

<b>Abstract Submission</b>	
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<b>Full Title of Degree</b>	M.Sc. in Management of Information Systems
<b>Title of Dissertation</b>	The Under-Representation of Women in Third Level Computer Science in Ireland
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## **Abstract**

This dissertation examines the barriers that discourage women from studying Computer Science at third level institutions in Ireland and what can be done to reverse the trend.

A review of the current situation in Ireland identified that there is an under-representation of female students in third level Computer Science courses. Over the past six years, the ratio of males to females has remained at 5:1 with girls only accounting for 15 per cent of all Computer Science students. Due to the extensive growth of the computing industry in Ireland in recent years, the issue of a gender imbalance in Irish based computing jobs is becoming an ever increasing concern.

The research was conducted by means of an online survey of 142 Irish second level students who were preparing to finish secondary school. Semi-structured interviews were also held with six Career Guidance Counsellors from Irish secondary schools.

The data collected were analysed to gain insights into the barriers that are preventing women in Ireland from going on to study Computer Science at third level and what the potential solutions could be to reverse the trend.

The findings of this research indicates that poor self-efficacy, lack of role models, curricula and negative stereotypes/culture are some of the barriers that are stopping female students in Ireland applying to study Computer Science at third level.

Potential solutions are to change the curriculum in Irish secondary schools to offer Computer Science as a subject; to introduce a partnership program between secondary schools and third level institutions and Industry; and offering more support to Career Guidance Counsellors.

**Keywords:** Under-representation, Stereotypes, Gender, Computer Science