

The impact of work-life balance and its effectiveness on offshore employee retention at oil companies in Qatar

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Abstract

This thesis aims to investigate the influence of work-life balance (WLB) on employee motivation and retention in the offshore segment of Qatar's oil and gas industry. The research objectives include the development of a systematic conceptual framework, exploring the relationship between WLB and employee retention, assessing the impact of organisational culture on retention and WLB, and providing valuable recommendations for managing and enhancing employee retention in the oil and gas sector.

To achieve these objectives, an extensive literature review was conducted to identify gaps related to WLB and its effects on worker engagement. The researcher considered various philosophical and methodological approaches to determine the most suitable data collection method.

Quantitative methods were chosen for data collection, enabling the study to effectively address the research questions. Surveys were employed as the primary data collection tool, with pilot surveys designed and refined before the final versions were distributed among offshore workers in Qatar's oil and gas industry. The collected responses were analysed using correlation analysis and other statistical tests in SPSS.

The findings indicated a significantly weak relationship between work-life balance and retention, suggesting that improving WLB alone may not be sufficient to enhance employee retention.

However, a weak positive relationship was observed between WLB and employee engagement, highlighting the importance of WLB in fostering employee commitment. Furthermore, the study revealed a weak positive association between organisational culture and WLB, demonstrating that favourable WLB policies and a supportive culture can enhance employee engagement.

Conversely, a decline in positive aspects of organisational culture may adversely affect WLB policies for offshore employees.

This thesis contributes both academically and practically. Academically, it expands the existing literature by specifically examining the impact of WLB on engagement and retention within the context of offshore workers in the oil and gas industry. The study identifies a significantly weak relationship between retention and WLB. Additionally, it highlights a weak positive relationship between organisational culture, engagement, and worker retention in the offshore oil and gas sector. Practically, the study offers recommendations to stakeholders in the oil and gas sector to

improve welfare and working conditions, thereby enhancing WLB and retention—critical factors for ensuring business continuity in the sector in the future.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background Information

1.1 Study Background

Qatar's oil and gas sector is an important aspect of the country's economy, which is why the government of the country wields significant efforts to ensure effectiveness in the use of the resources from the sector (Oxford Business Group, 2022). The country's oil and gas sector contribute to over 50% of the country's GDP, and approximately 70% of the revenue generated by the government (Oxford Business Group, 2022). Prior to the discovery of oil and gas, Qatar was one of the poorest countries globally, with the main economic activities being trading, pearling, and fishing.

Following the discovery and exploration of oil and gas, the country leveraged on the presence of these resources, becoming one of the highest per-capita income earning nations globally (Oxford Business Group, 2022). The country's GDP per capita rose from \$2,755 in 1970 to \$85,000 by the mid 2010's, although most recent reports identify that it currently stands at \$92,000 in 2021 (Ibid).

The country's leadership takes various actions to facilitate the increase in the production capacity of its oil and gas sector as there is significant dependence on activities which are implemented from the sector, on the development of the country's economy (International Trade Administration, 2022). For instance, the Qatari government invested \$30 billion for the purpose of the North Field Expansion – a project focused on enhancing productivity capacity for liquefied natural gas and crude oil and petroleum products increase (International Trade Administration, 2022). Expanding on this expansion project, the North Field Expansion project, which was designed to be completed in two phases, the first proposed to end by 2026, and the second phase projected to be completed by 2028 are expected to raise the production capacity of the country in terms of oil and gas productivity by 43% following the completion of the first phase, and 64% following completion of the second phase (Ibid). Other actions which the Qatari leadership has taken to increase production capacity of its oil and gas sector includes awarding contracts to support infrastructural development to bolster expansion including the construction of

petrochemical complexes which are expected to start adding to its production capacity following its deployment by 2025.

Qatar Petroleum is the designated organisation that is responsible for the production of oil and gas in the sector, and the production of oil is done in the country's offshore and onshore fields. Despite the importance of the oil and gas sector, Heindenreich (2019) finds that there are challenges relating to the retention and recruitment of employees with competent skills within the sector, and this impacts on sustainability outcomes. Expanding further, it is suggested that to satisfy the growing demands relating to energy needs, it is essential that there is the sustainability of the workforce; shortage in the availability of competent employees negatively impacts productivity by causing delays relating to production (Heidenreich, 2019). Considering the contextual challenges associated with the demands and constraints of work in the Offshore sector, this impacts employee decision to remain in the sector (Asare, 2021).

Offshore workers suffer from several environmental and health challenges which affect the attractiveness of workers to the sector and also job satisfaction of employees within the sector (Asare, 2021). Additionally, offshore workers are exposed to a variety of physical stressors including poor air quality, noise, hazardous chemicals, extremities in temperature, and challenging work tasks which impact employee engagement and retention in the sector (Wellens and Smith, 2006). Other factors which affect employee retention in the offshore sector are the fears associated with travel to and from the offshore installations; workers within the offshore sector suffer significant anxiety and stress as a result of the time-consuming and stressful nature associated with travel to and from the offshore site (Wellens and Smith, 2006). In agreement, Parkes et al.,(2005) finds that many offshore workers in the oil and gas sector live far distances from the offshore sites, and despite organisations making provisions for travel for these workers, they face risks relating to travel to work such as accident risks in addition to stress which leads to job dissatisfaction. While the findings by Wellens and Smith (2006), and Parkes et al.,(2016) confirm that distance and fears associated with travelling to and from offshore installation leads to outcomes which are associated with risks of WLB such as anxiety, and job stress, they also that there is a wide array of these elements. The implication is that there are numerous risk elements including distance, health and safety risks, among other fears result in risks that enhance job dissatisfaction and negatively impact WLB practice for offshore workers and employee retention.

Parks et al.,(2005) identifies that compared to onshore workers who were exposed to 48 hours weekly of risks associated with travel to work, offshore workers have an increased chance of risks estimated to be 84 hours weekly. The time associated with travel results in fatigue of employees which could lead to an impairment of employee performance and also negative impacts on employee job satisfaction, leading to less attractiveness of individuals to working in the sector (Ibid). This means that offshore workers face a higher risk of fatigue due to longer travel time, resulting in impaired performance and job dissatisfaction compared to onshore workers. Further to this, the indications from this suggest that offshore workers compared to on-shore employees due to the nature of their job requiring non-traditional travel requisites to perform their jobs are more pronounced to negative WLB experiences.

Lichaz (2005) identifies family-work conflict and work-family conflict as other factors which influence the work-life balance of employees and which has extensive impacts on the capacity of organisations in retaining relevant workers. Work-family conflict is a form of inter-role conflict involving negative spill overs being transmitted from work domain to family domain while family-work conflict involves negative spill overs from family to work domain (Lichaz, 2005). This form of conflict occurs due to individuals exerting more efforts in one domain, negatively affecting efforts being exerted in the other domain (Aqeel et al., 2018). For instance, if the nature of work is negatively impacted by factors like work hours, toxic relationship environment at work, and status, these tends to lead to negative spill overs being transferred from the employee's work environment to family domain (Ibid). This negatively impacts employee satisfaction, which could be linked to WLB of employees.

Al-Suwaidi and Akmal (2022) emphasized the issue of retention of workers within the offshore segment of the oil sector being a crucial issue. Citing information from the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) and suppositions by Bet-Shlimon (2020), it is indicated that a key issue with the offshore industry is that there are man-power shortages particularly for offshore roles, which could impact the long-term sustainability, and productivity outcomes of the sector. Other issues which results in challenges in employee retention for the offshore sector include the lack of technical skills and competencies needed by workers in the sector which leads to increased health and safety risks; these cause job satisfaction and negative impacts on WLB (Al-Suwaidi and Akmal, 2022). While the findings from both studies indicate that work-family conflicts and family-work conflicts

could lead to negative outcomes for the employees in terms of job satisfaction, it does not confirm specifically how this influences WLB and employee retention within the context of the Middle East and in Qatar. This study probes further to consider the role of these factors in WLB and employee retention in the Middle East, and the offshore sector in Qatar, filling existing gaps in literature.

Poulose and Dhal (2020) identify that an important factor which impacts the retention of employees is rewards which are a form of motivation. Expanding further, it is indicated that providing the appropriate motivation is essential to retaining employees, and also to enhance their performance and engagement with their roles/duties. Edwards (2019) further identifies that compared to on-shore workers in the oil sector, offshore workers get three to four times the rewards obtained by on-shore peers, and while this enhances the employee motivation, their intermittent absence from home impacts on job satisfaction and engagement with their role.

Based on these suppositions, it can be argued that although rewards help in motivating workers in the performance of their duties, and engagement with their roles, the nature of offshore duties, and psychological and social challenges associated with offshore duties could impact on motivation of workers and dissatisfaction. Although the studies by Edward (2019) did not focus on the wider impacts on WLB and retention, dissatisfaction and motivation have been identified as important element that affects engagement of workers, and these could be argued to be factors that affect negative WLB outcomes for employees, leading to declining retention rates.

The review of prior literature also shows that employee turnover, organisational commitment and job satisfaction are significantly related to one another and impacts WLB (Scanlan and Still, 2013; Kim et al., 2005; Patterson et al., 2004). This makes it essential to explore these factors within the context of the offshore sector to understand how organisations could adapt their policies to enhance WLB in Qatar as limited studies within this context exists.

This thesis addresses this gap by undertaking a critical assessment on the factors which influence WLB and engagement amongst offshore employees within the context of Qatar's oil and gas segment, and the Middle East in general. Furthermore, WLB is of significance to the health and safety of workers, as it not only facilitates improvement of overall satisfaction of workers within

their roles, but help in the mitigation of health issues associated with working in offshore sector (Wickramasinghe, 2010).

Considering other terms of the specific importance of the study, Offshore employees in Qatar have experienced challenges relating to achieving WLB due to the characteristic associated with their roles, and this was further exacerbated as a result of COVID-19 pandemic (Al-Thani et al., 2021). COVID-19 led to an increase in the workload of employees and decrease in the time off for employees which resulted in overall negative outcomes on their well-being (Al-Thani et al., 2021). Also, Saadeh and Al-Tmeemy (2021) also emphasized on the direct impact of lack of WLB on the productivity and job satisfaction of workers, noting that poor WLB initiatives resulted in increased absenteeism of employees, decline in employee satisfaction and decline in the retention rates of employees. This underscores the importance of deploying WLB practices in organisations due to benefits such as increased productivity of employees and better business outcomes (Saadeh and Al-Tmeemy, 2021).

Based on the above evaluation, it is known that WLB is a crucial element needed for the work environment to be healthy; it facilitates the reduction of stress and burnout, and other mental and physical health challenges which leads to job dissatisfaction. Hence, this thesis aims to assess the impact of WLB on employee retention, motivation, and engagement of offshore workers in the sector. The findings obtained from the study would help industry stakeholders understand how they can enhance their policies and practices relating to WLB which would help in enhancing satisfaction, engagement and retention of employees.

This study's findings would be useful to industry stakeholder as it will help understand factors which accentuate higher levels of stress, fatigue and other elements which impact the WLB of employees in the sector. The findings would also help understand actions that stakeholders can deploy to enhance retention of the offshore workforce, and improve WLB as the findings would provide strong operational and strategic recommendations on how to address these challenges in the future. This study is timely as it addresses increasing concerns surrounding WLB and its impact on the retention, motivation and engagement of workers, particularly in the offshore sector, where the workforce is exposed to unique scenarios including extended working hours, limitations in accessibility to amenities and remote locations.

The findings from the study are expected to provide industry stakeholders with insights actionable for the enhancement of WLB practices and policies, ultimately contributing to the improvement of engagement, satisfaction and retention of workers. Moreover, the focus of the study on understanding factors which accentuate higher levels of fatigue and stress among offshore employees is particularly important when it comes to the context of an industry landscape which is evolving and requires safe and efficient operations. Overall, this study addresses a critical research gap and provides valuable insights into enhancing the WLB of offshore workers, thereby contributing to the development of a sustainable and healthy workforce in the offshore sector.

1.2 The Nature of WLB in Qatar

There has been a significant socio-economic expansion in the State of Qatar since 1940 because of the rise in global demands for oil and gas products which led to the rapid economic development of the country. The expansion of the country's economy was soon followed by increase costs associated with living and rising inflation in various segments of the country (Stepney, 2016). In response to the growing needs of individuals and residents, work participation by all citizens were prioritized by the government, resulting in the growth of the country's labour force, a phenomenon which is identified to be reflected in Western societies (Mitchell et al., 2015). This led to an increase in labour participation by both male and female residents in the State of Qatar.

WLB is noted to be important in Qatar due to the cultural values attributed to individuals engaging with their families; cultural norms of the country are rooted in the Arab origins and Islamic beliefs and values which emphasize the importance of family values, and what constitutes behaviours deemed "appropriate" with regards of the workplace undertaking of individuals (DIFI, 2018). This indicates that the nature of work and corresponding work-balance values is shaped by cultural and faith traditions in the country. Suggestions by DIFI (2018) indicates that WLB in Qatar is expressed in terms of the capacity of individuals to balance the demands from both work and family domains. The understanding of Qatari culture relating to the concept could be compared to the descriptions provided by Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) who suggest the concept of WLB incorporates the accomplishment of work related and family-related goals by individuals in the labour force.

WLB is pursued in Qatar through using a variety of strategies including men and women negotiating expectations which relate to their job roles with their partners and family (DIFI, 2018). Workers negotiate with their family about the feasibility of time spent together in relations to work schedules to ensure that responsibilities for demands on both the work and family domains are met (DIFI, 2018). This aligns with the suggestions by Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) which indicates that in taking a job role, there is no simple conformance to what is monolithically and socially prescribed or expected, but individuals accepting the roles and adapting to them based on the specifics associated with their job contexts.

Despite the strong desire to promote WLB in the region and the sector, there is a poor understanding as to whether organisational initiatives support WLB, employee retention and commitment. This is especially true amongst offshore employees. In studies by Al Thani et al.,(2021) it is indicated that lack of support for WLB initiatives is perceived by offshore workers in negative emotional feelings resulting in decreased commitment of employees and increased turnovers. Similarly, studies by Saadeh and Al-Tmeemy (2021) identify that the lack of understanding relating to the deployment of WLB practices in Qatar's offshore segment influences productivity and satisfaction of workers. This is because when employees do not understand the initiatives or resources available to ensure a balanced lifestyle, it results in burnout and decline in job satisfaction, resulting in a higher likelihood of the employees leaving the organisation in search of better WLB (Saadeh and Al-Tmeemy, 2021).

Literature strongly supports the view that WLB initiatives certainly affects productivity, facilitates cost savings for the organisation (Rosa, 2022), and enhance employee morale (Althammer et al., 2022). This means that the accessibility of employees and the ability of organisations in providing appropriate WLB initiatives could impact productivity outcomes in Qatar's offshore segment.

However, the challenging nature of offshore work and the working conditions adds a complexity into the process of offering effective WLB strategies. This is because of the nature of Offshore work; offshore work is indicated to be connected to the production of oil and gas at oil fields and installations including rigs and other installations or platforms and unlike other roles, employees are exposed to peculiar risks (Lockhart, 2015). Mehnazd (2019) argues that for employees to work in the offshore sector, there are several health screenings which they need to go through because

of the tedious nature associated with the job roles in the sector. This means that employees working in the offshore sector have high susceptibility to accidents and injuries, which makes working within the segment one of the most dangerous jobs to do (Mehnazd, 2019). Furthermore, the nature of the job roles impact the well-being of employees by increasing the risks associated with the employee roles. Some of the risks which impact employee well-being include operational risks and concerns relating to occupational health and safety, anxiety, and psychological stress, which impact the productivity of offshore employees (HSE, 2010). Therefore, high-susceptibility of employees to occupational hazards and incidents could be considered as a key factor affecting WLB outcomes. Hence, it is crucial to examine further whether WLB strategies can positively impact engagement and improve retention. Conducting this study is important as it would help measure the perception of employees relating to WLB and understand how it influences other factors like retention, satisfaction and organisational culture.

Putting into cognizance, the context of Qatar's offshore segment, the challenges associated with the nature of offshore sectors and associated health and safety risks imposes a layer of complexity in the procedures of offering WLB strategies which are effective. This makes it crucial for the prioritization of the development and deployment of effective WLB initiatives to cater to the unique needs of employees, particularly offshore workers in the oil and gas sector in Qatar. Doing this is useful in enhancing the enhancement of the morale of employees in the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector, which is important for reducing the risks relating to takeover and burnouts, ultimately leading to improvement in competitiveness and sustainability of the offshore segment. Moreover, as suggested by Rossa (2022), when there are effective WLB initiatives, this could also result in lead cost savings for business ventures, which can be particularly useful considering the context of the oil and gas sector, with its competitive and volatile nature.

1.3 Industry background information

The economy of Qatar as earlier iterated revolves around oil and gas extraction and production, due to the abundance of these resources in the country, and the designated organisation in charge of productivity in the sector is Qatar Petroleum. Both the offshore production facilities and on-shore wells are managed by the Qatar Petroleum; the activities undertaken by the organisation is

also identified to account for a major percentage of the GDP for the country (Sarrakh et al., 2021). Located offshore, the north gas field of the country which was discovered in 1971 is noted to be approximately 6000 square kilometres which constitutes more than half the geographical size of the country's mainland (Araman, 2018). The site is also identified to be the largest single deposit for non-associated natural gas, making the region important as it accounts for 20% of the global liquefied natural gas reserves, and the third most important globally with regards to gas fields (Araman, 2018). This makes it important that the required labour or talent needed to facilitate production within the country is engaged, as engagement would enhance productivity outcomes for offshore sites.

A large population of individuals from various countries globally make up the population of residents in the State of Qatar, with Qatari citizens constituting a minority of the total population of the country. Available statistics regarding the population of residents identifies 10% of the residents are of Qatari origin. With regards to the country's labour force, 88% incorporate citizens from different nations including 13% of other Arab nationalities, 21.8% of Indian descent, 7.35% comprising Filipino, 12.5% Nepalis, 9.35% Bangladeshis and 4.35% hail from Sri Lanka and Egypt (PSA, 2021). The figure 1 which follows provides further insight into the different nationalities present in the state of Qatar.

Figure 1- Population of Qatar by Nationality (PSA, 2021)

Nationality	Population	Total Percentile
India	700,000	21.8%
Bangladesh	400,000	12.5%
Nepal	400,000	12.5%
Qatar	333,000	9.35%
Egypt	300,000	9.35%
Philippines	236,000	7.35%
Pakistan	150,000	4.7%
SriLanka	140,000	4.35%
Sudan	60,000	1.9%
Syria	54,000	1.7%
Jordan	51,000	1.6%
Lebanon	40,000	1.25%
USA	40,000	1.25%
Kenya	30,000	1%
Iran	30,000	1%
Indonesia	27,350	0.85%
Tunisia	26,000	0.8%
Ethiopia	25,000	0.8%
UK	22,000	0.7%
Nigeria	11,000	0.35%
China	More than 10,000	0.3%
Turkey	10,000	0.3%
Canada	9,200	0.3%
Saudi Arabia	8,245	0.25%

Further insights on the demographic of Workers in Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector reveals [this](#) comprises a diverse composition, which are mainly expatriate workers from various countries. Key nationalities present includes professionals from the Southern Asian region (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), Southern Eastern Asian region (Philippines and Indonesia), and other Middle Eastern countries. Other nationalities present include Kenyans, British, among others, but there presently does not exist accurate demographic percentages of the various nationalities present in the sector from published reports, although the demographic percentages of workers vary, and all nationalities contribute in dynamic ways to the operational sustainability of the sector (Planning and Statistics Authority, 2020).

Nationally, and industry-wide, the number of working-age Qataris is approximately 215,000 people, while expatriates constitute 2.2 million people of working age, indicating that the economic dependency ratio is such that every 10 expatriate workers in Qatar support 3 members

of society; no statistics are available for the Offshore segment of the oil and gas industry (Planning and Statistics Authority, 2020).

In terms of the skill levels and roles prevalent in the Offshore workforce in Qatar, this includes technicians, engineers and project managers who are responsible for operations including drilling, maintenance and safety protocols. There are also Semi-skilled and unskilled labourers contributing to the operational activities which are undertaken daily, illustrating the hierarchical nature of the structure of the workforce in the sector.

Additionally, the offshore workforce comprises various age groups, with younger professionals employed in more technical roles, and older workers in managerial and advisory positions, with most of the workers predominantly male, although female employees are represented in support and administrative functions. This evidences governmental policies trying to diversify the representation of gender in the Offshore sector (Naguib and Aref, 2024).

In terms of the living arrangements of Workers in Qatar's offshore sector, the nature of their roles is such that organizations in the sector have developed purpose-built accommodation, taking the form of living quarters on floating vessels or offshore platforms which are stationed close to the production sites. These infrastructure have been equipped with essential amenities, allowing for prolonged residence of workers; they include galley or dining areas, medical facilities and recreational spaces, and are manned by trained personnel to cater for the worker's needs. Legislation and policies governing accommodation is regulated by Qatar's Ministry of Municipality and Environment (Ministry of Interior, 2018). No published studies have outlined or probed into how these demographic elements impact WLB of the sector, making it crucial to examine.

Suggestions by Yin et al.,(2014) finds that there has been a continuous drop in the number of employees interested in working within the offshore industry, with younger employees having preference for working in onshore jobs. The decline, shortage and low retention rate are suggested to impact recruitment to the sector and increase costs associated with recruitment of new workers due to the perception and notion that the nature of jobs available offshore are high-risk and the perception that better opportunities are available to onshore workers (Li et al., 2014). Suggestions

by Dickey et al.,(2011) indicates that there is a discretionary willingness of individuals in accepting offshore jobs due to the nature of activities and efforts required for these jobs when compared to onshore jobs which are characterised with lower occupational health and safety hazards.

Evaluating these arguments, it can be suggested that offshore jobs compared to onshore roles, have higher risks and lower health related hazards due to the differences in the environmental characteristics associated with the job roles. These elements including worker exposure to dangerous working conditions, social isolation, distance from family/home, increased are argued to be important factors which affect employee satisfaction, and WLB of employees (Sandal et al., 2006). While Sandal et al.,(2006) fail to provide insights relating to the risks faced by offshore workers and its impact on WLB of employees, Afzainizam et al.,(2016) confirms these arguments by stating that the nature of the offshore sector presents a situation which is unique due to the high-risks involved in the job roles when compared to working environments that are onshore. This makes maintenance of the satisfaction of employees within the sector quite challenging. Expanding further, it is indicated that due to the kind of activities incorporated into the work-roles offshore, employees are constantly stressed, and are consistently exposed to high rates of occupational hazards, accidents and other health and safety challenges (Bergheim et al., 2015).

Additionally in terms of talent that is essential to facilitate operations of the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector, it is noted that most organisations face challenges in recruiting workforce or talent to work in the sector (Pegram et al., 2018). This is suggested to be due to lack of skilled and experienced workforce willing to work in the segment. Pegram et al., (2018) indicates that globally, there is a lack of experienced and qualified workers, and due to this lack of competent/skilled workers for oil and gas organisations, there is a huge reliance on foreign workers to facilitate operations and business continuity within the sector.

While no specific data exists on the turnover rate in Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector, it is indicated that the turnover rates are influenced by multifaceted elements including the nature of rotational work schedules in the sector; the industry has a 28 days on, and 28 days off shift, which affects turnover because this impacts personal and familial commitments of employees to their role (Modern Intelligence, 2024). Additionally, the nature of the compensation and benefits is such

that the remuneration packages are competitive, comprising offshore allowances, base salaries and performance bonuses, which are pivotal for the retention of skilled professionals. Further to this, the sector due to safety concerns adopts stringent adherence policies to international health and safety standards, which are integrated with robust safety protocols, in addition to emergency response systems to promote a secure working environment, which is important factor impacting the potential retention and positive morale of employees (Belengar et al., 2024).

As indicated previously, limited existing data is available on turnover rates in Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector, making it difficult to compare with other industries including construction, hospitality and health care which exists in the country. However, overall suggestions of available published industry reports provide an estimate highlighting that the turnover rates in the Offshore oil and gas industry tends to hover between moderate and high resulting from global demand fluctuations and industry specific challenges, coupled with the allure of international career opportunities existing within the segment globally (Belengar et al., 2024).

In comparison with other industries such as hospitality and construction which experience high turnover rates due to factors such as contractual flexibility, seasonal employment and variation in job demands, Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector adopts retention strategies such as competitive compensation packages which are regularly benchmarked with industry standards and economic demands, to retain workers. Further to this, Qatar's offshore segment, in comparison to other industries has introduced flexible work arrangements, recreational amenities aboard offshore platforms and comprehensive leave policies for its workers, coupled with continuous enhancement of occupational health and safety measures for promoting employee wellness and enhancing WLB.

The clear gap in literature makes it crucial that further research is undertaken to provide insights into the impact of WLB on effectiveness of offshore employee retention in oil companies in Qatar. This makes this study not only timely but relevant.

In this thesis, findings from prior studies would be taken further, and gaps relating to examination/exploration of the impact of WLB on employee engagement, including specific focus its impact on employees within the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry. Specifically in prior studies on WLB in the Middle East, the focus of those studies have been have only focused on the impact of WLB on organisational outcomes (Al-Emadi et al., 2015; Alrowwad et al., 2018).

There have been no studies focused on exploring the impact of WLB on engagement and retention of employees specifically in the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector in Qatar. This study fills those gaps in literature by specifically examining how WLB could be used to enhance retention, specifically within the offshore segment of Qatar's oil and gas segment.

In a study by Rajan-Rankin (2016) which emphasizes the challenges faced by offshore workers noted that these challenges include health complaints such as sleep challenges, mental health issues, mental fatigue, anxiety and increased levels of nervousness when compared with on-shore workers. The study found that reason for these challenges is argued to be resultant of reduced positive WLB practices within the offshore segment when compared to onshore, which results in increased occupational strain on offshore workers (Rajan-Rankin, 2016). A possible explanation for this is that on-shore employees, particularly those working in less high-risk industries do not face the same amount of physical and mental challenges associated with their roles, when compared to on-shore workers. This study however was not conducted within the context of Qatar, so this research would expand on the contributions provided by Rajan-Rankin (2016).

Arlinghaus et al.,(2019) suggested that in the consideration of the working and operational conditions for employees, a variety of factors could have risk impacts that are negative on the health of workers including psychosocial risks, role conflicts, and reduced physical health among other negative traits associated with distress and fatigue. Poulouse and Dhal (2020) also identify that an important factor that is essential in facilitating the satisfaction of workers and ensuring WLB are rewards. Rewards including monetary rewards are essential for the retention of employees, but they will not be sufficient when adopted as strategies to improve job satisfaction of workers, or the impacts of work pressures (Poulouse and Dhal, 2020). These claims have been supported by other studies which identify that a combination of intrinsic rewards such as job security, and extrinsic rewards which include monetary rewards are essential for job satisfaction (Khan et al., 2013).

As several of these studies have not been conducted to examine WLB and its impact on organisational commitment, employee retention and overall organisational outcomes, within the context of offshore organisations, specifically in the Middle East and Qatar, this study aims to

expand on available literature with the aims of providing further insights to bolster business policies and employee outcomes within the context of the State of Qatar.

The importance of this study is in the potential of the study in providing insights which could aid in informing business policies and positive outcomes for employees in the offshore segment, which is a vital segment of Qatar's economy. Additionally, by examining the effect of WLB on various outcomes for the organisation including engagement, productivity and job satisfaction, the study can provide valuable insights relating to the effectiveness of various measures including non-monetary rewards and its impact on WLB outcomes for employees and their overall well-being. Furthermore, the focus of the study on the offshore segment is critical, considering the unique challenges which are faced by offshore workers, which could have significant effects on their overall health, ultimately impacting their performance and retention. The study can, therefore, contribute to a better understanding of the factors that influence the retention of employees in the offshore segment, including the role of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

Overall, the study's importance lies in its potential to provide novel insights into the impact of WLB practices on organisational outcomes in the offshore segment, which can inform business policies and improve employee well-being and retention. By addressing a critical gap in the existing literature, the study can contribute to the advancement of knowledge in this field and have significant implications for both research and practice.

The next section provides insight into the significance of conducting this investigation.

1.4 Significance and Rationale of the Study

Within the oil and gas sector, two categories of employees exist including office-based employees and field-based employees, including the category of employees that work off-shore. Employees that are office-based work within regular organisational settings, based in the city, having "normal" work schedules which commence at the beginning of a business week to the end of a business week, which is usually Monday to Fridays, having the weekends off (Wadsworth and Facer, 2016). For the second category of workers, also known as the field employees, the nature of their roles is rotational, hence them being referred to as rotational employees, and are characterized by a work schedule arrangement that incorporates them working away from home or offsite/offshore for

periodic times (Valk and Hannon, 2016). Field employees are usually domiciled within the operational base for the organisation including its rigs, offshore platforms and flow-stations which are usually located in remote locations, making it impossible or impractical for employees to travel back and forth to on a daily basis.

