Qatar's English Education Policy in K-12 and Higher Education: Rapid Development, Radical Reform and Transition to a New Way Forward

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Abstract The State of Qatar is a small peninsula in the Arabian Gulf that remained relatively unknown outside the region from its independence from Britain in 1971 until the late 1990s. An ambitious education reform and development program, on a scale—and at a speed—rarely if ever seen before, has seen Qatar go from a few schools and no universities at independence to a comprehensive K-12 system, three technical colleges and 15 universities (at the time of writing), most housed Education City, that combine the best of foreign education with local institutions. Education reform at all levels is fraught with difficulty in every country and has a long record of failure in most jurisdictions. It is not surprising then, that Qatar's English for a New Era reform (EFNE), launched in 2002, came under heavy local criticism for rapidly instituting English as the medium of instruction in the K-12 system and for a failure to deliver promised improvements. In 2012, as a result of these perceived failures the Rand Corporation, author of the reform, did not have its contract with Qatar renewed. At the same time, the medium of instruction at the K-12 level reverted to Arabic. Similarly, simmering discontent with the dominance of English in higher education—and the perceived primacy of the imported education institutions—resulted in Qatar University officially becoming Arabic medium of instruction in many subjects. Therefore, Qatar is now at a policy crossroads. Does the leadership maintain the remaining EFNE reforms in the K-12 system now that Arabic has been restored to prominence? Do the Education City universities continue their dominance of higher education while continuing to be fully funded by the State of Qatar? At present, it seems that Qatar intends to stay the course and concentrate on a reform of teacher education in order to boost the number of Qatari teachers and to further improve the school system. Given that EFNE was producing improvements, albeit more slowly than desired, this seems like the prudent course.

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However, the Supreme Education Council, the body that oversees all levels of education in Qatar is known for making massive changes or reversal of policy with extreme rapidity. Therefore, only time will answer the question: "Whither education policy in Qatar?"

Keywords Qatar • Language policy • Education policy • Education reform • English as a medium of instruction • K-12 • Higher education • International education • Arabian Gulf • Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

1 Introduction

The State of Qatar is a small peninsula (approximately 11,586 sq. km) in the Arabian Gulf. It borders Saudi Arabia and juts into the Arabian Gulf[1] The island Kingdom of Bahrain, lies some 15–30 miles (24–48 km) northwest of Qatar (CIA 2014). Qatar's history as a nation is relatively recent; it was first recognized as a national entity separate from Bahrain in 1868. Although nominally under British influence from the nineteenth century, Qatar officially became a British Protectorate in 1916 (Smith 1994). It achieved independence from the United Kingdom on September 3, 1971.

Like many countries in the Middle East, Qatar's educational terrain is marked by the tension that arises from the need to preserve cultural identity on the one hand and the desire to adapt Western educational methods (and the English language) on the other. This discord between heritage and the economic imperative of learning English will be explored in greater depth in Sects. 2 and 3 following an analysis of Qatar's past and current English education policies. Like most of the Arabian Gulf States, the formal education system in Qatar was practically non-existent until the mid-twentieth century. The nation's first school did not open until 1949. Before this, learning took place in *Kuttabs*, i.e. informal schools that had been set up in mosques or private residences. Significant development of modern K-12 and tertiary education systems did not begin in earnest until after independence (Rostron 2009).

1.1 Current Political Situation and Demographics

Qatar is ruled by the Al-Thani clan which has primarily followed the primogenitor rule of succession since the founding of the dynasty in 1825 (Onley and Khalaf 2006; CIA 2014). A de-facto constitutional monarchy, Qatar experienced a smooth transition of power as the Crown Prince, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani

[1] Although this region is commonly referred to as the Persian Gulf, the term Arabian Gulf will be used throughout this work as it is the preferred nomenclature of all nations in the region excepting Iran.

succeeded his father, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, as Emir on June 25, 2013. This type of transition is rare in the Arabian Gulf where rulers tend to die in office rather than abdicate (UPI, 26 June 2013; CIA 2014). The country's economy is driven by revenues from oil production and natural gas. Qatar is the world's largest producer of liquid natural gas (LNG) and has the world's third-largest natural gas reserves (CIA 2014). Like most of the Arabian Gulf states, Qatar's population is dominated by expatriate workers. Estimates vary, but the breakdown is approximately 40 % Arab (of which only 13 % are Qatari and 27 % are expatriate Arabs—Egyptian, Syrian, etcetera); Indian, 18 %; Pakistani 18 %; Iranian 10 % and Other 14 %. Qatar has an estimated population of 2.1 million and nearly 80 % of its citizens are Muslim (CIA 2014; UN Data 2014; UN Statistics Division 2014).

1.2 Qatar's Education Policy Is Qatar's English Education Policy: The Inextricable Links Between English Language Learning and Education in Qatar

Qatar is striving to improve the state education system so that the potential of its young people can be more fully realized. More qualified graduates are also a key cog in the success of Qatarization initiatives to get more nationals into the workforce and reduce the country's dependence on foreign labor (Qatar General Secretariat for Development Planning, nd). The process of preparing the youth of the nation for further success in life and work begins in kindergarten. Therefore, public education is compulsory for Qatari citizens from kindergarten through high school. In 2012, the illiteracy rates of Qatar were the lowest rates among Arabic-speaking nations (Qatar Statistics Authority 2012).

English is the lingua franca in Qatar, as a result of the substantial percentage of the population that is made up of foreign nationals working in the country. Over 94 % of Qatar's workforce is comprised of non-Qataris (Chalabi, 26 September 2013). For this reason, the Qatari government insists that its citizens learn English. At the same time, the Qatari government desires to safeguard the country's cultural identity, and therefore, also emphasizes Arabic. These two opposing poles of concern have resulted in extreme language education policy shifts throughout the past decade.

Along with math, science and Arabic, English is one of four subjects that all students are required to learn (Zellman et al. 2009). The Supreme Education Council (SEC), the government body responsible for overseeing education, was founded in 2002 as a result of the educational reform called "Education for a New Era" (Brewer et al. 2007). The SEC composes standardized tests that must be passed in these subjects and offers recommendations as to the amount of classroom hours that should be set aside for teaching English in each grade. Currently, the independent schools can take or ignore this guidance, which means the amount of English education students receive is up to each Independent school. However, until an abrupt

change in late 2102, English was the medium of instruction at all Independent schools (Brewer et al. 2007; Khatri 2013a)

At the tertiary level, English language is paramount. Higher education institutions in Qatar are international branch campuses with the exception of Qatar University (QU), Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Community College of Qatar, Qatar Aviation College and the Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies. Except for QU, which recently changed to Arabic as the language of instruction for most programs, instruction is predominately in English at all tertiary institutions. One of the reasons for this is that there has been a drive (starting with the establishment of Qatar Foundation) to promote English as a medium of instruction and to introduce international education to Qatar (Abou-El-Kheir and MacLeod 2014).

