



Member of Qatar Foundation

CAREER ASPIRATIONS, GUIDANCE AND MOBILITY:

ACHIEVING "QUALITY QATARIZATION"

Commissioned by:
Qatar Career Fair

Zamila Bunglawala
February 2016



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE CAREER GUIDANCE GAP – STRUCTURAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND CULTURAL CHALLENGES:

Despite education investment, increasing education levels, diverse opportunities and ad hoc skills initiatives, near 90 percent Qatari government/public sector employment persists, a mismatch between skills and qualifications of youth and the needs of the economy, and only 33 percent female employment. Public and private sector employers highlight youth have limited career focus, skills and work preparedness resulting in employers and the economy gaining limited benefit from rising education levels. Qatar needs to address structural, institutional and cultural career guidance challenges to meet youth aspirations to make informed education and employment decisions, achieve Quality Qatarisation and deliver QNV 2030 goals for a sustainable knowledge economy.

QCF ANALYSIS STUDY VISION:

To engage with Qatari youth to assess their motivations, aspirations, needs and challenges, and with diverse education, employment, business, policy and career stakeholders for the exchange of ideas, expertise and best practice to help Qatar Career Fair identify policy and program career guidance recommendations to support Qatari youth and the Qatar economy, to achieve QNV 2030 goals.

QCF ANALYSIS STUDY OBJECTIVES:

- To assess qualitative perspectives of Qatari youth and diverse education and employment stakeholders of career guidance services and needs of the labour market in Qatar;
- To identify key challenges and policies now needed to address structural, institutional and cultural issues to meet career aspirations of Qataris, needs of the economy and QNV 2030 goals.

OVERARCHING MESSAGES FROM QATARI YOUTH ON ASPIRATIONS, CHALLENGES AND NEEDS:

- Qatari youth have strong willingness to work but limited career awareness, employability skills and work preparedness – and have continued public sector employment preference.
- Mandatory, voluntary, paid and unpaid internships are available to increase skills - but lack of guidance leave youth confused, with limited participation and impact from initiatives.
- Very limited awareness of and access to university student centers – youth face obstacles to finding work: lack of job-search skills, employment advice, work experience and *wasta*.
- Many youth belatedly recognise the value of career advice to support employment decision-making and were disappointed they were not made aware of career services whilst studying.
- Youth value impartial Qatar Career Fair and now also want career advice provision.
- In the absence of formal career guidance, youth turn to parents and *wasta* – perpetuating high government/public sector employment, low skills and career-focus.
- Despite strong willingness to work, Qatari females face additional challenges in employment and progression due to limited support, limited favourable working practices and culture.
- Youth demand is high and latent demand may be higher for formal career guidance and to address structural, institutional and cultural absence of career guidance provision in Qatar.



OVERARCHING MESSAGES - EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS AND POLICY STAKEHOLDERS:

- Education does not integrate career guidance, employability and skills into curricula.
- No mandatory requirement for Career Centers to engage students through expert advisors.
- Qatar Career Fair has strong youth and employer engagement and seeks to build on success.
- Educators highlight Qatar needs career guidance counsellors in career centers, high schools and universities to provide nation-wide services to students, employees, entrepreneurs and the inactive to increase employability and skills via programs, events and web services.
- Employers are committed to human development and 'Qatarisation' – large and emerging industries face challenges of high salaries, retention, parental influence and *wasta*, highlight lack of youth motivation, skills and focus on prestige and 'job's rather than careers.
- Employers want internships/placements to now be made mandatory in all universities for all Qatari students – to increase employability, skills, career guidance and work preparedness.
- Employers recommend national policy should change to 'Quality Qatarisation' – with career guidance focus and address structural and cultural needs to increase career awareness, skills, access to career guidance, understanding employer needs and manage expectations.
- Educators and employers need 15 year labour market growth projections to inform education, STEM scholarships, skills building and careers needed in the growing economy.
- Employers recognise challenges in increasing and diversifying Qatari female employment –focussed initiatives, family-friendly working practices and cultural awareness needed.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Ministry of Education and Qatar Career Fair should collaborate to integrate career guidance, employability and skills framework into education institutions across Qatar

Ministry of Education and Qatar Career Fair should collaborate to agree a way forward of how to integrate career guidance, increase employability and skills in high schools, community colleges and universities in Qatar through the following institutional, structural and cultural measures:

- Integrate expert impartial career guidance in education institutions nation-wide – and increase the number of trained career guidance counsellors.
- Introduce mandatory employability skills and career counselling sessions for all high school and university students.
- Develop inspiring programs and workshops to focus on employability and career awareness.
- Deliver an annual platform to raise awareness among youth and parents of career guidance, employability and skills for Qatarisation, a knowledge economy and labour market needs.

Recommendation 2: Ministry of Education and Qatar Career Fair should collaborate to integrate promote career guidance, employability and skills among Qatari youth and parents

Media and awareness campaigns should be considered to encourage youth to make informed career decisions, develop skills, explore aspirations and diverse professions; and encourage parents to attend school events to learn about employability, skills and diverse professions in Qatar.



Recommendation 3: Qatar Career Fair should establish career guidance framework and design innovative career guidance, employability and skills programs across Qatar Foundation institutions

Qatar Career Fair should develop a career guidance focus to coordinate across Qatar Foundation institutions to provide inspiring and motivating career guidance, skills, internships and work experience through career centers, to meet the needs of youth, employers and economy.

Recommendation 4: Increase career aspirations for Qatari females

Qatar Career Fair should coordinate with key ministries to consider programs to raise Qatari female career aspirations - to inspire females to study diverse qualifications and enter diverse careers, identify incentives for employers to recruit and progress females through scholarships, training subsidies and awards; encourage diverse employers to provide workplace flexibility; and incentives for entrepreneurs to establish affordable and accessible childcare facilities.

Recommendation 5: Evaluate and assess career guidance impact and outcomes

Qatar Career Fair, Qatar Foundation and Qatar University should identify gaps in research to assess career guidance challenges, measure the impact of career advisors and career centers on increasing skills, career awareness, understanding and experience, and commission this research then disseminate findings to educators, employers and policy-makers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is indebted to Qatar Career Fair for commissioning this key study and for all their generous support, interactive engagement and kind collaboration throughout.

The author would also like to express sincere thanks to the following two key groups:

Firstly, to the Qatari male and female high school and university students and employees whom kindly gave their time to participate in interviews and small-group discussions. Without their generous contributions through sharing their personal experiences, challenges and insights, this study would not have been possible. All interviews were conducted in complete confidence.¹

And secondly, to all the organisations whom kindly participated in this study for sharing their insights as experts, policy-makers, educators, employers, human resources, national development and Qatarisation personnel, without their support this study would not have been possible:

Bedaya Center; belN Sports; Commercial Bank; Doha Bank; Dolphin Energy; Hamad Bin Khalifa University; Hamad Medical Center; Higher Education Institute; MILAHA; Ministry of Development, Planning and Statistics; Ministry of Economy and Commerce; Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; Ministry of Youth and Sports; Qatar Airways; QDVC; Qatar Financial Markets Authority; QChem; QatarGas; Qatar Museums Authority; QNB; Qatar Olympic Committee; Qatar Petroleum; QShell Qatar Statistics Authority; Qatar University; RasGas; Supreme Council 2022 and Ministry of Education.

¹ 95 percent of Qatari youth interviewed were aged 15-30. The remaining 5 percent were aged 30-35.



1 INTRODUCTION

The Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030) and National Development Strategy 2011-2016 (NDS) set strategic goals in human and economic development² and made key investments in ICT, education and healthcare, research, services, tourism and manufacturing capability³ to achieve these goals.

Between 2008 and 2012 Qatar was the world's fastest growing economy with 2015 GDP growth forecast at 7.8 percent due to gas production, robust services, public infrastructure projects and private investment. ⁴Qatar's future growth away from oil and gas is dependent upon economic diversification, private sector expansion in innovation, entrepreneurship for a knowledge economy.

An estimated 12 percent⁵ of the rapidly growing Qatar population of nearly 2.5million⁶ is made up of Qatari nationals. Several decades of public sector expansion and rentier state policies has resulted in the majority of Qatari nationals continuing to be employed by the government and public sector while the private sector and broader economy are highly dependent on expatriate workers.

Despite high education investment, low unemployment at 0.3 percent⁷ and a plethora of ad hoc initiatives to increase youth skills and entrepreneurship in schools, universities and by employers, research into Qatari career aspirations found there are systemic challenges to accessing career guidance, increasing private sector and female employment, entrepreneurship and employability. ⁸

There is currently no scaled-up integrated career guidance, education-to-employment transition system or career culture in Qatar. The absence of career guidance results in youth coping with complex education and employment decisions, which can lead to unintended outcomes, under-performance or dropping-out - this results in a waste of human capital, talent and financial resource.

To ensure Qatar benefits from increasing human capital, delivers effective return on education investment and meets the needs of youth Qatar now needs to address the institutional and structural career guidance challenges to meet youth aspirations, achieve Quality Qatarisation and deliver the QNV 2030 goals for a sustainable knowledge economy.

Report Structure: Chapter summary

This report contains the following chapters:

- Chapter 2 – describes the vision, objectives and strategic direction of Qatar Career Fair.
- Chapter 3 – is concerned with methodology.
- Chapter 4 – details an overview of the Qatar labour market.
- Chapter 5 – details the key findings and analysis from the engaging discussions with Qatari youth regarding their employment aspirations, challenges and needs.
- Chapter 6 – details the key findings and analysis from diverse engagement with educators, employers, NGOs, practitioners and policy-makers.
- Chapter 7 - details the report recommendations.

² "Qatar National Vision 2030" and "Qatar National Development Strategy 2011-2016", General Secretariat for Development and Planning, 2008 and 2011 respectively.

³ "The Business Year 2014: Qatar", <http://www.thebusinessyear.com/publication/overview/31/qatar-2014>

⁴ "Qatar Economic Outlook", Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics, June 2015.

⁵ <http://www.bqdoqa.com/2013/12/population-qatar>

⁶ Population of Qatar is 2,374,860 as of May 2015, Qatar Statistics Authority <http://www.qsa.gov.qa/eng/populationstructure.htm>

⁷ Qatar Statistics Authority, 2014.

⁸ "Young, Educated and Dependent on the Public Sector", Z Bunglawala, Brookings Doha Center, 2011.



2 ANALYSIS STUDY: VISION, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION

2.1 VISION

To engage with Qatari youth to assess their motivations, aspirations, needs and challenges, and with diverse education, employment, business, policy and career stakeholders for the exchange of ideas, expertise and best practice to help Qatar Career Fair identify policy and program career guidance recommendations to support Qatari youth and the Qatar economy, to achieve QNV 2030 goals.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this analysis study are:

- To assess qualitative perspectives of Qatari youth and diverse education and employment stakeholders of career guidance services and needs of the labour market in Qatar;
- To identify key challenges and policies now needed to address structural, institutional and cultural issues to meet career aspirations of Qataris, needs of the economy and QNV 2030 goals.

2.3 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Career guidance is integral to increasing Qatari youth job-readiness as a career-focussed workforce with career skills and professional aspirations, to meet the needs of diverse employers, achieve 'Quality Qatarisation' and deliver the QNV 2030 goals for a sustainable knowledge economy.⁹

As high government and public sector employment by Qataris persists, Qatar's strategic shift from rentier state to productive, innovative and sustainable knowledge economy requires structural, institutional and cultural policy interventions. To help Qatari youth and the Qatar economy benefit from increasing education, national career guidance services and an education-to-employment transition system should be considered as the next phase in human development investment.

The findings from this analysis study and its recommendations are intended to help Qatar Career Fair – as it transitions towards the new Qatar Career Development Center – to better understand the motivations and aspirations of increasingly educated Qatari youth, their career guidance and development needs, and the needs of diverse employers, growing economy and QNV 2030 goals.

⁹ This qualitative analysis is a valuable evidence-based assessment of the needs, demand and latent demand for career development services, strategies and wider programmes and policies in Qatar.



3 METHODOLOGY – INNOVATIVE AND INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT

Due to the limited availability of information and analysis regarding the career development needs of Qatar's youth to help prepare them effectively for the labour market and meet the growing skills and resource needs of the diverse Qatar economy, this analysis study was commissioned by Qatar Career Fair to qualitatively assess specific career guidance needs, challenges and opportunities.

This analysis assesses attitudes, demand, potential youth engagement and impact, employer and labour market needs, and identifies key education and employment strategic structural, institutional and cultural policies necessary to integrate and deliver tailored career guidance services in Qatar.

3.1 ANALYSIS THEMES – ENGAGING, DEMAND-LED AND KNOWLEDGE-BASED

This small-scale independent, qualitative analysis underpinned by key labour market statistics, offers unique insights through thematic, demand-led consultation and analysis of career development needs undertaken with Qatari youth and diverse education, employment, business, research, policy, careers guidance, government, public, private and mixed sector stakeholders.

The emphasis of the study was as a process of inclusive and diverse engagement, improving understanding and facilitating knowledge exchange to identify opinions, perspectives, needs and expertise from Qatari youth and stakeholders. Both groups were asked questions relevant to education, career development and the labour market to inform key analytical themes to:

- **Identify the drivers of Qatari youth aspirations** - Attitudes, motivations, expectations, aspirations, barriers and challenges to work, occupation/sector preferences by salary, benefits, hours, challenge, development, progression opportunities, and job-career views;
- **Identify youth approaches to job-search, skills building and employment preparedness** – Perceived or encountered skills building opportunities, including internships, site visits, challenges to job-entry, training and progression, and the impacts of *wasta*;
- **Assess youth career guidance awareness, access, experiences and needs** - Parental influence, formal career counselling, education and employer support - and what more is needed to increase career awareness, training, preparedness and employment mobility;
- **Provide specific analysis of Qatari female perceptions on career guidance** - Support available, gaps in provision, cultural context and culturally appropriate recommendations;
- **Assess education-to-employment transition and career guidance services** - Demand and latent demand among youth and stakeholders for enhanced services provision - and what more needs to be done to support Qatari youth education-to-employment transition.
- **Assess youth and diverse stakeholder perspectives of the annual Qatar Career Fair event** – Career development support, expectations, challenges and recommended next steps;
- **Highlight diverse employers' human capital resource and skills needs** - What they provide – recruitment, training, development and Qatarisation measures - their career awareness and skills expectations of youth, and the need for education-to-employment and career services provision to prepare youth for the rapidly expanding and diverse Qatar labour market;
- **Assess institutional, structural and cultural factors in career guidance** – Identify policy, program and strategic recommendations to address education-to-employment transition and career guidance provision needs for all Qataris – male and female - and the economy.



