The “Glass Ceiling” and Empowerment of Qatari Women for Employment in Qatar

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Abstract: Qatar is rapidly transforming from a traditional conservative and modest society to a more open, modern and technologically advanced society. Qatar has made significant strides over the recent years in increasing the participation of women in higher education and in the Qatari workforce (*Scott-Jackson, 2015*). Women comprise 24% of the Qatari population and 18% of the workforce (*MDPS, 2015*), however, they remain concentrated in entry-level administrative jobs (*Al Ansari, 2012*) and mostly in the public sector. Is this inequality of participation of women in higher levels of Qatari organizations, a Glass Ceiling phenomenon that has been noticed in other countries and global organizations? The answer from similar previous research is “Yes” and this dissertation is an endeavor to further build on these reasons and highlight how this problem has sprouted in Qatar. Using an employment effectiveness route, to make employees both men and women, express their views of their current work experiences and their likelihood to continue or leave employment and complete their career objectives in the current organization, this dissertation will help understand whether the Glass Ceiling has external reasons or is it self-inflicted. Self-Infliction can be a reason from the lack of enthusiasm to progress into senior roles by women themselves due to the Islamic and patriarchal society values and the influence that this has had on women in Qatar and the entire middle east region in general *(Ermis-Mert, A., 2018).* The objective of this research is to find not only the reasons for the Glass Ceiling but also the solutions of how to use public policies and driving cultural changes to overcome this problem and to see Qatar fulfilling its vision 2030 in its entirety.

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1. Introduction

Qatar is rapidly transforming from a traditional conservative and modest society to a more open, modern and technologically advanced society. Qatar has made significant strides over the recent years in increasing the participation of women in higher education and in the Qatari workforce (*Scott-Jackson, 2015*). Women comprise 24% of the Qatari population and 18% of the workforce (*MDPS, 2015*), and they remain concentrated in entry-level administrative jobs (*Al Ansari, 2012*) and mostly in the public sector.

The research (*Documents 2, 3 and 4*) conducted as part of this DBA program has seen evidence of the fact that in spite of their higher graduation rates than men, women in Qatar tend to remain in middle-management jobs or entry-level jobs and do not move up to higher levels of management.

Qualitative and quantitative tests as witnessed in other western countries (*Simbula et.al, 2011*) were discussed in length in Documents 3 and 4 and in relation to the Qatar job market to compare this phenomenon to known causes such as the Glass Ceiling Effect (*Cotter et.al, 2001; Hymowitz & Schellhardt, 1986*). A five-level gender equality maturity framework (*Evanthia & Marina, 2018*) was also used to test the maturity level of organizations in Qatar to establish gender equality across all levels of the organization. The results thus far from the previous documents submitted in this DBA program, indicate that strong reasons exist for the Glass Ceiling effects in the Qatari job market due to men dominating the workplace in higher rungs of the organization especially senior roles in leadership and management and such roles are stereotyped to suit men only. It is also to be noted that women voluntarily and in a self-inflicted manner stop progressing in their careers in order to strike a good work-life balance and focus more on family needs. The dominating factor amongst these two reasons has come out to be the male stereotype which has been the finding in the previous submissions of this research.

Unfortunately lack of national policies and lack of government incentives (*Metcalfe, 2008*) has led organizations to ignore this social problem and women are witnessing limited career progression while men enjoy the benefits of both leading organizations and the government bodies that create policies and decisions in relation to women.

In spite of the Qatar National Vision 2030 (*QSDP, 2008*) and its mandates to establish gender equality at work, limited progress has been noticed (*Wirth, 2001*) except in the recent past where women have taken up leadership roles (*Gulf Center for Strategic Studies, 2004*) and moved into higher positions within the companies owned by the Government and other Government organizations.

The Qatar Leadership Center that works with the mandate of creating future leaders for the country has helped to a certain extent in the path of giving equal opportunity for developing male as well as female leaders in the country. The researcher having gone through the leadership training at the Qatar Leadership Center and having interacted with fellow Qatari women, feels that even through this program the dominance of men in workplaces has not been addressed and creating women leaders and women role models has been a training and development exercise only and many women leaders from the leadership center are yet to be placed in leadership positions within the Qatari organizations where they could make a difference.

The main issue surrounding the lack of a comprehensive solution is that extensive research in the area has not yet been established through either academic engagements or societal forums like witnessed in other countries (*Powell and Graves, 2003*) and hence the problem is getting ignored in most organizations. Findings of such researchers in other countries with similar socio-economic structures has also taken into consideration to bring reforms both in the society and in government and commercial organizations to address the problem of Glass Ceiling.

The questions thus being pursued in this research are:

1. What are the reasons for the gender inequality in higher levels of Qatari Organizations – is it "*the Glass Ceiling*" (barriers to move up) or "*Sticky Floors*" (unwillingness to move up) amongst Qatari women?
2. What are the incremental changes that can be taken by Qatari government agencies to influence existing policies within Qatari organizations to bring about gender equality in all levels of Qatari organizations?

Following on from previously conducted work the focus of the research in Document 5 of the DBA program is to make a clear distinction between the two likely reasons i.e. whether the lack of progression of women in their careers in Qatar is due to the Glass Ceiling Effect as seen in other developing countries or it is due to the voluntary and self-inflicted lack of enthusiasm to progress into senior roles by women themselves due to the Islamic and patriarchal society and the influence that this has had on women in Qatar and the entire middle east region in general *(Ermis-Mert, A., 2018).*

Having a clear distinction of the reason for the Glass Ceiling, the solution for how to approach the problem in order to solve it will become explicit recommendations of this research. The researcher believes this work will benefit decision makers in Qatar to take societal beliefs, reforms and organizational policies to the next level in supporting the progress of women in their careers.

As for the literature review, it will be focused on appending to the literature review that has already been conducted in documents 3 and 4. In these previous documents, the literature survey covered the topic of Glass Ceiling in detail taking into consideration its definition, misunderstandings of the concepts and the similarities and differences it has between its features in other countries and Qatar.

In document 5, the literature survey will focus more on Qatar's career scenario for women i.e. how progression of women depends not only in them finding a job and working but also moving up their career path and working in higher levels of the organization. The usefulness of this phenomenon to achieve the country's vision will also be investigated in depth comparing the Qatar scenario to that of other countries. Women in Qatar being already educated and holding good skill sets to work in higher roles in Qatari organizations, will have a natural progression to lead Qatari companies and hence help the society as a whole to establish gender equality across all levels in the organization and not just in total numbers. The literature survey will also help build the questions for the online survey that is the instrument for primary research in this document and focus the reasons for the choice of Employment Effectiveness as a tool to probe the reasons for the lack of gender equality in higher levels of Qatari organizations.

2. Literature review

2.1. The Glass Ceiling phenomenon and its cause

The Glass Ceiling is a metaphor used to represent an invisible barrier that keeps a given demographic (typically applied to minorities) from rising beyond a certain level in a hierarchy (*Cotter, A.D., et.al,* 2001).

The metaphor was first coined by feminists in reference to barriers in the careers of high-achieving women (*Bano, S., & Fatima, K., 2016*). In the US, the concept is sometimes extended to refer to obstacles hindering the advancement of minority women, as well as minority men. Minority women often find the most difficulty in "breaking the glass ceiling" because they lie at the intersection of two historically marginalized groups: women and people of color. East Asian and American news outlets have coined the term "bamboo ceiling" to refer to the obstacles that all East Asian Americans face in advancing their careers (*Lekan, O., 2014*).

Within the same concepts of the other terms surrounding the workplace, there are similar terms for restrictions and barriers concerning women and their roles within organizations and how they coincide with their maternal duties. These "Invisible Barriers" function as metaphors to describe the extra circumstances that women undergo, usually when trying to advance within areas of their careers and often while trying to advance within their lives outside their workspaces. If women are generally prevented from receiving promotion, especially to the executive rankings, within their organizations due to sterotypes, gender bias or any other reason, are said to be facing the Glass Ceiling.

Within the last twenty years, women who are becoming more involved and pertinent in industries and organizations have rarely been in the executive ranks. Women in most corporations encompass below five percent of board of directors and corporate officer positions (*KPMG, 2017).*

Despite their increased rate of participation (*Powell, G.N., & Graves, L.M., 2003*) in work, women face significant challenges at work from not only the Glass Ceiling but also other concepts such as a Self Infliction of not willing to progress higher. Their career advancement especially into the higher levels of the organization and management is limited due to this Self Infliction. There are different theories such as interaction centered theory (*Kiaye, E., & Singh, M., 2013*), social role theory (*Terjesen and Singh, 2008*) and the human capital theory (*Kiaye, E., & Singh, M., 2013*) that place the cause of the Glass Ceiling on women themselves.

The interaction centered theory (*Kiaye, E., & Singh, M., 2013*) claims that women have a less propensity to interact and make clear their career ambitions within their work organization. As per this theory, they don't make a definitive self-desired move but rather wait for opportunities to come their way before attempting to move up in their career path. As for the social role theory (*Terjesen, S., & Singh, V., 2008*), women have been recognized as persons who have more interest than men in maintaining a social life that is more important to them than a professional life i.e. closeness to the family, maintaining family relationships and spending time with friends and maintaining social networks rather than pursuing a career ambition. This phenomenon, as per the research, makes women less capable candidates for a career move above a certain level.

The human capital theory (*Kiaye, E., & Singh, M., 2013*) believes that women place more emphasis on domestic responsibilities and therefore voluntary choices related to work differs from their male counterparts. Hence, there is a distinct reason why women tend to keep to a certain grade level in the workplace that is just to maintain a secondary family income and not aim for anything that would disengage them from their social commitments.

With these theories existing in academic literature, human resource practitioners in industry will tend naturally to believe that women are not capable to move up their career path and it is but natural to see promotion of men higher than women as a phenomenon in most business organizations. This perception of women self-inflicting the Glass Ceiling upon themselves looks to be the easy comfort zone of thinking for human resource practitioners however, if this belief is challenged and women are themselves probed with the thought there might be other views that may emerge which is the aim of this research.

For example to prove this point, that is, a different view regarding women's self-propensity to move up the organizational ladder, a research conducted amongst working women in India (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*), in active employment, probes the relationship between working women's Glass Ceiling beliefs and their Job Satisfaction. It was concluded through this research that there is a co-relation between the two and that if women have been satisfied with their nature of job and the work environment it is more likely that they would consider moving higher up in their career path.

This research (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*) also leads to the belief that women in all levels of the organization are the most important source of information to draw conclusions of any form of research on the features of the Glass Ceiling.

To further prove the point that the effect of the Glass Ceiling is not only true for women but also a feature of a minority in any work place, like men in healthcare profession, it was found that male nurses may see limited career progression compared to female nurses in a hospital or old-age care home (*Mullan, B. & Harrison, J., 2008*). Hence the

same effect of the Glass Ceiling can be applied to any minority population that works as a subset of a larger population in any organization.

Hence, even though it is mostly applicable to women working in male dominant organizations, it is clear from the literature that the Glass Ceiling is caused by a combination of social structures, personal beliefs and organizational policies that lead to the existence of this phenomenon in organizations.

It has been seen during the course of this research in document 3 and document 4 that the situation in Qatar is not an exception with regard to the Glass Ceiling and women's career progression in higher levels of the organization.

In the context of the GCC (*Gulf Cooperation Council*) countries, which is one of the most challenging regions in the world for women seeking to move up their career ladders or break the "Glass Ceiling effect" to move into senior roles in management (*Keddie, N., 2008*), most challenges arise out of factors such as the traditionally (or rather historically) patriarchal society, lack of government policies regarding women's promotion to higher grades and the lack of balance between office and home routines between men and women.

Qatar has been a typical patriarchal society like any other GCC country (*Syed, J., 2010*) which has led women to be passive in demanding their rights or to go against the male dominance in decision making whether it is at home or at work (*Syed, J., 2010*). Numerous small surveys and in-depth interviews (*Al Salem, A., & Speece, M., 2017*) show that there is a widespread belief that women can perform just as well as men, and that there is not very much resistance to women in managerial positions. The data suggest that access to mid-level management is fairly equal in the private sector, although the public sector seems to lag. Both sectors probably have some degree of "glass ceiling", with fewer women in top positions except in cases where they have built their own companies. The absence of policies and incentives for government organizations and public sector companies to establish equality of genders in workplaces (*Scott-Jackson, 2015*) especially in senior roles continues to dominate the situation at the workplace. The societal norms whereby men and women share the burden of bringing external wealth to the family (by doing a job or conducting a business) but don't do the same when it comes to working at home, the burden of work is entirely on the women (*Spar, D.L., 2013*). This leads to a less work-life balance for females and hence leads to their early voluntary retirement from work and hence the Glass Ceiling.

Such reasons have led fewer women to enter the workforce in the GCC countries, and even fewer to make it to senior positions than in almost any developed region. Too many women also opt out of their career before they get to senior levels.

In this context, a research by the Pearl Initiative on Women's careers in the GCC countries (*Imelda, D., et.al, 2015*) analyzed data from 600 senior women across the GCC region including Qatar. This research puts the problem in perspective. The report states that only 45% women find it feasible to achieve a positive work/life balance and combine a high-power career with a family. Even though three quarters of respondents in this research feel that their families are supportive of their education and career, they are still hampered by traditional family structures and lack of women role models and there is little evidence to suggest that social attitudes are changing. 76% of respondents believe that within the workplace the most important direct influence on women's careers are their male colleagues mostly who are their line managers. Hence, men tend to ignore the problem and if not solved now will be a bigger problem to solve as women have a higher graduation rate than men in the country and hence will form the major workforce of the future.

The Qatar National vision 2030 (*QSDP, 2008*) that supports the participative nature of both men and women in the Human Capital Development is one big reason for the authorities to view the problem of career progression of women. The lesser graduation rate of men will also mean that those who lead organizations currently and, in the future, will perhaps lack the right credentials (educational qualifications and certifications) to run such organizations.

Nearly 80% of the respondents in the above Peal Initiative survey feel that simply being a woman puts them at a disadvantage at work, and this was even more profound in countries such as Bahrain and the UAE (*Imelda, D., et.al, 2015*). As a result of this situation, many women opt out by taking career breaks, while others opt out by starting their own businesses or becoming self-employed, where they can have more control about their career progression.

Qatar's leadership vision of a transformed society by the year 2030, (*QSDP, 2008*) has been the first step in the right direction to drive the thought process for a better future for women's career progression (*Scott-Jackson, 2015*) and has had a positive impact in favour of the women workforce in that it has made the men and women to mutually realize that achieving equality at work and abolishing negative influences such as the glass ceiling are good for the society.

The literature can be perceived to be inadequate in the context of Qatar. Certain critical areas that may need further research to ensure a comprehensive take on the effects of the Glass Ceiling in relation to Qatar are required and to a certain extent addressed in this research. For example, there was little mention of gender-related barriers that women face which prevents them from developing interpersonal relationships and get adequate career guidance at work, also called mentoring. Further it is felt that there is no research available on how almost non existence of cross gender mentoring

relationships in Qatari context seriously affect women's careers and further increases the Glass Ceiling. Cultural norms affect interaction across genders and make networking with potential male sponsors, especially challenging for women in the gender segregated societies of the Middle East (*Tlaiss, H., 2014*).

Even in Western societies formalized mentoring programs tend to match gender in same-sex pairs (*Ibarra, H., Carter, N. & Silva, C., 2010*). This poses a challenge, because a metaanalysis of mentoring found that male mentors report providing more career development mentoring than female mentors (*Bano, S., & Fatima, K., 2016*). Additionally, male mentors usually rank higher than female mentors so young women often end up with lower-ranking and less powerful sponsors. Further, in the context of Qatar's patriarchal society, men may fear that the relationship may be perceived as improper and similarly women may not reach out to potential mentors given these workplace taboos. Women themselves may not mentor other women and men due to the lack of professional mentorship culture in the Qatari context (*Ottsen, C.L., 2019*).

2.2. Engagement and Satisfaction as indicators of the Glass Ceiling

Work engagement and work satisfaction (*Bakker, A.B. & Leiter, M.P, 2010*) is one area of popular thought in the investigation of the Glass Ceiling and its effects. This has been made possible through the field of positive psychology (*Seligman, M., & Csikszentmihalyi, M., 2014*) and in many cases has led to better understanding of work-related well-being (*Albrecht, S.L., 2010; Bakker, A. & Leiter, M.P., 2010*) among practitioners and researchers.

The existence of the Glass Ceiling leads to less engagement with the work and hence can cause negative impacts to the performance of the organization (*Akkermans, J., et al., 2015*) as a whole. Global competition, high paced innovation, new communication technologies (*Derks, D., et al., 2015*), new career aspects and unpredictable changes in the labour market reaffirm the importance of employees being completely engaged in work (*Shimazu, A., et al., 2015; Timms, C., et al., 2015*). Although there are vast amounts of research work reporting on work engagement, very little deals with its implications on a women's career especially the relationship between Glass Ceiling and Engagement.

A Study conducted on working-women in Kuwait (*Al Salem, A., & Speece, M., 2017*) found that women who perceive inequality feel that their male colleagues with the same skills and experience are more likely to be promoted, and this often reduces the women's motivation to accomplish much at work. The one about husbands or family not appreciating work obligations often related to cases where women might need to work late or travel for their jobs.

Job satisfaction, a well-researched construct of numerous studies, has the glory of being part of many classic theories in management such as two-factor theory (*Herzberg, F.I., 1966*), equity theory (*Adams, J.S., 1963*), and social influence theory (*Salancik,G.R., & Pfeffer, J., 1978*). Being a well-researched area, studies in job satisfaction have also dealt with women's viewpoint on job satisfaction as compared to men's (*Furnham, A., 2012; Bender, K.A., et al, 2005*). Despite the fact that women's expectations from their jobs, socialization behavior and value perception about the job have been found to be different from that of men (*Furnham, A., 2012; Bender, K.A., et al, 2005*), there have been few studies that connect glass ceiling beliefs to job satisfaction.

Although there is now increased participation of women in the workforce, their underrepresentation in higher posts is an unresolved problem for social sciences and women's studies (*Eagly, A.H., & Carli L.L, 2008; Powell, G.N., & Graves, L.M., 2003*) to resolve. Given that abrupt changes in business environment – both internal and external – determine the importance of work engagement for an employee (*Akkermans, J., et al., 2015; Derks, D., et al., 2015; Timms C., et al., 2015*) and job satisfaction has become an essential consideration for organizations (*Pacheco, G., & Webber, D., 2016*), a study of women's views on such aspects would provide more insights into the areas that need to be reformed for their empowerment and to shatter the glass ceiling.

Hence, in addition to the already carried out research, this research looks at the glass ceiling from a psychological viewpoint, i.e., glass ceiling beliefs and important career aspects – work engagement and job satisfaction.

This study can be compared to a similar recent study (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018, 2018*) done in India wherein cross-sectional data have been collected from women employees in the banking sector in India. India is passing through a demographic transition, with a bulge in the working age group, which may encourage more women to enter the work force because of the decline in family size (*Kumar, 2014*). Moreover, India is a rapidly developing country and different institutions are working for the greater empowerment of women (*Mishra, S.M., et al., 2015*). The service sector contributes almost half of female employment participation all over the world, of which banking provides more opportunities for women, since it values more feminine attributes such as teamwork, caring, serving and communication. Data were collected from different public, private and foreign banks across the country and these statistics apply to India as well. (*Bezbaruah, S., 2015*). In this work, the authors show the direct and indirect relationships between glass ceiling beliefs and job satisfaction through work engagement.

The research helped to prove that optimistic beliefs, denial and resilience show a significant positive relationship with work engagement. Denial of the existence of a glass ceiling reduces tension in women and, indirectly or unknowingly, makes them optimistic. With respect to resilience, the day to day level of resilience can be positively related to

the work engagement through greater vigour. These beliefs allow women to be optimistic, expect good things to happen to them, and experience high levels of work engagement. Optimism is known to be associated with physical and psychological states of wellbeing whereas pessimism provides negative outcomes.

The research (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*) also investigated the phenomenon on men and found that men find it easier to rise in their career than women, despite equal education, qualifications and skills.

In other research conducted on work engagement, Bakker et al. (*Bakker et.al, 2007*) found that job resources were positively related to work engagement. Most of the determinants of job satisfaction, such as autonomy, and feedback, come under the category of job resources.

A study among teachers (*Hoigaard, R., et al., 2012*) and a different study among nurses (*Giallonardo L.M., et al., 2010*) showed a positive relationship among work engagement and job satisfaction, and both included women as the majority of respondents.

Despite women's acknowledged disadvantages with regard to autonomy, pay, and promotion opportunities, their job satisfaction is not lower than that of men (*Furnham, A., 2012*). The reasons for this have been explored. First, the expectations of women are lower than those of men (*Bender, K.A., et al., 2005*), because they compare themselves with specific cohort career groups, such as other women, not men. Secondly, women are not as inclined as men to express discontent or rage in an open society. Third, men and women value different aspects of the job; women value intrinsic aspects such as relationships in the organization, and work conditions, whereas men value extrinsic aspects such salary prospects, career growth, and company prestige.

In middle eastern societies such as Qatar, one of the major hindrances of a woman's career progress is family responsibility including child-care and family-work conflict (*Syed, 2010*). Despite improved economic freedom, women are still highlighted as homemakers who are supposed to nurture their family members' health. It is also opined that, among working women, work-family conflict is negatively related to work engagement.

In order to improve organizational performance, management attention has started to focus on positive organizational concepts (*Cameron, K., & Dutton, J., 2003*). Denial and resilience are considered optimistic constructs in glass ceiling beliefs (*Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014*). Optimism and resilience, which are parts of the psychological capital, show strong positive relationships with job satisfaction (*Bakker & Leiter, 2010*). Researchers (*Kiaye, E., & Singh, M., 2013; Hakim, 2006*) also claim that women face more family-work conflicts than men, which in turn acts as a barrier for career development. Researchers have shown that family-work conflict is negatively related to

job satisfaction (*Buonocore & Russo, 2013; Masuda et al., 2012*) and hence career progression.

