BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

TECHNOLOGY, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND EDUCATION TOWARDS THE FUTURE OF LEARNING

Organised by RN24/SSTNET
– Sociology of Science and Technology Network and RN36 –
Sociology of Transformations: East and West

26 - 27 FEBRUARY 2026

LINK CAMPUS UNIVERSITY | Aula Magna "Franco Frattini" | Via del Casale di San Pio V, 44 - Rome

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EXPLORING STUDENTS' ETHICAL AND PRIVACY CONCERNS IN THE ADOPTION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Ariela MORTARA, Rosantonietta SCRAMAGLIA, *IULM University*

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly embedded in educational environments, driving innovations in adaptive learning, automated grading, and predictive analytics. While these technologies promise personalization and efficiency, they also introduce critical ethical challenges related to student privacy, data governance, and algorithmic accountability. Recent research indicates that AI-driven educational systems often collect vast amounts of behavioral, academic, and biometric data, frequently without transparent consent or clear data ownership protocols (Salloum et al., 2024).

Ethical analyses in the learning analytics literature highlight three primary domains of risk: (1) surveillance and erosion of learner autonomy, (2) algorithmic bias and opacity in decision-making, and (3) secondary use of educational data by third parties (Slade & Prinsloo, 2013; Marín et al., 2025).

This contribution presents some results of a broader research project aimed at exploring the social impact of the introduction of smart technologies, investigating how they are transforming people's daily lives, both in their private and professional spheres. Based on a quantitative methodology, the study was conducted through a self-administered questionnaire distributed online via the SurveyMonkey platform. Between November and December 2024, a total of 9,457 questionnaires were collected using a snowball sampling approach (Gabor, 2007; Handcock & Gile, 2011), among them 2,736 Italian university students. Beside the perception and knowledge of Artificial Intelligence and the actual use in everyday activities, the questionnaire investigates concerns related to responsible AI use, including ethical awareness, privacy issues, and cognitive bias.

AI-related concerns were also examined through several items of a 7-point Likert-scale measuring attention to ethical principles, privacy awareness, and perceptions of algorithmic bias. Students showed moderate sensitivity to ethics (M = 4.33) and privacy (M = 4.24), with no gender differences. However, concern about social biases (gender, ethnic, religious) was lower (M = 3.15), suggesting a general underestimation of algorithmic bias risks.

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