

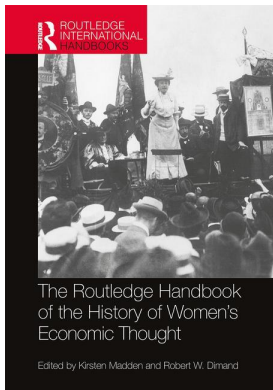
This article was downloaded by: 10.2.97.136

On: 24 Mar 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



The Routledge Handbook of the History of Women's Economic Thought

Kirsten Madden, Robert W. Dimand

Women economists of the Arab Homeland

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315723570-22>

Talia Yousef, Robert W. Dimand

Published online on: 28 Sep 2018

How to cite :- Talia Yousef, Robert W. Dimand. 28 Sep 2018, *Women economists of the Arab Homeland from: The Routledge Handbook of the History of Women's Economic Thought* Routledge
Accessed on: 24 Mar 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315723570-22>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

Full terms and conditions of use: <https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms>

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

WOMEN ECONOMISTS OF THE ARAB HOMELAND¹

Talia Yousef and Robert W. Dimand

Researcher's approach, limitations and position

This research aims to identify the role of Arab women in the field of economics within the Arab nations of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). In doing so, the research goal is to highlight the extent of female participation in modern economics within the Arab Homeland, in comparison to the rest of the world. For consistency and to allow for a relevant comparison between female participation in economics within this region versus female participation in economics elsewhere, the field of Islamic economics will be excluded from this study. Even though Islamic economics has a profound history existing long before Adam Smith (see e.g. Hosseini 2003; Islahi 2015), this study focuses on female participation in the field of modern liberal economics.

It is essential to highlight the positionality of one of the authors as an Arab–Canadian female scholar. This author's position has both benefits and limitations. The benefits of the author's position are an expanded scope of study, because many research results were retrieved in both English and Arabic. The author's expanded access to material in the Arabic language sets a limitation on the countries and women included in this survey. Because of the limitation to data and content in the Arabic, English and French languages, only the Arab nations within MENA can be included in this research. Thus, this research excludes female participation in the field of economics in non–Arab nations that might be included in the Western definition of the Middle East, such as Turkey, Iran and Israel.

The lead author mitigates the prospect of orientalist or subjective Western bias, as the researcher is linked to the research subject as a female Arab economist herself, though in North America rather than in an Arab nation. As an Arab researcher, it is necessary to identify the nations included in the research by the local definition rather than the orientalist Western definition. The modern term “Middle East” was coined as a British colonial military term referring to all Islamic “othered” nations in the “middle”, between Britain and Colonial India. Although the term fell into common use, “Middle East” was neither accepted nor used by the inhabitants of the region until very recently. A commonly used local term for the region is *الوطن العربي* – in Arabic (or “Al-Watan Al-Arabi”), directly translated as “The Arab Nation.” In research studying numerous maps of the “Middle East” published from within the region, Karen Culcasi (2012) translates the commonly used term as the “Arab Homeland”:

One can easily deduce that the Arab Homeland includes the states of Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Palestine (Israel is not included), Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, the UAE and Yemen. On nearly all Arab Homeland maps that have been published since the 1960s, these states have consistently comprised the Arab Homeland.²

Many Arabs, including the lead author, do not identify with or recognize the term “Middle East” in reference to Arab nations, because that term was imposed by Western colonizers. This research focuses on the Arab nations within the region that have linguistic and cultural commonalities.

Socio-economic context: Arab women in education and the labor force

Table 21.1 shows that labor force participation rates have been low for women in many of the countries of the Arab Homeland in recent decades. Average female labor force participation rates are 21% in 1990 and only 23% in 2016. There are noteworthy exceptions: Qatar, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, which clearly indicate that a low women’s labor force participation rate is not a necessary outcome in this region of the world. Though beyond the scope of

Table 21.1 Female labor force participation rates and national GDP, 1990 versus 2016

	1990 female labor force participation rate (ages 15+)	1990 GDP (\$ billions)	2016 female labor force participation rate (ages 15+)	2016 GDP (\$ billions)
Algeria	10	62.045	17	156.08
Bahrain	28	4.23	39	31.859
Egypt	26	43.13	23	336.297
Iraq	11	179.886	15	171.48
Jordan	9	4.16	14	38.655
Kuwait	35	18.428	48	114.041
Lebanon	18	2.838	24	47.537
Libya	18	28.902	28	*
Mauritania	25	1.02	29	4.635
Morocco	27	30.18	25	101.445
Oman	17	11.685	30	66.293
Qatar	41	7.36	53	152.469
Saudi Arabia	14	117.63	20	646.438
Sudan	27	12.409	24	95.584
Syria	18	12.309	12	2007: 40.405*
Tunisia	20	12.291	25	42.063
UAE	25	50.701	42	348.743
West Bank and Gaza	9	1994: 2.843*	18	13.397
Yemen	16	5.647	26	27.318
Arab World	21		23	
World	52		49	

Source: World Bank, 2016. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS>

*For the purpose of consistency, all data presented have been retrieved from the World Bank. Thus, any data which the World Bank does not have nor provide for public record, is omitted. This does not mean that the labor force in these regions did not exist at that time. Rather, for a variety of possible reasons, that information was not accessible to, or was omitted by, the World Bank.

