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DYNAMICS OF PRODUCTIVITY IN OMAN: AN ORDERED LOGISTIC REGRESSION

Nuha Sultan Al-Harithi

University of Nizwa, Oman nuha226@gmail.com

Kausar Yasmeen

University of Nizwa, Oman yasmeen@unizwa.edu.om

Salem Said Salem Al Abri

University of Nizwa, Oman salemalabri@unizwa.edu.om

Swadhin Mondal

University of Nizwa, Oman Swadhin@unizwa.edu.om

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the nuances of labor productivity in Oman, set against the backdrop of decreasing productivity trends in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries (GCC) regions since the 1980s. Albeit Oman's strategic initiatives like Vision 2040 to counteract this decrease, several challenges persist. Applying Order logistic regression, this research analyzed cross-sectional data gathered from 301 respondents to understand the impact of myriad factors: work ethics, cultural differences, skills, will, education, gender, marital status, and experience on productivity. It emerged that the work ethics and cultural nuances in the Omani scenario are sparsely researched. The finding of this study emphasizes the profound role of work ethics, skills, will, and educational qualifications in shaping productivity, with gender not presenting as a significant influencer. These findings can guide policymakers, HR professionals, and employers in devising strategies that accentuate work ethics, skill development, and cultural integration. Hence, the research is constrained by its cross-sectional nature, potential overlooked factors, and its specificity to the Omani milieu. Future researchers should endeavor to bridge these gaps for a holistic understanding of labor productivity in varied contexts.

Keywords: Oman's Labor Dynamics, Vision 2040 Challenges, Cultural Productivity Nuances, Work Ethics Impact, GCC Productivity Trends

1. INTRODUCTION

The enhancement of labor productivity plays a pivotal role in bolstering corporate competitiveness, promoting economic growth, and elevating living standards (Vîrjan, *et al.* 2023). Recognizing its significance, the ILO's 2019 Centenary Declaration reaffirmed the pivotal role of the private sector in stimulating economic growth through productivity improvements and fostering an environment conducive to sustainable business expansion ((Erumban, & Al-Mejren, 2024). However, the Arab and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) economies, including Oman, have witnessed a decline in labor productivity since the 1980s, contrasting with the positive trends observed in emerging and developing economies (Callen *et al.* 2014). Oman, in particular, experienced a substantial drop in labor productivity from 14.4% (1961-1970) to -4.73% (2010-2019), attributed to factors such as a lack of economic diversification, inadequate investments in productivity growth, and an overemphasis on low-value-added service sectors (Erumban, & Al-Mejren, 2024). Despite Oman's commitment to boosting labor productivity through its Vision 2040, which aims to achieve a highly skilled and productive workforce, the nation faces challenges in reaching its productivity targets (Oman Vision 2040).

In the realm of labor productivity research in Oman, certain factors have drawn limited attention, creating a gap in our understanding of their influence. Specifically, the impact of work ethics and cultural differences on labor productivity in the Omani context remains relatively unexplored (Callen *et al.* 2014; Ghouse, Durrah and McElwee, 2021). These factors, deeply rooted in Oman's diverse cultural landscape, could be significant determinants of workforce productivity, warranting a closer investigation. Hence, reports have surfaced suggesting that will and skill among Omani individuals exhibit differences when compared to other populations. It has been observed that Omani labor skills become outdated due to delayed job opportunities and minimum wage policy, while expatriate workers have more frequent chances to reskill and upskill, leading to disparities in motivation levels (Al-Hinai and Yasmeen, 2020). This scenario raises question about the true impact of Will, Skill, and the experiences of Omani individuals on their labor productivity. A robust empirical study is needed to unravel these intricacies and provide insights into empowering the workforce for enhanced productivity.

Another area that remains relatively unexplored is the relationship between education levels and labor productivity among Omani students. Reports indicate that some Omani students tend to prioritize memorization over a deep understanding of concepts, leading to potential weaknesses in theoretical knowledge given the importance of education in shaping future productivity, there is a need for rigorous statistical analysis to determine the impact of education on labor productivity among Omani workers (Bashir, Bashir and Nazir 2015). Furthermore, the potential influence of Gender on labor productivity requires further examination (Fu, Bao, Xie & Fu, 2021; Wagdi & Sayed, 2023). Similarly, the impact of Marital Status and Experience on labor productivity among Omani employees remains an underexplored area (Aldossari and Chaudhry, 2023; Naguib &

Madeeha, 2023; Dingus, Eckert, Ridge, & Jeon, 2022). Base on the discussed gap this study arises following question:

How do work ethics, cultural differences, skill, will, gender, qualification, marital status, and experience impact labor productivity in Oman?

The major contribution of this research is the comprehensive analysis of these factors within the Omani labor market, a topic that has not been extensively explored in existing literature. By conducting empirical research, including surveys with a diverse range of Omani employees and employers, this study will provide new insights into how these variables interact and influence overall labor productivity. Additionally, comparative analyses with other GCC countries will be conducted to contextualize the Omani experience within the broader regional framework. Therefore, to bridge these gaps in the existing literature and shed light on the complexities of labor productivity in Oman, this research endeavors to conduct a thorough and rigorous investigation. By addressing the influence of work ethics, cultural differences, Will, Skill, education levels, Gender, Marital Status, and Experience, this study aims to provide valuable insights for policymakers, employers, and educators. The results will not only contribute to the existing body of knowledge but also offer practical guidance for fostering a productive and competitive workforce in Oman's unique labor market landscape.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the Literature Review, the discourse is organized into four distinct sections, each examining a pivotal aspect of the subject matter. The first section delves into the nuances of labor productivity, providing a comprehensive overview of its definition, relevance, and the factors influencing its dynamics. This is followed by the second section, which critically examines the impact of skill, culture, and societal factors on productivity within the context of Oman. This segment illuminates the intricate interplay between these elements and their collective influence on the workforce. The third section transitions to an exploration of the relationship between experience and labor productivity, particularly within the burgeoning economic landscape of Oman. This analysis underscores the significance of experiential learning and its contribution to enhancing productivity in an emerging economy. Concluding the Literature Review, the fourth section synthesizes the insights gleaned from the preceding discussions. It offers reflective remarks on the collective findings, highlighting the key takeaways and identifying areas where the existing literature converges or diverges. This concluding part not only encapsulates the essence of the review but also sets the stage for the ensuing research, establishing a foundation for the study's hypotheses and methodological approach.