3.2 QATARI YOUTH AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT – DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE AND STRATEGIC

The selection of Qatari youth as interview and focus group participants, and consultation with diverse stakeholders as clients and beneficiaries, was based on the following key factors: ¹⁰

1. **Qatari Youth** - To reflect genders, age and education diversity, Qatari male and female youth in high school, universities and employment were interviewed;
2. **Employers** – To reflect the existing energy sector, expanding sectors such as banking, finance and aviation, and rapidly emerging sectors in culture, sports and media;
3. **Policy and Decision-Makers** – To reflect government ministries with key education, employment, business, youth and social affairs policy, research and program portfolios;
4. **Career Practitioners** – To reflect career development expertise, identify training, access and provision gaps, and market need.

3.3 INTERVIEWS WITH QATARI YOUTH - STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

In total 55 Qatari male and female youth – students and employees – were consulted through 1-2-1 surveys and small-group discussions. Interviews were based on a detailed questionnaire informed by the key analytical themes above (see Annex 1) and conducted in a semi-structured format. Small-group discussions selected key career development questions from the surveys and conducted in an open dialogue format to encourage youth to comment on specific and related labour market issues.

Full breakdown of the Qatari youth consulted is as follows:

1. **25 1-2-1 INTERVIEWS** – Conducted with students and young employees in Doha.
2. **7 1-2-1 INTERVIEWS** – Conducted with students in London.¹¹
3. **7 SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSIONS:**
 - a. University students: 4 group discussions - Total participants 10;
 - b. Trainee Employees - 1 open dialogue session on internships: Total participants 3;
 - c. High School students - 2 open dialogue sessions on career development activities in schools: Total participants 10.

3.4 INTERVIEWS WITH DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS

Formal open dialogue discussions were conducted with 26 diverse education, employment, business, research, careers guidance, Government, public, private and mixed sector stakeholders,¹² with senior personnel from policy, human resources, National Development/Qatarisation and careers services disciplines as detailed in Table 1.¹³

¹⁰ Qatari males and females interviewed included high school and university students, and full-time employees. Qatari males and females were identified through direct engagement with Qatar University, Hamad Bin Khalifah University (HBKU), self-selection, nominations by employers or friends, and approached directly at public events and conferences, including Qatar Career Fair training courses and formal meetings.

¹¹ Interviews were kindly permitted by the Qatar UK Embassy during their Annual Career Fair in February 2015.

¹² Meetings were requested with organisations in the telecommunications sector and Community College of Qatar but could not to be scheduled within the time permitted.

¹³ See Acknowledgements for the details of the diverse stakeholders interviewed.



Table 1: Full breakdown of diverse stakeholders consulted

Energy sector	Qatar Petroleum (QP), Qatar Gas, RasGas, Dolphin, QChem, QShell
Banking and Finance	QNB, Doha Bank, Commercial Bank, Qatar Financial Markets Authority
Sports, Media, Aviation, Shipping, Construction	belN Sports, Qatar Airways, MILAHA, QDVC
Government and Public Sector	Ministry of Education, Higher Education Institute, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Development, Planning and Statistics, Qatar Statistics Authority, Qatar Olympic Committee, Hamad Medical Center, Qatar Museums Authority, Supreme Council 2022
Researchers/Practitioners	Qatar University, HBKU, Bedaya Center

Selected stakeholders were referred back to, to help identify additional areas of interest or clarification, to further ensure recommendations are demand-led and tailored to meet Qatari youth and stakeholder needs to encourage engagement, impact and sustainability of potential reforms.

Given the small sample size and qualitative nature of this study, it is in no way intended to be fully representative of the Qatari youth group. All interviews were held in confidence and conducted between February and May 2015.



4 QATAR'S LABOUR MARKET – AN OVERVIEW

Qatar has ambitious yet achievable development goals - a key priority for Qatar's continued economic success is to address both demand and supply labour market needs to build human capital, knowledge and labor force skills, to enable the Qatari and expatriate population to operate productively in a globally competitive knowledge economy.

Education systems need to be capable of producing the broadest possible human capital base to meet the needs of its stakeholders – students, education institutions and employers – and the labour market and society. While literacy remains the foundation of all education systems, science and technology, which teach cognitive problem-solving and analytical skills, are considered to be the principal drivers of a knowledge economy.¹⁴

4.1 QNV 2030 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PILLAR – PART: 1 EDUCATION REFORM

Launched in 2008, the Qatar National Vision (QNV) 2030 received broad national ownership for its overarching goal to build a diversified knowledge economy with increasing private sector growth. The QNV 2030 details long-term national development goals and the National Development Strategy (NDS) 2011-2016 defines programs and projects towards achieving these goals. The NDS contains key education, training and labour reforms as vehicles for economic and social and transformation.

Table 2: QNV 2030 Four pillars for a society that promotes justice, benevolence and equality

Qatar National Vision 2030			
Human Development	Social Development	Economic Development	Human Development
Develop all people to enable them to sustain a prosperous society	Develop just and caring society with high moral standards and active role in global development	Develop competitive diversified economy to secure prosperity for all in present and future	Ensure harmony between economic growth, social development and environment
Institutional Development and Modernisation			

Source: Ministry of Planning, Development and Statistics, 2014.

To help achieve the QNV development goals, detailed in Table 2, Qatar has invested heavily in education reform, human development and legal and regulatory labour market reforms, key to economic development, diversification and sustainability. Qatar has made significant progress towards strengthening education, institutional and human capital capacities. Key measures here include standardised curricula, restructured education system to help deliver improved results, creation of new education institutions such as Qatar Foundation (1995), Education City (2002) and Community College Qatar (2012) to enhance human capital through education, scientific research, and vocational development.

Education reforms in Qatar do not appear to have been evaluated to assess their full impact however there are international measurements which highlight improving education and economic activity in Qatar. The OECD PISA 2012 rankings, a strong indicator of post-secondary education participation and future

¹⁴ "The Road Not Travelled: Education Reform in the Middle East and North Africa, MENA Development Report, World Bank, 2008.



success, reveal that Qatar has made progress in education attainment with a global ranking of 62. The ranking highlights that while Qatar remains below the average in the measurements of maths, science and reading it has experienced the highest level of improvement over nine years, than any other country.¹⁵

The UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure for assessing long-term progress in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living. The Qatar HDI in 2000 was 51 and improved strongly by 2014 the HDI was 31 out of 187 countries. Qatar's HDI is below the average of 0.890 for countries in the very high human development group and above the average of 0.682 for countries in the Arab States. Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates have HDIs ranked 44 and 40 respectively.¹⁶

Qatar continues to experience increasing numbers of females completing secondary education and entering higher education. Qatar has made credible progress in improving gender empowerment and narrowing the gender gap in education and employment. Qatar has in place a target to increase Qatari female employment to 42 percent by 2016, and increase representation across the economy.

The current Qatari female employment level is 33 percent, compared to 67 percent for males. In 2012 the female employment rate was 37 percent, compared to 63 percent for males).¹⁷

The UN Gender Inequality Index (GII) reflects gender-based inequalities in reproductive health, empowerment and economic activity. Qatar is ranked of 114 out of 149 countries. In Qatar 66.7 percent of women have reached at least secondary education, compared to 59 percent of their male counterparts however females are not diversely represented across Qatar's economy and society.¹⁸

Female labour market inclusion allows for increasing empowerment, economic productivity, growth and overall prosperity of a society as it utilises the skills and contributions of all citizens. A recent Harvard study found that daughters and sons of working mothers enjoy better careers and higher pay, than home-makers, with daughters benefitting most from the positive role model of a mother with a career.¹⁹ Qatar in recent years has seen pioneering women enter the fields of law, politics and medicine, and establish leading business networks and associations.²⁰

OECD findings highlight that girls have higher career expectations than boys, yet on average, across OECD countries, less than 5 percent of girls consider pursuing careers in engineering and computing. Parents are more likely to expect sons to work in STEM careers than daughters, even if they show equal ability. Despite lower PISA rankings and higher dropout rates, on average boys seem better prepared to enter the workforce than girls. Boys reported higher levels of participation in key activities such as internships and job-shadowing than girls. Girls were also 10 percentage points less likely than boys to have learned how to prepare for a job interview.

¹⁵ PISA 2012 Results, OECD, 2013.

¹⁶ Access to knowledge is measured by mean years of education among the adult population and expected years of schooling for children of school-entry age, "Human Development Index, Sustaining Human Progress: Qatar", UNDP Human Development Report, 2014.

¹⁷ Total employment: Qatari females - 31,282; Qatari males 62,250, Qatar Statistics Authority, 2015.

¹⁸ UN Gender Inequality Index 2013.

¹⁹ "Mums the Word! Cross-National Effects of Maternal Employment on Gender Inequalities at Work and at Home", K L McGinn, Harvard Business School, 2015.

²⁰ Associations include Qatar Business Women's Association and Qatar Business Women's Network, and "Unlocking the Potential of Educated Arab Women, Brookings Institute, 2015.



The OECD highlights some education and employment challenges remain in Qatar:²¹

- Boys have a very high likelihood of failing to make the grade in core PISA subjects (reading, mathematics and science), at 60 percent compared to 40 percent for girls. The OECD average for boys is 15 percent - this can lead to disengagement and high dropout rates.
- When students are more self-confident they give themselves the freedom to fail and engage in trial-and-error processes, fundamental to acquiring knowledge in mathematics and science. On average across OECD countries boys outperform girls in formulating solutions mathematically and apply knowledge - Qatar falls below the OECD average. The gender difference in the ability to think like a scientist may be related to students' self-confidence.

Universities in Qatar display a high gender imbalance in the number of males and females in higher education institutions. Qatar University is the country's largest university by far and currently, 58 percent of the university's 15,494 students are Qatari, of whom 73 percent are females.²² In Education City, 16 percent of the total student population are Qatari, of whom 63 percent are females.²³ This disproportionate female population size in universities in Qatar may in part be explained as Qatari males are more likely than females to study in overseas higher education institutions while also being recruited after graduating high school into the Qatari security services.

4.2 QNV 2030 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PILLAR – PART 2: BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

The advancement of a knowledge economy – applied in entrepreneurship, research and product design - is a central feature of developed and developing countries for sustained growth in a global economy.²⁴ Innovation and investment in "intangible" assets, such as research and development, and information and communication technologies, are ever more important as drivers of growth.

The QNV 2030 details strategic goals for a diversified economy in which the private sector and SMEs play a pivotal role in increasing innovation and entrepreneurship. Qatar is well positioned to move towards a knowledge economy as education levels of Qataris, investment in training increases and the labor market requires more highly skilled workers. The education system needs to ensure it meets employer education and skills demands.²⁵

Qatar's private sector needs to grow and provide more opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation, which can also help to reduce government and public sector employment. Qatar has invested in establishing key research and enterprise institutions, such as Qatar Science and Technology Park, Silatech and Enterprise Qatar. These institutions, similar to Singapore's highly innovative and successful Science Park and National Science and Technology Board²⁶ work to bolster local industries while providing infrastructure support, financial incentives and facilitate knowledge transfer between R&D and local businesses, to help support and stimulate innovation and growth.

²¹ PISA in Focus, Number 49, OECD March 2015 and The ABC of Gender Equality in Education: Aptitude, Behaviour and Confidence, OECD, March 2015.

²² Qatar University.

²³ Career Development Center, HBKU.

²⁴ A good definition of a knowledge economy is "economic success is increasingly based on the effective utilization of intangible assets such as knowledge, skills, and innovative potential as the key resources for competitive advantage. The term knowledge economy is used to describe this emerging economic structure." UK Economic and Research Council, 2005 and Chris Voss and Leonieke Zomerdijs, "Innovation in Experiential Services," Department of Trade and Industry Occasional Paper No. 9, June 2007.

²⁵ "Nurturing a Knowledge Economy in Qatar", Z Bunglawala, Policy Briefing, Brookings Doha Center, 2011.

²⁶ Government of Qatar Planning Council, "Turning Qatar into a Competitive Knowledge-Based Economy: Knowledge Economy Assessment of Qatar," World Bank, 2007.



Key reforms and investment in research, innovation and enterprise have led to Qatar's growth and diversification toward a knowledge economy, as highlighted by the following:

- Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), the leading measure of sustained economic growth in 2014-15 ranked Qatar as 16th, compared to being 22nd in 2009-10.²⁷
- Qatar is ranked 50th out of 183 economies in 'ease of doing business', according to the World Bank after placing 39th in 2010. Kuwait is ranked 86 and UAE is 22.²⁸
- 53 percent of companies in non-hydrocarbon sectors including finance, real estate and business services expect to increase their workforce, (up from 47 percent in 2013) and 47 percent intend to invest in business expansion (up from 35 percent in 2013).²⁹
- World Bank research shows Qatar ranks 131 in getting credit and 103 in starting a business out of 189 countries in the 'Doing Business' ranking;³⁰

In addition to the increasing total numbers of Qatari graduates, delivering market-relevant education is also essential. This relates to the subjects and majors offered by education institutions and the degree to which these are aligned with the needs of the rapidly diversifying Qatar economy, with the goal of becoming a knowledge economy. Despite education reforms and increasingly diverse employment opportunities, research highlights there remains a mismatch between skills being taught, qualifications of Qatari graduates and the needs of the economy³¹.

Employers highlight that students in Qatar are still instructed to learn fixed answers by rote, with too little emphasis on flexibility, risk-taking and creativity in learning methods:

- Only 35 percent of Qatari CEOs believe young Qataris have the right skills to succeed in the private sector – few curricula build communications, networking, leadership skills, awareness of career guidance, mentoring and risk-taking to increase professional development.³²
- 52 percent of Qataris prefer to be an employee while 30 percent prefer to be an entrepreneur. Across MENA countries only 42 percent would rather be an employee than entrepreneur.³³

Science and technology are deemed key components for a knowledge economy as they help to teach cognitive problem-solving and analytical skills that are essential for Qatar's economy.³⁴ By offering a wider range of courses, particularly those that strengthen vocational skills, schools and universities can equip students for a variety of careers which are critical for a knowledge economy.³⁵

The availability of free and sponsored higher education is a positive and high cost population investment to improve human capital levels. Higher education at Qatar University is free to all Qataris and entry to Education City universities is free to students who receive sponsorship funding from either the Ministry of Education or employers in Qatar.

The OECD has identified specific industries and specialisations considered to be the basis of a knowledge economy, which are science, business and economics, engineering, law, medicine and pharmacy. Table 3

²⁷ Global Competitiveness Report 2014-15, World Economic Forum, 2015.

²⁸ "Doing Business 2015: Going Beyond Efficiency", Economic Profile 2015, Qatar, World Bank Group, 2015.

²⁹ <http://m.thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/274180/hiring-hopes-high-in-non-hydrocarbon-sector>

³⁰ "Doing Business 2015: Going Beyond Efficiency", Economic Profile 2015, Qatar, World Bank Group, 2015.

