A quarter century of gender and information systems research: the role of theory in investigating the gender imbalance

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This study analyses the role of theory in gender and information systems (IS) research by providing a descriptive review of 25 years' IS journal publications on the topic of gender and IS. Trauth (2013) performed a critical literature analysis on research papers that appeared in information systems journals between 1992 and 2013. This paper extends the analysis by Trauth (2013) adding a literature analysis for research papers from 2012 to 2020. Decades of research on the underrepresentation of women in information systems (IS) has revealed a chequered landscape of studies ranging from completely atheoretical to theoretically well-informed work. Contained in this considerable body of knowledge lie a collection of explicitly theorised gender and IS studies. These are the only types of study that allow researchers to build upon each other's work, and allow the field to progress from purely descriptive studies to studies that are more analytical in nature, with the goal of suggesting interventions aimed at broadening participation in the IT workforce. This study examines only explicitly theorised research and finds that IS research has indeed progressed from gender essentialist studies toward gender intersectional studies. The intersectional approach encourages explanatory studies which investigate relevant issues in today's diverse global IT workforce and allows the identification of suitable interventions.

Keywords: diversity; gender; gender and information systems theory; gender imbalance; gender theory; intersectionality; Individual Differences Theory of Gender and Information Technology.

Note: Although the common nomenclature in the Information Technology (IT) field varies, the term IT seems to be more frequently used when associated with the science domain while the term information systems (IS) is more frequently used within the business domain (McLachlan et al., 2016). In this paper we will

refer to the entire continuum of workers who build and manage IT application systems, as "information systems (IS) personnel". As per Niederman, Ferratt and Trauth (2016: 29), "we use this terminology in reference to IS workers, IT professionals, and other phrases referring to those working with information systems".

1. Introduction

In an increasingly technological world, countries are becoming more reliant on their science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) workforce in order to compete in the global economy (Hüsing et al., 2015). Consequently, job opportunities in the STEM field abound. In addition to availability, these jobs are among those that offer the highest remuneration (Kulturel-Konak & Trauth, 2012). The information and communication technologies (ICT) sector in the STEM field offers employment opportunities worldwide, which implies economic empowerment to suitably qualified workers (Oreglia & Srinivasan, 2016).

However, in order to qualify for these jobs, incumbents require post-secondary education. Research shows that the number of qualified graduates is paradoxically decreasing (Kori, Altin, Pedaste, Palts & Tõnisson, 2014). Various reasons, which include beliefs about job scarcity due to the dotcom bust, perceptions regarding the difficulty of the subjects and perceptions regarding the image of the professionals as nerds or geeks, are proposed for the decline in the number of ICT graduates (Ridley & Young, 2012; Mui, Tee & Sien, 2013; Ashcraft, Eger & Friend, 2012). The secondary school system is also a contributing factor to the persistently low number of students in post-secondary ICT education. Inadequate computer science education at secondary school level leads to a decrease in the number of students who enrol for ICT studies (Wilson, Sudol, Stephenson, Stehlik, Acm & Csta, 2011).

Hayes and Bigler (2014) identify two emerging trends from worldwide efforts to produce a sufficiently large technology workforce. The first is that students are internationally mobile and able to gain their qualifications at perceived high-ranking institutions outside their country of birth. Globalisation also demands that graduates are prepared and able to work in different countries with culturally diverse development teams, as well as culturally diverse users (Patil, 2005). The second trend concerns the lingering under-representation of women in STEM studies. A significant number and variety of interventions are in place to introduce girls to information technology (IT) (Fisher, Lang, Craig & Forgasz, 2015; Von Hellens, Trauth & Fisher, 2012; Trauth, 2012; Christensen, Knezek & Tyler-Wood, 2014; Clayton, 2007). However, the number of females who commence and continue pursuing ICT studies and occupations remains low. While women earn the lion's share in tertiary qualifications, only 25% of engineering and IT degrees go to women (DiPrete & Buchman, 2013) and only around 16% are employed as IT specialists (Gorbacheva et al., 2019). In the United States, the under-representation of women and minorities is recognised as one of the main problems of the professional computing fraternity (Ross, 2007).