Work engagement mediates among job aspects and behavioral outcomes and provides significant outcomes (*Sulea et al., 2012; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008*). Researchers (*Yalabik, Z., et al., 2013*) have also found out that work engagement mediates the relationship between employee attitudes and outcomes, including job satisfaction.

Hence this research aims to contribute to the understanding of the relationship between glass ceiling beliefs and job satisfaction, with work engagement as a mediator to establish job satisfaction. While the study by Balasubramanian (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*) has provided empirical support for many specific links to the phenomenon of Glass Ceiling it has not established a comprehensive model for organizations to assess and establish the existence of the Glass Ceiling effect and how to proactively manage and reduce the effects of the problem.

The above research findings however, were one main reason to choose in this research, the probes of Job Satisfaction and Job Engagement as appropriate for the purpose of measuring the extent and existence of the Glass Ceiling in Qatari organizations.

The model pursued in this research has similar characteristics to what was measured by Balasubramanian (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*) that used a system called CPS (*Smith, P., et al., 2012*). The CPS used in their model assessed levels of denial (10 items), resilience (11 items), resignation (*10 items*) and acceptance (*7 items*) in glass ceiling beliefs. A seven-point Likert scale was used by the researchers with anchors 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Sample items were “Women and men have to overcome the same problems at the workplace” (*denial*), “Women have strength to overcome discrimination” (*resilience*), “Women believe they have to make too many compromises to gain highly paid positions” (*resignation*), “Motherhood is more important to most women than career development” (*acceptance*).

The purpose of the reported research was to examine glass ceiling beliefs, work engagement and job satisfaction. The Balasubramanian model (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*) has thus captured the perception of the importance of women employees as the source of information. Their study used the CPS model to examine how women’s glass ceiling beliefs are related to their job satisfaction through work engagement. More specifically, that women’s glass ceiling beliefs (denial, resilience, resignation, and acceptance) could predict job satisfaction through work engagement. In addition, they hypothesized that denial and resilience would be positively related to work engagement, and resignation and acceptance would be inversely related to work engagement. In line with the positive psychology approach (*Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi,*

2014; Bakker and Leiter, 2010), they extended the focus on work engagement to include glass ceiling beliefs and job satisfaction. They also claim that this was the first study to test the mediating role of work engagement in glass ceiling beliefs and job satisfaction. Their main hypotheses were largely supported by the data and this showed how work engagement (fully) mediates the relationship between glass ceiling beliefs and job satisfaction.

They extended previous research in this field into predictors and consequences of work engagement. Their study also reaffirmed glass ceiling beliefs as a potential predictor of work engagement.

Smith et al. (*Smith et.al, 2012*) on the other hand found little support for the relationships among denial, resilience, acceptance and work engagement whereas the Balasubramanian study (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*) showed strong support among these. Secondly, the study contributed to glass ceiling beliefs and job satisfaction in a direct model. As expected, work engagement positively relates to job satisfaction, reaffirming previous studies in this area (*Hoigaard, R., et al., 2012; Giallonardo L.M., et al., 2010*). The study also contributed to knowledge of the mediating role of glass ceiling beliefs and job satisfaction.

Although the perception of glass ceiling beliefs as a predictor of job satisfaction (*Smith, P., et al, 2012*) was already analyzed, in the Balasubramanian model (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*), the researchers have included work engagement as a mediator linking them. Their findings show that women's optimistic glass ceiling beliefs – denial and resilience – removes barriers, the women feel more engaged in work, which is, in turn, helps towards increased job satisfaction. They have also found in this study that the pessimistic glass ceiling beliefs – resignation and acceptance – related negatively to work engagement and resulted in the women being less engaged in their work, thereby providing lower levels of job satisfaction.

The study confirms that work engagement has a strong impact on job satisfaction (*Hoigaard, R. et al., 2012; Giallonardo L.M., et al., 2010*). Changes in gender or attitude impact the relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction. This can be taken as an observation tool or primary test in order to find out the attitudes of employees. The relationship between glass ceiling beliefs and work engagement is new in the literature of both the glass ceiling and work engagement. With this, women's views and their engagement with their work can be recognized. Since glass ceiling beliefs predict job satisfaction through work engagement, it adds an entirely new dimension for women's empowerment, work engagement, and job satisfaction research.

This research will hence help individuals and organizations equally to assess whether the Glass Ceiling is imminent as a roadblock in the path of career progression. For example

using tools like the Johari window (*Luft, J. & Ingham, H., 1961*) an individual can assess their beliefs that they must hold on to, and those that must be changed or eliminated in order to enhance engagement in work and job satisfaction. In a similar manner the current model of Job Satisfaction and Engagement can be used to assess the likelihood of Glass Ceiling in the future.

This study will be especially helpful for female job aspirants, so that they can assess themselves prior to choosing an appropriate job according to their beliefs; for example, those who score high on acceptance beliefs (others accepting them) could choose to work from home where acceptance is high, or to opt for flexi-time jobs and part time jobs where work engagement and job satisfaction levels will not matter and the jobs will be task oriented.

For an organization, this research can be considered as a tool to check the glass ceiling beliefs of women that would help human resource management functions such as hiring, promotion, succession planning, training and counseling. This study can be used to understand the problems women face in their work which, in turn, can help in understanding their engagement with work, job satisfaction and attitude towards the glass ceiling.

The social implications of this work have also been used to work on public policy issues. Results from this study could be used to empower women, since it shows their attitudes towards job satisfaction and the glass ceiling. If women's attitudes towards the glass ceiling can be generalized to geographic, ethnic, and professional domains, social reformers and policy makers can work in these areas to promote progress. Hence positive results can be studied and encouraged further and negative results can be suppressed through proper remedial measures and policies.

In their recommendations for further work, the authors (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*) recommend that since the potential relationship among the constructs over a period of time is unpredictable, and that because beliefs and views may change with time, longitudinal studies can be considered for better understanding. Longitudinal studies mean that before reaching any conclusion on one particular situation multiple surveys at multiple times of the year and perhaps conducted over multiple years should be used to corroborate the results.

Secondly, the authors (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*) have used a self-reporting style which may be associated with problems of social desirability. However, the data was collected anonymously, and study participants were assured of confidentiality. Future work may have to make use of a 360-degree approach for surveying – including supervisors, colleagues, subordinates and other stake holders, or any of these stakeholders. Multiple views can be compared to avoid error.

Thirdly, the authors (*Balasubramanian, S., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018)* having pursued a new area of research, found a lot of limitations with respect to respondent groups, the work area, industry, and different career aspects considered in the study. Hence, future researchers have been advised the larger scope of studying different target groups, such as entrepreneurs, social workers, and employees of different organizations. Future work may also consider different industries that treat women differently, such as nursing, and underrepresented areas, such as defense.

The study considered only two important career aspects – work engagement and job satisfaction. Future work may take more career aspects into consideration in order to provide more insights in the area of Glass Ceiling.

Using this study, this research has selected the eleven probes for job satisfaction and job engagement as given in the methodology section namely: energy level to work; career development plan; commitment to overall wellbeing; fulfilment of Career Objectives; challenges to move up in the organizational ladder; employee endorsement for others to join the same organization; employer image building – employer of choice; reasons if any for career being held back; opportunities for progress in career; initiatives currently under way to correct career path for employees; channels for feedback.

2.3. Why should we solve the problem of women's lack of career progression?

As per the study conducted on women in the academic profession in Europe (*Doherty, L., & Manfredi, S., 2010*), it was found that the movement from gender inequality to equality has several issues that are not all related to how men should accommodate women at work but rather what happens in terms of culture and society that helps build a smooth transition of the society to create gender neutrality in work places and most importantly at all levels in the workplaces. A framework to assess the maturity level of such gender neutrality (*Doherty, L., & Manfredi, S., 2010*) as the society achieves step by step progression formed a useful guidance tool to move from inequality to equality in a smooth manner. Hence any society like that of Qatar has to adopt either a policy based scientific approach to force organizations to move into gender neutral work environments or there has to be the effect of creating societal changes by training the mindset gradually of both genders to accept each other as equal at work. At the end of the process we transform into what adds value to the way we work and perform.

Needless to say, that establishing gender neutrality at work places can be advantageous for organizations and nations and if Qatar as a nation can compare itself to near and far regions it will only help establish the baseline and how it can solve the issues going forward. This will then help establish the baseline of where Qatar stands in respect to the Glass Ceiling and whether it is external factors that cause women's lack of career

progression or is it their own self-inflicted causes that are more dominant in causing the lack of progress.

While it is complex to define a direct relationship between the lack of career progression in women and the organizations' performance, it is still crucial to achieve greater gender equality in the workplace and in the society as a whole for two important reasons (*Northouse, P.G., 2013*). Firstly, the equal opportunities for everyone to be in leadership roles will provide a diverse pool of talents and hence greater organizational success will be gained. Different people have different types of knowledge and other intellectual capital, which are referred to as knowledge stocks (*Morris, S., et.al, 2005*). If these knowledge stocks can be effectively managed, combined and renewed, they will generate the sustainable competitive advantage for the organizations (*Morris, S., et al., 2005*). Secondly, findings from a great amount of research (*Bosco, S., et.al, 2009; Forsyth, 2010; Nielsen & Huse, 2010; Woolley et.al, 2010*) reveal that women participating in the leadership roles will help make organizations more representative, ethical, productive, innovative and financially successful. Researchers (*Cooper et.al, 2001*) stress that the involvement of women from the grass roots to the senior management level should be both the short term and long-term objectives of organizations. The recognition of the differences (if any) in the leadership styles among male and female leaders and its impact on the organizations' performance is the premises on which the perception of current Qatari corporate leaders should change.

While the above review focuses more on differences in leadership style and its subsequent impact, studies have also found differences attributed to diversity depending on the nature of the task or job profile. For example, a study of gender-diverse and same-gender groups performing a radio assembly task revealed no performance differences between the two groups (*Myaskovsky, L., et.al, 2005*). In this case, the nature of the task (i.e. simple and mostly physical) may be a relevant factor in the research of the latter whereas a more cognitive task might yield different results.

In one of the more revealing studies that analyzed this idea, (*Bowers, R., et.al, 2006*) reviewed data from 13 studies involving a total of 2,258 people. The types of diversity included gender, personality and ability. Measures of performance included some combination of the quality, quantity and accuracy of teamwork. He concluded that although none of these types of diversity appeared to have significant direct effects on team performance, when the task to be performed was rated as highly difficult (complex), significant performance advantages occurred for the diverse groups compared to the homogeneous groups.

The work reveals insight into yet another aspect worth consideration. They examined the relationship between employee perceptions of diversity among managers and non-managers and perceptions of firm performance. Based on their analysis they report strong

support for a positive relationship between perceptions of diversity and perceived performance. A practical implication that they draw from the study is that: “Organizations need to be sure they focus on initiatives that have a positive influence on employee perceptions of diversity within the ranks of senior managers and among non-managers” (*Allen, R., et al., 2008*).

This study suggests that organizational interventions that affect employee attitudes toward diversity may also affect – or at least be related to – attitudes towards firm performance. Although the value of this work is limited by a reliance on perceptual measures, what employees believe about their employers is certainly a determinant of employee behavior. Consequently, the management of perceptions is worthy of constant attention by organizational leaders.

Having said that there are also studies that divide the impact of gender neutrality into three outcomes: one favours men, one favours women, and the last considers two genders the same. There has been a long-held belief that leadership effectiveness equates with masculinity and being male *(Eagly, A.H. & Karau, S.J., 1995*). The research (*Javadian, G., & Singh, R.P., 2012*) focuses on leadership effectiveness as perceived by their male and female followers provides the evidence that both male and female followers prefer a male leader.

Researchers (*Heilman, M., 2012*) argue that “women were found to be lesser desirable candidates for management positions” because their competencies were believed to be lower than those of men. In order to become an effective manager or leader, one should have competence, independence, and rationality. Those traits are often believed to be possessed by men. Nevertheless, researchers (*Bass, B.M., & Avolio, B.J., 1994*) carried out a survey of followers that rated women and men leaders on leaders’ characteristics that produced a contradictory result. Female leaders were rated higher than males on the characteristics that are vital for an organization’s growth and flexibility. Women leaders tend to have more idealized, inspirational influence, and intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration than their male counterparts. Subordinates also felt more satisfied with female leaders and viewed them as more effective. There might be three explanations for the results including male chauvinism, lower expectations by followers on female than male leaders and “tendencies of women to be more nurturing, interested in others and more socially sensitive” (*Bass, B.M., & Avolio, B.J., 1994*). A report (*Carnes, W.J., & Kelley, R., 2011*) shows that women outrank men in seven out of eight leadership traits. Both (*Adams, B., & Funk, 2011*) point out that financial firms are dominated by men, which might be the reason for the poor performance of banks in the light of the most recent financial crisis. UK Labour Party’s deputy leader – Harman even accused male domination as being the cause of the financial crisis (*Adams, B., & Funk, 2011*). The last school of thought referred to in this research supports that men and women are equally effective leaders. (*Eagly, A.H., & Karau, S.J., 1995*) conclude that gender does not have

an influence on an organization's success. Male and female leaders are effective in different settings. For example, women's leadership styles might be more suitable in educational, government or social service settings while men's styles might be more appropriate in military settings (*Eagly, A.H., & Karau, S.J., 1995*).

McKinsey and company have been investigating the relationship between gender diversity and organizational performance for several years. Mckinsey's 2015 report *Diversity Matters*, (*Hunt, V., & Layton, D., 2015*) examined proprietary data sets for 366 public companies across a range of industries in Canada, Latin America, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The research looked at metrics such as financial results and the composition of top management and boards. The findings were that companies in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity are 35 percent more likely to have financial returns above their respective national industry medians. Companies in the top quartile for gender diversity are 15 percent more likely to have financial returns above their respective national industry medians.

Education enables women to participate in the public sphere and contribute to the growth in Middle East economies. In the UAE, there is now support from the very highest level for the UAE women to gain qualifications through education that will lead to positions of influence. His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, founder of the country said "*Nothing could delight me more than to see the woman taking up her distinctive position in the society. Nothing should hinder her progress, Like men, women deserve the right to occupy high positions according to their capabilities and qualifications" (Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai's speech extracted from Kemp, L., Madsen, S.R., & El-Said, M., 2013)"*

Now that the UAE has more educated females, career choices have increased as well. Although in a small number, Emirati women are now represented in the forces, military and police, and across the professions. Interestingly, because of the cultural requirement that only women can treat women, in science and medicine there are probably more female doctors than the global average. HH Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak noted in a speech (*extracted from Kemp, L., Madsen, S.R., & El-Said, M., 2013*), that women now play a number of important roles, e.g. judges, UAE Cabinet ministers, Federal National Council member, diplomats and ambassadors. Her Highness also noted that "*females occupy 66% of public posts, 30% of them being top decision-making positions, Over one third of the workforce in banking and financial services is made up f Emirati women.*

Although the banking and financial services are quoted as having 33 percent females, it has not yet been verified how many females are in senior management in that sector.

Another sign of progress is that, according to HH Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, the UAE has also "passed numerous laws that ensure the constitutional rights for women" including their right to education, to work, and to manage businesses.

Although women have made gains in the UAE workforce, there continue to be many cultural and traditional barriers to their future progress. *Aguirre et al. (Kemp, L., Madsen, S.R., & El-Said, M., 2013*) argued that the UAE women have to constantly proves themselves in an organizational culture dominated by men.

One barrier to females in business is stated by many authors (*Al-Jenaibi, B., 2012; Elamin, A.M., & Omair, K., 2010; Tlaiss, H., & Kauser, S., 2010*) as being the traditional attitudes against working females. Cultural traditions may hinder independence for women through protectionism. (e.g. family restrictions on traveling alone). That societal barrier is somewhat supported by a religious background, as that is an important influence on cultural norms in the Middle East. Beliefs about cultural and religious norms, whether true or not.

A number of barriers preventing women obtaining leadership positions are noted in the literature. For example, a current deficiency of women in senior management roles means that there is lack of role models for emerging women managers and leadership, and it also reemphasizes leadership and management as masculine roles (*Aguirre et al., 2011*) Comparisons between the genders in business are obviously a healthy aspect of literature (*Al Jenaibi, B., 2012; Read, J.G., & Oselin, S. 2008; Yaseen, Z., 2010*), but sadly with samples of 22 countries, in 2001 the Gallup Organization found people still had a preference for a male boss (*Simmons, W.W., 2001)*. Using the Schein Descriptive Index (*Schein, V.E., 1975*) to investigate managerial sex-role stereotyping, it was found that in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (*Mermenout, K., 2009*), women and men had a similar stereotyped view of management characteristics to those in the Western nations. In the UAE, Mostafa (*Mostafa, M.M., 2005*), using the "multidimensional aversion to women who work scale" found that men held less positive attitudes to women managers that did females. It is important to note, however, that there is a "growing conviction in the research community that there are more useful and valid research tasks that trying to identify inherently male or female approaches to leadership" *(Barrett, M. and Moores, K., 2009*).

Companies in the bottom quartile both for gender and for ethnicity and race are statistically less likely to achieve above-average financial returns than the average companies in the data set (that is, bottom-quartile companies are lagging rather than merely not leading).

This Mckinsey study (*Hunt, V., & Layton, D., 2015)* referred above also shows that in the United States, there is a linear relationship between racial and ethnic diversity and better

financial performance: for every 10 percent increase in racial and ethnic diversity on the senior-executive team, earnings before interest and taxes (*EBIT*) rise 0.8 percent. Racial and ethnic diversity has a stronger impact on financial performance in the United States than gender diversity, perhaps because earlier efforts to increase women's representation in the top levels of business have already yielded positive results. In the United Kingdom, greater gender diversity on the senior-executive team corresponded to the highest performance uplift in the data set: for every 10 percent increase in gender diversity, EBIT rose by 3.5 percent. While certain industries perform better on gender diversity and other industries on ethnic and racial diversity, no industry or company is in the top quartile on both dimensions.

The unequal performance of companies in the same industry and the same country implies that diversity is a competitive differentiator shifting market share toward more diverse companies.

As the focus of this research is on studying whether the "Glass Ceiling" effect or the self-inflicted lack of enthusiasm amongst women to move up in their careers is causing the lack of gender diversity in higher levels of Qatari organizations, findings from an earlier McKinsey study on effects of gender diversity in top leadership is also relevant. The study conducted between 2008 and 2010, concluded that companies with more diverse top teams were also top financial performers. The study looked at the executive board composition, returns on equity (*ROE*), and margins on earnings before interest and taxes (*EBIT*) of 180 publicly traded companies in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States. It focused on two groups that could be measured objectively from company data: women and foreign nationals on senior teams (the latter being a proxy for cultural diversity).

The findings were consistent: for companies ranking in the top quartile of executive-board diversity, ROEs were 53 percent higher, on average, than it was for those in the bottom quartile. At the same time, EBIT margins at the most diverse companies were 14 percent higher, on average, than those of the least diverse companies. The results were similar across all but one of the countries studied; an exception was ROE performance in France; but even there, EBIT was 50 percent higher for diverse companies.

This overall review of the above discussed literature points to several considerations: It is important to examine different dimensions of diversity not only gender but also ethnicity, age e.tc which seem to have a different degree of impact on performance, depending on the specific situational conditions (e.g. nature of the task at hand); diversity's positive effects can be tapped by providing supportive processes, i.e. measures of diversity management; both the factual degree of diversity and the subjectively perceived diversity seem to influence performance, so both deserve attention. It is also clear that diversity including gender diversity does give a competitive edge and is a differentiator in terms of

performance especially in today's knowledge-based economies that depend more on cognitive tasks.

Hence from the above literature we can conclude that breaking the social evils and bringing in gender diversity in the workplace not only increases the satisfaction of the male and female employees but also benefits organizations by increasing productivity and the return on investment.

However, in order to achieve this task in Qatar we must define and understand the nature of the problem whether it is the glass ceiling or the self-inflicted lack of enthusiasm amongst women in Qatar, which is the next part of the literature review.

The literature has presented multiple theories to explain the occurrence of the Glass Ceiling, however there are still nuanced contextual and geographic factors that are diverse, growing in intensity but remain unaccounted for due to lack of research on these specific aspects, example the influence of mass media and communication on women's aspirations, young women may have different & higher aspirations given this influence and might not resign easily to the Glass Ceiling.

As most organizations (both public & private) have been historically steered by male leadership in Qatar, the literature dwells on gender bias however there is less attention paid to the fact that organizations traditionally led by male leadership are often ignorant of gender discrimination and the inherent unconscious bias that is talked of in the literature. The lack of understanding of the gravity of this issue on the future of the workforce manifests in little or no effort to challenge gender biased organizational policies and practices that might reinforce gender inequalities.

2.4. Nature of the problem of women's careers in Qatar:

Having understood the necessity to solve the problem of the Glass Ceiling and bring in gender equality through all the rungs of an organizational ladder, let us now examine the nature of the problem in Qatar. The problem can be of two types that is caused by external influences of the majority on a minority i.e. males on females and those that are caused by self-infliction by the minority i.e. females themselves.

For example, in the case of Qatar it could be argued that influences by male employees such as stereotyping, male friendly policies and less exposure of females to leadership roles is a general phenomenon that can be blamed towards lack of career progression amongst women.

These statements are already proven from the study conducted on women in senior roles by the Pearl Initiative (Imelda D., Schreiber C., El Attar M., 2015)) in the GCC countries including Qatar. The study gives insights into the gender bias women face in the corporate

environment and how they react to it sometimes accepting the bias and self-inflicting the Glass Ceiling on themselves.

