



Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey

# THE ENTREPRENEURIAL CAREER INTENTIONS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN QATAR

GUESSS 2021 NATIONAL REPORT

Allan Villegas-Mateos  
Mahmoud M. Abdellatif  
Mokter Hossain



Observatory of  
Entrepreneurship  
& Innovation





## Contents

---

Preface	4
Executive Summary	5
01. Introduction	6
02. Demographic Information About the Sample	7
03. Students' Entrepreneurial Career Choice Intentions	9
04. Drivers of Entrepreneurial Career Choice Intentions	13
05. Nascent Entrepreneurs	17
06. Active Entrepreneurs	20
07. Potential Successor in Family Firms	23
08. Implications and Conclusion	27
References	28

## Table of Figures

---

Figure 1. Sample Distribution Based on Gender	7
Figure 2. Share of Students by Field of Studies in Qatar	8
Figure 3. Nationality of Respondents in Qatar Sample	8
Figure 4. Career Intentions Right After Graduation	9
Figure 5. Career Intentions Five Years After Graduation	10
Figure 6. Expected Changes in Career Choice Intentions of Qatar Students after Five Years	10
Figure 7. Nascent and Active Entrepreneurs	12
Figure 8. Proportion of Students Taking Entrepreneurship Courses	12
Figure 9. Knowledge of an Incubator and/or Accelerator at the University in Qatar	13
Figure 10. Proportion of Financial Resources Expectations to Start a Company	14
Figure 11. Students' Intentions Towards Being an Entrepreneur	14
Figure 12. Students' Attitudes Towards Being An Entrepreneur	15
Figure 13. Students' Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy	15
Figure 14. Students' Locus of Control	16
Figure 15. Entrepreneurial Family Background as a Driver of Entrepreneurial Intentions	16
Figure 16. Expected Environmental Reaction to Being an Entrepreneur	17
Figure 17. Distribution of Nascent Businesses by Industry	17
Figure 18. Activities Undertaken to Found a New Business	18
Figure 19. Nascent Entrepreneurs and Co-Founders	19
Figure 20. Nascent Entrepreneurs' Ownership-Share of the New Business	19
Figure 21. Distribution of Active Businesses by Industry	20
Figure 22. Motivations of Active Entrepreneurs	21
Figure 23. Perceived Performance of Businesses Compared to Competitors	22
Figure 24. Active Entrepreneurs and Co-Owners	22
Figure 25. Active Entrepreneurs' Ownership-Share of the Business	23
Figure 26. Students' Attitude and Intention Towards Succession	24
Figure 27. Distribution of Family Businesses by Industry	24
Figure 28. Performance of Parents' Business Compared to Competitors	25
Figure 29. Students' Family Size	25
Figure 30. Ownership-Share of the Business in the Hands of the Family	26
Figure 31. COVID-19's Impact on Entrepreneurial Intentions	26

## Preface

Entrepreneurship is increasingly a means of promoting sustainable development. Every day a growing number of practitioners, academics, policymakers, and other actors recognize entrepreneurship as an engine for economic development and to solve some of the world's pressing problems. Understanding the phenomenon of entrepreneurship by its consequence is a key for any country and its decision-makers to make smarter decisions, particularly in times of global crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Within entrepreneurial ecosystems that aim to put together the local conditions to properly support entrepreneurial activities, universities play significant roles as catalysts for creating an entrepreneurial culture, as well as education and training. To understand their role better, the GUESSS (Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey), with its presence in 58 countries, has been dedicated to this mission since 2003. Specifically, this GUESSS Qatar report provides insights into students' entrepreneurial career choice intentions, their entrepreneurial activities, and the underlying drivers, comparing students in Qatar with students from the rest of the world.

This edition of GUESSS and the national report of Qatar would not have been possible without the invaluable effort and support of the GUESSS teams, national university partners (Qatar University), members of Qatar Foundation (HEC Paris in Qatar and others), EY as the international project partner, and certainly the students who responded to the survey invitation. Thank you!

We are already looking forward to the next GUESSS edition in 2023! Don't hesitate to reach out to us to be included.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr. Allan Villegas-Mateos**

*HEC Paris in Qatar / GUESSS Qatar Coordinator*

Email: villegas@hec.fr

**Dr. Mahmoud M. Abdellatif**

*Director of Center for Entrepreneurship, College of Business and Economics,  
Qatar University / GUESSS Qatar Team Member*

Email: m.abdellatif@qu.edu.qa

**Dr. Mokter Hossain**

*Center for Entrepreneurship, College of Business and Economics,  
Qatar University / GUESSS Qatar Team Member*

Email: mokter@qu.edu.qa

---

## Citation

Villegas-Mateos, A., Abdellatif, M. M., & Hossain, M. (2021). *GUESSS 2021 National Report: The Entrepreneurial Career Intentions of University Students in Qatar*. Doha, Qatar: HEC Paris.

## Executive Summary

One project, 121 students in Qatar, and one country report comparing them with 58 countries around the world. This is the report of the first Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey (GUESSS) ever done in Qatar. It explores the entrepreneurial intentions and activities of university students.

The results show that Qatar is above the regional and global average for career intentions to become an entrepreneur. Students in Qatar report on average a higher positive attitude towards becoming an entrepreneur, a more externalized locus of control, and a higher self-efficacy to undertake entrepreneurial endeavors than that of students from the rest of the world.

### The key findings are:

#### CAREER INTENTIONS

- Upon graduation, the preferred career of students in Qatar is becoming a founder of a business in the first place or working for a large business. Almost anyone would like to be working for a small business. These rates are above the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and the world average.
- Five years after graduation, there is a dramatic decrease in the proportion of both leading career intentions; founder (entrepreneur) fall from 35% to 9%, and an employee in a large business fall from 25% to 5%. However, these rates are higher than the students from the rest of the world.
- A larger share of female respondents expressed a higher intention to start their own business than did male respondents, both right after graduation (19.7% vs 29.3%), and five years later (36.1% vs 53.4%).

#### UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

- A large share of students in Qatar have not attended a course on entrepreneurship so far (37%), which is above the MENA countries' average (34%), but below the GUESSS average (44%).
- About 89% of students in Qatar are aware of the existence of a business incubator and/or accelerator linked to their universities, and half of them (48%) would start their business with personal savings.
- Given the COVID-19 pandemic, 42% of students in Qatar have expressed that their plans to become entrepreneurs have changed for the positive given the remote work conditions during the pandemic period.

#### NASCENT ENTREPRENEURS

- The share of nascent entrepreneurs in Qatar (48.8%) was significantly higher than the rest of the world (28.4%).

- Most preferred sectors are advertising/design/marketing (9.9%), trade (wholesale/retail) (7.4%), and others (4.1%).
- For students in Qatar, the most popular way to start a business is with one co-founder (47.7%), but they also expect to have majority ownership (50%). Compared with the rest of the world, the most popular answer is doing it on their own (53.5%) and being major shareholders (59.7%).

#### ACTIVE ENTREPRENEURS

- The share of active entrepreneurs among students in Qatar is almost twice (20.7%) that of the rest of the world (10.8%).
- Most preferred sectors are other (24%), other services (16%), and trade (wholesale/retail) (16%).
- For students in Qatar, the most popular way to have started a business was on their own (40%), and for that reason, most of the students with businesses have majority ownership (54.2%). Compared with the rest of the world, the most popular answer was also doing it on their own (37%) and most of them are major shareholders (57.6%). That means that in Qatar there are 3% more sole founders than in other countries.

#### POTENTIAL SUCCESSORS IN FAMILY FIRMS

- A big portion of the Qatar respondents (45.7%) have at least one sibling and 34.3% have two or more siblings; only 20% shared that they do not have siblings. The family size is relevant since it affects their succession line to the family business.
- The students' attitude towards succession of the family business in Qatar is higher than in the rest of the world.
- Most preferred sectors of family businesses are others (22.9%), trade (wholesale/retail) (11.4%), and manufacturing (11.4%).

## 01. Introduction

The entrepreneurial ecosystem concept has attracted the attention of participants of it, mainly entrepreneurial leaders and policymakers (Stam, 2015). Studying the entrepreneurial ecosystem is relevant because it presents a systemic perspective on how to support entrepreneurial activities (Cavallo et al., 2018). In this sense, entrepreneurship serves as an important vehicle for economic and social prosperity by improving productivity and economic competitiveness. For this reason, the participants' cooperation and links with each other are essential to acquire and diffuse knowledge for their knowledge-based economies (Kruja, 2013).

The advent of entrepreneurial ecosystems in the last several years reflects the widespread recognition that entrepreneurship plays a key role in enabling knowledge investments not only by universities but also by private companies, non-profit organizations, and research institutions, in commercializing new ideas and ultimately transforming them into innovations (Audretsch and Link, 2017). The evidence shows that the concept of entrepreneurial universities has dedicated significant attention to understanding how academic ecosystems shape the propensity of their members to establish new ventures (de Moraes et al., 2020). Therefore, this report aims to understand the role of universities in fostering entrepreneurial activities in the national entrepreneurial ecosystem of Qatar, a country transitioning to a knowledge-based economy within the MENA region. Research publications concerning entrepreneurship within the MENA region are evidence of the growing interest in this field of study, with the potential to boost and drive future economic development and growth (Aljuwaiber, 2021).

In Qatar, the main strength of the knowledge-based economy transition is the determination of the Qatari government to diversify its economy. The main weaknesses are the shortage of qualified human resources, the fear of failure, and the low performance of the innovation system (Ben Hassen, 2021). In the entrepreneurial ecosystem literature, universities are agents of change that as many other studies have treated empirically as an independent variable that affects the behaviour of entrepreneurial intentions and firm creation (Audretsch and Link, 2017). In this context, university support in Qatar could be interesting to analyze since the country has established branch campuses of seven international universities and one homegrown university in a multi-million-dollar complex called Education City, founded by Qatar Foundation to foster the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

There are in total 32 universities for different fields in Qatar (Villegas-Mateos, 2021). Qatar University is the country's only public university and the biggest by the number of students. Evidence shows that in the region, universities offer an entrepreneurship course for business students only and it is mostly optional (Azim and Hariri, 2018). Consequently, this report aims to explore the impact of university education on the entrepreneurial intentions of its students.

The report is based on a dataset collected between April 1, 2021 and June 30, 2021 in Qatar, within the GUESSS timeframe and methodology for collecting data globally. The GUESSS standard questionnaire has been distributed to students at undergraduate and graduate levels from the different schools of Qatar University, and our university partners in Education City, HEC Paris in Qatar is the national coordinator of GUESSS.