Trauth, Quesenberry and Huang (2008) approach female ICT underrepresentation from the following theoretical point of view:

"The under-representation of women in the IT workforce, coupled with increased cultural diversity emanating from the globalization of the IT sector, highlights a problem both for the practice and the research domains of the IT field. The problem for practice is to develop interventions to increase the under- representation of women. The problem for research is to theorize the issue and compile data in such a way that actionable interventions can result." (Trauth et al., 2008:2)

Trauth et al. (2008) call for researchers to focus on explicitly theorising their work which makes it possible to share findings, and to aim at identifying practical interventions to address the problem of female under-representation.

However, in a descriptive summary of papers on gender and IS from a selection of IS journals and conferences since 1990, Gallivan (2013) found that only a minority of papers explicitly employ a gender theory. Gallivan reviewed 190 papers which he divided into four topic areas and classified the authors' research methods, epistemological stance and the type of gender theory they used. He found that most authors assume that males are the norm in the IS field, an assumption which he says should be challenged, and concludes by highlighting the need for authors to explicitly articulate the gender theory they use in their studies – to describe what factors cause the reported differences in the behaviours of men and women in the IT industry. The strength of this study lie in the findings that researchers do not recognise the implicit bias in the IT workforce and that they do not realise the need for providing theoretical clarity in their research.

Another study which was published in the same year, performed a critical literature analysis on the topic of gender and information systems theorising. Trauth (2013) identified 132 journal articles on the topic of gender and information systems theorising which appeared in leading IS journals in the 20-year period from 1992 to 2012. She analysed the approach to theorising by conceptualising the term "theory" to include both established and emergent theory, as well as theoretical frameworks and conceptual models. Three types of theorising were considered: firstly where no gender theory was used, secondly where an implicit gender theory was observed, and lastly where an explicit gender theory was employed in the study. She concluded that there existed a sufficient body of descriptive gender and IS research and called for more theoretically-informed research to be performed that is more analytical in nature. She also called for greater

diversity of methodology and epistemology, and that gender and IS research should become fully inclusive.

Recent years have seen an increase in research efforts aimed at understanding female disinterest in IT education, moving away from gender essentialism to a wider understanding of socio-cultural issues affecting participation (Nix & Perez-Felkner, 2019). Ashcraft, Eger and Friend (2012, p. 30) call for future research that takes a more in-depth look at intersections of race, gender, class, ability, and sexuality, saying that "...variation within sex is often greater than variation between the sexes".

In a Management Information Systems Quarterly special issue on "ICT and Social Challenges", Oreglia and Srinivasan (2016) drew attention to the necessity for more theoretically sophisticated research on gender and IS. They agreed with Adam, Howcroft and Richardson (2004) who criticised the existing gender and technology scholarship for focusing too narrowly on gender as a binary variable in determining differences in behaviour, while ignoring variables such as age, class and ethnicity. They mention Corneliussen (2005), Pozzebon, Mackrell and Nielsen (2014), Tapia (2006) and Trauth (2013a) as producing theoretically sophisticated research on gender and IS, Adam *et al.* (2006), Howcroft and Trauth (2008) and Trauth and Howcroft (2006), as integrating critical theory in IS research, and D'Mello and Eriksen (2010), Kvasny (2006) and Ravishankar, Pan and Meyers (2012) for investigating race in IS. However, they emphasise that these studies constitute the exception rather than the rule.

In an attempt at providing a bird's-eye view of theorising in the field of gender and IS since its inception 25 years ago, the objective of this study is threefold: to identify research papers on the topic of gender and IS that succeeded in explicitly articulating their theoretical underpinning, to investigate the degree to which they are diverse in terms of methodology and epistemology, and to investigate whether these papers achieve fully inclusive gender and IS research.

Background

Theories in the field of gender and IS research, mostly originate from the social sciences. Researchers in this field have employed various theoretical frameworks in attempting to understand the situation of women in the IS environment, and to record the knowledge gained from their research. Despite a large body of research, criticisms are still being levelled at the perceived insufficient theorising of gender in information systems research (Trauth, 2013).

