

Do IT! – Identifying Socio-Cultural Barriers to IT Career Choices of Women

In the digital age, Germany is far from exploiting its full innovation potential in educating tomorrow's professionals. While the percentage of male students in information systems and business informatics in Germany is relatively high, female students only account for 20% of all students in this subject area, despite the fact that young women use information technology (IT) actively and very frequently in their everyday lives.

The research project "Do IT!" focuses on this seemingly paradox phenomenon and aims to examine why young women show little interest in the STEM subject area information systems/business informatics despite their daily use of IT. To this end, the project draws on the use of IT by young women, and links determinants of young women's IT use from research on IT adoption with determinants of degree course and career choice from research on STEM education toward a better understanding of their interplay in young women's everyday lives. The identified relationships result in testable hypotheses in the second project phase. These are in turn empirically tested toward verifying socio-cultural and psychological reasons for which young women avoid a career in information systems/business informatics whilst taking into account their daily use of IT. The last project phase looks into the dynamics of degree course and career choice based on a characteristic scenario from the everyday working life of an information systems professional.

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The research project "Do IT! – Identifying Socio-Cultural Barriers to IT Career Choices of Women" at the University of Mannheim is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) under grant number 01FP1705. The responsibility for the content of this publication lies with the authors.

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