

# **Arab Middle Eastern Women in Qatar and their Perspectives on the Barriers to Leadership: Incorporating Transformative Learning Theory into Graduate Educational Leadership Programs**

Fatma Saeed AL-HASSAN

Department of Educational Sciences, Collage of Education, Qatar University

Regarding the teaching of educational leadership in an Arab context, it is vital to prepare Arab women for not only the leadership positions that they might assume, but also provide opportunities for Arab women to develop complex understandings about why things are the way they are. This insight will enable these women to not only understand these barriers that might influence securing leadership positions but also it influences leadership styles and experiences. The central focus of this research project is to explore the perspectives of Arab Middle Eastern Women living in Qatar regarding the barriers to leadership and develop recommendations utilizing Transformative Learning Theory that can be incorporated into an Educational Leadership program to better meet the needs of these women.

In this study, leadership is broadly defined as having obtained a formal leadership position. The sample for this study was randomly drawn from Arab Middle Eastern Women in leadership positions. Forty-one participants completed a ten question open-ended survey posted on Survey Monkey (Available in both English and Arabic) regarding their perspectives on the barriers facing them as Arab women in leadership positions. Upon completion of the data analysis, 10 semi-structured interviews are conducted based on the emergent survey themes. Data gained from survey responses and interviews coupled with Transformative Learning Theory are used to develop recommendations for graduate Educational Leadership programs in the Middle East.