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cisions accordingly.

Taking into account the new globalised era that Qatar is approaching, there are significant requirements for education. In particular, there are new requirements for youth to obtain skills and competencies that are far beyond what educational systems alone offer. Therefore, collaboration between different associations in the state is important, to encourage new shared visions, and prepare the new generation with competencies of critical thinking, problem solving, entrepreneurship, and communication. More importantly for the new educational vision is to a system which connects the museum sector, Qatari educational system and the community. Such interlinking would help make the agenda of lifelong learning a reality, which could inspire people, enhance their knowledge and accommodate the various skills they need.

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(Hooper-Greenhill 2000). The challenges QM is facing today include the degree of the changes that can be implemented in their educational role, as well as what shifts and collaborations should be managed over what time period, which could help to achieve the new educational mission of lifelong learning. It is only when these challenges are overcome that we can declare that Qatari museums have succeeded in their advocacy for a new educational role and that the gap between museums, the educational sector and the community has been bridged successfully.

Conclusion

In this article, I reviewed and evaluated the contemporary educational role of museums in Qatar. Apparently, the current universal educational trends imposed inevitable changes in education which would assure the offering to the new generation twenty-first century education and knowledge needs. This would constitute a learning ecosystem, which mainly encourages and targets achieving lifelong learn-

ing for individuals, making education a journey, not a destination. Thus, this new educational need requires significant commitment, collaboration and interaction between the museum sector, education sector and the community. In Qatar, culture has always been a vehicle for innovation, aspiration and creativity. However, as mentioned in the article, QM developed an agenda to foster art, providing lifelong learning education, but with weak advocacy. In fact, the gap that exists between museums and the education sector highlights that the message of new educational need did not reach its intended recipient. We could assume that QM reached the point of wondering what constitutes a good educational role on the part of museums and prepared themselves to achieve great outcomes from their programmes. Nonetheless, there is no consistent system developed to bridge the gap between museums and the educational sector within the state. Rather, the museum sector in Qatar has to find its optimal path and make its de-

For QM, it is clear there is a high demand—both within as well as outside QM—for the skill sets and crafts that are pursued by the Qatar public sector. Therefore, further education programmes at the school will target further vocational modules, focusing on more specific skillsets. In addition, the school will follow an exploratory approach. The curricula are expected to cover the following areas: Curatorial Arts/ Exhibition Design, Film & Photography, Fashion/ Image/ Makeup (including for film and special effects), Branding & Graphic Design, Product/ Prop Design, Architecture, Landscape Design/ Gardening, Urban Design/ Planning, Linked practices: Agriculture, Synthetic Biology, Artificial Intelligence, etc. (Information Provided by QM Archive, March 2021). However, such an ambitious project, as QM admits, would require partnering with the professional associations in each field to co-brand the accreditation in order to develop a universally acknowledged training program (Information Provided

by QM Archive, March 2021). Indeed developed skills are important for twenty-first-century economic competitiveness. This fact supports the adoption of a learning-ecosystem approach, which should be the new universal approach, particularly as it is a highly structured and centrally focused system. This is particularly the case if it is designed sustainability in the curricula, with less governmental control and intervention. The new economy requires engagement with non-traditional education and students, but with quality outcomes (Thompson 2009). Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, a museum professor, argues that new museum practices need to emphasise the active and engaged use of museum collections. Such uses should be designed through innovative and creative methods, which are linked directly to a lifelong learning that incorporates available resources for audiences. Specifically, the aim is for the museums to perform a more enjoyable educational role compared to previous, traditional museum experiences



education system fostered creativities? What are the curricula implemented within the Qatari educational system that enhance innovation?

The need for an effective educational system is not just to address the economic need, it is also a reflection of the country's vision, values, beliefs and culture. Previously, many countries underestimated vocational education, as they considered it as less important than more liberal and academic education. However, current economic rhetoric highlights the contributions of vocational education to economic progress and a lifelong-learning strategy (Thompson 2009). QM was founded in 2006 with the objective of making Qatar a cultural destination which offers authentic family experiences while enhancing the quality of life of Qatari people by building first-class cultural institutions and collections. Such resources ultimately provide a platform for aspiration, creativities and innovation (Al-Mayassa 2022).