³¹ Ministry of Development, Planning and Statistics, 2014 and "Arab Human Development Report", UNDP Regional Bureau for the Arab States, 2009.

³² Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation and PWC, "Arab Human Capital Challenge: The Voice of CEOs," 2008, <<http://www.mbrfoundation.ae/English/Entrepreneurship/Pages/AHCC.aspx>>

³³ Bayt.com and YouGov, 2014 <http://m.thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/317603/qataris-prefer-construction-industry-to-work>

³⁴ The World Bank, "The Road Not Travelled: Education Reform in the Middle East and North Africa," 2008.

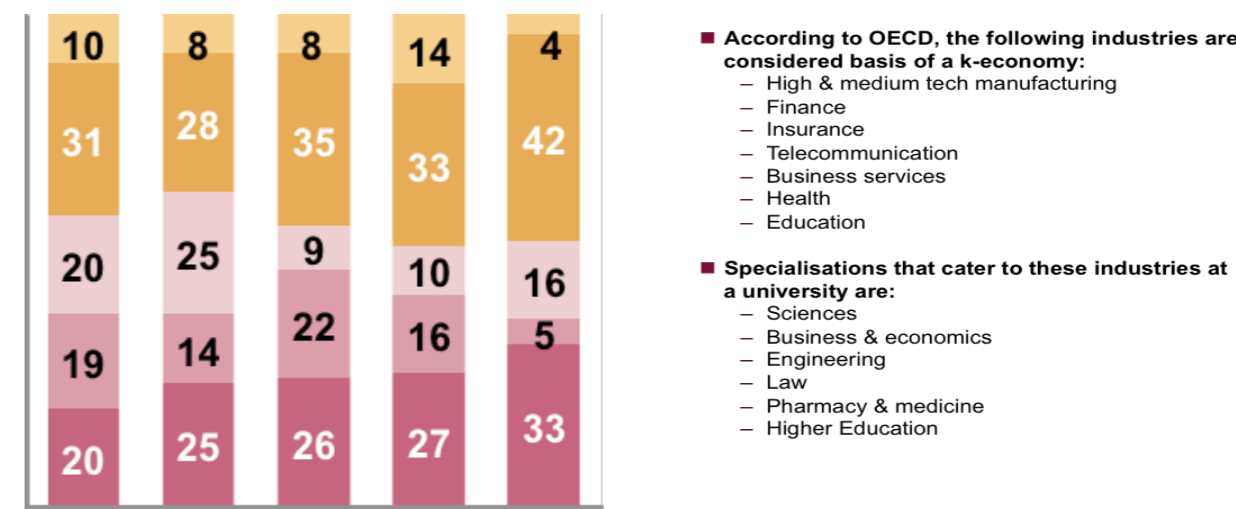
³⁵ "Nurturing a Knowledge Economy in Qatar", Z Bunglawa, Policy Briefing, Brookings Doha Center, 2011.



illustrates that Qatar produces similar numbers of engineers to Finland, a recognised knowledge economy. Yet Qatar produces 33 percent of graduates in non-K-economy specialisations compared to only 20 percent for Finland and 27 percent for the UK. Qatar only produces 5 percent of health and welfare, and 4 percent of science graduates, compared to 19 percent and 10 percent for Finland respectively.

Table 3: Knowledge economies are most reliant on knowledge and less on natural resources

K-economy industries specialisations



Source: Ministry of Planning, Development and Statistics, 2014.

Education City universities offer degree specialisations aligned to those of a knowledge economy, including sciences, engineering, biomedical research, healthcare, computer science and innovative design however the current total number of Qatari students at HBKU is 135.³⁶ The current breakdown of Qatari student numbers in the largest university, Qatar University by faculty is detailed in Table 4. The table gives a strong indication of projected Qatari graduate specializations, with low numbers in law and pharmacy yet very high numbers in arts & sciences.

Table 4: Qatar University – Registered Qatari Students by Faculty/School

FACULTY	FEMALES	MALES	TOTAL
Arts & Sciences	2,951	422	3,373
Business & Economics	1,835	746	2,581
Education	742	10	752
Engineering	721	295	1,016
Law	599	262	821
Pharmacy	18	1	19
Shari & Islamic Studies	338	77	415

Source: Qatar University, 2015, Students include those studying Foundation, Undergraduate, Masters and PhD.

³⁶ HBKU Student Affairs, 2015.



Singapore, the international leading example of a knowledge economy, implemented key structural and institutional education and employment reforms toward a knowledge economy, over several decades. The country learned valuable lessons through trial and error as the national innovation system developed. Individuals, businesses and institutions adopted a culture of productivity and innovation, and learned to adapt to and benefit from policy interventions.³⁷

Qatar is establishing similar institutions to Singapore at an accelerated rate. Therefore, the government needs to do more to ensure that its education and economic structures, public and private sector institutions, Qatari nationals and societal culture understands and adapts effectively to the rapid changes, to fully benefit from them and help create a knowledge economy.

4.3 QATARISATION, HIGH PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT AND LOW WORKFORCE MOBILITY

Qatar is a rentier state where funds accrued from natural resources are distributed often in the form of public sector jobs and expenditure. The prestige, high salaries, lower working hours, benefits and security of the public sector and unequal financial packages, longer working hours and limited understanding of the private sector continues to influence employment decisions. This results in persistently high levels of Qatari government and public sector employment as 53 percent of government employees are Qatari³⁸ see Table 5. This creates a break in the causal link between work and reward where rentier populations expect income without necessarily having to work hard to earn it, affecting sector mobility, productivity, innovation and efficiency.³⁹ No research has yet been undertaken to help understand the factors behind the decreasing female employment rate.

Table 5: Qatari Employment 2010-2015 – Percentage by Sector and Gender⁴⁰

	GOVERNMENT	MIXED	PRIVATE	FEMALES	MALES
2010	83	5	8	37	63
2015	81	7	12	33	67

Despite rapid growth in diverse sectors including construction, real estate, retail, sports and media, Qatari employment in these areas remains low - indicating a diversifying economy but a small national workforce of approximately 93,000 Qataris, that is not mobile across the economy. Table 6 details occupations with the highest number of Qatari nationals are Public Administration, Defence and Compulsory Social Security, Mining & Quarrying, Education and Human Health & Social Work (full breakdown is at Annex 1).

Table 6: Qatari Labour Force Occupations – by Gender

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	TOTAL	FEMALES	MALES
Public Administration, Defence and Compulsory Social Security	49,729	11,288	38,441
Mining & Quarrying	8,639	1,073	7,566
Education	11,311	9,343	1,968
Human Health & Social Work	5,026	3,578	1,448

Source: Qatar Statistics Authority, 2015.

³⁷ Trevor Monroe, "The National Innovation Systems of Singapore and Malaysia," July 4, 2006.

³⁸ Ministry of Social Development and Planning (Paper), Qatar Petroleum Human Resources Conference, 2014.

³⁹ "Young, Educated and Dependent on the Public Sector", Z Bunglawala, Brookings Doha Center, 2011.

⁴⁰ Ibid and Qatar Statistics Authority 2015.



To increase the number of Qataris in employment and diversify representation across the economy, and enable more targeted use of expatriate workers, Qatar implemented a national labour market intervention policy - Qatarisation. Qatarisation acts as a quota, setting specific targets by industry of the percentage of Qatari nationals that must be employed there. For example, the energy sector has a 50 percent Qatari workforce target while banking has a 20 percent target.⁴¹ Penalties for non-compliance with the target are rarely applied however, there are no incentives to achieve the target.

To help achieve Qatarisation targets, many organizations in the public and private sectors have committed leadership time, adopted strategies and allocated significant human and financial resource, including establishing dedicated Qatarisation or National Development teams to provide jobs, training, and workforce preparation to nurture Qatari talent. Measures include scholarships, sponsorships, graduate development, career development and leadership programs, and monitoring and reporting committees to assess recruitment and retention. It remains the case however, that Qatar continues to have a high Qatari government and public sector employment.

4.4 QATAR NOW NEEDS TO ADDRESS THESE PERSISTENT HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

A key challenge for developed and developing countries is to ensure their population is educated, skilled and supported to help meet the needs of the economy. Qatar's commitment to education, human development investment, Qatarisation and structural reforms towards a diversified Qatari workforce for a growing private sector and sustainable knowledge-based economy are laudable.

Despite some positive initiatives for skills development, many have low Qatari take-up, are often individual, sector-specific or not aligned with the skills needs of the economy, or address youth aspirations and challenges. Many also have little to no measure or evaluation of impact, outcomes and sustainability. Therefore, while much needed, scaled-up career-focussed initiatives are not integrated into the education system or underpinned by a career advice institutional structure, to help create a nation-wide career culture that is sustained, monitored and effective.

Under-achievement in PISA rankings, mis-alignment between qualifications gained and the needs of the economy, persistently high government and public sector Qatari employment, lack of parity in pay and benefits between the public and private sectors, low Qatari employment mobility, female employment and Qatari entrepreneurship all present Qatar with significant human capital, growth and productivity challenges.⁴² Often Qatari youth are not engaged to independently assess their motivations or understand how and upon what information, they base education and employment decisions, or what their needs, perceptions and experiences are of such initiatives.

The ILO highlights that dialogue between governments, employers and employees is vital to prepare youth as entrepreneurs and career professionals across economies, for productivity, innovation and sustainable growth.⁴³ If Qatar is to utilise increasing education levels of the Qatari workforce, meet youth aspirations and needs of the economy, then entrenched labour market challenges must now be addressed through structural, institutional and cultural policies to ensure impact and effective return on education investment for a knowledge economy, to meet the QNV 2030 goals.

⁴¹ Qatarisation targets are set and monitored by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

⁴² Ministry of Social Development and Planning (Paper), Qatar Petroleum Human Resources Conference, 2014.

⁴³ "Governing Body addresses more equitable future in the Arab World", ILO, 2011.



5 YOUTH CAREER AWARENESS, MOTIVATIONS, ASPIRATIONS AND CHALLENGES

There is limited availability of information and analysis regarding the education-to-employment choices and journeys of Qatari youth, and their career guidance and development support needs. Qualitative 1-2-1 interviews and small-group discussions with this target group and diverse stakeholders are vital to inform understanding, analysis, policies and program formulation. Qatar needs to better understand youth motivations, aspirations and needs if they are to support them from education into employment, meet their aspirations, assess the supply-side factors of labour resource, to meet the needs of a diverse knowledge economy and the QNV 2030 goals.

In the chapters and sections that follow we explore and unpack the findings from detailed interviews with Qatari youth - male and female high school and university students and young employees - and education, employer, business, careers services and government policy stakeholders. These findings can be viewed on a number of macro and micro levels.

First, there were important views on macro, as they relate to youth motivations, aspirations, expectations and multi-faceted challenges to jobs or careers. There were significant and consistent messages between Qatari youth interviewed regarding their strong willingness to participate in the labour market while having limited awareness of or access to formal career guidance to make informed education and career choices, build employability skills and prepare for the labour market, to help meet their aspirations. There were also consistent messages in experiences of making the 'wrong decision', reliance upon parental influence and cultural networks *wasta*, and clear correlation to perpetuating public sector employment in the absence of formal career advice, and the differences between young students and their older counterparts and issues faced by females. There is a clear high demand – and possible latent demand - for formal career guidance in high schools, universities and beyond to help youth make informed career choices (Chapter 5).

Secondly, interviews with diverse stakeholders – policy-makers, educators, employers and business stakeholders, Qatarisation, national development, human resources teams and careers services - enabled assessment of the labour market landscape, demand-side challenges and opportunities for Qatari youth including education institutional and employer skills development support and employment opportunities. There are consistencies between what employers demand from the supply of labour and what Qatari youth themselves recognise as necessary careers guidance support though there are misconceptions of Qatari youths' willingness to actively participate in a diverse economy. There are clear institutional, structural and cultural gaps between the demand and supply of career guidance services and support in Qatar (Chapter 6).

All qualitative views and quantitative findings views and this macro and micro approach directly inform the policy and program recommendations (Chapter 7).



5.1 DRIVERS OF YOUTH MOTIVATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS TO JOBS AND CAREERS

Continuing preferences for government and public sector employment, high salaries and prestige...

Qatari youth, similar to youth everywhere, aspire to reach their goals and respond to credible incentives to achieve these goals. Presently, the vast majority of the Qatari population are employed in government ministries and wider public sector where they earn a high salary with significant benefits, in culturally valued and prestigious roles.

Students and employees interviewed were asked to identify where they would like to or currently do work and the reasons for their choices. While the sample of youth interviewed is too small to be statistically representative it is important to highlight the majority of youth, many of whom had not yet identified a specific career or profession they wanted to work in, were clear of the type of or the specific organisation they wanted to work for. Many identified energy companies or government and public sector suggesting strong awareness of and preference for employment here, despite the increasingly diverse and well paid career opportunities available in the private sector, in Qatar.

When asked the reasons for choice of employment in order of preference, the majority of Qataris interviewed highlighted level of pay, job security, prestige and working hours, in that order, with many comparing government with fewer working hours and less challenge than the private sector.

"Since we were kids heard about the prestige of the energy sector and they offer good scholarships and benefits. My Father was very keen for me to study. My company gave me a scholarship to university and now I am on the graduate program." Male, Mechanical Engineer, Energy Sector

"If you are hard-working then should go to the private sector – they will work long hours but you receive good benefits. Some Qataris think working in government means an early finish and family friendly hours." Female, Analyst, Government Ministry

A recent study affirms this pattern of Qatari government and public sector employment preferences and found the top three factors most important to Qatari respondents when selecting jobs are salary and benefits at 84 percent, opportunities for career growth at 64 percent and job security at 27 percent. In Qatar, 71 percent of respondents have set professional goals they want to achieve followed by career path of 38 percent and work-life balance at 31 percent.⁴⁴

Research highlights continued high preference for government and public sector roles by both Qatari youth and Qatari parents. Qatari youth, and in many cases parental, consideration for employment in private sector organisations is very low, see Table 6. A variety of research highlights Qatari employment preferences of the public (and government) sector rather than the private sector:

- **Salary and benefits** - Clear disparity as often much higher levels in the public sector.⁴⁵
- **Working hours** – Unsociable and long working hours, with requirement to work six days.⁴⁶
- **Holidays** - 10-15 days for Eid in the public sector while only 3-4 days in private sector.⁴⁷

When asked what are the characteristics of the 'best employer' Qatari youth and their parents responded high salary, word of mouth and work culture.⁴⁸ The National Development Strategy put forward options

⁴⁴ Bayt.com and YouGov, December 2014 <http://m.thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/317603/qataris-prefer-construction-industry-to-work>

⁴⁵ Manpower survey, Ministry of Development, Planning and Statistics, 2015.