Theorising in the field of gender and IS research can be imagined to lie along a continuum (See Figure 1).





At the leftmost side of the continuum are studies that investigate one or more factors of gender and IS, but that do not use any form of theorising. These are termed gender atheoretical studies. Then there are studies that assume that men and women have fixed and oppositional natures, and that all members of each group exhibit similar behaviour. This is termed the Essentialist approach. The next type of theorising is called Social Construction, and is an approach that rejects the assumption of fixed inherent differences, and attribute any observed differences to the "social moulding" of gender roles. Both the Essentialist and the Social Construction approach essentialise women as a single group and men as a single group. The rightmost side of the continuum can be seen as occupied by an approach called "Individual Differences", which acknowledges a variety of factors influencing gender relations. This type of theorising is also called "Intersectionality" and is found in gender intersectionality and minority gender theories (Trauth, 2013). It rejects the principle of fixed group membership and proposes the variability found in considering a combination of within-gender group variables such as gender identity, race or ethnicity. Gender intersectional research considers the differences between people and therefore looks deeper than the essentialist and social construction approaches which do not distinguish between "gender research" and "gender differences research".

2 Methods

Trauth (2013) performed a critical literature analysis on research papers that appeared in information systems journals between 1992 and 2013. The papers were sourced from the "core" IS outlets – the Association for Information System's Senior Scholars' "Basket of 8" journals, and a number of other highly ranked journals that publish information systems research (See Table 1). Non-IS journals were excluded. The study was titled "The role of theory in gender and information systems research". By identifying and discussing the role of theory in the chosen studies, Trauth (2013) had created a list of publications purporting to be about gender and IS, and had analysed each according to the type of theorising employed. By focusing on IS journals alone, many relevant studies were excluded. Finding these studies can be pursued in future. The advantage of focusing on the highly regarded information systems journals is that the subsequent findings are highly relevant to our study.

The departure point for this study is Trauth's list of publications on gender and IS theorising. This study updated Trauth's list to include publications that have appeared

since (i.e. over the time period 2012 to 2020). To update the list, the authors followed the same method as Trauth. The following journals were perused:

"European Journal of Information Systems, Information Systems Journal, Information Systems Research, Journal of the Association for Information Systems, Journal of Information Technology, Journal of MIS, Journal of Strategic Information Systems and MIS Quarterly) or other journals that publish information systems research (The Database for Advances in Information Systems, Information & Management, Information & Organization, Information Resources Management Journal, Information Technology & People, International Journal of Technology & Human Interaction, and Journal of Information, Communication and Ethics in Society)" (Trauth, 2013:279).

Criteria for inclusion were the word "gender" or an equivalent such as "girl", "woman" or "female" in the title, abstract or keywords. The search yielded 43 papers (excluding the original study by Trauth), and can be seen in Table 1. **Table 1:** Journal papers (by journal name) on gender and IS that were published between 2012

and 2020.

