*FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ADOPTION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAM ON FEMALE FACULTY MEMBERS COMPETENCIES IN SAUDI ARABIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES*

**HOMOUD FREH ALHAIDAN**

**GSM 2020 6**

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By

**HOMOUD FREH ALHAIDAN**

**Thesis Submitted to the Putra Business School, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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**January 2020**


**Chairman** : **Associate Professor Dr. Amer Hamzah B Jantan, PhD**
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A good number of researchers have demonstrated the need for online training for the faculty members in various countries around the world in recent years. However, most of these academic researchers have discussed the different effects of the online training system. Conversely, the need for online training for female faculty members in Saudi Arabia has not been adequately measured, which is culturally very diverse and unique. Thus, empirical evidence is clearly lacking and needs to be studied. There is also no conclusive model for Saudi Arabian educational industry yet exists. As gender inequity remains an unsolved issue in Saudi Arabia, thus, this research is undertaken to realise the need to examine the need for the online training program (OTP) for Saudi women faculty members closely. Therefore, this research aims to determine the factors influencing the adoption of the online training program and its effectiveness for the female faculty members in Saudi Arabian public universities. At the beginning of the study, issues were identified, goals and objectives were set, and a detailed review of the literature was conducted to identify the variables for this study. The theoretical foundation of this research is based on Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Venkatesh and Davis's Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Besides, in this study, "social influence" has been added as a dependent variable as well as "competitive pressure" and "government regulations" were added as moderator that signifies the theoretical extansion of this study. For this research, primary data has been collected from female faculty members working in different Saudi Arabian public universities using simple random sampling method.


A self-administered closed-ended questionnaire was utilised to collect data from 228 randomly selected respondents. Before actual data collection, a pilot study was conducted on a small sample group of female faculty members to clarify the statement of the survey questionnaire. Finally, PLS-SEM was used to run the analysis. The

findings show that perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived relative advantage, and social influence has a significant positive relationship with adoption of OTP and effectiveness of OTP. However, the variable "perceived trust" was not statistically significant. Besides, the testing of two new moderating variables (competitive pressure and government regulations) has also confirmed that these two variables significantly influence the relationship between adoption of OTP and effectiveness of OTP for the female faculty members working in different Saudi Arabian public universities. This statistical significance has provided new light for future consideration.

This study has significantly contributed to the theoretical enhancement of the online training program (OTP) theory by adding "social influence" factor in the context of the adoption of the online training program. Hence, this eventually extends the understanding of the current model and opens a new direction for further investigation. This finding will further facilitate future policy development for Saudi Arabia's education industry by offering better employment opportunities for the female workforce. It can also function as an essential guideline for universities to enhance employee motivation and conjointly to retain staff with high potential and talent within the setting of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Finally, study limitations are discussed, and future study directions are proposed.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

# FAKTOR-FAKTOR YANG MEMPENGARUHI PERLAKSANAAN DAN KEBERKESANAN PROGRAM LATIHAN DALAM TALIAN TERHADAP KOMPETENSI ANGGOTA FAKULTI WANITA DI UNIVERSITI AWAM ARAB SAUDI

Oleh

**HOMOUD FREH ALHAIDAN**

**Januari 2020**

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Sebilangan besar penyelidik telah menunjukkan keperluan untuk latihan dalam talian bagi ahli fakulti di pelbagai negara di seluruh dunia beberapa tahun kebelakangan ini. Namun, kebanyakan penyelidik akademik tersebut membincangkan kesan yang berbeza tentang hasil sistem latihan dalam talian. Walau bagaimanapun, keperluan untuk latihan dalam talian bagi ahli fakulti wanita di Arab Saudi tidak dinilai sebaiknya sesuai dengan budaya mereka yang pelbagai dan unik. Justeru, bukti empirikal jelas kekurangan dan perlu dikaji. Selain itu, model konklusif untuk industri pendidikan Arab Saudi juga masih belum wujud. Oleh kerana ketidaksamarataan jantina masih merupakan isu yang belum selesai di Arab Saudi, justeru, kajian ini dijalankan bagi merealisasikan perlaksanaan program latihan dalam talian (OTP) untuk ahli fakulti wanita Saudi dengan teliti. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi perlaksanaan program latihan dalam talian dan keberkesanannya terhadap ahli-ahli fakulti wanita di universiti awam Arab Saudi. Pada permulaan kajian, isu-isu dikenalpasti, matlamat dan objektif ditetapkan dan kajian literatur terperinci telah dijalankan bagi mengenal pasti pembolehubah kajian ini. Asas teori penyelidikan ini adalah berdasarkan Teori Tingkah Laku Terancang (TPB) Ajzen dan Model Penerimaan Teknologi Venkatesh dan Davis (TAM).

