EXPLORING UNDERGRADUATE LEADERSHIP PERCEPTIONS AT AN INTERNATIONAL BRANCH CAMPUS IN QATAR

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“Leadership is one of those words that mean a lot of different things: success, power, authority, change… none of these things will be possible for you if you do not know who you are.”

(Rachel Simmons, 2013)
Abstract

Many educators and higher education administrators believe that leadership skills are a desired outcome of the undergraduate experience (Astin & Astin, 2000; Lucas, 1994; Shertzer & Schuh, 2004). While the importance of leadership development in higher education is well supported, research on how students perceive and define leadership is lacking (Logue, Hutchens, & Hector, 2005; Haber, 2011; Marckett & Kadolph, 2010; Shertzer & Schuh, 2004). Furthermore, the research that is available on perceptions of leadership should be expanded to include and represent a diverse student body, as it has been shown that minorities’ perceptions of leadership differ from those of the dominant White culture (Arminio et al., 2000; Haber, 2011; Lo, 2011). Dugan, Morosini and Beazley (2011) also suggest that the literature in college student leadership has not advanced to include attention to cross-cultural considerations.

As higher education evolves globally, there has been an increase in the number of American institutions that have opened campuses internationally (Wildavsky, 2010), spreading the idea of undergraduate leadership development to different cultural contexts. This inductive, qualitative study explored undergraduate leadership perceptions among Qatari students studying at an international branch campus of an American institution of higher education. After an extensive review of the literature, no current research on student leadership development discussed leadership experiences within the cultural context of the Arabian Gulf, including Qatar, or at international branch campuses of American institutions.

This study contributes to the literature on undergraduate leadership definitions and perceptions by expanding the research on leadership development to include the global experiences at international branch campuses of higher. The findings identify Qatari students’ perceptions of leadership experiences at the campus and how Qatari students construct leadership
within their cultural context. The findings from this study also suggest that perceptions of leadership are embedded within the social and cultural context of Qatari culture. Five themes emerged from the data providing a framework to describe the social and cultural construction of leadership within the Qatari students’ community. This study affirms that Western postindustrial and industrial definitions of leadership are not independently relevant to Qatari students studying at an international branch campus. This study provides a set of guidelines that can be used by educators at international branch campuses in Qatar to develop leadership programs that resonate with the social and cultural construction of leadership within the Qatari context.

Key words: undergraduate leadership, leadership perceptions, Qatar, international branch campus, international higher education
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements........................................................................................................ 2

Abstract.......................................................................................................................... 4

The Topic and Research Problem .................................................................................. 10

Statement of the Problem .............................................................................................. 11

Qatar .................................................................................................................................. 12

Education City ................................................................................................................ 15

Significance of Research Problem .................................................................................... 16

Research Questions ......................................................................................................... 18

Positional Statement ....................................................................................................... 19

Theoretical Framework .................................................................................................... 20

Relational Leadership Theory (RLT) ............................................................................... 21

Relating to the Audience ................................................................................................ 23

Chapter Two: Literature Review ..................................................................................... 23

Industrial and Postindustrial Leadership Paradigms ......................................................... 25

Leadership Enhancing the Undergraduate Experience ...................................................... 27

Cultural Influences on Leadership Development .............................................................. 29

Race/Ethnicity .................................................................................................................. 29

Gender .............................................................................................................................. 31

Cultural Transferability of Leadership .............................................................................. 32
Participant Two: Mohammad ................................................................. 55
Participant Three: Bubbles................................................................. 55
Participant Four: Muneera ................................................................. 56
Participant Five: Paris ........................................................................ 56
Participant Six: Poppy ......................................................................... 56
Participant Seven: Mishaal ................................................................. 57
Participant Eight: Ahmed ................................................................. 57
Findings ................................................................................................. 57
Leadership is valued within the Qatari culture ........................................ 58
Leadership is gendered ......................................................................... 67
Leadership is community oriented .......................................................... 79
Leadership is perceived as positional ..................................................... 87
Leadership is evolving due to the Qatari economy .................................... 92
Chapter Summary .................................................................................. 94
Chapter Five: Conclusions ..................................................................... 96
Study Purpose and Research Questions ...................................................... 96
Discussion of the Findings ...................................................................... 97
Figure 1. Social and cultural construction of leadership within Qatari culture .......... 98
Research Question 1: How do Qatari college students define student leadership and leadership roles? ................................................................. 99
Research Question 2: How do Qatari college students perceive leadership? ...................... 104

Research Question 3: How is leadership socially constructed among Qatari college students? .................................................................................................................................................. 109

Discussion of the Findings in Relation to the Theoretical Framework ................................. 114

Practitioner Implications ........................................................................................................ 114

Recommendations for Future Study ....................................................................................... 125

Limitation of the Findings ........................................................................................................ 127

Significance and Summary of the Study .................................................................................. 129

References .................................................................................................................................. 131

Table 1 ........................................................................................................................................ 138

Table 2 ........................................................................................................................................ 139

Table 3 ........................................................................................................................................ 140

Table 4 ........................................................................................................................................ 141

Appendix A: Unsigned Informed Consent Document ............................................................ 142

Appendix B: Interview Question Protocol ................................................................................ 143

Appendix C: Call for Participants ............................................................................................. 146

Appendix D: Letter of Institutional Support ............................................................................ 147

Appendix E: List of Codes ......................................................................................................... 148
Chapter One: Introduction

The Topic and Research Problem

It is argued that leadership experiences allow students to grow across a number of areas, including multi-cultural awareness, self-awareness, conflict resolution, civic responsibility, and commitment to continued leadership (Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001). In fact, many educators and administrators believe that leadership skills are a desired outcome of the undergraduate experience (Astin & Astin, 2000; Lucas, 1994; Shertzer & Schuh, 2004). Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) state that longitudinal studies consistently show that students improve their leadership skills during their college experience, which supports Astin’s (1993) earlier findings of an increase of leadership skills among undergraduates that was not attributable to pre-college characteristics.

Universities and colleges approach the idea of leadership skills development in a variety of ways. Students can engage in opportunities to explore leadership through formalized leadership positions within student organizations, or they can participate in a wide range of leadership workshops and training programs. As Dugan, Komives and Segar (2008) share this commitment to undergraduate leadership development is represented in the increase of the number of leadership programs (curricular and co-curricular) offered for students. The number of leadership programs in higher education settings has doubled in the past two decades, solidly connecting it to the undergraduate experience (Dugan, Komives & Segar, 2008).

Although the importance of leadership development in higher education is well supported, research on how students perceive and define leadership is lacking (Logue, Hutchens, & Hector, 2005; Haber, 2011; Marckettii & Kadolph, 2010; Shertzer & Schuh, 2004).
Furthermore, the research that is available on perceptions of leadership does not always include and represent a diverse student body. The limited research available on minority students has shown that their perceptions of leadership differ from those of the dominant, White culture (Arminio et al., 2000; Haber, 2011; Lo, 2011). Lo (2011) argues that there is an absence of understanding of the distinctive leadership perspectives and needs of students of color and other underrepresented student groups. Dugan, Morosini, and Beazley (2011) also suggest that the literature in college student leadership has not advanced to include attention to cross-cultural considerations and student leadership perceptions in international settings.

**Statement of the Problem**

As higher education evolves globally, there has been an increase in the number of American institutions that have opened campuses internationally (Wildavsky, 2010). Wildavsky (2010) argues that globalization has led to intensified competition and increased mobility of higher education. The recent increase in the number of American institutions that have opened international campuses is an example of such globalized efforts in higher education. According to the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (2009), international branch campuses in higher education have increased by 43 percent between 2006 and 2009. Becker (2010) defines the international branch campus (IBC) as an offshore (international) location of a higher education institution operated by the institution or in partnership with a local organization. Simply put, an IBC is a fully-accredited, degree-granting institution that is located in another country (Becker, 2010). International branch campuses also have complete academic, student, and research facilities and a range of course options that allow them to exist and operate nearly independently from the main campus, unlike study abroad programs or satellite learning centers.
Becker (2010) also adds that the United States leads the way in international higher education by setting up the majority of all current IBCs, with Australia, the United Kingdom, France, and India also contributing to the availability of global IBCs. The most common countries that host branch campuses include the United Arab Emirates, China, Singapore, and Qatar, as these countries have a high student demand as well as a drive to build knowledge-based economies (Becker, 2010).

In a review of three different American international branch campuses in the Arabian Gulf, Cichocki (2005) argued that the goals and practices of exported American education are often based on American needs, and thus they neglect regional knowledge and culture. These differences in cultural expectations and American-based values and practices could also translate to the extracurricular experience, where many of the leadership development programs reside. However, little is known about how international branch campuses balance cultural differences when designing undergraduate leadership development programs or how leadership is understood from the student perspective at IBCs in the Arabian Gulf. This makes it imperative to expand the research of perceptions of undergraduate leadership beyond the American understanding. To this end, the purpose of this qualitative study is to explore leadership definitions and describe leadership perceptions of Qatari students at an international branch campus of an American university.

Qatar

Situated in the Arabian Peninsula, the State of Qatar is an independent state ruled as an emirate by the Al Thani family since the mid-1800s. The official language of Qatar is Arabic and the majority of Qataris are Muslim. Rostron (2009) asserts that Qatari society is defined by
Islamic customs and beliefs, and the culture is highly conservative, tribal, and deeply connected to its Bedouin history. Whereas the population of Qatar is approximately two million people, only about 15% of the population are Qatari nationals, with the remaining majority being expatriate.

Within the last forty years, Qatar has seen significant economic growth and development due to the discovery of oil and gas resources, which transformed this state from a pearl-diving based economy to one that is utilizing its oil and gas natural resources to create rapid economic growth, political modernization, and social change (Rostron, 2009). His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the former Emir, created political, social, and cultural reforms that have changed Qatari society to be more progressive. One major initiative is educational reform (Rostron, 2009). Qatar lacked a formal education system until sixty years ago; Prior to this, children were taught to read and write informally through classes organized in mosques for young boys and in homes for young girls. Gradually, there was a secularization of education, which allowed for greater access to education for women (Davidson, 2008). The first modern boys’ school opened in 1951 and the first girls’ school opened in 1956, with primary and secondary education focused on Arabic literacy, mathematics, ethics, health, and Quran (Rostron, 2009). In 1973, Qatar opened Qatar University, which like the K-12 educational system, was gender-segregated, in accordance with the social norms, and offered degrees in humanities, social studies, Islamic studies, and sciences, as well as teacher training.

Since 2001, Qatar has focused its efforts on establishing greater opportunities in higher education as well as overall education reform for graduates who have not met academic demands or employers’ expectations (Rostron, 2009). This push for educational reform was not only experienced in Qatar, but across the Arabian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. They
experienced two main shifts in education reform as a result of an opening in the globalized market: a rapid growth in higher education in the Arab world, and the emergence of the GCC as a major player in the region for academic opportunities (Romani, 2009). Romani (2009) shares that in the last ten years the GCC (including Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) have established over 40 foreign branches of Western universities and dedicated nearly $50 billion toward transforming higher education in the region.

Specifically in Qatar, RAND, a research organization, was consulted to help transform the education system to become a world-class competitive system, and the Qatari government established the Supreme Education Council to oversee the educational reform in the K-12 and higher education systems (Ellili-Cherif & Romanowski, 2013). Bahry and Marr (2005) note that Qatar is a commercial society in which more women pursue higher education than men and more male high school graduates directly enter the workforce, creating a gender imbalance within higher education. Educational reform has expanded opportunities for Qatari men and women to pursue higher education in their own country (Bahry & Marr, 2005). This led to the establishment of Education City, which brought together six American universities under the common vision of “unlocking human potential” within Doha, Qatar (Qatar Foundation’s Education Division, 2011). Qatar University, by contrast, was the only national university at the time. Unlike the schools within the Education City system, the curriculum at Qatar University is still taught predominately in Arabic rather than exclusively in English. Haber and Getz (2011) add that with the creation of Education City, Qatar developed a focus not only on expanding higher education in the region, but also helping undergraduates become global citizens.
**Education City**

Education City is a 14 million square meter campus that is composed of six American university branch campuses located in Doha, Qatar. Education City was created under the patronage of His Highness, Father Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, established through Qatar Foundation, whose mission was to reform Qatar’s education system by partnering with world-renowned international branch campuses (Qatar Foundation’s Education Division, 2009). The creation of the international branch campus community aligned with the threefold mission of Qatar Foundation: education, scientific research, and community development, to build a sustainable society that creates and shares knowledge (Qatar Foundation’s Education Division, 2009). The vision of Education City prioritizes education as a vital pathway to creating a knowledge-based society.

The six international branch campuses (IBCs) established by Qatar Foundation include Texas A&M University in Qatar, Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, and Northwestern University. Each campus offers specialized degree programs in separate academic disciplines. The first IBC (Virginia Commonwealth University) opened in 1998 and the most recent IBC (Northwestern University) opened in 2008 (Qatar Foundation’s Education Division, 2009).

This multi-university campus, named Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU) in 2011, brings together a truly global student body from 60 different countries and cultures (Qatar Foundation’s Education Division, 2011). Qatari students account for about half the student population (White, 2010), with the remaining student study body either being expatriates or international students. The diverse student body is representative of the mission of Qatar
Foundation to be home of “the most elite universities…providing excellent educational opportunities to students from the region and beyond” (Qatar Foundation’s Education Division, 2009). The majority of these students are undergraduates, as only two of the IBCs offer master degrees (a Master of Fine Arts program and Master of Science in Engineering program).

The goal of HBKU is to provide opportunities for research, scholarship, learning, and discovery for students through interdisciplinary programs. The international branch campuses within the HBKU system are autonomous. However, through the multi-university setting they collaborate among the campuses, which allow for deep and holistic learning (Qatar Foundation’s Education Division, 2011). HBKU aims to support the Qatar National Vision 2030 statement to develop the human resources capabilities of Qatar by encouraging global leadership potential among their students (Qatar Foundation’s Education Division, 2011). Qatar Foundation provides the financial support for developing and maintaining the IBCs in Education City, including the costs of buildings, infrastructure, and the costs of faculty and administrative assistance, demonstrating the dedication Qatar has to education reform. Beyond the unique experience of attending an American IBC, Qataris attending higher education in Education City choose to do so in a coeducational, English-instruction setting, unlike Qatar University, which offers coursework predominately in Arabic and is gender-segregated. Another unique experience found at the international branch campuses within Education City is the commitment to developing student leadership capacity (Qatar Foundation’s Education Division, 2011).

**Significance of Research Problem**

While Qatar Foundation’s goal is to create a knowledge-based society through importing Western institutions of education, Rostron (2009) suggests that American faculty and
administrators at the branch campuses place different cultural and educational expectations and demands upon local students attending these campuses. This supports Cichocki’s (2005) earlier findings that goals and practices of exported American education are often based on American needs, and thus they neglect regional knowledge and culture. These differences in cultural expectations could also translate to the extra-curricular experience, where many of the leadership development programs reside.

While there has been no research conducted on leadership experiences of students studying in the Arabian Gulf, Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) have explored leadership from the business management lens and assert there is a lack of leadership theories that are sensitive to the local (Gulf) culture. Islamic values as well as Bedouin and tribal traditions have influenced the understanding of leadership within the Qatari and Arabian Gulf community (Abdalla and Al-Hamoud, 2001). Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) also state that within the Arabian Gulf, leadership is often seen as positional, leadership skills are mainly innate, and leadership positions should only be occupied by those competent to lead, which is different from Western ideas of business leadership. Additionally, the Gulf culture is more collectivistic in values and practices rather than individualistic (Abdalla & Al-Hamoud, 2001), which may limit the acceptance of Western leadership theories within this cultural context. Given that American universities are new to the Arabian Gulf region, it would be helpful to explore leadership definitions and perceptions from a student perspective, to provide a more holistic understanding of leadership within this region. It also would provide insight to any cultural tensions that may arise because of differences between the campus’s and the Qatari community’s definition of student leadership.

Furthermore, research on how students define undergraduate leadership is lacking (Logue, Hutchens, & Hector, 2005; Haber, 2011; Marcketti & Kadolph, 2010; Shertzer & Schuh,
Arminio et al. (2000) and Lo (2011) assert that there is a need to expand research on minority students’ perceptions of leadership, as their perceptions differ from those of White culture. Given that Qatari students are not part of the White or American culture, it is important to explore their perceptions of leadership to understand the perspective of these students and contribute to the literature on leadership within different cultural groups. This qualitative study addresses a gap in the literature on Qatari student leadership perceptions and experiences, and adds to the understanding of leadership development within an IBC setting.

There are several reasons for this study. An extensive review of the literature has shown that there is no current research on student leadership development discussing student leadership within the context of an international branch campus. Therefore, this study explores leadership definitions and describes leadership perceptions of Qatari students at an international branch campus. As leadership development continues to be integrated in the undergraduate curriculum (Dugan, Komives & Segar, 2008), it is imperative to not only explore leadership definitions and perceptions among different cultural groups, but also equally important to look at leadership development within a global perspective.

**Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to explore leadership definitions and describe leadership perceptions of Qatari students at an international branch campus. To better understand the leadership experiences and perceptions of Qatari students studying at an international branch campus (IBC) in Qatar, three research questions guided this study:

1. How do Qatari college students define student leadership and leadership roles?
2. How do Qatari college students perceive student leadership?
3. How is leadership socially constructed among Qatari college students?

Positional Statement

As a scholar-practitioner who works closely with students at an international branch campus, one of my biases in relation to this study is that, as an administrator, I am involved in defining and administering leadership experiences for students. I have bias in my personal definition of student leadership and my own understanding of how students perceive leadership. As I am aware of this bias, I bracketed out preconceived ideas about leadership development as well as my personal experience involving student leadership when analyzing the data and making meaning of the lived experiences of leadership among the participants in this study.

Another bias is my own cultural background, being a non-Qatari researcher. My Egyptian-American cultural background allows familiarity with the language and religion of the Qatari culture; however, my culture background is different from the one that I am exploring. Therefore, it is important that I am aware of these cultural biases while conducting this research study to remain committed to exploring multiple interpretations of leadership definitions within this different cultural context.

Through this study, the findings identified Qatari students’ perceptions of leadership experiences at the campus and how Qatari students construct leadership within their cultural context. The findings of study contribute valuable information to help student affairs practitioners and educators who work at international branch campuses to better understand Qatari student perceptions of leadership within a non-American setting.
**Theoretical Framework**

In order to place the selected theoretical framework for this study in historical context, it is important to briefly review two leadership paradigms that shape leadership development programs in higher education. Rost (1993) identified two divergent leadership theory paradigms that have emerged: the industrial paradigm, in which leadership is centered on a leader and is management oriented; and the postindustrial paradigm, in which leadership is values-based and centered on relationships. Kezar and Moriarty (2000) highlight that the industrial paradigm of leadership was derived from the values and beliefs of the dominant American culture which was mainly Caucasian, male, and from an upper-income social class. Lo (2011) supported this assertion by stating that the emerging postindustrial paradigms created a shift in leadership understanding that allowed it to be broadened and inclusive, but also argued that while postindustrial paradigms challenged White, male, upper-income norms found in the industrial paradigm, it still represents “some sort of Western notion” of leadership (p.13). This assertion further supports the need to extend the research on leadership using a postindustrial paradigm to diverse groups of students. The postindustrial framework is particularly relevant to this study because it attempts to explore student leadership within a non-American context. Rost (1993) argues that leadership is a socially constructed reality that can only be understood through actions or words. Rost (1993) continues to assert that people collectively construct an idea of leadership based on race, gender, religion, family, and cultural influences. Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) note that Arabian Gulf cultures place importance on personal relationship and the influence of groups within leadership styles, it is critical to explore leadership within the Qatari context using a postindustrial framework, as it is values based and relationship focused. Using a postindustrial lens is useful when looking at relational dynamics in the Qatari student
culture, as opposed to the industrial lens which focuses on the leader-follower connection and views leadership as a management approach.

The selected theoretical framework guiding this research is the relational leadership theory (RLT), developed by Uhl-Bien (2006). RLT aligns with the postindustrial paradigm of leadership development (Rost, 1993) and Uhl-Bien (2006) asserts that the RLT is a framework for guiding leadership theory and practice that focuses on the study of relational processes of leadership. Utilizing this theoretical framework aligns with the constructivist-interpretive approach, as it assumes that leadership is a process experienced by individuals and their understanding of leadership abilities, rather than utilizing one external definition of leadership.

**Relational Leadership Theory (RLT)**

Relational leadership theory (RLT) is an organizational leadership framework that explores leadership as a social process constructed by groups involved in an organization. It occurs within the context of the relational dynamics in that organization (Uhl-Bien, 2006). RLT is aligned with the postindustrial paradigm of leadership as it does not restrict leadership to formalized roles or hierarchical positions (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Rost (1993) views leadership as a process of what leaders and collaborators achieve, rather than what the leader achieves, and Uhl-Bien (2006) supports the view that leadership occurs in a multidirectional process rather than focused on top-down relationships.

Uhl-Bien (2006) emphasizes that within the leadership discourse, there is a growing emphasis on understanding relational perspectives of leadership, where the knowledge of leadership is socially constructed by individuals and then shared. Traditionally, there have been two lenses of viewing relational leadership: the *entity* perspective that focuses on leadership
through an individual’s (leader) internal traits and how he or she interacts with others, and the *process* perspective that focuses on social interactions and communication processes between the leader and followers (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Uhl-Bien (2006) argues that relational leadership should be viewed from both the entity and process perspective. She developed the relational leadership theory to address the multiple realities of leadership that places the individual (leader) in the context of his or her environment. RLT places emphasis on the process of leadership and looks at both the internal characteristics of the individual as well as the external context(s) that allow leadership to arise through interactions. Uhl-Bien (2006) shares that RLT is a process-orientated theory of leadership, where the objective is to “enhance our understanding of the relational dynamics – the social processes – that compose leadership and organizing (p. 666).” Within this new understanding, leadership occurs when relational processes and social influence work towards creating change.