Table 21.2 Female labor force participation, female population and total population

Country	2016 female labor force participation rate (ages 15+)	Female population (% of total)	Total population
Algeria	17	49.5	40 606 052
Bahrain	39	37.9	1 425 171
Egypt	23	49.4	95 688 681
Iraq	15	49.4	37 202 572
Jordan	14	49.4	9 455 802
Kuwait	48	42.6	4 052 584
Lebanon	24	49.8	6 006 668
Libya	28	49.6	6 293 253
Mauritania	29	49.6	4 301 018
Morocco	25	50.5	35 276 786
Oman	30	34.6	4 424 762
Qatar	53	24.8	2 569 804
Saudi Arabia	20	43.1	32 375 687
Sudan	24	50.0	39 578 828
Syria	12	49.4	18 430 453
Tunisia	25	50.6	11 403 248
UAE	42	27.2	9 269 612
West Bank and Gaza	18	49.3	4 551 566
Yemen	26	49.5	27 584 213
Arab World	23	48.2	
World	49		

Source: World Bank, 2016. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS>

this chapter, it is relevant to note that the low female labor force participation rates are due to a vast array of reasons, including political and economic disruptions imposed by nations outside the Arab Homeland.

Where there are high female labor force participation rates in the Arab Homeland, this is correlated with high per capita GDP. Thus, oil-rich and foreign investment-attracting countries such as the nations of the Arabian Gulf provide women the greatest means to enter the work-force simply based on higher availability of jobs. This is the case for all Arabian Gulf nations, except for Saudi Arabia.

In assessing the role of women in the labor force, Saudi Arabia is an outlier: it exhibits the absolute highest GDP among other Arab nations, yet has one of the lower female labor force participation rates. Unlike other Arab nations, Saudi Arabia has imposed strict patriarchal laws on its female citizens, falsely using Islam as a justification for its policies. Such limitations imposed on women include the fact that, unlike other Arab-speaking nations and until quite recently, women in Saudi Arabia have not been permitted to drive, run for political positions past the municipal level, or work without a male guardian's permission. These patriarchal policies are not at all correlated with Islamic law, which traditionally prioritizes and promotes women's right to work, own land and contribute to their communities.³ This disconnect with Saudi Arabia's policies on women and Islam is further strengthened by the fact that all other Arabian Gulf nations are also ruled by conservative Muslim monarchs, and yet the other wealthy Gulf nations exhibit higher female labor force participation rates. Thus, Saudi Arabia is a unique case with its own socio-economic context. In the sense of female contributions to the field of economics, Saudi Arabia's unique differences set a limitation on women to participate

in economics in the political realm, but might not have as much of a negative impact on their contributions within the academic realm.

In contrast to the wealthy economies of the Arabian Gulf, the nations of the Levant which include Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the West Bank and Gaza, exhibit weaker economies and worse female labor participation rates. In addition to the economic limitations which differentiate the Levant from the Arabian Gulf, the Levantine nations are all less than a century out of British and French colonization, in which the displacement of people from their traditional lands and socio-economic roles was a key contributor to the rise of poverty. The high poverty rates of Jordan and Lebanon are associated with millions of displaced refugees from former Palestine and now from Syria as well. The nations with lowest GDP as of 2016, and the lowest female labor force participation rates have much in common. On one hand, there is the effect of political instability and war which impacted the economies of Iraq and Syria. On the other hand, there is the very recent settler-colonialism which impacted the economies of Algeria and the West Bank and Gaza. The context of colonialism in the Levant and North Africa is essential to providing socio-economic context. This is especially relevant as women in the Levant and North Africa traditionally held key economic roles in their previous communal structures, most of which were destroyed with colonialism and the imposition of new economic structures.

Private property and capitalist relations of production in the context of an expanding market economy transformed class structure. In the rural areas a complex process of social differentiation and stratification occurred, characterized by inequalities in land-holding and new social relationships of production and distribution.⁴

Colonial impact not only affects the key economic roles of women by imposing capitalism and land privatization, but in the case of the West Bank and Gaza caused the displacement of, and was the root cause of poverty for, millions of Palestinian refugees. Such context is important to factor in, to address the Western-centered biases that falsely lay the blame on Islam: historical studies highlight the fact that within the traditional cultures of the Levant especially, women held very key economic roles within their communities. Therefore, it is essential to understand the political relations and their economic impacts which have had long-term impact on the economic status of women in the Arab Homeland.

One other major impact of colonialism in the modern economies of the Arab Homeland is the main language use in post-colonial Arab nations. In the Levant and Egypt, both Arabic and English are the professional languages, while in North Africa, French and Arabic are the professional languages. These sub-regional differences have effects on women's advanced education. More women from the Levant and Egypt earn their Ph.D.s from English-language universities in the UK and North America. Many women in North Africa seek completion of their Ph.D.s in modern economics in France due to their French proficiency. Lebanon is an outlier, as it recognizes all three languages, French, English and Arabic as common. The vast majority of Lebanese academics being trilingual, they have the option of completing dissertations and teaching or practicing economics in any of the three languages.

In Lebanon especially, but also in parts of Jordan, and most of North Africa it is becoming increasingly uncommon to complete one's post-secondary education in the Arabic language. Lebanon and Egypt were the first to adopt American universities and implement Western systems of higher education, which initially created the advantage of feminist advocacy in the early 20th century and early female enrollment in education. Yet their initial advancements did not allow them to exceed other Arab nations in the labor force participation of women due to different experiences of political instability from the civil war in Lebanon, to the Egyptian revolution in 2011.