Di samping itu, pengaruh social telah ditambah sebagai pembolehubah bersandar selain tekanan persaingan dan peraturan kerajaan sebagai moderator yang menandakan pengembangan teori kajian ini. Untuk kajian ini, data primer telah dikumpulkan daripada ahli fakulti wanita yang bekerja di universiti awam Arab Saudi yang berbeza menggunakan kaedah persampelan rawak mudah. Borang soal selidik tertutup telah digunakan untuk mengumpul data daripada 228 responden yang dipilih secara rawak. Sebelum pengumpulan data sebenar, satu kajian rintis telah dijalankan

ke atas sekumpulan kecil ahli fakulti wanita untuk menjelaskan pernyataan borang kaji selidik. Akhirnya, PLS-SEM digunakan untuk menjalankan analisis. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa tanggapan mudah guna, tanggapan kebergunaan, tanggapan kelebihan relatif dan pengaruh sosial mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan perlaksanaan OTP dan keberkesanan OTP. Walau bagaimanapun, pemboleh ubah tanggapan kepercayaan tidak signifikan. Selain itu, ujian bagi dua pemboleh ubah moderator (tekanan persaingan dan peraturan kerajaan) juga telah mengesahkan bahawa kedua-dua pemboleh ubah ini secara signifikan mempengaruhi hubungan antara penggunaan OTP dan keberkesanan OTP terhadap ahli fakulti wanita yang bekerja di universiti awam Arab Saudi yang berbeza. Statistik yang signifikan ini telah memberikan harapan baru kepada pertimbangan akan datang.

Kajian ini telah menyumbang secara signifikan kepada perkembangan teori bagi program latihan dalam talian (OTP) dengan menambahkan faktor "pengaruh sosial" dalam konteks perlaksanaan program latihan dalam talian. Justeru, ia meluaskan pemahaman model semasa dan membuka jalan baru untuk penyelidikan selanjutnya. Dapatan kajian ini akan membantu dalam merangka polisi akan datang bagi industri pendidikan Arab Saudi dengan menawarkan peluang pekerjaan yang lebih baik kepada tenaga kerja wanita. Ia juga dapat berfungsi sebagai panduan penting bagi universiti dalam meningkatkan motivasi pekerja dan bersama-sama mengekalkan staf dengan bakat dan potensi yang tinggi bagi Kerajaan Arab Saudi. Akhirnya, batasan kajian dibincangkan dan arah kajian masa depan dicadangkan.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 8 January 2020 to conduct the final examination of Homoud Freh Alhaidan on his thesis entitled "Factors Influencing the Adoption and Effectiveness of Online Training Program on Female Faculty Members competencies in Saudi Arabian Public Universities" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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**Declaration by graduate student**

I hereby confirm that:
- this thesis is my original work;
- quotations, illustrations and citations have been duly referenced;
- this thesis has not been submitted previously or concurrently for any other degree at any institutions;
- intellectual property from the thesis and copyright of thesis are fully-owned by Universiti Putra Malaysia, as according to the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Research) Rules 2012;
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Signature: _____ Date: _____

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## Declaration by Members of Supervisory Committee

This is to confirm that:

- the research conducted and the writing of this thesis was under our supervision;
- supervision responsibilities as stated in the Putra Business School (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) were adhered to.

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# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

From a historical period until the modern-day, the issue of gender differences has attained much attention from academicians and researchers in the arena of leadership and organisational behaviour. Over the years, men and women have been continuously compared to each other, may it be in the way they interact, carry out their duties or influence their subordinates (Findlow, 2007). Such differences have evidenced to be highly detrimental to women. The influence of these differences can still be experienced in the modern era of the twenty-first century in different regions of the world (Abouchedid & Eid, 2014). Even though women have been immensely successful in various disciplines such as politics, education, humanities as well as business, they are still perceived negatively by many when it comes to holding top organisational positions (Findlow, 2013). Even though there has been a substantial increase in the number of female workforces, they are still underrepresented in the top management despite possessing the required qualifications and potentials (Al Lily, 2013; Al Lily, Borovoi & Vlaev, 2016).