We mentioned earlier that with all efforts that QM has put into its

educational role, there is a clear weakness in its advocacy strategy. Perhaps this made QM take the initiative. As, in contrast to the Ministry of Education in Qatar, QM is making an effort and attempting to establish its first Vocational School for Creative Industry in the country, in collaboration with Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and Arizona State University (ASU) (Information Provided by QM Archive, March 2021). This institution that will be aligned with the Qatar National Vision 2030. As envisaged, the school will be dynamic, responsive, and explore and define practices for the creative industries (Information Provided by QM Archive, March 2021). The school's objective is to preserve and develop the knowledge base of talented employees, as well as to develop the subsequent generation of museum leaders by producing a new example in providing graduate-level training in art history to museum employees while they remain working (Information Provided by QM Archive, March 2021).

educators do, what they aim for, who they do it for, and why they need to do it.

Creativity and knowledge Economy

Creativity is much more than a word used to describe ideas, it forms our understanding and directs the paths available to us (Thompson 2009). The establishment of a certain form of creativity is by default overridden by other powerful concerns in the national curriculum. The new art forms that have been introduced by QM should have positive consequences for the lifelong educational approach. Thus, any attempt by the government to address and implement creativity must be located within the context of the government's overall condition and for the lifelong educational system specifically. In addition, bridging programmes with the national curriculum are required. To highlight the importance and attractiveness of creativity to QM, it is necessary first to understand the position of education in the labour market. Without a doubt,

recently, education has played a significant role in providing students with skills that have enabled them to better compete in the public sector. Apparently, this aligns with current economic rhetoric, which argues that education must adhere to a new economic strategy that corresponds with global trends, requiring the creation of well-rounded students [Thompson 2009]. The reason for the emphasis on creativity in education lies in the intension to achieve a cultural shift and embrace the knowledge economy. Creativity and innovation thus become key elements for learners, which they need in the knowledge economy. The cultural turn linked creativity with capitalism, disconnecting it from earlier traditional views, which linked creative learning with a progressivism that has no commitment to standards (Thompson 2009). Creativity in education means using creative and imaginative methods in teaching, which make learning an effective and interesting process. It is a factor that leads us to ask, how far has the Qatari



encouraging lifelong learning, which contributes to the learning-ecosystem strategy, when its attempt at introducing new art forms and fostering interest in art did not convince locals? In addition, what about the reluctance of the youth to view QM as a potential place for their future career? The challenges QM is facing today is the extent of the changes that is applied. How can QM reach out to its community and implement a new vision of art? How can QM become popular amount the youth and become a destination for their future career and ambitions? It is only when these challenges are overcome, that we can conclude that QM has succeeded in making itself a participant in lifelong learning. QM's ambition is to make Qatar the "art Mecca of the Middle East" [CCN Style 2021]. Indeed, it has invested significant effort and money in bringing renowned artistic names to Qatar. It is an attempt to turn Qatari urban landscape into an open outdoor art exhibition [CCN Style 2021]. In addition, QM hope to show

the world how tolerant and hospitable Qataris, in the hopes of changing the global perception of the state. QM proclaimed that the strategy of turning the Qatari landscape into an open exhibition is aimed at showcasing the Qatari identity, culture, history and present. Probably, this is exactly why the Qatari community criticized the international art works exhibited in Qatar, as they could not see how those pieces are representative of their culture or identity. On the contrary, they viewed them as exotic and disconnected from the local culture. Returning to the relationship between museums and schools in Qatar, such a reaction might also show the actual gap that exists between museums and schools. As creativity means little if essential issues of curriculum, awareness, knowledge and talent are not genuinely addressed (Thompson 2009). Thus, a relationship between creativity and the knowledge economy should be built. This can be achieved through a strategy of advocacy which forms a clear and precise message about what museum

video reflects people's questions, and not his, was he questioning whether such work can really be considered a work of art? A controversial raised as a result of poor advertising and marketing of the work by the QM [Twitter post 2022]. The sudden announcement of the work shocked the community; hence, what he published on social media did not represent his opinion or an attempt to undermine the work; rather, it represented the opinion of the Qatari community. Lastly Al-Emadi concluded his video by comparing the work to a similar one displayed in the

deserts of America, which has become a tourist attraction. He also indicated that this work will be a landmark for tourism in Qatar during the 2022 World Cup. He further praised the current investment of Qatar in art works, which will see a great return for the state in the future. However, such contradiction and the quick shift in Al-Emadi's opinion was criticized by the public, who saw his justification as weak, criticized his change in opinion and did not accept his point of view regarding the work.

