Background: Research reports a dramatic increase in the rate of overweight and/or obese Qatari nationals. Limited research has been completed on the female subset population; however, it appears that the majority of Qatari women are insufficiently physically active for health benefits. Reasons for high inactivity levels among Qatari women are typically attributed to conservative social norms that are prevalent within the GCC region. To date no research has considered ways in which Qatari women are able to negotiate these social norms in ways that enable them to participate in physical activity on a regular basis.

Objective: This research sought to determine positive examples of Qatari women participating in regular physical activity and to identify facilitators for their participation.

Methods: Using a qualitative framework, 10 young Qatari women, aged 18-25, were interviewed over a 2-hour period. Questions asked, related to the women's participation in physical activity from childhood through to adulthood, and took into consideration the ways in which the family, schools and social networks acted as a barrier or an enabler. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed using an interpretive framework and thematic analysis.

Results: Results indicate that opportunities for these Qatari women to participate in regular physical activity are enabled through family support, developing or established health literacy and access to culturally appropriate facilities.

Conclusion: This research shifts the focus of Qatari women's participation in physical activity from a deficit framework to one that highlights possibilities towards establishing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Future research should extend upon these findings to understand ways in which the Qatari population can advocate for culturally appropriate and meaningful physical activity promotion within Qatari society.