Surprisingly, the traits for which women were disadvantaged and looked down upon are required in order to lead organisations in this twenty-first century (Birkinshaw & Mark, 2015). The belief that men are better for undertaking leadership roles is a result of mere stereotype perceptions. Therefore, in current time, organisations need women as much as they believe that they need men to run the top managerial positions (Al Lily & Foland, 2013; Hamdan, 2018). This belief has heightened due to the rapid development in the ICT sector, which has created the demand for the education industry to adopt the new concept of online teaching and learning. This leads towards the introduction of online training for the female faculty member in various universities mostly in the Middle Eastern countries where male dominance still exists. Online training is a part of online learning (E-learning) that can help the female faculty members in those male-dominated societies to transfer their knowledge towards performance improvement for better task accomplishment (Brown & Lease, 2009). Hence, online training has become one of the most popular alternative media that can be used in order to develop and increase female faculty members' skills and competencies (Haidar, 2012).

However, lack of knowledge and skills among the female faculty members on how to use online media remain as the main obstacle these days (McMenomy, 2010). Besides, the lack of experience in selecting the right online training materials by the person in charge also creates obstacles towards selecting appropriate online training for the employees (McMenomy, Hill & Dubose, 2010). Furthermore, in many cases, the person fails to contemplate the environment of the training condition when selecting a training solution (McMenomy et al., 2010).

In recent years, the massive development in the ICT sector has boosted the demand for online teaching and learning that attracts a good number of students to opt this medium for furthering their studies (National Centre for Education Statistics, 2013). To cope with this increasing demand, many institutions around the globe offer online courses to these students (Allen & Seaman, 2013). However, lack of experience on how to incorporate the online system into teaching among the faculty members necessitates further demand for training (Palloff & Pratt, 2011; Rhode & Krishnamurthi, 2016). Therefore, it is important to incorporate a new pedagogical system that will enhance the overall teaching-learning process.

It is an also very essential for the top management of the educational institutions to assist female faculty members towards understanding the current needs and therefore upgrading their skills based on their culture, needs, and economic conditions of their country (Palloff & Pratt, 2011). This will further support them towards integrating the new online teaching method into their teaching style (Titan et al., 2014). As such, the proper support system should be established to backing the female (Allen & Seaman, 2014; Brown et al., 1999; Rhode & Krishnamurthi, 2016).

## 1.2 Gender Separation and the Need for Online Training Programme in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is a very conservative country, both socially and religiously (Metz, 1992). An enormous obstacle exists for the women in Saudi Arabia as they are not able to do anything without the permission of their male authority (Aarts, 2004; Sultan et al., 2012). Due to this reason, it is difficult for the government to ensure proper education for women (Al Lily, 2011). Besides, many extreme cultural beliefs among Saudi Arabian male authorities such as the belief that woman should not drive cars or practice Law or Engineering have created further obstacles for women to get a proper education (Alenezi, Abdulkarim & Veloo, 2010). Moreover, women's activities are insufficient within their surroundings and are not welcomed to participate in the wider social activities in Saudi Arabia (Al-Asmari & Khan, 2014). Currently, in terms of women participation in the workplace, Saudi Arabia has one of the lowest, particularly from graduates (Alotaibi, 2015; Binsahl & Chang, 2012). However, the participation is essential to keep pace with this modern world as many women are much qualified and able to work better than men (Alhareth, Alhareth & Dighrir, 2015; Al Sudairy, 2007). Therefore, the Saudi Arabian government needs to reform the current societal beliefs if they want to achieve their development goal (Wynbrandt, 2010).

According to Internet World Stats (2016), the total population of Saudi Arabia is 32.16 million. This population consists of the generation "Y" and accounting almost 50% of the total population (Alqahtani, 2016). However, the use of the Internet is relatively low (only 14.7%) comparing to other neighbouring countries (Internet World Stats, 2016), as shown in Table 1.1 below. Though the Internet penetration rate is almost 65%, however, due to many internal issues such as gender separation, social interaction, freedom of choice by women, the user's number is too low (Evosys, 2015).

