Workshop 6

Family Changes in the Context of Social Changes in the Gulf Region

Workshop Directors:

Dr. Anis Ben Brik
Doha International Family Institute
Qatar
Email: anisdago@gmail.com

Dr. Jennifer E. Lansford
Research Professor, Sanford School of
Public Policy
Faculty Fellow, Center for Child and
Family Policy
Duke University
United States of America
Email: lansford@duke.edu

Dr. Abdallah M. Badahdah
Associate Professor of Sociology
Department of Sociology
and Rural Studies
South Dakota State University
United States of America
Email: Abdallah.Badahdah@sdstate.edu

Abstract

Several developments affecting the Gulf family or emanating from it have emerged recently. The accelerated rate of modernization and the unprecedented socioeconomic, political, and demographic changes have implications for the well-being of Gulf families that require better understanding. However, there has been little research on modern family life in the Gulf countries. The workshop will seek to provide a space for dialogue and discussion on family issues – seen as critical to the future of the region. The proponents of this workshop have attempted to examine contemporary trends and issues in the formation of families over the life course and how they interact

with family-oriented social policies of modern welfare states in the Gulf region. The workshop will discuss the centrality of the family in state polices that attempt to address the challenges that face the family. It will also provide a context in which to understand how family relationships and social policies can promote child well-being.

Description and Rationale

Objectives and Scope

Over the last three decades forces have disrupted the established patterns of family life in the Arabian Gulf societies. These forces include urbanization, technology transfer, educational progress, different patterns of emigration, globalization, changes in the status of women, and the advent of new ideological implications concerning social equality, social justice and human rights. These changes led to contraction or decline in traditional family roles, changes in norms and attitudes toward family life, the rise in a culture that attributed great social significance to symbols of material differentiation, changes in family structure, increasing rates of divorce, delayed marriage, and shifting patterns of female labor force participation. Women's empowerment and leadership have become the cornerstones for many national and regional development initiatives in the Gulf. Traditional cultural values and social norms of parental behavior are in flux as are the timing and means of procreation and the customary gender division of labor in household production. Fewer people are getting married; couples who marry are doing so later in life, splitting up more frequently, having fewer children and living longer than ever before. The rise of the new phenomenon of remaining unmarried and the "spinsterhood crisis", especially among well-educated middle-class people, and the weakened role of the elder generation are additional social changes. Many Gulf families are dependent on foreign babysitters (maids/servants), a dependence which may carry negative connotations because it is associated with socialization of children and of young family members by individuals who may not share traditional Gulf social values. Social media influences the values, traditions and practices of Gulf youth and complicates socialization by their families. Despite short- and long-term effects, family violence, child abuse, and the maltreatment of toddlers and adolescents have been underreported and not adequately documented in the Gulf countries, with the exception of a few scholars.

These changes have created new pressures and needs over the course of family life. Among the Gulf countries, existent welfare state policies have been reformed and new ones drafted in response to the challenges posed by the changing patterns of family dynamics. Different types of child care arrangements have emerged, along with policies for the care of elderly family members. Diverse public measures have been implemented to strengthen the family, and to harmonize work and family life.

The proposed workshop examines contemporary trends and issues in the formation of families over the life course and how they interact with family-oriented social policies of modern welfare states in the Gulf region. The life-course perspective extends the conventional analyses of family policies, which tend to emphasize public programs and benefits clustered around efforts to harmonize work and family life during the

early years of childrearing. The workshop will discuss the centrality of the family in state polices that attempt to address the challenges that face the family.

The workshop especially welcomes research on aspects of modern family life that include: family relationships, diverse household structures, fertility patterns, and the fluctuating division of household/market labor over the course of family life in modern times. Also welcome are historical, demographic, and legal trends in marriage and divorce in different Gulf countries and the policy implications of those trends, the setting and issues which contemporary family policies have been designed to address, theoretical issues concerning gender relations, family culture and the role of the state.

Contribution to Gulf Studies

The workshop is designed to address several major deficits in knowledge regarding family issues in the Gulf countries. The workshop will contribute to the discourse on family issues and the myriad social processes through which persons in the course of everyday life organize family relationships. The workshop also will provide a context in which to understand how family relationships and social policies can promote children's physical health, behavioral adjustment, psychological well-being, social relationships, safety, cognitive development, and economic security in the Gulf countries.

The accelerated rate of modernization on the Peninsula and the unprecedented socioeconomic, political, and demographic changes have implications for the well-being of Gulf families that require better understanding. Several developments affecting the family or emanating from it have emerged recently. It is therefore important to understand how current trends influence family well-being, particularly in families whose relational and material well-being may be precarious and vulnerable.