The question here is how can we assume that QM succeeded in

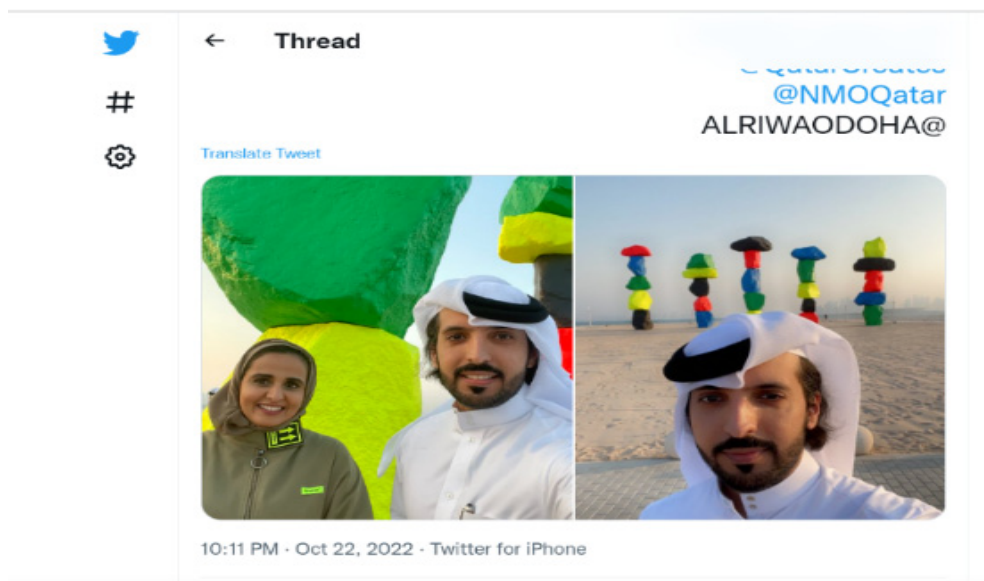


Fig. 4. Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad Al Thani, with Abdulla Al-Emadi at the inauguration event of “The Five Mountains of Doha”



Fig. 3. Abdulla Al-Emadi imitation.

On 22 October 2022, the official inauguration of “The Five Mountains of Doha” took place in the presence of His Excellency Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, President of the Qatar Olympic Committee and Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad Al Thani, Chair of the Board of Trustees of Qatar Museums. Abdulla Al-Emadi was invited alongside a number of social-media activists and the press. Following the inauguration, Al-Emadi posted his pic-

ture with Sheikha Al-Mayassa (Fig. 4.) adding a comment regarding his post at twitter:

Where is the social media activist, can you do the same? With all kindness and sophistication, this was the comment of Sheikha Al Mayassa in front of the artwork. Indeed, I was honored to attend the inauguration of the work. [Twitter post 2022].

In addition, he posted a video on twitter explaining the reason for his pre-inauguration post, and justifying his criticism. As his

Kang, Indian Shilpa American Lawrence Weiner, Qatari Shua'a Ali, Qatari Salman Al-Malik, Lebanese Najla El Zein, American Faye Toogood, Austrian Franz West, Iraqi Adel Abidin, Egyptian Adam Henein and Iraqi Ismail Fattah [Peninsula 2022].

The community welcomed the productions of the local and regional artists, however, the international art works attracted significant criticism on social media. For example, when QM received the artwork "The Five Mountains of Doha" (Fig. 2), produced by Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone, near Stadium 974 in a preparation for the FIFA World Cup

2022, the work generated public controversy. Criticism highlighted the nature of the work and the amount of money spent on it. Furthermore, a TV presenter, Abdulla Al-Emadi, imitated the work and posted it on his page on Twitter as a form of criticism directed at QM in considering the work as a work of art. His criticism and imitation attracted significant attention from social-media users who supported his point of view.



Fig. 2. "The Five Mountains of Doha" by Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone.

as curators, collection keepers, exhibition management or any other professions. Following that rejection, I conducted a survey in 2022 among CCQ's students regarding the establishment of a diploma programme in museums and art history studies. The interested response was also very low, around 10%. They even explained they would enter the programme only if they had not been accepted onto other programmes, such as engineering, cyber security, science and other programmes that can offer them better job opportunities (Al-Hammadi 2022). It worth mentioning here that between 2010 and 2020, University College London established its branch in Qatar in partnership with Qatar Museums and the Qatar Foundation. Over ten years, the university offered MAs in Archaeology of the Arab and Islamic World, Conservation Science, Museums and Gallery Practices, and Library and Information Studies. 330 students graduated from these courses; however, Qatari students made up only 20% of the students, as the rest were overseas graduates [UCL 2022]. UCL courses was meant to attract Qatari student to specialize in museums, art history and archaeology; however,