Only 27% of the study respondents agreed that the leadership in their own organization is committed to having women in senior roles, and 48% believed to have suffered from conscious and 62% from unconscious gender bias at work. The more years a woman has been working, the more strongly she is likely to feel this, which may reflect either in a greater awareness borne of experience or increasing levels of bias as women move into senior roles. Around 40% believed there is conscious bias in most organizations in their market, but as many as 71% believe there is unconscious prejudice. Businesses from the GCC are more likely to exhibit conscious bias than multinationals, which is a measure of how much progress needs to be made in changing attitudes. It is not surprising, likewise, that non-GCC nationals report more examples of unconscious bias than GCC national women (*75% against 62%*).

The above discussion interestingly points out to a phenomenon called “unconscious bias” wherein gender stereotyping becomes so engrained in organizational culture that unconsciously it is perpetuated in varied forms.

Literature on these subjects asserts that people’s perceptions and behavior are filtered through gender stereotypes, despite personal beliefs and commitment to egalitarianism. This includes reliance on gender schemas that designate women as oriented towards family and men towards their careers. They attribute women’s success to external factors such as luck, help from others or special circumstances, whereas men’s success is attributed to internal factors such as skills and ability. Gender stereotypes and biases are particularly pertinent in traditionally male-dominated environments such as managerial and professional ranks of large corporations or hierarchical organizations. Research supports the idea that stereotypes and biases are more likely to be activated when decision-making is informal, non-transparent and subjective (*Liff, S. & Ward, K., 2001)*.

Cultural stereotyping and inadequate self-perception also hamper women’s career advancement. Gender biased legislation, as well as limited access to finance and networking can act as disincentives for women to enter or exit the labour market and to pursue careers.

Another factor for the development of gender bias could be the English language itself, which is becoming more prevalent in the private sector in Qatar. Women find English Language as a major barrier in being promoted to higher positions especially within the private sector. The rising influence of English Language has to be seen in the context of globalization of Qatar and how it has influenced the Qatari culture and job market. Globalization has made English the most popular foreign language spoken in Qatar. It is the second most commonly used language of the country. Qatar being a former British

colony, English was spoken for official purposes during British control. It is widely accepted and spoken throughout Qatar even though it is not the country's official language. Secondary schools in Qatar have introduced English in their curriculum however, it had gained more distinction and stature in the business and corporate community of Qatar.

While Globalization has made the English Language a new career progress barrier for women in Qatar and the Middle East, Abdul Razak (*Abdul Razak, M., 2011*) confirmed that, in Arab societies, globalization has provided a positive impact on women's rights with regard to equal wage, career opportunities and career path.

A case study that investigated Arabic women and English Language Learning elaborates that there is both personal as well as professional rationale for Arabic women learning English Language. The Arabic women student participants in this study provided stories to express their personal rationale for studying English in the United States, and some of these stories changed over time. For example, some of the Arabic women students said that at the beginning of their English language study they only wanted to communicate and be able to use public transportation without the help of their husbands; later they wanted English language proficiency to be able to teach their children in English so the children could attend international schools in their home countries. Al-Essa (*Al-Essa, A.F., 2003*) stated that increasing numbers of Saudi parents have recognized the importance of the English language for their children, and face pressures due to their children's weakness in English. Some of the Arabic women wanted to be able to travel around the world and interact with people from other cultures and improve the ability to communicate, and be independent. In addition to personal rationales for studying English all the Arabic women students expressed professional rationales, such as earning a master's degree in linguistically diverse education; working at ARAMCO, an oil company located in Saudi Arabia; finding a good job and complying with a condition for a scholarship. Regardless of the professional rationales expressed through their stories, the Arabic women were highly motivated. (*Alkarni, R., 2012*)

Another study (*Rousseau, R., 2014*) that explored gender differences in foreign language acquisition in Qatar cites that there are different motivational factors that fuel the adult male and female language learners' desire to acquire English in Qatar. For men, the motivational drive pointed more towards the monetary value that would include a promotion at work, more money and lastly the possibility of entrance to a foreign university or to communicate effectively when travelling overseas. Women were more motivated to study English for professional as well as personal communication needs, like being able to converse with a child's school teacher, or officials at a bank or an airport.

As one male lecturer of English reported (*Rousseau, R., 2014*), "In this particular country (Qatar), they have the excellent example set to them by Sheikha Moza, (consort of the

Father Emir) who speaks English, is well educated, and who is not shy to go after her ambitions" The influence of the lecturers' personalities, teaching methods and cultural differences on the learners' personalities, and therefore, their motivation towards acquiring English, could also not be underestimated, as this could lead to de-motivation towards language acquisition.

The study concluded that women were considerably more motivated to acquire English than their male counterparts. This included motivation towards communicating with others, their desire to acquire a language, as well as attitudes towards the course material, learning in general, and towards the lecturer. The female learners, although all adults and responsible for their own actions, were also motivated by their families to continue acquiring proficiency in English.

Recently, in the state of Qatar, the situation of women has improved as compared to earlier years. The percentage of fulltime housewives decreased from 69.2% at the end of 2007 to 55% at the end of 2009 (*Jacobsen, M. 2010*). Moreover, the number of women as a percentage of the adult labour force in Qatar increased from 4% in 1970 to 12% in 1995 to 58.5% in 2018.

As a Qatari woman the researcher herself believes that because of the increased participation of women in education and the workforce, the social status of women, in general, has improved and has begun to move away from the more historically traditional roles, i.e. that the place of women is in the household only. With more women joining the labour force and the labour force in itself being increasingly globalized, English language has become almost a necessity especially for women who aim to progress in their careers and aspire to become senior leaders in global companies operating in Qatar.

The above discussion has put forth the barriers for women who aspire to senior leadership roles in the Qatari context. The challenges faced by Qatari women are similar in many respects to other women in many parts of the world and in particular Arab women. However, while this discussion emphasizes on "sameness" of the challenges faced it simultaneously investigates the "differences". As in a globalized world it is imperative to acknowledge local customs and practice within the Middle East and specifically within Qatar maintain strong commitment to Islamic cultural values.

Women's groups, governments and organizations advocate the interface between the Islamic and universal construction of human rights and stress the family as a foundation of an Islamic state (*UNIFEM, 2004; Badran, M., 2005*) and argued by the author (*Torraco, R.J., 2004*) different cultural and political contexts requires us to rethink the challenges and choices for how we frame and research women and human resource development in the global economy. The implication is that Western or global experiences and knowledge of leadership may not provide the most appropriate model with which to

improve women's economic role in the Arab region (*Rees, C.J., et.al., 2006*) as also stated in previous documents of this research. Ethical and critical organization scholars have noted that leadership development is inextricably linked with notions of rights, status and broader community development (*Al Dabbagh, M., 2008*). In this respect it should be highlighted, that Arabic heritage and political constitutional frameworks provide a moral environment that values the contribution of men and women and serves as an alternative model to that one advocated by western political systems and values. In valuing local knowledge, and responding to the global, regions can devise leadership systems for themselves.

The research on Globalization and the effect on women's Glass Ceiling beliefs (*Marinakou, E. 2015*) also reviews the position of women in the GCC by situating their experience within the framework and rhetoric of globalization in order to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the diverse institutional and cultural mechanisms that influence gender dynamics in the region. The overarching questions - How do the ways the GCC responds to the demands of globalization impact the position of women in its workplaces? And, more generally, what are the dynamics of the interaction between women, globalization, states and societies in the Gulf region and what are the outcomes of these diverse forms of interaction?

Globalization can be defined as "a complex economic, political, cultural, and geographic process in which the mobility of capital, organizations, ideas, discourses, and peoples has taken a global or transnational form (*Moghadam, V.M., 2004*).

Globalization consists of social, economic and political adjustments that people may embrace to epitomize their culture and incorporate it with the world. It is a concept that has its economic, social and political roots and consequences.

The Arab world is diverse economically, socially, historically and politically. Yet Arab people are linked in a variety of ways. The great majority are linked by common language (*Arabic*), religion (Islam) and cultural identity and heritage (*Kemp, L., Madsen, S. & El-Said, M., 2013*).

Globalization processes and economic opportunities remain uneven, between countries, within countries and between individuals (*UNIFEM, 2004*). The region continues to face social transformations, demographic shifts, economic waves of affluence as well as civil strife (*Ali, A.J., 1999; Noland, M., & Pack, H., 2004; Norris P., & Ingleheart, R., 2002*). Consistent with the contradictory nature of globalization the impact on women has been mixed (*Walby, S., 2005*). One feature of economic globalization has been the generation of jobs in export processing, free trade zones and world market factories as well as ecommerce and finance, especially in oil/gas-rich economies such as Bahrain, UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Labour market policies such as Qatarization, Emiritarization, Omanization, Bahrainization and Saudiazation have also created job opportunities in public administration for women (*Moghadam, V.M., 2005*). Important factors limiting women's progression are the recruitment and HR practices of private sector organizations in the Arab region. There is reluctance by private sector institutions to employ women partly due to social norms and partly due to additional costs that may be incurred for maternity provisions (*Wirth, L., 2001*). It should be noted, however, that women themselves prefer to work for public agencies since the working conditions and benefits are often more favourable (*Wirth, L., 2001*).

Qatar should also take impetus from many Middle Eastern states that have made significant efforts in improving institutional frameworks that can tackle inequalities (*Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies, 2004*). Following the Beijing conference which called for countries to develop National Action Plans (NAP) for women, the majority of ME states have established independent women's ministries or sections to ensure that women's issues are included in public policy planning and development. These bodies advocate the empowerment of women in a range of areas including economic empowerment, social empowerment, legal rights awareness, capacity building for women as well as working to incorporate gender mainstreaming principles in all aspects of public administration and policy planning. An objective of these units is also to start the process of data collection on women's work and status in their regions in order that they benchmark progress and can prepare gender-sensitive development plans (*Dalia, B., & Amna, S., 2014*).

Further, the importance of the Arab region to the world economy and the requirement of Arab societies to expand into new markets have made women's empowerment important development policy agendas.

State's policies to enhance female educational opportunities can partly be attributed to pressures of globalization and creating an educated workforce.

The positive relationship between women's education and nonagricultural employment is marked throughout the Middle East. Census data reveal that each increase in the level of education is reflected in a corresponding increase in the level of women's nonagricultural employment and a decrease in fertility. Education seems to increase the aspirations of women in certain sectors of society for higher income and better standards of living. Moreover, it has weakened the restrictive barriers of traditions and increased the propensity of women to join the labor force and public life. These social changes have had a positive effect in reducing traditional sex segregation and female seclusion and in producing a generation of middle-class women who have achieved economic independence and no longer depend on family or marriage for survival and status (*Moghadam V.M., 2005*)

On the other side, according to authors (*Bahry L., & Marr, P., 2005*), Qataris today expect unmarried women who have finished high school or university to work. Some women work to help their families cope with the rising cost of living and some prefer working to the boredom of staying at home. Some also "want to make use of the knowledge they have gained to 'prove themselves' and to be useful members of society" (*Bahry L., & Marr, P., 2005*). It is believed from this study that local attitudes are changing not because of a self-motivated cultural shift or government led efforts or public policies but the presence of large numbers of female foreign workers from different cultures and from the influence of the internet, television and other international communications media. These experiences expose Qataris especially Qatari women to cultures where it is commonplace for women to work side-by-side with men and to compete equally for career advancement (*Bahry L., & Marr, P., 2005*).

Is this situation unique to Qatar only? Women in the MENA region face similar barriers as other women in the world to reach top positions in business and management. One of the key challenges is that women face the double burden of work and family care responsibilities. Research in the GCC countries indicated that women considered balancing work and family/life as the single most important obstacle to their career aspirations.

Hence inferring from the above studies and statements by experts in the region the situation in Qatar can be modeled to one of the Arab region where women have taken the brunt of the male dominance in work places and hence are experiencing problems in moving up the organizational ladder.

To prove this further, and in hindsight as a Qatari women working in a public shareholding Qatari company, the studies that have researched Qatari women in the workforce are extremely scarce. This points to the fact that increase in awareness required amongst Qatari females to actively participate, remain and progress to senior roles in the workforce is a must for the future of the nation.

The closest to highlighting this problem is 1997, when the government adopted a Qatarization policy aimed at increasing the percentage of Qatari citizens in the workforce. The government's goal was that at least 20 percent of employees in all sectors should be Qataris. To neutralize the loss of public-sector benefits to Qataris employed in the private sector, all Qataris were made eligible for social benefits regardless of where they are employed. The policy does not differentiate employees in terms of gender so both public and private employers have been motivated by the Qatarization policy to hire women as well as men in order to meet Qatarization goals. This has opened and expanded employment opportunities for Qatari women. The legislative framework for women's participation and advancement in the workforce is also much advanced in Qatar as compared to some other countries in the region (*Felder et.al, 2008*). However, the other

barriers still remain like social expectations concerning appropriate work for Qatari women and the relatively high average Qatari wage demands to meet the Qatari lifestyle. This makes it unlikely that Qatari women will be attracted to low paying labor-intensive jobs. They will likely need a high level of skill to participate in the work force at higher levels (*Sikdar, A., & Mitra, S., 2012*) (*Bahry L., & Marr, P., 2005*).

Hence based on the regional study and that of Qatar, it can be said that Qatari women employment mirrors the societies of the middle east wherein perhaps male stereotype and the lack of leadership opportunities can drive down the enthusiasm amongst women to move up the ladder and not fulfill their career objectives.

The leadership of the country is trying to rectify the situation but has not taken any practical steps to curb the effect especially in balancing the gender at all levels in Qatari organizations. They have only been successful in forcing public sector organizations to maintain the ratio of nationals to expatriates at a fixed number. It is required that the government can control the problems facing Qatari women employees by educating and transforming the culture so that women can accept all types of roles and not only the ones that are high paying.

There is a certain amount of self-inflicted glass ceiling from the female employees as is seen in the case of other middle-eastern countries and that is mainly due to a combination of the fear of moving up and the adoption of the social norms that working in higher positions is not meant to be for women.

2.5. Can gender inequality be self-inflicted?

Gender equality does contribute to greater organizational performance. However, if it is left to individuals to establish equality, it can be ignored and can lead over a period of time to a self-inflicted workplace practice (*Booth, A., et.al., 1998*) and this is suspected to be happening in Qatar. Women are retiring early without any specific reason or leaving work to start their own business because they don't derive the financial benefits from work that support their lifestyle, or they are not getting the satisfaction of working and running a family at the same time. This self-inflicted inequality by Qatari women can be related to similar situations in other parts of the world.

The study of working women in Kuwait by (*Al Salem, A., & Speece, M., 2017*) agree that one of the most productive areas of research on opportunity for women in management in Kuwait (and more broadly in the Middle East) appears to be through incorporating a social capital perspective.

Although study of social capital has been “established as a real academic subject, it seems that local variations of "wasta" (private connections) are left unobserved, failing to be looked at in a more systematic way” (*Kropf, A., & Newbury-Smith, T.C., 2015*). Further, the emerging field of studies on social capital have ample room to look at issues relevant to women.

Most researchers (*Bell, M.P., et al., 2002; Insch,G., et al., 2008*), recognize the smaller number of female executives in comparison with that of male executives in all the fields throughout the world despite the increasing number of females in the workforce and in managerial positions (*Powell, G.N., & Grave, L.M., 2003*) and (*Bell, M.P., et al, 2002*) that “the higher the post, the fewer the women”. A lot of them recognize that the phenomenon is a combination of what is caused by external influences and self-infliction.

Hence what drives us to reflect on what is the common strand that runs throughout the world in keeping the negative growth of women through the career ladder intact regardless of the country we are in? We see that similarities exist consistently regardless of geographic location. Yet what might be more surprising (*and tends to come up less often in conversations with women leaders*) is that from our early years, we subconsciously learn the unchallenged gender norms and rules of the societies we grow up in. Leaders do not recognize how dramatically what we learn in our early years shapes our educational path and impacts our beliefs and behaviors as we enter adulthood and the workplace. We also find that many companies’ beliefs and systems have not evolved much from legacy 19th and 20th century thinking. In the past, companies were fairly homogeneous and organizational values systems, working practices and decision-making processes have not necessarily kept pace with their mixed gender, multi-cultural, and diverse workforces. This lack of evolution not only hinders company productivity and growth, but also impacts the attraction, recruitment, and retention of a talented and global workforce.

This phenomenon then creeps into the workplace and how women are treated differently in the workplace in different geographic markets. It is to a large extent a reflection of how they are treated in the society. It is inescapable that there are specific legal and religious constraints that prevent women performing similar tasks to men in professional environments and indeed, many countries still have laws incompatible with the UN Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (*CEDAW*).

The concept of “sticky floors” (*Morgan, M.S., 2015*) or self-infliction of career progression has thus arisen in studies of social problems in society. The authors say that sometimes women are to be blamed or the organizational policies are to be blamed towards women developing a laid back nature at work where they stay over satisfied and content by working in junior roles and don’t make the effort to develop themselves to progress through higher levels of the organizational ladder.

This phenomenon must be investigated in Qatar through this research as it is very likely that the existence of “sticky floors” goes un-noticed when it comes to complaining about the “glass ceilings” in organizations.

The literature has indicated societal norms creeping into the workplace and this is one reason for sticky floors. However, there are other factors as well such as the work-life balance and the mobility of husband-wife partners to pursue their individual career paths. For example, if Fred is married to Judy and Fred is an Executive Chef in a 5 star hotel and Judy is a management consultant working in a consultancy, there might arise a situation that Fred has to move to a location to pursue his career ambitions and Judy has to give up her career ambitions in order to stay together with her husband. This happens very commonly and, in such situations, women or even for that matter some men would not opt for a career that makes them move places to progress through the organizational ladder. They would rather stay in a lower level job and pursue a stunted career ambition fulfilling their family commitments instead and this is where the concept of stick-floors comes in.

However, even in this case the burden of unpaid care work at homes primarily falls on women. If paid and unpaid work are combined, women work longer hours than men in nearly all countries, including all countries in the MENA region. On average, women do at least 2.4 times more unpaid care and domestic work in Qatar (*UN Women Annual Report, 2015*). If this is the case, then there is a good reason to investigate glass ceilings and sticky floors together through this research.

Care services must be affordable, accessible, of appropriate quality and respectful of the rights and dignity of both caregivers and care receivers, but in most countries care services are still scarce, and where they exist their coverage and quality are often uneven.

Policy responses to the care needs of dependent adults—including frail elderly people and people with disabilities—have been slow to develop, even in developed countries. Public expenditure on elderly care remains low. Families, friends, neighbors and community networks provide the bulk of long-term care, with women assuming most of the related unpaid work (*UN Women Annual Report, 2015*)

The literature points out that unpaid care work coupled with lack of family friendly policies at the workplace play a critical role in women either choosing to remain out of the workforce or quitting midway. Unpaid care-work consisted of work neither paid for nor recognized in policy or formal sectors. Its burden on women that had increased substantially following cuts in social protection and service programs caused by the global economic crisis.

In addition to the barriers mentioned above, a study (*Jouharah & Abalkhail, 2016*) provides a lot of insight into barriers women face when trying to progress within the

workplace, in the middle eastern context. One of them is the access to "*wasta"* is an important factor that will likely influence a woman's career because it is prevalent in the Arab business world and also in Qatar*. Wasta* in Arabic is a person and/or an act who intercedes that another may obtain something and is similar to the concept of *guanxi* in Chinese society.

Wasta affects both men and women in the Arab world. In the study, women in different levels of management supported that a lack of *wasta* was a hindrance to growth. Part of the specific frustration associated with this barrier is that if a woman is better qualified for a job than a man, the man may still receive the job if he has the necessary connections or *Wasta*. This poses a problem for women seeking to advance in this region, as even if the woman receives more education, her lack of connections may keep her from moving forward within the company (*Tlaiss, H., & Kauser, S., 2010*).

A study on the Political Economy of *Wasta* done in Saudi Arabia points out that although the effects of *Wasta* may also be positive, they are usually considered as negative and affect decision-making on all levels of Middle Eastern societies and other societies who use social capital networking in a negative manner. The use of *Wasta* causes inequality and inefficiency when people without the necessary skills get jobs or are even promoted in case their inability becomes obvious.

The authors also dwell on general perceptions about women at work in relation to their utilisation of *Wasta* and find out that while *Wasta* is disdained socially, it is still widely used for the benefits users reap when *Wasta* is exercised. Being promoted in a male dominated organisation that operates in a patriarchal society is a significant reward for Saudi women. The barriers they face in their careers encourage them to utilize *Wasta* although it contradicts their attitudes towards it. The differences between those holding senior and other managerial positions on the use of *Wasta* are also examined in the study for both genders.

The study notes that more women in the professional track hold negative views about *Wasta* than women in the leadership track. This means that women leaders understand the importance of *Wasta* in their career progression as some might not have progressed without it. Similarly, more women leaders than professionals perceive *Wasta* a tool to overcome many of the barriers they face in the workplace.

Regardless of professional rank, majority of Saudi men hold negative perceptions about *Wasta* as an unfair practice and a form of corruption that impacts morale and motivation amongst employees but also agree of the importance of *Wasta* to facilitate career advancement. In line with the cognitive dissonance theory, *Wasta* plays a great role in men's career progression. It helps them progress in a highly competitive work environment, and thus men use *Wasta* despite their negative views. The use of *Wasta*

seems far more prevalent in gaining employment and promotion, particularly in the public sector, and the interviewees of the study confirmed that its use has become more prominent in recent years.

This is also true in Qatar's context, further *Wasta* promotes wasteful competition in highly segmented labour markets and the ones left out are the minorities i.e youth and women who do not have access to *Wasta*, it is also not frequently discussed that from a sociological perspective *Wasta* can be argued to have a social function in the traditional Arab societies however in the current world it represents a visible dichotomy between a quest for modernity and a reliance on tradition. (*Ramady M.A. 2016*)

There is adequate literature that aptly describes the phenomenon of *Wasta* and how it manifests itself within the Gulf countries and within modern public sector organizations, It is felt that it not only negatively impacts women's career growth and perpetuates the glass ceiling but it also promotes inefficiencies in the public sector which is usually the most preferred employer by women seeking a career. It is also seen from the author's personal experience that even those women in leadership track who may use *Wasta* for career progression use it as structured networking programs and mentorship is almost non-existent for aspiring women leaders.