A history of women in education in the Arab Homeland

Although the observed emergence of Arab women graduating with Ph.D. degrees in modern economics began in the mid-1960s, the accomplishments are not limited to such recent involvement. The world's first university, the University of Al-Karaouine in Fez, Morocco, was actually founded by an Arab woman, Fatima Al-Fihri, in 859 AD.⁵

The legacy of educated Arab women was strengthened in 1885 when Tabat M. Islambouly graduated from the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania, which is now Drexel University in Pennsylvania. Tabat Islambouly was the first Arab medical student to graduate from an American university. She became a successful medical physician in the Arab Homeland.

Tabat Islambouly is also believed to have gone back to Damascus, and then was in Cairo, Egypt in 1919 according to the alumnae list of that year. After that, the college lost touch with her and it's not known what happened to her ultimately.⁶

As one of the first Arab nations to adopt Western economic structures, Lebanon holds the record for the earliest admittance of females into modern universities within the Arab Homeland. The first three females to graduate within Arab nations were Adele Kassab, Rosa Kulunjian, and Ossanna Maksoudian, who enrolled at the American University of Beirut (AUB) in 1905.⁷ The three graduated in 1908 with Nursing Certificates. The AUB implemented coeducation in 1921 with little feminist advocacy or pressure to do so, but as a natural progression to reinstate the traditional economic roles of Arab women within the rising Western economic structures. The coeducation expansion of 1921 was a decision that resulted from an executive observation within the university that other departments required female influence. This expansion encouraged the enrollment of female students in faculties other than Nursing, including the School of Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, and the pre-medical program in the School of Arts and Sciences. As the enrollment of female students increased, Lebanese women began to graduate in a variety of fields, enhancing the contributions of Arab women to the economy. The first Arab woman to be granted a degree from a university in the region was Miss Sara Levy from Palestine, who gained a Ph.C. in Pharmacy from the AUB in 1925.⁸ According to the AUB Archives,⁹ the next women to be the first to graduate in their field were as follows:

- Munirah F. Jaffri, who graduated with a B.A. in Arts and Sciences in 1926
- Gladys F. Shanklin, who graduated with a B.A. in Arts and Sciences in 1926
- Fortune Azriel who graduated with a D.D.S Dentistry in 1926
- Edma Abou Shadid who gained her B.A. in Arts and Sciences in 1926, and then an M.D. in Medicine in 1931 from AUB. She also continued post-graduate studies from 1932–1933 in Paris and London. Dr. Shadid practiced as a clinical assistant in gynecology and obstetrics at AUB from 1933–1935. She then worked as a government physician at the Royal Hospital of Baghdad from 1935–1942. She became the first woman to open a private practice in Baghdad from 1942 to 1945, then moved to work in the U.S.A.

By 1947, which commemorated the silver jubilee of coeducation at the AUB, there were 113 female students enrolled across every single department within the university except for the engineering school. These accomplishments for women were published in “the *kulliyah* magazine” (college magazine) in 1950,¹⁰ which, after presenting the absence of females in the engineering department, wrote “any feminine team of three to force open its gates”, empowering and encouraging women to challenge that male-dominated field. The AUB was the first

university in the region to enroll female students, and actively advocated for further academic achievements and economic contributions of women.

Egypt paved the path of progress in women's rights and participation in a variety of ways. As the oldest economy within the Arab Homeland, it could be expected that a nation with such a powerful history of politics, trade, and innovation would be one of the first to exhibit female participation in the field of modern economics. As the Egyptian economy grew, the demand for women in the labor force increased and an Arab feminist movement gained mainstream attention. The Egyptian Feminist Union (EFU) was the first women's rights advocacy group in the Middle East, emerging in Egypt in 1923.¹¹ Led by Huda Sharawi, the EFU successfully advocated for many women's issues including female enrollment in universities. The EFU's advocacy was successful, resulting in female admission to the Egyptian National University in 1928, now internationally recognized as the University of Cairo.¹²

Since the number of modern universities in the Arab Homeland before the 1950s was limited, all universities that were founded later in the 20th century enrolled both female and male students upon opening. For example, the University of Jordan has practiced coeducation since its founding day in 1962.¹³ All Arabic universities accept female students equally based on academic ability, and provide equal means of academic and economic achievement for both men and women. Extreme cases that will be evaluated later are nations such as Saudi Arabia, in which gender segregation exists in higher education but, nonetheless, women are not excluded from studying any academic fields.

Female economists in Lebanon

As the first nation to include female students in higher education, along with a historical context of social progressiveness, Lebanon holds the record for the earliest observed involvement of Arab female economists.

The first observed record of an Arab female economics instructor was Ms. Mona Baroody at the American Junior College for Women within the AUB, in 1944.¹⁴ Ms. Mona Baroody first held the position of secretary at the American Office of War Information in Beirut from 1943 to 1944, then later became an instructor of economics from 1944–1946. In 1947, she married an economics instructor, Faisal Farouk Damlouji, who taught economics at the School of Commerce in Baghdad from 1943. The family became better known for Damlouji's diplomatic work in the Iraqi Embassy in London, and later as the Assistant Director General of the economics department in the Foreign Ministry of Baghdad, a position he took over in 1951.

The next Arab woman to make a professional contribution within the field of economics was Ms. Salwa Mansur Jurdak, born in 1927 in Beirut, Lebanon. Ms. Jurdak received her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1947, her M.A. degree in 1948 and became an instructor at the Beirut College for Women within the AUB in 1949. She was the second female economics professor in the Arab Homeland, also teaching subjects such as history and political science since November 1949. The inclusion of female faculty was not limited at the AUB, as the economic positions of women were traditionally valued in the Levant. In 1951, another female faculty member began teaching economics at the AUB. Mrs. James Baster had an M.A. from Columbia University and lectured economics at AUB from 1951 to 1953.