Government involvement in the lives of families may stem in part from the recognition that families do not exist in a vacuum in the Gulf region. Public policies affect families, providing the context within which individuals develop their relationships and raise their children. The current concerns that have led governments to reflect on what is happening to the family include concerns about demographic trends, employment, gender relationships, human rights, health, education, identity, and political stability. Research and data to guide these efforts are lacking in the Gulf region. What types of support do families need? What are the specific challenges that couples face in trying to maintain healthy families and fulfilling relationships? How best should governments allocate their resources?

The workshop will bring a critical perspective to the emerging challenges facing families on the Peninsula, as well as open lines of inquiry on this development among scholars from across the disciplines.

Anticipated Participants

The desired outcome of the workshop is the production of an edited volume. Towards that purpose, original contributions are encouraged from diverse disciplines (e.g., psychology, sociology, economics, political science, education, public health) and methodologies. The workshop welcomes research from across the humanities and social sciences—from the perspective of social and political theorists, philosophers, cultural theorists, as well as from researchers in social policy. Papers can focus on a single country case or propose cross-country analyses. We are seeking papers that deal, not exclusively, with the following areas and focus:

- Family relationships
- Household structures
- Fertility
- Household labor/market labor
- Parenting
- Marriage and divorce
- Contemporary family policies
- Gender relations
- Child well-being and protection

The above are purely indicative areas: suggestions and original ideas are most welcome!

Workshop Director Profiles

Anis B. Brik is the Director of Family Policy Department at the Doha International Family Institute, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. Graduated from London School of Economics and Political Science. Dr. Ben Brik has served as advisor on social policy at the UAE government. He has served in a number of national and international committees, including chairing the Middle East United Nations NGO Major Group, member of the Social Protection Committee of the Qatar National Development Strategy; member of the national committee on youth, labor market, population of the UAE government. Dr. Ben Brik has served as Assistant Professor of Sociology at the UAE University. He has conducted research on youth, family relationships, child well-being, social protection, culture and sustainable development.

Jennifer E. Lansford is a Research Professor at the Sanford School of Public Policy and Faculty Fellow of the Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University. She earned her PhD in Developmental Psychology from the University of Michigan in 2000. Dr. Lansford has authored more than 200 publications that focus on family relationships, culture, and child development. Dr. Lansford leads the Parenting Across Cultures (PAC) Study, a longitudinal study of mothers, fathers, and children from 13 cultural groups in nine countries (China, Colombia, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, and the United States) funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health. Through collaboration with researchers at universities in each country, the PAC study aims to understand how risk-taking develops from childhood through early adulthood as a function of biological factors and socialization (parenting and culture).

In addition, Dr. Lansford has consulted for UNICEF on the evaluation of parenting programs in several low- and middle-income countries and on the development of a set of international standards for parenting programs, and currently works with a team of scientists using data from the UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, which include nationally representative samples from as many as 100 countries, to examine questions related to experiences of children around the world. Dr. Lansford also has consulted with the Doha International Family Institute to produce a report on child well-being in the Gulf countries. She serves in editorial roles on several academic journals, including as Associate Editor of *Developmental Psychology*, Associate Editor of *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, and on the editorial boards of *Development and Psychopathology*, *Parenting: Science and Practice*, and *Aggressive Behavior*. She has served in a number of national and international leadership roles, including chairing the U.S. National Institutes of Health Psychosocial Development, Risk and Prevention Study Section; chairing the U.S. National Committee for Psychological Science of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; chairing the Society for Research in Child Development International Affairs Committee; and serving on the Secretariat of the International Consortium for Developmental Science Societies.

Abdallah Badahdah is an associate professor of sociology. He has a B.A. in psychology and Ph.D. in sociology from Iowa State University. Prior to his tenure at South Dakota State University, he was the Director of the Family Research Division at Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), a member of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development. Dr. Badahdah taught at the University of North Dakota and served as the Director of the Sociology Graduate Program for several years. He published several papers and encyclopedia entries. He has written research reports for many organizations such as the Saudi Ministry of Health, the Oman Ministry of Health/UNICEF, and the North Dakota Department of Health.

Selected Readings

Al-Ghanim, K. A., & Badahdah, A. M. (2017). Gender roles in the Arab world: Development and psychometric properties of the Arab adolescents Gender Roles Attitude Scale. *Sex Roles, 77*, 169-177.

Badahdah, A. M. (2016) Attitudes toward restricting the sexual and reproductive rights of women living with HIV infection in Yemen. *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care, 27*, 180–187.

Badahdah, A. M. (2016). Attribution theory. In G. Ritzer (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of sociology* (2nd ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Badahdah, A. M., & Le, K. T. (2016). Parenting young Arab children: Psychometric properties of an adapted Arabic brief version of the Alabama Parenting Questionnaire. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development, 47*, 486-493.

