



IS Education & Research Issues in Developing Countries

# The Case of the Faculty of Computers & Information, Cairo University, Egypt

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# Agenda

1. Introduction to FCI.
2. General issues in State universities in Egypt.
3. Curriculum design issues.
4. IS Research in FCI.
5. Conclusions.



# Faculty of Information and Computing

- a Cairo University is the oldest modern university in Egypt (established 1908).
- a FCI was established in 1996.
- a Informally ranked the top State computing school in Egypt.
- a <http://www.fci-cu.edu.eg>
- a The highest number of full faculty members than any computing schools in Egypt (around 55 PhD holders).



# General issues in Egyptian state universities

- a No formal contracts or job description for academic staff.
- a Staff do not normally participate in the administrative aspects of their departments.
- a Attendance is mostly for formal sessions only.
- a Office hours, even when set, are not adequately observed.
- a However, things have very recently started to change.



# General issues in Egyptian state universities II

- a Incredibly low salaries for State staff, even in comparison with the cost of living.
- a Overly political climate, distribution of workload & additional rewards or incentives.
- a Promotion structures (committees) enforce very rigid discipline boundaries: reward narrow technical views.
- a There is discipline racism & class hierarchies.



# IS Research tracks & sub-domains

**IS Engineering Track**

**Data Base Track**

**Information  
Systems  
Engineering**

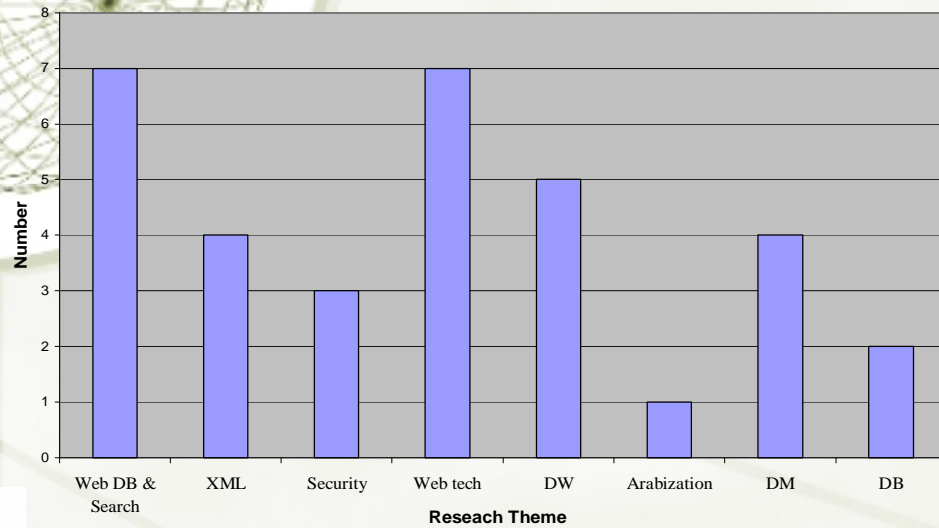
**Technologies:  
Databases,  
Data Mining,  
Data warehousing etc.**

**IS applications:  
-E-Commerce  
-E-Services  
-Internet Services**

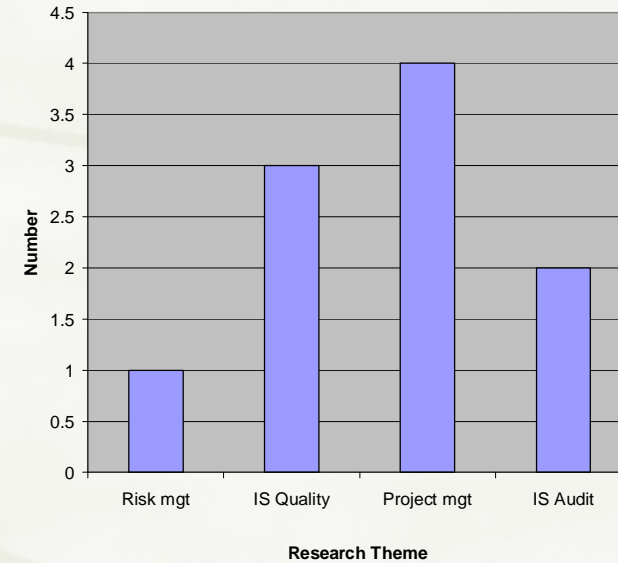


# Research registrations

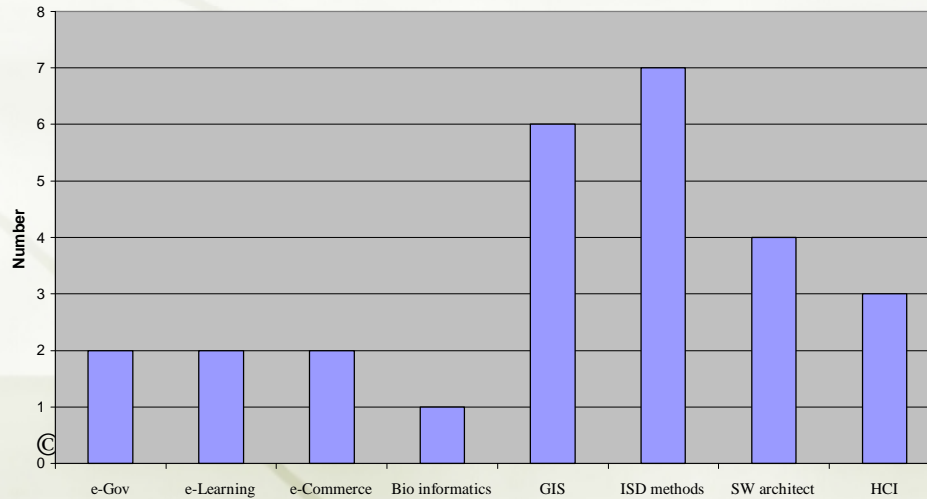
IS Technical Building Registrations (M.Sc. & Ph.D.)



IS Management Registrations (M.Sc. & Ph.D.)



IS Development & Applications Registrations (M.Sc. & Ph.D.)



# Curriculum design issues

- a Little or no training in curriculum design.
- a Structures for designing curriculum are too rigid: central approvals a must, the cycle is too long etc.
- a An overly political debate & control of “old guard” means many voices are ignored.
- a The majority of staff studied or researched information systems subjects only at the PhD level, some post-doctoral only: narrow & traditional views of the IS field.
- a Impact on students’ awareness of the broader tapestry of information systems topics.
- a Limited perspectives of senior and more experienced staff affect staff recruitment.



# Conclusions

- a General issues in State universities impact the development of information systems research.
- a General curriculum design issues affect students' perception of what the field of information systems is.
- a Strong bias towards technical (implementation-end) topics of IS, as opposed to the more contextual, usage and methodological aspects.



# Conclusions

- a Typical core IS concerns such as Systems Analysis and Design, Methodologies, IS Management and contextual issues, and HCI do not receive sufficient research attention.
- a Many structural issues strongly affect the development & practice of IS research.

