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Parallel Sessions I
The Role of Women in Business and Leadership organised by
College of Business and Financial Sciences

Chair	Ms. Sabah AlMoayyed, Managing Partner Intellect Resources Management W.L.L. Ms. Nadera Abuali, Head of Public Affairs Citibank Bahrain/Qatar/Kuwait
Speaker	Mr. Magued (Mag) Wassef, MCP Consulting Inc. Canada, Egypt & East Africa Dr. Nehal El Naggar, RUW
Title	“A Tailleur and a Tie (T&T), Profiling Women Leaders”

ABSTRACT

In today's world, female representation in all aspects of life (professional, volunteer, even household) can no longer be overlooked or marginalized, even in some areas where old-fashioned taboos, customs, stereotypes, traditions, and cultural influences are still governing the society. Some cultures are adamant to assign roles and give responsibilities to people based on their gender and not on the competency level they carry. The unfortunate news is that this behavior got infiltrated from the professional sector to some volunteer-based organizations. The justification you hear sometimes add insult to the injury: “Since women can’t handle the pressure, we had to turn to a gentleman instead!”

As a civilized community, do we really have to panic or bring someone who creates panic to get things done? Are we condemning the qualified female calibers to slay their ambition if they do not fit in a suit and a tie attire?

There are still those fighters who do not need to wear combat boots & heavy armors to prove that they are dependable & reliable decision makers. How did they do that? What did they have to give up to reach a top level rank in their respective organizations? Do they really need to have a defected life since they had to choose between their obligations & their ambition? This paper showcases few eminent feminine profiles in multiple industries and sectors with the purpose of inspiring future female leaders by shedding some light on their journeys and their failures before becoming as successful as they are now. This paper is targeted towards those self-motivated female calibers who have the confidence to stand in the storm and prove that they are no less of dependable characters than their peers.

A review of literature has been conducted on leadership and women in various countries along with findings from the World Bank (WB) and the International labor Organization (ILO). A quantitative study design was employed for this project. A closed-ended questionnaire was sent out, focusing on women in different managerial positions highlighting the main challenges and leadership abilities to overcome these challenges. The research findings indicated that 29% of the women sought advice from business development services and from top management.

Keywords: Women in Business- Women and Leadership- Challenges facing women, Women Entrepreneurs

Theme	The role of women in business and leadership: Part I
Chair	Ms. Sabah AlMoayyed and Ms. Nadera Abuali
Speaker	Dr. Cindy Ann Smith, Dar Al Hekma
Title	“Utilizing Mentors to Develop Positive Leadership Skills in Young Women”

ABSTRACT

Women who live in patriarchal societies may find it especially difficult to develop leadership roles in education and business, particularly in ways that are socially acceptable within their particular culture and society. However, there is evidence that women who are able to have female mentors as supportive role models are more likely to develop their leadership skills for the benefit of their personal growth, their families, and the society in which they live. These role models and support may come from unexpected sources and have similarities regardless of geographic locations or cultures. This paper discusses the theoretical foundations of this phenomenon, a summary of the relevant available research literature as well as results from the mixed methods design research study of Girl Power! a Gender specific mentoring program which seeks to support adolescent girls across cultural and socio economic areas through positive relationship development. The discussion of research results will be especially focused on specific elements of the program which may most effectively support development of leadership skills not only in the mentees but mentors as well. Participants will have the opportunity for interactive discussion exploring the application of these methods to the particular need of specific populations such as adolescents, college women, or young women in business or employment settings. Participants will receive as handouts information useful in the development of leadership focused mentoring programs for women.