⁴⁶ <http://dohaneews.co/survey-most-qataris-dont-want-to-work-in-the-private/>

⁴⁷ <http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/349566/private-sector-workers-see-holiday-parity>

⁴⁸ "Pre-Branding Report", Ipsos Mori Marketing, commissioned by Qatar Airways, 2014.



for government to incentivise private sector employers to recruit Qataris through subsidised training costs while the Permanent Population committee Annual Report (2012) suggested legalisation be enacted that guarantees equal salary and benefits for Qataris in both the public and private sectors.⁴⁹ It is rational therefore that many employment decisions youth make are informed by the highly lucrative high wage-low work jobs available in the government and public sector, in the absence of private sector pay, benefits and working hours parity and incentives.⁵⁰

Table 7: Qatari Youth and Parents Sector Preferences⁵¹

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	Government	Public Sector	Private Sector
Qatari Students	74%	21%	1%
Qatari Graduates	52%	45%	0%
Qatari Parents	54%	26%	4%

...Increasingly youth have preferences for challenge, autonomy and progression in employment...

Several students highlighted strong preferences for a level of challenge, autonomy, training and progression support. Some conveyed an overall awareness of the interesting and diverse employment opportunities now available. There were mixed perceptions of whether the private sector has less financial reward to government and if that matters more than youth aspirations:

"Five years ago we did not hear about sports, culture or media jobs here and we used to laugh at our friends studying these majors - now these jobs are everywhere and my friends have Director roles!" Male, Employee, Public Sector

"There are now interesting opportunities in culture, art and history that I will be able to select from when I graduate. I did not apply for a company scholarship – my friends get QR7,000 more than me a month from their company." Female, Art History Student, HBKU.

Both male and female Qatari students stated a strong willingness to enter employment after their education however, very few were aware of whether their choice of employment was a career or a job, or indeed that there was a difference between the two. Some employees were highly motivated, ambitious and aware of the difference between a job and a career, and were very keen that more youth be supported to understand this difference, as these responses illustrate:

"A job you take to pay the bills. A career is something you love to do! I could easily have taken a ministry job and be paid more - I chose to work here because it's interesting, they value my overseas education and skills, and the benefits are good." Male, Graduate Developpee, Tourism Sector

"A job is everyday routine while a career is something to develop and improve yourself over the course of life – we need to encourage youth to make choices based on challenge and drive, not money and prestige." Male, Electrical Engineering Student, Coventry University

...these are encouraging signs for possible future entrepreneurship

Strong willingness to be challenged, ambitious and autonomous are encouraging signs for possible future entrepreneurs. Qatari youth were asked if they were interested in running their own business and become entrepreneurs. While some students did suggest that they were keen to 'have a business' after they

⁴⁹ <http://dohaneews.co/survey-most-qataris-dont-want-to-work-in-the-private/>

⁵⁰ "Young, Educated and Dependent on the Public Sector", Z Bungalwala, Brookings Doha Center, 2011.

⁵¹ Ibid



graduated whilst also working full-time, none had yet started an enterprise. This may be reflective of the young age profile of interviewees, as many were still students.

Entrepreneurship has the potential to offer youth a viable alternative to employment in the public sector however, it requires financial incentives, support and guidance as well as a culture of risk-taking and innovation. Research shows that schools, universities and research and development institutes can help foster a culture of business development through nurturing the skills and expertise needed for project incubation and risk-taking.⁵² Research also highlights Qatari youth value parental support when considering entrepreneurial projects as they do not want to be considered a 'failure' if the business is not successful or takes time to make a profit.⁵³ By ensuring that promoting entrepreneurship and innovation are an integral part of the education curriculum and parental support is forthcoming, more students can be encouraged to become involved in business ventures in the private sector and contribute to the development of a knowledge economy.

5.2 AWARENESS AND APPROACHES TO SKILLS BUILDING AND EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION

Limited awareness of employability skills and work preparedness among the majority of youth...

It is in the interest every country to ensure that the population are trained in the skills required by the economy in the immediate and long term, thereby utilising their education and maximising their resource and potential. The ILO highlights employability is closely linked to an individual's capacity to adapt to change, combine knowledge and prepare for the labour market before entering it. This helps to broaden awareness and understanding of diverse professions, build non-academic cognitive and problem-solving skills (herein employability) and become familiar with the work environment.⁵⁴

Early experience of and exposure to the labour market can inspire and motivate youth, nurture talent, broaden career horizons, enable them to form realistic expectations of employment and the work environment. Career orientation activities exist in some Qatar schools including employer presentations, site visits to companies and job-shadowing opportunities which can help students to determine their future goals, raise ambitions and inform long-term education and employment decisions. While not every internship or work experience may be positive, exposure to the work environment enables students to gain key understanding of employment and establish contact with potential employers for sponsorship, scholarship, work experience and employment opportunities.

Qatari youth were asked about their approaches to skills building and employment preparedness, and their opinions, attitudes and experiences in this regard, specifically regarding employability skills, internships, placements, and site visits. Majority of students had limited awareness of what employability skills were and the importance of in addition to gaining education qualifications also preparing for entry to the labour market. These youth felt that as students their focus should be on their studies and employability skills can wait until they enter full-time employment.

Many youth were unable to identify that employers look for 'soft' employability skills including communications, team-building, time-management, creativity, problem-solving, leadership and English fluency. This is not to suggest that they did not have employability skills, rather they were unaware of the lexicon of specific skills and were not made aware of these skills through schools or work experience providers. Qatari youth in work were keen more students are now supported to understand the importance of learning what these skills are and gaining them, as the following responses illustrate:

⁵² "Education for the Knowledge Economy," World Bank, 2009.

⁵³ "Nurturing a Knowledge Economy in Qatar", Z Bunglawala, Policy Briefing, Brookings Doha Center, 2011.

⁵⁴ "Strategic training partnerships between the State and enterprises," Employment and Training Papers (19), ILO, 1998.



"Companies need Qataris with English language, problem-solving and negotiation skills, and self-confidence - I was told by my coach at work that I have these skills. Until she told me, I did not even know these were skills!" Female, Human Resources, Tourism Industry

"Students need to understand companies are looking for drive, passion, good communications skills including English language fluency. Youth should gain experience through internships – this will help them when looking for employment." Male, National Development, Tourism Sector

Qatari youth whom had no experience of internships held a variety of perceptions regarding this activity ranging from positive to sceptical outlooks of the benefits of employability skills development, to regrets for not taking up the opportunity, as the responses below illustrate:

"I will apply in my 4th year for an internship so I will have a higher chance of getting a job – It will develop my team working skills and give me experience of the work environment. I may struggle at the beginning of a job but at least some aspects will be familiar." Female, Art History Student, HBKU

"I have to undertake an internship as part of my course – it's not a part of my scholarship – I would not do if it was optional. I do not see why it is beneficial and it will take place over summer break and interfere with my time off." Male, Communications Student, HBKU University

"I did not prepare my skills for work – I chose my university course because I wanted to be with my friends and I did not know where to work, I simply searched online. I realise now that I should have developed my skills and gained some experience." Female, Graduate Developee, Tourism Sector

... but those who had undertaken internships had positive experiences and developed key skills

Qatari youth whom had completed an internship, largely as a result of being mandated by their university course or complying with their sponsorship or scholarship criteria rather than volunteering to participate, had largely positive experiences. The majority of youth with internship experience stated they recognised the value of gaining work experience while studying and gained an understanding of the work environment to help inform future employment choices, even if the placement itself was not to their liking, and some recognised specific employability skills they had gained, as the responses below illustrate:

"The internship was mandatory for my course – it was a good opportunity to develop skills - four weeks was even too short as I learned for the first time what the work environment was like." Female, Economics Researcher, Government Ministry

"I did two internships while I was a student to help decide what I wanted to do – I didn't like either of them but I learned about the job and gained skills such as communications, time management and it built my self confidence." Female, Human Resources, Public Sector Employee

"As part of my course I had to do an internship, my sponsor gave me a six-month placement in the US to increase my skills – I gained leadership and workplace skills, learned to understand the work environment and how to be a committed professional." Female, Engineer, Construction Sector

Some youth struggled to identify specific workplace and employability skills they had gained through internships, further suggesting limited awareness of the lexicon of employability skills and what employers are looking for. Some youth expressed concern they were not properly managed or challenged during the internship, or simply did not wish to complete the mandatory requirement. This may convey poor line management, broader employer capacity issues, importance of managing expectations and monitoring engagement and completion, as the responses below illustrate:

"I completed a one-month internship but I was placed in the wrong department – the work was not related to my major and the manager did not give me any engaging tasks. I complained to the Training Department but nothing changed." Male, Human Resources, Public Sector



"I had to complete a summer internship for two months but I only went for two weeks and then went on summer vacation. On paper it shows I completed it because the placement was with a family friend and so they 'handled it' for me." Female, Administration, Public Sector

Qatari youth were asked if they had any experience of initiatives or events to help inspire them, broaden their career horizons, improve their skills or attract them to specific professions through for example, guest speakers, site visits or company presentations. The following response illustrates the broad opinion many youth had of current types of interventions suggesting many companies do not share sufficient information with youth about their organisations and work opportunities:

"Some companies visit schools but mostly share scholarship information - they need to explain their job-shadowing and internships, to help youth understand the work environment, skills needed and choose the right courses, to inform their future decisions." Female, Engineer, Construction Sector

Mandatory, voluntary, paid and unpaid internships: not supported, monitored or level playing field

Many Qatari university students have scholarships or sponsorships with either the Higher Education Institute or with employers, which pay them a monthly salary whilst they study. Some employers mandate while the majority 'encourage' students to complete an internship with the organisation during their studies and work for the organisation after they graduate. The salary and managerial support students receive are an incentive to complete the requirements of the scholarship, including undertaking an internship. Financial sanctions are rarely applied for non-completion of internships.

Some Qatari students are required to complete an internship as part of their degree course – usually business and engineering - however there is no clear financial support or incentive though some employers may pay them, it is not on par with the level sponsored students receive.

No students interviewed stated they had received support from their university career service to help identify, prepare for or discuss internship places before or after completion. Some students whom had completed internships without company scholarships sought advice from individual professors or faculty staff to help them find a placement. There appears to be no monitoring or evaluation of student internships by employers or universities for skills gained, value or impact.

Volunteering is required by high schools...but many do not participate and are not monitored

High schools in Qatar require students to complete volunteering assignments of up to two weeks duration or more, which are mandatory for graduation. Volunteering enables youth to give back to the local community while also enabling them to gain valuable communications, team building and leadership skills, and provides them an insight into a work environment.

Many youth recognised the importance of giving back to the community though many did not actually take part as their parents advised them not to complete the mandatory requirement:

"I am glad I participated to gain experience. It will help me in public life to communicate with new people and build my confidence. We need more support like this!" Female, High School Student

"Many youth do not complete the volunteering activity – parents need to encourage youth to gain skills even if it clashes with summer vacation or Ramadan, and the system needs to check if students are really volunteering – do unannounced visits!" Female, Program Activities, Public Sector

"I actually wanted to volunteer but my Mom said I didn't need to. She had one of her friends sign the form saying I had completed it. No one from the school checked!" Female, High School Student



These findings suggest that despite high schools and universities recognising that internships, placements and volunteering activities are important for building skills and experience and connecting with potential employers, there are key challenges as follows:

- No formal career services support available to raise student awareness of the benefits of these skills building activities, identify opportunities available or help manage expectations;
- While diverse options in gaining skills is valuable, there appear to be too many variations in internships – paid or unpaid, supported or unsupported, voluntary or mandatory – thereby leaving students and perhaps parents also - confused of the benefits;
- Internships usually take place during summer break, when many families take holidays - if there appear to be no clear benefit or support, youth may choose not to engage;
- Youth participation – and non-participation – are often arranged through *wasta* by family and friends, limiting Qatari employment mobility and transparency;
- No independent evaluation of internships or volunteering by education institution to monitor attendance, assess skills gained, evaluate youth experience, perceptions and benefits of the activities, and how experiences may inform future career decisions.

5.3 FORMAL CAREERS GUIDANCE, CAREERS FAIRS AND JOB-SEARCH EXPERIENCES

Despite career centers in universities there is very limited student access, awareness and impact

Understanding the labour market, career awareness skills, preparedness and job-search capability all enable youth to have exposure to the labour market and work environment before they enter it which can help them to navigate careers effectively. In Qatar, many students have little to no exposure to the labour market until after they have graduated from high school or university.

Qatari youth were asked how they intended to or experienced finding work, how easy or difficult they found job-search, how they went about it and if they sought advice and guidance in the process. The key obstacles most frequently identified to finding work included: lack of awareness of how to job-search, access to advice on employment opportunities, what employers were looking for, how to connect to employers and a lack of relevant experience.

Qatari youth when asked about their job-search and job-entry experiences highlighted that while there were many jobs in Qatar for Qataris some youth, whom did not have company scholarships or the social networks of *wasta*, encountered considerable challenges in finding a job as follows:

- Many 'waited' at home for several months before finding 'any' job, which they accepted;
- Many resorted to 'blind' online applications by sending their CV to organisations in hope they were looking for employees, rather than apply for actual vacancies;
- Some who did have specific professions in mind were convinced 'a Qatari would never be recruited in those roles', due to limited understanding or engagement with employers;
- Some stated these experiences left them feeling de-motivated and applying for jobs randomly, rather than based on their genuine aspirations and career choices.

"Many Qatari youth are sitting at home for months after graduation. I got my job just by just submitting my CV – I did not even know what jobs they were hiring for! Youth need advice to help choose their majors and look for work." Male, Financial Researcher, Government Ministry

"You feel blind or lost – many young graduates wait a long time before they find a job and they can explore a dark journey if they do not find the right career." Female, Analyst, Government Ministry



"I recognise that you need the right education and have to develop your skills but I am studying PR and communications and I know they will not give me a PR role even though we have these jobs in Qatar." Female, Communications and PR Student, Qatar University

Despite Qatar University and Education City universities having dedicated career advisors and senior personnel to support students on campus the majority of students and employees interviewed had never accessed formal career advice, information or support from student centers. Only a handful of youth cited any awareness of the existence or location of university career services suggesting their presence on campus has little impact on or benefit to Qatari students.

Many students mistakenly assumed their high school academic advisors as being trained career advisors while others rely on individual teachers and professors – whom are also not trained career advisors - to answer their work-related questions. Other than a "How to write a CV" class few youth could recall any formal career support they had received during high school or university.

Career centers, in addition to career advice, can also be helpful sources of career coaching and counselling for students seeking support before they commence or indeed after they leave university. Some universities in Qatar hold summer preview programs where youth participate in one-month long preparatory courses to help raise awareness and familiarity with universities and their courses. It would benefit students if career advisors were engaged during these courses to provide support, answer career questions and establish contact with potential future students.