Journal	Authors		
The Database for Advances in	Brooks, Hardgrave, O'Leary-Kelly, McKinney &		
Information Systems	Wilson, 2015		
y	Ge, Kankanhalli & Huang, 2015		
	LeRouge, Wiley & Maertz, 2013		
	Trauth, Cain, Joshi & Kvasny, 2016		
European Journal of Information	Chen & Sharma. 2015		
Systems	Foth, 2016		
	Gorbacheva et al., 2019		
Information and Management	Lin, Featherman & Sarker, 2017		
	Zhang, Zhao, Lu & Yang, 2016		
Information and Organization	Trauth, 2013		
International Journal of Technology and	Chiu, 2012		
Human Interaction	Park, Lee & Shin, 2015		
	Khedhaouria & Beldi, 2014		
	Nisha, Iqbal, Rifat & Idrish, 2017		
	Reid & Thomas, 2017		
	Smith, Mendez & White, 2014		
Information Resources Management	-		
Journal			
Information Systems Journal	Annabi and Lebovitz, 2018		
	Armstrong, Riemenschneider and Giddens, 2018		
	Craig, 2016		
	Newman, Browne-Yung, Raghavendra, Wood &		
	Grace, 2017		
	Pozzebon, Mackrell & Nielsen, 2014		
	Venkatesh, Sykes & Venkatraman, 2014		
	Windeler & Riemenschneider, 2015		
Lufamuntian Contanua Dara angl	Xu, Xu & Li, 2015		
Information Systems Research	- Alam & Lange 2015		
Information Technology and People	Alam & Imran, 2015 Dhan khattasharias and Dishardson, 2018		
	Huong Shi Chon & Chow 2016		
	Mishra Ostrovska & Hacaloghu 2017		
	Molnar & Hava Muntean 2015		
	Newbery Lean & Moizer 2016		
	Wijayawardena, Wijewardena & Samaratunge.		
	2016		
Journal of the Association for	Fehrenbacher, 2017		
Information Systems	Gallivan & Ahuja, 2015		
5	Hansen & Walden, 2013		
Journal of Information Communication	Baglione, Harcar & Spillan, 2017		
and Ethics in Society	Flick, 2015		
	Fothergill et al., 2019		
	Khalil & Seleim, 2012		
	Yeganehfar et al., 2018		
Journal of Information Technology	Laumer, Maier, Eckhardt & Weitzel, 2016		
Journal of MIS	-		
Journal of Strategic Information Systems	Krasnova, Veltri, Eling & Buxmann, 2017		
MIS Quarterly	Oreglia & Srinivasan, 2016		
	Godinho de Matos, Ferreira & Krackhardt, 2014		
	Venkatesh, Windeler, Bartol & Williamson, 2017		

All the papers in Table 1 were then analysed in the same way as Trauth did in her original list, and added to the papers from Trauth's study. Together, these studies represent the last 25 years' peer-reviewed IS journal papers on gender and IS theorising. (These tables are available on request from the author).

Since this paper focuses on explicit theorising in the field of gender and IS research, we were only interested in those studies that explicitly harnessed a gender theory. Therefore all gender atheoretical and gender essentialist studies were discarded, as well as those with a focus on IT Use, to allow a focus on studies of various aspects of the information workforce (See Figure 2).



Figure 2. Steps followed to create list of explicitly theorised gender and IS research papers: 1992 to 2020

The list of explicitly theorised Gender and IS research papers can be seen in Table 3. The authors of the paper are listed in the first column. Then the relationship to gender theory is specified, followed by the name of the theory and the role the theory played in the study. The original author's labels were used. The "relationship to gender theory" label indicates that the paper employs either a gender theory (an imported theory) or a gender and IS theory (a theory developed in the IS field). The "Name of the gender theory" is the name the author of the paper gave to the theory they employed. The "Role of the gender theory" indicates the overarching role that the gender theory plays in the paper. The term "Guiding" indicates that the gender theory was used to guide the research that was reported in the paper while the term "Resulting" indicates that the gender theory was created from the research reported on in that paper.

Author	Relationship to gender theory	Name of gender theory	Role of gender theory
Igbaria & Baroudi, 1995	Gender theory	Gender bias in job performance assessment	Guiding
Igbaria & Chidambaram, 1997	Gender theory	Gender in human capital theory	Guiding
Panteli et al., 1999	Gender and IS theory	Gender occupational segregation in IT the industry	Resulting
Ahuja, 2002	Gender and IS theory	Model of barriers to women in IT	Resulting
Gallivan, 2004	Gender and IS theory	Model of barriers to women in IT	Guiding
Joshi & Schmidt, 2006 Riemenschneider,	Gender theory Gender and IS	Gender role theory Model of women's voluntary	Guiding Resulting
Armstrong, Allen & Reid, 2006	theory	IT turnover and workplace barriers	
Armstrong, Riemenschneider, Allen &	Gender and IS theory	Model of women's thoughts about work-family conflict	Resulting
Timms, Lankshear & Anderson, 2008	Gender theory	Model of factors influencing female participation in ICT*	Guiding
Guzman & Stanton, 2009	Gender and IS theory	Occupational culture including gender	Resulting
Panteli, 2012	Gender theory	Community of women returning to IS work	Resulting
Armstrong,	Gender and IS	Model of barriers to women in	Guiding
Giddens, 2018	theory	11 - extended	
Fothergill et al., 2019	Gender and IS theory	Gender intersectionality	Guiding
Björkman, 2005	Gender theory	Feminism	Guiding
Kvasny, Greenhill & Trauth, 2005	Gender theory	Feminist standpoint theory	Guiding
Adam, Griffiths, Keogh, Moore, Richardson & Tattersall 2006	Gender theory	Critical feminism	Guiding

