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Educators' Opinions of the Impact and Effectiveness of Omanization in Public Education

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2023

Abstract

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MA, Penn State, 2010

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Since 2003, the Sultanate of Oman has been under Royal Decree No. 35/2003 and Royal Decree No. 99/2011, which outlined the Omanization quota for the private sector and cultural goals in Oman. A central aim of Omanization, both historically and presently, has been to augment the presence of Omani citizens in private sector employment, thereby reducing reliance on expatriate workers. Despite being in effect for more than 30 years, the private sector's Omanization goals have yet to approach the initial target of 90%. Guided by human capital theory and a generic qualitative inquiry approach, interviews were conducted with a convenience sample of eight educators in Oman, to investigate their perceptions of current curriculum designs, specifically pertaining to English language skills in public education as a preparatory foundation for Omanization employment. Thematic analysis was used to systematically examine and compare the collected data. Several key themes emerged from the analyses, including (a) language proficiency, (b) hiring practices, (c) educators' perspectives, (d) workforce development, (e) Omanization goals, and (f) curriculum development. This study aimed to bridge the existing information gap regarding the importance of English education curriculum and Omanization objectives. The study findings have potential implications for positive social change through informative findings from the insights and viewpoints of educators beneficial to stimulate a reevaluation of workforce localization policies by the Omani government.

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Dedication

This is dedicated to all the children who grew up in darkness. Be your own light and let it shine.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to Allah, without His love, mercy, and compassion, my eyes would have only seen red and black. I also must thank myself, Mighty Mouse, Dr. M. (Thanks for having the initials of an awesome villain, I will always remember you), Dr. Wilson, Dr. Lane, and the staff of Walden University.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Oman is a country that shares its border with three neighboring countries: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates. The capital of Oman is Muscat. In 1970, Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said took power from his father through a military coup. The Sultan proceeded to implement modernization policies throughout the country. One such policy was Omanization. Omanization is a policy implemented in 1988 to integrate the young uneducated Omani population into the private sector (Al-Lamki, 1998). One of the policy goals was to replace expatriate workers with trained Omani personnel (Al-Lamki, 2000). However, this process of investing in human capital cannot work without the Omani government investing heavily in public education.

Oman's traditional education started with Quranic schools. These schools taught the fundamentals of Islam, the Qur'an, Arabic writing, reading, and grammar. Formal government education started to emerge in Oman in 1930. Before the reign of Sultan Qaboos, Oman only had three government schools. After his ascension to power, the Sultan started implementing policies that would boost Oman's economy, health care, welfare, and education. By 1976, government schools in Oman increased from three to 207 schools (Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Education, 2016). Data from 2018 attribute over 910 government schools in Oman, with the Muscat governate having 160 schools (Ministry of Education, 2018). To reinforce the Omanization policies that could boost Oman's economy, health care, welfare, and education, Sultan Qaboos's government passed Royal Decree No. 35/2003 and Royal Decree No. 99/2011. Both decrees focused

on the well-being of the citizens of Oman. In this study, I focus on labor and education and the perceptions of public school administrators specific to classroom curriculum efforts toward meeting each decree's Omanization goals.

Article 11, Royal Decree No. 35/2003 focuses on employing Omani citizens over expatriates (foreign workers). The decree states that "an employer must employ Omani employees to the greatest possible extent" (Royal Decree 35/2003, Article 11, 2003, p. 7). This quota is established and periodically adjusted by the Ministry of Labor for all work sectors. Depending on the needs or activities of each sector, the Omanization quota can be adjusted up or down specifically for private companies in Oman as well as the public sector employing expatriate staff. The quota established by the government must be abided by in the private sectors. This has placed a toll on the government and private sectors to prepare national citizens through higher education and training.

Article 13 of Royal Decree No. 99/2011 defines the cultural principles of Oman regarding educating Omani citizens. Article 13 gives the Omani government power to disseminate and make education accessible to all. The aims of this Royal Decree include raising and improving the general cultural level, promoting a culture of scientific inquiry, inspiring a dedication to research, addressing the requirements of economic and social plans, and cultivating a generation that embodies both physical and moral resilience. Although the article does not specifically state the word *Omanization* as an economic plan, education institutes in Oman adhere to this decree as a north star to educate qualified Omani citizens to enter the workforce. These institutions work together with the

government, so the employee quota under Article 11 of Royal Decree No. 35/2003 can be met.

The former Sultan of Oman, Qaboos bin Said al Said, implemented the modernization plans to propel Oman into a future in which they can be competitive in the global market. By issuing Royal Decree No. 35/2003 and Royal Decree No. 99/2011, Sultan Qaboos ensured that national citizens of Oman will become educated enough to compete with expatriate workers in the private sector. The outcomes of these decrees specific to curriculum development have not been studied and are not fully understood.

In this chapter, I address the background of the problem, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research question, and the conceptual framework. I also speak on the nature of the study, definitions of uncommon terms, assumptions, scope, delimitations, limitations of the study, and what makes this study significant from other Omanization research. The chapter will end with a summarization of key points.

Background

Omanization has been studied by many researchers; however, those researchers did not evaluate Omanization from the perspectives of public school administrators in Oman. According to Zerovec and Bontenbal (2011), media coverage of the policies has been favorable toward the government. The government normally informs the public of the progress of Omanization on its website and through different media outlets. These articles and updates are from different ministerial departments (General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning, 2019; Ministry of Finance, 2019; Sultanate of Oman Education Council, 2018; Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Education, 2016), and authors

such as Al-Lamki (1998), Al-Shaibany (2016), and Yoel (2018). Updates on the

Omanization policies are constantly published on the Times News Service website (2018,

2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2020).

Although research on the topic of workforce localization in Oman is minimal,

there are an array of articles on this topic as it pertains to the Middle East. These articles

are from a wide range of research. Localization and localization in the Middle East are

discussed by Bose and Dey (2018), Goby et al. (2017), Goby (2015), Goby et al. (2015),

Jabeen et al. (2018), Neal (2010), Pegram et al. (2018), and Waxin et al. (2018).

Additionally, Al-Waqfi and Forstenlechner (2010), Das and Gokhale (2010), and

Forstenlechner et al., (2012) discussed expatriates in the Gulf nations. Human resources

in the Gulf region were discussed by Budhwar and Mellahi (2007), Khurshid (2014), and

Riaz and Ishaq (2016).

This study's primary objective was to address the gaps in the existing literature

concerning Omanization. I aimed to significantly contribute to the current body of

knowledge on this topic. I identified numerous gaps in research on Omanization policy.

Initial research has shown the research on Omanization is limited to barriers of

Omanization and students' and parents' perceptions of the effectiveness of learning

English (Al-Lamki, 1998; Tekin, 2016). Other studies on Omanization by Moideenkutty

et al. (2016) explored Omanization practices, human resources management (HRM), and

its connection to financial performance. Researchers such as Al-Lamki (1998), Al-Salimi

(2011), Arslanian (2013), and Schmierer (2016a, 2016b) provided a brief history of

Omanization. Al-Ani (2017) and Zerovec and Bontenbal (2011) informed readers of an

economic scheme by the Omani government called Vision 2020. Vision 2020 is a plan to reduce Oman's dependencies on oil revenue and prepare Omani students for the developing technological world. A report from the PRS Group, Inc. (2017) is useful for analyzing risk factors in investing in Oman by foreign investors, and the report briefly covered Omanization. In a study by Denman and Al-Mahrooqi (2019), the authors discovered that Omani public school graduates have fallen behind "international standards and the expectations of policymakers, employers, and higher education institutions" (p. 30). By identifying these gaps in the literature, this study provides a foundation for future research on Omanization policy and practices.

Along with the limited research on Omanization, research on the use of human capital theory (HCT) perceived by public school administrators related to curriculum design in Oman is absent. There has been research on HCT and education and the correlation of other theories to HCT, but none has been focused on Omani workforce development through education foundations. For example, Castellano et al. (2019) described the exploration of HCT and education and concluded that the concepts serve important roles individually and combined. Holden and Biddle's (2017) research were focused on the emergence and adaptation of HCT as a framework in education policies in the United States. Both believed that the federal government should fund and control education because of its connection to an increase in the productivity of the economy.

Researchers, such as Hayek et al. (2016) and Ismail and Awang (2017), found a correlation between education and worker income. For example, Ismail and Awang's (2017) study concluded that Malaysian teachers earned more if they were educated. This

conclusion correlates with how HCT suggests that earnings and experience of workers align with worker education levels (Hayek et al., 2016).

Researchers also have discussed HCT on a theoretical level. Tan's (2014) study informed readers of HCT and laid out the groundwork for others to comprehend the theory holistically by dissecting the words *human capital* and discussing different paradigms on the origins of HCT. Al-Lamki (2000) investigated the issue of HRM and training on Omanization but not HCT. The researchers concluded that economic growth can be achieved through education to produce skilled and trained human capital (Al-Lamki, 2000). In this study, I explored the perceptions and interpretations of Muscat public school administrators in adhering to Omanization policies and their connections to education.

Problem Statement

Omanization is a program that was first implemented in 1988 by Sultan Qaboos' government to integrate the young uneducated Omani population into the private sector (Al-Lamki, 1998). As part of the Omanization policies, a portion of the government funds is allocated to train and prepare Omani citizens to replace expatriates who currently hold more than 49% of employment in private sectors (Ministry of Finance, 2019). From 1970 until 2019, Oman invested more than 70 billion Riyal in education as part of the country's goals to educate its citizens to compete in the global market (Ministry of Finance, 2019). A large portion, 39%, of the 2019 budget, was dedicated toward public spending (Times News Service, 2019a). Past expenditure levels among ministerial departments and organizations ranked the Ministry of Education at the top of Oman's

expenditure budget list (National Centre for Statistics & Information, 2016). Despite Oman's significant investment in education, Omanization policy has faced several challenges, including a mismatch between the skills of Omani graduates and the needs of the private sector.

Since the start of Omanization, there are fewer than 30% of Omanis working in the private sector (Yoel, 2018). In June 2020, the number of expatriate workers in the private sector was estimated to be 1,259,814 (Oman Observer, 2020). In 2022, the Arabian Stories News Service, a monthly bulletin of the National Center for Statistics and Information, indicated that "the net number of Omanis working in the private sector in 2021 had increased by 4.7% compared to 2020, from 254,754 Omanis to 266,799 Omanis" (para. 2). The 2020 statistics placed the percentage of Omanis working in the private sector at approximately 17%, a value far short of the Oman Vision 2040 target goal. By 2030, Oman Vision 2040 stipulates Omanis to hold 35% of private sector positions (His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimur, 2019) and sets a strategic path to have Omanization reach 40% by 2040. Given the progress that has been made in recent years, it is clear that Oman is committed to achieving its Oman Vision 2040 target goal of 35% Omanization in the private sector by 2030.

To achieve these percentage increases, Vision 2040 has outlined a set of priorities to improve Oman's labor market and employment prospects. One key priority is the establishment of a flexible labor market that can attract and retain talented individuals while staying in sync with demographic, economic, knowledge, and technological changes. Vision 2040 aims to achieve this by implementing an effective legislative

system that seamlessly integrates domestically educated talent into the labor market. The objective of Vision 2040 is to enable the private sector, through robust legislation and adaptable labor policies, to create job opportunities for qualified Omani youth. In turn, this would enable the Omani workforce to better adapt to global shifts in future job opportunities and effectively address the challenges of the global job market (His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said bin Taimur, 2019). Vision 2040's focused on establishing a flexible labor market is essential to achieving its goal of increasing the number of Omanis working in the private sector.

To ensure these goals will be met, the Omani government has carried out many decisions to boost the employability of Omanis. One example of this decision is the cancellation of academic-degree-linked wages (WAF News Agency, 2020). This decision eliminated wages attached to degree requirements. The government also instilled a minimum wage for all Omani citizens working in the private sector regardless of the employment position held. Both 2020 decisions caused different responses from advocates for and proponents against the Royal Decree No. 35/2003 initiatives. Proponents argue that government decisions diminish the private sector's power to hire workers at their costs. According to critics, the educational impact of this decision devalued the efforts of academic qualifications of prospective hires (WAF News Agency, 2020), and from an HCT perspective, critics believe eliminating academic degree requirements may lead to fewer citizens pursuing advanced education.

One indicator of the slow growth of hiring Omani nationals in private sector positions may be that only 27% of Oman public schools provide English education in the

curriculum (Al-Shaibany, 2016). Only 303 (27%) of Oman's 1,125 public schools serving Omani citizens incorporate bilingual education curricula (Ministry of Education, 2018). Al-Shaibany posited that having a bilingual background is important for Omanis to secure employment in private companies. Further, Al-Issa (2014) investigated English language use in the legal/law employment job market and found that acquiring English proficiency was important for law employment in both private and public sectors. Finally, Al-Shaibany described that government and private business officials alike have agreed that applicants who are proficient in English and Arabic have a higher chance of acquiring management jobs in private companies.

In a more recent decision (July 17, 2022), the Ministry of Labour issued Ministerial Decision No. 235/2022 that restricted expats from acquiring positions in 207 job categories (Times News Service, 2022). Some of these categories are customs clerk, legal clerk, store supervisor, street vendor, grocer, postal worker, gas seller, librarian, human resources director, public relations director, and many others. Expats who are currently in banned positions can continue with their employment until the end of their current work permits. According to the senior news editor of Gulf News, the decision is "part of an ongoing efforts to boots Omanization" and is based on Royal Decree No. 35/2003 (Nasrallah, 2022, para. 1). Oman's recent decision to restrict expats from acquiring positions in 207 job categories is a significant step towards achieving the goals of Vision 2040.

In the presence of adequate funding and governmental support, after more than 20 years, Oman is still not achieving Omanization in the private sector at the rates needed to

reach Royal Decree No. 35/2003 goals. Part of the Royal Decrees policy aims have been to improve English proficiency levels and the technical capabilities of Omanis, but these policy aims have been limited in measurement and poorly quantified (Ministry of Finance, 2019). Research has not yet addressed the perspectives of Oman public school administrators on curriculum development supporting students' English language proficiency for these Omanization workforce goals. These perspectives are unknown and require further investigation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this generic qualitative inquiry was to fill a gap in the existing literature on Omanization's policy efforts of preparing students for private sector employment. Data were collected regarding the perspectives of eight former and current educators on the lack of capacity to comprehensively deliver English language education to support Omanization goals in Oman. Investigating these perspectives through an HCT lens may help to build capacity for potential curriculum change efforts and may offer further evidence supporting the continued need for native English speakers or other qualified dual language teachers exempt from Royal Decree 35/2003 Omanization quotas.

Research Question

What are Oman public school administrators' perspectives on curriculum development supporting student English language proficiency for workforce Omanization goals?

Conceptual Framework

In qualitative research, a conceptual framework allows a researcher to interpret studies that involve people's way of life (Imenda, 2014). My generic qualitative study explored how HCT relates to educational reform, thus improving the effectiveness of Omanization. The study investigation and data enhance the theoretical literature on HCT in connection with education reform equating to an increase in a country's citizens obtaining employment in private industry. HCT was developed and refined by Becker (Becker & Murphy, 2007; Galiakberova, 2019; Holden & Biddle, 2017), Mincer (Chiswick, 2003; Galiakberova, 2019; Teixeira, 2011), and Schultz (Drobny, 2017; Galiakberova, 2019; Schultz, 1961a; 1961b). HCT is based on two principles. The first is the exploration of peoples' way of life, their behavior, emotions, organizational functions, and other behaviors (Imenda, 2014). The second principle of HCT is that the education and training of a country's citizens is the key to increasing the country's strength in the labor market (Marginson, 2019; Pravdiuk et al., 2019). HCT researchers have emphasized that education plays an important role in the acquisition of gainful employment (Castellano et al., 2019). Some HCT researchers have concluded that earnings and experience levels are correlated with education levels (Hayek et al., 2016; Ismail & Awang, 2017). HCT researchers have specified that economic growth can be achieved through education to produce skilled and trained human capital (Al-Lamki, 2000)

I selected HCT as my research lens because of the main goal of Omanization, which is to educate and train Omani citizens, so they can be part of the labor force (Al-

Lamki, 1998). The three main theorists of HCT derived their findings from Adam Smith's perspective on economic growth (Ucak, 2015). Smith attributed wage differentials to education (Human-capital theory, 2016). One of the main theorists of HCT is Schultz who believed that if society wants to grow economically, organizations must invest in human capital (Ritzer & Smart, 2001; Schultz, 1961a). According to Ritzer and Smart (2001), modern HCT connects economic growth and losses to educational investments. Put simply, if Oman wants to grow economically and reduce its dependency on foreign workers, Oman must reorganize its education system.

Nature of the Study

Qualitative research is a scientific method of observing subjects in their natural setting to gather non-numerical data. Denzin and Lincoln (2013) defined qualitative research as studies that use and collect empirical materials. Examples of empirical evidence are interviews, artifacts, case studies, observations, and personal experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). I have chosen the generic qualitative inquiry approach due to its departure from conventional boundaries within qualitative methodologies. Kahlke (2014) characterizes this approach by referencing Caelli et al.'s (2003) definition, which emphasizes that it does not adhere to any explicit or established set of philosophical assumptions akin to the more recognized qualitative methodologies. This approach offers a distinctive and open framework, allowing for a flexible exploration of research questions without being tied to specific philosophical assumptions commonly associated with other qualitative methodologies.

This method harmonized with the overarching research objectives, the specific inquiries guiding the investigation, and the contextual intricacies. Generic qualitative inquiry offers notable advantages, primarily through its capacity to facilitate a comprehensive exploration of the phenomena under investigation. This method excels in unveiling the subtleties inherent in individual experiences and their direct implications for the advancement of human capital. Furthermore, a qualitative research approach is adept at capturing emergent insights, particularly concerning the examination of contemporary issues within the sphere of HCT.

Percy et al. (2015) described the generic qualitative inquiry as a methodology that targets the opinions, beliefs, attitudes, or reflections of the participants. With this description in mind, I chose this design because it aligns with my specific purpose to investigate the opinions of former and current Omani educators regarding Omanization. Further, this design is aligned with my interview approach of using semistructured interview questions for all participants (Appendices A–C). I explored the relationships HCT has to educational reform efforts and my study produce evidence to help address the stagnation of Omanization in the private sector connected to the lack of English language skills by most Omani job seekers. I hypothesized that this stagnation may lessen with the reformation of Oman's education system.

I implemented the chosen research approach by conducting semistructured interviews. This method involves the use of open-ended questions that offer participants the flexibility to provide detailed responses. In fully structured interviews, all the questions are predetermined and asked in the same order to every participant (Percy et al.,

2015), whereas semistructured interviews allow the interviewer room to ask follow-up questions that educe a more in-depth answer. The semistructured interview questions I used focused on real events, in alignment with the approach described by Barnard and Simbhoo (2014). This approach allows "continued exploration of participant responses to uncover the experience of authenticity in the sample context" (Barnard & Simbhoo, 2014, p. 3). To recruit participants, I employed a convenience sampling method, selecting former and current educators in Oman. Interview data were organized using Microsoft Access and Word and thematic analysis (TA) was conducted using NVivo Version 14. This comprehensive methodological approach provided valuable insights into participants' perceptions of the phenomenon being investigated.

Definitions of Terms

The following key terms and vocabulary are used in the study.

Curriculum development: In relation to curriculum standards for English language subjects in Oman, the definition of curriculum development is an academic plan that can meet the general aims of education in Oman. Curriculum development requires setting the following goals to achieve those aims: student learning goals, objective goals, outcome goals, and content goals. In addition to the goals, curriculum development must include the sequence of the curriculum, instructional methods and activities, instructional resources, and lastly, assessments to measure student performance (Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Education, n.d.; Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Manpower, 2020).

Educator: An educator includes "school leaders and school administrators, specialist educators and those educators working in school age outside school hours care

programmes" currently working in a school or worked at a school or early childhood

center (Rouse et al., 2023).

Expatriate: A "person who resides in a country, temporarily or permanently, other

than that of his or her citizenship" (Ilyas, 2018, p. 109).

Omanization: Localization policies implemented since 1988 by the Omani

government to give Omani citizens priority in the hiring practice of public and private

companies (Kooli & Abdli, 2021).

School administrators: An encompassing term attributed to people in principal

and assistant principal roles (Akuzum, 2021).

Wilayat: An area that is controlled by a local governor (Caris & Reynolds, 2014).

Workforce localization: Implementation of policies that recruit and develop local

citizens' employability in hopes of reducing the country's dependency on foreign

workers (Waxin et al., 2020).

Wow moment: This term is defined by John Evans Jr., Ed. D., executive director

of Janus Labs, as "a unique, emotionally engaging experience that goes beyond

expectations and is readily recounted" (Wong, 2017, p. 16).

Assumptions

Assumptions are related to the theory, phenomenon, instrument, selection process,

participants, and study results. In this study, the assumption that relates to the theory and

phenomenon is that Oman is not able to fulfill its Omanization goals unless they increase

English language courses in its primary and secondary schools. The second assumption is

that Oman's dependency on foreign workers will outweigh the localization goals of the country.

Qualitative research is related to subjectivism, and for my methodology, this subjectivity is centered on the perceptions and experiences of working public school administrators in Ministry of Education schools. Using the generic qualitative inquiry methodology, I assumed that the instrumentality of structured and semistructured interview questions would accurately reflect the experiences of public school administrators related to their experiences with English language curriculum development and use. I assumed interview participants would be truthful in their responses and not subjected to any influences from the Ministry of Education. I also assumed that the use of pseudonyms to protect participants confidentiality would be sufficient for each to speak freely. When retrieving and reviewing any publicly assessable documents from the Oman Ministry of Education or Oman Ministry of Labor, I also assumed these to be valid and reliable information sources. Furthermore, by selecting generic qualitative inquiry over other qualitative or quantitative methods, I assumed that the flexibility and the nonconformity of this method would allow me to draw out participants' personal opinions of the research phenomenon.

I also had assumed that the Ministry of Education in Oman would be helpful to both endorse the study and to support recruitment messaging throughout the public schools in Muscat by sending emails to all primary school administrators asking for English proficient participants. During the actual recruitment stage, however, the Ministry of Education was minimally responsive to emails and ultimately played no role

in recruitment or study endorsement and other recruitment methods were required (see Chapter 4). I assumed the sample size would offer interview responses that would be thematically related, offering their collective perspectives on the implementation and outcomes of this public policy requirement. Lastly, two assumptions are attributed directly to participants and the methodological approach. First, I assumed participants would have sufficient English proficiency to answer the interview questions and engage in meaningful dialogue. Second, I assumed that participants would be honest in their answers and our interactions.

Scope and Delimitations

Workforce localization policies have many aspects, including immigration restrictions, job training programs, and local content requirements. Various historic and contemporary theories have been proposed as explanatory tools and interpretive lenses. These range from Marx's capital and conflict theories, intergenerational mobility theory, social capital theory, general system theory, cultural capital theory, HRM theory, and labor mobility theory, to name a few. I found Marx's capital theory (MCT) and HCT to be the most suitable for my interpretive lens and interview question generation. Ultimately, MCT was not selected based on the works of He et al. (2011). He et al. differentiated and compared MCT and HCT specifically and concluded that from the MCT perspective, humans would not be included in the capital concept as MCT's constructs were more related to labor power and capital investment. To that end, I selected HCT due to its conceptual and interpretive ties to education. HCT posits that

educating and training are essential if governments or organizations seek to increase citizen and worker productivity, a key outcome goal in the Oman Royal Decrees.

The study's focus was on workforce localization policies that address public educational objectives in Oman. The scope was limited to a subset of public school administrators in Oman, who volunteered to participate. The Ministry of Education requires anyone who wants to conduct research in Oman's public schools to acquire preapproval from the ministry. As such, potential participants were assured that the Ministry of Education's approval to participate was obtained and was the genesis of the initial recruitment email. All potential participants were employed as school administrators in Oman, and had sufficient English language comprehension skills to understand and reply to the posed structured and semistructured interview questions, offered in English only. Respondents to the recruitment email who were not actively working as public school administrators in Muscat and who lacked sufficient English language comprehension skills were excluded from my study.

Limitations

For my study, limitations such as potential ethical issues, language barriers, privacy, and participant integrity were identified. Study limitations can be found in design and methodology. For example, the transferability of qualitative study results can be limited by the selection accuracy of the interpretive conceptual framework as well as the overall methodological design. Additionally, information saturation can vary, which may require additional participant recruitment beyond the initial design requiring added researcher time. According to Percy et al. (2015), the population used for the data

collection must represent the target population of interest to obtain rich, thick descriptions that help improve transferability. Within the classic qualitative methodological approaches (ethnography, case studies, grounded study, and phenomenology), the generic qualitative inquiry is a new entrant and has been argued by Percy et al. (2015) to be the best for the study of "people's subjective 'take' on actual external happenings and events" (p. 79). Eight participants were interviewed, and the collected data were analyzed. The TA supported that information saturation was achieved as repetitious themes emerged from combined individual interviews.

A qualitative methodology alone could be argued as a study limitation when considered in lieu of a mixed methodology or pure quantitative design. Published quantitative data in Oman are limited as it pertains to my area of research. For example, graduation rates for Omani citizens are unavailable. Additionally, some data in Oman's National Centre for Statistics and Information (2016) are outdated or inaccessible as public information. These limitations have required the use of external agency data, such as the United Nations Human Development Index (United Nations Development Programme, 2019), to provide useful statistics on Oman's social and education metrics. Similarly, data about the skilled labor force, education dropout rates, and English reading fluency rates were absent in the available data repositories. To that end, available data will be used as descriptive information only thus relying solely on interview transcripts and thematic interpretation without triangulation as the only valid data sources.

A researcher must consider ethical issues that arise. Ethical considerations, whether in qualitative and quantitative research, are guided by the National Institutes of

Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research. Ethical concerns can potentially introduce bias into the analysis of research data. Babbie (2011) noted that research on social justice is susceptible to bias, where researchers might interpret data in a way that aligns with their own perspective. To prevent bias, I followed the research protocols of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (2004) and used reflective journaling. For my study, I do not anticipate conscious bias clouding my interpretive judgments. However, I must acknowledge that unconscious bias may have influenced my analyses. This could be due to my personal experiences as an educator in Oman, particularly when discussing education outcomes with public school administrators and former and current educators. Nevertheless, I remained vigilant and employed rigorous research practices to minimize any potential biases in my findings.

Before conducting interviews, I acquired Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval [10-18-22-0974551], and I made certain that I received a signed informed consent document in English from each participant. This helps foster disclosure and transparency. Although the Ministry of Education in Oman needed to approve the study to take place inside their schools, the privacy of the participants was addressed by attributing pseudonyms to the participants. In addition, my study may be limited by participants' truth telling. Participants' behaviors in this regard may be altered given that the Ministry of Education may approve the study, and the participant will be aware of the initial selection process. While random recruitment selection helped to eliminate this potential association limitation, a purposeful sampling approach was required. While my belief still holds that participants were telling the truth during the interview, I noticed

some hesitations with Participant 4 (P4), Participant 5 (P5), and Participant (P6) for email exchanges. Thus, their answers may not reflect entirely truthful responses.

<div align="center">**Significance**</div>

While the social impact of this study on Omani government policies remains uncertain, its primary objective is to make a meaningful contribution to the reevaluation of workforce localization policies by the Omani government. Research outcomes and information gaps for Omanization policies are many. Al-Lamki (1998) and Tekin (2016) have written that Omanization research has been limited to barriers to Omanization, lack of higher and technical education of Omanis, and students' and parents' perceptions of the effectiveness of learning English. While these findings are important, no published research has been focused on the perceptions of Oman public school administrators concerning English-focused curriculum development as a foundation of the Royal Decrees' goals. My study findings hold particular significance as they endeavor to bridge the existing information gap pertaining to the significance of English education curriculum and the objectives of Omanization. Furthermore, these insights and viewpoints from educators, which foster positive social change, can also contribute to the reevaluation of workforce localization policies by the Omani government.

Oman's education system is constantly changing to meet its 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Upon the passing of Sultan Qaboos bin Said in 2020, a new sultan, Haitham bin Tariq Al Said, rose to become the new Sultan of Oman. In Sultan Haitham's inaugural speech (2020), the education of Oman was emphasized as a national priority. On February 20, 2020, in response to that speech and with the government's permission,

the *Times of Oman* published an article stating that the Ministry of Education passed a resolution canceling all contractual obligations with non-Omani employees working in government schools to include teachers responsible for English curriculum development and content delivery. With this policy change, English education becomes limited to English as a second language (ESL) instructors who may have limited English fluency and cannot comprehensively deliver English education to support Omanization goals when preparing students for private sector employment after graduation. With this significance in mind, I sought to investigate the perceptions and voices of those public school administrators who remain and hold the responsibility for shaping curriculum that supports the private sector Omanization goals.

Summary

The country of Oman, nestled in the Middle East, has implemented workforce localization policies to combat the increase of foreign workers in the public and private sectors. The policy aims to reduce Oman's dependency on oil revenue, present ideas about modernization, reduce the employment of foreign workers in certain sectors, and restructure Omani education to compete with the changing technological world. This generic qualitative inquiry study, by way of semistructured interviews, may improve Omani understanding through an exploration of the opinions and experiences of public school administrators in meeting Royal Decree No. 35/2003. The theory used for the conceptual framework was HCT. The study holds significance as it aims to bridge the existing information gap regarding the importance of English education curriculum and Omanization objectives.

