

Jennifer Barone

CYSE201S

Information Literacy for Cybersecurity

Article Review #1: Discrimination and Cyberbullying Against Women in Iraq

The article “Discrimination and Cyberbullying against Women in Iraq: Exploring Social Media and Perceived Norms” by Saleh Hussain Ali and colleagues examines cyberbullying and discrimination experienced by women in Iraq. This topic relates strongly to the social sciences because it focuses on human behavior, gender inequality, social norms, technology, and the ways laws and institutions affect people’s experiences. Instead of treating cybersecurity as only a technical issue, the article examines how social and cultural factors can influence people’s safety online.

The main objectives of the study were to determine the prevalence of discrimination and cyberbullying against women in Iraq and to explore the roles of social media, internet education, perceived norms, and social beliefs. The researchers used a qualitative research design based on an interpretivist approach. They selected nine Iraqi women through purposive sampling and conducted semi-structured interviews. The interview responses were entered into NVivo software and examined through thematic analysis. The researchers organized the responses into themes involving personal experiences, perceived norms, social beliefs, social media, internet education, organizations, and possible measures for reducing cyberbullying.

The findings show the connection between cybersecurity and larger social issues. Eight of the nine participants reported experiencing discrimination in their personal or professional lives, while five reported experiencing cyberbullying. Participants also described social pressure, unequal opportunities, and difficulties receiving protection from existing institutions. These findings connect to social science concepts such as social norms, inequality, gender roles, discrimination, and the influence of institutions on individual behavior.

The article especially relates to marginalized and underrepresented groups because it focuses specifically on Iraqi women and the barriers they experience both online and in society. The participants’ experiences suggest that online harassment cannot always be separated from existing gender inequality. The authors argue that internet education, stronger legal protections, improved privacy measures, and cooperation between law enforcement and social media platforms could help address the problem.

Overall, this study contributes to cybersecurity by showing that protecting people online involves more than technology. Social beliefs, education, laws, institutions,

and inequality can all affect cybersecurity experiences. One limitation is the small sample of only nine women, which the authors acknowledge may limit how broadly the findings can be generalized. Even with this limitation, the study gives attention to women's experiences and identifies areas where additional research and protections are needed.

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