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Distr.
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July 2007
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REPORT ON FACT FINDING STUDY -
OMANI WOMAN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS
AND HER TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Field Study covering the Governorate of Muscat

Prepared by the students of Sociology Department
and Sociology Work

Sultan Qaboos University, 2006

Introduction

In line with the Sultanate efforts to provide social care for its citizen, the Omani woman has been recognized to receive special attention and care to activate her role and participation in development efforts on both the family level as well as the community level. That included preparing plans and drawing policies and programs that look after the Omani woman from a rehabilitation point of view , training her, and setting special centers and associations that fulfill the Omani woman's needs and requirement and allow her, accordingly to participate in the development efforts in general and the local development in particular.

To augment this fact finding study a survey was done covering a random sample of female and housewives and educated women in different grades totaling (538) and another sample of totaling to (260) to identify how families support the Omani woman in developing her knowledge and expertise in the field of Information Technology and her training in this field in general. The samples used for the survey were only from Muscat Governorate and its Willayats.

Objectives of the Study:

The study tried to address the following main objectives:

- Identify Omani woman awareness features of Information Technology (IT) and its applications;
- Identify Omani family awareness features of Information Technology (IT) and its applications;
- Define the training requirement in the filed of IT for Omani woman;
- Revealing major difficulties and impediments factors facing the Omani woman in the filed of IT;
- Present number of suggestions that could help in the utilization of the Omani woman to IT and gain the necessary skills for computers.

Outcome of the study:

First: Related to the study first objective "Identify Omani woman awareness of Information Technology (IT) and its applications" the study has concluded that:

- 1- The Omani woman has a degree of awareness for Information Technology and in particular with the usage of PC as one of the most popular technological tools. The degree of awareness varies from one area of the research to another based on the women's education and place of residence;
- 2- Despite that the study revealed the presence of IT awareness and the usage of PCs and its importance in day to day life but also revealed that majority don't have or own PCs

Second: Related to the study second objective "Identify Omani family awareness features of Information Technology (IT) and its applications" the study has concluded that:

- 1- The Majority of families have agreed on the importance of having the necessary PCs' skills and on the usage training and how to benefit from the PCs in real world;
- 2- All researches agreed that if the Omani woman starts using the PC, this will increase her effectiveness within her family

Third: Related to the study third objective "Define the training requirement in the field of IT for Omani Women" the study concluded that:

- 1- The assurance on the utmost importance of training the Omani woman on how to use the PC;
- 2- There is a urge desire among the Omani women to attend training courses to gain necessary PCs' skills;
- 3- There is a great need within the Omani women to learn number of real life applications skills that will allow them to socially interact in a more positive way in general and will help them to be rehabilitated in the right way to enter the job market;
- 4- Majority of the women confirmed that if they use the PC after being properly trained that will have a positive impact on herself as well as on her family.

Fourth: Related to the study fourth objective "Revealing major difficulties and impedimental factors facing the Omani woman in the filed of IT" the study has concluded that:

- 1- Business of the Omani woman with her chore;
- 2- The low level of education of the majority of housewives and specially in remote areas;
- 3- High cost of training courses and non availability of these courses in remote areas;
- 4- Family traditions and customs related to not allowing the Omani woman to join training courses, especially evening ones, or far from her residence.

Fifth: Related to the study objective No. 5 "Present number of suggestions that could help in the utilization of the Omani woman to IT and gain the necessary skills for computers" the study has concluded that:

- 1- The media must have a more active role in the awareness of information technology;
- 2- Conduct awareness campaigns to introduce all the community members in general and women in particular to information technology and the usage of computers either at work or at home;
- 3- Organizing training courses related to the usage of computers in location where the women can avail of without lot of traveling and suitable timings;
- 4- The production and publishing of introduction booklets explaining the importance of usage of information technology and computers and, most importantly the publishing of these booklets so that the targeted audiences can benefit from;
- 5- The ease of purchasing of Personal Computers (PCs) and provide support to those who can not afford to buy in addition to reducing the charges of accessing the internet;
- 6- Increasing the support to local training institutes that conduct training courses related to IT and PC usage, through variety of schemes that will cover housewives and working ladies that can not afford to pay the tuition fees of these courses and offer these courses free or subsidized;
- 7- Setting either free training centers or subsidized ones to teach PC skills either in schools or clubs or at the Omani Women Association premises during summer holidays;
- 8- Organizing specialized training courses to increase the Omani Women awareness and skills showing them how can they improve their quality of life and perform their social duties through the usage of PCs, in addition to open new ventures and alleys for their to join the labor market so that they can be ready and qualified to run small self entrepreneur projects to support their family and children which will have a great positive impact on their active participation in the social development.

1	Ministry of National Economy	www.moneoman.gov.om
2	Muscat Municipality	www.mm.gov.om
3	Royal Oman Police	www.rop.gov.om
4	The Tender Board	www.tenderboard.gov.om
5	Ministry of Information	www.omanet.om
6	Ministry of National Heritage & culture	www.mnhc.gov.om
7	Ministry of Social Development	www.mosd.gov.om
8	Telecommunication Regulatory Authority	www.tra.gov.om
9	Information Technology Authority	www.ita.gov.om
10	Ministry of Manpower	www.manpower.gov.om
11	Ministry of Health	www.moh.gov.om
12	Ministry of Education	www.moe.gov.om
13	Ministry of Higher Education	www.mohe.gov.om
14	Ministry of Commerce & Industry	www.mocioman.gov.om
15	Ministry of Regional Municipalities & Environment & Water Resources	www.mrmewr.gov.om
16	Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry	www.chamberoman.com
17	Ministry of Tourism	www.omantourism.gov.om
18	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	www.maf.gov.om
19	Muscat Securities Market	www.msm.gov.om
20	Public Establishment for Industrial Estates	www.peie.om
21	Public Authority for Craft Industries	www.paci.gov.om
22	Knowledge Oasis Muscat – ICT Park	www.kom.om
23	Omani Center for Investment Promotion and Export Development	www.ociped.com
24	Digital Oman ICT Magazine	www.digitaloman.com
25	Petroleum Development Oman	www.pdo.co.om
26	Ministry of Interior	www.moi.gov.om
27	Muscat Security Market	www.msm.gov.om
28	Capital Market Authority	www.cma-oman.com

	Telecommunication	
29	Oman Telecommunications Company	www.omantel.net.om
30	Omanmobile	www.omanmobile.om
31	Nawras	www.nawras.com.om
32	Oman Network Information Center	www.omnic.om
	Banking	
33	Central Bank of Oman	www.cbo-oman.org
34	Bank Muscat	www.bankmuscat.com
35	National Bank of Oman	www.nbo.co.om
36	Oman International Bank	www.oiboman.com
	Educational	
37	Sultan Qaboos University	www.squ.edu.om
38	Modern College of business studies	www.mcbs.edu.om
39	College of banking and financial studies	www.cbfs.edu.om
40	Middle east College of IT	www.mecit.edu.om
	Tourism	
41	Oman Destination	www.destinationoman.com
42	Birds Oman	www.birdsoman.com
43	Arabian Oryx Project	www.oryxoman.com
	Oil and Gas	
44	Petroleum Development Oman	www.pdo.co.om
45	Shell Oman	www.shell.com
46	Oman LNG	www.omanlng.com
47	Oman Society for Petroleum Services	www.opaloman.org
	Port Services	
48	Port Services Company	www.pscoman.com
49	Salalah Port Services	www.salalahport.com