

Kawader National e-Recruitment Portal: Promoting Better Labor Market Outcomes for Youth in Qatar

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The Qatari government has worked on promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth and full, productive, high-quality employment for all. This policy brief summarizes some of the major findings of the first wave of the Qatari Youth Survey (QYS), which sought to navigate youth's educational outcomes, employment options, and personal transitions. The study provides an overview about the use of Kawader national e-recruitment job-searching portal, capitalizing on sectors and industries available on the platform and skill requirements from those seeking employment that yield insights into youths' employment experiences. The data are intended to inform stakeholders and decision-makers about the main challenges facing youth in the Qatari labor market and current satisfaction rates.

The youth empowerment has vast potential to enhance societies' inclusive growth and development. If given the opportunity to build appropriate skills and access decent employment, the youth can help accelerate progress regarding Qatar's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and engage in meaningful work that benefits them, their families, and society as a whole. To facilitate this process, Qatar National Vision 2030 seeks to transform the country into a knowledge-based economy¹.

To achieve this goal, the *ictQatar* strategy² was developed to support Qatar's ICT infrastructure to position the country as a leader in the knowledge economy. As a result of such efforts, several government organizations, including the Ministry of Labor, continued the implementation of their digitization strategies as part of Qatar's E-Government 2020 objectives. For instance, government organizations developed an online platform called Kawader, which offers quick and simple access to services and online job search resources in the government and private sectors through multiple electronic service channels.

According to this view, the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) at Qatar University conducted a national telephone survey for a representative sample of Qatari citizens. The respondents were asked about the main challenges they face in the labor market, their awareness and perceptions of, and their interest in using Kawader platform as a method of securing employment in government entities and the private sector. Considering the lack of research on whether the Kawader platform has improved employment opportunities and diversified occupations for youth, this policy brief focuses on providing a public opinion assessment of Kawader platform.

Qatari Youth Employment Status

This section provides an overview of the employment background of Qatari youth, including their work sectors, occupations, and active working years. A total of 1,989 male and female Qatari youth between 18 and 29 years old were interviewed for the survey.

Work Sectors: The majority of the respondents were working in the public government sector (86%) or the semi-public government sector (9%), with only

5% working in the private sector. Most of the success of Qatarization (a governmental initiative to increase the number of Qatari employees within the private and public sectors) has taken place within the government sector, with serious attempts being made to increase the demand for Qatari labor in the private sector³. The findings indicate a statistically significant relationship between sector type and age group. The results show that 92% of the respondents in the 18–24 age group were working in the public government sector compared to 83% of those in the 25–30 age group.

Occupations: Most respondents (39%) worked as clerks (e.g., secretaries, cashiers, or office assistants), with statistically significant differences by gender (female 65%, male 31%) and for the 25–30 age group (43%). The second most chosen occupation for the respondents was “member of armed forces or the police” (30%).

Work Experience: Overall, the findings show that 45% of the young Qatari respondents had worked for an average of two to five years, 27% had worked for six years or more, and 28% had worked for one year or less. Among the respondents with an average age of 25–30 years, the results show that 46% had between two and five years of work experience.

Challenges Facing Qatari Youth in the Labor Market

The respondents were asked about the challenges facing Qatari youth in the labor market. The majority of the respondents indicated that the three critical challenges to youth employment are English language requirements (91%). The second most significant issue for 84% of the respondents was that a considerable amount of attention is given to personal connections, or *wasta* when applying for a

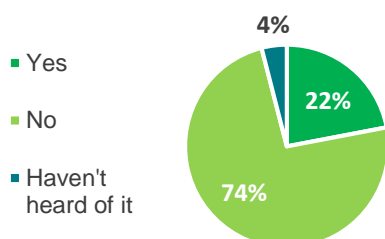
job. According to the respondents, the third most significant difficulty that young people in Qatar might encounter in the workplace was that government occupations are less demanding and involve carrying out everyday chores (81%).

In addition, sustaining a balance between family and work is often challenging for employees. The respondents were asked to indicate if they faced these challenges based on a 12-item work-life balance scale. According to the results, 75% of the Qatari youths indicated that the nature of their work required always being physically present at the workplace, and heavy workloads create another challenge for employees (32%). Prior research has found that various stressors, such as balancing work and family life, long working hours, stressful duties, parental responsibilities, vacations, family obligations, childcare, commitment to work, gender equality, maternity and paternity leave, coping strategies, and resources available were found to affect family cohesion in Qatari society.

Usage Rates of Kawader Platform

Figure 1 shows the frequency of Qatari youth’s usage of the Kawader platform to search for jobs. According to this figure, around three-fourths of the respondents (74%) had not used the Kawader platform to search for a job, 22% had used it, and 4% had never heard of it. The findings show that 80% of males had not used the platform compared to 68% of females. The younger respondents (aged 18–24) had not used the platform as much as those in the 25–30 age group (77% and 70%, respectively).