The AUB was the first university among Arab nations to hire a female economist, and continues to have strong female presence within their Economics Faculty. In fact, the chair of the department of economics from 2011 to 2015 is Dr. Nisreen Salti. Dr. Salti received her Ph.D. in Economics from Princeton University in 2006, and in that year joined the AUB. When

surveyed as a primary source, Dr. Salti clarifies that she never faced any barriers in pursuing an education or gaining a career within economics. She also states: “In the Middle East, as it is elsewhere, the field of economics tends to be male-dominated, but this has been changing in the Middle East as it has been in the rest of the world.”¹⁵ This quote by the chair of the economics department at AUB in 2015 indicates that the involvement of Middle Eastern female economists continues to evolve alongside that of female economists across the world, and also along with the constant growth of the field of economics. Retrieved from her professional website, two topics of recent interest include health economics (for example, see Salti and Raad 2010; Salti and Ghatta 2016) and public finance (for example, see Salti 2015 and Salti et al. 2015).

The references cited here, along with her many other publications and ongoing research show that this Arab economist is not only contributing to the field of economics, but she is using her platform as an economist to contribute positively by addressing social and economic issues within the Arab Homeland. Her work is often published and recognized on an international level, as she continually succeeds to release economic research that brings forth relevant and influential data. The Faculty of Economics at the AUB includes many other successful female economists.

Female economists in Egypt

Among the many Egyptian universities that benefit from the contributions of female economics professors, the University of Cairo holds the largest number within a department of economics with 88 female economics professionals.¹⁶ Not only did the University of Cairo enact the first enrollment of female students within Egypt, but it also hired numerous female economists in the 1960s who were among the first Arab women to gain Ph.D. degrees in economics. An emeritus faculty member, Dr. Salwa Ali Soliman Farghali (recognized as Dr. Soliman) obtained a Ph.D. in Economics in 1966 from the University of Southern California.¹⁷ Her Ph.D. dissertation appears to also be the first publication within economics by an Arab woman. Her thesis was published as a book titled “Planning under Socialism—and Risk” in 1966. In this publication, Dr. Soliman examines the role of “risk” with emphasis in the economic system of the United Arab Emirates. Her main hypothesis is that all economic systems face risk, centrally planned as well as market-based. Her second hypothesis is that

under socialist centrally-planned systems, the situations which originally represent cases of “risk” are affected by new conditions that turn them into situations of “uncertainty,” and that this fact gives a strong justification to the arbitrariness in decision-making under these systems.

p. 2

As she taught at the University of Cairo, she was responsible for many publications in Arabic, one of which was a first edition political economy textbook which introduces the applied economics aspects within mixed economic systems, discussing the rules and foundations upon which economic policies should be built and clarifying the fundamental objectives such economic policies should seek to achieve.

Another significant University of Cairo emeritus faculty member and alumna is Dr. Hanaa A. Kheir-El-Din who gained her Bachelor’s degree in Economics with highest honors from the University of Cairo in 1961. She acquired her Ph.D. in Economics in 1967 at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the U.S.A., where she conducted a successful dissertation titled “A Quadratic Programming Approach to the Problem of Optimal Pricing and Use of Cotton in

Egypt.” Dr. Kheir-El-Din’s success within economics includes public service as an economic advisor for ministries in the Arab Homeland since 1968. Her economic contributions were prominent in the following list of highly influential advisory roles:¹⁸ Economic advisor at the Ministry of Treasury (1968–1969); economic advisor at the Arab Corporation for Investment Guarantee in Kuwait (1974–1975); economic consultant evaluating all investment in construction within the Ministry of Planning of Kuwait (1977–1978); economic advisor within the Ministry of Economy in Cairo, Egypt (1978–1980); economic advisor to the Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade in Egypt (1981–1985); economic advisor to the Minister of Economic Cooperation in Egypt (1986–1993); economic advisor to the Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade (1994–1996); and member of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden (2005–2008).

Dr. Kheir-El-Din’s vast success is not limited to her many influential advisory roles within economics ministries, as she has succeeded in roles such as the director of research within the Economic Policy Initiative Consortium from 1997–1998. Her expertise was utilized often in her participation as a board member at the United Nations University (Kokusai rengō daigaku), located in Shibuya, Tokyo, Japan, and also in the Egyptian Competition Authority, the Economics Committee of the Supreme Council of Culture in Egypt, the Egyptian Capital Market Authority, and the Executive Committee of the Social Fund for Development in Egypt. Dr. Kheir-El-Din received an Award of Honour by the Economics Research Forum (ERF) alongside other successful researchers. The ERF acts as a professional local network within Egypt, which recognizes the successes of high-quality economic research, promoting sustainable economic development in the Middle East and North Africa region.¹⁹

In consecutive order, the next Egyptian emeritus faculty member from the University of Cairo who was one of the first Arab females to contribute to the field of economics is Dr. Nadia Hassan Soliman. She completed her M.Sc. in 1969 at the University of Cairo with a dissertation on “Agricultural Land Taxation in the U.A.R.” Her thesis was conducted and reported in English and it aimed to find a taxation system that maximized the tax revenue from land without neglecting the equity of tax and its income distributional effects and balancing the issue of land taxes as dis-incentives for agricultural development.

The successful female economists from the University of Cairo have held a variety of influential roles and have made an impact in the field of economics within the Arab Homeland.