These workers who are also classed as rotational workers within the oil and gas sector are confronted with challenges including those associated with work-life balance (WLB); 80% of employees working as rotational workers are identified to find it difficult in being able to balance activities relating to their personal and work lives, which influences their performance within their roles (Kumar and Janakiran, 2017). This is because the nature and characteristics associated with rotational workers are such that they experience stress in their personal lives and challenges associated with their social lives due to the conflicts stemming on their personal lives as a result of time/periods away from home. Additionally, the intensity associated with their job roles including tendency for over-working impacts employee turnover intention within the offshore sector (Kumar and Janakiran, 2017).

Due to the intensity associated with the work roles within offshore jobs, Stuhr et al.,(2015) suggests that employees that are rotational workers are required to be physically and mentally fit, because the intensity associated with these roles offshore impacts on their mental wellness, particularly when adequate provisions are not made to facilitate WLB. This is noted to impact engagement and retention of workers in the segment (Ibid).

Initial studies relating to WLB and engagement were conducted by Caesar and Fei (2018) within the context of the shipping segment and it was found in this study that WLB work-life balance issues is directly linked to the many benefits for the individual and organisation including improved organisational citizenship behaviour which leads to better performance and productivity of employees. When employees are able to attain positive job satisfaction outcomes, they become motivated in their roles, and this impacts overall performance of employees, their engagement, and organisational outcomes (Obiageli et al., 2015).

Looking at prior studies which have explored employee engagement and WLB within the context of the Middle Eastern region, a review of the papers identify that these studies have examined the

topic in relations to organisational outcomes. For instance, Prang (2020) conducted an examination into how employee engagement and job satisfaction impacted on organisational outcomes of workers in the supply chain business in the region. The findings identified that there are statistically significant relationships among employee engagement, job satisfaction and organisational outcomes and recommended increase of WLB to improve these relationships (Prang, 2020).

In another study, Alrowwad et al.,(2018) conducted a study in Jordan within the telecommunications and Information technology sector exploring the relationship between WLB, talent management, motivational drivers of engagement and performance of the organisation. The findings showed that WLB and motivational drivers of engagement examined played mediating roles between organisational performance and talent management (Alrowwad et al., 2018). Looking at these studies, it can be seen that the contexts of these studies did not consider industries such as the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector but explored on-shores positions in the telecommunications industry. The studies also failed to consider the relationship between WLB and retention, and also consider the impact of culture on WLB and did not consider the impact of WLB on commitment of workers, nor did they put into cognizance the challenges and issues associated with WLB in the offshore segment. This indicates a lack of published studies exploring WLB and its impact on engagement and retention of workers.

1.5 Research aims and objectives

The aim of this research is to examine the impact of work-life balance on employee motivation and employee retention amongst offshore employees in Qatar.

The objectives of the research include the following:

- To critically review the academic literature in the area and develop an effective framework
- To critically assess the impact of work-life balance on the commitment and engagement of offshore employees
- To understand the impact of culture, specifically the policies of Qatarization on WLB and retention of offshore employees
- To provide valuable insights to oil sector on how to design effective strategies to managing WLB initiatives for the benefits of offshore employees.

Research Question

- What is the impact of WLB on employee motivation and retention among offshore workers in Qatar's oil and gas sector?

1.6 Document Structure

In chapter 1, the study aims, the research objectives and the significance of the study are highlighted. The chapter provides some details about the offshore sector which this research is focused on, and highlights the challenges and issues faced by employees in the sector in relations to WLB.

In chapter 2, a critical review of relevant literature is provided. The chapter explores literature relating to WLB, identifies the factors that impact WLB and also provides insights into deploying WLB strategies, the relationship between employee engagement and WLB and the concept of retention. The chapter also reviews literature relating with employee retention and WLB, organisational commitment and WLB, and also literature examining the relationship between job satisfaction and WLB.

In chapter 3, the methodology of the research is provided in detail. The chapter outlines the philosophy used in the research along with the justifications for adopting the philosophy and the considerations which were taken by the researcher in justifying the philosophical position of the study. Additionally, the chapter outlined the research approach followed, where it was identified that the research makes use of the quantitative approach. The justifications and rationale for the use of this approach are also highlighted. The data collection instrument, procedures for collecting the data, sampling techniques being used, data analysis approach and the ethical principles followed by the study.

In Chapter 4, the research findings are presented. The analysis of the results which was done quantitatively using SPSS are outlined in this chapter. Details relating to the demographics of the participant, descriptive analysis, reliability analysis results, and correlation test results are outlined in the chapter.

Chapter 5 presented the discussions relating to the findings obtained from the study; this was done by comparing the findings obtained and the meanings with appropriate literature.

Finally, the thesis is concluded in chapter 6 where the research aims and objectives are reiterated, and the academic and practical contributions of the study are identified. The conclusion chapter is presented in a manner that provides facilitates exploration of the hypothesis posited at the commencement of the research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

A review of existing literature on the core concepts have been undertaken. Noting that this study explores the impact of work-life balance on the retention and engagement of offshore employees, the scope of the chapter is to introduce and assess the concept of WLB by assessing key definitions and provide detailed evaluation of the concept. It also outlines details from extant research regarding the concept of WLB within organisations, identifies the factors affecting WLB and provides insights into how the concept relates with employee engagement, retention, organisational commitment and how they intersect together. Finally, the scope is to present the thesis conceptual framework.

2.1 Understanding Work-life Balance

The use of the term WLB was initiated in 1996 by Marks and Macdermid (1996), where the concept was described from the perspective relating to role balance. In using the concept, the construct was defined as the capacity for individuals in engaging in roles which are meaningful in their lives (Marks and Macdermid, 1996). A different definition of the concept was posited by Frone (2003) which identified that it referred to the combination of low-family conflict or absence of same, and high enrichment relating to engagement with family duties.

In describing the concept of work-life balance (WLB), Lewis and Beauregard (2018) indicate that no single definition or explanation of the concept has been accepted, and that there are various overlapping definitions of the concept, across a variety of research disciplines. At its inception, the concept was described as a scenario which occurs when low levels of conflict occurs between work and non-work-related demands (Lewis and Beuregard, 2018). In another study by Meenalshi et al.,(2013) WLB is described as a balance of satisfaction which occurs between an individual's work life and family life, while Lazar et al.,(2010) goes further and argued that the concept is all about employees managing both their work and non-work-related activities.

A more detailed definition is posited by Greenhaus et al.,(2011), where the concept is suggested to incorporate equal engagement of both family and work commitments, although in this

definition, it is argued that balance only occurs when there is consistency between effectiveness of role and role satisfaction by the said employees.

Halpern and Murphy (2013) described the concept of WLB as an illustration of a balance beam from the family perspective, indicating that WLB incorporates an individual's burden of the family on one end, while work was at the other end of the spectrum of the beam. This definition was rejected by Casper et al.,(2018) who indicated that the concept of WLB incorporated fitting the resources and demands present in the family and work domains.

An evaluation of these papers indicates that WLB relates to the idea of ensuring satisfaction and effectiveness of individuals within the family and work domains, and the alignment individuals and their priorities with the various domains of life; and not just their resources, or work. This argument is posited based on the realisation that there is diversity associated with individual differences, preferences and family structures, and that there is a personality personal role which could impact the balance of individuals, with regards to their ability to align family and work domains.

Consequently, to define the concept of WLB, it is suggested that that separating the domains of personal and family life are important, but the variance of individual contexts such as family structure and career phases also needs to be put into consideration (Adkins and Premeaux, 2019).

WLB is a social construct that tends to highlight a broader approach, such as redressing underlying issues related to gender equity and family-friendly policy usage, which individuals face in their quest for gaining economic independence and self-worth. As a result, the more inclusive phrase “work-life”, as opposed to “work-family”, has gained ubiquitous acceptance, paving the way for the widespread adoption of this terminology (Akanji et al., 2020a, b; Au et al., 2020).

The above reviews shows that there are inconsistencies relating to what WLB incorporates as the various definitions continue to contest what the concept denotes, depending on the context of the situation. Despite the lack of agreement around WLB concept, the study describes WLB within the context of its conventional description, considering time management and inter-role conflicts including considerations of care for dependents and how this impacts the workforce within the

offshore segment of Qatar's oil and gas industry. The elements considered in this definition of the concept relate to employment-based and home/family-based characteristics, and also considers how the individual concerned, incorporates care arrangements for family as supported by legislative policies. This implies that for individual in Qatar's offshore segment, WLB depends on the interactivity between personal balance, balance at the workplace/site and balance relating to social welfare commitments of individuals.

This supposition aligns with Anxo et al.,(2013) argument which identifies that WLB incorporates the ability of individuals in balancing these concepts. Consequently, for the scope of this study, WLB is described as the ability of offshore workers in the oil/gas sector in Qatar to balance work-life and personal-life through ensuring balance of both domains in a manner that facilitates reduction of conflict of work-life with personal life. Specifically, this means that WLB is the capacity of workers in the oil and gas offshore segment in being able to balance work activities with activities in their personal life without either form of activities leading to negative impact or outcomes on the employee.

Summarily, WLB concept incorporates ensuring a balance between work and personal life (Mark and Macdemid, 1996) or a scenario where there is low conflicts between an individual's work commitment and non-work-related commitments (Lewis and Buregard, 2018). The extant literature also described the concept as involving the balance of satisfaction between an individual's personal and work life (Meenalshi et al., 2013), by ensuring that these activities are managed effectively (Lazar et al., 2010). This perspective aligns with the societal and cultural nuances of Qatar, which emphasizes the importance of strong family values and a close-knit community, underscoring the value of this balance. Within this context, WLB is not focused only on time allocation but also on fostering satisfaction and well-being of employees in both domains.

Other descriptions used in denoting the concept of WLB includes the equal engagement of work and family commitments, a balance-beam of family and work burdens (Greenhaus et al., 2011; Halpern and Murphy, 2013). From this description, it could be suggested that WLB in the context of Qatar's offshore segment involves employees balancing work commitments with family commitment and showing some equality with regards to the extent to which one is committed to their role.

This definition used in this research is underscored by papers by Carreri et al.,(2022) and Fleetwood (2007) where it is argued that the life of individuals are usually based on two spheres: their usual everyday life, and work-life - the former having some form of unfavourable constraint on the latter. They strongly suggest that there is a need for an alignment between various commitment, time management and personal ambition. A greater alignment facilitates positive employee outcomes such as exertion of efforts in implementing assigned duties, enhanced productivity outcomes for the organisation and job satisfaction and motivation of the employees (Carreri et al., 2022; Tejero, 2021).

Considering the context of the offshore segment in Qatar's oil and gas sector, these suggestions indicate that prioritizing safety protocols, which require careful design and ensuring adherence to safety regulations, in addition to investing in technology and infrastructure to improve communication by workers while on offshore rigs, and improving flexible arrangements through introducing rotational shifts can help reduce fatigue, inevitably impacts WLB of employees. By putting into cognizance these opportunities and challenges, the suppositions indicate that stakeholders in Qatar's offshore segment of the oil and gas sector could leverage work arrangements resulting in improved employee wellbeing, job satisfaction and WLB.

This explains why WLB is an important component of an organisation's success since it leads to increased productivity which influences employee retention. It is important to identify and explore these factors as understanding them is crucial to facilitating the achievement of this study's objectives. The next section expands on the factors which impact WLB.

2.2 Factors associated with WLB

There are numerous factors which impact WLB at individual and organisational level (Dhingra and Dhingra, 2021). Firstly, working hours have been identified as a key influential factor for WLB. Longer hours could result in reduction of resources because when longer hours are implemented by employees, it draws on a finite available resource in the organisation which could impact organisational strategy (Boyar et al., 2007; Haar and Brougham 2014). Longer work hours could lead to conflict within organisational teams as a correlation in the prediction of the impact of longer hours of work on organisational operations predicts higher level of conflicts associated

with significantly high work demands (Byron, 2005). Secondly, job autonomy is another factor which influences WLB as it affects employee ability in making decisions relating to how they implement their duties, and this results in the employee having the feelings associated with control, which is important for job satisfaction and WLB (Haar and Brougham, 2020). Job control needs to be such that there is reduced continued monitoring of employees by management or supervisors, and employees have the perception that they are in control of the functions which have been assigned to them (Harr and Brougham, 2020). Expanding further, suppositions by Haar (2013) indicate that when there is higher autonomy, this links to job satisfaction which relates to WLB because autonomy increases the self-esteem of employees with regards to their perception of their ability in implementing a variety of objectives.

These arguments suggest that in the correlation between longer working hours and reduced WLB in the context of the offshore oil and gas sector in Qatar, there is a need to reconsider work schedules. This is because implementing flexible working arrangements, such as rotational shifts or the introduction of more breaks within shifts, could alleviate the strain of long hours, which affect the balance of work and family domains. Also, ensuring that workloads are manageable within these hours can help reduce conflict and enhance team cohesion, ultimately benefiting organizational strategy and employee well-being. The arguments are underscored by the position that positive impact of job autonomy on WLB underscores should be deployed in designing roles of Workers because this provides employees with a sense of control over their work (Harr and Brougham, 2020; Haar, 2013). Considering the context of offshore employees in Qatar's oil and gas sector, who may feel isolated or detached from the broader organizational context, it can be argued that enhancing autonomy can improve job satisfaction, boost morale, and strengthen their commitment to their job roles.

In other studies, O'driscoll et al.,(2007) suggested that the demands of work on family time are factors that influence WLB because these demands cause conflicts by increasing work-time demands on the employee. Expanding further, when employees work long hours, and the nature of the work roles is such that they do not have time to balance regular workload or have irregular work schedule patterns with a balance on their personal lives, it increases issues surrounding WLB, which impacts productivity outcomes. In agreement, suggestions by Yildirim and Ayca (2008)

indicate that higher demands associated with work, and irregular schedules for job functions align with lower WLB.

Considering the context of offshore roles in Qatar's offshore oil and gas segment which is characterised by an often-imposing significant demand on employees' time, the literature implies the need for strategies to mitigate work-family conflicts being critical. This is because the nature of the role and structure of offshore-jobs results in an imbalance of family and work-related commitments, leading to confluence of both commitments by workers. Providing support services, such as counselling and family care assistance, can help employees manage these tensions (Yildrin and Aycan, 2008). Additionally, creating communication channels for employees to stay connected with their families during offshore stints can ease the emotional burden of separation.

Management commitment has also been seen as an important factor to enable employees to engage further with work activities. For example, employee accessibility to work-life programmes, work-life support initiatives, the work culture, support by the supervisory team, the nature of work hours, work schedule, and flexibility of work schedules contribute positively to organisational performance (Haar et al., 2014). It facilitates employee ability to balance both family commitments and job functions, it enhances job satisfaction and commitment (Poulose and Dhal, 2020). Abdirahman (2018) goes further by identifying that management commitment not only impacts job satisfaction, but is important to WLB due to its characteristics which makes it an indicator associated with psychological health, and well-being, and also because it is related to a variety of behaviours associated with positive benefits to the organisation. The implication of this is that the employees being satisfied with their roles could impact WLB as the nature of the role may have wider impacts on the health, well-being and attitudes of employees within the organisation.

Evaluating these suggestions, the implications are that in the demanding environment of Qatar's offshore sector, there is a need for strategic actions by senior leadership to actively endorse and integrate WLB initiatives within the corporate culture. This is because such commitments such as flexible work arrangements and comprehensive support systems that consider the unique challenges of offshore work would enhance the satisfaction of workers and alleviate negative health-related challenges which may impact worker productivity. Abdirahman (2018) highlights job satisfaction as a crucial element for WLB because it impacts psychological health and

organisational behaviour positively. For Qatar's offshore segment, this implies the necessity to tailor job roles and responsibilities that align with individual strengths and provide a clear sense of purpose. The arguments also underscore the importance of management engaging in continuous dialogue with employees to gauge satisfaction levels, and adapt roles to mitigate any detected challenges proactively. The adoption of this approaches will foster a work environment where employees feel valued, directly influencing their satisfaction and, by extension, their WLB.

Mittal (2021) in a study on WLB and the impacts of WLB identifies other factors that impact WLB as including work pressure, stress, demotivation, and communication challenges which impact the relationship environment in the organisation. The study however found that the most influential factor which influence WLB was the demotivation of employees (Ibid). The indication that employee demotivation as the most influential factor which impacts WLB could be argued to not necessarily denote the case in other context as the study was focused on WLB within hybrid working conditions. However, the findings that stress, challenges in work environment communication and stress impact WLB can be suggested to be valid, as these elements tie to the demotivation of employees. Saeed and Farooqi (2014) agree with these suppositions by suggesting that a key factor for WLB is job satisfaction, noting that job satisfaction is the most researched variable which has been examined in relation to WLB because it influences the motivation of workers with their role, and the extent to which employees have a preference for or against their role. Sultan et al.,(2017) also highlighted that social support is important to facilitate the achievement of WLB, impacting motivation.

The agreement by these different authors on the importance of WLB in underscoring motivation suggests that demotivation, exacerbated by work pressure and communication challenges, are significant barriers to achieving WLB. Considering the context of the offshore sector in Qatar, where the isolation and intensity of work could heighten these issues, the arguments by these authors indicate the importance of implementing robust internal communication strategies that ensure clarity of roles, recognition of efforts, and a supportive feedback mechanism. Further to this, addressing work pressure through realistic job design and workload management is essential to mitigate demotivation and foster a positive work environment for workers in Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector. The literature underscores the role of social support, particularly from

supervisors, in facilitating WLB (Sultan et al., 2017; Saeed and Farooq, 2014). This means that of crucial importance is the need for leadership training that equips supervisors with the skills to provide emotional and professional support to their teams. Creating a support network that includes peer mentorship and access to counselling services can provide the necessary social support to buffer the challenges of offshore work, thereby enhancing employee motivation in the sector (Abdirahman, 2018).

Various studies have also been able to link stress and poor job satisfaction to poor implementation of WLB initiatives. Stress is described as an issue that occurs when the pressures being faced by individuals supersede the ability to cope with assigned work roles (Kazmi and Singh, 2015; Zahoor and Abdullah (2021). Suppositions by Althammer et al.,(2021) indicate that perceived stress is representative of the manner through which individuals are able to identify with an event that is stressful that they are engaged with, rather than the emotions and symptoms relating to stress that they could experience.

Some of the stressors encountered by employees are noted to include those relating to job security, capital problems, and family challenges leading to poor performance (Kazmi and Singh, 2015). Stress could affect the personal life and lead to extended impacts on the organisation; persons under stress could have several health risks including headaches, burnout, and depression, which leads to job dissatisfaction (Ma et al., 2021). Organisations in a bid to increase their competitiveness within their sector tend to project more responsibilities to employees which results in increases in stress and pressures on these individuals. This leads to wider organisational implications including a decline in productivity, higher turnover rate, and higher absenteeism due to work dissatisfaction (Ma et al., 2021; Matusaka et al., 2021).

From the review undertaken, it is seen that there are detrimental effects of stress on job satisfaction, which impacts organisational performance, including productivity, turnover rates, and absenteeism (Kazmi and Singh, 2015; Ma et al., 2021). In Qatar's offshore sector, where the work environment inherently includes numerous stressors, this necessitates a comprehensive stress management strategy. The development of such a strategy which should include proactive measures for stress identification, programs for stress reduction (e.g., mindfulness training, leisure activities), and policies that enhance job security and work autonomy could impact WLB. This is because

projection of more responsibilities on workers could result in increased stress, as underscored by studies by Ma et al., 2021 and Matusaka et al., 2021 which call for a strategic review of job roles within the offshore sector. In these studies it is suggested that the adoption of a balanced approach to workload distribution, ensuring that the addition of responsibilities is matched with adequate resources and support could alleviate stress. The implementation of this balanced approach considering the nature of job roles in Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector could thus be argued as crucial in preventing burnout and promoting a sustainable work environment that supports both organisational objectives and employee well-being.

Another study relating to WLB on stress suggests that a negative correlation between WLB and stress occurs; the findings show that there exists a relationship between WLB on stress, but the findings do not explicitly identify specifics on how the variables relate (Christiana and Rajun, 2014). In similar notion, suggestions by Hosseinabadi et al.,(2018) indicate that although satisfaction is used in reference to emotions, attitudes and feelings individuals have relating to their work functions, stress relates with the ability of individuals in coping with an overwhelming event being experienced by them. Hosseinabadi et al.,(2018) argued that attaining job satisfaction results in a pleasant and positive emotional state, and this feeling translates to individual's expression of attitude and behaviours within their job role and while no metric of how this relates to stress, assertions by the paper suggest that this reduces stress which impacts the ability of workers in performing their functions or duties. They indicated that lack of organisational support to enhance This shows that WLB initiatives significantly impacted on job stress, and job satisfaction, which in turn affects organisational commitment (OC) of workers.

Summarily, among the factors which impact WLB, the review identifies nature of work/demands of work (O'Driscoll et al., 2007), length of work hours and autonomy of jobs (Byron, 2005), and characteristics of work environment (Haar and Brougham, 2014) as important factors which affect WLB outcomes. Other factors identified as crucial which impact WLB includes the approaches used in executing job roles, the characteristics associated with the job role (Poulose and Dhal, 2020), job satisfaction, the presence of social support within the work environment and stress (Christiana and Rajun, 2014). environment. As identified from the existing literature, when the WLB is healthy, this positively impacts the emotional, physical and mental well-being of the

employees. This makes it important to explore the deployment of WLB initiatives. Wood et al.,(2020) study support this as they argued that the importance of exploring the link between WLB, engagement and commitment of employees. They highlighted that that engagement of employees which describes the positive work-related mind-sets of employees has an impact on the commitment of employees and other positive organisational outcomes including job satisfaction. Other positive outcomes associated with engagement were noted to include positive impacts on performance, although it is indicated that in order to derive these benefits, it is essential for organisations to create appropriate environments which facilitate positive employee WLB (Wood et al., 2020). The implication of this is that WLB is essential to deriving positive outcomes including engagement and commitment of employees towards their roles. The next section provides an insight into WLB initiatives and the implementation of WLB within the workplace.

2.3 WLB Implementation

Many organisations have implemented various work-life balance practices to help their employees manage work-related stress and maintain a healthy work-life balance. There are three forms of practices that could be offered by organisations with regards to WLB implementation (Glass and Estes, 1997). These include practices that facilitates family caring commitments and the capacity for reducing work hours, flexible work practices, and offering caring facilities to support employees in caring for their children. It is essential for organisations to focus on flexible work practices as WLB initiative which relates to the flexibility of the working hours, and other range of practices such as reduced work hours, remote working, job share, part-time work provisions amongst others (Bjarntoft et al., 2020). This suggests that when flexible working practices are adopted, it enhances the well-being of employees by facilitating the ease with which employee can plan their personal lives and work schedule, reducing induced stress which could arise due to work-family conflicts. Russel et al.,(2009) research offers some interesting findings as they found that the impact of flexible work practices, specifically part-time WLB initiatives facilitates the improvement of WLB leading to reduction of work-life pressure, conflicts as well as facilitates improvement on job satisfaction. In agreement Martinez-Leon et al.,(2019) identifies that WLB is impacted by the number of work hours as it increases employee job satisfaction due to lower work intensifications due to better WLB activities. This means that the nature of flexible work

arrangements within the workplace can be leveraged as a strategy for the implementation of WLB practices.

The implication for organisations, especially within sectors characterized by rigid work schedules like Qatar's offshore industry, is the need to integrate flexible work arrangements proactively. These could include part-time work, job sharing, and remote working options, tailored to reduce work intensifications and accommodate employees' family caring commitments. For Qatar's offshore sector, adopting such practices suggests a strategic shift towards operational flexibility, acknowledging that enhancing employee well-being directly contributes to improved organizational performance. The adoption of flexible work practices as a strategic tool for WLB implementation must, therefore, be deliberate and aligned with the overall organizational goals and employee needs.

Dizaho and Saleh (2017) in a study which examined how flexible work arrangements impact on WLB suggested that while flexible working practices facilitates ease of planning assigned work functions for employees, it has the capability of distorting the boundaries between non-work and work events, which could lead to higher work-family conflicts. This implies that in adapting flexible work arrangements, WLB initiatives encourages management and balance between work and personal life activities. Poor flexible work arrangement results in decline in engagement of employees with their roles, which has negative impacts on employee commitment and organisational outcomes (Dizaho and Saleh, 2017). This is in agreement with suppositions by Putra et al.,(2020) which explored WLB initiatives and their impacts on employee work practices within the context of COVID-19 scenario. The findings also suggested that although remote and other WLB initiatives including flexible work arrangements are designed to reduce work-life conflict, some employees could adopt these practices such that they work longer hours which increases conflicts relating to work-life and inadvertently the effectiveness of WLB initiatives. Similarly, Putranti et al.,(2020) in their study which explored WLB and flexible working practices within the context of the global health pandemic. Although there is a potential for flexible work practices in reducing the work-load of employees, initiatives like the work-from-home practices could negatively impact on WLB practices. This is because some employees have difficulty of separating work from private life, resulting in them working longer hours, negatively impacting on WLB

outcomes. The potential downside of flexible work arrangements, including the blurring of boundaries between work and personal life, highlights the complexity of WLB initiatives. For organisations in Qatar's offshore sector, the implication is the necessity of designing WLB practices that not only offer flexibility but also guard against increased work-family conflicts due to extended work hours in informal settings. This necessitates a balanced approach that includes setting clear guidelines for remote work, ensuring communication technologies do not encroach unduly into personal time, and promoting a culture that respects the distinction between work and personal life. The findings also hint at the importance of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of WLB initiatives to ensure they meet their intended goals without unintended negative consequences.

Further to that, the nature of the relationships in the work environment is a factor which could facilitate positive WLB for employees. Wu et al.,(2022) argued that when WLB initiatives are applied, it results in the creation of a more socially engaging work environment; this form of environment facilitates the achievement of positive outcomes including loyalty of employees to the organisations. This means that deploying WLB through strategic practices that enhance the work environment would result in increased job satisfaction which positively impacts the loyalty of the employee and the extent to which they want to remain within an organisation.

A different perspective is posited by Kelliher and Anderson (2010) which suggests that a reduction in work hours did not translate to a reduction in workloads, as reduced work hours only resulted in a later intensification of workloads due to their inability to meet the demands of work responsibilities. However, employee trust has been seen as a critical tool to encourage a positive WLB thinking. Chan and Tay (2022) noted that WLB initiatives could impact on perceived trust of employees about the organisation. When balanced WLB initiatives are applied within the policies of the organisation, it results in employee's appreciation of their organisation and promotes a perception which facilitates trusts of employees in their organisation. This results in positive impacts on OC and ER (Chan and Tay, 2022). The implementation of WLB initiatives should not be implemented in a manner that is reactionary, but should be rather designed to facilitate its demands and the need to implement it by the workforce. As Muthoni and Alexander (2022) suggests, the introduction of WLB initiatives implement facilitates an improvement in work

performance, reduction of expenditure to the organisation resulting from absenteeism, and indirect costs associated with employee replacement. The implication of this is that WLB facilitates the ability of employees in coping with issues that could impact their OC and ER. This section has evaluated different means through which WLB could be deployed within an organisation. Furthermore, the section identified that leveraging different means of implementing WLB enhances organisational outcomes by improving employee outcomes including reducing stress and other consequences of lack of WLB policies. One of the impacts of WLB is noted to challenge to employees with regards to managing their time in an effective manner which could lead to negative impacts of stress on the employees. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) suggested that employees who perceive their organisation as supportive of their work-life balance are more likely to be engaged and exhibit higher job satisfaction and commitment. Conversely, employees experiencing work-life conflict tend to exhibit lower levels of engagement, reduced job satisfaction, and higher levels of turnover intention. The discussion on the social dimensions of WLB practices and their impact on employee loyalty and trust within the organisation presents a compelling case for the strategic deployment of WLB initiatives. For Qatar's offshore sector, creating a socially engaging work environment through WLB practices can enhance job satisfaction, employee loyalty, and organizational commitment. However, the challenge of work intensification despite reduced hours signals the need for a careful re-evaluation of workload management alongside WLB initiatives. Trust emerges as a crucial element, suggesting that transparent communication about WLB policies and their genuine implementation can foster a trust-based relationship between employees and the organisation. This, in turn, can enhance organizational citizenship behaviors (OC) and employee retention (ER), underscoring the strategic value of WLB in talent management and organizational performance. The broader implications of WLB on organisational outcomes, including stress reduction and enhanced employee engagement, highlight the importance of a supportive organisational culture towards work-life balance. For the offshore sector in Qatar, acknowledging and addressing the unique stressors faced by offshore employees is critical. Implementing WLB policies that are perceived as supportive by employees can significantly improve job satisfaction, engagement, and reduce turnover intentions. This calls for a strategic approach to WLB that is not only responsive to current challenges but also anticipatory of potential stressors, ensuring that WLB practices are both effective and sustainable. The interaction between

WLB and employee engagement underscores the need for a holistic understanding of employee well-being that integrates both organisational support and employee needs.