Table 2. Journal papers on the IS workforce, employing explicit gender and IS theorising, that

 were published between 1992 and 2020.

Author	Relationship to	Name of gender theory	Role of
	gender theory	c .	gender
			theory
Reid, Allen, Armstrong &	Gender theory	Critical feminist theory	Guiding
Riemenschneider, 2010	~	~	~
Harvey, 1997	Gender and IS	Social construction of	Guiding
	theory	gendered technology	~
Woodfield, 2002	Gender theory	Social shaping of gender	Guiding
Harris & Wilkinson, 2004	Gender and IS theory	Social shaping of gender and technology	Guiding
Corneliussen, 2005	Gender theory	Social shaping of gender	Guiding
Tapia, 2006	Gender theory	Social construction of gender	Guiding
Joshi & Kuhn, 2007	Gender theory	Social construction of gender	Guiding
Kuhn & Joshi, 2009	Gender theory	Social construction of gender	Guiding
Lang, 2012	Gender and IS	Socio-cultural construction of	Guiding
Windolon Pr	Condon (minority)	Affective events the erry and	Cuiding
Wildeler & Diamangahnaidan 2015	theory	Affective events theory and	Guiding
A days & Kaisan 2005	Canden and IS	The server should be madel	Descriting
Adya & Kalser, 2005	Gender and IS	11 career choice model	Resulting
Crossdall Mal and &	Gender and IS	TDA applied to conder	Doculting
Simkin 2011	theory	I KA applied to gender	Resulting
Clayton Bookhuizon &	Gonder and IS	IT career choice model	Guiding
Nielson 2012	theory	Theateer choice model	Outding
Trauth 2002	Gender and IS	IDT	Posulting
11autii, 2002	theory	IDT	Kesulting
Ouesenberry Trauth $\&$	Gender and IS	IDT	Guiding
Morgan 2006	theory		Outding
Trauth & Howcroft 2006	Gender and IS	IDT	Guiding
Huun & Howeron, 2000	theory		Guiding
Howcroft & Trauth 2008	Gender and IS	IDT	Guiding
Howeron & Huun, 2000	theory		Guiding
Trauth, Quesenberry,	Gender and IS	IDT	Guiding
Huang & McKnight, 2008	theory		C an anna
Trauth. Quesenberry &	Gender and IS	IDT	Guiding
Huang, 2009	theory		C an anna
Kvasny, Trauth &	Gender and IS	IDT	Guiding
Morgan, 2009	theory		C an anna
Ouesenberry & Trauth.	Gender and IS	IDT	Guiding
2012	theory		0
Ridley & Young, 2012	Gender theory	IDT, gender essentialism.	Guiding
	Gender and IS	social shaping of gender	0
	theory	I & S	
Trauth, Cain, Joshi &	Gender and IS	IDT	Guiding
Kvasny, 2016	theory		0
Annabi and Lebovitz,	Gender and IS	IDT	Guiding
2018	theory		C

* ICT – Information and Communications Technology





Figure 3: Chronology of gender and IS studies published in the IS journals: 1990-2020

Each paper is identified as using either a gender theory or a gender and IS theory (written in italics). The papers in boldface indicate work that resulted in a theory. Arrows originate from studies that created a theory, and indicate studies that subsequently use the theory. An example is Ahuja's paper (Ahuja, 2002) that built upon the published literature

on gender research to create a model of barriers faced by women in the IS field. Gallivan (2004) subsequently employed Ahuja's (2002) model to investigate IS professionals' adaptation to technological change. Another example is Trauth (2002) who created a gender theory that identifies various influences on women who enter and remain in the IS field. The figure effectively illustrates how many subsequent studies employed this theory.

