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**The College of Graduate Studies and the College of Information Technology
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Master Thesis Defense

Entitled

*GENDER DIFFERENCES IN IDENTITY-BASED SOCIAL INFLUENCE: AN EXPERIMENTAL
EXAMINATION OF SOFTWARE PIRACY BEHAVIOR*

by

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Abstract

Software piracy is the unauthorized copying, sharing, or using of software. It can be a profitable endeavor for individuals, and a tremendous loss for the industry. According to Gulf News, Software piracy losses in the Arabian Gulf states in 2015 was \$897 million (AED 3.29 billion). Therefore, it is critical to understand as much as possible about the phenomenon and investigate the factors that influence subjects' piracy behavior. Driven by gaps in previously published literature, the study presented here is an experimental investigation into the gender differences in identity-based social influence. In essence, the study examined if males or females are more likely to influence a group of their peers to either pirate or abstain from pirating a piece of software. While this topic is previously unstudied in the field of software piracy, it could be potentially useful in such areas as anti-piracy advertising. Further, as most of the published studies in software piracy are inclined to social desirability bias (as these studies traditionally rely on surveys and responses to paper-based scenarios), the study presented herein has been designed with the specific objective of avoiding social desirability bias by having real money at stake in an experimental setting.

Keywords: Software piracy, Social Influence, Social desirability bias, Identity-Based Social Influence, Gender differences.