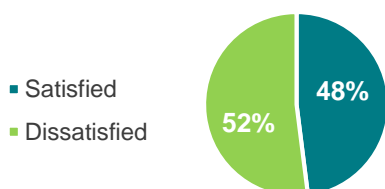
Figure 1. Usage Rates of Kawader platform



Satisfaction with using Kawader Platform

Figure 2 illustrates satisfaction with Kawader platform. Among the respondents who had used the platform, 48% were satisfied, and 52% were dissatisfied. The results demonstrate the statistical significance of gender and age. Whereas 59% of the male respondents reported being satisfied with Kawader platform, 41% of the female respondents were satisfied.

Figure 2. Satisfaction with using Kawader platform



Difficulties in using Kawader platform

Figure 3 captures several common complaints that the respondents may have had when using the platform. The statements were used to determine whether the respondents had similar difficulties when applying for a job through Kawader.

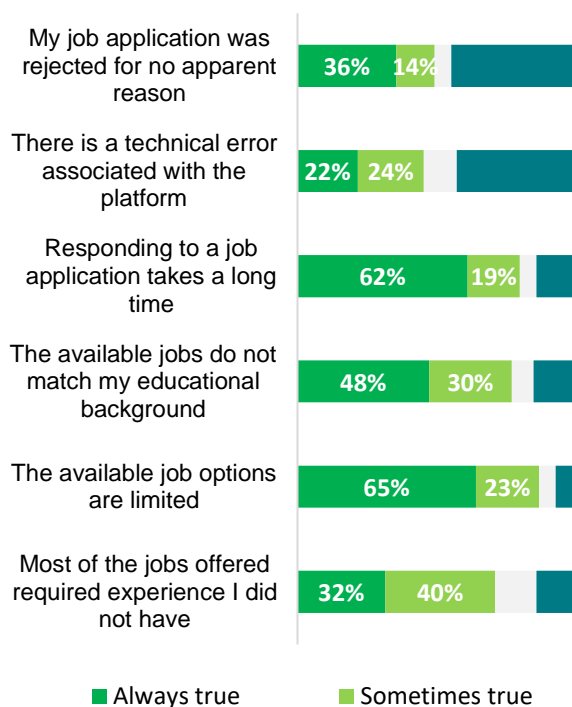
When the participants were asked about the truth of the statement that “The available job options are limited,” around 65% reported it was always true (female

73%, male 51%), 23% said that it was sometimes true, 6% indicated that it was rarely true, and 6% stated that it was never true. More than half (62%) of the respondents chose the response “Always true” for the statement “Responding to a job application takes a long time,” while 19% reported that it was sometimes true, 13% indicated that it was never true, and only 6% stated that it was rarely true.

For the statement “The available jobs do not match my educational background,” the results show that 48% reported that it was always true with a statistically significant relationship to gender: (females 54%, males 37%), 30% said sometimes true, 14% said never true, and 8% stated that it was rarely true. Responding to the statement “My job application was rejected for no apparent reason,” 44% of the Qatari youth reported that it was never true (with a statistically significant relationship to gender: (females 41%, males 47%), 36% stated that it was always true, 14% said that it was sometimes true, and 6% indicated that it was rarely true.

In response to the statement about encountering a technical error associated with the platform, 42% of the respondents reported that they had not faced any, 24% said that it was sometimes true, 22% stated that it was always true, and 12% indicated that it was rarely true. Most of the Qatari youth tended to agree with the statement, “Most of the jobs offered required experience that I did not have,” with 40% responding that it was sometimes true and 32% indicating that it was always true. The remaining respondents’ answers were as follows: 15% rarely true, and 13% never true. The data related to this statement show statistically significant differences between the genders, with 44% of the male respondents indicating “sometimes true” and 38% of the females choosing “always true”.

Figure 3. Challenges using Kawader Platform



Based on the results, the use of the Kawader platform is still limited, and respondents faced difficulties in using the platform when applying for jobs. The study's findings would help decision-makers to understand people's attitudes

toward the system better and endeavor to improve it by offering a variety of opportunities through the platform. The following policy recommendations provide insights for decision-makers considering improvements to Kawader system.

References

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Policy Recommendations

1. Promote the availability of career resources and guidance, including information about job prospects, salaries, and other relevant details.
2. Expand the number and diversity of job options available on Kawader platform with a view to providing appropriately matched positions based on young people's educational backgrounds.
3. Use various communication channels, including social media, to increase awareness of the use of Kawader platform.