Many Qataris - some belatedly - recognise the value of career advice for employment decision-making and were disappointed they were not made aware of career services while studying

Many students and employees were very disappointed to learn that career advisors were present on university campuses and questioned why they were not made aware of this before, particularly when looking for work or making life-changing employment decisions, and the very few whom had accessed advisor support had negative experiences, as the following responses illustrate:

"There is a careers advisor in my former university? Why did I not know about this when I was a student?! Careers advice should start from primary school to help youth learn what they might be interested in becoming and engaging them from an early age about work." Female, Economics Researcher, Government Ministry

"I have never received careers advice – I have made career mistakes costing me time and money. We need careers advice and support provided by trained qualified professionals. Our academic counsellors are usually the worst teachers in the school!" Male, Human Resources, Public Sector

"I heard about the careers service from my professor but I never saw their location. I twice met them but they were not very useful – they did not help me to learn about the different companies in the economy, what might best suit me or where I might fit!" Female, Analyst, Government Ministry

Many youth highlighted that it was implausible to require students to select their university degrees and be exposed to company sponsorships, many of which require specific majors to be selected, at the ages of 16 or 18 without having access to formal career advice to help them make informed decisions, as the following comments illustrate:

"I was very confused at 16 – many youth are forced into what to study. Career advice could help youth in identifying professions available and which to choose." Female, Art History Student, HBKU

"The problem is they make us choose at 18 – we need time, support and career advice to help identify our life-long career!" Male, Physics Student, HBKU



Qatari youth on Qatar Career Fair – value the impartial platform and now also want career advice

When asked specifically about their experiences of Qatar Career Fair the majority of students and employees responded positively, highlighting the benefits of being able to see the diversity of organisations in one location and the opportunity to learn about and gain sponsorships on-site.

Many youth also however highlighted the limited information many employers provide at the fair about their organisation with regards to work culture, development opportunities and the professions they were recruiting for. Some youth also expressed disappointment of how many employers do not respond when contacted by youth seeking information. Many youth stated that the fair platform should now also include impartial career advice, as these responses illustrate:

"I found my sponsor through attending the fair - I learned about the options available in the labour market, all the companies are there in one place. There has to be independent career advice available there too. Qatari youth need support to learn more about professions, identify the right jobs based on their interests and how to apply." Male, Design Engineer, Public Sector Employee

"Many young people attend just to find scholarships – even if they already have one – they do not go to learn about companies. There is no career advice available and so youth choose the wrong job and companies end up with high worker turnover." Female, Chemist, Energy Sector

"I applied for jobs and scholarships but received no advice or responses. It was good to see how many companies we have – when you approach them they should explain their work environment, organisation and development opportunities." Female, Graduate Developee, Tourism Industry

Many Qatari youth also commented on having attended career fairs at universities or employer open days. Youth interviewed stated the benefits, challenges and limitations of these initiatives were similar to those of Qatar Career Fair, highlighting that while there were nice 'goody bags' provided and many organisations offered sponsorships, there was very limited information provided by the organisations about their work culture and professions they were recruiting for.

Youth had very positive views on Qatarisation – but recognise challenges of 'quantity over quality'

All Qatari youth interviewed were aware of Qatarisation and that companies across Qatar had targets to recruit Qataris, to increase the number of Qataris across the economy. Many employees appreciated that their organisations had Qatarisation teams dedicated to training and recruiting Qataris. Several youth however commented that Qatarisation teams appear to only recruit people based on their Qatari nationality, rather than their aspirations or having the relevant skills:

"The nation's approach to Qatarisation is a challenge in itself – yes companies need to fill quotas but they force Qataris who do not want that job or have the right skills for the job! This is not the intention of Qatarisation." Male, Engineer, Construction Sector

"Some companies recruit Qataris just based on numbers but face challenges in attracting 'quality' Qataris. Overseas universities require students to do internships so when they graduate they already have key skills – we should have this in Qatar!" Male, Mechanical Engineer, Energy Sector

"I didn't apply for this job – the Qatarisation team contacted me via text offering it to me when I was due to graduate. I like the job but they did not ask if I was interested in banking. I had no other options or knew who to ask for advice, so I accepted." Female, Human Resources, Banking Sector

Youth in work also want access to impartial career advice – but this is not currently available



Many employees, having learned from their own challenging experiences, highlighted that companies should do more to prepare Qatari youth for work including offer internships, raise awareness of the diverse opportunities at recruitment and promotion events, explain the work environment and progression opportunities, to enable them to make informed employment choices.

Many employees stated that they needed access to career advice while in work such as information on training, development, progression and the diverse opportunities available in the organisation but this was not currently available to them. This suggests Qataris in work and not just students or new graduates would benefit from access to formal career advice.

"Qatarisation departments in companies should offer career advice – if they want to develop Qatari staff they should help them to understand what skills they need to develop so they can make sure they are on the right track for future promotion." Male, Mechanical Engineer, Energy Sector

"Achieving quality Qatarisation is a challenge. Companies should have staff who can explain the different professions available and the scope of their work before youth apply for jobs and scholarships and even after they have joined." Female, Chemist, Energy Sector

Employees recognised the importance of impartial career advice and the limitations that may occur if advice was delivered by companies trying to retain their Qataris. This highlights the importance of all Qataris being able to access impartial professional career advice.

5.4 IN THE ABSENCE OF FORMAL CAREER GUIDANCE YOUTH TURN TO WASTA AND PARENTAL INFLUENCE - THIS MAY PERPETUATE HIGH GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT...

In response to job-search challenges and perceived lack of or access to formal career advice and recruitment transparency, youth and societal culture find alternatives to facilitate education-to-employment transition. The majority of youth stated that they looked to their parents and in some cases friends for advice on education and employment. Family advice and support are important for young people to have. It is worth noting that the majority of parents of youth interviewed work in government and the public sector, reflecting overall Qatari employment representation.

Many youth, due to the limited awareness of how to job-search, highlighted that while they may be willing to apply for employment through transparent open competition they recognised the importance of parental influence and connections – known as *wasta* - in Qatari culture to help determine education and employment choices, gain internships, scholarships and employment.

These influencing factors while effective in gaining opportunities also suggest a limited range of choices in the rapidly diversifying Qatar labour market, as the majority of parents may only be aware of and have *wasta* in the government and public sector, in which they work. Therefore, while parental advice and *wasta* can be beneficial they may also continue to perpetuate the trend of high Qatari public sector employment. Some youth recognised using parental influence and *wasta* did not necessarily enable them to make informed choices as some accepted jobs based on superficial reasoning and parental influence, rather than their own aspirations:

"My Dad recommended the energy scholarship and job to me through wasta but I had no clue what it was about! Wasta may not be ideal but you need connections if you do not have proper career advice." Male, Physics Student, HBKU

"I got my company scholarship when I was 17 through wasta – the company chose my major, not me. I am actually not interested in accounting. I would have chosen law but they told me the majors I could choose from and law was not on the list." Male, Accounting Student, Qatar University



5.5 ...WHICH MAY BE CORRELATED TO YOUTH BEING UNHAPPY IN WORK - THEIR SIBLINGS ARE LEARNING FROM THEIR ELDERS' NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

While appreciating the value of Qatari parental support, several youth highlighted how parental influence in their decisions had led them to education or employment outcomes they were not happy with. There appears to be a correlation between youth not making their own education and employment decisions and being unhappy in employment - in several cases youth stated they were so unhappy they changed their majors, resigned from their scholarships and jobs, and some even had to pay back company fees:

"I had to repay three years of sponsorship fees and resign because I decided I wanted to change my major from what my sponsor needed - I didn't know where to go or what my aspirations were – I just know I was unhappy and did not want a routine job." Male, Human Resources, Public Sector

"My Father chose this job for me, he got it through wasta – I am not happy here but I cannot tell him, or anyone, is it not what I want. In a year or so I will leave." Male, Human Resources, Government.

The presence or absence of family support may directly affect youth education and career choices, willingness to take on diverse career challenges, show ambition, commitment and investment in training and development. If employees are not happy in work, this can deprive them of the incentive to work harder, affecting performance, productivity, and overall well-being. Productivity is a key factor in economic growth as is employee commitment as it leads to better performance.⁵⁵

Some youth have decided to wait until they select a major before choosing a sponsor

Some students, having observed and learned from the experiences of their older siblings and friends – of making education and employment choices they later regretted - have begun to make different and more nuanced choices for themselves. Several students interviewed stated while they were aware employers offered lucrative sponsorships to students encouraging them to become their employees after gaining good grades from high-school, they felt that as they were uncertain of what major to choose and or what employment they wanted after graduation. They preferred to wait rather than sign a three or four year company scholarship, at an early age.

Many students stated they were keen to wait until they had identified a major they were interested in, possibly undertaken an internship and maybe identify a career they might pursue, and then seek out the relevant employer and scholarship opportunities:

"I saw my sisters suffering because they accepted company sponsorships after high school but they did not like their jobs– I have decided to wait until after I choose my major, then I will know what I want to be –and then I will look for the right sponsor." Female, Communications Student, HBKU

"Many Qatari youth choose company sponsorships because they pay more, without understanding the consequences, they should first seek SEC scholarships and decide during college what they are interested in and then decide what major to study." Male, Physics Student, HBKU

5.6 IN THE ABSENCE OF A CAREER CULTURE – ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT - IT IS IRRATIONAL TO EXPECT YOUTH TO HAVE REALISTIC EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Interviews with Qatari youth consistently highlighted the clear absence of a career culture in Qatar - a lack of access to or awareness of formal career advice or understanding of the labour market to inform decision-making. This results in youth having to make education and employment decisions based on limited information gained by themselves, parents, employers or through career fairs. In addition to the

⁵⁵ 'Building a Solid Talent Management Strategy: Managing Expectations', Total EP Qatar, March 2014

high salary and benefits available in the public sector, to help meet Qatarisation targets, many employers seek to attract Qatari youth with lucrative scholarships, sponsorships and salary packages – which youth at an impressionable young age are understandably attracted to.

In the absence of accessible formal career advice for all students in addition to limited experience of the labour market, many youth have not yet formed career aspirations, are not readily aware of the types of questions they should ask potential employers, skills they need to develop or the diverse professions available. Many Qatari youth enter employment with little to no understanding or experience of the labour market which can often lead to youth lacking key skills, having unrealistic expectations of senior roles on entry being unable to manage expectations leading to unhappiness at work or misconceptions of ambition, creating challenging work environments between Qataris and non-Qataris:

"We do not have a career culture in Qatar! Youth think about senior roles even if they have no experience! Few understand it is their responsibility to develop their skills. Many stay in jobs they do not like because of the lack of career advice." Female, Human Resources, Public Sector Employee

"Many expatriates want Qataris with experience – this is not fair. Universities do not push us to increase our skills through internships and companies do not always train and develop us to increase our skills and experience." Female, Graduate Developpee, Culture and Tourism Industry

While it is important to help youth manage their employment expectations, it is irrational in this environment of limited career awareness and advice to expect youth to have realistic expectations. Qatar does not yet have a career culture or trained career advisors in high schools and those in universities are accessed seldom. It is implausible to expect even motivated youth to make informed career decisions when they have limited career awareness, skills and labour market understanding.

5.7 QATARI FEMALES FACE ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Females are increasingly powerful as employees, producers, investors and consumers, and their improved outcomes also benefit their children and the next generation.⁵⁶ World Bank research highlights a healthy economy is one that is inclusive of females - more females in employment can have a multiplier effect as females recruit more females than males do.⁵⁷ Female employment and entrepreneurship are important for economic growth and development but policies often do not take into account the specific needs of females, and access to opportunities remains a challenge.⁵⁸

Qatar has set a female employment target yet many females are still not active in the labour market.

Qatari females interviewed were very passionate about their education and willingness to work, citing ambition, development, progression and their wish to embrace more in life than just 'a job'. In Qatar, like in other MENA countries, despite higher levels of education and employment compared to previous generations, there are still perceptions of women's suitability to certain roles. Qatari females enter government and public sector employment disproportionately to males. This could be due to perceived or actual favourable conditions of work, such as working hours and maternity benefits, family preferences or cultural barriers:

"My Mother is always saying the Ministry is a good environment for Qatari females. Parents need to understand there are diverse companies in Qatar now – I want a job that will utilise my education and skills." Female, Electronics Engineering Student, Cardiff University

⁵⁶ Gender Equality and Development, World Development Report, World Bank, 2012.

⁵⁷ "The Environment for Women's Entrepreneurship in the MENA Region", World Bank, 2008.

⁵⁸ Promoting Entrepreneurship and Innovative SMEs in a Global Economy: Towards a More Responsible and Inclusive Globalisation, OECD Conference on SMEs, 2004.



"Some parents are conservative and do not want females to be in non-segregated places - we need to hold workshops with parents so they can understand the importance of career development for females and that we can work anywhere." Female, Business Student, Community College

"Working hours is the biggest difference between the public and private sectors – I cannot work until 3PM I have young children and need to be home with them. The private sector pays more and money is important. My female friends work between 8AM-3PM – they do not get flexible family friendly hours." Female, Economics Researcher, Government Ministry

"I joined the ministry because they are good work places for Qatari females and if you look you will see nearly 60-80 percent of ministries are females – but very few are in senior positions. Progression is not easy for Qatari females." Female, Human Resources, Government Ministry.

As with most careers and professions, increased visibility of diverse groups at all levels, including females, can directly or indirectly encourage more females to enter those professions.

"I attended the fair as a representative for my company – it was very useful as students learned more about my organisation and my role as a female engineer. Female students were attracted to work here and asked me about being a female in this sector." Female, Engineer, Construction Sector

5.8 DEMAND IS HIGH - AND LATENT DEMAND MAY BE HIGHER – FOR CAREER AWARENESS, PREPAREDNESS AND GUIDANCE SERVICES TO ALL QATARIS

The majority of youth interviewed stated that while they recognise the government was supporting Qataris they felt very let down by the lack of available or accessible career advice, training and skills development – stating they now want and need career guidance services. Many youth were very disappointed that they had never been asked career-relevant questions before to help understand the labour market, identify employment opportunities, make informed choices and benefit from expert career advice. These factors suggest that the problem is not a lack of career motivation on the part of Qatari youth, rather there is a structural and institutional lack of career guidance services in Qatar. If career services made available and effectively promoted there is likely to be high demand and high latent demand among students and employees, as these responses illustrate:

"No one has ever asked me such career-related questions! It would have helped to be asked these when I was younger to help me think about types of jobs I wanted to do! My Father told me to choose a finance major. I didn't like it so I changed." Male, Graduate Developpee, Tourism Sector

"I have never before had a career focussed interview! I would have benefitted from career advice to help me identify how to make better work choices." Male, Human Resources, Public Sector

Many Qatari youth had clear ideas of what types of career guidance and skills support youth in high schools and universities should now be provided, including mandatory internships, advice on education and sponsorship selection, types of questions to ask potential employers, access to career advisors, and a centralised system with career guidance centres, as these comments illustrate:

"Qatari youth need advice to not just to look at sponsorships and salaries but think about the career they want, seek information and ask about the role, development and career progression – and then decide based on what is best for them." Male, Business Management Student, Derby University

"We need advice from age 16 to gain employment experience of how it feels to be at work - even if we make mistakes we are still learning. Youth need support, advice and guidance - employment experience." Female, Business Student, Community College

"Qatar needs a centralised career system with a high standard of support – we also need career counsellors in schools to encourage students, give them career advice, prepare for work, undertake job shadowing and internships to learn about careers." Male, Human Resources, Public Sector



The findings in this chapter highlight that Qatari youth are largely being left to rely exclusively on their education qualifications and ad hoc initiatives to prepare them for the competitive and rapidly diversifying Qatar labour market – leading to widespread employer misconceptions that they are interested only in financial packages or not motivated or ambitious. Volunteering and internships are available and can provide valuable employability skills and career inspiration but they are not monitored or assessed to evaluate attendance, benefits, career awareness, skills or impact.