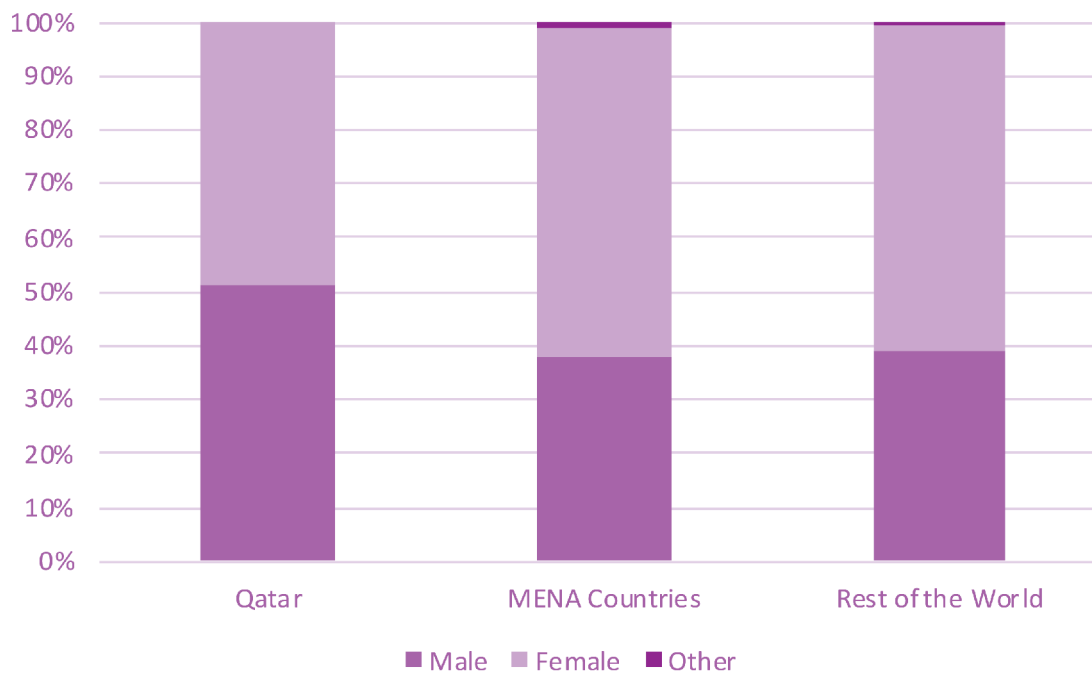
The survey was distributed by email, centralized by HEC Paris in Qatar, and it relied on colleagues' cooperation to distribute the questionnaire link directly to their students. By the end of the surveying period, we had received a total of 121 complete responses from students in Qatar. This sample relies on a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. We hope that the present report findings will advance and inspire research and practical work on student entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurship in general, as per the 2021 GUESSS Global Report (Sieger et al. 2021), but more specifically in Qatar to reach more students.

## 02. Demographic Information About the Sample

The respondents of the survey were students at six universities in Qatar, mostly from HEC Paris in Qatar and Qatar University. However, the invitation was open to all Qatar Foundation members. The other four universities participating were: Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, and Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar. A total of 121 students responded to the survey from these six universities.

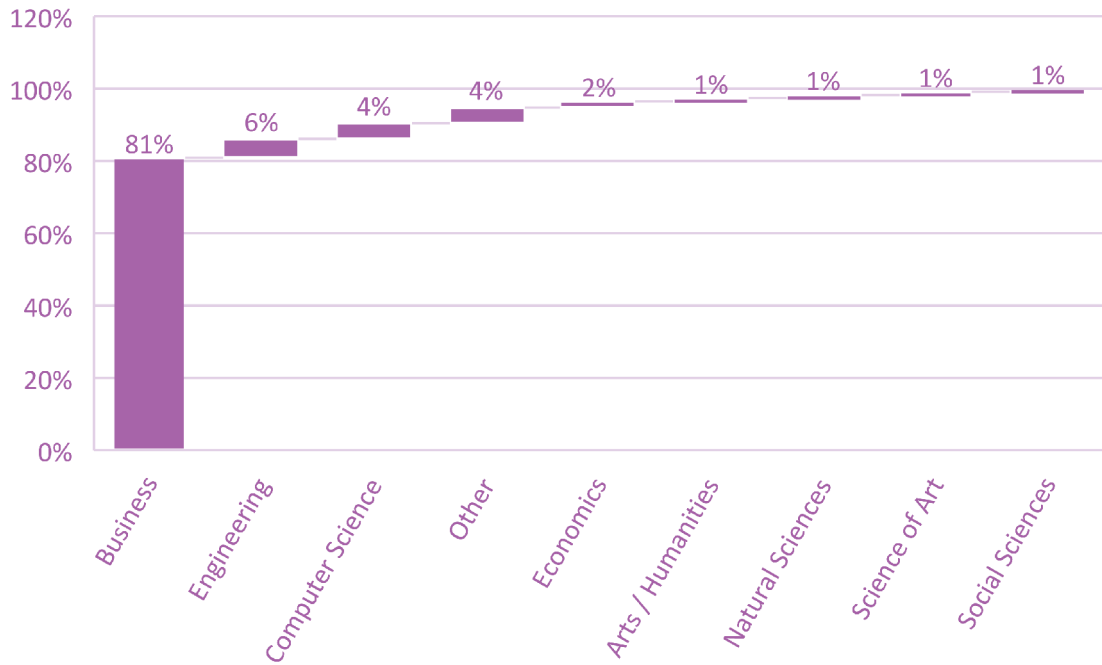
As described in Figure 1, students are from Qatar, the MENA region, and other parts of the world. The respondents from Qatar have equal gender distribution: 50% males and 50% females. However, in the MENA region category, the percentage of female students is more than double that of males. A similar percentage is also found in the category 'the rest of the world'. There are two students in the 'other' category. Even though gender balance is equally distributed in Qatar, there is a high gender imbalance in the other two categories.

**Figure 1. Sample Distribution Based on Gender**



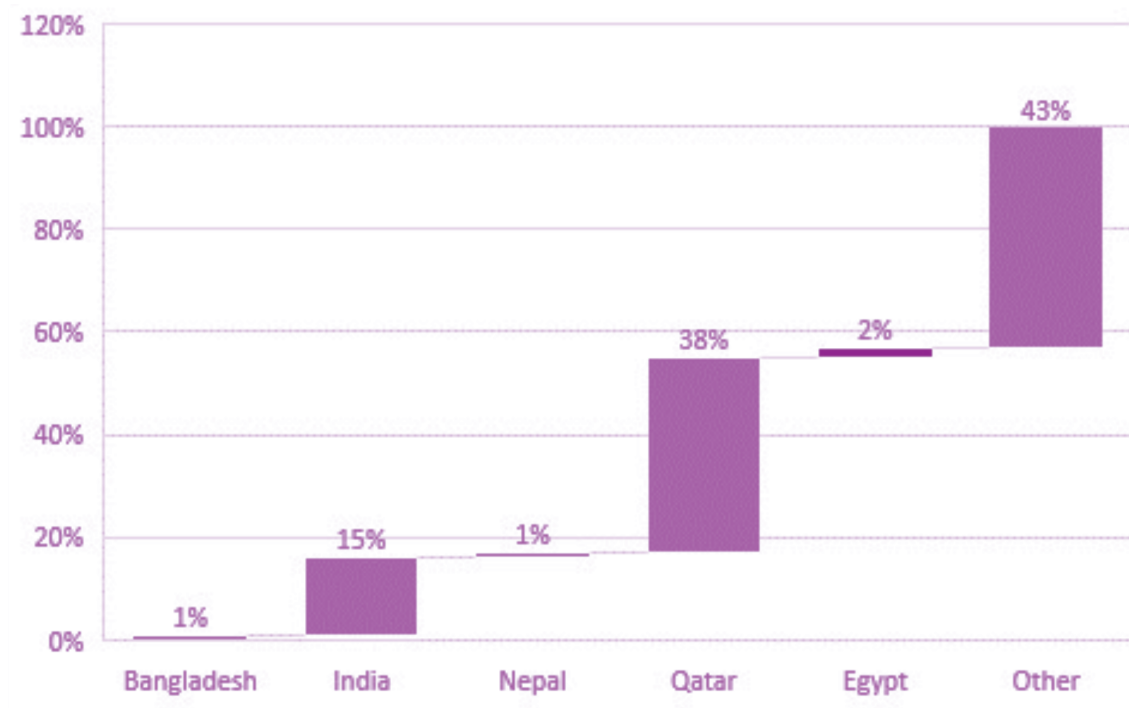
As shown in Figure 2, in terms of field of studies, 81% of respondents are from business fields. The main reason seems to be that a major portion of respondents are from HEC Paris in Qatar, which is a business school. Another reason may be that the Center for Entrepreneurship, which is a part of the College of Business and Economics of Qatar University, was the nodal point for the survey on that university's students. Thereafter, Engineering in general and Computer Science, in particular, are two prominent fields of studies. We have only one respondent from each of the following fields: Arts/Humanities, Natural Sciences, Science of Art and Design, and Social Sciences, and no respondents from Medicine/Health, Law and Mathematics.

**Figure 2. Share of Students by Field of Studies in Qatar**



As Figure 3 indicates, the highest number of respondents are Qatari nationals (38%) followed by Indians (15%). However, 43% of the responses are from unknown countries as they have selected «others» category. This is due to the high level of diversity in the country and its universities.

**Figure 3. Nationality of Respondents in Qatar Sample**

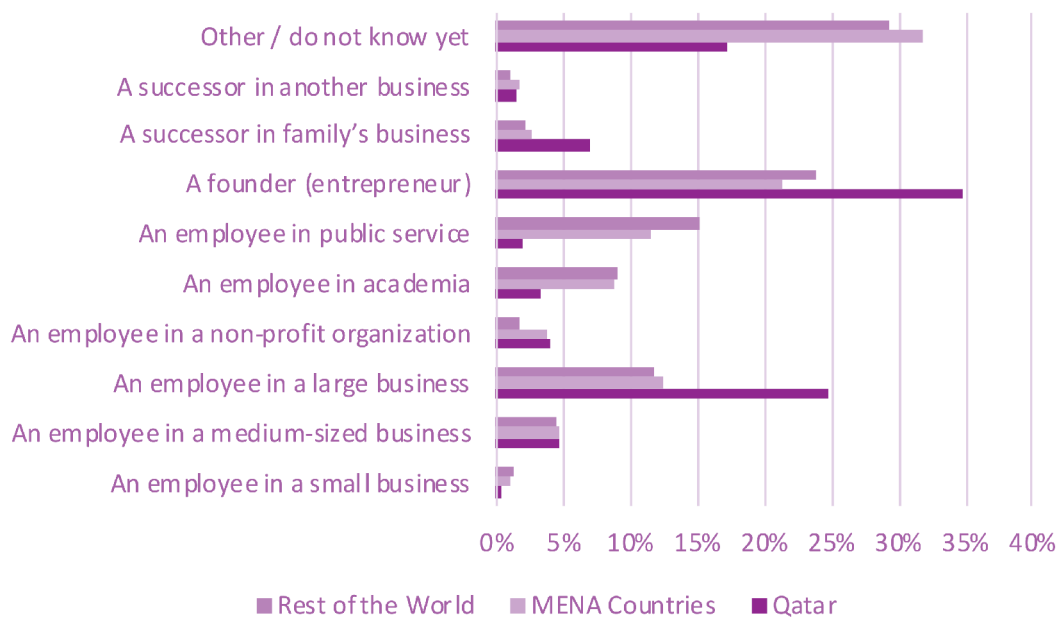




### 03. Students' Entrepreneurial Career Choice Intentions

Figure 4 shows the career intentions students wish to pursue after graduation. The respondents were asked to share their career choice soon after graduation in three categories, namely, 'Qatar', 'MENA Countries', and 'Rest of the World'. Two categories are prominent as a career choice. In all three categories, a higher number of respondents intend to pursue entrepreneurship after graduation. The entrepreneur option as a career intention of students in Qatar is much more than the other two categories. However, a large number of students in all three categories are not sure about their careers. The intention to work in large organizations is also noticeable among the students in Qatar but students in the rest of the world and within the MENA region seem to have low interest in working in large organizations. However, respondents in general do not intend to pursue employment in SMEs, academia, a successor of a family business, or in NGOs. There is a strong apathy to working in the public sector. There is a similar trend of career choice in all three categories overall.

**Figure 4. Career Intentions Right After Graduation**



The students were asked to share their career intentions after five years from graduation (see Figure 5). Overall, it seems that the pattern of career choice remains the same as the choice students selected soon after graduation. However, a noticeable change is that students know better about the career choice as they selected the 'other/do not know yet' category less than at the stage soon after graduation.