Theme	The role of women in business and leadership: Part I
Chair	Ms. Sabah AlMoayyed and Ms. Nadera Abuali
Speaker	Dr. Suzanne White, Oasis Training Center
Title	“Developing ‘Personal Power and Personal Leadership’”

ABSTRACT

With the average age of people in the GCC being under 25 years old and the falling price of oil, the competition for employment is at all-time high. In order to distinguish themselves in the job market, young GCC graduates need to differentiate themselves from others. Coupled with employers’ general dissatisfaction at the caliber of graduates available, professional development programs that help to get graduates ‘work-ready’ are in high demand. What is most often missing, however, is the personal power and leadership side to their development. What is needed is a mindset shift, to effect real change in their thinking or in their behavior. For young women, the dilemma is compounded by the fact that there are fewer female leader role models in the GCC than there are for men, and so many women fall into the trap of thinking that they have to act like a man to succeed in business or to be a leader. Considering that often many professional development and leadership programs are written and designed by (white western) men, this is not surprising. Programs that allow a woman to really understand herself and her vision for the future are paramount to developing an authentic leadership style that is unique. Once she is clear about who she is, what changes she needs to make and where she is going, a woman will create her own style of personal leadership that will sustain her when difficult times present themselves.

Work with a Saudi company that offered a set of personal development programs, which include experiences around “Personal Power” and “Personal Leadership” has proven that igniting the power in young people can have a life-changing effect on their contribution to performance on the job. Being clear about where they have come from, where they are now and where they are

going in life, exploring ways to get there, can have a profound effect on how they live their life and how they perform at work. Over a period of 2 years, and with over 700 employees going through the program, the culture of the company has changed. The program inspires and empowers people to craft for themselves a personal vision of the future and teaches proven strategies to bridge the gap between the desired vision and the current reality. While less than 1% of the employees were women, which is not uncommon in the Saudi market, the young women who were given the opportunity to engage in these programs reported life-changing experiences. This paper will give insights into delivering successful leadership programs for young GCC nationals, in particular females, to help them perform better and remain motivated.

Theme	The role of women in business and leadership: Part II
Chair	Ms. Ahlam Janahi, Chief Executive Officer, Bahrain Horizons
Speaker	Dr. Adel Al Alawi, University of Bahrain
Title	<i>“Status of Bahraini Women in Banking and Financial Sector”</i>

ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the current status of Bahraini Women in the Financial and Banking Sector; Challenges and Opportunities that prevent them from progression to top level management and to progress to board members. To determine the extent to the application of the principle of equal opportunities, and mainstreaming women's needs, opportunities and to identify the challenges facing the Bahraini women workforce in this sector and the impact of these challenges in their continuity. The methodology is built on the descriptive approach. The study uses quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain the results that can be generalized, where several tools are used to collect data such as questionnaires and interviews with groups of CEO's and top management' from various financial institutions.. Three different types of questionnaires have been used in the study, the first questionnaire was directed to Bahraini working women in this sector, the second questionnaire was directed to Bahraini women who departed the sector, and these two questionnaires contained implicit references to the factors of the study. The third questionnaire was directed to the human resource managers (HRM) to provide the required information and data. The sample of the respondents were from different ages, functions that signifies the main approach of the study that discuss the views of women challenges and opportunities. The study shows the total number of Bahraini employees in this sector is 14,675 with about 37% being Bahraini women which represents 25% of the total workforce (Bahraini and Expatriates). The results illustrate that approximately 8% of women are at the level of Board of Directors among the Bahraini workforce, while the majority of 92% are men which is a very low percentage of women in comparison to men. The study shows that 4.5% of Bahraini women among Bahraini workforce got the position of CEO, while the proportion of men received 95.5%. The sector is in continuous growth and needs to invest in human resources properly to attract talent, and to enhance the access of women in this sector for senior positions it must acknowledge the factors that influence it. One of the most effective factors for Bahraini women's advancement for leadership positions is the need for women in higher ranking positions, which strengthens the need and the importance of women availability in financial institutions. Therefore, it is essential to remove all the barriers that might hinder a woman from reaching those positions, and to provide equal access opportunities to leadership positions in the sector, where the respondents think that the presence of women leads to the existence of the most versatile mentality and the possibility of making more balanced decisions. The respondents who have left their jobs stated there is a need for women in leadership positions