**Table 1.1 : Middle East Internet Users Statistics 2016**

| Country | Population (2016 Est.) | Users, in Dec-2000 | Internet Usage Jun-2016 | % Population (Penetration) | Internet % users |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bahrain | 1,378,904 | 40,000 | 1,278,752 | 92.70% | 0.90% |
| Iran | 82,801,633 | 250,000 | 56,700,000 | 68.50% | 40.10% |
| Iraq | 37,547,686 | 12,500 | 14,000,000 | 37.30% | 9.90% |
| Israel | 8,174,527 | 1,270,000 | 5,941,174 | 72.70% | 4.20% |
| Jordan | 7,747,800 | 127,300 | 5,700,000 | 73.60% | 4.00% |
| Kuwait | 4,007,145 | 150,000 | 3,202,110 | 79.90% | 2.30% |
| Lebanon | 5,988,153 | 300,000 | 4,545,007 | 75.90% | 3.20% |
| Oman | 4,654,471 | 90,000 | 3,310,260 | 71.10% | 2.30% |
| Palestine | 2,839,777 | 35,000 | 3,007,869 | 63.20% | 2.10% |
| Qatar | 2,258,283 | 30,000 | 2,200,000 | 97.40% | 1.60% |
| **Saudi Arabia** | **32,157,974** | **200,000** | **20,813,695** | **64.70%** | **14.70%** |
| Syria | 18,563,595 | 30,000 | 5,502,250 | 29.60% | 3.90% |
| UAE | 9,266,971 | 735,000 | 8,515,420 | 91.90% | 6.00% |
| Yemen | 27,392,779 | 15,000 | 6,773,228 | 24.70% | 4.80% |
| Gaza Strip | 1,921,202 | see Palestina | see Palestina | n/a | n/a |
| Total | 246,700,900 | 3,284,800 | 141,489,765 | 57.40% | 100.00% |

(Source: Internet World Stats, 2016)

In Saudi Arabia, only 21 per cent of the total workforce consists of women (Saudi Gazette, 2015). Therefore, if the government wants to achieve its transformation goals of equitable resource allocation among male and female, a need for change is demanded through the increased commitment to providing higher education to women. According to UN Women (2014), Saudi Arabia achieved the highest economic development among all the Islamic countries. However, as of today, Saudi women still have few or no political and social rights (Al-Kahtani, Ryan & Jefferson, 2006; Kendall, 2016).

In the year 2014, Saudi Arabia has called for a national plan to adopt IT spanning the country (Al-Asmari & Khan, 2014). The plan strongly recommends the implementation of e-learning and distance learning in higher education. In a major transformation of conventional education, the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education has recently launched the National Centre of E-learning& Distance Learning, set up a repository to organize the change, and prepare E-learning materials to help universities adopt the system and transform to a scheme of E-learning quickly (University World News, 2008).

The findings of the past literature pertaining to this issue demonstrated that in certain aspects male leaders differ from their female counterparts, whereby it has been revealed that men are more task-oriented and on the other hand, women are more relationship-oriented (e.g. Arnot, David & Weiner, 1999; Banerjee et al., 2018; Boaler, 1997; Crosato, Morandi & Satti, 2005). On the contrary, literature has also proven that there exists no difference in the teaching practices of men and women (Brickhouse, 2001; Butler, 1990; Ostebo & Haukanes, 2016). When it comes to the aspect of

teaching effectiveness, literature does not demonstrate that effective teaching is an outcome of a gender-based phenomenon Gipps & Murphy, 1994). Rather, effective teaching is highly situational which is based on an individual's (men or women) capability of practising a teaching approach that is the most suitable or ideal for a particular situation (Delamont & Duffin, 1978; Golombok & Fivush, 1994; Njaya, 2015). In modern time as the importance of non-hierarchical, flat organisational structures is increasing, educational institutes are giving much importance to team-work, empowerment and relationship building, and these traits are more prevalent among women.