Adya and Kaiser (2005) built upon the theoretical foundation of two studies, those by Ahuja (2002) and Trauth (2002), to develop a model of IS career choice by young women.

5. Discussion

The gender and IS studies illustrated in Figure 3 are those listed in Table 2. They are plotted along a timeline ranging from 1990 to 2020, with two vertical axes indicating the origin of the theories and the type of theories used in the papers. The origin of the theories indicate that two types of theories are used in the selected studies: those theories inherited from the Social Sciences (gender theories) and those theories native to the IS field (gender and IS theories). The studies plotted in this figure use theories that belong to one of two broad types of theories: social construction theories and intersectional theories.

Social construction theories are situated in sociology and social psychology, and are based on the "social shaping" of gender and sex roles which are internalised by the individuals in that society. They are another form of gender essentialism, that essentialize men as a single group and women as a single group. Intersectional theories on the other hand, are not based on a gender binary. They acknowledge within-gender group variability by considering the interaction of biological sex and other identity characteristics such as gender identity and ethnicity.

It is interesting to see that in 25 years of gender and IS research, almost an equal number of studies were based on either social construction theories or intersectional theories.

The individual studies depicted in the diagram are listed in more detail in Table

3, where their methodology and findings are summarised.

Table 3 : IS journal papers employing explicit gender and IS theorising 1992-2020:

methodology and findings.

Authors	Methodology	Respondents	Findings
Igbaria & Baroudi, 1995 [G, Guiding]	Survey	IS development staff - utility company (US)	No significant gender differences in job performance ratings, but men perceived to have more favourable chances for promotion than women.
Igbaria & Chidambaram, 1997 [G, Guiding]	Survey	IS managers and professionals (US, Canada)	Significant gender differences observed in tenure, human capital and seniority.
Woodfield, 2002 [G, Guiding]	Qualitative – Interview analysis	Developers	Male workers and their competencies are privileged. The nature of IS work will not automatically shift when more women undertake it.
(Panteli et al., 1999) [G&IS, Resulting]	Survey- Analysis of secondary data	IT workers (UK) (n=2236 and n=35 000)	The gendering of occupations in the IT industry. The low proportion of women and their underrepresentation at the higher ranks of both the technical and management career paths.
Ahuja, 2002 [G&IS, Resulting] Creates theory "model of barriers to women in IT"	Literature review	Women in IT (US)	Three career stages (entry, persistence and advancement) that limit women's career progress.
Gallivan, 2004 [G&IS, Guiding] [uses theory from Ahuja, 2002]	Interviews, surveys	IS employees (US)	Women showed weaker technical skills than the men, but stronger communication skills.
Joshi & Schmidt, 2006 [G, Guiding]	Survey	College students, IS professionals (US)	Stereotypes disappear when students are educated in the unique nature of IS. The perception of an IS professional favours masculine traits and abilities