Given that this study explores student leadership definitions and perceptions that are not focused on a specific title or leadership position, relational leadership theory is ideal to ground this study through a process-oriented approach. Additionally, this study explores student leadership within the Qatari community, paying attention to the social processes that influence how leadership is developed and understood within this community. This theoretical framework has also been selected to scaffold this investigation because it is aligned with the institution’s student leadership programs, which espouse the postindustrial view of leadership as both process and relationship oriented. RLT also takes into account the cultural context of this study. Bakken (2013) shares that Qatari culture values relationships, and he notes that familial relationships are important influences in Qatari undergraduates’ decision making process. Additionally, Abdalla and al-Homoud (2001) assert that Gulf cultures (Qatari culture included) are collectivist in both
values and practices, and there is an importance placed on personal relationships and the influence of groups within leadership styles. The chosen framework aligns with the cultural value of personal relationships and argues that the leadership process is about both the individual and the relationships that develop within groups. The RLT is useful in exploring leadership definitions because it meets Anfara and Mertz’s (2006) requirement of explaining a story or a phenomenon and offers new insight into the understanding of leadership definitions and how they are developed within the Qatari student community.

Relating to the Audience

This research is useful for student affairs professionals, faculty, and other educators who work at international branch campuses within the Arabian Gulf. As there is little research on student leadership perceptions and experiences among Qatari or Arabian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) students, this study provides insight into how Qatari students define leadership within their cultural context, how they understand leadership roles, and how they define leadership skills. It provides a narrative of the phenomenon of Qatari student leadership that is not found in the current literature on student leadership experiences and perceptions, and it expands the current understanding of undergraduate leadership to the global, international branch campus experience.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Leadership experiences instill empowering beliefs in undergraduates by allowing them to realize that they can make a difference in, engage in, and influence their campuses and communities (Shertzer & Schuh, 2004). The types of leadership experiences offered at institutions of higher education vary greatly and can allow students to hold positions of
responsibility or authority within student organizations, serve as active members within academic or extracurricular organizations, or participate in extracurricular programs that encourage leadership development. Leadership is thought to be an important part of the undergraduate experience, as many educators and administrators believe that through leadership experiences, students gain leadership skills, which are a desired outcome of the undergraduate experience (Shertzer & Schuh, 2004).

Current research focuses on the role of leadership development at college campuses and the cultural influences of leadership on the undergraduate experience within the American higher education setting. As leadership programs in the undergraduate setting have increased in recent years (Dugan, Komives & Segar, 2008), it is critical for practitioners and researchers to analyze the role that leadership development plays in student development. Logue, Hutchens, and Hector (2005) highlight that leadership roles and experiences should be analyzed and operationalized to better understand the relationship between leadership and the undergraduate student experience.

While the importance of leadership development is well supported, Dugan, Morosini and Beazley (2008) suggest that the literature in college student leadership has not advanced to include attention to cross-cultural considerations and is American-focused. While leadership development is important at diverse institutions, it is also important to look at the cultural transferability of leadership and leadership development within international contexts (Dugan, et al., 2008). Given that today’s graduates transition into a culturally diverse work climate, it is important to examine undergraduate leadership experiences and perceptions within a global context.

This literature review has six main areas of discussion: (a) an overview of the industrial and postindustrial leadership paradigms; (b) a summary of how leadership development
enhances the undergraduate experience; (c) cultural, race/ethnicity, and gender influences on leadership development; (d) the cultural transferability of leadership; and finally, (e) an overview of the current understanding of leadership within the Middle Eastern and Qatari Cultures. The review concludes with a synthesis of leadership development within the undergraduate setting, and a summary.

**Industrial and Postindustrial Leadership Paradigms**

The commitment to leadership development in higher education has allowed two leadership theory paradigms to emerge. Shertzer and Schuh (2004) outline these two divergent paradigms: the industrial paradigm, in which leadership is seen as focused on one leader and is often management oriented; and the postindustrial paradigm, in which leadership is values-based and relationship-centric. Leadership theories in the industrial paradigm were focused on production and efficiency, and therefore emphasized leadership as traits, behaviors, or examples of good management (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella & Osteen, 2004). Haber (2011) argues that using this type of leader-centric approach is limiting, as it is focused on the individual, the position, or a title, and it allows for the assumption that leadership is an intrinsic characteristic. Haber (2011) continues to suggest that the idea of leadership has recently evolved into a concept that is “more relational, process-oriented, service-directed and systems-focused” (p. 66). This emergent postindustrialist perspective of leadership is one that views leadership development as a process for both the individual and the group, not one that is focused on a title or a position of leadership (Komives & Wagner, 2009). From within the postindustrial paradigm grew the idea of socially responsible leadership (social-change model), which is a collaborative,
purposeful leadership process that transcends cross-cultural boundaries to create social change (Dugan, Komives & Segar, 2008).

The postindustrial paradigms highlight an important shift in the perception of leadership as being a collaborative, shared process instead of an individualistic, leader-focused process. Unlike previous theories, postindustrial post-industrial paradigms emphasize the importance of leadership serving a common goal (such as social change), encourage inclusivity, and value differences and the interconnectedness of the individual, group, and system. (Dugan et al., 2008; Komives & Wagner, 2009; Haber, 2011).

Haber (2011) shares that from within postindustrial paradigms, the relational leadership model (RLM) developed, in which a common purpose or goal directs the leadership process toward positive change. As outlined by Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (2007), RLM supports Rost’s (1993) earlier idea of leadership as a process that happens when a group of people intend to create change, and is not only an outcome of change. RLM places importance on relationships among groups, in which inclusivity is key. This model does not differentiate between the individuals in the group (leaders or followers), but rather it affirms that all group members can draw upon their own leadership abilities to be involved in the group leadership process (Komives et al., 2007). The foundation of this model is that leadership is a communal process, where individuals work toward positive change through interacting with others (Komives et al., 2007). Komives et al. (2007) add that the relational leadership model is process orientated and emphasizes inclusiveness, ethics, and empowerment. Ethical development is important to leadership development in this postindustrial paradigm because of the emphasis on the individual leaders to identify and act in congruence with their values (personal and group) to contribute to the purpose and common goal (Haber, 2011).
Leadership Enhancing the Undergraduate Experience

Marcketti and Kadolph (2010) argue that the importance of leadership education must not be underestimated, as leadership opportunities provide students with the chance to learn valuable professional skills such as self-management and the ability to empower others. Logue, Hutchens, and Hector (2005) suggest that leadership experiences in post-secondary settings foster personal growth opportunities and have positive impacts on career and academic development as well. Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, and Burkhardt (2001) also support the idea that leadership should foster personal growth and that leadership experiences allow students to grow across a number of areas, including multicultural awareness, self-awareness, and commitment to continued leadership. Cress et al. (2001) also found that as a result of leadership experiences, students reported having enhanced conflict resolution skills and awareness of civic responsibility. Students also shared that the most influential components of leadership programs were those that included experiential and active learning activities or volunteer service activities (Cress et al., 2001). Therefore, there are many positive outcomes of student leadership in the undergraduate experience.

While leadership programs have expanded in curricular and co-curricular programs across college campuses, Komives et al. (2005) emphasize the importance of providing students with learning opportunities to build their ability to lead. Dugan et al. (2008) also support this notion and argues that institutions have a responsibility to position leadership development as a central component of student learning.

While affirming the commitment to leadership programs in the undergraduate experience, Komives et al. (2005) share that little research was initially conducted on the process of how a leadership identity is developed or how it changes over time. Shertzer and Schuh (2004) suggest
that a student’s personal definition of leadership may play a significant role in leadership identity and how the student perceives of him or herself as a leader. Fischer, Overland and Adams (2010) also found that incoming first-year students recognize and value both hierarchical (industrial) and systemic (postindustrial) forms of leadership. While students develop their leadership identities, Komives et al. (2005) found that they experienced personal growth through the development of the self, engaging with groups, and the changing view of the self in relation to others. This process of developing a leadership identity occurs in six progressive stages: awareness, exploration/engagement, identifying a leader, leadership differentiated (beyond the role of positional leadership), generativity/commitment to a larger purpose, and integration/synthesis of leadership as part of self-identity (Komives et al., 2005).

When developing leadership identity, students reported experiencing a process that began with viewing leadership as external to one’s personal identity (Komives et al., 2005). At first, leadership was viewed as being leader-centric, with the belief that leadership is an action committed by a positional leader. As students progressed through the formation of a leadership identity, they were able to acknowledge the contexts in which they were “leaders” or “members,” and then progressed to recognizing that leadership can come from non-positional leaders (Komives et al., 2007). As reported by Komives et al. (2005), leadership became an integrated part of students’ self-concepts, and they moved from viewing leadership as positional to being a fluid process in which all members can participate.

Further research on leadership identity led to the creation of the leadership identity development model (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005), which encourages educators to view the stages of leadership identity development as cyclical and transitional. Students should be encouraged to reflect on each of the six stages as they transition
through the process of leadership identity (Komives et al, 2004). Komives et al. (2004) suggest that the leadership identity model should be used by leadership educators to facilitate the movement of students through the stages and to create stage-oriented learning opportunities for students.

**Cultural Influences on Leadership Development**

The development of leadership skills or a leadership identity does not occur individually, and the context in which students develop their identity as leaders is important. Cultural influences such as race, ethnicity, and gender are part of the context in which students engage during leadership development. Dugan et al. (2008) explains that social identity and culture can influence one’s approach to and understanding of leadership. Fischer, Overland, and Adams (2010) also note that Western cultures value individualism as well as a hierarchical approach to leadership, suggesting that approaches to leadership are influenced by cultural perceptions. Dugan et al. (2008) also share that the field of research is limited in providing a comprehensive understanding of leadership development, with particular respect to demographical differences, such as race or gender.

Additionally, Logue, Hutchens, and Hector (2005) argue that studies should involve students’ personal experience, as the literature in the field does not reflect much on personal experiences of student leadership (lived cultural experiences). Therefore, it is important for leadership development experiences to be explored in more detail, taking into account the context in which each student forms his or her leadership identity.

**Race/Ethnicity.** The cultural differences of race and ethnicity can influence leadership
development. Antonio (2001) shares that interactions with diverse peers is influential as college students develop their leadership skills, particularly among groups of students who formerly had homogeneous circles of friends. The influence of race and its relationship to leadership is explored in numerous studies (Dugan et al., 2008; Komives et al., 2005; Komives et al., 2006). Dugan et al. (2008) found that White students reported valuing individualism more, whereas African American and Black students were more receptive to models of leadership that are relational, inclusive, anti-hierarchical approach. This is similar to the findings of Arminio et. al., (2000), which found that students of color favored a collaborative approach to leadership and did not self-identify as leaders. Asian American students were less likely to identify themselves as leaders, according to Dugan et al. (2008), yet these research findings were unclear as to whether Asian American students’ views toward leadership are significantly influenced by culture. This is contrary to Fischer et al. (2010), who clearly state that cultural difference has an influence, as first-year students expressed ethnic differences in their approaches and attitudes toward leadership. It is interesting to note that of the studies examined in this review, only one study (Fischer et al., 2010) specifically included the international student experience of leadership, whereas other studies focused on racial differences of leadership attitudes between Americans: White, African American, and Asian American students. When researching leadership identity, Komives et al. (2005) found that minority students viewed their ethnic and racial identities as assets that they shared within the group leadership setting. Similarly, Arminio et al. (2000) found that interracial interactions positively contributed toward cultural awareness and leadership.

Extensive review of the literature also revealed a void in capturing the Middle Eastern students’ experiences with leadership and leadership development. One study, focused on teaching leadership to undergraduate women studying in Saudi Arabia, found that students
enrolled in a leadership course developed an increase in their perceived leadership competence when compared to other women not enrolled in the leadership course (Alexander, 2011). However it did not expand the understanding of cultural influences on leadership development or explain how Arabian Gulf students define or perceive leadership. There were no studies that looked at the influences of the Middle Eastern or Arab culture on leadership in the undergraduate setting, further demonstrating a gap in the educational research in leadership development among diverse populations.

**Gender.** Gender is another cultural construct that influences the approach to leadership. Fischer et al. (2010) found that incoming first-year male students expressed a significantly higher acceptance of hierarchical leadership, as compared to females, which supports similar research findings in the field. Dugan et al.’s (2008) findings supported previous research that suggests women are more democratic, relational, and inclusive than men in their leadership styles. Fischer et al.’s (2010) findings, however, did not support the idea that female leadership is more cooperative, collaborative, and empowering, which contradicts previous research on female leadership. Miller and Kraus (2004) found that at campuses with more female staff advisor representation, there was a greater likelihood of having more female student government leaders. According to Fischer et al. (2010), leadership development that reinforces a collaborative approach also supports societal expectations instead of limiting them to hierarchical or non-collaborative leadership. They argue that students should be aware of both hierarchal (industrial) paradigms as well as collective (postindustrial) paradigms of leadership (Fischer et al., 2010).

Shim (2013) also highlights how female students experience greater social or psychological barriers to taking on leadership roles due to gender stereotypes. When compared to
male students, female students are more likely to take ownership of leadership when it is conceptualized in a way that reflects the values of collaboration and empowerment, and is relationship-oriented. Shim (2013) also found that female students possess leadership potential that is aligned with the postindustrial paradigm of leadership, rather than the industrial paradigm. Furthermore, positional leadership is experienced differently among male and female students, with females fostering greater skills in collaboration and group facilitation, and men fostering greater skill in self-awareness.

Dugan et al. (2008) encourages campus administrators to be mindful of affirming students’ leadership capabilities, particularly for women and minority students. Komives et al. (2004) also shared that experience with people different from themselves was critical for students to move through the interdependent stages of leadership development. Therefore, cultural differences, such as race and gender, can enhance the leadership development processes, as it can provide opportunities for meaningful connections and reflection.

**Cultural Transferability of Leadership**

Based on the current review of literature, the postindustrial perspectives of leadership were developed within a Western context. The social change model, in particular was designed for undergraduate students studying in the American higher education system (Komives & Wagner, 2009). Wildavsky (2010) also adds that higher education is becoming increasingly global, and students must be adept at working within multicultural settings upon graduation. Therefore, the question of cross-cultural transferability of leadership development to non-Western, non-American contexts arises. While the importance of undergraduate leadership development is well supported, Dugan, Morosini and Beazley (2008) suggest that the literature
in college student leadership has not advanced to include attention to cross-cultural considerations. Shah (2006) also argues that theories and practices in education that are rooted in Western values ignore the multicultural environment found at educational institutions. Rostron (2009) also discusses the need for institutions to be mindful of intercultural perspectives, and suggests that Western faculty and administrators working in international settings place different cultural and educational expectations and demands upon local students. Shah (2006) argues that educational leadership is not fixed and stagnant, but rather varies across different cultures and societies, and is influenced by cultural ideologies and theoretical assumptions. Therefore, Shah (2006) maintains that there needs to be a reorientation of leadership theory in multicultural and international settings.

Dugan et al. (2008) also share that the majority of cross-cultural research on leadership is not conducted within the higher education context. They argue that students must be prepared to engage in culturally transferable leadership if they want to work in a global society (Dugan et al., 2008). Dugan et al. (2008) assert that the cross-transferability of leadership models to non-African American cultures needs to be explored further.

When looking at the transferability of socially responsible leadership in the American and Mexican higher education settings, Dugan et al. (2008) found that students studying in a Mexican institution had a significantly higher capacity for socially responsible leadership than those studying in America. This could be due to the cultural influences that allow for socially responsible leadership to be better received in the Mexican institutions and suggest that cultural preferences toward collectivism and humane orientations may influence approaches to leadership. Dugan et al. (2011) encourage future research to explore how cultural influences shape student leadership development. Spreitzer, Perttula and Xin (2005) also add that research
on transformational leadership across international contexts in the field of organizational behavior is limited. No other data outside of Dugan et al.’s (2008) study explored the transferability of leadership in international higher education contexts. This suggests a clear need for researchers to explore international leadership identity development and how leadership models can be culturally sensitive, as well as culturally congruent.

**Current Understanding of Leadership within the Middle Eastern and Qatari Cultures**

While there exists a lack of literature on the study of leadership within the Middle East and Arabian Gulf cultures (Abdalla & Al-Hamoud, 2001; Kabasakal & Dastmalchian, 2001; Neal, Finlay & Tansey, 2004), there are a few studies looking at leadership within the framework of business management. Neal, Finlay and Tansey (2004) also highlight that current leadership research has ignored how Arab women conceptualize leadership and suggest that cultural differences within the Arab region have direct implications on how leadership trainings should be designed.

Abdalla and Al-Hamoud (2001) analyzed leadership perceptions among Qatari business managers within both the private business and governmental sector, and found that the local culture supports the view of a successful leader as one who possesses specific leadership qualities, including integrity, competency and diplomacy, and their behaviors are performance oriented, visionary, and inspirational. Social background, as defined by family or tribe and level of education, was also identified as an important trait for a leader’s success within this cultural context (Abdalla & Al-Hamoud, 2001). This study also suggested that Qatari business managers seem to have the same beliefs about the concepts of managers and leaders, with two main differences: (a) leaders are focused on the long term and are future oriented, whereas managers
are focused on short-term planning; and (b) leaders draw influence from personal resources whereas managers draw influence from their position and rules about the organization (Abdulla & Al-Hamoud, 2001). More research is needed to understand how leadership is viewed apart from the fields of business and management, to better understand how college educators at branch campuses can create leadership development programs that are reflective of the cultural understanding of leadership.

**Summation of Literature Review**

In summary, the literature indicates that leadership experiences plays a substantial role in leadership identity development, and students engaged in leadership experiences report gaining interpersonal and academic skills that enhance their undergraduate experiences. While students transition into the university setting with hierarchical perceptions of leadership, current research has found that students can adopt new ways of comprehending leadership to embrace non-positional, relational leadership models, which empowers students to view themselves as change agents and collective leaders. A critical part of leadership identity development is the interaction with and learning from students who have diverse and different backgrounds (Komives et al., 2004). Experiencing different perspectives and cultural outlooks helps students along the crucial pathway of developing their leadership identity, as cultural differences (race, ethnicity, gender) also influence leadership perspectives and identity (Komives et al., 2004).

One of the limitations of leadership development research found through this review is that it is explored only in a Western context. Dugan, Morosini and Beazley (2008) state that college student leadership has not advanced to include attention to cross-cultural considerations, and only one of the studies explored in this literature review discussed the leadership experiences
of international students. As Wildavsky (2010) highlights that higher education is increasingly global, it is important to view leadership development not only in multi-cultural contexts, but international ones as well. Fostering more research in non-American settings can implement a better understanding of culturally appropriate leadership development at international branch campuses.

Extensive review of the literature has revealed a void in capturing the Middle Eastern students’ experiences with leadership and leadership development. While student leadership has increasingly become part of the undergraduate experience, the research is silent on the experiences of Middle Eastern, and specifically Qatari, students—both within the United States context and within the international branch campus settings. Furthermore, as American branch campuses in Qatar aim to support the 2030 national vision of fostering global leadership, it is important to understand how Qatari students define and perceive leadership. The silence in the leadership research within the Arabian Gulf reinforces the necessity of this study as it sheds light on how leadership is understood by undergraduates through a non-American lens. This study captures the narratives of how undergraduate Qatari students perceive and experience leadership within their cultural context and provides a major contribution to the understanding of how the Qatari conceptualization of leadership differs from the American conceptualization. This study not only enhances the understanding of leadership development from an international context, but it can be used to inform practice of leadership development programs by administrators and faculty who teach within the international branch campus setting in Qatar.

Chapter Three: Research Design

This chapter describes the research design that was utilized for this study. It begins with an explanation of the research paradigm, research tradition and research design, as well as an
overview recruitment of and access to participants, data collection techniques, data storage and
data analysis methods. Finally, the trustworthiness of this study is reviewed.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore definitions of leadership and describe the
perceptions of leadership of Qatari students at an international branch campus. All the
participants of this study were Qatari undergraduate students enrolled at an international branch
campus (IBC) of an American institution of higher education. To better understand the
leadership definitions and perceptions of Qatari students, three research questions guide this
study:

1. How do Qatari college students define student leadership and leadership roles?
2. How do Qatari college students perceive student leadership?
3. How is leadership socially constructed among Qatari college students?

Research Paradigm

Qualitative research is used to collect data that helps describe, communicate and capture
an experience using an individual’s own words (Patton, 2002). Glesne (2011) highlights that
qualitative research is used to understand and interpret a research phenomenon. Social scientists
often use a qualitative, interpretive paradigm when trying to understand human ideas,
interactions, or actions within a specific context (Glesne, 2011). Within the qualitative
framework, Ponterotto (2005) shares that the constructivist-interpretive research paradigm is an
ideographic way to understand a social phenomenon. Ponterotto (2005) asserts that rather than
there being a single external reality, it is instead constructed in the minds of individuals, and
there are multiple, equally valid realities in the constructivist-interpretive approach. This idea is
later supported by Butin (2010), who argues that interpretive researchers investigate, describe and document the socially constructed perspectives being examined.