2 The Development of Qatar's K-12 System

2.1 Early Development to 1995

As noted in the introduction, prior to the discovery of petroleum, and the riches generated by oil exports, Qatar did not have a formal public education system. Some children learned basic literacy in *kuttabs*, informal schools located in mosques or private homes, taught by literate men and women in the community. Qatar's first official school was opened in 1949 with one teacher and 50 male students. Starting in 1951, the school was sponsored by the government. In the next 3 years, three additional schools for boys were opened. The curriculum included Arabic, Islamic studies, arithmetic, English and geography. The Department of Education was created in 1956 and the first girls' school opened in that year. By 1971 at independence, the number of girls and boys in formal education were approximately equal (Toth 1994). Even at this early stage, girls were performing better academically than boys. This performance gap, which persists to the present day, will be discussed in Sects. 2.4 and 3.4 of this chapter.

The population of Qatar has grown rapidly particularly since HE, the former Emir, Hamid Bin Khalifa Al Thani began a rapid program of modernization and infrastructure development in 1995. As a result, the school system has also grown rapidly (Table 1).

2.2 1995 to Present: Ambitious Reform and Reform Again

In a radical move to overhaul an underperforming school system, the Qatari government contracted with the Rand Corporation in 2001 to evaluate the K-12 system and recommend options for reform. The Independent School model was chosen and an ambitious educational reform initiative "Education for a New Era" (EFNE) was

Table 1 Growth of the Qatari K-12 System (From Toth 1994; UNESCO-IBE 2011; SEC 2012)

Date	Schooling milestone	Important details
1949	First school	One school; 50 (male) students
1956	Department of Education established	5 schools; First girls' school opened
1995–1996	Over 66,000 students	207 schools
2001	Over 100,000 students	Nearly doubled school population in 6 years
2002	English for a New Era Reform launched.	Supreme Education Council created
2011–2012	Over 196,000 students	School population nearly doubled again in a decade

launched in 2002. The first stage of reform resulted in the Supreme Education Council (SEC) being established to oversee the reforms and (gradually) phase out the Ministry of Education (MOE) (Brewer et al. 2007). At the same time, a number of Independent schools were established. The process of converting MOE schools into Independent schools started in 2003 with the goal of phasing out all MOE controlled schools by the 2010–2011 school year. To ease the transition, a number of MOE schools operated under a hybrid structure—designated as "semi-Independent schools" (Oxford Business Group 2010). All former MOE schools (i.e., all government schools) officially achieved independent status by 2010 (SEC 2014a, b). In addition to Independent schools there are three types of private schools in Qatar: community schools, which are sponsored by the embassy of a particular nation and primarily intended to serve the children of expatriates from that country; international schools which offer an international curriculum (often International Baccalaureate) and are open to expatriates and Qataris; and private Arabic schools which offer a more traditional Arabic curriculum (Rostron 2009). Until late 2012, the Independent schools were English medium of instruction, but they now teach all classes (except English language classes) in Arabic.

All schools must meet the SEC's curriculum standards including those for English, but the number of hours per week of instruction is suggested not mandated. The system is focused on the learning outcomes embedded in the standards and the process and procedures are left to the individual schools within limits. For example, English is a core subject and must be taught at all independent schools to a level that allows students to enter the workforce or higher education. In 2008, the SEC suggested that students receive 5 h of English tuition in grades 1–6, 4 h in grades 7–9, and 2.5 h at foundational level in grade 10, or 4 h at advanced level in grade 10 (Supreme Education Council 2008); however, this was only a guideline and schools were not required to follow the suggested number of instructional hours.

All the Private International schools are English medium of instruction, while some community schools offer English medium instruction. Other community schools offer instruction in the students' native language. For example: the Doha Japanese school follows the Japanese National Curriculum.

2.3 The Strengths of Qatar's K-12 System

The main strengths of Qatar's K-12 system under the EFNE were intended to be flexibility and choice. The EFNE reform started in 2002 had a significant effect on the way schooling was offered in Qatar. From the traditional, rigid, hierarchical Ministry of Education, Qatar moved with amazing rapidity towards a new model predicated on autonomy, accountability, variety and choice. National Curriculum Standards were developed in four areas: Arabic, mathematics, science and English (Brewer et al. 2007). All children in Qatar are required to attend primary and secondary school (up to the age of 16). All K-12 education is either provided by independent, international or private schools. The government funds independent schools but they function autonomously (Brewer et al. 2007). Tuition is free for all citizens and attendance at international schools is funded under a voucher system. By allowing schools to be independent (that is, by allowing them to create their own operational plan, curriculum, and philosophy) the government had hoped to foster diversity within the educational system, thereby expanding the educational options for students and parents and boosting achievement. Initially, the government received international acclaim for enabling its schools to be independent (Yamani 2006). However, as will be discussed below, while the EFNE resulted in significant improvements in some areas it was partially overhauled in 2012 due to widespread public dissatisfaction and then ended in 2013. Currently, a return to centralized control is progressing (Abdel-Moneim 2015).

2.4 Limitations and Disadvantages of Qatar's K-12 Policy Choices

As with any rapid reform movement there are areas that need ongoing improvement and re-evaluation of goals and objectives. For example, under EFNE, mathematics and science were taught in English in the Independent schools which led to a great deal of frustration for teachers and students who did not have the language skills to deal with this change—and for parents who lacked the English language skills to help their children with their homework. Further, this emphasis on English led to a feeling among parents, students and teachers that Arabic language and culture was being devalued (Romanowski et al. 2013). In response, the SEC reversed that policy: as of 2012, independent schools and Arabic private schools began teaching math and science classes in Arabic in an apparent effort to preserve Qatar's cultural heritage. Regrettably, this has renewed fears that students will not be as well prepared for higher education opportunities in the Education City universities which are almost exclusively English medium of instruction (Khatri 2013a).

