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# **Environmental Portraits of Saudi Women Entrepreneurs: A Digital Ethnography Study on Instagram**

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## **Abstract**

The present study aims to demonstrate how Saudi women entrepreneurs can benefit from the latest technologies, highlighting the strategies that might decline the complications these women face in contributing to Saudi economic development through social media use. On the other hand, Saudi women's portraiture at work is very limited due to religious and cultural factors. Therefore, this study seeks to document the importance of women entrepreneurs' presence in their work environment by examining Saudi women's presence in the workforce through visual representation as a visual signifier of power. Without environmental portraits of Saudi women in their workspaces to document their presence, their contributions may go unnoticed. One of the essential elements to achieve women's empowerment is relying on women's involvement in politics; thus, this study explores whether empowering Saudi women entrepreneurs economically leads to improve their political position. The objectives of this study primarily serve three functions. First, identifying the challenges and opportunities that Saudi women entrepreneurs face in using social media for businesses. Second, understanding how cultural factors and power relations play a role in presenting Saudi women's entrepreneur's in visual representations. Finally, discovering whether Saudi women entrepreneurs pursue economic power contributes to achieving women's empowerment in politics. Methodologically, this study employs a case study (Instagram) method, using digital ethnographic research techniques (qualitative semi-structured interviews and offline/online observation). Research on social media and Saudi women entrepreneurs in the workforce in



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Saudi Arabia context is a relatively recent phenomenon; as a result, the study is developing a deep understanding of the situation of Saudi women entrepreneurs who use Instagram as a method for improving their positions in the workforce, especially after the new vision of the country 2030 which attempt to empower Saudi women in the workforce. So far, none of the previous studies has conducted visual methods in exploring Saudi women at work; this study produces environmental portraits of Saudi women entrepreneurs in their work environment within the Saudi context through visual representations to fill the gender gap in women representation in Saudi Arabia.

**Keywords:** Women work, mixed-gender, social media, entrepreneurship, visual representation