Because *Wasta* is associated with family status, it seems plausible that a woman coming from an influential family has more of an opportunity to advance in the workplace than one coming from a less well-known family. Women remain under-represented in management and leadership positions worldwide, and the situation varies from country to country. For example. in 2013, women held 24 percent of senior management positions globally, with only 1 percent in the UAE, 19 percent in the UK and 51 percent in mainland China. These differences are attributed to patriarchy which is embedded in the social, legal, political and economic systems of different cultures in different ways (*Afiouni, F., 2014*).

Consequently, women's situation in both the workplace and home varies depending on their culture and society. This study focuses on women's careers in the Arab Gulf States, described by Metcalfe (*Metcalfe, 2008*) as a highly patriarchal socio-cultural context and one that affects women's career choices. patterns and conceptualizations of success (*Afiouni, F., 2014*).

The importance of professional networks within the workplace environment has been extensively explored from a Western perspective in the literature, and research findings indicate that these networks have a significant impact on both men's and women's career advancement to top leadership positions (*Davidson & Burke, 2012*). However, in the context of Arab countries, few studies have considered networks and how they impact on the career development of employees with the workplace.

Broadbridge (*Broadbridge, A., 2010*) describes social capital as "the ability of people to acquire benefits through their membership in social networks or other social structures and the reputation they have because of their connections and she identifies that it brings benefits to both the individual and also the organization. Social capital helps women to gain benefits such as increased visibility, support and upward mobility, increased career and job satisfaction and respect and recognition within the organization (*Broadbridge, A., 2010*). Other researchers report similar findings and contend that social capital plays a significant role in women's career advancement to the senior management level.

In the UK, Singh et al. (*Singh et.al., 2006*) investigated women's corporate networks, and their study revealed that women manage to work across boundaries by building strong networks which support their career development, as well as increasing their visibility within their organization. This study complemented the work of Tymon and Stumpf (*Tymon, W. & Stumpf, S., 2003*) who identified that social capital can provide a competitive advantage to individuals and consequently access to networks is an important ingredient in enabling women to access senior positions. It is worth noting that it is not only access to the networks that is important but also taking action as a result of engagement with networks which leads to increasing one's social capital (*Tymon, W. & Stumpf, S., 2003*).

This is confirmed by the research of Cross and Linehan (*Cross, C., & Linehan, M., 2006*) who examined the experiences of female managers to understand the reasons behind the scarcity of senior female managers in the high-tech sector in Ireland. They concluded that organizational decisions were based on access to information which gained through formal and informal networks, and decisions were made, and promotion promised through informal networks. In the same vein, Adler and Izraeli (*Adler, N., & Izraeli, D., 1994*) confirmed that it is women's lack of social networks that holds them back from advancing to higher levels.

There are important distinctions between informal and formal networks as indicated in Durbin's (*Durbin, S., & Tomlinson, J., 2011*) discussion of networks, gender and knowledge creation. Formal networks are easily identified in an organizational context. Informal networks can exist alongside formal networks and tend to be broader, less hierarchical and are created or developed for social and/or business reasons.

The term "old boys" network is used to describe informal gendered networks, often based around common educational experiences, sports, private clubs or other connections, which enable men to gain influence and support from each other and so promote each other's careers or interests. As these informal networks are by their very nature closed to women, they present barriers to the advance of women into leadership positions and gaining influence (*Wirth, L., 2004*).

Within the Arab context, access to professional and social networks is very different to that in Western societies, and the culture and customs of Arab society mean that they are strictly gendered (*Barakat H., 1993)* In addition, there is a marked absence of organizational programmed networks to facilitate the advancement of women's careers, and this results in women managers relying on their families for career support (*Abalkhail, J., & Allan, B., 2015*). Abdalla (*Abdalla,I., 2015*), researching Arab women senior executives, found that women were impeded in their careers as a result of exclusion from networks.

The role of family is important in Arab societies for women who wish to progress their careers, e.g. Tlaiss and Kauser (*Tlaiss, H., & Kauser, S., 2010*) observe it is vital for women to gain support from their male family members (*husbands, fathers or brothers*) or other strong family connections. Their work supports earlier research that focused on female directors in top companies in Jordan and Tunisia, and found that family connections, i.e. *Wasta*, helped women to gain non-executive positions in banking and development. Male family members and their connections play a major role in supporting women through the education system and then helping them to achieve success in their promotion within organizations. Thus, without the support of influential male family members, Arab women may find it challenging to access information and resources. This does not mean that Arab women do not have their own informal networks, but it is important to acknowledge that women's networks are often tied to men's networks (*Metcalfe, 2006*). The importance of family connections or *Wasta* in the Arab region is explored in more detail in the following paragraph.

Family connection in most Arabic region are built on the notion of tribal affiliation and solidarity which is one of the most cherished axes of social organization (*Barakat, H., 1993*). The role of tribe (*qabali*) and kinship (*qardbah*) system ties is crucially important in understanding the system of values in the Arab countries (*Barakat, H., 1993*). For example, the solidarity of the kinship system is based on the concept that kin relations are sources of security on various levels, including emotional, social, economic and political. Hofstede (*Hofstede, G., 2001*) reported that the Arab culture is a collectivistic culture that emphasizes strong group commitment and loyalty to group members, and families are the key players that secure a strong wasta. Wasta is viewed as an informal system of connections or personal relations that provides social support to family members (*Al-Tarrah, 2007*). It is worth noting that the phenomenon of wasta is found not only in the Arab countries but also in other cultures; for example, in Russia, it is called Blat and, in China, Guanxi. Wasta may be seen as equivalent to what is known in the West as "the old boy network" or having the right family background (*e.g. nobility*) to help a person get things done (*Hutchings, K. & Weir, D., 2006*).

Hofstede (*Hofstede, G., 2001*) went on to argue that the workplace environment within the Arab context is influenced by the structure and culture of the social environment,

including values, norms, artefacts, regulations and rules. Consequently, it is important to understand *Wasta*, as it provides insights into how decisions are made and people operate within organizations in the Arab states (*Gold G.D., & George, S.N., 2012*). The idea that men and women may have different access to wasta through their different solidarity (*alsabiyya alqabaliyya*) being one of the most cherished axes of social organization" (*Al-Rasheed, 2010, p. 184*). This remains the case, despite the fact that Islam brought with it the idea of umma (*the Islamic community*) loyalty to which, and collective identity with which, replaced that to and with the tribe (*Al-Rasheed, M., 2010*). The role of tribal (*qabali*), kinship (*qarabah*) and family (ailah or usra) system ties is basic to understanding the value system of these countries (*Barakat, H., 1993*). As such, the society is characterized by a patriarchy system, which is defined as "the prioritizing of the rights of males and the justification of those rights within kinship values which are usually supported by religion". Moghadam (*Moghadam, V.M., 2004*) reported that the "patriarchal contract" as a system is still strongly reinforced in the Arab states which reflect on the supply and demand for female labour (*Moghadam, V.M., 2004*).

Furthermore, although women in the Arab Gulf region are given opportunities to work in both the public and private sectors, they are found predominately in the public sector and only in certain fields, i.e. education health and social work (*UNDP, 2006*). It appears that the public sector has been the best available option for women in the Gulf States and it provided a more supportive environment with regard to their employment and career development (*Metcalfe, B., 2008*) as compared with the private sector. As a result of the importance of this sector as employers of women, this study focuses on women leaders in the public sector in the Arab Gulf States.

However, even if it is applied to women only, it is clear from the above characteristics of the Glass Ceiling that it should only be used to a job-related inequality that is unexplained considering a person’s experience and qualifications in a job. There is evidence in the literature to relate the Glass Ceiling to the levels of motivation of the different genders (men and women) to move into higher levels of the organizational ladder (*Rindfleish, J., 2000*). The author (*Rindfleish, J., 2000*) argues against women saying they have in general lesser motivation than men to progress above a certain level in their careers due to their commitments outside of work and especially in giving time to the family and hence inflict a self-made Glass Ceiling on themselves. This phenomenon is what I term above as “Sticky Floors” but I would not relate “Sticky Floors” to lack of motivation but rather to the excess of job satisfaction to stay down where they are.

In addition to the lack of motivation, psychologists have found another factor causing the Glass Ceiling, which is that many high performing female employees undergo the impostor syndrome (*Langford, J., & Clance, P.R., 1993*) which is underplaying their achievement as a matter of luck or an act of God rather than a product of their hard work, educational attainments and dedication to their career. The prevalence of this syndrome

is higher in women than men. These are issues that cannot be solved at an organizational level, but awareness can be created to ensure that female employees don't get into any of the circumstances that could cause this syndrome to occur. Imposter syndrome is a feeling of self-doubt. The feeling that one day we're going to be caught out as a total fraud'. The fundamental fear is being unmasked and revealed as a fake. It particularly afflicts successful individuals and is more common after a significant accomplishment or award.

Imposter syndrome was first identified more than 30 years ago by two clinical psychologists who dubbed it the 'impostor phenomenon' (IP). In their paper, Clance and Imes (Clance, P., & Imes, S., 1978) describe women who, despite reaching significant intellectual milestones ranging from advanced degrees to professional awards, cannot internalize their success or convince themselves they deserve it. "They consider themselves to be 'impostors',". "Numerous achievements, which one might expect to provide ample objective evidence of superior intellectual functioning, do not appear to affect the impostor belief." Certain early family dynamics and as well as societal gender based stereotyping appear to contribute significantly to the development of the impostor phenomenon. Despite outstanding academic and professional accomplishments, women who experience the impostor phenomenon persist in believing that they are really not bright and have fooled anyone who thinks otherwise.

This clinical study also states that that the victims of this syndrome can come from various fields and backgrounds, with only a minority of the subjects having psychological problems other than the impostor syndrome. It was common, however, that all of them fostered a feeling of inadequacy among their professional peers based on their own self-appreciation and a continuous fear to be unmasked as a fraud in spite of remarkable achievements of their own. The study's subjects, like many other women, tended to have lower expectations to succeed in their tasks, attributing successes that they deemed unexpected to either luck or intensified efforts. To quote Clance and Imes, they have "apparently internalized into a self-stereotype the societal sex-role stereotype that they (the women) are not considered competent." and do not spontaneously expect to be acknowledged as such. (*Clance, P., & Imes, S., 1978*)

The victims of the impostor phenomenon go a step further down this deprecating stand by denying themselves the self-acknowledgement that they are competent professionals whose success is deserved, believing that they could be uncovered as unworthy of their status at any time. These fears can lead to the adoption of strategies devoted to protect this so-called cover and delay its eventual blowup. One will work as hard as she can. Even if it allows her to reap the earned results of her labors, she will nonetheless keep deep down the illusion that she will not succeed in her tasks unless she worries about said failure in the first place and acts accordingly. Another one actively hides her own ideas in a bid to win the approbation of an authority or her peers and thus escape the

failure that would have inevitably occurred had she displayed her own “sensible” opinions in the first place, losing the approbation she seeks.

The first one consequently carry on with the idea that she owns their success to a constant compensation for her eventual failure-to-be while the other one believes that her façade is inherent to her success and could even be its only reason – After all, no competent professional would feel the need to resort to such measures to thrive in their career. As a matter of fact, it appears that even extremely competent women would resort to such measures to shield themselves from the constant fear that they have not earned their place or deserved their rewards.

Clance acknowledged in her later studies that men can be struck by the impostor phenomenon as much as women however she nonetheless noticed in their researches that societal expectations toward women lead them to be criticized if they succeed, making them fear that openly acknowledging their competence and their ambitions could lead to consequences they have no wish to face.

Karen Kaplan (*Kaplan, K., 2009*) analyses this apparent phenomenon and its impact by sharing examples of highly accomplished women. It usually happens to Cherry Murray when she is about to write a paper or give a talk on a new finding or discovery. The thoughts come unbidden, hammering inside the physicist's head: 'I can't do this. I haven't done enough experiments. I haven't got enough data. I can't write the paper well enough yet or give the talk.' These aren't the routine self-doubts of a young researcher. Murray, was the principal associate director for science and technology at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) in California, and president of the American Physical Society. She was on her way to become dean of Harvard University's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at the time Karen interviewed her. Referring to her work, she says: “I have to tell myself this doesn't have to be perfect.”

Before taking up her LLNL post, Murray spent decades at Bell Laboratories and left as senior vice-president for physical sciences and wireless research. She has published more than 70 papers in peer-reviewed journals, has won a number of awards, holds two patents and has served on more than 80 national and international scientific committees and governing boards. Yet the self-doubt still lurks. “Do I ever think I'm not qualified?” she says. “All the time.” (*Kaplan, K. 2009*)

Another 2017 study (*McLean, M., 2017)* on the imposter syndrome suggests that the feeling of being an impostor may hinder women’s career advancement by amplifying their responses to negative feedback. Additionally, it shows that it illuminates other negative beliefs that people with strong impostor feelings may hold that are detrimental to career and academic pursuits. Women report higher the feeling of being an impostor than men (*Kumar, S. & Jagacinski, C.M., 2006*); the above mentioned study thus tested whether

the feeling of being an impostor hinders women's ability to advance in their careers. Specifically, this research addressed whether the feeling of being an impostor increases women's sensitivity to negative feedback because impostor feelings are associated with decreased self-efficacy, self-confidence, and an attribution style that emphasizes internal sources of failure (*Kumar, S. & Jagacinski, C.M., 2006).*

Whether the gender difference in attrition for students studying Science, Engineering, Mathematics and Technology and employees in other domains is due to higher levels of the feeling of being an impostor for women than men is unknown (*Kumar, S. & Jagacinski, C.M., 2006).* There is evidence as per the author that women in medical school score higher than men on the feeling of being an impostor. The study tested whether negative feedback resulted in less interest in pursuing a graduate degree and less persistence for people high on the feeling of being an impostor, and whether that was particularly true for women. In addition, it examined whether the feeling of being an impostor had incremental validity as a predictor variable after adjusting for (1) self-esteem, which was negatively related to the feeling of being an impostor (*Chrisman, S.M., et al., 1995*), and (2) beliefs about intelligence because the feeling of being an impostor may be positively related to believing that intelligence is fixed rather than malleable. Results suggest that:

1. The feeling of being an impostor was especially detrimental to women's pursuit of a graduate degree, but only when they faced negative feedback about their potential.
2. The stronger people's the feeling of being an impostor, the more strongly they believed negative feedback about their potential.
3. The feeling of being an impostor was related to beliefs essential to career and academic advancement (e.g., fixed mindset beliefs).
4. The feeling of being an impostor was not related to persistence rates on a graduate school aptitude task, but the task suffered from poor psychometric properties. Findings suggest that the feeling of being an impostor may hinder women's career advancement by amplifying their responses to negative feedback.

The literature on imposter syndrome gives key insights which helps explain why imposter syndrome may be a key factor that hinders women's career advancement and amplifies the glass ceiling. Imposter syndrome is more common in women than men, high achievers are as likely to suffer from the feeling of being an impostor as young women who are just starting out their careers. Impostor syndrome is not a recognized psychiatric disorder however it is a key behavioral health condition impairing professional performance and contributing to burnout especially among women. Someone as accomplished as Sheryl Sandberg notes in her book (*Sandberg, S., 2013*) "Every time I was called on in class, I was sure that I was about to embarrass myself. Every time I took a test, I was sure that it had gone badly. And every time I didn't embarrass myself — or even excelled — I believed that I had fooled everyone yet again. One day soon, the jig

would be up … This phenomenon of capable people being plagued by self-doubt has a name — the impostor syndrome. Both men and women are susceptible to the impostor syndrome, but women tend to experience it more intensely and be more limited by it".

The Glass Ceiling effect can only be negated if qualifications, experience and motivation are rightfully normalized between the affected parties i.e. men and women or majority and minority groups. It is an easy stop for researchers to blame the gender bias or male stereotyping that are of course the common cause of the Glass Ceiling.

However, looking at the literature, there are several non-work related issues that can also cause the stunted career growth and here we have examined the sticky floors, formal and informal social networks and the impostor syndrome all of which can be major contributors towards the uninfluenced career progression that depends upon merits and performance only.

2.6. Qatar's response to gender inequality:

Has the government in Qatar or any other lobby or agency made a positive effort in the direction of studying the effect of gender inequality or to bring about gender equality or break the gender inequality in higher levels of Qatari organizations?

The literature review shows that the Qatari government has made public commitments both locally and within Qatar and internationally within the UN to provide equal opportunity employment for both men and women. The force behind the transformation in Qatar can be said to a large extent, the Qatar National Vision, wherein it has been recognized that the importance of investing in human capital is to have a strong, developed economy and to facilitate the transfer of technologies. It has become essential that Qatari society acquires the capabilities, knowledge and skills to pave the way for the country's socio-economic development. Therefore, the key challenge for Qatar in the coming future relates to realizing its national vision as sustainable economic growth requires a skillful and diverse workforce.

Male labour force participation is at 76% (The Gender Gap Report 2014, World Economic Forum & United Nations Statistics Division) and hence more has to be done to ensure that women gain more share of this number towards equal opportunity employment. Qatar is a signatory to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (*SDG's*) and in this context Qatar's permanent mission to the UN has emphasized (*State of Qatar, 2014*) on improving family policies to help mainstream employment of women and place emphasis on the role that family plays in achieving universal primary education, the empowerment of women, and, among other things, promoting gender equality, which is fundamental to crafting a sound Post-2015 Development Agenda. Designing and implementing family policies, especially in the areas of poverty eradication, full employment and decent work,

work-family balance, intra-generational mobility, social integration and intergenerational solidarity have immeasurable importance and impact on development. These are the words stated in the Statement of the State of Qatar before the SDG's OWG 10 (*State of Qatar, 2014*).

Although the country's commitment is still based on the traditional male headed model of a "family" unit, this commitment at a global platform is a crucial indicator of increasing commitment to address gender inequalities in the labour market and promote equality in business and work life balance. Qatar's commitment to the SDG's which includes Goal 5 on gender equality and women empowerment reaffirms political will to work towards equal opportunities for women.

Central to this discussion is addressing the role and commitment of the state, included in preserving and adequately utilizing policy space through dynamic design of national economic, social, and environmental policy tools and mobilizing development-focused institutions. Examples from other countries (*Sandberg, S., 2013*) show that state policies play a crucial role in breaking the glass ceiling effect by promoting equal opportunity policies. It plays a crucial role in helping women enter work, remain in the workforce (*Ben-Galim, D. & Silim, A., 2014*), and progress to decision-making roles within organizations. Important lessons can be learnt from Europe and other countries on women friendly policies like the importance of affordable childcare for women's employment and advancement opportunities. Countries with affordable and high-quality childcare systems tend to have higher maternal labor-force participation. Likewise, paid parental leave, with genuine choices for both parents, can be a retention tool that reduces the impact of the so-called motherhood pay penalty and also aids women's long-term prospects by offering mothers and fathers the flexibility to work and to care. Flexible work also can benefit both women and men, particularly those with caring responsibilities, if the culture of a workplace supports it.

Hence it is necessary through this research to investigate the actual nature of the problem and attempt to form an advisory note for the government and senior leadership towards establishing gender equality at work at all levels of the organization.

This is particularly required at this point of time because in Qatar's commitments to move the society to establish equal opportunity and employment for men and women are not backed up by policies and processes that will ensure that the rhetoric will turn into reality.

To start with let us take the educational attainment of Qatari women. There are evidences to prove that the government provides generous scholarship support for academically qualified individuals to study abroad and attain knowledge and skills to work in key positions within Qatari companies. However, family responsibilities, cultural tradition, and social attitudes in Qatar continue to limit many women from taking advantage of this

opportunity to be highly skilled. If they do get past the educational qualifications, there are further barriers in finding the right job to match the skill.

The survey (*Stasz, C., et.al 2007*) on post-secondary education opportunities in Qatar, asked the 1998 and 2006 cohorts about the barriers they saw to getting a job. The question is highly relevant, because there is currently a mismatch between women's career choices and the demand for workforce in different fields. Those most prone to unemployment, in addition to the least educated men, are the most educated Qatari women. This is also corroborated by the Planning Council of Qatar.

Some of the women of the 1998 cohort were not currently working or looking for work and reported family responsibilities as the main reason for their unemployment. Other women in this cohort reported that they considered the high level of competition and the lack of job openings to be their greatest barriers. Hence despite the intent to fund the education there is little effort made by government and public agencies to match the skills required to the skills attained.

Further, the educational attainment has also societal challenges. A majority of the female students in the 2006 cohort believed that their willingness to work hard will help them get a job or career of their choice. However, almost 40 percent of these female students expected the lack of adequate English language skills to prevent them from achieving the kind of job or career they want.

As part of this same study in Qatar, (*Stasz. C., et.al, 2007*) information about women's attitudes toward work and factors affecting their career choices and the job characteristics they most value it was found that for the first-time young Qatari women were systematically asked these questions. They accepted that religious beliefs and parental advice were the top two factors that Qatari women in both cohorts of secondary school graduates said they took into consideration when making career choices. However, 88 percent of the females who graduated in 2006 also thought it was important that their future careers reflect their own personal interests. Hence government and public agency intervention to change the public mindset seems the biggest gap in the solution building towards gender equality in Qatar. The literature can further substantiate the evidence for the solutions for breaking the glass ceiling in Qatar from what has been achieved in the global context.

Qatar aims to build a modern world-class educational system that provides students with a first-rate education, comparable to that offered anywhere in the world. The system will provide citizens with excellent training and opportunities to develop to their full potential, preparing them for success.

The presence of a large number of non-natives from countries that speak English have contributed to the growth of English in Qatar. A few studies have examined the influence

of English language in GCC countries, these countries contend with issues of identity, language loss, and the attrition of local culture and tradition. English is a requirement in most educational settings. While Arabic is still the primary language of personal and social communication, English is the lingua franca in many educational, economic, and technical interactions in much of the Arab world, particularly in the GCC. Therefore, even though the region's native language is Arabic, English language education is a dominant feature in both the K-12 and tertiary education systems despite the noticeable differences in how education ministries articulate and implement English language education in curriculum and policy. (*Abou-El-Kheir A., & MacLeod P., 2019*) Similarly in Qatar, acquisition of English language skills is now deeply tied to employability and economic mobility.