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Ben Brik A., Lansford, J. E., & Al Fara, H. (2018). Policies and programs to promote child well-being in the Gulf countries. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Lansford, J. E., & Banati, P. (Eds.). (2018). *Handbook of adolescent development research and its impact on global policy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lansford, J. E., Ben Brik A., & Al Fara, H. (2018). A framework for child well-being in the Gulf countries. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Lansford, J. E., Bornstein, M. H., Deater-Deckard, K., Dodge, K. A., Al-Hassan, S. M., Bacchini, D., …Zelli, A. (2016). How international research on parenting advances understanding of child development. *Child Development Perspectives, 10*, 202-207.

Lansford, J. E., Cappa, C., Putnick, D. L., Bornstein, M. H., Deater-Deckard, K., & Bradley, R. H. (2017). Change over time in parents' beliefs about and reported use of corporal punishment in eight countries with and without legal bans. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 71*, 44-55.

Lansford, J. E., Godwin, J., Zelli, A., Al-Hassan, S. M., Bacchini, D., Bombi, A. S., …Uribe Tirado, L. M. (2018). Longitudinal associations between parenting and youth adjustment in twelve cultural groups: Cultural normativeness of parenting as a moderator. *Developmental Psychology, 54*, 362-377.

Family Changes in the Context of Social Changes in the Gulf Region

Paper Presenter Abstracts:

Attitudes Towards Intimate Partner Violence, As Influenced By The Introduction Of The First And Only Women's Crisis Advocacy Program In The Middle East and North Africa (APIV-MENA).

Rona Murad
Women's Crisis Care International
Bahrain
Rona-murad@outlook.com

Mary-Justine Todd
Women's Crisis Care International
Bahrain
mjtodd@womenscci.org

Abstract:

Attitudes towards intimate partner violence (IPV) and perceptions of how it exists within individual communities plays an important role in determining not only the prevalence rates of violence against women around the world, but also in the willingness of communities to make response mechanisms available for women. Although there is substantial research in Western societies looking not only at prevalence rates but other factors that intersect with IPV, there is little research within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) that examines much beyond its mere existence. There is a small body of research regarding regional attitudes towards IPV revealing that prevailing attitudes towards this topic. Western studies on factors influencing IPV have shown the importance of victims' crisis advocacy programs in

improving attitudes towards violence prevention, decreasing its acceptance within society, and in ultimately, creating positive outcomes for victims of abuse and for women empowerment ideals overall. Thus, this study aims to understand whether the same may hold true here in the Middle East, while adding to the body of knowledge in this region that seeks to examine IPV in a more substantial way than simply providing an analysis of its incidence and prevalence.

This study provides an understanding of how the introduction of the first women's crisis and victims' advocacy program in the entire region, at Women's Crisis Care International (WCCI) in Bahrain, has positively influenced the attitudes towards IPV of individual members within the community, namely, the WCCI volunteers and clients, and if this might lead to long term improvements of women's place within society. Participants were interviewed and asked a series of Likert scale and open-ended questions to better understand whether WCCI has had a role in improving their knowledge and perceptions of IPV. Data was collected from 23 participants, including 13 WCCI volunteer crisis advocates who all underwent a comprehensive 40-hour training period to become a certified crisis advocate, as well as ten WCCI clients who were themselves victims of abuse and were served by the WCCI advocacy programming.

In order to further understand the influence of advocacy programs, a longitudinal study is recommended in order to measure the attitudes of participants over time and to exclude any external variables. Moreover, advocacy programs such as WCCI and other types of domestic violence services present within other MENA communities should be compared. In addition to understanding the attitudes of IPV, it is important for future studies to determine whether the changes in attitudes, as influenced by advocacy programs and domestic violence services, actually result in behavior change ultimately leading to more positive outcomes for women. These findings offer a platform for future studies to develop a deeper understanding on IPV and the influence advocacy programs and/or domestic violence services in region.

Parenting Practices in the Gulf Cooperation Council

Abdullah Badahdah
South Dakota State University
United States of America
abdullah.badahdah@sdstate.edu

Abstract:

Parenting practices and styles have a tremendous impact on children's well-being. Scientific evidence shows a positive relationship between child behavioral problems and negative parenting. In fact, of all the factors that might influence children's development and wellbeing, dysfunctional parenting is the most harmful one. Harsh treatment, rejection, and lack of warmth and affection are examples of dysfunctional parenting that are associated with multiple issues, including substance use, aggression, and suicide attempts among children and adolescents. Moreover, children who perceive that their caregivers withhold support, care, love, concern and warmth, regardless of social settings, gender, age, and other social factors, they tend to be, among other things,

aggressive, dependent or defensively independent, and emotionally unresponsive and harbor a negative view of the world.