The main assumption of the constructivist-interpretive approach is that reality is subjective and it depends on the context and of the situation, including the individual’s perceptions, experiences and social environment, as well as the relationship between the individual and the researcher (Ponterotto, 2005). The goal of the researcher is to understand an experience through interactive researcher and participant dialogue to develop a rich, deep meaning of that experience and co-construct the research findings (Ponterotto, 2005). Glesne (2011) adds that interpretive researchers use personal involvement and empathetic understanding to connect with participants and interpret their social world. Constructivist-interpretive research should both reveal the multiple meanings of a phenomenon (from the multiple individuals in the study) and the multiple interpretations (multiple realities) of the data (Ponterotto, 2005). Through the constructivist-interpretive approach, this study will explore their perceptions of Qatari leadership and their leadership experiences as undergraduates. This approach aligns with the research questions regarding the ways Qatari students define student leadership as it explores the multiple realities of Qatari leadership to identify shared definitions among the participants. Merriam (2009) and Ponterotto (2005) both support the use of the constructivist-interpretive approach when the purpose of a study is to describe, understand, or interpret an experience. As this study aims to explore leadership experiences and describe leadership perceptions to gain deeper understanding of leadership experience of Qatari students, it is well aligned with the constructivist-interpretive approach.
Research Design

Patton (2002) asserts that qualitative research methods facilitate in-depth, meaningful, and detailed understanding of issues. Qualitative inquiry is useful when attempting to capture feelings or depth of emotion in order to understand and comprehend different points of view (Patton, 2002). Merriam (2009) adds that qualitative research is aimed at “understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (p.5). A qualitative approach was chosen for this study, as its purpose is to explore leadership definitions, describe leadership perceptions of Qatari students, and understand their leadership experiences. Using a qualitative research approach facilitates a deeper understanding of the unique perspectives of this group of students. Merriam (2002) also encourages qualitative research when the goal of the research is to explore socially constructed meaning by individuals. As such, utilizing a qualitative approach allows for the exploration of the socially constructed meaning of leadership among Qatari undergraduates and provides insight into their experiences, particularly within the context of their campus and community life.

The qualitative study has its origins in psychology, law, and social sciences and, as Merriam (2009) highlights, qualitative research is also particularly useful in the field of education. As the intent of this study is to explore leadership definitions of Qatari students, the qualitative approach allows for the participants to share their experiences of student leadership as well as how they perceive undergraduate leadership within the unique cultural context of studying at an international branch campus of an American university. Additionally, Arminio et al. (2000) and Lo (2011) support the need to expand research on minority students’ perceptions of leadership, which differ from those of the dominant, White culture. Utilizing a qualitative approach allows for detailed, in-depth exploration of leadership perceptions among a group of
Qatari undergraduates as described in their own words. Merriam (2009) and Creswell (2013) both support the use of qualitative studies that explore a participant’s meanings of an issue or a problem, creating a holistic account of the issue being studied. Given that prior research on leadership development in higher education has not looked at leadership definitions by Qatari students, a qualitative research approach is well aligned with this study as it attempts to provide a holistic, rich description of their leadership definitions and perceptions.

**Research Tradition**

This general inductive qualitative study explores the definitions of student leadership through qualitative questioning of multiple individuals (Creswell, 2012). According to Thomas (2006), general inductive approaches attempt to condense data, establish links between the data, and to derive concepts and themes without the limitations imposed by other methodologies. The outcome of a general inductive approach is to identify themes that are most relevant to the research objectives, and it describes the most important themes found in the data (Thomas, 2006). Merriam (2009) refers to this approach as “basic qualitative research” (p.22) and explains that the basic qualitative approach allows researchers to collect information, organize them into themes and concepts, providing a rich description to express a phenomenon. Given that the current literature in student leadership development has been silent on Qatari students, utilizing a general inductive approach aligns with this study. It will allow for a detailed, rich, in-depth examination of their leadership definitions and experiences.

Thomas (2006) asserts that a general inductive approach provides an open approach to collecting and analyzing data. The general inductive approach uses raw data, in the form of observations or interviews, to develop concepts or themes that allow a theory to emerge from the
collected data (Thomas, 2006). This idea is supported by Corbin and Strauss’s (2008) claim that qualitative research aims to develop interpretations of the data through identifying concepts and themes, which lead to a description of the experience or event. The general inductive approach is different from the deductive approach, as the latter aims to test specific hypotheses rather than allow for the presentation of the most important themes to arise (Thomas, 2006; Merriam, 2009). Creswell (2013) and Merriam (2009) highlight that inductive qualitative research provides a rich, thick description using the words and personal quotes of participants. As such, the general inductive approach is well aligned with the research questions and purpose of this study, as it will provide for a description of the themes found among Qatari student leadership definitions and leadership perceptions.

**Participants**

This qualitative, general inductive study utilized purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to select participants that “can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study (Creswell, 2013, p.156).” Merriam (2009) and Glesne (2011) highlight that purposeful sampling is the most widely used in qualitative research. This study utilized purposeful criterion sampling as recommended for qualitative research designs (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2013, Miles & Huberman, 1994). All participants were Qatari undergraduate students over the age of 18 and enrolled at an international branch campus in Qatar.

All Qatari students enrolled at the international branch campus in Qatar (study location) received an email about the study and self-selected to participate. See Appendix C for the Call for Participants. This study did not limit participation only to those involved in formal or
positional leadership opportunities (as in student clubs or student government). It allowed all Qatari students who were interested in the topic to participate, thus capturing the experience of a multitude of ways Qatari students are engaged in leadership development. This also allowed the researcher to explore their perceptions of leadership more broadly than a sampling that looked at only positional leaders.

The intended sample size was twelve people; however, the actual number of participants was eight. The study captured a representative sample of the student body from all undergraduate grade levels and a range of academic majors. The sample included students over 18 years of age, as this is representative of the overall age demographic of the student body. As this study is a qualitative study, the small sample size is aligned with guidelines for this type of research (Creswell, 2103; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002), allowing the researcher to collect extensive detail about the individuals and gain a depth of understanding. This study captured a representative sample of the Qatari student body at the international branch campus, to provide insight on this group of students’ perceptions of leadership and their cultural construction of student leadership within the Qatari culture.

**Recruitment and Access**

The research site for this study is an international branch campus of an American institution in Qatar, where the researcher is currently employed. As such, the researcher of this study was familiar with the student body and had access to the emails of potential participants to recruit them to join the study. After receiving Northeastern University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and study location IRB approval, an electronic Call for Participants (Appendix C) was sent to all enrolled Qatari undergraduates at the IBC and students self-selected
to participate. Participants were all informed that their participation is voluntary and that the role of the researcher in the professional setting (student affairs professional) should not affect their decision to participate in the study or their relationship with the researcher in her professional role. All participants self-selected to participate in this study, and there was no monetary or non-monetary compensation for participating in this study, thus limiting coercion.

This study was also grounded in the principle of justice and maintained ethical conduct throughout the research process. The researcher maintained confidentiality and ensure protection of human subjects throughout the entire research process. This study maintained the ethical standards as outlined by the Office of Human Research Protections for educational research, and approval was obtained from the Northeastern University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the study location’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). All participants gave their verbal consent before they engaged in the research process. A letter of support from the Division of Student Affairs at the study location was also obtained (see Appendix D).

**Protection of Human Subjects**

The human subjects for this study were undergraduate Qatari students enrolled an international branch campus (IBC) of an American institution of higher education in Qatar. All the participants were autonomous. They were able to evaluate the risks, harms, and benefits of engaging in this qualitative study. No participants of a vulnerable category or diminished autonomy, and all were capable of informed decision making and giving informed consent. All participants self-selected to participate in this study, and there was no monetary or non-monetary compensation for participating in this study, thus limiting coercion.
The benefits of participating in this study include the opportunity for participants to reflect on their definitions of leadership in general and undergraduate leadership experiences in particular, identifying individual perceptions, and to contribute to the understanding of leadership development among Qatari students in higher education. This study exercised beneficence, as it limited any potential harm to participants and the benefits for participating in this study outweigh any harm. To minimize any social risk (stigmas), pseudonyms were used, and there were no other potential risks (physical, psychological, legal, or economic) to participating in this study. This study was grounded in the principle of justice, and the research participants included a fair distribution of individuals to ensure that there is an equitable representation of a diverse range of students. Participants were contacted about the study via email, and met with the researcher to review the informed consent process before participating in any interviews for data collection.

**Informed Consent**

All participants were informed of their right to voluntarily participate in this study, and their right to withdraw at any time. All participants were emailed a copy of the informed consent form (See Appendix A) prior to their interviews so that they could review the material listed and were prepared to ask questions for clarity. All participants were asked to read through the informed consent form that explains the study’s objectives and purpose (exploring leadership definitions and describing leadership perceptions of Qatari students at an international branch campus). The researcher met with each participant to discuss the purpose of the study, and outline the risks and benefits of participation in this study. Before any data was collected, all participants were required to give verbal consent and received a copy of the informed consent form.
Though the data were collected outside the United States, the participants are enrolled at an international branch campus of an American institution and are fluent in English, ensuring that they comprehend the informed consent form. The researcher was mindful of the local cultural values and maintained confidentiality as both a research process requirement and as a way of respecting local, cultural norms. The informed consent form can be found in Appendix A.

Confidentiality

Participants were also informed of the confidential nature of this study, and the researcher maintained confidentiality by using pseudonyms. Participants selected their own pseudonym upon giving verbal consent to participate. Data collected for this study (via interviews) were recorded and transcribed, and the participants’ data were only identifiable via their chosen pseudonyms. All data collected for this study were identified using pseudonyms to ensure the confidentiality and reduce any social stigma or risk for participating. All data and transcriptions of interviews were stored on a password protected computer, and any paper data were kept secure in a locked filing cabinet.

This study maintained ethical conduct and ensure protection of human subjects throughout the entire research process. Participants were reminded that their participation in this study was completely voluntary and they had the right to opt out at any time throughout the process. This study also met IRB approval by following the guidelines of Northeastern University as well as the study location, and occurred under the supervision of a Northeastern University faculty member.
Data Collection

Data collection for a qualitative study should consist of in-depth, open-ended interviews of participants who meet the requirements for the ascribed sampling method (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Patton (2002) explains that qualitative data includes quotations, observations and documents that can be used to describe and communicate an experience. This study collected qualitative data utilizing a one-on-one, individual interview with each participant. The interview questions were semi-structured to allow the researcher to gather a “textual and structural description of the experience” (Creswell, 2013, p. 81), and ultimately capture the perceptions and definitions of leadership. Taylor and Bogdan (1998) emphasize the importance of descriptive questioning and in-depth interviewing to allow for the participants to share perspectives and experiences. The interviews were held at a location of the participants’ choosing at the study location (international branch campus). The location of the interviews allowed for complete privacy and were free from distractions or interruptions. The interviews were audio-recorded using a digital audio recorder, upon receiving permission from the participants.

Each participant signed up for an individual interview on a date/time that worked best with his or her schedule. Each interview was scheduled for 90 minutes, but some took more or less time, depending on the participant. The researcher was mindful of the time and allow for participants to take breaks or pause the interviews, to avoid interview-fatigue. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix B.

All the data were collected via transcription of the audio recordings of each interview. The interviewee selected a pseudonym to protect confidentiality. The interviews were recorded using a digital recorder and each interview was transferred to a computer (mp4 or .wav) file to allow for transcription. The audio files of the interviews were transcribed by a professional
transcription service, Rev Transcribe, which offers confidential transcription. Their website can be found here: [http://rev.com](http://rev.com). These transcribed interviews were then sent to each of the interviewees, who were asked to read and review their interviews and could offer further clarification on the transcribed documents to ensure that what was transcribed was accurate. The researcher also listened to each interview’s audio-file and read the transcribed word document simultaneously, to provide further accuracy of the transcribed files. All data collection was only obtained after receiving IRB approval.

**Data Storage and Management**

As maintaining confidentiality is critical for the research process, the researcher followed IRB guidelines for data storage. All original audio-files of the interviews were saved on the researcher’s computer, which is password-protected. All paper documents (printed transcriptions of the interviews) were stored in a lockable filing cabinet in a locked office. The only individuals who had access to the office were the researcher and her supervisor, but the locked filing cabinets and computer could only be accessed by the researcher. The digital recording audio files were sent to REV Transcribe using a secure email address. The professional transcriber was expected to uphold confidentiality of the interviews as well, and the use of pseudonyms provided anonymity of the participants. The professional transcriber was asked to destroy the digital audio files after the interviews were transcribed into a word document.

The audio files and interview transcriptions were backed up into two additional back-up locations: a password protected online storage location and a USB flash-drive that was stored in a secure filing cabinet in a locked office. Digital recordings, interview transcripts and all related written documents for this study were securely stored, either online in a password protected
online storage website for electronic files or a locked filing cabinet for hard copies of files, for up to three years beyond the data collection period. After this three year period, the documents (audio and written) will be destroyed and deleted.

**Data Analysis**

The data analysis process for qualitative data is both a simultaneous and an iterative process (Creswell, 2012; Patton, 2002). Data are collected and interpreted by the researcher reading the data and reflecting on the meaning of the codes, allowing the resulting themes to emerge from the data (Creswell, 2012). This process is also inductive, as the general codes can become more clear and detailed as a theme is generated based on the identified codes (Thomas, 2006). For this study the data collected includes the transcribed interviews. A list of the codes from the open and axial coding process are found in Appendix E.

Data was analyzing using the general inductive approach as outlined by Thomas (2006) and Merriam (2009). This process involves a close reading of the transcribed interviews and reflection on the multiple meanings that are essential and important across the interviews (Thomas, 2006). According to Saldana (2013), coding is utilized in qualitative research to assign words or short phrases to a group of words in a data set (transcribed interview), attempting to capture an essence or attribute of the participant’s experience. More specifically, a code is generated by the researcher to symbolize and attribute interpretative meaning to a set of text that can then be used to detect patterns and categorize multiple sets of data (Saldana, 2013). Thomas (2006) adds that inductive coding starts with a close reading of the text to identify meaningful sections, and text segments are assigned labels. Codes can be used to summarize, condense, and refine data (Saldana, 2013; Thomas, 2006). The researcher then identifies categories and themes
that emerge based on the multiple, close readings of the interviews (Thomas, 2006). The process of coding involves multiple cycles, in which the data are reviewed to look for overarching themes, categories, and concepts within the data set (Saldana, 2013). Table 1 visually displays the general inductive analysis process used for this study (Thomas, 2006; Merriam, 2009; Creswell, 2012; & Saldana, 2013).

For this study, the utilization of MAXQDA11 software was used by the researcher to code and organize the data. Each data set (interview) was read through entirely once, and then uploaded into the MAXQDA11 software tool to begin the electronic coding process. The use of software to code the data is similar to Merriam’s (2009) recommendation of using an audit trail as a way to document the coding process, the reviewing of codes and developing interpretations of the codes and categories or themes from the data.

This study utilized two methods of coding: descriptive and in vivo. Descriptive coding assigns basic labels to the data, and in vivo coding utilizes the participant’s own unique language as a code (Creswell, 2013). Utilizing in vivo codes aligns with the inductive approach as it uses the participants’ language to describe an experience (Creswell, 2013) and encourages themes to emerge naturally from the text (Thomas, 2006). The themes that emerged relate back to the initial research questions. Emotional coding was used to label and define the emotions reflected in the transcribed data and is useful in qualitative interviews that explore interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences (Saldana, 2013). Thomas (2006) adds that when using inductive coding, themes can be “created from actual phrases or meanings specific in the text” (p.241).

Saldana (2013) outlines that the coding process involves two cycles, in which the data are first broken into small sets of information (codes) and then those codes are used to develop larger categories. The data sets were analyzed for the second cycle of coding, in which the researcher
constantly compares the codes to organize them into categories, or themes. Saldana (2013) defines a theme as an “extended phrase or sentence that defines what a unit of data is about and/or what it means” (p.175). Themes are utilized in the second stage of data analysis to find meaning and identify recurrent patterns of experiences from the set of data (Saldana, 2013; Thomas, 2006). This process is similar to the two-stage approach to coding that is outlined by Corbin and Strauss (2008) which uses open and axial coding. Corbin and Strauss (2008) define open coding as a process that involves “breaking data apart to look for varied meanings of a word or phrase” (p.46). Axial coding is the second cycle where the codes identified in stage one are related back to one another to create connected themes that can be used to describe the data among larger categories or in a larger context. This two-step process to coding the data allows themes to emerge from the data and creates a summary of key aspects or central themes that are most important to the research question (Thomas, 2006).

This data analysis method is aligned with the qualitative, inductive approach which involves identifying and labeling categories (codes), reducing the overlap among categories and using the categories to generate larger themes which can be used describe the most important categories in data (Thomas, 2006). The emerging themes should be narrowed down to create three to eight manageable categories, as recommended by Thomas (2006), which capture and describe the main themes from the interviews. As the purpose of this doctoral research study is to explore leadership definitions and describe leadership perceptions, the inductive approach of data analysis is well-aligned to generate a descriptive summary of the leadership experiences of Qatari students. Using general inductive data analysis provides themes to emerge from the data which can be used to describe Qatari perceptions of student leadership and their leadership definitions.
Trustworthiness

Ensuring that the data collection method and data analysis follows quality protocols is an important step in the research process. Butin (2010) highlights that qualitative research needs to ensure that the conclusions are strong and accurate, by confirming they have internal validity. This supports Merriam’s (2009) earlier definition of validity as the extent to which one’s research findings are credible and reliable and that they match reality. Creswell (2012) says that the researcher must ensure that the findings are accurate, and he suggests that qualitative studies should utilize member checking to validate the findings of the research. Member checking is used in qualitative research to ensure validity and creditability of findings by having the researcher share his or her findings with the participants to assess if the findings are accurate (Creswell, 2012; Thomas, 2006). Merriam (2009) also supports the use of member checking by allowing participants to review and internally verify the data presented in the transcribed interviews.

This study utilized member checking to ensure credibility of the findings, in alignment with Thomas’ (2006) recommendation for general inductive studies. Each of the participants of this study was asked to review the transcripts of their interviews to ensure that their individual reflections were accurately portrayed. After all the interviews were complete and the data was analyzed, the researcher asked two participants to participate in member checking. These individuals were asked to offer feedback on the discovered themes, findings, and interpretations of the data. Their feedback was then incorporated to ensure that the findings of this research study are accurate and credible. Member checking is a way to compare the participant’s intended meaning with the researcher’s themes and interpretations (Thomas, 2006). Including the
feedback from the two participants involved in member ensured that the research findings are accurate and reflective of the participant’s thoughts and experiences.

Yet another way this study attempted to ensure validation is through utilizing detailed, thick description, as recommended by Merriam (2009). According to Creswell (2013), rich, thick description means that the “researcher provides details when describing a case or when writing about a theme” (p. 252). By utilizing detailed descriptions of the participants’ experiences with leadership and their perceptions of leadership, as well as utilizing their own quotes and words in the data analysis, the researcher will attempt to ensure trustworthiness of the findings.

One final way this study attempts to ensure validity is by clarifying researcher bias. Merriam (2009) asserts that researchers must “explain their biases, dispositions and assumptions regarding the research” (p. 219) before the research is conducted. This allows the reader to understand how the researcher may interpret the data and create themes (Merriam, 2009). As such, one potential research bias involves the dual role of the researcher and administrator at the study site. To minimize this threat, students self-selected to participate in this study, rather than being selected to participate, and the researcher clearly stated that the purpose of this study was for doctoral research, rather than for professional research as a university employee. Another potential bias of this study involves the cultural background of the researcher, who is exploring the experience of Qatari students, but who is not ethnically Qatari. To minimize this possible bias, the use of member checking will be used to ensure that the identified categories and themes are reflective of the Qatari student experience.

Additionally, the technique for general inductive analysis, as outlined by Thomas (2006) and Merriam (2009), will be strictly followed to minimize all validity concerns about data
analysis. The generalizability of this study’s findings is limited as outlined by Thomas (2006) for inductive studies.

In summary, this study contributes to the literature on leadership definitions and perceptions, by giving a voice to Qatari student perspectives. It also provides a valuable outlook on undergraduate leadership at international branch campuses within the Gulf Arab region that can further inform student affairs work in the international context.

Chapter Four: Findings

Introduction

As stated in Chapter One, the purpose of this qualitative study is to explore leadership definitions and describe leadership perceptions of Qatari students at an international branch campus of an American university. The data in this chapter will present rich descriptions of Qatari student’s perceptions of student leadership and leadership views within their Qatari context.

This chapter is outlined into four parts. The first part reviews the research questions used for this study and describes how data was collected. The second part outlines the research participants, and the third part describes the findings pertaining to the three research questions. The fourth part summarizes the results.

Research Questions and Data Overview

The three research questions for this inductive, qualitative study are:

1. How do Qatari college students define student leadership and leadership roles?
2. How do Qatari college students perceive student leadership?
3. How is leadership socially constructed among Qatari college students?
The investigator designed a semi-structured qualitative interview protocol for individual interviews with Qatari students that self-selected to participate in this study. The detailed list of interview questions can be found in Appendix B. The qualitative interviews were digitally recorded and professionally transcribed. The researcher then read the transcriptions multiple times for coding and analyzing the interview responses. The researcher constantly compared the data, looking for themes or patterns among the participants. The codes and analysis process can be found in Appendix D. The researcher also utilized member-checking and allowed participants to review and internally verify the data presented in the transcribed interviews to ensure the credibility of the findings. Validation for the data and findings was ensured through the development of detailed, thick descriptions of the themes that emerged from the data.

**Study Participants**

Data was collected through semi-structured qualitative interviews with eight participants who all met the following criteria: all were over 18 years of age, Qatari, and students enrolled at an international branch campus (IBC) of an American University located in Doha, Qatar. Of the eight participants, three were male and five were female, distributed across all four grade levels from first-year to senior students, and across three of the four majors offered at the institution. The data collected through the interviews was used to answer the research questions for this study and describe how Qatari students understood leadership within their cultural context. Direct quotes from the participants are used to demonstrate and authenticate the researcher’s understanding of the participants’ responses and to create meaning in answering the three research questions for the study.
The following participant descriptions are used to introduce the participants for this study. As illustrated in Table 2, the participants included a range across gender and grade level at the international branch campus institution (IBC). All participants selected a pseudonym to protect their identity and ensure that confidentiality was upheld.

**Participant One: Cinderella**

Cinderella is a first-year Qatari student who attended a co-gender high school before attending the IBC. She said that she was involved in some high school leadership experiences including international charity work and student government.