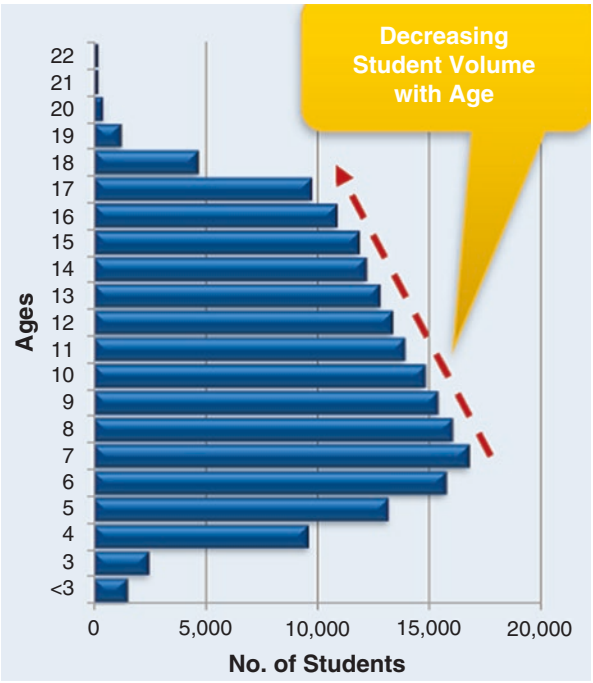
The decision to have English as the medium of instruction in schools was controversial. However, many parents, students and school administrators believe that the SEC's tendency for last minute changes in policy coupled with the failure to hire, or

train, enough teachers sufficiently fluent in English was a root cause of the perceived failure of the EFNE reform—not the language policy itself (Paschyn 2013; Romanowski et al. 2013).

Only time will tell if this rapidly instituted reversal of policy regarding language of instruction is a necessary correction of a flawed policy or simply another example of a Gulf state suddenly altering well planned and partially implemented policies when subjected to societal pressure (Hvidt 2013). The answer to that question will largely be determined by Qatar's strategy beyond the EFNE plan. In addition to the second, hastily implemented, change to the language of instruction in a decade the Government of Qatar did not renew its contract with the Rand Corporation, the architects of the EFNE reform. While this reform did not yield the promised results, the removal of Rand means that Qatari students and parents will have to endure another iteration of school reform. A failure to increase test scores was cited as a primary reason why the Rand Qatar Policy Institute did not have their contract renewed with the Qatar Foundation after their 10 year contract expired in December 2013 (Qatar Foundation 2013). The rhetoric in the Qatar press was overwhelmingly negative: "…. almost a decade after the reform began, students in the system continue to have some of the worst standardized test scores in the world, and concerns about attracting quality staff are growing". It was also an issue that Qatari parents are increasingly entering the voucher program which allows them to send their children to international schools at subsided rates (Khatri 2013a, b). The fact that Qatar, while still having a high failure rate on national exams and sub-par performances on international tests like the PISA, still showed the greatest amount of improvement of any Arab nation could be taken as an indicator that the EFNE reform was working but that the SEC had unrealistic expectations around the speed of improvements. (Paschyn, October 25, 2013; Sedghi et al. 2013). Unfortunately, as in many Western jurisdictions, the reliance on test scores to measure the efficacy of educational reform raises concerns about cheating. Al Marzouki (2009) asserts that cheating at many Independent schools was systematic and initiated by teachers and administrators in order to raise test scores (as cited in Abdel-Moneim 2015). Did the possibility of a widespread cheating scandal contribute to the end of the EFNE reform? Ironically, given all the angst over test scores in Qatar, in an article entitled, "Will Qatar outperform Arab countries in education by 2020?", Dr. Muhammad Faour (a senior associate at Carnegie Middle East Center, Beirut) lauds what he perceives as Qatar's amazing increase in scores on all aspects of the International Reading Literacy test (PIRLS) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) between 2006 and 2012 (2014 March 07).

In summary, it can be seen that the K-12 system is in a state of flux. On the one hand, the SEC is maintaining the Independent schools; on the other, curricular and other decision-making has been almost entirely re-centralized and these schools are "independent" in name only. Originally open to non-Qatari directors, and based on a for- profit model, independent schools must be run by a Qatari and must be non-profit (Abdel-Moneim 2015). The question remains will the SEC consolidate the gains made under the EFNE and be content with incremental improvements? Or, will those in charge choose to put their own stamp on Qatari education with a new,

Table 2 Number of students in Qatar by age (2010–2011) Collier's (2013)



ambitious program of reform? Given the history of failure of large-scale school reform in the Gulf, and around the world, it can only be hoped that Qatar will buck the international trend, stay the course on its most current reforms and not attempt to implement the newest "instant solution" (Bishop and Mulford 1999; Fullan 1998).

In all of the discussion of the fallout from the failure of the EFNE reform, a significant additional problem with the Qatari K-12 system was largely ignored by commentators, namely, that the drop-out rate rises significantly as students progress through the system. As can be seen from Table 2, enrollment drops significantly as students enter secondary schooling which is not compulsory. The dropout rate at this stage is also much higher among males which contributes to the under-representation of men in Qatari higher education (Al-Misnad 2012; Colliers 2013). Some of this effect can be attributed to expatriate parents sending their children to their home country as Qatari nationals comprise 65 % of the student body at Independent schools and only 18 % of the student body at private schools. However, this trend is clearly not compatible with Qatar's vision of maximizing citizens' employment and developing a knowledge economy (SEC 2011).

Ultimately, however, the greatest weakness of the Qatari K-12 system is its teachers. The level of education and experience required for teacher licensure vary in Qatar. Normally, the minimum requirement for teachers is a university- level qualification, most commonly a Bachelor of Education. Secondary schools generally

also require a relevant subject-area specialization. To regulate and improve teacher education and development, the SEC launched a National Professional Standards for Teachers framework in 2007 (SEC 2007a, b).

A teacher licensure program for Independent schools was launched in 2008 and expanded to include all private schools in 2010 (SEC 2010). This process was due to be completed by 2011. The guidelines of the licensure process explicitly state that teachers are only permitted to teach in the subject areas in which they are qualified (Iqbal 2010; Jaafar 2012). Further, the SEC announced in early 2012 that all Independent School teachers would have to take an aptitude test, to determine their fitness for their profession, regardless of their age or experience (Toumi, 02 April 2012). The researchers could find no follow-up announcements or data related to this edict.