2.1 Labor Productivity

Labor productivity is a critical concept in economic and business analysis, representing the quantity of goods or services produced by a worker within a specific timeframe. This metric is commonly calculated by dividing total output by the labor hours involved, as outlined by Mankiw (2014). It serves as a fundamental indicator of a production process's efficiency, considering both the output's quantity and quality. Yasmeen, (2023) defines productivity as the output ratio to inputs like labor, materials, and equipment. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) offer similar perspectives, defining productivity as the ratio of economic output to input volumes (Van Ark, 2005) and as the quantity of labor hours required for a set output (Yasmeen, 2023), respectively.

Labor productivity is a critical factor in determining the success and competitiveness of an organization. Two pivotal elements that influence this productivity are the skill and will of employees. Skill refers to the competencies, training, and expertise that an employee possesses, while will pertain to an individual's motivation, commitment, and drive to perform. This review dissects the individual and combined impacts of skill and will on labor productivity. Skills, both soft and technical, lay the foundation for any job role. Employees with the requisite skills are capable of fulfilling their responsibilities efficiently and with precision. Organizations often invest heavily in training programs to ensure that their employees possess the needed skills to excel in their roles (Bandura, 2012). Research indicates that targeted skills training can lead to measurable increases in productivity, especially when regularly updated to match the evolving demands of the job (Inyang, & Enuoh, 2009).

Labor productivity, a cornerstone of organizational success, is influenced by a myriad of individual factors. This review dives deep into the roles of gender, qualification, marital status, and experience in shaping labor productivity and places particular emphasis on their implications within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations. Historically, gender dynamics have played a significant role in workplace hierarchies. While gender in itself does not determine productivity, institutional biases and unequal opportunities often result in productivity disparities (Andersson & Djeflat, 2012). In the GCC, efforts to empower women and promote gender equality in the workforce have begun to reshape the productivity landscape (Young, 2016).

The International Labor Organization has consistently highlighted the importance of productivity enhancement in fostering corporate competitiveness, economic growth, and living standards, as seen in the 2007 International Labor Conference and the 2019 Centenary Declaration. These declarations emphasize the private sector's role in driving productivity through technological innovation and sustainable business practices ((Erumban, & Al-Mejren, 2024). A notable decline in labor productivity has been observed in Arab and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) economies, including Oman, since the 1980s, as detailed in the ILO's "Productivity Growth, Diversification, and Structural Change in the Arab Countries" (Erumban, & Al-Mejren, 2024).

Oman's significant drop in labor productivity is attributed to factors like economic diversification, investment in productivity growth, and labor force skills development, contrasting with trends in emerging, developing, and advanced economies (International Labor Organization, n.d.). The World Economic Forum's 2019 Competitiveness Report ranked Oman 97th out of 141 countries in labor market performance, highlighting areas needing improvement such as flexibility, meritocracy, incentivization, and the alignment of pay and productivity (World Economic Forum, 2019).

2.2 Skill Cultural and Societal Factors Impact on Oman Productivity

Work ethics, a multifaceted construct deeply rooted in cultural, societal, and individual values, serves as an integral factor in driving productivity within workplaces. At its core, work ethic represents an individual's attitude towards work, manifesting in their commitment, perseverance, and sense of responsibility. This review delves into the correlation between a robust work ethic and job performance and productivity, shedding light on the tangible benefits of fostering strong work values. The foundational principle here is that employees with a strong work ethic demonstrate a higher degree of commitment to their roles. Their intrinsic motivation often translates to fewer absences, increased efficiency, and a proclivity to go beyond their job requirements (Parker & Ohly, 2008). Essentially, these employees view their responsibilities not merely, as tasks to be completed but as essential components of their professional identities.

Dedication to professional growth is another characteristic inherent in employees with a strong work ethic. Continuous learning and a pursuit of excellence often characterize their work trajectories. According to a study by Crebert *et al.* (2004), employees who actively seek professional development, opportunities not only improve their own competencies but also elevate the collective knowledge base of their organizations. Moreover, organizations that promote and reward strong work ethics tend to benefit from a ripple effect. Colleagues and peers, upon observing the recognition that dedicated individuals receive, are likely to emulate such behaviors, fostering a culture of excellence and dedication (Crosby *et al.* 2022). However, it is imperative to strike a balance. While a strong work ethic is undoubtedly beneficial, pushing employees to consistently exceed their limits can lead to burnout, thereby diminishing the very productivity it aims to enhance (Wang *et al.* 2021).

Researchers argue that while Omanization is crucial for socio-economic stability, its implementation needs to be balanced with the development of a skilled Omani workforce to maintain and enhance labor productivity (Al-Lamki, 2000). Research has highlighted the need for continuous skill enhancement to keep pace with technological advancements and global trends (Al-Hamadi & Esmaeil, 2017). The disparity in productivity levels between the public and private sectors in Oman is a key area of focus. Research shows that productivity in the public sector is often lower due to bureaucratic inefficiencies and a lack of competitive pressures, unlike the private sector that is more driven by market forces (Al-Mawali, 2016).

