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Celebrating Women in Science at HBKU

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Qatar women are coming up showing interest in science and researches; thanks to the various organisations like Qatar Foundation and the homegrown Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) working relentlessly for the empowerment of them and also the enormous support Qatar government provides for a cause.

As today marks the United Nations' International Day of Women and Girls in Science - which is celebrated on February 11 each year, The Peninsula spoke to three female scientists from HBKU who are making great strides in their specific areas of scientific interest. They discuss the role of women in science, and how HBKU is

supporting them on their academic and career journey.

“HBKU fully supports and encourages women to pursue science at a high level in both academia and within a decision-making structure. The university’s extensive programmes in various branches of science guide women towards full participation in higher education, nurturing them on their academic journey towards becoming experienced and confident scientists,” said Sara Al Tamimi, a Master of Science in Biological and Biomedical Sciences student at HBKU’s College of Health and Life Sciences (CHLS).

“Working as a woman in the field of science these past few years has been an extremely rewarding experience. I believe women have started to gain far greater confidence to pursue academic and career paths in science. The field of science is incredibly important as it drives progress and plays an integral part in shaping our future for the better,” she added.

Pursuing a biomedical sciences degree at HBKU means that students can benefit from the highest standards of teaching using state-of-the-art laboratories and medical equipment to advance and develop healthcare and technologies. HBKU’s research institutes, such as Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI) are working to improve and transform healthcare through innovation in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting local and regional populations.

The Master of Science in Biological and Biomedical Sciences program covers the study of the human body in relation to health and disease within different fields such as cancer biology, mechanobiology, neurodegenerative diseases, diabetes, and genomics.

Dr. Eman A. Fituri, Senior Program Manager at HBKU’s Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI) said that there is an abundance of opportunities for young women to pursue careers in science in Qatar, and the rate of enrolment of young women in science-related fields in universities in Qatar is high.

“If you are interested in the field and choose to pursue a degree in science, I encourage you to persistently work towards your interests and dreams. A career in science is fun and exciting because it’s dynamic, and the knowledge and skills you gain can lead you in a direction you never anticipated. You get to come up with new ideas and test them. When you succeed, you celebrate pushing the limits of knowledge a little further; and when you fail, you celebrate learning new skills,” she said.



Talking about what sparked her initial passion for the field of research and science Dr. Eman said, “Since childhood, I have always had a genuine curiosity to know how things work, how they can be improved, and how we can make the world around us a better place. I also grew up in a family that cherishes science and technology, and has encouraged us to expose ourselves to different experiences and to try our hand at new things. We learned that science is fun and believed we can achieve anything if we are willing to learn and put in the effort.”

“Therefore, my interest in research was natural, and then working with wonderful supervisors at university furthered my passion for science. As I grew older and had my own children, I developed a keen interest in kindling youth’s curiosity and interest in technology in general, and in computing and engineering in particular.”

Nour Majbour, is a research associate at the Neurological Disorders Research Center at HBKU’s Qatar

Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI). She recently secured second place in Stars of Science for her Parkinson's disease Early Detection Kit.

"I have always had a fascination with neuroscience and psychics. I did a bachelor's degree in pharmacy, but I felt in a way I was drifting away from my passion. Thus, I decided to do my master's in biomedical sciences, and it was at that point I decided to go into the field of neuroscience research and developed a fascination with Parkinson's disease."

"I wanted to understand and help people who are living with neurodegenerative diseases and try to determine why certain people are predisposed to the illness. There are several aspects to Parkinson's disease, including diagnostics and therapeutics. I decided to pursue the diagnostics field as I believe diagnostics is the "power of knowing" - if we are able to provide an early diagnosis, we have a far greater window for therapeutic intervention," she said.



Highlighting the key benefits of working as a researcher at HBKU, Nour said that there is a lot of flexibility, which enables us to juggle both our personal and professional lives.

"There's also a great deal of room to be creative and innovative. Your work and input are valuable and recognised accordingly. Furthermore, since working at HBKU, I have been introduced to and work among an incredible research community," she added.

Source: [The Peninsula Qatar](#)