In a changing world with increasingly complex technical requirements, the system will also encourage analytical and critical thinking, as well as creativity and innovation. It will promote social cohesion and respect for Qatari society's values heritage and will advocate for constructive interaction with other nations with the targeted size and quality of expatriate labor that are determined by Qatar's leadership and people.

Qatar is currently experiencing high rates of population growth due mainly to massive urban development, large-scale investment projects and rising government expenditure. These factors have led to a large increase in the ratio of expatriates to citizens in the labor force, and a particularly sharp and unanticipated rise in the immigration of unskilled workers. The composition of a nation's population will determine the nature of its society and hence Qatar must determine a suitable size and quality of its expatriate labor force.

It must weigh the consequences of recruiting expatriate workers in terms of their cultural rights, housing and public service needs, as well as the potential negative impact on national identity.

2.7. Conclusions from Literature Survey

The objective of the literature review above was to explore the impact of emerging global trends on the situation of women and on gender relations in workplaces within the Middle Eastern context and in Qatar in particular. It does not, therefore, claim to be a comprehensive discussion. The underpinnings of the above discussion emphasize the need for addressing employment related issues for women in the formal and private sector and specific efforts to translate educational attainment into employment.

The Literature survey has highlighted that research in the context of Qatar on the issue of the Glass Ceiling has been limited. Hence this research will add to the body of knowledge in the context of Qatar and its opportunities for achieving gender equality in all levels of Qatari organizations.

The Literature Survey has also highlighted the fact that there is enough focus in Qatar on the subject of Human Development as it is part of the National Vision 2030. Hence it is

envisaged that any work that is done to highlight the problem to the senior leadership will add value to the society and the body of knowledge in the field of Glass Ceiling.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Questions, Ontological and Epistemological Assumptions

The Methodology of this research is designed to find answers to the research questions stated below:

1. What are the reasons for the gender inequality in higher levels of Qatari Organizations – is it “the Glass Ceiling” (barriers to move up) or “Sticky Floors” (unwillingness to move up) amongst Qatari women?
2. What are the incremental changes that can be taken by Qatari government agencies to influence existing policies within Qatari organizations to bring about gender equality in all levels of Qatari organizations?

The reason to select these questions has been mainly to add value to the body of knowledge that already exists in the field of Glass Ceiling and its effects on the country of Qatar, which is the country of citizenship and birth of the researcher. The research questions already assumes that Glass Ceiling and gender inequality exists in higher levels of Qatari organizations and that the investigation in this research is aimed at finding out the reasons for its existence, and the solutions to solve it. This stems from the ontological assumptions following the constructs of critical realism and bounded relativism (*Moon, K., & Blackman, D., 2014*)

Ontological Assumptions:

Ontology is defined as the study of the status quo or the actual situation as is based on which a research can be conducted (*Crotty, M., 2003*). Based on the theory of Critical Realism which is the reality captured by broad critical examination, we have already established in the previous submissions of this research, the existence of the Glass Ceiling in Qatar. This has been established through the previous research findings in course of this DBA program, where data from some Qatari organizations that were analyzed led to the conclusions that the Glass Ceiling exists in Qatar. Quantitative analysis of the number of males and females working in senior positions despite the existence of talent and qualifications showed that male stereotyping and lack of women leaders as role models have led to the Glass Ceiling to thrive in Qatari organizations. Qualitative findings from face to face interviews conducted with many Qatari employees within Qatari organizations, both male and female, have also reaffirmed this assumption with descriptive problem statements.

Apart from this critical realism, using the theory of bounded relativism, it has been established through the survey of the literature during the course of previous submissions and the current survey in this submission, that several researchers have examined the

effects of the Glass Ceiling in neighboring countries that have a similar social and economic construct (*Al-Salem, A. & Speece, M., 2017*). The existence of such a phenomenon such as the Glass Ceiling can hence be extrapolated for Qatar using the fact that human behavior very much follows a societal and economic norm that exists within a particular region. It is hence logical to believe that the Glass Ceiling exists in Qatar. Hence if the aim of the research remains is to investigate the existence of the Glass Ceiling it will not add any further to the body of the knowledge but rather it is required to investigate the reasons for its existence and the solutions to break the ceiling.

Hence, leading from the ontological assumptions and to add value to the existing body of knowledge in the area of the Glass Ceiling, for Qatar, it was decided to investigate the reasons for the existence of the Glass Ceiling and establish solutions that will help to eliminate the problem.

Epistemological Assumptions:

The epistemological assumptions arise from the leadership drive in this country expressed through the national vision. The National Vision of Qatar 2030 aims to transform the country by 2030, capable of sustaining its own development rather than be a dependent economy where demand and supply of the economy comes from outside the country. It aims through this self-sustenance mode, to provide a high standard of living for its population and future generations. However, the country requires a balance in the human capital at all levels in such a way that education is purposeful and adds value to society, genders both male and female enjoy equal opportunities for growth, and the country is open for business with every form of global society and culture.

The state of Qatar has further broken up this national vision into four pillars, Human Development, Social Development, Economic Development and Environmental Development. In particular, the objectives of the Human Development pillar are to develop Qatar’s people to enable them to self sustain a prosperous society. Currently the country depends upon a large expatriate population of white and blue-collar workers who help the country to sustain its economy.

Using this basis for social and societal reforms, the epistemological assumptions used in the research methodology in this research is the belief that Qatar as a country relies on achieving progress detailed in its National Vision by driving societal changes through its citizens and expatriate residents and this can be done by the target year 2030 as the geographical coverage area and the population is small. Amongst this population the number of citizens are low in number, share a common culture, and are united in their religious beliefs and social constructs.

It is also true to assume as part of this research's epistemological construct that in Qatar, the problems that exist in other countries like racism, poverty, lack of education, or even

lack of social belonging are not part of the social framework in Qatar. The social welfare system ensures that Qataris and especially educated Qataris are always employed and if not, are covered with a social welfare system that takes care of their basic needs. Hence, to solve the problem of the Glass Ceiling, the subject of change, the citizens of Qatar, can be placed in the second layer of Maslow's triangle where they are looking to fulfill psychological needs and have already fulfilled their basic needs of physiological and safety needs (*Maslow, A.H., 1954*).

The Qatar leadership Center that works with the mandate of creating future leaders for the country has followed the path of giving equal opportunity for developing male as well as female leaders in the country. The researcher was one of the selected females amongst 150 male and female leaders aged between 25-55 years for the Executive Program within the Qatar leadership center. The epistemological assumptions have been derived through discussions within this forum where the general consensus has been amongst both male and female cohorts that the solution to drive the change with regard to the Glass Ceiling within Qatari organizations has to be made through policy changes and organizational incentives after having investigated why the Glass Ceiling exists.

Another epistemological assumption that has been derived in discussion with the research guides is to make this research as a generic research of employment effectiveness where it is assumed that the existence of the Glass Ceiling makes employment in Qatari organizations, less effective. Hence by conducting an investigation on employment effectiveness, the nature of the Glass Ceiling can be inferred and hence participants being investigated would state their problems in a realistic manner rather than being alluded to the purpose of this research. The research questions hence have been designed to investigate the topic of employment effectiveness where the assumption is that if employees are satisfied with their employment they are more likely to attempt to progress into higher management levels and hence achieve the growth and not hit a Glass Ceiling.

3.2. Research Design

The epistemological assumption being addressed here is that Qatar is interested to pursue Human Development as a pillar of its National Vision 2030. In so doing it is assumed in this research that the country's leadership will find the problems of the Glass Ceiling to be relevant both as a body of knowledge and for a remedial action plan as part of its Human Development pillar.

The research design has to thus take the phenomenon of the Glass Ceiling as a solution set part of the Human Development pillar of the National Vision in the country. To gain insights into the problem of the Glass Ceiling in Qatar, an exploratory survey approach has been used, where the questions don't allude to any of the research objectives that are being addressed for example, "Do you think that the Glass Ceiling

exists in your organization?" as this will perhaps lead the respondents to certain biased answers. It is intended hence to keep the research questions and the research design generic and rather focused on the topic of Employment Effectiveness.

To set the context of this methodology, document 3, the previous submission of this research, compared the findings from the literature survey on the topic of the Glass Ceiling using a qualitative survey with the face-to-face survey approach. The survey respondents were employees of government owned entities in Qatar. It helped to establish comparison based on common opinion and the unique features of the Glass Ceiling prevalent in Qatar to other parts of the world. The results showed how other researchers in the literature have found the phenomenon to affect the countries where the research was conducted and how similar or different were these to Qatar.

By completing Document 3 the prevalence of the Glass Ceiling in Qatari organizations was established but the reasons were not immediately evident at that time.

Document 4 then moved the research logic further by investigating using desk based research on how women employees in one particular organization ie Ooredoo in Qatar were facing the problem of the Glass Ceiling and the fact that this was partially being addressed through policies and remedial action by the management of the company. It further confirmed the fact that the Glass Ceiling is a common social circumstance that has to be addressed by all organizations in Qatar to move forward in its Vision 2030 Agenda where Empowerment of Women is of prime importance.

Survey based research are of two types i.e. exploratory or confirmatory (theory testing) and descriptive survey (*Pinsonneault, A., & Kraemer, K., 1993; Filippini, R., 1997; Malhotra, M., & Grover, V., 1998*). The survey method used in this research will be a combination of being confirmatory and descriptive i.e. it will test Employment Effectiveness within Qatari organizations using 11 employee satisfaction and engagement related probes namely:

- Energy to work in the current organization
- Career Development Plan
- Organizational Commitment to the employee overall wellbeing
- Willingness to fulfill career objectives in the current organization
- Challenges at work – moving up the organizational ladder
- Recommending others to join the same organization
- Organization's drive to promote itself as an employer of choice
- Barriers at work – those that held back an employee from progressing
- Opportunities for career progression
- Gender Equality initiatives
- Channels of Feedback

With such Employee Satisfaction and Employee Engagement indicators, the existence of the Glass Ceiling in Qatari companies can be probed to not only reveal whether it exists or not but also the reasons why it exists. These indicators form an easy assessment of the likelihood of Glass Ceiling as discussed in the literature survey earlier documents as well as several earlier researches (*Nelson and Shraim, 2014*).

Employee Effectiveness probes employed here will not lead the survey respondent to make any direct conclusions of the research but rather allude towards the existence or absence of indicators that will then lead to the conclusion of whether it is the Glass Ceiling effect or some other phenomenon in the organization that is causing the employment effectiveness to drop.

The reasons why the proposed probes were chosen are as follows:

- Energy level to work (*Karatepe, 2013*) is one of the key factors why an employee will be satisfied or engaged to continue progressing at work. Negative energy levels *(Mauno, S., & Ruokolainen, M., 2017*) are usually caused by lack of co-worker support and participative thinking to achieve any organizational task. Silo mentality or separation of work outcomes based on organizational processes can also cause the employee to maintain energy levels adequate to achieve work outcomes but perhaps not to continue working in the organization. Low energy level to work in the organization can lead to an indication of disengagement of the employee with the organization. It can be an indirect indicator of the Glass Ceiling as well, especially if the employee is in the mid-career level.
- Career development plan was the next probe and it is clear that planning a career is both an effort of an individual and the organization and is usually a mapping of personal goals to organizational objectives (Christensen T., & Johnston J., 2003). The existence of a career path will indicate that employees will remain in employment till such time that they can fulfill their career objectives and maintain their energy levels at work. The presence of the career development plan means that there is less likelihood of the existence of the Glass Ceiling.
- Commitment to overall wellbeing stems from the fact that the overall wellbeing of an employee is an organizational commitment to expect and retain long term engagement of the employee with the organization (*Kovjanic, S., et.al., 2013*). This has been a major research theme especially on the topic of women employment and gender equality at work. If employees perceive a lack of commitment to their overall wellbeing, then it can indicate the absence of engagement and an indirect indication of the Glass Ceiling.
- The career development plan (*Lent, R., et.al, 2000*) and fulfillment of career objectives are related themes in this survey. It helps test qualitatively the existence of the Glass Ceiling in a direct manner. Positivity in being able to fulfill career

objectives indicates that employees will complete their career plan and remain in employment and hence absence of the Glass Ceiling.

- Challenges to move up in the organizational ladder is the inability to move up the organizational ladder in a direct indicator of the Glass Ceiling (*Li, Y., 2002*). This question analyzes qualitatively the causes of such challenges and can also lead to the solutions to the problem.
- Employee endorsement for others to join the same organization it is clear that Employee Endorsement (*Tang, L., et.al 2002*) is a positive employer brand and it encompasses all the features of a great employment experience such as the career path, commitment to overall wellbeing and also policies that enable establishment of gender equality across all rungs of the organizational ladder.
- Employer's image building helps to study the previous question of employee endorsement from the point of view of the employer. If the employer is keen to retain and develop good employees, then this indicator should be positive and an indication of the absence of the Glass Ceiling.
- Lack of career growth or generally any situation where the employee feels that he or she cannot grow in the organization is a catch-all situation probe of any other point that is perhaps specific to each survey respondent. Glass Ceiling indicators can be seen if the answers indicate accordingly.
- Opportunities for career progress is an angle of the former question and an indication of the presence or absence of the Glass Ceiling. Career Progression has to be in line with the career objectives (*Nagin, D., et.al, 2002*) and this provides the maximum engagement.
- Initiatives currently under way to correct career path for employees is a question that was inserted to find if solutions are already underway within Qatari organizations to solve the Glass Ceiling issues if they exist.
- Channels for feedback are channels of helping employees express their feelings against all aspects of their employment. Absence of feedback channels can lead to dissatisfaction and also the existence of the Glass Ceiling (*Driggers, S., 2018*).
- The questions were also formulated to check for the reasons for low engagement levels, which could be a lack of career path or other cultural issues (*Khan, G., 2013*). These symptoms are indicative of the presence of the Glass Ceiling especially if respondents have no other reason to leave the organization.

With these probes the research design is intended of to derive the reasons for the effectiveness of employment overall and hence also see the possibility of a Glass Ceiling effect existing in the organization. If such a problem exists, then solutions based on the highest scoring probes can be inferred as findings of the survey. In order to achieve such an outcome, the title of the survey was also chosen to be Employment Effectiveness.

Employment Effectiveness has been used by several researchers (*Locke, EA, 1969*) to test Employee Engagement and Satisfaction and hence whether the symptoms and effects of the Glass Ceiling exist or not in organizations. Solutions that can lead to solving the issue can also emerge through such primary research.

The results of the primary research survey employed in this document will help establish patterns of satisfaction and engagement that can then be traced back to whether women will be able to continue or leave the organization at a certain stage of their career.

Hence the survey findings will form the most important component of the primary research in establishing the links in Qatar between the causes and the solution of the problem of the Glass Ceiling.

3.3. Conduct of the Survey – Survey Participants selection, Data Collection Method and Ethical Process

The survey sampling method used was “Purposive Sampling” (*Given, 2008*) which is a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher. There are seven types of purposive sampling methods available namely, maximum variation/heterogeneous purposive sample, homogeneous purposive sample, typical case sampling, extreme/deviant case sampling, critical case sampling, total population sampling and expert sampling (*Given, 2008*).

It is believed that for the purpose of this research and the fact that it focuses on working people in Qatari organizations, the purposive sampling method using homogeneous purposive sample (*method 2 above*) can help obtain a representative sample by using a sound judgment, which will result in saving time and money in conducting the research. Purposive sampling method proves to be effective when only limited numbers of people can serve as primary data sources due to the nature of research design and its aims and objectives.

The sampling units or participants chosen for this research as the homogeneous groups for purposive sample are given below:

- Employees of Qatari organizations through their HR departments (pursued through the researcher's personal contacts)
- Employees of the organizations from where Qatar Leadership Center cohorts were represented (explained in section 3.1 above)

The survey questions were uploaded through an online survey tool namely, survey monkey. The link to the survey monkey tool was sent with the survey participation request email. The sample email and survey questionnaire are given in Appendix 1. The survey was kept open for a period of 1 month in which it was requested of the survey participant

to read each question and provide descriptive answers. The descriptive answers method was chosen over the multiple choice method as it helps the participant to talk about a problem in a descriptive manner and hence make the conclusions more rich in nature. Out of a total of 150 invitations to participate in the survey 76 respondents participated with a 50% and above participation rate that has made the statistically significant and meaningful.

A sample survey would have fulfilled the need for testing the validity of the probes used in the survey and also to homogenize the participants in the survey. However, as the probes are investigative in nature and the employment effectiveness objective can be inferred from these probe statements it was decided to go ahead with sending out the main survey to the target audience and not to cause any survey fatigue with a sample and then a main survey to follow. The nature of descriptive answers as well made the need for the sample survey redundant.

The ethical process followed in this research is to obtain standard ethical approval of the university for postgraduate research where primary research was conducted on the behavior of other human beings. The survey questionnaire and the mails that will be sent to the survey participants were all formulated and sent to the ethics committee and was approved.

The survey respondents have all been invited with the email as per the approved format and complete knowledge of why the survey is being conducted, that is, it is a part of the doctoral research and terms of the statements used to inform the participants in the survey of the confidentiality of the information that they would provide and the way the data will be handled and maintained was completely made clear to the participants. Appendix 2 provides more details on the ethical process followed in the survey approach.

3.4. The Analysis Method

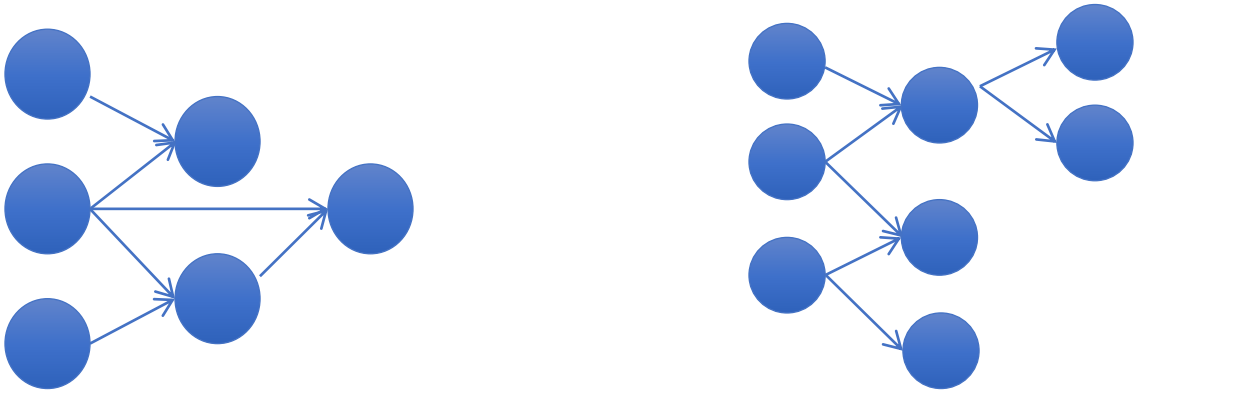
The Analysis method chosen for this qualitative online survey was to analyze the descriptive statement replies for each probe from each respondent and form an influence matrix for the respective probe such that we can infer if the probe statement influences a high likelihood for creating a Glass Ceiling effect or not?

The Decision Tree approach is a form of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach (*Schumacker, R., 2004*) for statistical analysis and it has been observed that SEM is used extensively in social science research such as Balasubramanian (*Balasubramanian, S.A., & Lathabhavan, R., 2018*) who has studied the effects of the Glass Ceiling. Rahman et.al (*Rahman et.al., 2015*) details the usage of the Structural Equation Modeling methods as one strong form of social science research.

The reason the Decision Tree approach has been used in this research is that every probe has a build of two possibilities only i.e. high likelihood and low likelihood and hence

each possibility node (like a decision node) connects to the next node below based on these two outcomes till the final node is reached where the two outcomes don't lead to any further possibilities.

The SEM on the other hand has one to many interconnecting nodes, which has not been the case in the current analysis of the Employment Effectiveness data. The following two diagrams explain the difference between the SEM and Decision Tree approaches if applied to this analysis and hence the selection of the Decision Tree approach as the analysis method for this research.



SEM Analysis Nodes (multiple outcomes per node) Decision Tree Nodes (Two outcomes per node)

Fig 1: Difference between SEM and Decision Tree Analysis

Hence following the data collection process all the replies were placed in a spreadsheet from where the high likelihood versus low likelihood analysis for each probe was plotted in a decision tree matrix. The results were then discussed in detail per probe and hence inferred for the outcome of the employment effectiveness i.e. is it effective enough for the employees to complete their career objectives in the current organization and women employees will move up the ladder or not?

Solutions that will lead to the elimination of the problems of the Glass Ceiling will be inferred from the employment effectiveness probes that indicate a high likelihood of causing the Glass Ceiling.

Decision tree is a popular tool used in operations research (*Keeny, R., & Raifa, H., 1976; Von Winterfeldt, D., & Edwards, W., 1986*). A decision tree is a flowchart-like structure in which each internal node represents a "test" on an attribute (e.g. whether a coin flip comes up heads or tails), each branch represents the outcome of the test, and each leaf node represents a class label (decision taken after computing all attributes). The paths from root to leaf represent classification rules.

In decision analysis, a decision tree and the closely related influence diagram are used as a visual and analytical decision support tool, where the expected values (or expected utility) of competing alternatives are calculated.

A decision tree hence consists of three types of nodes: Decision nodes (represented by the “Situation” box in Fig 1, Chance nodes (represented by “outcome A” and “outcome B” and End nodes represented by “outcome AA, AB, BA,BB” etc).