This makes it imperative to understand the interaction between WLB practices and employee engagement, to help organisations design and implement effective WLB practices that enhance employee engagement. The section which follows discusses the current state of knowledge on the interaction between WLB and employee engagement and provide insights into how WLB practices can be leveraged to improve employee engagement.

2.4 WLB and Employee Engagement

The review of literature examining the conjunction of WLB with employee engagement shows that while both concepts are connected, most studies explore the topic as concepts that are stand-alone (Schieman, 2017). However, a clear path that links the adoption of WLB with engagement including the nature of WLB initiatives impacting on perceptions employees have relating to organisational support being provided, which has a bearing on engagement. Susi and Jawaharrani (2011) suggested that WLB practices have significant impacts on employee engagement as high levels of organisational awareness on individual challenges and needs is positively linked to wellness job satisfaction and commitment. There is a direct link between WLB and engagement as the engagement of employees is impacted by work-home conflicts; when there is increased engagement of employees with their work functions such that they are undertaking roles associated with their job during out-of-office hours or weekends, this reduces satisfaction due to the negative impacts on WLB (Schieman, 2017). This supports Saks (2006) study which suggests that when there is support and provision of resources, this increases employee engagement. The implication for organisations, especially within sectors characterized by rigid work schedules like Qatar's offshore industry, is the need to integrate flexible work arrangements proactively. These could include part-time work, job sharing, and remote working options, tailored to reduce work intensifications and accommodate employees' family caring commitments. For Qatar's offshore sector, adopting such practices suggests a strategic shift towards operational flexibility, acknowledging that enhancing employee well-being directly contributes to improved organizational performance. The adoption of flexible work practices as a strategic tool for WLB

implementation must, therefore, be deliberate and aligned with the overall organizational goals and employee needs.

f (2014) suggests that in most contemporary organisations, the focus is on ensuring the attainment of competitive advantage, and notes that the engagement of the workforce facilitates the achievement of this competitive edge, as engagement increases retention and better performances which translate to increased productivity and outcomes for the organisation. Agreeing with this, Schieman (2017) identifies that when there is low engagement results in higher turnover rates, lower efficiency in the implementation of procedures, and poor performance. The implication of this is that when organisations are under the threat of their talents leaving, this could result in challenges of engagement. Anitha (2014) in examining WLB and employee engagement identifies that WLB practices such as designing organisational policies to facilitate the promotion of work arrangement which are flexible, and to provide support to employees also impacts engagement through these practices improving retention within the organisation. Expanding when employees are offered roles that facilitate flexible working in terms of location and work time, this influences employee ability to undertake their assigned duties in a manner which promotes maximum outcomes being achieved by stakeholders because of improved job satisfaction stemming from positive perceptions about employer's value of their duties (Anitha, 2014). In other words, when there is a high level of engagement of employees within the organisation, it results in proactive attitudes, innovativeness, and improved organisational commitment, which drives a reduction in turnover within the organisation (Schaufeli, 2013; Boyd et al., 2011).

The literature underscores the interconnectedness of work-life balance (WLB) initiatives and employee engagement within high-demand sectors such as Qatar's oil and gas offshore industry. Studies by Schieman (2017) and Susi and Jawaharrani (2011) highlight that organizational support for WLB through flexible work arrangements can significantly enhance employee engagement by addressing individual challenges and needs. This is particularly relevant for Qatar's offshore sector, where the work's demanding nature often leads to work-home conflicts, negatively impacting job satisfaction and employee well-being. The findings suggest that adopting WLB practices can mitigate these conflicts, fostering a more engaged and committed workforce (Saks, 2006; Purcell, 2014).

Rath and Harter (2010), and Bhalerao (2013) further support this by arguing that when employees are disengaged from their roles or assigned functions, it drives up rates of absenteeism resulting from work-related stress, dissatisfaction, and issues relating to productivity, which inadvertently impacts on organisational commitment of employees. The presence of WLB initiative and practices are however noted to increase job satisfaction which enhances the engagement of workers, improved productivity and commitment of employees to their roles in addition to improved (Rath and Harter, 2010; Bhalerao, 2013). This indicates the positive role WLB plays in the engagement and commitment of workers in their various roles. Miles (2019) in a study which explored the relationship between WLB and engagement also identified that WLB positively aligns with engagement of employees. The study identified that employees having better perception of a balance between non-work related and work-related activities had levels of engagement that are higher defined as a “positive and fulfilling, work-related state of mind, characterised by dedication, vigour and absorption (Miles, 2019). In another study by Kunze et al.,(2018) conducted on employee engagement in the offshore sector, it was found that poor deployment of WLB resulted in higher levels of stress for employees and a decline in job satisfaction. This was noted to be due to the overarching impact of poor WLB initiatives on work-family conflicts and also because of the correlation between poor WLB initiatives and low levels of organisational support (Kunze et al., 2018). Achieving WLB in the offshore sector is fraught with challenges due to the inherent nature of the work, including long working hours, rotating shifts, and extended periods away from home. These conditions necessitate a strategic approach to HRM that includes the integration of FWAs to address these operational challenges effectively (Kamalaveni et al., 2019). The literature suggests that such arrangements not only support employee engagement and retention but also contribute to the organization's competitive advantage by enhancing overall productivity and performance (Purcell, 2014; Anitha, 2014). Achieving WLB in the offshore sector is fraught with challenges due to the inherent nature of the work, including long working hours, rotating shifts, and extended periods away from home. These conditions necessitate a strategic approach to HRM that includes the integration of FWAs to address these operational challenges effectively (Kamalaveni et al., 2019). The literature suggests that such arrangements not only support employee engagement and retention but also contribute to the organization's competitive advantage by enhancing overall productivity and performance (Purcell, 2014; Anitha, 2014).

The indication of this is that poor WLB initiatives impacts engagement, and explains the lower levels of satisfaction and commitment of workers to organisations with poor WLB practices. These findings suggest that improving WLB in the offshore sector may lead to higher levels of engagement, job satisfaction, and well-being among workers. This, in turn, may lead to lower turnover rates, higher productivity, and better overall organisational performance. However, achieving WLB in the offshore sector can be challenging due to the nature of the work, which often involves long working hours, rotating shifts, and extended periods away from home and family.

Therefore, WLB is essential for human resource planning effectiveness as it aids organisations in accurately estimating and initiating actions to meet the demand of employees needed to facilitate operational procedures for the organisation, while at the same time ensuring employee satisfaction and engagement (Kamalaveni et al., 2019). The relationship between WLB and employee retention appears to be complex, with studies presenting mixed findings. While Chen, Song, and Cao (2019), and Albrecht et al.,(2017) found a positive correlation between WLB and retention, Lee and Ok (2018), and Huselid and Becker's (2018) research suggest that the impact of WLB on retention might be marginal or situation-dependent. This indicates that while WLB is a critical factor in employee retention strategies, it should not be viewed in isolation. Organizational commitment and job satisfaction emerge as significant indicators of long-term retention (Lee and Ok, 2018), pointing to the need for a holistic approach to HRM that encompasses a range of retention factors, including but not limited to WLB.

The section which follows provides further insights into the concept of employee retention.

2.5 Employee Retention

Employee retention is noted to be useful to organisations due to its importance in facilitating succession planning for employees in an organisation. It incorporates the process of encouraging employees to remain within an organisation for a long period (Kamalaveni et al., 2019) and sustain organisational human capacity competitive advantage (Wright et al., 2014). Even though hiring talented and skilled people for the job is imperative for an employer, retention is considered more important than hiring because of the cost associated with the turnover of employees as there are

various checks and costs that are involved when hiring a new employee and high turnover costs could be incurred with issues such as reference checks and security clearance; relocation and temporary worker costs, induction, and training costs (Kotze and Roodt, 2005). A study by Chen, Song, and Cao (2019) found a positive correlation between work-life balance and employee retention. The study which was undertaken by distributing 386 surveys employees in China as part of its sample, discovered that those who have a better WLB are more likely to stay with their present job. The study also discovered that the relationship between job satisfaction and employee retention is mediated by work-life balance.

The imperative of employee retention in Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector is underscored by the industry's operational demands and the high costs associated with employee turnover. The unique challenges of the sector, such as remote work locations and long shifts, necessitate robust retention strategies that go beyond conventional HR practices. Echoing Kamalaveni et al.,(2019) and Wright et al.,(2014), the focus on retention is critical for sustaining Qatar's competitive advantage in the global energy market. The findings of Chen, Song, and Cao (2019) on the positive impact of work-life balance (WLB) on retention are particularly relevant, suggesting that Qatar's offshore sector must prioritize WLB initiatives to mitigate the turnover risks posed by the sector's demanding work environment.

Similar to this, a study by Albrecht, et al.,(2017) identified that employee retention is positively impacted by work-life balance. The study examined the research on work-life balance and how it affects employee performance. According to the findings from the study, businesses that give their staff members a better work-life balance are more likely to keep them on board (Albercht et al., 2017). The study also revealed that different employees place different amounts of importance on work-life balance. Employees with family responsibilities, for instance, are more inclined than those without them to value work-life balance (Albercht et al., 2017). The study findings indicated that organisational commitment and work satisfaction are significant indicators of employee retention. In the context of Qatar's offshore oil and gas industry, the adoption of WLB practices is not just beneficial but essential for employee retention. The sector's inherent challenges, including extended periods away from home and the demanding nature of offshore work, amplify the need for effective WLB policies. Albrecht et al.,(2017) highlight the positive correlation between WLB and retention, suggesting that tailored WLB initiatives could significantly improve staff retention

in Qatar's offshore sector. Moreover, the diverse workforce in this sector, with varying family and personal needs, requires a flexible approach to WLB — one that considers the unique demands of offshore work and its impact on employees' personal lives.

Work-life balance and employee retention were not shown to be significantly correlated in another study by Lee and Ok (2018). The implication of the findings from the study by Lee and Ok (2018) is that Work-life balance has a little impact on employee retention. The study which was a quantitative investigation incorporating a survey of 1,001 South Korean employees who were posed various questions relating to WLB and employee retention also discovered that organisational commitment and work satisfaction are excellent indicators of long-term employee retention (Lee and Ok, 2018).

The association between work-life balance and employee retention, on the other hand, has been found to be poor or non-existent in several research. For instance, Huselid and Becker's (2018) research revealed that employee retention is only marginally impacted by work-life balance. Work-life balance and employee retention appear to have a favourable association, according to the literature examined in this paper, albeit the strength of this relationship varies depending on the situation. While other studies have indicated a weak or no association, some have discovered a high positive correlation between work-life balance and employee retention. According to research that indicated a significant positive correlation, businesses are more likely to keep employees who have a better work-life balance. Work-life balance may not be the sole factor affecting employee retention, however, according to research that revealed a tenuous or non-existent correlation. The relationship between WLB and employee retention in Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector is multifaceted. While some studies, such as those by Huselid and Becker (2018), suggest a nuanced impact of WLB on retention, the offshore working environment in Qatar, characterized by its rigorous schedules and isolation, necessitates a broader perspective. This sector requires a comprehensive approach to employee well-being that encompasses but is not limited to WLB, addressing factors such as job satisfaction, organizational support, and engagement strategies to counter the high-stress environment and mitigate turnover intentions.

Although adequate literature exists about the variables that drive employee turnover (Tett and Meyer, 1993; Griffeth et al., 2000; Cohen, 2017), there is not an abundance of publications or

studies on retention factors and their intersection with work-life balance which is a factor which impacts on employee retention within the offshore sector.

The rationale for identifying job retention variables of offshore personnel in the oil and gas business is that retention influences job satisfaction and that, in turn, serves to nurture safe and dependable output (Cohen, 2017). Extant research has revealed that motivated individuals exhibit a high degree of job satisfaction (Zaidi and Abbas, 2011). Moreover, they strive towards the objectives of a company to attain high performance (Sharma and Bajpai, 2011) and are also likely to stay in the firm for a long time (Dhiman and Mohanty, 2010).

The retention of employees incorporates procedures which facilitate the recruitment and on boarding procedures that stimulate the commitment of employees to their organisation (Chew et al., 2005). Allen (1996) exploring the commitment of employees suggests that commitment could take an affective manner, which describes the emotional ties between an organisation and individual employees; employees having a higher level of affective commitment have a higher likelihood of remaining or being retained within an organisation. Chew et al.,(2005) suggest that the affective commitment of employees is influenced by personal fulfilment of employees and the ability of their individual goals, converged with positive work experiences in facilitating job satisfaction.

The offshore oil and gas sector in Qatar presents a unique set of challenges and pressures that can affect job satisfaction and organizational commitment, both crucial for employee retention. The findings from Cohen (2017) and Dhiman and Mohanty (2010) about the importance of job satisfaction in fostering retention are particularly pertinent in this high-demand context. Qatar's offshore sector must, therefore, focus on creating a work environment that promotes job satisfaction and nurtures affective organizational commitment. This involves recognizing and addressing the personal and professional needs of the workforce, ensuring safety and reliability in operations, and developing policies that reflect an understanding of the unique demands placed on offshore employees.

The literature has established the importance of employee retention to organisational effectiveness and has indicated that job satisfaction among other elements influence employee retention. The section which follows expands on the various factors which impact employee retention.

2.6 Factors that influence Employee Retention

Various factors influence employee retention within organisations including the nature of work environment, and job satisfaction of employees (Eskildsen et al., 2004).

Danish and Usman (2010) focused on the role of rewards and recognition in increasing job satisfaction and asserted that retaining employees in an organisation requires an understanding of the factors that may make them leave. It was however found that the nature of financial rewards and also non-financial rewards being provided to employees also impact job satisfaction which is related to employee retention (Danish and Usman, 2010). While this idea is based on employee satisfaction, Eskildsen et al.,(2004) had earlier given a different view by indicating that employees' personalities play critical roles in determining their turnover intentions. It was asserted that some employees cannot be contained in one place for long because they are adventurous and want to try as many places as possible and the feelings of being dissatisfied working in one place or organisation for a long time could impact on the retention of employees (Eskildsen et al., 2004). Based on this suppositions, offshore employees working on deep seas may be forced to leave their jobs as a result of their personality which may not be akin to performing routine roles over a longer period (Eskildsen et al., 2004).

Within Qatar's offshore oil and gas environment, factors influencing employee retention gain unique contours, shaped by the sector's demanding nature and the critical need for job satisfaction. Eskildsen et al.,(2004) and Danish and Usman (2010) provide insights into the role of rewards and recognition in fostering job satisfaction, a fundamental component of retention in such a high-stakes industry. However, the adventurous personality trait described by Eskildsen et al.,(2004) becomes particularly relevant here, suggesting that the monotonous and challenging offshore work might not suit everyone, thereby affecting retention rates. This underscores the necessity for

Qatar's offshore sector to develop tailored reward systems and career paths that cater to the diverse personalities and aspirations within its workforce, providing further justifications for this study, extending available extant literature on the subject.

Different employees may want to leave for various reasons and findings by Dhiman and Mohanty (2010) grouped these factors into individual, organisational, and environmental. Individual factors include the factors emanating from the employees themselves, such as the need to achieve a higher level of needs as explained by Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The authors noted that after employees work in one place for a long period of time, they need to see their progress in terms of goals and objectives achieved. However, if this is not achieved, they are inwardly motivated to leave.

Organisational factors influence employee retention by impacting on their commitment to the organisation (Aamir et al., 2016). In a study by Chang et al.,(2013), it is discovered that management plays a crucial role in setting an organisation's turnover intention levels. They found that when employees that management is not taking actions which aligns with their affairs, an uneasy feeling develops, which may lead to them joining another organisation. The implication of this given the context of the offshore segment of Qatar's oil and gas industry is that management needs to undertake practices which positively impact employees or they may be forced to identify organizations that embed practices in alignment with their affairs. In similar notion, Nienaber and Masibigiri (2012) also investigated the factors that influence turnover intentions of Generation X employees in public service in South Africa and found that employees would leave their jobs due to organisational factors such as the nature of their jobs and organisational contexts. The study findings agreed with findings from previous studies by Singh and Loncar (2010) noting that organisational rewards in terms of compensation approach influenced the intentions of employees to leave their jobs. The implementation of reward practices can be argued to align with employee needs. Based on these findings, the indications imply that management has a role to play to ensure that employees are adequately satisfied in the workplace and are provided with the required support to accomplish their duties (Neinaber and Masibigiri, 2012).

These supposition align with the high level of Maslow's needs associated with offshore roles as it suggests that when the organisational culture is in alignment with employee engagement, and the environmental specificity of offshore operations demands organizational needs and employee

needs will be aligned. Considering this within the context of the offshore sector of Qatar's oil and gas industry, the implication is that ensuring employees see their growth and progress aligns which is alignment with organizational needs of ventures in the sector and Qatar's national vision for human capital development, there could be a reinforcement commitment and satisfaction within the challenging offshore work environment.

Walker (2001) suggests that employee retention is multifaceted in nature and is influenced by social factors including internal and external relationships, mental factors including the characteristics associated with the work roles, and physical characteristics including the nature of rewards and work environment conditions. In another study, Lakhar et al.,(2013) also identified a comprehensive list that identifies seven key factors which influence the retention of employees where it was stated that rewards are elements which impact engagement. The other factors identified include employees feeling appreciated for work, the availability of challenging work, opportunities for progression, promotion and learning, the physical atmosphere in the organisation, a positive relationship environment, good communications approaches, and WLB initiatives.

In the context of Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector, Walker's (2001) assertion of retention being influenced by a mix of social, mental, and physical factors calls for a holistic approach to HR practices. The sector's unique conditions, such as isolated work locations and intense job demands, magnify the importance of providing a supportive work environment, inclusive of rewarding challenging work, progression opportunities, and robust WLB initiatives. The diversity of the workforce, including expatriates and local employees, further necessitates nuanced engagement strategies to ensure all feel valued and understood.

SHRM (2017) in their study on employee retention identified pay and compensation as significant factors which influence the retention of employees. When organisations are able to offer employees, rewards including pay packages and benefits which are above the market offering, or provide rewards in forms of grants or other forms for good job performance, it enhances the retention of employees within the organisation. In agreement, suppositions by Chew et al.,(2005) indicates that recognition and rewards are core elements which encourages or influence employee commitment because it serves as an indicator to the employees that they are valued, and as a result impacts the decisions of employees remaining. The nature of rewards including non-monetary

rewards like recognition from peers and superiors are also cited as important elements which impacts on retention (Chew et al., 2005).

The indications from these studies emphasize the importance of rewards to the retention of employees. The studies show that when employees feel valued and recognition for their duties and roles as presented by the management in the form of both monetary and non-monetary rewards, it enhances their motivation and engagement with their role. This in turn results in employees being more committed and willing to put in extra effort to achieve their goals within their role. This could be argued to happen because rewards create a feedback loop which is positive, and this reinforces behaviours which makes employees desire to perform within their roles using their best efforts.

Positive motivations and performance management are also elements that influence employee retention (Maersk, 2014). Positive motivations such as clear pathways to career progression can foster environments which enhances the productivity and engagement of the employees (Maersk, 2014). This is because positive practices of providing clarity of career progression indicates to employees a sense of job security and safety within the work environment, thereby improving the relationships environment within the work environment (Aamir et al., 2016)

Considering the context of Qatar's competitive offshore oil and gas sector, the arguments promulgated by the authors relating to providing both monetary and non-monetary rewards and employing practices of clarity in career development pathways could serve as a crucial differentiator in attracting and retaining top talent in this industry. Considering the contextual challenges in the sector highlighted previously, including the hazardous and strenuous nature of the oil and gas sector in Qatar, when monetary and non-monetary rewards, such as recognition and career development opportunities are provided, this conveys a message to employees that they are valued members of the organization, resulting in an increase in their motivation and commitment to the challenging roles the sector offers.

However, the evaluation of these studies also considers that there could be limitations and a broader context to underpinning impacting employee retention, as they are not the sole determining factors which impact the retention of workers in the sector, and other elements like well-being also

play an important role in the retention of workers in the offshore sector of the Qatar's oil and gas industry.

In another study by Horwitz (2003) the nature of the work environment being fun and conducive were identified to be positive elements that influenced the retention of employees, which aligns with prior suppositions reviewed which indicates the importance of job satisfaction to employee retention. In another study by Ell et al.,(2007), it was noted that an important role is played by flexibility in terms of impact on employee retention; flexibility offers employees opportunities to develop themselves and facilitates WLB which also enhances job satisfaction. Tiwari (2012) also suggested that retention is improved by opportunities being made available to employees, but specifically notes that when training opportunities are made available, these are linked to job satisfaction which is tied to retention of employees. Other authors also emphasize the intersectionality of various factors including rewards, job security, and presence of opportunities for advancement including training as essential to ensuring employee retention putting into cognizance the presence of WLB initiatives in an organisation. Gardener et al.,(2015) identified that training enhances retention because when employees are trained, this enhances their ability to attain organisational goals which are tied to rewards that bolster satisfaction. It facilitates employee's ability to achieve competitive advantages for their organisation by bolstering their competencies which are needed to achieve personal and organisational goals (Gardner et al., 2015).

The offshore work environment's unique challenges also highlight the importance of flexibility and job satisfaction in retention, as suggested by Horwitz (2003) and Ell et al.,(2007). Offering flexibility in work schedules and locations, coupled with opportunities for personal and professional development, can significantly enhance job satisfaction among Qatar's offshore employees. Such practices not only cater to the immediate needs of the workforce but also align with Qatar's strategic goals for a resilient and innovative energy sector.

Critically, while the findings from these studies identify crucial elements which impact the retention of employees, there is a need for these elements to be considered within a broader context. For example, although a fun work environment, flexibility and training are important factors which could affect retention, these practices are not standalone solutions to retention issues. The culture within the organization, presence of quality leadership, and overall wellbeing of employees could

also play important roles in retention. Furthermore, the employment of these strategies could also be varied in terms of their effectiveness considering that varying cultural and organizational contexts exist. For example, the socio-economic conditions and cultural expectations in Qatar's oil and gas sector could affect the perception of these factors by employees in the offshore segment, impacting on retention if employed. Additionally, although intrinsic motivator such as personal growth opportunities and satisfaction are vital, they require consistency and genuineness in their implementation in order to be effective. The implication of this argument is that for Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector it is essential that a comprehensive understanding of the nature of employee retention is essential to determine the extent to which these practices may be effective in driving retention.

In another Asikhia et al.,(2022) which examined employee retention and the impact of skills and mobility of skills identified that when there are challenges relating to employee opportunity relating to skills advancement, it impacts on retention. This is because employees reach a point where they outgrow their ranks and positions and seek opportunities which are more challenging, rewarding and more aligned with their competencies (Asikhia et al., 2022). The implication of this is that when there are sufficient opportunities for skills development and career progression, this encourages retentions, as against the risk of moving to another employer particularly at a period of economic uncertainty. In agreement, Takala (2022) suggests that when employees are disillusioned due to their lack of opportunities it is expected that they take action in seeking better opportunities, albeit externally, more so career progression and development opportunities are identified to be significant factors that impact on employees today. Developmental and growth opportunities have been seen as critical elements to promote the commitment and loyalty of the employee towards the organisation which reduces retention challenges (Horwitz et al., 2003; Ileris et al., 2003; Kroon, 2013).

Critically evaluating these arguments within the context of Qatar's offshore oil and gas segment, although there are clear benefits in the provision of developmental opportunities, the characteristic associated with the demanding nature of job roles in the sector requires the practice of incorporating tailored developmental programs which address both personal growth and technical skills, and this is a challenge for the sector (Epelle et al., 2019). Considering the context of Qatar's

offshore oil and gas segment, the implication is that the characteristic landscape of the sector and the introduction of these programmes by ventures within the sector are such that they allow for perception of these opportunities as positive by the workforce present in the sector. Additionally, there exists a risk that when career progression is heavily focused on by organizations, this could result in unrealistic expectations from employees, potentially leading to frustration if these opportunities are not eventually presented to them. This means that organizations within Qatar's oil and gas offshore segment must take actions to balance the offering of developmental opportunities with the expectations of employees, such that the progression plans are attainable to mitigate retention issues.

Vu and Nwachukwu (2020) identified that the organisational culture of ventures also impacts on employee engagement and their retention. Expanding further, the organisational culture of a venture describes the values, visions, systems, norms, language, beliefs, assumptions and habits associated with venture (Ibid). In studies by Vanhala and Ritala (2016), it is indicated that when the organisational culture is such that there is lacking trust, this impacts engagement of employees and also affect the innovativeness of employees. Vu and Nwachukwu (2020) went further and found that when organisational culture is positive, it influences the behaviour of employees which affects positively employee engagement and retention with their role. Habib et al.,(2014) support this argument by indicating that when the organisational culture is such that it positively motivates employees towards being more committed to their performance, and motivated, this results in engagement and satisfaction, which is aligned with improved retention of employees within their role.

It is also indicated in studies by Guo and Hou (2022) that leadership enhances engagement of employees by keeping them motivated, which reduces their intention to leave the organisation. Expanding further, when the leadership of an organisation exudes good characteristics, this induces subordinates to be more effective in their duties; this is because positive leadership characteristics facilitates support of workers in performing activities essential to their role (Guo and Hou, 2022). This indicates that when the perception of employees relating to their leaders are such that they have positive influence on their cognitive state, this motivates the employees in the performance of their role, which enhances the retention of workers within their role.

Considering the unique and often isolated environment of Qatar's offshore operations, the role of leadership in employee engagement and retention cannot be overstated, as highlighted by Guo and Hou (2022). Effective leadership in this context goes beyond traditional management; it requires a deep understanding of the unique stressors faced by offshore workers and the ability to inspire, communicate, and support in ways that resonate with a diverse and often transient workforce. Leaders must be adept at recognizing the signs of burnout, fostering team cohesion despite physical distances, and creating a sense of purpose and belonging among employees. This leadership style should be proactive in recognizing achievements, providing constructive feedback, and facilitating career growth opportunities within the framework of Qatar's strategic objectives for its energy sector. Such leadership qualities are essential not only for navigating the operational complexities of offshore work but also for ensuring that employees remain committed and motivated, seeing their roles as critical to both their personal growth and the overarching goals of Qatar's energy industry.

Summarily, the literature reveals that organisational factors, commitment of employees, presence of management support, the characteristics of the work environment, rewards, recognition and job satisfaction are important factors which influence retention of employees (Aamir et al., 2016; Cheng et al., 2013; Eskildsen et al., 2004; Danish and Usman, 2010; Singh and Loncar, 2010). Other factors identified which are important elements which influence retention of workers include the availability of progression opportunities, personal needs of the employees being met (Dhiman and Mohanty, 2010), and employee personality (Asikhia et al., 2022). While the findings from the literature has emphasised the multifaceted nature of factors which could influence the retention of employees such as the nature of rewards and available opportunities for the employees in the organisation, the findings from the papers reviewed have identified how these factors being linked to WLB is crucial to retention because non-integration of these factors without considering their impacts affects the satisfaction of workers which is linked to engagement.

2.7 Organisational Commitment (OC) and WLB

A variety of definitions have been posited in relation to the concept of OC; it is described as the desire and efforts made by employees to ensure dedication to their contractual obligations, accepting the values and objectives associated with the organisation (Krishna et al., 2022). For

example, Ahad et al.,(2022) describe OC as the extent of employees' ability to identify with the venture for which they work, and the extent to which they are committed to engaging in assigned roles or functions. It is noted that there are three varying perspectives associated with OC including the social exchange perspective, the affective commitment perspective and the normative perspective is noted to be related to inputs received by the employee from their company, and links with the relationship, emotional attachment, and values of the organisation and individual employees (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Betanzos and Paz (2007) indicate that when there is a poor relationship between organisational stakeholders including management and workers, this could lead to negative outcomes including poor performance and increased absenteeism. In other words, it is identified to be described as being related to psychological contract which is related to the extent of compliance of the organisation with its promises to employees (Ahad et al., 2022). These promises are linked to three difference perspectives. The social exchange perspective, employee commitment is due to the investments employees believe they have contributed to the organisation over a period of time, which would mitigate their voluntary disengagement from the organisation (Jung et al., 2021). The psychological perspective is the connection which binds employees to the organisation; this perspective is noted exude characteristics of employees desiring to remain within their organisations and accepting contractual obligations due to psychological rewards to be derived (Jung et al., 2021). Finally, the normative perspective focusing on the responsibility of employees and work ethics acquired by the employee which drives their ability to perform their job roles optimally irrespective of difficult circumstances (Millar et al., 2017).