Chapter 2 includes a review of the literature that will provide an understanding of the connection HCT has to public policy and education, with a particular focus on workforce localization policies in Oman. The review serves as a foundational step in building a strong conceptual framework. It also allowed me to formulate a rationale where I explained how HCT is the driven force behind workforce localization policies in Oman.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this generic qualitative inquiry was to fill a gap in the existing literature on Omanization policy efforts to prepare students for private sector employment. I collected data regarding the perspectives of eight former and current Omani educators on the lack of capacity to comprehensively deliver English language education to support Omanization goals in Oman. To conduct the study, I first reviewed, synthesized, and critiqued past and current literature.

In this review, I explore the connection between how public school administrators perceive the effectiveness of Article 11, Royal Decree No. 35/2003, and Article 13, Royal Decree No. 99/2011. In addition, this study was designed to explore and elicit responses on how the Omanization policies can be adjusted from the perspectives of public school administrators who oversee the primary education of Omani citizens to ultimately contribute suggestions to how Omanization policies can be improved to better serve students and other educational stakeholders. I reviewed three major bodies of literature related to HCT, HCT and its connection to education, and workforce localization. A review of the literature on HCT provides a historical understanding of the development of HCT. Other literature on that theory includes how HCT is connected to education. Lastly, all cumulate to a government imposing workforce localization policies to bolster the employment of their citizens.

Although Omanization has been in effect since 1988, the government of Oman is still grappling with how to implement strategies to effectively decrease expatriates and

increase labor market participation among its citizens (Al Harrasi, 2020; Atef & Balushi, 2017). Some researchers have hypothesized that before the Omani government can replace expatriates in private sector positions, public education requires significant reform to increase competencies, such as English language fluency, among Omanis. Through further research that lends evidence and clarity to solutions, the goals of Omanization may be achieved at a quicker pace (Kooli & Abadi, 2021).

Omanization is part of a greater effort by government officials in Oman, a country that is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), to localize its workforce. This form of employment replacement is called *workforce localization*. Workforce localization is defined as the process of recruiting and nurturing citizens to enhance their employability, thereby diminishing a nation's reliance on expatriate labor (Waxin et al., 2018). According to Waxin et al., countries that are characterized by the same degree of workforce localization have similar human resources strategies for recruiting, selecting, training, and developing their citizens to replace foreign workers. Offering enticing performance and compensation packages for their citizens and incentivizing private companies to hire nationals are other common strategies in countries seeking to increase workforce localization (Waxin et al., 2018; Zhiqiang et al., 2021).

Workforce localization and other resource market problems became more significant concerns in many GCC countries after the discovery of oil (Albelali & Williams, 2021). Examples of these problems are rapid population growth and an increase in foreign workers (Waxin et al., 2018). Historically, Al-Dosary and Rahman (2005), Al-Waqfi and Forstenlechner (2010), and Hasan (2015) reported similar cyclical

events. According to Waxin et al. (2018), GCC countries share commonalities in demographic and labor market characteristics. The labor market characteristics that prompted workforce localization policies throughout these countries are low levels of nationals working in private sectors, a high level of expatriates working in private sectors, and high local unemployment rates among women and young people (Waxin et al., 2018; see also Malit & Naufal, 2017; Zhiqiang et al., 2021). In some GCC countries, foreign workers surpass the population of their citizens, causing population and employment imbalances (Waxin et al., 2018). Government officials in a few GCC countries experiencing this imbalance are finding solutions by implementing quotas and visa restrictions. However, Waxin et al. opined that these restrictions do not stop private companies from hiring more expatriates than national citizens.

Past and current research and reports on workforce localization policies in non-Western countries, particularly GCC countries, have concluded that many private companies prefer to employ expatriates over GCC nationals because expatriates are cheaper to employ, work longer hours, are easier to dismiss, are willing to work jobs nationals deem unsuitable, and are generally more qualified (Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014; Malit & Naufal, 2017; Pegram et al., 2018). Al-Dosary and Rahman (2005), Albayrakoglu (2010), Forstenlecher (2010), and Goby (2015) have shared the same conclusion. To counteract these issues, Oman has implemented many steps in its Omanization policies to incentivize citizens to work for private companies and industries.

The proponents of workforce localization policies in Oman have a set of defined objectives that guide their implementation. These objectives aimed to address critical

issues within the labor market and national economy. Proponents of localization policies believe that the implementation of these policies will reduce unemployment and the need for their country to depend on foreign workers (Alanezi et al., 2020). Localization policy goals are to reduce nationals in the public sector while making private-sector employment desirable, improve educational policies to coincide with demands of the technological market, control overdependence on foreign workers, enforce national quotas in the private sector, and develop incentive programs to attract private companies to hire nationals (Alanezi et al., 2020; Hasan, 2015). By understanding and analyzing these multifaceted objectives of workforce localization policies in Oman, researchers will gain insight into the complexities and potential outcomes of such policies.

Academic research on the topics of education and localization has demonstrated a direct connection between the topics (Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014; Berrebi et al., 2009; Zerovec & Bontenbal, 2011). While private companies hire more expatriates for labor-intensive positions than positions that require specialized skills and qualifications, findings also indicate that private companies are willing to hire more citizens of GCC countries in theory; however, they find that many citizens who apply lack the necessary qualifications and language competencies to succeed in managerial positions (Haak-Saheem, 2016). Thus, education reform would be a likely and viable solution to increase professional skills and qualifications at the local level. Nonetheless, other researchers contend that education reform alone is not a sustainable and viable solution (Atef & Al Balushi, 2017). These researchers feel that citizens will still resist working in the private sector due to conflict between local culture and company culture (Goby et al., 2015; see

also Kuehn & Al-Busaidi, 2000; Whitney, 2013; Williams et al., 2011). Nevertheless, many GCC countries have determined that traditional workforce localization policies are the most effective route to increased workforce localization.

This literature review expands on previous and current research on workforce localization in non-Western countries and the impact on public school administrators in Oman. More specifically, Chapter 2 includes an analysis of literature about workforce localization in non-Western countries, HCT, and education reform in Middle Eastern and North African countries (MENA). The literature search strategy is explained first, followed by a discussion of the theoretical framework. HCT serves as the research lens. HCT is part of a broad range of economic theories that have guided research intended to enhance human resources and identify solutions to labor market issues (Ali, 2017; Bhattacharyya, 2018). Middle Eastern educational reform is discussed thereafter, including subsections that address the role of the World Bank and the theoretical foundations of Middle Eastern educational reform. The connection between human capital and workforce localization is discussed subsequently in the regional context of the Middle East, including a subsection that centers on human capital and workforce localization in Oman. A summary concludes the chapter.

Literature Search Strategy

This review was conducted systematically to identify, appraise, and synthesize data from many types of research (Aveyard & Bradbury-Jones, 2019). A systematic literature review is a cornerstone of rigorous academic research. It enables the researcher to objectively assess the available evidence and draw informed conclusions based on a

broad and inclusive spectrum of research findings. Systematic literature reviews are not limited to qualitative, mixed methods, or quantitative research. Rather, a systematic literature review encompasses all types of research that fall within designated search parameters to ensure all reviewed literature is relevant to the study (Aveyard & Bradbury-Jones, 2019).

The focus of the literature review is workforce localization and its connection to HCT. The publications reviewed in this chapter include journal articles, reports, online books, and conference papers located through Google Scholar and Walden University Library databases, which included ProQuest, EbscoHost, and Sage Publications. Current news articles on Omanization and other journal articles were also considered. Further, the government of Oman provides qualitative and quantitative resources on their ministerial pages that were used in this review. A variety of key terms and phrases related to workforce localization in GCC, and HCT were used to locate relevant research. These keywords and phrases are *workforce localization and GCC, localization and education, expatriates in gulf countries, Oman, Oman education, expatriates and GCC countries, human capital theory, human capital theory and education, HCT, education, Arab education reform, Omanization, Omanization in education, development and human resource, HCT and expatriates, human resource management, Oman employment policy, Middle East employment policies*, and *expatriates in Oman*. Most of the articles included in this review were published between 2016 and 2022 to ensure relevance to the current research problem. However, some older theoretical, seminal, and historical publications are included to inform the study's foundation.

Conceptual Framework

In the academic world, progress results from emergent research and theories. One such theory is that of human capital. The history and focus of HCT are discussed first in this section. Modern HCT principles and research are discussed thereafter, followed by a subsection on applications of HCT in education research.

History and Focus of Human Capital Theory

HCT is an economic theory that evolved from Smith's theory on wage differentials (Holden & Biddle, 2017). HCT is based on the principle that training and educating human beings will increase individual personal income (Sandmo, 1993; Schultz, 1961). By investing in human capital, a skill based labor force can be developed, leading to an increase in the nation's economic growth (Human-capital theory, 2016). Human capital theorists also promote education and training as a solution to improve unemployment and underemployment (Marginson, 2019; Pravdiuk et al., 2019). As Hayek et al. (2016) stated, HCT's main principle is that an increase in human capital will increase pay and job performance. On a global scale, the HCT perspective promotes that the global labor market can contribute to aggregate social and national growth if countries invest in human capital (Aziz, 2016; Becker, 2018; Becker & Chiswick, 1966; Gillies, 2017; Rindermann, 2018). HCT is relevant to this study because, to minimize foreign workers in private sectors, the government of Oman implemented workforce localization policies that include quotas on foreign workers and educational goals to bolster their citizens' marketability to the private sector.

Classical Views of HCT

While some have claimed that Smith introduced the notion of humans as a form of capital, others date the notion back farther in time. According to Wyrzykowska (2014), viewing humans as capital dates to 430 BC by Xenophon. Wyrzykowska interpreted Xenophon's concept as identifying human capital as a resource in the context of the division of labor among masters and slaves, and professional qualifications as an important aspect of economic growth and increasing skilled labor. As civilizations evolved, the perception of humans as capital changed.

According to Wyrzykowska (2014), in quantitative research, the first person to consider human forms of capital was Sir William Petty. Wyrzykowska believed that Petty was influenced by Thomas Hobbes and Francis Bacon and wrote that, during Petty's lifetime, Petty published papers that voiced that skills and professional qualifications are capital in human beings. The two concepts are part of four factors that encompass a nation's wealth. Petty based these theories on what was taking place in England contemporary to the mid-1600s (Wyrzykowska, 2014). Petty's theories contributed to future theorists' perceptions of HCT.

In qualitative research, HCT has been used by different economists to explain and find solutions to the economic situations of their era. A few of these authors are Smith, Ricardo, List, and Marx. HCT was introduced by Smith's *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Wyrzykowska, 2014). Wyrzykowska wrote that Smith believed that money spent on educating an individual would increase their human capital, thus society would improve the skills of the worker. Another economist who used HCT

in qualitative research was Ricardo who created a model that showed that education level influences the quality of a worker (Wyrzykowska, 2014). Others, such as List and Marx, emphasized that economic growth depends on workers' knowledge and skills (Wyrzykowska, 2014). These classic economists stressed that for the economy of a nation to grow successfully, it is important to educate the workers and citizens alike. The contributions these authors made led to the neoclassical views of HCT by prominent economists such as Becker, Schultz, and Mincer. In addition, authors such as Sardar and Henzell-Thomas (2017) conducted HCT-based research and concluded that higher education in the Middle East is worse than in Western countries because the government controls all aspects of education. By controlling how education is disseminated, the government can align education and training to the needs of modern industrial practices, but control does not always equate to satisfactory and sustainable outcomes.

Neoclassical Views of HCT

The development of HCT is attributed to Becker, Schultz, and Mincer. Becker, Schultz, and Mincer were part of a neoclassical school of economic thought called the Chicago School of Economics (Schultz, 1961). Each of the economists has their version of HCT that is derived from their questions of human behavior and social processes (Holden & Biddle, 2017). Holden and Biddle cited that Becker wanted to develop a theory based on investing in human agents. Schultz wanted to understand economic growth, and Mincer's interests centered on explaining how human beings distributed their income by investing in themselves (Holden & Biddle, 2017). Collectively, these classical

economist theorists developed the principles of HCT that guide studies in numerous disciplines.

Becker published a book titled *Human Capital* in 1964 (Sandmo, 1993). Sandmo wrote that Becker attributed the progression of a nation to citizens and the government. Becker wrote that individuals who viewed education and vocational training as an investment factored in the cost of their education and the loss of income while pursuing their education (Sandmo, 1993). Pursuing their education was a positive investment to the individuals only if their net present value of costs and benefits were positive (Becker et al., 2018). Becker et al. believed that individuals who educate and train themselves are investing in the overall progression of society. When governments invest in the education of their citizens they will see an increase in wages, productivity, and living standards (Becker et al., 2018). This perspective on human capital shifted to the importance of education and training on the progression of the economy of a nation.

Schultz was drawn to the human capital idea to find an answer to the puzzlement of the residual that was derived from stimulating technical progress that Abramovitz, Solow, and others saw in their research on economic growth (Holden & Biddle, 2017). Schultz believed that people invested largely in themselves (Schultz, 1961). Schultz viewed human capital as an aggregate phenomenon. He used "national income accounting to develop an aggregate time series index of human capital formation in the United States" (Holden & Biddle, 2017, p. 545). Schultz wanted to determine the rate of return to education. His research wanted to find out whether the social rate of return on human capital outweighs the rest of the return on physical capital (Schultz, 1961). If this

was determined, then the government had to find where there are aggregate levels of misallocation of resources. Applying Schultz's perspective to Omanization allowed the government of Oman to put in place an executive summary for education (Sultanate of Oman Education Council, 2018) and Sustainable Development Goals (Ministry of Finance, 2019). These public initiatives are part of a wider workforce localization policy that Oman has in place to sustain and move its economy forward.

After Schultz became chair of the economics department at the University of Chicago, he invited Mincer into a postdoctoral fellowship after learning of Mincer's research on human capital investment (Holden & Biddle, 2017). Mincer's research in labor economics impacted how future researchers approached labor economics (Teixeira, 2011). By incorporating economic theories into public policies, governments can predict and create initiatives aimed at promoting labor productivity.

Modern Human Capital Theory Principles and Research

Classical economic theorists regard human capital according to two approaches and perspectives. The first approach is that individuals, in and of themselves, are a form of capital (Wyrzykowska, 2014). Wyrzykowska wrote that the second approach is that human beings should not be viewed as capital. Instead, their knowledge, skills, and health are capital. The second approach is shared by Smith, Mill, Say, List, Schultz, and Becker (Wyrzykowska, 2014). Discourse on and surrounding these approaches helped develop the concept of human capital in later years. The development assisted researchers to use HCT in quantitative and qualitative research.

According to HCT, human capital can be categorized into individual, organizational, and societal components (Castellano et al., 2019; Schultz, 1961). These three components, respectively, describe how the availability of human capital shapes economic outcomes at the individual, organizational, and societal levels. Likewise, Castellano et al. and Schultz offered that HCT described the interaction of these levels of human capital and how increased human capital at one level can produce benefits or changes at other levels. Investments of human capital at the individual level last a lifetime and do not depreciate. Castellano et al. argued that by investing in an individual's education, society, in turn, improves economically, their workplace may benefit, and the individual's income will improve. Human capital is owned by the individual, though companies and organizations can benefit through the development of individuals' human capital that occurs during professional training and experiences. Thus, the three forms of capital addressed by HCT emphasize the interconnected nature of how human capital develops and influences societies, systems, and economies at different levels.

The principles of HCT are perceived differently by Western and non-Western cultures. The Western view centers on human capital as a marketable asset. Western cultures see education as an improvement to the productivity of the worker and individual well-being (Castellano et al., 2019). The association between capitalism, HCT, and education in the United States was first investigated by Heller (Holden & Biddle, 2017). Heller was a key figure in bringing HCT constructs into federal economic policy discussions and recognizing educational policy as a subset of economic policy (Holden & Biddle, 2017). Holden and Biddle described Heller as wanting the federal government to

focus more on education funding by using human capital and externalities economic concepts and his aim was for the United States to be better equipped to compete with the Soviets in terms of scientific and technological knowledge.

In a Western setting, the theory of HCT has existed for decades to connect the government's responsibility in shaping education policies. Even in non-western settings, countries feel that they are obligated to provide compulsory free education for their citizens. Each country has different education policies that are tailored to the needs of its citizens. When these countries are faced with globalization and a declining economy, they reestablish their economy to introduce policies that can propel them from their recession.

In non-Western cultures, HCT is seen as non-marketable from a civic point of view. Rather, education is viewed as a process that influences public happiness and well-being (Castellano et al., 2019). Castellano et al. (p. 52) believed that education influences "society's income by bettering public policies and institutions." The non-Western perspective underscores the broader societal benefits of education. It promotes the idea that investments in education go beyond individual financial gains and have the potential to elevate the collective happiness, well-being, and overall quality of life for the citizens of a nation.

Modern views on HCT connect measurable education investments to people acquiring skills and knowledge to monetary gains and losses (Stehr, 2003/2001). Researchers have included HCT in quantitative studies. One example of such study was a study that investigated the economic modernization and development in the labor market

of West Germany between 1970-2008 (Becker et al., 2018). Further, some researchers have examined HCT in non-Western settings to explore if human capital development resulted in greater pay (Hayek et al., 2016). Korpi and Clark (2017) researched how HCT influences people's motivation to internally migrate. In their study, Korpi and Clark found that people with higher education who moved to larger metropolitan areas had a higher chance of obtaining a higher income, thus reinforcing the principles of HCT. These studies are many examples of how researchers provided evidence of how HCT relates to higher capital for individuals who invested in furthering their education.

Human Capital Theory and Public Policy

HCT has guided numerous studies on education and public administration (Brown et al., 2020; see also Hayek et al., 2016; Jepsen & Montgomery, 2012; Nel Páez & Teelken, 2016; Peers, 2015). My research will relate HCT to the discipline of public policy and administration. In the context of my research and the HCT framework selected to guide my research, it is hypothesized that localization policies are more attractive to private companies if human capitals are better qualified, as qualifications and competencies stem from training and education. HCT's primary conceptual premise highlights the pivotal role of qualified human capital in the success and desirability of localization policies. Such qualified individuals are more likely to meet the demands of the workforce effectively, which, in turn, can lead to increased productivity, innovation, and competitive advantage for businesses.

According to Potuček and Rudolfova (2017), public policy can be described as a discipline that utilizes the interpretative frameworks of various fields to analyze and

predict the processes involved in addressing diverse social problems and advancing public interests. These policies originate from problems faced by the public. They can include social, health, economic, education, environmental, criminal justice, and political issues (Nunn et al., 2019). These policies may include laws or regulations that directly impact the economy. Nel Páez and Teelken (2016) believed that by using an HCT theoretical lens, public policy and administration researchers may determine the cause of an issue or find solutions to the economic woes and prosperity of a nation. Although Oman has not specifically stated that their policy makers have applied the theory of human capital to the Omanization policies, I deduced that either a part of the theory or all the theory was applied to Omanization based on its strong connections to education.

Recently, researchers have used HCT as a foundation to explore the implications of human capital in diverse contexts and socioeconomic settings, including studies by Adom and Asare-Yeboa (2016), Belwal et al. (2017), and Pravdiuk et al. (2019). Adom and Asare-Yeboa's research evaluated how elements of HCT influenced female entrepreneurship in sub-Saharan Africa. Their research revealed that education and training played a significant part in the success of female entrepreneurs. Pravdiuk et al. authored an article to identify the advantages and disadvantages of HCT. Through their analyses, Pravdiuk et al. (p. 176) developed recommendations to improve the methodologies used to assess human capital and to provide clarification of the cost of human capital assets in accounting and enterprise methodologies.

Human Capital Theory Advantages and Disadvantages

Like other economic theories, HCT has advantages and disadvantages as a research framework. One of the advantages of HCT is that the theory can provide a meaningful explanation concerning educational and economic developments. Meichang et al. (2016) wrote that HCT is an important approach to use in explaining education demand and investments. The importance stems from Smith's key principles of capital which are human, physical, and social capital (Meichang et al., 2016). Another advantage of HCT is that it supports research in the context of capitalism-driven societies, in that if humans invest in knowledge and skills, their return on investment will increase (Brown et al., 2020). Research that is guided by HCT provides policymakers with an empirical basis to identify strategies that promote economic growth and improve individuals' ability to obtain general education so they can increase the nation's wealth and individual income (Brown et al., 2020). Further, Brown et al. stated that HCT provides legitimacy for the phenomenon of social mobility. Capitalism allows individuals or families to move between social statuses as their economic status changes. This mobility can be influenced by government policies and other external influences (Hung & Ramsden, 2021).

Some of the disadvantages of HCT are linked to the classical views of the theory. These disadvantages are voiced by many researchers due to dissonance between the concepts of capital and what it means to be human (Peers, 2015). Secondly, descriptions of human forms of capital have an undertone of slavery and human ownership (Schultz, 1961). Thirdly, knowledge and skills are highly subjective and can be difficult constructs to analyze (Drobny, 2017). Lastly, some scholars contend that HCT is too linear, making

rational choice theory and cultural capital theory more suitable for diverse research applications (Marginson, 2019). The researchers' arguments are well grounded but still do not deter others from using the theory. With so many disadvantages, HCT is still viable as a theoretical theory that can assist nations in building economic policies centered on workforce development.

Looking at the first argument that the words human and capital are not compatible, Peers (2015) justified it by stating that both words are intangible entities. Peers believed that by combining the two words, researchers suggest a paradoxical arrangement that the two are tangible. Both the words human and capital communicate value. In Peers' research, he stated that some researchers say the value of a human being is priceless, making them the center of everything, while capital is a central part of most human cultures. Theorists of HCT believe that the metaphysics of human capital tends to ignore the historical contests and traditions of the words (Peers, 2015). Peers concluded that this view allows economists to perceive human capital and value through the lenses of labor economists. Another of Peers' conclusions was that through this view individuals can be seen as commodities to be exploited and a source of revenue.

The above arguments and criticisms underpinned Schultz's (1961) hesitations about theoretically linking investment in human beings as an investment in capital goods because this view has a slavery undertone. In 1961, Schultz wrote that although some societies have yet to eradicate indentured servitude, viewing human beings as capital goes against humanistic values and beliefs about organized societies. Despite these concerns, Tan (2014) offered that Schultz's conclusion that the term human capital does

not degrade or impair human dignity if it is not regarded as a resource to be exploited is correct. Thus, the valence of the concept of human capital is positive or negative depending on how it is referenced and whether the historical context of the word is acknowledged.

A third disadvantage is that analyzing knowledge and skills as economic factors isolates the structure of human activity (Drobny, 2017). As Drobny wrote, modern economic theorists consider human traits as autonomous factors of production, the qualities of humans are seen as standing apart from the products that they produce. Drobny believes that authors who do not acknowledge this concept also fail to acknowledge how human capital and sources of labor can be embodied by the same people. Human beings have knowledge and skills within themselves to produce capital. By conceptually separating knowledge and skills from the individuals that possess them, economists demonstrate the complexity and sensitivity of HCT principles that have led some researchers to label HCT as unrealistic (Drobny, 2017).

Marginson (2019) similarly highlighted why HCT failed to provide valid theoretical explanations for real-world phenomena. Marginson first gave a historical background of the theory and its contexts. He also included different theory criticism. One of the criticisms was that HCT lacked realism in the analytical system and independent variables. Secondly, the theory is a linear theory that is applied to non-homogeneous materials, in that it unifies two domains, education and work, into one. Lastly, HCT eliminates other relationships that the two domains share. Marginson concluded that HCT should not be used to theoretically approach education and labor

within a single analytical system. After Marginson emphasized additional limitations of HCT, he concluded that HCT lends a great deal to the social science of how education is provided to benefit individuals and economies. Marginson also concluded that HCT theorists should produce an alternative theory that is grounded in a meta-method. Lastly, the author suggested that independent variables in studies that are guided by HCT should be limited to multivariate analysis. One can note that Marginson would be more prone to accepting HCT if the theory connected more to realistic applications instead of the what ifs.

Marginson's (2019) research is a critical analysis of HCT that provided similar criticisms to Tan's (2014) work because both authors did not view HCT as a holistic or comprehensive theory. While Marginson expressed that HCT is too linear, Tan similarly wrote that the linear relationship of human capital to education does not always exist in practice. Instead of looking at HCT as a way for the economy to improve through education, key government stakeholders should ask questions to clarify the implications of human capital, such as why education has not paid off in some countries while in others it has (Tan, 2014). Other key questions that were raised by Tan are how much is too much education? And should the government pay more attention to educating their citizens and less to health, housing, or infrastructure? While Tan offered many criticisms, he also opined that HCT should not be discarded as a viable theory. Marginson wrote that the only way to discard the theory is if it can be replaced with an even better theory. This challenge has been taken on by theorists of related theories including cultural capital theory, human resource theory, and intergenerational mobility theory.

Human Capital Theory in Education Research

The principles of HCT can be applied to analyze the economic elements of knowledge production, dissemination, and application in professional settings that are made possible through education or training, thus making HCT an appropriate framework to analyze education supply and demand (Meichang et al., 2016). From an educational perspective, forms of human capital are outcomes that result from education and other social and individual investments (Figure 1). Knowledge production, dissemination, and application in professional contexts are inherently linked to economic factors. Through education and training, individuals acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to their respective fields. This acquisition of human capital is a vital economic investment, which is intrinsically tied to the principles of HCT.

While theoretical explanations of how human capital results from education are straightforward, the process is nuanced, complex, and context-dependent in reality (Marginson, 2019). Belwal et al. (2017) focused on the employability of Omani graduates pre and post-oil economy. Belwal et al. found that the ineffectiveness of higher education in Oman resulted in degree programs not contributing to the employability of graduates. Belwal et al. noted that when students went job hunting, they felt that employers were searching for prior training, English language proficiency, computer skills, teamwork, and personality in prospective employees. These key factors of employability in Oman will be discussed further in my research. Many HCT studies involve a qualitative research approach to examine the role of human capital. This method of research was

chosen for its ability to interpret the nature of social reality and its ability to delve deeply into the perspectives of individuals (Bates & Rhys-Taylor, 2017).

Figure 1

Human Capital Theory
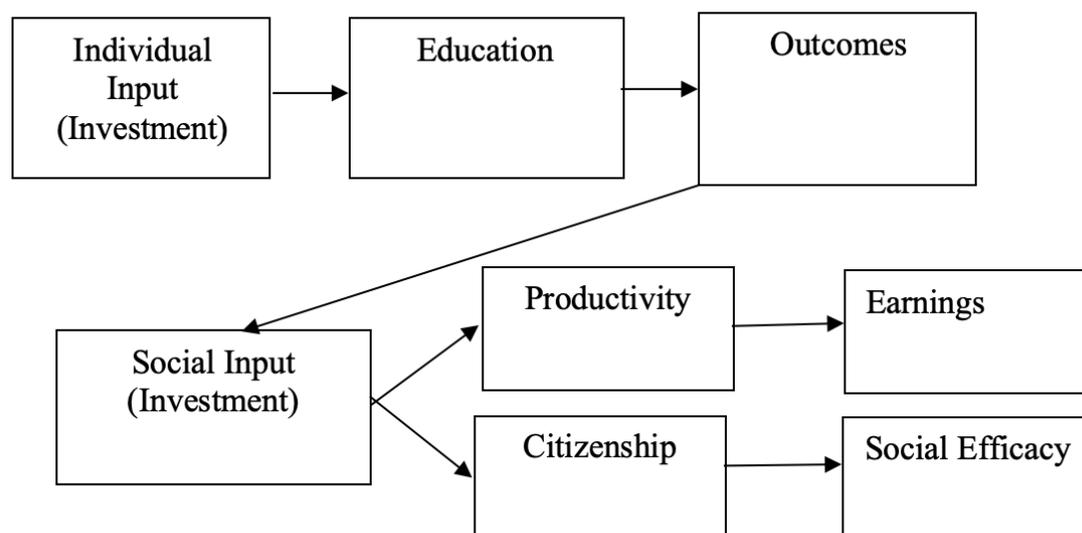
Note. A visual representation of how education and investments at various levels contribute to enhanced human capital. Adapted from *Foundations of Human Resource Development* (p. 110), by R. A. Swanson and E. F. Holton, 2001, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. Used with permission (see Appendix D).

Expanding on education and HCT, Peers (2015) examined the roles of the family (private) and school (public) in human capital development in the context of education. Peers offered that some economists assert that families failing to invest in their children's education places more pressure on the government. With this pressure, the government then places more responsibility on the private sector to bridge the gap. He also believed that public policies in these countries saw more people who can afford better quality

education enrolling in private schools, while the rest of the population was in public schools. Thus, public education was founded by the government as a means of providing members of the low-skilled labor force with a means of developing social capital through education.

Despite evidence of clear pathways to human capital development through education, more contemporary research highlights a more nuanced perspective. It is increasingly evident that an investment in education does not necessarily equate to a proportional outcome or benefit. Nel Páez and Teelken (2016) concluded that higher education does not equate to gainful employment or acquired skills, as the effectiveness of and extent to which higher education prepares students for professional roles after college vary. This finding conflicts with Schultz's (1961) broad premises of HCT, which promote that if individuals invest in education and training, they will be rewarded proportionately with a higher potential income in the future.

Human capital theorists believe the better-educated someone is the more they will earn (Schultz, 1961). This theory encourages countries and global organizations to invest more in education. Thus, HCT has been used by numerous researchers, including Hanuschek (2016) and Brown et al. (2020), to reinforce findings on how and why education can be used as a solution to problems associated with the economy and labor market. Brown et al. (2020) emphasized that there have been two fundamental gaps in education and economic development. The first is the impact of the global economy on nation-states and the demands for educated laborers. The second is that economists believe that to understand the nature of the social and economic world, we must view it

from the point of the nation-state. Brown et al. also communicated that instead of education propelling economic policies in developing countries, transnational companies should. Brown et al. concluded that these companies prefer cheap labor and are located in underdeveloped regions of countries as long as there is adequate communications infrastructure to move goods, information, and services. Hanushek (2016) argued that investment in quality education by the World Bank can lead to future growth in a country's gross domestic product. The researcher suggested that countries should introduce school choice and competition autonomy for schools to enhance accountability surrounding educational outcomes.