The reason for all of these quality assurance measures is that there are a high percentage of teachers in the Qatari K-12 system who are not academically qualified to teach. According the SEC (2012), in the 2011–2012 school year 98 % of Independent school teachers held at least a bachelor's degree while only 67 % had a formal education qualification. In private Arabic schools, 85 % of teachers held at least a bachelor's degree while only 66 % had a formal education degree and in international schools 93 % of teachers held at least a bachelor's degree while 82 % had a formal education qualification. While these numbers are actually an improvement over 2011, it still means that the average student at an independent school has approximately a 33 % chance of being taught by a person who has not been formally trained to do the job. Romanowski and Amatullah (2014) suggested that teacher resistance to the licensure process, or their inability to implement the standards effectively, might be a by-product of their unsuitability for teaching or it might be a result of teacher perception that the standards are just one more foreign requirement—unrelated to their teaching practice—that they are being forced to deal with. In either case, it brings into question the efficacy of ongoing professional development as the answer to Qatar's teacher qualification problem.

The situation with school leadership is not much better: 72 % of Independent school leaders had formal education credentials while only 54 % have school leadership training. In the Private Arabic schools these numbers fall to 60 % with an education credential and only 40 % with leadership training. In International schools the numbers are somewhat better with 79 % of school leaders with and education credential and 59 % having school leadership training (SEC 2012).

This widespread practice hiring of unqualified teachers who do not meet the licensure requirements is the result of both the relatively late implementation of a teacher licensure system and of the inability of schools to recruit sufficient numbers of qualified teachers to meet the demands of Qatar's burgeoning school- age population (UNESCO 2011, Colliers 2013). Part of this difficulty in recruitment is caused by the relatively low salaries of teachers in Qatar (Peninsula 2012; InfoQat 2014; SEC 2014a, b). In an attempt to alleviate the teacher shortage, the SEC has developed a recruitment program targeting qualified teachers from countries including Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria and Oman.

In addition, in response to the difficulty in recruiting Qatari teachers (Qataris tend to view teaching as a low status position) the SEC has both dramatically increased the salaries offered to Qatari teachers and reduced the qualifications required for Qataris to teach. While this appears counter-intuitive, given the plethora of unprepared teachers in the system, the recent Qatari graduates in this program will teach in independent schools while completing an in-service qualification program developed by the SEC in in concert with Qatar University (SEC 2013). Despite these measures, the major concerns at a 2014 meeting between SEC officials and the public were the perceived lack of Qatari teachers, long- working hours, insufficient salaries for teachers and poor discipline and attendance among students (SEC 2014a, b).

2.5 Qatar's K-12 Policy Compared to Its Closest Neighbors, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Qatar faces many of the same educational challenges in the K-12 sector as its neighbors. Issues with English language—too much or too little; students' struggle with Arabic; under-prepared teachers and a shortage of local teachers—particularly men; school graduates who are scoring far below average on international tests and who are unable—or unwilling—to study in science technology, engineering and mathematics, (STEM) fields of higher education (Deloitte 2013). What then is Qatar's response to this? What is the policy that embodies the vision that the Qatari leadership has for the future of is youth? The EFNE reform was intended to ameliorate many of these weaknesses by helping Qatari students learn to become more critical and creative thinkers and by helping them to achieve greater mastery of English—which has become the de facto world language of science, technology, and to a great extent, education. In line with this vision, Qatari K-12 English language policy was emulating the early English adoption favored in the UAE. Again, similar to its neighbors it has embarked on a new round of reform before the previous one has had time to fully take effect, but so far there has not been a full-scale re-modelling but only a return to Arabic as a medium of instruction. This change leaves Qatar with a very similar approach to English as its neighbors. Although the SEC now mandates more hours of English per week than the other Gulf States, particularly Saudi Arabia, the system is not working. As discussed, students routinely score below average on international standardized tests. Moreover, the Qatar curriculum standards (SEC 2004) call for students at year 12 Foundation (not advanced) English to be able to score a 550 Test of English as a Foreign Language/ Band 6 International English Language Testing System (IELTS). This level of competency in English is an atypical result for the majority of Qatari students as evidenced by the preponderance of foundation and preparatory programs offered by institutions of higher education in Qatar to help students to reach a similar level. For example, a 4.5 Level

IELTS or equivalent is required to enter the Academic Bridge preparatory program for Education City Universities where entrance requirements for direct entry to programs varies from 550 to 600 on the TOEFL exam (ABP 2014).

3 The Development of Qatar's Higher Education System

3.1 Early Development

Shortly after independence, in 1973, the country was ready to open its first institution of higher education, the College of Education with separate campuses for men and women (Al-Attiyah and Khalifa 2009). This would become the founding college of Qatar University (QU). The College of Education expanded in 1977, adding the faculties of Humanities, Science, Social Studies, and Islamic Studies to the existing teacher training colleges, and Qatar University was established (Al-Attiyah and Khalifa 2009; Stasz et al. 2007). Today, QU comprises seven colleges and a number of research centres including the National Center for Educator Development. During its first year of operation in 1973, the university had a total student body of 150 (QU 2013). Currently, academic year 2013–2014, there are 15,000 students enrolled at the QU, while student enrolment is projected to reach 20,000 by 2015–2016 (James 2013)

In 2003, a reform project, led by the University's Board of Regents and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, was initiated to define the new mission and vision of the university, and to formulate a plan of action to achieve that mission and vision. The reform's main goals were to, "….evolve the quality of instruction and educational services, and promote its administrative efficiency" (Al-Attiyah and Khalifa 2009).

In the mid-1990s, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani and his wife Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser al-Misnad felt that the higher education system offered unsatisfactory options for their children and other young Qataris. As a result, they established the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) in 1995, with the intention of providing a comprehensive range of higher education courses for Qatari citizens (Stasz et al. 2007). Education City, an independent organ established by the QF in 2003, now hosts a number of research centers and educational organizations, chief among them the Rand-Qatar Policy Institute,[2] as well as six world-class US colleges, including Carnegie Mellon, Texas A&M University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Cornell's Weill Medical College, Northwestern and Georgetown University. In addition to the American institutes in Education City, there is a French university, HEC Paris; a British university, University College London as well as two national universities, Hamid Bin Khalifa

[2]The Rand Corporation concluded their 10 year contract with Qatar Foundation in 2013. Qatar Foundation Press Release: http://www.qf.org.qa/news/qf-and-rand-corporation-to-conclude-rqpi-agreement

University for Graduate Studies and the Faculty of Islamic Studies, Qatar. Outside of Education City, there are also two Canadian institutions, University of Calgary and College of the North Atlantic (SEC n.d.), and a Dutch university Stenden, formerly known as CHN (Stasz et al. 2007).