Organisational commitment (OC) within Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector encompasses employees' dedication and adherence to their roles, influenced by their alignment with the company's values and objectives (Krishna et al., 2022; Ahad et al., 2022). The diverse perspectives on OC, including social exchange, affective commitment, and normative perspectives, highlight the multifaceted nature of employee dedication in this unique work environment. Specifically, in Qatar's offshore context, where employees face isolated working conditions and extended periods away from home, the psychological contract between employees and their organization becomes critically important (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Betanzos and Paz, 2007). This contract underscores the importance of maintaining a positive relationship between management and workers to prevent

negative outcomes such as poor performance and increased absenteeism, which are particularly detrimental in the high-stakes environment of offshore operations.

Boonsiritomachai and Sud-On (2021) proposed two forms of commitment; calculative and attitudinal commitment. They argued that the form of commitment moderated their impacts, and three different forms of commitment were duly noted including normative, affective, and continuance commitments. Affective commitment is used in the description of the emotional or affective attachment of individuals to organisations in a manner that when employees are identified as committed to the organisation, they enjoy being involved and engaged with organisational activities. This is different from continuance commitment which describes a scenario that relates to employee considering the perceptions related to the outcomes of quitting (Khan et al., 2021). Normative commitment describes the internalized normative pressure of employees to perform in a manner that meets the interests and goals of the organisation based on the belief that their actions are morally upright (Khan et al., 2021). Although these three forms of commitment are suggested to facilitate employee ties with their organisation, they affect employee work behaviour differently (Elisabeth et al., 2021). For instance, affective commitment enhances employee performance because it is based on the personal choices of the employee to remain, while for employees having strong continuance commitment, their retention is based on the requirement to remain/ lack of other alternatives (Elisabeth et al., 2021).

The offshore oil and gas industry in Qatar presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities that shape employee commitment. Boonsiritomachai and Sud-On (2021) differentiate between calculative and attitudinal commitment, emphasizing the varied impacts of normative, affective, and continuance commitments on employee behaviour within this sector. Affective commitment, characterized by an emotional attachment to the organization, is crucial for ensuring that employees are not only retained but are also actively engaged and satisfied with their work. This distinction is vital in the offshore sector, where the cost of turnover is high, and the need for a committed, skilled workforce is paramount (Khan et al., 2021; Elisabeth et al., 2021).

Considering the context of the offshore oil and gas sector in Qatar, these arguments suggests that fostering affective commitment should be a strategic priority for ventures in the segment as it facilitates the creation of an environment where employees feel emotionally connected to their job

roles. At the same time, the arguments imply that there needs to be awareness by organizations of the limits of depending solely on normative commitment or continuance to ensure the retention of employees as they do not necessarily result in high levels of performance and engagement. Consequently, it is important for a balanced approach to be adopted whereby both affective commitment, and the moral and practical considerations which drive normative and continuance commitment is promoted in its practices to enhance commitment of workers.

Saleem et al., (2021) in agreement suggests that employees having a strong normative commitment, retention is because of their perceived emotional need to remain within the organisation. Similarly, Lee et al., (2021) identifies that affective commitment impacts a variety of work-related attitudes. For example, it is suggested that a correlation exists between absenteeism and affective commitment of workers.

While these arguments do not indicate how absence from the work results in less emotional attachment of employees to their jobs or vice, it shows that affective commitment influences absenteeism. This supports Clausen et al.,(2015) findings that affective commitment cannot be used in the prediction of absenteeism. It was however noted that there were effect sizes which were found that were small, indicating that affective commitment has only small impacts on. In another study, Kim (2014) identify that affective commitment serves as a determinant for performance within the organisation. Interestingly, it was identified that WLB positively impacts affective commitment of employees, which results in a decline in turnover intention amongst employees within the organisation.

In Qatar's offshore sector, the relationship between affective commitment and work-related attitudes such as absenteeism and performance takes on added significance. The papers reviewed indicate a complex relationship between affective commitment and absenteeism, highlighting the need for targeted strategies to foster emotional attachment to the organization in this unique work setting (Lee et al., 2021; Clausen et al., 2015). Moreover, the positive impact of work-life balance (WLB) on affective commitment underscores the necessity of implementing effective WLB policies to reduce turnover intentions, a critical consideration for offshore operations where replacing skilled workers is both challenging and costly.

Further to that, organisational citizenship behaviour is another important outcome associated with OC. It describes the emotional state of employees where they identify themselves with the organisation (Novianti, 2021). While it is noted that there are no formal rewards that are derived by employees for organisational citizenship behaviour, it results in an improvement in efficiency within organisations (Novianti, 2021). There is also a strong link with employee loyalty. It is suggested to be one of the most difficult tasks faced by organisations to attain due to the challenges associated with obtaining secure employment, there has been an issue with the loyalty of workers toward their roles (Azzam and Harsono, 2021). This translates to higher levels of loyalty to their organisations and overall increased job satisfaction which impacts retention (Hassan et al., 2021). WLB practices and initiatives are also identified to facilitate an obligation of these feelings or serve as a motivation to result in employees having strong reasons to remain within their organisation (Liu et al., 2021). Therefore, employees having strong normative and affective commitments have higher likelihood of being less absent and motivated to perform better within their operational roles, thus enhancing job satisfaction. For example, Klindzic and Maric (2019) suggest that WLB impacts organisational commitment by positively influencing employee satisfaction facilitating the reduction of employee intentions to leave their roles. This supports Bjärntoft et al.,(2020) argument that when WLB policies of flexible working arrangements are adopted, it increases the job autonomy for workers, which facilitates the stimulation of job satisfaction and eventually increases the commitment of employees.

The concept of organizational citizenship behaviour takes on a new dimension in the context of Qatar's offshore oil and gas industry, where the emotional state of employees significantly influences operational efficiency and job satisfaction (Novianti, 2021). The absence of formal rewards for such behaviour underscores the importance of cultivating a work environment that promotes loyalty and a sense of belonging. This is crucial for retention in the offshore sector, where the physical and psychological demands of the job can impact employees' commitment to their roles (Azzam and Harsono, 2021; Hassan et al., 2021).

Taking on another dimension, Hassan et al.,(2013) research examined the role of training as a specific engagement factor that influences organisational commitment. They found that when training opportunities are provided for employees, it motivates them in undertaking their role.

Similarly, Chemirmir et al.,(2017) noted, poor WLB practices including non-availabilities of training could result in negative impacts on productivity as this impacts the wellbeing of employees, and indirectly the job satisfaction, and commitment of the workers to the organization. Grady et al.,(2008) and Seligman (2011) also indicates that when organisations fail to provide training, this impacts WLB initiatives as it leads to decline of competence of the workforce affecting the level of organisational commitment. This shows that providing necessary training opportunities could impact WLB facilitating the development of a motivated and loyal workforce, reducing tendency for absenteeism, which positively impacts on organisational commitment. Stress and other poignant issues such as family problems could impact satisfaction of the employees and their loyalty is reduced as a result of the adoption of WLB initiatives (Malik and Shamshir, 2020; Farshad and Marjan, 2015). Such issues and organisational challenges have a direct impacts on employee OC.

Training emerges as a pivotal engagement factor that influences organizational commitment within Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector (Hassan et al., 2013). Providing employees with opportunities for skill development and career growth not only motivates them but also improves their work-life balance, thereby enhancing their decision to stay with the organization. This is especially relevant in the offshore sector, where the complexity of operations demands a highly skilled workforce, and poor WLB practices can lead to decreased productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Chemirmir et al., 2017; Grady et al., 2008).

Evaluating these papers from the context of Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector, where specialised skills are crucial, the implications from these articles indicate that provision of training can improve the technical abilities of employees, ensuring that they have Competencies which are in line with industry requirement. This investment in training development not only bolsters the performance of employees but helps in strengthening their emotional attachment to their organizations, consequently resulting in an enhancement of affective commitment. For instance, Chemirmir et al., (2017) in their suggestions implied that when there is inadequate training provision, this could result in negative outcomes including decline in productivity and lower well-being of the employees, which in turn impacts OC and job satisfaction. For employees within Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector, being able to balance the demanding work schedules of the

sector with personal life is already challenging, and when firms fail in providing support to employees in the management of this balance, it could result in outcomes such as burnout, decline in loyalty and absenteeism. The provision of comprehensive WLB initiatives such as flexible work schedules and mental health support are practices which could mitigate this issues, enhancing continuance and normative commitment of workers by making them feel supported and valued. When training is neglected/ not provided by organizations, it could result in employees feeling undervalued, and unprepared to handle their roles, resulting in diminishing of their commitment. On the converse, the provision of regular training programs could help ensure that employees remain competent in their abilities, positively impacting their overall job satisfaction and commitment.

Wellbeing and mental and physical health have been seen as stressor indicators which impacts fatigue of employees and job satisfaction providing support on the role of organisational commitment to WLB (i.e. Labrague et al., 2018; Zheng et al., 2015). Absence, or poor WLB practices leads to induced stress which results in impacts on the psychological wellbeing of employees. For example, Gambles et al.,(2006) suggest that there has been more awareness of organisations of issues that relate to the well-being of employees as this impacts the organisational productivity, prompting the introduction of integrating wellness into the framework of activities being undertaken by organisations. The ability to establish a work environment where there is the promotion of a sense of pleasure and calmness facilitates employees' capacity of thriving and being able to attain peak potential while serving their organisation and themselves. This supports Devi and Rani (2012) findings as they argued that happiness and job satisfaction of employees significantly impacts WLB. They suggested that higher levels of job satisfaction as a result of practices of WLB, it increases commitment of employees to the organisation. Dhas and Karthikeyan (2015) in agreement suggest that when the work environment is such that wellness practices are encouraged and adopted, there is reduced non-attendance/absenteeism and employees develop a better sense of purpose, which impacts their attitude to their job roles, and productivity.

The studies reviewed underscore several implications considering the context of Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector, one of which is that the implementation of a robust wellbeing and WLB practices could enhance OC considering the physically demanding nature of the sector. The physically

demanding nature of the sector leads to increased fatigue and which diminishes job satisfaction, suggesting that poor WLB results in increased stress and tendencies for absenteeism; absenteeism within the sector could result in disruption in operations and increased costs to organizations.

In the offshore oil and gas sector, high employee turnover and absenteeism can disrupt operations and increase costs. The suggestions by these papers indicates that recognizing and addressing these stressors through the integration of wellness initiatives into the organizational framework is essential for maintaining a motivated and productive workforce in Qatar's offshore operations (Gambles et al., 2006; Devi and Rani, 2012). By adopting practices within the organizations which foster employee well-being and WLB such as open communication channels, reward programs, recognition and a strong emphasis on health and safety, employee sense of purpose can be improved resulting in higher levels of OC across all dimensions including affective, normative and continuance commitment of employees.

Vantansever (2008) goes a step further by arguing that WLB has a goal which is to facilitate the mental or emotional feelings of fulfilment by workers, and can be derived from the adoption of relevant compensation and appropriate benefits strategies by organisations. Interestingly, Vantansever (2008) argued that the nature of compensation adopted could serve as both a means for upkeep and inspiration to employees and is the most important determinant of retention among employees compared to the various forms of impetuses that influence retention. The implication of this is that compensation could serve as a means of reduction of administrative turnover of employees and a means to improve employee WLB.

In another study by Abdirahman (2018), it is identified that opportunities for growth and progress also influenced WLB; when employees are provided opportunities to grow, this increases their enthusiasm for their role and is tied to organisational commitment. In agreement suggestions by Mokana (2016) suggests that investing in skills of employees at all levels within an organisation facilitates the ability of organisations in capitalizing on the skills of their workers. Expanding further, when employees are provided opportunities for upskilling, this facilitates the generation of a sense of belonging between workers, which facilitates the development of a non-toxic environment which is important for WLB and the organisational commitment of employees (Sanchez-Vidal, 2012; Mokana, 2016). There is also a strong line to strong relationship from both

family and organisations influences WLB. This links to the need for a supportive environment for employees on both the organisational and home fronts affecting OC and WLB (Pradhan et al., 2016). It indicates that when there is a strong relationship and support from organisations such as through supervisory support, and employees have a family-supportive environment, there is less likelihood for conflicts to occur between work and family commitments. For example, Garlson et al.,(2010) identify that using strategies that facilitate workplace flexibility including launching training programmes to provide supervisors with skills to enhance their capability of achieving WLB enhances organisational commitment, as these programmes serve as an indicator to the employee that they are valued by their organisation. The implication of this is that when management stakeholders are provided with trainings to enhance their knowledge of WLB practices, this influences the adoption and development of appropriate strategies to enhance WLB practices and outcomes for employees in the organisation.

Vantansever's (2008) discourse postulates that work-life balance (WLB) is instrumental in catalysing mental and emotional fulfilment among employees, achieved through strategic compensation and benefits frameworks. This assertion underscores the pivotal role of compensation as both a sustenance mechanism and a motivational tool, positing it as a critical determinant in employee retention. The implications for Qatar's offshore sector are profound, suggesting that nuanced compensation strategies can mitigate turnover and enhance WLB, addressing the specific objectives of assessing the impact of WLB on commitment and engagement, and providing insights on effective WLB management strategies.

Abdirahman (2018) extends this dialogue by highlighting the significance of growth opportunities in augmenting WLB, thereby bolstering organizational commitment. This perspective is enriched by Mokana (2016), who argues for comprehensive investment in employee skill development across hierarchical levels, fostering a sense of belonging and cultivating a supportive work environment conducive to WLB and organizational allegiance. The interplay between familial and organizational support emerges as suggested by the papers are critical factor in minimizing work-family conflicts, reinforcing the importance of supervisory support and flexible workplace policies in enhancing OC and WLB considering the context of Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector. This

aligns with the research objective to understand the cultural impacts on WLB and retention, suggesting that a culture of support and growth is essential for sustaining offshore employees.

From another perspective, Smith and Gardner (2007) strongly suggest that continuous investment in resources for employees is essential to support the achievement of WLB and OC. This shows that leadership is key to facilitate WLB strategies. The attitude of leadership towards employees in terms of the style of leadership being adopted, and the nature of tactics followed in the supervision of employees impacts job satisfaction which ties closely with organisational commitment (Emre and De Spiegeleare, 2019). As Stark (2017) argued, modern organisations should lead by example and utilise WLB as a tool to address work-related, non-work and stress-related issues. When there is high WLB within organisations. With regards to non-work-related outcomes, when the policies are such that organisations adopt WLB, it is noted to positively impact family, marital and life satisfaction which enhances commitment of employees to their organisation and also positively impacts productivity. Additionally, when WLB policies are adopted within organisations, it impacts stress-related outcomes by reducing psychological strain, burnout and tendencies for employees in engaging in substance-related abuse which are elements that impact organisational commitment and overall productivity and job satisfaction (Stark, 2017).

Smith and Gardner (2007) emphasize the necessity of persistent investment in employee resources as a cornerstone for achieving WLB and organizational commitment (OC). This assertion places leadership at the heart of WLB strategies, linking leadership attitudes and supervisory tactics directly to job satisfaction and OC. Stark (2017) champions the adoption of WLB policies as a comprehensive approach to addressing work-induced stress and enhancing life satisfaction across non-work-related domains. The implications for Qatar's offshore sector are significant, advocating for leadership models that prioritize WLB to boost productivity, reduce burnout, and prevent substance abuse, thereby fostering a healthier, more committed workforce. This insight directly supports the research aim to critically review literature and develop an effective WLB framework, highlighting leadership's role in shaping positive work environments.

2.8 WLB and Job Satisfaction

There is no doubt that job satisfaction has a direct link to WLB as a positive emotional state or a pleasurable appraisal associated with individuals and their job experience or roles (Judge et al., 2021). It is indicated to be resultant from the complex interactions occurring between the organisational environment of employees and their work experiences (Winkelhause et al., 2022). For example, Pratama et al.,(2022) suggests three dimensions to job satisfaction exist including general satisfaction, growth satisfaction and internal work motivation. General satisfaction describes the degree to which employees are satisfied with their work role, growth satisfaction describes the extent to which employees are satisfied with the opportunities available for growth for employees while internal satisfaction describes the extent of satisfaction of employees with the work environment and characteristics associated with the work environment (Pratma et al., 2022). Borah (2012) also identifies that job satisfaction could be described as an attitudinal variable, with historical description of the phenomena being approached from the perspective of need fulfilment. This means that job satisfaction relates with the job role being able to facilitate the employees psychological and physical needs being met.

There has been a de-emphasis of this approach in describing job relations, with most studies today tending to identify that job satisfaction is tied to the cognitive procedures associated with the role rather than the underlying needs of employees (Katebi et al., 2022). This supports Ramaite et al.'s (2022) findings that the attitudinal perspective which relates to job satisfaction is predominant today.

Noting this, it is clear that different definitions could be used in describing the concept of job satisfaction. Nonetheless, Serin et al.,(2022) describes the concept as the positive emotional feelings which employees have while Inoyatova and Isakov (2022) argues that it is the reactions which individuals have towards their employment/job roles. An emotional reaction that is related to the work functions of employees could be a signal of the emotional wellness of employees and could be impacted by behavioural influences stemming from other employees as well as a signal which impacts operations within an organisation. Most importantly, the survival of organisations is dependent on the satisfaction of its employees (Zamzami et al., 2022). Low job satisfaction suggest that organisations tend to lose skilled and competent employees affecting the knowledge

base of the organisation over time (Dermicioglu, 2021). Holbert et al.,(2021) highlights further that poor job satisfaction has implications for turnover due to ineffective organisational pro-activeness to WLB.

It is therefore important for organisation to maintain positive employee attitude towards their job roles. When organisations make provisions through initiatives to facilitate the WLB of employees, this enhances their mental and physical health, which is essential for job satisfaction (Aquinas, 2007). Voydanoff (2005) supports this argument as he indicated that an increase in job satisfaction could be attained through the implementation of WLB policies, as this facilitates the reduction of conflict between individual's job roles and family. As a result, analysis shows that WLB initiatives facilitates satisfaction which enhances confidence, bolsters quality of activities undertaken by employees, and overall organisational outcomes. Considering the focus of this study on WLB, the implication of suppositions from the literature review indicates that positive WLB initiatives enhance satisfaction which enhance the capacity for employees to facilitate organisational commitment and retention. This shows that the deployment of WLB practices enhances the motivation of employees and their engagement which improves job satisfaction which is also important for the long-term retention of employees (Hassan et al., 2021). The discourse on job satisfaction, as outlined by Judge et al.,(2021) and further expanded by Pratama et al.,(2022), establishes a direct correlation between WLB and the emotional state of job contentment. This relationship is dissected into three dimensions—general satisfaction, growth satisfaction, and internal work motivation—each contributing to an employee's holistic satisfaction with their work and environment. This nuanced understanding of job satisfaction, moving beyond simplistic need fulfilment to encompass a broader range of cognitive and emotional factors, aligns with the doctoral thesis's objective to critically assess WLB's impact on employee commitment and engagement.

The synthesis of these perspectives underscores the paramount importance of WLB practices in fostering job satisfaction, which, in turn, is crucial for organizational retention and commitment. The potential loss of skilled employees due to low job satisfaction highlights the urgency for offshore oil sector organizations to proactively implement effective WLB strategies. This approach not only enhances employees' mental and physical well-being but also serves as a strategic lever

to augment employee confidence, quality of work, and overall organizational performance. These insights are instrumental in addressing the doctoral research objectives, offering a comprehensive framework for understanding the dynamics of WLB, job satisfaction, and their collective impact on organizational commitment and retention strategies.

2.9 Culture and WLB

Culture describes the shared beliefs, values, and behaviours which are a definition of the identity of a group, organisation, or category of individuals (Jiang et al., 2018). The cultural values or norms adopted by specific groups impact the manner they act in their personal and professional lives, and as a result, culture could be argued to shape the way through which individuals within an organisation are able to balance the demands of work and life (Jiang et al., 2018). Culture can be categorized broadly into a number of forms such as regional culture, national culture, organisational culture and much more, but the most widely recognized categories of culture are organisational and national culture (Barrick et al., 2019). National culture is argued to impact on the attitude of employees towards WLB and their jobs (Barrick et al., 2019), while organisational culture impacts on the practices and WLB policies being deployed within an organisation (Graves and Ruderman, 2019).

Hofstede (2019) in defining national culture described the concept as the shared values, beliefs, and norms which shape the behavior and attitude within a specific society and also identified several dimensions of culture associated with different nationalities. National culture is noted to have several dimensions including the power distance index, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance index, long-term versus short-term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint (Hofstede, 2019).

Power distance index is the dimension which describes the extent of acceptance or expectations relating to unequal power distribution within a society while individualism describes the extent to which individuals from a culture prioritize their interests over other members (Ibid). For collectivism, this describes the extent to which individuals in a society prioritize the interests of their group over their personal interests while the masculinity versus femininity dimension describes the extent to which specific societies value qualities that are either traditionally feminine

or masculine (Ibid). The uncertainty avoidance index dimension describes the extent of the willingness of society in accepting risks, ambiguity, and uncertainty, while the long-term versus short-term orientation dimensions describe the extent of a society valuing long-term planning versus short-term gratifications (Ibid). With regards to indulgence versus restraint, these dimensions describe the extent of a society valuing engagement in gratification and pleasure as against self-control and restraint (Ibid).

Within the context of organizations, culture, as Jiang et al.,(2018) elucidates, comprises the shared beliefs, values, and behaviours that delineate the identity of a group or organization. This definition is crucial for understanding how in Qatar's offshore oil sector, both national and organizational cultures influence employees' WLB. Hofstede's (2019) cultural dimensions framework is particularly relevant in the Qatari context, where high power distance reflects a societal acceptance of hierarchical structures, and collectivism underscores the importance of family and group over the individual. These cultural traits necessitate WLB policies that respect hierarchical relationships and prioritize family needs. For instance, in Qatar, where familial obligations are paramount, flexible working arrangements must accommodate extended family commitments, aligning with Barrick et al.,(2019) and Graves and Ruderman (2019) on the impact of culture on WLB policies and employee attitudes.

Cultural values such as individualism and collectivism impact the perceptions and attitudes of employees or workers toward WLB initiatives (Jiang et al., 2018). For instance, within cultures that are collectivist, the emphasis on employees from such cultures is that they have higher priorities in terms of their obligations towards family and have the perception that WLB is a means of prioritizing personal and family life (Cooke and Williams, 2017). In cultures that are individualistic, employees may perceive their career success are being of priority and may have the perception that WLB could be a means of facilitating the achievement of personal goals while ensuring the maintenance associated with personal well-being (Cooke and Williams, 2017). More so, other cultural values/dimensions including uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and long-term orientation play a significant role in shaping behaviors and attitudes which relate to WLB.

Graves and Ruderman (2019) identify that organisational culture affects WLB by shaping the approaches which organisations take relating to the deployment of their WLB practices and

policies. For example, when the nature of the organisation is such that the culture of overworking is prevalent, the expectations of employees will be such that they work long hours which does not support WLB for employees (Graves and Ruderman, 2019). Contrastingly, suppositions by Kossek and Thompson (2019) identify that when the organisational culture is such that WLB practices are prioritized through adopting initiatives such as employee support programs and flexible work arrangements, it positively impacts WLB outcomes which enhance engagement and commitment of workers to the organisation.

The interplay between individualism and collectivism critically shapes the WLB policies within Qatar's offshore industry. The collectivist orientation of Qatari society, as discussed by Cooke and Williams (2017), emphasizes the significance of family obligations, which in turn influences how WLB initiatives are perceived and valued. This contrasts with more individualistic cultures where personal career success might be prioritized. In Qatar, organizational cultures that reflect these societal values, promoting family-friendly WLB policies, are likely to be more effective. This is echoed in the practices of some Qatari offshore companies that incorporate extended family leave or flexible working hours to accommodate communal gatherings and obligations, as suggested by the differentiation between cultural values' impact on WLB by Jiang et al.,(2018).

O'reilly et al.,(2018) identify that the nature of the organisational culture being employed by a venture could impact the retention of employees, with positive organisational culture leading to better satisfied and committed employees who are aligned with the organisation's culture and values which inadvertently results in higher rates of retention. O'reilly et al.,(2018) further enthused that when the cultural prerogative is positive and strong within an organisation, it results in higher rates of retention compared to organisations with poor cultural practices. Considering the context of the offshore sector as against work the nature of organisational culture within the on-shore labour sector, this means that cultural differences in work values, expectations, and practices can create significant challenges for offshore compared to onshore employees in terms of the management of WLB (Wang and Taksa, 2015). For example, offshore employees may perceive the home office as less supportive of WLB due to cultural differences in attitudes towards work and life balance. Moreover, offshore organisations may face challenges in managing WLB due to

language barriers, time zone differences, and cultural differences in communication styles when compared to on-shore employees.

In studies by Chatman and Barsade (2015), it is indicated that when employees are a good cultural fit, this increases their likelihood of remaining with their organisation. Chatman and Barsade (2015) identified that cultural fit is a significant predictor of employee turnover; employees who do not fit well with their organisations' cultures have a higher likelihood of leaving their job role. Therefore, creating and maintaining a positive organisational culture is essential for achieving high retention rates (Barsade, 2015). These findings suggest that a positive organisational culture is critical in retaining employees in both offshore and onshore organisations.

The significance of a positive organizational culture in enhancing employee retention and satisfaction, as highlighted by O'Reilly et al.,(2018), is particularly pertinent in Qatar's offshore sector. The challenging work conditions and the isolation associated with offshore environments make the alignment of organizational culture with national values crucial for employee retention. For instance, organizations that foster a culture of respect for hierarchy while providing robust support for family commitments can enhance WLB and reduce turnover. The study by Wang and Taksa (2015) underscores the challenges offshore workers face compared to onshore employees, such as less perceived support for WLB, which can be mitigated by culturally aligned organizational practices.

In terms of the relationship between organisational culture and WLB, Bono et al.,(2018) identified that a positive organisational culture that prioritizes employee well-being could lead to better WLB outcomes. According to a study by Bono et al.,(2018), organisations with supportive cultures tend to have employees with better WLB outcomes, such as less work-related stress and higher job satisfaction. In agreement, suggestions by Denison and Mishra (2017) argued that positive organisational cultural practices could influence WLB outcomes. In organisations where the perception of the employees is that the organisational culture was positive better WLB outcomes including improved physical and mental health, reduced absenteeism, and improved work relationships which result in greater job satisfaction and increased rates of retention are achieved (Denison and Mishra, 2017).

Bono et al.,(2018) and Denison and Mishra (2017) emphasize the positive influence of supportive organizational cultures on WLB outcomes. In Qatar's offshore sector, where the work environment is inherently stressful, organizational cultures that prioritize employee well-being and incorporate flexible work arrangements can lead to improved job satisfaction and reduced stress levels. For example, companies that have implemented structured rotational schedules allowing for significant off-time to spend with family have reported improved employee well-being and retention rates. This approach aligns with the Qatari cultural emphasis on family and collective well-being, highlighting the importance of organizational culture in enhancing WLB. The implication of this is that putting into cognizance the cultural factors within the organisation and adapting practices within the organisation to reflect cultural practices that facilitate the deployment of WLB initiatives could impact the retention and engagement of employees within the offshore segment.

The multifaceted impact of national and organizational cultures on WLB in Qatar's offshore oil sector underscores the complexity of designing effective WLB policies. National culture, with its emphasis on collectivism and power distance, sets the broader context within which organizational cultures develop their specific WLB policies. For instance, the adoption of WLB initiatives that respect hierarchical structures while promoting family well-being can lead to more engaged and committed employees. This dual consideration of cultural dimensions is critical for the successful implementation of WLB initiatives in Qatar, addressing the specific research objectives of assessing the impact of culture on WLB and retention among offshore employees and providing insights for the oil sector on managing WLB initiatives effectively.

2.10 Integration of Extant Literature and Research Design

The intersection between WLB and employee engagement within this research as shown by the literature is a rich field with several studies conducting inquiry within the context of human resources management. From the review implemented, it was revealed that a wide array of methodological approaches were employed in investigating the relationship between WLB, employee engagement and retention by several authors. These approaches were primarily based on a combination of quantitative, qualitative and mixed research strategies.

For instance, a substantial portion of the literature adopted quantitative methods in exploring the links between WLB, engagement and retention. Purcell (2014) and Schieman (“017) utilized quantitative techniques in examining how engagement influenced organizational outcomes and in examining the relationship between turnover rates and WLB. The use of these strategies typically encompassed the employment of statistical and survey tools in the assessment of variables like job satisfaction, engagement levels and the extent to which WLB initiatives are effective. By employing quantitative methods, these studies were able to generalize their findings, and identify statistical correlations. In studies like Chen et al.,(2019) and Albercht et al.,(2017), large scale surveys were employed in the investigation of the extent to which WLB affected retention of employees, with the findings demonstrating positive correlations between the two variables. Through the employment of quantitative mechanisms, the studies were able to provide empirical evidences useful in supporting the hypothesis that WLB contributed to high retention rates. In similar notion, studies by Lee and Ok (2018) and Huselid and Becker (2018) leveraged quantitative insights in examining the strength of these relationships, enhancing the capacity of the studies in highlighting the nuanced impacts of WLB on retention levels.