Authors	Methodology	Respondents	Findings
Riemenschneider,	Interviews	Women working in	No link between promotion
Armstrong, Allen &		IT at a Fortune 500	opportunities and voluntary
Reid, 2006		company, United	turnover. Relationships identified
[G&IS, Guiding]		States	between managing family
			responsibility, work schedule
			flexibility, job qualities and stress.
Armstrong,	Causal mapping	Women IT workers	Family responsibilities, work stress,
Riemenschneider,		(US)	work schedule flexibility and job
Allen & Reid, 2007			qualities influence women's work-
[G&IS, Resulting]			family conflict.
Timms, Lankshear &	Survey	ICT professionals	Females should not be seen as a
Anderson, 2008		(Australia)	homogenous group. Female
[G, Guiding]			discomfort in the ICT industry is not
			industry-wide but originates in
~ ~ ~ ~			particular workplace relationships.
Guzman & Stanton,	Mixed methods	IT college students	Women and ethnic minorities
2009	research	(US)	experience greater difficulty fitting
[G&IS, Guiding]		XX7 1	into the IT culture.
Panteli, 2012	Qualitative	Women who return	Women have less human capital
[G, Resulting]	study on 3	to 11 industry (UK)	(training and education) due to their
	years primary		interrupted pattern of employment
	data		
Windeler &	Field study	IT workers (US)	Organisations should amphasisa
Riemenschneider	Their study	II WORKERS (US)	psychosocial mentoring and
2015			interventions for their ethnic
[G. Guiding]			minority IT workers.
Biörkman, 2005	Discussion	N.A.	Feminist research in technology and
[G. Guiding]	paper		computing broadens the concepts
[-,	r ·r ·		and understandings of technology.
Kyasny Greenhill &	A critical	ΝΔ	Explores both methodological and
Trauth 2005	feminist	14.7 \$.	enistemological aspects of
[G. Guiding]	perspective on		conducting IS research from a
[0, ourung]	gender		feminist perspective.
Adam, Griffiths,	Interviews and	Women in IT	The organisational and socio-
Keogh, Moore,	web-based	industry	cultural contexts of experiences of
Richardson &	survey		women in IT.
Tattersall, 2006	5		
[G, Guiding]			
Reid, Allen,	Survey	IS managers of both	Male participants' understanding of
Armstrong &		genders (US)	challenges is superficial and that
Riemenschneider,			men and women have little
2010			cognitive overlap with regard to the
[G, Guiding]			challenges that women face.
Harvey, 1997	Literature	N.A.	The IT culture, which is socially
[G, Guiding]	review		constructed, is a masculine culture
	~		that denies the feminine voice.
Harris & Wilkinson,	Survey	Students (Canada)	Different types of IS work are
2004			discussed in terms of interactions
[G, Guiding]			or gender, computing and skill
Luses theory from			requirea.
Anuja, 2002]	1		

Authors	Methodology	Respondents	Findings
Corneliussen, 2005	Survey	Students (Norway)	Computing is not "incompatible to
[G, Guiding]			being a girl"
Tapia, 2006	Case studies	Three small IT	Despite an acute shortage of
[G, Guiding]		businesses from the	employees, the businesses sustained
		dotcom era	a hostile work environment against
			female employees.
Joshi & Kuhn, 2007	Interviews	IT Employees (US)	A "top performer" was considered
[G, Guiding]			masculine.
Kuhn & Joshi, 2009	Survey	Recent IT graduates	Aspiring IT professionals agree on
[G, Guiding]			the same work values and job
			attributes, yet with subtle gender
			differences in factors (social
			construction)
Lang, 2012	Interviews	School students	Neither gender understood the IT
[G, Guiding]		(Australia)	profession. The IT discipline holds a
			lower status than most other
			professional careers.
Armstrong,	Interviews	Women in IT	We need to cultivate an
Riemenschneider and	(Focus groups)	companies	occupational culture of inclusion so
Giddens, 2018			that women and minorities have true
(gender & IS theory)			opportunities to flourish.
Adya & Kaiser, 2005	Literature	Literature Review	Factors that influence girls' career
[G&IS, Resulting]	Review	(US)	choice social, structural and
	0		Individual differences.
Croasdell, McLeod,	Survey	Students (US)	Personal interest and family
& Simkin, 2011			influence mostly account for
[G&IS, Resulting]	C	0-11	Sets a long of some la fam IT malated
Clayton, Beekhuyzen	Survey	Schoolgiris (Australia)	Sets a broad agenda for 11-related
α Interset, 2012		(Austrana)	career choices.
Trouth 2002	Qualitativa	Fomelo IT	Desults in a framework of
[G&IS Desulting]	Qualitative	remaie 11	individual differences that
[Oals, Resulting]	study	professionals	characterise personal family and
			environmental influences on an
			individual's IT career
Quesenberry Trauth	Interviews	Women employed in	Fach woman interprets the complex
& Morgan 2006		the IT workforce in	societal messages differently which
[G&IS Guiding]		the United States	contributes differently to that
[ouns, ounding]		the entred states	individual's decisions about their
			professional and personal lives.
Trauth & Howcroft.	Qualitative	IT females (US)	Power dynamics in the IT
2006	study - critical		workforce
[G&IS, Guiding]	5		
Howcroft & Trauth,	Literature	N.A.	Critical studies benefit gender and
2008 [G&IS,	review - critical		IS research due to the possibilities
Guiding]			of generating new insights into the
			subject.
Trauth, Quesenberry	Survey	Female IT	Socio-cultural factors both bar and
& Yeo, 2008		professionals (US)	facilitate women's entry into and
[G&IS, Guiding]			progress in the IT industry.
Trauth, Quesenberry	Interviews	Women in IT (US)	Three factors (work-life balance,
& Huang, 2009			organisational climate and
[G&IS, Guiding]			mentoring) affect each woman's

