



Married Female Emirati Students Pursuing Higher Education: Striking a balance

Round Table Discussion – March 14th 2012



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كلية الإمارات للتطوير التربوي
Emirates College for Advanced Education



مؤسسة الإمارات
Emirates Foundation
للشأن الاجتماعي Philanthropy

Married Female Emirati Students Pursuing Higher Education: Striking a balance

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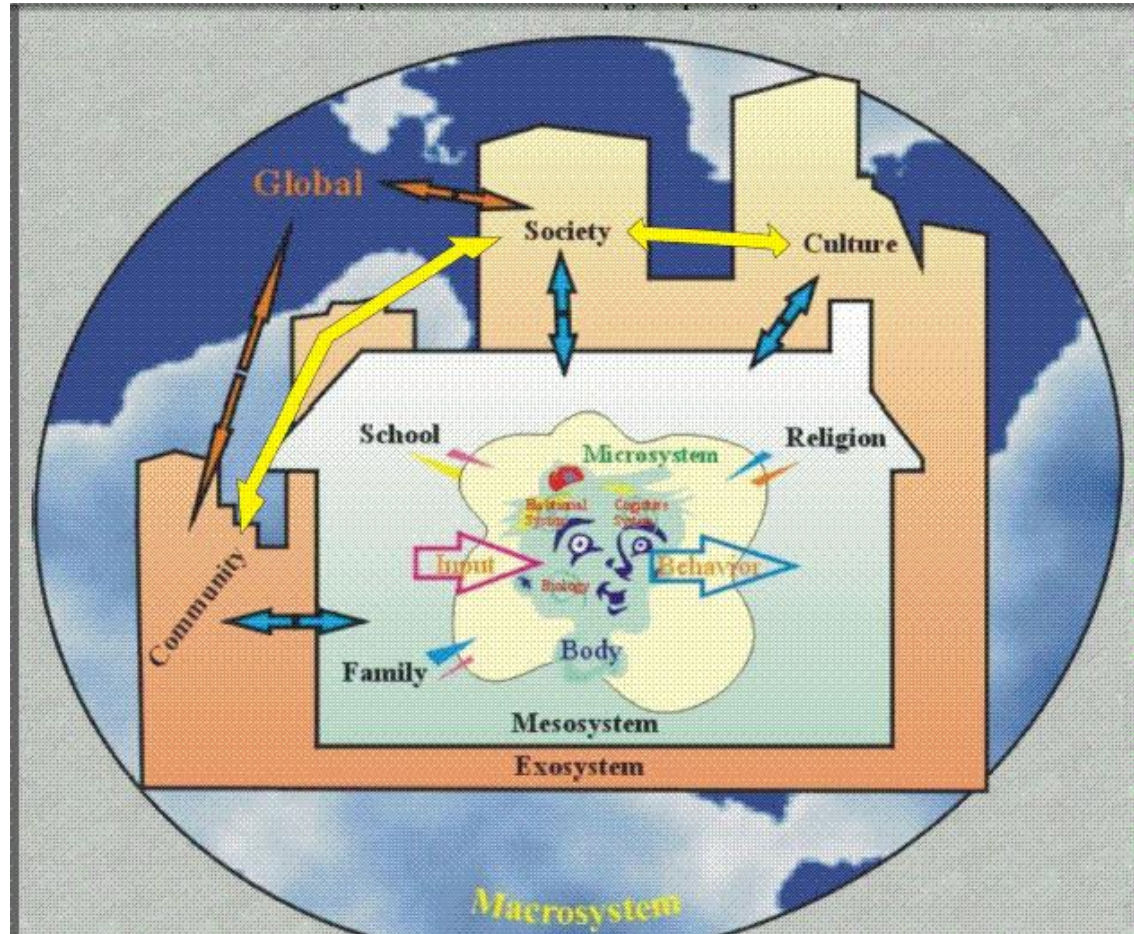
Overview of the Research Study

- This Research Study funded by Emirates Foundation
- Research Aim:
 - To gain an insight on the current challenges and supports of Emirati married students who are in teacher education
 - To identify future possibilities of support and include implications for higher education institutions
- Mixed Design – Quantitative and Qualitative methods
- Phases of the Study
 - Phase 1 – Survey Emirati married students at ECAE
 - Phase 2 – In-depth interviews – selected married students and their spouses
 - Phase 3 – Focus group discussions with ECAE Student services staff
 - Phase 4 – Putting it all together – Data Analysis of Results/Discussion