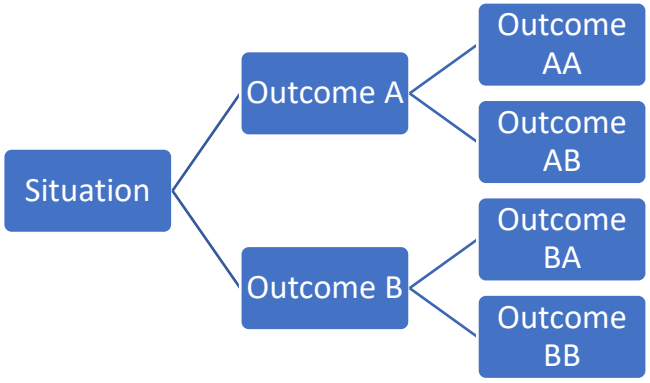


Figure 2: Decision Tree Analysis

4. Findings from the Qualitative Survey:

4.1. The Survey structure and how participants were approached:

The covering email and the survey questionnaire sent to participants is provided in Appendix 1 of this document for easy reference. The ethical process explanation for the understanding of the participant of why this survey is being conducted is provided in Appendix 2 of this document. This also explains how the data and the information derived from it will be handled ethically and in any case the participant wants to withdraw from the survey even after participation, he or she has the liberty to do so.

The work conducted in the previous documents of this DBA research has established that there is gender inequality in the higher levels of Qatari organizations. This could be the Glass Ceiling effect or other problems that have led women to step out of employment when they reach mid-career level.

The Qualitative Survey conducted in this research titled Employment Effectiveness survey uses an exploratory cum confirmatory strategy (*Pinsonneault, A., and Kraemer, K.L., 1993*) to determine the nature of the inequality existing in Qatari organizations.

This was done through the survey by constructing the same with no indication to the problem of Glass Ceiling but rather pointed to the effectiveness of employment and also engagement with the organization that both men and women are working with. This kept the responses unbiased towards agreeing or disagreeing with the actual problem being investigated and obtaining unbiased answers.

The survey set seven probes and four repeat probes on various factors described in the methodology of this research to find reasons for the gender inequality in higher levels of Qatari Organizations – is it “the Glass Ceiling” (lack of ability or opportunity to move up) or “Sticky Floors” (lack of enthusiasm or motivation to move up)?

The survey also helped to probe the solutions in the mind of the employees that would perhaps relieve the gender inequality problem in higher levels of the organization by addressing the question: What are the incremental changes in the opinion of the survey respondents that can be taken by Qatari government agencies to influence existing policies within Qatari organizations to bring about gender equality in all levels of Qatari organizations?

The decision tree employed to derive conclusions from the survey is as follows:

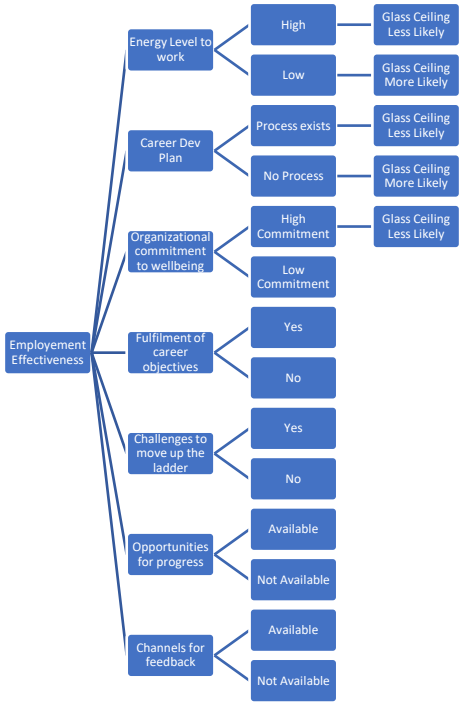


Figure 3: Decision Tree used in the Employment Effectiveness survey analysis

4.2. Demographics:

The first set of questions established the demographics of the survey respondents. A total of 76 responses were received and analyzed out of the total of 150 invited for the survey. The balance of the responses was not received or incomplete. The ratio of male to female amongst the respondents was as follows:

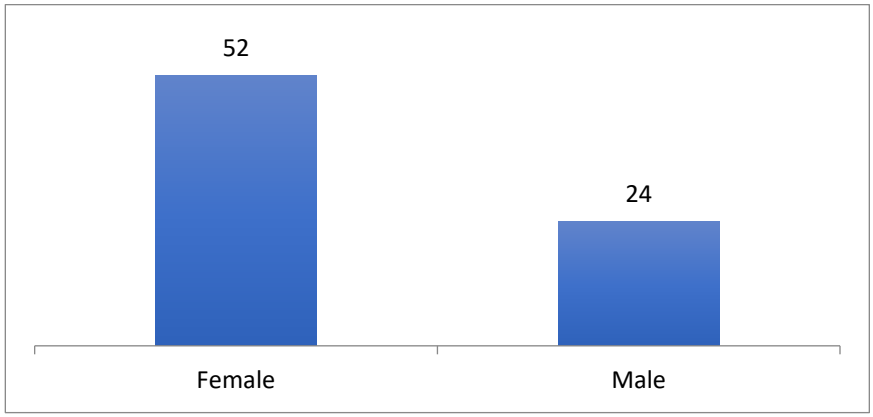


Figure 4: Split between males and females in the responses

This provides a bias towards female opinion more than male however, the invited population to the survey consists of an equal number of males and females. The fact

that a higher proportion of females than males chose to respond to the survey indicates that the former are perhaps willing to express an opinion whether positive or negative. This willingness to participate in an online survey as opposed to a face to face survey where there is an extra degree of personal obligation indicates that women have issues relating to employment more than men and they want to express an opinion. This phenomenon in particular is not being noticed for the first time but rather in several previous survey, based research work (*Forza, C., 2002*) where the willingness to participate in the survey indicates the willingness to express an opinion on the topic of survey. It also shows that those who are ready to discuss (ie females) are perhaps those that are affected by employment issues in the workplace.

The age group of the respondents were as follows:

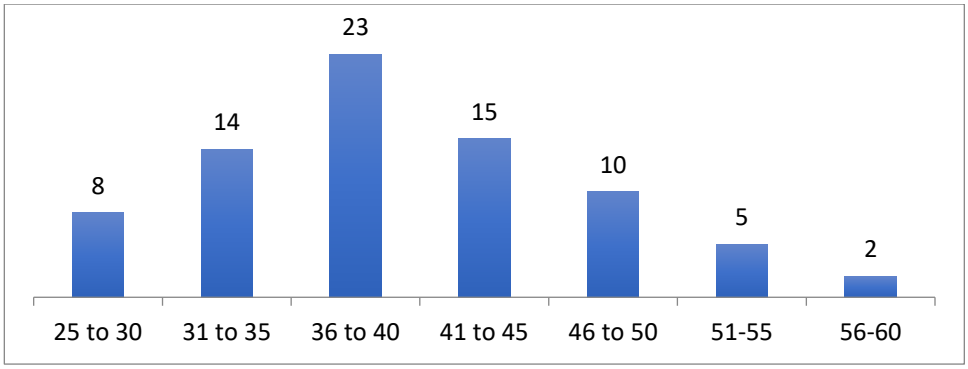


Figure 5: Split between age groups of the survey respondents

The age group split provides adequate coverage of the various employee ages that could contribute to the solution of the problem. The maximum was found to be in the group of 36 to 40 years the typical age group when an employee would have gained 10 to 15 years of work experience and is looking to move into senior roles in the company.

When superimposed, the female population within the survey respondent age groups the number of females in most age groups is higher than that of men.

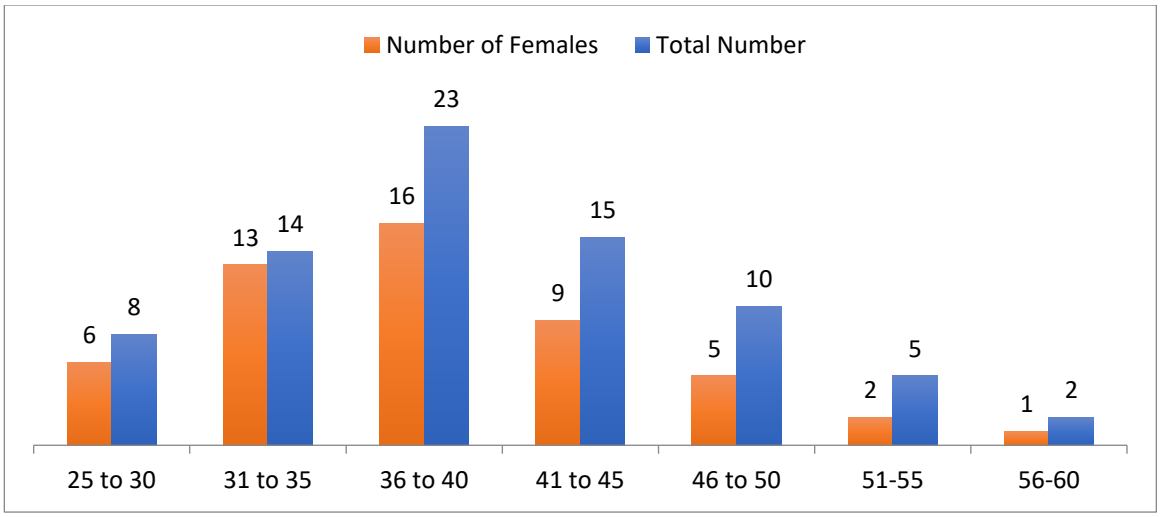


Figure 6: Number of Females in the Survey Population

This shows that the population of the females upto the age of 40 is dominating the respondent population which also indicates that the females above the age of 40 are either not willing to respond or the number of males in this age group are more than females.

The current employment status or positions held by the respondents also indicates that the majority of them are in their mid or high career level and they being the right population to survey for the objectives of this research and to make effective use of the assumptions around Glass Ceiling if it exists in their respective organizations.

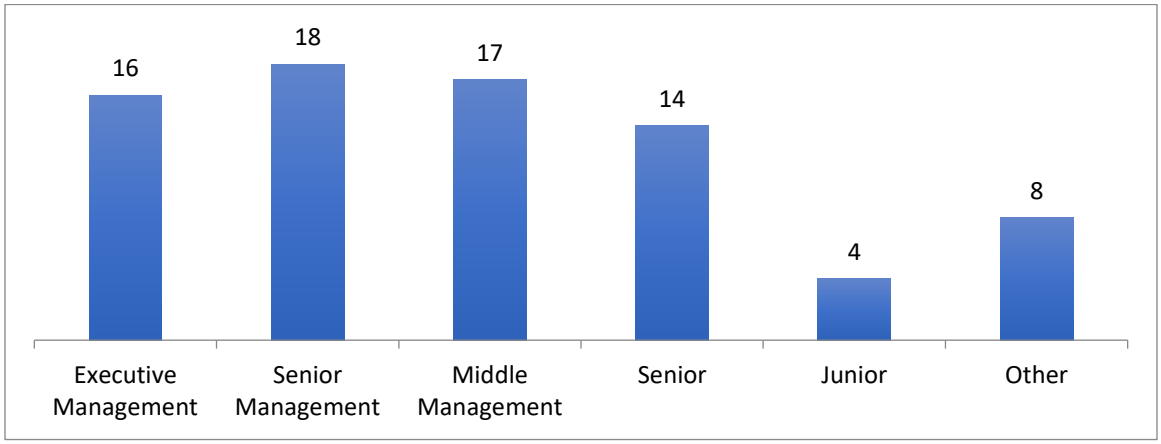


Figure 7: Current employment status of the survey respondents

Another angle to examine the population of respondents is their age group vs gender vs their employment status and this also shows that as the seniority of the respondents increases their employment status also is in the higher categories but with decreasing numbers.

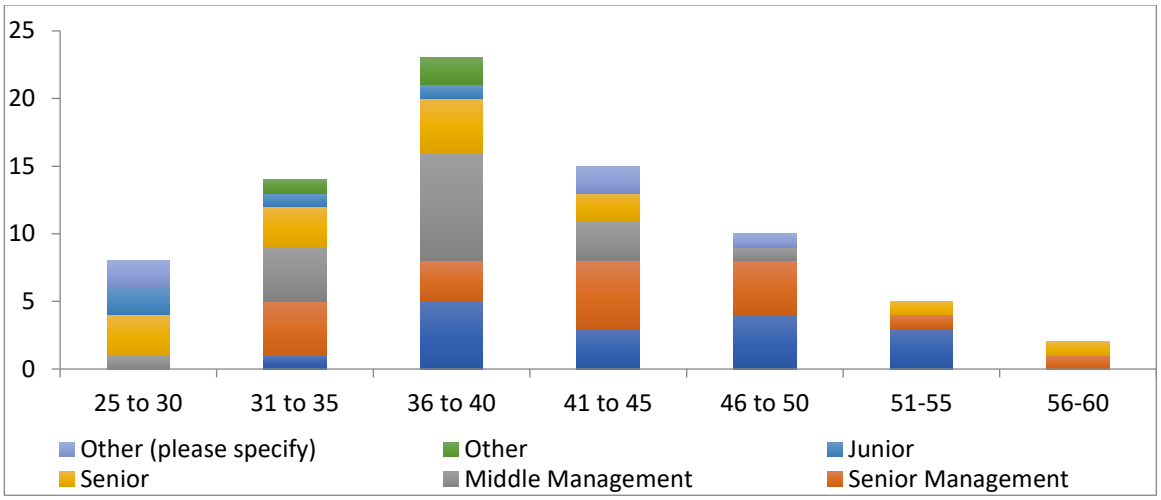


Figure 8: Age Group vs Employment Status of the survey respondents

The same graph for males is different as there is less evidence of the respondents being in junior roles as they progress in age.

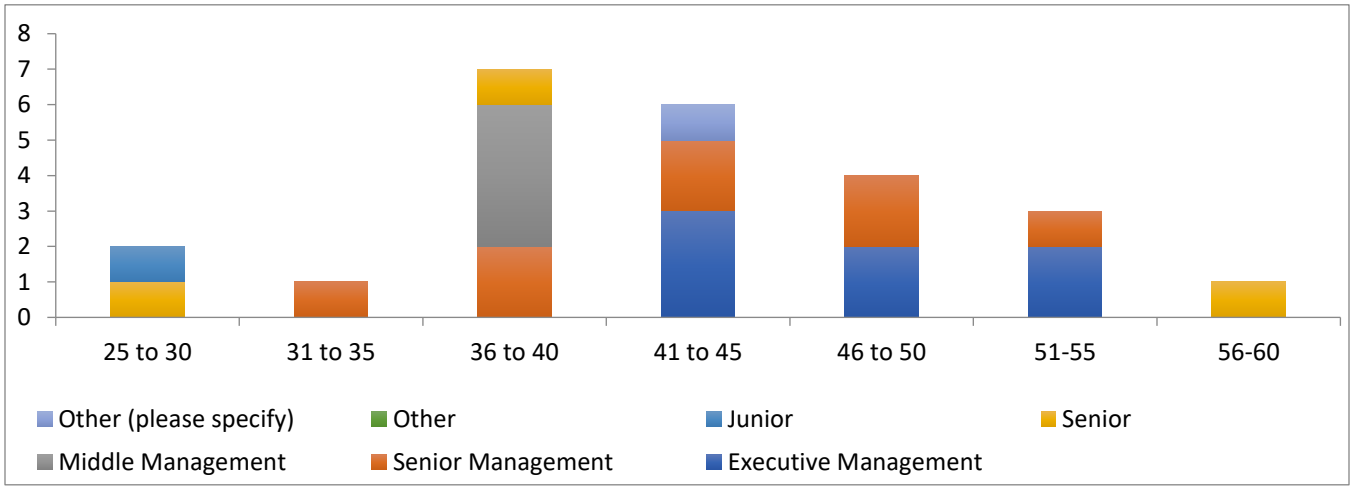


Figure 9: Age Group vs Employment Status of the survey respondents (male)

This age and employment split itself shows how males vs females are progressing in not just one but almost all public sector and government organizations in Qatar. Despite being more qualified and educated in Qatar, females are not prevalent in the higher echelons of management and this shows that the gender inequality in the higher order of employment is clearly evident from the Figures 5 and 6.

4.3. Analysis of responses:

The probes employed to test the existence or absence of the Glass Ceiling are explained in the Methodology section of this document. The findings are first mapped in the Decision Matrix below and then detailed findings are given following the same. It

can be seen that against every probe indicator the positive and negative responses are given in percentages. Most of the probes indicate that the negative responses are higher than the positive responses indicating a likelihood of dissatisfaction and the thus the existence of the glass ceiling.

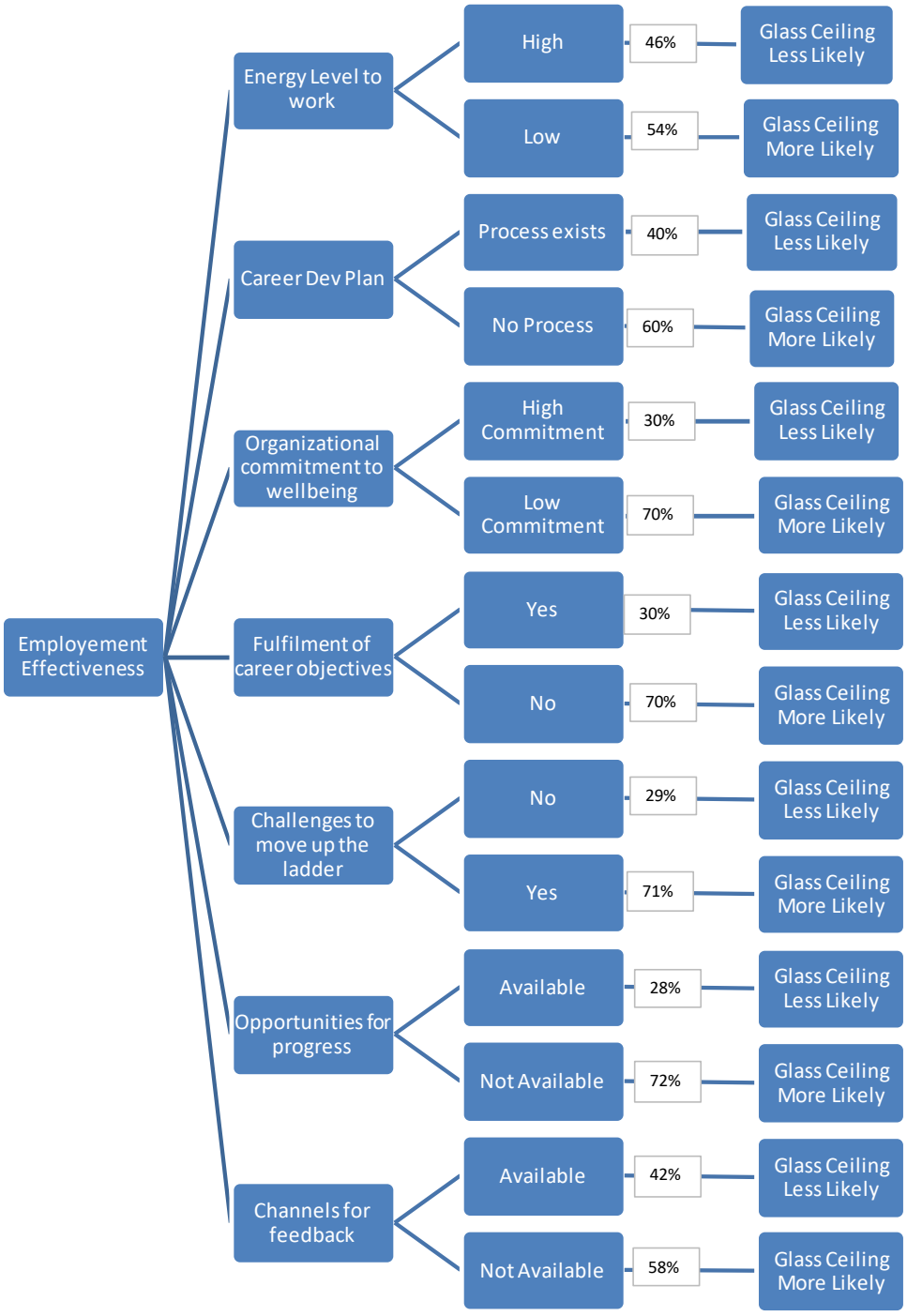


Figure 10: Decision Tree based analysis for employment effectiveness survey amongst employees in Qatari companies

These results are further substantiated if we analyze them for women only and men only employees.

Overall as can be seen, the effectiveness of organizations in Qatar in maintaining satisfaction and engagement of women employees is low. As can be seen in the comparison between the decision tree for the overall rating the dissatisfaction level in women employees is higher than that of men.

Using the employment effectiveness probes in the survey the following have been recorded as findings from the research survey against each probe question:

Probe 1: Energy to work in the current organization:

Here females report a lower energy level than males. Lower energy levels usually comes from the lack of a challenging and interesting work environment that adds value to the career goals of the employee (*Niederle, M., & Vesterlund, L., 2007*). The negative response rate towards this probe indicates that females will probably work only to earn a wage and not really contribute towards the positive outcome of the organization.

Males also report a low energy level but higher than females. This area of work management perhaps needs to be addressed for the entire population of males and females in Qatari organization and especially that it should generate a sense of belongingness to the place of work. Lack of motivation to achieve i.e. the ability of the employees to perform and be rewarded for the performance with promotion or praise usually generates the lack of energy to perform at work. This phenomeon has been reported in previous research as well (*Nelson, S., & Shraim, O., 2014*) and was hence used as a probe in this research and the results do show that the area of energy levels at work has to be addressed by the management of Qatari organizations.

