Managing strategic Omanisation for localization of skills in the logistics sector in Oman and dealing with challenges and headwinds

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ABSTRACT

The main thrust of this seminal research is to strategically analyse strategic Omanisation in the logistics sector to meet employer human capital requirements and expectations in Oman and to localise skills. The main reasons giving rise to this research are to illuminate world best practices on recruitment, staff retention and consolidation of localisation in the logistics sector to meet employer human capital requirements and expectations in Oman logistics firms which logistics industries, government departments and academia can then use to advantage and benefit the country. This research is based on literature review and field research done at Sohar and Barka, Muscat, Oman for fair coverage of the economic hubs of Oman, and analysis and identification of substantive gaps in knowledge thus making a contribution to the stock of knowledge available. This is theory building in the human resources theory of the General Systems Theory (GST) which proffers that organizations depend on their environments for several essential resources: customers who purchase the product or service, suppliers who provide materials, employees who provide labor or management, shareholders who invest, and governments that regulates. In this research researchers would focus on strategic logistics employees who provide labour and management, with focus on Omanisation. A survey research method will be used as well as interviews for a deeper understanding of the issues. The limitations are linked to the partial lingering COVID-19 pandemic and partly fear of talking face to face with anyone, the limited time which did not allow to do long term longitudinal studies to compare different time periods over a longer period of time (like 5-10 years) and cultural/organizational sensitivities where some questions were not answered. An exploration of literature review and field research findings clearly showed that skills localization strategies success and competitiveness required high market knowledge and sophistication, stemming the flow of workers from the private sector to the government in search of better salaries and conditions of service, good conditions of service, cultural sensitivity, good staff retention strategies, planned skills localization which does not disrupt workflow as some jobs required a lot of working experience, an understanding of the community around you and the continuous employment of supply chain graduate trainees from colleges and universities. Oman had been quite successful in this area, but the logistics sector remained dominated by expatriates for many reasons outlined in the main project like the late starting of supply chain diplomas/degrees locally, dislike of the odd hours and weekends worked in this industry, especially by females and other reasons, a situation which the government was quite keen to reverse in the short, medium and long term naturally. Researchers believed these findings would help enhance and improve the logistics sector HR practices in Oman and contribute to development. Colleges and universities can disseminate this new knowledge for improvements. Firms can benchmark using these findings. Oman partly lags behind Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Qatar in logistics performance and Omanisation (localization), depending on the industry sector, and findings in this research will

illuminate possible reasons for correction. This 1st paper is a conceptual paper without field research and field research will be covered in the next paper.

KEYWORDS: Recruitment, Selection, Training and Development, Induction, Incentives, Staff Development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Statement of the research problem/project

This is theory building research in the human resources theory of the General Systems Theory which proffers that organizations depend on their environments for several essential resources: customers who purchase the product or service, suppliers who provide materials, employees who provide labor or management, shareholders who invest, and governments that regulate. In this research researchers would focus on strategic logistics employees who provide labour and management, with focus on Omanisation. The main thrust of this seminal research is to strategically analyse strategic recruitment, staff retention and consolidation of Omanisation in the logistics sector to meet employer human capital requirements and expectations in Oman as the logistics sector has perennially been losing critical logistics experts to other industries and government service, and acted as a training ground for other industries. The main reasons giving rise to this research are to illuminate world recruitment, staff retention and consolidation of Omanisation in the logistics sector to meet employer human capital requirements and expectations in Oman logistics firms which logistics industries, government departments and academia can then use to advantage and benefit the country. "The primacy of human capital is leading to a global war for talented people in much the same way that nations once fought over land because it was considered a productive asset, and said it was becoming a key determinant of success or failure of organisations", The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (2003:4). Where does the logistics sector in Oman stand on this aspect – field research will shed light on this?

This research is based on literature review and field research done in Nizwa and Muscat in Oman and analysis and identification of substantive gaps in knowledge thus making a contribution to knowledge. This is theory building in the human resources theory of the General Systems Theory which proffers that organizations depend on their environments for several essential resources: customers who purchase the product or service, suppliers who provide/ materials, employees who provide labor or management, shareholders who invest, and governments that regulate. In this research researchers would focus on strategic logistics employees who provide labour and management, with focus on Omanisation. The Middle East faced challenges particularly in the areas of employment nationalization policies, self-initiated expatriation, local employees' view on expatriate managers, female talent retention, knowledge transfer from multinational corporations to local subsidiaries, high performance work systems, and employee and leaders' behaviours (Marmenout & Lirio, 2014)

The main reasons giving rise to this research are to illuminate world skills localization, recruitment and staff retention best practices which the Oman logistics sector can then use to advantage and benefit the industry and country. This research is based on field research done in Muscat/Barka and Sohar in Oman and literature review done to be fully educated on issues at play as well as gaps in knowledge. Where did Oman logistics sector stand on this? Field research would educate researchers and society at large.

According to a pilot survey done with three managers in the sector the logistics sector in Oman has faced many teething challenges regarding local skilled labour recruitment and retention as labour had a tendency to use this sector as a training ground and thereafter leave and go to other sectors like oil and gas, MNCs or government service which paid much better, had job security and did not have odd working hours like weekends and working after normal business hours. One wonders why the industry has lived with these challenges for so long without solving them, and why solutions evade them? An industry is a matrix of government, industry, labour and academia. What is each party supposed to do or contribute as a solution for a long-term solution to this dilemma? Answers are required to all these complex vexing questions, hence this research. This is the gap in knowledge researchers want to fill with this research. This research was primarily based on field research and extensive literature review, analysis and identification of gaps in literature and knowledge. Researchers believe these findings will help enhance and improve the logistics sector and contribute to development of the sector which employs thousands of people in Oman. A logistics sector which has localized skills has stability as locals have long tenure and go nowhere long term which reduces recruitment costs, improves ease of doing business, convenience for customers, competitive prices, value for money, respect, fast service, reliability, availability of stock, is profitable, cares about sustainability and the environment, pays high taxes to the government and does corporate social responsibility in the

community. This is good for investors, customers, society and government and must be promoted. This research addresses such issues and was long overdue. *But that may be too simplistic as evidence on the ground shows that Oman still imported critical skills where local graduates are plentiful like engineering, supply chain management, hospitality and tourism and logistics itself.* Cultural dislike of some of these jobs is a factor, e.g. hospitality industry jobs and working odd hours for logistics jobs or both is another factor. Salary levels were another factor for self-actualisation and career growth as well as parity with peers. Plagiarism and ghost writing have been cited in USA, India, China and Europe as part of the reasons why graduates may graduate without the hybrid skills and expertise expected of their grade or discipline or degree, or alternatively grade inflation by faculty or both factors. This is undeniable the world over and is reality. National governments, universities and accreditation bodies are all fighting this issue using different technical tools like viva voce for all assignments and projects or a sample of too high marked assignments/projects or too good assignments, projects and dissertations. That is a good deterrent and sends the right message to all students and ghost writers. Jail terms for offenders all help a lot as well as expulsions from universities/colleges. All universities have policies in place to fight this scourge. The last reason for producing unsuitable graduates is a lack of internship in industry where countries produce paper tigers who cannot do any jobs. This has been a major problem for Oman but has been gradually addressed. Depending on the industry 3 to 6 months compulsory internship is a must if the country's HEI are to produce the graduates that industry wants, who are productive from day one and have an unquestionable industrial culture. Without internship a country produced paper tigers with distinctions but who could not do jobs practically and took time to learn the industrial culture and practices (Al-nabhani et al., 2015),. Dr. Richard N. Rutter and Dr. Awadh Ali Al Mamari said, "Currently, Oman is still having to import vital technical and academic skills from abroad, rather than being able to develop its own base of domestic expertise. Another problem facing Oman higher education is the lack of Key Performance Indicators, or KPIs," said the Borgen Project, 2014 quoting Dr Richard N. Rutter and Dr Awadh Ali Al Mamari **[Online].** The unanswered question was why would a graduate with a pass grade failed to do a job for which he was graduated?