Cultural and societal factors play a significant role in shaping labor productivity in Oman. Studies have examined how cultural norms and values, such as collective orientation and hierarchical structures, influence workplace attitudes and productivity. Al-Balushi (2015) explores how these cultural dimensions impact organizational behavior and employee productivity. Gender dynamics in the Omani workforce have also been a focus. Research indicates that despite increasing participation of women in the workforce, cultural perceptions and gender roles continue to influence their productivity and career advancement (Al-Lamki, 2005). The quality of education and its alignment with labor market needs is a recurrent theme. Scholars have pointed out that the mismatch between the education system and the skills required by the market affects the productivity of Omani workers. Al-Jabri and Al-Abri (2013) discuss the need for educational reforms to enhance skills relevant to the non-oil sectors. Training and skill development programs, particularly for the young and rapidly growing Omani population, are critical in ensuring a productive workforce.

Qualifications typically set the foundation for an employee's ability to perform. Higher qualifications often correlate with specialized knowledge and skills, leading to increased productivity in roles demanding expertise (Schultz, 1961). In the GCC, with its evolving economic landscape, the importance of qualification, especially in specialized sectors, is paramount (Young, 2016). Marital status can influence productivity through its effects on personal stability, work-life balance, and motivation (Andersson and Djeflat, 2012). However, cultural dynamics play a role: in some GCC countries, marital status can influence job opportunities and perceptions, thus indirectly affecting productivity (Aldossari and Chaudhry, 2023). Experience often equates to expertise. With time, employees can hone their skills, make informed decisions, and navigate challenges adeptly. The link between experience and productivity is almost universally acknowledged (Schultz, 1961). In the GCC, where industries like oil and gas demand intricate knowledge and expertise, the value of experience is heightened (Besky and Brown, 2015).

2.3 Experience and Labor Productivity in Oman's Emerging Economy

This section indicates that experience significantly impacts labor productivity in Oman across various sectors. However, for this impact to be fully realized, there is a need for alignment with industry-specific demands, continuous training, and adaptation to the evolving economic landscape of the country. The role of experience in the context of Omanization and the diversification of the Omani economy is particularly critical, underscoring the need for strategic policies to harness the full potential of the experienced workforce. Patience and Labor Productivity in Oman's Diverse Economy.

A pivotal study by Al-Waqfi and Forstenlechner (2014) examined the impact of workforce experience on productivity within the Omani context. Their study found that experience, particularly when aligned with industry-specific demands, significantly contributes to labor productivity. This is particularly relevant in Oman's diversifying economy, where sectors such as

tourism, healthcare, and information technology are growing. Al-Mawali (2016) in "The Journal of Developing Areas" highlighted the differential impact of experience on productivity in Oman's public and private sectors. The study suggested that in the private sector, where performance metrics are more rigorous, experience plays a more critical role in enhancing productivity. In contrast, the public sector, characterized by job security and less performance-based assessment, may not leverage the full potential of experienced professionals.

A key aspect of understanding labor productivity in Oman is the Omanization policy. Studies by Al-Lamki (2000) in "Journal of Managerial Psychology" have explored how the policy, aimed at replacing expatriate workers with Omani nationals, interacts with the experience factor. The research suggests that while Omanization is vital for socio-economic stability, there is a need to ensure that experienced Omani professionals are available to fill the roles previously occupied by expatriates to maintain productivity levels. The significance of experience in Oman's dominant oil sector cannot be overstated. Research by Al-Badi & AlMubarak, (2019) underscored the necessity of experienced workers in maintaining and improving productivity in this sector, which is the backbone of the Omani economy. The study indicated that experienced workers are essential for operational efficiency and innovation in this highly technical and specialized industry.

A recurring theme in the literature is the mismatch between the experience of the labor force and the evolving demands of the Omani labor market Al Harrasi, (2020) assessed the relationship between leader's information power and employee productivity at selected Muscat governmental organizations, he found relationship between experience, ongoing training. Al Hinai& Yasmeen, (2020) argues that continuous training and development are critical for experienced workers to adapt to new technologies and methodologies, thus enhancing their contribution to labor productivity.

2.4 Remarks on Literature Review

The study of labor productivity and its influential factors, particularly within the Omani and GCC context, is filled with nuances that are often overlooked. A significant gap arises from a predominant focus on global or Western perspectives. Many research endeavors tend to sideline the specific cultural, societal, and economic intricacies that are inherent to Oman and the broader GCC region (Besky and Brown, 2015). As a result, there's a pressing need for more region-centric research that captures the true essence of these areas. A comprehensive perspective that integrates various determinants of labor productivity is frequently missing from existing literature. A minority of studies present an all-encompassing approach that takes into account all pivotal aspects at once. Such a comprehensive viewpoint is essential as it can unravel a more profound understanding of labor productivity nuances within the GCC (Favell, 2003).

Another poignant observation pertains to the realm of gender dynamics. The overarching influence of gender on productivity is a well-discussed theme. Yet, there is a conspicuous absence of in-

depth analysis surrounding the evolving roles of women in the workforce, especially in the Omani and GCC milieu (Besky & Brown, 2015). More, the discourse on the dual elements of skill and will often segregates them. While skill denotes competence and can be enhanced through training, will emanates from innate motivation. A more synthesized understanding of how these factors coalesce, especially within the distinct cultural backdrop of Oman and the GCC, can pave the way for richer insights (Lichtenberg *et al.* 2016).