"Will you take leave from work even if there is work exegiencies?" This question tests the protest or dissatisfaction level amongst employees with regard to the energy level at work. If an employee lacks energy at work the natural tendency will be to take leave especially when there is a surge in the work load. The affirmative replies shows that yes, there is a protest level existing in the work place. Such protest levels are usually temporary but repeated protests can lead to permanent protest of leaving work or retracting to one's one comfort zones at work. The employees will not challenge themselves (probe number 5) to perform in higher roles or add positively to the overall outcome of the organization. Out of the 76 respondents only 35 (less than 50%) have chosen not to respond to this question. The answer has been left blank. This could indicate two situations i.e. either that it is a position of protest or it could be a position of not willing to answer in the negative. In both situations abstaining from answering the question leans the person towards disengagement. Many survey respondents have not responded to this question i.e. 41 out of the total of 76 respondents have left the response as blank. This could be

mainly because of the lack of clarity in the question and its link to the fact that the question alludes to the fact that the leave is taken at time of work. It perhaps puts the respondent in a dilemma of how to respond. However, from the people who have replied with a “No” i.e. 35 out of 76 respondents they are mainly male i.e. 20 are male and 15 are female in the 35. It is also probably an indication that men are more attached to the work and more engaged as they are getting the career path whereas their female counterparts could be experiencing things differently. As for those who have responded i.e. 41 out of 76 respondents, only 5 have replied in the affirmative (comment of “Yes”) and 1“maybe”. However, the interesting fact is that all these respondents are females in the mid-career level and above the age of 35. They are all holding middle or senior management positions. The question clearly points to “taking leave during work exigencies”. If a person feels he or she should not help or support the organization during times of work exigencies then it is a clear pointer towards disengagement. The fact that all respondents who did respond in the affirmative are females indicates that there are very few females who do move up the ladder and those who do are not engaged enough to contribute to the organization in a positive manner. As for the 36 respondents who have responded negatively, there seems to be a equal mix of male and female but slightly more females than males. Out of the 17 females, 12 are in senior and middle management roles and above the age of 30. It clearly shows that females who have moved up the ladder are showing commitment to the work. Males who have responded negatively are almost all above the age of 35 and in senior management positions who show commitment towards work with this aspect of the question.

The next sub question in this main question is to examine “any other aspect” of interest that is not covered by any of the sub questions in the main question. 12 out of the 76 respondents chose to enter a comment. Out of the 12, 8 are female and 4 males. Amongst the 8 females there is a mix of junior and senior employees. While some of the females have used this opportunity to express their gratitude to participate in the survey others have shown signs of disengagement such as office politics, lack of salary rise etc. Once again, the intent to provide a response to such a situation of taking feedback has been higher in females. They see more concerned about the work and want attention to solve their problems.

On the topic of engagement the next sub question was to test the sense of belonging where only 48% (32 respondents) have replied in the affirmative and 27 of these 32 are above the age of 35 (ie employees working in the mid-career level). Also out of the 32, 51% (17 respondents) are females and working in the mid-career level. The balance of 49% (15 respondents) are males working mostly working senior management level. As for the balance of 52% of respondents (44 out of 76 respondents) for this question their reply is either blank or categorical “No” i.e. not engaged or other comment indicating a negative opinion to the question. The majority of these respondents (34 out 44

respondents) are females and mostly (30 out of 34) in the above the age of 35. Analysis of their employment level also shows that they have not reached senior management or higher levels within the organization.

Probe 2: Do you have a career development plan for yourself?

A career development plan is an employment effectiveness probe that indicates to a great extent the nature of engagement and satisfaction in the work environment. The existence of the career development plan will provide visibility for the employee of his or her career growth and hence the engagement to continue in employment. Females have reported lower level of positivity than male employees in the response to this probe question. The existence of the career development plan at a personal level is positive. However, the replies indicate that these personal plans are not being formalized by the organization that the survey respondents work for. This indicates that there is commitment from the employee to work on their development goals but the organizations do not seem to reciprocate with a similar approach.

The question in this probe that asks about whether employees have planned their move step by step to higher levels is another question that helps probe the satisfaction and engagement of the employee with the work place. A step-by-step approach means that they know exactly where they should be in mid-career level and to achieve the same what development goals should they work upon. Negative outcome on this probe especially for female employees shows that this is an area that needs to be addressed for improving engagement levels and this can certainly influence the Glass Ceiling.

The question “Do you believe that you should keep building your skills to work in different types of roles within the organization and at different levels?" indicates in both males and females that yes, there is a willingness to build their skills and work in higher levels in the organization. The availability of a self-intention to create a career plan and work in higher levels of the organization is a clear indication of the absence of "sticky floors". If this is the case the lack of gender equality in higher levels of management and grades is a clear indication of the presence of the Glass Ceiling.

Matching employee skills to organizational needs was the next probed question and here the indication was also negative. It indicates that employees are willing to attend training but perhaps to secure their future in other organizations or towards planning a self-employment career. Very few responses, especially amongst females indicated that they are interested to match organizational needs to their development goals.

Probe 3: Organization's commitment to overall well-being of the employee

This probe relates to matters such as health, education of children, holidays, accommodative approach in case of nursing kids or special needs. Most of the male employees have rated this to be positive and that organizations in Qatar are accommodative in their approach towards employee welfare. However, female employees have responded with a negative feeling for this probe.

Female employees especially above the age of 30 show a negative rating for the same probe and mainly because of certain family commitments that perhaps male employees are not exposed to. This is to do more with the social structure of the society and that female employees will face a higher family commitment than male employees (Syed, 2010). This is also one typical reason why women employees will leave employment if not provided with the right work-life balance.

Qatar being a family focused society where the integrity of the family relationship is treated as the highest societal value like in any other middle-eastern society (*Shaya, N. & Abu Khait, R., 2017*), this particular probe about employee well-being is very important to break the Glass Ceiling. Women employees may at a certain stage give up on work if it does not allow them to meet their family commitments. It has repercussions on family life and the commitments that females have in society. If female employees have to contribute positively at work, especially in this part of the world, this would be one area of change that has to be addressed either through slow societal changes towards shared family commitments between males and females or by organizations providing the facilities to female employees to manage their affairs in office and home in a smooth manner.

Probe 4: Will you fulfill your career objectives in your current organization and at the same level or higher levels?

The answers to the energy level at work was mostly negative and more so in females. They would for lack of energy at work probably leave their current job and take up other jobs outside of work or start their own business. As per majority opinion they would certainly not complete their working life in the current job. This is a clear indication of the lack of camaraderie at work and lack of visibility to reach higher levels of management or senior positions.

Positive contribution to the work is another area of concern and lack of visibility between what the organization's objectives are and what the employee is trying to achieve at work can also lead to dissatisfaction which is visible in the replies. This will lead to dissatisfaction and perhaps an indirect way of hitting the Glass Ceiling.

Overall this probe has indicated that majority of the younger employees will not complete their career objectives or working life in their current organization. Older employees who have perhaps reached seniority levels in management have not either replied to this

question or are males who have a positive answer. It gives a clear indication that after a certain stage employee will hit the Glass Ceiling or leave employment for other opportunities outside of work.

Probe 5: Challenges at work.

This probe was a confirmative stance in the survey to see if employees especially female employees are facing the challenges that are typical of the Glass Ceiling.

The first question was probing the engagement level of the employee in terms of how challenged he or she feels in working in the current role. Higher level of challenges will boost energy levels and even perhaps keep the employee engaged to achieve more. However, in case of the survey respondents, most of them have been negative. The junior female employees have indicated that they are feeling challenged and engaged but in the next question they have indicated negatively. This clearly indicates that they are trying to achieve and engage with the organization in their younger age however, when they reach the senior roles of management the same is not possible.

Promotion on merit is a clear indication of the absence of the Glass Ceiling. The majority including males have replied that this is not the case. This means that promotions are based on how employees network and showcase their networking power to move into higher levels of management and not on merit of their performance at work. This reason is a major indicator of the Glass Ceiling because in such circumstances the minority population with less networking opportunities will not be able to move to the higher levels of management.

The next question seeks directly the answer to the question that whether promotion can be based on engagement with the organization or networking with senior management. The answers clearly indicate that promotion is not meritorious but rather based on people's contacts and the way that they can present themselves to senior management. The findings of the study 2002 study on employee endorsements by Tang et.al (Tang et.al, 2002) that employees are usually not satisfied with organizations only because of the monetary benefits but rather how they can achieve overall satisfaction and achievement in life through their work. This will help them endorse the company they work for and hence indicates a positive behavior at work as well. The fact that both males and females have indicated negatively, shows that employees have not really found value in their engagement with work and perhaps consider it only as a source of income rather than an entity where they need to add value as much as the organization needs to add value to their lives.

Probe 6 and 7: Do employees recommend others to join the organization and does the organization promote itself as the employer of choice?

The next probe also questions the employer and how they promote themselves as an employer of choice. Do they like to move themselves towards managing their image as a good employer?

Employees were first probed about the likelihood of the employer to consider internal promotions for senior roles compared to hiring talent from outside the organization. Both the first and second questions in this probe are about internal promotions and recruitment internally in case of vacancies in the organization. This is a clear indication of how well the organization likes to position itself with its employees especially for its concern for their promotion and movement into higher roles. The negative feelings for this probe especially amongst female employees indicate that organizations are not concerned about internal promotions and do not develop their own talent for futuristic roles. This is also a clear indication of the Glass Ceiling.

The third sub-question in this probe was about the concern for employees by the organization. This shows the level of empathy that organizations have towards their employees. This was also negative, and this negativity was recorded for case of both males and females. It is a clear indication that employees will probably leave employment in face of any other eventuality such as an opportunity to do their own business or some other organization which provides better concern for their career.

Probe 8: Challenges faced at work

The next probe question was about the challenges faced at work and it directly asks questions related to the gender bias, work-life balance, management of change and policies for career progression.

Regarding gender-bias the males have responded with a neutral i.e. neither positive or negative sentiments. However, the females have reported a negative sentiment and especially amongst the older respondents. This shows that the gender bias feeling is experienced more as an employee spends more time in the organization.

With regard to work-life balance both genders had a negative sentiment. The older survey respondents however, have responded with an acceptable balance. This indicates that as employees spend more time in the organization, they feel that they have the luxury of allocating and delegating work to the employees reporting to them and have a better work-life balance. The only indicator of the Glass Ceiling with regard to this factor is the fact that the more junior employees have reported this sentiment negatively which means they may not complete their career objectives if this phenomenon persists.

With regard to policies or career progression the responses were again negative throughout the population of survey respondents and more so with regard to the female employees. Even if some organizations do have good or balanced policies towards the same, lack of communicating the same to employees can also lead to this particular predicament.

Probe 9: Opportunities available for career progression.

The first sub-question tested the regular follow up of the organization with regard to the career path progression of its employees. Here the responses were negative both for males and females and not many responses for the older employees. This indicates certain lack of concern for employees' career path progression which then becomes the problem of the employee himself or herself to take care of the problems facing their career and its progression.

Availability of role models is a very important factor in breaking gender equality barriers like the Glass Ceiling. As is obvious the importance of a north star to look up to as the employee charts his or her career and working life for senior roles in the organization is a very important aspect of any organization. This question was purposely placed in the survey to find out how inspirational leaders in the Qatari organizations are that employees can actually look up to them as role models. Unfortunately, the responses were yet again negative. This is one solution area that can be immediately addresses where organizations should create both women and men leaders who are inspirational and act as role models for others to look up to and work towards achieving the same.

Discussing management issues with regard to career progression was the next question with regard to this probe. The fact that most employees have not taken part in such discussions is an indicator that the Glass Ceiling does exist as there is no concerns being raised or discussed with regard to the same within the organization. Open Discussions and feedback are an important mechanism of breaking such barriers and this is a solution area for the Glass Ceiling that immediately needs to be addressed.

Probe 10: Initiatives to bring about Gender Equality in the workplace

The next probe question was around the initiatives that organizations are conducting to break the Glass Ceiling or at least bring about gender equality in the workplace. The responses were mainly "unknown" or "not really" etc. which means that even if some initiatives are being conducted, there is a lack of communication of such initiatives within the employees. The importance of awareness especially amongst male employees to be aware of the problems around gender equality is a must in Qatari organizations. Such initiatives were the result of change in other countries as reported by other researches. Hence, this would also make one of the solutions for breaking the Glass Ceiling.

Probe 11: Channels of Feedback

This was the final probe question placed in the survey to find out how receptive is the organization to receive feedback from employees with regard to their employment issues. Some respondents recognized that such channels exist but the lack of formalization of the channels causes a lack of usage of the same. Employees if don't see a formal process to receive feedback and track the information given therein it can easily lead to dissatisfaction and employee disengagement. This is another reason for the cropping up Glass Ceiling. Minority populations usually rely on a feedback mechanism to maintain equilibrium and this is one of the solutions to break the Glass Ceiling.

With the above overall findings from the survey, it can be said that the effect of the Glass Ceiling is evident and the solutions that can be immediately implemented as well as over a long period of time are both evident. In the discussions section of this document the findings will be compared to other similar findings and the solutions related to what is logically relevant and also corroborated through previous research.

5. Discussions:

The objective of the research was mainly two-fold. The first objective was to conduct a Qualitative online survey using the theme of Qatari Employment Effectiveness in order to extract an unbiased opinion from employees in Qatari organizations of their day-to-day circumstances at work and establish whether the Glass Ceiling is a matter of serious concern amongst employed men and women. The logic being absence of job satisfaction and engagement will indicate that Glass Ceiling does exist in the Qatari job market as this was established in other regions also.

The second objective was to co-relate the updated literature survey to the findings through the survey and recommend policy corrections and societal changes that will help achieve true gender equality at work in Qatar.

5.1. Discussions on the Findings:

The decision tree mechanism employed in this research indicates that an overall dissatisfaction is registered amongst the Qatari working population and hence the overall effectiveness of working in Qatari organizations can be placed at a level of 33% which mean 67% (2/3rd of the working population) will leave work or perhaps work for just earning a wage to meet family commitments. Engaged employment i.e. that which generates positive outcomes for the employee as well as the employer which has the qualities of innovation, progress and positive contribution or value addition to the product that the organization delivers to the public is missing as per the survey.

In the eleven probes employed to test the level of engagement and satisfaction with work, and thus the presence or absence of the Glass Ceiling, employees especially the female employees have indicated being disengaged more than the males and hence perhaps they will leave work when they reach their mid-career level. This is a clear indication of the existence of the Glass Ceiling.

The male employees being more satisfied than the females is also an indicator that perhaps the policies that are currently governing the Qatari organizations are more male focused and the male stereotypes surrounding these policies does not help the female population to progress in the career as much as the male population.

The findings of the research indicate that there are several similarities and differences between the findings of similar research conducted in other parts of the world.

The literature survey has indicated two prominent ways of investigating the Glass Ceiling and these have been the Gender Wage Gap where a higher wage gap indicates absence of a particular gender in employment and hence the Glass Ceiling.

The second method is to find out how effective is the employment and whether employees are satisfied and engaged at work that they will be able to fulfill their career ambitions and their career within their current organization. The lower the satisfaction and engagement the higher will be the chance of the Glass Ceiling.

This research has used the latter approach and used the Decision Tree mechanism to map the overall satisfaction of the employees in Qatari organizations with the likelihood of whether they will continue or not in the organization after a certain age level or experience i.e. the Glass Ceiling.

The use of the Decision Tree mechanism has been effective in drawing the conclusions pattern from the research and also mapping the responses to the outcome of the research.

The method of Decision Tree to be used to derive conclusions in a survey acts as a simple yet powerful statistical tool for classification, prediction and interpretation that has several potential applications in operations research. The mechanism has the advantages of simplifying complex relationships between variables by dividing original input variables into significant subgroups. It is easy to understand and interpret and also easy to handle when there are missing values without having to resort to any regression analysis of data. It is also robust in case of outliers in statistical data.

As with all analytic methods, there are also disadvantages of the decision tree method that have been taken into consideration in this research. The main disadvantage is that it can be subject to sometimes as an over fit or under fit of the outcome, particularly when using small data sets. The problem can limit the robustness of the resultant decisions. It is for this reason that when applying any decision multiple "nodes" or decision points should be used to probe the same problem area and this is what was done as part of this research thus eliminating the problems associated with this particular phenomenon.

A comprehensive review of the statistical literature of classification tree methods that may be useful for future researchers who want to learn more about the statistical theories behind the decision tree method is available through other literature. There are several applications of decision tree models that have not been considered for review or description in this research.

With regard to the findings from the survey, it can be said that the satisfaction and Engagement levels are negative amongst females more than males. The reason for females continuing to work despite being dissatisfied and disengaged more than males is perhaps to fill a gap till they get their next better opportunity to work in an organization where they can fulfill their career objectives. This is one major reason to believe that women will not fulfill their career objectives in the current organization and hence leave work indicating the presence of the Glass Ceiling.

Women employees have not exhibited any sign of not willing to grow in their careers that is no sign of "sticky floors". There were several probes and repeat probes that were used to find out the same and all of them indicate that women are willing to continue in employment as long as they have a clear career path, are provided challenging work assignments, provided the right work-life balance with the right channels to provide feedback to employers on how to improve at work.

Self-development i.e. career plan for the self and the challenges faced at work show that the employees have the motivation to grow in their career and achieve more for themselves and the organizations that they serve but perhaps the opportunities and the policies don't go hand in hand to provide a congenial environment to produce a positive outcome towards breaking the Glass Ceiling.

If employees are willing to work with higher energy levels and also have a career development plan that supports their career objectives and are able to provide positive or negative feedback, it means that they want to grow in their organization however, circumstances such as the Glass Ceiling are limiting them from getting there.

The probes on career progression and career path also indicate that women are willing to participate in higher levels of management and perform in the same but are not being supported in this mission by the policies and stereotypes existing in Qatari organizations.

Glass Ceiling exists in Qatari organizations in mid-career level and has been expressed through a combination of dissatisfaction and disengagement with the organization especially by women employees in this age range. They are likely to leave the organization if suitable opportunities arise outside of the organization and if action is not taken in creating a participative style of working so that they maintain high energy levels and higher engagement with the organization.

The non-existence of inspirational women role models is also another area of concern amongst women employees that needs attention from the management of Qatari organizations. The changes on gender equality at all levels requires policy and societal changes however, the creation of women role models will help in creating an objective setting mindset for both women employees and the society on a whole to work towards solving the problem at a faster pace. This particular phenomenon has been discussed in length in document 4 and examples are found in several European societies that have created inroads in breaking the Glass Ceiling by adopting this approach.

In case women are inflicting a Glass Ceiling upon themselves by resisting to progress in their career the probes in the survey have found that there are ways and to break that also as there is willingness amongst women to work towards formalization of a career path and to have opportunities to discuss their progress at work in a conscious manner. The survey probes that indicate this phenomenon are the willingness to move to higher

positions especially amongst women is positive and hence indicates that women have the intent to take the next career step but other circumstances as indicated by other probes are hindering the progress. The probes with regard to career development plan being low for both men and women is also an indicator that it is not about the lack of willingness to move forward with the career but the absence of the plan. The lack of a career path that indicates a career development plan and step by step approach towards reaching a goal which means the amount of work to be done or time doing significant contribution to the organization based on which an employee will get the promotion to higher levels in the organization. This vision if not clear it is likely that employees will hit a Glass Ceiling and then perhaps leave or stop working progressively in the organization.

Majority of the respondents especially in the higher age groups i.e. above 35 years old reported low energy levels and not motivated to work. The reason perhaps that they are still at work is probably because of lack of accountability between output and pay and whether or not they work, they would perhaps be paid to fill a vacancy. This especially shows up in employees who have spent a longer time at work in an organization. In order to reemphasize this point the engagement with leadership was also queried in the probe 1. Majority of the respondents have not registered a reply to this probe question. However, it is clear from those who have responded that there is quite a lot of similarity between motivation to work and the engagement with leadership i.e. that the motivation and engagement with leadership of employees is going down with age and experience in their respective organizations and perhaps their coming to work is only to earn a living. To add to this phenomenon if all those who remain with growing age in the organization happen to be all or mostly males then it is very likely that females will not continue to remain engaged or pursue their career after the mid-career level.

It clearly shows that females have a higher disengagement with the organization as they move up the ladder of employment and they are in this case likely to leave the organization or continue working for a pay and a living rather than fulfilling any career objectives. It also shows that organizations are not making a strong move towards balancing gender equality in all levels of the organization.

The other aspect of this phenomenon is that the sense of belonging in the affirmative or engagement to the organization could also mean Sticky Floors where employees are simply lazy or lack motivation or are complacent to move up the ladder and would rather work with less responsibilities and not move up the ladder to accept more responsibilities.

The investigative aspect of taking time off from work is also an indicator of the Glass Ceiling. Taking time off regularly does reflect upon the engagement with work and it is also an indication of how the employee will perform at work i.e. always excited about having to go from work and not really feeling himself or herself at work. Taking leave in situations when the organization actually needs the presence of the employee at work i.e.

work exigencies. This also shows how engaged or connected is the work environment and the employee.

5.2. Solutions to solve the Glass Ceiling applicable to Qatar

As for the solutions to solve the Glass Ceiling the research and the qualitative survey used in it has pointed out several solutions that can be implemented. Policy changes, Process changes and Culture changes are the three broad areas of how to achieve the desired outcome of breaking the Glass Ceiling.

Changing policy and its associated processes in organizations are considered in this research to be low hanging fruits or short-term quick win solutions as they can be enacted through management decisions, discussions and mandates in a short period of time.

Cultural changes on the other hand require societal influence and perhaps change of mindset that can be considered to be long-term solutions to reach a solution to the problem. It is desired that organizations in Qatar and the senior leadership through governmental agencies, women lobbies and the media promote both the small term and the long-term solutions simultaneously so that there will be enough traction to achieve the solutions in a long-lasting manner.

The solutions are discussed below:

Policy and Process changes as short-term solutions to break the Glass Ceiling are to do with the fact that every employee deserves a career path, motivation to achieve the career path and a progress report of where he or she is relative to the career path. This is a low hanging fruit for all organizations to adopt as a solution for the Glass Ceiling. This solution consists of creating policies and processes for creating and managing career paths of all employees. It has been clearly indicated that employees will engage more with the organization and contribute positively if they know that by achieving certain milestones in their career, they can be given a promotion or move into more challenging tasks provided by the positions in higher management. The career path discussion has been found as a solution in other researches as well which has been discussed in the literature survey of this research. The main factor surrounding the success of the career path initiatives are the visibility that it provides to the employee to work in senior roles in the organization and also to shoulder responsibilities in lieu of better opportunities in the future. Positive contribution to current day work also increases when employees are motivated with what is to come in the future. Targeted performance levels can easily be achieved by providing the much-needed visibility in the work pattern today and in the future.