The Oman Government must make it compulsory to employ supply chain graduate trainees in any supply chain office/operations as a way to localize skills quickly and long term. One of the reasons why many local supply chain graduates were not employed was that they did not have the required experience. But experience was not bought from supermarket shelves but was given by the very companies asking for it and requiring it, yet denying these young people a chance to get and gain that very experience. It looks quite contradictory. Many companies were already doing this and making a great contribution to developing the sector and national economy but many others were not doing so. The Oman Government and Oman companies have to answer the perennial loud cry of Omani graduates saying: *"Please give us a chance, give us a chance, give us a chance to get experience in industry!!"* That noble developmental cry cannot be ignored any more, and must be addressed with prescriptive, panacea style and appropriate Oman Government policy interventions. There were too many Supply Chain/Logistics Management graduates who were unemployed inn Oman and simply needed a minimum one year graduate traineeship in companies to start making a meaningful contribution to the national economy but that chance was simply a pie in the sky for many as long as they were not afforded company exposure and industrial experience. Adopting this policy of compulsory graduate traineeships would help the graduates, their families and society and would create more high value local skilled labour (import substitution effect), who contribute more in taxes, consumption, national aggregate demand and taking off families from the government social security handouts where this may be the case. It is undeniable that Oman benefits more from this policy revision.

Focus interviews with human resources managers, government players and other industrialists could unravel the reasons for this strange but actual situation. An economy is not a tuck shop or supermarket but a very complex huge system with many unwritten realities which outsiders may not know. This is the crude reality which many political and economic planners realise across the world to smooth productivity and efficiency. Colleges and universities can disseminate this new knowledge for the benefit of their constituencies. Logistics firms can benchmark to world best practices using these findings. Oman partly lags behind Saudi Arabia in logistics sector skills localization and findings in this research will illuminate possible reasons for corrections. Research has been done about this but it has tended to scratch the surface rather than being extensive and digging deeper into issues bedeviling the sector. This research seeks to fill that gap.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF RELATED WORK

Omanization is a policy by the government of the sultanate of Oman to increase employment of Omani citizens in the country's workforce. The policy aims to reduce the reliance on foreign workers and to promote the development of skilled and educated manpower to the labour market. , in their study claimed that Omanization policy has had mixed results in impact on the Oman's labor market. The policy has shown a positive contribution in increasing the number of Omani citizen's employment particularly in the public sector. However, their findings have also shown criticism in that the policy is leading to a decline in the quality of some services and a decrease in the competitiveness of certain sectors of the economy. The public discourse continues as the Omanisation policy is refined as it is implemented. Both government, academia, society and industry continue to learn critical new insights as different research are done and implementation

challenges emerge. Even in the first world skills localization has always been unfinished business due to the turbulence and dynamism of the modern labour market and global economy. Population studies have continued to baffle governments the world over as critical skills continue to be in short supply in some sectors e.g. health, education, hospitality, drivers and tourism sector. An economic behemoth like the USA, China, UK, Germany, United Arab Emirates, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Australia still import some substantial skills despite having a multiple cross section of tertiary colleges and universities and apprenticeship training. People are too mobile across borders as they follow the quality of life and are now partly borderless as they scout for the best benefits and quality of life globally in exchange for their strategic skills. Some even acquire foreign citizenship in the process as they insulate themselves and their families to guarantee good life, prosperity, a just society and social insurance (access to the welfare state) and a life they prefer.

It is also worth noting that the Omanization policy has been the subject of some controversy and criticism. Some have argued that the policy has led to discrimination against foreign workers and has created barriers to their employment in the country (Angel, Actis, et al., 2021; Cediey et al., 2008) Others have argued that the policy has not been adequately implemented or enforced, leading to a lack of progress in increasing the employment of Omani citizens (Rabia Nasser, 2016). In addition, some have argued that the Omanization policy has not been accompanied by sufficient investment in education and training programs to support the development of a skilled Omani workforce (Rabia Nasser, 2016). As a result, there have been calls for the government to address these issues and to take a more comprehensive approach to promoting the employment of Omani citizens. The Omanization policy has had a significant impact on the logistics and shipping sector in Oman. According to a study by Ali et al., (2017) ; Ali and Alani, (2017) , the policy has led to an increase in the employment of Omani citizens in the sector, particularly in the public sector. However, the policy has also been criticized for leading to a decline in the quality of some services and a decrease in the competitiveness of the sector. One issue that has been raised in the context of the Omanization policy in the logistics and shipping sector is the lack of skilled Omani workers to fill certain positions. In response, the government has implemented training and education programs to support the development of a skilled Omani workforce in the sector (Ali & Alani, 2017).

What are the competencies considered most important by logistics industry?
The idea of choosing, enlisting and compensating workers is based on their competencies that influence today's rapidly changing (competitive) markets. Attitudes that differentiate between an active employee and an inactive one can describe the word competency, it also covers motivation, beliefs and values represented in tasks and performance in order to fulfil a particular job . Abilities are those suitable manners during work important to get together knowledge and skills

The logistics and supply chain sectors would face a lot of obstacles as long there is a continuous fast-changing business environment, including the requirement for fine, clever and trained logistics professionals, is essentially very important. Similarly, it was proposed that among the biggest challenges may face administration for the next upcoming years is the shortage of well-trained supply chain leaders, also that radical shift in the logistics and supply chain education is substantial or needful to meet these obstacles (Sweeney et al., 2018) In Accenture Supply Chain Academy, this view is a little bit more detailed by (Al Abbadi et al., 2021) who argued that recently big companies saw that instead of investing only in technological advances and processes, developing people's abilities to produce better results because they play a vital role in driving innovation in the supply chain was critical.

Moreover, a large number of shipping companies were heading now to prepare extra services along with port-to-port services, and a lot of ports were also started and destined to become more advanced by providing multi-services above the traditional cargo handling and storage services, shifting to become an integrated logistics maritime supply chain. Meanwhile, there is an orientation happening to these organizations generally providing the clients with extra value-added and integrated logistics services by replacing hardware-based systems with knowledge-intensive platforms. Therefore, in order to make employees able to face wider challenges of their role in a globalized market, it is important to recognize that the required knowledge and skills for maritime logistics professionals was required.