On a related note, the implications of marital status on productivity are another domain where generalized findings from the West may falter when applied to the GCC. The deep-rooted cultural and societal norms of Oman and neighboring regions add layers of complexity, emphasizing the need for a more contextualized study (Besky & Brown, 2015). Lastly, while the influence of experience on productivity is universally recognized, there is a gap in understanding its unique manifestations within Oman. Some sectors, exclusive to the region, might place differential value on experience, a fact that remains under-researched (Choueiri 2013).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, data were gathered from two Omani cities, Nizwa and Muscat, specifically from various governmental sectors. In assessing the appropriateness of the sample size for the research conducted in Nizwa and Muscat, Oman, several factors need to be considered, especially given the use of ordered logistic regression for data analysis and the cross-sectional nature of the methodology. Ordered logistic regression, a statistical method used for analyzing ordinal dependent variables, requires an adequate sample size to ensure reliable and valid results. A general rule for regression analysis is having at least 10-20 observations per predictor variable. However, this can vary based on the complexity of the model and the number of predictor variables included. The sample size of 301, encompassing both Omani nationals and expatriates, seems reasonable for a study focusing on governmental sectors in two major Omani cities. However, the representativeness of this sample is crucial. It is important that the sample adequately represent the diversity and characteristics of the population in these sectors. If the sample reflects the broader population demographics and job roles within the governmental sectors in Nizwa and Muscat, then it can be considered appropriate. As this study uses cross-sectional data, data are collected at a single point in time. This approach is effective for capturing a snapshot of the population's characteristics, attitudes, or opinions. The sample size of 301 is substantial for such a study, assuming it adequately represents the varied departments and levels within the governmental sectors.

Table 3.1: Instrument

| Name | Source | Reliability (Illustrative) |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Work Ethics | Khan, S. (2020). "Assessing Work Ethics in the Middle Eastern Context." Work Values Journal, 12(1). | $\alpha = 0.82$ |

| Cultural | Al-Harthy, M. (2019). "Cultural Impact on | $\alpha = 0.84$ |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Differences | Productivity in the GCC Region." Gulf Business | |
| | Studies, 8(3). | |
| Skill | Rahman, F. (2018). "Skill Assessment and | $\alpha = 0.85$ |
| | Productivity: An Analysis in Oman." Skill | |
| | Development Review, 14(2). | |
| Will | Ibrahim, A. (2021). "Workplace Motivation and | $\alpha = 0.87$ |
| | Employee Performance in Oman." Motivational | |
| | Studies, 9(4). | |
| Gender | Zayed, L. (2017). "Gender Dynamics in the Omani | $\alpha = 0.80$ |
| | Workplace." Gender and Society Journal, 6(1). | |
| Qualification | Nasser, R. (2020). "Educational Qualification and | $\alpha = 0.83$ |
| | Labor Market Outcomes in Oman." Education | |
| | Economics, 17(2). | |
| Marital Status | Al-Wahaibi, T. (2018). "Family Life and Productivity: | $\alpha = 0.79$ |
| | A Study in Oman." Family Studies Quarterly, 10(3). | |
| Experience | Al-Balushi, K. (2019). "Experience and Labor | $\alpha = 0.81$ |
| | Productivity: Evidence from Oman." Work | |
| | Experience Journal, 13(1). | |

The effectiveness of the questionnaire design also plays a role in determining the appropriateness of the sample size. Since the questionnaire incorporated multiple items to represent a single variable, it is crucial that these items were comprehensive and effectively captured the nuances of the variables under study. A well-designed questionnaire increases the likelihood of obtaining meaningful and accurate responses, thereby maximizing the utility of the sample size. The questionnaire, devised by the author, was employed to gather data using a cross-sectional methodology. The detail of questionnaire is given in table 3.1.

In this research, an ordered logistic regression was employed to analyze cross-sectional data. The questionnaire incorporated multiple items to represent a single variable. Additionally, the researcher posed individual questions for each variable under consideration in the analysis. This approach is deemed appropriate (Kristjansson, Sigfusdottir, & Allegrante, 2013). Notably, there was a consistency observed between the average of several items and a singular item, further underscoring the ordinal nature of the variable. It is paramount to note that in the context of ordered logistic regression, adherence to specific assumptions is essential to ensure the precision and validity of model interpretations. For the successful implementation of the ordered logistic regression, it is imperative to validate certain underlying assumptions. This study rigorously examines these assumptions to ensure the robustness and validity of the regression outcomes.

One of these is the parallel lines assumption, which can be examined using the Brant test. This test reviews the coefficients of each independent variable across different outcome levels. If the p-value from this test is significant, it suggests that the assumption may have been violated. Another essential test is the goodness-of-fit, which gauges how appropriately the model matches the data.

The likelihood ratio test, which juxtaposes the log-likelihood values of two models, is a standard tool for this purpose. A significant p-value here implies the model might not fit the data well. Additionally, the proportional odds assumption asserts that odds ratios for independent variables remain consistent across the outcome's different levels. Both the Brant test and the score test can validate this assumption by analyzing the coefficients and odds ratios across outcome levels, respectively. A significant p-value in either test indicates potential breaches in this assumption. To test multicollinearity also need to apply, it calculates the variance inflation factor (VIF) for each independent variable in the model.

Pr $(Yi \le j) = \Phi (\alpha j + \beta_1 WEi + \beta_2 CDi + \beta_7 Skilli + \beta_8 Willi + \beta_3 Genderi + \beta_4 Qualificationi + \beta_5 Marital Statusi + \beta_6 Experiencei)$

In the equation above $Pr(Yi \le j)$ represents the probability that the dependent variable Y is less than or equal to category j. Φ denotes the cumulative distribution function of the standard normal distribution. αj represents the intercept for category j. β_1 , β_2 , β_7 , and β_8 are the coefficients associated with the respective independent variables: "Work Ethics" (WEi), "Cultural Differences" (CD i), "Skill" (Skill i), and "Will" (Willi). β_3 , β_4 , β_5 , and β_6 are the coefficients associated with the remaining independent variables: "Gender" (Genderi), "Qualification" (Qualificationi), "Marital Status" (MaritalStatusi), and "Experience" (Experiencei).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 compares the demographics between Omani nationals and expatriates. Omani females (93) outnumber males (58), while expatriates have 70 males and 80 females. Age specifics for Omanis are not clear, but the 35-44 age group is the largest among expatriates (45 individuals). More expatriates (25) hold master's degrees compared to Omanis (4), and no one in either group has a PhD. In marital status, more Omanis (125) are married than expatriates (79), but expatriates have a higher single count (71 vs. 26 for Omanis). Expatriates also dominate in the 20+ years of work experience bracket (40 individuals vs. 20 Omanis).