3.2 The Importation of Foreign Education Institutions, Systems and Policies

The development of Qatar's education system is closely tied to the discovery of oil, the resulting increase in revenues and the need for major transformations that the job market imposed. Qatar has huge gas and oil reserves, which are responsible for 70 % of government revenues and 50 % of its GDP (Al-Misnad 2012). The massive growth of the gas and oil industries from the 1990s until the present day requires an educated and skilled workforce that Qatar is simply not capable of providing. Companies rely extensively on the expatriate population, which in 2009 had a growth rate of 15 %, compared to the growth rate of 3 % for Qatari nationals (Al-Misnad 2012).

The development of the economy has provided the government with an unprecedented opportunity to improve the education systems in Qatar. Education City was populated with imported branch campuses of international institutions in hopes of maximizing the education of the population, in order to develop a knowledge based society, which would secure Qatar's political and economic status after petroleum reserves run out (Altbach and Knight 2007). To achieve this goal, the State of Qatar has invested heavily in developing relationships with the US colleges and other international institutions based in Education City, and they now offer scholarships and grants that allow Qatari students to attend these institutions. Through this, they aim to educate the population so that Qataris can maximize their contribution to society (QGSDP 2011; SEC 2011).

English is the primary language used for instruction in nearly all higher education institutions and programs in Qatar. In Education City, internal procedures, policies, and methods of teaching and assessment are all imported directly from the home campus of each individual institution. Qatar University is the only institution that does not have English language entry requirements (i.e. TOEFL/IELTS). It is also the only institution to have Arabic as its official language even though not all courses are taught in Arabic. Courses taught in Arabic at Qatar University include law, international affairs, media, and business administration courses. The change to Arabic occurred in 2012 when the SEC reversed a long-standing policy of providing instruction in all higher education courses in English (Katri 2013b). In short, English has a dominant presence in tertiary education in Qatar.

As far as entry standards are concerned, all tertiary institutions except for Northwestern (Nu-Q) require students to achieve a minimum TOEFL score of 550 or IELTS score of 6.0. Nu-Q does not specify a minimum TOEFL or IELTS score, but applicants with scores lower than 600 on a paper-based TOEFL exam are generally not accepted (Abou-El-Kheir and MacLeod 2014).

3.3 The Strengths of Qatar's Higher Education Policies

The internationalization of Qatar's higher education system provides a number of advantages for Qatari nationals. International institutions offer Qataris a modern and diverse range of subjects (Supreme Education Council 2008). The colleges offer high standards of education and globally recognized qualifications, potentially making Qatari graduates employable all over the world. Employment and literacy rates are high, with literacy rates well above the regional average for both men and women (Abou-El-Kheir and MacLeod 2014). Political and economic development go hand in hand with education, as highly skilled graduates start to fill important positions in the government and other national institutions, and research centers develop new initiatives (Yamani 2006). The predominance of English as the lingua franca and language of instruction in almost all higher education institutions allows Qatari students and graduates to engage in global scientific discussions, as well as to develop social and political connections with other countries, particularly the US. Further, the more exposure Qataris have to high academic standards and world-class, international professors, the better they will be able to assess the characteristics of a quality education. As more Qataris become involved in the K-12 system, as a result of programs such as Teach for Qatar, those who have experienced high educational standards and adopted them will be able to pass them on to their students.

Lastly, the introduction of English education and international universities has given Qatari females the opportunity to study at top foreign universities with excellent professors in their home country. Without having these institutes in Qatar, the opportunities for females to study anywhere other than Qatar University could be very limited due to cultural and religious reasons (Stasz et al. 2007). This has had the positive effect of opening higher education choice to females. While it produces benefits for women, this gender gap creates troubling prospects for men (Al-Misnad 2012). The gender gap will be one of the topics addressed in Sects. 3.4 and 4.2.

3.4 Limitations and Disadvantages of Qatar's Higher Education Policy Choices

The vast majority of students attending universities in Education City are not Qatari nationals, but the children of expatriate workers, or employees of companies based in Qatar that offer further training opportunities to their staff. Providing higher education institutions that cater to the needs of these individuals is necessary so as to ensure the continued growth and development of Qatar's economy and infrastructure. However, the international nature of these universities and the high level of English that is required to be accepted by these universities put Qatari nationals graduating from secondary education at a distinct disadvantage. Further difficulties are encountered by Qatari citizens who wish to attend foreign universities,

including the high cost of tuition, rigorous standards of education, and the culture shock involved in attending mixed gender institutions for the first time (Gonzalez et al. 2008).

English instruction at higher levels causes problems lower down the chain of education on a national level. The need to speak English to a high standard in order to be accepted at international universities led the SEC to decree that science and math must be taught in English at K-12 levels, to better prepare students for English language studies at university. Regrettably, due to inadequate staff training and sudden implementation, this initiative failed and was overturned in 2012 (Paschyn 2013). This has led to widespread disruption and difficulties for both students and teachers in K-12, which will have a negative effect on students upon entering post-secondary institutions in Qatar.

Finally, according to a recent doctoral study (Abou-El-Kheir 2014), one of the negative aspects of the internationalization of education is that it may lead to an erosion of culture and the loss of identity and language. A specific example delineated by one of the participants in the study, is that there is sometimes an aspiration to mimic Western identities and habits, and the idea speaking English is "cool" and that Arabic is "weak" This is analogous to the findings of Findlow (2006) where there seems to be a binary opposition between English and Arabic.

3.5 Qatar's Higher Education Policies Compared to Those of Its Closest Neighbors

Along with Bahrain and the UAE, Qatar aspires to become an education hub in the region. All three countries have invited foreign universities to set up in their countries and all have a strong emphasis on English as a medium of instruction. They also have each developed an 'education city'. Qatar has 'Education City'; the UAE has 'Knowledge Village' and 'Academic City', while Bahrain (along with investors from Kuwait) has pledged a billion dollars for their own 'Higher Education City'. In addition to investing in clusters of higher education institutions, these countries are also heavily investing in research and development and science and technology. This drive to become an education/knowledge hub is happening for similar reasons. Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE are trying to move from oil/gas based economies to knowledge based economies. It remains to be seen whether or not the region has the capacity to house three similar education hubs (Knight 2014a).