What competencies do employees lack most?
Competency-Based Database Management System will enhance the capability of the firm's human resource substantially which will lead towards gaining a competitive advantage over other players in the market. As opposed to (Stitt-Gohdes et al., 2000) who argued that doing a work analysis, doing a critical incident interview and doing several critical incident interviews, those are three popular approaches to describe people at work and their competencies.

According to (Škrinjarić, 2022) , not all firms that have discussed competencies have truly worked on them and apply them into several of their processes. Some of the organizations have merely managed to carry out competency modelling and reporting system properly, that tackle the improvement of an employee from process design to a succession plan. Building and implementing a competency model is quite a difficult thing for some companies. Almost all sizes of different companies are having problems with set, design and implement competency model projects in which this process can be

fully customized. Depending on several organizational factors, the decisions of competency design are derived such as the nature of processes, the management philosophy, business input and customer requirements. This would require to modify an approach to competencies in the working area because those factors may differ from one organization to another. Every organization must consolidate competency notions into its job design, recruitment, job direction, development and succession processes when customization is important to a comprehensive success of competency efforts. To a large degree, this definition is agreeable between human resources specialists in working environments. Klemp, (1980) has argued that the underlying attribute of an employee which results in an effective and or outstanding performance on a specific job is difficult to measure. Similarly, (Spencer & Spencer, 1993) had described in their (Competency at work) that competency was an essential attribute of an employee which is linked by the criterion-referenced effect and or excellent performance in a job position. According to (Parry, 1996) in 1995 a lot of experts in human resources development who presented papers at a conference related to the topic of competencies in Johannesburg suggested this definition in detail that is a group of relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes which affect a large portion of employee's job whether the role or responsibility that is linked with job performance level, and with the help of well-accepted standards it can be measured and enhanced through training and development courses. Likewise, the current and new employees can draw information and enhance the skill sets required in order to accomplish several tasks and reaching their maximum potential by having proper training courses in which, companies fundamentally keep those employees who had proper training longer in their job than those who do not. For the sake of strategically successful growth, providing training is a vital and crucial way for the company to re-enhance the performance of each employee. If an employee is well trained, then there is a chance that he/she becomes effective and produce more, in which case training is useful for the firm, both the employee and the employer. One of the aspects of a firm's capability to develop and improve the characteristics of the existing employees is the provision of inclusive training and development. Besides that, the training is fundamental which boosts the level of productivity, it also gives a sense of inspiration and motivation for the employee, which provides the required information in order to perform a task and demonstrate the importance of employee's job (Elnaga & Imran, 2013)Compared with (Škrinjarić, 2022) she had categorized competency characteristics into five types and explained them staring with:

* Motives as the things that an employee continuously thinks about or need, in which he/she generates action. It could be also as a drive, direct or pick out an attitude to merely a certain action or goal.
* Traits are those physical attributes and regular answers toward situations or information.
* Self-concept is the manners and values of an employee and the way he looks to himself.
* Knowledge as an employee possesses particular information for determined fields.
* Skill is an employees' ability to do a specific physical or mental job.

Therefore, competencies of knowledge and skill are visible on the surface as characteristics of an employee that could be easily developed through providing an effective way, for instance, training courses can secure these abilities and upgrade it. However, motive, trait and self-concept tend to be more hidden and deeper to the personality of an employee. Likewise, an iceberg concept is where motives, trait and self-concept are fundamentally at the base in which these are not easy to recognize and a bit difficult to evaluate or develop which lead to a cost-effective to choose these attributes. Characteristics that differentiate the high performance of employees including attitude, ability, skill and area of knowledge are defined as competencies.

According to Leonard-Barton, (1992) creating a system which includes learning to be provided constantly, and applying it efficiently is training, where a company which consider the value of knowledge as a key element to have a competitive advantage is highly advised for it. Training the employee can lead to have common advantages such as more job satisfaction and generate motivation and effective results in the process, which lead to financial growth, change in the company's capability to cope up with modern technological advancement and mechanisms, a significant reduction in employee turnover and adoption of innovation in strategies. However, if leaders demonstrate an obligation to their employee's growth, the same fundamental emotions will be exploited. workers are motivated to respond similarly, telling their thanks or show loyalty through having more advances. However, managing via fear may produce exertion result and weaken brain function, in which, the quality of work is widely not the same when the whole staff is obliged to appreciate. In case leaders would like to encourage the best of their team, they should defend them, boost them through a traineeship, give promotion, and aid their projects. Research has demonstrated the point that authorized teams give a better customer service level and reflect a result with a high level of job satisfaction and obligation to their team and company in which they have more productivity and proactiveness.

According to Elmortada et al., (2022) supply chain performance could be improved to the next level, the moment that organizations decide to highlight the human resource factor widely in order to gain more advantages. Previously a lot of companies used the strategies on developing infrastructure and spend more investment in technological advances. The next move for more enhancement is to direct the investment towards the human resource capital that will manage and operate the supply chain. Bourne (Bourne, et al., 2008) made a survey that included firms that have better non-financial

performance reported higher returns on their assets and improved financial performances as mentioned in their annual reports. Non-financial performance was seen to influence when there are changes in the social climate in an organization and the flexibility in human capital.

According to the Vietnam Association of Logistics Services Enterprises, there are currently more than 3000 enterprises participating in providing logistics services, of which, 70 per cent are based in Ho Chi Minh City. There are some 1300 active enterprises, including 89 per cent with 100 per cent domestic capital, while the rest are foreign-investment enterprises. However, Vietnam's logistics industry is facing many challenges, especially human resources issues. Human resources currently do not meet the requirements of the logistics service industry, lacking both the quantity and quality of high-quality human resources. There are about 200,000 professional employees among a total of nearly one million people (Phuong Nguyen, 2020)

Example from one of the shipping agencies organization requirements
In 2005 the Association of Ship Brokers and Agents (ASBA) has formed certification guidelines with the intention to grant ship agencies the ability to provide a higher level of services for the customer. After that the Federation of National Associations of Ship Brokers and Agents (FONASBA) has built its quality standard based on ASBA's guidelines in which in ASBA's criteria for certification of ASBA ship agent members, (section 4), every employee in a ship agency has to be well trained and professional. In addition, the ship agency has to ensure on the job training for its employees (Association of Ship Brokers and Agent, 2010).

Training and development strategies can be implemented to maintain the competencies in the market and retain them
In order to reduce logistics costs, contribute to the country GDP and improve the country's logistics rank, there must be a focus on the training and improvement of human resources.

To improve the quality of human resources and develop competencies in the logistics service industry, we need to deploy the following strategies.

Training is one of the keys to develop the competencies of workers and localize skills. Both academia and industry should collaborate with each other to develop programs, review materials and develop curriculum to equip the graduate with the right competencies that are needed by the industry.