**Figure 5. Career Intentions Five Years After Graduation**

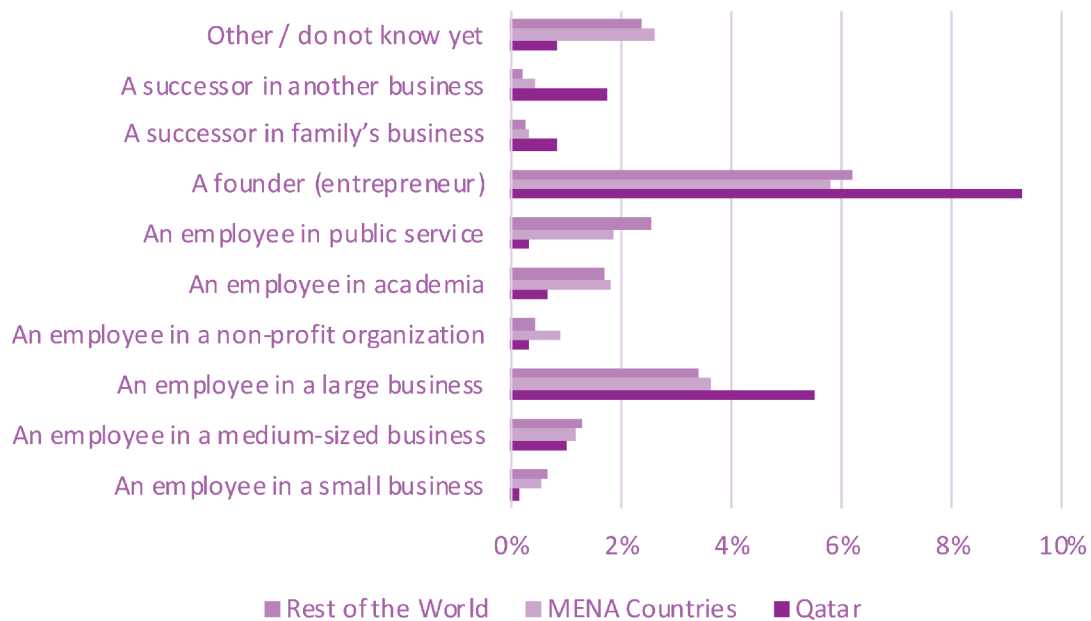


Figure 6 shows the career intention changes of students in Qatar after five years. Becoming a founder of a business is their main intention. Similarly, working in large companies remains consistently pronounced. Other categories remain more or less similar from the time of graduation to five years after graduation. But the career intention to work in small businesses is minuscule. It seems that the career intention to found a business by students in Qatar increases significantly after five years. A similar pattern is seen in career intention to work for a large business. The intention to become a successor of a family business, work in NGOs, and work in academia increased significantly after five years from graduation.

**Figure 6. Expected Changes in Career Choice Intentions of Qatar Students after Five Years**

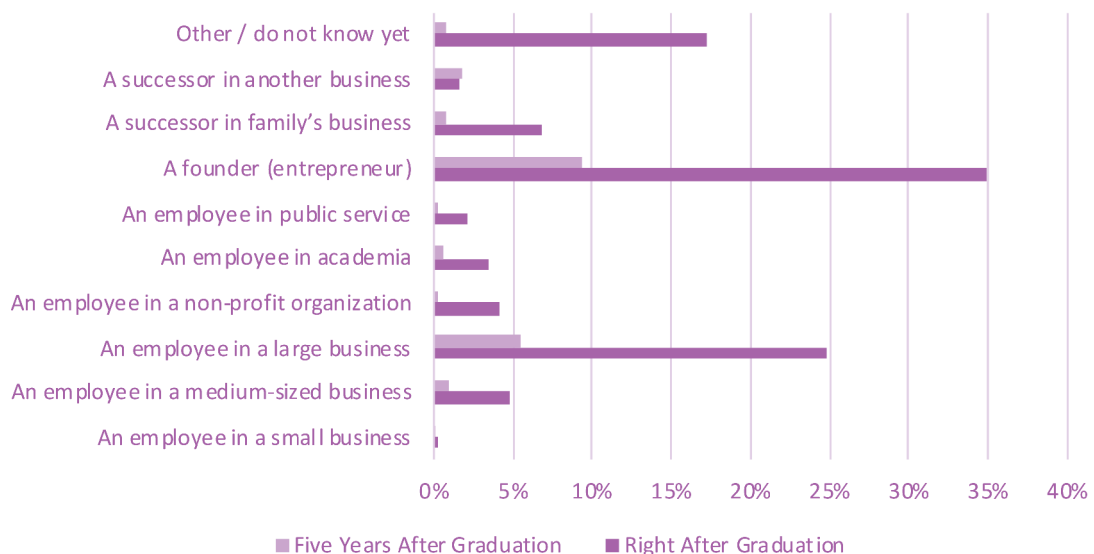


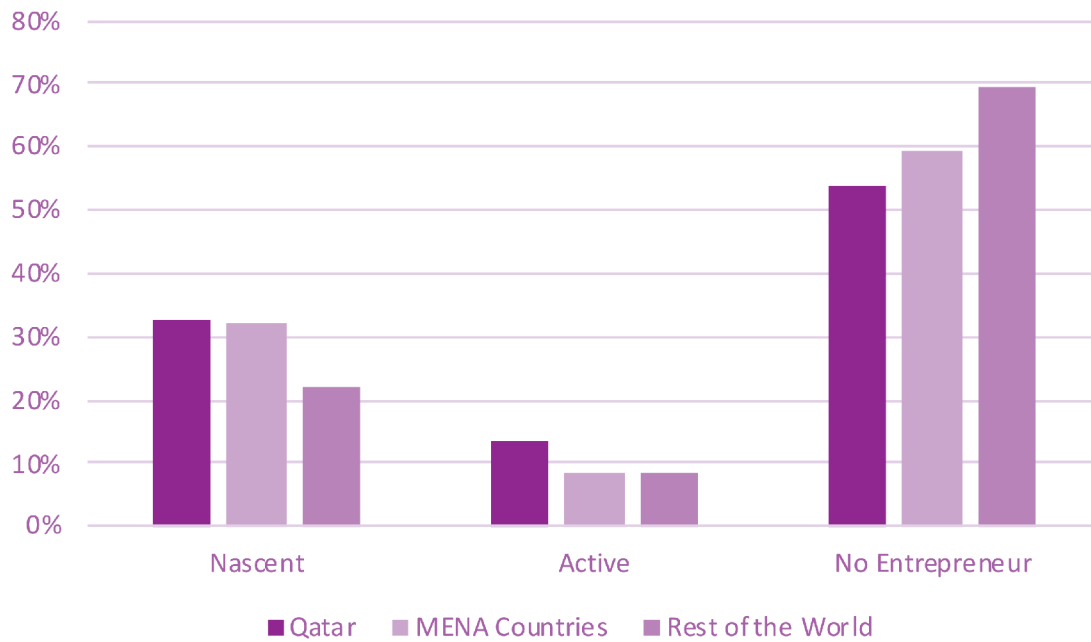
Table 1 lists the career intentions of students in Qatar based on gender just after graduation and after five years. The intention to work in a large business is a promising choice right after graduation and this intention diminishes as the career intention of male students, from 49% right after graduation to 36% five years after graduation. A similar trend is found for female students as their career intention was 29% right after graduation but 15% five years after graduation. In contrast, the career intention to found a business has increased for both male and female students. Five years after graduation, students' interest to work in a large business falls significantly but their interest in becoming a successor in another business increases.

**Table 1. Career Intentions of Qatar Students by Gender**

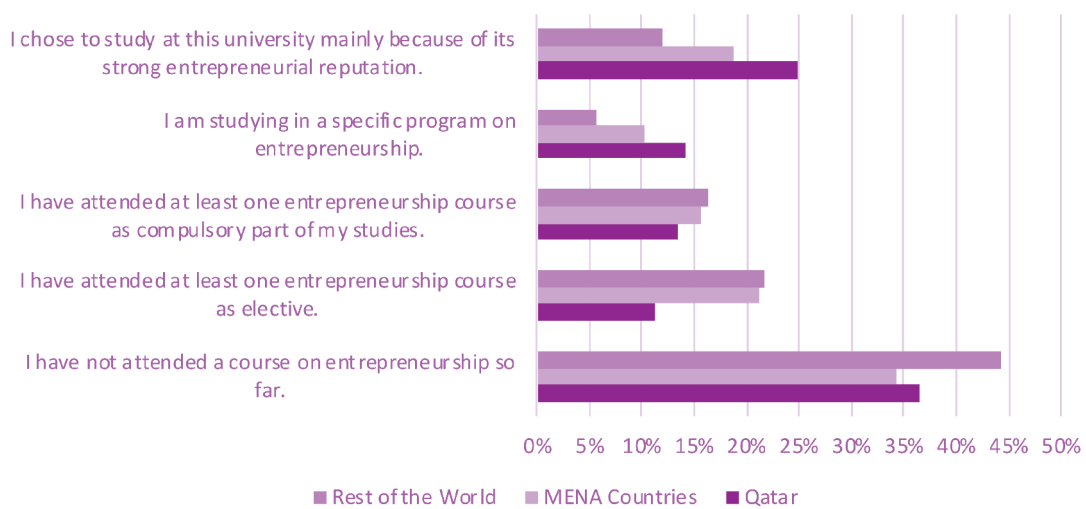
	RIGHT AFTER GRADUATION		FIVE YEARS AFTER GRADUATION	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
An employee in a small business	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%
An employee in a medium-sized business	9.8%	13.8%	6.6%	3.4%
<b>An employee in a large business</b>	<b>49.2%</b>	<b>29.3%</b>	<b>36.1%</b>	<b>15.5%</b>
An employee in a non-profit organization	0.0%	10.3%	0.0%	3.4%
An employee in academia	1.6%	5.2%	4.9%	1.7%
An employee in public service	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%
<b>A founder (entrepreneur)</b>	<b>19.7%</b>	<b>29.3%</b>	<b>36.1%</b>	<b>53.4%</b>
A successor in family's business	8.2%	0.0%	4.9%	3.4%
A successor in another business	0.0%	1.7%	8.2%	8.6%
Other / do not know yet	8.2%	8.6%	1.6%	6.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure 7 shows the share of the total sample in three categories: Nascent, Active, Not Entrepreneurs. Most of the students are not entrepreneurs among Qatar, MENA countries, and rest of the world categories. Several students are active entrepreneurs, but there are a promising number of nascent entrepreneurs, and Qatar has the major share of them in its sample.

**Figure 7. Nascent and Active Entrepreneurs**



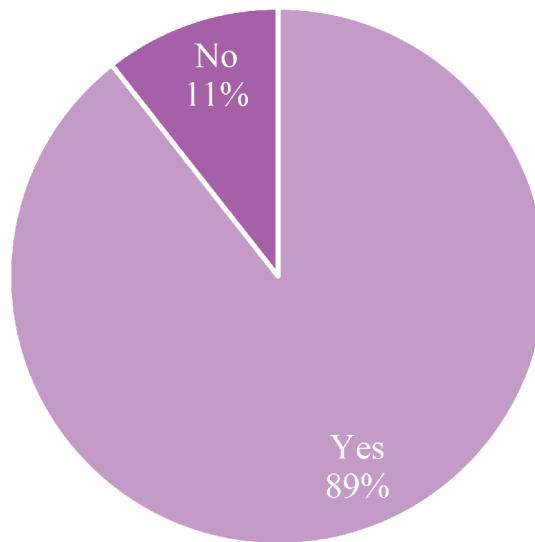
**Figure 8. Proportion of Students Taking Entrepreneurship Courses**



## 04. Drivers of Entrepreneurial Career Choice Intentions

Figure 8 shows how many of the students have taken an entrepreneurship course at their universities. Around 40% of students did not attend a course on entrepreneurship and this number is in the rest of the world category compared to Qatar and MENA countries. Among those who attended an entrepreneurship course, students in Qatar are least among three geographical categories. Some students chose to study at a university due to its strong entrepreneurial reputation or they study in a specific program on entrepreneurship. A positive sign is that most students in Qatar (89%) are aware of incubators and accelerators at their university (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9. Knowledge of an Incubator and/or Accelerator at the University in Qatar**



In Qatar, most of the students expect to start their business with their personal savings (48%). The second preferred option for funding is seed private capital. However, the respondents consider family money (7%) and government grants (9%). As a whole, it seems that students are not interested in external funding sources (see Figure 10).