It is vital education engages youth from an early age to provide an inspiring learning experience to nurture talent, motivate and inspire, to inform future education and career aspirations. If formal career guidance and education-to-employment transition services are not integrated in education with nation-wide access to raise skills and motivation then it is likely, despite increasing education, Qatari youth will continue the high government and public sector employment trend due high salaries and benefits rather than aspiration. This is likely to result in wasted talent, resource and productivity, and threaten the Qatarisation and female employment targets, and QNV 2030 goals.



6 LABOUR MARKET DEMAND - INSTITUTIONS, STRUCTURES AND CULTURE

The rapid speed of development and change in Qatar including through education reforms, Qatarisation, QNV 2030 goals and the scale of new industries and employment opportunities have led to strong growth in the economy. The Qatari youth population has vastly more education and employment options to choose from than previous generations. And yet, the vast majority of Qatari youth continue to move from education into employment in the armed forces, government and public sector, much as their parents did a generation ago.

Educators, employers, career services, program providers and policy-makers are all key stakeholders in an economy, and represent the demand-side factors of a labour market. In this chapter their expert opinions, experiences, best practice, challenges and recommendations are qualitatively assessed to understand the needs of diverse sectors and new industries to recruit, train and develop Qataris, to help achieve Qatarisation target –and what policy interventions in career guidance provision, skills development and education-to-employment transition are now needed to meet the needs of the education and skills needs of the economy and help deliver the QNV 2030 goals.

6.1 WORKFORCE PREPARATION: BUILDING STUDENT EMPLOYMENT SKILLS

Education does not institutionally integrate career awareness, motivation and skills into curricula

Developed and developing countries are seeing greater numbers of graduates in their economies which are crucial to meet skills, growth, innovation and productivity needs. Many countries, including in the MENA region seeking to become knowledge economies, highlight the need for greater emphasis on cognitive and employability skills⁵⁹ to prepare students for employment.⁶⁰

Education institutions – high schools, vocational colleges and universities - need to ensure high standards of education is combined with fostering and nurturing aspiration and careers advice to motivate all students, to gain knowledge and skills to empower and prepare them to fulfil their potential.⁶¹ Career guidance and skills development can provide students with employability skills, career awareness, motivation and experience, and the earlier the exposure to employment and diverse careers the more likely youth are able to make informed career decisions.⁶²

Qatar University has the highest representation of Qatari male and female students in Qatar and is committed to enriching its educational offerings to its student body and supporting the country's growing education and national strategy needs. The university recently established the College of Medicine, College of Pharmacy and programs at the Health Sciences Department, to address the need for Qatari healthcare professionals for the rapidly expanding healthcare sector. Texas A&M University at Qatar (TAMUQ) was ranked number one in the Times Higher Education Mena University Ranking, Qatar University was fourth. This new ranking reflects regional priorities and university missions, such as greater focus on teaching, learning or graduate employment.⁶³

⁵⁹ "Youth and the Localisation of Knowledge", Third Arab Knowledge Report, 2014.

⁶⁰ "The ABC of Gender Equality in Education: Aptitude, Behaviour and Confidence", OECD, March 2015.

⁶¹ "Downward Mobility, Opportunity Hoarding and the 'Glass Floor'", Research Report, R Knight, LSE, 2015.

⁶² The Lebanese American University was second, Saudi Arabia's King Abdulaziz University third and the American University of Beirut fifth. Times Higher Education publication, 2015.

<http://m.thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/320231/tamuq-tops-mena-university-rankings>

⁶³ The Lebanese American University was second, Saudi Arabia's King Abdulaziz University third and the American University of Beirut fifth. Times Higher Education publication, 2015.

<http://m.thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/320231/tamuq-tops-mena-university-rankings>



...however employability and skills building initiatives often have low take-up by Qatari youth...

Qatar University and HBKU implement a variety of programs to help expose students to employers through hosting career fairs and inviting Qatar-based companies on campus. These initiatives enable collaboration with diverse employers' recruitment pipelines to raise student awareness of internships, skills development, employer' expectations and promote employment opportunities.⁶⁴

Both universities deliver key programs to help build leadership, communication and team-building skills which are valuable for employability – though they may not always convey to the students the skills they have acquired. The programs are not always delivered in coordination with the university Career Center, see Box 1. Despite strong marketing and promotion, programs that are not targeted exclusively to Qatari students have very limited Qatari participation. For example, at HBKU and Qatar universities in 2015 only 10 percent of the SEP Program participants were Qatari.⁶⁵

"It is not clear if Qatari youth are aware of what cognitive or soft skills are – our programs are intended to help them build communications and leadership skills but very few participate...and we do not inform them that these are the skills they are gaining." Student Affairs Official, HBKU

"We have a career centre but Qatari students are not motivated – they know jobs are guaranteed! Communications, team-building and English are skills they need." Senior Official, Qatar University

Employers suggested there should also be employer engagement programs in high schools across Qatar. Programs with diverse employers visiting all schools to deliver inspiring, motivating workshops and students visiting employer locations to gain knowledge, skills and awareness of diverse careers would help nurture young talent, gain opportunities and broaden education and career horizons. A leading example of education-to-employer engagement is the Education and Employer Taskforce (UK) which aims to ensure every school and college has a partnership with employers to help students achieve their full potential and secure the country's future prosperity.

Box 1: Examples of Qatar University and HBKU Student Skills Building Programs

Nasmou Program - Qatar University's College of Engineering with Silatech and Occidental Petroleum Qatar created a personal development program for senior students to develop skills, competencies and the mindset needed for a successful career. Many students were also offered internships at Oxy Qatar.

EBDA Program – Offered jointly by HBKU and Qatar University - program takes students out of the academic environment to develop skills through managing themselves, working with others and beginning to lead, self-motivation, practical skills, cross-cultural awareness and community engagement.

Student Employment Program (SEP) – HBKU program to provide students with work experience, training, enhanced career development, development of social skills, environments suited to achieving youth career goals, demonstrate strengths and willingness to learn, and a future work reference.

Source: Author's interviews with Qatar University and HBKU officials and promotional material.

⁶⁴ Author's interviews with senior officials at Qatar University and HBKU.

⁶⁵ Ibid.



...there is no mandatory requirement for students to engage with Career Centers to gain advice...

While career services in universities in both developed and developing countries may not be fully aligned to the needs of the labour market, few countries are like Qatar that aspires to become a knowledge economy, provides free higher education to nationals, has in place a national Qatarisation employment target and a female employment target, all at the same time.

Both HBKU and Qatar University have dedicated student centers with career advisors on campus however both have very limited access by Qatari students.⁶⁶ This could be as:

- Students are not aware of their existence and/or location;
- Students are not aware of – or value - the career advice and guidance available;
- Students with employer sponsorships may think they do not need career advice;
- There is no mandated requirement for students to access career services at any time.⁶⁷

"Our center is located next to the cafeteria – students pass by everyday yet still very few come inside! It should be mandatory for them to seek career advice during their studies – to help choose majors, understand the labour market or find a suitable job." Advisor, Career Center, Qatar University

There is no mandatory requirement for student centers to engage students which might otherwise help students to be aware of and access their career services, advice and guidance. Educators and employers highlighted that in many cases career advisors do not have professional training, have low visibility, limited access by students, limited engagement with employers, or are a resource afterthought as they are disproportionately represented against student numbers.

...nor are internships mandatory for all students, to increase their career awareness and skills...

Qatar's significant expansion in university education has not yet led to a parallel increase in skills, employability and workplace preparedness. The OECD highlights the important role the higher education sector can have in preparing students through work placements and internships, and should recognise employers' complaints about limited graduate skills and career preparation.

Both Qatar and HBKU universities only require internships to be completed for certain majors, therefore many students graduate having never gained any work experience. For many who do participate in internships or voluntary activities, providers do not inform students of the skills they have gained to raise career awareness and update CVs accordingly. Some universities in the MENA region have a mandatory requirement for all students to complete an internship during university.⁶⁸

...Employers state internships should now be mandatory in universities and for all Qatari students

The majority of employers interviewed offer internships to help students gain skills and awareness of the work environment and culture. Some mandate sponsored students to complete internships or participation is voluntary. Many stated it was challenging to get youth to participate in voluntary internships and recommended internships now become mandatory for all Qatari university students.

"As sponsors we are paying for their education so completing internships should be mandatory - many Qataris ask 'what are the benefits of an internship?!' They need to be taught that these skills are valuable – we do not expect much just some exposure to our work." Senior Official, Energy Sector

⁶⁶ No statistics are collated/recorded on the number of Qataris that access the centers.

⁶⁷ Interviews with Qatar University Student Center and HBKU Student Affairs.

⁶⁸ "Young, Educated and Dependent on the Public Sector", Z Bunglawala, Brookings Doha Center, 2011.



"Graduates are not ready to enter work – we pay for internships but they should not come because we pay they should come for the opportunity to learn and be trained!" Senior Official, Banking Sector

6.2 CAREER FAIRS, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT TO YOUTH

Education-to-employment transition support can also be delivered effectively outside of high school and university to provide youth with impartial career learning, workplace preparation, skills building, and broaden education and career horizons, to help them make informed education and employment decisions. Public and independent providers in Qatar deliver a range of support to youth in the form of career fairs, specialised sustainable programs and one-off projects, see Box 2.

Box 2: Examples of Key Youth Skills, Empowerment and Career Support

Qatar Career Fair 'QCF Ambassadors' Program - Attended by over high school students from Independent schools, academic advisers and career guidance counsellors, to equip youth with educational capacities, team-building, problem-solving, confidence-building, critical thinking and leadership skills. Participating schools select five to six students from 10th and 11th grades to take part in year-round training sessions, workshops and presentations that promote career development, provide youth with opportunities to explore the labour market, learn about work environments, prepare resumes and conduct job interviews.

Bedaya Center for Entrepreneurship and Career Development – Provides services, training and activities to help youth achieve career goals and develop entrepreneurial skills. The Center recently signed an MoU with Qatar Leadership Academy to provide career guidance to QLA students in grade 10 and 11, provide job shadowing and promote career guidance services in Qatar.

Silatech and Social Development Center 'Navigator Leadership Program' - Engaging youth to build leadership skills and develop entrepreneurial ideas into innovative, sustainable and profitable businesses leading the way to economic diversification and meet the requirements of Qatar National Vision 2030 and better equip them to address challenges accompanying the surging economy.

ROTA Empower - Focusing on youth development for peaceful societies, encourages youth to think about their role in creating a more peaceful world. Catered for young leaders aged 16 to 26, the event features panel discussions, keynote speeches, lectures, group workshops, off-site visits and a student public debate focusing on personal leadership, service learning and global citizenship. The event prepare youth for the World Humanitarian Summit, guided by United Nations development goals that address education for sustainable development, human rights, equality and peace.

Annual UK Career Fair: Qatar Embassy, London - Attended by Qatari students studying in colleges and universities in the UK. The two-day event aims to attract ambitious and high performing Qatari students and graduates and familiarise them with the job opportunities available after graduation, in addition to scholarships and training programs offered by diverse companies. Qatar-based employers engage national students to introduce their diverse career opportunities.

Source: Author's interviews with providers and promotional material.
<http://m.thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/324836/rota-meet-to-draw-450-young-leaders>
<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/341858/25-attend-navigator-leadership-programme>
<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/347915/bedaya-to-promote-career-guidance>



Qatar Career Fair has strong youth and employer engagement and seeks to build on this success

Qatar Career Fair, a member of Qatar Foundation, has delivered an annual career fair since 2007 and implements impartial programs to raise youth career awareness, increase employability skills through voluntary activities such as summer camps, and aims to establish a career culture in Qatar. The annual career fair is a key impartial platform for Qatar's education institutions and diverse employers across all sectors to engage thousands of Qatari youth – male and female - searching for career opportunities and support.

A survey of 2011 career fair attendees identified the following key findings:

- 53 percent of respondents were students – 33 percent high school, 5 percent diploma and 16 percent university students;
- Reasons for visiting the fair:
 - 62 percent searching for employment opportunities.
 - 14 percent searching for career guidance.
 - 13 percent searching for educational opportunities.
- 67 percent of respondents were extremely satisfied with the fair;
- 68 percent believe the fair helped them to find employment.⁶⁹

Building on the success of the annual fair, the strong engagement and brand recognition by Qatari youth and employers in the organisation, Qatar Career Fair has highlighted the need to now provide Qataris – students, employees, entrepreneurs, inactive– with nation-wide universal access to impartial career guidance services, to meet the needs of Qataris, employers and the 2030 Vision.

Qatar needs structural change to establish universal career guidance services with trained advisors

While some good practice and ad hoc NGO provision in career guidance already exists, there is still a long way to go to ensure there is effective capacity for all Qataris to have access to and benefit from career guidance services. As identified in the previous chapter high schools in Qatar do not have certified career advisors and career centers in universities are rarely accessed by Qatari students leaving youth to make higher education and employment choices with little to no formal advice.

Just because Qatar does not have a high unemployment problem does not mean the population does not need universal career guidance services. The Qatari population is small enough to ensure career guidance provision and education-to-employment transition support is universally accessible for all without posing significant logistical, resource or dead-weight challenges.

Nation-wide centers would enable access by high school and university students, employees in-work, entrepreneurs and those who are inactive or seeking to re-enter employment. All Qataris should have access to impartial career guidance to help fulfil their aspirations, gain key skills and be prepared for the labour market, through making informed career choices. Career guidance services can be delivered in diverse ways including through career centers, workshops, open days and online.⁷⁰ Key services career centers in Qatar could provide include:

- Advice on vocational, graduate and post-graduate university courses;
- Advice on selection of major and change of major;

⁶⁹ Qatar Career Fair Survey, 2011.