To meet the challenges inherent in 21st-century work careers and organizations, employees are required to continuously update their knowledge, skills, and work habits, and organizations to invest highly in the development of their human capital (Chen & Klimoski, 2007)

According to the dynamic developments of all work fields, the organization must develop their HR to strategic HR, because organizations cannot apply a strategic training plan unless they have a strategic human resource management system in place. In the strategic human resource management, strategic training is regarded as a vital way of raising employee competency and productivity (Milhem et al., 2014). The following is the process:

Strategy 1: Align Training with Mission Goals
To determine the benefits of the training, there must be a clear alignment between the training and the goals of the organisation. All these goals must be measured and categorized to each job or task. And there should be specific indicators to measure the competencies of employees in that specific task under that specific goal.

Strategy 2: Improve Employee's Performance
The aim of training is to develop and improve the employee's competencies and performance through learning and taking action on that learning. So, when there is a gap in the performance, the easiest solution for the organization is training. However, if the gap is not caused by a lack of skill or knowledge, training is not necessary. Therefore, it is necessary to identify realistic solutions to fill the performance and competency gap.

Strategy 3: Reduce Time to Competency
The final objective of training programs should be to develop KSAs in order to fix a performance problem and to achieve training unit and organizational objectives. The following steps will help to determine the benefit of reducing time to competency, the feasibility of using alternative delivery systems and to choose the delivery option with the greatest impact

Strategy 4: Choose the Correct Combination of Delivery Options

Selection process gives an important insight into which specific factors should be given the highest priority and ways of gathering the information required to deal with the final recommended solution. It involves; 1. Identifying delivery options currently used by the training department and organization 2. Gathering information on training content, target audience and environmental factors to select possible delivery options 3. Dividing training programs into modules 4. Identifying potential delivery options 5. Making a comparison of the cost of realistic delivery options 6. Considering a mixed delivery strategy 7. Identifying possible implementation problems and 8. Drawing up recommendations (Milhem et al., 2014)

Strategy 5: Consider Internal Versus External Options
This strategy is worth considering, as at certain times and under certain conditions, external training consultants can be more (cost) effective than internal training personnel. When considering the advantages and disadvantages of each training option, it is necessary to define requirements, assess the experience and skills of internal training staff, assess available material, calculate possible benefits, determine time to achieve competency, calculate potential benefits, make a comparison of costs and draw up recommendations (Milhem et al., 2014)

Strategy 6: Duplicate Effective Training Programs and Identify Issues
This strategy for selecting effective training programs and determining the cost and the needed resources involves comparing different training programs in order to find out what has worked and why, identifying and resolving problems and reducing duplication to a minimum (Milhem et al., 2014)

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Analysis of literature
Key policy drivers and lessons from GCC and beyond
It is important for the government of Oman to continue to review and evaluate the Omanization policy in the logistics and shipping sector in order to ensure that it is meeting its intended goals and addressing any negative consequences. This may

involve making adjustments to the policy, such as providing additional training and education programs or increasing the quotas for the employment of Omani citizens in the sector. A one size fits all will not work as witnessed in developed countries and other GCC countries where many adjustments have been done to skills localization programmes.

Oman is blessed with a population that is considered most friendly in the GCC and the country is considered as the most peaceful too. Those positive factors should help the country attract and retain first class talent and investment. The strategically skilled foreigners would help the country in long term strategic human capital capacity building as Oman weans its itself from excessive reliance on expatriate labour to localizing critical skills and expertise, including the logistics sector, which is very much run by a disproportionately large number of expatriates or foreigners. The same is the case with tourism and hospitality sector. Sectors like banking and local authorities are now largely run by locals who have excelled and served the country very well. The same is the case with government or public services. The country has done very well in successful localization of skills.

The UAE is now giving expatriates a 10 year gold visa to highly skilled engineers, health personnel and university PhD degree holders to keep them locked to their contracts and insulate their country from critical skills shortages, rather than the Oman two year visa. That is why UAE is the jewel of skilled labour in the GCC. This has worked wonders and is a lesson for the rest of the GCC countries as regarding the standard two year contracts applicable in Oman and elsewhere. Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman's Neom City with its new unique excellent living conditions for citizens, expatriate labour and investors is another big lesson for Oman and the message is that world capital and skilled labour is attracted by quality of life wherever it is available. The message by all these competing GCC countries is very clear here and is that *'please come to our country, we want you long term in development plus we give you long term security of tenure and employment and maximum returns on your critical strategic skills and other investments'*. As localization is done it is worthwhile to look at UK, rest of Europe, USA, Australia and New Zealand and their current skills shortfall crisis. These are well established developed countries but still face a skills crisis, especially after Covid-19 and Brexit. Self-sufficiency has been achieved by very few countries in the world and GCC was no exception. As politicians grapple with localization it is still correct and appropriate to remind each other that there will always be shortage areas in high value health categories like surgeons, neuro-surgeons and other hospital specialists and top PhD engineers, scientists and technologists and university professors, who take ages and decades to educate and train and to accumulate critical unique experience which drives the world economy. People in the villages might not understand this and government planners have to educate them on this reality. Critical skills imports are a part of running a modern economy. What does happen is a reduction of the expatriate numbers as you localize and do import substitution as you graduate and induct your own people. But complete elimination of imported critical skills labour is not possible, except for very few countries. Cross fertilization of cultures/languages is good for international relations and inter-country relations and as networks to use to attract investment and tourists and lastly to avoid having a population with an inward village mentality and unappreciative of what the world does for their country (imports of high grade diverse technologies for a modern economy, imports of essential groceries, food, clothes and the entertainment industry, strategic skills imports, drugs and medicines for hospitals and convenience goods, among many). All countries need other countries one way or another.

Competition does not wait for good policies but flows in the direction of incentives, ease of doing business, quality of life and predictable governments. America's green card reminds us why America is the biggest and most sophisticated economy in the world, and was built by immigrants, initially 14 million highly skilled immigrants from every corner of the world included those engineers, technologists, health experts and professors persecuted by Adolf Hitler, in the Soviet Union and other places. These helped build the USA behemoth as we know it today. The world is awash with successful skills localization case studies for Oman to learn from in the GCC and globally. Cases like India, Egypt, South Africa and Malaysia were instructive as they graduated from colonialism and localized skills successfully. Our literature review is one such great treasure of global successes and best practices in skills localization. This research is of great national importance hence this long term group research cutting across large sections of Oman industrial cities, Barka, Muscat and Sohar.

No retirement age policy for medical experts and senior academics in Oman

The recent policy changes introduced by Oman where there is no retirement age for senior academics (mainly PhD holders) and strategic medical experts is a most welcome development which copies what was already normal for years in most developed countries in the world (pioneered by creative and forthright Americans in USA followed by the UK and the rest of the world), where these critical skills (for academics) are required to create strategic skills and skills transfer to the younger generation in universities and for medical experts to run the complex hospitals for national benefit. No sensible country can afford to lose the strategic brains and skills of top medical staff and academics with 10-30 years' experience or more. That is a lifeline for any country and the oxygen that the rest of the country feeds on. This will be a Key Success Factor for Oman no doubt. The futuristic Oman Government must be congratulated for being visionary and strategic as they drive the country forward to consolidate its 50 years of great unimaginable transformation for the better. Smart countries and people do not reinvent the wheel but copy good proven ideas from other countries and a few new of their

own and move on.

3. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review mainly focused on methods to identify competencies that would help the logistics companies to develop their employees and maximise localisation of skilled jobs. It is also clear that training and development is a must to develop skills and competencies and fill the gap of performance. On the same vein it is important to choose the right way of training delivery strategy related to the nature of work and organizational objectives. In concluding it is important to note that successful organizations usually invest more on training, motivation, loyalty and retention of their employees. Employees are attracted to organisations by the incentive package and growth prospects. Toxic stressful organisations mostly drive away talent no matter what they pay. Other variables also come into play like salaries, incentives, bonus, profit sharing, overtime, overworking, stress, fatigue, work life balance, ventilation, free speech, career growth, good transparent and fair management, regular promotions, scholarships, training opportunities, research and innovation, corruption free environments, CSR and legal compliance. Employees are labour market factors of production and compare different companies on these parameters and decide where to work. Omanisation is definitely an unfinished business in Oman. Engaging all stakeholders regularly becomes critical for the Government of Oman, academia and industry as well. Government policies do matter a lot to increase investment, confidence, trust, facilitate long term planning and create a bigger national cake or GDP. PPP is imperative and so are shared values and disposition. Predictability and durable policies drive confidence and trust, but we should all bear in mind that governments do deal with emerging crisis on a regular basis where policy changes are done with speed to mitigate negative effects on a country. Corvid 19 was one such crisis as well as oil price shocks, flooding, earthquakes and global warming. To better understand the lives of our politicians or government leaders we just need to look at the plethora of hyper sensitive issues (some contradictory), that they deal with day to day, like security, food security, human capital development, infrastructure, education, innovation, employment, pandemics, health, supply chain, industrialisation, pollution, population control and management, environmental protection, international relations and the axis of opposing world powers, global warming and related disasters like flooding, droughts and earthquakes. A government is a not a tuckshop or supermarket but a behemoth and monstrous creature, too big and complex, where teams rather than individuals participate and share power and decision making, where consensus reigns supreme.

Objectives
The main objectives of this research are:
- Establish status of skills localization and staff retention in the logistics sector in Oman, focusing on Barka/Muscat and Sohar logistics and related firms.
- Establish global best practices on skills localization and recruitment.
- Understand the psychology of staff retention and labour turnover and how to mitigate same.
- Establish employer concerns, crossroads and how to overcome them.
- Understand employees major reasons for leaving logistics sector and practical solutions for stability.

Research questions
The following research questions will be answered by this research:
- What is the status of skills localization and staff retention in the logistics sector in Oman, focusing on Barka/Muscat and Sohar?
- What are the global best practices on skills localization and recruitment?
- What does the psychology of staff retention and labour turnover educate us about these issues and how to mitigate same?
- What are the employer concerns, crossroads and how to overcome them?
- What are the employees major reasons for leaving logistics sector and practical solutions for stability?

Research methodology, Implementation Plan, Timelines and Milestones
Phase 1: Development of Methodology based on review of literature (3 months)
Research strategy
A research strategy is a plan or approach that outlines the methods and resources that will be used to conduct a research study" (Creswell, 2011). It is an important element of the research process as it helps us to ensure that the study is well-designed and well-executed, and that the results are reliable and relevant. The research strategy of this study involves setting up clear research objectives, research philosophy, research approach, research methodology and with clear reliability and validity analysis. The strategy designed will help to clarify the research question and objectives, determine the scope, and focus and ensures all aspects of the research process are aligned with the research question and objectives (Creswell, 2011). A research strategy helps to determine the most appropriate research methods and data collection

techniques to use in the study, accordingly mixed method research is proposed for this study as it aligns with research question and the resources available (Saunders et al., 2012). It helps the researchers to ensure the reliability and validity of the results as a well-designed research strategy helps to reduce the risk of bias and error in the study and increases the confidence that the results can be generalized to other populations or contexts(Kumar & Ranjit, 2011). A research strategy also helps us to identify the resources to be deployed for the research including labor, equipment, funds required, and important materials and equipment to be used efficiently (Saunders et al., 2012)
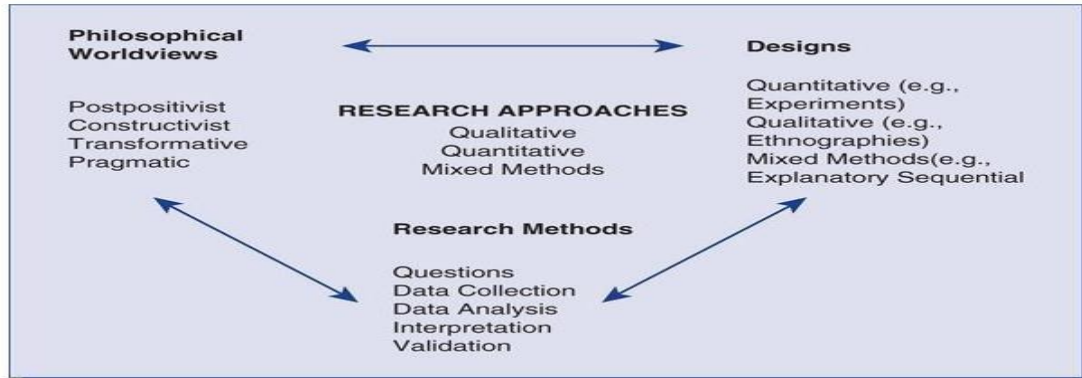
Fig. 3.1 Research strategy adapted from Creswell & Creswell, 2018:5

Research Philosophy

Research philosophy: "…plan and procedure for research that spans from broader assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation"(Creswell, 2011). Research philosophy refers to the underlying beliefs and assumptions that guide the research process. It is an important element of the research process as it determines the way in which the researcher approaches the study and the methods and techniques that are used to collect and analyze data. There are several key research philosophies that can be identified in the literature: Positivism philosophy assumes that reality is objective and that it can be studied and measured using scientific methods. Researchers using a positivist approach typically adopt a quantitative research approach and use statistical techniques to analyze data (Saunders et al., 2012). Interpretivism philosophy assumes that reality is subjective and that it can be understood through the interpretation of meaning and experiences. Researchers using an interpretivist approach typically adopt a qualitative research approach and use techniques such as open-ended interviews and focus groups to collect data (Creswell, 2011). Realism philosophy assumes that reality exists independently of our perception of it, and that the goal of the research is to uncover the underlying structures and mechanisms that shape reality. Researchers using a realist approach may adopt either a qualitative or quantitative research approach, depending on the nature of the research question and the resources available (Saunders et al., 2012). Research philosophy shapes the way in which a researcher approaches a research problem, and influences the methods and techniques that are used to collect and analyze data. These philosophies differ in their assumptions about the nature of reality, the role of the researcher, and the relationship between theory and practice.