**Figure 10. Proportion of Financial Resources Expectations to Start a Company**

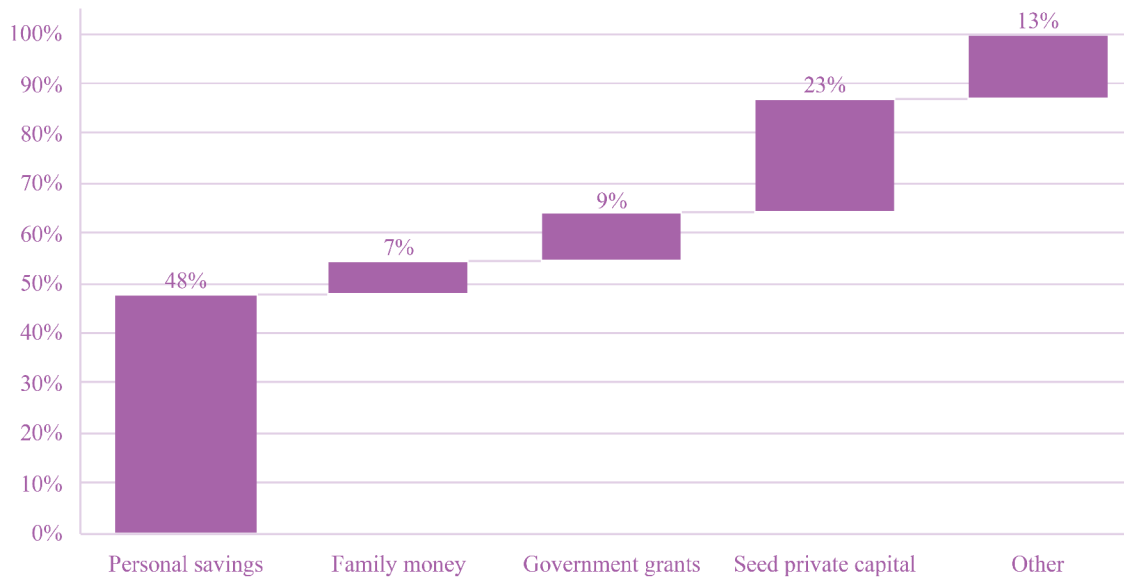


Figure 11 shows the intention of students to become entrepreneurs. In general, students in Qatar are more likely to become an entrepreneur than in the rest of the world; their intention to start a business is strong. This finding is promising since it highlights the opportunities to create a pipeline of future entrepreneurs that can be supported and can contribute to the economic development of Qatar if they decide to start a business in this country.

**Figure 11. Students’ Intentions Towards Being an Entrepreneur**

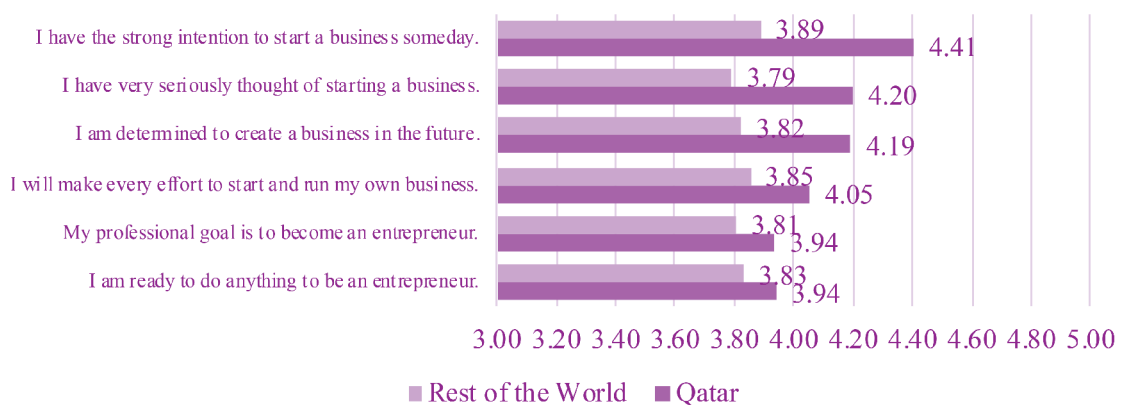


Figure 12 shows students’ personal attitudes towards being an entrepreneur. The attitude of students in Qatar in general is above the rest of the world in all seven items. It is relevant to highlight that the highest perception is that they will become an entrepreneur if they have the opportunity and resources.

**Figure 12. Students' Attitudes Towards Being An Entrepreneur**

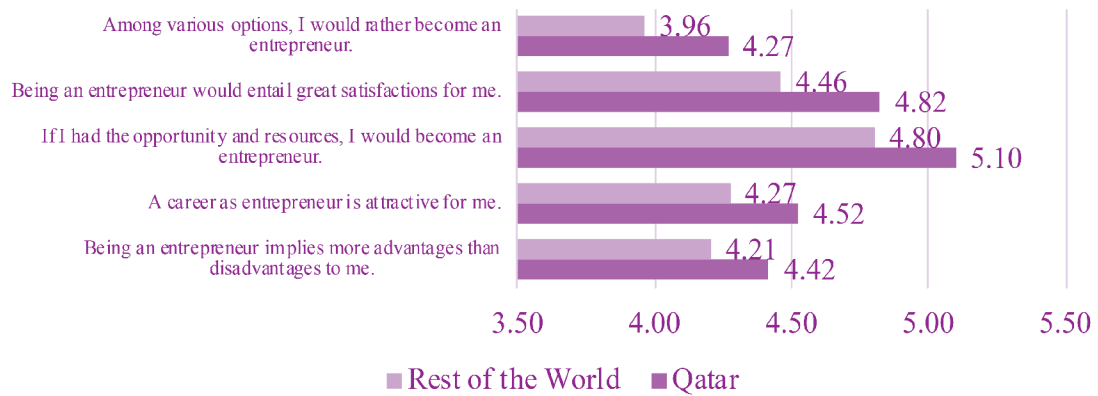


Figure 13 shows the entrepreneurial self-efficacy of the students in Qatar and the rest of the world. Among seven options to choose, students seem to have an equal magnitude of self-efficacy in all seven categories. Qatari students have higher scores in all seven.

**Figure 13. Students' Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy**

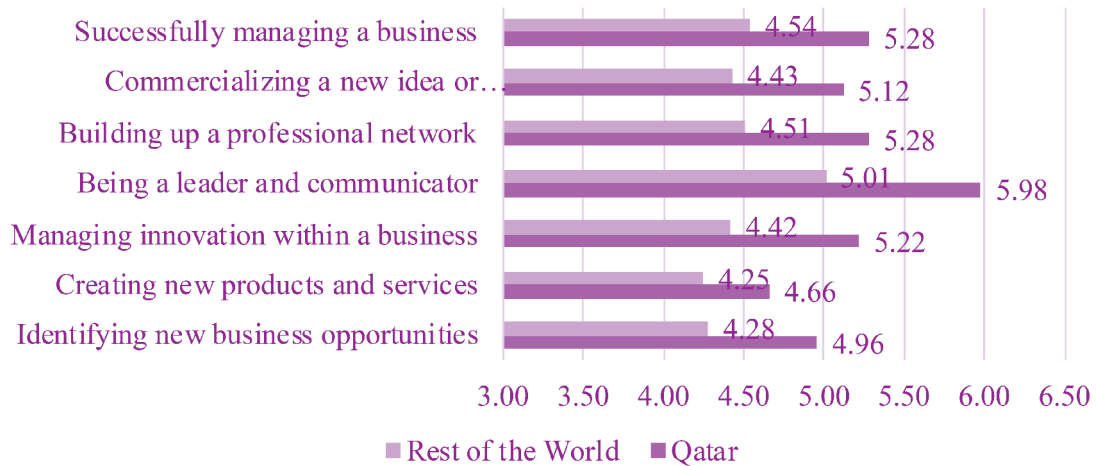
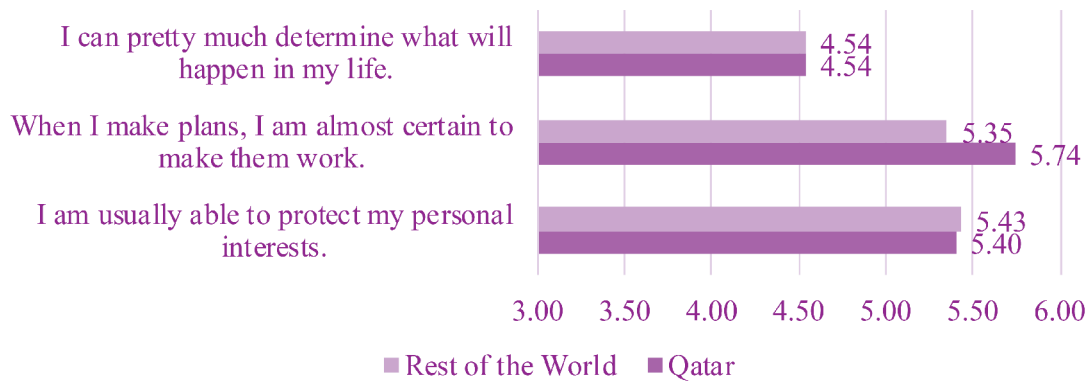


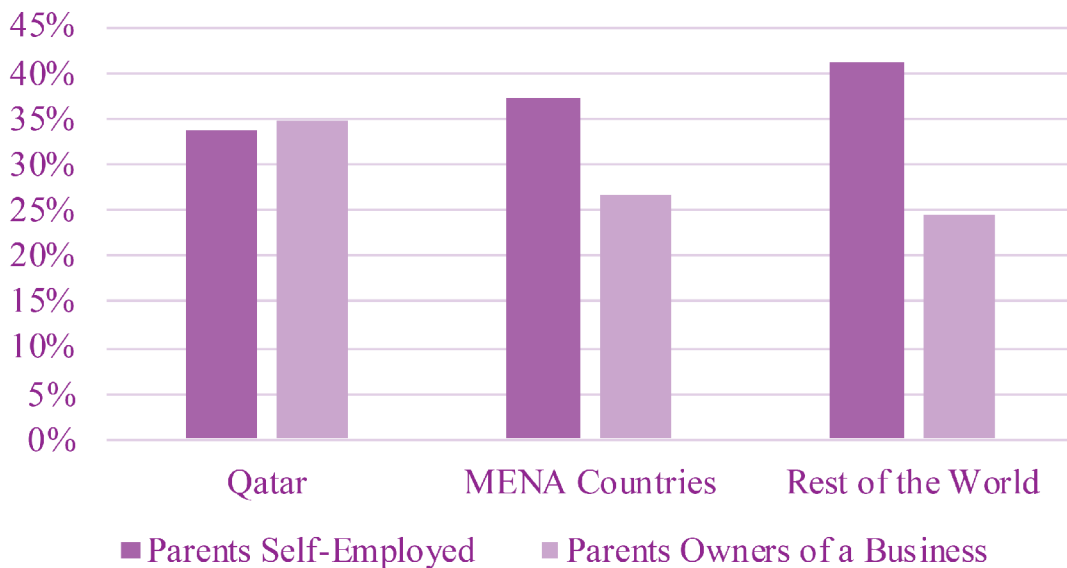
Figure 14 shows the locus of control of students in three categories. Both Qatari and the rest of the world students have a similar score for the locus of control. As a whole, it seems that students who score high in all three categories and make sure to do the determined work have a higher score than the other two categories.