**Participant Two: Mohammad**

Mohammad is a senior Qatari student who attended an all-boys high school before attending the IBC. He shared that there were limited leadership experiences in the high school setting, adding “We don’t have clubs and organizations, but we have Arda.” Arda is a Qatari male dance performance that was an extracurricular activity. Mohammad explained that he was part of the Arda team.

**Participant Three: Bubbles**

Bubbles is a sophomore Qatari student who attended an all-girls high school before attending the IBC. She asserted that she did not have leadership experiences in her high school setting and adds “we didn’t really do a lot of extracurricular activities. In high school it was just academics.”
**Participant Four: Muneera**

Muneera is a junior Qatari student who attended a co-gender high school. She noted that her high school did have leadership experiences and she was involved in various leadership roles in high school, including serving as team captain, prefect, and senior prefect of her class.

**Participant Five: Paris**

Paris is a junior Qatari student who attended an all-girls high school. She shared that she struggled in high school with learning English and focused mainly on academics, but was encouraged by family members to participate in some extracurricular activities as this was expected for admission into an IBC. Paris added that while she did attend some extracurricular activities, such as volunteering with the Doha Film Institute, she noticed that “A lot of people, in my school especially didn’t go to these events or workshops…I don’t see a lot of Qatari Girls...The events I participated in in high school had maybe one or two that actually included Qatari girls.”

**Participant Six: Poppy**

Poppy is a junior Qatari student who attended a co-gender high school before attending the IBC. Similarly to Muneera, she noted that her leadership experiences in high school involved serving in roles of prefect and house captain of her class. She also described being involved as a student athlete and competing in local and international competitions in a way she identified with being a leader.
Participant Seven: Mishaal

Mishaal is a senior Qatari student who attended an all-boys high school. Similarly to Mohammad, Mishaal shared that he was not involved in leadership opportunities, but did share that he was involved in an extracurricular activity of the debate club.

Participant Eight: Ahmed

Ahmed is a senior Qatari student who attended a co-gender high school. When asked about leadership opportunities in high school, he stated that “[I] was not involved in any clubs and sorts of thing; we didn’t have as much. However, I was helping a music teacher to teach music to the grade four and five student.” Ahmed described his involvement with organizing music performances and teaching as an example of his leadership.

Findings

As described in Chapter Three, the themes presented in this chapter emerged through an inductive, two cycle coding process that included an open coding (utilizing descriptive and in vivo codes) and axial coding, in which the identified codes were constantly compared to identifying patterns, categories and ultimately themes (Thomas, 2006; Merriam, 2009; and Saldana, 2013). The initial open coding process resulted in 102 assigned codes that emerged from the data. Axial coding was used to arrange the data into 25 categories which were then further distilled into five overarching themes using selective coding. These codes from the data analysis process can be found in Appendix E.

This study provides a framework to explore leadership through the unique social and cultural context found within Qatar and from the perspective of these eight students. A total of five overarching themes emerged from the qualitative interviews and these themes answered the
research questions and were framed by the theoretical framework. Table 3 provides a visual representation of these findings. Rich and detailed descriptions of these five themes follow.

**Leadership is valued within the Qatari culture**

According to the participants in this study, the Qatari culture values leadership, and many participants shared personal examples of how their family supported the idea of leadership and encouraged them to take on undergraduate leadership roles. Some participants feel that leadership is a new concept within Qatari culture, while others disagree and connect leadership to the tribal history found within the Qatari culture. The international branch campus environment is identified as a source of support for leadership development by all the participants. The ruling family is also identified as an example of leaders within the Qatari community. While the participants did not all share similar views on the value of leadership within the Qatari culture, the overall theme of leadership being valued and supported within the Qatari culture was shared by many of the participants. Six of the eight participants identify leadership as valued and important to the Qatari culture. One participant (Cinderella) feels that leadership was not a shared value among Qataris and one participant (Ahmed) did not identify how the Qatari culture valued leadership.

The males and females in this study had differing views on how the Qatari culture values leadership. Two of the three male participants discussed how they feel leadership is important to the Qatari culture and connected it to the patriarchy and tribal history of Qatar, whereas none of the female participants discussed leadership in reference to Qatari’s tribal history. Mishaal explained that he feels leadership is closely connected to the Qatari culture, and specifically tied to the family unit. He described that within the Qatari culture, each family has a leader and this
idea originated from the tribal context of Qatari families. He shared that each family or tribe had a leader, and these tribes were connected to each other and to the country’s ruling family. He also added that Qatar “values leadership from the house itself. The father is the leader of the family and he’s responsible for them, and to raise new leaders.” Mohammad discussed similar thoughts of leadership being ingrained in the Qatari culture through generational transition: “In terms of family, the father is the leader…and they [sons] grow and become stronger and they become leaders themselves.” The remaining male participant, Ahmed, did not express similar views and rather shared that he is unsure of how the Qatari culture values leadership.

From among the female participants, two feel that Qatari culture valued leadership based on gender, whereas the other three do not feel similarly. Bubbles and Cinderella both asserted that the Qatari culture values male leadership rather than both male and female leadership. Bubbles shared that she feels the Qatari culture values male leadership, and argues “I see a lot of people encouraging their sons to do everything, to study this, to do that, to lead. But I don’t see them doing it for women.” Cinderella added that she does not think leadership is specifically valued in the Qatari culture, but recognizes that men are often seen as leaders of their families. She said, “It’s important for the guy to do it [be a leader], because he should have enough support or backbone to hold his family.”

Poppy, however, did not feel that leadership is specifically connected to the patriarchal or tribal history within the Qatari culture. She shared “I think [Qatar] does value leadership in many ways, like whether it’s man or a woman. I think because it takes a lot of courage to be a leader, so they really do take it into account.” Muneera also feels the Qatari culture values leadership, an added “I feel the Qatari culture values it as they always emphasize it, as they always talk about it in the news. It’s not something they hide. It’s not something that’s not part of our
Paris feels the Qatari culture values leadership, but also feels that this is a recent value rather than one that is part of Qatari culture or history. She explained “Maybe leadership is not a very common word. Few people see leadership for anything… [It is valued] especially recently. Because I feel like now they’re realizing how they need to have these [leadership] skills.”

The majority of participants feel that Qatari culture values leadership, but there were differing opinions connecting leadership to Qatari tribal history or to recent trends. The concept of gendered leadership was shared by two participants who feel that Qatari culture is more supportive of male leadership than female leadership. For further findings on gendered leadership, see the section below outlining the second theme of “Leadership is Gendered.” For the majority of the participants, the concept of leadership is connected to their country and their culture.

**Family supports leadership development.** All the participants felt that family support of leadership development was important. Both female and male participants gave examples of how their various family members are personal role models and are supportive of leadership development. Six of the eight participants indicated that their family members actively support their roles as student leaders and encourage them to take on leadership positions while pursuing their undergraduate studies. Two participants (Cinderella and Paris) indicated that while they do not describe themselves as student leaders, they would have family support if they wanted to take on leadership roles on campus.

While self-identifying as someone who is not a leader, Paris indicated that her family would be supportive of her pursuing leadership opportunities but did not elaborate. Muneera said that her family was important in supporting her leadership development. She shared that “They
have always pushed me to take more than I can handle, so they’ve always…I think they know
my potential more than I know my own potential. …I feel they are very supportive in that
matter.” Poppy also highlighted that her family “definitely…support leadership and [they] hear
that leadership is a very important aspect, especially now, this generation.” Ahmed indicated that
his family supports his interest in leadership development as an emerging entrepreneur and they
support his decision to open a start-up company during his senior year of university. Mohammad
also shared that his family is supportive of his leadership development on campus: “They always
like to make us lead something, even if it’s small.” Mishaal similarly expressed familial support
of his leadership development by stating that “they are very support[ive] of the idea of
leadership; and not only inside campus, but also outside campus in creating your own business.”
He added that while he feels his family’s support of his community leadership roles, there is also
familial pressure to ensure that leadership roles do not detract from academic success.

Cinderella offered an expanded understanding of familial support of leadership. She
argued that, for Qatari students, support for leadership begins within the home. She shared that
one must obtain his or her family’s support before pursuing leadership opportunities. She
explained “You have to start with your basics. Your family has to like what you’re doing before
anyone else….I come from a country with a very strict cultural belief…You have to make your
family happy and then work into agreeing with everyone else. It has to start from your core.”
Bubbles also expanded on the idea of successful leadership being dependent on family support.
She clarified: “I think it starts with the family, because if a girl feels like she has her family’s
support, she’s going to go for it…They support their daughter and tell her that they’re with her
throughout everything. Then that encourages her to take her first step. Then it just goes from
there…. Family support would be the best way.”
The concept of familial support was discussed by all participants and demonstrates how the participants view the value of leadership from within their personal family context. The family support described by the participants also demonstrates and confirms the overarching theme of Qatari culture valuing leadership and leadership development.

**International branch campus supports leadership development.** According to the participants, leadership is not only valued within the family setting, but also within the campus setting. Another common focus discussed by all the participants is the concept of feeling support for leadership development within the campus setting. This shared feeling of support further demonstrates that the campus setting is an extension of how Qatari students perceive leadership as valued within their community—both on campus and off campus.

All participants in the study indicated that attending an international branch campus supports their leadership development either through the creation of leadership opportunities or the expansion of their understanding of leadership. Mohammad shared that coming from an all-boys high school to an international branch campus “definitely changed my mind [about leadership] because now I am looking at a diverse community. It’s different when I have been a leader to only boys…I need to take into consideration…all students, ideas, and views.” Ahmed also feels that attending an IBC changed his perceptions of leadership. He shared that attending an international branch campus “changed the way I think. The way I decided to spend my time. What the campus did…it gave me opportunities, it showed me a lot of possible ways …We should at least try and walk on these paths so the opportunities it opened, the ideas they gave us, and the enlightenment kinds of moments.” Ahmed did not further explain how his leadership perceptions changed as a result of attending an IBC, but did affirm that the IBC setting changed how he thinks about leadership. Paris also feels that attending an international branch campus
changed her understanding of leadership and added “It helped me actually understand more that leadership is not only about controlling… Coming to an American university, I feel like it make(s) us realize more… and explains our behaviors [as leaders]. Here they made us more aware of our leadership.” Muneera expanded on the idea of IBC’s widening Qatari students’ understanding of leadership by sharing that the IBC setting

Opened up what I think leadership is and made it so that there’s more opportunities for leadership; And more, it’s made me know that leadership isn’t only being the leader at home or being the leader at school. It’s having that opportunity to lead different people… being in the American university allowed me to be a leader for everyone, and that way you learn how to work with other people….it has really opened my eyes to see how much is, actually, how much work and how many opportunities are available, just to be a leader.

Qatari students in this study also said that their international branch campus supported leadership through creating opportunities for leadership development. Bubbles described feeling campus support of leadership development by “always hav[ing] opportunities for people to be active...I think giving them these opportunities helps them actually go through the experience and realize that they are leaders.” Mishaal also described how attending an international branch campus provided opportunities for leadership development. He shared “I think, before, I wanted to be a leader, but didn’t have much opportunities. I think it’s the campus that provided a lot of opportunities for me as a student to try to be a leader…. The exposure of opportunities we have…opportunities for students to be leaders.” Poppy asserted that through the “differing activities that there are and the different positions that people could carry” students are able to explore leadership opportunities. She added “There’s a wide variety to choose from….There’s a lot of opportunities in universities, whether it’s to organize your own trip abroad or being
president of a club or student government. These opportunities are open for student[s] who are interested.” This idea of the international branch campus setting supporting leadership development is discussed by Cinderella, who stated “[The IBC] university has given us way more than we need to be able to have that [leadership]…There’s opportunities for us to do this. If we join something and do it, at one point we will become leaders.” Paris discussed how she feels that in an international branch campus setting one is “constantly being in a position that you actually deal with other people. You’ll be in a position where you have to be a leader [even in coursework].”

Academic coursework at the international branch campus is another that the IBC setting demonstrated support and value of leadership. Poppy and Paris both indicated that the academic coursework at the international branch campus supports their leadership development. Poppy explained “Leadership classes…teach you how to become a leader. Things like the qualities that you need and what it takes to be a leader. Things like that, to prepare you to become a leader.”

There is a clear consensus that Qatari students feel the campus setting provided leadership opportunities and supported their undergraduate leadership development. Whereas the family support was discussed by some as dependent on gender, none of the participants indicated that campus support is in any way gendered. The participants did not discuss specific faculty or staff (either male or female) that had offered direct campus support of their leadership development, but rather discussed the IBC setting in general as a source of support for leadership development. Both male and female students highlighted ways their campus setting fostered leadership development. For further finding on the International Branch Campus setting in relation to specific leadership experiences on campus, see the section below describing the theme Leadership is perceived as positional. Overall, the Qatari student participants feel encouraged
and supported by the international branch campus to explore leadership development opportunities. The IBC setting is an extension of the wider Qatari culture, with a similar support of leadership. The students asserted that the IBC campus has widened their understanding of leadership within the campus and Qatari community.

**Ruling family is seen as an example of leadership within Qatari culture.** Another illustration of how Qatari culture values leadership is highlighted by the participants’ discussion of the ruling family as examples within the Qatari community of exemplary leaders. The larger Qatari community supports leadership, according to these eight participants, and the family setting, campus environment, and role models from the ruling leaders all provide examples of this overarching value. For several participants, the ruling family are seen as exemplary, inspirational leaders within the Qatari community.

Seven of the eight participants identify the ruling family as leaders within the Qatari community. Muneera identifies that the Emir, his Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, his Highness Emir Father Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, and her Highness Shaikha Mozah bint Nasser Al Missned are leaders within Qatar because of “the changes they’ve implemented within the country, and that’s what really makes people look at them as leaders…look just at the changes they’ve made over the years; They’ve really made an impact.” Mohammad also described the ruling family as examples of inspiring leadership. He shared “For example, our Emir Father Sheikh Mohammad, he was a good leader and he’s still a good leader, and his son Sheikh Tamim, he’s even better; He learned from his father. You see Doha now, after 10 years, change[d] dramatically from nothing to something. Doha skyline is an example [of his leadership].” Cinderella shared that “Shaikha Mozah is the biggest [female role model]. She has done so much. Education City was her idea, her initiative, and she did it… she
was able to do it.” Four of the five female participants and one male participant (Mishaal) identify either Shaikha Mozah bint Nasser al Missned or her Highness Shaikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani as examples of female leaders within the Qatari community. In this way, both male and female royalty are identified as role models of leadership, and the participants perceive the ruling family as an example of how good leaders and leadership are valued within the Qatari culture.

Summary. The concepts of familial support, campus support, and the role models within the ruling family were discussed by all participants as examples of how Qatari students feel leadership is valued within their culture. Many participants discussed their perceptions of leadership being valued within the Qatari culture by sharing stories of their family support, campus support or inspirational examples from the ruling family. While some participants feel that Qatari culture is more supportive of male leadership, the participants generally agree that leadership is a central value within their country and culture. For further findings on gendered leadership, see the section below outlining the second theme of Leadership is gendered. Participants also discussed how their international branch campus setting fosters leadership development and deepened their understanding of leadership regardless of gender. For further findings on the International Branch Campus setting in relation to specific leadership experiences on campus, see the section below describing the theme Leadership is perceived as positional. Overall, the first resounding theme among the participants is that leadership is valued in the Qatari culture.
Leader**ship is gendered**

A second evident pattern emerging from the participant interviews focuses on the gendered experience of leadership. The intersection of leadership and gender discussed by participants highlights the social and cultural construction of leadership within the Qatari context. Many of the participants assert that within Qatari culture, the idea of leadership is gendered, and both male and female participants discussed how leadership is perceived through gendered perspectives. This section will outline female perceptions of leadership, male perceptions of female leadership, and examples of female leaders within the Qatari culture as identified by the participants.

**Female perspectives of leadership.** All five of the female participants perceive leadership through gendered lenses, meaning they attribute differences in leadership based on gender. The concept of gender barriers, or social constraints on leadership based on gender, was reflected by several Qatari female participants. They discussed how females face limitations within their cultural context (gender barriers) when it comes to leadership opportunities and development. In this way, leadership in Qatar is perceived by some female participants as limited by gender.

As previously stated, leadership is defined through the social and cultural context found within Qatar. The female participants identified gender as one component of this social and cultural context. Within this context, leadership is a gendered experience and defined from a gendered perspective. Cinderella explained her perceptions of leadership as gendered:

I think, personally, as a girl, leadership and a girl just don’t combine. Say I want to be a minister one day, or I want to open up my own business, it’s kind of looked down [upon] when it’s a girl doing it… females just aren’t supported because females are seen to be
the woman of the house that takes care of the house, or the emotional side of things in life, we’ve never been seen as the business or administrative side. I think that leadership in Qatar is literally down to the cliché of manpower, where men do almost everything and they’re allowed to do everything and girls just aren’t.

Cinderella also added that she feels men do not actively seek out leadership roles, but are allowed leadership opportunities because of their gender. She explained, “it wouldn’t be a matter of him looking to be a leader, it would be a matter of him doing things to achieve financial support or even by name, getting known more for his family, and leadership would just happen to come with it. It wouldn’t be a kind of goal trying to be achieved.” Later she added “Leadership with men are existent, leadership with women aren’t. It’s really that simple.”

Bubbles also strongly argued that leadership is gendered within the Qatari culture. When asked how the Qatari culture values leadership, she adds “I think for the men it does. For the women not so much.” She explained that female leaders “would … be seen as leaders because she was able to overcome her barriers, the cultural barriers,” and “It [leadership] differs from, I think, boys to girls, but I think for a girl if she just speaks up and states her opinion and is active, she is kind of considered a leader amongst other girls.” Bubbles also added that “it’s not very common for you to see a girl that actually is active and a girl that actually fights for something [leadership positions].”

Several female participants discussed how they feel a lack of support of female leadership from their community. Cinderella explained that Qatari society is less accepting of female leadership:

If a girl tries to do something, even in job types; if a girl wants to be a pilot, she’s looked down upon. If a girl wants to be a head at the company that has a majority of guys, she’s
not respected. She can do it; she’s just not respected…There aren’t people supporting the fact that women can change or can lead.

Bubbles also asserted that she feels a lack of support by stating “The majority, they don’t support it, and shared

I see a lot of people encouraging their sons to do everything, to study this, to do that, to lead, but I do not see them doing it for women. I think whenever they kind of frown upon that. If a girl is out there, it is frowned upon like she might bring shame to her family. I think some of them are [supportive of female leadership]. Some of them aren’t ….I don’t think they have gotten used to it [female leadership] yet.

Bubbles shared that females are not actively encouraged to seek leadership roles. She stated “I think there is equal opportunities for both, but I think that one is more encouraged, like the guys are more encouraged.” Later Bubbles continues

People think when they compare girls and boys in this society, it is like boys are the ones who should be doing everything and the ones who can travel abroad to study…The girls have to be really conservative one…and they should study here. Most of them are not able to go abroad. The other thing is there are certain jobs that they cannot do, just because of the environment of the job or just because it is not acceptable. I think that not only limits opportunity because I honestly think that girls are more capable than boys when doing things. The biggest evidence is that more than 50 percent of EC [Education City] are girls… They are actually the ones that work twice as hard as the boys to get something but then they still have a harder time. I think that [female leadership] is not encouraged, but it should be encouraged.
In this way, Bubbles described how females face barriers toward leadership within the Qatari context, due to societal gender expectations. Bubbles continued to reflect on the importance for women to be involved in leadership, and comments, “The gender one [issue]…That would be the biggest thing when talking about this society, addressing this society, I think that’s really the most important point.” Similarly, Paris described the lack of support of female leadership within the Qatari culture:

I feel like that’s very common that a girl is… [perceived] like she’s not a good leader because she won’t control…She won’t make a good decision all the time because she’s emotional. She might make a decision…based on her emotions…She would sometimes be moody, for example. That’s why that doesn’t qualify her to be a good leader. I feel like a lot of males could see that…would see it like this way.

The concepts of leadership, career development and gender barriers also emerge, according to the participants. Some of the female participants described how the social and cultural construction of gender can limit leadership roles and career development. Paris noted the changing perceptions of female leadership within the career industry, while at the same time she described how gender can influence female leadership within the career world:

The minority would actually [want] women to be a part of it because they think that women should have a really big role here. They would support her to be a leader because we need female leaders…Some companies… [have] more female interests, for example like arts [and] in museums….However, in engineering or in IT [information technology]
it’s the total opposite. You see no females, [not] even a leader…because she’s not in a position.

Paris also reflected on gender influencing leadership and career development:

I would say some families... [are] just scared that a female would work...because they would prefer that she would stay home and take care of the children. It surprised me, but there are still people who believe that. Even if someone is educated and she had a degree, but her husband stops her from doing that. Also marriage, it can be a barrier because we don’t want to be a leader, if that would take a lot of time...they should be home...that just discourage[s] them to have those leadership positions...it [hinders] for females more than males.

Bubbles described her perception of how social expectations of women within the Qatari culture can limit female career development as well as female leadership. Later she shared “I think that they [Qatari society] frown upon the idea of outspoken women.” She discussed how female leaders within the Qatari culture can go unnoticed and unappreciated:

I think that just because it is not very acceptable, people do not really notice that [female leadership]. They would overlook that and they would not actually realize, “By the way, she’s a leader.” Whereas if it was a guy, they would just automatically say, “Yeah I know. He is always there, he is doing everything.” If it is a girl, they just straight away go to the negative stuff…criticize them, their lives that they are living.

In this way, Bubbles, Cinderella and Paris argue that the concept of leadership within the Qatari culture is constructed and influenced by gender expectations, gender roles and perceptions of
gender in their context. They also assert that Qatari culture places less value on female leadership, and gender also influences the concepts of female leadership and career development.

Muneera, however, differs from Bubbles, Cinderella and Paris. She offered a different perspective on gender, supporting female leadership: “For example, if you’re a woman and you’re a housewife, that position as a housewife is [seen] as a leadership role within your family. So it’s not something they just not talk [about], avoid or say, “Oh, you’re not allowed to take on this position because you’re a Qatari [female]. In this way, Muneera perceives that gender can empower Qatari women to pursue leadership roles, rather than limit leadership opportunities.