due to their positive impact; which results from the diversity in attitudes and ideas, and decision-makers have to promote equal opportunities between both genders to reach those positions. While, the top decision makers believe that social and cultural factors might contribute to hampering Bahraini women's ability to witness career advancement and arrive to senior management positions. HRMs indicated regarding the extent of applying the financial and banking sectors' regulations and laws that include policies and procedures on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and the integration of women's needs, (66.7%) of the institutions gave affirmative responses and ascertained that those policies are applied. The study motivates the sustainability of the development of Bahraini women requires the continuation of the concerned authorities in the Kingdom of Bahrain in the development of mechanisms to encourage women's employment in this sector and the continued career development, and work to build their capacity and support to cope with the major challenges that they may encounter at work and enable them to take up leadership positions.

Keywords: Women, Bahrain, challenges, opportunities, obstacles, financial.

Theme	The role of women in business and leadership: Part II
Chair	Ms. Ahlam Janahi, Chief Executive Officer, Bahrain Horizons
Speaker	Dr. Katerina Nicolopoulou, University of Strathclyde; Prof. Nada Kakabadse, Henley Business School; Dr. Ahu Tatli, Queen Mary University, London; Kanellos-Panagiotis Nikolopoulos, Doctoral candidate, Open Universiteit, Nederland's.
Title	<i>"Cosmopolitanism as a disposition for the study of female entrepreneurship"</i>

ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on the role that *cosmopolitanism* as a disposition (Woodward et al. 2008) plays in the process of entrepreneurial business development by female entrepreneurs in Dubai. Responding to the demand for multidisciplinary approaches to entrepreneurial research (Coviello and Jones 2004), our study describes this entrepreneurial business development as a relational interaction of process with context (Hosking and Hjorth 2004). Studies in the areas of transnational and/or gender-based entrepreneurship have not to-date discussed the cosmopolitan perspective in this manner. Following the analysis of 15 in-depth interviews with female entrepreneurs based in Dubai, the paper develops a conceptual model that explores the perceptions and experiences of female entrepreneurs, both nationals and expatriates. This research addresses an existing knowledge gap on conceptualizing the opportunities and challenges of female entrepreneurship when studied from the lens of a cosmopolitan perspective. Our findings indicate that the cosmopolitan disposition is an asset for transnational entrepreneurs when venturing in a cosmopolitan city like Dubai, and highlights specific characteristics of female entrepreneurship. There are theoretical and practical implications that call for further study of cosmopolitanism with entrepreneurship in an international context, in particular in the context of cosmopolitan cities like Dubai, using a relational theoretical framework. This paper seeks to respond to these challenges, which also address within the gender perspective.

Theme	The role of women in business and leadership: Part II
Chair	Ms. Ahlam Janahi, Chief Executive Officer, Bahrain Horizons
Speaker	Dr. Eugenie Samier, RUW Ms. Amal Al-Gallaf, The British University of Dubai
Title	“Constructing Modern Women’s Leadership Identities in the Arabian Gulf: Synthesising Roles from Culture, Tradition and Modernisation”

ABSTRACT

The Arabian Gulf countries have gone through unprecedented changes affecting social institutions and culture, and lie at the intersection of a broad range of historical forces that continue to shape national developments from traditional culture, through colonisation to globalisation and modernisation. Part of this change is the increasing role for women in holding senior organisational and community positions that require leadership in reshaping social institutions and providing role models for younger women. Because of differences in culture, most ‘Western’ leadership models do not fully apply. This is an exploratory theoretical paper grounded in constructivist, critical and postcolonial theory traditions that suggest an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach in researching Gulf women’s leadership identity formation that focusses on the connections among four levels of analysis that are interdependent: 1) historical, social and cultural contextualisation; 2) interpersonal interactions ; 3) social institutions through organisational social constructivism; and 4) the individual level through social identity and agency-cultural identity formation theory.