Project Title: Tamim Al Majed Portrait and its Role in Shaping the Relationship Between the Political Leadership and the People (A historical, Social and Analytical Study)

Primary Research Mentor: Prof. Kaltham Ali Al-Ghanim

Mentor: Dr. Sherine El-Menshawy

Students: Zainab Al-Abdulla, Lulwa altamimi, Munira Hezam Al-marri, Bakhita Saeed Al-Qoz, Shaikha Al-Qorh, Bashair Almarri

Abstract:

On June 5, 2017, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt severed diplomatic relations with Qatar and imposed a blockade on them by air, land and sea. All residents of Qatar were affected by this decision. However, the Qatari artist Ahmed bin Majid al-Maaedid has translated his feelings about these events by drawing a portrait of Emir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani. The painting has spread everywhere in the State of Qatar, on the facades of the walls of the buildings, a poster on the windows of the cars, shops, mobile phone covers and inside commercial complexes, companies and state institutions. The murals of Tamim al-Majd were illustrated in most of Qatar's streets, where Qataris and residents sought to stand up and freely write statements that reflected their feelings about the blockade. Therefore, this study aims to: Study and document the emergence of the "Tamim al-Majd" portraiture till now, while linking it to the historical and political events that led to its appearance and spread. Documentation, classification and analysis of the phrases that were written on the murals of Tamim al-Majd as a primary source to study this historical period. This research project will be part of the multidisciplinary research using the historical-social analytical approach in the study. Finally, Portrait "Tamim al-Majd" is worthy to study because it reflects a form of communication between the leadership, the people and the residents at a precise historical moment worthy of documentation from its primary sources for future generations.
Project ID: UREP21-120-5-016

Institution: Qatar University

Project Title: Impact of ICTs and Urbanization Level on Environmental Quality in Qatar.

Primary Research Mentor: Dr. Charfredidine Lanouar

Students: Asma Al-Maadid, Yosra Hamana, Aisha Al-Thani

Abstract:

The objective of this project was to investigate the impact of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Urbanization on Qatar environmental quality. Several reasons motivate this research question. On one hand, since many years, Qatar continue to be ranked at the top of world countries characterized by high levels of CO2 emissions per capita, Ecological Footprint, and other local air pollutants. On the other hand, Qatar has made livability and sustainability at the top priorities of the country, e.g. the Qatar National Vision 2030 pillars are directly or indirectly related to improving environmental and life quality. In addition, in the last two decades Qatar has heavily invested and has rapidly expanded the use of ICTs in the country, e.g. the efforts include Lusail’s “smart city” and Msheireb which both show an incredible ICT infrastructure and serve as templates for sustainable urban living. Empirically, to investigate this relationship between ICTs, urbanization, and environmental degradation, we extend the STIRPART model to include both ICTs and urbanization variables. The proposed model is estimated using cointegration with structural breaks approach over the period 1970-2016. As a proxy for environmental degradation, we used ecological footprint, carbon footprint, and CO2 emissions per capita. Regarding the ICTs variables, we used the internet users per 100 people and mobile cellular subscriptions per 100 people. The percentage of urban population on total population and population density are used as proxies of urbanization. Our empirical results show evidence that ICTs and urbanization have a negative impact on CO2 emissions and carbon footprint but not ecological footprint. This means that ICTs and Urbanization only reduce CO2 emissions and carbon footprint (second order effect) but increase pollution related to water and land (first order effect). Several energy and environmental policies designed to facilitate transition towards the adoption of a sustainable urban planning approach that is based on the use of ICTs are proposed and discussed.
Project Title: Level of free reading and its relationship to identity, empirical study on Qatar University students

Primary Research Mentor: Dr. Mahrous Mohamed Basuny

Mentor: Dr. Zakaryya Mohamed Abdelhady

Students: Fatima Al-Sawadi, Amal Mohamadi, Roba Shady, Tasnim Ramadan, Marwa Abdelaati, Lamya Al-jallabi

Abstract:

No doubt, cultural illiteracy suffered by the new Arab generation may be more dangerous to the Arab and Islamic nation than the illiteracy of reading and writing, that requires to focus on and its causes and how to overcome. Cultural illiteracy is no longer an educational issue, it is an issue that has its social, economic and political dimensions, and its implications on the identity of individuals and communities. By identity we mean the qualities that distinguish a nation from other nations to express its cultural identity. There are three core elements that combine identity: the creed that provides a vision of existence, the language in which it is expressed, and its long-term cultural heritage. [Globalization and the world without identity, Mahmoud Samir Mounir: 146] The emergence of extremism movements among youth, is an alert of dangers our nation would suffer from absence of the culture and identity that supports the moderate thought, and distancing its followers from the causes of extremism. Free reading is at the forefront of the features that are reliable to combat cultural illiteracy, since it contains elements that may not be available in other means that challenge cultural illiteracy, such as being based on an internal sense of importance, the ability to choose the reading material, and not forced on reading that could impact on lose or delusion of the consciousness. Free reading is a tool for advancement to both individuals and communities. The more the new generation is interested in it, the greater and deeper the hopes for this generation. The aim of the research is to detect the level of free reading among Qatar University students and to indicate the relationship between what is being read with the Arabic and Islamic identity, through utilizing analytical descriptive approach. Which will impact on result and recommendations some of which are carried out during the research, such as: (student awareness campaign to encourage reading) to raise the level of reading among Qatar University students; to achieve the knowledge and cultural excellence Qatar seeks in accordance with the Qatar 2030 Vision.
**Project Title:** Breaking down the Stereotypes: Experimental Approach to Discrimination on the basis of Nationality and Accent

**Primary Research Mentor:** Dr. Mongoljin Batsaikhan

**Mentor:** Solanga Mookerjee

**Students:** Awatif Al Habsi, Yara Al Kahala, Mohammed Ali Taimur, Yara Abdelmajed

**Abstract:**

The confluence of nationalities and cultures within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has given rise to a deeply rooted social hierarchy in the region that often leads to discrimination. This is of particular concern for Arabs living in the GCC because Arabic dialects can easily be used to infer nationality. A person’s dialect can consequently make him or her the target of discrimination. We implemented a trust game in a lab-in-field experiment in Qatar to study whether interacting with a counterpart by listening to his accent and knowing his nationality impacted levels of trust. In our control group, subjects played the trust game with no information about their counterpart. In the first treatment, they were informed that their counterpart was Egyptian before they made a decision about how much money to send him. In the second treatment, they heard a recording of their counterpart speaking in a distinct Egyptian dialect before making their decision. Our results show that hearing an actual voice increases trust between strangers, and that increased trust depends on the attributes of the voice. We find no evidence of discrimination against Egyptians in Qatar, as knowledge of nationality did not reduce the amount sent on average.
Project Title: JIDARYIA

Primary Research Mentor: Dr. Rogaia Abusharaf

Students: Osama Camara, Saoud Al-Ahmad, Mohammed Al-Khulaifi, Mohammed Al-Jabri

Abstract:

GU-Q student members of a recently concluded Undergraduate Research Experience Program (UREP) research grant project were invited to take part in a research outcome seminar at the HBKU Student Center. Held under the overarching theme of preserving Qatari identity in a globalized world, the seminar was hosted by the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), and featured a selection of some of the most outstanding UREP-funded research projects from across Education City, one of the main research funding programs at the undergraduate level offered by QNRF.

Titled “Jidariya: Every Day is National Day in Qatar,” the faculty-mentored student research project examined the ways in which the iconic jidariya, meaning billboard, of “Tamim Al-Majd” served to solidify the idea of the nation through researching the visual, linguistic and anthropological significance of the billboard, particularly in the wake of the blockade.

The project used visual anthropology methods to gather footage on the billboard’s political and social impact on individuals living in Qatar, including Qatari nationals and expatriates of all ethnicities. The gathered footage was used in the production of a short documentary film that documented their efforts and captured the broadly shared sentiments of unity and solidarity that swept the country in the wake of the land, air, and sea blockade launched by neighboring countries.