**Figure 14. Students’ Locus of Control**



It is known that family background plays a crucial role in becoming entrepreneur. Figure 15 shows how family background influence entrepreneurial intentions in three categories, namely, Qatar, MENA countries, and the rest of the world. The GUESSS distinguishes owners of a business from self-employed parents, being the first cases where they have partners and own a majority of shares of the business, while self-employed are single owners or freelancers, normally of smaller businesses. Among the students in Qatar, the split of their family backgrounds is almost the same, whether their parents are self-employed or owners of a business. However, in MENA countries and the rest of the world categories, students whose parents are self-employed have a higher degree of drive for entrepreneurial intentions.

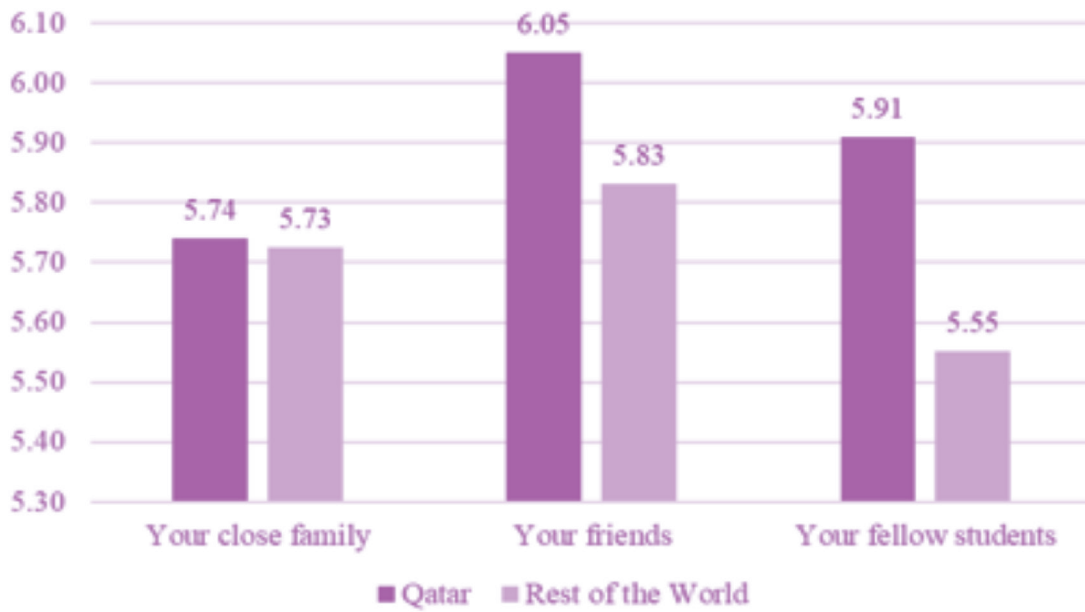
**Figure 15. Entrepreneurial Family Background as a Driver of Entrepreneurial Intentions**



Environment plays a pivotal role for people to become an entrepreneur. Figure 16 shows the expected environmental reaction to being an entrepreneur in Qatar and the rest of the world. In the category of close family, Qatar and the rest of the world students have a similar score. However, in the category of friends, Qatar’s students have a higher expectation than students in the rest of the world category. Similarly, in the fellow students category, a similar pattern is obvious. Students as a whole have at least an expected environmental reaction compared to friends and fellow students.



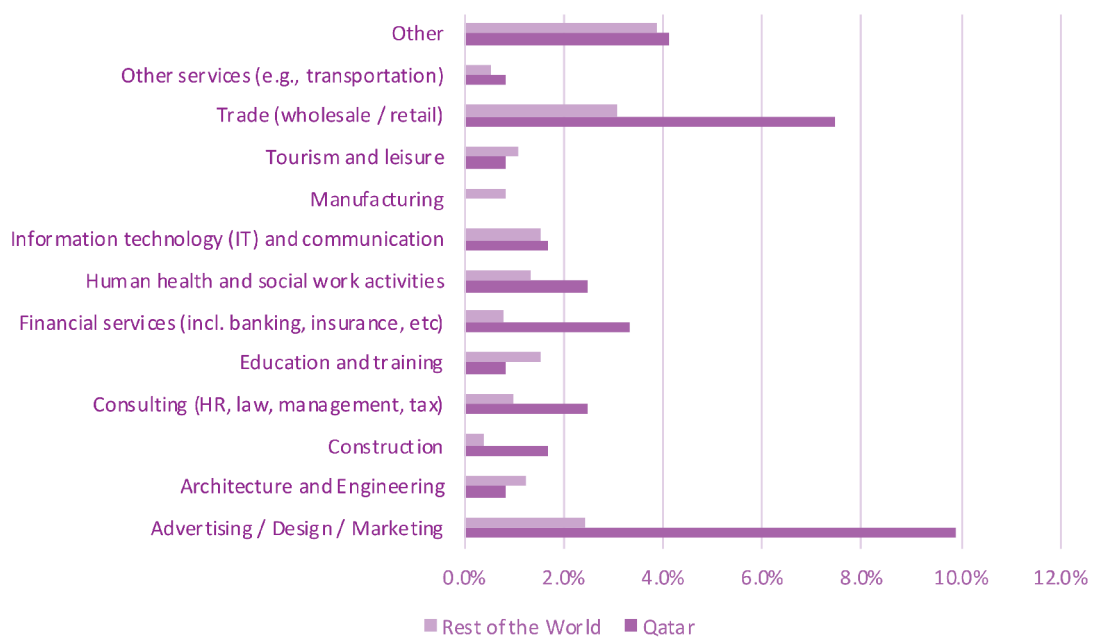
Figure 16. Expected Environmental Reaction to Being an Entrepreneur



## 05. Nascent Entrepreneurs

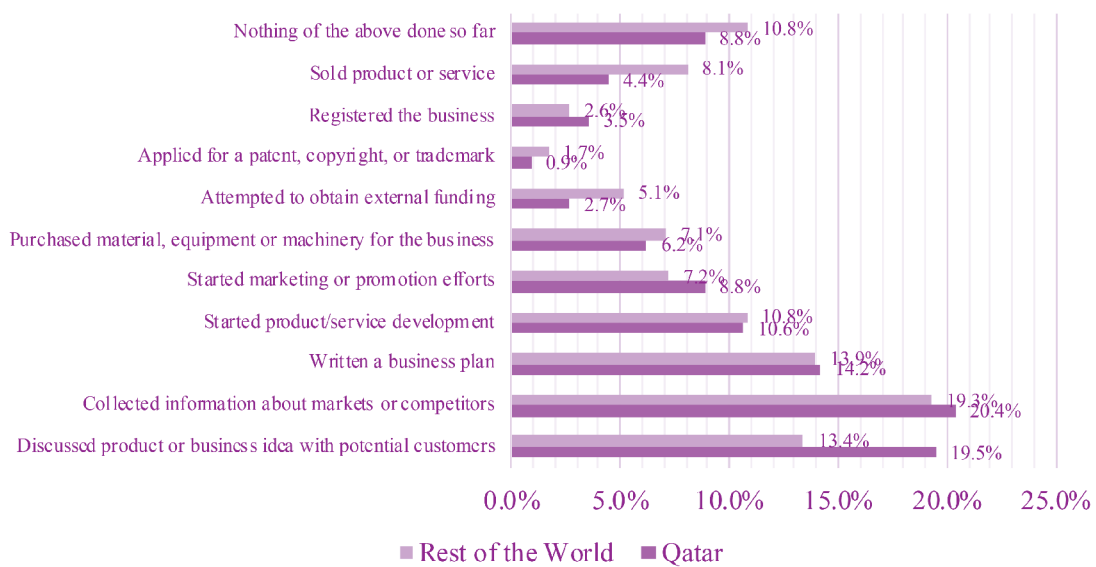
The distribution of nascent businesses by industry is shown in Figure 17. Among the students in Qatar, advertising, design, and marketing industries are highly pronounced followed by the trading category, financial services, consultancy, and healthcare. Manufacturing is the sector students in Qatar have not shown interest in at all. Tourism, Education, Architecture, and Engineering are less preferred by students in Qatar, compared to students from the rest of the world.

Figure 17. Distribution of Nascent Businesses by Industry



As shown in Figure 18, from the activities needed to be done to found a new business, students in Qatar are more advanced in discussing their product or business idea with potential customers, collecting information about the market, writing a business plan, starting marketing efforts, and registering the business than students from the rest of the world. On the contrary, students in Qatar have done less than students from the rest of the world on selling the product or service, applying for a patent or any intellectual property, attempting to obtain external funding, purchasing machinery or equipment, and starting a product or service development. In addition, 8.8% of the students in Qatar have not done any of the previously mentioned activities, which is lower than the 10.8% of students from the rest of the world.

**Figure 18. Activities Undertaken to Found a New Business**



Among the nascent entrepreneurs, the students mostly have one or two co-founders. More than three co-founders are rare for students in general. A noticeable difference is that sole entrepreneurs are more among students from the rest of the world than students in Qatar, but entrepreneurs with one co-founder are higher among students in Qatar (see Figure 19). In terms of ownership, as shown in Figure 20, most of the students own 51% or more of their venture followed by owning exactly 50% of shares in the venture. The percentage of students having less than 50% ownership of their venture is minuscule.

Figure 19. Nascent Entrepreneurs and Co-Founders

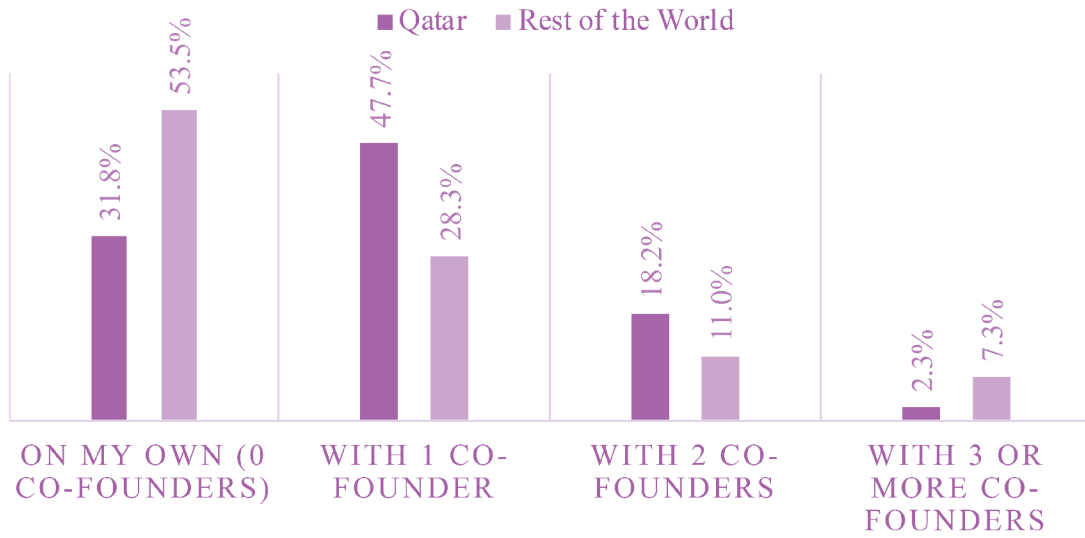
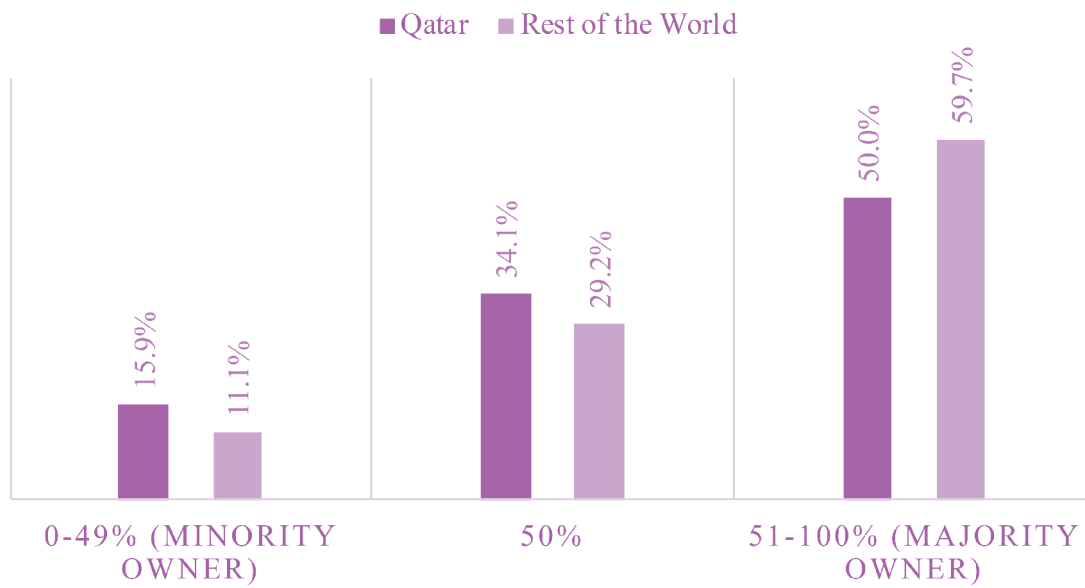