When discussing motivation, Muneera again challenged the idea of female leadership being unsupported: “I think it’s just an opportunity, because before there wasn’t many opportunities for Qatari girls to go out and do something and make a change… [Now] they can help people and they can make a change.” She also shared that there has been a recent shift in female leadership perceptions:

I think before, it used to be only the male; It used to be male-dominated, so it used to be only males could have a leadership role within the community, because you know in our religion it’s always the man of the house and things like that, but I think now it’s changed so much because of [her Highness] Shaikha Mozah. She had great influence on a lot of females around Qatar and she’s made Education City, and she’s made this happen…with opportunities for both genders to take on leadership roles.

Later, Muneera added that there are some cultural barriers to female leadership: “In our culture, it’s very looked down upon for [females] to travel alone without a guardian. Some positions for
leadership involve you as a leader leaving to represent your country, and sometimes you can’t do that because of this cultural reason.” Within the Qatari culture, the societal norm is that single women do not travel without a male chaperone (guardian), and Muneera referred to this social norm within the Qatari culture as a barrier to possible leadership development. She also expanded on the idea of barriers for female leaders by connecting it within a global framework, not limited to Qatar.

I feel a woman leadership is, it’s not even in Qatar, it’s all over the world, but there’ve always been problems with women taking on leadership roles and it’s been something that’s been changing over the years…It’s something that [women] need to change ourselves…I just feel by making that change happen and reaching out to different people, you’re causing that change…. [Women] should have the opportunities to go out and do whatever they’re interested in, and there’s sometimes, it’s not that the males are ignorant towards this issue, it’s just that they aren’t aware because it’s been so male-dominated.

Poppy echoed similar thoughts on how leadership is becoming less male oriented in Qatari culture: “I think it’s mostly like the guys who are leaders usually in the past couple of years… But I think now it has changed a lot and more females are getting involved. Yeah, they are starting to become leaders and be part of organizations, heads of organizations [and] committees.” She also shared, “More women are getting involved, are being leaders. The culture barrier then would be maybe just not being familiar, getting used to the idea [of female leadership].
Among the female participants, three asserted that female leaders face cultural barriers in Qatar, and two discussed the changing perceptions of female leadership that support female leadership development. All female participants perceived the concept of leadership as being influenced by gender, rather than being independent of gender. They discussed ways that female leadership is increasing, yet all perceive leadership through a gendered lens. The Qatari cultural context deeply influences female perceptions of leadership, as several of the participants discussed how societal norms could limit their potential for leadership or career development. Several of the female participants also said they perceived a lack of support for female leadership within the Qatari culture. According to the participants, female perceptions of leadership are influenced by the social and cultural norms found within the Qatari community.

**Male student perspectives on female leadership.** While the male students did not clearly define differences between female and male leadership, they did identify ways in which females may experience leadership differently from men. Two male participants assert that females have unique cultural challenges as leaders within the Qatari context, while the remaining male participant did not see gender influencing a female’s access to leadership opportunities. The three male participants did not specifically discuss men’s leadership, but rather conceptualized leadership as gendered when looking at female leadership. This supports the assertion that leadership within the Qatari culture is influenced by gender, rather than being independent of gender.

Mohammad does not feel that women face barriers towards leadership due to their gender: “They already have Qatari ladies that become President of some [student] clubs. Even once QSA [Qatari Student Association] was led by [a] Qatari lady.” He explained
Now [gender] doesn’t matter [to leadership]… When Qatar start[ed] to flourish and become bigger, and the education was very important… Women in Qatar study more than men, even in Qatar University, but they weren’t in a leading position. But [now] we have the head of Qatar University [is a woman]…. Now women [are] becoming leaders.”

Mohammad argued that there are no gender barriers for Qatari female leaders: “With the new vision and the development program for nationalization for Qataris… It doesn’t matter. They don’t think ‘This is a man, we need to develop him [as a leader], and this is a lady we don’t need to develop her.’ We develop it all.” Mohammad continued to explain that he does not perceive a gender barrier for female leaders. He explained “It’s all about personality and their way of thinking, and their skill set,” illustrating that he does not see a difference in opportunity for male and female leaders. However, Mohammad described leadership in male-oriented terms: “The father is the leader, and… you have even my grandfather and my uncles… They grow and become stronger and they become leaders themselves.”

Mishaal and Ahmed offered a different perspective, and do recognize a difference in perceptions of male and female leadership. Mishaal shared “I don’t think everyone supports that [female leadership]… I think it’s in all cultures, I think. Or a lot of countries…. [There are] those who are with and against, but I think with time now we’re seeing more of leaders, women leaders in Qatar and the [Arabian] Gulf.” Ahmed shared that within the career context he notices a cultural barrier in teamwork which could influence leadership opportunities: “When it’s a mixed group, usually one of the two genders don’t speak frequently. Usually females, or sometimes males… This is a barrier to facilitate group discussion in group meetings… in Qatari teams.” He also explained that there is a limit to what a female leader may be able to achieve in the Qatari culture:
To a certain extent yes, [Qatar supports female leadership], but not to the idea that…The idea is that a woman might not lead for example huge projects…for example…building [and] designing the streets. They should not take these roles and would be given to male engineers, because it’s believed that it’s a masculine job. However, in other communities and domains, I think yes [Qatar supports female leadership].

According to two of the male participants, leadership is perceived as gendered and for the remaining participant, gender is perceived as not influencing female leadership. None of the three male participants differentiated between male and female leadership, but they did discuss leadership through gendered perspectives. Both male and female participants highlighted ways in which the Qatari culture can influence female leadership. Additionally, participants reflected on ways that Qatari social norms, gender roles, and gender expectations can limit access for females to gain leadership opportunities.

The concept of men’s leadership was not discussed, and the participants did not identify a gendered experience for male leaders in any detail. The gendered experience of leadership was perceived by the female participants and two of the three male participants, supporting the overall theme of leadership being perceived as gendered within the social and cultural context within Qatar.

Examples of Qatari female leaders within the Qatari culture. As stated in an earlier section in this chapter discussing the theme of Leadership is valued within the Qatari culture, participants gave examples to demonstrate how the ruling family is seen as an extension of the Qatari culture valuing leadership. Member of the ruling family are identified by participants as role models of exemplary leadership (see section above titled Ruling family are seen as examples
of leadership within Qatari culture), and they are also used to identify examples of female leadership within the Qatari community.

All the female participants and one male participant (Mishaal) identified either her Highness Shaikha Mozah or her Highness Shaikha Al-Mayassa as examples of female leaders within the Qatari community. Cinderella highlighted her perception of gendered leadership when discussing example of Qatari female leaders. She argued “If you name girls, you have Shaikha Mozah…I literally can’t think of anyone else. If you think of guys, I can give you a list of twenty.” Mishaal discussed how he sees Shaikha Mozah as a prime example of female leadership. He shared “Shaikha Mozah is a great example…of being a leader. A woman leader in the community, not only in Qatar but a global leader too” He also shared that there are women involved in governmental leadership roles within the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Technology, but did not expand further.

Aside from the ruling leaders of the country, participants identified family members as examples of Qatari female leadership. For Mohammad, the example of a Qatari female leader was more personal, as he identified his mother: “I don’t know what to say. I can talk only about my mother. She’s a good leader in one of the best companies in Doha. She’s almost leading the company…She knows everything. She can tell if it’s a good decision or wrong…This is what I think. She’s a good leader in what she’s doing.” To Mohammad, the example of female leadership is personal and maintained his earlier assertion that his family supports leadership development within the Qatari community.

The examples of female leaders within the Qatari community used by the participants connects with the identified fourth theme of this study, Leadership is perceived as positional, as these examples of female leaders all relate to a position, either within the ruling family or within
an organizational company. While none of the participants specifically discuss these examples of Qatari female leaders within the framework of position, their titles and positions within the Qatari culture support an understanding of leadership in which position is valued. None of the participants identified non-positional examples of Qatari female leaders within their communities. For more on how leadership is defined through the social and cultural context within Qatar as it pertains to positions and titles, see the below section on *Leadership is perceived as positional*.

**Summary.** As seen from the participant comments, a second evident pattern emerging from the interviews focuses on the gendered experience of leadership. While some participants discussed cultural and gender barriers that limit female leadership opportunities, other participants discussed how the Qatari culture is changing and has recently encouraged more female leadership. Three of the female participants asserted that female leadership in Qatari culture is valued less than male leadership, and the remaining two female participants acknowledged that while Qatari females have been less apparent in leadership roles, there have been more female leaders in their communities. Leadership is a gendered experience, as both male and female students listed ways in which the Qatari social and cultural context influence female leadership. Additionally, both female and male participants identified her Highness Shaikha Mozah and her Highness Shaikha Al-Mayassa as examples of female leaders within the Qatari community. This supports the earlier theme of the ruling family demonstrating Qatari’s value of leadership, and also supports the idea that Qatari females can serve as role models of leadership. Therefore, a second common theme evident across the participants in this study is that leadership in Qatar is perceived through a gendered perspective.
Leadership is community oriented

A third prevalent theme is that leadership within the Qatari culture is community and group oriented. The idea that a leader is responsible both for a group and to a group emerged in multiple interviews. Participants also described that some of the outcomes of leadership are community enhancement and social change. The participants also explained that the relational nature of Qatari culture, networks, and the value placed on relationships can influence leadership. Overall, the participants discussed how leadership is not an independent role, but one that involves a group process and is community oriented. Participants’ assertion that leadership is community oriented connects back to the previous theme of Leadership is valued within Qatari culture as the participants described how leadership enhances their community relationships within the Qatari culture.

Relational. The participants discussed concepts of relationships and networking. It is clear that relationships within the Qatari culture are central to the understanding of leadership and community. Many of the participants in this study discussed the importance of leaders connecting and relating to their groups, and the value of networks: building and maintaining relationships within the Qatari community.

Participants described the shared perception that a leader is responsible to the group (or community) for his or her leadership choices. Paris explained that leadership is not an independent process and the leader is “responsible for a team...responsible for an outcome. Your responsibility [as a leader] is to make sure that everyone is in the same line. Everyone’s...contributing to the vision or mission [of the group].” Cinderella shared that a leader must bring about unity within the group and should not serve his or her own interests, but rather the interest of the group:
Leadership would probably be anything that you can sit down with a group of people and [achieve a goal]….If you’re a leader, you’re not leading to what you think is okay to everyone, you’re leading to what everyone else thinks would work and trying to go with, and all the things that should and shouldn’t happen, and putting them together to make a certain unity.

Cinderella continued to explain that the leader is responsible for representing the thoughts and ideas from the entire group:

The word leader in itself means you’re leading something or someone. You can’t lead by your own thoughts and morals. You can’t just ignore everything else that’s happening around you. If you’re leading something and you put into consideration every single person’s take from it and how to affect everyone in the community that you’re leading, and you do it in a way that keeps everyone happy, then you’re a good leader.

Bubbles expands on the idea of leadership being community focused by sharing: “We don’t have an individualistic approach to things. We’re all one community…. if you’re not able to communicate well with people and if you can’t get along with people, then that’s not really a leader.” Mishaal also expressed similar thoughts by stating that a “leaders should work for the best, for a group.” He feels a good leader is responsible for “the satisfaction of the community.” Poppy added that the relationship between the group and those he or she leads are important, and the leader is responsible for connecting and communicating with the group he or she leads:

You need to be able or you need to know that you’re going to deal with a lot of people and you’re going to find out their opinions. You have to listen to them, help solve problems… if they listen to others and they’re able to fulfill the task or their favors, I
think that’s most important thing as well...And reaching out to others, also. Connecting with people, talking to different types of people.

Poppy also shared that “there has to be obviously a good relationship between the leader and the community...for it to go by smoothly... [The leader should] be able to talk to them and understand what the problem is, and clear any misunderstandings before the leader moves on.” This indicates the importance of leadership being relationship and community oriented. Poppy continued to discuss how leaders must have positive relationships with others in their community:

Networks and relationships are very important in the Qatari community because you feel ...I think without them you’d feel lost....If the community does not know the leader then it’s like being connected with other people, seeing what’s going on...being updated and knowing what’s going on and building relationships with others...so you feel a sense of belonging [to the community and leader].

Mohammad also discussed the importance of leaders connecting with others in the community and building relationships: “Networking is very, very important everywhere. Especially here in Qatar, it’s in our culture. If you know someone you’ll get it done sooner than if you don’t know anyone. It’s important.” According to Paris, relationships are important because “everyone would see him [a good leader]...as a friend. It’s really strong actually in Qatari culture.” She also added “Maybe in Western culture it’s not like [that]. In [Qatar] a lot of things are likely depend[ent] on your relationship with the other person.” Paris also said that leaders should be “able to make everyone work together... [make] everyone cooperate,” noting the influence a leader has within a group setting. Muneera reflected on relationships within student leadership and described them as being team-oriented: “In the context as a college student...basically
you’re working with a team, but you’re somehow having a big effect on the team to make
something happen.” Ahmed also supports the idea of leadership being team-oriented and said
that a leader should “look at the goals and consult the team to bring out the goal and to go and
achieve that goal.”

All the participants described leadership as being closely dependent on the relationships a
leader builds with his or her community. Within the Qatari culture, relationships and networking
are important, and a leader should be mindful of relationships with his or her community. The
assertion that leadership is relational was described by multiple participants, and it is clear that
relationships within the Qatari community are central to the understanding of leadership.

**Leadership enhances the community.** When discussing the community-focused
approach of leadership within the Qatari culture, participants noted that social enhancement and
community development are core goals of leadership. Participants described how leadership not
only depends on relationships, but these relationships allow a leader to create positive
community change. Seven of the eight participants said that a leader is responsible for social and
community change within the campus or Qatari community setting.

The participants emphasized that the role of a leader is to listen to a group and make
community changes based on communal input. Cinderella asserted that a leader is “anyone who
can do something to change something that is not okay in the community, and also listens to
what other people thinks is not okay.” In her perspective, a leader should gather feedback from
others and implement change based on enhancing the community. She expanded on this by
adding that a leader is responsible for

Creating change that you think is for the better without ignoring what other people think.

You can’t be stubborn and think, “This is what’s going to make us a better community,”
and you do it and you ignore everyone else who thinks it’s not going to be okay. You have to sort of make a change that will make everyone happier.

Poppy added that leaders should “make the change or make a difference…in other people’s lives.” She described good leaders as those who can

Listen to others and deliver change. Not just says something but doesn’t do it. I think it’s mostly inspiring and making change. Seeing the action take place rather than just talk, talk, talk, because many leaders do the talking, but they never accomplish what others want, which is a problem.”

Poppy connected leadership not only to action, but also to community enhancement:

“[Leadership] helps the country grow and helps its community benefit and grow like its people. [Improve] Qatar and the people of Qatar.” Bubbles expressed similar thoughts on leadership involving social and community change: “[A leader] makes it better. For example, [he or she can] listen to what people are struggling with or listen to what people want to change and try and make that happen.” She feels that student leaders try to “make the university better in any way possible: academics, activities, everything. Muneera echoed the sentiment about leadership involving social community change: “If a person wants to be an effective leader, they need to know exactly what they’re going to do and how they’re going to do it, and do it because they want to do it and they want to change something.” While Paris did not directly assert that leadership needs to create community change, she identifies Shaikha Al-Mayassa as an example of a Qatari leader who took “the initiative to do things that actually improve our community. She actually [is] the founder of Doha Film Institute. That actually help[ed] us … help Qatar to be identified in a regional perspective…I feel like she’s just inspiration[al].”
Muneera also added that in her student government role, she feels that she can empower the broader student community for change “I’m there as a bridge for the students in order to make change for them, so if they have a problem or anything, in anything, or if they have a complaint about something… We [student government] can speak to a higher figure and can make that change.” Mohammad also discussed his role in student government and gave examples of how his role as a student leader helps create specific changes within the university community: “We are working on something bigger… We are trying to change some stuff in the building…and then the whole community. We can do it… changing because of the students, because of the [student] leaders.” He added that student leaders should identify goals that they “want to be changed in the community that would help the students, and even the faculty and staff.” emphasizing community change. According to Mohammad, student leaders on campus “want to help the students; they want to raise the[ir] voice; they have [a] message they want to deliver… [it is the] purpose of being leaders in their community.” Mishaal identified student leaders as those who “have a vision … how it would transform from this current status to a more developed one, a better [university] culture…A better community, a better education, [and] a better experience for everyone.”

Ahmed was the only participant who did not directly relate leadership to community enhancement; however, for the other participants there was a prevalent pattern in which they saw enhancing the community as central to the goal of leadership. Participants perceive the leaders as people who are responsible for positive community change. The construction of leadership within the Qatari culture supports a community-focused approach, in which relationships and social change are central factors, both within the campus setting and within the larger Qatari community setting.
Community reputation influences leadership. According to several of the participants in this study, reputation and respect from the community can influence leadership perceptions and the selection of a leader within the Qatari context. Not only are relationships important to lead within the Qatari context, but the reputation of a leader also influences the role. According to these participants, leaders are perceived as individuals who have a positive community reputation.

Cinderella explained that a leader is “anyone who holds a certain position with a lot of respect” and later added that a leader is the “head of a group and this is a very admired and well looked upon group… you’ll become a leader because… you’ve been able to give back to the community in a respectable way.” Cinderella explained how student leaders gain a reputation in their community, which can then lead to further leadership opportunities beyond the campus setting:

Because you’re a leader… your name has already spiraled around campus and people have met you. You start to become more known around campus, maybe will hold more leadership roles after you graduate. You’re known around campus, all the people you were with have also graduated, thus you were known as the leader at the time, and it kind of progresses after that, and you become a leader in your work space and keep going and going and going.

Cinderella asserted that leaders who create community change earn their community’s respect and are valued. “People realize that when you make a big difference, you’re probably respected way more than how much you have in your bank account.” Mishaal described how reputation influences leadership by stating that a “leader is a person who is knows what he’s doing and he’s
known for a skill…Everyone will go to him for a question; everyone [will] go to ask for his guidance.”

The concept of leaders being recognized in their community also emerged in the interview with Bubbles. She described a student leader as being “really, really active almost everywhere,” and later added “I think it’s very obvious who the leaders are… they know almost everyone.” Similarly to Cinderella, she explained that recognized student leaders within the community would probably be connected to additional leadership opportunities: “The more people you know, the more opportunities you have to actually show that you can be a leader.”

Mohammad suggests that leaders gain community recognition through their roles as leaders: “It’s a big challenge for them to prove themselves, and to be good in the community, and to be well known. They are well known; they are known for their hard work; they become a good leader.” Ahmed shared a different perspective, highlighting the relational context of Qatari culture and how popularity can influence leadership: “To become an informal [leader] you have to be popular and loved by your community, and accepted as a leader in your community….Wisdom. Wisdom also plays a role.” He also explained that within the Qatari culture the community identified the leader based on the reputation from the group members: “[Leadership is deferred to] the eldest or the wisest, the most experienced….We just know how this guy is the eldest, or he has the most experience. We don’t even say we follow him, but we know and respect his opinions.”

While the remaining participants did not specifically discuss reputation in their interviews, it is clear that several felt that community reputation can influence leadership perceptions and leadership opportunities within the Qatari context. The selection of a leader within the Qatari context is influenced by community recognition and respect. Leadership within
the social and cultural context of Qatar is not only community focused, but a leader’s reputation and respect from the community can influence perceptions of leadership.

**Summary.** A third evident pattern emerged demonstrating how the construction of leadership within the Qatari culture is community and group oriented. The participants explained that the relational nature of Qatari culture, networks, and the value placed on relationships can influence leadership. Leadership is not an individual process but rather is heavily community and group oriented. The relational nature of Qatari culture requires leaders to listen and support their community members. Leaders are also expected to build and maintain relationships. Participants also said that the outcome of leadership is community enhancement or social change. The community reputation of an individual also influences perceptions of leadership, as Qatari leaders are perceived to have positive reputations and are well-respected by the community.

Overall, the participants discussed how leadership is not an independent role, but one that involves a group process and is community oriented. These reflections illustrate the finding of Leadership is community oriented, but also supports the prior assertion that Leadership is valued within the Qatari culture. The participants described how leadership enhances their relationships and community and is valued within the Qatari culture. As a result, the third emerging theme among the participants is that leadership within the Qatari culture is community oriented.

**Leadership is perceived as positional**

A fourth theme that is evident among the eight participants is that leadership is largely perceived as positional, meaning that leadership roles are defined by title or position. When asked to identify student leaders on campus or describe their own leadership experiences, the majority of participants reference positions within student organizations or student government.
Other participants discussed their view of a leader as someone who is a manager or has power due to his or her position. Only one participant (Mishaal) did not identify leadership through position or title.

**Leadership is a title or position.** Cinderella explained that a leader is “anyone who holds a certain position with a lot of respect” or “who they are in their title,” while Bubbles shared that within the Qatari community, “people respect those with the higher positions. People just say those people are leaders. They just identify them as leaders,” but she also added that leadership in Qatar is “positional based, but it shouldn’t be that way.” Ahmed asserted that leaders are often identified because of their title: “If you are an official leader then you have a title to stick next to your name so that you know that you are.” He later shared that this positional view of leadership is something that he feels should change: “Most major companies, all of that they are doing is managerial [leadership]…which should not be the case.” Paris supported a positional view of leadership, and similarly to Ahmed, identifies leadership from a managerial perspective: “[Leadership] would mean controlling…Someone with high power; that means he is a leader….being a manager is a leader.” She also said that a leader “in Qatar is someone…having big responsibilities in a company or field,” and “leadership is defined as being able to manage, being able to actually handle situations…under pressure.” According to Paris, there is a growing need for leadership skills because of “the need for better…better managers so they can actually manage.” In this way, leadership is described as positional, being defined by title, power or responsibilities.

