THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN EMPOWERING THE INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE IN IRAQ

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TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE IN IRAQ

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Abstrak


Kata kunci: Media sosial, Pemerkaasan wanita, Teori feminisme siber, Tenaga kerja TM.

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Abstract

The underrepresentation of the women workforce in the field of Information Technology (IT) in Iraq has been closely observed over the last few years. One of the facts is that social media have been widely and intensively used in Iraq, which is an effective way to empower women in the IT workforce. This study aimed to investigate women's awareness of using social media to get empowered in the IT workforce as well as the role of the social media in women empowerment in this sector. In order to achieve the objectives of this research and based on the theory of cyberfeminism, the current study conducted a survey amongst the female students of the University of Baghdad - College of Education Ibn al-Haytham and tried to find out how the use of social media is contributing to the growth of women participation in the IT workforce. For this purpose a sample of 162 female students was taken from this college. The quantitative method was used to collect data for this study. The findings in this study revealed there was a significant relationship between women’s awareness and the encouragement of women in the IT workforce through the use of the social media. Besides, there was a significant relationship between the empowerment of women and the encouragement of women in the IT workforce through the use of the social media. Hence, women’s awareness and empowerment of women through the social media encouraged the involvement of women in the IT workforce. In addition, this study recommends several suggestions for further research.

Keywords: Social Media, Women empowerment, Cyberfeminism theory, IT workforce.
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List of Abbreviations

CSO  Central Statistical Organization
COBOL  Common Business Oriented Language
CS  Computer Science
DV  Dependent Variable
ENIAC  Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer
IV  Independent Variable
IT  Information Technology
STEM  Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
SPSS  Statistical Packages Social Science
UNDP  United Nations Development Programme
VIF  Variation Inflation Factors
AQ  Awareness Questions
EQ  Empowerment Questions
ENQ  Encouragement Questions
MIS  Management Information System
SD  Standard Deviation
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Information Technologies (IT) refers to the integration of telecommunication networks, computers, and audio-visual systems used to create, access, store, transmit, and manipulate information (Bolanle, Zhang, Oluwadare & Akintola, 2013). With such integration, it supports various applications in various fields like business, education, healthcare, and entertainment. Currently, it integrates also digital social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube (Ajjan, Beninger & Crittenden, 2014). There are literally hundreds of different social media platforms (e.g., blogging, micro-blogging, social networking, text messaging, shared photos), in which they have fundamentally changed the way individuals, communities, and organizations communicate and collaborate (Correa, Bachmann, Hinsley & de Zúñiga, 2013). Currently, social media is referred to as a web-based service that allows individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system (Borrero, Yousafzai, Javed & Page, 2014).

Having been incorporated with various utilities, social media has infiltrated people’s daily life with amazing rapidity to become an important social platform for computer-mediated communication (Lin & Lu, 2011). This is because they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks (Poonia, Scholar & Bhurani, 2014) by providing a variety of new behaviours that were not previously possible, such as online collaborative authoring, online collaborative reviewing, online collaborative editing, online collaborative associating, and online collaborative experimenting. The use of social media with its
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