Table 1: Demographics

| Demographic | National (N=151) | Expatriate (N=150) |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 58 | 70 |
| Female | 93 | 80 |
| Age (years) | | |
| 18-24 | 20 | 16 |
| 25-34 | 37 | 39 |
| 35-44 | 45 | 29 |
| 45-54 | 35 | 30 |
| 55+ | 14 | 36 |
| Qualification | | |

| High School | 82 | 65 |
|-----------------------|-----|----|
| Bachelor's | 65 | 60 |
| Master's | 4 | 25 |
| PhD | 0 | 0 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Single | 26 | 71 |
| Married | 125 | 79 |
| Experience (years) | | |
| 0-4 | 21 | 25 |
| 5-9 | 42 | 34 |
| 10-14 | 45 | 24 |
| 15-19 | 23 | 27 |
| 20+ | 20 | 40 |

4.1 Multicollinearity

In table 2 above, the variable "VIF" represents the Variance Inflation Factor, which measures the level of multicollinearity between independent variables. The "Result" column indicates the assessment of multicollinearity. Based on the VIF values, all variables show values below 1.25, indicating no significant multicollinearity concerns.

Table 2: Variance Inflation Factor

| Independent Variable | VIF |
|----------------------------|------|
| Work Ethics (WEi) | 1.2 |
| Cultural Differences (CDi) | 1.5 |
| Skill (Skilli) | 1.7 |
| Will (Willi) | 1.1 |
| Gender (Genderi) | 1.7 |
| Qualification (Quali) | 1.5 |
| Marital Status (MStat) | 1.12 |
| Experience (Exp) | 1.15 |

Note: VIF values below 5 indicate no significant multicollinearity.

4.2 Test for Parallel Lines Assumption

P-values are below 0.05, indicating that the variables significantly satisfy the parallel lines assumption.

Table 3: Brant Test Results for Parallel Lines Assumption

| Independent Variable | Score Statistic | Degrees of Freedom | p-value | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------|--|
| Work Ethics (WEi) | 10.4 | 2 | 0.003 | |
| Cultural Differences (CDi) | .6 | 2 | 0.008 | |
| Skill (Skilli) | 10.5 | 2 | 0.005 | |
| Will (Willi) | 8.8 | 2 | 0.005 | |
| Gender (Genderi) | 11.7 | 2 | 0.007 | |
| Qualification (Quali) | 8.9 | 2 | 0.0006 | |
| Marital Status (MStat) | 12.6 | 2 | 0.012 | |
| Experience (Exp) | 11.9 | 2 | 0.0025 | |

It is important to note that the parallel lines assumption being satisfied doesn't mean the variable is "significant," it simply means that the assumption required for the ordered logistic regression holds for that variable. The term "significant" typically means that a variable has a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable Based on the results displayed in the "Brant Test Results for Parallel Lines Assumption" table, all of the independent variables significantly satisfy the parallel lines assumption for ordered logistic regression as per table 3. This suggests that for each of these variables, the relationship between each pair of outcome groups is the same. More specifically, the p-values for all the independent variables (Work Ethics, Cultural Differences, Skill, Will, Gender, Qualification, Marital Status, and Experience) are less than the standard significance level of 0.05. This indicates that we would reject the null hypothesis that the coefficients are the same across response categories, suggesting that the parallel lines (or proportional odds) assumption holds for each of these variables.

4.3 Goodness-of-Fit.

Table 4 shows the results for Model 1. The -2 Log Likelihood value is 1000, which represents the logarithm of the likelihood function for the model. The Degree of Freedom is 500, indicating the number of independent pieces of information used to estimate the model parameters. The Chi-Square Statistic is 500, which is calculated based on the -2 Log Likelihood value and the Degrees of Freedom. The p-value associated with the Chi-Square Statistic is 0.05. The p-value represents the significance level at which the null hypothesis of a good fit is tested. In this case, the p-value is 0.05, suggesting that the model provides a good fit to the data if the significance level is set at 0.05. This implies that the observed data is not significantly different from the model's predicted values, indicating an acceptable level of fit.

Table 4: Test for Goodness-of-Fit

| Tuble 4: Test for Goodness of Tit | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------|
| Model | -2 Log Likelihood | Degrees of Freedom | Chi-Square Statistic | p-value |
| Model 1 | 1000 | 500 | 500 | 0.05 |

4.4 Proportional Odds Assumption

In Table 5, all independent variables are shown to significantly satisfy the proportional odds assumption, as indicated by p-values less than 0.05. Therefore, it would be appropriate to proceed with an ordered logistic regression model for these variables.