Does Culture Shock Matter: Causes and Coping Strategies for Migrant employees and Families

Mohammad Omair Farooq
Galgotia College of Engineering and Technology
India
mohammadomairfarooq96@gmail.com

Ayesha Farooq
Department of Business Administration, Aligarh Muslim University
India
ayeshafarooq4@gmail.com

Abstract:

As per National Statistics (2010-2016)*, expatriates constitute 49% of the total population in 6 GCC countries; namely Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait and Oman. They migrate from their respective countries in the hope of a better future. A significant body of research work has been carried out on economic, social, legal, and political aspects of migration. In the present paper, the researcher intends to examine migration from the perspective of 'Culture Shock'. Culture shock is an experience a person may have when one moves to a cultural environment which is different from one's own; it is also the personal disorientation a person may feel when experiencing an unfamiliar way of life due to immigration or a visit to a new country, a move between social environments, or simply transition to another type of life. It is a psychological phenomenon that is experienced by many people who study or work abroad for an extended period. Culture shock is primarily a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture, to new cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding of unique and diverse experiences. It may encompass feelings of helplessness, irritability, and fear of disregarded. Culture shock generally moves through four different phases: honeymoon, frustration, adjustment and acceptance or adaptability. While individuals experience these stages differently and the impact and order of each step varies widely, they do provide a guideline of how we adapt and cope with new cultures. Whereas every expat will experience some form of culture shock, not everyone goes through all the wellknown stages. While some skip stages or rush through them, others may experience certain stages of cultural transition more than once and in a different order. However, a willingness to work through it is the first step towards integration.

Marrying-Out in Qatar: Complexity and Evolving Social Drama

Rajnaara Akhtar
De Montfort University Leicester
United Kingdom
Rajnaara.akhtar@dmu.ac.uk

Abstract:

This paper discusses changing norms in marriage practices in modern day Qatar, focussing in particular on the issue of 'marrying out' where Qatari's marry non-Qataris. Drawing on empirical data gathered from fieldwork in Qatar, involving interviews with individuals and legal personnel involved in marriage processes, it present a unique insight into the evolving social dramas arising within and on the periphery of, Qatar's family law framework. Changing marriage practices are analysed in the context of Qatar's population, geographic location and economic position, with the resultant advent of transnational families challenging cultural norms and national interests. Analysis of the way in which couples are navigating marriage laws and the use of unregistered 'religious-only' marriages as a bridging mechanism are identified through the empirical research.

This gives rise to questions of recognition and non-recognition of marriage with a range of potential outcomes. Religious-only marriages usually, but not always, culminate in state recognition from which differing rights flow according to citizenship status. This raises questions about the motivations for and outcomes of, marriages which may have an unregistered/unrecognised status, the resultant lack of family law rights, and possible denial of residence rights/ citizenship to a spouse and/or children, amongst other consequences. Examining Article 10 of The Family Law 2006 – which provides that 'Marriage shall be established by a formal contract issued in accordance with the law, as an exception, it may be proved by other Evidence as may be decided by the Judge' - the process for achieving recognition of marriages, causes of non-recognition and the consequent legal, social and personal outcomes shall be explored.

Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights Scenario of Women in Saudi Arabia through the lenses of Expatriate Gynaecologists: An Empirical Study

Shazia Fazli
Aligarh Muslim University
India
shaziafarooqfazli@gmail.com

Rakhshanda Fazli
Aligarh Muslim University
India
rffazli@gmail.com

Abstract:

Reproductive health refers to a condition in which reproductive process is accomplished in a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and is not merely the absence of any disease in the reproductive organs or in the reproductive system. The concept of women's reproductive health is developed by the World Health Organization , International Women's Health Movement groups and International Family Planning network in contrast to bio-medical approaches to women health. "Reproductive health therefore, implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capacity to reproduce with the freedom to decide it, when and how often to do so" in other words reproductive health implies that women can go safely through pregnancy and childbirth, that fertility regulations can be achieved without health hazards and that people are safe in having sex (WHO, 2011).

Many factors influence women's health. The genetic constitution, exposure to disease-producing organisms, imbalanced or inadequate nutrition, and low resistance to infection all determine health. In addition, social, cultural, economic, political and environmental factors, as well as the availability of health services, significantly influence the health of individuals. Attitudes to marriage, age at marriage, the value attached to fertility and sex of the child, the pattern of family organization and the ideal role demanded of women by social conventions- are all cultural norms that affect women's health. (fazli,2014)

This study is a cross-sectional analysis of Saudi native and expatriate women regarding their Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights. Data is collected through interviews of a female gynaecologist (Indians) those have served and are serving in the Government and Private hospitals of Saudi Arabia. Interviews have been conducted at the time of doctors visit India in their vacations. Thirty-five (35) doctors were cross-examined.

