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### The Doha Paradox: Disparity between Educated and Working Qatari Women

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Qatar is considered one of the best places in the world for women to get an education. Research has shown that for every man, there are six women enrolled in tertiary education. This upward trend in the willingness and ability of women to receive higher education is undeniably encouraging. However, though labelled a “vital element within the development process” of Qatar, the Qatari women’s role in the labor market is, at best, limited. Recent data demonstrates that the participation of women in Qatar’s labor force was a meagre 35%. Qatar, however, has made the empowerment of women in the labor market a significant part of its Development Strategy. The designers for Qatar National Vision have formulated its first National Development Strategy (2011–2016) with Human development being one of the four major pillars of this strategy. One of the aims of Human Development under NDS (2011–2016) is to increase opportunities for women to “contribute to the economic and cultural world without reducing their role in the family structure.” This research, therefore, intends to analyze a) Qatar’s success in carving out a more vital role for its female citizens and b) the obstacles in the realization of their goal to establish a more gender-inclusive labor force. The reasons for this analysis are, therefore, not solely to augment and scrutinize Qatar’s Development Strategy but to demonstrate that Qatar’s extensive investment in education will not reap benefits if the majority of its educated does not take advantage of the various avenues their learning opens up. Whether this is due to unwillingness on the part of women to work or due to gender neutral reasons such as the gap between education, training and job placement or other motives; this research aims to ascertain the reasons for this difference.

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