Assessing the Impact of Incentive Programs on Female Participation in Computer Science Degree Programs

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Abstract:
Women remain underrepresented in computer science and engineering education worldwide, despite longstanding policy and institutional efforts to broaden participation. This paper examines female participation in the Bachelor program Computer Science and Digital Communications (CSDC), which shows a comparatively high proportion of female students in Austria. Using institutional data from 2018–2025, we describe participation trends in CSDC (full-time and part-time) and compare them with the master program Software Design and Engineering (SDE). The analysis is discussed in relation to targeted measures implemented to support women's entry into and participation in the programs, including admission preparation, tutorials, and financial incentives. The paper concludes by outlining implications for program-level strategies and directions for future research on participation dynamics across study formats and degree levels.

Keywords:
Gender Gap, Women in Engineering, Computer Science.