In higher education, some demographics are associated with populations that are the most likely to continue their education. Thus, different populations are more or less likely to seek higher education as a means of increasing their human capital and employability. Jepsen and Montgomery's (2012), framed within the context of HCT, demonstrated that the older an individual is, the less likely they will pursue higher education. Hayek et al. (2016) stated that women who were older than what is considered the range of ages associated with traditional college students were 30% to 50% more likely to pursue further education than males who are of non-traditional age. Hayek et al. suggested that nontraditional college student populations may be an untapped source of human capital, as most educational policies are targeted toward promoting higher education among traditional student populations. In their same study, Hayek et al. hypothesized that the three components of HCT (education, tenure, and training) influence pay. They believed that if people invest in education it will lead to greater

productivity thus leading to an increase in pay. Their second hypothesis stated that when a worker is working at a job for a long time, they gain firm-specific knowledge which will increase productivity. By increasing their productivity, their pay will increase. All of these may be able to attract any demographic of workers to seek higher education or training.

Hayek et al. (2016, p. 931) used secondary data contributed by 856 employees from a Latin American financial service to analyze employees' salaries, their number of years of formal education, and the total "number of independent courses or workshops an employee participated during their employment with the firm", and job tenure as a measure of their span of employment. The control variable was gender. Hayek et al. found that the three HCT components did not significantly contribute to performance. However, other results showed that the HCT components had a significant relationship to pay. These relationships were discovered by using Hayes and Matthes' procedure called computational procedure. Further, the researchers determined that managers' pay was related to credentials and not performance, while nonmanager employees were rewarded based on their performance. To reinforce the findings in their research, Hayek et al. (2016) quoted earlier research by Fang et al. (2009) and Williams (2009). Fang et al. and Williams (2009, as cited in Hayek et al. 2016) wrote that "specifically, the rational prediction posting that greater accumulation of human capital will result in higher performance evaluations and consequently to higher pay is not supported in the present research" (p. 932). The authors concluded that individuals receive higher pay based on the symbolic value of their formal education and training.

Human Capital Theory in Non-Western Education Research

HCT research on education often reveals nuances in the relationship between human capital in education that depend on context-specific factors such as local educational opportunities and culture (Lee & Lee, 2018; Lim et al., 2018; Ogundari & Awokuse, 2018; Sun et al. 2018). For example, Hayek et al.'s (2016) research examined how the components of human capital influence pay and were conducted in a non-Western setting where local companies commonly face salient socio-cultural and institutional pressures. The researchers predicted that education has an indirect, positive relationship with pay via a positive relationship with performance evaluation scores; tenure has an indirect, positive relationship with pay via a positive relationship with performance evaluation scores; and training has an indirect, positive relationship with pay via a positive relationship with performance evaluation scores. Hypotheses 1 and 2 centered on paths associated with the economic rationality of HCT (i.e., an indirect relationship with pay conveyed via performance evaluation scores). Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c predicted that the three human capital components indirectly influence pay through performance evaluation scores. Full support for these hypotheses was contingent upon support for Hypothesis 2.

Hayek et al. determined that these hypotheses are not supported as any of the human capital components significantly related to the performance evaluation scores. Hypothesis 2, which predicted a significant relationship between performance evaluation scores and pay, was supported ($\beta = .34$, $p = .001$). Thus, although the relationship between evaluation scores and pay was supported, Hypothesis 1 was not supported

because the human capital components are not significantly related to performance

evaluation scores, and, as such, there were no indirect effects to convey. Hypothesis 3

predicted significant direct relationships between the human capital components and pay.

This hypothesis was supported by years of formal education. The significance can be

seen here (β =.18, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 3 proved a direct relationship between pay and

human capital components. Hypothesis 4 predicted "a moderating effect of rank on the

relationship between performance evaluation scores and pay. The results indicate[d] the

presence of a significant interaction effect ($\beta = -1.02$, $p = .04$)" (Hayek et al., 2016, p.

932). Hayek et al. concluded that if researchers wanted to find out an individual's career

needs, they must expand their minds to address the role of national cultures.

In another study on education that was conducted in the context of a non-Western

country, Adom and Asare-Yeboa (2016) examined educational policies in Ghana. Adom

and Asare-Yeboa surveyed a sample of female entrepreneurs in Accra, Ghana. In Accra,

they found that these women credit education to the success of their businesses. These

findings reinforce the notion that by investing in the education of citizens, a country's

economy may be able to grow and compete in the global market (Castellano et al., 2019).

Adom and Asare-Yeboa (2016) concluded and emphasized that the country (Ghana)

needs to have more effective policies that encourage education and training. This is not

true just for Ghana. Other countries should be able to revamp their education policies to

boost the effectiveness of their economic policies.

Nel Páez and Teelken (2016) conducted additional HCT studies in non-Western

education research. In conflict with the HCT framework that guided their study, Nel Páez

and Teelken determined that there was no correlation between investing in higher education and higher income or skills due to flaws associated with Columbian school systems. The study participants chose universities that were expensive because they thought there were better teachers there. Approximately 44% of the participating students reported that they had inadequate teachers. Students who are unable to pay for universities chose schools that cost less. The teachers that worked in these schools were on a part-time basis and stretched very thin. Students who graduated from low-fee universities encountered discrimination in the labor market and lacked certain skills. Nel Páez and Teelken determined that in the future, it would be beneficial for researchers to expand on how the higher education system in Columbia can improve so many of its citizens that chose low-fee institutions can enjoy the human capital benefits they associate with and expect from receiving a college education.

Further, Castellano et al. (2019) explored two alternative approaches to understanding human and social capital. Their purpose was to introduce readers to how human and social capital are viewed in Mediterranean cultures while emphasizing how education plays an important role in both. Castellano et al. explained the importance of dividing human capital into two components, marketable human capital, and non-marketable human capital. Additionally, Castellano et al. discussed diverse theories of economic growth. They differentiated between social capital and human capital opining that social capital is collective of attributes among multiple individuals. By contrast, human capital is a representation of capital at the individual level (Castellano et al., 2019).

It is noted that in some cultures, education is ingrained in their culture. This speaks volumes in the Islamic world. In some Islamic countries, formal education starts at the religious level. Children are taught Quranic verses and Islamic fundamentals at a young age. When it comes to Islamic culture and education, authors such as Sardar and Henzell-Thomas (2017) wrote that Muslim societies are experiencing an educational crisis. The pair came to this conclusion based on evidence from a 2003 Arab Human Development report and related research papers. In their same publications, Sardar and Henzell-Thomas stated that this crisis is also happening in Western societies, especially in higher education. For many Islamic societies, reform may come in the form of a new "paradigm rooted in the Quranic worldview and an epistemology based on the doctrine of Tawhid…" (Sardar & Henzell-Thomas, p. viii, 2017). The researchers placed reform in this context into four categories, which are the nature and characteristics of Islamic legacy and ethics of Islam in education, issues concerning the integration of knowledge and legacy of International Institute of Islamic Thought, issues, and discourse surrounding dominant paradigms of education, and the future of education in a globalized world.

Sardar and Henzell-Thomas (2017) noted that some Muslims in Islamic societies believe that universities are like corporations (p. 2), in that they do not exist to promote culture. The authors also discussed work by Godet that listed 11 major crisis factors that higher education around the world is going through, many of which relate to human capital. Notable in the context of this education research is the crisis of aims and the crisis regarding the content and organization of education systems. The crisis of aims

centered on questioning the objectives of the education system. The objectives of the education system are there to educate students, help them develop certain skills, or create responsible citizens. The crisis regarding the content and organization of education systems centered on what should be taught in schools, as well as the quality of education and teaching practices. In this crisis, teachers were unable to teach new materials if not trained. Sardar and Henzell-Thomas pointed out that countries in this crisis also allocated more money to education and solutions to issues in education, but it does not solve all the problems if the solutions are ineffective or not evidence-based. This leads to the questions of why public education differs in the Middle East, specifically in Oman, and how public school administrators perceive their roles in meeting workforce localization policies.

The answer can be found in Sardar and Henzell-Thomas' (2017) HCT-based research. Their research asserted that higher education problems are worse in the Middle East than in many Western countries because universities are controlled by the government. They believe that globalization forced higher education from a peripheral to a central position. However, significant pressure is placed on timetables and assessments, instead of learning bases and mastery of learning objectives. These issues contribute to a knowledge-to-practice gap that detrimentally affects the professional development and progress of many graduates (Kooli & Abadi, 2021; Sardar & Henzell-Thomas, 2017). Thus, leading to many of the graduates being unable to acquire gainful employment in the private sector.

HCT research offers that many non-Western Universities are catering to technology-savvy students who already possess human capital in the form of fluent use of technologies in their everyday lives (Kooli & Abadi, 2021; Sardar & Henzell-Thomas, 2017). These students may be up to date with technology, but they are still illiterate in how to apply technology skills in professional contexts. Kooli and Abadi's research on college students in Oman illustrated that many students are still unable to read and understand technical words, instructions, and books, indicating that Omani universities are ineffective in their capacity to teach students to apply learned knowledge and skills, such as technology literacy, to benefit their professional performance once they graduate. These findings emphasize the nuances of knowledge and skills that constitute forms of human capital, as individuals must also possess the ability to apply or harness their human capital to produce favorable outcomes for their capital to be of value in different professional contexts.

Literature Review

Role of the World Bank

The World Bank is an organization established after World War II that includes 189 countries that collectively pursue the mission of reducing poverty and increasing income in developing countries (World Bank, 2020). The World Bank also fund projects and disseminates knowledge to developing countries in efforts to improve economic prosperity. When it comes to education, the World Bank's earliest involvement was through publishing economic reports (Teixeira, 2017). One of these reports was a mission to Columbia where the World Bank emphasized that education and training had a role in

eliminating poverty and contributing to a higher standard of living (Teixeira, 2017).

Teixeira wrote that although the World Bank recognized the importance of education, it

did not play a role in implementing most of the recommended actions that they published

for economic development. Teixeira believed that as human capital research gained

momentum in the World Bank, members of the World Bank changed perspectives and

degrees of involvement in education. Now the World Bank is the largest contributor to

education policies in the developing world (World Bank, 2020).

During the 1960s, the role of government in funding and managing education

attracted public attention (Teixeira, 2017). During that time, the World Bank established

the International Development Association (IDA). Teixeira emphasized that the IDA

became an avenue where the World Bank can allocate money to fund educational

development. The IDA is the largest provider of loans for education in developing

countries (World Bank, 2020). According to the World Bank's website, the IDA also

finances projects that center on specific challenges and aspects of global education,

including girls' education, teacher training, early childhood development, higher

education, technology, and skill development.

The World Bank's views of education and goals largely reflect HCT principles

and beliefs, in that they view education as a pathway to economic prosperity (Schultz,

1961). However, the World Bank's views on education have also shifted many times. In

earlier years, they only recommended changes in education in their economic policies.

After the 1960s, attention on education became more prevalent. Globalization allowed

them to shift to market efficiency as a determinant of national education and training

policies (Ngcwangu, 2015). During the 1990s, Ngcwangu believed that the World Bank focused more on primary and junior secondary education than vocational education and training. Now their policies are more geared toward vocational training. Ngcwangu also wrote that the World Bank's perspective further shifted to support the notion that occupational training is a more effective avenue to gainful employment than general education in many global contexts. According to Ngcwangu, World Bank policies and priorities promoted the notion that people who do not seek opportunities to acquire employment are themselves to blame, and blame should not be placed on economic policies. This view by the World Bank was expressed as part of their Education Strategy 2020 Report (Ngcwangu, 2015). This perspective is important in the context of Middle Eastern education reform because many researchers have attributed high employment rates in the Gulf region to citizens preferring public work over private (Salih, 2010; Williams et al., 2011). However, the public sector is presently overextended in Oman and other Middle Eastern regions where the government is unable to sustain national citizens in the wake of declining oil sales and a worldwide recession (Nasser, 2019).

Middle Eastern Educational Reform

Each country in the Middle East presents its regional educational systems and challenges (Ivancheva & Syndicus, 2019; Omwami & Rust, 2020; see also Bale, 2017). However, as Bale noted in a commentary on a collection of essays on the politics of education reform in MENA countries, common themes and challenges broadly characterized needed education reform. Through analysis of diverse data sources including interviews, case studies, reports, and policy documents, Bale indicated that the

most common issues associated with poor education quality in MENA countries were poor educational policy efficiency and poor social and economic development disrupting educational progress. Further, Bale opined that the most effective solutions to educational challenges in this context involved "providing equal access to education, improving the quality of education, and enhancing school administration systems" (p. 322). Bale concluded that collectively, these strategies were found to enhance educational outcomes, particularly in underdeveloped regions. Although some MENA countries are not considered underdeveloped, these strategies may improve the educational outcomes of their economic policies.

According to Ivancheva and Syndicus (2019), one issue that plagues educational reform research and, by extension, policies is the misalignment between the acknowledgment of increasingly globalized and commodified education systems in research and the lack of research that characterizes education reform efforts in non-Western or Anglo-American research contexts. While the limited existing research on education reform in Middle Eastern countries provides some solutions to problems faced in one or more regions, most education reform research is context-specific (Bale, 2017). Thus, the lack of available research and recommendations that directly address education problems in the context of Middle Eastern education systems resulted in the emergent issues of policymakers choosing solutions that are not compatible with Middle Eastern education systems or relying on strategies that are not evidence-based (Ivancheva & Syndicus, 2019). This criticism was further emphasized by Ivancheva and Syndicus as an unintentional consequence of the globalization of education. As they noted, the

prominence of globalization in education should, in theory, have had an egalitarian effect whereby all schools and education systems could become top producers and disseminators of the knowledge and skills that propel labor markets. However, Ivancheva and Syndicus explained how globalization may have had the opposite of the intended effect, particularly for countries that were not previously considered to be at the forefront of global education quality. Furthermore, they also explained that globalization may have exaggerated existing norms and dynamics in education, solidifying some nations as leaders in education, and others as being on the periphery of educational progress:

> …the supposed homogenisation may, in fact, ideologically obscure the processes that reinforce and reorder higher education sectors along vertical lines, producing a specific core-periphery dynamic within the higher education sector. What we see is an apparently more voluntary subjugation of self-perceived peripheries to the dominance of higher education policy agendas and evaluation mechanisms emanating from core contexts in the global field of higher education. Consequently, actors in charge of individual institutions or entire national higher education systems even in otherwise wealthy countries internalise the division between top-ranking universities and other institutions as the determining developmentalist axis. (p. 5)

These assertions further reinforce the complexity of addressing education reform issues, particularly in regions and contexts that are not central to most existing research that is meant to guide educational policy decisions (Ivancheva & Syndicus, 2019). The complex dynamics of global education reform are also reflected in these sentiments. In

many instances, positionality as dominant or as a leader that is at the forefront of progress is a matter of examining statistics and metrics. However, Ivancheva and Syndicus suggested that many education reform issues, some of which contributed to the periphery phenomenon, persist regardless of available resources in Middle Eastern countries. They concluded that resources and capital only go so far as to fuel solutions and reform efforts; the content and appropriateness of the solution for the issue at hand are what ultimately determine if reform results in positive educational outcomes.

Theoretical Foundations of Middle Eastern Educational Reform

In addition to HCT, other related theories are common features of Middle Eastern educational reform research and policies. One such theory, cultural capital theory, addresses the role of attitudes, skills, and learner profiles (Aziz, 2016). The cultural capitalist theory is a sociological theory that was developed by Bourdieu. According to Aziz, Bourdieu believed that cultural capital can be converted to economic capital in the market. The capital can be personal, social, economic, religious, and symbolic. In Aziz's work, Bourdieu separates cultural capital into three states: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized. Tan (2017) further expanded by offering that the embodied state refers to knowledge and education. Aziz wrote that the objectified state references materialistic objects that individuals used to show social class. Lastly, the institutionalized state of cultural capital:

> Affords individuals institutional recognition predominantly in the form of
> academic qualifications that confirm the value of the holder as well as acting as an
> indicator to the labor market of the composite value of the cultural capital held by

the holder which can be converted to economic capital as well as a form of

certification of cultural competencies. (Aziz, 2016, p. 236)

This theory relates to education reform because some people perceive educational

attainment as academic brilliance, leading them to reward people accordingly.

Another theory that has been used to explain the workforce localization policies

implemented by countries in the Middle East is the human resource development theory.

Budhwar and Mellahi (2007) pointed out that although this region had 65% of the

world's oil reserves, they struggle to sustain economic growth. This percentage has

changed slightly showing a decrease in oil reserves and an increase in economic growth

in the Middle East (The World Bank, 2022). According to 2018 estimates by the

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC; 2021), the Middle East holds

64.5% of the world's oil reserves. Researchers such as Budhwar and Mellahi linked the

cause of the stagnation to political imbalance, dominant public sectors, regional conflicts,

underdeveloped financial sectors, and restrictive trade policies. To reduce their

dependencies on oil and foreign workers, these countries implemented human resource

policies that are guided by the theoretical principles of human resource theory.

Despite evidence of human resource theory principles in policy reform efforts,

scholarly research on HRM in the Middle East remains limited (Budhwar & Mellahi,

2007). With little knowledge of how western management practices can work in the

region, Budhwar and Mellahi concluded that studies on the topic suggested that foreign

firms need to be more open to local stakeholders and customers. Further, they

emphasized that Middle East human resource tactics emphasize local cultural norms and

limited participation in decision-making by citizens. In a past study, Budhwar and Mellahi found the process of bringing in more foreign investments resulted in a greater number of state-owned businesses turning to privatization and the central government reducing control of human resources (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2007). Citizens saw their job security being challenged. In their 2007 study, Budhwar and Mellahi noted that this was noticeable in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Morocco. Although privatization occurred with most state-owned entities, the governments of the Middle East still invested heavily in human resource development, but their education systems remained inadequate. Education in these countries could not meet the demands of the labor market as it pertained to skills and the number of laborers.

In a more contemporary study, Budhwar et al. (2019) analyzed HRM practices in the Middle East and found that researchers have significantly different views on the subject. A commonality among many studies that took place in the context of different Middle Eastern countries is that local culture played a crucial role in HRM. As Budhwar et al. concluded, before a localization policy should be implemented, all stakeholders should come together to plan a policy that will benefit local citizens, foreign stakeholders, and the country. Budhwar et al. emphasized an overhaul of localization and education policies will benefit all parties involved.

Achoui (2009) emphasized that the Gulf Arab nations are plagued by high dependency on oil and petrochemical industries, foreign labor, and low female participation in employment. Achoui further emphasized that skilled local labor shortages are a result of cultural issues, inadequate education systems, and low population size.

Achoui identified that most locals in the Middle East prefer managerial positions and refuse to work in manual and low-status jobs typically dominated by Southeastern Asian laborers from India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, the Philippines, and some African countries. Achoui further asserted that the GCC and developing countries in Asia's labor force developed differently from each other. In many Asian countries manufacturing, agriculture, education, and technology saw increases in laborers, while in the GCC, maids and personal drivers outnumbered educators, doctors, and other professionals. These differences were also reflected in citizens' beliefs. Thus, Achoui concluded that in Asian countries, many citizens believed that they had the right to live comfortably, and the government had a duty to develop and provide human resources, a belief that is shared by citizens in GCC countries.

Recognition of these differences led Achoui (2009) to examine and explore how governments can develop the skills of their citizens more effectively under the cultural conditions that most citizens are not used to manual labor, prefer civil service employment, and discourage women from participating in the labor market. Using a case study approach, Achoui examined the outcome of a Saudi government citizen survey and found that most Saudi citizens prefer to work in government positions due to job security, high salaries, and prestige. By contrast, expatriates were preferred for non-government jobs because they are more skilled, they have English proficiency, they are more disciplined, and they are cheaper laborers (Achoui, 2009). To improve the compatibility of employees' and business leaders' interests, the government developed an economic and human resource plan. Achoui pointed out that the government of Saudi Arabia

promoted the plan by showing citizens and other stakeholders that for Saudi Arabia to grow economically, it must develop its human capital at the individual level.

According to Achoui (2009) and later research by Alanezi et al. (2020), the development of human capital in Saudi Arabia required training, an overhaul of the educational system, and the cooperation and input of transnational companies. The burden of training was placed on the government and private companies. Private companies had to meet the demands of government quotas of hiring local citizens. Achoui stated that the private sector spent more money on training and professional programs to meet the quota demands. However, Achoui found that some private companies found it difficult due to differences in family and business values. Achoui concluded that GCC countries are facing both macro and micro challenges. These challenges included dependencies on income from natural resources; low female participation in the workplace; subpar educational systems; and a high dependency on foreign workers. The utilization of HRM theory as a framework for Achoui's research produced complex insights about the compatibility of the resources and demands associated with labor market participation in GCC countries.

The last theory that has been central to educational reform research and practices in the Middle East is the intergenerational mobility theory. Intergenerational mobility theory emphasized that changes in the family's social position between generations are due to parents investing in their children's human capital. They do so by spending on their child's education, leaving an inheritance, or otherwise providing resources. Becker et al.'s (2018) research highlighted the implications of wealthy parents investing more in

their children than poor parents due to their access to resources, a phenomenon that leads

to and exacerbates inequality across generations. Becker et al. (2018) found that

intergenerational mobility is low among higher-income families due to higher

investments in children's human capital. The researchers also found that higher returns to

education sometimes do not increase cross-sectional inequality and intergenerational

persistence. The authors concluded that "if the market offers disproportional rewards to

high human capital, then even modern societies may develop social classes with

considerable mobility within but not across class boundaries" (Becker et al., 2018, p.

522). In the context of GCC countries, Becker et al.'s suggested that if the labor market

rewards laborers based on their human capital, countries will see the emergence of more

variation in social classes and more intergenerational mobility.

Human Capital and Workforce Localization in the Middle East

Concerning human capital and workforce localization in the Middle East, there

are many reasons why reform is needed. As noted in the previous section, one reason is

that countries in the Middle East are not characterized by a conventional path to

industrialization. Yet, policymakers' work is often informed by research and solutions

that have been applied to more traditionally industrialized nations. Another reason is the

Middle East relies heavily on foreign workers which decreases the availability of

desirable professional opportunities for nationals. These issues are further compounded

by education systems in the Middle East that are relatively young and have a heavy

reliance on assessments. Thus, many workers, even those who pursue and obtain higher

education degrees, enter the workforce unskilled and without the knowledge necessary to progress professionally.

According to Shaw (2001), for human capital and workforce localization to excel in the Middle East, three events must occur. The first is significant changes to education systems to improve education quality and decrease knowledge-to-practice gaps among recent graduates. This can be propelled by policymakers, as well as transnational companies that dictate the labor market. Secondly, researchers including Shaw, suggested that the Middle East needs to open its economies more to foreign investment and knowledge exchange. Opening their market more to foreign investors may help Middle Eastern governments foster more skilled and knowledgeable labor forces. Thirdly, Shaw suggested that Middle Eastern governments need to be willing to listen to public discourse and revise public policy accordingly. Collectively, these actions could lead to improved utilization of human capital and workforce localization to the benefit of Middle Eastern economies.

Human Capital and Workforce Localization in Oman

Though limited, some existing research has lent insight into the human capital implications of workforce localization policies and conditions in Oman. Al-Shaibany (2016) found that 27% of schools in Oman offer a bilingual curriculum. While employers are looking for workers who are skilled and bilingual, most government schools in Oman are not providing citizens with the useful skillsets that Omani employers are seeking (Al-Shaibany, 2016). Interviewed employers offered that most job applicants had a higher chance of being hired if they were bilingual, Arabic and English.

English was the preferred language sought by most employers in Oman (Abu-Shawish et al., 2021; Al Hinai et al., 2020; Ali & Hamid, 2020; Imran & Atiya, 2020). One HR manager at Carlton Enterprises voiced that "no company in Oman accepts a CV in Arabic" (Al Shaibany, 2016, para. 4). Al Alawi (2016) also stated that people who are not proficient in English and Arabic failed written tests during the interview process. Al Alawi further emphasized that if Oman wants to compete in the global labor market, its citizens must be proficient in English. A director of a job placement company opined that policymakers guiding Omanization must consider that the private sector needs workers who are fluent in English, an issue that makes workforce localization more difficult (Al-Issa, 2020). Although Oman's education system is improving, Oman still does not mandate government schools to teach English. Thus, most parents must turn to private schools for childhood education at a significant tuition cost to increase the likelihood of desirable employment opportunities later in life (Al Sawafi et al., 2019). Al Alawi, when considering the Omani education system, found education as a primary driver of HCT and viewed it as a source of improving human capital toward the pursuit of upward social mobility. Furthermore, Al Sawafi et al. gives credence to my research's problem statement that for Oman to improve education so its citizens may effectively compete with expatriates for jobs, they must change their education system to accommodate the knowledge, language, and skills that dominate the global market.

In Oman, the government struggles with implementing human capital development programs because they are unable to implement "appropriate mechanisms to activate and utilize them" (Al-Yahya, 2010, p. 32). Al-Yahya demonstrated that

employees who work in teams were able to utilize their knowledge and skills more effectively than they did when working individually. Secondly, Al-Yahya found that human resource development and organizational development were conflicting. Al-Yahya concluded that Oman did not have a lack of skilled citizens, but rather, lacked the resources and infrastructure to implement proper human resource programs. Further, Al-Yahya found that more effective human capital development may be possible in Oman with the help of proper human resource development programs that are sustainably implemented.

Al-Yahya's (2010) assertion about resource and infrastructure issues affecting public education in Oman reinforces Al Sawafi et al.'s (2019) findings concerning limitations that served as a barrier to education reform, human capital development, and workforce localization. Al Sawafi et al. examined the practice of communicative language teaching (CLT) in Omani schools as a teaching approach intended to prepare students for academic success in the future and, later, participation in the Omani labor market. Upon analyzing questionnaire responses from 122 English as second language teachers working in Omani public schools, Al Sawafi et al. found that while participants had significant knowledge of CLT principles and teaching practices, they felt hindered in their ability to apply CLT and other evidence-based practices. Hindrances that were identified by participants included: "(1) teachers' lack of training in CLT; (2) lack of time to prepare communicative activities; (3) students' low levels of proficiency in English; (4) large class sizes; and (5) difficulties assessing the linguistic aspects of the language" (Al Sawafi et al., 2019, p. 289). Both Al Sawafi et al. and Al-Yahya determined that these

challenges revealed a complex web of obstacles that cannot all be addressed through a single policy or strategy.

Ghailani and Khan (2004) believed that Oman's secondary education system would be more effective at producing skillful employees if their resources were allocated more equitably. During their study's time frame, they found that private schools in Oman produced a higher number of employees that entered the labor force than public schools produced. During Ghailani and Khan's research, and still current today, most of the Omani national population attends public schools as education is free, thus indicating a disparity in students' likelihood of succeeding in the labor market. Instead of putting the burden of ensuring a skilled workforce on private schools, Ghailani and Khan asserted that secondary schools should take the initiative. Before taking action, they noted that secondary schools need to be more "proactive and target-oriented" (Ghailani & Khan, 2004, p. 167). These schools would be able to provide most of the needed skilled workers if they change their curriculum focus. Ghailani and Khan believed that administrators who are involved in the implementation of secondary school programs should allow teachers to contribute more meaningfully and noted that teachers should be able to express their ideas freely without repercussions.

Another change suggested by Ghailani and Khan centered on improving sources of extrinsic motivation for teachers, such as providing teachers with rewards and professional development opportunities to morale. Lastly, the researchers suggested that secondary schools should focus on preparing students for constant changes in the global market. Collectively, these solutions may improve Omanization policies' effectiveness

and enhance the extent to which students in Oman graduate with the knowledge, skills, and other forms of human capital needed to succeed in diverse professional sectors.

Summary

The reviewed literature in this chapter focused on HCT and its theoretical lens when applying it to Omanization and Oman public education. The nuances of this theoretical framework were reviewed in-depth by examining historical foundations and their application to the current study. The proceeding sections contained previous empirical literature regarding how workforce localization and human capital are perceived within Oman and other Middle Eastern regions. The findings indicated a need to inform policies for the betterment of educational stakeholders in Omanization. A gap was additionally identified concerning the implications of human capital and workforce localization policies and conditions in Oman. Various researchers indicated a need for information regarding human capital, education, and workforce localization in the Middle East (Ghailani & Khan, 2004). The gap identified in the reviewed literature supports this study's purpose, which is to fill a gap in the existing literature on Omanization's policy efforts of preparing students for private sector employment by discovering the perspectives of eight former and current educators on the lack of capacity to comprehensively deliver English language education to support Omanization goals in Oman. Chapter 3 presents the research design and methodology that guided this study, along with the details regarding data collection and analysis procedures. Additionally, Chapter 3 describes how ethical issues and data integrity were addressed.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this generic qualitative inquiry was to fill a gap in the existing literature on Omanization's policy efforts of preparing students for private sector employment. Data were collected from eight former and current Omani educators regarding their perspectives on the lack of capacity to comprehensively deliver English language education to support Omanization goals in Oman. As mentioned in previous chapters, Oman implemented many policies to ensure the employability of its citizens. The goals of these policies are to replace foreign workers with national citizens in private industries. This study aimed to bridge the existing information gap regarding the importance of English education curriculum and Omanization objectives. Furthermore, the findings have implications for positive social change gleaned from the insights and viewpoints of educators, which are beneficial in stimulating a reevaluation of workforce localization policies by the Omani government. In this chapter, generic qualitative inquiry design was used to conduct semistructured interviews using open-ended questions. The phenomenon of the lack of English language competencies among public school graduates in Oman was the study's focal point. More details on the research design and rationale are explored. The chapter also includes information on the role of the researcher, biases, relationships with participants, and other ethical issues. To ensure the validity of this research, I include the methodology section, which describes the logic behind the participant selection process, instrumentation used, participant recruitment

procedures, data collection procedures, and data analysis plan. Chapter 3 concludes with the trustworthiness section followed by a summary.