Besides, the government of Saudi Arabia has started promoting equal rights for genders by encouraging and establishing more female learning institutions to enhance the number of Saudi women reaching higher education (Mehran, 2013). Besides, transitions from social and humanity fields to technology fields through incorporating of learning and developing ICT in the women's curriculum reflects as of the major efforts taken by the government in recent years (Abdul Ghafour, 2008; Al-Asmari, 2005; Al-Khalifa & Garcia, 2013; Khan et al., 2000; Sahab, 2003). This inclusion will advance the use of ICT to engender E-learning in such schools (Kendall, 2016). Finally, it can be asserted that teaching effectiveness cannot be attained by trying to dominate the aspect of teaching by one particular gender, rather effective teaching can be accomplished by being gender- neutral and integrating the male and female teaching approaches. Therefore, the stereotype perceptions that create a barrier for women to work in the male-dominated society should be minimised. It is recommended that modern-day organisations should strive to enhance diversity at every level of management. Due to the reason that diversity only adds new ideas, perceptions as well as practices, which eventually foster organisational effectiveness. Henceforth, in order to attain their full potential universities should hire more female faculty members.

## 1.3 Problem Statement

In today's world, the university working environment is far away from being static since it is continuously going through and experiencing changing situations (Peach & Bieber, 2015). Thus, it is essential for universities that are operating in this dynamic environment of modern time to be aware of the changes that are taking place. They should also learn how to cope up with the changes in order to remain successful (Tracey, 2014). Under these circumstances, it has indeed become a challenging issue for universities to craft strategies and create policies that will facilitate and as well as permit them to effectively manage the effects of such uncertainties that may arise due to shifts in either external or internal environments and help them to not only meet but also surpass their performance expectations (Titan et al., 2014).

In scholarly writing the most distributed exploration on learning styles is on instruction discipline, trailed by business the board and software engineering (Naqvi & Naqvi, 2017). The focal point of instructive exploration on learning styles stressed on coordinating understudy learning styles with educational program and showing styles

of teachers (Kolb, 1984). Be that as it may, as referenced previously, little exploration examines the impacts of the adoption of online training system and gender orientation on the effectiveness for the female faculty members. The reason of this research is to guarantee that the students can relate ideas of figuring out how to the particular conditions during the conveyance procedure. Besides, it is essential to invigorate the separating understudies for bringing their scope of thoughts and methods of critical thinking in class. These studies despite the fact that are not fruitful in execution as joining understudies, they assume a significant job in the applied comprehension of the course material. These students are the most inventive ones and different knowledge can gain from them (Messick, 1996). Expanding the students' attention to learning styles may prompt an increase in the adaptability of showing styles and upgrade the correspondence among teachers and the students.

The popularity of online education is also increasing, and a good number of educational institutions are seeking to grow their online offerings to meet their future students' demand (Alkhalaf, Drew & Nguyen, 2013; Al-Rawaf & Simmons, 1991; Ramady, 2010). The great advantages such as the capability of reaching a wider number of students, flexibility in terms of course delivery as well as the cost-effectiveness have encouraged many higher learning institutes to integrate this new e-learning system into their curricular (Hu & Hui, 2012).

Due to this, the current programme needs to be revised and requires to build new online instructional capacity. As such, the faculty members also need to undergo training that will enable them to be equipped with such modern technology to teach online (Major et al., 2014; Rhode & Krishnamurthi, 2016). This is also well applicable to Saudi Arabian public universities as they need to upgrade themselves to compete in today's world (Al Lily & Foland, 2013). In Saudi Arabia, most teachers are familiar with the old classroom teaching. To cope with the current demand from the new generation of learners, they need to equip them with the new method of online teaching and learning (Titan et al., 2014). However, a very few know where to begin (Allen & Seaman, 2013, 2014). Therefore, a gap can be observed between the teachers' current and required level of knowledge for online teaching to serve in this ever-increasing student-centred teaching method (Rhode & Krishnamurthi, 2016; Tracey, 2014). According to Gibbs and Gosper (2006, p. 46), "the next generation of learning technologies and systems will only take us forward if educators have a much greater stake in controlling how they are developed." As such, a proper faculty development program on online teaching is required that will support towards bridging this gap. Moreover, this will also ensure that educators are provided with the essential online learning experience to teach and communicate effectively in the online learning environment.

