of the field's overall societal output. This raises concerns about the potential loss of diverse perspectives from the social sciences and humanities in shaping AI governance.
- Student Ethical Awareness: Research into student populations concludes that while they are technically optimistic, they are ethically cautious. Students recognize that AI will fundamentally alter sectors like medicine and education, but they fear the "loss of human abilities" and a decrease in collective human intelligence.
- Corporate Reinvention: From a business perspective, CEOs are increasingly confident that AI will drive revenue, but they acknowledge that tangible returns are often elusive in the early stages. Currently, only 12% of companies have realized both cost savings and additional revenue from AI.

VI. Future Insights And Recommendations

- The Need for "AI Constitutions": Future AI development should move toward creating foundational frameworks, or "constitutions," that act as a "trellis" for organic growth rather than a rigid set of rules. These should be "perpetual works in progress" that evolve alongside the technology.
- Global Harmonization of Ethics: The sources advocate for a "harmonized global standard" for ethical AI governance. Future success depends on "sustained international collaboration and dialogue" to bridge the gap between conflicting regional priorities.
- Curriculum Reform: There is a strong recommendation for educators to develop specific curricula on ethical and professional codes of conduct. This is vital for preparing future "decision makers" to design systems that align with societal values rather than just technical efficiency.
- Integrating Technical Strategies for Fairness: Future systems should utilize "fairness-aware algorithms" and "routine audits" as standard practice. This includes using techniques like Explainable AI (XAI) to ensure that AI-driven decisions are transparent and interpretable by non-technical stakeholders.
- Corporate Agility and Trust: For businesses, the "next move" is to build strong AI foundations that include formalized responsible AI and risk processes. Furthermore, "trust" will become a critical boardroom topic, as companies that prioritize stakeholder trust deliver significantly higher shareholder returns.
- Gender-Balanced Development: Future insights suggest that including more women and marginalized identities in AI development is not just a matter of equity but a strategic necessity to address the industry's skills gap and ensure ethical considerations are prioritized. Research shows women often have a stronger inclination toward "helping others" and ethical considerations in technological implementation.

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