<div align="center">**Research Design and Rationale**</div>

Research Question

The specific research question explored was: What are Oman public school administrators' perspectives on curriculum development supporting student English language proficiency for workforce Omanization goals?

Research Design

Qualitative research was chosen to allow for an understanding of the why behind behavior, perspective, and experiences of the phenomena. For this qualitative generic study, semistructured interviews were used to explore the perceptions and opinions of public school administrators in Muscat, Oman, on meeting the goals of Article 11 of Royal Decree 35/2003 and Article 13 of Royal Decree No. 99/2011 concerning curriculum efforts that seek to replace expatriates in the private sector. The qualitative method was chosen over quantitative because qualitative research relies on the reasons behind behavior, perspectives, and experiences (Brikci & Green, 2007). In qualitative research, researchers investigate why and how someone uses the research in decision making (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). Qualitative research is a scientific method of observing subjects in their natural setting to gather non-numerical data. Denzin and Lincoln (2013) defined qualitative research as studies that use and collect empirical materials. Examples of empirical evidence are interviews, artifacts, case studies, observations, and personal experiences.

The term *qualitative research* emerged in response to positivism in the early 1990s (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, 2013), but its roots can be traced back about two decades earlier. Positivism "use methods resembling those of the natural sciences as tools for understanding society" (Sage, 2018, 0:45) and was initially wary of qualitative research due to the potential for interpretative data to critique its own projects (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). However, qualitative research gained recognition as a valid method around 1990. Qualitative research is anchored in subjectivism, where an individual's knowledge is shaped by experiences, and constructivism, which emphasizes active learning through personal experiences and beliefs (Dorsey, 2017).

Qualitative research is a scientific method of observing subjects in their natural setting to gather non-numerical data. I chose to use qualitative research because I wanted to understand the experiences of people who have encountered the phenomena and how their experiences affected their decision making. I also wanted to be able to ask open-ended questions and explore the nuances of their experiences.

Rationale for Generic Qualitative Inquiry

After thorough research into various methodological approaches, I found that a generic qualitative inquiry was the most appropriate research design method for my study. This selection was motivated by its alignment with my objective to explore participants' perspectives on the research problem through open-ended interviews. Analyzing the data gathered from these interviews was accomplished through Braun and Clarke's TA, a method that allows for a comprehensive data interpretation while

maintaining flexibility in both questioning and analysis approaches, including deductive and inductive analysis.

Generic qualitative inquiry, unlike other qualitative research designs with rigid definitions, does not conform to a single methodological perspective. Generic qualitative inquiry encompasses various approaches, as observed by researchers like Caelli et al. (2003); Merriam (1998), as cited in Caelli et al. (2003); and Percy et al. (2015). This approach primarily focuses on comprehending the experiences of participants. Caelli et al. (2003) described four characteristics that underpin the rationale for adopting this inquiry approach: (a) recognition of rigor's theoretical nature, (b) methodological alignment with the research approach, (c) the articulation of a well-informed choice regarding rigor, and (d) the transparent acknowledgment of the researcher's assumptions and reasons for their chosen data analysis method. I have justified the selection of this design method, demonstrated rigor in the methodology procedures, and clarified how TA serves as the primary interpretation technique in harmony with the choice of generic qualitative inquiry as the design methodology.

Role of the Researcher

My role in this generic qualitative inquiry study was as an external researcher. Instead of becoming part of the phenomena I was studying, I was an observer, inquisitor, listener, and data scientist. As an observer in this generic qualitative inquiry, I was there to observe the phenomena without influencing the data (see De Fina & Perrino, 2011; Tomaszewski et al., 2020). This laissez-faire approach is another form of bracketing. *Bracketing* is a term used when a researcher informs the participants of the researcher's

past or "consciously uses their background as a research tool" (Sorsa et al., 2015, p. 2). Bracketing can be used to increase awareness of phenomenology, strengthen validity, and limit or eliminate bias during all stages of the research study.

I ensured that my behavior during the interview process was welcoming and professional, and I sought to place all participants at ease. As an inquisitor conducting a semistructured interview, I guided the questions in a semiformal atmosphere to acquire more in-depth responses. A qualitative researcher who is conducting interviews listens (Anderson & Henry, 2020) in three folds: One is during the interview process when participants discuss their experiences with the phenomena. The second is during the transcription, and lastly, while analyzing the data to decipher meaning and patterns.

As a data scientist, I was able to validate, gather, and analyze sets of data. Validating data was done by reviewing the data until saturation was met. Data analyses included summarizing transcripts to identify themes. These themes arose from participants' responses. Constant reviewing of the data encourages trustworthiness (Schwandt et al., 2007). A disclosure statement would have been included in the study if I had any form of relationship with any of the participants. Although I lived in Oman, for more than 2 years, I actively sought to minimize the conscious and unconscious bias I had due to my experiences.

Conscious bias was managed in several ways. One way was to record and follow an interview format (see Appendices E and F). Another approach involved using a journal to record reflections, ideas, thoughts, and possible connections among data and participants. Additionally, I conducted an ongoing review of responses by participants,

including a review of my conclusions. A researcher can also list the bias they have and should avoid biased questions.

Given the experiences of living and working in education in Oman, I was aware of the potential for conscious and unconscious biases related to personally experienced cultural insights. Recognizing that participants might not provide truthful answers due to concerns about embarrassment or criticism of superiors, I exercised caution to avoid overinterpretation when assigning thematic labels and interpretive meanings. I considered reflecting on the interview responses to reduce reflective actions an important step in the content analysis process. If a researcher is unable to minimize or eliminate their bias, it could lead to ethical issues in the study (Shenton, 2004; Sorsa et al., 2015).

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

Study participants were recruited by using purposeful convenience sampling. The target population were public school administrators in Oman. Using purposeful sampling allowed me to determine participants who could provide knowledge of the specified phenomena (see Cresswell & Clark, 2010). This form of sampling also enabled me to collect data from participants who were easily accessible (see Palinkas et al., 2015). The accessibility of participants is important to data collection due to time constraints and participant availability.

The requirement for my target participant group was English proficiency. To determine if the criterion of English proficiency was met, an email specifying all participation criteria was sent out (see Appendices G, H, and I). With the initial email, an

embedded acknowledgment statement of English proficiency was included. I conducted

semistructured in-depth interviews of eight former and current educators until

information and thematic saturation occurred. Saunders et al. (2018) offered that a

researcher's goal is to achieve data saturation "in such a way as to best meet the aims and

objective of the research" (p. 1904). Based on my data and thematic analyses, data

saturation was achieved and evidenced by consistent themes and circular information

across multiple participants.

Although participants may be part of a protected group, such as being pregnant,

my research did not seek to actively recruit vulnerable people and their study inclusion

would be incidental to my recruitment efforts and research findings. Privacy concerns

may arise in the initial stage due to the hiring practices of the government of Oman. All

the employees in public schools are hired by the government. Concerns arose during the

initial recruitment of public and private school administrators due to delayed responses

from the Ministry of Education and a lack of agreement from contacted schools to

participate without the ministry's written approval. This prompted me to expand my

research to former and current educators in my personal and professional network who

worked in private and public schools in Oman. All participants were assigned a random

unidentifiable code for result reporting. Participant names and background information

are known only to me, and cross reference materials will be retained securely for the

required 5 years.

Instrumentation

Interviewing is a data collection tool used to acquire in-depth subject matter information. Qualitative interviews are a way for study participants to tell their stories and can be exploratory or target a specific hypothesis. Interviews are also useful to gain firsthand information about someone's personal experience. Babbie (2011) wrote that a qualitative interview is a conversation between the interviewer and the respondent. Herbert and Riene Rubin (1995, as cited in Babbie, 2011) described a qualitative interview as a "flexible, interactive, and continuous" approach (p. 340). In contrast to a structured interview, where questions are predetermined, qualitative interviews involve prepared yet open-ended questions. This flexibility allows researchers to follow up on responses with additional questions during the interview process.

To assist qualitative researchers in conducting their interviews, most educational institutions provide interview guides and/or teach the criteria during coursework. I developed an interview guide to assist me in conducting my qualitative interviews. My interview guide includes the following qualities: step-by-step guidance, samples of researchable questions (see Lafrance, 2018) and report writing, lists of the pros and cons of some of the steps of the interview process, and guidelines for developing interview questions (see Pedersen et al., 2016). Consistent with Pedersen et al., I designed my interview guide to have broad questions related to my research questions and a dynamic dimension with specific questions that would contribute to a natural conversation in an everyday language during the interview.

In this generic qualitative inquiry, I assumed the role of the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. The structured and semistructured interviews were conducted using a constructed interview protocol. These questions were constructed to help elicit in-depth participant responses from each question posed. These questions were aligned with the research problem, purpose, and question and were based on the reviewed literature and HCT conceptual framework.

By using HCT as a conceptual framework, I was able to shed a unique perspective on the challenges that Oman has with achieving the goals listed in Royal Decree No. 35/2003 and Royal Decree No. 99/2011. Proponents of HCT believe that training and educating citizens will increase individual personal income (Schultz, 1961). By the government investing in the education of its citizens, it will see an increase in wages, productivity, and living standards (Becker et al., 2018). This may also lead to a solution for underemployment and unemployment in Oman. Researchers such as Kooli and Abadi (2021), wrote that Oman needs to reform its public education if it wants to meet the goals of Omanization.

According to the HCT conceptual framework, thematic concepts of education and training are important to the individual, organizational, and societal growth. My interview questions were derived from the reviewed HCT literature that focused on education and training as tools for human capital improvements. These questions were then formulated to elicit content experiences of Oman public school administrators concerning their perspectives on curriculum development as a preparatory tool for a student's educational success. The reviewed literature and the formatting of model questions from other

generic inquiry research examples served as the basis for the content validity of the questions. Given the limited number of potential participants, a pilot study of the questions was not conducted. Roberts (2020) offered that when qualitative pilot studies are not feasible to test questions, the novice qualitative researcher can conduct audio recorded mock interviews with supervising faculty and use the recording play back for critique. This approach was used on three educators willing to sit for mock interview sessions for a qualitative method class. Additionally, after each interview, I prepared the participant's manuscript. Through my reflective review of those manuscripts and the use of my reflective journaling, when one or more questions were not well understood, or when additional clarification was needed before participant responses, this served as an indication for necessary question formatting or wording changes to enhance clarity before conducting future interviews.

The interviews were conducted through a combination of virtual platforms, Google Meet and Zoom, utilizing voice over internet protocol (VoIP), as well as in-person interactions. These interviews were audio recorded using a secure password protected audio recording device, which may have video recording features that will be disabled at the participant's request. The data collection instrument (recording device) was vital in that it captured verbatim the participant's spoken transcript that I will use for the TA procedures. Using a digital recording device allowed me to listen more intently, noting speak tone and participant word and phrasing choices. After each interview, I stored the data in a password-protected cloud storage drive and an encrypted external storage drive. Transcriptions and audio copies of each interview were distributed to each

participant for member checking of their interviews. All study materials will be stored securely for 5 years and then destroyed by encrypting and deleting electronic data and shredding paper-based journal notes.

Procedure for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

After I have obtained initial IRB approval, I took steps to conduct research in Oman's educational institution. My expectations were for the recruitment efforts to be assisted by the Ministry of Education in Oman. Study approval by the Ministry was the first step to conducting the data acquisition from participants. Before approving any study in institutions operated by Oman's Ministry of Education, researchers are required to complete a research information form and send supplemental information detailing the capstone university (see Appendices J and K). In addition to the above forms, the Ministry of Education required that all researchers send an official letter from the university that they attend (see Appendix L). These materials were sent to the Ministry. The recruitment email included my information, the proposed study reason, standard response email for research (see Appendices M, N, and O), informed consent forms for virtual and in-person interviews, English proficiency statement, and the involved time parameters. This was attached to an email with instructions on how I wanted the initial email to be structured to prospective participants. If approved for data collection, the Ministry was asked to send out a mass email on my behalf with this invitation email to all primary public schools' administrators. My contact information was listed in the invitation email.

Before the final recruitment efforts, I attempted to contact the ministry multiple times, but I made no progress. I had expanded my recruitment efforts to include primary private schools in Oman. To obtain a list of private schools in Muscat, Oman, I conducted a Google search, which yielded over 100 private schools in the area. Initially, I gathered contact information, such as email addresses and phone numbers, from the school websites. I called and/or sent invitation emails to the administrators of primary private schools to gauge their interest in participating in the study (see Appendix H).

I had been pursuing recruitment by reaching out to private schools in Oman, but I could not proceed as all of them indicated that I required permission from the Ministry of Education to conduct interviews. Unfortunately, I was unable to secure such permission. Consequently, I broadened my recruitment efforts to include former or current educators from my professional and personal network. Educators in this context encompass "school leaders and administrators, specialist educators, and those involved in school-age outside school-hours care programs" who were either currently working in a school or had worked in a school or early childhood center (see Rouse et al., 2023).

My prior employment as a teacher in Oman provided me a personal and professional network of former colleagues who are educators. These educators are either presently teaching in Oman or have worked as teachers in the past. This convenient sample recruitment involved initiating an initial WhatsApp text message to inquire if former colleagues were willing to participate. During the initial conversations with my former colleagues, I asked if they could recommend other individuals interested in becoming participants. I would then inform them that prospective participants should

reach out to me via WhatsApp or email at my Walden University email address. Qualifications for potential participants were verified before dissemination of the consent form. I verified that each participant met the operational definition of administrator or educator. Upon validation of one of these roles, I emailed the informed consent and included an option to find out their availability. Final recruitment efforts resulted in eight current or former educators in the city of Muscat, I did not have to expand the scope to include adjacent wilayat.

During the recruitment communication, informed consent was attached to the email for the participants. Participants had a choice to either consent (virtual interview) and return the form via email or reply to the initial recruitment email with "I accept and will complete a consent form in person." This form had useful information such as the kind of study, the purpose of the interview, the reason for recording, assurance of confidentiality, contact information, and a blank availability list. After accepting and, in some cases, consenting to the interview, I emailed the participants asking for their availability. Once they informed me of available times, I scheduled the interview and notified them of their official meeting date and time.

Before the interview, research participants were informed that data collection would be conducted in a semistructured format. Both the participants and I agreed on the interview setting, i.e., in-person or virtual. The approximate length of each interview did not exceed 60 minutes. The shortest interview took approximately 24 minutes and the longest took around 60 minutes. The average interview time was 46 minutes. If the interviews were conducted virtually, a VoIP platform, such as Zoom or Google Meet

allowed for digital recordings to be later used in transcript development. In-person interviews were recorded on a secure digital voice recording device for the same transcript generation process using voice-to-text software settings. Each style of digital transcript was available for uploading to my laptop for processing and storage NVivo 14 was used for analyses.

To reduce information and participant fatigue, I began to draw the discussion to a close starting at the 45-minute mark with the interview conclusion at 60 minutes. With each finished interview, I debriefed the participant. Debriefing included reassuring each participant of their confidentiality and information security, informing them of the next steps, and encouraging them to reach out if they have any further questions or concerns. Follow-up was in the form of an email thanking the participants for their support. In the participant's email, I included a link for participants to access their individual versions of the interview with transcription.

Data Analysis Plan

Thematic Analysis

After conducting the interviews and compiling interviews' transcripts, I used the TA method to analyze the research data. Normally connected to qualitative approaches, TA is a method to organize data by codes and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2017). This method enables the researcher to see emerging data patterns. These patterns enable researchers to understand and identify the commonality in the meanings and experiences illustrated through data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). These patterns or themes can be the foundation of organizing, interpreting, and reporting the research findings. Flexibility and

accessibility of TA can be exuded through "sample size and constitution, data collection method, and approaches to meaning generation" (Braun & Clarke, 2017, p. 297); this flexibility was an important aspect of my data analyses given the inductive approach to my TA of my research.

Braun and Clarke (2012) categorized TA into three general types. They are coding reliability, reflexive, and codebook approach. I adopted the reflexive approach and my thematic tool. This approach analyzes and interprets themes from different views of the researcher. The coding process for this approach is "unstructured and organic" (Braun & Clarke, 2021, p. 39). This flexibility is the reason for my methodological and interpretive choice.

TA is organized into six steps for the researcher to follow when interpreting data patterns and meanings. The steps that were used to interpret patterns included familiarizing myself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing the themes, defining and briefly describing each theme, and communicating the final analysis and finding in written form. This approach ensured a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of the collected data, enabling a clear explanation of patterns and meanings.

Data analysis in qualitative research produces variables. These variables are the theme, category, or qualitative codes (Oleinik, 2011). The first step in the analysis was to familiarize myself with the data. This process involved reading and rereading the data. After permission was granted to audio record the interviews, I listened to the audio

recording once as a general overview and subsequent listening was conducted using the prepared transcript for annotated note taking.

The second step in TA is to code the data. Microsoft Word, Microsoft Access, and NVivo were used in the data coding processes. I used the three at different levels of data analyses to ensure dependability. Coding is giving a name to describe what is being said by the subject. Words, phrases, or a sentence that described the phenomenon were highlighted as they recurred in analyses. As I coded data, I used a reflexive journal to transcribe thoughts on how or why I coded content in a certain format. These journaling activities helped to increase data reliability.

After coding, I moved on to categorizing, a process by which similar codes are grouped into thematic categories. The next step after coding and categorizing the data was looking for interrelationships among the various categories. This is called a theme. DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000, as cited in Connelly & Peltzer, 2015) defined a theme as capturing and unifying experience in a meaningful whole.

A theme "provided a framework for organizing and reporting" the participants' accounts of the phenomenon that I see as relevant to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2017, p. 297). The themes can be identified by reviewing the coded data to pinpoint patterns or broad topics among some of them. Six themes emerged during this process: (a) language proficiency, (b) hiring practices, (c) educators' perspectives, (d) workforce development, (e) Omanization goals, and (f) curriculum development. As these developed themes materialized, the use of my reflexivity journal proved invaluable for visualizing information, working through data coding, and summarizing findings.

After developing my themes, I conducted a quality checking process by comparing them to the coded data and data set, following the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2012). This process aimed to determine whether my themes aligned with the extracted data set. If the themes did not align, I evaluated whether codes needed to be relocated, restructured, or discarded. The subsequent step in quality checking involved reviewing the themes in relation to the entire data set. This review allowed me to assess whether my themes effectively captured essential and pertinent data aspects, as well as the overall data context concerning my research question (see Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 66). Utilizing the reflexivity journal, I ensured to document my understanding and interpretation of each theme, the evidence supporting these themes, how the data corresponded to the constructed codes, and their relevance to my research question.

The final step in the TA process involved the labeling of themes. Themes were assigned labels based on how they expressed their thematic features. Utilizing the reflexivity journal, I described each emerging theme and elucidated why I chose a specific thematic label. Moreover, I verified that each theme aligned with the interpretive lens of HCT.

Upon completing the comprehensive TA, I developed an explanatory framework that delineates my findings. Any instances of outliers were noted and categorized under a theme titled *discrepant cases*. These cases have the potential to yield additional insights and serve as a basis for further research studies. This theme, along with others, was formulated by me and is further discussed in Chapter 4.

Issues of Trustworthiness

A qualitative researcher shows trustworthiness in their research by choosing the proper methods for their investigation. A researcher must have a clear research objective to apply a research method. The data can include the following: a structured interview, questionnaires, surveys, field notes, video and audio recordings, images, observation notes, and other documents (Anderson, 2010). Qualitative research includes different standards for quality. These various standards fall under the umbrella of trustworthiness. Trustworthiness is the truth value in qualitative research. Researchers can establish trustworthiness by journaling, audit trailing, peer debriefing, member checking, and using thick descriptions.

The standards to rate this truth value are called validity (internal and external), reliability/dependability, and confirmability/objectivity (Morrow, 2005). Assessment of the truth value of research findings is important in maintaining the integrity and credibility of a study. Threat to trustworthiness can take the form of bias interpretation, leading participants' responses, not collecting enough data, inferring the data, not letting the data speak for themselves, and offering superficial view of participants' experiences with the phenomenon (FitzPatrick, 2019).

Some researchers might find qualitative research biased or lacking rigor (Anderson, 2010). If it is done correctly, the research is dependable, credible, holds validity, and is rigorous, each helping to build trustworthiness. Guba (1981) explained the criteria for trustworthiness as a naturalistic approach to judging research's validity. These criteria are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is

internal validity. Transferability is external validity. Dependability is the reliability of the data and confirmability is the objectivity of the data. The people who normally question the trustworthiness of qualitative research are positivists (Shenton, 2004). Positivists examine the research by employing Guba's criteria (Shenton, 2004).

Validity

Instead of looking at the traditional definition of validity, FitzPatrick (2019) defined it as inferences that come from the results of the data. It is "dependent on the purpose and context of the research and refers to conclusions that are based on particular methods used to address validity threats that are pertinent to the particular research" (FitzPatrick, 2019, p. 212). Validity "refers to the inferences and uses that come about the results, not the validity of the data" (FitzPatrick, 2019, p. 212). There are different theorists who argue that validity is unique to each study. Others believe that validity has commonalities for all qualitative studies (FitzPatrick, 2019). No matter the case, researchers agree that the process of validating research should be conducted during the study and not after. Using the following methods, I strived to ensure validity.

Methods to establish validity included the use of appropriate sampling to reduce bias in the selection process and establishing trust and rapport with the research participants to help elevate their comfort in responding to the questions posed. Additionally, using an established methodological approach, such as generic qualitative inquiry, offered a guidepost framework for the construction of interview questions and an interpretive lens. Researchers can take these steps to ensure trustworthiness in their research.

Validity has internal and external threats. Internal threat and internal invalidity are synonymous terms. These threats are bias and reactivity. A qualitative researcher can be bias if the data collection or analysis is distorted in favor of the researcher's bias. Reactivity is "the effect of the researcher on the individuals studied…" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 124). It is also the assurance that what you measure or test in research is what a researcher intended to measure (Shenton, 2004). Examples of internal invalidity are maturation, historical events that may change results, selection biases, experimental mortality, rivalry, instrumentation, and testing (Drost, 2011).

In qualitative research, internal validity is called transferability. Having an internal validity is a key factor in establishing trustworthiness in research (Schwandt et al., 2007). Transferability allows others to generalize the results of the research (Drost, 2011; Golafshani, 2003) and apply the prediction to a real-world situation. It can also mean if the results can be applied to other situations (Shenton, 2004). Lastly, a researcher must generalize the results in a twofold manner, either specifically or generally (Drost, 2011). If the researcher generalizes the results specifically, they must explain that the results only apply to a specific population.

Credibility

Credibility informs the readers if the research data are genuine and honest (Anderson, 2010) and the "availability and effort of the researcher" (Golafshani, 2003, p. 600). It shows if the instrument you chose can measure what it is assigned to measure. To ensure that my study was credible, I listed the procedural steps and the instrumentation of my study in the methodology section. In addition, credibility asked if the research

represented the participants accurately (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). This was demonstrated through member checking. I made sure that I accurately represented my participants by releasing the transcription of each interview to the proper participant. This allowed them to check the transcription against their recollection of the interview to ensure that I accurately captured their thoughts, words, or/and expressions. Member checking gave the participants the option to change a response if needed.

Transferability

Transferability "develop descriptive context-relevant findings that can be applicable to broader contexts while still maintaining their content-specific richness" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 205). I bolstered transferability by purposeful sampling and using thick description when describing study elements. One way to provide a rich and thick description of the research data is by using display tables. Tables can be employed to organize, sort, analyze, and display data (Cloutier & Ravasi, 2021). Additionally, I supported transferability by ensuring an accurate description of the research setting was provided, and the context, assumptions, and participants' experiences were accurately represented.

Dependability

Dependability in qualitative research is when the study's sources are documented and can easily be traceable years from now. I addressed the study's dependability by providing an audit trail (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). An audit trail is records that include the raw research data. By keeping records of the raw data, such as, reflexive notes,

transcripts, and instrument development procedures, I was able to create a clear audit trail of my research.

Confirmability

Confirmability in qualitative research is one of the criteria a researcher must demonstrate to show trustworthiness. Confirmability is when the findings and interpretations are derived from the data. One of the goals "of confirmability is to acknowledge and explore the ways that our biases and prejudices impact our interpretation of data, and to address those to the fullest extent possible through reflexivity, dialogic engagement, and reflective discourse" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 205). The researcher's role is to present the data objectively and without personal influence. Researchers can accomplish the above goals with reflexive journaling and maintaining their bias.

I used reflexive journaling to write down personal notes and thoughts throughout the research process. In addition, I maintained the reasoning for methodological, analytical, and theoretical choices throughout the entire study, so others can understand how and why decisions were made and easily replicate the study. I eliminated representations of the primary data findings in a biased way (see Bryman & Bell, 2007). By employing these strategies, I enhanced the research findings' reliability, which will ensure the trustworthiness of my research.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical issues and considerations in any form of research are regulated by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which is under the United States Department of

Health and Human Services (National Institutes of Health, 2022). The NIH provides

comprehensive ethical guidelines and regulations to ensure that research involving human

subjects adheres to the highest ethical standards. These guidelines encompass a wide

range of research disciplines and are designed to protect the rights, safety, and well-being

of participants. For students in higher education or research institutions, the IRB reviews

and approves research proposals pertaining to human subject to make sure that ethical

requirements are met (Walden University, 2021). The ethical principles guiding research,

often based on documents such as the Belmont Report, underscore key tenets, including

respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (United States Department of Health and

Human Services, 2018). Researchers are obliged to obtain informed consent from

participants, minimize potential harm, and ensure equitable access to research benefits.

These principles are essential in preserving the dignity and rights of individuals who

participate in research studies.

Ethical considerations that I implemented included treating all participants fairly

and with respect. I maximized the benefits of the research by divulging study details in

aggregate form, using information synthesis. Participants were provided with an informed

consent document that described the study's purpose, methods and intended possible uses

of the research, what their participation in the research entails, and what risks, if any, are

involved (see MacDonald & Headlam, 2015). Additionally, conflicts of interest or bias

were explicitly addressed, and any potential harm to participants was minimized.

Ensuring the dignity of the research participants was a priority, and efforts were made to

allow participants to respond freely to the semistructured interview questions. Research participants were encouraged to participate voluntarily, free from any coercion.

To conduct the study ethically, I considered the privacy and confidentiality of the participants. To protect the privacy of the research participants, their information was kept confidential, and participants will have the right to decline to answer background information that they do not want to divulge. For the research, I made certain that I had a signed informed consent document in English and that participants' consent will be obtained prior to initiating any of the interview questions. To safeguard the privacy and foster confidentiality of the participants, I assigned each one a pseudonym, such as P1, P2, and so forth. The true names are well guarded and known only to me. This is crucial because most of the participants may decline to participate in the interview if they know their school or their individual names may be disclosed to others or in my research findings. Access to the data was restricted to me and Walden University faculty. Before commencing my research, I duly submitted a request for approval to Walden IRB, which was subsequently granted. Furthermore, I ensured that all ethical aspects pertaining to human subjects were thoroughly addressed to their utmost satisfaction. At the conclusion of the required 5-year retention period, all handwritten notes were destroyed by shredding and electronic data were encrypted and deleted from all storage devices.

Summary

I aligned the research methodology with the central research question to ensure the precision and reliability of the data gathered from primary school administrators and former and current educators in Oman. The chosen methodology encompassed

purposeful convenience sampling, semistructured interviews, and a rigorous TA. The recruitment of final participants was executed through purposeful convenience sampling, and their experiences were elicited through semistructured interviews. These interviews were meticulously analyzed using TA, with the overarching goal of capturing the rich experiences of the participants in relation to the study phenomenon. Moreover, as a generic qualitative inquiry researcher, it was incumbent upon me to uphold the highest ethical standards and ensure the trustworthiness of this study. To this end, strategies were implemented to guarantee the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the research. I also took measures to mitigate potential threats to trustworthiness by collecting ample data, refraining from leading participant responses, reducing researcher bias, avoiding unwarranted inferences, and employing triangulation techniques. Furthermore, I maintained a steadfast commitment to ethical considerations, including fairness, confidentiality, transparency, participant privacy, and strict adherence to Walden's IRB standards.

Throughout this chapter, I explained the importance of aligning the chosen methodology with the central research question to ensure the accuracy and validity of the findings. By the conclusion of this chapter, a comprehensive understanding of the methodology that underpins the study will have been established. This understanding is essential for ensuring that the subsequent chapters, which elucidate the findings and their implications, are firmly rooted in a sound research framework.

In Chapter 4, I will embark on a comprehensive exploration of the research methodology, aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the processes and techniques.

Chapter 4 serves as the bridge between the objectives and the tangible implementation of

the research methodology. The methodology, purposeful convenience sampling,

semistructured interviews, and TA, is detailed and justified in this section. Additionally,

the criteria and procedures used for participant recruitment and data collection are

mentioned. Furthermore, Chapter 4 will delve into the specifics of TA, explaining how

rich narratives provided by participants were extracted and interpreted.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this generic qualitative inquiry was to address a gap in the existing literature concerning Omanization's policy efforts in preparing students for private sector employment. This was achieved through the exploration of eight Omani public school educators in Oman, regarding the capacity to effectively deliver English language education in support of organizational goals. The guiding research question for this inquiry was centered on the perspectives of Oman educators regarding curriculum development and its role in enhancing student English language proficiency to meet workforce organizational objectives.