given to the low demand among Qatari students, UCL decided to terminate its courses in 2020. Moreover, as part of a celebration of diversity in arts, in 2022, QM commissioned 40 different public art works developed by local, regional and international artists. The works were installed at different places in the state, from the arrival to the Hamad International Airport; from the desert to the most crowded areas, such as Souq Waqif. With this, the state public spaces transformed into an open exhibition, hosting 100 art works created by artists from different cultures and backgrounds, employing different artistic styles, of subject matters, which varied in size and forms, and used different mediums. The works are exhibited permanently for locals and the 1.5 million global visitors who will arrive in Qatar for the FIFA World Cup [Peninsula 2022]. Involved artists are the Lebanese Simone Fattal, American Jeff Koons, Iraqi Ahmed Al Bahrani, Japanese Yayoi Kusama, Olafur Eliasson, German Katharina Fritsch, Brazilian Ernesto Neto, Swiss Ugo Rondinone, American Rashid Johnson, Shezad Dawood, Kuwaiti Monira Al Qadiri, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Korean Suki Seokyeong

members. Despite all of the activities mentioned above, we shall ask: has QM succeeded in delivering lifelong learning?

The Impact of Qatar-Museums' Strategy for Lifelong Learning

It is worth mentioning here that the main goal for a learning ecosystem is to achieve lifelong learning and sustainability in learning, thus providing society and public sectors with a well-qualified community and employers. To achieve this goal, advocacy is particularly important to ensure a collaboration between different governmental organizations. Advocacy is also important to build a sustained and continuous link with the wider community. Although QM paid great efforts and attention to its museums' educational role, there are clear weaknesses in its strategy to introduce this role, as well as to link museums with the community. This resulted in a widening of the gap between museums, the educational sector, communities and other organizational segments. Indeed, despite the development of a range of educational activities, in reality, museums' educational role in the learning ecosystem is not apparent.

Evidence of this appears in the reluctance of higher education institutions in Qatar to establish programmes of museum and art history studies. Unfortunately, despite the significant effort QM has made in the museum and art world, there is no institution in Qatar which offers such a specialised programme either at undergraduate or postgraduate level. The establishment of new courses in Qatar has been always linked to the market and student needs and demands. In 2015, the Humanities department at Qatar University took the initiative to establish a minor programme titled Heritage Studies, which combined archaeology, museums and tourism. However, there was low demand for the programme. Consequently, the project was put on hold and did not go further (information obtained from Humanities Department Archive 2018). In addition, in 2021, in collaboration between Community College Qatar (CCQ) and QM, an invitation was sent to students at CCQ asking them to attend a career fair and explore the opportunity to work at QM. Surprisingly, there was zero interest from students and the event postponed. Students further rejected working in museums



including students, scholars, families and different community groups. A variety of outreach programmes are available at the EC to encourage visitors to explore the context of Islamic art and its meaning. The objective of these programmes can be linked directly to government plans, as they aim to encourage the awareness, of local and global communities, of Islamic art and heritage. Museum educators created a range of educational materials and learning programmes. All this effort is in the hope of developing, from the MIA, an arena in which the public can discover the past and employ the knowledge gained to play a role in Qatar's future (Education Centre: Introduction 2009; Al-Hammadi 2019).

The NMoQ also provides various educational programmes, including self-guided and virtual-guided tours, discovery programmes through designing interactive workshops, hands-on workshops, and conferences. The 3,2,1 OM also established its own educational department, which focuses on raising awareness the relationship between a healthy mind and body. The museum designed different activities to link education to sport, such as deliver-

ing engaging programmes for teachers and students to enjoy at home (3,2,1 Olympic Museum, Learn. <https://321qosm.org.qa/en/learn/> 2022). The MAMoMA does not include a specific educational department; however, it is located at the Education City Qatar Foundation, which hosts different international and local universities and the Qatar Academy School. This links the museum directly to students and faculty alike. The museum educators have created programmes and content which interpret and teach the history of Arab Modern Art. Such programmes have been designed to stimulate creativity and the appreciation of art production and design in the Middle-East region (Mathaf 2022).

As mentioned earlier, previous museum practice in Qatar depended upon a narrative-based self-educational approach, which displayed local cultural heritage and history, and everyday objects (Al-Hammadi 2019). In contrast, current educational activities reflect the interest of QM in making museums in Qatar academic resources that complement other academic institutions in the country. Accordingly, QM is attempting to build a relationship with different community

of Islamic Arts (MIA), with its impressive Education Centre (EC); National Museum of Qatar (NMoQ); 3,2,1 Olympic Museum (3,2,1 OM); Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Arts (MAMoMA); as well as other museums currently under construction, such as DADU Children's Museum, and Lusail Museum. Every single museum has its own educational programmes which align with its collection, mission and vision. Msheirb Properties also established its serious of museums; however, its approach differs significantly from that of Qatar Museums. Qatar Museums is focusing on establishing museums which are very innovative in terms of architecture and presentations, which reflect the current economic status of Qatar. On the other hand, Msheirb properties establishes museums that reflect Qatari tradition, heritage, identity and history through their traditional architecture, presentation and location at the heart of downtown Doha. Msheirb museums also have not established standalone educational departments, as Qatar Museums has. Instead, they are satisfied with organised school tours and activities that are conducting during school visits [Learn 2022].