All three countries see education as a way not only to diversify their economy, but they see education as crucial for the development of their citizens in order for them to be competitive in the job market and to contribute to the society and country. Overall, Qatar's educational project demonstrates the combination of planning and investment. All of the institutions in Education City are meant to complement and not compete with each other. This does not just prevent duplicate programs, but also makes it easier to manage the partners and to control the development of higher education. In contrast, in the UAE they do not even coordinate on a national level,

and each Emirate independently decides its course of action. Bahrain has steered a middle course where foreign universities are encouraged to establish in the country, but are under the close oversight of the Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training. Finally, of the three countries, Qatar is the only one where there is no private investment. The projects are fully funded by the government of Qatar. (Dou and Knight 2014; Fox and Al Shamisi 2014; Knight 2011; Knight 2013; Knight 2014a, b; Ibnouf et al. 2014).

Conversely, Qatar's higher education policies differ significantly from those of its closest neighbour, Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia and Qatar share many socio-economic characteristics and are both very conservative societies. However, while Qatar has been able to implement sweeping reforms, Saudi Arabia has had to follow a more cautious path due to non-educational factors that make modernization more difficult. One of these difficulties is that the leadership of Saudi Arabia places great importance on maintaining its religious image and both adhering to—and being seen to adhere to—the strictest principles of Islam. This is necessary as legitimacy of the al-Saud regime depends in large part on its close relationship with the Wahhabi institution, a conservative religious establishment that controls the entire educational system in the country. Any sweeping reform that is perceived as moving away from traditional Islamic educational principles or moving toward significant modernization (i.e., towards Western educational philosophies) of the educational system could cause a rift between the Wahhabi and the al-Sauds (Yamani 2006).

The main differences between the higher education systems of the two countries are that Saudi universities are domestic and controlled by the state while Qatar's higher education institutions are state controlled but are primarily international institutions. Also, Saudi Arabia does not provide its women with nearly as many educational possibilities as Qatar. Despite being controlled by the religious Wahhabi right, all Saudi universities teach English as either an elective subject, or as a major field of study. All students, despite their major, are required to take an introductory English course, and English instruction is standard for most courses run by the departments of science, engineering, medicine, allied health, and other technical subjects. Some newly founded private universities choose English as the medium of instruction in other areas as well (Al-Seghayer 2012).

4 Controversial Issues in English Language Policy in Qatar

4.1 The Perception of Failed K-12 Reform: After Rand, the Conflict Between Arabic as Mother Tongue and English as Lingua Franca Continues

Unsurprisingly, most the controversial issues in Qatari K-12 policy have been discussed in the sections on the strengths and weaknesses of the K12 system. There were two recent interesting developments in the Qatar education scene. The first is

that the SEC is holding what they indicate is a series of public meetings to get stakeholder feedback on the system. Such meetings are not controversial, but one of the major issues in the meeting was that even after the restoration of Arabic as the medium of instruction, many parents in Qatar are still concerned with promoting Arabic in school. Qatari students often struggle with the differences between the spoken dialect used in Qatar and Modern Standard Arabic which is used for writing and formal speech (Toumi, 23 January 2014a, b). Perhaps to address this concern, the government of Qatar needs to put more resources into the teaching of language. While Qatar Foundation International (QFI) runs high profile teacher training opportunities for teachers of Arabic as a second language in other countries, there are current no teacher training opportunities focused either on the teaching of Arabic or English which seems a significant oversight given the new emphasis on teacher quality and the importance of language to learning (QFI 2014). Secondly, the SEC has established a Teachers' Council to gain teacher feedback on improvements to the education system. Again, this is not truly controversial, but it is a first for what has been a strictly top-down managed system. It will be interesting to see what will happen if this council dare to publically disagree with government policy.

In a related development, a segment of parents in Qatar are calling for a shortened school day due to hot weather and upcoming national examinations (Toumi, 04 May 2014). Despite the public calls for this reduction, it is unlikely that the SEC will shorten the school day given that other Gulf States such as Bahrain have recently expanded the school day to get closer to UNESCO's recommended standards around hours of instruction.

4.2 Higher Education Systems: The Economic Necessity of English Versus the Cultural, Religious and Historical Imperatives to Promote Local Language

Due to the petroleum industry, large companies set up in Qatar, built necessary infrastructure, and brought in hundreds of thousands of people from outside nations to work for them. This was necessary, since Qatar's native population was too small and their education system was not adequate to meet the overwhelming demand for skilled workers to fill roles in these companies. As a result, a huge majority of Qatar's population is now made up of non-nationals. People have come to live and work in Qatar from regions as close as other Gulf countries, Asia and Africa, but also nations as far away as Australia, Canada, the US, the UK, and all over Europe. This influx of expatriates has firmly established the role of English as the lingua franca in Qatar. Most secure, lucrative jobs outside of the public sector in Qatar have a high level of English as a basic requirement, which means that if Qataris hope to compete for private sector employment with expatriates, English education must be cultivated at every stage of education in Qatar.

It is not only essential for Qataris to be educated in the English language, but also to be educated to rigorous international standards. In order to compete professionally, they require comparative qualifications. Looking ahead—when the oil runs out—the Qatari government aspires to have a stable economy based on a knowledge economy. Having highly skilled workers trained at international institutions is a crucial part of the foundation necessary to make this vision a reality. Also, English is likely to remain important as the international language of science. All these factors mean that the establishment of leading US colleges and the implementation of courses with English tuition were necessary in order for Qataris to compete in the present and to progress towards achieving their future goals.

Despite its perceived necessity, the predominance of the English language means that Arabic is starting to become marginalized. Along with the loss of language, there has been a tangible shift in terms of culture and values (Khatri 2013a, b). The education system previously was based on religious teachings, but this has changed with the modern reforms. Many Qataris see this as a serious problem. It is less of a political imperative for Qatar to maintain an educational system based on conservative Islamic beliefs than it is for other Arab states, such as Saudi Arabia, since there are no education ministry religious links in the country, and the monarchy does not derive its legitimacy from links with a religious organization. Qatar is nevertheless a very conservative culture, and many Qatari citizens have voiced concerns about what they see as the introduction of disruptive Western influences and damaging Western ideals (Yamani 2006).

There was a recent controversy concerning inappropriate reading materials published in English that were accessible through the library database at Qatar University. A 19-page letter was written by members of the university community detailing the titles of books that were considered to be inappropriate and asking that they be removed from the database. In response to this letter, the university implemented a policy of censoring reading materials and deleted from its database any books that it deemed to be in violation of Qatari values (Al Romaihi 2013; Doha News 2013). There have been some similar reports of censorship at Education City (Abdul Jawad 2014). While these are fairly minor incidents, they clearly illustrate the tension between academic freedom and modernization, and traditional cultural values. Striking the correct balance is a difficult task, but it is central to any further reforms of Qatari higher education systems (Khatri 2013a, b).