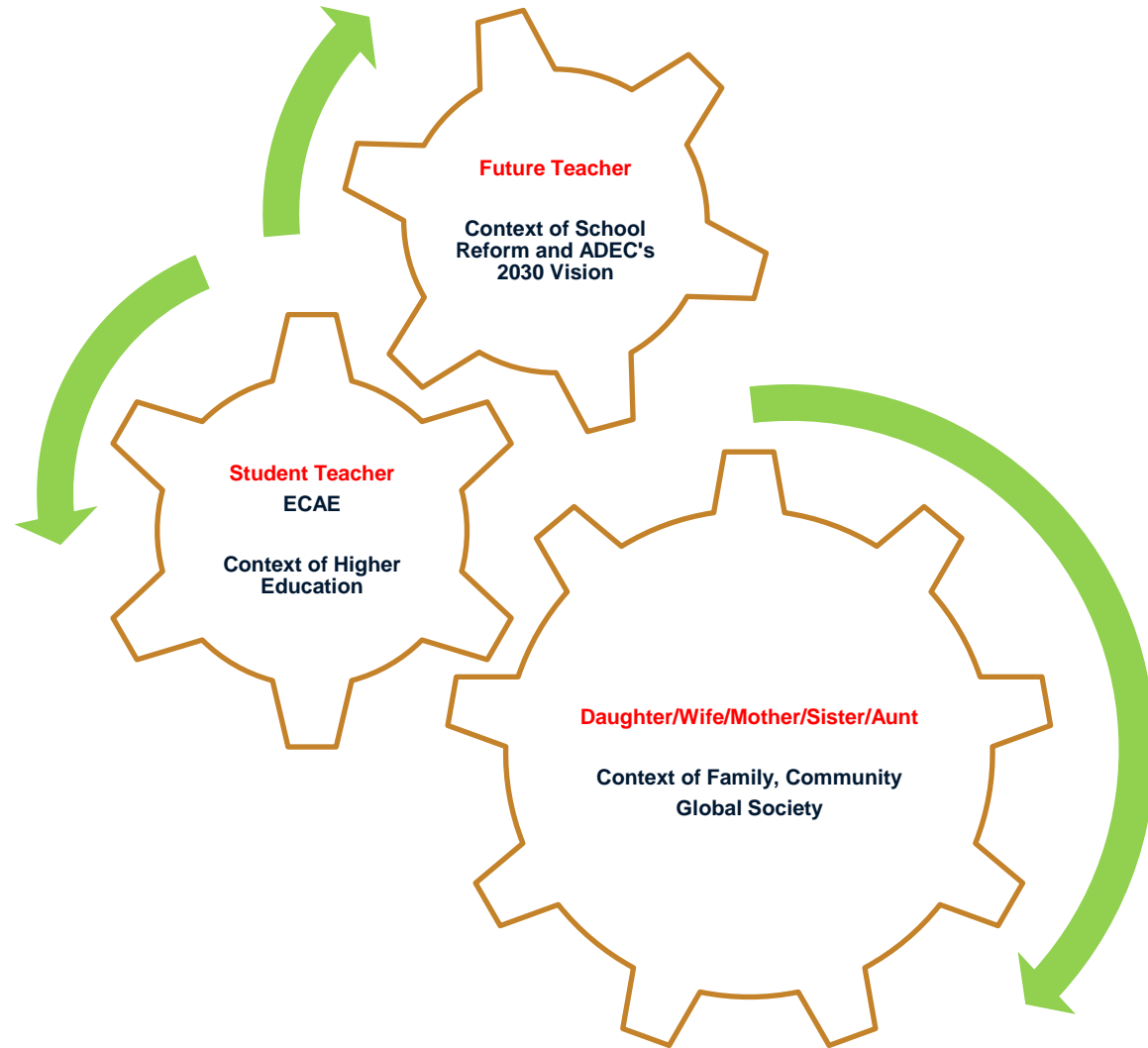
Focus for this session

- Discuss the phase 1 of the research study
- Design of the survey questionnaire
- Participants
- Context of the study
- Presentation of Findings
- Discussion

Rationale: Survey Questionnaire Design



Conceptual Framework of the Study



Construction of Survey

- Theory
- Survey construction links
- Main categories
- Informal conversations
- Ethics
- Pilot