It is generally perceived that each culture has its own individual method of social affair and handling data, of learning and of taking care of issues (Lee, Becker and Nobre, 2012). These individual subjective capacities which are gained throughout a long socialization process are called learning styles (Reynolds, 1997). A learning style can be defined as the individual, characteristic and favored way an individual treats data

and sentiments in a specific learning circumstance that will influence their choices and practices. Each culture prepares and forms those inside its framework for what it considers to be the most suitable strategies for critical thinking. Strengthening this, Hofstede (1986) accepts that psychological advancement is controlled by the requests of the earth in which one grew up and that subjective capacities are established in the all-out examples of a general public. Expanding on this idea, Hofstede (1980) defines culture as the aggregate programming of the psyche which recognizes the members of one human gathering from another. It is dictated by national socialization encouraged by foundations, for example, family, school and work. Those influence the improvement of learning styles – the best approach to gain, request and use ideas. Subsequently, the improvement of learning styles might be straightforwardly and in a roundabout way identified with, and along these lines influenced by, culture. A large portion of the earlier writing on multifaceted contrasts in conduct has focused on qualities and perspectives (Hofstede, 1980, 2001).

For instant, the power disparity between men and women in Saudi Arabia is enormous (Al-Jarf, 2007; Doumato, 2010). A study conducted by Alqahtani (2016) found that a clear reflection of men domination in the existing education system can be observed where participation of women in higher education is either restricted by their male authorities (e.g., father, husband) or access is very limited (e.g., lack of women higher learning institutions). This practice implies that woman's choices of higher education for further development are still limited that must be improved (Al-Wabil et al., 2008; Asiri et al., 2012). Besides, freedom of work or do something independently without the supervision of their male authority should be in place in Saudi Arabia that will allow the Saudi Arabian women to access more educational opportunities (Taleb, 2014a).

It should be noted that even e-learning could open up opportunities for Saudi women towards education more freely, however, require substantial investment from the leaner (Al Saif, 2005; Ali, Sait & Al-Tawil, 2003). Therefore, the introduction of this e-learning system might offer opportunities for females towards better involvement for the foreseeable future (Al-Shawi & Al-Wabil, 2008; Hu & Hui, 2012; Singh & Hardaker, 2014; Taleb, 2014b).

A good number of researchers have demonstrated the need for online training for the faculty members in various countries around the world in recent years (e.g. Allen & Seaman, 2007, 2014; Brown et al., 2009; Hassell-Corbiell, 2001; Knowles, Holton III& Swanson, 2005; Palloff & Pratt, 2011; Powell, 2010; Rhode & Krishnamurthi, 2016; Sorcinelli, 1999; Titan et al., 2014; Walker & Montes, 2011). However, most of these academic researchers have discussed the different effects of the online training system. Conversely, the need for online training for female faculty members in Saudi Arabia has not been adequately measured, which culturally very diverse and unique. Thus, empirical evidence is clearly lacking and needs to be studied.

Adding to this, though there are many reasons that discusses the need for the online training program (OTP), however, there is no conclusive model for Saudi Arabian

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educational industry yet exists in the current literature where culture is a big barrier comparing to the other world. As gender inequity remains an unsolved issue in Saudi Arabia, thus, this research is undertaken to realise the need to examine the need for the online training program (OTP) for Saudi women faculty members closely. This will help them in equipping with modern teaching and learning system as well as remain under the supervision of their mail authority. Such a programme will help Saudi women faculty members in learning new things without breaching any social or religious obligations.

There is also a lack of evidence on how to measure the effectiveness of online training programs (OTP) for women in Saudi Arabian public universities. In that respect, there is also a need to identify a measurement tool through which the effectiveness of online training programs (OTP) for women in Saudi Arabian public universities can be measured.

## 1.4 Research Questions

This research aims to determine the factors influencing the adoption of the online training program and its effectiveness for the female faculty members in Saudi Arabian public universities. This is aimed to train the female faculty members in need of technology and online teaching through of internet. Hence, the main research question this study will answer is, "What are the factors influencing the adoption of the online training program and its effectiveness for the female faculty members in Saudi Arabian public universities?" To achieve this, the following sub-research questions will be answered:

- What is the relationship between perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived relative advantage, perceived trust and social influence and adoption of the online training program?
- Does perceived usefulness mediate the relationship between perceived ease of use and adoption of the online training program?
- What is the relationship between the adoption of online training program and effectiveness of online training program?
- Does the adoption of the online training program mediate the relationship between perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived relative advantage, perceived trust, and social influence and effectiveness of online training program?
- Does competitive pressure and government regulations moderate the relationship between the adoption of training program and effectiveness of online training program?