This chapter is dedicated to the presentation and analysis of the gathered data. The chapter includes methodological changes, research setting, participant demographics, data collection procedures, data analysis methods, evidence of trustworthiness, and results. The chapter initiates with a discussion of study changes pertaining to methodological approaches. Then, the setting, along with the demographics of the participants, is presented to offer a clear context for the data collection. Next, the procedures and methodologies employed to collect the data are detailed. After procedures and methodologies of data collection, data analysis techniques are listed to make sense of the collected information. Then an evaluation of trustworthiness is explored, following the results. The chapter culminates in a comprehensive study summary.

Methodological Changes

Initially, I planned to recruit seven-10 public school administrators in Oman, with recruitment facilitated by the Oman Ministry of Education. I obtained IRB approval in October 2022. However, the recruitment process faced challenges, necessitating a shift in approach. Subsequently, approval was granted by the IRB to include private school administrators. This alteration prompted the acquisition of contact information for over 100 private schools in Muscat. I used sources such as the Ministry of Education website, Google searches, and school websites. Invitations were extended via email to potential participants, although some emails proved undeliverable. Through initial phone conversations with potential participants, I realized interviews required approval from the Ministry of Education. Faced with this bureaucratic impasse, I made the decision to reconsider recruitment strategies. Eventually, the criteria were expanded to encompass current and former teachers through convenience sampling from personal and professional contacts, and I obtained change of methodology approval from IRB in June 2023.

Setting

The interviews conducted were executed through various modalities, including in-person meetings in Oman and online via Zoom and Google Meet sessions. Each participant provided their informed consent form, adhering to the policies established by the IRB. All eight participants willingly signed informed consent forms or provided verbal consent recorded on video and audio. Scheduling of interviews was tailored to

participants' availability. Participants' geographic locations, time zones, and organizational affiliations did not impact the results.

Demographics

All participants met the criteria for inclusion, which required them to be either a current or former educator in an educational institution in Oman. Additionally, participants were required to possess proficiency in the English language. The word *educators* in this context encompasses a diverse range of roles, including school leaders, administrators, specialist educators, and those engaged in school-age outside-school-hours care programs. These criteria ensured that participants had relevant experience and expertise to contribute to the research objectives.

Data Collection

A total of eight participants were involved, with five interviews conducted via Zoom, Google Meet, and audio recording between June and August 2023, and the remaining three interviews conducted in person in Oman during July and August 2023. Recruitment efforts, initiated in June 2023, began with outreach to former colleagues through WhatsApp, followed by email invitations containing IRB approval details and consent forms. Four participants expressed a preference for in-person interviews, leading to travel arrangements. Although two initial participants initially agreed to be interviewed, they declined upon my arrival in Oman. This setback did not deter further recruitment efforts.

Following email consent, participants' availability was confirmed. Prior to online interviews, participants were informed of the recording and transcription process, with

transcriptions promised within a week of the interviews. The data collection process also included in-person audio-recorded interviews, necessitating travel to Oman in July 2023. All participants consented to the live recording of their interviews, which typically lasted 40–60 minutes. During online interviews conducted via Zoom and Google Meet, a smartphone recorder app facilitated digital transcription of the live conversation. Additionally, the Tactiq extension was used to enable speech-to-text functionality during online meetings.

An unusual circumstance was encountered during the initial data collection, when it was discovered that Zoom offered only up to 40 minutes of free recorded session time before disconnection. Subsequently, additional Zoom links were provided to continue the interviews. This issue was addressed in preparation for future interviews. Zoom was used for two interviews, per participants' preferences, while Google Meet was the platform of choice for the other two online interviews.

During the interviews, participants provided detailed responses, occasionally prompting follow-up questions. Any questions beyond the scripted ones were documented in the interview sheet's note section. In one instance, an interview was adjusted due to a participant's limited time in Oman, resulting in the omission of certain questions. Otherwise, no significant issues arose during data collection in relation to the interview process.

Data Analysis

Following each interview, a log was maintained on respective interview sheets, documenting the date, time, pseudonyms, participants' post-interview thoughts, and

interviewer notes. These logs were subsequently uploaded to the memo section of NVivo 14 for further analyses. After each interview session, online audio and voice recordings were uploaded to secure storage, and transcriptions were generated using the dictation function in Microsoft Word, typically within seconds. Interviews that were recorded by the phone app were automatically transcribed, while interviews conducted using the Tactiq extension via Google Meet and Zoom were received via email and subsequently downloaded to a secure location.

For interviews conducted via Zoom and Google Meet, three methods were employed to verify data accuracy: (a) comparing audio recordings with Tactiq transcriptions, (b) comparing audio recordings with phone Recorder transcriptions, and (c) comparing audio recordings with Microsoft Word dictations. In-person recordings allowed for all verification methods except Tactiq, which was specific to virtual interviews. These verification measures were implemented to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the collected data across different interview formats.

Following each interview, data were entered into a Microsoft Access file created to streamline organization and enable the creation of data tables summarizing interview responses. Subsequently, data were transferred into individual Microsoft Word files, one for each participant. This process was designed to simplify the upload of data into NVivo, facilitating the subsequent analysis of the collected information.

Initial coding of transcribed documents resulted in 52 distinct codes. To progress from codes to categories within NVivo, I took a comprehensive approach. This involved reviewing the research question, seeking guidance on transitioning codes into categories,

and conducting further research on utilizing NVivo for TA. These efforts culminated in the creation of two folders within NVivo: initial codes and thematic framework. The initial codes folder was designed to preserve the original coding, whereas the thematic framework folder served as the foundation for categorization.

Categories or themes were named to reflect their connection to the research question and the shared concepts and language observed across interviews. Initial categories/themes encompassed *language proficiency*, *Omanization*, *curriculum development*, *workforce development*, and *educators' perspectives*. As the categorization process advanced, an additional category, *hiring practices*, was introduced, and the existing category *Omanization* was refined to *Omanization goals* to better encapsulate the essence of the theme.

Further analyses revealed that some categories/themes contained subthemes, which were identified in NVivo by capitalized titles followed by parentheses. These subthemes included: (a) language proficiency (education and language learning and challenges and concerns in learning English); (b) hiring practices (qualifications and requirements, diversity and composition, workforce dynamics, and hiring process); (c) educators' perspectives (Omanization in the education sector and positive effects of Omanization); and (d) workforce development (educational development). In conjunction with the main themes, these subthemes contributed to the formation of a comprehensive thematic framework comprising six distinct categories/themes. Each theme represents a significant aspect or dimension of the research findings, allowing for a detailed examination of the data and a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. This

systematic approach ensured the robust development of categories in alignment with the research objectives, facilitating a nuanced and comprehensive analysis of the data.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the analysis, I cross-referenced the categories/themes against the coded data and the entire data set. A matrix query was conducted to identify patterns within the coded data and visualize these patterns. Table 1 shows the result of the matrix query.

Table 1

Patterns in Responses From Interview Questions

	Themes					
	Curriculum development	Educators' perspectives	Hiring practices	Language proficiency	Omanization goals	Workforce developments
P1	1	4	8	16	8	5
P2	6	24	26	43	8	17
P3	1	18	29	23	11	10
P4	3	7	10	22	7	8
P5	9	17	11	21	9	8
P6	2	7	8	13	6	14
P7	1	7	10	13	6	9
P8	1	8	22	20	7	13
Total	24	92	124	171	62	75

Table 1 illustrated the response frequencies from each participant pertaining to specific themes. In this representation, the rows denote the number of times each theme was addressed in the responses of individual participants, while the columns represent the themes themselves. The total, located at the interaction of each row and column, indicates the cumulative number of times a participant discussed a particular theme. For example, for Participant 1 (P1), the theme of language proficiency emerged 16 times, while for Participant 5 (P5), the theme appeared 21 times.

By scrutinizing the total number of responses associated with each theme, I conducted an interpretation to discern which theme held the most significance for the participants. Additionally, by comparing the occurrences of each theme across different topics, I identified the relative importance participants attributed to these themes within the context of the discussions. Furthermore, the variations in the numerical values within the table suggest that certain participants may have possessed more extensive knowledge or exhibited a higher level of interest in specific themes. Themes were ordered by their perceived importance, with language proficiency occupying the foremost position, followed by hiring practices, educators' perspectives, workforce development, Omanization goals, and finally, curriculum development. This prioritization was based on the frequency and prominence of these themes within participants' responses, allowing for a structured analysis of their perspectives.

Theme 1: Language Proficiency

The theme of language proficiency emerged as the most prominent theme in the analyses of participants' responses. It encompassed two key subthemes: (a) education and language learning, and (b) challenges and concerns in learning English. This emphasis on language proficiency reflected its central role in the participants' discussions and underscored its significance in the context of the research.

Education and language learning subtheme delved into various aspects of language acquisition within the educational context. The subtheme encompassed discussions related to participants' first languages, proficiency in known languages, access to native English speakers, the English proficiency of parents and educators, the

frequency of English courses per week, and the integration of English into various subjects within the curriculum. Expressions such as "I think they were motivated to speak English" (P1), "parents are sending their kids to these private schools with English speaking teachers so that they can learn more English" (P2), and "so, I think those common core subjects should definitely be taught in English" (P2) were indicators of this subtheme's content.

The other subtheme challenges and concerns in learning English explored the obstacles and considerations associated with learning English. It encompassed discussions about participants' and students' motivation (or lack thereof) to learn English, the impact of dialects and accents on English learning, the practice of English outside of the school environment, and the development of oral communication skills in English. Notable expressions by P2 such as "being a Canadian, they expected us to have a particular accent" and "they wanted their kids to speak with a similar accent to a Canadian," were indicative of the issues discussed within this subtheme.

The prevalence of these subthemes underscored the significance of language proficiency in the participants' perspectives. Participants not only discussed the importance of language education and learning strategies but also delved into challenges and concerns related to English language acquisition. This exploration demonstrated that language proficiency was not just a matter of education, but also encompassed various factors, including motivation, communication skills, and cultural considerations. The depth of these discussions illuminated the complex and nuanced landscape of language

proficiency within the educational context, providing valuable insights into the participants' perspectives and experiences.

Theme 2: Hiring Practices

The theme of hiring practices encompassed a comprehensive exploration of various aspects related to the recruitment and employment of educators. Within this theme, several subthemes and topics emerged. These include discussions about changes in qualifications or requirements for educators, emphasizing the necessity for individuals to possess teaching degrees or relevant qualifications in education. Additionally, participants discussed the education level of administrators and educators, highlighting the significance of their educational background and qualifications.

Another critical dimension within this theme centered on the diversity and inclusivity of the educator workforce. Participants emphasized the importance of collaboration and having educators from various backgrounds. They acknowledge that a diverse workforce not only enriched the educational experience but also fostered cultural understanding among students. Additionally, participants explored how the composition of the workforce affected communication dynamics within educational institutions, emphasizing the need for effective communication and teamwork.

In the context of hiring practices, language proficiency among educators, especially in English, emerged as another key subtheme. Participants recognized its relevance in the hiring process, discussing how language skills influence educators' suitability for specific roles. They discussed the importance of English language proficiency for effective teaching and communication, particularly in subjects where

English is the medium of instruction. This subtheme highlighted the subtle considerations involved in hiring educators with strong language skills to ensure quality education and communication within the educational setting.

Furthermore, participants considered the influence educators might have had in the hiring process itself, suggesting a degree of involvement in the selection of colleagues. This collaborative aspect of the hiring process within the educational sector reflected the significance of teamwork and shared values among educators in shaping the workforce. Lastly, discussions touched upon the role of salary in relation to the citizenship status of educators, with observations that individuals from different countries might have received different compensation. This aspect underscored the interplay between financial considerations and hiring practices, highlighting the need for equitable compensation practices ensuring compliance with Omanization policies.

To capture the multifaceted nature of this theme, I used phrases such as "people must have a teaching degree or some qualification in education" (P1), "there was a lot of collaboration" (P1), "private schools and government companies now, and that big change is almost all of them now, even in the medical sector, require an Omani to have an IELTS (International English Language Testing System)" (P8), and "whenever you get people from different countries, you can pay them differently" (P3). The increased demand for Omani candidates, particularly those with proficiency in English as demonstrated by the requirement for an IELTS, showcased the evolving landscape of hiring practices. This comprehensive examination of hiring practices sheds light on the

intricate considerations and dynamics involved in the recruitment and employment of educators in the study's context.

Theme 3: Educators' Perspectives

Positive and negative effects of Omanization, Omanization in the education sector, and views of participants if the policies were not in effect are the subthemes that encompassed the theme of educators' perspective. Participants engaged in thoughtful discussions concerning the consequences, both positive and negative, of Omanization policies in the education sector. These conversations delved into how these policies influence various facets, including employment dynamics and compensation structures, providing a comprehensive understanding of their impact.

In the exploration of the sub-theme, Omanization in the education sector, a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics surrounding the implementation of Omanization policies within the realm of education emerged. Participants shared their insights regarding how these policies had shaped the composition of the educator workforce and impacted the broader educational system, shedding light on the intricacies of Omanization in education. The discourse on Omanization policies not only highlighted their impact but also explored potential scenarios that could have unfolded if these policies were not in effect. In contemplating this hypothetical scenario, participants engaged in an intellectual exercise, pondering the educational terrain devoid of Omanization's influence. This contemplation encompassed various considerations, including the potential implications of Westernization, cultural differences, and the pivotal role played by the Ministry of Education in the allocation of teachers.

To capture the essence of this theme, I employed phrases such as "paying expats less…Citizens are able to get better pay" (P1), "I think it would be much more Westernized and much more cultural differences" (P6), and "the school doesn't choose. School only asks for more teachers and ministry send" (P4). These phrases encapsulated the nuanced viewpoints and discussions surrounding educators' perspectives on Omanization policies and their implications within the education sector. This thematic exploration provided valuable insights into how educators perceive the impact of such policies on their profession and the education system at large.

Theme 4: Workforce Development

The emergence of the workforce development's theme within the participants' responses, encompassed a pivotal aspect of the education sector within the Omani context. This theme resonated with several critical dimensions at the intersection of education and employment. First and foremost, responses highlighted a compelling call for increased government support in the field of education. Participants articulated the necessity of governmental assistance as a driving force behind educational progress and development. This underscored the integral role of the government in shaping the educational landscape and ensuring that it aligned with the national objectives, particularly in the context of Omanization.

For more government assistance in education, participants expressed a desire for increased government involvement and support in the realm of education. They discussed the potential benefits of government initiatives, such as making English language certificates like CELTA or TESOL a requirement for teachers. This suggestion highlights

the role of government assistance in enhancing educational standards. Furthermore, the theme discussed how imperative professional development as a means to meet the ambitious Omanization goals. Participants recognized that fostering a highly skilled and diverse workforce demanded continuous learning and adaptation. Hence, the role of professional development programs as catalysts for educational excellence and alignment with Omanization objectives came to the forefront of the discussions.

In addition, the theme explored the relationship between education and English proficiency, identifying them as a pivotal catalyst for opportunities within the Omani labor market. Participants discussed how proper English language instruction was crucial for students' success, as it influenced their performance in higher education and future career prospects. This recognition highlighted the importance of language skills and education as gateways to a wide array of employment prospects and socio-economic mobility.

The last sub-theme, entry into the labor force after graduation, examined the transition of Omani students into the workforce after completing their education. Participants noted the prevalence of students entering the workforce directly after high school, bypassing further studies. This aspect highlighted the realities of workforce entry and the factors influencing career trajectories.

Phrases such as "I think an English language certificate like a CELTA or a TESOL or TOEFL would be something that the government should make a requirement for their teachers" (P2), "professional development in order to make sure they have the skills to carry out their responsibilities" (P3), and "education is important if you use it

correctly" (P1) captured the essence of this theme. The workforce development's theme underscored the intricate interplay between education, government assistance, professional growth, language proficiency, and career trajectories within the context of Omanization and education.

Theme 5: Omanization Goals

The theme Omanization goals emerged from participants' responses. It encompassed deliberate efforts and policies meticulously crafted to bolster the representation of Omani nationals across various sectors, with a particular focus on the educational domain. The resonance of this theme had reverberated throughout the conversations, underscoring the strategic importance of Omanization in shaping the socio-economic and cultural fabric of the nation. For example, this theme finds elucidation through several poignant phrases that punctuate the discourse. The statement by P2 "they had to have a certain number of teachers who are Omani on staff, and I recall they hired one teacher," attests to the concrete measures taken to ensure that Omani nationals are integrated into the education sector. This measure served as a tangible manifestation of the Omanization objectives, which entail actively recruiting and retaining Omani educators within the educational workforce.

Moreover, the phrase by P1 "most of the public jobs were only for Omanis," underscored the comprehensiveness of the Omanization agenda, extending beyond education to encompass various sectors. It underscored the emphasis on creating opportunities for Omani citizens within the labor market, reinforcing the principle of nationalization. The reference to a "government program that allows equal opportunity

for Omanis that have the right qualification to be hired as a part of the workforce" by P3 further solidified the theme. It illuminated the institutional frameworks and policies put in place that facilitated Omanization, emphasizing the importance of meritocracy in the recruitment process. Lastly, the phrase "we celebrated national holidays" by P1 served as a symbolic expression of the commitment to Omani identity and culture by the participant, thus aligning with the border Omanization goals of fostering a sense of national pride and unity.

These expressions underscored the significance of Omanization goals within the context of education and broader workforce dynamics. Participants discussed the impact of such policies on hiring practices, the representation of Omani nationals in public jobs, and the sense of national identity and pride associated with celebrating national holidays. The theme of Omanization goals offered valuable insights into the intentional measures taken to promote the participation of Omani citizens in various aspects of the workforce, including the field of education.

Theme 6: Curriculum Development

The final theme, centered around the English curriculum, emerged notably from inquiries related to the participants' schools and their educational experiences. This theme was particularly informed by responses to questions such as:

1. Can you describe the English curriculum of your school?

2. What level of education do you believe a school administrator should have?

3. How important is the alignment of teaching methodology to the local cultural context?

4. Should English be more prevalent in all core subjects?

Participants' responses encompassed various aspects, including the type of curriculum implemented in their schools, the educational qualifications deemed necessary for school administrators, the relevance of teaching methods aligned with local culture, and the prominence of English within core subjects. The following phrases contributed to the development of the theme: "Cambridge curriculum" (P2), "IB curriculum" (P1), "bilingual curriculum" (P5), "for a native speaker that they really need like a Bachelor of Education like, I feel like a certificate or a Grade 12 certificate GED" (P5), "teaching with a different way and not like old class school" (P4), and "the curriculum has been watered down to like a very below standard grade" (P5).

The theme pertaining to the English curriculum and related educational aspects provides valuable insights into participants' perspectives on curriculum types, teaching methodologies, and the role of English within the educational framework. The phrases provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities that education system in Oman face. They show that the Omani education system is evolving to meet the needs of the global economy, but that there are still some challenges that need to be addressed. The theme sheds light on the complexities and considerations surrounding curriculum development and implementation in an educational context.

Discrepant Cases

Before commencing the categorization process, instances of discrepancies were first discerned as a preliminary step to data analysis. Notably, one significant issue that arose pertained to data miscoding. Subsequently, prior to initiating the matrix

calculations and identifying thematic patterns within the codes, I rectified this matter by removing erroneously coded data segments from the data set.

Furthermore, in preparation for matrix calculations and the identification of thematic patterns within the codes, a comprehensive data examination was conducted to detect outliers. This examination revealed that several participants had provided responses that were more pertinent to different questions than the ones initially posed. To ensure the accuracy of the analysis and representation of the data, these responses were diligently recategorized to align with their intended context. These rigorous data validations and correction procedures had been undertaken to maintain the integrity and reliability of the subsequent data analysis and thematic categorization processes. Such attention to detail ensured that the findings derived from the data set were robust and accurate, contributing to the overall quality of the research.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness had played a pivotal role in upholding the rigor and validity of the analysis in research endeavors. It had served as a foundational element in establishing the credibility and reliability of the findings. Achieving trustworthiness had been accomplished through various means, including seeking feedback from colleagues, conducting member checks, and employing techniques such as data triangulation. In the study's context, trustworthiness is reflected through several dimensions: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) conformability. By addressing these dimensions of trustworthiness, I strived to establish the credibility and reliability of the findings, ultimately contributing to the study's overall quality and validity.

Credibility

Credibility was diligently upheld through a series of measures. Firstly, participants were consistently reminded of the paramount importance of maintaining confidentiality, underlining my role in safeguarding their responses and personal information. Participants were provided with a comprehensive overview of the data collection procedures. Additionally, they were informed about the protocols and the crucial member checking process.

Following each interview session, I transcribed the collected data and promptly shared the transcription, along with the audio recording of each individual interview and the interview protocols, with interviewed participant. However, it is worth noting that while half of the participants participated in member checking, the other half chose to opt out of the member checking process and transcripts were used as presented. Specifically, participants P4, P5, P7, and P8 declined to participate in member checking. The reasons for their decision are elaborated upon in the following paragraphs.

P5 adopted a pseudonym for communication purposes and expressed a strong preference for not disclosing their email address. Furthermore, P5 conveyed their reluctance to receive transcriptions or any form of correspondence via email. Subsequent discussions with this participant unveiled an incident involving a security breach of their phone, which appears to have influenced their decision to abstain from member checking.

P4 and P8 proactively communicated their contentment with assisting and conveyed that member checking was not deemed necessary in their cases. P7 declined to

furnish their email address but expressed a willingness to respond to any queries. This stance presented challenges in conducting the member checking process.

This approach to member checking, where participants had the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the transcribed data and associated materials, served to enhance the validity and trustworthiness of the research findings. While some participants chose to engage in this process, others opted not to, and their perspectives and reasoning are respected as integral aspects of the research process. The diverse range of responses obtained from participants throughout the research process underscored the significance of flexibility and adaptability in safeguarding the integrity of the research endeavor. By accommodating varying perspectives and preferences, I strove to uphold the highest standards of research ethics and rigor, ultimately contributing to the robustness and trustworthiness of the research outcomes.

In conclusion, prioritizing the rigorous maintenance of credibility has been achieved through a multifaceted approach. This approach encompassed confidentiality assurances to protect participants, transparent research procedures to maintain transparency, and the provision of the option for member checking to ensure the accuracy of the findings. The credibility of my findings reflects the trustworthiness and a testament to the rigorous and ethical approach taken throughout the research process.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which findings can be applied or transferred to other contexts or populations. Transferability enhanced the external validity of research, making insights relevant and meaningful in a broader context. These could be

established through sampling, providing rich descriptions, and the flexibility of the research question.

While the transferability of qualitative interviews are limited, my interviews pertained to educators' perceptions of Omanization's policy efforts in preparing students for private sector employment and this approach may be transferrable to other Middle Eastern countries encountering the same nationalization efforts in the education sector. This concept holds applicability in broader contexts. My inclusion of content tables may enable other researchers to visualize an approach to detailed data descriptions with subsequent integration into other reviewed literature.

Dependability

Dependability is a crucial aspect of research, and deliberate measures were taken to address this concern by demonstrating the stability and consistency of its findings. Two common methods employed to establish dependability are the creation of an audit trail and peer debriefing. This generic qualitative study's sources have been documented in both written and audio formats. These records are securely stored, ensuring their long-term traceability for the required but limited 5-year retention period. The presence of this comprehensive audit trail helps to reinforce research dependability and enhances the potential for future replication by fellow researchers. Data organization and file retention serves as a valuable resource for verifying and replicating the study's processes and findings, thereby contributing to the overall reliability and trustworthiness of the research outcomes.

Conformability

Confirmability relates to the degree to which findings are viewed objectively and can be validated by others. To ensure confirmability, a rigorous methodology was followed throughout the research process. Findings, interpretations, and notes were diligently recorded in a reflexive journal, maintained both in NVivo and as a paper copy. After each interview session, these notes were promptly documented to capture both my reflections and the participants' perspectives. The process of data analysis was recorded on paper as the tasks were being completed. Furthermore, NVivo logged the thematic data analysis steps undertaken during the research process.

In conclusion, these measures were implemented to enhance confirmability and transparency in the research. Confirmability underscored the objectivity of the research findings, ensuring that they were grounded in the data rather than influenced by the researcher's personal bias or interpretation. Transparency, on the other hand, contributed to the openness and clarity of the research process, making it accessible and comprehensible to others. By documenting the research process comprehensively and maintaining detailed records, the study facilitated an objective and verifiable understanding of the findings, reinforcing the trustworthiness and validity of the research outcomes**.**

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Results

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Theme 1: Language Proficiency

The inaugural theme that emerged throughout the data analysis was the significance of language proficiency. The first theme underscores the pivotal role of

language proficiency, particularly in English, within Oman's education system. This theme was synthesized from responses to Interview Questions 2(c), 3(a)-3(e), 3(g), 3(h), 3(j), 3(k), 4(c), and 4(d). Participants consistently stressed the significance of English proficiency for students, parents, and educators, shedding light on the multifaceted challenges faced in this regard. These challenges encompassed student attitudes, disparities between public and private schools, and concerns about the quality of English teaching in public schools. The participants' diverse language learning experiences revealed varying approaches to language acquisition, highlighting the need for improvements in teaching methods and resources. The importance of oral communication skills is consistently emphasized, with motivation emerging as a key factor in language learning success. Table 2 displayed significant phrases provided by participants on the theme of language proficiency. Moreover, the table illustrate concerns mentioned by participants about student readiness for higher education, given the requirement for English proficiency in many university courses. In conclusion, addressing these language proficiency challenges is essential to ensure that Oman's students are well-prepared for future academic and career opportunities in an increasingly globalized world.

Table 2

Participants' Responses for Language Proficiency

	Education and language learning	Challenges and concerns in learning English
P1	"Learned English in public school outside of Oman. Want people who know English dialect. Purpose of native English speakers is for children to learn different dialects which will enable them to be better in the working force"	"Younger students were motivated more than the older students to learn English. Some learners are unable to pick up the language quickly. I believe it is because they come from public schools. Omanis cannot learn English by doing a short program, studying it, or a short workshop."
P2	"Being a Canadian, they expected us to have a particular accent and they wanted their kids to speak with a similar accent to a Canadian. Speaking and oral communication is the foundation for which all of their language learning will need. So, if students cannot, are not proficient orally, they will not be proficient readers and they will not be proficient writers. First entry point of English language learning has to be oral communication." "If Omani students are not learning how to speak from people who speak, who can speak proficiently and then everything else in terms of language learning is going to fall short." "English should be taught in all the core subjects."	"Students that come from public system had difficulties with English proficiency more than ones who started in private schools. Public schools had issues with accessing native English teachers. Public school English teachers were not totally fluent or they themselves didn't have like the same proficiency as somebody who was a native speaker from a Western country. This led to gaps in the students' learning. Omani students who excel more in English had parents who either were educated in English speaking countries or/and who spoke English at home." "Need additional English language learner supports for struggling students." "Omani teachers who are teaching English needs to be more proficient in the language. Proficiency can come from English proficiency programs."
P3	"Learned English in private school outside of Oman and from family. The administrator does not need to be bilingual if they have another administrator who can compensate for the language deficiency. There are very few students that say, I don't care about English; I don't want to learn English, but those are usually the ones that are having a difficult time and they're being self-conscious of it."	"There are very few that say I don't care about English; I don't want to learn English, but those are usually the ones that are having a difficult time and they're being self-conscious of it." "Some people want more English, especially students that are struggling with Arabic, they want more English classes."
P4	"Learning English from watching movies and talking to other English speakers. Most oral communication in English were self-taught. I prefer Indian and Sri Lankan's teachers because their English accent is better than the Egyptians. If you don't practice speaking English, it will not be proficient. Going overseas help me hone my English language skills. English should be taught in science and math."	"Public schools in Oman needs more English classes. Students need to find a way to speak English outside of English class."
P5	"Learned English in a private school outside of Oman. Students tell me that they do not need to learn English because they will be running the family business after graduating."	"Teachers lack experience. They do not employ native English speakers to teach English. Some students are not motivated to learn English. Students complained of having English twice a day. Both the parents complain that the students aren't getting the grades that they are paying and the hours that they are putting in and the students are complaining that it's too much for them." "Not enough emphasis on learning English. The students are entitled, and the schools are setting them up for failure."
P6	"Learned English in a public school outside of Oman. Repetition in the English classes makes the students bored."	"Students become bored when repetition occurs in learning English. English is not prevalent in all core subjects."
P7	"Omani public school helped me learn English but mostly learned English by watching TV."	"English class all week, one class per day and it lasts for 40 minutes." "Teachers in college complained that all important specializations are taught in English. Participant is against teaching university courses in English. It should be taught in Arabic."

	Education and language learning	Challenges and concerns in learning English
P8	"Learned English in Canadian public school. Most subjects in public schools are in Arabic and that should change. The foundation subjects (Math, Science, and English) should be in English."	"I think resources are there for Omani teachers to excel but they are not equipped to teach English." "English course is only 45 mins a day and that is just not enough time. Most subjects in public schools are in Arabic and that should change. The foundation subjects (Math, Science, and English) should be in English. This is not enough for them to graduate and then enter a bachelor program or foundation program." "School students or students that finished in government school and took the placement test, and it was not very high. English language plays a big role in expanding vocabulary and teaching grammar, however for public schools it is not enough and should be focused on preparing them for foundations."

Table 2 underscored the central role of language proficiency, particularly English language proficiency, within Oman's educational landscape. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of English proficiency for students, parents, and educators. These participant responses collectively shed light on the multifaceted aspects of language proficiency challenges in Oman's education system, encompassing student attitudes, teaching methods, and the integration of English into the curriculum.