⁷⁰ National Careers Service, UK – www.nationalcareersservices.direct.gov.uk

- Advice on sponsorships, scholarships, work placements and internships;
- Job-search, job-preparation advice and interview skills (mock interviews);
- Psychometric testing and assessments;
- Employment – entry, re-entry, training and progression advice;
- Entrepreneurship – funding, regulation, incubation and services support advice;
- Career awareness, orientation, coaching and application guidance;
- Non-academic 'soft'/employability skills building opportunities;
- Platform to connect with diverse employers to learn about opportunities.

Career guidance services need to be delivered by trained, professional, impartial career advisors with the necessary resources to support Qataris to increase their employability and equip them with career information and gain skills needed to make informed education and employment choices.

Qatar needs to train and support a generation of career guidance professionals to increase skills and career culture in every high school, vocational college and university. Career advisors can work collaboratively with educators, employers and independent providers to put careers at the heart of academic life to ensure that all Qatari youth and engaged, given key knowledge, skills and understanding of diverse education and careers, through innovative and inspiring activities.

"Qatar has the resources and capacity to ensure there are enough trained career advisors – and then introduce mandatory sessions for all students to benefit from their expert advice and services to create a career culture in education." Senior Official, Career Center, Qatar University

Qatar Career Fair recently delivered the 'Career Advisor Training Course', a one-week course delivered by a certified organisation to equip career advisors, academics, human resource personnel with the essential knowledge of career advising, planning, tools and activities to effectively engage and support students and employees to make better informed education and career choices.

"I have been a career advisor in human resources for one year – this is the first time I have received career guidance training. Until now I have been sharing with employees basic prescriptive information – from this training I have learned to listen to employees." HR Official, Public Sector

6.3 EMPLOYERS - SKILLS AND RECRUITMENT NEEDS, AND QATARISATION COMMITMENT

Employers are highly committed to investing in human development and Qatarisation...

All employers interviewed stated they are highly committed to providing employment opportunities and career development to Qataris as part of their national development objectives and to achieve their designated sector Qatarisation targets. Almost all employer organisations interviewed have, in addition to human resources, dedicated Qatarisation or National Development teams, committed to Qatarisation and investing in the future of Qatar's youth for Qatar's economy and society.

The majority of organisations interviewed stated they have in place a 'Qatarisation Strategy' which seeks to focus on developing 'Quality Qataris' by increasing the number of Qatari staff and investing in performance-based training and human development. Many organisations interviewed stated they implement a plethora of in-house and outreach initiatives to invest in Qatari recruitment. These include talent pipelines, providing sponsorships, internships, job-shadowing, training, leadership and career development plans, graduate training programs, and retention initiatives - Box 3 highlights some key examples. Many training, career development opportunities and benefits are equivalent to those found in the government ministries where training and development opportunities are prioritised on an annual basis.⁷¹

⁷¹ Author's interviews with senior officials from various Qatar government ministries.



"We are committed to investing in Qatari youth. We recruit Qatari high school graduates through strong engagement with schools for presentations and site visits, internships are mandatory to coach, mentor and support them throughout." Senior Official, Recruitment, Energy Sector

"Investing in Qataris is very important to us – we have a high percentage of Qatari employees. We offer internships and we like to give sponsorships to our interns so they will join us after graduation." Senior Official, Recruitment and Manpower, Banking Sector

The majority of employer-led initiatives are delivered in close collaboration with schools, colleges and universities in the form of school visits, careers fairs, open days, recruitment campaigns and activities to promote their programs directly to students in hope to recruit them through sponsorships. Qatar University has in place memoranda of understanding with leading employers to share the details of high-achieving and soon to graduate Qatari students whom employers may contact directly regarding recruitment.⁷²

The most notable and successful Qatarisation Unit is that of Qatar Petroleum (QP) which has a strategic, structured and comprehensive approach, including increasing the number of Qataris needed through identifying skills and long-term knowledge gaps in their recruitment pipeline. Over the past 15 years QP has invested significantly in graduate awareness and recruitment campaigns for the diverse opportunities available and gained strong recognition for their human development focus. The QP Technical Preparation Program (TPP) has a dedicated corporate training department that seeks to identify future employment needs and matches training opportunities to these roles.

QP also advises across the energy sector subsidiaries on Qatarisation and recruitment initiatives. Many employers in Qatar have implemented similar, though smaller scale, initiatives through best practice learning. The majority of interviews with employers identify human development initiatives implemented to provide youth training, including internships, working alongside a performance coach and mentor, opportunity to develop a career pathway, gaining valuable national and in some cases international experience and learning to operate in a challenging and competitive work environment – see Box 3. Some employers offer talented Qataris participation in regional or national and regional level committees, as role models to support them to become future leaders.

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⁷² Author's interview with Senior Official at Qatar University.



Box 3: Some Leading Qatarisation Examples

Qatar Airways Al Darb Qatarisation – Diverse package of opportunities and aviation training for ambitious Qatari students and high performing professionals - notable elements are the undergraduate National Scholarship Program (QRNSP) and the Graduate Development Program (GDP), key factors include:

- QRNSP provides financial and academic support to students in Qatar or overseas, similar to other scholarships, yet students here mandated to attend two internships – lasting two-three months.
- GDP provides graduates a two-year program of departmental rotation in Doha and overseas, with general aviation and role-specific experience to develop capability for line management roles.

QChem – Under the Training and development Department, Qataris are given a Progression and Development Plan to fulfil QChem's commitment to developing talented Qatari engineers towards higher posts within the organisation. Individuals are selected to enhance and improve their skills and experiences, towards achieving the ultimate targets within the plan. The department compiles monthly data of all staff – Qatari and non-Qatari by department and location, and data is shared with all managers. An annual data report is compiled and shared with QP as it is QP which sets the Qatarisation target for the energy sector.

Source: Author's interviews with Senior Officials at Qatar Airways and QChem, and promotional material.

...however many employers say Qatari youth lack employability skills and workplace preparation

Employers from public, private and mixed sectors frequently highlighted that while they were happy to invest in training, development and Qatarisation, Qatari youth should be motivated, ambitious and take responsibility to develop their skills before they enter work. Employers stated they were looking for Qatari graduates with employability skills – including communications, critical thinking, problem-solving, English language fluency, team-oriented and self-motivated – but often find it challenging to find Qataris with these skills, as the following responses illustrate:

"When youth come here they do not have workplace skills – we have to train them. These skills should be gained while youth are in education. This is not just a problem in our organisation, this is a country-wide problem!" Senior Official, Energy Sector

"Qatari graduates do not come ready for the corporate world – communications, English fluency and business etiquette are all lacking. They need to be better prepared for careers before they graduate." Senior Official, National Development, Culture, Sports and Tourism Sector

...and rather than ask employers about professions available they ask the about salary/titles...

"Even at open days Qatari youth only ask questions about the salary – they don't care about the career we are offering. They need to know more about the job, we should involve families in this too." Senior Official, Recruitment, Culture, Media and Tourism Sector

"We need sessions with Qatari youth to explain what Qatarisation is – it is not just about high salaries we have to explain that we have progressive packages, training and the roles we need Qataris to fill." Senior Official, Recruitment and Manpower, Banking Sector



...many youth tell employers they do not want the jobs they have – their parents chose the job

"80% of our employees say they applied because their Father told them to – it was not their decision. We cannot reject the youth, we need Qataris for our target!" Academic Affairs Official, Energy Sector

"Many times I meet graduates who do not want to be here – they were guided by their parents. We need career counselling for youth to be prepared, self-motivated and autonomous." Senior Official, National Development, Culture, Media and Tourism Sector

Employers and policy stakeholders recognise wasta influences youth employment decisions...

"The country has invested in education and we need youth to choose the right major for them – but in reality many will find a job based on wasta even if they do not want it or is there is a better candidate." Senior Policy Official, Ministry of Education

"Many sponsorships and scholarships are not always transparent – wasta is highly prevalent in youth decision-making. Qatar is experiencing a diversifying economy - career guidance is vital to ensure youth pursue the career paths that are right for them." Senior Educator, NGO Sector

...and current recruitment approaches may inadvertently send inaccurate messages about skills, language, dress-code and segregation - affecting youth employment expectations...

All organisations interviewed in the public, private and mixed sectors were asked questions relating to recruitment - how they target recruits, engage and present to youth, promotional and marketing materials used. Many employers are not aware that some of their approaches may inadvertently send inaccurate messages, which may later affect youth expectations, satisfaction and retention:

- **Promotional material** - Regarding sponsorships, training or recruitment criteria in promotional material appears highly prescriptive detailing GPA, school certification, age and nationality requirements with little information detailing what the companies are looking for in relation to motivated, problem-solving self-starters with employability skills.
- **All Qatari presentations** - Companies rightly utilise Qatari staff for recruitment events with Qatari students. This may send inaccurate messages as an all-Qatari, Arabic-speaking presentation to young impressionable audiences may lead youth to think the organisation is mostly Qatari, Arabic-speaking, segregated and wear Qatari cultural attire.

Government ministries in Qatar are largely gender segregated working environments. The majority of public, private and mixed organisations are non-segregated, have Qatari and Non-Qatari staff, are largely English-speaking work environments, and many employment opportunities particularly in the energy and construction sectors, are based off-site requiring travel off-site, mixed working environments and appropriate off-site attire for safety reasons, rather than traditional Qatari dress.

Organisations need to inspire ambition and foster motivation in youth, ensure recruitment presentations and promotional material are interesting, transparent about work culture, accurately reflect organisations and what they are looking for. During interviews many employers recognised it may be more beneficial to share information on skills, careers available and work culture, rather than highlight financial benefits, to help youth make informed choices and manage expectations.

Emerging private sector industries in Qatar face recruitment challenges as many Qatari youth are unaware of the skills or education needed or the diverse career opportunities now available

Qatar is estimated to invest QR100bn in national infrastructure projects over the next decade, including the FIFA 2022 World Cup. This has led to more diverse careers in the construction, services and creative



industries sectors however there are few Qataris in these booming sectors. Employers in new emerging industries highlighted they struggle to recruit Qataris as few are aware of the careers available, education and majors required or the competitive salary and training on offer.

Some employers interviewed were concerned Qatari youth or parents may not consider them 'prestigious' or be deterred by the long working hours, salary packages or mixed environments compared to government and highlighted there is no government support to help emerging industries to recruit Qataris, to meet Qatarisation targets and diversify the economy.

"This is a short-term prestigious industry as we offer the opportunity of a lifetime - to be part of Qatar 2022! But many Qataris do not want to work these long hours or only 5-7 years, they want more money and security." Senior Official, Sports and Media Sector

"Many Qataris are not aware of the majors we need or the exciting careers we have – some may not like to hear our working hours or that they have to start in junior roles, but those who do work here enjoy it!" Senior Recruitment Official, Sports and Media Sector

Many Qatari youth and their parents, whom either did or currently still do work in government or the security services, may not be aware of the diverse career opportunities now available in Qatar. While some employers reach out to engage, Qatari parents are not usually invited to recruitment events which may help broaden their understanding, for the benefit of their children.

Employers highlighted they face key challenges - Qatarisation, high salaries, retention and wasta...

Many employers highlighted the statistical challenges they face in meeting Qatarisation targets due to the small Qatari population and the widespread problem of Qataris being recruited due to wasta rather than ambition, ability and transparent practices. When social networks (*wasta*) are used to secure internships and employment, rather than transparent recruitment practices, this can affect social mobility and labour market success of those that do not have social networks.⁷³ Several employers also highlighted retention issues as Qataris are increasingly being head-hunted to move to more lucrative roles elsewhere.

"We have a 50 percent Qatarisation target – we do not have enough Qataris in the population to meet this target and we have a retention problem as companies approach our staff offering them higher salaries in other sectors so they can meet their targets!" Senior Official, Energy Sector

"A lot of Qataris have been brought in through wasta – people are not recruited on the basis of capability, competency or passion, this is a general problem in Qatar." Senior Official, Banking Sector

Many employers recognise that investing in Qataris through sponsorships and training is a good investment, even if they leave for other organisations their training will still be of benefit to the wider Qatar economy. While some human resources departments undertake exit interviews to better understand and address retention challenges, not all organisations follow-up or conduct independent assessments of staff, which may help organisations to improve retention rates.

...and recommended policy should change to 'Quality Qatarisation' – with a career guidance focus

The majority of employers highlighted that while they agree with the intended objective of the Qatarisation policy - to provide Qataris with human development opportunities and diversify employment representation – the policy needs to move away from being quantity-based, as the targets appear statistically unattainable.

⁷³ Downward Mobility, Opportunity Hoarding and the "Glass Floor", Research Report, R Knight, LSE, 2015.



"Many youth agreed to join us at age 18 – now they are at university they have changed their minds and do not want to work off-site. This is a challenge - we have many roles outside Doha. Mandatory internships may help to prepare youth for their roles." Qatarisation Division Official, Energy Sector

"We need sessions in schools to teach youth what Qatarisation is – and to explain it is not about high salaries – to manage youth expectations and attract them to think about their future, the skills and majors we need in our economy." Senior Recruitment Official, Banking Sector

Employers recommended a new strategic policy is now needed, changing 'Qatarisation' to 'Quality Qatarisation'. Employers suggested this policy shift from quantity to quality would address the challenges they face enabling them to focus on effectively on training developing and supporting Qataris to become future leaders, and reduce retention issues, rather than focus on targets.

Employers highlighted youth should not be left to navigate higher education and employment alone, stating there is pressing need for a career guidance system across Qatar to help youth develop skills and prepare for employment. Employers recommended the government now address the structural and cultural needs in education and society to increase youth career awareness and skills during education, manage expectations and ensure access to career guidance to help them make informed career choices, to help meet the education and skills needs of the rapidly diversifying economy.

6.4 POLICY-MAKERS HIGHLIGHT STRUCTURAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND CULTURAL CHALLENGES

Despite many diverse initiatives to support Qatari human development through schools and universities, and various employer programs for workplace skills, entrepreneurship and to support Qatari youth to become future leaders, challenges remain. Many initiatives are often not sustained, sector-specific or not directly aligned with the skills needs of the labour market. There is little to no published evaluation of such initiatives to assess and monitor outcomes and impact. Qatari youth are rarely engaged to independently assess their motivations or understand how and upon what information, or lack thereof, or cultural influences they base their education and employment decisions, what their career needs are, or their perceptions and experiences of such initiatives.

Education, employment and youth-focussed policy-makers highlighted it is now time Qatar addresses the structural, institutional and cultural challenges faced by youth and employers. Policy-makers highlighted the Qatarisation policy has undoubtedly helped focus employers' strategic efforts towards human development and recruitment however, the unintended consequences of quantity over quality, challenges of skills and retention, and overarching need for economic diversification now requires policy intervention.

