



# May 2024 Newsletter

## News

### **SESRI Researchers' Work Presented at the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Annual Conference:**

SESRI's CATI Operations Manager, Mr. John Lee Holmes, represented the Institute at the 79th annual conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), held in Atlanta in mid-May. At this most prestigious conference of the survey profession, Holmes presented the work done by numerous scholars based at Qatar University in general and SESRI in particular. One of the projects presented was titled "Exploring factors influencing family cohesion in Qatar," co-authored by SESRI's director, Professor Kaltham Al-Ghanim, along with Amal Ali, Dr. Buthaina AlKhelaifi, Catalina Petcu, Maitha Al Naimi, Noor Al Emadi, Maryam Al-Thani, and Rima Charbaji El-Kassem. This study, part of a larger project that SESRI is working on with the Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), examined the dynamics and factors contributing to family strength and unity in Qatar. A primary finding was that improved family support and the presence of shared morals were associated with increased family cohesion. Another project presented was titled "Interest in Volunteering for the FIFA 2022 World Cup in Qatar: A nationally representative study of motivations," co-authored by Šemsia Jatić, John Lee Holmes, Engi ElMaghrabi, and Maitha Al Naimi. SESRI also published a paper on this topic in a peer-reviewed journal. This study explored the motivations behind volunteering for the FIFA World Cup and found that previous volunteering experiences, interest in football, and positive attitudes about Qatar hosting the games had the strongest effect on the respondents' interest in volunteering.

The third project presented looked at "Expatriates in Qatar from Nationals' Points of View," and was co-authored by Dr. Buthaina Al-Khelaifi, Dr. Abdoulaye Diop, Engi ElMaghraby, John Lee Pratt Holmes, and Lina Bader. This study investigated Qatari nationals' perceptions of foreign workers and follows up on prior research, including a paper published on the topic in 2012. Like its predecessor, this study contained a survey experiment. Results suggest that Qatari nationals appreciate the talent and economic contributions of expatriates, but continue to have concerns about traffic congestion in particular.

SESRI researchers regularly attend conferences from AAPOR and its globally-focused sister organization, the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR), as well as regularly sponsor their own conferences that illustrate the social and policymaking benefits that derive from the scientific measurement of public opinion.

## Training Field Workers in a Study to Estimate the Number of Unowned Pets (Stray Dogs)

Within the framework of preparations for a study to estimate the number of stray dogs in Qatar, in cooperation with the Ministry of Municipality, the Social & Economic Survey Research Institute organized the first field work training from 29-30 May 2024. Dr. Mo Salman, research consultant and professor at the University of Colorado in the United States of



America, participated in the training. The goal of the training is to familiarize the participants with the protocol. Research and occupational health participated in training veterinarians and selected candidates to work in the field research.

## Presentation for “Bahith” Program

As part of the initiative by the Civil Service and Government Development Bureau and Qatar University, a group of female graduates participating in the "Bahith" program for research and development skills presented the final report they worked on for six weeks at the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute on Monday, 20 May, 2024. It is worth noting that the researchers were trained in research fundamentals and wrote a comprehensive study on education in Qatar, specifically focusing on parents' satisfaction with schools in Qatar. This initiative comes from SESRI's belief in the importance of providing essential and significant services to the community.



## Publications

### SESRI Publishes in the International Journal of Methods in Psychiatric Research (MPR)

SESRI researchers' work has been published as a special issue of the International Journal of Methods in Psychiatric Research (MPR). The journal issue, entitled “Scoring Goals to Improve Mental Health, from the FIFA World Cup to the World Mental Health Qatar (WMHQ) Survey,” documents academic findings and methodological innovations from SESRI's four-year effort to measure mental health issues in Qatar, involving over 5,000 Arabic speakers residing in Qatar.