Pragmatic philosophy is a philosophical approach that emphasizes the practical consequences of actions, beliefs, and theories. It is based on the idea that the value of an idea or course of action should be judged based on its practical consequences, rather than on abstract principles or theoretical considerations. As the current research intends to analyze the level and status of Omanization and retention which might be done objectively. However, analyzing the views and the psychology of staff retention and labor turnover may be based on the views and attitudes of the respondents for which interpretivist philosophy may be appropriate. Therefore, pragmatic approach is proposed as it emphasizes the Saraactical relevance of research, it allows for flexibility and adaptability, and encourages collaboration and interdisciplinarity (Peirce, 1998)

Mixed Research Approach

There are three basic approaches to research: Qualitative approach, Quantitative approach and mixed approach. Depending on the nature of the researcher's view, the type of data collected and the method of analysis, appropriate research approaches can be chosen. As the questions of the research are objective and subjective in nature, determining status, benchmarking best practices and exploring views and attitudes of managers to analyze psychology retention, a mixed approach is proposed for this study. In the human resources management study, a mixed approach has been applied for several reasons. A mixed approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem as it combines both qualitative and quantitative methods, which can provide a more complete and nuanced understanding of the research problem (Eichenlaub, 2009). It allows for the triangulation of data which can increase the reliability and validity of the results (Saunders et al., 2012). It allows for the integration of different perspectives which can provide a more comprehensive and multi-faceted understanding of the research problem (Saunders et al., 2016). It allows for the

exploration of complex and multifaceted phenomena as human resources research often involves complex and multifaceted phenomena, such as organizational culture, leadership, Turnover, employee motivation, and retention. A mixed research approach allows for the exploration of these phenomena from multiple angles and using multiple methods, which can provide a sound understanding of their relationships and dynamics (Creswell, 2011)

Method of data collection
Research site and Data collection
The research is planned to be conducted in three cities of Oman: Muscat, Barka and Sohar. The sites are chosen based on the number of logistics firms operating in these cities. Logistics firms of various sizes are to be considered in the study. Large-scale, Medium scale and SME logistics firms will be covered to analyze the dynamic and level of Omanization. Researchers can make use of secondary data or collect new data (primary data) specifically collected for a study. In this context, the study will develop a structured questionnaire, do interviews and expert panel interviews. The questionnaire will use both Arabic and English languages. The design of the questionnaire determines how it will be administered (Saunders et al., 2012) . This study will use self-administered questionnaires which will be completed by participants in the Sultanate Oman port facilities and industry, and interview guides for interviews and expert panel interviews.

Questionnaire
Literature entails the availability of several methods of data collection such as survey (questionnaire and interview), experimentation, observation and a case study. As the study covered wider geographical sites and 340 (85 in each city) logistics firms, a survey approach is proposed to be appropriate for this study. Surveys are commonly used in human resources research, including recruitment research, because they allow researchers to collect data from a large number of participants in a relatively short amount of time (Ary et al., 2009). Surveys can be administered online, by mail, or in person, making them flexible and convenient for collecting data from a diverse group of participants. Surveys use standardized questions and response options, which helps ensure that data is collected consistently across all participants. This makes it easier to compare and analyze the data. Surveys are also useful for collecting data on a wide range of topics, including demographics, job satisfaction, job performance, and employee engagement. They can be designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, depending on the research questions and goals (Creswell, 2011; Trochim & Donnelly, 2001)

Interview
In this study interview survey is also proposed to get insights from managers regarding the implementation of the policy together with the prospects, challenges and possible measures to ratify the implementation challenges. Interviews are commonly used in human resources research, including recruitment research, because they allow researchers to gather in-depth, qualitative data from participants. Interviews can be conducted in person, by phone, or online, depending on the preference of the researcher and the availability of the participant. Interviews allow researchers to ask open-ended questions and probe for more detailed responses, which can provide a deeper understanding of the experiences and perspectives of the participants (Ary et al., 2009). They provide a flexible method for collecting data in that interviews can be tailored to the specific research questions and goals of the study, allowing researchers to explore a wide range of topics and issues in detail. Interviews also allow researchers to follow up on responses and ask for further clarification, which can help to ensure that the data is accurate and complete (Creswell, 2011). Interviews allow researchers to establish a rapport with the participants, which can help to create a more comfortable and open environment for gathering data (Trochim & Donnelly, 2001).

Expert panel interviews
Expert panel interviews will be employed to collect qualitative data from university researchers, government officials, and company HR experts. This method involves gathering of data through structured interviews with a group of Human Resources experts. According to a study by (Creswell, 2011), expert panel interviews will enable to gain insight and understanding from high-level experts who have a high level of knowledge and experience implementing the Omanization policy or those researching related policy implementation. Expert panel interviews are particularly useful in fields such as healthcare and business, where experts can provide a deeper understanding of complex issues and provide valuable recommendations for future research. The interviews will be conducted in person or online confirming their consent and convenience to undertake the interview. a mix of open-ended and semi-structured questions will be posed during the interview which will again enable the researcher to raise a series of questions to the expert panel members and records their responses for analysis. This is done to obtain a deeper understanding of the policy and help to get valuable information from the panel members.

Method of data analysis
As the study involves both qualitative and quantitative data, quantitative and qualitative analysis methods are proposed to be applied.

Qualitative and quantitative analysis

The interview data collected from managers of logistics firms will be analysed using the thematic quantitative data analysis method. Qualitative analysis tools are helpful tools in human resource recruitment research because it allows researchers to analyze and interpret large amounts of data in a structured and systematic way. It is a method of analyzing and interpreting non-numerical data, such as words, images, or video. It is often used in human resources research to explore complex phenomena and to gain a deep understanding of the experiences and perspectives of individuals/managers or groups. There are several different approaches to qualitative data analysis, including thematic analysis, case study analysis, and grounded theory (Braun & Clarke, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 2019). Qualitative data analysis can provide valuable insights into the experiences and perspectives of individuals or groups and can help researchers to understand complex phenomena in a rich and nuanced way (Braun & Clarke, 2008) . It is often used in human resources research to explore topics such as employee and employer attitudes, motivation, and work-life balance

Using quantitative data analysis techniques, researchers can identify patterns and relationships in the data and draw conclusions about the effectiveness of different recruitment strategies. Some of the reasons for employing quantitative data analysis in recruitment research includes (a) it helps to compare the retention rates of employees recruited using different strategies, such as online job boards, social media, or employee referrals ; (b) it helps to identify predictors of job performance that are associated with good job performance, such as education level, work experience, or personality traits (Collings & Mellahi, 2009); (c) it helps to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of different recruitment strategies to determine which strategies are most cost-effective(Rothwell, 2008). The secondary statistical and quantitative survey data on the status of Omanization will also be analysed by utilizing quantitative data analysis.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis is a method of quantitative data analysis that involves calculating summary statistics to describe the characteristics of a dataset . It is often used as a first step in the data analysis process to understand the basic features of the data and identify trends and patterns.