Piloting of the Survey

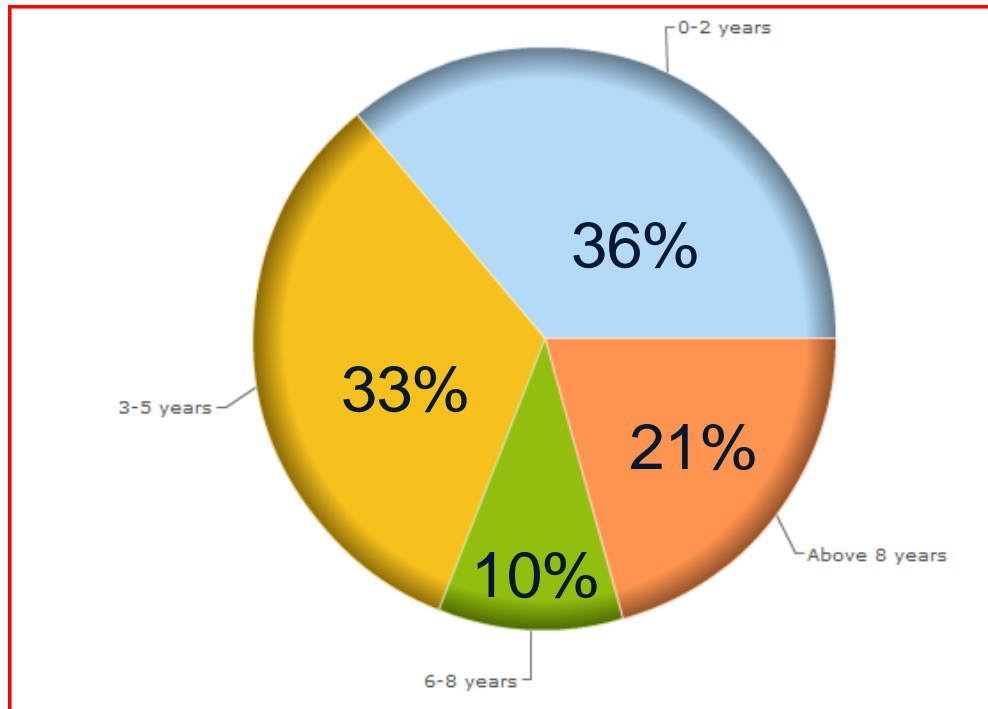
- **Pilot study was conducted to get feedback and refine the survey questions – 36 respondents from different institutions in teacher education**
- **Fine tuning and item reduction**
- **Final survey questions were developed using the software esurveyspro.com**
- **101 respondents for main study**
- **esurveyspro software program was used to design the survey and to manage for initial data analysis**

Survey Instrument

- **Invitation to Participate**
 - Introduction, bilingual
 - Question types & format
- **Main parts of the survey:**
 1. Demographics
 2. Types of Supports
 3. Motivating Factors
 4. Challenges at different levels
 5. Supports at different levels
 6. Possibilities
 7. Concluding statements

Study Participants

- Age group: 20-24yrs – 60%, 25-30 yrs – 28%, above 30 yrs – 12%
- ECAE female students in Bachelor of Education – over 50% were from Year 4, 20% from years 1 and 2 and over 10% for year 3,
 - Number of years married:



Context of the Study

- Total Population in the UAE - 8,248,000



Citizens: 948,000, Expats: 7.3 million

(Gulf News p. 16, March 11, 2012)

- Funded and Sponsored by ADEC, Abu Dhabi Emirate
- ECAE initiated in 2007, students enter from High School
- Over 400 students from the Abu Dhabi Emirate and supported by about 40 faculty
- Abu Dhabi public schools in the midst of educational reform and often referred to as the “New School Model”
- Video clip

Key Findings of the Survey

Motivating Factors of becoming a teacher:

Expected Responses Over 80% strongly agreed

To be an educated parent أن أصبح والدة متعلمة

Add to my knowledge and experience
كي أضيف إلى خبرتي ومعرفتي

Be an active member in society and honor
my country
أن أصبح عضواً ناشطاً في المجتمع و أشرف بلادي

Surprises Only about 45% agreed on these

Teaching is desirable occupation for women
التعليم مهنة مرغوبة لدى النساء

Improve my financial situation
تحسين وضعي المادي

Peer encouragement تشجيع أقراني لي

Key Findings of the Survey

Challenges at the Family level

Expected Responses About 50% strongly agreed	Surprises
Spending less quality time with my husband قضاء وقت أقل جودة مع زوجي	My extended family members (including husband's) do not offer support – 20% أفراد عائلتي الممتدة (بما فيهم عائلة زوجي) لا يقدمون العون
Spending less quality time with my children قضاء وقت أقل جودة مع أولادي	Difficulty meeting family and study commitments 39% – صعوبة التوفيق بين الالتزامات الدراسية و الأسرية
Spending less time with relatives and sharing social life قضاء وقت أقل مع الأقارب و المشاركة في الحياة الاجتماعية	

Key Findings of the Survey

Challenges at the College level

Expected Responses	Surprises
Too many courses and assignments to be done per semester - 70% وجوب إنهاء الكثير من المواد و الواجبات في كل فصل	Inflexible deadlines for submitting assignments - 37% عدم المرونة في مواعيد تقديم الواجبات
Lack of facilities on campus: (e.g. child care nursery, majlis, prayer room, study area) نقص التسهيلات في الحرم الجامعي (حجرة عناية بالأطفال، 65% - مجلس، مصلى، حيز للدراسة)	Teaching and Learning in English is a challenge - 45% التعليم و التعلّم باللغة الإنجليزية هو تحدٍ بذاته
	Transportation challenge الموصلات - 45%