Within the field of economics, there are many groups and councils that utilize economics expertise to advocate policy and legislation. The Egyptian Center of Economics Studies (ECES) funds and publishes a wide variety of economic research, as an independent and non-profit organization. With the contributions of international experience and the thorough evaluation of many stakeholders, the organization aims to continually increase economic efficiency and social justice within Egypt. The ECES provides research to propose effective economic policies and introduce institutional and legislative reforms within Egypt. The ECES is divided into three categories of involvement; the board of directors, the ECES members, and the ECES research team. Four of the 41 ECES members are women who work in influential roles within the Egyptian economy. The research team of 21 includes 10 female economists. All the managing roles within the team are held by female economists while many of the male economists on the team contribute as supporting staff.

Dr. Abla Abdel-Latif is the executive director and director of research within the Egyptian Center of Economic Studies. With over 20 years of teaching experience as a Professor of Economics at the American University in Cairo, she has also participated in research within the ERF and is the author of many publications within international refereed journals. She is currently the chairwoman of the Presidential Advisory Council for Economic Development, a member of the Central Bank of Egypt’s Coordinating Council, and is the first female board

member at the National Bank of Egypt. She currently holds the role of the main economic advisor to the president of the republic of Egypt. Her economics contributions have been recognized by Western academics: she received a special award for outstanding achievement and excellence in research from Sussex University in the UK.²⁰

The other female economists on the ECES research team include Magda Awadallah the deputy director of finance and administration. She has over 30 years' experience. Her previous international contributions include the finance accounts manager at the USAID-funded National Council of Negro Women, Inc., and work with the International Development and Energy Associates, Louis Berger International, Inc., and the UNDP/FAO Regional Fisheries Project. Rama Said is the senior economist at the Egyptian Center for Economics Studies and is also the senior economist at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, where she is responsible for creating strategic documents and policy-oriented research papers on behalf of the ministry. Maya Ehab is an economist at ECES who has previously worked as the team leader at the Egyptian Competition Authority and has served as a visiting fellow at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva. Other roles successfully achieved by women on the ECES research team include three economics research analysts, the executive assistant to the executive director, the editor and translator, and the events, operations and membership officer.

Female economists: Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabian laws and policies pertaining to women's rights exhibit uncommon limitations and restrictions, with very little, if any, room for political advocacy and resistance. Social and socio-economic barriers imposed on Saudi Arabian women by the state, until quite recently, included the inability to drive, inability to study abroad without a male guardian and inability to work without the permission of a male guardian. These restrictions limit the means and accessibility of labor force participation for Saudi Arabian women in the overall workforce, let alone the field of economics.

Yet despite the unparalleled restrictions Saudi Arabian women face, some do have the means to contribute to academic economics. The controversial policies which enforce gender-based segregation create a demand for all-female faculty. It is common for Islamic universities, which include all universities in Saudi Arabia, to provide separate faculties for males and females. The idea is to provide both genders with access to the same education and awards, but all lectures and academic sessions are segregated. Despite this gender-based segregation being problematic from a Western feminist perspective, it can be argued that there arises an economic benefit from these structures. First, the availability of two faculties for each field of study provides opportunities for female student enrollment and a guaranteed higher rate of female students to be accepted into universities. A second beneficial aspect of the segregation of faculties is that it encourages women to succeed in higher levels of education and to pursue well-paid and economically stable work as professors.

In one university alone, there exists a faculty of 20 Saudi Arabian women working within the field of economics.²¹ One of these women economists of Saudi Arabia is Dr. Lubna Mohamed Abu Alaa Abdullah. She is an economics professor at King Abd Al Aziz University in Jedda, and her first research publication was in 1989 on "The Factors Affecting Household Saving, an Attempt to Measure the Qualitative Impact."²² She specializes in teaching macroeconomics. Some of the other research topics she explores in her publications include oil revenues in Saudi Arabia and the role of barter deals in Egyptian exports.

Islamic universities, Al-Azhar University

Islamic universities offer a variety of world-renowned fields of study, with the university operations maintaining Islamic religious ethics and standards. All levels of education are equally available for males and females. Although Islamic universities are the norm within Saudi Arabia, they are quite rare among the rest of the Arab nations. Most universities in the Arab Homeland operate in correlation with Western education systems. There are many American universities throughout Arab countries such as Lebanon, UAE and Egypt. Many other universities offer all disciplines in the English language and operate in correlation to the UK education system. In the North Africa region, most universities operate in closer correlation to the French education system, and offer all disciplines in French rather than English. Therefore, it can be observed that Islamic universities are not very common outside of Saudi Arabia, and segregation of genders in higher education is also not common in Arab countries.

There is a noteworthy exception. Al-Azhar University in Egypt is a well-renowned Islamic university which practices gender segregation, and, like Saudi Arabia, provides the specialized labor demand for female faculty in Egypt. Apart from the discipline of Islamic economics, the business school at Al-Azhar University includes a gender-segregated economics department.

Other examples of female economists in the Arab Homeland

In Iraq, the historically dominant University of Baghdad first founded its College of Administration and Economics in 1947, then known as the Economics Business College. Almost half of the staff at the University of Baghdad are females, with 3125 female staff in comparison to 3517 male staff.²³ The university's small faculty of economics professors includes two female faculty members with Ph.D.s in Economics (Dr. Hala Khalid Hameed, assistant professor; Dr. Raphe Qasim, lecturer) and one female faculty (Basma Khalil Namik) lecturing with an M.Sc. in Economics.

