VIRTUAL COMMUNITY AS PLATFORM SOCIAL COHESION: A CASE STUDY OF IRAQ

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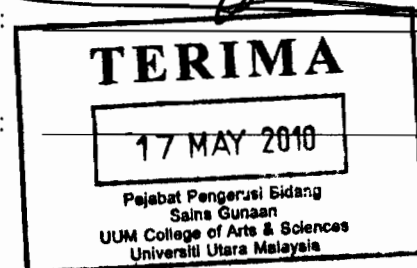**COHESION: A CASE STUDY OF IRAQ**

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ABSTRACT

The Internet users are growing steadily in the field of social networks such as forums, blogs and groups. This life has created virtual communities which inherited all the advantages of the Internet on the one hand, and a structure of traditional communities on the other. This research was conducted to study the possibility to take advantage of the facilities offered by virtual communities, and used it to build social cohesion, through the investigation of the existence of factors affecting social cohesion within the virtual community.

The hypothesis was tested on Iraq, a country that suffers from divisions and problems of political and social, through the selection of samples from the virtual community of Iraq and analyze data using content analysis technique; In addition, comparison of results derived from the virtual community with traditional society That showed great similarity, and the possibility of using ICT to build cohesion and community development, Which opens the door for more studies to organize the process and develop in the future.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the entire study. It contains a general overview for each section through this report structure. In section 1.2, the background of this study will be presented followed by problem statement in section 1.3, then the research question in section 1.4 Meanwhile, the objectives will be stated in section 1.5, and the scope as well as the significance of the study in section 1.6 and 1.7. Finally this chapter will end with a short summary in section 1.8.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Twenty-first centuries is a time of change, with the Internet, the need for construction, organization and administration of modern societies is invertible. Internet technology has been an agent for breaking the barrier of time and place to facilitate interaction between individuals within the same society or between societies in general.

Internet users are growing steadily, during the period between 2000-2009 the growing number of Internet users in the world by 380.3% as shown in Figure 1 (Internet world statistics, 2009). This situation led many specialists in different areas to consider seriously how Internet can be

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