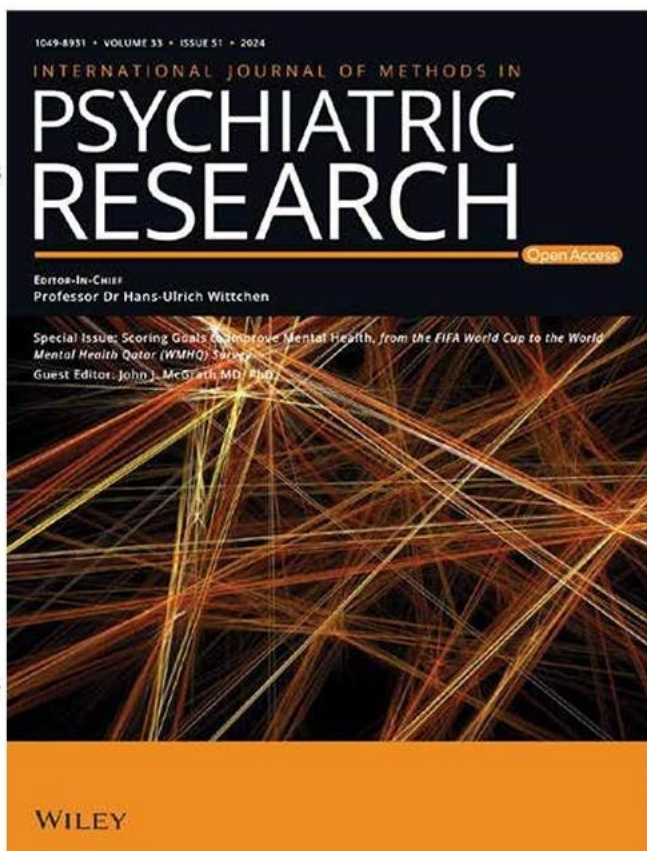
The multiyear project was led by Dr. Salma M. Khaled, who was a senior researcher at SESRI and now an Associate Professor at Qatar University's College of Medicine. Her collaborators included senior researchers from Hamad Medical Corporation, Harvard Medical School, and the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research (ISR). Over 234 days, 5,195 interviews, each averaging 77 minutes, were completed. A subset of these interviews, conducted by SESRI's trained telephone interviewers, was verified through follow-up clinical reappraisal interviews using trained psychology professionals, and the correspondence of results was measured. Another subset of the sample was recruited for epidemiological measurements using Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) technology.

The fieldwork occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, researchers adapted the study from face-to-face interviews to telephone administration. Working with Qatar University's Information Technology Services (ITS), SESRI's programmers, led by Mr. Anis Miladi, further adapted the phone lab to become a distributed network of interviewers, supervisors, and quality monitors so that data collection could be conducted safely from home without sacrificing data quality. Mr. Abdolrahman Abdulaziz Alharmi of SESRI's CATI lab administration oversaw the implementation of these novel procedures.

The special issue contains seven articles written by researchers and scholars affiliated with SESRI and other research centers involved in the project. From a methodological point of view, the study results demonstrated that a survey of over an hour could successfully be adapted to the phone, providing results that were both reliable and consistent with face-to-face versions of the survey. Consequently, in addition to providing important information to mental health care providers in Qatar, the study also resulted in critical methodological innovations for researchers worldwide.

In an article on “Lifetime Prevalence,” Dr. Salma Khaled and her co-authors noted that the “overall lifetime treatment estimate reported . . . for Qatar [was] similar to neighboring Saudi Arabia but much lower than lifetime treatment rates reported in high-income countries.” They reiterated that “[f]or any service planning, identifying those at high risk is crucial.” Mental health issues can be troubling for families and costly to society if not properly addressed, and this study is a significant step forward in understanding the dimensions and range of treatments required to properly address this national concern.

Hamad Medical Corporation (Qatar) funded the study through Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (UK). Additionally, many resources and services of Qatar University were generously provided, particularly by the university's ITS.



Congratulations to Dr. Buthaina ALKhelaifi for winning this year's Qatar University Dissertation Award

# The Office of Graduate Studies is pleased to announce Graduate Studies Awards Winners 2023-2024

## Thesis Award

**Alaa Ahmed Mohamed Lotfi Abbas**  
Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences  
College of Health Sciences

**Dania Alkhiyami**  
Master in Health Professions Education  
QU Health

**Doaa Elayed Abdelrahman Mahmoud**  
Master of Science in Pharmacy  
College of Pharmacy

**Kazuto Matsuda**  
Master of Arts in Gulf Studies  
College of Arts and Sciences

## Dissertation Award

**Fatima Mohammed Qafoud**  
PhD in Biomedical Sciences  
College of Health Sciences

**Sara Ali Sallabi**  
PhD in Law  
College of Law

**Lubna Therachiyil**  
PhD in Pharmaceutical Sciences  
College of Pharmacy

**Buthaina Abdulrahman ALKhelaifi**  
PhD in Gulf Studies  
College of Arts and Sciences

## Graduate Research Award

### Humanities and Social Sciences

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Place

**Lakshmi Venugopal**  
PhD in Gulf Studies  
College of Arts and Sciences

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

**Kazuto Matsuda**  
Master in Gulf Studies  
College of Arts and Sciences

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

**Gazala Nouri Ben Ashur**  
PhD in Fiqh and Usul Al-Fiqh  
College of Sharia and Islamic Studies