The Iraq Economists Network has qualified Iraqi economists connecting to discuss and debate current issues including but not limited to monetary policy, inflation, fiscal policy, oil policy, trade policy and tariffs. One of the nine experts overviewing the network is Dr. Salam Smesim.²⁴ Prior to receiving her Ph.D. in Economics in 1999, she contributed to the field of economics as an economics teacher within commercial secondary schools in 1982. She was the founding dean of the College of Administration and Economics at the University of Kufa from 1991 to 1994.²⁵ She was a consultant at the World Bank in 2006, an economic advisor at the State Ministry for Civil Society in 2008 to 2011, and has been the economic advisor for the State Ministry of Governorates Affairs since 2011. Dr. Smesim has published 15 scholarly research articles within economics, in addition to over 40 articles published in various newspapers and magazines. Her scholarly publications topics include budget deficits, investment and globalization, providing economic analysis for key issues within the Arab Homeland.

Jordan

In Jordan, all universities have been co-educational since they were founded and female faculty began working as soon as they were eligible to teach. The University of Jordan was established in 1962,²⁶ and currently only three of the faculty members within the Department of Economics are female professors with Ph.D.s. Dr. Buthaina Muhtaseb, earned her B.Sc. in Economics and Statistics in 1974 from the University of Jordan and her Ph.D. in Economics in 1995 at Strathclyde University in the UK with her thesis on "The Competitiveness of Jordan's

Manufacturing Industry.” She is a current faculty member in the Economics Department at the University of Jordan. Dr. Muhtaseb could potentially be the first female to gain a degree in economics from a Jordanian university. In addition to her success as a professor at the University of Jordan, Dr. Muhtaseb has published 16 research articles and one textbook titled *Competitiveness and Development* in 2010.

Another female faculty member at the University of Jordan is Dr. Dalal Alkadi. Dr. Alkadi has been practicing in the field of economics since the 1980s, and published six scholarly research articles between 1987 and 1990. She first received a B.Sc. in Statistics from the University of Baghdad in 1975 and completed her Ph.D. in Statistics in 1985 at Oklahoma State University in the United States. Due to her background in statistics, her economics contributions emphasize econometrics. She has published four books since 1990. She also published two textbooks: *Statistics for Business and Economics*, 1st and 2nd editions, 2004 and 2005; and *Mathematics and its Application in Business and Economics*, 2006 (listed as first named co-author). Both textbooks are published in Arabic by Al Ahliyya Amman University (the mathematics text is also published in English).

Female ministers of economics in the Arab Homeland

The contributions of Arab women, especially in economics, are not limited to publications, academic careers and advisory roles. Arab female economists have successfully contributed to the workforce in a variety of roles and operations, including the government sector. In addition to the many female economic advisors within the Arab Homeland, including some economists mentioned above, Arab female economists continue to rise to leadership and gain greater influence.

The first female minister within the Arab Homeland was Ms. Naziha Jawdet Ashgah al-Dulaimi as the minister of municipalities in Iraq in 1952. Before her appointment as the first female Arab minister, she co-founded and was the first president of the Iraqi Women League, founded in 1952. Ms. Al-Duhaimi began feminist empowerment in Iraq and set an example of leadership for all other women within the Arab Homeland. The current youngest minister in the world is another Arab woman, Shama Al Mazrui minister of youth in UAE.

Table 21.3 presents 13 women holding ministerships in eight different locations within Arab nations. This list only includes ministry positions that are economics-related:

Table 21.3 Contemporary female ministers in economics within the Arab Homeland²⁷

Name	Location	Position	Time Period
Rima Khalaf Hneidi	Jordan	Minister of trade and industry	1993–1995
Dr. Nawal ‘Abd al-Moneim al-Tatawi	Egypt	Minister of economy and international cooperation	1996–1997
Dr. Magda Shahin	Egypt	Vice-minister of international economic relations	circa 1999
Dr. Samiha Fawzi Ibrahim	Egypt	Minister of trade and industry	2011–present
Dr. Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasemi	UAE	1 Minister of economy and planning 2 Minister of foreign trade 3 Minister of development and international cooperation	1 2004–2007 2 2008–2013 3 2013–2016
Leila Solh	Lebanon	Minister of industry	2004–2005
Raya Haffar Al-Hassan	Lebanon	Minister of finance	2009–2011

Dr. Abir Awda	Palestine	Minister of national economics	2009–present
Dr. Lamia Assi	Syria	1 Syrian ambassador in Malaysia	1 2004–2010
		2 Secretary of economy and trade at the Ministry of Economy	2 2010
Fatema Marouane	Morocco	Minister of trade and social economy	2013–present
Bouthaina Ben Yaghlane	Tunisia	Secretary of State of Finance	2015–2016
Lamia Zeribi	Tunisia	1 Secretary of state of development, investments and international cooperation	1 2015–2016
		2 Minister of finance	2 2016–2017

A few additional biographical details are relevant. Dr. Nawal ‘Abd al-Moneim al-Tatawi of Egypt was also the first female bank director in the Arab world.²⁸ Dr. Magda Shahin of Egypt holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Cairo. She was previously an ambassador to Greece, and she is currently a professor and the director of the Prince Alwaleed Center for American Studies and Research, School of Global Affairs and Public Policy at the American University of Cairo.²⁹ Dr. Samiha Fawzi Ibrahim of Egypt obtained her Ph.D. in Economics at the University of Cairo in 1984.³⁰ Along with extensive experience teaching as an economics professor at the University of Cairo, she held the role of the Deputy Director of the Egyptian Center for Economics Studies, and served as a board member at the Egyptian Competition Authority, the Bank for Exports Development, the National Council for Women and the General Authority for Investment.