Apparently, the development of standalone educational depart-

ments at QM museums, each with a specific educational vision and mission, reflects the QM's awareness of the importance of museums' exhibitions and artefacts in the learning process. Take, for example, the Museum of Islamic Arts (MIA), which is the only museum with an educational centre (EC) instead of a department, which was opened in 2009. The MIA adopted a new model of narrative, ideology and function which provides audiences the opportunity to examine their cultural heritage in a broader context. Their cultural heritage is interpreted with awareness of the complexity and vitality of the culture, and the influence of Islamic culture to different fields, such as arts, philosophy, science, literature, music, medicine and astronomy. To establish their educational role, museum educators developed programmes aimed at building relationships with the community. The approach hopes to attract community members by offering them opportunities for inspiration, pleasure, and the new knowledge to be gained from organised educational programs (Al-Hammadi 2019). Furthermore, the goal of the EC is to be a knowledge hub in arts learning which designs high-quality accessible teaching and learning opportunities for its audiences,



educational role, which moves the focus towards user-generated content, more customized information and informal-lifelong learning experiences. This strategy will build closer, more solid relationships with defined groups, meaning that the utilisation of museum resources and artefacts will be more effective in the long term. In addition, this approach will constitute an excellent fit for the new learning mission and strategy that museums offer (Franco 2010). Lifelong learning is a term that indicates the attractiveness of a decisive, reflexive connection between learning and a person's life experiences. The nature of such relationships, as museums hope them to be, can be challenging. There has been a continuous call, from educational institutions and more recently illustrated by new educational trends worldwide, for the formation of learning societies (Strain 1998). Consequently, the desire for lifelong education has increased, alongside aims to achieve more extensive individual learning. This seeks to enhance equity, and continues to maintain social and economic life in order to preserve human well-being (Strain 1998). However, to ensure the achievement of such goals, we should also take into account the ways in which human activities

and behaviours are often significantly distanced from familiar, traditional sites (Strain 1998). We should also consider the fact that new economic formations emphasise the consumption of information services more than manufacturing products. Thus, learning should be more effective across a wider range of human activities and encompass the vast global population. Such new global tendencies require new learning concepts, which aim to serve the economy as well as reveal the potential of individual life worlds (Strain 1998). The questions here are what strategy Qatari museums have adopted to create their lifelong-learning strategy? And, more importantly, have Qatari museums called for an advocacy role?

Beside showcasing the organic narrative of objects, many museums today use additional methods to disseminate knowledge in order to support their educational role. These include workshops, dramatic events, and creative programmes (Hooper-Greenhill 2000). Qatar Museums (QM) established different national and specialist museums throughout the country, with each museum having its own educational department and programmes. For example, there has been the establishment of the Museum

the context of a learning economy and knowledge economy, we should also recognise that the knowledge economy requires a form of learning that is directly linked to official knowledge organisations and goes beyond official methods of knowing, such as that offered in schools, colleges or universities. Conversely, a learning economy is a system within which youth can learn and experience lifelong learning at informal knowledge institutions, such as museums, galleries and cultural institutions, along with other governmental organizations. It is a process involving a hands-on learning strategy, which constitutes learning by doing or learning by using. A strategy of learning connected with the process of working, and stresses tacit, concrete and embodied understanding produced through the work process (Peters 2010).

Consequently, museums, as cultural institutions, find themselves in the midst of dramatic changes, as cultural institutions and educational arenas address the internal and external demands and challenges necessitated by new educational and learning approaches (Franco 2010). Therefore, the options facing museums concerning how to design their educational role is no longer a free choice, as museums are required

to adapt to new educational strategies for the twenty-first century. Such a strategy aims to prepare the youth for future jobs and professions, through providing them with the required skills. Accordingly, museums are expected to provide youth with rich educational experiences that develop various skills, such as communication, critical thinking, entrepreneurship, digital awareness, and creativity. Therefore, museum educators first need to bridge the gap between themselves and educators in the formal educational sector, at schools, colleges and universities. There is no doubt that museum educators are aware that there is a gap between themselves and educators at schools or higher education institutions. While museum educators may wish to provide experiences that support lifelong learning, the system that other educators follow focuses more or less on test-driven content, basic information and skills. This method does not provide the required support to achieve the goal of lifelong learning, which is required by the future workforce.

