Qatari Voices book discussion evokes enlightened debate
21 emerging literary talents pen anthology of essays

IT was a full house at the Qatar National Library’s (QNL’s) monthly book discussion, which featured Qatari Voices, an anthology of essays written by 21 young Qatari authors, and brought together avid readers, writers, students, teachers and entrepreneurs to discuss their thoughts, experiences, and opinions on the book. The event took place at the TV Room, Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) Student Center on 10 September 2014. The discussion began with a personal introduction from the participants.

The collection, edited by Carol Henderson and Dr Mohanalakshmi Rajakumar, reflects concerns and aspirations of the young Qatari generation, which are depicted in essays and short stories. Dr Rajakumar, who was present at the discussion, explained that this compilation of essays reflected the thoughts and experiences of young Qatari, as writing has become their way of capturing the past and looking forward to the future. The book also showcases cherished glimpses of old reminiscence and photos that showcase their views and opinions of a challenging present and aspirations to the future. Qatari Voices is the first anthology book featuring Qatari authors to be published internationally.

Sebastian Wilke, Information Services Librarian, Music, QNL moderated the discussion. He told QF Tel-egraph that he was extremely happy with the impact of the book discussion on all who were present and its outcome. “We had a good attendance with the impact of the book discussion serves as an inspiration to continue such important conversations.”

Abed Shirzai, a participant at the book discussion, stressed how important book clubs and discussions like these are to promote a book-reading culture in Qatar. “These discussions also bring people together, and encourage meaningful conversations outside of the ordinary. I was really impressed with the stories in Qatari Voices, a collection that shows the country’s youth voicing experiences that matter to them.”

Maryam Al Subaie, Contributor, Qatari Voices
“This book discussion was not only a platform for our voices, but it also showcased the current generation having a strong sense of direction toward independence and achievement, while having a strong connection with their roots at the same time.”

Habees Howall, Participant
“Book discussions are great opportunities for us to share our thoughts outside of our ordinary mundane lives, in a mixed environment. I work with the education industry and it’s especially exciting to see women step out of their comfort zone to talk about their thoughts and how they view life.”

Nouran Allam, Participant
“I thought the discussion was brilliant and it’s a great way to encourage young people to read and have conversations on important topics. It’s also empowering for me to see women engaging in discussions, and writing books on their experiences.”

DID YOU KNOW?
Approximately 250 new students attended ABP’s New Student Orientation for the 2014-2015 academic year.