Authors	Methodology	Respondents	Findings
			career development in different
			ways.
Kvasny, Trauth &	Survey data	Women in IT (US)	Highlights intersections between
Morgan, 2009	analysis		characteristics such as race and
[G&IS, Guiding]			class.
Quesenberry &	Survey data	Women in IT (US)	Organisational interventions should
Trauth, 2012	analysis		become flexible enough to cater for
[G&IS, Guiding]			the diversity of women in IT.
Ridley & Young,	Content analysis	Newspaper articles	The essentialist theory is dominant.
2012		(Australia)	Media interventions are proposed to
[G&IS, Guiding]			increase awareness.
Trauth, Cain, Joshi &	Survey	University students	Gender stereotypes exist, but are not
Kvasny, 2016		of different ethnic	uniform across all members of a
[G&IS, Guiding]		origins (US)	gender group.
Annabi and Lebovitz,	Case study	IT professionals	A framework of organizational
2018		(US)	interventions.
[G&IS, guiding]			
Fothergill et al., 2019	Literature	N.A.	Suggestions for developing related
[G&IS]	review		policy in large ICT projects.

When analysing the studies listed in Table 3, it can be seen that there are approximately equal numbers of papers following qualitative approaches and quantitative approaches. There are a small number of mixed methods studies. Critical studies are increasingly being used to highlight new interactions. Approximately half of the studies follow essentialist approaches while the other half, notably the studies by Trauth, follow intersectional approaches. Intersectional approaches encourage researchers to explore more options than a gender binary, and illluminate the interactions of attributes such as race, ethnicity, minority status or disability status. It is encouraging to see that none of the gender and IS theories follow the essentialist approach.

6. Conclusion

In an answer to calls for researchers to explicitly articulate the gender theory used in their studies (Gallivan, 2013; Oreglia and Srinivasan, 2016; Trauth, 2013), this study investigates gender and IS research published in leading IS journals. It attempts to provide an overview of the last 25 years' research on gender studies and their theoretical underpinning.

The objective was to identify explicitly theorised research papers on the topic of gender and IS, to investigate their methodological diversity and to determine whether these papers achieve fully inclusive gender and IS research. The picture that emerged was one of societies that struggle to see past stereotypes, but of researchers who persevere in uncovering more complex truths.

Various stereotypes are being neutralised by presenting alternative images (Master et al., 2016) and thereby reducing feelings of incompatibility. Simultaneously, the male-female gender dichotomy is being challenged socially. Such diversity can be studied using intersectionality approaches, recognising that not only are females underrepresented but also other minorities such as people of different cultures and ethnicities.

The true relevance of using intersectionality models to study gender and IS, and further diversity, lies in the fact that the findings can be shared (Trauth, 2013). A body of research such as the collection of studies discussed in this paper, strengthens the hand of a researcher who aims to analyse, explain or address a perceived problem in gender and IS research. Trauth's individual differences framework (IDTGIT) has proved itself an effective tool to research and address issues in the diverse modern workforce, not only in enabling theoretically informed research but also in theoretically informed interventions.

Conflicts of interest: none

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