In the UAE, Dr. Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasemi was also appointed president of Zayed University in 2014.³¹ She was rated first in the “top ten most powerful Arabic women in 2013” list and ranked the 42nd most powerful woman in the world by *Forbes* in 2015.³²

Another Arab female economist to acknowledge is Dr. Nemat Shafik who is the deputy governor of the Bank of England from 2014 to 2019.³³ Although her contributions as an economist are representative of England, she is an Arab woman of Egyptian origin born in Alexandria, Egypt in 1962. She represents the Bank of England on an international level overseeing many reforms and efficiency updates to improve institutional operations. Prior to her current role she was the deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund from 2011 to 2014. Dr. Shafik was also a vice president of the World Bank, where her implemented improvements are valued at \$50 billion. In honor of her vast achievements in economics, she was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 2015, in the Queen’s Birthday Honours list.

Conclusion

Female economists have been present since the mid-20th century in obtaining advanced economics degrees, in university teaching, in research and publication, and in government service (including at the ministerial level) in the Arab Homeland. The entry of women into studying and teaching of economics at universities in Arab nations began with secular institutions such as the Egyptian National University (now the University of Cairo) and institutions with close ties to the English-speaking academic world such as the American University of Beirut, American University in Cairo, and British University in Cairo. Women’s entry into economics in French-speaking universities in Arab countries was slower, paralleling the belated academic participation of women in France, where women did not even win the right to vote until after World War II.

The entry of women into university teaching of economics in the Arab Homeland has paralleled their entry into teaching in other disciplines, but credentials and skills as economists have helped women to rise to ministerial rank in the region. The role of women in liberal economics within Arab nations is similar to the role of women in economics elsewhere in the world. As the field of economics grows, and as economies grow stronger, more women participate in studying economics and in pursuing careers within the field.

Notes

- 1 We are grateful to participants in the 2016 History of Economics Society conference at Duke University and especially to our discussants, Joseph Persky and Annie Cot, for helpful comments.
- 2 Culcasi, K. (2012, p.1108).
- 3 Sayigh, R. (1979, p. 23). On women's economic rights and activity in earlier times, see Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Dominique Sourdel (1973), Abraham Marcus (1983), and Amira al-Azhary Sonbol (2005).
- 4 Farsoun, S. and Aruri, N. (2006, p. 45).
- 5 Guinness World Records, retrieved from: www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/oldest-university
- 6 www.andfaraway.net/blog/2013/12/23/sabat-istanbul-female-student-at-the-womens-medical-college-of-pennsylvania1885/
- 7 American University of Beirut Archives.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 *The Al-Kulliyah Magazine*. "Through Half a Century: Women Students." June and July 1950. Published by the Alumni Association, American University of Beirut, p. 15.
- 11 Guity Nashat and Judith E. Tucker (2012, pp. 105, 118–119), and Soha Abdel Kader (1987).
- 12 Nashat and Tucker (2012) and Kader (1987).
- 13 University of Jordan Archives.
- 14 American University of Beirut archive, online.
- 15 Personal statement via e-mail.
- 16 University of Cairo website accessed in 2016: <http://feps.cu.edu.eg/contacts/fepsfaculty.php>
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Curriculum vitae on the University of Cairo faculty website; <http://feps.cu.edu.eg/contacts/fepsfaculty.php>
- 19 <https://erf.org.eg/us/>
- 20 www.eces.org.eg/Staff.aspx
- 21 The Department of Economics at King Abd Al Aziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. See also "Arab universities: The kingdom is king," *The Economist*, April 2, 2016, p. 51, and "First Female Politicians Elected in Saudi Arabia," *Huffington Post*, December 13, 2015.
- 22 Curriculum vitae, online.
- 23 Arabic source: University of Baghdad website, www.en.uobaghdad.edu.iq/PageViewer.aspx?id=29
- 24 Information obtained from <http://iraqieconomists.net/en/miss-salam-smesim-ph-d/>
- 25 University of Kufa website, www.uokufa.edu.iq/
- 26 University of Jordan archives.
- 27 Rima Khalaf Hneidi, www.un.org/press/en/2010/sga1263.doc.htm; Nawal 'Abd al-Moneim al-Tatawi, <http://guide2womenleaders.com/egypt-htm>; Magda Shahin, www.ictsd.org/about-us/magda-shahin; Samiha Fawzi Ibrahim, www.eiod.org/uploads/publications/pdf/assessingcgegypt.pdf; Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasemi, www.arabianbusiness.com/people/sheikha-lubna-al-qasimi-507900.html; Leila Solh, <http://whoissh.lau.edu.lb/expert-profile/leila-solh-hamade>; Raya Haffar Al-Hassan, <http://whoissh.lau.edu.lb/expert-profile/raya-haffar-el-hassan-minister-finance>; Abir Awda, www.mne.gov.ps/DesktopDefault.aspx?lng=2; Lamia Assi, www.syrianfinance.gov.sy/arabic/2079.html&pr_docid=2792; Fatem Marouane, www.artisanat.gov.ma/; Boutheina Ben Yaghlane, www.huffingtonpost.com/author/boutheina-ben-yaghlane; Lamia Zribi, siteresources.worldbank.org/WBEUROPEEXTN/Resources/268436-1423672573448/9746237-1475484587168/9917909-1480580082085/Bio_list_of_speakers_EN.pdf; www.abouthier.com/node/2336/people/leading-ladies/lamia-zribi-breaks-male-monopoly-heads-tunisian-finance-ministry

- 28 <http://web.archive.org/web/20160816235645/http://www.kenanaonline.net/page/983>
 29 www.ictsd.org/about-us/magda-shahin
 30 Retrieved from Curriculum Vitae, online www.feps.edu.eg/ar/staffpages/samihaelsayed/curriculum/CV.doc
 31 <https://uaecabinet.ae/en/details/cabinet-members/her-excellency-sheikha-lubna-bint-khalid-al-qasimi>
 32 www.forbes.com/pictures/mdg45jihh/sheika-lubna-bint-khalid-al-qasimi/
 33 www.bankofengland.co.uk/about/people/minouche-shafik/biography.