When discussing student leadership on campus, Ahmed noted that there are both official and unofficial leaders on campus: “There are some official leaders; these are the people that are official, the presidents of the clubs. On the other hand, there is unofficial leaders which are
people that can make everyone do things without even having the official power, the authority.” When asked about the difference between formal and informal leaders on campus, Ahmed described how community relationships influence an informal leader’s roles “to become an informal [leader], you have to be popular and loved by your community.” Mohammad self-identified as a student leader and cited his experience as “hold[ing] an executive position in the organization” as an example of why he perceives himself as a student leader. Muneera, similarly, identified her role in student government as a reason she feels she is a student leader. Poppy also identified student organization titles as examples of her leadership experiences. These seven participants perceive leadership as positional in nature, as identified through a title or position within an organization.

As previously discussed, the ruling family is seen by the participants as an example of inspirational Qatari leadership. While none of the participants made the direct connection between the titles and positions of the ruling family and their ability to lead, the ruling family demonstrates how leadership is perceived as positional within the Qatari culture. The ruling family holds positions of power, authority, and respect, and its leadership inspires many of the participants. As previously shared in the Ruling family are seen as examples of leadership within Qatari culture and Examples of Qatari female leaders within the Qatari culture sub-themes above, the participants identify the Emir, his Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Khalifa Al Thani, his Highness Emir Father Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, her Highness Shaikha Mozah bint Nasser al Missned, and her Highness Shaikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani as examples of leaders within the Qatari community. These individuals are perceived as exemplary leaders within their community, but also hold significant titles and positions with the Qatari community that supports their leadership roles.
Mishaal was the only participant who described leadership as non-positional. He explained “I don’t think being a leader is a like a title... [A leader] should have power to influence the community.” He also added that a leader “should be not in for the title but more for his skills and for his experience and leadership.” In this way, he described leadership as non-positional.

**Leadership is inherent.** While the majority of participants described leadership as positional through title, power, or responsibility, there were differing opinions on how one becomes a leader. Several participants share that leadership qualities are inherent and are easily recognizable. These participants also assert that not everyone can become a leader, as it is an intrinsic characteristic. All three male participants and three female participants discussed how leadership is perceived as an inherent attribute.

According to Bubbles, “if you’re a leader, then you’re always a leader” and this trait is inherent. She described leadership as “just a quality that you would have. Leadership...I don’t think being a leader is something that you can get. I think it’s a quality that you have; you’re born with it in a way.” She later added, “If you’re not a leader, you’re just not a leader. You can’t make yourself. You can’t become a leader,” and “People are born with ...personalities when they grow up and I think that some people get to be leaders and some people don’t.” In this way, Bubbles sees leadership as a quality that one is born with. Mohammad also supports the idea of one being inherently a leader. He shared “This is how I define leadership. Not everyone can be a leader. They maybe work better not being a leader.” Mohammad also discussed how leadership is an inherent quality: “I think a leader is identifiable. You know if he or she has the right skills and [if] this person holds this position, he will do something, not just stay there and not doing anything, just watch. You will know.” Poppy also discussed leadership as an inherent trait. She
explained “I don’t know if anyone can become a leader. To be honest, I don’t think anyone, everyone can become a leader.” According to Paris, not everyone can be a leader, but she did not share whether she thinks leadership is an inherent or learned quality. Ahmed, however, explained his perception of leadership as ultimately inherent: “You can train to be a good leader, but still you need….some people are better doing it then others. Even if you’re trained well, but you cannot follow the rules of the book all the time…you have to understand people, t’s like diagnosing people and understanding them.” According to Mishaal, not everyone can become a leader. He added“… I don’t think so. They could be a leader in a field, or in a class, but not everyone could be a leader to change [the community].”

Summary. In this way, the participants discussed leadership as an inherent attribute, and that, even with education on leadership skills, not everyone can become a leader within the Qatari context. Leadership is perceived through a positional perspective, and many participants referred to titles and positions within student organizations as examples of leadership. Others perceive leadership as relating to managing others or asserting power. They described the positional leadership styles within Qatari companies. The ruling family, while not directly discussed by participants as examples of positional leadership, hold titles and positions within the Qatari culture that support a positional understanding of leadership. While only one participant (Mishaal) did not identify leadership through a title or position, a central theme among the participants is that leadership is largely perceived as positional in nature, reflected by as a title or position within an organization. Therefore the fourth theme that is evident among the eight participants is that leadership is perceived as positional.
Leadership is evolving due to the Qatari economy

A fifth theme that emerged from the interviews is that Qatar’s recent economic development has created an emphasis on leadership development within the last two decades. Many participants noted the changing times and recent shifts in economic development served as a catalyst for increased leadership opportunities within the Qatari context. Participants perceive these increased leadership development opportunities within the Qatari community as economically driven. Participants shared that the recent economic growth has required Qataris to respond through increased engagement in leadership development opportunities on a national level.

Cinderella shared that she feels the emphasis on leadership in Qatar has changed in the last ten years

This [leadership] is all recent. If you go ten years from now, none of this would be even remotely thought of. …It’s very rapidly changing. If you take it within a scope of 100 years, it’s [leadership within Qatar] only started changing 20 years ago, and it’s changed again five years ago, and it’s probably going to change again in a few years. It keeps changing and accelerating.

When discussing his perception of leadership being mainly managerial (or positional), Ahmed shared that this form of leadership was “set up years ago and [people] are still following the same old routines, and these should change to adapt to the changes in the culture and changes in the rapidly changing environments.” Muneera also discussed her recent awareness of leadership opportunities with the Qatari community, and shared

[This is] recent, yeah, or maybe because I wasn’t as exposed, because I used to live in a town where [there were] opportunities, but they were very limited, like within schools or
like, say, within the community…I feel change has started to happen and a lot of females have now been taking on leadership roles, not only as student leaders, but you see so many female doctors, so many female engineers, you know these positions were only held by males before, so I feel it has really changed over time.

Paris also reflected on the recent emphasis on leadership within Qatari. She added that while Qatar values leadership, this is a relatively recent change. She said “especially recently [Qatar values leadership]… I feel like now they’re realizing how they need to have these skills… Now, because it’s developing, they would need everything to be fast.” Poppy also described a cultural shift in the need for female leaders. She believes there is an increased awareness of Qatari female leadership “most recent[ly], maybe four or five years [ago].” She explained “so before a couple years ago, I think [Qatari culture] was more male dominated, but now I think more women are getting involved in different organizations, whether with charity events or organizations. I think they’re becoming more part of it.” She also added “I think it’s quite [new], I think they just have to get used to the fact that women can become leaders. I think maybe they are, but it’s something new.”

**Summary.** Bubbles, Mishaal and Mohammad did not specifically discuss leadership as changing recently within Qatari culture or how it may be connected to the recent economic growth and development of Qatar. For the remaining participants, leadership did seem to develop recently within Qatari culture. Many attributed this increase in leadership opportunities to the economic growth and development Qatar has experienced in the last ten years. The economic, political, and social reforms instituted by the royal family in recent years have created the perception of increased leadership opportunities for Qataris. Participants identified that they have experienced more emphasis on leadership development within their community and the emphasis
on leadership development has evolved in recent years. The participants identify that Qatar’s recent economic development has served as a catalyst for leadership development within the Qatari community. The fifth theme that emerged from the interviews is that leadership is perceived as evolving due to the recent economic developments within the Qatar.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter describes the research findings of this basic inductive qualitative study exploring leadership perceptions and experiences of Qatari students studying at an international branch campus of an American institution. Five themes emerged from the research data, addressing the three research questions of this study, and providing a framework to describe the social and cultural construction of leadership within the Qatari culture. Participants think of leadership as an extension of their country and culture, and their perceptions of leadership are deeply influenced by the social and cultural context of their Qatari community.

According to the Qatari student participants involved in this study, leadership is defined through the unique social and cultural context found within Qatar. A total of five overarching themes emerged from the data: (1) Leadership is valued within the Qatari culture; (2) Leadership is gendered; (3) Leadership is community oriented; (4) Leadership is perceived as positional; and (5) Leadership is evolving due to the Qatari economy.

Participants described ways in which they see leadership as being valued on campus, in their families and in their communities by offering personal stories as well as examples from the Qatari ruling family. According to participants, leadership is perceived through a gendered perspective. Male and female participants explained how gender can influence leadership opportunities, and the majority asserted that women may face greater barriers to leadership
development within the Qatari culture. Participants also explained how they perceive leadership as community oriented and how relationships and reputation can influence leader selection, leadership outcomes, and leadership opportunities. Many of the participants in this study perceive leadership as positional, attributing it to a title or position in an organization. Many described leadership as an inherent, rather than learned, quality. The data also highlights how student perceive an increased number of leadership opportunities in Qatar that are economically driven. Participants perceive leadership development to be a recent phenomenon that resulted from the rapid economic developments within Qatar over the last decade.

These five themes are also interconnected and interrelated within the larger context of the Qatari culture. Leadership is defined through the social and cultural context found within Qatar. Perceptions of leadership are influenced by the Qatari communities’ societal and cultural expectations and perceptions. For example, the finding that Leadership is community oriented not only emphasizes the importance of relationships, reputation, community development, as components of leadership, but it also supports the finding that Qatari culture does value leadership. The family, campus setting, and ruling family are similarly examples of groups within the larger Qatari community that highlight the value of leadership within this context as well as the community-oriented perceptions of leadership.

Similarly, when participants discussed the ruling family, their examples supported the related themes of Leadership is valued within the Qatari culture, Leadership is gendered, and Leadership is perceived as positional further demonstrated how the themes are interrelated and how leadership is socially and culturally constructed within the Qatari culture. These five themes are interconnected because they exist within the context of the Qatari culture, which influences definitions and perceptions of leadership. The participants provide a multilayered understanding
of how the Qatari culture influences leadership definitions, perceptions and ultimately construction. The concept of leadership, according to the participants, is deeply influenced by their Qatari social and cultural context. The findings from this study provide a framework to understand leadership within the social and cultural context of Qatar. Conclusions from this study, including a discussion of the findings, implications for practitioners, and future research recommendations are included in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

This chapter discusses the findings from this inductive qualitative study exploring Qatari student leadership definitions and perceptions. This chapter will show how the findings support and relate to the theoretical framework and the literature review on undergraduate leadership development as discussed in Chapter Two. The first part of this chapter reviews the purpose and research questions that guided this study. The second part provides a discussion of the findings as they relate to the three research questions, the literature review, and the theoretical framework. The third part shares implications for practice for educators working at international branch campuses. The fourth part discusses the recommendations for future research to expand the literature on undergraduate leadership, particularly within the global context at international branch campuses. The fifth part reviews limitations of the study findings, and the sixth part discusses the significance of these findings and summarizes the research study.

Study Purpose and Research Questions

As stated in Chapter One, the purpose of this qualitative study is to explore leadership definitions and describe leadership perceptions of Qatari students at an international branch
campus of an American university. Grounded in the relational theoretical framework and inductive qualitative methods, three research questions guided this study:

1. How do Qatari college students define student leadership and leadership roles?
2. How do Qatari college students perceive student leadership?
3. How is leadership socially constructed among Qatari college students?

This study explored leadership definitions, leadership perceptions and leadership experiences of eight Qatari students studying at an international branch campus of an American university, and Chapter Four presented rich descriptions of Qatari students’ ideas regarding student leadership and leadership views within their Qatari context. The findings presented in Chapter Four provided insight on the social and cultural construction of leadership within the Qatari culture through direct quotes from the participants.

Discussion of the Findings

This section outlines the three research questions for the study and the relevant themes that emerged from this study in response to these questions. Connections to the theoretical framework and the literature review presented in Chapter Two are also shared. Table 4 includes the five themes that emerged from the data, providing insight on the social and cultural construction of leadership within the Qatari culture. Figure 1 illustrates that within the Qatari context, the social and cultural construction of leadership assumes (a) Leadership is valued within the Qatari culture; (b) Leadership is gendered; (c) Leadership is community oriented; (d) Leadership is perceived as positional; and (e) Leadership is evolving due to the Qatari economy. These five themes present an in-depth, qualitative description to the social and cultural construction of leadership as seen through the Qatari students’ experiences in their community.
As described in the statement of problem in Chapter One, it is important to explore undergraduate leadership perspectives in the Arabian Gulf context. A number of international branch campuses (IBCs) have been established in this region, yet there has been no research on either Qatari student perceptions of leadership, or how international branch campuses balance cultural differences when looking at undergraduate leadership in a non-American context. The findings from this study demonstrate how the concept of undergraduate leadership is influenced by the social and cultural norms of the Qatari community. It also illustrates how the understanding of leadership cannot be separated from the cultural context.

The findings show that the five themes outlining the social and cultural construction of leadership within Qatari culture are interconnected, interrelated, and provide a multi-layered understanding of leadership within the larger context of the Qatari culture. The five themes can
be used to answer the research questions of how leadership is defined, perceived, and constructed within the social and cultural context of Qatari culture. The following sections will summarize the findings as related to the three research questions previously defined.

Research Question 1: How do Qatari college students define student leadership and leadership roles?

While the importance of leadership development in higher education is well supported, research on how students perceive and define leadership is lacking (Logue, Hutchens, & Hector, 2005; Haber, 2011; Marcketti & Kadolph, 2010; Shertzer & Schuh, 2004). This study provides insight into how Qatari college students perceive and define leadership within the social and cultural parameters of their context and country.

It has been established that while there is a void in capturing Middle Eastern students’ experiences with leadership development, there is some research on leadership perceptions from a management-business setting. Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) assert that within the Arabian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, business leadership is often seen as positional, and leadership skills are perceived as mainly innate, which is different from Western understandings of business leadership. The findings from this study demonstrate a similar conceptualization of student leadership. Several of the Qatari participants defined leadership as serving in positions within student organizations or clubs. The theme of Leadership is perceived as positional can be used to describe leadership definitions among Qatari students, as they used positions and titles to identify and describe the questions of who was a leader on campus and what his or her role was. Additionally, several students described leadership as managing groups, further supporting the idea that leadership is positional or managerial. Leadership was also defined as being inherent,
further affirming Abdulla and Al-Hamoud’s (2001) description of business leadership within the Arabian Gulf setting as being position oriented. The examples in which participants speak about the ruling family also supports a positional understanding of leadership. According to the participants, members of the ruling family are perceived as exemplary leaders within their community. The ruling family members also hold significant titles and positions with the Qatari community that supports their leadership roles. Therefore, the ruling family not only represents the cultural commitment to leadership, but also supports the perception of Qatari culture valuing leadership.

This study also supports Shertzer and Schuh’s (2004) earlier findings that college students view leadership as a process that involves power, position and influence. The participants largely define leadership as positional, which means a title or position within a group is used to define a leadership role, supporting a leader-centric, industrial paradigm of leadership. As Haber (2011) explains, within the industrial paradigm, leadership is assumed to be an intrinsic characteristic and is identifiable through the individual’s title or position. This study’s findings of the theme of Leadership is perceived as positional and the sub-themes of Leadership is a title or position and Leadership is inherent support an industrial understanding of leadership and state that Qatari participants define leadership as positional. This finding suggests that Qatari students support the industrial paradigm of leadership development in which leadership is centered on the leader and is seen as management oriented. Although Lo (2011) asserts the industrial paradigm represents “some sort of Western notion” of leadership (p.13), this study shows that Qatari students define leadership within the industrial paradigm despite their non-Western context. Given that the literature on undergraduate leadership development is silent on Qatari student perceptions, this finding gives educators insight into Qatari student’s definition of
leadership as being positional in nature. Additionally, this finding suggests that postindustrial theories of leadership that do not place emphasis on the positional nature of leadership are less relevant to the Qatari student experience. Positional leadership is demonstrated through the conversations of Qatari participants as well as their examples of leadership of the ruling family, grounding it in the social context of how leadership is defined within the Qatari culture.

This study also states that Qatari students believe leadership is a relational, social process that aims to direct community change. The theme of Leadership is community oriented supports an understanding of leadership that is dependent on relationships, reputations, and community enhancements. This theme supports the relational leadership theory (RLT), which is a leadership framework that explores leadership as a social process constructed by groups, which occurs within the context of relational dynamics among the groups (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Participants in this study discussed how different communities (family or campus) supported their leadership development. It is evident from the theme of Leadership is Community Oriented that the concept of leadership is deeply intertwined with the social processes and community within the Qatari culture. The participants explained how the group (community) reputation can influence the selection of a leader, as well as support the leader’s vision, demonstrating how leadership is a social process constructed by the group, much like the RLT framework suggests (Uhl-Bien, 2006). The findings of this study support earlier work by Rost (1993) and Uhl-Bien (2006) that suggest postindustrial leadership is a multidirectional process involving leaders and collaborators working together to achieve leadership. Similarly to the postindustrial relational leadership model (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007), Qatari participants define leadership as serving a common goal or creating a social change, but the concepts of inclusiveness, ethics and empowerment (which is central to the relational leadership model) were not specifically
discussed by participants in this study. While this study did not focus on the concepts of inclusivity, ethics, or empowerment in relation to student leadership, these topics could be explored in future studies on Qatari perceptions of leadership. This description of leadership as being community oriented supports Abdulla and Al-Homoud’s (2001) claim that Arabian Gulf cultures place importance on relationships, and Qatari students clearly connect the concepts of leadership and community. While Komives, Lucas & McMahon’s (2007) discussion of the relational leadership model is grounded in the postindustrial paradigm, the Qatari participants of this study do not wholly ascribe to the postindustrial leadership paradigm, which is perhaps why the concepts of inclusivity, ethics and empowerment did not arise. However, similar to Komives, Lucas & McMahon’s (2007) description, Qatari students defined leadership as a communal process that depends on relationships. The participants’ descriptions of leadership as being community oriented supports the postindustrial understanding of leadership as a social, relational process that is focused on creating community change. This finding can inform educators work with Qatari students, as this finding demonstrates how the concept of leadership is connected to social and community change. Educators working with Qatari students should be mindful of how Qatari students define leadership as community oriented and leadership programs should convey an understanding of leadership that is purposeful and connected to enhancing the Qatari community. By doing so, educators can support a local definition of leadership that involves and depends on relationships, networks, and community change within the Qatari context.

Consequently, this study supports an understanding of leadership by Qatari undergraduates that is unique in that it supports both industrial (Leadership is perceived as positional) and postindustrial leadership (Leadership is community oriented) paradigms. Qatari participants defined leadership as fitting both within an industrial and postindustrial leadership
paradigm, as they identify leadership through positions or titles, and also recognize leadership as a social process dependent on community relationships, networks, and community change.

This study affirms that Western postindustrial and industrial definitions of leadership are not independently relevant to Qatari students studying at an IBC. The participants defined leadership from both an industrial (leadership is perceived as positional) and a postindustrial (leadership is community oriented) paradigm. This gives educators and administrators a newer understanding of student leadership within a global context, as Qatari students do not fully ascribe to either paradigm, but rather both leadership paradigms. Qatari students have dualistic definition and understanding of leadership, allowing them to see leadership as both individual and management oriented, and relational and process oriented.

Therefore, the response to the first research question of “How do Qatari college students define student leadership and leadership roles?” is that Qatari college students define leadership as a social, relational process that is focused on creating community change in which a leader is identified through a title or position. The social and cultural influences of Qatari culture shape the construction of leadership, and have allowed Qatari participants to embrace both industrial and postindustrial understandings. Qatari participants define leadership through two key themes: Leadership is perceived as positional and Leadership is community oriented. Qatari participants define leadership as a social, relational process that is focused on creating community change, in which the leader is identified through a title or position. Knowing this definition of Qatari student definition of leadership allows educators working at IBCs in Qatar become more mindful of developing leadership programs that are focused on titled leadership positions that create community change. Rather than encouraging broad leadership skills development for all students, educators can develop leadership programs that respect the local definition of
leadership as being positional and community oriented. Additionally, educators should develop programs that encourage Qatari students to become involved in positional leadership opportunities or encouraging Qatari students to take on leadership roles focused on community change are examples of ways educators at international branch campuses can foster leadership development that are more congruent with Qatari student’s definitions of leadership.

**Research Question 2: How do Qatari college students perceive leadership?**

The second research question of this study explores how Qatari college students perceive leadership. As stated in Chapter One, the higher education research on perceptions of leadership should be expanded to include and represent a diverse student body, as it has been shown that minorities’ perceptions of leadership differ from those of the dominant, White culture (Arminio, Carter, Jones, Kruger, Lucas, Washington, Young, & Scott, 2000; Haber, 2011; Lo, 2011). As Qatari undergraduates are not part of the White or American culture, it is important to explore their perceptions of leadership to understand the perspective of these students and contribute to the literature on leadership within different cultural groups. The findings from this study address a gap in the literature on Qatari student leadership perceptions and add to the understanding of leadership within this social and cultural context.

Several themes of this study provide insight into the perceptions of leadership by Qatari undergraduates, including “Leadership is valued within Qatari culture,” “Leadership is gendered,” “Leadership is community oriented,” and “Leadership is positional.” Participants in this study discussed how student leadership is valued within their community, offering examples of their family support, support from the international branch campus setting, and support from the wider Qatari community. Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (2007) assert that college
camps provide students with the opportunity to build their ability to lead, and this study’s findings demonstrate that the international branch campus (IBC) setting can be used to support leadership development. As prior research on undergraduate leadership experiences has not included the branch campus experience, this study asserts that leadership development can be an integral part of the undergraduate curriculum and experience at international branch campuses. Participants in this study identified that the IBC campus provided support for their leadership development in a variety of ways through student leadership positions, roles in student organizations and academic experiences. Therefore, this study demonstrates that IBC faculty, administrators, and educators support undergraduate leadership development and provide ways for students to gain leadership experience in a global context. While educational institutions in America have seen an increase in leadership education programs (Astin & Astin, 2000; Dugan, Komives & Segar, 2008), branch campus institutions also contribute to the leadership development of students. Participants in this study indicated that their family and campus setting provided them with support and access to opportunities for leadership development. The theme of Leadership is valued within Qatari culture establishes that leadership is valued in the Qatari culture and is supported both on and off campus.

