

Continuation of the Problem Statement

Intersection with Social Justice Concerns

The lack of ethical frameworks for AI in SPED creates particularly significant risks for students with intersecting marginalized identities. Without appropriate oversight, AI systems can:

- **Reinforce** historical biases in special education identification that have led to overrepresentation of students of color in certain disability categories (Baydar, 2022; Holmes et al., 2022)
- **Exacerbate** existing disparities in disciplinary actions, with AI-driven behavior monitoring systems flagging behavioral differences in culturally diverse students as problematic (Maslej et al., 2023)
- **Implement** standardized approaches that fail to account for cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic factors affecting student performance (Nguyen et al., 2023; Holmes et al., 2022)
- **Compromise** student data privacy and autonomy, particularly for vulnerable populations already subject to heightened surveillance (Gamal, 2023)

Without a structured framework for ethical AI use, there is a risk that these technologies could reinforce existing disparities, misclassify students, delay critical interventions, and undermine the educational rights of students with disabilities (Maslej et al., 2023). Holmes et al. (2022) emphasize that "instructional strategies that aim to benefit all learners might disproportionately benefit more advantaged groups of learners" (p. 515), highlighting the need for "fairness-promoting algorithms" (p. 515) in educational AI systems. As AI becomes increasingly embedded in educational decision-making processes, ethical guidelines, comprehensive training, and robust oversight mechanisms become increasingly urgent, particularly for vulnerable student populations whose educational outcomes depend on equitable and appropriate technological implementation. The ethical implementation of AI in special education is fundamentally a social justice issue.

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Students with disabilities already encounter significant obstacles to achieving equitable education, and the introduction of AI without appropriate ethical guidelines may worsen these disparities. Holmes et al. (2022) express this concern, emphasizing that a major ethical issue is to guarantee that AI systems "do not show bias against a particular group" (p. 514) and stressing that these technologies pose a risk of "diminishing the quality of education for 'certain groups of students'" (p. 514).

For students with disabilities who also belong to marginalized racial, cultural, or socioeconomic backgrounds, these risks become even more pronounced. Holmes et al. (2022) recognize this intersectionality challenge, stating that "classifying students in terms of educational tests must account for the inherent ambiguity and variability in the measure" (p. 515). Haque and Li (2024) support this concern, noting that AI systems like ChatGPT learn from datasets that "may contain inherent biases and stereotypes" and that "certain social groups are underrepresented in the training data" (p. 8), potentially leading to unequal outcomes.

The AIEIP program addresses these ethical challenges with a thorough framework that aligns with the NASW Code of Ethics (2021), advocating for the responsible use of technology to promote human well-being. By implementing Holmes et al.'s (2022) plea for a "well-designed framework for engaging with ethics of AIED" (p. 504) and incorporating Haque and Li's (2024) suggestions for "improved transparency," "bias detection," and "ethical guidelines" (pp. 11-12), AIEIP aims to ensure that AI functions as a tool for educational equity rather than perpetuating existing power imbalances that disadvantage students with intersecting marginalized identities.