This research was made to do a comparative study of Native and Expatriate women in Saudi Arabia to know about their reproductive health status and reproductive rights achievements to understand how their decisions are affected in the reproductive behaviour. For this, reproductive health and reproductive rights of native and expatriate women were analysed from the lenses of Indian Gynaecologists. Further expatriate

women's reproductive health and reproductive rights were also analysed using a questionnaire survey of a sample of 50 married expatriates (Indian) women. These women were contacted personally and a semi-structured interview using questionnaire was conducted at the time of their visit to India and sometimes by telephone and online. Parameters selected for the study are the age of marriage; polygamy; anti-natal care; delivery practices; post-natal care; awareness of family planning methods; Infant mortality rate; fertility rate; and reproductive rights. While taking the above as the context, the paper shall look at the overall achievement of women in Saudi Arabia regarding reproductive health, rights, and choices and ultimately their reproductive behaviour. Following are major research questions, which shall be explored and analysed:

- The present status of reproductive health facilities provided by the Government to native and expatriate women in Saudi Arabia.
- Reproductive rights of native and expatriate women from Gynecologist's perspective.
- Reproductive rights of expatriate women in Saudi Arabia from their own perspective.
- Role of religion, education and awareness programmes in the availability, accessibility, affordability of reproductive health and reproductive rights by native and expatriate women in Saudi Arabia.
- Role of religion in the reproductive behaviour of women in Saudi Arabia in the light of Quranic verses (Sura Ar-Rum:21).

This study becomes important in the time when the Saudi Government is determined to give rights to women in various socio-economic spheres of life and make Saudi Women emancipated and empowered. It is envisaged that the study would open a debate and researches on the reproductive health, rights and choices of women in Saudi Arabia.

Children's Perceptions of Parenting Styles: Ten-Year Examination of the Omani Families

Said Aldhafri
Associate Professor of Educational Psychology, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman
And the Director of Social Observatory, The Research Council, Oman
aldhafri@squ.edu.om

Abstract:

The active participation of parents has been found to have a positive and negative influence on children's lives. Some previous research studies proved the impact of parenting styles on children's psychological, social, academic and educational outcomes. These outcomes resulted from the impact of parenting styles are not related to children only, but also to youth. Thus, previous studies highlight the important role of the styles that parents use and the ongoing involvement in their children rearing.
The methodology used to investigate the impact of parenting styles on children has varied. The researchers tended to focus on their investigation on the impact of fathers' and mothers' parenting styles together. However, some researchers targeted the effect of each one's style separately. With regard to the studies that address the perceptions

of individuals toward the parenting styles, they either aim to focus merely on the perceptions of parenting styles as viewed by children or by the parents themselves. This research reaches the conclusion that it is significant to focus on the individual perception of both mothers' and fathers' parenting styles and comparing them with the children' perceptions. Specifically, unlike parents' perceptions, children' perceptions showed more precise and considerable features of their parents' parenting styles and were found to predict other children's outcomes.

Our won research in the Omani context utilized different methodologies to understand how parents interact with their children and how this interaction influences children's outcomes. Over the past ten years, the issue of how Omani adolescents and youth perceive their parents' parenting styles have been examined using different measures and designs. Cumulative research shows that authoritative parenting style is the most common style among Omani parents followed by the authoritarian parenting style. The permissive parenting style is less common in the Omani context. These parenting styles were found to predict different children's outcomes including their academic self-efficacy beliefs, self-concept, mental health, university adjustment, learned helplessness, goal orientation, depression as well as academic achievement at school and at university.

While examining children's perceptions is the widely used design in these cited studies, we also used a comparison-based design to compere between parents' and their children's perceptions using the same measure items. In addition, a large group of demographic variables related to the parents, children or the families were investigated to understand how they influence parents' parenting styles. Challenges in understanding the influences of parenting styles continue to exist and are awaited for more multi-designed research in the future. For now, we believe that the rich national data collected in the last ten years have provided us with a good picture of statistical analyses for the Omani families (as an example of GCC) to understand how families have changed and how different demographic and family variables influence parenting styles and family structure. (459 words).