Participants in this study also discussed how gender can influence perceptions of leadership, both by supporting and hindering student leadership opportunities. The perception of female leadership as a gendered experience was prevalent across multiple conversations. It became a noteworthy finding in this study, as it demonstrated how social and cultural perceptions of leadership within the Qatari community could create gender barriers to leadership opportunities. Similar to Shim’s (2013) assertion that female students may experience greater social or psychological barriers to taking on leadership roles due to gender stereotypes, this study
demonstrates that Qatari female participants also experienced social and cultural barriers to leadership roles due to gender stereotypes. The finding that *Leadership is gendered* reveals that, according to the participants, leadership is perceived as gendered by both male and female undergraduates. While Shim (2013) found that female students possess leadership potential that is aligned with the postindustrial paradigm of leadership, this study indicates that Qatari female students perceive leadership as being aligned both with the industrial and the postindustrial paradigm, as stated earlier in this chapter. This study provides a newer understanding of leadership as gendered within an international branch setting, expanding the literature on gender and undergraduate leadership. Given that Qatari students perceived leadership as gendered, it is important for educators to be mindful of this perception of leadership within the Qatari context. While Qatari female student experience social and cultural barriers to leadership roles, it is important for educators and administrators in Qatar to be mindful when developing leadership programs, so they do not marginalize potential female student leaders. Educators can develop leadership programs that respect the local perception of leadership as gendered and design programs that allow female students to acknowledge and overcome these boundaries on campus. Future studies should explore how Qatari female leaders have overcome gender barriers and how campuses can create supportive environments that foster greater female student engagement in leadership roles.

The participants also described their perceptions of leadership as being community-focused. They highlighted the importance of networking, relationships, and reputation within the context of leadership. The finding of *Leadership is community oriented* demonstrates that participants perceive leadership as community-focused, as the participants discussed a relational understanding of leadership. As previously stated, the participants perceive leadership as a social
process that is deeply intertwined with the community and Qatari culture, and that is focused on
community change. Participants perceive leadership as group oriented and the relational nature
of Qatari culture, networks, and the value placed on relationships can influence leadership.
Leaders are selected within the Qatari community based on their reputation and social standing
within the community. The participants in this study support the relational leadership theory
(RLT) framework’s perception of leadership as social process constructed by the group (Uhl-
Bien, 2006), and in this case, Qatars perceive leadership as a social process constructed within
the larger Qatari community, which influences leadership selection and leadership outcomes.
This finding is important because it demonstrates the importance of the local Qatari culture and
how community perceptions influence leadership within the Qatari community.

The finding of Leadership is perceived as positional within the Qatari context clearly
demonstrates that leadership perceptions are positional within the family, an organization, or the
larger Qatari community. This finding also relates back to the first research question, addressing
Qatari students’ definitions of leadership. The participants both define and perceive leadership as
positional, meaning that leadership roles are identified by title or position. When asked to
identify student leaders on campus or describe their own leadership experiences, the majority of
participants referenced positions within student organizations or student government. This
demonstrates that the perception of leadership is seen a positional among Qatari undergraduates.
In this way, the participants’ support an industrial perception of leadership in which leadership is
defined by an individual’s title or position (Rost, 1995).

This study demonstrates that Qatari students perceive leadership as fitting both within an
industrial (Leadership is perceived as positional) and postindustrial leadership (Leadership is
community oriented) paradigms. The participants in this study perceive leadership as a social
process that is identified by a position or title, and the leader is dependent on community relationships, networks, and community change. This study also shows how two paradigms interact with the local Qatari culture to create a dualistic understanding of leadership. The Qatari cultural and social context supports an understanding of leadership as being both industrial and postindustrial. This finding also expands the literature of perceptions of undergraduate leadership to include the Qatari international branch campus perspective.

These four themes—Leadership is valued within Qatari culture, Leadership is gendered, Leadership is community oriented, and Leadership is positional— not only describe the social and cultural construction of leadership, but outline how this construction of leadership influences perceptions. Leadership is perceived to be valued, gendered, community oriented, and positional within the Qatari context. According to the participants, the social and cultural construction of leadership within the Qatari culture affects their perceptions of leadership. The findings of this study illustrate that leadership is perceived as valued within the Qatari culture and as gendered by both Qatari men and women. Additionally, leadership is both perceived and defined as being community oriented and positional within the Qatari context.

This study affirms that Qatari students define and perceive leadership through both a postindustrial and industrial lens of leadership. Qatari students do not fully identify with either paradigm but rather perceive leadership within both an industrial (leadership is perceived as positional) and a postindustrial (leadership is community oriented) paradigm. This gives educators and administrators a newer understanding of student leadership within a global context, as Qatari students do not fully ascribe to either paradigm, but rather both leadership paradigms. Qatari students have dualistic definition and understanding of leadership, allowing them to see leadership as both individual and management oriented, and relational and process
oriented. Qatari students’ definitions and perceptions of leadership come from a dualistic paradigm of leadership where they are able to ascribe to both the industrial and postindustrial paradigm.

Therefore, the response to the second research question of “How do Qatari college students perceive leadership?” is similar to the response for the first research question. Qatari participants define and perceive leadership as a social, relational process that is focused on creating community change in which the leader is identified through a title or position. This social, relational process is influenced by the cultural context of Qatar, where leadership is perceived as gendered and the leadership experiences of men and women are different depending on gender. This study also establishes leadership as valued by the Qatari culture, within the family setting, through the examples of the ruling family, and through the international branch campus settings. Therefore, the answer to the second research question of this study is that Qatari undergraduates perceive leadership to be valued, gendered, community oriented, and positional within the Qatari context.

**Research Question 3: How is leadership socially constructed among Qatari college students?**

While there has been no research on undergraduate Qatari leadership perceptions, Bakken (2013) describes how Qatari students attending an international branch campus (IBC) found that the IBC setting required them to “negotiate changes in societal and family beliefs, where traditional roles of men and women continue to evolve on current national reforms” (p. 105). Bakken (2013) further explains that Qatari student participation in extracurricular activities challenges traditional cultural views on mixed-gender interaction. This cultural tension between
mixed-gender interactions and extracurricular experiences, such as leadership development, was discussed in the current study, as some female Qatari shared perceived barriers to leadership development that they faced based on their gender. This study’s finding of the theme *Leadership is Gendered* illustrates that Qatari students perceive leadership within the Qatari culture as gendered. Both male and female students offered examples of how gender can limit opportunities for female leadership within the Qatari community. This study affirms that, according to these participants, the construction of leadership in the Qatari community is gendered.

The construction of leadership within the Qatari community is also deeply connected to the communal aspect of the culture, as the Qatari community defines leadership through titles or positions, and leadership depends on the communal aspects of relationships, networking and reputation, as illustrated by the two themes of *Leadership is perceived as positional* and *Leadership is community oriented*. This study demonstrates the need to evaluate the complex social construction of leadership, as the Qatari students’ description of leadership was not consistent with the traits found in some Western theories of leadership. Perkins (2009) advocates the need for global leadership perspectives and argues that there is a bias in Western [American] theories of leadership that make them ill-suited for most cross-cultural interaction. Perkins (2009) also defines Western leadership theories as being leader-centered, male-dominated, and individualist, which may cause disconnects when working with collectivist cultures. This study however, establishes that Qatari students embraced both a positional (industrial) and communal (postindustrial) approach to leadership.

As previously stated, this study asserts that Qatari students construct their understanding of leadership through both a postindustrial and industrial lens of leadership. While in the Western, American context, there appears to be tension between the older industrial paradigm
and the newer postindustrial paradigm, this study asserts that Qatari students hold a dualist understanding of leadership as being both positional and leader-centric as well as community and collectivist focused. Qatari students do not fully identify with either paradigm but rather with both paradigms. This finding provides educators and administrators a newer understanding of student leadership within a global context and demonstrates that Qatari students have dualistic understanding of leadership where they are able to ascribe to both the industrial and postindustrial paradigm.

One of the overarching themes of this study is that leadership is seen as community-oriented, signaling that community and relationships greatly influenced a leader’s actions given the networking and emphasis on community within Qatari culture. At the same time, Qatari participants described leaders in positional terms, either by title or position, signaling that community expectations, title, and power influence leadership within the Qatari culture. This dual-perception of leadership as both industrial and postindustrial is not described in Western theories of leadership. Rost (1993) and Haber (2011) argue that there is a dichotomy between leadership theory paradigms that support either leader-centric (industrial) or relationship-centric (postindustrial) approach to leadership. This study demonstrates that Qatari undergraduates do not understand leadership as being either industrial or postindustrial, but rather support both approaches to leadership.

The findings from this study establish that the cultural environment found within Qatar shapes students’ perceptions and definitions of leadership. Shah (2006) asserts that there needs to be a reorientation of leadership theory in multicultural and international settings, as Western valued theories or practices may ignore the multicultural environment found in educational settings. This study shows that the conceptualization of leadership cannot be separated from the
Qatari context, and the social and cultural norms guide how leadership is defined, perceived, and constructed. According to the participants, leadership is seen as an extension of their culture and their country. The ruling family exemplifies the understanding that leadership is valued, positional, and community-oriented.

Therefore, the response to the third research question of “How is leadership socially constructed among Qatari college students?” is that leadership is socially constructed within the cultural context of Qatari community, which influences Qatari students’ understanding of leadership. Leadership within the Qatari culture is socially constructed on the assumptions that it is valued within the Qatari culture, is gendered, is community oriented, is perceived as positional, and is evolving due to recent economic developments in Qatar.

As Billsberry (2009) asserts, leadership education should allow students to understand their own definitions of leadership and understand leadership in their own environments. This study provides a framework outlining the social and cultural construction of leadership within Qatari culture. The five interconnected themes of this study, as illustrated in Table 4, directly answer the three research questions exploring Qatari students’ definitions of leadership, perceptions of leadership and social construction of leadership. The findings provide a multi-layered understanding of leadership in Qatari culture, within the social and cultural context that defines leadership. The interrelationships between the five themes demonstrate how leadership is deeply embedded in the Qatari culture, and how culture influences the perceptions and understandings of leadership within the larger context of the Qatari culture. Consequently, the five themes can be used to answer the research questions of how leadership is defined, perceived, and constructed within the social and cultural contexts of Qatar.
As previously stated, findings from this study address a gap in the literature on Qatari student leadership perceptions and add to the understanding of leadership within this social and cultural context. This study affirms that Western postindustrial and industrial definitions of leadership are not independently relevant to Qatari students studying at an IBC. The participants defined leadership from both an industrial (*leadership is perceived as positional*) and a postindustrial (*leadership is community oriented*) paradigm. This gives educators and administrators a newer understanding of student leadership within a global context, as Qatari students do not fully ascribe to either paradigm, but rather both leadership paradigms. Qatari students have dualistic understanding of leadership, allowing them to see leadership as both leader and management oriented, as well as relational and process oriented. This dualistic view of leadership provides a new understanding of undergraduate leadership that is not represented in the American context. While Rost (1993), Kezar, Carducci, and Contreras-McGavin (2006), Haber (2011) and Rosch and Caza (2012) assert that leadership theory has evolved from the industrial to the postindustrial paradigm, this study demonstrates that Qatari undergraduates hold a dual understanding of leadership as being both industrial and postindustrial in nature. The Qatari undergraduate definitions of leadership focused on positions, titles and for some participants it was inherent in nature. The definitions also included a relational process that was focused on community and social change. Therefore, this study asserts a new paradigm to understand Qatari leadership perceptions: a dualist paradigm of leadership for Qatari students. This dualistic paradigm honors and acknowledges that Qatari definitions and perceptions of leadership are focused around both the position (and title) of a leader and the community oriented outcome of a relational leadership process. This paradigm gives us a greater understanding of how Qatari undergraduates define, perceive and construct leadership.
Discussion of the Findings in Relation to the Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used to guide this research was the relational leadership theory (RLT) developed by Uhl-Bien (2006). RLT aligns with the postindustrial paradigm of leadership development (Rost, 1995), and Uhl-Bien (2006) asserts that the RLT is a framework for guiding leadership theory and practice that focuses on the study of relational processes of leadership. It supports a relational and community-focused understanding of leadership, and grounding this study allowed for the exploration of community, relationships, networks and family within the Qatari context. Using the relational leadership theory (RLT) as a framework also allowed for a process-oriented approach, which would focus on the relational process of leadership as described by the participants. The participants discussed the importance of community, networking and relationships, and also described family relationships that supported leadership exploration and leadership development. While the participants demonstrated an understanding of leadership that is both industrial and postindustrial, using a postindustrial framework for this study allowed for a deeper understanding of the complex ways relationships and community influence leadership within the Qatari context.

Practitioner Implications

Findings from this study are directly relevant to higher education faculty, staff and researchers working in international branch campus locations, particularly those working in Education City in Qatar. These findings are relevant to the specific areas of student affairs, intercultural education, and student counseling or student advising. Faculty, administrators, and others who develop student learning programs or leadership development programs would also benefit from these findings.
Several implications can be drawn from this study. The first implication from this study is that the social construction of leadership is intertwined with the Qatari culture, resulting in an understanding of leadership within the Qatari context that is different from the American (or Western) understanding. This study provides insight into how cultural tensions that may arise between the campus and Qatari community due to definitions of student leadership. The five findings of this study outline how Qatars perceive, construct, and define leadership. These five themes provide a more holistic understanding of the social construction of leadership within the Qatari context.

The first recommendation of this study is that educators at international branch campuses should work toward identifying leadership definitions that are specific to their cultural context. Rather than applying the leadership theories that are used on the home campus settings in the United States, branch campus educators should look at how the concept of leadership is socially and culturally constructed in the international locations.

As this study demonstrates a dualistic understanding of the industrial and postindustrial paradigm within the Qatari context, it is important to have future studies explore the local definitions of leadership and how leadership is constructed within the country to the international branch campus. Rather than transplanting educational programs from the home campus in America, educators should explore local understandings of leadership. The assertion that leadership theory has evolved from the industrial to the postindustrial paradigm (Rost, 1993; Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006; and Haber, 2011) is not directly applicable to the Qatar context and to the Qatari student experience of leadership, as demonstrated by this study.
Future studies should explore how leadership is defined, constructed, and understood within the local culture of an international branch campus, thus providing more global understanding of undergraduate leadership within international branch campus contexts.

Allowing an organic definition of leadership to arise supports the local student body and their own cultural understanding of leadership. It also minimizes any cultural tensions that may arise due to conflicting definitions of leadership. For example, this study demonstrates that Qatari students perceive leadership in gendered ways, therefore it is important that leadership programs honor this construction of leadership and avoid minimizing how leadership can be experienced differently by gender. In Qatar specifically, the five themes identified in this study can be used by educators to develop culturally appropriate leadership programs that support and honor Qatari’s cultural understanding of leadership. The results of this study indicate that it is critical for educators working at international branch campuses in Qatar to recognize the importance of family support and how Qatari community relationships can hinder or support leadership opportunities. As previously stated, Shertzer and Schuh (2004) assert that a student’s personal definition of leadership plays a significant role in leadership his or her identity and self-perceptions of leadership. Therefore, this study indicates that educators at intentional branch campus settings should become aware of their students’ definitions and perceptions of leadership within their unique cultural and social contexts. Similarly, educators across all IBC settings should be mindful of how the social construction of leadership in their international locations can influence students’ perceptions of leadership and their willingness to engage in leadership development. This study demonstrates how the Qatari construction of leadership is influenced both by the local culture and the international branch campus experience. Future studies should explore the social construction of leadership at other international branch campuses, as the Qatari
construction of leadership may vary from other undergraduate leadership perceptions, definitions, and ultimately social construction in differing branch campus locations.

The second implication that can be drawn from this study is that the unique international branch campus setting in Education City provides a supportive setting for leadership development. This study demonstrates that the IBC setting is aligned with the vision of Qatar Foundation in “unlocking human potential” by encouraging Qatari students to explore leadership opportunities. All of the participants discussed feeling the value of leadership development on campus, through extracurricular activities and academic coursework. Therefore, educators who work in IBC settings should continue to cultivate and foster a supportive setting for leadership development, allowing students a safe place to explore leadership opportunities. The international branch campus setting should continue to challenge students to engage in leadership through academic coursework or extracurricular activities, such as student organizations or leadership development programs, but at the same time should honor the social and cultural influences that construct leadership definitions and perceptions within the Qatari context.

Not only is this research relevant to undergraduate leadership within international branch campuses, it is also important to communicate these findings directly to the study site’s institutional leaders. Given that this is the first study exploring Qatari student perceptions of leadership and the findings demonstrate how the construction of leadership is deeply embedded within the social and cultural context of Qatar, it is imperative that administrators at the study site acknowledge this new understanding of Qatari perceptions of leadership. This study outlines three practical ways that the findings from this study can be implemented at the study location. The three specific recommendations for the study site are: (1) to expand the already established
leadership programs to cover both industrial and postindustrial perspective; (2) to create a women’s leadership program through engaging students, faculty, alumni, and community leaders; and (3) to develop a mentoring program to connect Qatari students with community leaders. These practical suggestions come directly from the finding of this study and encourage campus-wide implementation through collaborative efforts between educators, administrators and students.

As this study demonstrates that Qatari students perceive leadership both through an industrial and a postindustrial lens, the first practical suggestion is that student affairs practitioners and faculty at the study site should avoid exclusively teaching postindustrial paradigms of leadership. Currently, the institution implements a first-year leadership development program which relies solely on teaching leadership through a postindustrial lens: the Social Change Model of leadership. Utilizing only a post-industrial paradigm to teach leadership and develop leadership skills minimizes the dualistic understanding of leadership paradigms experienced by Qatari students and undermines their perception of leadership as being positional. Administrators at the study site must recognize that leadership is constructed differently within the Qatari setting than it is constructed on the home campus. Administrators and educators should also honor Qatari students’ construction of leadership and should not simply replicate leadership development programs found on the home campus. The study site should expand its leadership development programs to teach a range of leadership approaches that include both industrial and post-industrial paradigms. In doing so, the campus community honors the dualistic understanding of leadership held by Qatari undergraduates and provides
them the opportunity to explore leadership through multiple paradigms that resonate with their own conceptualization of leadership.

Given that this study demonstrates Qatari undergraduates perceive leadership as gendered within Qatar, it is imperative that the study site acknowledges this understanding of leadership through its leadership development programs. The second practical suggestion is that the study site designs a women’s leadership program which would allow Qatari female undergraduates to come together in a safe space to discuss definitions of leadership, ways in which gender and culture influence leadership experiences, and how Qatari women within their society have navigated gender barriers to pursue leadership opportunities. Establishing a women’s leadership program would honor the experience of Qatari female students on campus and acknowledge their gendered construction of leadership. It would allow Qatari females the opportunity to explore female leadership in a supportive environment where they could openly discuss the gendered construction of leadership through their collective experiences. This women’s leadership program should be designed as a weekly workshop, where Qatari females can engage in a series of discussions on leadership, encouraging them to define the specific skills they will need to cultivate as they articulate their leadership goals and develop their leadership identity as Qatari female leaders. This women’s leadership program should engage both current Qatari female leaders on campus as well as others females who are interested in exploring the topic that do not necessarily hold campus leadership positions. The women’s leadership program should be a collaborative effort between educators and Qatari students to ensure that the leadership development curriculum is co-constructed and culturally relevant within the Qatari context. Qatari students should be engaged in designing the specific details and scope of the women’s
leadership program, including the location, length and weekly topics, to ensure that student investment in a leadership program and authenticity to their experiences as Qatari females within their community. The collaborative construction of a women’s leadership program would provide an opportunity for educators at the study location to understand the lived experiences of Qatari students and ensure that these experiences are not minimalized by focusing solely on American understandings of female leadership or undergraduate leadership development.

Engaging Qatari female alumni and Qatari female community leaders in conversation with Qatari undergraduates would also foster greater support for female leadership and resonates with the finding that leadership is gendered. Designing a community outreach component to the women’s leadership program would allow Qatari students the opportunity to meet and connect with alumni and female community leaders. This allows the students to explore the concept of leadership both on campus and within the larger Qatari community. These Qatari female alumni and female leaders could be invited to engage in the women’s leadership program by facilitating some of the weekly discussion. Also, while the number of female faculty at the study site is low, engaging female faculty in the women’s leadership program would also offer Qatari students another example of female leadership within their community. Engaging faculty, alumni, and Qatari female community leaders in a women’s leadership program offers Qatari students at the study site the opportunity to view female leadership from a multitude of lenses. In offering multiple perspectives of female leadership, both on and off campus, educators and administrators at the study site can support Qatari female students as they define aspirational and culturally realistic leadership goals.
The study site should also recognize this gendered construction of leadership by engaging male students in dialogue about this construction. Given that the findings shows that leadership is evolving and economic development has led to an increased number of leadership opportunities, it is important that male Qatari students become aware of how female students may face barriers to these leadership opportunities. Engaging male students to acknowledge the gendered experience can allow for dialogue between both male and female students on the intersection of gender and leadership. The institution should also establish a series of campus-wide events that showcase female leadership to the entire university community, allowing male student the opportunity to expand their understanding of gendered leadership and female leadership. Educators at the study site should help male and female students challenge their assumptions about leadership within the Qatari context, and allow them to identify ways in which leadership has shifted, and continues to shift, within the Qatari culture. Fostering dialogue and discussion between Qatari students, faculty, staff and administrators about the gendered experiences of leadership is critical, as the campus should support both male and female leadership within the Qatari community. Providing a series of campus-wide events to showcase both male and female Qatari leaders honors the construction of leadership as gendered, provides role-models within the Qatari community, and minimizes the risk of marginalizing female students from participating in the conversations around leadership.