The participants' diverse language learning experiences, both within and outside Oman, revealed the varied approaches to language acquisition. Some had learned English abroad, while others had relied on self-taught methods or private school education. Table 3 highlighted disparities in English proficiency between students from public and private schools. Participants had expressed concerns about the quality of English teaching in public schools, with suggestions for improvement, such as additional classes and teacher proficiency programs.

Oral communication was consistently emphasized as the foundational aspect of language learning. Participants stressed that proficiency in spoken English is essential for reading and writing skills. According to participants, attitudes toward learning English

had varied among students, with some having expressed a strong desire for more English classes and others having displayed reluctance. Participants also noted the importance of motivation in language acquisition. Suggestions had been made for allocating resources to enhance English teaching and for integrating English into core subjects like Math and Science. Concerns had been raised about the preparedness of students, particularly in public schools, for higher education and university courses, which were often conducted in English.

In conclusion, Table 4 highlighted the complex and multifaceted nature of language proficiency challenges in Oman's educational system. It underscored the significance of English proficiency, the need for improvements in teaching methods and resources, and the role of motivation in successful language learning. Addressing these challenges and disparities is crucial to ensure that Oman's students are well-prepared for future academic and career opportunities in an increasingly globalized world.

Theme 2: Hiring Practices

The analysis of hiring practices for educators revealed several significant categories of consideration. These categories encompassed qualifications and requirements, diversity and composition, workforce dynamics, and the hiring process (see Table 3). Within the qualifications and requirements category, emphasis was placed on educational qualifications, teaching experience, language proficiency, and collaborative history. The aspect of diversity and composition highlighted preferences for educators based on nationality and language proficiency, which could sometimes pose communication challenges. Workforce dynamics emphasized the importance of

collaboration among educators from different backgrounds, with some English teachers tending to isolate themselves while others successfully collaborated. Finally, the hiring process itself involved a mix of criteria, including qualifications, experience, and alignment with Omani values and beliefs. Educators also play an active role in recommending candidates. Overall, these categories shed light on the complexity and multifaceted nature of hiring educators in a diverse context where language, nationality, and cultural factors integral to decision-making.

Table 3

Participants' Responses for Hiring Practices

	Qualifications and requirements	Diversity and composition	Workforce dynamics	Hiring process
P1	"Teaching degree or some qualifications in education. Two years' experience from a place. Teaching qualification even if you have a degree."	"English dialect and native speakers."	"Good experience with lots of collaboration."	"None."
P2	"Level of English. Native English speaker. Bilingualism. School educator should have a degree attended a post-secondary institution and receive their degree from a post-secondary institution that was in English, but then they should have some sort of Certification to teach, and then definitely a degree of expertise and whatever they are teaching. I think a English language certificate like a CELTA or a TESOL or TOEFL would be something that the government should make a requirement for their teachers."	"Ethnicity/nationality is considered. Looking for native English speakers who is from Canada, United States, Great Britain, Australia, or New Zealand."	"Limited communication and collaboration with Omani teachers due to lack of English. Able to communicate with the Arabic teachers who spoke English."	"None."
P3	"Need to have a certain score on the IELTS. Qualifications, experience, right education, able to collaborate, showing enthusiasm and initiative."	"Ethnicity and nationality is a factor when it comes to hiring. Multicultural, English teachers from Egypt, Tunisia, Canada, UK, and America."	"Subjective question. Omani teachers I picked did an excellent job with collaboration and communication."	"Big part. I am part of the interview process as well and then we have a committee that decides who we should hire."
P4	"One year of teaching college to be a class teacher. To be a subject teacher, need a bachelor in the subject and one year teaching college. Should have a degree, lessons in teaching, and experience. Pass with a good grade on IELTS."	"Ministry does the hiring. Do not know."	"Some collaboration. English teachers separated themselves and only spoke with each other."	"No."
P5	"Teachers need experience. Native English speaker. If they do not have degree with experience, will take someone with a GED plus experience in teaching."	"Prefer young white female with a UK education."	"Horrible, like a lion and hyena. Can't get along."	"I do have a role. I can recommend a teacher."
P6	"Bilingual or multilingual. Teachers should have at least a Bachelor of Education."	"No, they don't. Do not know the meaning of ethnicity."	"Call it diversity. Omanis and non-Omani teachers are communicating and learning from each other. Collaboration happens daily."	"None."
P7	"Have an educational bachelor and to pass the teachers test set by the ministry of education. Teacher: At least bachelor. Then it depends on the position, if university teacher should have masters."	"Ethnicity and nationality are considered. Only teachers with the same values and beliefs as Oman."	"Not a good idea to hire teachers just because they are Omanis. They should be qualified."	"None."
P8	"An educator should have undergrad with experience with a lot of experience."	"Government schools do not hire European or North American English teachers. They have Indians, Pakistanis, Egyptians, and Jordian that are English teacher. Ethnicity and nationality are considered. Pick a white candidate over another color. Female is preferred over male teachers."	"Answer he gave did not pertain to question. Was on time constraint."	"I don't."

In the context of hiring practices for educators, several categories emerged during the data analysis. These categories included qualifications and requirements, diversity and composition, workforce dynamics, and the hiring process. It was evident that each category presented unique challenges and considerations. A deeper investigation into each of these categories to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the intricacies involved is warranted.

For qualifications and requirements for educators, there was a recurring theme of emphasizing the need for relevant educational qualifications and teaching experience. Some common prerequisites mentioned included possessing a teaching degree or relevant qualifications in education, along with a minimum of two years' teaching experience. It was also important for educators to have a command of the English language, particularly for native speakers, and a history of collaboration and experience in the field.

The aspect of diversity and composition in the hiring process were evident in the consideration of factors such as ethnicity, nationality, and language proficiency. Native English speakers from specific countries, such as Canada, the United States, Great Britain, Australia, or New Zealand, were often preferred candidates. However, this preference had its challenges, as language barriers sometimes hindered communication and collaboration with Omani teachers.

Workforce dynamics and collaboration among teachers from different nationalities were significant considerations. Collaboration among educators from various backgrounds was encouraged, but English teachers sometimes tended to isolate themselves, limiting communication primarily to their own group. However, there were

positive instances where multicultural English teachers from countries like Egypt, Tunisia, Canada, United Kingdom, and the United States successfully collaborated and communicated effectively with Omani teachers.

The hiring process itself involved a mix of criteria. These criteria included qualifications, experience, and the ability to collaborate and demonstrate enthusiasm and initiative. Ethnicity and nationality played a role in hiring decisions, with a preference for candidates who aligned with Omani values and beliefs. In some cases, educators had an active role in the interview process or could recommend teachers for positions.

In conclusion, Table 3 highlighted various aspects of hiring practices for educators. They encompassed qualifications, diversity, collaboration, and the hiring process. These categories shed light on the complexities and considerations involved in recruiting educators, especially in a diverse context where language, nationality, and cultural factors have played pivotal roles in the decision-making process.

Theme 3: Educators' Perspectives

Educators' perspective emerged from Questions 1(b) through 1(d), 2(a), 2(b), 2(d), 3(h), 4(b), and 4(d). The TA of responses to specific questions revealed a nuanced discussion surrounding Omanization policies within the education sector in Oman. Four key thematic categories emerged: (a) Omanization policies in education, (b) positive aspects of Omanization, (c) negative aspects of Omanization, and (d) potential consequences in the absence of these policies. Participants discussed the challenges and experiences related to filling specific roles with Omani candidates as per Omanization quotas, highlighting difficulties in finding qualified candidates for specialized positions

(see Table 4). While Omanization was viewed positively to involve citizens in the workforce and foster cultural understanding, concerns were raised about inexperienced staff and potential disruptions. Participants also considered scenarios without Omanization policies, envisioning a more culturally diverse workforce but noting cost-saving opportunities. This comprehensive discussion underscored the complexities and implications of Omanization within the education sector, offering valuable insights into its impact on both education and the broader workforce in Oman.

Table 4

Participants' Responses for Educators' Perspectives

	Omanization in education	Positive effects of Omanization	Negative effects of Omanization	Policies not in effect
P1	"None."	"Saving money by paying expats less."	"Expats are paid less."	"Less school events celebrating Oman and more of other cultures."
P2	"Students from government schools are far less proficient in English. Due to Omanization, teachers in public schools are not as proficient in English, therefore there are gaps in the students' learning. Firing non-native speakers in public schools is detrimental because the level of English language proficiency of students I had who arrived from public schools are really low."	"Hiring Omanis to do work in the service sector jobs that were typically or more commonly given to non-Omanis." "Good to hire Omani so their perspective and voice was amongst the staff. Students to see themselves reflected in the place they go to." "I think it's good that Omani students, while getting exposure to people from outside the country, I think it's good that they also see themselves reflected in those sector so they too can aspire to be working in a variety of sectors and in particular, in this case education."	"Foreign companies that were doing business in Oman, would hire Omanis to meet a quota and then they'd relegate them to, you know, the lowest possible position." "Omanis are overlooked for promotion because of their lack of English proficiency." "Omanis without the same level of qualifications as a Canadian teacher is hired. I think that what they're doing with firing non-native speakers in public schools is detrimental because the level of English language proficiency of my students who came from public schools was really, really low."	"Service sector would have no Omanis. The jobs were typically or commonly given to non-Omanis. Schools would be under the Omanization quotas. They wouldn't have hired Omani staff who do not have the qualification for the position. They would hire someone from Egypt or India to do the same job at lower pay."
P3	"Private schools had to abide by the quota for Omanization. We had a position called Soabaat (unsure of spelling), which is like a special needs teacher. That teacher had to be Omani, and we needed that in order to have approval for grade 11 and 12. Now what happens this whole year, we kept searching and searching and searching and we never found like an Omani, Special needs teacher. What ended up happening for next year, they realized that so many schools had difficulties with this. They have now removed that position from Omanization."	"Getting citizens to be part of the workforce. They give them opportunities to be able to earn an income and it ends up helping society in general, because you have a lot of people that have the ability and the support to work. Salaries of Omanis are fairly determined. Students feel the more comfortable with Omanis that are at the school because these are Omanis would know them, their culture, their language."	"Whenever we're trying to hire people or whenever if we didn't have enough Omani because the number of Omanis that have certain specializations may not be there, the position would be left empty." "There might be Omanis that are not qualified about a certain position, but because that position is for Omanis, it makes it difficult for us to find someone to fulfill the needs of the Ministry of Education."	"Didn't have to worry about filling Omanization quota before hiring new staff. Can pay Omanis staff the same salary as other staff. Lot of positions that would be given to different people. Pay people at cheaper rate."
P4	"Government hire the teachers in public schools. The school doesn't choose."	"Does not know."	"Does not know."	"More people from different countries."
P5	"Inexperienced Omanis in positions. Public schools should forget about Omanization into English proficiency of the educators increase."	"At first, stated that they could not say, then proceeded to say the empowering of the people."	"Expats losing their jobs. They don't know what they're doing in the position so that they spending more money to just put that person Omani like a local person in the managerial position and then hiring another person to like ghostly do all the work. People who are taken over managerial position are a complete failure. Omani staff are not able to answer any questions. constantly disrupting	"Students would have to work harder and they would have to earn the grades. They just get past and we are told, as educators like, we need to put them over."

	Omanization in education	Positive effects of Omanization	Negative effects of Omanization	Policies not in effect
			us to find out what do they need to do, what do they need to say. Limiting expats and giving the position to Omanis. Salaries are given without any perks. Salaries are reduced. Hiring staff without degrees and experience. Increase in salaries and better benefits for expats before Omanization policies."	
P6	"No."	"Did not experience any positive effects of Omanization."	"Teachers being moved out of positions for Omanis to come in."	"Much more westernized and more cultural differences."
P7	"Most teachers in public universities are Omanis. Omanization was implemented in educational sector because Omanis were outraged due to economic situation of the country."	"Schools run smoothly when the school staff are from Omanis because they understand the culture here."	"Not all Omanis are well qualified to be teachers or to work in educational sector so there might be problems with the school and students' performance."	"As far as my knowledge extends, Omanization policies were not applied to universities, including Sultan Qaboos University. Therefore, it did not have any discernible impact on the institution."
P8	"I don't think it affects education much. For government schools, there is a stronger rule of Omanization. priority is given strictly and only to Omanis first in government schools."	"Omani teachers in government schools can connect with the child. Omanization policies are good in the government sector."	"Private school teachers cannot make the same connections with an Omani student as someone working in government school."	"To be candid, there were very few Omani employees present, to be precise, no more than three or possibly two. It's worth noting that this situation may have evolved since then, but during that period, it didn't seem to have a significant impact."

The presented summary encapsulated a comprehensive discussion of Omanization policies in education, encompassing both positive and negative outcomes. On the one hand, Omanization was seen to involve citizens in the workforce, enhance cultural understanding in schools, and provide income opportunities for Omanis, contributing to societal well-being. On the other hand, concerns were raised about the placement of inexperienced Omani staff in roles that could affect student achievement, as well as job displacement for expatriates and the promotion of unqualified Omani staff to

management positions. The possibility of a scenario without Omanization policies was also considered, with potential increases in cultural diversity but financial implications. This multifaceted discussion of Omanization in education highlighted its complexities and implications for both the educational system and the broader workforce.

In the category of Omanization in education, participants discussed the implementation of Omanization policies in the education sector. They shared experiences related to specific positions, such as special needs teachers, which needed to be filled with Omani candidates as per the Omanization quota. Schools faced challenges in finding qualified Omani candidates for certain specialized positions, leading to the removal of certain roles from Omanization requirements. Omanization was seen as a positive way to involve citizens in the workforce and foster a sense of comfort and cultural understanding among students.

Participants identified positive outcomes of Omanization policies, including the opportunity for Omanis to be part of the workforce and contribute to societal well-being. The presence of Omani staff members was beneficial for students who felt more comfortable with individuals who understood their culture and language. Negative effects of Omanization were also discussed, such as the placement of inexperienced Omanis in positions, particularly in public schools, which could lead to potential gaps in English proficiency among students. Instances of expatriates losing their jobs and challenges associated with Omani staff members taking managerial roles without sufficient qualifications were also highlighted.

Participants contemplated a scenario without Omanization policies, anticipating that more people from different countries would be involved in the workforce, potentially leading to a more culturally diverse environment. This increased diversity was seen as an opportunity to enrich the workplace with a broader range of perspectives, skills, and experiences. Some mentioned that without Omanization policies, they would not have to worry about meeting quotas and could pay Omani staff the same salary as other staff, allowing for cost savings. This cost efficiency could be redirected into training programs and skill development initiates, further enhancing the capabilities of the Omani's workforce, and contributing to overall organizational growth and competitiveness of Oman.

In conclusion, the perspectives shared by participants in the table shed light on the various aspects of Omanization in the education sector, including both positive and negative effects. These insights provided valuable context for understanding the impact of Omanization policies on education and the broader workforce. They underscored the complexities and multifaceted nature of such policies, highlighting the need for careful consideration and balanced approaches in their implementation. Furthermore, the diverse viewpoints presented there served as a reminder of the importance of inclusivity and open dialogue when shaping policies that influenced the composition and dynamics of the workforce in Oman's education sector.

Theme 4: Workforce Development

Theme 4, derived from Interview Questions 3(h), 4(b), 4(c), 4(d), and 4(f), encompassed four categories from the perspectives of participants on the government's

role in supporting citizen skill development and education. The theme provided valuable insights into four distinct categories, each shedding light on different dimensions of this aspect. The data revealed several noteworthy conclusions related to government support, professional development, the importance of education and English proficiency, and evolving perspectives on entering the Omani workforce.

Participants advocated for active government involvement in enhancing educational opportunities, such as grants and fee coverage for specific fields of study. Continuous learning and development for teachers was valued, including sending them abroad and providing ongoing support. Participants saw collaboration between Omani and non-Omani educators, as well as partnerships with private and international schools, as crucial for a comprehensive approach to education. They recognized education as a means of societal contribution and English proficiency as essential for international communication and career advancement. High school graduates were increasingly aware of the need for further education and training to bolster their skills and employability. These conclusions collectively underscore the pivotal role of education and language proficiency in Oman's development and the nation's commitment to preparing its citizens for the evolving demands of the workforce. Table 5 provides a detailed exposition of these aspects, accompanied by illustrative quotes from the participants.

Table 5

Participants' Responses for Workforce Development

	Government assistance	Professional development	Importance of education and English	Labor force entry of Omanis after graduating high school
P1	"Better initiative programs."	"More experiences before hiring."	"Students needs to be taught English correctly. Education is important if taught correctly."	Omitted due to short stay
P2	"Allocation of funds and some training into teaching English as a second language." "Sending their teachers to study abroad, which is something I know they've done in the past and continue to do, maybe creating more opportunities for their English language teachers to continue their studies of English, even in Oman or elsewhere so that they can become more proficient."	"Additional English language teaching certificate, formal certificate." "Engage in newer teaching practices."	"Proficient teachers English language proficiency is valuable for upward mobility in the workforce." "Qualified teachers who are proficient in English language."	"I don't have any contact with any former students or parents."
P3	"The government is already providing grants and covering fees for their citizens who are going into certain fields."	"Professional development in order to make sure they have the skills to carry out their responsibilities."	"Education is important if they want to make a positive contribution to society in the future. English is important because it allows them to communicate at an international level."	"Since the school started, students have graduated from college and entered the workforce."
P4	"More English training."	"Teach more English courses to Omanis so they can be more proficient."	"English is important to learn everywhere in the world." "Education is important plus training."	"Some."
P5	"Slow down on Omanization. Keep the expats in their positions and train the Omanis."	"Feel like they get it	"Should be more emphasis on English. Education is important"	Earlier statements indicated he was in his position for a short stay (3 months) and would not be able to answer
P6	"Provide support, initiatives, and resources placed at their disposal. Workshops where Omani teachers and non-Omani teachers are working together."	"Be more incorporated into the private and international schools and work with the curriculums at the end." "Need teachers to work with the native English teachers as well."	"Education is definitely a catalyst. To attend top universities outside of Oman, learning English is important."	"None to their knowledge."
P7	"Make the educational sector a desirable domain to work in."	"Programs that could improve Omanis teachers, such as CELTS."	"Education is an important aspect of every nation. Anyone who could speak English have much more job opportunities than one who don't speak English."	"Hard to answer."
P8	"Prepare high school students for English foundation classes in universities. Educate Omanis, send more overseas for education/experience for the next 5-10 years."	"Need training in life skills to show them what happens after graduating high school."	"Every degree, almost, nearly every single degree, now is now in English."	"It's the public schools where a lot of schools don't go for studies after high school, they go straight to the workforce."

Based on the information provided in Table 5, several key conclusions related to government assistance, professional development, the importance of education and English proficiency, and the labor force entry of Omanis after graduating high school can be drawn. One of these conclusions is that participants believed that the Omani government should actively involve itself in supporting its citizens by providing grants and covering fees for certain fields of study. Furthermore, encouragement for continuous learning and development was evident throughout the responses. This included sending teachers abroad for further education and training and providing ongoing support and resources.

Another conclusion is the idea of collaborative efforts between Omani and non-Omani teachers, as well as collaboration with private and international schools, was mentioned. This reflected a recognition of the need for a well-rounded approach to education and professional development. In addition, it was evident that the interviewees recognized the significance of education and proficiency in the English language. Education was seen to make a positive contribution to society, and English was emphasized for its international communication value and its role in enabling upward mobility in the workforce. There was a consistent emphasis on the importance of English language proficiency, not only in education but also in the labor market. Proficient English language skills were viewed as valuable assets, and efforts should be made to enhance English teaching and proficiency among Omanis.

Lastly, interviewees suggested that while some individuals may enter the workforce immediately after graduating high school due to various factors, there was a

growing awareness of the need for further education and training to enhance their skills and employability. They emphasized that in a rapidly evolving job market, continuous learning and skill development were becoming essential for career advancement and job security. Furthermore, interviewees pointed out that employers increasingly valued candidates with a combination of practical experience and advanced education, which made it imperative for high school graduates to consider pursuing higher education or vocational training to stay competitive in the job market. This shift toward a more education-oriented approach to career development reflected a broader recognition of the benefits of lifelong learning in the dynamic and competitive workforce landscape of that time.

In conclusion, the insights from the table interviewees highlighted the importance of education and English proficiency in Oman during that period. Participants emphasized the significance of government support, professional development, and collaborative efforts aimed at improving the educational landscape and workforce readiness of Omanis. These conclusions underscored the critical role that education played in the nation's development and future prospects. The past observations served as a testament to the ongoing commitment to educational improvement and the recognition of its vital role in shaping Oman's socio-economic landscape.

Theme 5: Omanization Goals

The thematic categories that had emerged from participants' responses to Questions 1(a)-1(c), 1(f), 2(a), and 4(g) had revolved around the concept of Omanization. The participants' insights on Omanization revolved around four key thematic categories.

These categories encompassed the definition of Omanization, examples of its application, staff compliance with its policies, and the alignment of teaching methodologies with the local cultural context. Table 6 shows brief insights into participants' responses to these questions.

Table 6

Participants' Responses for Omanization Goals

	Definition of Omanization	Examples of Omanization	Staff compliance of Omanization	Alignment of teaching methodology to local cultural context
P1	"Getting more citizens to work in private companies, businesses, or schools."	"An Omani in administration who helped with visa preparation and other administrative work. KG teacher was Omani. Paying locals more than they would pay the immigrants or expats. Most of the public jobs were only for Omanis."	"2 Omanis and 8 expat staff."	"Celebrated national holidays"
P2	"My understanding of Omanization is gradual increase in employment of Omani in all sectors and native citizenship carrying Omanis not people who were necessarily born there, but people who have citizenship through lineage in Oman. So, the idea of Omanization was to become less dependent on foreign employees and foreign expats in all sectors, whether that be engineering, education, healthcare, transportation, and in all sectors across the country. There were mandates put out by royal decree to have Omani people represented in public and private spheres."	"I got a visit from the Ministry in my first year there and the woman who was representing the Ministry of Education was kind of like a math coach. And you know, she had mentioned that through the process of Omanization. She was one of the first women to be hired, Omani women, to be hired to do that job. Previously, there had been only men in that position doing that job." "They would hire Omanis without the same level of qualifications as a Canadian teacher."	"Two Omanis staff and rest expats"	"Hiring of Omanis"
P3	"Government program that allows equal opportunity for Omanis that have the right qualification to be hired as a part of the workforce."	"Different field, have a different percentage for Omanization in order to ensure that citizens are getting jobs." "A judge or a lawyer in the court systems, you have to be represented by an Omani lawyer when you go to court." "Certain positions are only for Omanis."	"Had enough Omani on our staff when Omanization started. Out of 40 of our current staff, 11 are Omanis and the rest are expats."	"Social Studies and Islamic Studies are taught in Arabic."
P4	"Jobs for only Omanis. I know this as Taa'meen. It means if you have job, Omani first for this job, after if you don't find Omani bring another from outside."	"Public school prefer Omani more than any."	"80% Omani teachers and 20% are foreign teachers."	Unable to answer the question.
P5	"It's a process to get to empower Omanis. In the most nicest way."	"Most of us expats are losing our jobs because of this Omanization."	"70% Omanis and 30% from other countries."	"Bilingual curriculum to cater to second language students."
P6	"Omanization is the nationalism of Oman wherein the government wants people of Oman to have more access to jobs and to be more involved in the workforce. In Oman. In all the professions and positions and careers available in the country."	"If we go into the medical department, you will find that Oman is pushing these students in these schools more in medicine, so that they should become doctors."	"70% expats staff"	"Certain cultural custom followed during each morning. The curriculum is aligned with what Oman wants to achieve."
P7	"Replacing non-Omani employees with Omani worker. It is not about nationalities or backgrounds it is all about providing jobs to Omanis."	"Most driver were mostly from South Asia and now the government is trying to limit this profession to Omanis." "No Omanization in universities."	"75% Omani teachers and 25% non-Omanis."	"We do study about the local culture but not comprehensively."

	Definition of Omanization	Examples of Omanization	Staff compliance of Omanization	Alignment of teaching methodology to local cultural context
P8	"The hiring of Omani citizens versus non-citizen. The hiring of Omani citizens over foreigners."	"If a job was to become available in a company, they'd prefer to hire the local citizen before a foreigner. With the military, law enforcement, and the medical field, they always go with all Omanis first in government jobs."	"Majority Expats."	"I do not think so. I am not sure what the answer to that question."

Omanization is defined as a government initiative aimed at prioritizing Omani citizens in the job market, reducing reliance on foreign workers, and reserving specific positions exclusively for Omanis. Examples of Omanization include increased Omani hiring, cultural integration in education, and national holiday celebrations. Participants generally noted compliance with Omanization quotas in private schools, while public schools exhibited a higher presence of Omani teachers, though concerns about qualifications were raised. Furthermore, alignment with the local cultural context in teaching practices, including language use and customs, was emphasized as essential for educational relevance in Oman.

The following is a summary of participants' definitions of Omanization. P1 saw it as an initiative to increase Omani employment in all sectors, prioritizing Omanis over expatriates. P2 emphasized its goal of reducing dependence on foreign workers, mandated by royal decrees. P3 described it as a government program to provide equal job opportunities for qualified Omanis, with certain positions reserved exclusively for Omanis. P4 characterized it as a policy that prioritized Omanis for jobs, especially in public schools, reserving jobs exclusively for Omanis and hiring foreign workers only when necessary. P5 viewed it as a process to empower Omanis, albeit with implications

for expatriate workers, striving for a predominantly Omani workforce. P6 defined it as a nationalistic initiative to provide Omanis with more access to jobs across various professions, highlighted by the government's push for Omani students to pursue specific fields like medicine. P7 described it as the replacement of non-Omani employees with Omani workers across different sectors, with the government limiting certain professions, such as drivers, to Omanis. P8 emphasized Omanization as the preference for hiring Omani citizens over foreigners in various job sectors, including the military, law enforcement, and medicine.

Participants provided various examples of Omanization practices, such as hiring more Omani staff, prioritizing Omanis in job positions, and reserving specific jobs exclusively for Omani citizens. Celebrating national holidays and incorporating local cultural elements into the curriculum were also mentioned as past examples of Omanization. The incorporation of local elements seemed to be prevalent in most of the participants' views, with some wanting a mixture of international cultural aspects. These examples collectively demonstrated the multifaceted nature of Omanization practices across different sectors and contexts.

For the staff compliance of Omanization category, participants felt that most private schools had met the Omanization quota. Participants who taught in public schools stated that there were more Omanis teachers than expatriate teachers. P2 mentioned that some Omanis teachers were hired without the same level of qualifications as foreign teachers, suggesting that there may be variations in staff compliance with Omanization policies.

Furthermore, participants noted that certain cultural customs, such as traditional greetings, the national anthem, and customs that reflected Oman's cultural heritage, were followed during the morning. The curriculum was also aligned with Oman's goals and values, with a focus on promoting Omani culture and history. Social Studies and Islamic Studies were taught in Arabic to ensure alignment with the local cultural context and to foster a deeper understanding of Oman's cultural and religious traditions.

In summary, the theme of Omanization encompassed definitions, examples, and implications for staff and education, highlighting the government's efforts to prioritize the employment of Omani citizens and align educational practices with the local cultural context. It reflected an approach to promoting Omani identity and participation in the workforce, with participants sharing their perspectives on the various aspects of this policy. This theme shed light on the balance between fostering national identity and addressing the challenges of workforce development in Oman's educational landscape.

Theme 6: Curriculum Development

Curriculum development emerged as a key theme from participants' answers to Questions 2(a), 3(f), 3(h), and 4(a). Table 7 provides an overview of phrases obtained from the participants. The insights shared by the participants shed light on the diverse landscape of English language curricula employed within educational contexts in Oman. These curricula encompassed a broad spectrum of international curriculum, including those from countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Singapore, and Canada. Additionally, bilingual curricula and those emphasizing cultural understanding are part of the educational landscape.

This diversity underscored the commitment to offering students a well-rounded English language education that addressed various facets of language proficiency, cultural awareness, and readiness for language assessment. Curriculum development played a pivotal role in shaping English education in Oman, tailoring programs to meet the unique needs and aspirations of learners across different educational settings. It reflected an ongoing effort to provide students with a comprehensive language education that prepared them for success in both national and international contexts. Table 7 shows brief insights into participants' responses to these questions.

Table 7

Participants' Responses for Subtheme English Curriculum of Curriculum Development

	English curriculum
P1	"IB curriculum"
P2	"English curriculum had four strands of language for English. So, in ELA you had speaking, you had listening, you had reading, and you had writing for students in the fourth grade. Sorry, the fifth grade, it was speaking, listening, reading, and writing."
P3	"International Cambridge Curriculum."
P4	"Do not know because I taught a different subject."
P5	"Watered down version of NQF (National Qualifications Framework) Cabridge curriculum. Mixed with Oxford to accommodate second language learners. The school has a bilingual curriculum."
P6	"Cambridge curriculum. Learning about different cultures with English."
P7	"Task based curriculum. The book contains many activities that includes reading a passage and answering questions or initiating a conversation with a colleague and the teacher was supposed to monitor and assess."
P8	"Cambridge IELTS curriculum."