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## 1.5    Research Objectives

The main objective of this research is "To identify the factors influencing the adoption of the online training program and its effectiveness for the female faculty members in Saudi Arabian public universities." The sub-objectives are:

- To determine the relationship between perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived relative advantage, perceived trust and social influence and adoption of the online training program.
- To determine whether perceived usefulness mediates the relationship between perceived Ease of Use and adoption of the online training program.
- To discover the relationship between the adoption of online training program and effectiveness of online training program.
- To determine whether the adoption of the online training program mediates the relationship between perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived relative advantage, perceived trust, and social influence and effectiveness of online training program.
- To determine whether competitive pressure and government regulations moderate the relationship between the adoption of the training program and effectiveness of online training program.

## 1.6    Significance of the Study

In Saudi Arabia, universities increasingly get convinced of the necessity to adopt the online training programme (OTP) for their female faculty members (Al Lily & Foland, 2013). Hence, universities are trying their best to elaborate policies and strategies to introduce and implement online training programmes for female faculty members in the hope to improve their overall teaching performance (Al-Asmari & Khan, 2014). It is important to note that adaptation of OTP within the teaching activities can be used as a mechanism to show the students that the university care for their students that aims to provide the up-to-date teaching and learning experience. Thus, providing this needed support to the female faculty members will enhance the success of the business through profit maximisation (Seguino & Grown, 2006; Sen & Nayar, 2013).

There are many universities in various countries presently offering online courses with the aim to reduce operational costs in comparison to traditional teaching methods (Peach & Bieber, 2015). However, this is not the only factor that affects the effective implementation of online training programs (OTP). There might be other important factors which need to be addressed and which have been overlooked by the researchers to date. As the government is working actively towards the promotion online training program (OTP) for the country, this study will identify the underlying factors influencing the adoption of the online training program and its effectiveness for the female faculty members in Saudi Arabian public universities that could shape the future of education industry in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, this study is very significant in various aspects. These are highlighted below.

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### 1.6.1    Methodological Significance

Firstly, in terms of methodological contribution, a valid and reliable instrument will be proposed that will help to measure the effective implementation of online training programs (OTP) for female faculty members. These will add further to the methodological aspects of online training programs (OTP) research.

### 1.6.2    Empirical Significance

Empirically, this research will seek to evaluate the factors influencing the adoption of the online training program and its effectiveness for the female faculty members in Saudi Arabian public universities. Therefore, this research will measure the relationship between the various factors that influence the effective implementation of online training programs (OTP) for female faculty members in Saudi Arabian public universities. This will be achieved by empirical testing of the structural relationships among different OTP factors. This rational consideration will enable a better understanding of the factors influencing the adoption of the online training program and its effectiveness for the female faculty members in Saudi Arabian public universities.

### 1.6.3    Theoretical Significance

This study is also theoretically critical. This study will significantly contribute to the theoretical development of the online training program (OTP) theory for Saudi Arabian public universities. Besides, this study has incorporated the factor "Social influence" which is the first time used in the Saudi Arabian context of the adoption of the online training program. Social influence includes deliberate and accidental endeavours to change someone else's beliefs, attitudes, or conduct (Hudson, 2015). It is characterized as change in a person's musings, sentiments, attitudes, or practices that outcomes from association with another individual or a gathering (Luo, Chen and Wu, 2016; Stibe and Cugelman, 2019). It results from a particular activity, order, or solicitation, however individuals likewise adjust their attitudes and practices in light of what they see others may do or think (Deutsch and Gerard, 1955; Kelman, 1958). All the incorporated variables are combined for linking and testify with (dependent variable) adoption of the online training program among Saudi Arabian female users.

### 1.6.4    Practical Significance

Finally, from the practical viewpoint, a minimal number of studies can be found on the factors influencing the adoption of the online training program and its effectiveness for the female faculty members in Saudi Arabian public universities. Therefore, its resulting indicators will help both the government and the researchers to understand why there is a need for the effective implementation of online training programs (OTP) for female faculty members in Saudi Arabian public universities. Hence, it will help to develop new policies to attract more female students, which, in turn, will provide

better revenue for Saudi Arabia. The outcome of this particular research also intends to provide the academics and management authorities working in the universities in Saudi Arabia with an opportunity and strategy for properly managing and handling their human resources and turning them into their success factors. At the same time, it will also facilitate the management in creating and modifying their institutional policies and rules regarding human resource recruitment, selection, training and development.