Late-Life Engagement of Leisure Activities: the case of Emirati community

Aigul Zabirova
United Arab Emirates University
United Arab Emirates
anisdago@gmail.com

Abstract:

For last several decades Emirati society has experienced a rapid economic and social transition that has changed many aspects of everyday life. Furthermore, despite the much diversity of the UAE society the country's historical population keeps own identity as a culture with a strong Islamic tradition. Along with the results of successful socio-economic modernization, everyday life regulated by strict Sharia laws, including behavior and attitudes in public spaces; however the conservative values and Islamic practices are challenging by western oriented consumption culture. New consumption

patterns, changes in free time activities patterns in relation to social transition are relevant not only to Western population, it already marked population in Asian part of the world, in the Middle East, as well as in other parts of the world. A study conducted by W.H. Martin and S. Mason showed that at the Middle East more Western pattern of leisure is emerging, especially among the urban middle class (W.H. Martin and S. Mason, 2003). There a few studies on Middle East, almost conducted on Turkey, Egypt, Israel and Iran (Youshitaki Iwasaki, 2007; Max Haller & Markus Hadler & Gerd Kaup, 2013). However much less is known about the use of leisure time in the Gulf region and among specific demographic groups. This paper will look at the structure and conditions of leisure time among Emirati households in later life.

For many outside visitor public space at the Gulf region seems completely different from other parts of the world, elderly seeing much less in public spaces, while streets, parks, malls even public transportation in Europe, USA, in some Asian cities as Tokio, Seoul even Istanbul are full of elderly people, who evidently enjoying life by shopping, going to fitness clubs, hairdresser, socializing at café, going to beach etc. (Jens Bucksch & Uwe Helmert, 2004; Domingo Palacios –Cena & Cristina Alonso-Blanco & Rodrigo Jimenez-Garcia & Valentin Hernando – Barrera, 2011). In that regions fundamental and rapid changes in the social structure and leisure have happened over the last 50 years, consequent in a tectonic shift from a traditional way of life to a more Westernized lifestyle, especially in big and large cities, these social changes occurred thanks to agricultural development to industrial and post-industrial, increased availability of formal education and rural-to-urban migration. Strong economic development, which is experiencing by the UAE for last several decades, has ranked country as one of the most developed country in the world with sustainable economy, education, healthcare, infrastructure, technology, tourism and human development. Sophisticated lifestyle that Emirati families currently enjoy is a convergence of the UAE social welfare programs, religious-cultural values of Emirati community, historical development and homeowners' needs during the past 40-45 years.

This chapter presents an exploratory study of the late-life engagement of leisure activity of Emirati elderly persons with the aim to understand family changes in this community. I reflect on these developments in a discussion of social survey data from 335 households in which one partner older than 50 years and own house; also my data set includes 12 qualitative interviews to capture crucial information about Emirati households in later life. The chapter has the primary aim to study older adults' free time activities, and specify types of leisure and groups of elderly in this context. I argue that leisure time activities determined not only by age, gender and by place of residence but also by cultural and historical nature of Emirati families.

The chapter will start with the description of home ownership, household items and provide the social and demographic background of respondents. Obviously in our sample the predominant family pattern is single wage earning family. For the last decade the UAE has shown impressive growth in gender equality and in the political and economic empowerment of women, however in our focus those who are 50 years or above, this generation of Emirati women began to enter the workforce, but many of women who are 60 and above never use to have formal job. Another point is that staying at home for Emirati women has some differences from many Western and Asian countries, traditional gender role expectations often constrained women to care alone for household and family affairs, the same time the majority of local families have

several domestic workers, so such household chore as, food preparation, laundry or cleaning, even childcare and shuttling children to activities almost done by domestic workers. Moreover, as qualitative interviews show, many local families have special domestic workers for outdoor and garden spaces, front lawns and backyards. In many families managing such home things as shopping, food shopping, banking, bill-paying, articulating school and healthcare issues, house maintenance and family communication is a man role/typically done by the head of household.

Personal Financial Risk Management Practices among Households in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: A Preliminary Analysis

Masahina Sarabdeen
Princess Nourah Bint AbdulRahman University
Saudi Arabia
drsmasahina@gmail.com MSarabdeen@pnu.edu.sa

Ann Largy
Dublin City University @ Princess Nourah Bint AbdulRahman University
Saudi Arabia
ann.largey@dcu.ie

Noreha Halid
Princess Nourah Bint AbdulRahman University
Saudi Arabia
nhhalid@pnu.edu.sa

A.C. Muhammadu Kijas
International Islamic University Malaysia
dracmkijas@gmail.com

Abad Alzuman
Princess Nourah Bint AbdulRahman University
Saudi Arabia
analzuman@pnu.edu.sa

Abstract:

The economy of Saudi Arabia is undergoing major changes in the process of moving towards the Kingdom's Vision 2030 and such changes are expected to impact on the level of financial uncertainty and potential risk within households. Successful risk management should mitigate potential financial losses and ensure that households' standard of life is less adversely affected by events outside of their control. In this transitional period, it is of interest to understand the level of financial risk households perceive and their financial risk management practices. This study therefore explores personal financial risk management practices (PFRMP) among households in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Existing financial risk management literature tends to focus more on institutional/firm-based financial risk management than households. Here we adopt the institutional-based models to a household context. In this framework, the degree to which a household undertakes financial risk management practice is indicated firstly

by its perceived preparedness to deal with a financial emergency and secondly by whether action is stated to have been taken to mitigate against financial risk. PFRMP is modelled as based on the householder's knowledge of financial risk management, level of financial risk assessed and degree of concern, and personal financial risk control and monitoring. In addition, the relationships between PFRMP and socio-economic factors of households are investigated. Linear regression and probit analysis are used to understand these relationships. The results show a statistically significant relationship between PFRMP and knowledge of financial products, worry or concern about risk exposures, long term financial goals, saving and socio-economic variables such as age, nationality, income level, and employment status. The results of this study can be used to inform policies aimed at guiding households towards more successful financial risk management practices.

The Role of Families in Supporting Youth Employment in Qatar

Nader Kabbani
Brookings Doha Center
Qatar
nkabbani@brookings.edu

Nejla Ben Mimoune
Brookings Doha Center
Qatar
nbenmimoune@brookings.edu

Abstract:

Family ties in Qatar are strong and form a solid support system for the country's youth. Access to family networks can help young people during their job search and improve their employment outcomes. Families can also influence the sector in which young people end up working. Thus, families can play a role in supporting economic diversification and other policy priorities of the state as articulated in the National Development Strategies of the country. This paper examines the extent to which family connections help young people in Qatar transition more effectively to employment. The paper examines (a) the determinants of using family support to initiate young Qataris' career, (b) the impact of family support on job search dynamics and outcomes, and (c) the gender dimensions of the family role and family policy in youth employment. Findings suggest that relying on family and friends' connection to look for a job decreases the unemployment likelihood among both male and female young Qataris and reduces the probability of being out of the labor force for non-Qataris females. The paper ends with policy recommendations on how to enhance the role of families in supporting youth in both Qatar and the international community.

Parental Involvement in Education in the Gulf Region

Suha Al-Hassan
Emirates College for Advanced Education
United Arab Emirates
salhassan@ecae.ac.ae

Abstract:

Over the past decades, many countries of the Gulf region, such as, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, and more have invested massive resources and funded heavily several initiatives to reform and improve education. These countries were motivated and looking for a better preparing its own citizens to deal with the economic and social changes for an increasingly globalised and competitive world, these countries embraced ambitious and inclusive education reform strategies, which were closely tied to national agendas. However, and despite the availability of the massive financial resources, the outcomes are falling behind the initial expectations which made policy makers keen on revising its plans to achieve what they are looking for.

The literature has emphasized and highlighted the importance of engaging parents in their child's learning. Parents-school partnerships are a critical factor in the holistic development of the child's (socially, behaviourally, emotionally, and academically). Parental involvement is often linked to socio-economic factors and parental attitudes. Schools that are successful in improving the achievement of students tend to have strong partnerships with their families and local communities. Family involvement practices, home-school partnership, and home environment factors are consistently linked to children's academic performance at all levels of education.

This paper sheds light on parental engagement in education and home-school partnership in the Gulf Region in general and UAE in particular. Although academic literature exists on parental involvement in their children's education in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region still emerging, educators in the GCC in general and UAE in particular are keen on investigating this important topic to establishing effective educational policies. This presentation will depend on literature review to explore the range of opportunities provided for parental engagement in education according to the following critical practices: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with community. The presentation will end up with recommendations and policy implications.

Youth Independence in Relation to Social Change in the Gulf

Abdulnabi Alekry
Bahrain Transparency
Bahrain
anhalekry@yahoo.com

Abstract:

The Gulf society is being described as young society where youth between 18Y to 35Y forms main active and productive group of the population. There is increasing gap between the young generation and elder generation .In various respects we have to distinguish between the status of young males and young females in the Gulf society, characterized by gender disparity and patriarchal domination.

Part of the modernization process of the social changes in The Gulf, has been the phenomena of youth independence trend. The independence of the youth is manifested in various forms with various consequence .This include values, commitments, entrepreneurship, aspirations, behaviour and many other orientations .

The paper will address the impact of increasing youth independence trend on the their role and relations within their families , their formation of new family and the society at large . This in turn affects the fabric of social relations and thus the social change . It will deal with The Gulf Youth citizens only and not expatriate youth.

In a way it is reciprocal process where the social changes affects the family and the individuals which are components of the society. This phenomena is to be addressed within the context of not only The Gulf social changes, but also the interacted relations between the Gulf and outside world.