Bibliography

- Abdel Kader, S. (1987). *Egyptian Women in a Changing Society, 1899–1987*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- American University of Beirut Quarterly Magazine*, Winter 2003, 1(2).
- Culcasi, K. (2012). “Mapping the Middle East from within: (counter-) cartographies of an imperialist construction,” *Antipode* 44: 4.
- Economic Development Board (2013). “Increasing Women’s Contribution to Bahrain’s Economy. (June 17). Retrieved from www.bna.bh/portal/news/565892?date=2013-07
- Egyptian Center for Economic Studies. (2014). Retrieved from www.eces.org.eg/Default.aspx
- Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University. Retrieved from www.feps.edu.eg/en/departments/economics/home.php
- Farghali, S. (1966). *Planning under Socialism—and Risk*. University of Southern California Dissertations and Theses. Retrieved from <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll18/id/219299>
- Farsoun, S. and Aruri, N. (2006). *Palestine and the Palestinians: A Social and Political History*. Boulder, CO: Westview Books.
- “First Female Politicians Elected in Saudi Arabia.” (2015, December 13). *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/saudi-arabia-female-politicians_us_566d8368e4b0e292150e3472
- Hosseini, H. S. (2003). “Contributions of Medieval Muslim Scholars to the History of Economics and Their Impact: A Refutation of the Schumpeterian Great Gap,” in W. J. Samuels, J. E. Biddle, and J. B. Davis, eds., *A Companion to the History of Economic Thought*, Malden, MA: Blackwell, pp. 28–45.
- Islahi, A. A. (2015). *Economic Thinking of Arab Muslim Writers during the Nineteenth Century*. Basingstoke, UK, and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Marcus, A. (1983). “Men, women and property: dealers in real estate in eighteenth century Aleppo,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 26(2): 137–163.
- Minister of Economy and the Moroccan ambassador discuss strengthening cooperation. (2016, March). Retrieved from *Maan News Agency*, <https://maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=836880>
- Ministère de l’Artisanat et de l’Economie Sociale et Solidaire. (2015). Retrieved from www.artisanat.gov.ma/fr
- Nashat, G. and Tucker, J. E. (2012). *Women in the Middle East and North Africa*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Nemat (Minouche) Shafik – Deputy Governor, Markets & Banking. Retrieved from www.bankofengland.co.uk/about/Pages/people/biographies/shafik.aspx
- Ristem, A. (2010, February 19). *Minister of Economy holds two meetings regarding the administration and economic activities in Aleppo*. Retrieved from http://syria-news.com/readnews.php?sy_seq=109895
- Roba. (2013, December 23). *UPDATED: Sabat Istanbuly, female student at the women’s medical college of Pennsylvania, 1885*. Retrieved from www.andfaraway.net/blog/2013/12/23/sabat-istanbuly-female-student-at-the-womens-medical-college-of-pennsylvania1885/
- Safa, S. (2016, March 16). *AUB acknowledges achievements and steps forward in gender equity*. Retrieved from www.aub.edu.lb/news/2016/Pages/gender-equity.aspx
- Salti, Nisreen. (2015). “Income inequality and the composition of public debt,” *Journal of Economics Studies* 42(1): 821–837.
- Salti, Nisreen and Ghatta, Hala (2016). “Food insufficiency and food insecurity as risk factors for physical disability among Palestinian refugees in Lebanon: evidence from an observational study,” *Disability and Health Journal* 9(4) (October): 655–662.
- Salti, Nisreen, Chabaan, Jad, Nakkash, Rima and Alaouie, Hala (2015). “The effect of taxation on tobacco consumption and public revenue in Lebanon,” *Tobacco Control* 24(1): 77–81.

- Salti, Nisreen, Chabaan, Jad and Raad, Firas (2010). "Health equity in Lebanon: a microeconomic analysis," *International Journal of Equity in Health* 9(1) (January): 1–21.
- Sayigh, R. (1979). *Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries*. London: Zed Press.
- Sonbol, A. A. (2005). "How the *Shari'a* Sees Women's Work," in N. Hanna and R. Abbas, eds., *Society and Economy in Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean 1600–1900: Essays in Honor of André Raymond*, Cairo and New York: The American University in Cairo Press, pp. 159–179.
- Sourdel-Thomine, J. and Sourdel, D. (1973). "Biens foncier constitue waqf en Syrie Fatimide pour une famille de Sarifs Damascaïns," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 15: 269–296.
- Souriyati. (2016, February 9). "Thabat Istanbul: Syrian student studying medicine in America, 1885." Retrieved from www.souriyati.com/2016/02/09/40812.html
- UAE Gender Equality Profile 2011. (2011, October). (UNICEF). Retrieved from www.unicef.org/gender/files/UAE-Gender-Equality-Profile-2011.pdf
- UAE Women Statistics. Retrieved from www.dwe.gov.ae/stat.aspx
- Women and AUB: A Pioneer Spirit. (2003). [*American University of Beirut Quarterly Magazine*]. Retrieved from <http://staff.aub.edu.lb/~webmgate/winter02/feature1.html>