The students benefited from the GU-Q mentorship and guidance of Dr. Rogaia Abusharaf, professor of Anthropology, Dr. Suzi Mirgani, managing editor at the Center for International and Regional Studies (CIRS) at GU-Q, and Dr. Yehia A. Mohamed, associate professor of Arabic.

Reflecting on his UREP experience, International Economics senior Mohamed Al-Khulaifi said that the project “is a testament to the unity Qatar witnessed during the blockade from all segments of society under the symbol of Tamim Al-Majd. Not only did this go against the calculations of the blockading countries, but it also boosted our morale and set a precedent for future projects.”
**Project Title:** The relationship Between ICT use (including after-work hour emails) and Employees` Work-Life Balance, stress, and occupational health: an exploratory study in the Higher Education sector in Qatar

**Primary Research Mentor:** Dr. Shatha M. Obeidat

**Mentors:** Dr. Allam Abu Farha

**Students:** Shaikha Almarri, Amna Al-sheeb, Lamis Khaled, Reem Aljelham, Sara Almarri, Alaa Dalloul

**Abstract:**

This study investigates a comprehensive model for the effect of ICT use on employees` work life balance, job satisfaction, personal burnout, and intentions to leave. An empirical study was conducted. Particularly, a model was developed and tested using the survey methodology. Our data from 87 employees and faculty members working at Qatar University in Qatar were analyzed using the SEM through PLS software. The study results showed that ICT use have a direct effect on perceived employees` related outcomes (i.e. Job satisfaction, Work-Life Balance, Personal Burnout, and intention to leave). This study is exploratory in nature; thus, several limitations have been highlighted and discussed. The findings will help managers carefully examine the logic of using ICT. To authors` knowledge, this is one of the rare studies that examined this topic in a new context, particularly the higher education sector in Qatar.
Abstract:

Accessibility for disabled people in education or other public spaces is a human right rather than a luxury. There are growing opportunities for students with disability to study in educational institutions. However, accessibility for disabled students could pose a challenge towards ease of facility use in educational set-ups. There is a need to assess student facilities in educational institutions to verify accessibility and inclusiveness. There are several detailed assessment tools that focus on several aspects of accessibility criteria. However, a simplified and quicker assessment framework is required that is objective rather than subjective to the facility users. The study focuses on physical disability and aims to develop a simplified assessment framework for education buildings in higher institutions, it focuses on specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) across three criteria items. These are internal (indoor), external (outdoor) and connecting features. The methodology included comparative (disabled and non-disabled) survey at Qatar University campus (female section). The study adopted a multi-criteria tool for the assessment. Due to the subjective nature of the criteria, there was a need to develop criterion that is objective and meets educational standards. A workshop with eight industry experts was conducted to develop simple assessment criteria for educational buildings. The findings of this paper can be used to assess educational buildings within higher institutions. The assessment tool can provide ratings to buildings that encourage awareness and availability of facility support towards inclusiveness of the disabled within an education set-up.
Project Title: Arabic Language Issues: A study of Newspaper Layout Styles and Linguistic Content (The Culture Pages in Qatari newspaper: a case study)

Primary Research Mentor: Dr. Elsayed Abdelwahed Elkilany

Mentors: Dr. Radwan Menisy Abdalla Gaballa

Students: Elmoutasem Moussa, Kaltham Alfadala, Mohammed AlMarri, Jaber Ahmad Al Yafei, Khadija wahba, Hana Aladhba

Abstract:

This is a research project funded by Qatar Foundation within the Undergraduate Research Experience Program (UREP). It is an interdisciplinary research between two disciplines: Journalism and Arabic language. It aimed to analyze the journalistic treatment of topics related to Arabic Language in three of the Qatari newspapers namely ‘Al-arab’, ‘Al-raya’ and ‘Al-sharq’ during 2017. The research team from Qatar University (QU) consisted of two researchers and two groups of students; one from the Mass Communication Department, and the other from the Arabic Language Department. The research employed the descriptive analytical approach to analyze the published contents that relate to the Arabic Language. These contents covered ten types of topics (Poetry, Rhetoric, Story, Novel, Popular literature, Narration, Translations, Drama, Thoughts and others). The research explored the editorial and layout techniques employed with such content and examined how this helped to emphasize the content. This project achieved four important outcomes. 1) The statistical analysis of the topics related to Arabic language published in the three Qatari newspapers during 2017 with regard to applied editorial and layout techniques. 2) Training six students from two disciplines on different research tools and gaining experience in interdisciplinary research. 3) Sharing the study results in three different scientific events including: a) the annual research forum & exhibition 2019 at QU, b) the National Identity in Qatar 2019 conference and 3) the Scientific Research Day of the College of Arts and Sciences, QU. 4) Publicizing the project through different media channels. 5) Proposing three researches based on the collected and classified data.
Project ID: UREP21-019-5-001

Institution: Qatar University

Project Title: University experiences of adults with disabilities: A recipe for success

Primary Research Mentor: Dr. Elsayed Elshabrawi Ahmed Hassanein

Students: Shahd Abubaker Elamin, Marwa Magdy Elkhouly

Abstract:

The college experiences of students with disabilities (SWD) is full of challenges. It is essential to explore what aids and hinders students’ success/satisfaction of their education journey. This study reports the findings of disabled student's experiences and views of higher education at Qatar University (QU). The study aims to investigate and describe the experience of higher education from the perspective of SWD at the university level, presenting the usage of services/accommodations utilized and their barriers to usage. The sample consisted of (37) students enrolled in QU’s Inclusion and Special Needs Support Center. A mixed methodology was used: surveys were collected to reflect the usage of services, their barriers, and students’ Quality of Life; while qualitative data (interviews) and extracted themes were conducted for more in-depth analysis. Results of the survey showed that most students were Arts and Sciences female students with visual impairments. The most utilized services by students were those exam-related (e.g. extending times, separate rooms, and reading/writing assistance). Major barriers included two categories: negative attitudes of the university community, and availability of services. The Quality of Life Questionnaire showed average to higher average levels for students. Interviews concluded that students were satisfied with facilities provided but faced some obstacles that might hinder achieving their current and future goals. In conclusion, there are many services provided by the university to SWD. However, more efforts should be put into communicating what the center provides and what the students need- to achieve the highest benefit to the students.
Project ID: UREP 20-121-5-027

Institution: Northwestern University in Qatar

Project Title: Assessing and Improving Migrant Workers Access to and Utilization of Health Information and Resources

Primary Research Mentor: Dr. Susan Dun
Mentor: Amal Zeyad Ali

Students: Thani bin Hamad AlThani, Muhammad Muneeb Ur Rehman, Muhammad Humam, Sana Zehra Hussain, Bothayna Talal Al Mohammadi

Abstract:

The goal of this study was to understand migrant workers’ beliefs about their health, how much they value it and the barriers they faced towards being healthy as well as their physical and leisure time activities in Qatar. The literature indicated that migrant workers are vulnerable populations and may experience difficulty in accessing basic services such as healthcare, have a high risk of injury and often avoid using healthcare facilities. Through semi-structured interviews which were translated into seven languages due to low literacy levels of the participants and diverse linguistic backgrounds, a sample of (n=96) of workers were asked a series of questions relating to their health, physical activity/sport participation, fan/spectator behavior. The results show that a majority, 62.5% (n = 60), of the participants reported participating in a variety of types of physical activity while in Qatar. Despite their participation, participants indicated that they would like to engage in more physical activity. However, lack of time was cited by almost all of them as a barrier to increased activity, followed by money, facilities and transportation in that order. Many of our participants have faced a variety of issues when attempting to utilize health resources. 87%, of the participants have Hamad Medical Corporation cards but about half of them do not use these cards, and instead use their own money to pay for the medical expenses. Participants are also less likely to go to a medical professional if their illness is acute.