4.3 Cultural and Linguistic Conflicts Resulting from Qatar's Policy of Importing Higher Education Institutions and Policy

One phenomenon in the higher education scene in Qatar, which is not unique to Qatar but appears in other Middle Eastern nations as well, is a post-secondary gender gap. There are almost three times as many females as males enrolled in higher

education. For every 100 women in higher education, there are only 46 men. On average, Qatari women spend 3.4 years longer in education than Qatari males. Traditionally, jobs in the public sector have been highly prized. These jobs do not require higher education, and so many men do not feel compelled to continue their education beyond the secondary level. Instead, they pursue careers in the police force or military, which offer security, decent pay, and a certain prestige. Women are more inclined to continue their education, with the result that many more women than men are entering jobs in the private sector that require post-secondary education and specific skill sets (Al-Misnad 2012).

Another possible reason for this gender gap is the high level of English that is required for entry into the international universities in Qatar. Studies conducted throughout the world suggest that, in general, women have the ability and motivation to learn languages more easily than men (Swaminathan 2008; Burman et al. 2008; Rua 2006; Kissau and Salas 2013; Merritt 2014). It may be that Qatari men lack the language skills to successfully pursue higher education at the international universities, and that this influences their decision to not pursue post-secondary education. In order to address this, the SEC has decreed that Qatar University offer certain courses in Arabic. These courses are both central to Qatari culture, and likely to appeal to men. Moves to offer more vocational courses have also been suggested (Abou-El-Kheir and MacLeod 2014).

The implications of this gender bias are not yet fully clear. There are concerns that men will start to find it more difficult to compete for employment, particularly in the public sector. Statistics also show that disparities in the level of education of spouses can lead to marital problems. Having a higher proportion of well educated women than men could have negative repercussions in marriages, leading to further disruption of the Qatari culture (Al-Misnad 2012).

Linguistic conflict arises within the Qatari educational system most notably in relation to the transition from K-12 to higher education. Qatari K-12 instruction is in Arabic. While it is compulsory to teach English in K-12, students often do not attain a level of competence that is sufficient to gain a place in a higher education institution where English is the primary or sole medium of education. Many Qatari nationals find that they have to spend extra time and resources completing an English foundation course before they are able to successfully apply to an institution of higher learning. This deters potential students and puts Qataris at a disadvantage in terms of time and money (Abou-El-Kheir and MacLeod 2014).

To counteract this issue, in 2010 the SEC decreed that K-12 math and science classes were to be taught in English. This sudden change, however, left teachers ill equipped to teach their subjects properly. Many teachers did not have sufficient English skills to give English instruction, which led to classes being taught in Arabic with English textbooks. Low pass rate ensued and the decision was reversed in 2012 (Khatri 2013a, b).

5 The Future of Education Policy in Qatar

5.1 After Rand? Whither Qatar's K-12 Policy?

After reverting to Arabic as a medium of instruction (a reasonable correction given the low level of English language ability of a large segment of Independent school teachers) and the dropping of the originators of EFNE, the Rand Corporation, Qatar faces a major decision. Where does K-12 reform go from here? At present, the Qatari focus—similar to that of Bahrain—seems to have shifted to teacher education reform as means to improve the K-12 system. In addition to the teacher quality assurance measures discussed in Sect. 2.4, the SEC partnered with Qatar University's, National Center for Educator Development (NCED). The NCED was established in 2010 with the mandate to develop well qualified teachers for the Independent Schools and to conduct research in order to develop best practices for teachers in Qatar, and to inform policy decisions and to facilitate leadership development (QU 2014). The Center aims to expand QU's capacity to develop high quality educators for Qatar's schools, to develop high quality PD activities based on current research and embedded in Qatar's educational and cultural context; to conduct ongoing research/evaluation to ensure the quality and effectiveness of education in Qatar. To achieve these aims, the NCED offers professional development support for teachers throughout the academic year and offer school- based support programs to participating schools and consultancy services on an ad hoc basis (QU 2014).

In addition, the SEC—in concert with Qatar Foundation and Qatar Petroleum—has just launched Teach for Qatar (an affiliate of the Teach for All non-governmental organization, NGO). The NGO recruits young professionals and recent university graduates and trains them in the teaching profession and places them in independent schools. After the 2 year stint, participants emerge fully qualified and they continue to receive professional development support and evaluation throughout their teaching career (Teach for Qatar 2014). A new professional development center for teachers, under the auspices of Qatar Foundation is also in the planning stages. There have been several advertisements recruiting for leadership positions at this, as yet unnamed, center but no other details have been released to date. The SEC has recognized that a crucial element in realizing its goals for students is improved teaching.

The Education and Training Sector Strategy (ETSS) 2011–2016 (a key component of part of the Qatar National Development Plan intended to facilitate the realization of the Qatar 2030 Vision), is an integrated strategic plan for education in Qatar. The goals of this plan are in Table 3.

Table 3 Improving K-12 Education in Qatar, 2011–2016 (SEC 2011)

Program: Improving K-12 General Education		
Outcome	Key Performance Indicators and (NDS Targets)	Project
10. K-12 National curriculum aligned with higher education, TVET, work skills and individual student needs developed	• More students approach or meet national standards in math, science and English • High school graduation rates increase • Fewer students directed to foundation/non-credit bearing programs/courses • Increase Qatari enrollment in higher education • Reduced rate of dropouts from higher education institutions • Higher enrollment ratio in higher education for male Qataris • Greater student skills in knowledge-based economy • Greater student employability	10.1. Align and coordinate K-12, Higher education, and TVET programs and services and establish feedback mechanisms) 10.2. Improve the breadth and quality of the national curriculum, learning resources and programs to address the diverse learning needs of all students including the educational and working skills needed to enable them to fulfill their potential

5.2 The Future of Higher Education in Qatar

By 2030, Qatar aspires to be an advanced, knowledge-based society that is capable of sustaining its own economic and political development and providing a high standard of living for all nationals. The nation subscribes to a Human Capital ideology that sees education as central to achieving these goals. In order to project what may possibly happen in the future, it is necessary to look at the past so as to predict the direction of current trajectories and trends. With this in mind, let us review the major milestones in Qatar's educational reforms.

In 1995 the Qatar Foundation was established, and in 2002, the Education for a New Era (EFNE) reform initiative was launched. Under this program, the Supreme Education Council (SEC) was set up to plan and implement major changes to the educational system. Over the intervening decade, sweeping reform occurred at all levels of education. In terms of higher education, this has led to the establishment of international universities and vocational training colleges within an area known as Education City. Opportunities have been opened up for men and women alike, allowing Qatari nationals to compete with the non-national population in terms of education and employment (Supreme Education Council 2008).