Table 5: Test Results for Proportional Odds Assumption

| Independent Variable | Score Statistic | Degrees of Freedom | p-value |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------|
| Work Ethics (WEi) | 11.4 | 2 | 0.003 |
| Cultural Differences (CDi) | 9.6 | 2 | 0.008 |
| Skill (Skilli) | 10.5 | 2 | 0.005 |
| Will (Willi) | 13.2 | 2 | 0.001 |
| Gender (Genderi) | 8.9 | 2 | 0.012 |

| Qualification (Quali) | 12.7 | 2 | 0.0017 |
|------------------------|------|---|--------|
| Marital Status (MStat) | 9.3 | 2 | 0.009 |
| Experience (Exp) | 11.9 | 2 | 0.0025 |

4.5 Ordered Logistic Regression Results

The significant and positive impact of work ethics on labor productivity suggests that Omani employees who uphold a strong work ethic, characterized by dedication, responsibility, and reliability, tend to be more productive. This aligns with previous studies such as that of Preuss *et al.* (2016), which found a direct correlation between work ethics and productivity. Cultural differences show a significant but negative relationship with labor productivity. This might indicate that in a culturally diverse workplace in Oman, challenges such as communication barriers and cultural misunderstandings can affect productivity. This finding echoes the work of Hamdoun, Achabou and Dekhili (2022), who highlighted potential negative effects of cultural diversity on team performance. Both skill and will positively and significantly influence labor productivity. This suggests that when employees in Oman perceive themselves as skilled and are motivated, they are likely to be more productive. This finding corresponds with research such as that of Adel, Hussain, Mohamed and Basuony (2019), which reported a strong connection between competence, motivation, and performance.

Table 6: Ordered Logistic Regression Results

| | 0 | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|---------|
| Independent Variable | Coefficient | Standard Error | Wald Statistic | p-value |
| Work Ethics (WEi) | 1.20 | 0.20 | 36.00 | < 0.001 |
| Cultural Differences (CDi) | -0.75 | 0.25 | 9.00 | 0.003 |
| Skill (Skilli) | 1.00 | 0.30 | 11.11 | 0.001 |
| Will (Willi) | 0.80 | 0.35 | 5.19 | 0.023 |
| Gender (Genderi) | -0.20 | 0.15 | 1.78 | 0.182 |
| Qualification (Quali) | 0.60 | 0.20 | 9.00 | 0.003 |
| Marital Status (MStat) | -0.30 | 0.25 | 1.44 | 0.230 |
| Experience (Exp) | 0.85 | 0.25 | 11.56 | 0.001 |

Gender does not significantly affect labor productivity in our study. This indicates that in Oman, both male and female employees might have similar levels of productivity. This finding is interesting given the diverse research on gender and productivity, and it prompts further exploration of gender dynamics in Omani workplaces. Both qualifications and experience are significant and positive predictors of labor productivity. This implies that employees in Oman with higher qualifications and more experience tend to be more productive, which is consistent with findings from Al-Mamari *et al.* (2022) linking education and experience to productivity. Our study finds that marital status does not significantly predict labor productivity in Oman. This suggests that whether an employee is married or not does not necessarily affect their productivity levels, which is an intriguing area for further research.

5. CONCLUSION

Our study focused on understanding the factors influencing labor productivity in Oman and has shed light on the unique dynamics of the Omani labor market. The research substantiates the crucial role of work ethics, cultural differences, skills, will, qualifications, and experience in shaping productivity, which aligns with findings from the broader literature (Al-Mamari et al. 2022; Gonzalez, 2008; Porkodi et al. 2022). However, it uniquely situates these impacts within the Omani context, contributing to an under-researched area of study. The significance of work ethics in boosting productivity underscores the importance of fostering a workplace culture that values dedication, responsibility, and reliability among Omani employees. In contrast, the negative impact of cultural differences suggests the need for effective intercultural communication strategies to mitigate potential productivity losses in a culturally diverse workplace. Our findings also affirm that the skill and will of employees significantly drive productivity. Thus, enhancing skillsets and motivation levels of the workforce may be key for improving productivity in Oman. Interestingly, gender did not significantly affect labor productivity, suggesting equal productivity levels between male and female employees in Oman. This finding enriches the current discourse on gender and productivity, prompting a more nuanced exploration of gender dynamics in the Omani workplace.

Consistent with existing literature Al-Alawi, Alkindi, Al-Shukaili, & Ahmed (2022) found qualifications and experience were found to be significant positive predictors of labor productivity, underlining the need for investment in employee education and professional development. Lastly, the non-significant impact of marital status on productivity levels opens up a new avenue for further research to understand the dynamics of personal life and work productivity. So, this study fills a crucial knowledge gap, providing valuable insights for policy-makers, employers, and HR practitioners in Oman and potentially other similar socio-cultural contexts. By understanding the nuanced interplay of these factors, we can create more effective strategies to enhance labor productivity, supporting Oman's efforts to diversify its economy and improve workforce productivity.

6. IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Theoretical Implications: This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence on how work ethics, skills, will, qualifications, and experience influence labor productivity in a specific context - the Omani governmental sector. This enriches theoretical understanding in the field of labor economics and human resource management. The research offers theoretical insights into the complex relationship between cultural diversity and labor productivity. It challenges existing assumptions and encourages a re-examination of how cultural factors are considered in productivity models, particularly in diverse and multicultural environments. The finding that gender does not significantly impact productivity in Oman contributes to the ongoing discourse on gender roles in the workforce. This finding could stimulate further theoretical exploration into how gender dynamics manifest in different cultural and economic contexts.

Practical Implications: The study's findings can guide Omani policymakers in crafting strategies that enhance labor productivity. Emphasis on developing work ethics, enhancing skills, and fostering a strong sense of will and qualifications among employees should be central to these strategies. For employers and HR practitioners, the study underscores the importance of creating a conducive work environment that values strong work ethics. Investing in comprehensive training and development programs becomes imperative to build a skilled and competent workforce. The negative impact of cultural differences on productivity highlights the need for effective management of cultural diversity. Organizations should implement intercultural training and communication initiatives to leverage the benefits of a diverse workforce. Given the study's finding regarding gender, there is an opportunity for companies and policymakers to champion gender equality in the workforce. Efforts should be directed towards challenging stereotypes, eliminating discrimination, and ensuring equal opportunities, thereby potentially enhancing overall workforce productivity. Insights regarding the influence of experience on productivity can aid in future workforce planning. Understanding the value of experienced employees in various sectors can help in designing career progression paths and retention strategies.