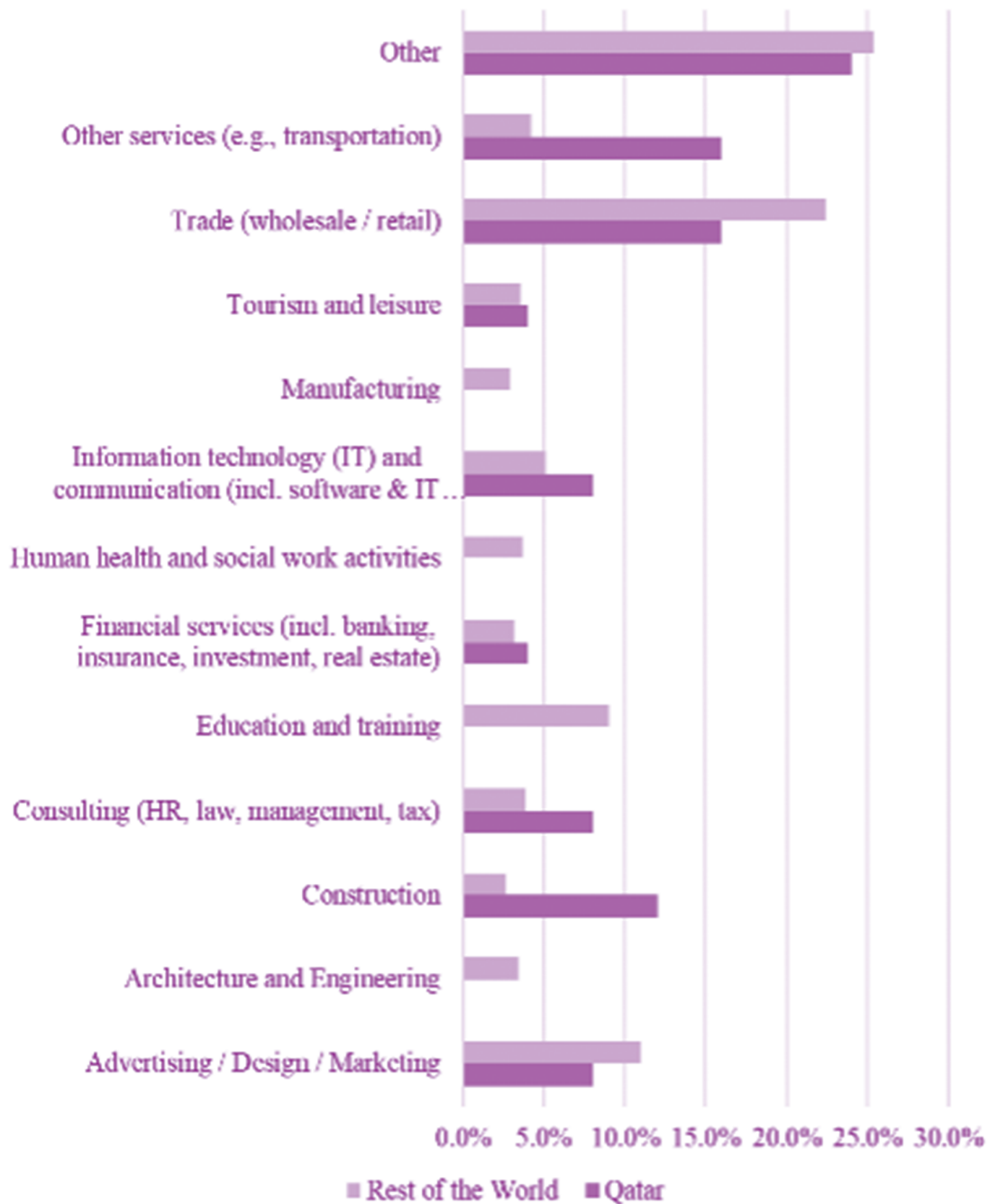
Figure 20. Nascent Entrepreneurs' Ownership-Share of the New Business



## 06. Active Entrepreneurs

Figure 21 shows the distribution of active businesses based on industry. It points out very contrasting results compared to the nascent business category (see Figure 17). For example, in this stage, Advertising, design and marketing are not highly concentrated industries. On the other hand, the trading industry scored high. Like the nascent business category, industries such as Tourism, Manufacturing, IT, Healthcare, Finance, and Education remained low among the active businesses.

Figure 21. Distribution of Active Businesses by Industry



The main motivation of students to be entrepreneurs is to advance their career in the business world, and Qatar’s students are slightly above in their perceptions (see Figure 22). The second main motivation for students in Qatar is to make money and become rich, more than the students from the rest of the world. Besides those two, the motivations for students in Qatar that include proactively changing how the world operates, solving social problems, playing a proactive role in shaping the activities of a group of people, and solving specific problems for a group of people that they strongly identify with, are lower than the rest of the world.

**Figure 22. Motivations of Active Entrepreneurs**

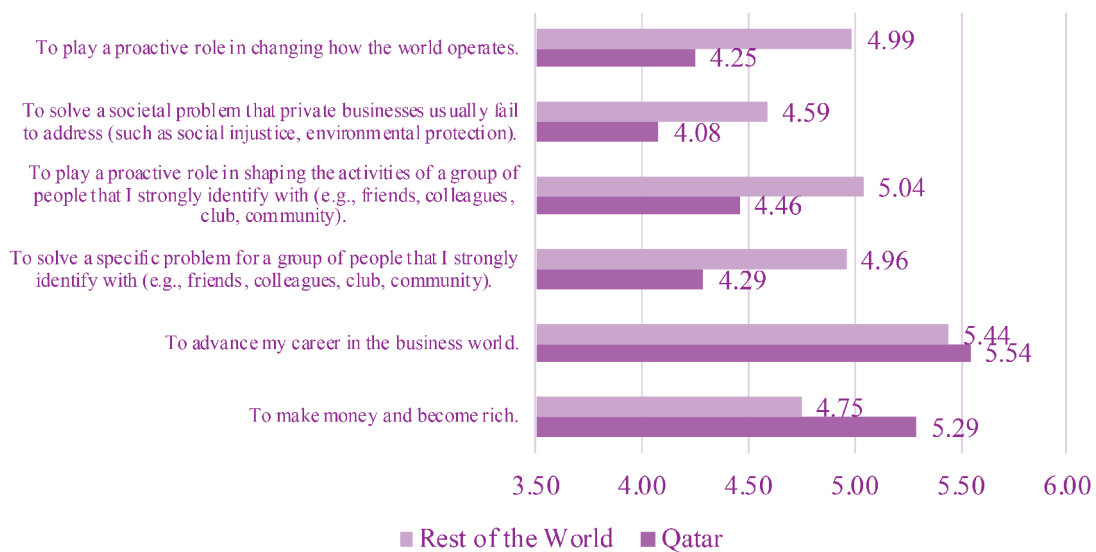


Figure 23 shows the performances of the businesses of the active entrepreneurs based on indicators and two categories: students in Qatar and students from the rest of the world. Respondents feel that, compared to competitors, they excel more especially in innovativeness and sales growth but they scored low in job creation and market growth. It is expected that sales growth and market share growth should be similarly scored but they are different as we see that sales growth is significantly higher than market share growth. Performance of the job creation parameter has the lowest score among the five. If sales growth and profit growth is high, naturally the number of jobs created is expected to be high, too. However, the result shows a different pattern. In all five indicators, students in Qatar have higher scores than students from the rest of the world and the gap is very wide in the case of job creation.

**Figure 23. Perceived Performance of Businesses Compared to Competitors**

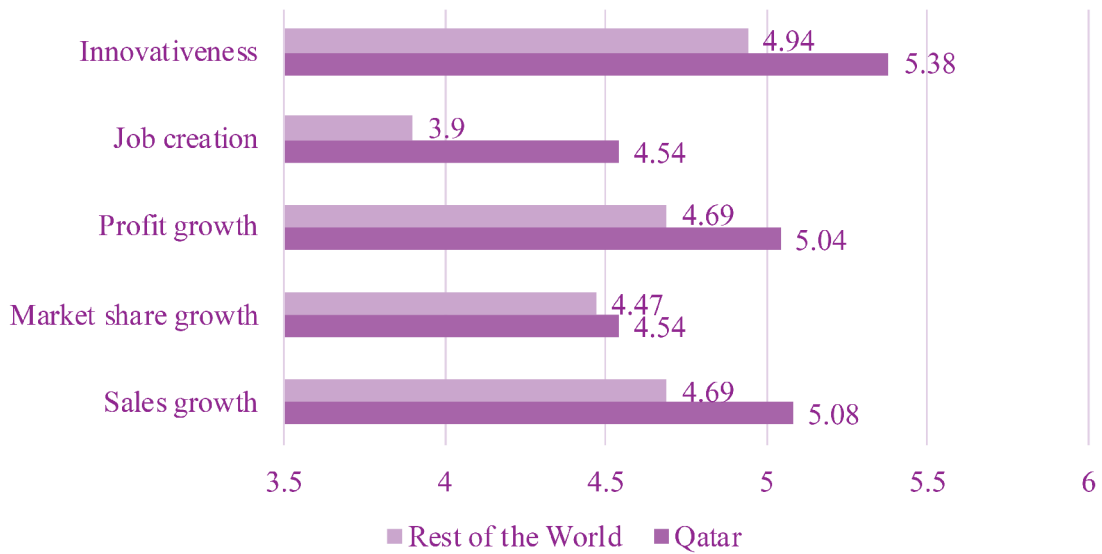


Figure 24 represents the answers of students to be a sole founder of a business or co-founder in Qatar compared with the rest of the world. Among the active entrepreneurs, there is a high number of sole entrepreneurs (around 40 %) followed by one co-founder. Even though there is no big difference in score for sole entrepreneur and two co-founder categories between students in Qatar and from the rest of the world, it differs significantly for ventures with at least four co-founders and one co-founder.