A summary of insights provided by participants in Table 7 of concerning the English curriculum is presented as follows. P1 mentioned the IB (International Baccalaureate) curriculum as relevant to English education. P2 described the English

curriculum with four language strands: speaking, listening, reading, and writing for students in different grade levels. P3 indicated the use of the International Cambridge Curriculum. P4 was unable to provide information about the curriculum due to teaching a different subject. P5 discussed a curriculum that combines elements of the NQF Cambridge curriculum and Oxford, tailored to accommodate second language learners. P5 also mentioned a bilingual curriculum at the school. P6 referred to the use of the Cambridge curriculum, emphasizing learning about different cultures through English education. P7 mentioned a task-based curriculum that included various activities such as reading passages, answering questions, and engaging in conversations, with teacher monitoring and assessment. P8 cited the Cambridge IELTS curriculum, which focuses on English language proficiency and preparation for the IELTS examination.

In conclusion, the participants' responses revealed a diverse range of English language curricula used in educational settings in Oman. These curricula include the IB curriculum, International Cambridge Curriculum, NQF Cabridge curriculum mixed with Oxford, Cambridge curriculum, task-based curriculum, and the Cambridge IELTS curriculum. The diversity reflected the efforts to provide students with comprehensive English language education that encompasses various aspects of language skills, cultural understanding, and proficiency assessment. Curriculum development played a vital role in shaping this educational landscape, ensuring that the curricula were aligned with Oman's goals and values, and that they prepared students for success in the globalized world.

Summary

This chapter introduced the purpose and research questions. Additionally, it provided a comprehensive overview of the research context, including the settings and demographics of the study's participants, ensuring a clear understanding of the study's scope. Furthermore, the chapter delved into the intricacies of data collection process, explaining the methodologies employed to gather relevant information from the participants. It also expounded upon the data analysis procedures, elucidating the systematic approach used to extract meaningful insights from the collected data. Moreover, this chapter furnished evidence of the study's trustworthiness, underlining the measures taken to enhance the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of the findings. These measures included various strategies such as member checks, peer debriefing, and the maintenance of an audit trail.

Subsequently, the chapter presented the results, offering a detailed account of the themes, categories, and key findings that emerged from the data analysis. These results were presented in a manner ensuring clarity and coherence. In conclusion, this chapter provided a comprehensive and structured overview of the research study, setting the stage for a deep and insightful exploration of the study's core findings and their implications.

The interpretation of the data provided a comprehensive overview of six distinct thematic categories that illuminated various aspects of Oman's educational landscape. The first theme emphasizes the critical role of language proficiency, particularly in English, within Oman's education system, highlighting challenges in student attitudes, disparities between public and private schools, and concerns about teaching quality in

public schools. Theme two delved into the complexities of hiring practices for educators, encompassing qualifications, diversity, workforce dynamics, and the hiring process. Theme three delved into educators' perspectives on Omanization policies in the education sector, exploring the positive and negative aspects and potential consequences in the absence of these policies.

Theme four focused on workforce development, advocating for government support, professional development, collaboration, and English proficiency to prepare Oman's citizens for evolving workforce demands. Theme five centered on Omanization goals, defining the initiative, citing examples, and assessing staff compliance with its policies. Finally, theme six discussed curriculum development, highlighting the diverse array of English language curricula employed in Oman's educational settings and emphasizing their role in shaping comprehensive language education. These thematic categories collectively provided a rich understanding of the complexities and dynamics shaping Oman's education system in relations to the Omanization policies.

Chapter 5 will cover interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, and implication of the study. The chapter begins by reiterating the study's purpose and nature and will explain why it was conducted. Next, it will summarize the key findings. Then, it delves into the implications of these findings, comparing them to existing academic knowledge and analyzing them within the relevant theoretical framework. The chapter will also describe the limitations of trustworthiness. Additionally, recommendations for future research, firmly grounded in the broader literature, will be provided. The potential societal impact of the research is then

described, considering the effects on individuals, families, organizations, policies,

methods, theory, and practice. Finally, a concise concluding message will underscore the

significance of the research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

In this chapter, I concisely reiterate the purpose of the study and its fundamental characteristics. I will explain why the research was conducted, articulating its essence, and setting the stage for subsequent discussion. In addition, I discuss key findings including a concise recapitulation of the significant discoveries. I interpret the data required by delving into the implications of the findings, assessing how these findings align with or challenge existing knowledge, as presented in the peer-reviewed literature discussed in Chapter 2. This comparative analysis adds depth to the contribution. Third, I present an analysis in the context of theoretical framework, allowing the findings to be scrutinized within the framework of relevant theory or concepts, ensuring the interpretations remain well-grounded and do not exceed the data and the scope.

Next, I discuss limitations to acknowledge the constraints and challenges encountered during the research. These limitations influenced the trustworthiness and necessitated revisions of the initial research proposal. Then, I discuss recommendations for further research rooted in both the current research and the broader literature. Afterward, implications for positive social change show the potential impact of the research on societal betterment, including how the research outcomes may affect individuals, families, organizations, and even policies. Furthermore, I explore methodological, theoretical, and practical implications. Subsequently, the chapter ends with a succinct concluding message to encapsulate key takeaways for readers and emphasizing the significance of the research.

In this study, I employed a generic qualitative inquiry as the principal methodology. This choice of method was driven by the study's specific objective of exploring the perspectives of former and current Omani educators on Omanization, focusing on curriculum designs related to English language development in public education. The study's primary objective was to delve into the intricate relationship between HCT and ongoing educational reform initiatives in the context of Oman. By doing so, the results shed light on how these educational reforms may impact the broader process of Omanization within the private sector. Specifically, I aimed to provide empirical evidence that could help illuminate the underlying factors contributing to the stagnation of Omanization in private-sector employment. Ultimately, I sought to contribute valuable insights that could inform policy decisions and educational strategies to address these challenges and foster the successful implementation of Omanization objectives.

Eight participants were interviewed in Oman and were recruited using convenience sampling from my personal and professional network of educators. The data collected underwent rigorous TA using NVivo 14, leading to the identification of six major themes and respective subcategories: (a) language proficiency with subthemes education and language learning and challenges and concerns in learning English; (b) hiring practices with subthemes qualifications and requirements, diversity and composition, workforce dynamics, and hiring process; (c) educators' perspectives with subthemes Omanization policies in education, positive aspects of Omanization, negative aspects of Omanization, and potential consequences in the absence of these policies; (d)

workforce development with subtheme government assistance, professional development, importance of education and English, and labor force entry of Omanis after graduating high school; (e) Omanization goals with subthemes definition of Omanization, examples of Omanization, staff compliance of Omanization, and alignment of teaching methodology to local cultural context; and (f) curriculum development.

The culmination of these comprehensive analyses yielded results that effectively addressed the primary research question: What are the perspectives of Oman's public school administrators regarding curriculum development in support of enhancing students' English language proficiency to achieve workforce Omanization goals? The study's findings illustrate the paramount importance of English language proficiency for students, educators, and parents. Second, the study revealed the diverse language learning experiences of participants, both within and outside of Oman, highlighting various approaches to language acquisition, disparities between public and private schools, and concerns about the quality of English teaching in public schools. Furthermore, the study revealed that oral communication skills are consistently emphasized as foundational to language learning, with proficiency in spoken English considered essential for reading and writing skills. Regarding hiring practices for educators, the study highlighted several significant categories, including qualifications and requirements, diversity and composition, workforce dynamics, and the hiring process. The results also addressed variations in staff compliance and diverse interpretations of Omanization's purpose within the context of education. Lastly, curriculum development featured various English language curricula aimed at providing comprehensive language education to students.

In conclusion, the findings provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities in Oman's education system. Challenges such as language proficiency issues or recruitment practices. Simultaneously, the opportunities represent areas where Oman's education system has potential to excel and adapt to meet the evolving needs of its citizens. These insights extended to various facets, particularly concerning English language proficiency, hiring practices for educators, Omanization policies, and curriculum development. These insights underscore the critical role of education and language proficiency in Oman's development and the nation's commitment to preparing its citizens for the evolving demands of the workforce in an increasingly globalized world.

Interpretation of the Findings

In the following section, I provide interpretations of the study findings, emphasizing the integral role of data collection in enhancing comprehension. A multifaceted approach was employed, involving confirming, disconfirming, and extending established knowledge concepts. The analyses were grounded in empirical articles, secondary sources, and invaluable narratives transcribed during data collection. These sources collectively constitute the raw data, serving as the foundation upon which my analyses were built. In the upcoming section, I elucidate how these sources were seamlessly integrated, drawing connections with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. This synergy between data and existing knowledge is fundamental to interpretive processes, facilitating a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the findings.

Literature Review: Confirmation and Disconfirmation

In this section, the primary objective is to critically assess and refine the findings in the context of existing literature and theoretical frameworks. This section serves as a bridge between empirical evidence presented earlier and the broader academic discourse. I will evaluate the extent to which the research question has been supported (confirmation) or contradicted (disconfirmation) by the collected data. Additionally, this provides an opportunity to extend existing knowledge by exploring unexpected findings, identifying their implications, and suggesting new avenues for further research. Ultimately, I hope to contribute to the scholarly conversation by demonstrating the significance, relationship to prior research, and potential to advance the field.

Confirmation Comparison

The findings provide valuable insights into Oman's education system and its alignment with HCT. HCT, as a conceptual framework, conceptualizes a strong emphasis on the role of education and training in enhancing individuals' productivity and contributing to overall economic development. HCT also conceptualizes that human capital is not evenly distributed across a population, and this can lead to disparities in income and opportunity. The interpretations will touch on the importance of (a) English language proficiency, (b) diverse language learning experiences reported by participants (c) participants' views on challenges faced by public schools in teaching English, and (d) oral communication skills of participants and people they encountered. Additionally, interpretations of the data discussed (a) the alignment of curriculum with the local

cultural context, (b) the hiring practices of employers in relation to Omanization goals, and (c) curriculum development in Oman.

Interpretation of Theme 1: Language Proficiency. The consistent emphasis on the importance of English language proficiency in the findings resonates strongly with the core tenets of HCT. Language skills, particularly proficiency in English, are regarded as crucial human capital assets that enhance individuals' employability and productivity. English language proficiency is an important skill in today's globalized economy. English is the language of business and science and is widely used in international communication. Individuals who are proficient in English have a competitive advantage in the workforce and are more likely to be able to find high-paying jobs. Language learning and HCT are connected because pursuing English language education can be seen as an investment in human capital. Individuals who invest in English language education are developing a skill in high demand in the workforce, and they are increasing their employability and productivity. HCT conceptualizes that such investments in education lead to increased productivity and higher earning potential, which underscores the relevance of these experiences (Becker et al., 2018; Sandmo, 1993; Schultz, 1961). Therefore, the significance placed on English language education in Oman supports the development of human capital as advocated by HCT.

Interpretation of Theme 2: Hiring Practices. The study shed light on the complexities of hiring practices, encompassing considerations related to qualifications, diversity, and alignment with Omani values. Omanization policies, which prioritized the employment of Omani citizens, could be viewed as a strategic approach to bolstering the

domestic human capital pool. By reserving certain job opportunities for Omanis, the government aimed to enhance the skills and capabilities of its citizens, thereby reinforcing the principles of human capital development (Becker et al., 2018; Castellano et al., 2019).

Interpretation of Theme 3: Educators' Perspectives. The equitable distribution of human capital is important because it ensures that everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential. When human capital is not evenly distributed, it can lead to disparities in income and opportunity. For example, individuals who do not have access to high-quality education and training may have difficulty finding good jobs and earning a decent living. The quality of English teaching in public schools and the disparities between public and private educational institutions are important to consider in HCT because they can impact the equitable distribution of human capital. If public schools do not provide high-quality English language instruction, then students from low-income families may not have the opportunity to develop this important skill. This disparity led some parents to turn to private school education to increase the likelihood that their offspring will have desirable employment opportunities later in life (Al Sawafi et al., 2019). This can lead to disparities in employability and productivity between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Interpretation of Theme 4: Workforce Development

Government Support and Investment in Education. Participants expressed a belief in the active involvement of the Omani government in supporting its citizens through grants and fee coverage for specific fields of study. This aligned with HCT's

concepts, as it emphasized the role of government intervention in promoting education and skill development. By providing financial support for education, the government is investing in the human capital of its citizens, ultimately contributing to their productivity and employability.

Continuous Learning and Professional Development. The emphasis on continuous learning and professional development, including sending teachers abroad for further education and training, reflects the recognition of the ongoing need to enhance skills and knowledge. HCT conceptualizes that lifelong learning and the continuous improvement of human capital through skill development is needed. Participants' attitudes toward continuous learning align with the theory's premise that investments in education and training lead to increased human capital and, consequently, higher economic returns.

Significance of Education and English Proficiency. The importance of education and English proficiency in Oman resonated with participants and aligned with HCT's core concepts. HCT models that education is a fundamental driver of human capital development. Additionally, the emphasis on English proficiency aligned with the theory, as language skills are considered a valuable component of human capital. Proficiency in English is viewed as essential for international communication and upward mobility in the workforce.

Shift Toward Education-Oriented Career Development. Interviewees recognized that high school graduates needed further education and training to enhance their skills and employability reflected a shift toward an education-oriented approach to career

development. This shift aligned with HCT, which supports the increasing importance of education and skill development in a dynamic and competitive job market. Employers' preference for candidates with a combination of practical experience and advanced education is in line with HCT's view that individuals with higher levels of human capital are more valuable to employers.

Interpretation of Theme 5: Omanization Goals. The findings related to Omanization and their comparison to HCT reveal several insights into the government's efforts to enhance human capital development and align the workforce with national goals. Interpretations of these findings will look through the lenses of prioritization of Omanis over expats, equal job opportunities, empowerment of Omanis, alignment with local cultural contexts, staff compliance, and shift toward education-oriented career development.

Prioritizing Omani Employment. The emphasis on prioritizing Omani citizens for employment aligned with the principles of HCT. HCT conceptualizes that investments in education and training are crucial for enhancing human capital. By prioritizing Omanis over expatriates and reserving certain positions exclusively for Omanis, the government aims to enhance the human capital of its citizens. This approach recognizes the value of investing in the skills and capabilities of the local workforce.

Equal Job Opportunities. The government's commitment to providing equal job opportunities for qualified Omanis, with certain positions reserved exclusively for them, reflects a policy aimed at promoting equitable human capital development. HCT emphasizes the importance of equal access to education and job opportunities to

maximize human capital potential. By reserving jobs for Omanis, the government aims to create a level playing field and enhance human capital development.

Empowering Omanis. Viewing Omanization as a process to empower Omanis is in line with HCT's focus on individual empowerment through education and skill development. HCT conceptualizes that investing in human capital empowers individuals to contribute more effectively to economic development. The government's push for Omani students to pursue specific fields like medicine reflects an investment in specialized skills development.

Alignment With Local Culture (Cultural Elements and Curriculum). The incorporation of local cultural elements into education and the alignment of the curriculum with Oman's goals and values demonstrate a commitment to cultural preservation and identity. While not explicitly a part of HCT, this alignment is relevant as it ensures that education is culturally relevant, which can enhance human capital development by fostering a deeper sense of belonging and identity among citizens.

In addition, the specific needs and context of a region are important to consider in HCT because the skills and knowledge that are most valuable in the workforce will vary depending on the region's economy and culture. For example, in a region with a strong manufacturing sector, there may be a high demand for workers with technical skills. In a region with a strong tourism sector, there may be a high demand for workers with customer service skills and foreign language skills. According to Holden and Biddle (2017), tailoring education and training to the local environment can help to ensure that individuals develop the skills and knowledge that are most in demand in the workforce.

This can lead to increased employability and productivity for individuals, and it can also help to boost the overall economy of the region.

Staff Compliance (Staffing in Public and Private Schools). The variation in staff compliance with Omanization policies, with some Omani teachers potentially hired without the same level of qualifications as foreign teachers, highlights a challenge in the implementation of Omanization. HCT illustrates the importance of education and training quality in human capital development. Ensuring that Omani teachers meet the necessary qualifications is crucial to maximize the effectiveness of human capital development efforts.

Shift Toward Education Oriented Career Development. The findings also suggest a shift toward a more education-oriented approach to career development, with an emphasis on continuous learning and skill development. This aligns with HCT's conceptual view that lifelong learning is essential in a dynamic job market. It underscores the importance of education and training in enhancing human capital and employability.

In summary, the Omanization policy reflects the government's commitment to enhancing human capital development among Omani citizens. It prioritizes education, employment opportunities, and cultural alignment, all of which are relevant to HCT's core constructs. The findings emphasized the balance between fostering national identity and addressing workforce development challenges, indicating the government's holistic approach to human capital development in Oman's educational landscape.

Interpretation of Theme 6: Curriculum Development. The diverse range of English language curricula employed in Oman exemplified the nation's dedication to

offering a well-rounded education. HCT underscores the central importance of education and training in elevating human capital (Brown et al., 2020). The presence of multiple curricular options signified a strategic investment in nurturing language skills, thereby augmenting the overall development of individuals' human capital. This commitment to diversified curricula resonates with the observations made by Belwal et al. (2019), who noted that job-seeking students perceived employers as seeking candidates with a foundation in prior training, English language proficiency, computer competencies, teamwork abilities, and favorable personality traits.

Conclusions of Themes Interpretations. In summary, the findings from the study aligned closely with the principles of HCT. Overall, HCT is a valuable framework for understanding the relationship between education and training, economic development, and social equity (Meichang et al., 2016). They underscored the importance of education, language proficiency, and equitable access to opportunities in the context of human capital development. By considering the specific needs and context of a region, as well as the equitable distribution of human capital, policymakers can design education and training systems that help to develop the skills and knowledge that are needed for economic growth and social prosperity. Oman's emphasis on English language education, endeavors to align education with the local context, and policies like Omanization collectively signified the nation's dedication to enhancing its human capital and preparing its citizens to thrive in a competitive workforce.

Disconfirmation Comparison

Disconfirmation comparison in a literature review involved comparing the study's findings to those of other studies in the field. This comparison helped identify areas where the findings aligned with the existing literature and areas where they differed. The findings did not diverge from the existing literature on HCT. Many of the findings appeared to align with key principles of HCT, which highlighted the importance of education and training in enhancing individuals' human capital and contributing to economic development. For instance, the emphasis on education and English language proficiency, government support for education through grants and fee coverage, and the recognition of continuous learning and skill development all resonated with the core ideas of HCT. Additionally, the discussions of Omanization policies, which prioritized the employment of Omani citizens, could be seen as an effort to enhance the domestic human capital pool. HCT suggested that investing in the skills and capabilities of the local workforce was beneficial for economic growth. Overall, the findings were in line with the principles of HCT rather than contradicting them.

Summary

The interpretation of the findings revealed a strong alignment with the HCT concepts. Several key conclusions emerged from the data analyses, as follows:

- Participants expressed a belief in active government involvement in supporting citizens through grants and fee coverage for specific fields of study. This aligns with HCT, which emphasizes the importance of education and training in

enhancing human capital. Government support for education is seen as an investment in the skills and capabilities of the workforce.

- The study highlighted the recognition of continuous learning and skill development among participants. HCT underscores the significance of lifelong learning in contributing to economic development.

- Acknowledgement of collaborative efforts between Omani and non-Omani teachers reflects a well-rounded approach to education and professional development, which is in line with HCT's view that investments in education contribute to increased productivity ad higher earning potential.

- The emphasis on education and English language proficiency in the findings resonates with HCT's core principles. Language skills, especially English, are considered human capital assets that enhance employability and productivity.

- The study highlighted Omanization policies, which prioritize the employment of Omani citizens, to enhance the domestic human capital pool. HCT suggests that investing in the skills and capabilities of the local workforce is beneficial for economic growth.

Overall, the findings interpretation demonstrates a robust alignment between the findings and the principles of HCT. The identified key findings emphasized the significance of government support in education, the perpetual value of continuous learning, the importance of collaboration in professional development, and the pivotal role education and language proficiency in human capital development. The findings further confirmed that Omanization policies, which prioritized domestic workforce

enhancement, strongly resonated with HCT's core ideas. This alignment reaffirms the influence of education and skill development in enriching human capital, ultimately contributing to economic development and individual productivity.

Limitations of the Study

The goal of this generic qualitative study was to fill a gap in the existing literature on Omanization's policy efforts of preparing students for private sector employment by discovering the perspectives of eight former and current educators on the lack of capacity to comprehensively deliver English language education to support Omanization goals in Oman. Therefore, in pursuit of trustworthiness, I have listed limitations that I have encountered. In this regard, I have undertaken a critical examination of trustworthiness, recognizing that while every research endeavor aspires to perfection, inherent limitations may affect the degree of trustworthiness. I scrutinized several facets that contribute to or impede the trustworthiness of the study's findings, all within the context of an exploration into the alignment of Oman's education system with HCT as the interpretive lens. Each limitation discussed here offers a nuanced insight into the challenges of conducting rigorous qualitative research in a dynamic and evolving educational landscape. By openly acknowledging these limitations and using rigorous research methodologies, I can bolster the trustworthiness and contribute to the discourse on education and workforce development in Oman and beyond.

Trustworthiness

Within the scope of trustworthiness considerations, this section delves into pertinent limitations, specifically addressing sampling bias and contextual factors.

Notably, the Ministry of Education's constraints played a pivotal role in shaping the sampling process. Originally, the intention was to engage with a broader spectrum of participants by interviewing administrators from public schools in Muscat, facilitated by the Ministry. Regrettably, despite diligent efforts, the research was constrained to a modest cohort of eight former and current educators who consented to participate. This constrained sampling procedure, however, regrettably limited the attainment of a diverse and truly representative sample, a factor critical to the trustworthiness.

It is imperative to acknowledge the unique socio-political landscape of Oman within the study context. Oman, governed by a republican monarchy with a Sultan at the helm, has undergone a transition from the reign of Sultan Qaboos to the present day leadership. Crucially, any research conducted within Oman necessitates official government approval. The approval process entails the submission of a succinct research synopsis to the government, and its acceptance or denial profoundly impacts data collection efforts. It is crucial to underscore those limitations stemming from these regulatory aspects, alongside potential shifts in policies, socioeconomic dynamics, or educational reforms, can exert a notable influence on the current and future relevance and applicability of the research findings. These contextual intricacies thus demand rigorous consideration to maintain the trustworthiness.

Recommendations

The pursuit of knowledge within the realm of education is an ever-evolving endeavor, and as I reflect on the multifaceted landscape of Oman's educational system and workforce localization policies. I recognized that there are numerous avenues for

future research that can further enrich our understanding of these dynamic fields. In contemplating the possibilities that lie ahead, it becomes evident that regional variation within Oman's educational and workforce localization frameworks remain a compelling area ripe for exploration. Different regions within the country may present distinct challenges and opportunities, and a deeper analysis of these variations can provide a more nuanced perspective on the state of education across Oman.

Future research could delve deeper into the regional variations within Oman's education system. Different regions may exhibit unique challenges and opportunities and understanding these variations can provide a more comprehensive picture of the country's educational landscape. Conducting longitudinal studies over an extended period can offer insights into the long-term effects of policies and practices. It would be valuable to track the career trajectories of Omani educators and students over several years to assess the impact of various factors on their development.

Comparative studies with other countries in the Gulf region or similar contexts can shed light on how Oman's education system compares with its neighbors. Indeed, the value of comparative studies extends beyond Oman's educational system alone, encompassing its broader workforce localization policies. By engaging in comparative research with other countries in the Gulf region or similar contexts, researchers and policy makers can gain a nuanced perspective on how Oman's approach to education and workforce localization aligns with regional counterparts. Such cross-country examinations provide a unique vantage point to evaluate the effectiveness of Oman's policies and practices in a broader geopolitical and socioeconomic context. This

comparative lens not only highlights areas where Oman excels but also pinpoints opportunities for improvement based on the experiences and strategies of neighboring nations.

Moreover, in the context of workforce localization, a comparative analysis can illuminate best practices in terms of enhancing domestic human capital, fostering sustainable economic growth, and achieving a harmonious balance between the needs of the local workforce and the demands of a globalized job market. By drawing insights from the experiences of neighboring countries, Oman can refine its strategies to align more closely with regional trends and aspirations. In essence, comparative studies in both education and workforce localization serve as invaluable compasses, guiding Oman's educational and economic endeavors toward a future that is not only informed by its unique cultural and national identity but also enriched by the lessons learned from its regional peers.

Future research of Oman's education system should continue to incorporate the perspectives of various stakeholders, including educators, students, parents, and policymakers. This multi-dimensional approach can provide a more holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities in Oman's education system. Given the rapid advancements in technology and their influence on education, it would be beneficial to investigate how technology is integrated into Oman's classrooms and its impact on teaching and learning outcomes.

Research focusing on workforce localization policies in conjunction with the effectiveness of teacher training and professional development programs in Oman can

provide insights into how educators can be better prepared to meet the evolving needs of students. By investigating how these policies and programs interconnect, researchers can unearth valuable insights into the alignment of educator preparation with the evolving needs of students in a dynamic world. This future research can help to identify areas where professional development can be tailored to equip educators with the skills and knowledge needed to foster students' holistic development, not only academically but also in terms of essential life skills and adaptability.

Furthermore, the commitment to educational equity should remain a cornerstone of future studies. Examining issues related to gender disparities, socioeconomic divides, and access to quality education provides the opportunity to create a more inclusive and fair educational system. Researchers can explore the impact of policies and initiatives designed to bridge these gaps, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and just society. In essence, the research agenda in Oman's education sphere should continue to evolve to encompass multifaceted aspects that go beyond traditional classroom dynamics. It should embrace a holistic approach that acknowledges the interplay between education, workforce localization, and societal equity, ultimately striving for a comprehensive and inclusive educational landscape that empowers all Omanis to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Given the importance of English proficiency in Oman, further research on language education policies and practices, as well as their impact on students' academic and career prospects, is relevant. Qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews and focus groups, can provide deeper insights into the experiences and

perceptions of educators and students. Future studies could employ these methods to gain a richer understanding of the educational landscape. Evaluating the effectiveness of specific educational policies and reforms in Oman can help inform future decision-making. Researchers can assess the outcomes of policies related to curriculum development, teacher recruitment, and student assessments, among others.

Furthermore, the government of Oman can apply HCT to developing English language proficiency by investing in high quality English language instruction in public schools. They can provide scholarships and other financial assistance to students from low-income families who want to pursue English language education. The government can also partner with businesses and industry to develop English language training programs for workers. Lastly, the government can promote the importance of English language proficiency to the public and to employers. By taking these steps, the government can help to ensure that everyone in Oman has the opportunity to develop the English language skills that they need to succeed in the workforce and in life.

These recommendations offer a starting point for future research endeavors in Oman's education system, aiming to contribute to its continuous improvement and development. Future research in Oman's education landscape should explore regional variations, conduct longitudinal studies, and engage in comparative analyses with neighboring Gulf countries. These approaches will provide insights into unique challenges, long-term policy impact, and alignment with regional trends. A multi-stakeholder perspective, integrating technology, optimizing teacher training, and promoting educational equity, remains crucial. Evaluating specific policies, language

education, and fostering English proficiency are key areas. Government initiatives to enhance English language skills can prepare Omanis for global workforce success, collectively contributing to a dynamic and inclusive educational landscape for the future.

Implications

Several implications are apparent based on the findings presented and discussed in this chapter. The data collected from the participants suggested social and policy changes pertaining to education and workforce development.

Positive Social Change

Through a comprehensive exploration of Oman's education system and workforce localization policies, the potential to catalyze positive social change across various dimensions is present. By identifying areas for improvement within the education system, it can pave the way for enhanced educational quality, ultimately benefiting students by providing them with a stronger educational foundation. Furthermore, by shedding light on effective workforce localization policies and teacher training programs, this can empower educators and students to be better prepared for the demands of the job market, resulting in a more competent and adaptable workforce. Additionally, by focusing on promoting educational equity, Oman can advocate for policies that reduce disparities, fostering a more inclusive society where opportunities are accessible to all, regardless of their background. Moreover, by emphasizing the incorporation of local cultural elements into education and promoting English language proficiency, this can contribute to the preservation of Oman's cultural heritage and enhance the global competitiveness of its

workforce. In essence, this has the potential to drive positive social change in Oman, enhancing educational outcomes, economic prospects, and societal inclusivity.

Social Change at Individual, Family, Organizational, and Societal/Policy

By identifying areas of improvement and best practices within Oman's education system, I hope my research can influence policy changes aimed at enhancing the quality of education. This, in turn, can lead to better learning outcomes for students, providing them with a stronger foundation for their future careers. Furthermore, my work has the potential to foster positive changes in Oman's education and workforce landscape by providing actionable insights. Through the evaluation of workforce localization policies and teacher training programs, my study can inform strategies to better prepare educators and students for the demands of the job market. A more competent and adaptable workforce, equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge, can significantly contribute to Oman's economic development. This, in turn, can attract international investments and partnerships, further fueling economic growth and raising the overall standard of living for Omanis. In this way, my research seeks to bridge the gap between educational and economic objectives, aligning them for the benefit of both individuals and the nation.

My research emphasizes the importance of educational equity, a crucial factor in shaping not only educational outcomes but also broader societal and policy changes. Advocating for educational equity policies that actively reduce disparities related to gender, socioeconomic status, and access to quality education envisions a fairer and more inclusive Oman. This commitment to equity aligns with the nation's core values and can

pave the way for a society where opportunities are truly accessible to all, irrespective of their background. Such positive social change can have profound ripple effects, fostering a more harmonious and cohesive Oman where every individual's potential is recognized, nurtured, and harnessed to the benefit of the nation.

By highlighting the importance of incorporating local cultural elements into education, my study can contribute to the preservation of Oman's cultural heritage. This can foster a sense of pride and identity among Omanis while promoting cross-cultural understanding. Furthermore, the emphasis on English language proficiency and recommendations for government initiatives can result in a more linguistically skilled workforce, potentially opening international opportunities for Omanis and facilitating communication in a globalized world. These findings can provide valuable insights to policymakers, enabling them to make informed decisions about education and workforce policies.