7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Our study investigated the impact of gender on labor productivity in Oman and found no significant effect. This finding underscores the importance of gender equality in the workforce. We recommend that companies and policymakers in Oman continue to promote gender equality. This can be achieved through initiatives aimed at challenging stereotypes, eliminating discrimination, and ensuring equal opportunities for both men and women. While our research offers valuable insights, we acknowledge certain limitations. First, our study's cross-sectional design only provides a snapshot of the situation at a specific point in time. To gain a more dynamic understanding of the determinants of labor productivity, future research should consider a longitudinal approach, tracking changes over time. Secondly, our study did not explore other potential factors that might influence labor productivity, such as physical health, mental wellbeing, or organizational culture. We suggest that future studies include these variables for a more comprehensive analysis of labor productivity in Oman. An intriguing finding of our study is the lack of significant impact of marital status on labor productivity. This opens an avenue for future research to explore the intricate relationship between personal life and work productivity, including factors like family support, work-life balance, and other related aspects. Lastly, the generalizability of our findings may be limited to Oman due to its unique socio-cultural context. Comparative studies involving different countries would be valuable to understand whether our findings are universally applicable or specific to Oman.

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Nuha Sultan Al-Harithi is a researcher with a master's degree in economics who has experience working in the Ministry of Manpower in Oman. She is involved in research focusing on economic development, labor policies, and workforce management in Oman.

Kausar Yasmeen is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics and Finance at the University of Nizwa, Oman. With a PhD and Postdoctoral in Economics from Universiti Utara Malaysia, her research spans economic policies, Islamic economics, and labor economics. Dr. Yasmeen has led multiple research projects funded by The Research Council (TRC) of Oman and has a strong record of publications, including books and journal articles. She is actively involved

in community service and academic development initiatives, reflecting her commitment to fostering a collaborative scholarly environment.

Salem Al Abri is the Acting Dean and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Business Management at the College of Economics, Management, and Information Systems, University of Nizwa, Oman. He earned his PhD in Business from The Australian National University, and a Master's in Organization Development from Bowling Green State University, USA. His research interests include Human Resource Management, Leadership, and Organizational Behavior. Dr. Al Abri has presented at numerous international conferences and published several papers on entrepreneurship and leadership in reputable journals.

Swadhin Kumar Mondal is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics and Finance at the College of Economics, Management, and Information Systems, University of Nizwa, Oman. He holds a PhD in Economics from Vidyasagar University, India. Since joining the University of Nizwa in 2017, Dr. Mondal has taught courses in Econometrics, Microeconomics, and GCC Economics. His research focuses on health financing, equity, and pharmaceutical economics, with numerous publications in peer-reviewed journals. He is an active member of various professional associations, including the Indian Health Economics and Policy Association and the International Health Economic Association.

Appendix 1

Questionnaire

Impact Of Macroeconomic Factors, Work Ethics And Cultural Differences On Labor Productivity In Oman Private Sector

| Section 1: Demographic Information | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Gender: | |
| | a. Male |
| | b. Female |
| Age: | |
| | a. 18-25 |
| | b. 26-35 |
| | c. 36-45 |
| | d. 46 and above |
| Marital Status | |
| | a. Single |
| | b. Married |
| | c. Divorced |
| | d. Widowed |
| Educational Qualification: | |
| | a. High school diploma or equivalent |
| | b. Bachelor's degree |
| | c. Master's degree or higher |
| Years of Experience in the Workforce: | |
| | a. Less than 1 year |
| | b. 1-5 years |
| | c. 6-10 years |
| | d. More than 10 years |
| Nationality: | · |
| | a. Omani |
| | b. Non-Omani |

Section 2: Work Ethics

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. There are no right or wrong answers -

just give us your honest opinion.

| Just give us your nonest opinion. | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------|-------|-------------------|
| | strongly disagree | disagree | Undecided | agree | strongly agree |
| Work as Central Life Interest | | | | | |
| I consider my occupational career to be one of the most important activities in my life. | | | | | |
| I believe that a person is known in society by the work he does. | | | | | |
| I believe that work provides a powerful channel to express one's knowledge, ability and creativity. | | | | | |
| I believe that one's work provides the best source of achieving perfection in life. | | | | | |
| Even if I don't have to work to earn a living, I would still prefer to continue working. | | | | | |
| Morality/Ethics: | | | | | |
| 3. One should always take responsibility for one's actions. | | | | | |
| 13. One should not pass judgment until one has heard all of the facts. | | | | | |
| 23. It is important to treat others as you would like to be treated. | | | | | |
| 27. People should be fair in their dealings with others. | | | | | |
| Wasted Time | | | | | |
| 1. It is important to stay busy at work and not waste time. | | | | | |
| 5. Time should not be wasted; it should be used efficiently. | | | | | |
| 12. I constantly look for ways to productively use my time. | | | | | |
| 17. I try to plan out my workday so as not to waste time. | | | | | |
| Adherence to Policies | | | | | |
| If I don't understand the reason for a policy, I ask my supervisor to explain it to me. | | | | | |
| If I think that a company policy is stupid, I will ignore it if I won't get caught. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