Considering that quantitative mechanisms were dominant in the literature, the study incorporated quantitative designs in the research to ensure alignment of the research with methodologies which are well established, and in contributing to the empirical understanding associated with WLB-engagement nexus within the context of the off-shore oil ad gas sector in Qatar. By leveraging insights from existing literature, the study design was such that it allowed for statistical analysis needed in uncovering patterns and relationships which may not have been possible if qualitative approaches alone were adopted in the investigation. Leveraging insights from the quantitative extant literature examined allowed for the study in employing surveys in collecting data on WLB practices, engagement and retention amongst offshore workers in the oil and gas sector in Qatar, allowing for the study in examining hypothesis relating to the impact of WLB on engagement and retention, using causal and correlation analysis in exploring the data. The decision to use quantitative approaches in this research was also informed by evidences from extant literature revealing the capability of the techniques when used in producing generalizable insights, and for quantifying the strength of the relationship existing between the variables.

Qualitative methods were also prevalent in the extant literature reviewed, and these methods often employed interviews and case studies for gaining deeper insights relating to employee experiences and their perceptions relating to WLB and engagement. For instance, studies such as Kunze et al.,(2018) and Dizaho and Saleh (2017) employed qualitative approaches in exploring aspects of WLB implementation and its impact on the wellbeing of employees. By adopting qualitative methods, these studies were able to provide rich, contextualized insights relating to the understanding of how WLB impacts the attitudes and behaviours of employees. In terms of how literature which used qualitative approaches informed this study's design, the researcher considered the advantage of qualitative approaches in enhancing the depth of understanding of the research due to their advantage of providing more nuanced exploration of experiences and specific challenges faced by employees in the offshore sector.

Some other studies reviewed adopted mixed methods, where quantitative techniques were combined with qualitative methods in providing comprehensive insights into WLB and how it impacts the retention and engagement of employees. For example, Bhalero (2013) and Miles (2019) adopted mixed methods in their studies which explored the interplay between WLB practices and employee attitudes and behaviours, and the use of the method offered their studies both detailed insights and statistical evidence to support the hypothesis they posited. Due to this advantage of mixed approaches.

Although reviewing literature from studies from multi-faceted approaches were essential to enhancing understanding of the concept of WLB within the context of the offshore oil and gas segment in Qatar, this study explored more quantitative approaches to enhance the generalizability of the findings from this research.

2.11 Work-Life Balance Scales

Several pre-validated scales have been established on the subject of WLB including scales designed by Brough et al.,(2014), which was designed for the purpose of assessing both non-work related and work-related events. The nature of these scales are that they provide a broad approach which encompasses a variety of dimensions of non-work and work-life. Additionally, the scale provides a capacity of capturing a wide array of experiences useful for offering valuable insights relating to how individuals perceive the balance between personal and professional domains. In

terms of the strengths associated with the scales designed by Brough et al.,(2014), this includes the pre-validated characteristics and comprehensive design associated with the scale, which enhances its applicability and reliability across various contexts. As a result of the nature of the scale, researchers are provided with the capacity of exploring multifaceted aspects of WLB, which provides a nuanced understanding of the intersection between work and personal life. Despite these merits, the scales could also present challenges including the complexity of the scales in facilitating the interpretation of results, leading to an obscurity of specific elements of WLB, especially in scenarios where the research aims at isolating specific dimensions associated with the construct (Brough et al., 2014). Also, there are effectiveness issues associated with the scales depending on the organizational or cultural context within which it is used, which necessitates potential adaptation of the scales within different settings.

Another WLB scale is the Netemeyer et al.,(1996) scale, also known as the family-work and work-family scale. Introduced by Netmeyer et al., (1996) for the purpose of measuring work-family and family-work conflicts, these two unique scales are crucial for facilitating the bi-directional characteristics associated with work and family domains. The family-work conflict scale is used in the assessment of how family responsibilities affect work, while the work-family conflict scales is used in the evaluation of the extent to which work demands impact family life (Netmeyer et al., 1996). In terms of the primary strength associated with this scale, this could be described by its ability to facilitate a differentiation between two forms of conflicts, providing a view which is detailed relating to how interference is operational in both direction; this differentiation facilitates a nuanced analysis of conflict dynamics, which is crucial for understanding the complexity of WLB. The scales also have a limitation in terms of their primary focus on conflicts, which prevents the metric in adequately capturing the positive interaction existing between work and family life, including enrichment or support. Additionally, an overlap exists between the two scales which could result in redundancy, further complicating the interpretation of the findings.

Another scale developed for WLB is the family satisfaction scale designed by Diener et al., (1985). This scale was deployed for measuring the subjective satisfaction of individuals with their family life, and is instrumental in the assessment of how family satisfaction contributes to WLB. The merits associated with the scale includes its clarity and simplicity, as the scale only has five items, making it easy for administering and interpreting, enhancing its accessibility and possible use

within a wide array of research (Diener et al., 1985). The scale is also advantageous due to its characteristic in capturing individual perceptions associated with family-life satisfaction, which is a crucial component needed for overall wellbeing. The narrow focus of the scale however, on family satisfaction does not directly address the impact of work-related factors on family life satisfaction, which might restrict the ability of the scale in providing a comprehensive insight of WLB (Diener et al., 1985). In addition, the scale is limited due to cultural differences in perceptions relating to family satisfaction across diverse population, impacting the applicability of the scales.

Other scales including the Hackman and Oldham (1975) three-item general job satisfaction subscale which is a metric established for the measurement of job-satisfaction; the scale is noted to be valued as a result of its theoretical foundations and its ability in providing general measures for job satisfaction. Merits of the Hackman and Oldham (1975) scale includes the concise and robust format it takes, using three items; the use of three items helps in minimizing respondent burden while still facilitating the ability of the measure in capturing crucial aspects which impact job satisfaction. The generalization mechanisms associated with this scale, while advantageous could also be a limitation of the scale, as it provides an overall measure for job satisfaction without facilitating the ability of research stakeholders in exploring specific dimensions which could be relevant to work-life-balance including work-flexibility and workload (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Also, the changes in work environments and roles over time could impact the accuracy and relevance of the scale, highlighting the importance of continuous adaptations and updates.

The psychological distress scale designed by Goldberg (1972) is another scale used in measuring psychological distress, which is an important element to be considered within the context of WLB, and comprises 12 General Health Questionnaires (GHQ) used for the measurement of psychological distress. A merit associated with this scale is its extensive validation in various settings enhancing reliability and applicability. This is because the scale's detailed nature facilitates thorough examination of psychological distress, useful in providing valuable insights relating to how individual's mental health impacts their work practice. Although the detailed nature of the scale is an advantage, the scale is limited by the GHQ's focus on distress rather than overall wellbeing, impacting the ability of researchers/stakeholders adopting the scale in capturing positive elements which impact mental health (Goldberg, 1972). Further to this there could be variance in

the effectiveness of the scale depending on organizational and cultural contexts, which potentially limits its applicability within various settings (Ibid).

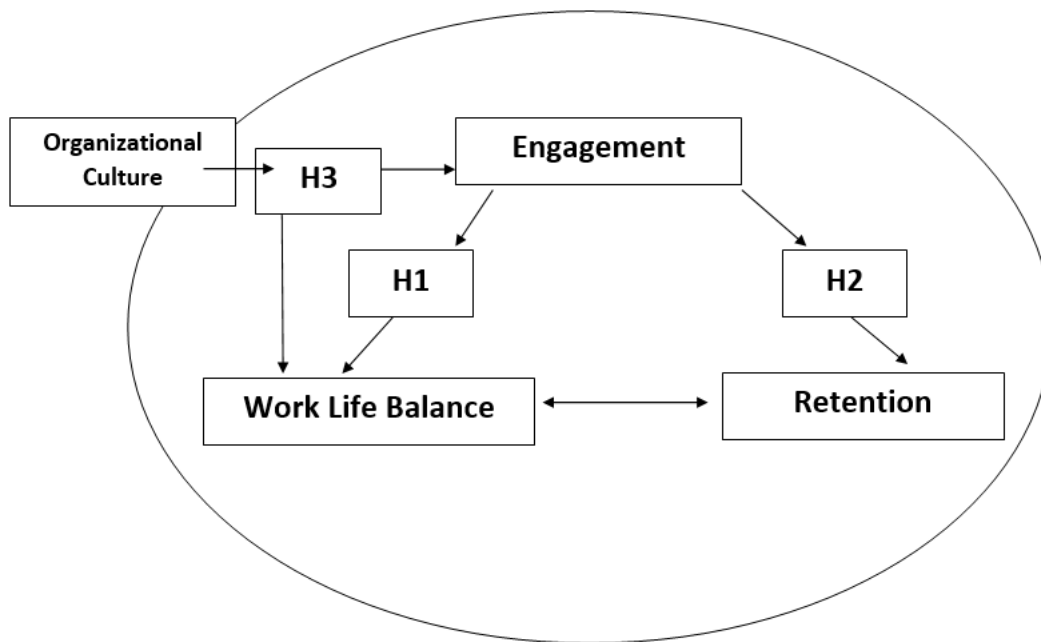
2.12 Conceptual Framework

This section presents the conceptual framework for this research, highlighting the different relationships explored to support the study's aim and objectives. The literature review shows that organisations' failure to focus on providing flexible work policies, such as offering care facilities to support employees and reducing working hours, undermines the effectiveness of work-life balance (WLB) (Bjarntoft et al., 2020). The review also identifies that organisations' failure to enhance overall job satisfaction by reducing work-life pressures and implementing initiatives like flexible work practices to ease the workload of employees similarly hinders effective WLB (Leon et al., 2019). A positive work environment was also identified as crucial for implementing effective WLB practices, contributing to positive outcomes such as job satisfaction and engagement, which in turn positively affect employee retention (Wu et al., 2022). In summary, these studies agree that organisational failure to provide factors that foster engagement—such as favourable working policies and a positive work environment—negatively impacts employee satisfaction. These factors are positively linked to organisational commitment and employee retention (Bjarntoft et al., 2020; Leon et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2022).

Despite the extensive body of research on work-life balance, there is a notable gap in the literature when it comes to examining the intersection of WLB with organisational culture (OC), employee relations (ER), employee engagement, and job satisfaction specifically within the context of offshore employees in Qatar. Existing research has overlooked the unique challenges faced by offshore employees, making it difficult to implement effective WLB strategies for this specific group. This study addresses this gap by considering the contextual factors associated with offshore employees in Qatar's oil and gas sector. Using the key factors identified, the framework postulates that the successful implementation of WLB strategies depends on the interrelation between these practices to enhance employee engagement and retention.

The following framework provides valuable insights into the influence of specific organisational contexts on WLB, employee engagement, and retention. Figure 1 illustrates that the interrelationships among the various elements identified in the literature affect both retention and WLB. In this study, WLB is considered the independent variable, as it is measured to determine its impact on the retention of offshore employees. Conversely, employee retention is regarded as the dependent variable, as it represents the outcome influenced by the independent variable.

Figure 2- Conceptual framework of the Study



H1: WLB positively influences offshore employee retention level

Exploring the conceptual framework further, the review of the literature identify that the presence of WLB policies in organisations positively impact engagement by increasing the employee commitment (Susi and Jawaharrani, 2011). It was also revealed that when organisations implement actions to improve employee wellness and through deploying actions that facilitate their engagement in personal activities considered to be important to the employees, these initiatives enhances job satisfaction and the engagement of the employees (Susi and Jawaharrani, 2011). Additionally, the extant literature explored also identified that poor WLB negatively impacts engagement which has a negative impact on employee retention. This means that poor WLB results

means less engagement, which results in lower job satisfaction negatively impacting the retention of workers (Schieman, 2017). Positive WLB initiatives including flexible work policies relating to flexibility in time and location were identified as important factors which enhance job satisfaction of workers (Anitha, 2014). This is because it facilitates the improvement of employees' perception relating to their organisation's dedication to improving their conditions, resulting in the enhancement of the engagement of the employees with their organisation (Anitha, 2014).

Putting into cognizance the focus of this study, it is noted that offshore workers face different challenges in the achievement of WLB when compared to their onshore colleagues. For instance, in scenarios where offshore employees have to work differing times and shifts, it could result in extended working hours leading to a challenge in the maintenance of WLB (Lok et al., 2010). This is not to overlook the presence of extended working hours within the context of onshore employment, but the differing scenario of available social infrastructure including social engagement with family makes offshore workers more prone to mental stressors. Furthermore, the nature of offshore roles could result in employees experiencing social isolation resulting in challenges in achieving WLB for employees (Sardeshmukh et al., 2012).

In the paper by Lok et al.,(2010), it is identified that when employees perceive better WLB initiatives being deployed by their organisation, it results in better employee satisfaction leading to higher commitment levels of employees with regards to intent to remain within their organisation. In similar notion, Sardeshmukh et al.,(2012) identified that when organisations prioritize WLB initiatives within the offshore sector, it enhances retention; this is when practices like providing flexitime, telecommuting, counselling services and social activities are likely to be perceived positively in terms of WLB by employees. Summarily, this suggests that the implementation of these practices to enhance WLB within the context of the offshore sector in Qatar's oil and gas industry could result in positive outcomes relating to retention and commitment of workers.

H2: The level of engagement mediates employee retention.

The extant literature also strongly supports the assertion that the extent to which employees are engaged with their roles depends on a variety of factors and these impacts the retention of

employees within their role. What this means is that when there are higher levels of engagement of employees, this tends to be associated with improvements in the retention rates of employees. For instance, in studies by Tariq et al.,(2017), it was suggested that when there are higher levels of engagement of employees, this was associated with lower intentions of employees deciding to leave the firm. Similarly, Raza et al.,(2019) in a study focused on the relationship between engagement and retention within the hospitality sector identified engagement as a significant factor which could predict the retention of employees, and which mediated fully the relationship between retention and satisfaction of employees within their roles. The findings from these studies provide compelling evidence which support the statement that the level of engagement serves as a mediator for employee retention.

Additionally, the reviewed literature emphasized on the importance of rewards to the engagement level of employees and illustrating how these impact engagement, suppositions by Syahreza et al.,(2017) identify that the provision of appropriate compensation enhances employee engagement and job satisfaction which bolsters retention. In similar notion, reviewed literature from Bakker and Demerouti (2017) identify that there is an indirect relationship between retention and WLB and in their findings it was noted that the presence of job resources including WLB could impact retention. From this study it was indicated that by affecting the extent to which employees are engaged with their role through ensuring presence of appropriate/relevant resources, the retention of employees will be enhanced.

The indirect relationship between employee engagement and retention could also be explained by literature suggesting through the conservation of resources model, that when employees possess more resources, it enhances their likelihood of engaging in their work/role which increases retention, but when a loss of resource occurs, this results in negative outcomes including burnout and increased turnover. Despite the existing literature on the interaction between work-life balance (WLB) and employee engagement, none of these studies have specifically focused on the unique context of the offshore sector. This evidences that there is a notable gap in the literature regarding the specific interplay of these variables and their impact on the retention of offshore employees. Using the conceptual model, this study aims to address this gap by examining the dynamic

relationship between WLB, engagement, and employee retention within the offshore sector, thus contributing to the existing body of knowledge.

In the development of the conceptual framework, it is important to acknowledge why this study does not directly examine the indirect relationship between work-life balance (WLB) and retention. This decision was based on the recognition that constructs such as organisational commitment and job satisfaction, which influence retention, are highly correlated and have the potential to impact it significantly (Meyer and Allen, 1991). The commitment of employees can be influenced by various factors, including WLB, organizational culture, and satisfaction. Given the intricate interdependencies among these factors, it was deemed necessary to consolidate them into a single retention variable, considering the complexity involved in disentangling these constructs from one another (Kim and Kao, 2014).

Furthermore, it should be noted that commitment and job satisfaction are distinct constructs, each influenced by a multitude of underlying factors, such as organizational culture, job characteristics, and leadership style. Consequently, determining the primary driver of retention becomes challenging (Meyer and Allen, 1991). By not assessing the indirect relationship between WLB and retention, this study was able to ensure that a parsimonious model was developed; exploring the indirect relationship between WLB and retention would have resulted in multiple predictors being incorporated into the analysis model for the research. This increases the risk of multi-collinearity which leads to inflated errors, and estimated variables that are biased. By exploring the direct relationship between retention and WLB, these issues are avoided and a model which is more robust is developed.

Additionally, by focusing solely on the direct relationship between work-life balance (WLB) and retention, this conceptual framework comprehensively captures and examines the impact of WLB on retention among offshore employees. This approach aligns with previous studies that highlight the need for context-specific considerations and caution against the automatic consolidation of satisfaction and commitment into a single retention variable (Kim and Kao, 2014). This is because different contexts may result in an exhibition of variations in the key drivers of retention. In certain situations, job satisfaction may be argued as the primary driver, while in others, commitment may play a more influential role, although other underlying variables at play. Acknowledging the

specific contexts associated with the offshore oil and gas sector in Qatar, as well as the intricate nature of factors influencing WLB in the sector resulted in the decision to consolidate job satisfaction and commitment into a single retention variable, a decision believed by the researcher to be made thoughtfully.

In summary, the choice to not examine the indirect relationship between work-life balance (WLB) and retention was influenced by several factors. Firstly, the complex and highly correlated nature of job satisfaction and commitment constructs necessitated a careful consideration of their consolidation. This decision aimed to maintain a parsimonious conceptual framework for the study. Secondly, the focus of this research was specifically on investigating the significance of WLB and its direct impact on retention. By narrowing the scope, the developed conceptual framework provides a more focused and targeted analysis. Moreover, potential implications associated with the interpretation of consolidated variables in relation to retention were considered when making decisions about the direct relationship between WLB and retention. These considerations ensured the research-maintained clarity and precision in its investigation.

H3: Relationship between the level of Engagement and WLB is moderated by Organisational culture characteristics.

This hypothesis was posited based on the review of extant literature which indicates that when employees have poor work-life balance, it can negatively impact their level of engagement in their work (Schieman, 2017). This means that employees who are struggling to balance their work and personal lives may not be fully committed or motivated to their jobs. As a result, they may be less productive and may not perform at their best, which can ultimately affect the organisation's overall performance (Schieman, 2017). Furthermore, when employees are not engaged in their work, they may experience low job satisfaction, which can negatively impact their willingness to stay with the organisation. This is because job satisfaction is a significant factor in determining the decisions of employees remaining in an organization (Schieman, 2017). If employees are not satisfied with their jobs, they may be more likely to leave the organisation and seek other opportunities. In other words, if employees are not satisfied with their jobs due to poor work-life balance, they may be more likely to leave the organisation (Ibid). This underscores the importance for organisations to

promote and maintain a positive work-life balance for their employees to enhance their engagement, job satisfaction, and ultimately their retention.

The review of the literature also showed that positive WLB initiatives including flexible work policies specific to time, location which enhance job satisfaction of workers and improvement of employees' perception of organisation's dedication to improving employee conditions enhances their engagement with the organisation (Anitha, 2014). While the review of the literature identified how WLB and engagement interact, it was also revealed that none of these studies were specific to the context of the offshore employee in Qatar. Considering this, the conceptual framework design considered the interaction between these variables and how they impact on job satisfaction and retention of offshore employees is examined.

Spillover theory also provides support for this hypothesis as it identifies that when the nature of the organisation is such that they provide an environment which enhances engagement by reducing the work demands of employees, providing social support to employees and provision of flexible working options for employees, this enhances the level of engagement of the employees (Shipmon-Friedli, 2022). Furthermore, organisations that employ organisational characteristics which enhance the deployment of WLB for employees also enhances the level of engagement, and reduces negative spill overs from the employees' work-life to their personal life (Tahir et al., 2022). For this study, of the main focus is the offshore employees within the oil and gas industry due to the unique spill overs associated with the sector which could impact on the engagement of employees.

This argument can further be enforced by suggestions from the literature which identify that when the nature of engagement within an organisation is at affective or emotional levels, it facilitates the development of a sense of belonging and attachment of the employees to the venture. This means that when there is an organisational culture of high trust which facilitates the treatment of employees as valued partners in the venture, this empowers employees by improving the relationship environment within the organisation (Block and Piersanti, 2013). Also, suggestions from the reviewed literature indicates that a high-trust within the organisation facilitates the decentralization of responsibility for employees, which enhances decision making, key information sharing, and reduces barriers to operational procedures, which increases job

satisfaction and the perceived value of the employees (Kivland, 2016). This means that when organisations adopt a positive engagement practices that enhances employee recognition and celebrates employee success, it results in an enhancement of the organisational commitment of the employees, loyalty, and engagement of the employees. This explains how employee retention is mediated by the level of engagement. The more readily available the engagement practices are being deployed within an organisation, the greater the retention level.

2.13 Conclusion

The conceptual framework developed in this thesis aims to bridge significant gaps in the existing literature regarding the interplay of work-life balance (WLB), organisational culture (OC), and retention, specifically within the context of Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector. From the literature reviewed, it is noted that when organisations fail to implement practices such as reduced working hours, flexible work policies, or supportive policies for worker care, WLB is negatively impacted. Additionally, a positive work environment, as cited in the extant literature, is crucial for successful WLB practices, influencing employee engagement, job satisfaction, and retention (Wu et al., 2022).

Despite the extensive research on WLB, a notable gap remains in understanding how WLB intersects with OC, employee relations, engagement, and job satisfaction within the context of offshore employees in Qatar. This study addresses this gap by contextualising the unique challenges faced by offshore oil and gas employees in Qatar, exploring how factors such as social isolation, mental stress, and flexible work characteristics affect workers. The framework conceptualised posits that successful WLB strategies enhance engagement and retention, identifying the essential factors influencing these variables.

For instance, H1 suggests that WLB positively impacts offshore employee retention in the sector, underscored by literature which argues that effective WLB practices enhance job satisfaction and engagement (Schieman, 2017; Jawaharrani, 2011). H2 proposes that the level of engagement mediates employee retention, with higher engagement levels linked to increased retention rates (Tariq et al., 2017; Raza et al., 2019). Furthermore, H3 suggests that the relationship between WLB and engagement is moderated by organisational culture, emphasising the importance of a positive

organisational environment for the enhancement of engagement and retention (Anitha, 2014; Shipmon-Fredli, 2022).

By consolidating commitment and satisfaction into a single retention variable, the study ensures a parsimonious model, effectively capturing the direct relationship between retention and WLB, while considering the specific context of employees in Qatar's oil and gas sector. In summary, the model developed in this study provides a nuanced understanding of the dynamics between WLB, retention, and engagement within Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector. The framework further underscores the importance of implementing effective WLB strategies and fostering a supportive organisational culture to enhance well-being, commitment, and satisfaction. These insights contribute to the existing body of literature and offer practical implications for improving employee retention and organisational practices in Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector.

Chapter 3 -Methodology

3.0 Introduction

Understanding the methodological design adopted in this thesis is crucial for the comprehension the procedures followed by the research in providing answers to the research questions posed, consequently facilitating the outcomes of the study in making a valuable contribution to the research outcomes as it relates to WLB of offshore workers. The methodological design is based on the research onion model as posited by Saunders et al.,(2016). The next section commences with the description of the research philosophy and the philosophical position of this study.

3.1 Research Philosophy and Approach

Positivism was deemed the most suitable approach for this study due to the several merits it offers to studies on WLB in terms of objectivity and measurement. For instance, by adopting positivism within this study, quantifiable measures including productivity rates and satisfaction scores which could provide concrete evidence on the effect of WLB initiatives could be measured. For instance, with positivist approach in this study, the findings provided are able to validate hypothesis regarding issues like flexibility at work and its impact on retention and WLB (Smith, 2020). Additionally, the adoption of positivism facilitates the replicability of the research by allowing for the findings to be replicated or compared with others, allowing for result consistency (Johnson and Liu, 2019). Further to this, positivism aids in the formulation of general strategies which aids in the development of general laws of behaviour which could be applied in a broad manner (Brown, 2021). Additionally, using positivism in this study allows for the findings in providing quantifiable data, which enhances evidence-based decision making, useful for managing WLB within organizations (White and Harper, 2018). The implication of this considering the context of this research is that it the adoption of the philosophy facilitates the justification of the implementation of more effective WLB policies which is underscored by empirical evidences as against evidences which are anecdotal.

Considering the context of this study focusing on measuring the impact of WLB on the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector, the adoption of positivism was deemed suitable for this study as it facilitates an objective means in addressing the research's aim (Thakurta and Chetty, 2015).

Using positivism within this study allowed for the research to maintain an approach which is non-biased, which is important to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results obtained, and ensure that the results garnered from the study is not impacted by bias of the researcher (Saunders et al., 2016). Expanding further, positivism relies on quantitative data, which is more reliable than qualitative data due to the scientific methods used in the collection of the data, and the possibility of validating the findings through replicability characteristics of the philosophical stance. When quantitative data is used in a study, it facilitates the development of objective information which forms the basis for scientific assumptions (Saunders et al., 2016). In order for understanding of general perceptions relating to WLB, OC, and ER, the use of a positivist stance allowed for the researcher in exploring general insights of offshore workers, and their perceptions relating to how they feel about various factors and its impact on WLB effectiveness. Positivism within this study allowed for identification of trends associated with WLB, OC and ER within the context of offshore workers in the oil and gas sector in Qatar and patterns associated with the concepts being investigated, enabling generalizability of the findings obtained (Saunders et al., 2016).

The adoption of positivism also facilitated the study's capacity in combining theories and concepts with practical experiences relevant to WLB in offshore segments. This is because with positivism examination of assumptions to the phenomena being investigated, and the measurement of definitive empirical outcomes relating to the focus of the investigation can be achieved (Saunders et al., 2016). In agreement, suggestions by Bougie et al.,(2020) identify that in positivism allows for accuracy of empirical deductions made, and also impacts on generalizability of the study.

Considering this research's aim on measuring the impact of WLB on the offshore segment of the oil and gas segment, the adoption of positivism facilitates the achievement of objective means in order to address the aim of the research (Thakurta and Chetty, 2015). For instance, in order to understand the general perceptions which relate to WLB, organizational culture (OC) and employee retention (ER), the adoption of a positivist stance allowed the research in exploring general insights relating to offshore workers, including their perceptions. The adoption of the positivist stance also allowed for the identification of trends and patterns which are associated with WLB, OC and ER within the context of offshore workers in Qatar's oil and gas sector, allowing

for the findings' generalizability (Saunders et al., 2016). Additionally, adopting positivism in this research allowed for the combination of theories with concepts and practical experience which are relevant to WLB within the context of Qatar's offshore segment. This allowed for the research in examining the assumptions and measuring the empirical outcomes, facilitating the achievement of a deeper probe into the research focal point.

As stated earlier, Positivism aligns with quantitative methods- the selected method used in this study (De Vaus, 2014). Quantitative methodology refers to the methods which are adopted in the exploration of a phenomenon, using approaches statistical such as the distribution of surveys and questionnaires in the collection of data (Saunders et al., 2016). Suggestions by Creswell (2013) find that the use of positivism in research is dependent on quantitative data, due to the consistency of this form of data, which allows for the generalizability of the data when put into comparison with qualitative and mixed approaches. This study utilised a quantitative approach, as this method involves the collection and analysis of numerical forms of data; quantitative techniques incorporate exploration of these numerical data through identifying patterns and averages, in order to test causal relationships and make generalized deductions that relate to the phenomena under investigation (Creswell and Creswell, 2017; Saunders et al., 2016).

Additionally, quantitative techniques are suggested to be conclusive in nature, facilitating tests for validity which are important in drawing deductions relating to the issues explored. Consequently, by using quantitative approaches in this study, the findings obtained could be validated through future studies exploring the concepts, using similar methods and approaches (Saunders et al., 2016).

Suggestions by De Vaus (2014) identify that there are several advantages associated with using quantitative techniques in a research investigation. These include the characteristics of quantitative techniques which allow for clarity with regard to the visualization of research data by using tables, charts, and graphs (De Vaus, 2014). Furthermore, quantitative techniques do not suffer from issues of propriety when compared to qualitative approaches (De Vaus, 2014). Despite these advantages, quantitative methods are noted to be disadvantageous with regards to the nature of results obtainable through the methods; the results obtainable from quantitative techniques are

numerical in nature, and as a result, there is less insight into the motivations, thoughts, and drivers relating to the contexts of the issues under examination (Saunders et al., 2016).