I hope to guide the development of policies that align with Oman's socioeconomic goals and cultural values. A more competent and well-prepared workforce can enhance Oman's global competitiveness. This can attract international investments and partnerships, leading to economic growth and a higher standard of living for Omanis. By advocating for continuous learning and skill development, my research can empower individuals to take charge of their educational and professional growth. This can lead to greater self-reliance and self-determination among Omanis. In addition, policymakers can utilize these insights to align policies with Oman's goals and values, fostering economic growth and self-reliance among its citizens.

Conclusion

With the ever-changing global world, Oman continues to implement policies that will benefit its citizens. Prior chapters delved deep into the intricate web of Oman's education system and its convergence with workforce localization policies. The journey began by elucidating the backdrop of Oman's strategic objectives, highlighting the nation's pursuit of economic diversification, modernization, and a reduced reliance on foreign labor. Employing a generic qualitative inquiry approach, my study endeavored to enhance understanding of Omanization's impact on education, specifically its implications for English language curriculum delivery, by engaging with former and current educators in Oman. Grounded in the HCT conceptual framework, this has illuminated the interconnectedness of education, workforce development, and economic progress within Oman's unique sociopolitical landscape.

The literature review examined the historical foundations of HCT and its contemporary relevance, culminating in an exploration of its application to Oman's education system and workforce localization efforts. The existing literature identified gaps related to the intersection of human capital, education, and workforce localization in the Middle East, setting the stage for this research's contribution to the field. The methodology aligned with the central research question, emphasizing precision and reliability. Purposeful convenience sampling, semistructured interviews, and TA were employed to capture the rich experiences of participants. Ethical considerations, including transparency, privacy, and adherence to Walden's IRB standards, ensured the study's trustworthiness.

The interpretation of findings unearthed six distinct thematic categories, revealing the complexities of Oman's education landscape and its symbiotic relationship with workforce localization policies. These themes encompassed (a) language proficiency challenges, (b) educator hiring dynamics, (c) Omanization's multifaceted impact, (d) workforce development imperatives, (e) Omanization policy alignment, and (f) the diverse landscape of English language curricula. Importantly, the interpretation consistently aligned with HCT concepts emphasizing education, continuous learning, collaboration, language proficiency, and government support as drivers of human capital development and economic growth.

Trustworthiness considerations underscored limitations related to sampling bias and contextual factors shaped by ministry constraints and Oman's dynamic sociopolitical landscape. These contextual nuances emphasized the need for careful consideration when interpreting the study's findings. The recommendations offered a roadmap for future research endeavors in Oman's education system, with a focus on regional variations, longitudinal studies, and comparative analyses with neighboring Gulf countries. A multi-stakeholder perspective, integration of technology, optimization of teacher training, and the pursuit of educational equity remain central themes for exploration. Additionally, evaluating specific policies, examining language education, and fostering English proficiency stand as critical areas for future research. The potential for government initiatives to enhance English language skills holds the promise of empowering Omanis for global workforce success and fostering economic growth and self-reliance.

In summary, I hope this serves as a comprehensive exploration of the symbiotic relationship between education, workforce development, and economic advancement within Oman's unique sociopolitical landscape. Beyond simply addressing existing gaps in knowledge, I hope these findings offer a robust foundation upon which future investigations can build, providing a framework for policy improvements and informed decision-making. The anticipated impact of this extends far beyond the confines of academia; it is poised to play a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of Oman's development. The insights garnered herein hold the potential to catalyze transformative changes that will empower Oman to navigate the challenges of the modern world with dynamism, inclusivity, and self-reliance at the forefront. As the nation continues its journey toward a more diversified, knowledge-based economy, the findings and recommendations presented here serve as a guiding light, illuminating pathways to a brighter and more prosperous future for all Omanis.

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Appendix A: Semistructured Interview Questions (Public School)

Public School Participant's Interview Notes Form

Participant's details			

School name: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Interviewee name: _____
___

Pseudonym: _____
___

Interviewee title: _____
___

Interviewee phone number or email address: _____
___

Official position title: _____
___

    a) How were you hired? _____

    b) How long have you held this position? _____

Qualifications:
    a) What level of education have you attained prior to this position? _____

    b) Number of years in education? _____

Gender: _____ Nationality : _____

Questions to Ask Interviewee	

Question #1: How has Omanization impacted the daily operations of public schools in Muscat, Oman? _____

    a) In your own words, please define Omanization. _____

    b) Can you please give me some examples of Omanization? _____

    c) As a public school administrator, has your school been impacted by Omanization? If not, have you experienced Omanization in another public school during your years as an administrator? If yes, please elaborate.

d) In what ways does Omanization affect your hiring process?

Notes: Enter notes

Question #2: What is your opinion and experience factors on meeting Article 11 of Royal Decree No. 35/2003, outlining Omanization quota's goals and Article 13 of Royal Decree No. 99/2011 outlining cultural goals pertaining to education?

a) What experiences or barriers have you faced in implementing the Omanization policies in your school?

b) If the policies were not in effect, how would your school be different?

c) Is a native English speaker teaching English in your school? If no, is this person bilingual?

Notes: Enter notes

Question #3: How has English language education played a role in the curriculum of public schools in Muscat, Oman?

a) How did you learn English and was it at a public or private school in Oman?

b) Why do you believe that a public school administrator should be bilingual or multilingual?

c) As an English Language Learner, what motivated you to learn English? Do you see the same motivation in your students?

d) Can you describe the English curriculum of your school?

e) How many times do students have English language courses in a week? Has anyone complained to you about the number of English courses? What were the top complaints?

f) Do you feel that English should be more prevalent in teaching all the core subjects in your school? Why or why not?

g) To what extent do you consider yourself to play an active role in the hiring process of your school?

h) When you are interviewing candidates for an English position, do you consider the ethnicity/nationality of the applicant? Why or why not?

i) What are your views on how the English course is preparing your students for the labor force or higher education?

Notes: Enter notes

Question #4: How does human capital theory (HCT) emerge in participants' perception of the Omanization policies?

a) What level of education should a public school administrator have?

b) How are the skills of young Omanis perceived in relation to the labor market?

c) What can the government of Oman do to assist the Omanization process?

d) In your experience working in the education field, how do you view education as a catalyst in progressing your students' future in the job market? How does English fit in that role?

e) How many students have continued their education to either a technical institution or 4-year college/university? Please explain the reason(s) behind that.

f) To your knowledge, how many have obtained a position after graduating from secondary school? Why such a high/low figure?

g) Omanization is pushing for the population of Oman to be trained and educated to obtain jobs in public and private sector, how have your schools complied with the policy?

Notes: Enter notes

Additional Notes

Enter Additional Notes.

Private School Participant's Interview Notes Form

Participant's details		

School name: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Interviewee
name: ___ _____

_____

Pseudonym: ___

Interviewee
title: ___

Interviewee
phone number
or email
address: ___ _____

Official position
title: ___

    c) How were you hired?

    _____

    d) How long have you held this position?

    _____

Qualifications: c) What level of education have you attained prior to this position?

    _____

    d) Number of years in education? _____

        Nationality

Gender: _____ : _____

Questions to Ask Interviewee

Question #1: How has Omanization impacted the daily operations of private schools
in Muscat, Oman? _____

    e) In your own words, please define Omanization. _____

    f) Can you please give me some examples of Omanization? _____

    g) As a private school administrator, has your school been impacted by
        Omanization? If not, have you experienced Omanization in another

school during your years as an administrator? If yes, please elaborate.

h) In what ways does Omanization affect your hiring process?

Notes: Enter notes

Question #2: What is your opinion and experience factors on meeting Article 11 of Royal Decree No. 35/2003, outlining Omanization quota's goals and Article 13 of Royal Decree No. 99/2011 outlining cultural goals pertaining to education?

d) What experiences or barriers have you faced in implementing the Omanization policies in your school?

e) If the policies were not in effect, how would your school be different?

f) Is a native English speaker teaching English in your school? If no, is this person bilingual?

Notes: Enter notes

Question #3: How has English language education played a role in the curriculum of private schools in Muscat, Oman?

j) How did you learn English and was it at a public or private school in Oman?

k) Why do you believe that a private school administrator should be bilingual or multilingual?

l) As an English Language Learner, what motivated you to learn English? Do you see the same motivation in your students?

m) Can you describe the English curriculum of your school?

n) How many times do students have English language courses in a week? Has anyone complained to you about the number of English courses? What were the top complaints?

o) Do you feel that English should be more prevalent in teaching all the core subjects in your school? Why or why not?

p) To what extent do you consider yourself to play an active role in the hiring process of your school?

q) When you are interviewing candidates for an English position, do you consider the ethnicity/nationality of the applicant? Why or why not?

r) What are your views on how the English course is preparing your students for the labor force or higher education?

Notes: Enter notes

Question #4: How does human capital theory (HCT) emerge in participants' perception of the Omanization policies?

b) What level of education should a school administrator have?

h) How are the skills of young Omanis perceived in relation to the labor market?

i) What can the government of Oman do to assist the Omanization process?

j) In your experience working in the education field, how do you view education as a catalyst in progressing your students' future in the job market? How does English fit in that role?

k) How many students have continued their education to either a technical institution or 4-year college/university? Please explain the reason(s) behind that.

l) To your knowledge, how many have obtained a position after graduating from secondary school? Why such a high/low figure?

m) Omanization is pushing for the population of Oman to be trained and educated to obtain jobs in public and private sector, how have your schools complied with the policy?
   1) How many Omanis do you have enrolled in your school?
   2) How many expats?

Notes: Enter notes

Additional Notes

Enter Additional Notes.

Educator Participant's Interview Notes Form

Participant's details

Interviewee name: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____
_____

Pseudonym: ___
Interviewee title: _____
___
Interviewee phone number or email address: _____
___
Current or former official position title: _____
___

a) How were you hired?
_____

b) How long have you held this position?
_____

Qualifications:
a) What level of education have you attained prior to this position?
_____

b) Number of years in education? _____

Gender: _____

Nationality : _____

Questions to Ask Interviewee

Question #1: How has Omanization impacted the daily operations of private/public schools in Muscat, Oman? _____

a) In your own words, please define Omanization. _____

b) Can you please give me some examples of Omanization? _____

c) As a current or former educator in Muscat, Oman, has your school been impacted by Omanization? If not, have you experienced

Omanization in another school during your years as an educator? If yes, please elaborate.

d) In your opinion, what are the positive or/and negative effects of Omanization on the daily operations of the school?

e) From your knowledge, have there been any changes in the qualifications or requirements for teachers and staff due to Omanization?

f) As an educator, how has Omanization influenced the composition of the teaching staff in terms of nationalities and backgrounds?

g) How has Omanization affected the dynamics and collaboration among teachers from different nationalities?

Notes: Enter notes

Question #2: What is your opinion and experience factors on your current or former school meeting Article 11 of Royal Decree No. 35/2003, outlining Omanization quota's goals and Article 13 of Royal Decree No. 99/2011 outlining cultural goals pertaining to education?

a) Has the curriculum or teaching methodology been modified to align with Omanization goals or to enhance the local cultural context?

b) If the policies were not in effect, how would your current or former school be different?

c) Is a native English speaker teaching English in your school? If no, is this person bilingual?

d) How have the students responded to the presence of more Omani teachers and staff in the school?

Notes: Enter notes

Question #3: How has English language education played a role in the curriculum of private/public schools in Muscat, Oman?

    a) How many languages do you know and speak and what are they?

    b) Was English your first language?

    c) How did you learn English and was it at a public or private school?

    d) Do you believe that a private school administrator should be bilingual or multilingual? Why or why not?

    e) As an English Language Learner, what motivated you to learn English? Do you see the same motivation in your students?

    f) Can you describe the English curriculum of your school?

    g) How many times do students have English language courses in a week? Has anyone complained to you about the number of English courses? What were the top complaints?

    h) Do you feel that English should be more prevalent in teaching all the core subjects in your school? Why or why not?

    i) To what extent do you consider yourself to play an active role in the hiring process of your school?

    j) Do you feel that administrators consider the ethnicity/nationality of applicants for an English position? Why or why not?

    k) What are your views on how the English course is preparing your students for the labor force or higher education?

Notes: Enter notes

Question #4: How does human capital theory (HCT) emerge in participants' perception of the Omanization policies?

a) What level of education should a school administrator or educators have?

b) In your opinion, what support or training programs should be provided to help Omani teachers adapt to their roles and responsibilities in meeting the Omanization policies?

c) What can the government of Oman do to assist the Omanization process?

d) In your experience working in the education field, how do you view education as a catalyst in progressing your students' future in the job market? How does English fit in that role?

e) To the best of your knowledge, how many students have continued their education to either a technical institution or 4-year college/university? Please explain the reason(s) behind that.

f) To your knowledge, how many have obtained a position after graduating from secondary school? Why such a high/low figure?

g) Omanization is pushing for the population of Oman to be trained and educated to obtain jobs in public and private sector, how have your schools complied with the policy?
   1) How many Omanis do you have enrolled in your school?
   2) How many expats?

Notes: Enter notes

Additional Notes

Enter Additional Notes.

Appendix D: Permission to use Figure 1

CCC Marketplace™

This is a License Agreement between Juwayriyah Abdallah ("User") and Copyright Clearance Center, Inc. ("CCC") on behalf of the Rightsholder identified in the order details below. The license consists of the order details, the CCC Terms and Conditions below, and any Rightsholder Terms and Conditions which are included below.

All payments must be made in full to CCC in accordance with the CCC Terms and Conditions below.

Order Date	03-Jan-2022	Type of Use	Republish in a thesis/dissertation
Order License ID	1173665-1	Publisher	BERRETT-KOEHLER PUBLISHERS, INCORPORATED
ISBN-13	9781576750759		
		Portion	Chart/graph/table/figure

LICENSED CONTENT

Publication Title	Foundations of human resource development	Country	United States of America
Author/Editor	SWANSON, RICHARD A., HOLTON, ELWOOD F., III	Rightsholder	Berrett-Koehler Publishers
		Publication Type	Book
Date	01/01/2001		
Language	English		

Appendix E: Interview Protocol (Public School)

Date:	
Location:	
Time (started at):	
Duration (planned):	45-60 minutes
Interviewee (code):	
Wilayat: Boucher	code for participant 1
	code for participant 2
	code for participant 3
	code for participant 4
	code for participant 5
Al-Khwair	code for participant 1
	code for participant 2
	code for participant 3
	code for participant 4
	code for participant 5
Interviewer:	Juwayriyah Abdallah

I.   Preparations (5 mins)
  - Preparing recording device, journal, pen, pencil, and water
II.   Introduction (Start audio recording) (10 mins)
  - Introduction of the study
  "Asalaamu Alaykum. My name is Juwayriyah Abdallah, I'm a public policy student from Walden University. I'm here to learn about your school and how Omanization has impacted education at your institution. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. The purpose of this interview is to understand the Omanization policies from the perspectives of someone in a supervisory or/and educator position in public schools. There are no right or wrong answers, or desirable or undesirable answers. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel. If it's okay with you, I will be tape-recording our conversation since it is hard for me to write down everything while simultaneously carrying on an attentive conversation with you. Everything you say will remain confidential. This means that only my committee members and I will be aware of your answers. The demographic questions are for general descriptions of the participants. I am asking for your contact information for member checking purpose. Do you have any questions or concerns about what I said thus far?"
  - Showing participants approval by the Ministry of Education for the study (if applicable)
  - Review of the consent form

- Objectives of the interview
III. Interviewing (45-60 minutes)
    - Demographics
    - Interview questions
IV. Conclusion (5-10 mins)
    - Interview debriefing
    - Verbal appreciation for participation

Time (finished at):	Duration (actual):
Interviewer Signature:	
Interviewee provided with the interview protocol copy:	Yes:_____ No:_____

Appendix F: Interview Protocol (Private School)

Date:	
Location:	
Time (started at):	
Duration (planned):	45-60 minutes
Interviewee (code):	
Wilayat: Boucher	*code for participant 1*
	code for participant 2
	code for participant 3
	code for participant 4
	code for participant 5
Al-Khwair	*code for participant 1*
	code for participant 2
	code for participant 3
	code for participant 4
	code for participant 5
Interviewer:	Juwayriyah Abdallah

V.   Preparations (5 mins)
- Preparing recording device, journal, pen, pencil, and water

VI.   Introduction (Start audio recording) (10 mins)
- Introduction of the study

"Asalaamu Alaykum. My name is Juwayriyah Abdallah, I'm a public policy student from Walden University. I'm here to learn about your school and how Omanization has impacted education at your institution. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. The purpose of this interview is to understand the Omanization policies from the perspectives of someone in a supervisory position and current or/and former educators in private schools. There are no right or wrong answers, or desirable or undesirable answers. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel. If it's okay with you, I will be tape-recording our conversation since it is hard for me to write down everything while simultaneously carrying on an attentive conversation with you. Everything you say will remain confidential. This means that only my committee members and I will be aware of your answers. The demographic questions are for general descriptions of the participants. I am asking for your contact information for member checking purpose. Do you have any questions or concerns about what I said thus far?"

- Review of the consent form
- Objectives of the interview

VII.   Interviewing (45-60 minutes)

- Demographics
- Interview questions

VIII. Conclusion (5-10 mins)
- Interview debriefing
- Verbal appreciation for participation

Time (finished at):	Duration (actual):
Interviewer Signature:	
Interviewee provided with the interview protocol copy:	Yes:_____ No:_____

Appendix G: Invitation Email to Public School Participants

Subject line:
Interviewing Primary School Administrators in Muscat

Email message:
Peace and Blessings to you. I would like to invite you to a new study about the experiences of public schools' administrators with knowledge of Royal Decree No. 35/2003. For this study, you are invited to describe your experiences in implementing the educational goals of Omanization. Your participation will be greatly appreciated and will assist me in my research.

<u>**Acknowledgments**</u>
I hereby acknowledge that I, _____, am proficient in the English language. I understand that all communication will be in English.

I also verify that I hold a position of education leadership in one or more Oman Ministry of Education public schools.

<u>**About the study:**</u>
- One 45-60 minutes interview (In person or using an internet-based connection tool, such as SKYPE or Zoom) that will be audio recorded only
- To protect your privacy, the published study will use pseudonyms and aggregate data only
- Participants will be able to check the transcription of the interview to validate that I accurately captured their thoughts, words, or/and expressions.

<u>**Volunteers must meet these requirements:**</u>
- 18 years old or older
- Primary public school administrators in Muscat, Oman

This interview is part of the doctoral study for Juwayriyah Abdallah, a Ph.D. student at Walden University. Interview date is to be determined.

If you are interested in participating in this research, please contact me by email at:

xxx@waldenu.edu

Appendix H: Invitation Email to Private School Participants

Subject line:
Interviewing Primary School Administrators in Muscat

Email message:
Peace and Blessings to you. I would like to invite you to a new study about the experiences of private schools' administrators with knowledge of Royal Decree No. 35/2003. For this study, you are invited to describe your experiences in implementing the educational goals of Omanization. Your participation will be greatly appreciated and will assist me in my research.

<u>**Acknowledgements**</u>
I hereby acknowledge that I, _____, am proficient in the English language. I understand that all communication will be in English.

I also verify that I hold a position of education leadership in one or more Oman schools.

<u>**About the study:**</u>
- One 45-60 minutes interview (In person or using an internet-based connection tool, such as SKYPE or Zoom) that will be audio recorded only
- To protect your privacy, the published study will use pseudonyms and aggregate data only
- Participants will be able to check the transcription of the interview to validate that I accurately captured their thoughts, words, or/and expressions.

<u>**Volunteers must meet these requirements:**</u>
- 18 years old or older
- Primary private school administrators in Oman

This interview is part of the doctoral study for Juwayriyah Abdallah, a Ph.D. student at Walden University. Interview date is to be determined.

If you are interested in participating in this research, please contact me by email at:

xxx@waldenu.edu

Appendix I: Invitation Email to Educator' Participants

Subject line:
Interviewing Former and Current Educators in Muscat

Email message:
Peace and Blessings to you. I would like to invite you to a new study about the experiences of private schools' educators with knowledge of Royal Decree No. 35/2003. For this study, you are invited to describe your experiences in implementing the educational goals of Omanization. Your participation will be greatly appreciated and will assist me in my research.

<u>Acknowledgments</u>

I hereby acknowledge that I, _____, am proficient in the English language. I understand that all communication will be in English.

I also verify that I held or currently hold a position in education in one or more Oman schools.

<u>About the study:</u>
- One 45-60 minutes interview (In person or using an internet-based connection tool, such as SKYPE or Zoom) that will be audio recorded only.
- To protect your privacy, the published study will use pseudonyms and aggregate data only.
- Participants will be able to check the transcription of the interview to validate that I accurately captured their thoughts, words, or/and expressions.

<u>Volunteers must meet these requirements:</u>
- 18 years old or older
- Former or current primary educator in Oman

This interview is part of the doctoral study for Juwayriyah Abdallah, a Ph.D. student at Walden University. Interview date is to be determined.

If you are interested in participating in this research, please contact me by email at:

xxx@waldenu.edu

Appendix J: Ministry of Education Form for Research

سلطنة عُمان
وزارة التربية والتعليم

استمارة طلب تسهيل مهمة بحثية

تاريخ تقديم الطلب: ··4/10/2022

مقدم الطلب: Juwayriyah Abdallah ← ← ····· ← ← ····· ← ← الوظيفة: Teacher

الجامعة/الجهة المشرفة على البحث: Walden University ········· ← ·· ← جهة العمل: United States

البريد الالكتروني: Juwayriyah.abdallah@waldenu.edu ··· ← ← ← الهاتف: 318-947-9703

عنوان الدراسة: Administrator's opinions of the impact and effectiveness of Omanization in public education

الغرض من الدراسة: The purpose of this qualitative research is to explore the residual effects of Omanization, specifically Royal decree No. 35/2003, on the education objectives of primary public schools in Muscat, Oman to find an alternative to the implemented policies

········ متطلب للحصول على الماجستير ··· ☑ متطلب للحصول على الدكتوراه ······ ☐ أخرى (تذكر) ·· ·········

المرحلة البحثية: وصلت في دراستي/بحثي إلى مرحلة:

تحديد العنوان أو المشكلة ☑ ·· ☐ بناء المخطط أو الأدوات البحثية

جمع البيانات أو المعلومات حول موضوع الدراسة ☑ ·················· ☐ تطبيق الدراسة الإستطلاعية

··· تطبيق أدوات الدراسة ··· ☑ استخراج النتائج وتفسيرها

حجم العينة: 10-15 participants

فئة عينة الدراسة: ☐ طلاب ···· ☐ معلمون ··· ☑ إداريو المدارس ··· ☐ موظفون ········· أخرى (تذكر) المهني.

نوع الأداة: ·········· استبانة ☑ ············ مقابلة ☐ ·········· ملاحظة ☐ ·········· أخرى.

أود أن أطبق دراستي في خطاق مديرية/محافظة:

········ (مسقط) ☐ ظفار ☐ الداخلية ☐ مستدم ☐ البريمي ☐ الباطنة جنوب

☐ الشرقية شمال ········· ☐ الشرقية جنوب ········· الباطنة شمال ☐ ······· الظاهرة ☐ ······ الوسطى

☐ مديريات ديوان عام الوزارة: (تذكر).

عليه يرجى التكرم بـ: ······· تسهيل الحصول على بيانات ········ ☑ الموافقة على جمع بيانات لبناء أدوات الدراسة

☐ ················· الموافقة على تطبيق الدراسة الإستطلاعية ··········· الموافقة على تطبيق أدوات الدراسة

يرجى إرفاق: 1- رسالة الجامعة/الجهة المشرفة على البحث ······ 2- مخطط الدراسة ······ 3- أدوات الدراسة المحكمة

ترسل جميع هذه الوثائق مع استمارة طلب تسهيل مهمة بحثية إلى البريد الإلكتروني: tosd@moe.om
للاستفسار يرجى التواصل على هاتف المكتب الفني للدراسات والتطوير/24255134 ··· 24255303

للاستعمال الرسمي فقط

نتيجة مراجعة أدوات الدراسة:

☐ ·· يمكن تطبيق الأدوات يأكملها وفق الإجراءات المتبعة

☐ ·· يتطلب تعديل بعض الجوانب في أدوات الدراسة (تذكر).

☐ ·· يتطلب أخذ مرئيات جهات أخرى ذات علاقة (تذكر).

☐ ·· أخرى.

النتيجة النهائية: ······ ☐ تسهيل المهمة ··············· ☐ رفض تطبيق أدوات الدراسة ·········

Appendix K: Ministry of Education's Supplemental Requirements for Research Approval

Walden's Mission

The mission of Walden University is to transform the global community into scholar practitioners and with the means to effect positive social change.

Walden's Research Authority

The research authority for Walden University is the IRB. The IRB is responsible for overseeing all research by Walden University students to ensure that they comply with U.S. federal regulations and the ethical standards of the University.

Contact information:
    Email: IRB@mail.waldenu.edu
    Office hours: Varies and through Zoom

The Study Plan

Study participants will be recruited by using purposeful convenience sampling. The target population are public school administrators in Muscat, Oman. The requirement for my target participant group is English proficiency. To determine if the criterion of English proficiency is met, I will send out an email specifying all participation criteria. With the initial email, an acknowledgement statement of English proficiency will be included, which will require printing and signature. I will conduct semistructured in-depth interviews of at least 10 participants or until saturation occurs. All participants will have a pseudonym or an unidentifiable code in all published materials. In addition, they will be kept safe in a secured location.

Referred Study Tools

The study tool will be semistructured interview. The interviews will either be conducted via voice over internet protocol (VoIP). Examples of VoIP access programs are Google Meet, Skype, WhatsApp, Telegram, Zoom, FaceTime, and Discord. These interviews will be audio recorded using a secure password protected audio recording device, which may have video recording features that will be disabled at the participant's request.

Appendix L: Introduction Letter to Ministry of Education

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

April 5, 2022

Sultanate of Oman

Oman Ministry of Education

To whom it may concern in: Ministry of Education

Subject: Permission to conduct research

Juwayriyah Abdallah is a Ph.D. student in Public Policy and Administration at Walden University. She is seeking permission to conduct a research study in primary schools in Muscat. This research will be conducted under the guidance of Dr. Steven A. Matarelli and Dr. Lynn Wilson.

Ms. Abdallah's research proposal is centered around Omanization. The title for her research is "Administrator's Opinions of the Impact and Effectiveness of Omanization in Public Education." The purpose of this generic qualitative inquiry study is to explore the residual effects of Omanization, specifically Royal Decree No. 35/2003, on the educational objectives of primary public schools in Muscat, Oman. In addition, the research plans to explore the perspectives of administrators on meeting Omanization education goals in public education.

The research will entail collecting data from primary school administrators and this student researcher would like to invite individuals holding these positions from your Muscat primary schools to participate. If they agree, they will either be interviewed virtually or face to face. The interview will take up to an hour and the time and date for participation are flexible.

Participants will be asked to give their written or verbal consent before data collection begins. Their responses and identities will be treated confidentially. Individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written study data. All research data will be

preserved for 5 years in a secure location and destroyed after the allotted time expired. The study results will be communicated in the published dissertation.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in study participation. The participants will not be compensated for participation.

Ms. Abdallah therefore requests permission in writing to conduct research with the administrators of primary schools in Muscat. Please contact me or Ms. Abdallah if you require any further information. She looks forward to your response as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Stout, Ed.D.
Program Director
Public Policy and Administration
Walden University
XXX@mail.waldenu.edu
1-(XXX) XXX-XXXX

Researcher information:
Juwayriyah Abdallah
Walden University
XXX@waldenu.edu

Appendix M: Public schools Standard Response Email for Research

Subject: Potential Research Participants

My name is Juwayriyah Abdallah, and the Ministry of Education recently emailed you regarding becoming a potential research participant in my research investigating the perceptions of Oman school administrators and education's efforts in meeting Omanization goals. The Ministry was asked on my behalf to send out the initial information and invitation emails to school administrators. If you are in a position that meets the definition of a principal, vice principal, or school administrator, and would be interested in learning more about my research or interested in participating, please contact me at: xxx@waldenu.edu

By responding to this email, you acknowledge that you meet the operational definition of administrator.

Respectfully,

Juwayriyah Abdallah, PhD Student Researcher

Walden University

xxx@waldenu.edu

Appendix N: Private Schools Standard Response Email for Research

Subject: Potential Research Participants

My name is Juwayriyah Abdallah, and I recently emailed you regarding becoming a potential research participant in my research investigating the perceptions of Oman school administrators and education's efforts in meeting Omanization goals. If you are in a position that meets the definition of a principal, vice principal, or school administrator, or educator, and would be interested in learning more about my research or interested in participating, please contact me at: xxx@waldenu.edu

By responding to this email, you acknowledge that you meet the operational definition of administrator.

Respectfully,

Juwayriyah Abdallah, PhD Student Researcher

Walden University

xxx@waldenu.edu

Appendix O: Educator Standard Response Email for Research

Subject: Potential Research Participants

My name is Juwayriyah Abdallah, and I recently emailed you regarding becoming a

potential research participant in my research investigating the perceptions of Oman

school administrators and education's efforts in meeting Omanization goals. If you are in

a position that meets the definition of an educator, and would be interested in learning

more about my research or interested in participating, please contact me at: +1 XXX-

XXX-XXXX WhatsApp) or xxx@waldenu.edu

By responding to this email, you acknowledge that you meet the operational definition of

administrator and/or educator.

Respectfully,

Juwayriyah Abdallah, PhD Student Researcher

Walden University

xxx@waldenu.edu