Key Findings of the Survey

Challenges: College & Family Interaction

Expected Responses Strongly agreed	Surprises Strongly agreed
Family identifies me as a married person first and student second الأسرة تراني شخصاً متزوجاً في المقام الأول وطالِباً 50% - في المقام الثاني	College faculty not understanding family situation – 22% عدم تفهم مدرسي الكلية للحالة الأسرية
Lack of communication between student services at the college and family -24% - neutral category ضعف التواصل ما بين قسم الخدمات الطلابية في الكلية والأسرة	College faculty inflexibility towards married students – 33% عدم مرونة مدرسي الكلية مع الطالبات المتزوجات
	Family member not understanding college expectations -22% عدم تفهم أفراد الأسرة لمتطلبات الكلية

Key Findings of the Survey

Challenges: Society Level

Expected Responses Strongly agreed	Surprises Strongly agreed
<p>As a female, married Emirati student I see myself as a teacher contributing to developing the education system – 75% كطالبة إماراتية متزوجة، أرى نفسي معلمة تسهم في تطوير النظام التعليمي</p>	<p>My choice of employment in terms of location is limited to working in close proximity to my home – 57% خياراتي الوظيفي ، فيما يتعلق بالموقع ، محدود بالعمل في نطاق قريب من منزلي</p>
<p>As a female, married Emirati student my employment opportunities are limited to a female only school environment – 47% كطالبة إماراتية متزوجة ، فرص توظيفي مقتصرة على بيئات مدارس الإناث</p>	<p>As a female, married Emirati student my professional development for further education opportunities offered in Abu Dhabi are limited – 44% كطالبة إماراتية متزوجة ، الفرص المتاحة أمامي للتطوير المهني من أجل المزيد من التعليم محدودة في أبوظبي</p>

Key Findings of the Survey

Challenges: Cultural Context

Expected Responses Strongly agreed	Surprises Strongly agreed
The teaching profession is respected in my culture – 74% مهنة التعليم محترمة في ثقافتي	Working as a teacher will allow me to spend more time with my family – 9% عملي كمعلمة سيسمح لي بقضاء وقت أكثر مع أسرتي
	The working hours of the teaching profession is acceptable in my culture – 17% عدد ساعات العمل لمهنة التعليم مقبول في ثقافتي

Key Findings of the Survey

Supports

Expected Responses Strongly agreed	Surprises Strongly agreed
My husband helps me with child care duties زوجي يساعدني في واجبات العناية بطفلي – 22%	The college supports me with a free education and course resources -28% تدعمني الكلية بتوفير تعليم و مصادر منهجية مجانية
I plan and prioritize my family and study commitments – 59% أخطط لوضع التزاماتي الدراسية والأسرية كأولوية	My college respects my cultural values تحترم كليتي قيمتي الثقافية – 25%

Key Findings of the Survey

Possibilities

Expected Responses Strongly agreed

Distance education courses will support me to complete my college degree – **50%**
مناهج التعليم عن بعد ستساعدني على إكمال شهادتي الجامعية

Policies for better college support for married women such as extended maternity leave, child care facilities on campus.- **68%**
سياسات تنظيمية لتقديم دعم أفضل للمتزوجات كتمديد إجازة الأمومة ، و وجود تسهيلات للعناية بالأطفال داخل الكلية.

A mix of online and face to face course work will support me to complete my college degree. – **51%**
مزيج من المناهج الألكترونية و المناهج الحضورية سيدعمني في إكمال شهادتي الجامعية

Surprises Strongly agreed

Opportunities to be employed as a future teacher in the public schools - **44%**
فرص توظيفي كمعلمة في المدارس الحكومية مستقبلاً

My education degree will offer me better opportunities for promotion- **49%**
درجتي التعليمية ستوفر لي فرصاً أفضل للترقية

Discussion Questions

- How much harder is it in terms of teacher education in the Emirati culture to strike a balance versus other cultures?
- Are our assumptions stereotyping the “teaching profession” for Emirati women? What would be the most favorable occupation for an Emirati woman in the sustainable future?
- To what extent do higher education institutions consider or tailor programs specific to the needs of married women who pursue further education?
- Itennant@ecae.ac.ae



"I can picture the future of the woman in my country ... I see her becoming more aware and understanding to all the surrounding circumstances and to the duties required from her. I see her and her sister hand in hand to ascend together the ladder of development and civilization established by the fixed foundations, as this is the beginning of the road for returning the favor to the motherland. "
(H.H Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak, 2010).



THANK YOU!