Building a work-life balance can help female employees a lot in building a liking for their job and also contributing positively towards the work and perhaps continuing in work to achieve their career objectives and thus breaking the Glass Ceiling. Organizations can build a concerted effort as Qatar is a closely connected country where organizations can

easily collaborate on this front through common forums and governmental agencies. A common policy on how to support female employees with their family and work commitments will generate a lot of good will amongst the female employees to continue in work and fulfill their career objectives and hence break the Glass Ceiling. The literature survey has also indicated several examples of this case in the Europe and the USA where building a framework for time off work and combined parenting i.e. paternity and maternity leaves help the employees to be more engaged and loyal to the organization that they work for and hence break the Glass Ceiling.

Exposure to more challenges or making work more interesting is an organization specific phenomenon and each type of organization can have its own unique way of addressing this solution. A common way of finding out how to address the problem and hence find a solution is are employee engagement surveys conducted periodically within the organization that can help leaders understand how to improve the engagement levels by making the work culture more interesting, transparent and challenging for the employees. If the outcome of the surveys is taken as action items by each organization and they work towards it, the employees will remain engaged with the organization till they fulfill their career objectives and retire in the organization hence breaking the Glass Ceiling.

Exposure of employees to work in higher management roles is also a process-based change that many organizations can implement in the short term. They need to build processes within the organization to move employees to different positions for short period of times as hands on experience and also perhaps create mentor-mentee pairs where mentees can get exposure to higher levels of working in the organization especially with regard to decision making, managing people and leading a change. Such exposure will create a sense of responsibility as has been discussed in the literature survey and found in other parts of the world. Such responsibility can create loyalty and engagement with the organization and also break the Glass Ceiling.

Channels and mechanisms to provide feedback to the organization both through direct line managers and confidentially through other feedback channels such as idea management portals or grievance committees can help also build a process based solution to improve the engagement and hence break the Glass Ceiling. This is a useful mechanism to break the barriers of communications at work and help employees talk and solve their problems rather than to keep pondering over the problem and perhaps taking a hard decision to leave the organization so as to alleviate the problem. Feedback can be related to work related issues or even product related issues where junior employees may individually or collectively decide to provide positive feedback and recommendations to the organizations to change the product or output for the better. Feedback has been also seen in the literature to be a positive contribution to work culture improvements and creating a positive engagement with work. It can certainly help in breaking the Glass Ceiling.

Appointment of women role models is another solution that is envisaged as a short term solution that is easily implemented especially with the creation of the Qatar Leadership Center where men and women are being trained as leaders and a central pool of leadership has been very well constituted in the country. It means Qatari organizations can now start putting women leaders as role models in prominent positions and contributing positively to the organizations that they work for and hence becoming a guiding north star to the junior women employees in Qatari organizations to take inspiration and imbibe their progress and hence also aspire to be leaders of the future. This has been discussed in length as a quick win in breaking the barriers of the Glass Ceiling and making the employment in higher roles of Qatari organizations interesting for the women employees.

Culture changes as long-term solutions to provide a congenial work environment to deliver higher energy levels of employees during work is a culture shift that has to be developed within Qatari organizations. It means there are challenges posed by the tasks assigned to employees, periodical communication of work requirements and high engagement of the leadership to keep the employees motivated and inspired to work. This will then lead to the energy level to deliver work as high and the work tasks will become more challenging and interesting and hence improve the working life of the employees. It will hence help them to continue in work and thus breaking the Glass Ceiling. This culture shift will also happen if the short-term process based shifts are addressed. As has been shown through the literature survey and the responses from the survey respondents in this research, this is a major area of concern and people do want to change the situation as long as organizations and the leadership within them are able to support such cultural shifts. Employees can be more engaged and productive if the work energy is maintained high and there is continuous follow up and challenging assignments that encourage the employees to improve his or her performance at all times. Such a culture shift requires to build up transparency and open sharing of work related objectives that every employee has been allocated. It adds to the participation of the employee in the work and creates an excitement to come to work every day and also perform to one's maximum level. It is hence a mindset change and a culture-shift, which is likely to take some time to implement. It can be enacted by creating for example, open plan offices rather than cabin type closed door office rooms. It can also be created by making policies on the number of times that employees should meet each other in the workplace and follow up on the tasks that are allocated to each other. It can also be improved by making the tasks more challenging for the mind and interesting for the employees. Tasks should be such that they are interesting to deliver and yet contributing positively towards the output of the organization.

Visibility of how the employee's output actually contributes to the output of the organization is also another area of work culture shift required in Qatar that builds up the

energy level to perform at work. This phenomenon is a culture shift more than a process shift. It involves the employees to share the tasks that directly or indirectly add value to the output of the department (culture shift) or organization that they work for. It also requires an understanding of who is the immediate i.e. direct customer and the indirect customer of one's work output (process shift). Based on this knowledge the work can be structured in such a way that employees see directly the value that they contribute or add to the work output and hence the value that it generates for the organization. It also requires managers to communicate to the employees on a regular basis of how their work is actually adding value to the output of the department or team that they work for. In case value is not being added, then appropriate feedback should also be provided in a timely manner to mitigate any disengagement levels that will come about from this phenomenon. Visibility of output and positive contribution to work requirements is a well-researched area that will certainly motivate and enhance employee output and hence their engagement and satisfaction with their work environment. Higher the satisfaction levels, lower will be the chances of hitting the Glass Ceiling.

Breaking the male stereotypes is another area that needs to be worked on from the culture change aspect and as a long-term solution. Currently male employees may not even realize the presence of the stereotype and will perhaps be one of the major causes amongst women to hit the glass ceiling. For example, leadership is a quality that especially in the middle-east, is stereotyped with men and this has been discussed in previous documents of this DBA program. The Qatari society at large has had very few women leaders either leading businesses or community activities or government initiatives. Hence when a woman does strive hard and becomes a leader it is time for the community to celebrate and talk about her success story. However, even in these situations, leadership qualities amongst women are seen to be something that is an imitation of that of men and past researches have indicated the same.

For these reasons of stereotyping, women in the mid-career tend not to go above a level where they need to exhibit leadership qualities. Leaders are of two types, born and made. Even though there are arguments that leaders cannot be made and only have to be born, there is enough evidence to show that leaders can be made. Women in the middle-east are now increasingly embarking on gaining leadership qualities and looking at leadership as their biggest asset to break the glass ceiling and move up. It seems to be the only resort to getting into senior management positions as these positions calls for managing teams, programs and projects. However, women are then also falling into the trap of imitating the male leadership qualities and stereotyping. Women have their inherent leadership qualities that are different to men and where such leadership is required in its original form rather than stereotyped to that of men, women have to utilize these leadership qualities in organizations. Examples of such leadership qualities when compared to men are in managing human resources. For example, a woman can with

her emotions that are different to that of men convince an individual or a team about how to manage a conflict within a team. Men would look at the problem in a digital manner “Yes”, “No” etc. whereas women will go that extra mile and look at the inner shades of gray in a subject and deal with the situation emotionally and patiently rather than just on the merits of who said or did what. Why don’t organizations use these leadership qualities to their advantage rather than depending only upon men leaders for any situation? The answer is again not to be found in any book or law but the mindset of people which includes women. When it comes to leadership qualities, people are prone to assess and recruit people who can display male like leadership and hence the vacuum of women leaders starts.

Overall the discussions on the findings of this research have highlighted the problem areas of the Employment Effectiveness in both male and female employees in Qatar and the cause of the Glass Ceiling. Solutions leading to solving this problem form the recommendations of this research and also lead to further work in the area of human resource management that has to be looked at holistically in order to deliver a long lasting solution to the problem and make both men and women equal in both pursuing and gaining higher management positions in Qatari organizations.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations:

This research has helped in consolidating and highlighting from the study of the literature the effects of the Glass Ceiling and women employment in higher levels of organizations and its impact in the middle east region in general and Qatar in particular.

A step by step approach is recommended to be adopted in Qatar as follows:

Step 1: Create awareness of the importance of gender equality in all parts of Qatari organizations. This should also be led at the national level in government departments and in public sector companies and by having public forums to discuss the importance of gender equality.

Step 2: Create a cultural shift by providing male and female employees with career paths right from the start of the career and close monitoring of the same.

Step 3: Create role models for leadership both amongst men and women and hence establish the basis for gender equality in all rungs of the organizational ladder.

Step 4: Reward and incentivize organizations that demonstrate gender equality and monitor and track it religiously as an organizational key performance indicator.

The major conclusions to be drawn from the consolidation of literature is that the Glass Ceiling and its features are related mainly to women at work and every organization and Qatar, as a country on a whole, should be conscious of it and solve it in order to move the Human Development agenda of the Qatar National Vision 2030 forward. Statistical indicators of women being more educationally qualified than men but not being trained and job-enriched to work in higher levels of management and senior positions within Qatari organizations is clear evidence of the existence of the Glass Ceiling and hence the necessity to solve it.

The research has analyzed various methods of detecting the Glass Ceiling and has adopted the survey based purposive sampling method to seek evidence of the Glass Ceiling by studying Employee Engagement and Satisfaction in Qatari organizations. The survey and its findings have clearly indicated that women have not inflicted the Glass Ceiling upon themselves. There is evidence to believe that they care and are aware of the importance of a career path and achievement of career objectives at every level of the organization and that they also need to fulfill career objectives as much as men. However, due to the lack of certain processes that can promote the progress of both men and women purely based on merits of the work and not on the gender, the Glass Ceiling has been noticed and is a clear evidence of the need for reform. Culture based changes are also required to make these new processes effective and these cultural changes are

related both to the traditional patriarchal mindset of the people in general and the work cultures in Qatari organizations.

The presence of the Glass Ceiling in Qatari organizations was clearly evident through this research. Eleven probes were used to gauge the effect of the Employee Satisfaction and Engagement and thus lead to the detection of the Glass Ceiling. The survey findings were analyzed by employing The Decision Tree method that is a common practice in operations and management research to find out how much impact does each sub-factor have on the final outcome or conclusion of a particular phenomenon. The presence of the Glass Ceiling was clearly evident through the survey and the analysis using the Decision Tree method. The characteristics of the Glass Ceiling in terms of how it has set in due to the lack of processes and policies was also part of the analysis and has indicated that such change in policy and process can immediately deliver the required results to break the Glass Ceiling. Short term and Long-term solutions have been discussed in length recommended to be studied and implemented in Qatari organizations.

This research has also highlighted that Gender Equality needs to be addressed at all levels of the organization in Qatar. Gender equality is usually treated as a whole i.e. if men and women are equal in number in employment across organizations then it is treated as "equality achieved". What organizations across the nation need to look at is gender equality at each level of the organization and ensure that it is achieved in all levels. Entry-level jobs usually have women in higher numbers than men and this is because of the higher graduation rate of women than men. This will ensure that social problems such as the Glass Ceiling are kept on check and women can contribute as much as men to the progress of the nation and the community at large.

The research has recommended the introduction and change in certain processes and policies that will lead to higher effectiveness rates of employment and improve engagement and satisfaction of employees with the organization. It will then improve the condition of women and break the effects of the Glass Ceiling so that they also fulfill their career objectives in Qatari organizations as much as men. The research has been very unbiased in obtaining the feedback from women and men and has analyzed the responses in depth. Hence it is recommended that the findings and discussions of the research form important inputs to the study of female employment in Qatar.

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Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

Copy of Email sent with the questionnaire link:

Dear Survey Participant,

I, Buthaina Al Ansari, am pursuing a doctoral research in the field of business administration. If you have received this communication, it is because you have been nominated by a friend who believes that you are someone who can provide independent unbiased opinion about your work. The attached participant consent form and project information has all the details that you need to know in order to participate in this survey. I would appreciate if you could read the attached participant consent form and the information about my research and answer the questions in this survey to the best of your ability.

I promise to keep your responses confidential and also use it only as findings of my research and not for any other purpose. I also promise to secure the data collected through your responses and that of all other survey participants and not to undermine the confidentiality in any way. Please don't participate if you are not in agreement of the data security and privacy information provided or other details in the consent form. You are once again assured of complete confidentiality whether you consent or don't consent to participate in the survey.

Survey Questionnaire used for online data collection:

Please first fill in your personal information, which is confidential and will not be used to reveal your responses to anyone. This personal information will only help me construct a statistical and demographic information about all the responses put together.

Please mark your Gender	Male Female
Your present Age Range	24 and below 25-30 30-35 35-40 40-45 45-50 50-55 55-60

Please mention your job role	Junior Senior Middle Management Senior Management Executive Management
Length of Service (combination of all places worked after completing undergraduate college education)	1 – 5 years 5 – 10 years 10 – 15 years 15 – 20 years 20 and above years
What type of Organization do you currently work	Government Private Public Shareholding Self Employed

Survey Questionnaire - Part 1 (Questions on Demographics)

Please provide your responses to the best of your ability to the following questions. In answering the question I suggest below some themes to guide your answer. You may find the themes relevant. Or you may prefer to add your own ideas. Please use as much space as you need to share your thoughts in response to the question.

Q1. How do you describe your energy to work in your current organization?

Consider the following in your answer:

- Are you motivated enough to continue working in your current role because it will help you achieve your career objectives?
- Do you come to work everyday looking forward to engage with your managers and your colleagues in a productive manner?
- Do you feel a sense of belonging at work and that your managers and colleagues treat you with respect and consider you to be a valuable member of the team?
- Will you take leave from work when you know that there is a lot to be done and that you might spend more time than usual at work?

Q2. Do you have a career development plan for yourself?

Consider the following in your answer:

- Do you have a plan for yourself based on your career goals and does anyone in the organization like the HR manager or your own line manager evaluate this on a periodical basis?
- Have you planned your move step by step to reach where you are currently in your career?
- Do you believe that you should keep building your skills to work in different types of roles within the organization and at different levels?
- Does your organization encourage you to develop your skills based on the organizational needs?
- Do you attend training programs that are relevant to your career goals?

Q3. Describe your organization's commitment to your overall wellbeing.

Consider the following in your answer:

- Does your organization offer you time off from work to spend with your family?
- Does your organization consider your needs with regard to your young children such as maternity/paternity leaves or childcare?
- Does your organization reimburse or compensate you for your children's education expenses?

Q4. Considering your responses to questions 1-3 above will you fulfill your career objectives in your current organization and at the same level or higher levels?

Consider the following in your answer:

- Your energy levels at work are so high that you cannot contemplate moving out of your job or even out of your department
- You feel that you contribute positively and add value to yourself and the output of your organization which you recognize as much as the organization recognizes the same
- You are motivated and empowered to achieve your career objectives
- Your organization takes care of your career as well as family/personal needs so well that you don't have to look anywhere else to fulfill your goals in life.

Q5. Describe your current challenges at work in terms of how easy or difficult is it for you to move up the ladder and work in higher roles or to fulfill your career objectives?

Consider the following in your answer:

- Do you feel that you are getting enough exposure in your current role to challenges that will help you work in higher roles?
- Does your organization promote people on merit or because of whom they know and their influence level in the organization?
- What will you do to move up your organization, work hard and add value to the organizational outputs or will you make contacts and network with people to make your presence felt?

Q6. Do you feel you should recommend your company to other friends to work here as it provides opportunities to career progression?
Consider the following in your answer:

- You are so proud of your work and your colleagues that you recommend your close relatives and friends to join your place of work in other words you are a proud apostle of your organization.
- You want to recommend your organization to others because it helps fulfills your career objectives and hence it should help others as well if they have similar goals in life.\

Q7. How well does your organization promote itself to be an employer of choice?
Consider the following:

- Your organization first looks within before externally for any vacancies or new roles that arise within the organization.
- Your organization believes in promoting its own people and their well-being and hence brands itself as an employer of choice.
- Your organization is concerned about each and every employee at all levels of the organization and recognizes the effort of each individual in achieving the vision of the organization.

Q8. What challenges or barriers have you faced that have held back your career?
Consider the following in your answer:

- Is gender bias an issue that you feel could be influencing your growth? Are both genders equally represented at all levels of the organization – junior and senior?
- Is the availability of work-life balance an issue in higher roles?
- Is the company undergoing change all the time and hence does not allow you to focus on the skill set that will help you move to a higher role?
- Does the company have policies for career progression or is it purely based on the skill set required for the higher role?

Q9. What are the opportunities provided for you to progress in your career?
Consider the following in your answer:

- Regular follow up with you of the status of your self-development and skill development path that helps you to move up your career.
- Availability of role models and good examples of how someone should progress in their career and move up the career path.
- Trigger management discussions in the event of lack of career progression and forcing employees to incrementally move up or re-plan their progression path.

Q10. Describe any initiatives currently underway in your organization that are considered to be corrective actions to setting a career path for all employees male and female.
Consider the following:

- If there are no initiatives, please answer – No initiatives.
- Organizations may run a campaign for career path creation for select high performing employees.
- Companies may conduct an initiative to link training of employees to match organizational needs and employee skill gaps.

Q11. Describe the channels available to you to provide feedback to your organization to improve its operations with regard to its employees.
Consider the following:

- Intranet site to collect employee concerns and feedback.
- Periodical surveys conducted within the organization to know employee engagement levels and their motivation to continue serving the organization
- Public forums to address employee concerns

Thanks for your time. As the researcher I will ensure that I will not share your responses with anyone but publish my research findings based on aggregated answers from all the survey responses.

Buthaina Hasan Al Ansari

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Questionnaire Part 2 (Survey Questions)

Appendix 2: Ethical process – The explanation provided to each survey participant in a Q&A format

What is the purpose of the study?

The Qatari Employment Effectiveness study will help understand whether or not Qatari employees have a clear career progression as they move from junior to senior roles in an organization. Similar research in other countries have pointed to several important improvements in the way employees are treated and policies are built such that employees are promoted and move up the organizational ladder depending upon the value that they add rather than the relationships that they build at work. Such progression means employees can fulfill career objectives that they have planned to achieve as long as their objectives can align to the value addition that the organization delivers to society.

What we will be doing?

We will be conducting an online survey using the survey monkey online survey tool. The responses to the survey should be submitted online and these are open ended questions with no multiple-choice answers but rather free-text responses to the problem that you are facing at work.

Who is running this study?

The study is being conducted by me, Buthaina Hasan Al Ansari. I am supervised by Dr Valerie Caven and Dr Helen Shipton of Nottingham Business School.

Do I have to take part?

Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep, and you will also be asked to sign the consent form (part 2) attached. After submitting your responses, if you would like to withdraw your responses, you will be free to do so within four weeks after the closure date of the study that will be available in the survey link as well as communicated to you by email. If you decide not to take part, or to withdraw at any stage, you will not be asked to give us any reasons.

What do you want me to do?

If you agree to participate, you will be studying the online questionnaire thoroughly and providing me with answers for the questions in a clear and concise manner. The answer should be your best response to what you are facing as a Qatari employee of a Qatari organization. Please don't answer any question that may not be applicable to you. The answers must reflect your own experience of the issues that you face at work. The

answers have no right or wrong answers neither do you have to select from a choice of answers. Please write in the free-text space given below each question what you think is the best response for the question. We have provided some thoughts for you to consider in order to understand the question better. These thoughts don't allude to any answer but rather point you in the right direction of understanding the question better.

What will happen to the information I give in the survey?

Upon receiving your survey response and other responses from other participants I will consolidate the results and draw patterns in the responses to benchmark and compare the effectiveness of career progression of Qatari employees. Problem areas if they were similar to those faced in other countries will be addressed in my findings. In case new problem areas that are unique to Qatar are discovered, then these will be analyzed further, and conclusions made appropriately.

How will you protect my confidentiality and anonymity?

The data collected from the survey responses will be handled only by myself in line with data protection principles and NTU's approved research protocol. Electronic files will be kept on password protected computers that are not accessible to any other person. All transcripts will be fully anonymized and any information that identifies you or your organization, or that gives any clues to your identity, will be removed. We are confident that these precautions will ensure that no-one will be able to trace your survey responses back to you or your organization. Only I will have access to recordings. Following Graduation, the data from all surveys will be destroyed and the relevant files erased.

We would like to reassure survey respondents that such information will be treated confidentiality. Extracts from the survey responses will be used in the final report. To protect your anonymity all names, places and organizations will be changed or referred to as 'organization x', 'respondent 1'. You will not be named or otherwise identified in any publication arising from this project unless your role forms part of a narrative that is already in the public domain (for example, if you were the named author of a published document or gave evidence to a public inquiry relevant to the study). No unpublished opinions or information will be attributed to you, either by name or position.

What are the possible benefits?

We hope that you will find the survey questions interesting and will take satisfaction from helping me with my research project.

What are the disadvantages and risks in taking part?

The main cost to you will be the time needed to be complete the online survey. The main risk is that you might give us information that is detrimental to you or your organization,

or that runs counter to data protection laws. We are confident that we have mitigated this risk and that the arrangements described above will prevent any of your information being shared with anyone outside the research team i.e. my supervisors and myself. For this reason, we believe that the risk of detriment is very low.

What will happen to the results?

The findings will be included in my final year project document and seen only by my supervisor, a second marker and possibly as part of a sample reviewed by an External Examiner to ensure NTU's quality procedures are followed.

Has anyone reviewed the study?

The proposal for this project has been vetted and approved by my supervisor on behalf of the College Research Ethics Committee. Through the research there are stringent reporting requirements back to this committee and my supervisor as regards the progress of the research and any issues or concerns are raised here. NTU is ultimately responsible for the conduct of the project. The university's ethical approval procedure has been consulted and there is no requirement for a DBS check.

For more information, please contact me Buthaina Hasan Al Ansari at the address below:

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