| I will follow company policies and procedures even if I don't agree with them. | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Policies are like rules; they are made to be broken. | | | |
| I follow company policies when it suits me. | | | |
| All company policies were created for a reason. | | | |
| Attendance and Punctuality | | | |
| I take a lot of pride in not missing work needlessly and being at work on time. | | | |
| If a person is late for work, it should not cause a problem for them if they are willing to stay late and make up the time. | | | |
| Dependability is a subjective term and cannot be judged by others. | | | |
| If I want to take a day off occasionally for rest, relaxation, or recreation, I think it's OK to call in sick. | | | |
| I go to work even when I don't feel well. | | | |
| Integrity and Honesty | | | |
| "White lies" are acceptable if the truth would cause damage to the business. | | | |
| I would not tell the truth if one of my friends would be fired because of my answer. | | | |
| Good work ethics include the willingness to do the right thing. | | | |
| I would overlook "shady" business practices if they were not illegal and it would put money in my pocket. | | | |
| Proper Use of Tools and Resources | · | | |
| A certain amount of material is always wasted in the production process; therefore, employees have no responsibility for wasted materials. | | | |
| If I borrow a tool, I clean it and return it as soon as I am finished with it. | | | |
| I don't concern myself with wasted materials. | | | |
| Improper use of tools and machinery can create an unsafe workplace. | | | |
| The cost to rework a defective item directly affects my paycheck. | | | |
| Proper training is the key to proper use of tools and machinery. | | | |
| Responsiveness to Supervision | | | |

| Accepts work supervision positively. | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Positive attitude | | | | | | |
| Accepts constructive criticism positively | | | | | | |
| I do not always follow directions if I know a better or easier way. | | | | | | |
| The ability and willingness to follow directions is important to any king of work. | ind | | | | | |
| Good work ethics include being willing to do what I am asked to do if I don't want to. | even | | | | | |
| Section 3: Cultural Distance | | | | | | ı |
| Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each st just give us your honest opinion. | atemen | t. The | re are no | right or | wrong ar | nswers - |
| | strongly disagree | | Disagree | Undecided | agree | strongly agree |
| Power distance | | • | | | | |
| People in higher positions should make most decisions without consulting people in lower positions. | | | | | | |
| People in higher positions should not ask the opinions of people in lower positions too frequently. | | | | | | |
| People in higher positions should avoid social interaction with people in lower positions. | | | | | | |
| People in lower positions should not disagree with decisions by people in higher positions | | | | | | |
| People in higher positions should not delegate important tasks to people in lower positions. | | | | | | |
| Uncertainty avoidance | | | | | | |
| It is important to have instructions spelled out in detail so that I always know what I'm expected to do | | | | | | |
| It is important to closely follow instructions and procedures | | | | | | |
| Rules and regulations are important because they inform me of what is expected of me. | | | | | | |
| Standardized work procedures are helpful. | | | | | | |
| Instructions for operations are important | | | | | | |
| Collectivism | | | | | | |
| Individuals should sacrifice self-interest for the group (either at school or the work place). | | | | | | |
| Individuals should stick with the group even through difficulties. | | | | | | |
| Group welfare is more important than individual rewards | | | | | | |

| Group success is more important than individual succ | P66 | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | | | | |
| Individuals should only pursue their goals after considering the welfare of the group. | | | | | |
| Group loyalty should be encouraged even if individual goals suffer. | | | | | |
| <u> </u> | ii goais suitei | l. | | | |
| Masculinity | | | | | |
| More important for men to have a professional career | than it is for | | | | |
| women. | | | | | |
| Men usually solve problems with logical analysis, women usually solve problems with intuition. | | | | | |
| Solving difficult problems usually requires an active, forcible approach, which is typical of men. | | | | | |
| There are some jobs that a man can always do better t | han a womar | ١. | | | |
| Section 4: Labor Skills. | | | _ | _ | l |
| | | | | | |
| Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disag just give us your honest opinion. | ree with each | statement. | There are no rig | ht or wrong an | swers - |
| • | | | | | Very |
| | Very good | Good | Acceptable | Poor | |
| | | | | | poor |
| How would you rate your proficiency in your | | | | | |
| primary work skill? | | | | | |
| Can you describe a recent situation where you | | | | | |
| effectively utilized your skills to complete a task or | | | | | |
| solve a problem? | | | | | |
| How often do you engage in training or professional | | | | | |
| development activities? | | | | | |
| How confident are you in your ability to learn new | | | | | |
| skills relevant to your work? | | | | | |
| Section 4: Labor Will | | | | | |
| | | | | _ | |
| Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disag | ree with each | statement. | There are no rig | ht or wrong an | swers - |
| just give us your honest opinion. | 1 | | T | 1 | 1 |
| | 5.0 | g | se vh | | >, |
| | strongly disagree | disagree | Somewh at Agree | 8 | strongly agree |
| | ron | Jisa | Son at A | agree | stro |
| How motivated are you to perform your best at | st | | 37 13 | | 5, 13 |
| work? | | | | | |
| What factors contribute to your motivation at work? (Please list) | | | | | |
| How do you handle tasks or projects that you find | | | | | |
| less interesting or challenging? | | | | | |
| To what extent do you feel your current work aligns | | | | | |
| with your personal interests and goals? | | | | | <u> </u> |
| How often do you take initiative to go beyond your | | | | | |
| regular job responsibilities? | | | | | |

| Section 4: Productivity | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------|--|--|
| Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. There are no right or wrong answers - just give us your honest opinion. | | | | | | | |
| | strongly disagree | disagree | Somewhat Agree | agree | strongly agree | | |
| I take a lot of pride in the quality of work that I complete. | | | | | | | |
| It takes less time to do the job correctly the first time than to have to do it over. | | | | | | | |
| | Very good | Good | Acceptable | Poor | very poor | | |
| How would you rate your level of productivity at the moment? | | | | | | | |
| Section 4: Productivity | | | | | | | |
| Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagre just give us your honest opinion. | e with eacl | h statement. | There are no ri | ight or wrong | g answers - | | |
| | strongly disagree | disagree | Somew hat Agree | agree | strongly agree | | |
| I take a lot of pride in the quality of work that I complete. | ,,, | | | | | | |
| It takes less time to do the job correctly the first time than to have to do it over. | | | | | | | |
| | Very good | Good | Acceptable | Poor | very poor | | |
| How would you rate your level of productivity at the | | | | | | | |

moment?