Abstract:

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is rapidly changing and emerging into our daily lives. In the area of educational technology, changes have been dramatic. In contrast to other areas of importance, however, women’s professional achievement in technology has actually regressed (Sanders, 2005). In view of a growing role of technology in the world—in education, communications, occupations, and entertainment, and as a tool for solving the world’s problems—low and decreasing representation is a major worry. (Sanders, 2005). This paper summarizes a collection of stories, poems and writings from female IT academics and outlines themes that emerged within the contributions. These themes are outlined and presented as a potentially foundational structure for developing guidelines and approaches for promoting technology to young females. In this way, the paper explores the possibility that there may be a distinctly female approach to technology that is currently unharnessed and can be used to attract young women to the IT.

Introduction:

"It makes it clear that girls are critical of the computer culture, not computer-phobic … instead of trying to make girls fit into the existing computer culture, the computer culture must become more inviting to girls” (The American Association of University Women, 2000).

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is rapidly changing and emerging into our daily lives. In the area of educational technology, changes have been dramatic. In contrast to other areas of importance, however, women’s professional achievement in technology has actually regressed (Sanders, 2005). In view of a growing role of technology
in the world—in education, communications, occupations, and entertainment, and as a tool for solving the world’s problems—low and decreasing representation is a major worry. (Sanders, 2005). Moreover, there is a need to offer k-12 teachers a descriptive explanation of the gender differences in information and communication technologies (ICT).

There is much dialogue about gender and technology, yet to date, little insight is offered as how we can change the current trend. Interestingly the whole area of ICT is a relatively new field in education (ie no historical male dominated control), yet we still see a significant under representation by young females. Why is that? Are there unique challenges and barriers for women in IT, if so how might we correct this? If not, why might this be the case.

This paper summarizes a collection of stories, poems and writings from female IT academics and outlines themes that emerged within the contributions. These themes are outlined and presented into a foundational structure for developing guidelines and approaches for promoting technology to young females. In this way, women who have been successful in ICT fields are sharing their own approaches and understanding of working with and in ICT.

References