There are several different descriptive analysis methods that can be applied in human resource research. For example, frequency distributions involve counting the number of times each unique value occurs in a dataset. Measures of central tendency involve calculating summary statistics such as the mean, median, and mode to describe the "center" of the data (Salkind, 2017). Measures of dispersion involve calculating summary statistics such as the range, variance, and standard deviation to describe the spread or variation in the data. Graphical methods involve using graphs and plots to visualize the data. Descriptive analysis is a useful tool for understanding the basic characteristics of a dataset and identifying patterns and trends. It can provide valuable insights into the characteristics of a population and help researchers to identify areas for further study.

Inferential

Inferential analysis is a method of quantitative data analysis that involves using statistical techniques to draw conclusions about a larger population based on a sample (Cohen et al., 2003). It is often used in human resources research to make predictions or to test hypotheses about relationships between variables.

There are several different inferential analysis methods that can be used in human resources research. For example, hypothesis testing involves testing a statistical hypothesis about the characteristics of a population by comparing the results from a sample to a hypothesized value Regression analysis involves using statistical techniques to identify the relationship between a dependent variable (such as job performance) and one or more independent variables (such as education level or work experience) (Hair et al., 2019). Factor analysis involves identifying the underlying factors or dimensions that explain the relationships between a set of variables

Inferential analysis is a powerful tool for understanding the relationships between variables in human resources research. It allows researchers to make predictions and test hypotheses about the characteristics of a population, and can provide valuable insights into the factors that influence employee attitudes and behaviors.

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Target population and sampling

The target population in human resources research refers to the group of individuals or organizations that the researcher is interested in studying. Accordingly, Omani firms that are implementing the Omanization policy are the target population.

However, as the domain is wide and diversified, Omani logistics firms operating in Muscat, Salalah, Nizwa and Sohar are considered in the sampling frame. It is important to carefully consider the target population and sampling methods when conducting the research, as these factors can have a significant impact on the representativeness and generalizability of the study findings. A well-defined target population and appropriate sampling method can help ensure that the study results are relevant and applicable to the larger population of interest

Sampling is the process of selecting a subset of the target population to participate in the study. There are several different sampling methods that can be used in human resources research, including random sampling, stratified sampling, and cluster sampling (Cohen et al., 2003). The choice of sampling method will depend on the research question and the specific characteristics of the target population.

Sampling frame and Unit of Analysis
A sampling frame is a list or group of individuals or objects that are eligible to be included in a sample for a study or survey. It is an important component of the sampling process, as it helps to ensure that the sample is representative of the larger population of interest. According to Saunders et al., (2012), a sampling frame is a list or other representation of the elements in the population from which the sample is drawn. It should be as complete and up-to-date as possible, and the elements should be easy to locate. Using Omani logistics and shipping companies as a sampling frame can be a useful approach for researchers and businesses looking to gather data or conduct market research in the region. These companies are typically well-established and have a strong presence within the country, making them a reliable source of information and insights about the local market. One advantage of using Omani logistics and shipping companies as a sampling frame is that they often have extensive networks of clients and partners, providing a diverse range of perspectives and experiences. Additionally, these companies are likely to have a good understanding of the logistical and regulatory challenges faced by businesses operating in the region, which can be valuable for researchers seeking to understand these issues in greater depth. However, it is important to keep in mind that using Omani logistics and shipping companies as a sampling frame may not be representative of the entire population of interest. These companies may have particular characteristics or biases that could affect the results of the research. Therefore, it is important to carefully consider the potential limitations of this approach and to consider using additional sampling frames or methods to supplement the data collected.

Sampling frame
The sampling frame for the study is presented below

Company	Logistics Department
Barka shipping and warehouse operators	
Muscat Port	
Oman Logistics Association	
Logistics and Supply Chain tertiary institutions in Muscat and Sohar	
ASYAD	
Sohar Port logistics agents and warehouse operators.	

Sampling method
Sampling techniques are used to select a subset of individuals or objects from a larger population for the purpose of studying or gathering data about that population. Various sampling techniques are in use by researchers, depending on the research question, the resources available, and the characteristics of the population. Probability sampling and non-probability sampling are used to determine the size of the sample. For this study, multistage sampling will be applied and in the first stage, large-scale, medium scale and SMEs are identified in the four cities. 340 samples (100 LS, 120 MS and 120 SMEs) from each stratum are nominated from each city constituting 340 observations. The choice of respondents for the questionnaire is to be conducted conveniently for which the non-probability sampling method will be utilized as it is one of the methods used in non-probability sampling (Salkind, 2017)

Reliability and validity analysis
Reliability
Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of research findings over time and across different samples and conditions. In scientific research, the requirement for reliability is the application of a valid measuring instrument to a different group of circumstances that should lead to the same observation . In an effort to rise the reliability of the research, as explained by Janesick (2000), the researchers will use types of triangulations: (i) Data triangulation whereby the researchers will employ a variety of data sources in the study which are literature, interviews, and questionnaire survey, and (ii) Methodological triangulation by which the researchers will use multiple methods to investigate the stated research problem,

which are qualitative. A reliable study is one in which the results can be replicated and consistently obtained under similar conditions. Reliability is an important consideration in research, as it helps to ensure that the findings are valid and trustworthy. There are various factors that can affect the reliability of a study, including the design of the study, the sampling technique used, and the measurement tools and procedures employed. To increase the reliability of a study, the researchers plan to apply a series of procedures such as employing valid and reliable measurement tools and statistical measures like Cronbach alpha. It is important to carefully consider the reliability of a measure or research findings, as unreliable results can lead to inaccurate or misleading conclusions (Salkind, 2017)

Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which a measure or research study accurately reflects the concept or construct that it is intended to assess. It is an important consideration in research, as it helps to ensure that the findings are meaningful and relevant. There are various methods of validity analysis, including content validity, criterion validity, construct validity, and concurrent validity. It is important to carefully consider the validity of a measure or research findings, as invalid results can lead to inaccurate or misleading conclusions (Salkind, 2017). As stated by Denscombe (2002), validity is concerned with the accuracy of questions asked, the relevant data collected and the accompanying explanations offered. Generally, validity relates to data and the analysis used in research. Validity concerns the accuracy of the questions asked, the data collected and the explanation offered. Generally, it relates to the data and the analysis used in the research. Accordingly, the accuracy of questions was ensured both through clarifications by the researchers and pilot testing, that is mainly testing the questions for accuracy and clarity before the final survey is made.

