

Alliance for collaborative research work between the universities, enterprises and government institutions in the Arab countries (ACRAW)

Dr. Lilia Kakaradova

Assistant Professor, College of Information Technology

Zayed University, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Creating the ACRAW as a deliberative and collaborative system and an open source model between the universities, enterprises and government institutions (DCsosUEG) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in support of power research, infrastructure development, ecological awareness, policy, education and community virtual networks is vital in building sustainable societies in the Arab countries from the Persian gulf region. The alliance is as a step towards a peace in the Persian gulf region and a step towards a Global peace and collaboration.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is currently a leading country in the Gulf region who invests in woman undergraduate and graduate education in the computing and telecommunications field. The young Emirates woman nationals are excited to learn and explore successfully the new ideas for wireless self assembled networks, networking security and information security as well as systems administration with UNIX/Linux. The young Emirates woman are interesting in building internet software applications and building secure UNIX servers along with software and database development and Grid networking to be involve in the international research data exchange among the leading research laboratories in bio computation and ecosystems research and management.

Brainstorming the ideas to increase the number of women in open source software systems and in the new communication technologies research in academia, enterprises and the Arab countries governments is vital. Currently there are many centers for research and information security institutions at the public University campuses in North America. These new structures are built to combine the collaborative efforts between the higher educational institutions, businesses and government institutions in support of traditional courses delivery and provide the organizational help to actively provide short (one to two days) workshops and long term (one to two weeks) intensive research workshops on emerging research topics and emerging technologies topics leading to quality peer publications and creation of quality educational materials for the graduate and undergraduate education.

It is well known that graduate programs in academic and research institutions are looking to increase the number of woman from under presented minority groups in the USA, Western Europe Asia and Australia. Zayed University offers students a great opportunity to take advantage of undergraduate and graduate courses in the Information Technology field. The Emirate female students have an opportunity to study the difficult fields of advanced networks, emerging technologies, software engineering, algorithms, mathematics, security and encryption in a very friendly and caring way that is centered on the students' success. Zayed University provides caring to the students and understanding environment on the opposite to the very high competitive and aggressive atmosphere at bigger technical universities and educational institutions where typically a single woman researcher feel lost under the very dynamic deadline programming projects submissions and paper publications approach.

Most of the problems that have led to a lack of women worldwide in the research programs related to the innovations in the Information Technologies and engineering field can be attributed to the lack of confidence that has been historically built during the not so long history of computer related research fields such as bioinformatics, artificial intelligence, human computer interaction, networking and telecommunications.

The first problem for the lack of woman in the emerging information technologies research fields here in the UAE and in the Gulf region is that the women are not allowed to travel alone to the graduate research centers at the bigger research institutions located in North America, Europe, Asia or Australia. The talented women researchers from the Arab countries prefer to not fight with their families and usually give up easily their talent for a scientific research in compensation of the family peace. The only form of research is if it is offered at the local home University at the local Arab country with no future to collaborate with other men researchers and what is more important with the leading researchers who usually are men in the specific emerging technological topic. Even if the talented woman have a good research paper she is not allowed to travel and present her paper at the conference even it is just two hours driving from her home. This fact put the potential talented woman researcher out of the natural relations with other male researchers and natural networking with other researchers in the specific field. The only form of networking is virtual networks and collaborations with other researchers where the potential for brainstorming depend only on written correspondence which usually slows down the process of brainstorming and cast the potential interesting ideas to develop and grow.

The second problem is that computer and technical related discoveries by women are usually not visible to the public and are less advertised in the media and in the textbooks. There must be an international conference named by admiral Grace Hopper or a famous father poet writer or programming language named to Ada Byron Lovelace or a new nano technology to be popularized by Christine Peterson with extraordinary passion in order the world of Information Technology to know about these three woman researchers.

The third problem is how to keep women researchers in the engineering fields not just in academic institutions, but also in engineering industries and businesses. Keep the talented woman researchers in the technical and the engineering fields need a vibrant and working infrastructure of support such as the proposed alliance as a local infrastructure to serve the woman researchers from the Arab countries in the Persian gulf.

How we will going to build the proposed alliance. As a networking professional I will apply one of the current research discoveries in networking “to make a system an information processing system the first node of the system is sending the feedback to itself”. With other words if one wants the system to change a person have to change herself or himself first. The second very simple small step is to start informal conversations during the lunch breaks about our personal research interests where we are and what we plan to do to advance our research. The third simple step is to help at least one graduate student on her research and help her to go to the conference where she will have an opportunity to make the connections and introduce herself and her research to the international research community. During the entire academic year I worked with the master student Aisha Ijaz and her adviser Dr. Hissam Tawfik from Liverpool Hope University, UK. Aisha presented our paper at the Challenge in IT conference on April 20th, 2008 at the Abu Dhabi Woman’s College where she was able to attract the attention of the UK researchers in Affective Computing. Aisha helped me to give informal workshops in my three hundred level undergraduate classes for advancing students research methods in their final course projects and in how to make better presentations. I make the connections between Aisha and a small group of researches and conference organizers in the USA. During the fall of 2008 Aisha is going to present our new research

paper An Affective Dimensions Supporting E-commerce Applications at Grace Hopper Conference, Keystone, Colorado and a paper at the European Modeling Symposium (EMS) 2008 in her home Liverpool Hope University, UK. Third small step is to organize open lectures, workshops and conferences for advanced networks research topics where the graduate students and undergraduate students will have opportunity to present their work and learn from each other. Fourth small step is to study the specifics of the social and political structure of the UAE in detail to explore the needs and how to approach these needs.

Fifth small step is to make contacts with the local governments, enterprises and foundations with a collaborative work of the students and their families.

The new paradigm of graduate research work is collaborative PhD programs which Zayed University will build in the Information Technology graduate study program in the very near future as a natural development of the existing masters program in information security. It will greatly benefit not only the IT students and the women researchers who attended Zayed University but the proposed alliance infrastructure will benefit all the woman and men researchers in the Gulf region and will benefit the Gulf peace. ACRAW will built collaborative and sustainable communities and will advance the quality of peoples life in the UAE and in all Arab countries in the region.

