

## GENDER DIFFERENCES IN VALUE ORIENTATIONS AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS AMONG ALBANIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NORTH MACEDONIA

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between value orientations and career aspirations among high school students in North Macedonia, with a focus on gender differences. Utilizing two validated instruments, the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) and the Career Orientations Inventory (COI), the research explores the connection between Self-Enhancement values (Achievement, Power, Hedonism) and General Managerial Competence, and contrasts them with Self-Transcendence values (Benevolence, Universalism) among 479 Albanian high school students. The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between Self-Enhancement values and managerial competence, indicating that students who prioritize personal ambition and power are more inclined toward leadership roles. Gender differences were also prominent, with men scoring higher on Self-Enhancement values and General Managerial Competence, while women scored higher on Self-Transcendence values, particularly Benevolence. These results underscore the influence of societal norms on value orientations and career aspirations, highlighting the importance of gender-sensitive career guidance in educational settings. The study's findings contribute to the understanding of how values shape career choices and managerial ambitions in a cultural context marked by evolving gender roles.

**Keywords:** Value orientations, career aspiration, gender differences.