**Figure 24. Active Entrepreneurs and Co-Owners**

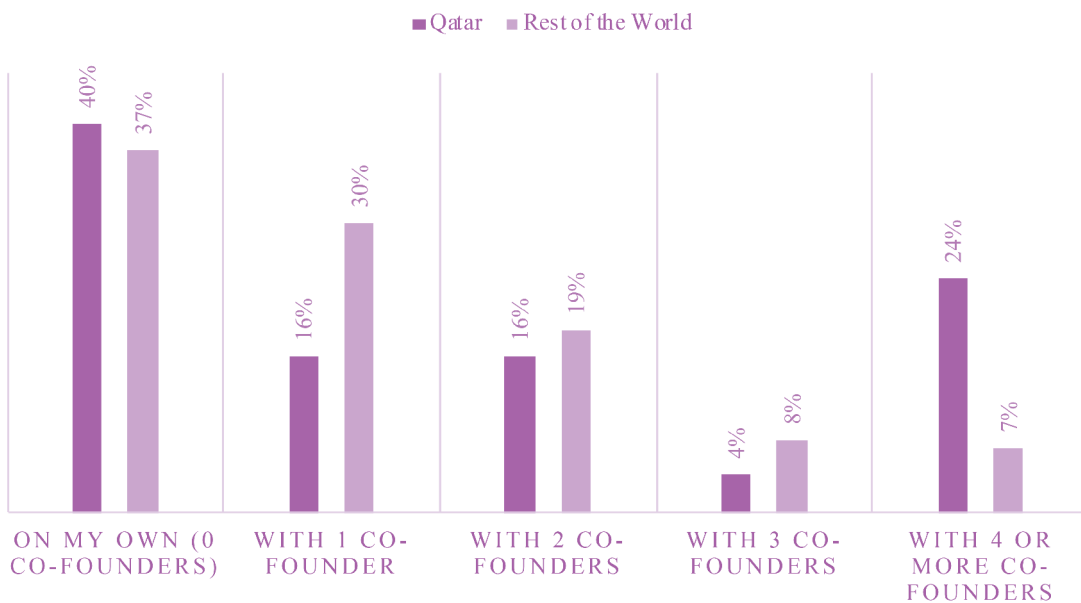
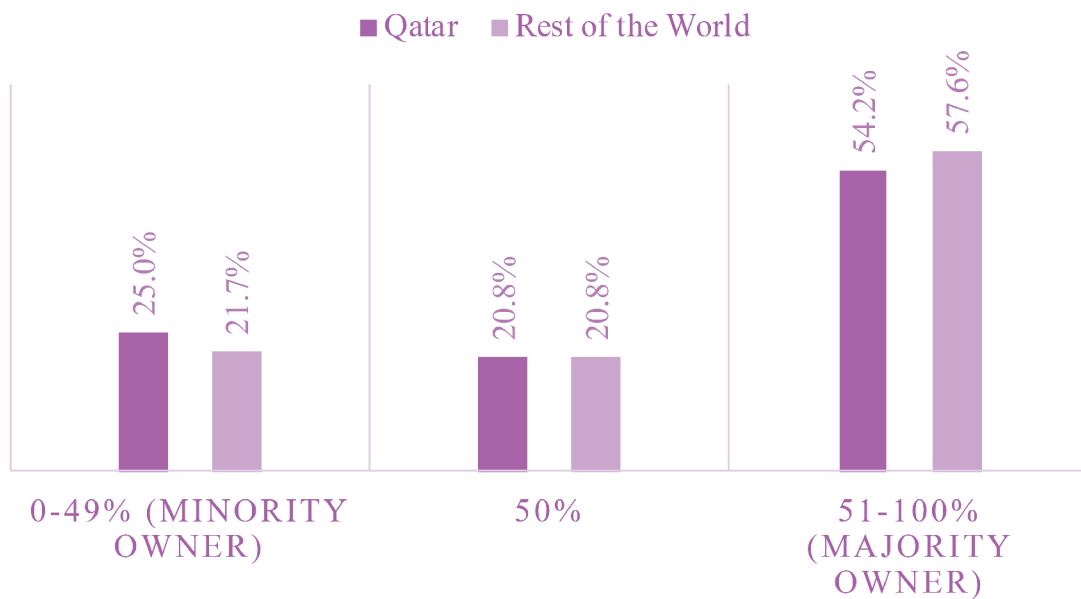


Figure 25 represents the answers of students who are active entrepreneurs considering their equity share in Qatar compared with other countries. The results indicate that (1) for entrepreneurs with minority ownership, 25% in Qatar and 21.7% of the rest of the world are keen to be active entrepreneurs, (2) for entrepreneurs with equal equity right, 20.8% in both Qatar and other countries are going to be active entrepreneurs. This reflects that the bulk of entrepreneurs in both groups are going to rely on the other business partners, and (3) when the equity rates increase, the entrepreneurs are keen to be active in both groups; however, the percentage in Qatar is lower compared with other countries.

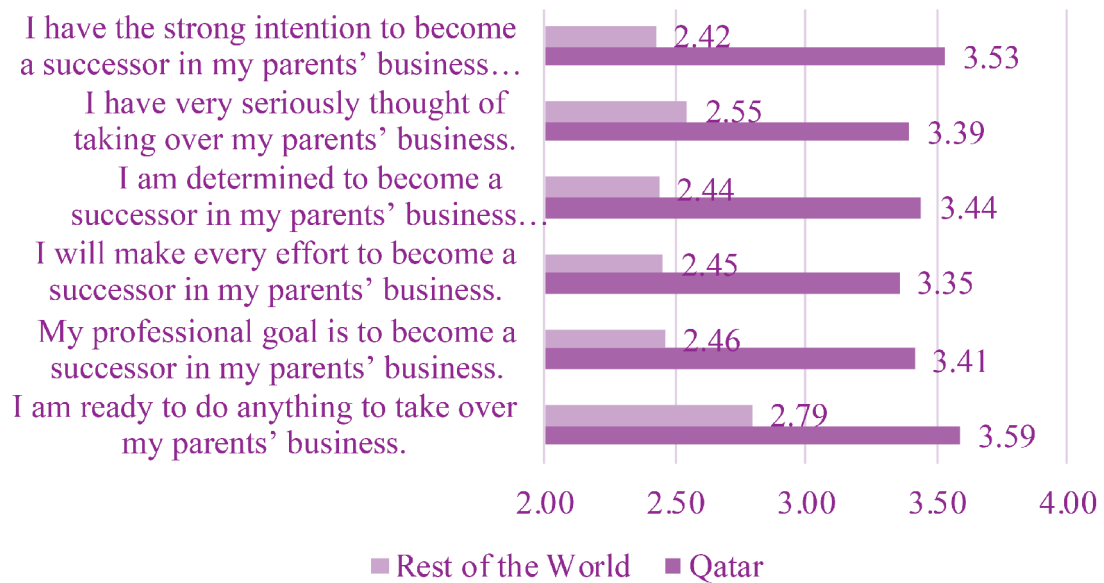
**Figure 25. Active Entrepreneurs’ Ownership-Share of the Business**



## 07. Potential Successor in Family Firms

The succession of a family business may be an option for some students to be entrepreneurs. Considering the bulk of businesses in Qatar are family enterprises, the results in Figure 26 indicate that students in Qatar are willing to be a successor of family businesses and in various aspects. Their answers ranged between 3.4 to 3.6, while in other countries the results ranged between 2.4 and 2.8. The highest perception of students in Qatar towards being a successor of the family business is feeling they are ready to do anything to take their parents’ business. As shown in Figure 27, in Qatar there are more family businesses in Tourism, Manufacturing, Financial services, Education, Architecture and Engineering, and Marketing, than in the rest of the world. On the contrary, there are fewer family businesses in other services like transportation, trade, human health, and construction. No family businesses were reported in Information technologies or Consulting in Qatar.

**Figure 26. Students' Attitude and Intention Towards Succession**



**Figure 27. Distribution of Family Businesses by Industry**

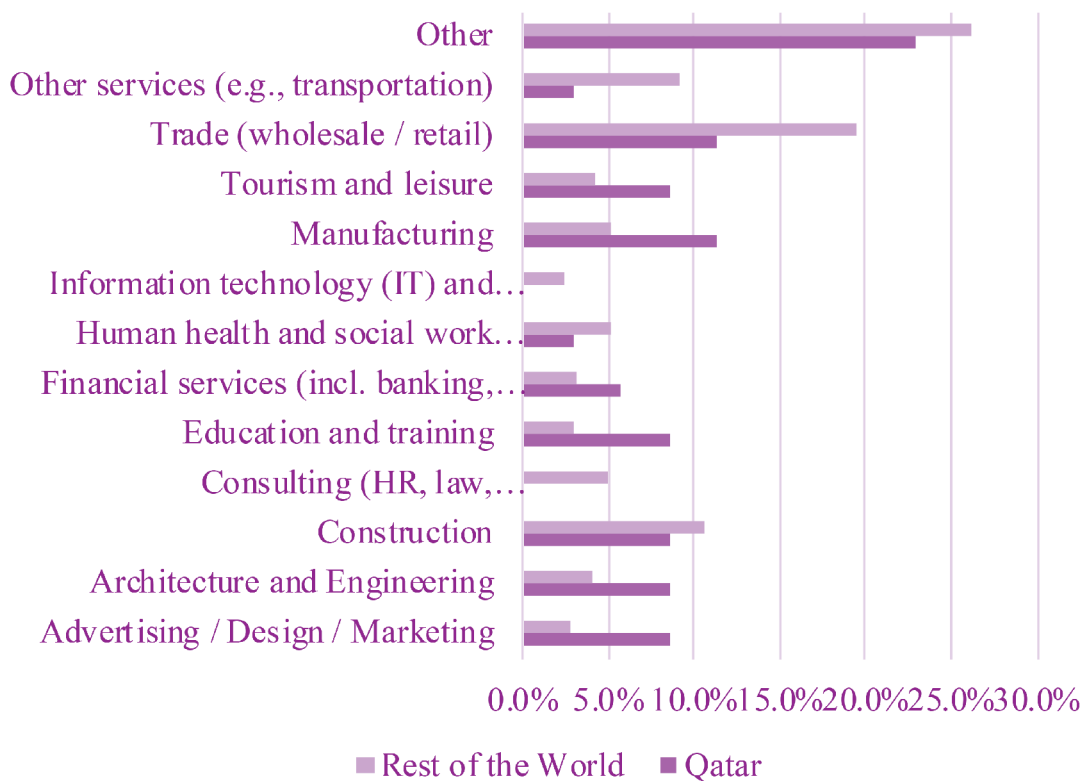


Figure 28 illustrates the students' answers about the performance of their family businesses in several areas (innovativeness, job creation, profit growth, etc.) compared with other countries. The students' answers reflect a high level of performance in all dimensions in Qatar compared with other countries.



Figure 28. Performance of Parents' Business Compared to Competitors

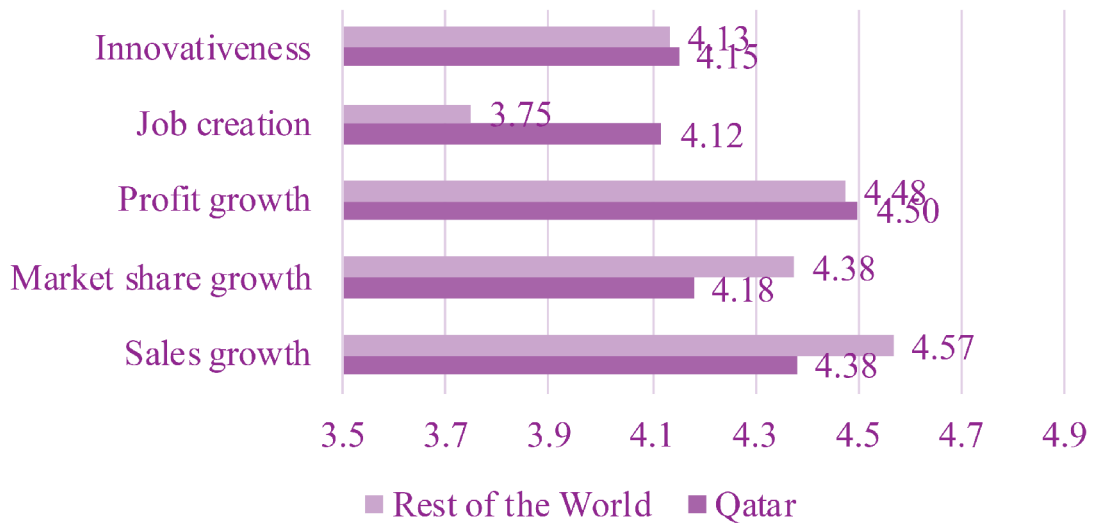


Figure 29 shows the students' family size in Qatar compared with other countries in the world. The results indicate that the number of families with one child is low in Qatar compared with other countries. The number of families with two children is high in Qatar and low in other countries, and families with more than two children are low in Qatar and high in the other countries.