Ethical considerations

- Ethical considerations Ethics in research refers to the norms or standards that guide the research process (Saunders et al., 2012). This study observed ethical considerations throughout the research process. The researcher will be guided by the three ethical principles during data collection and analysis namely voluntary participation, confidentiality, and non-maleficence. To adhere to these principles, the following steps were taken:
- Ethical clearance was obtained from National University of Science and Technology before the data collection process,
- The researchers requested permission from the management of various stakeholder involved in this research to give respondents' time to participate
- The respondents were informed of the purpose of the research in line with the principle of informed consent.
- The researchers ensured that participation in the study was free of prejudice towards any group (age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, race, gender, etc.).
- The researcher explained to the participants that they have the right to a copy of the results,
- The researchers respected the dignity, cultural values, beliefs, privacy, and autonomy of respondents.
- The confidentiality and anonymity of respondents were assured.
- The researchers recognized and validated any real or apparent issues where control between the researcher and participant could be abused.
- The researchers gave proper acknowledgment to all who contributed to this research and thanked them.
- The researchers made sure that the facts of the study be cautiously clarified within the final report to give readers the chance to critic the moral quality of the study for themselves.

Benefits to Oman

- The study will provide an in-depth understanding of strategic Omanisation in the logistics sector and their link to success in managing the global supply chain which connects Oman economy to the world.
- The study will enlighten industry, academia and government on strategic Omanisation issues in the logistics sector in Oman. It will provide a comprehensive overview of the localization opportunities and risks factors in Oman.
- The report will comprehensively provide the updated nature of issues, policy discussion, in-depth and analysis of key issues related to the Omanisation debate in the logistics sector in Oman.
- Additionally, the study will establish recruitment, retention and loyalty issues in Oman that contribute to the decision-making process of policymakers in logistics. That is good for well-informed credible decisions and progress
- The results shall contribute to providing fresh evidence and insights into strategic Omanisation issues in Oman.
- This will propose a positivist framework that is critical in informing national policy, industry, and the academics to project and propose a measure that is critical in strategic Omanisation management.
- The results of the study can also be generalized to other industries in Oman to assist policy framework development and implementation.

- Omanisation stems and reduces foreign remittances which stabilizes the Balance of Payments for the country and increases circulation of funds in the country with a multiplier effect on the economy.

Expected Output

- The study is expected to contribute immensely to the body of knowledge by unraveling knew knowledge expected to be obtained from the grounded theory because of interacting with the real subjects in the study who are partners in the Omanisation strategy and implementation. Research helps reduce suspicion and mistrust as decision are driven by facts rather than emotions and hunch.
- It is expected that benefits and risks will be highlighted which will influence the course of action taken by decision-makers and policymakers thereby enhancing the application of research into real-life situations.
- A critical analysis of literature will assist in giving a comparative analysis of different Omanisation aproaches and possibly different settings of the same in light of the context of geopolitical, national, or regional realities and perspectives giving rise to future practice, policy, and theory formulations.
- The limitations of the study are that researchers are sampling certain companies and organisations in Muscat, Barka and Sohar. The situation may be different elsewhere like in Salalah where there are more transshipments than goods for consumption in Oman. Even in selected cetres there may be differences based on stage of development, ownership and global networks or real motivations for Omanisation (real interest, compliance with government policies, patriotism, labour durability and stability or national interest). In addition, the findings in Oman cannot be generalized to other countries where policies, approach, situation and perspectives may be different.

Academic, Scientific and/or Innovation Significance

- The Omanisation audit and analysis of the logistics sector shall provide the degree and size of competitive nature of the logistics sector labour, performance, and barriers, how to overcome them, and what the country needed to do going forward.
- The study will directly contribute towards providing the successes and failures of the much tooted Omanisation policy in the sector in Oman. The expected impact of strategic Omanisation is critical in the planning and development of the logistics sector. The study will contribute to the development of literature and knowledge that is relevant to the Omanisation policy, a signature policy of the Oman Government and a crown jewel of the country which is an unquestionable national rallying point that unites the nation right throughout all villages and conurbations. There is no other subject that reverberates in Oman like Omanisation, maybe education only may compete for equal fervent attention and no other subject.
- The knowledge will be published in the form of academic journals that are significant to address strategic Omanisation opportunities and risks for academia and industry.
- The study is purely informed by a deductive approach; hence data will be analyzed using rigorously data analysis tools that are essential in the contribution and acceptance of the results. The sample which is going to be used is scientifically chosen and valid to constitute the acceptable framework.

Risk/Critical Success factors

- Ability to collect the data with acceptable response rates from the selected sample.
- Ability to complete the research within the specified period.
- Possibility of balancing the teaching workload and research tasks.
- Collaboration with research members.
- The chosen methodology will collect data objectively with limited bias.
- The targeted sample is a true representation of the population.
- Data analysis and collection will yield deductive and objective findings.
- The cooperation of various employers is critical to success and this has been assured as well as researchers being released to attend conferences to disseminate findings.

Is the project going to result in a patent? y/n – no

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Appendices

(i)   Budget Summary

Item	Cost (OMR)		
	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Administration cost	100	100	200
Data collection/ Analysis cost	2000	2500	4500
Dissemination	200	300	500
Equipment and Facilities	4600	2000	6600
Travel Expenses International Conference	1000	800	1800
Travel Expenses Local Conference	100	100	200
Material and supplies	1500	1700	3200
Research Assistants 01 Omani Technician)	400	400	800
Research Assistants (05 postgraduate Omani students)	1200	800	2000
Total amount	11100	8700	19800

(ii)   Project duration in months

Personnel Time Allocation			
	Year 1 (Hrs/Wk)	Year 2 (Hrs/Wk)	Total
Principal Investigator	2	2	4
Co-Principal investigator	2	2	4
Co-Investigator-1	2	2	4
Co-investigator-2	2	2	4
Co-Investigator-3	2	2	4
Co-investigator-4	2	2	4
Research Assistant	2	2	4
Research Assistant	2	2	4
Research Assistant	2	2	4
Research Assistant	2	2	4

Personnel Time Allocation			
	Year 1 (Hrs/Wk)	Year 2 (Hrs/Wk)	Total
Principal Investigator	2	2	4
Co-Principal investigator	2	2	4
Co-Investigator-1	2	2	4
Co-investigator-2	2	2	4
Co-Investigator-3	2	2	4
Co-investigator-4	2	2	4
Research Assistant	2	2	4
Research Assistant	2	2	4
Research Assistant	2	2	4
Research Assistant	2	2	4
Research Assistant	2	2	4

(iii)   Project duration in months

Sr. No.	Task Name /Months	DURATION IN MONTHS (1 Division= 2 month)											
		YEAR 1						YEAR 2					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1		▓	▓										
2				▓	▓	▓							
3						▓	▓						
4							▓	▓	▓				
5											▓	▓	
6												▓	▓

(iv)   Overall, TRC requested funding
        OMR20 000 (refer to budget above)
(v)   Collaborative outcomes (How many research assistants/technicians, etc)
        Refer to **(Risk/Critical Success factors)** above under Item (v).

(vi)   Additional key performance indicators
        a. Completion of data collection instruments
        b. Getting permission for field research from the various organisations
        c. Buying required equipment and software
        d. Educating respondents on procedure and expectations regarding survey interviews.
        e. Coordination and regular meetings of research team

Project Title: Managing strategic Omanisation for localization of skills in the logistics sector in Oman and dealing with challenges and headwinds.