However, as this study tests hypotheses that relates to WLB, ER, and OC, and measures how these variables impact one another, the use of quantitative approaches in this study was deemed to be suitable due to its importance in enabling the exploration of proposed hypotheses and its characteristics in allowing for the exploration of the relationship between the variables being explored.

Moreover, several studies which relate to WLB have adopted quantitative methods in the investigation of the concept. For instance, Canizzo and Obaldiston (2015) made use of quantitative approaches in examining WLB and its impact on employees in Australia, employing surveys in examining the issue. The use of this approach in this study facilitated the capacity of the research in identifying that there is a significant impact of the lack of WLB initiatives on the home front (Canizzo and Obaldiston, 2015).

Similarly, Hus et al.,(2019) used quantitative approaches in the examination of the effect of long working hours on WLB and job satisfaction. In this study, questionnaires were distributed to 369 respondents and following analysis, the use of quantitative approaches enabled the study in revealing correlations between WLB, occupational stress, and job satisfaction (Hsu et al., 2019).

Considering these dispositions, this research decided to follow quantitative approaches due to the belief that using this approach would facilitate the achievement of research goals.

Additionally, in designing the methodology for the study, considerations were made of the rules regarding physical meetups of individuals in the State of Qatar due to covid-19, which happened during the data collection period. Considering the ethical requirements of data collection, which requires accountability of the researcher in preventing harm for both the researcher and research participants, qualitative approaches and other face-to-face methods in the data collection process was avoided. This strategy aligns with suggestions by UKRI (2022) which emphasizes that in conducting studies, the researcher must ensure safety of themselves and participants. The adoption of this approach also aligns with ethical requirements and principles of research as suggested by

Saunders et al.,(2016) which also emphasizes the importance of research studies in ensuring that no harm comes to the research participants and researcher in the process of undertaking an investigation. Given the nature of COVID-19 which is easily transmitted by contact or being in close proximity with infected individuals, the research design was such that the study adopted online surveys to ensure adherence with safety guidelines. Additionally, the use of online survey allowed for the study in proceeding without significant delays, while ensuring the integrity and timeliness of the research outcomes are maintained.

The research design followed is also reflective of a pragmatic adaptation of the research studies to the global contextual approach adopted at the period when the study was undertaken, demonstrating the understanding of the researcher in ensuring methodological flexibility and rigour in circumstances which are not foreseen (UKRI, 2022).

3.2 Data Collection Instrument

With regards to this study, online surveys were employed for the collection of data and examination of variables relating to WLB, ER, OC, and engagement in the offshore sector. Online surveys are used in this study, due to their characteristic nature which allowed for generalized exploration of the issues relating to WLB, ER, OC, and engagement. In adopting online surveys, quantitative insights relating to WLB within the offshore segment were developed. This was done by defining questions and posing the questions to participants within the offshore sector in Qatar. To ensure that appropriate research questions were posed to the participants, and the questions facilitate the achievement of the research objectives, it was ensured that the questions were developed based on the reviewed literature, and a pilot survey was implemented (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). This facilitated the enhancement of the quality of the research outcomes, by allowing for the participant's understanding of the questions being posed, and also facilitating the collection of appropriate responses to the questions being posed.

In the design of the survey questions, it was ensured that all questions were standardized in alignment with supposition by Guidolin et al.,(2021) which suggests that standardizing survey question is essential for the minimization of research bias and also for ensuring the increase in the data reliability. By ensuring the same questions are posed and phrased in an identical fashion for

all participants, the investigation ensured that all collected data were comparable and consistent across responses. The uniformity in the design of the question also allowed for the study in analysing correlations and patterns specifically related to WLB within the context of the offshore sector, which allowed for relevant insights to be generalized to the broader population of the offshore employees. By doing this, the insights obtained were useful in ensuring that the research objectives of understanding factors to aid in the improvement of WLB within the offshore sector was fulfilled (Guidolin et al., 2021). Additionally, by deploying online survey, the researcher was able to ensure scalability of the volume of data collected from relevant participants, allowing for extensive data collection, providing more accurate insights and understanding of the characteristics associated with offshore workers in, thus enhancing the robustness and applicability of the deductions drawn by the study (Fowler, 2013).

3.3 Survey Implementation

In the design of the survey, it was ensured that participants were provided with an “information sheet” which identified to them the purpose of the study; consent request information was also provided to participants which was required to be completed before commencing the surveys. For the consent section, the design required for participants to provide voluntary consent to facilitate the research being able to utilize responses obtained. The participant information sheet also identified the variables being measured and the manner through which the data provided by the participants would be used. Further to this, demographic questions were posed to the participants.

The debriefing section of the questions thanked the respondents for partaking in the survey, and also informed the participants of details regarding withdrawal from the study, and reminds participants that their responses are purely anonymous and provides the researcher details in case of further questions about their involvement in the study.

Two survey questions were developed; one Arabic and the second in English language as potential participants were from a region where Arabic is the official language, despite widespread use of English. Designing the questions this way was to facilitate comfort of potential participants in interpretation and communication; using both languages helped to ensure clear understanding of the questions posed. Considerations of the language used in the design of data collection tools are

essential to ensure that the clear meanings associated with the questions posed were gained by the participants. Saunders et al.,(2016) identify that when there is a clear comprehension of the questions posited by participants in an interview, it allows for clearer responses that provide answers to these questions to be achieved by the study.

Critically, by ensuring that the survey questions were understood by the participants was not a logistical tactic, but a methodological approach. Clarity in comprehension of the research questions facilitates high-quality data, which is crucial for reliability and validity of the research findings. This is because misunderstandings could result in inaccuracies and biases, undermining the overall rigor of the study. Furthermore, the adoption of a dual-language approach in this study is in alignment with best practices of cross-cultural research. Suggestions by Saunders et al., (2016) emphasized that tailoring the data collection tools used in the cultural and linguistic context of participants is essential for collection of valid and reliable data. By adopting this practice in this research helped ensure that the findings obtained were a true reflection of the experiences and attitude of the study's population. Summarily, the development of the survey question in both Arabic and English was a strategic decision which helped to ensure that participant's comfort was enhanced, and also to allow for a comprehensive understanding of the questions by the participants, allowing for the research to obtain high-quality data.

Further to this, prior to distributing the surveys, it was ensured that ethical approaches were followed including obtaining consent from participants. Written consent were obtained from the participants in implementing the surveys. Participants were required to consent to participation in the research via an online consent form which preceded their ability to continue with the survey. They had to agree/consent to participation before accessing the survey questions. Additionally, participants were informed that surveys responses would be recorded using SPSS, and assurances are made to participants that the recording is only for academic purposes to reduce the response bias of the participants; this was contained in the participant information which was sent to potential participants for the study (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). This is in alignment with ethical principles guiding the study.

With regards to the measures used, pre validated WLB scales as adapted from Brough et al.,(2014) was incorporated in the measurement of WLB by allowing for respondents to the survey in

reflecting on non-work related and work-related event. Family-work conflict and work-family conflict were assessed using two separate scales: family-work conflict scale and work-family conflict scale. These scales were developed and validated by Netemeyer et al.,(1996) and measure interferences between work and family lives of individuals. Family satisfaction was assessed using a five-item life satisfaction scale developed and validated by Diener et al.,(1985). The individuals' level of job satisfaction was assessed using a three- item General Job Satisfaction subscale developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975). Psychological health in this study was measured by levels of psychological distress. Individuals' distress was measured using a twelve-item General Health Questionnaire developed and validated by Goldberg (1972).

The measure was based on 4 statements using a Likert scale between 1 and 5; 1 was noted to represent participants strongly disagreeing, while 5 iterated strong agreements by participants. Participants who received a high score relative to the Likert scale reflected/ was indicative of the individual capacity of achieving positive WLB experiences. With regards to the Cronbach's alpha of the scale, this is noted to be .87 which is indicative of high reliability.

3.4 Sampling

The target sample was chosen from the population of offshore employees within an oil and gas organisations in Qatar. Participants targeted included employees at higher, mid-level and operational level positions within an organisation in the oil and gas segment in Qatar.

The study's population included Offshore Installations Managers, Offshore team leads like Supervisors, Super Attendants, Mechanical Supervisors and Electrical Supervisors. The selection of the appropriate research sample is essential within this study as it facilitates the rigorous ability of the study in capturing empirical data needed for developing new theory (Shaheen et al., 2016). Glaser and Strauss (1967) identify that the choice of a research sample depends on the characteristics of the study and the theory being used in the study. Hence, the probability sampling methods was employed. This involved the random selection of participants from units of the offshore sector in Qatar.

Probability sampling in this study incorporated the use of scientific/statistical means in ensuring that members of the same population have the same opportunities in being part of the sample. For this study, the population incorporated participants from Qatar's offshore segment within its oil and gas industry. In terms of the sample size, the researcher tried to ensure that the sample size met the proposed sample/participant statistical requirements for the generalization approach used in the study, including significance.

For this study, the sample size $n=117$. The adoption of probability sampling in this study was also due to the characteristic features associated with this sampling method which allows for the researcher in selecting relevant samples from the existing population of offshore workers in the oil sector and the ability of the sampling method in allowing for predictions to be made based on the perceived response of the overall population of employees working in the offshore segment. This enhanced the generalizability associated with the results obtained/ research outcomes. Additionally, the selection of probability sampling in this study is due to cost effective nature of the sampling process, and the timeliness of the method due to less complications associated with the method. The sampling method was also selected due to its characteristics of facilitating ease with which the study could manage/monitor bias of the responses by the research participants.

3.5 Pilot Study

Pilot studies are described as mechanisms for testing, refining and reviewing data collection instruments used in a research; piloting is an essential action which needs to be implemented to ensure that accurate and appropriate forms of data are collected by the researcher in order to facilitate provision of answers to the research questions posed by a study (Saunders et al., 2016). In another study by Teijlingen and Hudley (2002), pilot studies were described as miniature forms of full-scale research or feasibility studies undertaken to test specific characteristics of the research data collection instruments. While pilot surveys do not guarantee the research being undertaken being successful, the deployment of pilot studies in a research improve the opportunities for a positive research outcome to be attained.

In studies conducted by Daly (2019) exploring the concept of WLB and its impact on job satisfaction, pilot interviews were employed to test the research procedures, and to identify

practical issues which could impact the effectiveness of the data collection tool in facilitating the achieve of the research aims. In this study, pilot surveys were conducted with four participants who are employees in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry. The pilot studies were useful in the development of the final survey schedule used for the data collection for this study. Through the responses obtained, the researcher was able to determine the expected timeliness for completion of the responses of the survey by the participants. Additionally, through the pilot survey, the researcher was able to obtain feedback from participants relating to challenges or any issues in understanding the survey questions posed. Issues relating to clarity of the questions posed in the survey were obtained via feedback to the researcher which was obtained via emails. The feedback obtained was used in the development of the final surveys which were then uploaded to the Qualtrics platform for distribution to the proposed sample who are members of the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry in Qatar. Changes that were made to the surveys included rephrasing some of the questions being posed to the participants in order to ensure clarity of the surveys by the participants.

The use of pilot surveys in this study facilitated the capacity of the research in testing the extent to which the research instruments being used in the study were adequate to facilitate the achievement of the research aims (Creswell, 2011). Additionally, deploying pilot questionnaires aided the researcher's ability to explore the adequacy and feasibility of the research instrument in being able to facilitate the achievement of the research aims.

Significantly, the data collection and sampling process were greatly influenced by the pandemic. The implementation of social distancing measures and lockdown restrictions posed challenges to data collection, leading to lower response rates. The fears associated with the global health crisis and the difficulties individuals faced in coping with the impact of COVID-19 might have affected the willingness and capacity of participants to respond effectively. As a result, the data collection approach was adapted to accommodate these circumstances. Online tools were utilized, and surveys were designed using the Qualtrics research platform. Email links containing the surveys were distributed to potential participants. The subsequent section provides a more comprehensive overview of the research process undertaken in this investigation.

3.6 Research Process

With regards to the deployment of the surveys in this research, the surveys were distributed using links generated using Qualtrics platform. In distributing the surveys, the researcher ensured that participants received information regarding consent in line with ethical requirements for the study. This was done through providing participants with online consent form which was available to the participants to review and agree or disagree with using the Qualtrics platform.

As participants completed the surveys using Qualtrics, it was not possible for oral consent to be obtained from the participants and in order for this to be circumvented, the survey was designed in such a manner that once the link to access the survey was clicked by the participant, they were directed to the consent aspect of the research. Only participants that agreed to the research consent conditions identified in the participant information sheet by ticking the appropriate consent box could access the survey questions.

The approach adopted aligns with research ethics best practices, which mandates that researchers fully inform participants about the purpose of the study, the rights to participant confidentiality, the nature of the participant's involvement and rights of withdrawal at any point of the study without consequence (British Psychological Society, 2014). By ensuring that the consent form was directly embedded within the Qualtrics platform, it was ensured that the study was able to adhere to ethical guidelines, which allowed for the participants to be provided with all relevant and necessary information in a format which was accessible and clear. The adoption of this approach allowed for not just the safeguarding of the rights of participants but also enhanced the ethical integrity and credibility associated with the procedures adopted in the research.

3.7 Data Analysis

It is essential that the procedures used in the analysis of the research data obtained from the participants are understood, as this enhances the quality of the deductions drawn and plays an important role in the conclusions drawn in the research and the capacity of the research to attain the research question (Adams and McGuire, 2022).

Recalling that this study adopts quantitative methods in undertaking the investigation, quantitative research data analysis methods were applied; this is because analysis for quantitative data requires the use of quantitative tools and software, as adopted by this study (Adams and McGuire, 2022). For the quantitative research analysis, this study adopts the use of SPSS software in the analysis of various statistical data, and for exploring the relationships between WLB and other variables explored in the study.

In presenting the quantitative analysis for this study, different forms of analysis were implemented using the SPSS software. These included descriptive analysis, reliability analysis and correlation analysis. Descriptive analysis was used in the exploration and description of the research data, while various forms of correlation analysis was used in exploring the relationship between different variables being explored by the study.

Suggestions by Saunders et al.,(2016) identifies that the use of appropriate quantitative analysis software in research analysis enhances the accuracy of the researcher in the analysis of the responses obtained; this is because the analysis process using a software facilitates effectiveness of the researcher in the implementation of multiple procedures relating to the analysis including identifying outliers, collinearity, normality and linearity, among other forms of analysis. In this study, this aided the ability of the research in evidencing the reliability and validity of the data obtained from the research. In this thesis, the presentation of the analysis results were done using frequency tables, while the reliability of the collected data was computed using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all the variables being measured by the research. The α coefficient was computed for all the variables under examination using SPSS and the α coefficient, which was specific to the reliability of the research was noted to range between 0 and 1. Cronbach's alpha score greater than 0.5 was considered as acceptable and noted to be an indication of positive internal consistency findings relating to the items being examined within the scale.

With regards to the statistical techniques which were deployed using the SPSS software, this included various forms of analysis including Pearson correlation analysis, t-statistic tests, ANOVA analysis and linear regression analysis tests. These tests were performed to examine the existing relationship between the various variables being examined in the study.

For instance, Pearson analysis facilitated the exploration of the relationship between WLB, OC and EE which are important themes that were hypothesized to exude relationships. The use of the correlation analysis facilitated the ability of the study in testing the extent to which the relationship between WLB, EE and OC was positive or if a negative correlation existed between the variables. Additionally, the use of the correlation analysis in this research allowed for the study to make comparison of the strength of association between WLB and other variables being explored. In implementing correlation within the research, SPSS was used in the calculation of the Pearson's correlation coefficient following which the correlation coefficient was interpreted. Following this, the degree of statistical significance of the correlation coefficient was then tested using the proposed hypothesis. Pallant (2010) suggests that the use of relevant statistical analysis tools facilitates exploration of variables including their subscales, and examination of the dynamics occurring between the variables making up the individual sub-scales being examined.

3.8 Research Ethics

With regards to the ethics followed in this study, it was ensured that all ethical principles relating to undertake a study of this nature were followed. This was to ensure that negative risks associated with a lack of ethical procedures including negative impacts on the researcher, participants, and institutions concerned, were mitigated (Saunders et al., 2016). The ethics considered the policies associated with research implementation, which governs Nottingham Trent University. Informed consent was obtained from the participants prior to commencing the interviews and also at the initiation of the response to the surveys, and this allowed for the researcher in providing information to participants relating to the use of the data they would provide in the investigation (Breakwell et al., 2000). Other ethical procedures followed in this study included ensuring the prevention of unauthorized access to the research files.

Additionally, all participants' data were anonymized to mitigate any risks posed to participants as a result of their partaking in the study; personal information which allows for identifying participants were avoided and participants were assigned a pseudonym. Further to this, honesty was applied in undertaking this study. Resnik (2015) suggests that honesty is essential in the interpretation and exploration of results that relate to the key aims and objectives of the study. As a result, in conducting the study, it was ensured that honesty and sincerity were ethical practices

adopted by the researcher; this was ensured that moral codes expected to be followed in undertaking the study were followed. Further to this, it was ensured that integrity and honesty were exuded by the researcher in interpreting data so as to ensure the accuracy of holistic outcomes (Resnik, 2015).

3.9 Validity, Reliability, and Credibility

Martiningshih et al.,(2022) finds that the reliability, validity, and credibility of a study's outcomes validates the approach followed by the research and highlights the selected research tools adopted, to facilitate the optimization of analysis associated with the research data. Validity, reliability, and credibility concepts within a study facilitate the outcomes of the research being in alignment with the objectives and aims of the study, hence being important to this study in drawing/reaching conclusions (Saunders et al., 2016). The concepts of validity, reliability and credibility are important and influence the quality of research outcomes, and the accuracy relating to the implementation of the analysis of data (Molinillo et al., 2022).

Molinillo et al.,(2022) define validity as the researcher's ability in ensuring the precision of data obtained from the process associated with the research development; validity facilitates the confirmation of the procedures applied within the study and verifies strategies in allowing for the research objectives to be obtained. For reliability, this describes the research methods employed in a study facilitate the reproduction of similar results multiple times; consistent replication of the study illustrates that there is a likelihood of reliability of the research methods (Saunders et al., 2016). In terms of credibility of the study, this describes the dependability and trustworthiness associated with the study findings.

With regards to the achievement of reliability in this study, it was ensured that the survey was consistently applied across a broad demographic of offshore employees within Qatar's oil and gas sector. The questions which were standardized were also administered in a uniform manner using the Qualtrics platform, allowing for all participants to be subjected to the same conditions, which allows for replication of the study findings under the same conditions. Saunders et al.,(2016) highlights the importance of methodological consistency in quantitative studies in ensuring results are repeatable and for the confirmation of the reliability associated with the study methods adopted.

In terms of the study's credibility, this is influenced significantly by the integrity associated with the data collection procedures followed. Through the integration of an informed consent form at the inception of the study, the research aligns with ethical standards associated with ethical investigations. This is because the procedures adopted helped in ensuring that all participants provided relevant data voluntarily, having had a clear understanding of the full extent associated with their participation, facilitating the trustworthiness of the data collection process followed (Nardi, 2018). The research also ensured internal validity through logical phrasing and sequencing of the survey questions in such a manner that they were designed to directly probe the relationship between WLB, retention and motivation. By carefully structuring the study, the analysis allowed for accurate probing and deduction of cause-and-effect relationships within the scope of the research aims (Cresswell and Poth, 2013).

In terms of external validity which also describes the study finding's generalizability, this was bolstered through ensuring that the sample of participants selected was diverse. By using Qualtrics in the distribution of the surveys, the study was able to ensure that a broad spectrum of participant experiences and perspectives, with the goal of providing actionable insights relating to WLB initiatives in the oil and gas sector was ensured. By adopting this approach, the study ensured that the study met not just its stated objectives but also provided valuable contributions relating to WLB within the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector.

3.10 Methods Criteria

In order to assess this study's validity, two sets of criteria that overlap were applied in this research. These criteria include integrity, transferability, credibility, and dependability in alignment with interpretive philosophical principles of qualitative research. The table which follows provides an insight into these criterion and methods of the means through which they have been applied within this study. In terms of credibility, this was ensured in this study by using internal validity measures to establish trustworthiness.

In this study, credibility criteria was achieved through using statistical test measures such as reliability analysis to establish the validity of the measurements and instruments used in the research. With regards to transferability, this can be described as the procedure involved in adopting the results obtained from the research in other similar contexts. In this research

transferability was ensured by considering the results obtained in the contexts of other regions where offshore employees deal with the issues of WLB, engagement and commitment.

Dependability was also established using reliability tests via the SPSS software; this allowed for examination of the consistency relating to the measuring instruments used in the research and also measures the extent to which the results can be replicated. Dependability was also ensured through ensuring that the findings obtained were reviewed and compared to similar studies implemented in varying contexts and countries. Additionally, conformability of the research results was ensured by reviewing the consistency of the research results. This was done through by reviewing the responses obtained from the participants and also by using SPSS software in the accurate analysis of the relationship existing between the different variables.

Objectivity was also used as a means in ensuring confirmability of the research results obtained from the study. It involved validation of the measures, data collection process, and data analysis approaches in establishing the reliability and validity of the study. Additionally, the use of a reflexive journal was employed to establish trustworthiness of the research outcomes. This was done through recording various relevant information in the journal including information about methodological decisions which were made by the study, the reasons and justifications for the selection of specific methods and instruments and the data analysis process adopted by the researcher.

The table 1 which follows provides a summary of the criterion used in the validity of the study's findings.

Table 1 *Validity of the study and findings*

Criterion for trustworthiness	Methods through which trustworthiness is addressed in study
Credibility – extent of acceptability of the results and the representations of the data presented	Critical review of emergent framework, amendments, and expansions.
Transferability – The extent to which the findings could be incorporated in various contexts	Theories have been posited. The final iteration associated with the conceptual framework is illustrated using data obtained from various participants.
Dependability- the extent of the uniqueness of the findings within the context of place and time and the consistency or stability relating to the explanations provided.	Reviewing findings and comparing findings obtained to prior similar studies undertaken in different contexts/countries. Consistency being found across responses provided by participants
Confirmability; this explains the extent to which research findings are resultants from participants insights rather than biases of the researcher	Using surveys allowed for generalizability of the study findings SPSS facilitates accurate analysis of the interrelationship between the different variables.
Integrity – This is the extent of the interpretation of the results being influenced by participants evading the questions posed.	Questions are designed in a manner that is clear, succinct, and non-invasive.
Fit- This describes the scope of the findings being within the substantive segment being examined by the study.	In this study, this is addressed using the approaches for ensuring dependability, credibility, and confirmability. Furthermore, issues examined are discussed in an extensive manner, and theories are applied iteratively, putting into cognizance

	the results relating to the objectives of the different actors.
Understanding- this describes the extent of the results obtained from participants aligning with world representations/perspectives	Findings are discussed and presented to the supervision team and at conferences
Generality – this describes the extent to which the results obtained are able to exude multiple contexts associated with the findings.	Result presentation exudes multiple aspects relating to the issues being explored. Use of positivist philosophical stance allows for generalizability of the study’s findings.

3.11 Participant’s Demographics

Understanding the demographics of the participants allows for a better understanding and appreciation of the value relating to the respondent’s supposition about the issues being investigated. It enables the exclusion of variables thought to be superfluous to the research, and contextual factors which impact the relationship between outcomes and antecedents being evaluated by the study. The review of the literature highlights the importance of the role of the variables which relate to the characteristics of workers in the offshore segment, including research conducted by Alia et al.,(2018) and Scholarios and Abigail (2004), where the role of individual actions in the offshore sector were noted to be influenced by different organisational policies which drive job satisfaction and impact the retention of workers. It was identified that both monetary and non-monetary rewards, educational qualification, marital status, gender, level of position are important factors which impact employee satisfaction, which influence retention and engagement of workers. Table 2 identifies the demographics of the participants based on the responses obtained.

Table 2 – Demographic Information

Demographics	f	f%
Gender		
Male	106	90.6
Female	6	5.1

prefer not to say	5	4.3
Marital status		
Married	117	100
Unmarried	0	0
Education		
Less than high school	0	0
High school	0	0
Diploma	0	0
Graduate degree	41	35
High Diploma		47
Masters or above	21	17
Age		
21 – 30	1	0.9
31 – 40	12	10
41 – 50	55	47
51 or above	49	41.9
Experience in the same organisation		
One year or less	1	0.9
2 – 5	61	52.1
6 – 15	8	6.8
16 – 21	1	0.9
22 years or above	46	39.3
Total experience		
One year or less	0	0
2 – 5	0	0
6 – 15	11	9.4
16 – 21	36	30.8
22 years or above	70	59.8
Job Level		
Higher level	9	7.7
Middle level	108	92.3
Lower level	0	0

working as		
onshore	34	29.1
offshore	83	70.9
Nationality		
Qatari	14	12
Non-Qatari	103	88

The demographic details highlight the gender of the respondents, their marital status, educational details, years of experience, level/position of respondents, offshore/on-shore work details, and nationality details of the respondents. The data provided in Table 1 represents the demographic information of a group of individuals. The majority of the group are male (90.6%), with a small proportion identifying as female (5.1%) and preferring not to disclose their gender (4.3%). All participants identified as married (100%), and none identified as unmarried. In terms of education, 47% have a High Diploma, 35% have a Graduate degree, and 17% have a Masters or above. Regarding age, the majority of participants are between 41-50 years old (47%), followed by those who are 51 or above (41.9%). In terms of experience in the same organisation, the largest group has 2-5 years of experience (52.1%), followed by those with 22 years or above (39.3%). With respect to total experience, the majority have 22 years or above (59.8%), and only a small proportion have 6-15 years of experience (9.4%). The majority of participants work in middle-level jobs (92.3%), with a smaller number in higher level jobs (7.7%). Regarding work location, the majority of participants work offshore (70.9%), and the remaining work onshore (29.1%). Finally, the majority of participants are Non-Qatari (88%) and Qatari nationals (12%).

The inclusion of diverse demographic variables as outlined in Table 2 underscores the fundamental elements for the analysis of the impact of WLB on retention and motivation of employees, as these variables are integral in understanding nuanced ways through which different factors impact retention, commitment and satisfaction in the offshore sector.

The rationale for including onshore workers in the study, despite the focus on offshore conditions is grounded by considerations made by the researcher with regards to facilitating comparative analysis, contextual understanding of the relevant issues, and internal consistency of the research.

Expanding on these, by including onshore workers as participants, allowed for the research in implementing a comparative approach which allowed for the understanding of unique challenges which aligns with offshore work. By implementing a comparison of the two groups, the research is able to accurately isolate specific factors which relate to WLB that are unique to offshore environment. Additionally, the comparative data obtained is useful in the development of targeted strategies which aid in addressing distinct needs of offshore workers.

In terms of the contextual reasons for the inclusion of on-shore workers, these categories of workers usually support offshore operations directly. By having a clear understanding of the experiences and dynamics of onshore employees, this aids in providing a context relating to the overall operational ecosystem within which the functions of offshore workers are deployed. The adoption of this holistic approach is useful in evaluating organizational policies peculiar to offshore organizations, and the assessment of their impact on WLB (Alia et al., 2018; Scholarios and Abigail, 2004).

Additionally, the inclusion of onshore workers as part of the research demographics aids in the establishment of internal benchmarks for retention and satisfaction, which is useful in understanding if the issues identified are endemic to the offshore segment, or are aa broader reflection of the overall patterns in the oil and gas industry. Further to this, the insights derived from including onshore employee data is invaluable deriving insights to enhance the practical recommendations that could be made by the study, which are important considering the requirements for the DBA program requiring the need to outline practical/managerial implications. By including these participants, the study is able to make practical recommendations which allow for organizational leadership in developing comprehensive WLB initiatives which are beneficial to both on-shore and offshore workers, fostering a more supportive and inclusive workplace culture.

3.12 Demographic Data Summary

The demographic details outlined in Table 2 reflects the comprehensive overview of the workforce which are relevant to the study. As indicated in Table 2, majority of the participants are middle-aged males, having significant experience in the sector, mostly identified to be at their mid-career points, and working offshore.

Each demographic factor outlined including marital status and educational level are factors which are considered to potentially impact on the experience of WLB by employees, and consequently, their loyalty and job satisfaction working in the sector. For instance, the high representation of married individuals could indicate an increased need for a supportive and stable work environment and policies considering family commitment, while a high percentage of employees with extensive job-tenure could be indicative of a potentially significant impact of organizational policies on the retention and motivation of employees.

Summarily, by including a broad array of demographic variables encompassing both offshore and onshore employee experiences, the study is able to ensure that the deductions drawn are relevant, robust and applicable to real-world settings. This not only allows for a comprehensive means in fulfilling the aims of the study, but also provides a foundation upon which future studies and practical deployments of the findings could be done in industry.