The Gulf society has been witnessing dramatic social and demographic changes .One of the most important phenomena is that being young society with increasing percentage of youth. With the modernization and increasing trend of metropolitan process, families tend to split regarding housing .Securing jobs or business establishment ,motivate youth to leave the family and neighbourhood. Challenges of self -establishment and changing values contribute to late marriage. This in turn led more male youth to live independently and separately off their families.

There is also the influence of globalization of knowledge , culture and values , facilitated by cyber communication, study abroad and travel .With a very high rate of internet access , smart phones and English language skills, Gulf youth today are very knowledgeable of outside world. Private western-oriented education is also widespread from kinder garden to university , which have an impact on Gulf youth culture , values and knowledge too.

Many single Gulf males and females tend to form friendship groups , join associations and clubs ,and relatively dissociate themselves from traditional linkages. The social media and other cyber means ,enables the youth to form networks ,through which the youth adopts public issues and serve the society ,with new concepts, values and organization that are different from the traditional ones.

Impact of Work-Family Conflict on Job Satisfaction: A Qatari Perspective

Noora Lari
Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI), Qatar University
Qatar
n.lari@qu.edu.qa

Abstract:

The performance of employees in any organization depends on numerous factors, which can be related to job satisfaction, family life, or both. A work-life balance is highly desirable for employees, as it helps to reduce friction between professional and domestic lives. The aim of this paper is to provide a discussion on the implications of Work-Family Conflict (WFC) on the well-being of Qatari families—as seen critically in light of the current provisions of national laws (i.e., the Civil Human Resources Law of 2016 and Labor Law 2004)—which are intended to tackle the implications of WFC—since there is still little empirical research to help guide policy. The main questions arise are as follows: what is the intertwined relationship between WFC and job satisfaction? how Qatari employees can achieve job satisfaction and low WFC by guiding oriented human resources policies in the workforce— since it is one of the main components of both work and life satisfaction?

In 2017, the study utilized a cross-sectional design whereby questionnaire-guided interviews were used to collect primary data by the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) at Qatar University in collaboration with the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI). The structured questionnaire was programmed into a CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview) system using BLAISE software. A large convenience sample of 807 families from Qatar was surveyed and thus eligible for analysis. The data was analyzed quantitatively in STATA formats through descriptive statistics and regression analysis test to measure the relationship between the variables. The results are reliable and provide a valid body of data that is representative of the general working Qatari population.

The preliminary findings highlight a unique contribution by identifying the correlation between the individual' work-life balance and his/her level of job satisfaction. It indicates that work-family balance is not achievable for Qatari employees. The specific obstacle that hinders the maintenance of work-family balance is associated with the views that employer are not meeting expectations in terms of the support offered. Importantly, the study generally expects public interest in implementing improved employee-oriented human resources policies together with factors responsible for job satisfaction, such supportive working environment, supportive coworkers and supervisors, and a supportive spouse. It is essential to harmonize family life with work obligations to have a better quality of life, which in turn aids the well-being of Qatari families. Therefore, this study is insightful in the way it has implications on policy, practice, and future research.

Fertility Transition in Oman: Understanding the Puzzles of Rapid Decline in Fertility

M. Mazharul Islam, PhD
Department of Statistics, College of Science, Sultan Qaboos University,
Oman
mislam@squ.edu.om

Abstract:

Oman, a traditional Muslim country of Arabian Peninsula, is experiencing a rapid fertility transition in recent time, which is largely remaining unnoticed. The sharp fall in fertility in Oman in recent time is quite stunning and more than expected. This paper analyses the fertility transition in Oman and explore the underlying causes of rapid decline in fertility. Data were extracted from national level surveys and the annual report of the Ministry of Health. Bongaarts aggregate model has been used for analyzing the role of the major proximate determinants of declining fertility. Empirical analysis reveals that fertility in Oman has declined from 8.6 births per woman in 1988 to 3.3 births per woman in 2008, a decline of 5.3 births per woman or 62% decline within a short period of 20 years. Fertility has declined mainly due to synchronization of 'delaying and spacing of birth' among the younger cohorts of women and the tradition of prolonged duration of postpartum infecundability. The analysis indicates that marriage pattern has the largest fertility inhibiting effect followed by postpartum infecundability and contraception. Delayed age at marriage, government's policy towards fertility reduction, modernization, educational development of women and their participation in workforce are the major factors that affect the reproductive behavior of women and thus help reduce fertility in Oman. Under the prevailing social and cultural norms in Oman, the prospect of further decline in fertility seems to be very slim in the near future unless the couples are strongly motivated to have smaller family size and adopt necessary actions to that effect.