The third practical suggestion is that the study site develop a mentoring program to engage student with the wider Qatari community in leadership development. As this study demonstrates the Qatari culture values leadership, it is important for the study site to be a collaborative community partner and support leadership development both on and off campus.
By engaging community leaders, business leaders, and even family members in a mentoring program for Qatari students, the institution can further support Qatari students as they explore and engage in leadership development. Having a formalized mentoring program would connect Qatari students to leaders in their community, supporting their construction of leadership as both being valued and community oriented. While participating in a formal mentoring program Qatari undergraduates would develop networks and relationships, supporting their relational understanding of leadership within the larger Qatari culture. It would also provide students the opportunity to learn from community leaders and become exposed to leadership development as a process. The institution should construct a mentoring program in collaboration with the community members and alumni to demonstrate an investment in undergraduate leadership development within the Qatari community, not just within the campus setting. The administrative leadership should create a task-force of faculty, Qatari students, and student affairs professionals that would be charged with the task of outlining the specific parameters of this mentoring program and the time commitment expected of both the mentor and the mentee. This formalized mentoring program would allow Qatari students the opportunity to meet one-on-one with established leaders in the Qatari community. Establishing a mentoring program would also provide Qatari students the opportunity to witness examples of how their mentor has created social change and community enhancements through their leadership experiences. This mentoring program also resonates with Qatari students’ construction of leadership as community oriented and developing a mentoring program reflects the institutions support of Qatari participation in leadership for all community members.
These three practical suggestions are concrete ways that administration at the study site can directly implement the findings of this study. By expanding leadership development programs to include industrial and post-industrial perspectives, the institution can support the dualistic understanding of leadership within the Qatari context. Establishing a women’s leadership program acknowledges the gendered construction of leadership within the Qatari community and engages both Qatari male and female students in campus conversations about the intersection of gender and leadership. The women’s leadership program would also provide students the opportunity to bring with the knowledge found in this study back to their own lived gendered experiences and allow Qatari females to reflect on shared experiences of gendered leadership. The last recommendation of creating a formal mentoring program that connects Qatari undergraduates with Qatari community leaders honors the construction of leadership as being both community oriented and valued. Developing a Qatari mentoring program provides students with tangible examples of leadership in action within their community, and provides role models beyond the campus experience. These three practical suggestions for the study site should be collaborative in nature and should not fall only on one office or division to implement. The institutional leadership at the study site should foster student collaboration in all three recommendations, as the existing leadership programs have not been grounded in research focusing on Qatari students’ perceptions. As the findings of this study provide insight into the Qatari perceptions of leadership, engaging them in leadership development program design and implementation is critical to honor their experiences and allow their voice to be reflected in literature and in practice. By establishing these three practical recommendations, campus administrators at the study site can utilize this newly discovered knowledge of Qatari student
perceptions to develop leadership education programs that are relevant to the Qatari student experience.

The findings of this research help student affairs practitioners and educators who work at international branch campuses better understand Qatari student perceptions of leadership within a non-American setting. Educators working a branch campuses in Education City should realize that leadership is defined through the unique social and cultural context found within Qatar. Three specific recommendations are outlined for the direct implementation by administrators at the study site: (1) expand the already established leadership programs to cover both industrial and postindustrial perspective; (2) create a women’s leadership program through engaging students, faculty, alumni, and community leaders; and (3) develop a mentoring program to connect Qatari students with community leaders. These three recommendations come directly from the findings of Qatari students in this study. Implementing these three recommendations allows the institution to mindfully enhance leadership development opportunities that respect the lived experiences of Qatari students and honors the cultural and social construction of leadership. Implementing these recommendations also demonstrates the shared value of leadership within the Qatari context both at the institutional level and the community level and provides students a wider range of leadership development opportunities that are not currently available. The results of this study indicate that Qatari students view leadership as an extension of their country and culture. Therefore, educators should be mindful when developing undergraduate leadership programs making them relevant and to Qatari students and supporting local definitions of leadership.
Recommendations for Future Study

This study’s findings highlight how Qatari undergraduate students perceive and conceptualize leadership within their cultural context. The study also highlights how utilizing the postindustrial relational theoretical framework can support the Qatari understanding of leadership as community oriented. All the Qatari participants discussed the importance of relationships, networking and group process when defining leadership roles and leadership outcomes.

Future research on Qatari student leadership perspectives should further focus on the Leadership is Gendered theme by exploring in depth how a larger sample of male and female Qatari students see leadership as a gendered experience and how the educational community or wider Qatari community can help support female leadership. As this study only included three males in the sample, it would be helpful to explore a wider sample of male student perspectives. Findings of this study could contribute to awareness of how gender is constructed within the Qatari culture and how Qatari students perceive the way it influences student leadership and professional career development. Particular attention to perceptions of both female and male leadership in future research would also add to the understanding of gendered leadership perspectives.

Another recommendation for future study is to qualitatively explore the definitions and experiences of undergraduate leadership from an all-female Qatari sample. The female participants in this study indicated that the Qatari culture views leadership in gendered ways, and an in-depth study on how gender influences leadership and professional development would expand the research on Qatari female perspectives of leadership. As Ridge (2014) notes that there are more female than male students in higher education in the Arabian Gulf Cooperation
Council (GCC) countries, it is important to look at their leadership experiences in the undergraduate setting and how the cultural and social context of the Qatari culture influences leadership opportunities, both on campus and within the larger Qatari community. The findings of this study could be useful for educators to develop women’s leadership programs that reflect the Qatari undergraduates’ leadership experience. This study could also expand the literature of gendered leadership perspectives to an international context.

As this qualitative study used a small sample size of eight participants, a larger quantitative study could be designed to better capture a wider sample size to explore leadership perspectives of Qatari undergraduate students. Additionally, this study was limited to one international branch campus setting within Education City in Qatar, and expanding the sample size to include students in multiple campuses while utilizing a quantitative approach could allow for a more generalizable study, given an anticipated wider response rate and sample size.

The findings of this study also indicate that Qatari students feel supported by their families in their leadership development. A future study could explore the parental influences on leadership among Qatari students and the specific ways parents support undergraduate leadership. This study could explore parents’ definitions of leadership and examples of ways in which they support students. In looking at family and parental influences on leadership, findings from this study can provide insight on the familial perceptions of leadership within the Qatari culture.

Another study could explore the social and cultural construction of leadership of the non-Qataris studying at international branch campuses in the Arabian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Given that Education City is also home to expatriate and international students, it may be helpful for researchers to explore leadership perceptions from a wider, international
student population. The results from this study can influence how practitioners can create culturally appropriate leadership programs that mirror the cultural values of students studying at an IBC setting, whether they are local or international students.

Yet another study could focus on self-perceptions of leadership among a wider range of Qatari participants. As Shertzer and Schuh (2004) argue that a “student’s definition of leadership may play a significant role in whether or not the student perceives him/herself as a leader” (p.112), it is also important to dig deeper into the self-perceptions of leadership among Qatari students. Six of the eight participants in this study self-identify with being a leader. As such having a majority of participants who self-identify as a leader, could have provided a definition of leadership that only supports this group of students. Future studies should also look at the definitions of leadership by both Qatari undergraduates who self-identify as leaders and those who do not. Doing so will provide greater insight into the Qatari definitions of student leadership.

**Limitation of the Findings**

The first limitation of this study and its results is the small sample size. Thomas (2006) asserts that the findings from a general inductive study can only be applied to the context and individuals involved in the study. Therefore, the transferability of the results of this study is limited to these participants and their experiences. This study describes the social and cultural construction of leadership within Qatar according to these eight participants and may not be fully representative of all Qatari students.

A second limitation of this study is that the findings and conclusion may not be generalizable to other international branch campus locations. Differences in cultural and societal
norms, values, and expectations will result in different findings at other international locations. While this study provides a framework to understand the social and cultural construction of leadership found within Qatar, these findings are specific to Qatar and may not be similar to other international branch campus locations. Further studies should be completed to see if these findings are applicable at other countries or international branch campus settings.

A third limitation of this study is the researcher’s biases. While steps were taken to actively look for subjective bias, the researcher is not Qatari and is an Arabic-speaking expatriate living and working in Qatar. While the researcher explored the experience of Qatari students, she is not ethnically Qatari, and may not fully understand the intricacies of Qatari culture as it relates to leadership development. To minimize this possible bias, the use of member checking was used to ensure that the data analysis was reflective of the Qatari student experience and accurately presented and honored the voices of Qatari participants.

A fourth limitation of this study is that the topic of leadership can be difficult to describe and define. Billsberry (2009) asserts that “there is no agreed definition of what leadership is or any universal agreement about who might be regarded as a leader” (p.1), so the participants were asked to offer their own definitions of leadership without any guidance or clarification. The researcher intentionally allowed for the definitions of leadership to emerge from the conversations, however given that English is not the native language of the participants, it may be have been difficult to capture the true essence of their leadership definitions. To minimize this possible bias, member checking was used to ensure that data was accurately presented and was reflective of the Qatari participants’ meanings and understandings.

Despite these limitations, this study hopes to improve the understanding of Qatari students’ perceptions of leadership, grounded in the cultural and societal context of Qatari
culture. Knowledge gained from this research can be used to design undergraduate leadership programs that mirror the cultural values and understandings of leadership found within the Qatari culture.

Significance and Summary of the Study

While many educators and administrators in higher education believe that leadership skills are a desired outcome of the undergraduate experience (Astin & Astin, 2000; Lucas, 1994; Shertzer & Schuh, 2004), there is well supported need for research on how students perceive and define leadership (Logue, Hutchens, & Hector, 2005; Haber, 2011; Marcketti & Kadolph, 2010; Shertzer & Schuh, 2004). Furthermore, the research on the perceptions of leadership should be expanded to include and represent a diverse student body, particularly in international branch campus settings, with native and nonnative students, where the concept of leadership development is transported to various cross-cultural settings. After an extensive review of the literature, the researcher found no current research on student leadership development within the cultural context of the Arabian Gulf, Qatar, or at international branch campuses of American institutions. Therefore, this doctoral research was an inductive, qualitative study that explored undergraduate leadership perceptions among Qatari students studying at an international branch campus of an American institution.

According to the Qatari student participants involved in this study, leadership is defined through the unique social and cultural context found within Qatar. A total of five overarching themes emerged from these qualitative interviews: (1) Leadership is valued within the Qatari culture; (2) Leadership is gendered; (3) Leadership is community oriented; (4) Leadership is largely seen as positional; and (5) Leadership is evolving due to the Qatari economy.
This study is significant because it highlights the concept of leadership as deeply embedded in the cultural and social context of Qatari community. This study provides a definition of leadership by Qatari undergraduates: leadership is a social, relational process that is focused on creating community change, in which the leader is identified through a title or position. This study establishes that Qatari student’s perceive leadership is valued, gendered, community oriented, and positional within the Qatari context. It also establishes that Qatari students embraced both a positional (industrial) and communal (postindustrial) approach to leadership. The conceptualization of leadership cannot be separated from the Qatari context, and the social and cultural norms guide how leadership is defined, perceived and constructed. According to the participants, leadership is seen as an extension of their culture and their country. The findings from this study provide a multi-layered understanding of leadership, and the relationships between the five themes demonstrate the social and cultural construction of leadership found within Qatar.
References


Creswell (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*


Qatar Foundation’s Education Division (2009). Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. [Brochure].


Table 1

*General Inductive Coding Process for Qualitative Research*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Close reading of the data (text from the interview transcriptions)</th>
<th>Divide text into specific segments relevant to the topic being researched</th>
<th>Label the segments of text using codes (categories), creating ways of organizing the data</th>
<th>Examine the codes for any overlap or redundancy</th>
<th>Group the codes into broad themes; Identify the most important themes found in the data.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cycle 1 begins</strong></td>
<td><strong>Open Coding</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many pages of data</td>
<td>Many segments of text</td>
<td>30 – 40 codes or categories</td>
<td>Reduced to less than 20 codes or categories</td>
<td>Codes are grouped to create 3-8 themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cycle 2 begins</strong></td>
<td><strong>Axial Coding</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Thomas (2006); Merriam (2009); Creswell (2012); and Saldana (2013)
Table 2

Participants’ Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cinderella</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>First-year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammad</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bubbles</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muneera</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
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<td>Junior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poppy</td>
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<td>Junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mishaal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3

**Summary of Findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Social and Cultural Construction of Leadership within the Qatari Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Leadership is valued within the Qatari culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Family supports leadership development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. International Branch Campus supports leadership development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Ruling family is seen as examples of leadership within Qatari culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leadership is Gendered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Female student perspectives of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Male student perspectives on female leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Examples of Qatari female leaders within the Qatari culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leadership is Community Oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Leadership depends on relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Leadership enhances the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Importance of reputation for leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leadership is Perceived as Positional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Leadership is a title or position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Leadership is inherent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Leadership is evolving due to the Qatari economy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table 4

*Interconnected themes of this study as they relate to the research questions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question 1: How do Qatari college students define student leadership and leadership roles?</th>
<th>Research Question 2: How do Qatari college students perceive leadership?</th>
<th>Research Question 3: How is leadership socially constructed among Qatari college students?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership is valued within Qatari culture</td>
<td>Leadership is valued within Qatari culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership is gendered</td>
<td>Leadership is gendered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership is community oriented</td>
<td>Leadership is community oriented</td>
<td>Leadership is community oriented</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership is perceived as positional</td>
<td>Leadership is perceived as positional</td>
<td>Leadership is perceived as positional</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership is evolving due to the Qatari economy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A: Unsigned Informed Consent Document

UNSIGNED INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Northeastern University, Department of: Higher Education Administration, College of Professional Studies

Name of Investigator(s): Dr. Atira Charles (Principal Investigator); Dalia Atef Rehal (Student Investigator)

Title of Project: Exploring Undergraduate Leadership Perceptions at an International Branch Campus

Request to Participate in Research

We would like to invite you to take part in a research project. The purpose of this research is to gain undergraduate Qatari students’ perspectives on leadership experiences at an international branch campus and explore their definitions of leadership. The goal of this study is to explore leadership definitions and describe leadership perceptions of undergraduate Qatari students at an international branch campus (IBC).

You must be at least 18 years old to be in this research project.

The study will take place either in person at CMUQ’s campus (in a conference room of your choosing) or via Skype. The interviews will take between 50-90 minutes. If you decide to take part in this study, we will ask you a series of qualitative questions about your experiences with leadership and leadership development during your time as an undergraduate student at an international branch campus.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you for taking part in this study.

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in the study. However, your answers may help us to learn more about student leadership and leadership within the Qatari community.

Your part in this study will be handled in a confidential manner. Only the researchers will know that you participated in this study. Any reports or publications based on this research will use only group data and will not identify you or any individual as being of this project.

The decision to participate in this research project is up to you. You do not have to participate and you can refuse to answer any question. Even if you begin the study, you may withdraw at any time.

You will not be paid for your participation in this study.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to call Dalia Atef Rehal at +974-6601-1922 (or rehal.d@husky.neu.edu) the person mainly responsible for the research. You can also contact Dr. Atira Charles (a.charles@neu.edu) the Principal Investigator.

If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 960 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617.373.4588, Email: n.regina@neu.edu. Additionally, you may also contact the Office of Research Integrity and Compliance at Carnegie Mellon University IRB-review@andrew.cmu.edu or via phone: +1(412) 268-1909 or +1(412) 268-5460. You may call anonymously if you wish.

You may keep this form for yourself.

Thank you.

Dalia Atef Rehal
Appendix B: Interview Question Protocol

Northeastern University: Doctor of Education Program

Principle Investigator: Dr. Atira Charles, a.charles@neu.edu

Student Investigator: Dalia Atef Rehal, Student Researcher, rehal.d@husky.neu.edu

Title of Project: Exploring Undergraduate Leadership Perceptions and Experiences at an International Branch Campus in Qatar

Introduction

The goal of this study is to explore leadership definitions and describe leadership perceptions of undergraduate Qatari students at an international branch campus (IBC). Given that there has been little research on student leadership within branch campuses in the GCC, I am interested in learning more about your experiences in undergraduate leadership at (institution) and within the Qatari community. I will explore three main areas in our conversation today: (1) how you define student leadership and leadership roles; (2) how you perceive leadership, and (3) how is leadership socially constructed within the Qatari community. You will have the chance to share your understanding of leadership with me, and this information will be helpful in better understanding Qatari student experiences with leadership.

1. IRB review and consent forms

Background:

1. Tell me a little about yourself:
   a. What is your year and major at (institution)?
   b. Share with me a bit about your high school experience before you came to (institution) and what led you to apply to (institution). Please share if you were involved in leadership experiences in high school.
c. Share with me about any the ways you have been involved in leadership experiences at (institution). Highlight ways you have been engaged in leadership as an undergraduate.

d. Share with me about any of your leadership experiences within the Qatari community. Highlight ways you have demonstrated leadership within your community.

RQ#1: How do Qatari college students define student leadership and leadership roles?

1. How is leadership defined in Qatar?
   a. How is the concept of leadership important to the Qatari culture?

2. What makes someone a leader at (institution)?

3. What is the role of a student leader on campus?

4. Do you consider yourself as a leader?
   a. If so, why?
      i. When did you first realize you were a leader?
      ii. How does your role as a student leader empower you to create change on campus?
   b. If not, why?

5. What do you think motivates Qatari students to take on leadership roles?

6. How does our campus foster leadership roles?

RQ#2: How do Qatari college students perceive student leadership?

1. What are your thoughts on student leadership at (institution)?

2. How do you determine who is a good student leader?
3. What are the most important skills or attributes of a leader?

4. How has attending an American IBC influenced your perceptions of student leadership?

RQ #3: How is leadership socially constructed among Qatari college students?

1. How do relationships influence leadership within the campus setting?

2. How do relationships influence leadership within the larger Qatari community?

3. How has your family influenced your understanding of leadership?

4. Within the Qatari community, how are leadership and gender viewed?

5. Who are leaders within the Qatari culture?
   a. How do they become leaders?

6. What role do student leaders play within the Qatari culture/community?

7. How does gender relate to the idea of leadership within the Qatari community?

Wrap Up:

1. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me?

2. Is there anything else that you would like me to explain about the purpose of this interview or my research study?

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me and participating in this research study. (Review timeline and participant review of their transcripts).
Appendix C: Call for Participants

Dear Students:

Are you a Qatari student who is engaged in leadership? Would you like to share your story of leadership experiences? If so, please consider taking part in this study!

A doctoral study is being conducted to gain insight into leadership experiences of Qatari students. This study is part of a doctoral research project, conducted by Dalia Atef Rehal, a doctor of education candidate at Northeastern University. It has been approved by Northeastern’s Institutional Review Board for Ethics (IRB # CPS140707) and Carnegie Mellon University’s Institutional Review Board for Ethics (IRB # HS14-468).

I invite you to participate in this research study. In order to participate, you must be at least 18 years old, currently enrolled at Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, and want to share about your experiences with leadership. The study will consist of one interview, conducted in person or via Skype (online), which focuses on your perceptions of leadership and the types of leadership experiences you have been involved in. The interview will last between 60 – 90 minutes and will take place on campus or via Skype, whichever you prefer.

If you would like to participate in this study or learn more, please email Dalia Atef Rehal (rehal.d@husky.neu.edu). All participation is voluntary, and your participation in this study will remain confidential. Participants’ names will not be shared with others or published with the results. Attached are the IRB approval forms from both campuses as well as the Unsigned Informed Consent Document for this study.

Thank you,

Dalia Atef Rehal

Doctoral Candidate, International Higher Education Administration Northeastern University
Appendix D: Letter of Institutional Support

Carnegie Mellon University Qatar

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a letter of supporting the qualitative research that Ms. Dalia Rehal would like to undergo for her doctoral program through Northeastern University. The Office of Personal Development and Counseling Services, and the Division of Student Affairs, has no objection to Ms. Rehal sending information about her research study to our students.

Ms. Rehal’s research is an exciting study in exploring leadership definitions, perceptions, and experiences of Qatari students studying at our Qatar branch campus. The results and data will better inform our work as student affairs practitioners and offer a greater understanding of the leadership experiences of our Qatari students.

Ms. Rehal, in her role as a researcher, has our permission to send information regarding her doctoral research study to our Qatari students. Students will self-select to participate in this study and no monetary compensation will be provided to students for their participation by Ms. Rehal or Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar.

Sincerely,

Jumana Al-Abdi,  
Director of Personal Development and Counseling Services

Gloria Khoury,  
Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

May 6, 2014
Appendix E: List of Codes

This section provides a list of codes from the open and axial coding process for this study.

Positional

Non-positional

Clubs, student organizations

Student Government

Informal

Formal

Hierarchy

Manager

Definition of a leader

Entrepreneurship as leadership

Leadership for professional development

Campus to professional

Campus not connected to leadership

Social community change

Social change as motivation

Create change

Yes I am a leader

No I am not

I am becoming a leader

Always a leader, recognizable born leader

Not everyone is a leader
Convince, influence
Motivate
Passion
Assertive
Inspire leadership
Awareness
Goals into action
Listens
Nonjudgmental
Open-minded
Communication
Wisdom
Vision
Emotional intelligence
Innovation
Confidence
Group leadership
Not independent
Networks are important
Teamwork
Friends
Reputation
Consensus
IBC supports leadership

Exposure

Opportunities

Support

Academics

Qatar supports

Qatar focused

Ruling family

Shaikha Mozah

Industry leaders

Family supports

Generational

Very rapidly changing

Shifts in leadership

Something we need to change

Recent shift in need for women leaders

Brag

Recognition; Respected; Role model

Status

Gender Leadership

Society looks down upon/doesn’t support female leadership

Lack of opportunity

No barrier
Career barriers for women leaders

Industry is gendered

Unsure

Money motivates

Social change as motivation

Internal motivation

Manage/power is leadership

Wasta (Arabic word for powerful connections)

Relationships in Qatari culture

Personal growth

Progress in leadership

Becoming a leader

Co-gender

Single gender

Didn’t really do a lot of extracurricular activities

Unsure how to become a leader

Goals into action