Chapter 4 - Research Findings

4.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to outline the findings obtained following the data collection process which was undertaken using questionnaires. The chapter is organised into three key sections; the first section identifies using cross-tabulations, the descriptive analysis of the findings including details of the demographics of the participants. In the second section, the details of the analysis of the results obtained are provided, following which a summative discussion of the findings is presented. Following the distribution of surveys, a significant amount of information was generated and formed the basis for the findings/outcomes of the research. This chapter identifies and presents the key findings based on the analysis of the responses obtained by the participants.

As part of the efforts in assessing the impact of WLB on the retention and motivation of offshore employees in Qatar's oil and gas section, it is essential that the key variables and dynamics at play within the workforce is understood. The section which follows is a descriptive analysis which outlines the key variables at play within the workforce including Work Life Balance (WLB), Employee Engagement (EE), Cultural Influences (CUL) and Retention (RET). The selection of these variables was underscored by their relevance to the objectives of the study which includes a critical assessment of the impact of WLB on commitment and engagement of workers, and understanding the role of cultural factors in impacting WLB initiatives within the offshore sector.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table 3 shows the descriptive outline for all the measured variables, including their mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtoses.

Table 3- Descriptive Analysis for Measured Variables:

Scales		R	Min	Max	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtoses
WLB	117	45	10	55	27.5	8.3	.37	.18
EE	117	64	610	74	31.4	7.8	.9	7.1
CUL	117	51	14	65	42.2	10.7	-.57	33
RET	117	47	23	70	45.6	9.9	-.009	.53

(WLB= Work life balance, EE=employ engagement, CUL=culture, RET = retention)

(N= Number of Participants, R=Range, MIN=Minimum, MAX=Maximum, M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation)

From the results obtained, the mean value of work-life balance is (M = 27.5, SD= 8.3) while the mean value for employee engagement is (M= 31.4, SD= 7.8). For culture, the mean value obtained was (M= 42.2, SD=10.7) while for retention, the mean value obtained was (M= 45.6, SD= 9.9). Based on the outlined results, the mean value of work-life balance is 27.5 with a standard deviation of 8.3, which indicates that the respondents rated their work-life balance moderately, with some variability in their responses. The mean value for employee engagement is 31.4 with a standard deviation of 7.8, which suggests that the respondents had a relatively high level of engagement with their work. For culture, the mean value obtained was 42.2 with a standard deviation of 10.7, indicating that the respondents perceived the organisational culture positively. For retention, the mean value obtained was 45.6 with a standard deviation of 9.9, which suggests that the respondents were generally satisfied with their job and likely to remain with the organisation. These results provide insights into the perceptions of employees in the organisation regarding work-life balance, employee engagement, organisational culture, and retention. To ensure the consistency of the questions, a reliability analysis was conducted.

4.3 Reliability Analysis

Table 4 outlines the reliability of the studied variables. For reliability, Cronbach's Alpha is used in the assessment. Reliability is about the consistency of the variables.

Table 4 - Reliability Analysis

Scale	N	a
WLB	9	.7
EE	9	.7
CUL	13	.7
RET	4	.7

(WLB= Work life balance, EE=employ engagement, CUL=culture, RET = retention)

N= No. of items, a = Alpha reliability

The range of the reliability is 0-1; if the variable's reliability is above ($\alpha = 0.5$), then it is to be considered as good and strongly reliable if not then it is less reliable. For all the study's variables, consistency is above ($\alpha = 0.5$) which indicates that above-mentioned variables are strongly reliable.

4.4 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Person correlations were undertaken to measure the strength of the linear relationship between variables. Correlation results are useful in the examination of the extent of influence the different variables being examined impact one another. In past studies including studies by Kangure (2014) and Jaharrudin (2019), correlation was adopted for the purpose of testing there was theoretical convergence between WLB and other variables including turnover intentions and engagement. In this study, correlation was used to test the extent to which WLB impacts other variables including employee engagement, culture and retention. The tests were also conducted to confirm or reject Hypothesis 1 which is outlined below:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): WLB positively influences offshore employee retention level.

The Table 5 which follows provides the details of the findings obtained following the correlation analysis.

Table 5- Correlation Analysis

Scales	WLB	EE	CUL	RET
WLB	-	.17	.24	-.02
EE		-	.43	-.38
CUL			-	-.38
RET				-

(WLB= Work life balance, EE=employee engagement, CUL=culture, RET = retention)

The above Table 5 show the relationship among the variables which is been studied in the current study. Range of the correlation is ($r = -1$ - $+1$). It can be seen all the variables were either having a weak positive relationship or a weak negative relationship. Employee engagement, culture, and

work-life balance are noted to outline a weak positive relationship that is less than ($r > 0.5$). For retention, this is noted to illustrate a negative relationship with all the other variables. A significantly weak relationship is also noted to exist between retention and work-life balance which is ($r = -.02$).

From the correlation analysis performed, an insignificant relationship is identified to exist between WLB and RET, with a correlation coefficient $r = -0.02$, indicating that WLB does not have significant influence on offshore employee retention levels.

Based on this analysis, H1 is rejected as the correlation data does not support a positive influence of WLB on retention levels. The suggestions from the analysis implies that improvements in WLB do not directly result in higher levels of retention. This could be an implication that employees might value other factors like career advancement opportunities or organizational commitment in comparison to WLB in their decisions to remain within their organizations. Furthermore, considering the nature of the offshore oil and gas sector in Qatar, which has unique job demands including extended time of employees away from home, and the high-stress nature of the work environment, the economic challenges of living in a country such as Qatar which is one of the most expensive countries to live in may overshadow the importance of WLB. This could result in employees prioritizing job security or financial incentives over the achievement of a balanced work-life dynamic.

In conclusion, as the data does not provide support to the hypothesis that WLB positively impacts retention in this context, the hypothesis is rejected.

4.5 T-Statistic Tests

T-tests were also performed to examine the difference between the mean of two groups, or the difference between one group's mean and a standard value. Table 6 presents the t—distribution for onshore and offshore workers, while Table 7 Identifies the t-distribution for Qatari and Non-Qatari employees. Table 8 identifies the t-distribution based on Job level/role.

Table 6 - T-test for onshore and offshore

	ONSHORE			OFFSHORE			p	Cohen's d
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
WLB	34	28.2	9.6	83	27.2	7.8	0.58	0.11
EE	34	31.9	7.3	83	31.2	8.04	0.67	0.09
CUL	34	42.5	12.4	83	42.1	10	0.86	0.03
RET	34	44.7			45.9			

(WLB= Work life balance, EE=employ engagement, CUL=culture, RET = retention)

Table 7- T test for Qatari and Non-Qatari Employees

	N	Non-Qatari					p	Cohen's d
		N	M	SD	SD			
WLB	14	28.5	6.8	103	27.3	8.5	0.56	
EE	14	33.8	3.5	103	31.1	8.1	0.03	0.43
CUL	14	45.9	11.6	103	41.7	10.5	0.22	0.37
RET	14	42.7	10.5	103	45.9	9.8	0.29	0.09

(WLB= Work life balance, EE=employ engagement, CUL=culture, RET = retention)

Table 8 - T-test for higher-level and lower-level jobs

	Higher Level			Lower Level			p	Cohen's
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
WLB	9	32.4	10.6	108	27.1	8	0.17	0.56

EE	9	32.11	7.1	108	31.3	7.8	0.77	0.1
CUL	9	45.4	12.5	108	46.5	10.6	0.44	0.09
RET	9	45.2	10.6	108	45.5	9.8	0.786	0.02

(WLB= Work life balance, EE=employ engagement, CUL=culture, RET = retention)

Table 6, 7, and 8 present independent sample t-tests for two groups. In the t-test analysis for onshore and offshore categories, the results show that there is no significant difference in work-life balance between onshore and offshore employees, with a p-value of 0.58 and a small effect size of 0.11. Similarly, there is no significant difference in employee engagement, culture, and retention between the two categories.

For Qatari and non-Qatari employees, the results show a significant difference in employee engagement between the two categories, with a p-value of 0.03 and a moderate effect size of 0.43. This suggests that Qatari employees are more engaged in their work than non-Qatari employees. However, there is no significant difference in work-life balance, culture, and retention between the two categories.

In the t-test analysis for higher-level and lower-level job categories, the results show no significant difference in work-life balance, culture, and retention between the two categories. However, there is no significant difference in employee engagement between the two categories, with a p-value of 0.77 and a small effect size of 0.1. This suggests that both higher-level and lower-level employees are equally engaged in their work.

4.6 ANOVA Analysis

ANOVA analysis was performed to examine if any significant statistical differences exist between different groups of participants. The ANOVA output was useful for indicating if the results obtained were statistically significant or not using the basis of the p-value obtained. Statistical

significance for this study was measured at 95% confidence level. Tables 9, 10, 11 and 12 iterate the different ANOVA analysis results.

Table 9- ANOVA for age

ANOVA for age:

variables	21-30		31-40		41-50		51+		F	p	η2
	N=1		N=12		N=55		N=49				
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
WLB	17	0	27.6	11.7	27.3	8.2	28	7.6	0.6	0.61	0.15
EE	34	0	31	3.1	31.4	6.5	31.6	14.7	0.04	0.9	0.001
CUL	51	0	46.2	6.2	42.8	11.4	40.3	10.6	1.3	0.26	0.03
RET	30	0	46	10.2	45.7	10.5	45.6	91	0.83	0.47	0.02

(WLB= Work life balance, EE=employ engagement, CUL=culture, RET = retention)

Table 10- ANOVA for experience

variables	one year or less		2-5		6-15		16-21		22+		F	p	η2
	N=1		N=61		N=8		N=51		N=46				
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
WLB	15	0	26.9	9.1	26.6	4.8	42	0	28.3	7.4	1.5	0.19	0.05
EE	32	0	31.1	9.1	29.7	4	45	0	31.7	6.2	0.87	0.47	0.03
CUL	42	0	42.1	11	47.8	8	64.8	0	40.8	10.3	1.8	0.13	0.06
RET	34	0	45.7	10.7	48.3	8.7	40	0	45.2	9.07	0.59	0.67	0.02

(WLB= Work life balance, EE=employ engagement, CUL=culture, RET = retention)

Table 11 - ANOVA for Total Experience:

Variables	6-15		21				F		
	N=11		36		N=70				
	M		M		M				
WLB	28	12	27.2	8.3	27.6	7.7	0.05	0.95	0.0008
EE	31.2	2.9	30.6	7.8	31.8	8.3	0.25	0.77	0.004
CUL	47.4	6	42.5	11.6	41.2	10.6	1.6	0.2	0.027
RET	45.4	11.3	44.5	10	46.1	9.5	0.33	0.719	0.005

(WLB= Work life balance, EE=employ engagement, CUL=culture, RET = retention)

Table 12 - ANOVA for education

Variables	Graduate				Masters		F	p	η2
	Degree		High Diploma		above				
	N=41		N=55		N=21				
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
WLB	26.7	8.3	27.9	7.9	28	9.5	0.26	0.766	0.0046
EE	32.8	9.1	30.2	7.4	31.8	5.5	1.2	0.27	0.022
CUL	43.7	11.2	39.9	9.9	43.7	11	2.4	0.91	0.041
RET	44.1	10.6	46.9	9.5	44.8	9.2	0.97	0.37	0.016

(WLB= Work life balance, EE=employ engagement, CUL=culture, RET = retention)

Table no 9, 10, 11, and 12 is measuring ANOVA which is analysis of variance. From the analysis of these Tables and sig value ($p < .05$) it can be seen that none of the groups are different because their significant value is greater than the desired value.

4.7 Linear Regression Analysis

Linear regression was performed to test for interaction between variables. The test was also used to confirm or reject hypotheses H2 and H3 which is outlined below:

H2: The level of engagement mediate employee retention.

H3: The relationship between the level of engagement and WLB is moderated by organizational culture characteristics.

Table 13 presents the linear regression for culture as a moderator while Table 14 presents the Andrew Hayes Process used in checking for mediation of employees considering variables of WLB and retention.

Table 13 - Linear Regression for culture as a moderator

MODERATOR	B	β	R^2	p
CUL	12	0.829	0.667	0.00

(B= Unstandardized coefficient, β = Beta, ΔR^2 = Adjusted R Square, p= significant value)

Table 13 illustrates the results of a simple linear regression analysis which was performed to examine whether culture is a moderator or not. It shows culture is a positively moderating work-life balance and employee engagement. The value of ΔR^2 indicates that culture explained 66.7%.

The linear regression analysis performed illustrates that CUL has a positive moderating impact on the relationship between WLB and EE. The significant value ($p=0.00$) and a high percentage of CUL ($\Delta R^2 = 0.66$) strongly supports this moderating effect.

H3 is confirmed, as the regression analysis indicates that the CUL significantly moderates the relationship between engagement and WLB.

Table 14 - Employ Engagement Process Andrew Hayes for mediation.

	B	Sig	R	R ²	F	95%CI	
						LL	UL
Step I							
EE	-0.49	0.00	0.17	0.03	3.6	-0.71	- 0.27
Step II							
WLB	0.04	0.6				-0.15	0.25
RET	0.39	0.001	0.02	0.0007	0.08		

Andrew Hayes process was used to check the mediation of employee engagement in work-life balance and retention. The results show that employee engagement plays a mediating role, sig value is ($p = 0.00$) which is less than ($p < 0.05$).

The mediation analysis using Andrew Haye's process identifies a significant mediation by EE between WLB and RET. The significant value ($p=0.00$) strongly supports the mediation effect.

H2 is thus confirmed, as the mediation analysis confirms that EE plays a mediating role in the relationship between WLB and RET.

The results can be explained based on the fact that employee engagement is a construct which is multifaceted encompassing individual's emotional commitment, enthusiasm and dedication to their roles and organization. Within the context of high-demand industries such as Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector, the challenging nature of the work environment necessitates employees remaining resilient and motivated irrespective of the external pressures they face.

With regards to job satisfaction, engaged employees are typically more satisfied with their roles which is essential for retention, job satisfaction impacts their daily experiences, which affects their intentions in remaining within an organization. Higher levels of job satisfaction can serve as a buffer against stressors which are associated with the offshore oil and gas work. In terms of commitment levels, engagement fosters a scenario where employees have a deeper emotional connection to their organization which results in stronger commitment levels. This is because employees who are engaged will exhibit higher levels of alignment with the goals and objectives of the organization, resulting in less likelihood of them seeking opportunities elsewhere. With regards to how engagement influences performance, engaged employees have higher tendencies of performing better, which is not just crucial for high-stake industries like the offshore segment of Qatar's oil and gas sector, but supports organizational goals and reinforces the sense of purpose of employees, further enhancing their intention to stay.

In terms of how all these variables are connected, the findings indicate that a nuanced relationship between WLB, EE and RET, illustrating the complexity of the dynamics of employees within Qatar's offshore oil and gas segment. The findings suggest that while there may not be a direct impact of WLB on retention, this variable serves as a foundational element which impacts engagement. This could be explained by the arguments which suggest that when employees perceive their WLB positively, there is a higher likelihood of them engaging in their tasks and in the organization, ultimately resulting in impacts on retention decisions.

This relationship could result in the development of a feedback loop where improvements in WLB could result in enhanced engagement, subsequently leading to increased retention rates. On the converse, if WLB is neglected, it implies that engagement levels may be lower, resulting in a risk of higher rates of turnover of employees. An understanding of this interconnectedness allows for organizations in encouraging firms within Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector in adopting a holistic

approach for employee management, as it recognizes that the adoption of interventions which aim at improvement of WLB could have impacts which extend beyond immediate job satisfaction.

The findings on organizational commitment being a key driver of employee behaviour and retention can also be further explained by arguments that engaged employees are often in resonance with organizational culture and values, which make them more invested in their roles. This alignment facilitates a sense of belonging and community within the workplace, which reduces the likelihood of turnover. Furthermore, the findings can be explained in terms of loyalty and advocacy because employees that are engaged are not only having higher likelihood of staying, but also act as advocates for their organization. These positive attitudes can impact colleagues, resulting in the development of a supporting work environment which enhances retention rates. The implication of these findings for Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector is that even in scenarios when WLB is not optimal, employees who are engaged may still evidence commitment to their organization and are more likely to endure the challenges they face, and remain loyal, resulting in stability of the sector's workforce.

Consequently, it can be concluded that the hypothesis 2 is confirmed, as the data indicates that EE is a crucial mediator in the relationship between WLB and employee retention. Hypothesis 3 is also supported as the data indicates that OC positively impacts employee retention. These findings highlight the importance of Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector focusing on using a strategy where WLB is aligned with other initiatives in driving retention.

4.8 Cross Tabulations:

Cross tabulations were used in the examination of the relationship between categorical variables, to identify trends, patterns and potentially anomalous data which could indicate areas for further investigation. Additionally, cross tabulation analysis was used in the evaluation of the impact of various demographic factors on the perceptions of employees about WLB within the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector, considering the research objectives.

Exploring the relationship between Gender and WLB, the analysis revealed the following:

Table 15 Gender and Work-Life Balance (WLB)

Gender	WLB Scores	Count	Expected Count
Male	10-15	6	5.4
	16-20	15	13.8
	21-25	21	19.8
	26-30	17	15.6
	31-35	24	22.8
	36-40	7	5.4
	41-45	6	5.4
	49-55	2	1.9
Female	10-15	2	2.6
	16-20	0	0.2
	21-25	1	1.2
	26-30	0	0.3
	31-35	0	0.2
	36-40	1	0.3
	41-45	1	0.1
	49-55	0	0.1
Prefer not to say	10-15	0	0.1
	16-20	1	0.2

Gender	WLB Scores	Count	Expected Count
	21-25	0	0.3
	26-30	1	0.3
	31-35	0	0.2
	36-40	1	0.1
	41-45	0	0.0
	49-55	0	0.0
Total		117	117

Chi-Square Tests:

Pearson Chi-Square: 88.050a

Degrees of Freedom: 70

Asymptotic Significance (2-sided): .071

$\chi^2(70)=88.050$

The distribution of WLB scores across gender indicates variances in counts against expected counts which suggests potential differences of how different genders perceive WLB within the offshore sector.

The chi-square tests indicates that the differences in gender perception are not statistically significant ($P>.05$). This implies that although there appear to be gender-based differences about WLB within the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector, these do not have any statistical deviation from what would be expected by chance. These finding challenges potential hypothesis which argue that gender could significantly impact the perceptions of WLB within the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector.

Cross tabulations were also used in analysing the relationship between gender and retention. The following table 16 presents the outcomes from the analysis.

Table 16: Gender and Retention (RET)

Gender	RET Scores	Count	Expected Count
Male	23-30	10	8.9
	31-35	14	12.9
	36-40	17	14.9
	41-45	11	9.9
	46-50	11	10.4
	51-55	10	9.9
	56-62	7	6.0
Female	23-30	1	1.1
	31-35	1	1.1
	36-40	0	0.1
	41-45	1	0.1
	46-50	0	0.1
	51-55	0	0.1
	56-62	0	0.0
Prefer not to say	23-30	0	0.0

Gender	RET Scores	Count	Expected Count
	31-35	0	0.0
	36-40	0	0.0
	41-45	0	0.0
	46-50	0	0.0
	51-55	0	0.0
	56-62	1	0.0
Total		117	117

Chi-Square Tests:

Pearson Chi-Square: 78.545a

Degrees of Freedom: 74

Asymptotic Significance (2-sided): .337

Pearson Chi-Square Statistic: $\chi^2(74)=78.545$

Degrees of Freedom: $df=74$

Asymptotic Significance (2-sided): $p=0.337$

The analysis of the retention scores across genders reveals a skewed distribution where the males are noted to have higher retention scores compared to females who “prefer not to say”. The chi-square tests indicates that there exists no significant relationship between retention scores and gender ($p>.05$), indicating that gender may not be a critical factor which influences the retention of employees within the offshore sector of the Oil and gas industry. This finding is important as it

underscores that HR strategies need to consider other factors which might be more influential in impacting the retention of employees.

Cross tabulations were also used in the evaluation of the relationship between age and WLB. The table 17 provides further details.

Table 17: Age and Work-Life Balance (WLB)

Age Group	WLB Scores	Count	Expected Count
21-30	10-15	0	0.1
	16-20	1	0.4
	21-25	0	0.6
	26-30	0	0.8
	31-35	0	1.0
	36-40	0	0.2
	41-45	0	0.3
	49-55	0	0.1
31-40	10-15	2	1.9
	16-20	1	1.1
	21-25	3	2.7
	26-30	1	2.0
	31-35	2	2.9

Age Group	WLB Scores	Count	Expected Count
	36-40	0	0.7
	41-45	0	0.4
	49-55	1	0.2
41-50	10-15	3	2.7
	16-20	10	7.8
	21-25	13	11.4
	26-30	14	12.6
	31-35	20	18.2
	36-40	8	6.5
	41-45	7	5.8
	49-55	1	0.9
51 or above	10-15	1	1.3
	16-20	2	2.8
	21-25	4	4.5
	26-30	4	4.1
	31-35	2	4.9
	36-40	0	1.6
	41-45	0	1.3

Age Group	WLB Scores	Count	Expected Count
	49-55	0	0.9
Total		117	117

Chi-Square Tests:

Pearson Chi-Square: 126.261a

Degrees of Freedom: 105

Asymptotic Significance (2-sided): .077

Pearson Chi-Square Statistic: $\chi^2(105)=126.261$

Degrees of Freedom: $df=105$

Asymptotic Significance (2-sided): $p=0.077$

In analysing the findings, a synthesis for the cross-tabulated data for each demographic group, considering scores across different tests of each variable (WLB, RET, EE, CUL), was done. The chi-square results identified significant associations.

Different age groups illustrated distinct distributions in WLB, with middle-aged workers (41-50) reporting higher levels of WLB. Although the analysis identifies a noticeable trend particularly in the mid-aged employees feeling positive regarding WLB, the test indicates that these differences are marginally non-significant ($p=.077$). This could imply that age-specific interventions could be essential in enhancing WLB within the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector.

Cross Tabulations were also adopted in examining the relationship between Nationality and Employee Engagement (EE), considering broader categories of Qataris and Non-Qataris working in the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector. The table 18 reveals the findings.

Table 18: Nationality and Employee Engagement (EE)

Nationality	EE Scores Range	Count	Expected Count
Qatari	10-20	0	0.1
	21-30	1	0.5
	31-40	3	2.6
	41-50	7	6.2
	51-60	3	4.6
	61-70	0	0.0
Non-Qatari	10-20	1	0.9
	21-30	4	3.5
	31-40	6	5.4
	41-50	55	56.4
	51-60	34	35.4
	61-70	3	2.4
Total		117	117

Chi-Square Tests:

Pearson Chi-Square: 19.928

Degrees of Freedom: 30

Asymptotic Significance (2-sided): .918

Pearson Chi-Square Statistic: $\chi^2(30)=19.928$

Degrees of Freedom: $df=30$

Asymptotic Significance (2-sided): $p=0.918$

The table identifies the counts and expected counts for both Qatari and Non-Qatari nationals across EE scores considering the context of the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry. The “Expected count” is based on the assumptions that no relationship exists between nationality and EE, serving as a benchmark for the observed count.

From the analysis of the findings, it is indicated that non-Qatari employees have a higher EE score, particularly within the mid-upper age ranges (41-60), compared to Qatari counterparts. The Pearson chi-square tests however shows that these differences are not statistically significant ($p=.918$), indicating that nationality does not significantly impact employee engagement levels in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry. This finding is important as it could indicate the impact of cultural background on engagement in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry, although the lack of significant findings could also imply potential need for further research to examine specific factors which could impact engagement across diverse nationalities.

This analysis is essential for understanding the impact of cultural background on engagement within the organization and indicates that the company's engagement strategies may be effectively addressing the needs of a diverse workforce. However, the lack of significant findings also suggests potential areas for further research, such as looking into specific factors that might influence engagement across different nationalities or exploring other demographic or job-related variables that could impact engagement levels. The findings however support the idea that the EE strategies being deployed are uniform across cultural background.

Summarily, although significant statistical difference was not identified by the cross tabulations, the trends observed calls for deeper investigation at group and individual dynamic levels within the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector. The findings also reveal that although demographic factors could significantly impact perceptions and outcomes of WLB to some extent, they are not determinants of WLB, RET, or EE across board within the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.0. Introduction

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the findings derived from the research. The primary objective of this study was to investigate the impact of WLB on the motivation and retention of offshore employees in Qatar. Within this context, the chapter delves into the examination of the influence of organizational culture on WLB, as well as its impact on the recruitment and engagement of offshore employees. By thoroughly analysing these aspects, the chapter aims to provide valuable insights into the complex dynamics between WLB, organizational culture, and the overall motivation and retention of employees in the offshore sector.

5.1 Retention and WLB

With regards to H1, the findings showed that a significantly weak relationship exists between retention and work-life balance which is ($r = -.02$). This means that there is little to no relationship between the retention and WLB. In other words, an employee's ability to balance their work and personal life is not a significant factor in determining their likelihood of staying with their current employer. This suggests that other important variables may have an important impact on the outcomes of employee retention including the nature of the job role associated with offshore workers and national culture. Based on the findings obtained, it could also be argued that WLB is still an important factor to consider in creating a positive work environment and promoting employee well-being, even if it may not be a strong predictor of retention. This is because when the characteristics associated with the industry being explored are considered including the fact that the industry is riddled with very high risks, these risks could pose an issue which affect the retention of employees. The findings obtained could be explained by the challenges of fostering an environment which enhances the WLB of employees within the offshore sector or in careers which are based in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry. Asare et al.,(2021) examined the health and well-being of employees working within the mining, offshore oil and gas, and construction industry identified that the characteristic nature of the role of offshore jobs impacted the retention of workers due to the extended nature of the roasters for workers in this segment. Expanding Asare et al.,(2021) indicated that workers employed in offshore roles, particularly in the oil and gas sector asides from facing challenges relating to health and safety risks face

difficulties arising from the rotation characteristics associated with their roles. The nature of offshore workers working in rotation shifts is noted to result in various psychological challenges including psychological distress resulting from the difficulties in balancing social life and work, challenges in being able to develop social relationships, high levels of fatigue which could impact their decision in remaining within the sector (Asare et al., 2021).

The finding from this study which identifies that there is little to no correlation between WLB and retention, and the supposition which argues that WLB is important in creating a positive work environment and promoting employee well-being, even if it may not be a strong predictor of retention can also be explained by findings from Parkes (1993) which explored the challenges faced by onshore and offshore employees. In the study by Parkes (1993), it was found that workers that were positioned in offshore roles had a more negative perception of their work environment which influenced their satisfaction with their roles. Expanding on this, it is indicated that the characteristic nature of constraints faced by workers in the offshore sector including restrictions relating to the use of electrical equipment, work permit systems, requirements for workers to use personal protective equipment, and lack of privacy, among other issues, cause frustrations for employees (Parkes, 1993). Additionally, it is indicated that the nature of the offshore sector is such that the workload when compared to onshore workers' demands long hours of work and more frequent work fluctuations which could impact frustration and the job satisfaction of workers (Ibid).

Furthermore, the correlation analysis presented in Table 5 provides additional insights into the relationships among the variables. The correlation coefficient (r) between retention and work-life balance is -0.02, indicating a weak correlation close to zero. This finding further supports the conclusion that there is a weak relationship between work-life balance and retention. Notably, the correlation table reveals that the strongest correlation exists between employee engagement (EE) and culture (CUL), with a correlation coefficient of -0.38. This suggests that a positive workplace culture may have a more substantial impact on employee engagement compared to work-life balance. The correlation coefficient between work-life balance and employee engagement is 0.17, indicating a weak positive correlation. This suggests that while work-life balance may have some influence on employee engagement, other factors likely have a more prominent effect. Overall, the correlation analysis reinforces the finding of a weak relationship between retention and work-life

balance. However, it underscores the significance of other factors, such as employee engagement and organizational culture, in creating a positive work environment and enhancing employee retention.

This finding is not consistent with prevalent theoretical expectations which posits WLB as a central determinant for retention as the analysis revealed a negligible correlation ($r=-0.02$) between the variables. The findings suggests that WLB, although a contributory factor to overall employee satisfaction, may not be pivotal with regards to impacting retention in high-level industries such as the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector. This revelation challenges extant literature where WLB is predominantly highlighted to be a critical lever in impacting the turnover intentions of employees.

5.2 The level of engagement mediating employee retention.

In relation to the second hypothesis, employee engagement was identified to have a weak positive relationship with WLB. The findings obtained from this indicated that an improvement in employee engagement would result in an increase in the retention of employees within the organisation. The findings could be explained by Herzberg's Two-Factor theory also known as the dual-factor theory which suggests that there are varying sets of mutually exclusive factors within the work environment that could result in the dissatisfaction or satisfaction of employees. These factors include motivator and hygiene factors (Alshmemri et al., 2017). The motivator factors could enhance employees' dedication and engagement with their roles or designated functions while the absence of the hygiene factors would result in employees being unmotivated with their designated duties or roles (Alshmemri et al., 2017).