As we have seen, the introduction of international universities and courses taught in English at institutions of higher learning has led to various conflicts in terms of

culture and language. This in turn has resulted in recent steps away from English medium of instruction in the K-12 system and away from a fully English-medium higher education system. This change is based on the acknowledgment that there is a conflict between Western education and Qatar's traditional language and culture. In addition to attacking the cultural problem, this solution addresses the issue of Qatari nationals (particularly males) not seeking higher education due to not having the requisite time, aptitude, or desire to study English. It is hoped that this will lead to more Qatari men enrolling in institutions of higher learning, which would ideally result in a healthy state of equilibrium between the genders in higher education.

This proposed solution to the gender gap issue raises the question of whether teaching courses in Arabic to cater to Qatari men's possible difficulties with English is a desirable solution in the first place. Could it be that teaching courses in Arabic to decrease the existing gender gap is like placing a 'Band-Aid' on a serious wound? After all, if Qatar is seeking to engage with the global scientific community and to make advances in knowledge across the world, it would be to the advantage of the government to ensure that Qatari males are taught English sufficiently at the primary and secondary levels so that they can be better prepared to continue their education rather than to give them a buttress simply so that the government can have a greater proportion of male citizens attending institutions of higher learning. This is also obvious deterrent to the employment prospect of Qatari citizens versus expatriates outside of the public sector in Qatar that was described in Sect. 3.1. Without knowing English, Qatari men would be ill-equipped to compete with expatriates for jobs in the private sector.

Qatar currently has a great deal of financial resources at its disposal, and it is certain that the country will continue to invest in the development of its educational systems. However, it is not certain what specific direction future reform of higher education is likely to take. Recently, the QF decided not to renew its contract with RAND Corporation, the think tank responsible for producing the EFNE reforms. This is due to a general feeling that EFNE has been largely unsuccessful. Recent statistics show that students have failed to perform better on standardized tests than before the reforms were introduced, and that Qatar remains near the bottom of education tables for the developing world, despite its relative wealth and the huge investment it has made in its educational systems. Many commentators believe that this perceived lack of success is largely due to changes not being given long enough to see if they succeed. New policies and procedures have repeatedly been put in place, and then have been scrapped if they have not led to immediate results. In many cases, it is possible that these policies would have produced the desired results if more preparation, training, and time were given (Abou-El-Kheir and MacLeod 2014). At any rate, it remains to be seen what effect these changes will have as the students who have endured these sudden changes in policy filter into higher education. To a large extent the outcome(s) will be determined by the next steps taken by the government of Qatar. New policies at the primary and secondary levels of education could lead to major changes in the percentages of Qatari nationals attending university and their success rates (Gonzalez et al. 2008).

It seems inevitable that Qatar's future will hold continued change in terms of higher education. We may well see further moves aimed at preserving Arabic language, culture, and traditions. More national institutions offering a wider range of vocational course that are not taught in English may be set up (QGSDP 2011). Whatever the future holds, women are likely to play a large part. With more women than ever acquiring under-graduate and post-graduate degrees and filling important posts, government offices, and prestigious roles in the private sector, a gender regress in regards to women's role in Qatari education has been rendered virtually impossible.

6 Conclusion

Qatar has developed quickly as a nation and has invested a large amount of money, time and resources in developing strategies to reform their educational system. The K-12 system has undergone exponential growth in the four decades since independence. In 2002, frustrated by the repeated failures of MOE reforms, the leadership of Qatar instituted the English for a New Era reform on the recommendation of its chosen partner the Rand Corporation. After 10 years of reform, Qatari students have made huge improvements, but still rank well below average in international tests and do not perform well on national exams. In response to this perceived failure, the SEC severed ties with the Rand Corporation, reversed the 2002 decision to have English as the medium of instruction and embarked on a series of initiatives to improve the quality of teacher education in Qatar—which many experts, parents and administrators had blamed for the failure of previous reforms to reach their potential. The SEC has also launched a series of public meetings on K-12 education and a teachers' council in an unprecedented (for Qatar) attempt to engage stakeholders in a meaningful way. It seems that for the present, Qatar is content to tweak the EFNE while it attempts to ameliorate systemic weaknesses of long standing.

Qatar's major policy choice in higher education was to import branch campuses of prestigious, American and European universities, to Education City. At the same time, Qatar University underwent a major revamp. As a result of these reforms, young Qataris have many promising educational opportunities and choices that were not available to previous generations. Some of the major achievements of the education reforms include very high literacy rates among men and women, the encouragement of women to pursue education and fill important roles within society, and the formation of strong ties with the global community through international educational institutions.

Unfortunately, various conflicts have also arisen. Chief among these conflicts are the dearth of men in higher education, the perceived marginalization of the Arabic language, the difficulties faced by Qatari nationals with low levels of English when applying for institutions of higher education, and the seeming adoption of Western values that contrast with Qatar's more conservative beliefs and traditions.

While there are many changes yet to come in Qatari education, English will continue to hold an important place in the educational system. The diverse society of non-national residents ensures that English will remain the lingua franca and therefore will remain the language of choice for most courses in higher education. It is necessary for Qatari K-12 policies to bring English education to the fore, without sacrificing traditional values or damaging the culture.

It is hoped that future reforms will lead to a more balanced proportion of the population in higher education. The steps taken to provide courses in Arabic at the national university herald a move in this direction. Presumably, if men and women were to both enter higher education in more proportionate numbers, Qatar would have a better opportunity to make major advancements towards accomplishing the goals set out in the 2030 National Vision. It is clear that developing the self-sufficient, advanced society to which Qatar aspires depends on the State of Qatar's ability to successfully educate its entire population. Balancing the gender gap would, in theory, lead to greater cultural stability, with jobs in both the public and private sectors being filled by Qatari men and women. This would in turn increase competition and help to fuel further growth and development opportunities. The question remains whether teaching courses in Arabic is a viable solution to the gender gap problem.

Qatar's education system at all levels is still a work in progress. From almost zero in the 1970s Qatar has built a complete K-12 and higher education system in an amazingly short period of time. There is still a great deal to be done in achieving its highly ambitious goals, but through a decade of educational reform, Qatar has set itself firmly on the track to success. With continued commitment to development in education, the world can expect to see Qatar gradually rise through the world rankings in educational achievement and social development in the years to come.

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