To provide effective learning experiences from museum sources and artefacts, museum educators need to look far beyond pre-organised field trips. There is a paradigm shift in museums'



audiences the experiences of lifelong learning or opportunities to develop new skills. These museums re-experienced substances of cultural heritage and historical importance, and presented them in exhibitions that mirrored their existing cultural frameworks (Al-Hammadi 2019). Consequently, this leads us to question, how do current museums in Qatar design their educational strategies? What is the impact of current museum's educational programs on individuals' lifelong learning? What values do these programs offer?

The traditional educational approach of museums in Qatar, although expected and accepted during the last century, is not appropriate today, as both the country and society moved through the modern era and headed toward post-modernism with all its connotations. In *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1984), Jean-Francois Lyotard defined the Postmodern era as an era defined by contingency, complication, diaspora and the spreading of knowledge. Therefore, since Qatari museums have already experienced an economic boom, they should also aim to accommodate twenty-first-century learners' demands. It is significantly important for post-modern museums in Qatar to

develop an advocacy approach in their educational services. In addition, the world today is moving towards a knowledge economy, which consist of three main forms: the learning economy, creative economy and open-knowledge economy (Peters 2010). Each form has a distinct connection to education and pedagogy and establishes the importance of various forms of learning within these larger strategic frameworks (Peters 2010). The concept of a knowledge economy directly depends upon the development of learning and education. In the wake of the emergence of the knowledge-based economy, employers are calling for a workforce equipped with a new range of talents, which requires applicants to have various skills alongside their degrees (Peters 2010). Accordingly, twenty-first-century educational needs require both skills and learning, and must aim to develop an attitude of lifelong learning which could provide learners with the developed skills they need. Thus, the knowledge economy distinguishes between providing youth with information, and knowledge. Knowledge is related to learning that often takes the form of "know-how and competencies based on tacit knowledge" (Peters 2010: 4). In

opment will help museums to better redesign their educational services, impact more profound educational change and provide the youth with the twenty-first century competencies and skills that they need. Therefore, advocacy for museums is very much essential at all levels, from front-line staff to boards of directors. This advocacy will enable museums to achieve a more profound positive impact on twenty-first century educational vision and mission (Franco 2010). To successfully advocate, there should be a clear and precise message about what museum educators do, their aims, who they work for, what they need to do. This message needs to be repeated again and again (Franco 2010). Moving away from advocacy, we shall ask how far do museums implement an advocacy strategy in Qatar? Do Qatari museums fulfil twenty-first century educational needs?

Museums in Qatar: Moving from a Traditional Educational Approach to A Learning Ecosystem

The educational role of Qatari museums began in 1975 with the opening of the first national museum in the country (Al-Hammadi 2019; Al-Mulla 2014; Al-Far 1979). However, that role followed traditional educational

methodologies which were common at that time of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. At that time, economic resources and lifestyles were much humbler compared to contemporary times. Museum environments at that time were sites which helped schools expose their students to additional knowledge in culture, history, art, ethnography, architecture, archaeology, heritage, natural history, science and marine science (Al-Hammadi 2019; Al-Mulla 2014; Al-Far 1979). Thus, school trips to museums were organized in collaboration between museums and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. It was hoped that these trips would help foster students' appreciation for art and culture. However, such trips did not involve a hands-on learning approach (Al-Hammadi 2019; Al-Mulla 2014; Al-Far 1979), nor did they aim to provide additional competencies that children might need, such as communication skills, critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving. The previous emphasis on the power of observation at Qatari museums, without a doubt, reflected an attempt to emphasise knowing and learning through the spectators' capability to decode existing cultural norms (Al-Hammadi 2019). However, such approach did not offer its



observed ideas and knowledge, instead of creating or adding a new knowledge arrangement. Unfortunately, this means museums teach the visitors what they already know (Falk 1999).

G. M. Candler, in his study *Museums in Education: The Changing Role of Education Services in British Museums*, discussed a recent report which reviewed the changing concept of education in museums. This new concept discarded traditional lectures, talks and displays as they have become insufficient to address twenty-first-century educational needs. Rather, museums' educational role in the current century has become more complex and includes new methods of communication. Candler further argues that museums are not merely places for displaying historical artifacts, they are a functioning institution. As, despite the fact that museums grew out of the interests of their founders, they do change in response to their customers' need and interests, as they are museums' audiences and consumers. From his experience at the American Museum in Britain, Candler offers some suggestions to improve educational role of museums. First, bridging the gaps between museum educators and school teachers; second. involving museum educators in school

teaching; third, training teachers and students in how to handle specimens; fourth, developing in-depth residential courses for both students and teachers; and, finally, launching internship programs. These suggestions would help in interpreting museum educational role in the broadest possible sense of disseminating learning and knowledge across limitless boundaries, rather than being available only to a certain community or delivering a certain form of education.