Figure 29. Students' Family Size

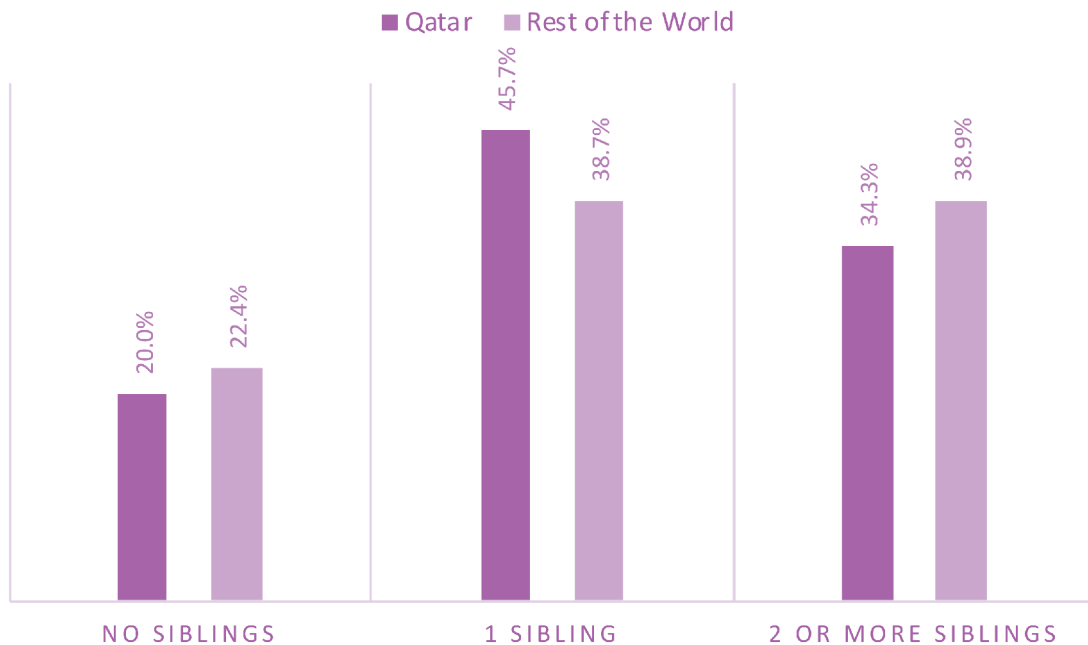
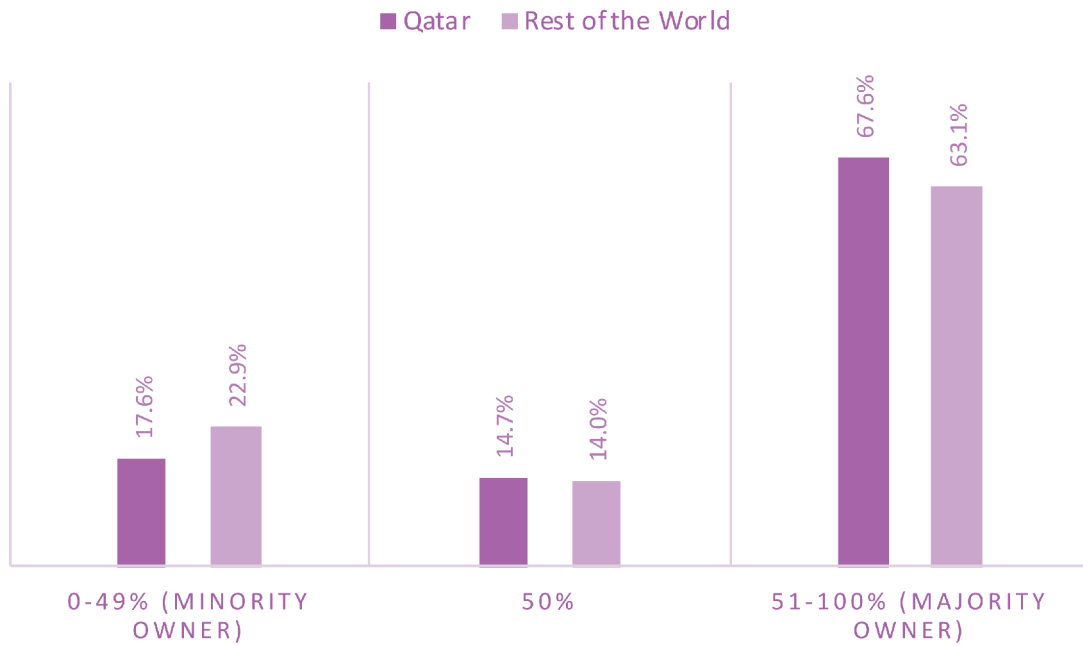


Figure 30 shows the ownership structure of family businesses in Qatar compared with other countries. It indicates that in around 68% of family businesses, the family has the majority ownership share in Qatar, while it is 63% in other countries. This high percentage reflects in a lower percentage of family businesses with the family having the minority ownership share, as they have equal rights.

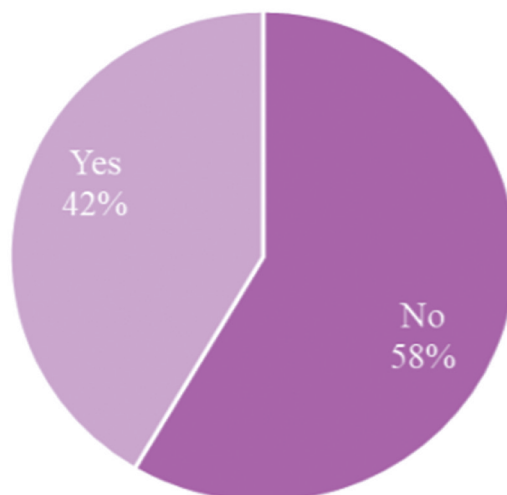
**Figure 30. Ownership-Share of the Business in the Hands of the Family**



## 08. Implications and Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic brought us changes as a society in the ways we live, work, and learn. Perhaps one of the greatest examples of the adaptation during this pandemic is happening, as you read this report, in educational institutions. Of course, GUESSS is focused only on undergraduate and graduate students, but further analysis around the topic and at different levels could be an interesting point to understand how to incorporate new teaching and learning techniques in our different institutions. In this edition of GUESSS 2021 (the previous edition was in 2018), we asked the students if their entrepreneurial intentions have changed since the pandemic started, and surprisingly 42% of them declared that yes (see Figure 31), they have grown more interested in becoming founders since then.

**Figure 31. COVID-19's Impact on Entrepreneurial Intentions**



The implications of this study are practical. It is the first time Qatar participates in GUESSS and it was an inter institutional effort mainly led by HEC Paris in Qatar (a member of Qatar Foundation) and Qatar University. Students from across schools participated from both undergraduate and graduate levels. The responses of the students in Qatar are compared with those of more than 267,000 students in 58 countries, providing an international benchmark that we offer to deans, faculty, program managers, and staff interested in the topic of entrepreneurial education.

Despite a high level of nascent and active entrepreneurs discovered in Qatar when compared with other countries, most students are yet to participate more in entrepreneurship-related curricula. At the same time, universities have to work on increasing their offer and availability of extracurricular activities. Only 13% of students in Qatar are studying a specific program on entrepreneurship, which is 16% lower than the rest of the world. From the sample, 87% of the students in Qatar do not have a compulsory entrepreneurship course as part of their degree, which is 3% higher than the GUESSS average.

From the GUESSS Qatar Report 2021, we can point out that students can become entrepreneurs in different forms, whether as sole founders with the current ease of regulations in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, as traditional partners of a business, or as successors in their parents' business. Universities should consider this, even if the goal is to align it with the Qatar National Vision 2030, as high-tech startups are not always the only possible outcome from potential entrepreneurs. However, universities are playing an important role in the country's entrepreneurial ecosystem, and Qatar is not an exception, so normally they offer various support mechanisms, mentorship, infrastructure, and many ways to find resources and try ideas (e.g., competitions, hackathons, grants, prizes, etc.).

As catalysts of disseminating an entrepreneurial culture, the presented results of this edition of GUESSS Qatar suggest we need to improve and expand entrepreneurship education offerings and unite forces between institutions to build a stronger business atmosphere. An important consideration while building our university-based ecosystem in Qatar would be awareness of the gender gap in entrepreneurship and cultural role models to systematically promote more entrepreneurs under equal conditions for male and female students. Also, this report is the result of collaboration between the unique and biggest public university, Qatar University, and the leading graduate business school, HEC Paris in Qatar. This collaboration shows us that we need to promote entrepreneurial ecosystems with both public and private players. We aim for these results to also foster discussion and gradual changes in entrepreneurship education among academic communities, industry, and government. We left the invitation open to explore the data upon request and to engage more actively in our future data collection for GUESSS Qatar 2023.

## References

---

- Aljuwaiber, A. (2021), "Enabling knowledge management initiatives through organizational communities of practice", *South Asian Journal of Business and Management Cases*, Vol. 10 No. 3, pp. 260-275.
- Audretsch, D. B., and Link, A. N. (Eds.). (2017), "Universities and the entrepreneurial ecosystem", Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Azim, M. T., and Hariri, A. (2018) "Entrepreneurship education and training in Saudi Arabia", in *Entrepreneurship Education and Research in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)* (pp. 193-214). Springer, Cham.
- Ben Hassen, T. (2020), "The entrepreneurship ecosystem in the ICT sector in Qatar: local advantages and constraints", *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 177-195.
- Cavallo, A., Ghezzi, A., Colombelli, A. and Casali, G.L. (2018), "Agglomeration dynamics of innovative start-ups in Italy beyond the industrial district era", *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 1-24.
- de Moraes, G. H. S. M. D., Fischer, B. B., Campos, M. L., and Schaeffer, P. R. (2020), "University ecosystems and the commitment of faculty members to support entrepreneurial activity", *BAR-Brazilian Administration Review*, Vol. 17.
- Kruja, A. (2013), "Entrepreneurship and knowledge-based economies", *Revista Românească pentru Educație Multidimensională*, Vol. 1, pp. 7-17.
- Sieger, P., Raemy, L., Zellweger, T., Fueglistaller, U. & Hatak, I. (2021), "Global student entrepreneurship 2021: insights from 58 countries", St. Gallen/Bern: KMU-HSG/IMU-U.
- Stam, E. (2015), "Entrepreneurial ecosystems and regional policy: a sympathetic critique", *European Planning Studies*, Vol. 23 No. 9, pp. 1759-1769.
- Villegas-Mateos, Allan. (2021) "Qatar's entrepreneurial ecosystem - 2021 edition: empowering the transformation" (pp. 1–100). HEC Paris: Doha, Qatar.