## 1.7    Scope of the Research

The current study takes an attempt and an initiative to explore the various factors influencing the adoption of the online training program and its effectiveness for the female faculty members in public universities in the setting of a different culture namely Saudi Arabia, where these relationships have not yet been discovered. Data were collected from female employees working at various public universities in Saudi Arabia using random sampling technique. This research is limited in scope towards public universities, thus ignoring some valuable information from the private universities. The findings of the study will serve as an essential guideline for universities to improve employee motivation and also to retain employees with high potential and talent, in the setting of Saudi Arabia. Given the significance of online training/instruction to enterprises and scholastic organizations overall data identifying with how culture impacts online learning and how cultural contrasts can be thought about in its structure and conveyance is of most extreme significance. The outcomes give bits of knowledge into how to consider the effect of cultural contrasts to structure and better convey online administration instruction/training to various cultural conditions.

## 1.8    Key Definitions

The definitions of the key variables used in this study are proved below.

### 1.8.1    Perceived Ease of Use

"The degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort" (Davis, 1989, p.320).

### 1.8.2    Perceived Usefulness

"The degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance" (Davis, 1989, p.320).

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### 1.8.3    Perceived Relative Advantage

It is the perceived image that an individual hold about something innovation or platform that he/she compares with a traditional alternative and found to be superior (Castle & McGuire, 2010).

### 1.8.4    Perceived Trust

It is the cognitive element (e.g., individual perception or idea about a certain thing) that plays a major role in building trust (Blumberg et al., 2013).

### 1.8.5    Social Influence

According to Rubha and Kothai (2015), social influence is the extent to which importance is perceived by others that are likely to form a belief about one's use of the new system.

### 1.8.6    Competitive Pressure

"Competitive pressure can be explained in terms of its effect on a firm's incentives to undertake product and process innovations. The result of product innovation is a new product to introduce into the market. Hence the incentive for product innovation is determined by the profit level associated with this new product" (Boone, 2008, p. 1248).

### 1.8.7    Government Regulation

"A rule of order having the force of law, prescribed by a government authority, relating to the actions of those under the authority's control" (Xu et al., 2015).

### 1.8.8    Online Training Programs

Online training program refers to a training program conducted over the internet (Taleb, 2014a).

### 1.9    Organization of the Thesis

There is total of five chapters in this Thesis. Chapter one is the introduction that explains the background of the research, current practices in Saudi Arabia, problem statement, research questions, research objective, the significance of the study, key definitions and the overall research structure.

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Chapter two explains the detail literature review. It starts with the theoretical background that explains the various theories related to the study. This section explains why some underpinning theories are required to explain the study framework. The next section includes a detail discussion on different variables that were identified in the study. Based on the detail discussion, the study framework is proposed in this chapter, followed by showing the detail linkage between the different constructs those will be measured in this study.

Chapter three deals with the research methodology. It starts with describing the research design followed by the survey method that will be used in this study. The population and sample of the study are also identified, and measurements and implementation are also explained in this chapter. Later, a detail data collection procedure, source of data, data analysis technique and tools are identified. Finally, it discusses the detailed procedure on how this study will handle the reliability and validity issues.

Chapter four deals with the data analysis. This chapter also presents the details procedures of various statistical tests performed in this study.

Finally, in chapter five, a detail discussion on the findings is presented. The various implications of the study are also presented at the end of the chapter. Additionally, further research directions on medical tourism are also proposed.

## 1.10    Chapter Summary

The current chapter provided a synopsis of what this study is all about. At the initial stage, this chapter primarily provided a general idea of the study at hand. Later on, it talked about the Saudi Arabian education system and particularly provided an overview of the current education system for the female population. Afterwards, the chapter proceeded by highlighting the problem that gave rise to this particular study. Next, the research objectives, as well as the research questions, were listed. Finally, the chapter came to an end by explaining the significance of the study. The next chapter strictly concentrates on all the relevant literature that has been reviewed. At the same time, it also presents the proposed model of the study at hand and lastly, lists the hypotheses.

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