Barbara Franco, in *Advocacy for Education in Museums*, calls for broader advocacy: she argues that museums need to expand their advocacy in education. Museums should create and address opportunities for both informal education and lifelong learning, as they play an important role in formal education and families. Museums, further, can play a vital part in bridging the educational gap that exists in the lives of disadvantaged students, who are excluded or marginalized from formal education. For disadvantaged students especially, museums can be hub of knowledge for self-directed learning. Museum educators, therefore, should be involved in national policy discussions and the development of education, rather than standing at the sidelines. Taking part in educational-policy devel-

the transformation of the and experiences in the workforce and public sector (Walcutt and Schatz 2019). To excel in this age, individuals should learn how to thrive in a world which is distinguished by instability and complexity. There is a serious need for profound understanding through a range of knowledge, and personal, affective and physical competences (Walcutt and Schatz 2019).

Cultural institutions and museums constitute one of the important professional sectors involved in providing lifelong learning. This is especially true now that the public sector is required to be socially aware and culturally adaptable, to solve problems, to be creative and flexible, and to employ digital literacy. Thus, designers of educational materials at cultural institutions and museums should adopt a strategy which aims to incorporate selective learning data, which serves the new learning ecosystem and its desired outcomes. In fact, the social-contract strategy to which the learning ecosystem adheres will definitely add more value and attraction to learning in cultural arenas. However, we shall ask here, what exact role do museums today play in twenty-first century educational missions and visions?

John H Falk., in his article ‘Muse-

ums as Institutions for Personal Learning’ refers to the fact that people learn and gain more knowledge and experiences individually outside classrooms. This argument supports the point of view of earlier scholars such as James S. Coleman, Christopher Jencks and Lawrence A. Cremin, who said that schools make a limited contribution in terms of educating children. The real learning occurs through vast infrastructure that exists either during work or leisure. In fact, leisure pursuits such as museums, broadcast media, national zoos, prints, internet, community-based organizations and other arenas are rich with learning opportunities, which are filled with knowledge-based experiences. These platforms play an important role in enabling public lifelong learning, where the public encounter free-choice learning. However, museums, with their established tradition of providing learning experiences for the public, are unable to measure their educational impact on the public. This is because they fail to document their impact on their millions of visitors, which hinders genuine assessment of their educational services. Another problem facing learning in museums is that the learning process is influenced and consolidated by previously



everywhere. Thus, learning becomes an endless and limitless process, as well as a practice that can be customized according to individual needs and interests. In addition, emerging competences have opened the door to transformative potential, such as enabling learning on a wide scale, improving learning in response to diverse data, and developing fully incorporated talent management systems for managing the future workforce (Walcutt and Schatz 2019). These new technologies have definitely changed the formal and traditional education and training that had been practiced over decades. Education today is both formal and informal, and includes experiential training and hands-on teaching. In addition, information has more accessible than it used to be, which has impacted the way individuals think, cooperate, communicate, develop and work. Consequently, people's expectations for educational institutions have also changed. Accordingly, educational institutions, such as institutions of higher education, governmental organisations, cultural arenas and museums, should accommodate these new expectations (Walcutt and Schatz 2019). Employers, too, are more interested in experience than degrees or transcripts. They assign more

value to performance-based credentials, life skills, teamwork, grit, and competency badges, which are more effective at highlighting an individuals' talents, knowledge, performance and skills (Walcutt and Schatz 2019). This new force made the call for a learning ecosystem a must, rather than an option.

