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**A Comparative Study on the Performance of
Male and Female Branches of Samba Financial
Group (Samba) in the Riyadh Region**



Abstract

Samba Financial Group, formerly known as the Saudi American Bank, is one of the leading financial institutions in Saudi Arabia. It was started in 1980 following a royal decree by King Khalid bin Abdul Aziz that all international financial institutions operating in this country had to convert their ownership to reflect a 60 percent local shareholding policy. Citibank, a large US firm, released 60 percent of its shares to the Saudi nationals. Citibank later sold off all its shares, leading to the drop of the name Saudi American Bank. The bank has been so prosperous since its inception, a fact that has seen it open branches in several neighboring countries and even in Europe. In its Riyadh branch, the bank has male and female banking units. There have been speculations as to the reasons why this bank has the two banking units. However, the main reason that comes out is the need to have banking units that are distinctively male or female. This is because of the reserved nature of the Islamic culture that restricts intermingling of the two genders, especially bodily contact. The male branches have been the better performing banking unit. They have been in a position to register brilliant performance, as compared to the female branches. One reason why the male branches have been in a position to perform better is that the male members of this society are treated as superior gender. As such, they get better services at every stage in life. Moreover, they are the custodians of wealth in the society, and as such, they have better banking powers as compared to the female members of this society.