"We need to re-assess Qatarisation – intended to provide good careers but it's not always the case. Youth should not only be attracted to high salaries – they need to think about their future career and not finding jobs via wasta." Senior Education Policy Official, Ministry of Education

"No one advises Qatari youth on education or employment – Schools must prepare them so they understand they need skills and experience for employment, and not just focus on salary and titles! Parents need to also ask their children 'where do you want to work?' and let them decide what is best for them." Senior Policy Official, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs

"We do not have unemployment problems but students still need transition support into employment if we are going to meet the 2030 Vision. We do not prepare students during 12 years of school for the work skills they need." Senior Policy Official, Ministry of Youth and Sports

Qatar is not alone in adopting employment targets for nationals. Malaysia in 1970 adopted the New Economic Policy (NEP) quotas in enrolment in tertiary education and the composition of company boards, to reflect the ethnic composition of the population. Between 1970 and 2002 the policy had a positive impact on enrolment at all education levels and ethnic Malays increased employment in modern and high-

productivity industries. Critics suggest however in the long term, quotas may reduce incentives to excel and treat university education as "a matter of right", thereby not valuing education and neglecting study. A survey in 2008 found that 71 percent of Malaysians agreed that race-based affirmative action was now obsolete and should be replaced with a merit-based policy.⁷⁴

Policy-makers in Qatar stressed there is an urgent need to re-assess Qatarisation and institutional and structural policies needed to help youth gain employability skills and access to career guidance to enable smooth transition from education into employment. Policy-makers also highlighted the need to openly discuss cultural factors of parental influence and *wasta* on youth career decisions.

Some recent policy, employer and Qatar Career Fair initiatives to try and address these challenges

To help ensure Qatar maximizes the talent and potential of the increasingly educated small Qatari population – and perhaps due to the absence of a nation-wide career guidance strategy - some government ministries, leading employers and Qatar Career Fair have recently begun to implement key initiatives to try and address the structural and institutional gaps in career guidance. Initiatives include raising career awareness, employability skills, establishing professional networks, facilitating organizational collaboration and knowledge exchange, and diverse attempts to engage in open dialogue between stakeholders to address challenges to human development, Qatarisation and empowering Qatari youth and meeting their career aspirations, see Boxes 4 and 5.

Box 4: Leading Examples of Career Awareness and Employability Skills Programs

Qatar Petroleum – QP hosted a conference to focus on issues and challenges associated with human capital, talent management, recruitment, retention, managing expectations through facilitating interaction between human resources teams across the energy sector to share knowledge, experience and enhance cooperation. The conference enabled companies to openly explore solutions, knowledge exchange and create stronger networks within this growing and diverse sector.

<https://www.qp.com.qa/en/Careers/HRCConference/Pages/Overview.aspx>

QatarGas: Qatar Society of Engineers – Professional Network -To boost knowledge and skills Qatargas enrolled all Qatari engineers working in different organisations across the country into a common network, to provide a common platform to exchange knowledge and ideas. The network will create a community of professional engineers and facilitate exchange of knowledge and help them keep abreast with the latest technology, training and ongoing developments in their various engineering disciplines.

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/261903/qatargas-forms-qatar-society-of-engineers>

Public Works Authority (Ashghal): Improving performance, skills and evaluation -The Individual Development Plan constantly reviews and assesses employee learning and career objectives to identify areas that need improvement, to guide Qatari employees through a confidential and rigorous process to develop and improve skills. Guided by experts, self-assessments are used to rank a set of career paths to help employees set short-term goals towards enhancing skills for their career development.

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/235848/81-qatari-staff-receive-ashghal-training>

Hamad Medical Corporation: Health Professions Awareness and Volunteering Programmes -Workshops for student volunteers to increase awareness of professional skills, training in planning for careers, writing CVs, attending interviews, communications and presentation skills,

⁷⁴ "Policy Brief 13: Affirmative Action – Malaysia", Overseas Development Institute, 2006.

and insights into healthcare professions and trip to Ambulatory Care Service clinic to familiarise students with medical environment.

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/325777/student-volunteers-attend-hmc-workshops-on-career-planning>

Bedaya Center and Qatar Leadership MoU – To facilitate career advisory sessions with students in grades 10 and 11, job shadowing opportunities to explore the work environment, and entrepreneurship and innovation workshops to enable participation in the annual Enterprise Challenge.

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/347915/bedaya-to-promote-career-guidance>

Key ministries recognize high-level policy changes are now needed in Qatar - key examples below:

- Labour Market Sector Strategy 2014-16 - Brings together public and private sector stakeholders to develop a Human Resource Master Plan for Qatari and non-Qatari labour force to improve institutional planning capabilities, assess education and labour supply needs by sector in the short-medium term, to meet economic needs.⁷⁵
- Over 21,000 scholarships for Qatari students and employees – Ministry of Administrative Development is developing a scholarship program to increase efficiency and competency of government employees, to help provide education for all and meet the current and future administrative capacity and leadership skills needs of government bodies, and QNV 2030.⁷⁶
- Education Institute, Ministry of Education – Established a committee to assess:
 - If the curricula now needs a skills focus, with specific modules for skills such as communications, presentation, time management and team building; and
 - If it is necessary to enhance the roles of academic counsellors in high schools to also provide students with university and recruitment advice.⁷⁷

While these developments are positive it is difficult to assess how further individual, non-integrated and possibly un-sustained initiatives will address the underlying structural, institutional and cultural challenges Qatar faces nationwide in career guidance and employability skills.

Structural changes to integrate career guidance into education nationwide should also now utilise Qatar's growing ICT capabilities to deliver innovative and accessible systems through social media, websites and Apps for Qatari youth, parents, educators, employers and career guidance providers.⁷⁸

Qatar Career Forum highlighted Qatar now needs a strategic nation-wide career guidance strategy to address the structural, institutional and cultural challenges the country faces

Qatar Career Fair held the Qatar Career Forum, a pilot platform for diverse education, employment and policy stakeholders, and Qatari youth and parents, to engage in open dialogue, exchange knowledge, identify challenges, best practice and strategic career guidance policy recommendations.

⁷⁵ Ministry of Planning, Development and Statistics, 2014.

⁷⁶ <http://www.qna.org.qa/en-us/News/15061419240047/National-Plan-to-Provide-Scholarships-for-21386-Qatari-Students-and-Employees-Minister>

⁷⁷ Author's interview with Senior Policy Official, Education Institute, Ministry of Education.

⁷⁸ Ministry of Education has created an App for schools to communicate to parents student attendance <http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/qatar/350661/sec-develops-app-for-parents-to-monitor-kids>



The Forum was well received by stakeholders whom highlighted that while recent policy and employer initiatives were welcome, they were not nation-wide, integrated within schools and universities to ensure universal access and sustainability for universal impact. Participants put forward the following recommendations, for a nation-wide career guidance system in Qatar:

- Establish nation-wide career centers, under the auspices of a central career guidance entity;
- Establish a policy steering committee for effective collaboration between the education, labor and commerce ministries, leading employers and the central career guidance entity to:
 - Develop key nation-wide career guidance policies and programs;
 - Disseminate key message to schools, universities and diverse employers;
 - Establish provision for trained career advisors in schools and universities.
- Encourage youth to be autonomous and make informed decisions, develop employability skills through volunteering and internships, explore ambitions and diverse professions;
- Strongly encourage parents to attend school meetings to learn about youth ambitions, career skills and diverse professions now available, to help support youth career interests;
- Create a culture of career advice, awareness and orientation using diverse media channels;
- Establish the Forum as an annual career guidance platform for diverse stakeholders – including Qatari youth and parents;
- Commission in-depth research to assess career guidance challenges, disseminate key messages and develop an effective demand-led education-to-employment transition system.

Establishing strategic platforms for greater collaboration and engagement between public, private and mixed sectors on career guidance and recruitment issues may help to achieve the following:

- Enable organisations to project education and skills needs, address recruitment and retention challenges, share best practice and exchange knowledge for Quality Qatarisation;
- Develop a career culture across sectors highlighting the importance of career guidance, raise awareness of skills needed, the work environment, culture and expectations;
- Inspire youth aspirations in emerging and creative industries, develop diverse career ambitions and willingness to work in diverse organisations with Qataris and Non-Qataris.

Box 5: Examples of integrated approaches, collaboration and knowledge exchange

QDVC - Strategic workshop with Qatari Diar to exchange Qatarisation knowledge across the sector:

- Active role to employ, support and develop young Qatari females – Once recruited and trained they are placed on prestigious projects – and publicly promoted to raise awareness.
- Valuing Non-Qataris - the Non-Qatari Serge Moulene Award recognises line managers who make outstanding contributions in encouraging Qataris to acquire skills and developing them.

RasGas – Qatarisation workshop with diverse stakeholders from across the Qatar economy – not only energy organisations – to share best practice, challenges and identify recommendations to recruiting, retaining and developing Qataris to achieve Quality Qatarisation.

Source: Author's interviews with senior officials at QDVC and RasGas.



6.6 A NATION-WIDE PROGRAM MAY INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY FEMALE EMPLOYMENT

Encouraging Qatari females into higher education, employment and entrepreneurship are laudable policies though Qatar is unlikely to achieve the 42 percent female employment target by 2016, to advance employment representation and entrepreneurship. Interviews with youth, employers and policy-makers highlights that family support is needed and employment practices across sectors need to be conducive and flexible for females and working mothers, to increase employment.

"For Qatari females our culture can be limiting – yet they often work harder than males! Employers lose good females due to maternity leave, long working hours and segregation issues. We need to address these in organisations and offer work flexibility for females." Senior Official, Energy Sector

"Many parents do not allow their daughters to accept certain roles, travel outside Doha or work off-site – parents need to understand the labour market opportunities now in Qatar." Senior Policy Official, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs

Educators, employers and NGOs highlight the importance of engaging in diverse careers through programs to motivate, inspire and support Qatari females yet most initiatives are not nation-wide. Due to the significant decrease in Qatari female employment, more now needs to be done to increase and inspire diverse female employment, at entry and progression levels. The Inspiring Women Campaign (UK) recruits inspiring professional females to engage female students in schools to discuss diverse career paths, experiences, challenges and to motivate females to aim high.

Qatari females should feel confident to utilise their increasing education and seek career opportunities across diverse careers based on aspirations, rather than in government ministries due to family-friendly working practices – otherwise females may further the already persistently high Qatari public sector employment level.



7 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS - QATAR NOW NEEDS A SECOND PHASE IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Qatar's future economic growth, away from oil and gas, is dependent upon the population's education and skills being able to meet the needs of the economy, for innovation, productivity and sustainability. Building on positive education reform and ad hoc employability initiatives, Qatar now needs to scale-up and establish a nation-wide strategic career guidance policy and education-to-employment transition system. This new phase in human development investment should utilise higher youth education levels to increase career aspirations, job-readiness as a career-focussed workforce with career skills and professional aspirations, to meet the needs of diverse employers, achieve 'Quality Qatarisation' and QNV 2030 goals for a sustainable knowledge economy.

Recommendation 1: Ministry of Education and Qatar Career Fair should collaborate to integrate career guidance, employability and skills framework into education institutions across Qatar

Ministry of Education and Qatar Career Fair should collaborate to agree a way forward of how to integrate career guidance, increase employability and skills in high schools, community colleges and universities in Qatar through the following institutional, structural and cultural measures:

- Integrate expert impartial career guidance in education institutions nation-wide – and increase the number of trained career guidance counsellors.
- Introduce mandatory employability skills and career counselling sessions for all high school and university students.
- Develop inspiring programs and workshops to focus on employability and career awareness.
- Deliver an annual platform to raise awareness among youth and parents of career guidance, employability and skills for Qatarisation, a knowledge economy and labour market needs.

Recommendation 2: Ministry of Education and Qatar Career Fair should collaborate to integrate promote career guidance, employability and skills among Qatari youth and parents

Media and awareness campaigns should be considered to encourage youth to make informed career decisions, develop skills, explore aspirations and diverse professions; and encourage parents to attend school events to learn about employability, skills and diverse professions in Qatar.

Recommendation 3: Qatar Career Fair should establish career guidance framework and design innovative career guidance, employability and skills programs across Qatar Foundation institutions

Qatar Career Fair should develop a career guidance focus to coordinate across Qatar Foundation institutions to provide inspiring and motivating career guidance, skills, internships and work experience through career centers, to meet the needs of youth, employers and economy.

Recommendation 4: Increase career aspirations for Qatari females

Qatar Career Fair should coordinate with key ministries to consider programs to raise Qatari female career aspirations - to inspire females to study diverse qualifications and enter diverse careers, identify incentives for employers to recruit and progress females through scholarships, training subsidies and awards; encourage diverse employers to provide workplace flexibility; and incentives for entrepreneurs to establish affordable and accessible childcare facilities.

Recommendation 5: Evaluate and assess career guidance impact and outcomes

Qatar Career Fair, Qatar Foundation and Qatar University should identify gaps in research to assess career guidance challenges, measure the impact of career advisors and career centers on increasing skills, career awareness, understanding and experience, and commission this research then disseminate findings to educators, employers and policy-makers.



ANNEX 1: QATARI LABOUR FORCE - GENDER AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY (QSA 2015)

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	24	0	24
Mining and quarrying	8,639	1,073	7,566
Manufacturing	1,476	132	1,344
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	1,460	268	1,192
Water supply, sewage, waste management and remediation services	421	181	240
Construction	1,423	352	1,071
Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	1,583	354	1,229
Transportation and storage	1,796	382	1,414
Accommodation and food service activities	825	356	469
Information and communication	2,895	778	2,117
Financial and insurance activities	3,205	1,674	1,531
Real estate activities	935	176	759
Professional, technical and scientific activities	523	236	287
Administrative and support service activities	1,113	680	433
Public administration and defence; compulsory social services	49,729	11,288	38,441
Education	11,311	9,343	1,968
Human health and social work activities	5,026	3,578	1,448
Arts, entertainment and recreation	883	391	492
Other service activities	174	34	140
Activities of households as employers undifferentiated goods-and services-producing activities of households for own use	0	0	0
Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies	91	6	85
TOTAL	93,532	31,282	62,250



ANNEX 2: QATARI LABOUR FORCE – GENDER AND OCCUPATION (QSA 2015)

OCCUPATION	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES
Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers	9,337	1,826	7,511
Professionals	28,587	15,548	13,039
Technical and Associate Professionals	14,603	4,141	10,462
Clerks	22,630	7,597	14,673
Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers	6,402	1,468	4,934
Skilled Agriculture and Fishery Workers	0	0	0
Craft and Related Trades Workers	5,417	0	5,417
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	1,121		1,121
Elementary Occupations	5,435	342	5,093
TOTAL	93,532	31,282	62,250