The phrase learning ecosystem describes a new formulation of learning, which considers the process of learning a journey rather than a destination. It reflects a dramatic transformation of learning: from disconnected educational experiences to the variety of lifelong learning. In addition, it is a system which is personalised to individuals, and delivered across various media, locations and periods of time (Walcutt and Schatz 2019). Its main technological base is an "internet for learning" (Walcutt and Schatz 2019, 14). This allows universal access to learning, as well as providing pathways for improving individuals and the workforce at an unprecedented pace. To develop a successful learning ecosystem, diverse professional sectors should be involved and collaborate, either regarding the services provided or at the measurement level. Implementing a learning-ecosystem strategy is meaningless unless we witness

I will examine how the current educational plans of Qatar Museums intend to enhance their participation in the development of the national educational vision, which would promote Qatari museums' status and popularity through their investment in educational programs. Without a doubt, there are clear indicators that the next educational era will feature first-hand, self-directed and distributed learning, which is intended to foster the twenty-first century skills of the synthesis of information, critical thinking, creativity, innovation, collaboration and teamwork. Inevitably, during such an era, museums would play important role, as resources for learners as well as trainers of teachers (Merritt 2014). A learning ecosystem aims to provide a more holistic approach to education to support students and communities. Such an approach identifies, selects and shares the most effective innovations that hope to reduce learning inequalities within communities. This holistic approach depends on education being in the form of a system of relationships between diverse biotic factors of learners, government bodies, teachers, educational associations and institutional bodies. In addition to abiotic considerations such as pedagogy, infrastructure and materials. To

achieve this structure, different groups of leading organisations and institutions should come together with a united strategic objective. This will be their connected element, through which they can communicate when building their present and future visions and missions that help promote the skills needed for the twenty-first century. In this context, educators and organisations who are aiming to impact the nation's youth face the challenge of a dramatically expanding and complicated environment, in which they must utilise their talents and knowledge to impact social and educational outcomes (Scott 2022). Such a challenge necessitates a shift in our thinking about what we aim to do in education and how we achieve it, realistically. In other words, in order to enhance and accelerate our impact in communities, we need to adapt our work to the current era, as well as consider employing emerging praxis for the future of education (Scott 2022).

Museums As Participants in a Learning Ecosystem

The technological features that mark and dominate the twenty-first century form from learning and education a process which can be achieved anywhere and



Introduction

Museums' educational role has broadened recently in line with an emerging global trend in education which seeks to achieve educational excellence. The main objective of educational excellence is to improve the quality of education through implementing an educational-ecosystem approach. This constitutes a system which involves a network of participants rather than just educational institutions and learners.

A learning ecosystem, see Fig. 1, has become an important new driver in education on a large scale in some of Qatar's educational institutions, such as Qatar University, Doha University, Qatar Foundation, Community College of Qatar, although not at schools. Thus, in line with Bandyopadhyay, Bardhan and Dey's description of education as a social process, these institutions emphasize the idea of the education process as a linkage of relationships between different segments (Bandyopadhyay, S., Bardhan, A., Dey, P., Bhattacharyya, S. 2021). These segments are learners, government organizations, teachers, families, the local culture, educational bodies, technologies and materials. Museums in Qatar, too, rethought their educational role and began to focus on these considerations,

as one participant in the ecosystem educational approach.

The main objective of this article is to highlight the educational role of museums in Qatar during the twenty-first century through the educational-ecosystem approach. The purpose is to apprehend how museums conceptualise their educational roles within the community and how these museums contribute to the educational-ecosystem approach that educational institutions are implementing in Qatar. Ultimately, the article will consider: what roles and methodologies are museums in Qatar applying to facilitate knowledge dissemination? How are their new educational roles constructed and performed? What is the impact of museums upon youth and their choice of museum professions as their future jobs? The article will use primary sources from the author's research: firstly, a survey that was completed by students from Community College of Qatar, both male and female, which questioned their interest in working in museums, especially as educators or curators. My concentration on the educational role of museums in Qatar during the twenty-first century aims to offer insight into the important role of museums in the educational-ecosystem approach as a cultural institution.

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Fig. 1. The components of a learning ecosystem

Museums in Qatar and their Educational Role in a Learning–Ecosystem Approach

Dr. Mariam Ibrahim Al-Hammadi (*)

Abstract

This article discusses the role of museums in Qatar as participants in an educational ecosystem. An educational ecosystem is an educational approach which involves a network of participants, rather than being confined to educational institutions and learners. This approach aims to increase the quality of education and achieve education excellence through building a culture of lifelong learning. This article analyses the ways in which Qatar Museums (QM) embodies this approach, by considering its relationship with the education sector and local community. The objective of this evaluation is to identify how museums conceptualise their educational roles within the community and how

these museums complement the educational-ecosystem approach which some educational institutions are already employing in Qatar. It is clear that, despite the fact that QM has a clear cultural and educational agenda, the gap between QM, the community and educational sector is apparent. Thus, I argue here that advocacy is vital for museums to support their new educational programmes. In addition, a collaborative national agenda should be developed between the museum sector, educational sector and community in order to encourage lifelong learning.

Keywords: Museum Education, Museums in Qatar, Learning Ecosystem, Education Excellence, Museums Advocacy, Lifelong Learning.

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