The finding of a weak positive relationship between employee engagement and work-life balance suggests that improving work-life balance may lead to increased engagement, which in turn can result in higher employee retention. This finding is consistent with previous research that has found a positive relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement (Allen et al., 2013; Lee and Choi, 2019). Moreover, the results from the correlation analysis in Table 4 show that employee engagement had a moderate positive relationship with retention ($r=0.43$), indicating that it may be a key factor in retaining employees.

The linear regression analysis in Table 12 also showed that culture as a moderator had a significant impact on employee engagement ($\beta=0.829$, $p<0.001$), indicating that a positive organisational culture can have a substantial impact on employee engagement, and ultimately retention. This is consistent with previous research that has found a positive relationship between a positive organisational culture and employee engagement (Grawitch et al., 2007).

Furthermore, the results from the linear regression analysis show that culture as a moderator accounted for 66.7% of the variance in employee engagement ($R^2=0.667$, $p<0.001$), indicating that a positive organisational culture can have a substantial impact on employee engagement.

In terms of the differences between Qatari and non-Qatari participants, the findings suggest that there were no significant differences in work-life balance, culture, or retention between the two groups. However, there was a significant difference in employee engagement, with non-Qatari participants reporting lower levels of engagement compared to Qatari participants. This finding is consistent with previous research that has found differences in employee engagement between different nationalities and cultures (Kim et al., 2016). The findings suggest that improving work-life balance may lead to increased employee engagement, which in turn can result in higher employee retention. A positive organisational culture can have a strong impact on employee engagement and retention. Additionally, there may be cultural differences in employee engagement that organisations need to take into consideration when designing and implementing engagement initiatives.

The findings also indicate that the level of employee engagement with their roles could be impacted by the motivator factors such as employee recognition, opportunities for employees to advance within their roles, and feelings of achievement of the employees. Considering that the nature of the work roles in the offshore segment is highly stressful, this could indicate that when organisations within the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry do not put into cognizance policies to enhance the motivation of employees, this could lead to negative impacts on the engagement level of employees within the sector. Similarly, it is noted that due to the dearth of skilled workers in the sector, hygiene factors such as high pay and improved health and safety standards have been adopted by stakeholders in the sector to increase the engagement of workers (Camps, 2015). While this has not significantly affected the decline in retention of workers in the

sector, the use of hygiene factors including improvement of work conditions, and company policies could enhance the engagement of workers in the sector.

The findings obtained from this study are confirmed by prior studies undertaken by Richman et al.,(2008) which investigated the relationship between perceived flexibility and supportive work-life policies and engagement. The findings by Richman et al.,(2008) indicated that level of engagement was influenced by perception of flexibility which further enhanced the retention of workers within their role. Jefri and Daud (2016) also confirmed the findings of this study by suggesting that a variety of factors influenced the retention and engagement of workers including the WLB of the organisation, opportunities for career advancement, the nature of the work environment, and the characteristic nature of the benefits and compensation rendered to the employees (Jefri and Daud, 2016). Expanding on the reflections of the result by Jefri and Daud (2016), the findings highlighted the importance of engagement factors like work environment, noting that the nature of the work environment impacted their engagement and their decisions to remain within the organisation. Having a flexible work environment characterized by a safe and good work environment where there is no hazards or health and safety risks impacts employee retention within an organisation. The implication of this considering the focus of this study in the context of the offshore segment which is characterized by hazards and risks, the indication is that these conditions affect the extent to which employees remain engaged and retained within their organisations.

The findings of this study align with the existing literature, indicating that various factors related to employee engagement play a crucial role in determining their inclination to stay in their roles within the offshore segment. Specifically, the results imply that the presence of factors such as a friendly work environment, opportunities for skills improvement, and policies that foster engagement have a significant impact on employees' desire to continue working within the organization. Building upon these findings, it can be inferred that enhancing the conditions of the work environment, mitigating health and safety risks, implementing positive WLB policies, and providing avenues for skill development and career advancement could positively influence the levels of engagement among workers and their subsequent decisions to remain employed within the organisation. By focusing on these aspects, organizations operating in the offshore sector can foster a more engaged and committed workforce, leading to improved employee retention.

Additionally, from the investigation, it is indicated that only a modest positive relationship exists between EE and WLB, implying a nuanced interplay rather than a direct and robust relationship between the variables. This finding subtly offers a refinement to Herzberg's Two-Factor theory, considering the context of the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry, with the suggestions indicating that hygiene and motivator factors might not uniformly impact outcomes for employees in environments which are characterised by operational exigencies which are inherent, as in the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector.

Further to this, the significant correlation between EE and RET ($r=0.43$) underscores engagement as a more salient determinant of retention compared to WLB. This elevation of EE over WLB with regards to the prediction of retention in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry indicates that in high-risk industries, intrinsic job satisfaction of employees and their consequent alignment with values of the industry may supersede WLB in terms of the impact on retention strategies.

5.3 Engagement and WLB being moderated by Organisational culture

The findings from this study identified that culture was identified to illustrate a weak positive relationship with WLB and it has been established that improved WLB enhances the engagement of employees. This means that the better the policies and organisational culture, the better the WLB outcomes within the organisation, and a decline in positive organisational culture elements would lead to a decline in WLB policies within the organisation. The findings from this study are consistent with suggestions by McBain (2007) which identified that organisational culture propels the engagement of workers within an organisation; when the organisational culture is such that the demeanour of employees is supportive and friendly, this facilitates engagement by improving the satisfaction of employees within their roles.

The findings can also be explained by social exchange theory which is a theory that could be adopted in the demonstration of the relationship between the engagement of employees and organisational culture. Social exchange theory is a framework which could be utilised in providing insights into the means through which individual workers can navigate the demands associated with their roles and its impact on WLB. The theory suggests that the relationship between an individual and an organisation could be derived using the process of cost-benefit analysis (Blau,

2017). Using Social Exchange theory to explain the findings from the study relating to how organisational culture influences engagement, it could be argued that when employees perceive that their employers are able to provide benefits to them, this facilitates their capacity in returning favours through work ethics (Blau, 2017). The suppositions by social exchange theory when considered in light of this research indicate that when there is a mutually beneficial longstanding relationship between employees and the organisations, it enhances their trust and loyalty to the organisation. These suggestions corroborate findings from this study by indicating that if the organisational culture is such that they facilitate mutual benefits to the employees it enhances their engagement with their role.

The findings from the study are also corroborated by prior research conducted by Al-Shehri et al.,(2017) where the impact of organisational culture was investigated within the context of Saudi Banks. Although this study unlike the current study focused on the impact of organisational culture on engagement within the context of an onshore organisation, the findings from the study revealed that when the organisational culture is such that enabler factors within the organisation this positively facilitates the achievement of employee engagement (Al-Shehri et al., 2017). For instance, the findings showed that the presence of training and development opportunities, rewards, the recognition of employees, organisational communication, and Islamic culture characteristics of banks in Saudi Arabia positively influenced the organisational culture and impacted engagement (Ibid). Considering the focus of this study on the context of the offshore segment, it can thus be argued that the nature of rewards, opportunities available, and use of strategies such as employee recognition could facilitate the improvement of organisational culture, resulting in positive outcomes as it relates with the engagement of employees within the sector.

The findings from this study could also be explained by the nature of the industry based on the unique contextual elements associated with the culture of practice within the offshore segment. Expanding further, suppositions by Bass and Avoilio (1993) identify that when there is positive performance within an industry, there are compelling drivers which impact these positive outcomes. In terms of this, Bass and Avoilio (1993) identify that these drivers facilitate the successful adoption of a positive culture quality. In agreement, suggestions by Dellana and Hauser (1999) indicate that when managers and owners of an organisation are able to direct a firm such that it is able to develop a positive cultural agenda by ensuring that the appropriate attitudes are

adopted in facilitating improved organisational environment, this enhances the capacity of the organisation in exuding positive cultural elements. This in turn drives the satisfaction and engagement of employees within their roles (Ibid).

The results obtained from this study which indicated that a weak positive relationship existed between culture and WLB and which suggested that WLB enhances the engagement of employees can also be explained by findings from Mette et al.,(2018) where qualitative approaches were used in the examination of the impact of occupational strain, health, and coping on offshore employees. Mette et al.,(2018) found that the nature of offshore jobs is such that the work culture is characterized by higher levels of stress, fatigue being experienced by workers, and physical and psychological health impairments including mental stress, and musculoskeletal challenges amongst others (Ibid).

Given the specific focus of this study on the offshore oil and gas segment in Qatar, the implications suggest that stakeholders should prioritize the adoption of strategies aimed at enhancing the organizational culture within these contexts. Such strategies may include improving policies related to health and safety practices, as well as providing social and work-related support to mitigate the challenges faced by employees in dealing with cultural factors inherent in their roles. By addressing these cultural conditions and other organizational practices, the engagement of workers within the offshore segment can be significantly enhanced, leading to positive outcomes in terms of employee engagement and retention within the segment.

Summary

The study aimed to explore the impact of work-life balance (WLB) on employee retention and motivation within the offshore segment of Qatar's oil and gas industry. The findings answered the overall research question by identifying a weak relationship between WLB and retention. This was demonstrated through correlation analysis, which revealed a negligible relationship between WLB and retention ($r = -0.002$), indicating that WLB is not a strong predictor of retention for offshore workers in Qatar's oil and gas sector. This suggests that an employee's ability to balance work and personal life is not a significant factor in their decision to remain in their job. This contrasts with traditional expectations that WLB plays a central role in employee retention across industries.

Based on these findings, it could be argued that the unique challenges faced by offshore workers, such as extended rotational shifts, extreme work conditions, and isolation from social support systems, overshadow concerns about WLB. The nature of the role assigned to offshore employees presents limitations that affect their ability to achieve a balanced work environment. This view is supported by Haar and Broughman (2014), who argue that the psychological strain, health risks, and exacerbated demands of offshore roles, combined with the high-risk nature of the segment, could influence the retention of talent in industries like Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector.

The study also addresses the second research objective, critically assessing the impact of WLB on the commitment and engagement of offshore employees. While WLB does not significantly affect retention, a weak positive correlation with employee engagement is shown ($r = 0.17$). This implies that improvements in WLB could positively influence engagement, though the relationship remains modest. These findings align with Sheiman (2017), who suggests that motivators such as recognition and advancement opportunities, rather than hygiene factors like WLB, play a more significant role in enhancing employee satisfaction and engagement. Additionally, the study suggests that WLB contributes more to engagement than retention. WLB was found to have an indirect effect on retention through its impact on engagement, as employee engagement demonstrated a moderate positive correlation with retention ($r = 0.43$). This indicates that while WLB may not directly retain employees, its influence on engagement could create a motivating environment, leading to higher retention rates.

The research also found that organisational culture emerged as a crucial mediator in the relationship between retention and engagement. The findings revealed that a positive organisational culture significantly enhanced employee engagement in Qatar's offshore oil and gas segment ($\beta = 0.829$, $p < 0.001$), which, in turn, influenced retention. This finding enabled the study to fulfil the third research objective, demonstrating that motivation and retention in Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector are strongly influenced by cultural factors, including social support, safety practices, and the psychological environment fostered by organisations. The findings suggest that improving WLB through organisational policies is most effective when integrated with a supportive organisational culture. A positive culture can enhance engagement by improving employee satisfaction, even in particularly challenging roles such as those in Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector.

Overall, the research questions were answered, leading to the conclusion that retention strategies in Qatar's offshore oil and gas segment should prioritise enhancing employee engagement through motivators that resonate with the unique challenges faced by offshore employees. Although WLB is important for employee well-being, its role in retention is limited. Furthermore, organisational cultures in the sector should promote recognition, safety, and development opportunities to mitigate the stress and isolation associated with offshore work. The study also recommended strategies to improve WLB in the offshore segment, including the provision of more robust social support systems, improvements to health and safety policies, and enhanced career development opportunities. If implemented, these strategies could address the core drivers of retention and engagement while acknowledging the limitations of WLB in this sector.

In the subsequent chapter, the study contributes to academic research by providing valuable insights and expanding the existing body of knowledge. Furthermore, the chapter outlines the practical implications of the study's findings, illustrating how the outcomes directly address the research questions posed, thereby establishing a comprehensive understanding of the impact of work-life balance, engagement, and retention in the offshore oil and gas industry.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Implications

6.0 Introduction

The aim of this research was to understand how WLB affects employee commitment and engagement of workers in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry in the State of Qatar, and also an examination of how WLB impacts the retention of workers. WLB has been described in this thesis as the extent or level of prioritization between the professional and personal activities employees engage in, and the extent to which activities relating to the job domain impacts the personal domain of workers in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry. WLB has been seen as a tool to incorporate an individual's capacity in accomplishment of goals relating to their personal and work lives, while achieving satisfaction in both domains. The term "balance" in the concept is used as an indicator of the absence of conflicts between personal and work domains and as a social construct developed between the employee and others in their personal and work domains (Bulger, 2014). This has been instrumental to develop the conceptual framework for this thesis.

The framework developed in this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between employee engagement, job satisfaction, WLB, and retention in the sector. According to the framework, the presence of employee engagement factors plays a crucial role in enhancing job satisfaction and commitment among workers, which, in turn, influences their decision to stay with the organisation. This framework suggests that achieving a balance between the personal and work domains of employees is essential for their overall well-being and retention in the sector. It highlights the importance of WLB initiatives and practices in promoting a positive work environment. The presence of flexible working approaches, such as adjustable work schedules and remote work options, along with the implementation of policies that foster a positive work culture, significantly contribute to the effective deployment of WLB. Additionally, the model emphasizes the significance of organizational policies, motivator factors (such as career advancement opportunities), and hygiene factors (such as fair compensation and work-life balance policies) in enhancing WLB outcomes, engagement, and retention of workers in the sector. By considering these factors, organizations can create a work environment that supports the satisfaction and well-

being of their employees, ultimately leading to higher levels of engagement and increased retention. The framework highlights the interconnectedness of these variables and emphasizes the importance of fostering a positive work culture and implementing WLB practices to enhance overall employee satisfaction and retention in the sector.

The second objective of this study was to explore the relationship between WLB and employee retention. The findings showed that the presence of WLB practices does not necessarily reduce the retention of employees, but other important factors could impact on the retention of employees within the offshore sector. Considering the focus of this thesis on the offshore sector, the characteristics of the sector including the challenges faced by workers in the sector in terms of their willingness to commit to working in conditions that come with offshore work including extreme temperatures and higher health and safety risks impact retention and WLB. These conditions impacts the ability of workers in achieving balance in terms of satisfaction relating to their personal lives and their work domains; workers offshore are away from their families based on the work-rotations, and these conditions influence their ability to balance commitments relating to the emotional needs of their family. While good pay enhances the engagement of workers and tends to lure employees in being retained within their offshore roles, the environmental conditions including employee exposure to hazards and risks while on the job affects the commitment and retention of workers. The findings could also be explained by the increase in human capital understanding of the importance of green issues, and ethics relating to the impact of oil and gas production on climate change. These issues impact the attitude of workers in getting satisfaction which influences their engagement with their roles and decisions to remain in working in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry. The findings can also be explained by the availability of opportunities for workers in the offshore sector in onshore jobs. With the availability of employment opportunities in other sectors which facilitate the ability of employees to achieve satisfaction and balance relating to their work and personal domains, the adoption or deployment of better WLB initiatives within the offshore sector would impact the intention of employees to leave the sector or the retention rate of employees in the sector.

For the third research objective, this was focused on the evaluation of the impact of culture on WLB and retention within the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector. The evaluation of the findings indicated a weak positive relationship between engagement and WLB and also showed

that culture exuded a weak positive relationship with WLB and enhances employee engagement of workers in the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector. With regards to the implication of the meanings relating to the weak positive relationship existing between WLB and engagement, the evaluation of the findings suggest that incorporating drivers which facilitate the engagement of workers does not necessarily improve the WLB of employees. Some of these drivers include the provision of flexible working policies, appropriate compensation, provision of a positive work environmental condition, increased job security and other factors which constitute hygiene and motivation factors. These factors while noted to enhance engagement and satisfaction does not necessarily improve employee perception relating to remaining within an organisation. While prior studies have examined the individual relationships between these variables, few studies have explored the underlying mechanisms that link them together. By identifying employee engagement as a mediator, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of how work-life balance can influence employee retention.

Additionally, this study highlights the importance of recognizing the moderating role of culture in the relationship between employee engagement and retention. It emphasizes the need for organizations to consider cultural factors when designing and implementing retention strategies. findings emphasize that organizational culture acts as a determining factor in the strength of this relationship. The recognition of culture's influence enables organizations to devise more effective and tailored retention strategies that align with the specific cultural contexts in which they operate. By acknowledging the importance of culture, organizations can cultivate a work environment that supports and promotes employee engagement and, consequently, enhances retention rates. The cultural values, norms, and practices within an organization shape employees' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours, which in turn affect their level of engagement and commitment to the organization. Therefore, understanding and leveraging the influence of culture on engagement and retention can lead to the development of targeted interventions and initiatives that align with the values and expectations of employees. It is crucial for organizations to foster a positive and inclusive culture that values employee well-being, growth, and development. By aligning cultural practices with the principles of work-life balance, organizations can create an environment that supports employees' personal and professional needs. This, in turn, enhances their level of engagement and commitment, leading to increased retention rates.

Lastly, this study makes a valuable contribution to the literature on cross-cultural differences in employee attitudes and behaviours. By differentiating between Qatari and non-Qatari participants, the study sheds light on the potential impact of national culture on work-related outcomes. This finding emphasizes the necessity for organizations to take cultural variations into account when formulating retention strategies, particularly in multinational settings. The identification of the mediating role of employee engagement, the moderating role of culture, and the significance of cultural differences collectively provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employee retention. These novel insights offer practical implications that can inform the development of effective retention strategies for organizations. Considering the influence of national culture on employee attitudes and behaviours is vital for designing retention strategies that resonate with diverse employee populations. By recognizing and accommodating cultural differences, organizations can create a work environment that aligns with the values, expectations, and preferences of employees from different cultural backgrounds. This approach fosters a sense of inclusivity and enhances employee satisfaction, engagement, and ultimately retention.

The study's findings contribute to the existing literature by highlighting the need for a culturally sensitive approach to employee retention. By integrating cultural considerations into retention strategies, organizations can tailor their efforts to address the specific needs and preferences of employees from different cultural backgrounds. By considering these factors in the design of retention strategies, organizations can foster a supportive and inclusive work environment that promotes employee satisfaction, engagement, and retention, particularly in diverse and multinational settings.

6.1 Improving WLB in the Offshore Segment of the Oil and Gas Industry

The final objective of the study was to provide practical insights and recommendations to stakeholders in the oil and gas sector relating to designing effective strategies for effective management of offshore employees. This is done based on the findings obtained from the analysis of this research. The offshore segment of the oil and gas sector has been identified to face issues relating to the retention of employees including ethical challenges faced by employees in being able to balance work and personal domains due to the characteristics associated with working in

offshore roles. These characteristics included the rotation/work schedules associated with roles for offshore employees, impacting the ability of workers to achieve satisfaction in the family domain and the inflexible nature of the work-role which prevents employees from being able to attain satisfaction in the family domain. There are also challenges relating to safety of workers in the offshore sector, which increases risks to mental stress and physical strain which could impact health and the ability of workers to achieve WLB and satisfaction which could affect job satisfaction and retention rate of employees.

These challenges impact the engagement of workers and the ability to engage with their roles, and also job satisfaction, which has an effect on the commitment of workers to their role and retention within their role. The findings from this study revealed that in terms of the impact of WLB on engagement and retention of employees within the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry in Qatar, there exists a weak positive relationship between WLB and retention. The study findings further revealed that irrespective of the adoption of WLB initiatives to bolster the engagement of workers, the characteristic nature associated with working in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry affects the ability of organisations in retaining its employees. Further to this, the findings from in this thesis revealed the existence of a weak positive relationship between engagement and WLB and also identified that a weak positive relationship existed between organisational culture and WLB. These findings also suggest that incorporating approaches to improve satisfaction of workers as part of the organisational culture does not necessarily facilitate the achievement of improved retention of employees given the characteristics associated with working in the offshore-segment and the oil and gas industry. The implication of this is that strategic adjustments needs to be made by corporations in the offshore segment in terms of the working conditions and characteristics to bolster and improve the achievement of the effective deployment of WLB initiatives which leads to improved engagement and retention of employees within the sector.

The findings of this thesis can influence the current strategies of organisations operating in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry. The results have highlighted the importance of work-life balance and its impact on employee well-being, engagement, and retention.

Consequently, organisations in the sector may consider these findings and make significant amendments to their policies and practices concerning employee well-being. One notable change

could be the re-evaluation and enhancement of policies aimed at promoting work-life balance among offshore employees. Organisations should recognise the importance of offering flexible work arrangements, such as adjustable work schedules and remote work options, to better accommodate the unique challenges faced by offshore employees. By incorporating these practices, organisations can improve the overall well-being of their employees and create a more supportive work environment. Furthermore, the research findings could prompt organisations to implement a platform specifically designed to support offshore employees. This platform could serve as a centralised resource offering various tools, information, and assistance tailored to the needs of offshore workers. Line managers should be trained on how to effectively utilise this platform and provide the necessary support to employees, fostering a culture of well-being and engagement.

The tangible changes made by organisations in response to these research findings could highlight the real impact they have had on shaping their strategies and practices. By adopting the recommendations from this study, organisations could demonstrate their commitment to prioritising the well-being and satisfaction of their offshore employees. This underscores the practical application and relevance of the research findings, as they contribute to meaningful change within the industry.

The findings from this paper also had positive impacts in terms of dissemination. The research was recognized and invited for presentation at industry conferences, providing the opportunity to share findings in addition to engaging with key stakeholders in Qatar's oil and gas sector. A notable interest was shown by the Qatar Oil and Gas Association (QOGA), with an invitation to their annual conference, where the findings of this study would be presented to industry professionals, policy makers, and executives. The presentation at this event provides an opportunity for discussing the implications of WLB on the motivation of employees and their retention within the offshore segment of Qatar's oil and gas industry. Attendees at this event would comprise representatives of leading organizations within the sector. Being invited to industry events such as this serves as an acknowledgment of the significance and relevance of the study and also validates and reinforces the importance of the study's focus on addressing issues surrounding employee retention and WLB in the offshore sector of the oil and gas industry in Qatar. Additionally, an invitation to the conference provides the opportunity to connect with potential collaborators and

industry experts who share an interest in addressing challenges associated with WLB and ER. This is important in fostering future collaboration and the application of the findings from this study to practice in the industry. Presenting at the conference offers an opportunity for disseminating the practical recommendations obtained from this study. Through highlighting the importance of engagement, organizational culture and favourable WLB policies, the findings from this study provide actionable insights for stakeholders in the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector in improving employee conditions, welfare, and retention.

Overall, disseminating the findings from this study at the QOGA Annual Conference not only validates the study's relevance but also facilitates engagement with industry professionals and provides a platform to disseminate practical recommendations.

6.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the findings, the following recommendations can be made to organisational stakeholders to enhance retention and strategies for effective deployment of WLB to bolster engagement and satisfaction of workers in the sector. Organisations can effectively deploy strategies to re-structure the working conditions of offshore workers in the sector through setting up feedback channels to help identify issues which are peculiar to employees that influence their motivation and their commitment to working in the sector. These feedback mechanisms which could be through pools, open ended questions and one-on-one sessions with employees can help identify issues faced by employees working in the sector which affect their WLB and impact their retention. The feedback mechanisms employed can also facilitate identification of changes which need to be made to current WLB initiatives to help identify how these initiatives could be improved to enhance commitment and engagement, leading to satisfaction of workers.

Additionally, organisations can deploy strategies to enhance the health and safety of the employees within the sector to mitigate risks which could impact the personal lives of employees and by extension, result in the retention and improvement of employee commitment in the sector. This could be done by incorporating target interventions in managing occupational health risks which are highlighted by employees as the greatest risks to their health and ensuring that all complaints relating to hazards and potential health risks are addressed. Further to this, time with family and challenges of employees relating to meeting their social and emotional needs were highlighted to

be an issue which impacts the achievement of WLB, engagement and retention of workers. This issue could be resolved through adopting strategies which foster longer time off work for offshore employees, improving the flexibility policies relating to rotational shifts and also developing staff quarters where employees and their families can live which are closer to the work location. This will help enhance engagement, driving job satisfaction which is important to improve retention of workers.

Additionally, organisations can adopt strategies to enhance the relationship environment within the organisation to bolster communication between employees and senior management. This will help foster inclusivity which is critical for the identification of issues that impact employee retention, considering the nature of the work environment in the sector, and improving engagement, and the achievement of WLB in the organisation.

Organisational stakeholders should consider adopting new policies that prioritize the health, safety, and well-being of offshore sector workers. This could involve the implementation of targeted interventions to manage occupational health risks, such as providing regular health check-ups, improving access to medical facilities and resources, and addressing employee concerns regarding potential hazards and health risks. Additionally, organisations should consider providing longer time off work for offshore employees, improving the flexibility policies relating to rotational shifts, and developing staff quarters where employees and their families can live which are closer to the work location. This will help enhance engagement, drive job satisfaction, and improve retention of workers.

Government policymakers should consider implementing new strategies that promote a healthy work-life balance for offshore sector workers. This could involve the introduction of legislation to regulate the working conditions of offshore sector workers, provide incentives for organisations to implement work-life balance initiatives, and establish support systems for workers experiencing personal or family issues that may affect their ability to work. The government can also consider partnering with organisations to provide training programs and resources for managers and supervisors to better support their employees and create a positive work environment.

Organisations in the offshore sector should consider improving the relationship environment within the organisation to foster inclusivity, which is critical for the identification of issues that impact employee retention. This could involve implementing communication channels that allow employees to provide feedback on issues that affect their motivation and commitment to working in the sector. Organisations should also adopt strategies to enhance the relationship between employees and senior management to bolster communication and collaboration, which can help to identify and address issues that impact employee retention.

In addition to the above recommendations, further research is needed to identify the most effective policies and strategies for enhancing employee retention in the offshore sector in Qatar. This could involve conducting longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee retention, exploring the impact of cultural differences on employee attitudes and behaviours, and assessing the effectiveness of government policies and incentives for organisations. By conducting further research in these areas, organisational stakeholders, government policymakers, and offshore sector workers can continue to develop and implement effective retention strategies that promote a healthy work-life balance, enhance employee engagement, and improve job satisfaction.

6.3 Academic Contributions

This study has made important academic contributions relating to the concept of WLB. The findings of the study expands current literature on WLB by specifically identifying the impact of WLB on the engagement and commitment of employees within the offshore segment in the oil and gas industry. The study does this by showing that a significantly weak relationship exists between retention and work-life balance which means that an increase in WLB would result in a decrease in employee retention level, but also identifies that the characteristic nature of the work environment and conditions in the offshore segment negates the achievement of retention within the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry. These findings are important for the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector in terms of enhancing WLB. Through the identification of the effects of WLB on engagement and the commitment of employees in the offshore sector, the findings from the study emphasizes the importance of ensuring that WLB is addressed as a crucial issue which impacts the retention and satisfaction of workers. The study also contributes to

academic literature relating to the intersection of the impact of organisational culture on engagement and retention of workers within the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry by identifying that a weak positive relationship exists between the concepts. The study however identified that incorporating drivers of employee engagement within the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector does not necessarily improve the achievement of WLB due to the characteristic nature of the sector including the physical work conditions and challenges peculiar to employees in the sector. The fact that the characteristic nature of the work environment and conditions in the offshore segment negates the achievement of retention within this industry calls for a more nuanced approach to addressing WLB and retention in this sector.

The study also makes a methodological contribution by adopting a multi-stakeholder analysis approach, which differs from the traditional single-perspective analysis commonly used in similar studies on work-life balance (WLB) and employee engagement (EE). By incorporating the viewpoints of a diverse range of stakeholders within the offshore oil and gas sector, including management, frontline employees, and HR professionals, the research provides a comprehensive spectrum of perceptions and experiences.

The adoption of this methodological approach not only allowed the research to overcome potential biases associated with the limitations of studies that rely on single-source data collection strategies, but also enriched the dataset, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings. This was particularly useful in offering a nuanced understanding of how different stakeholder groups perceive WLB, organisational culture (OC), and EE.

Additionally, the study's methodological contribution is particularly focused on the offshore oil and gas sector in Qatar—a context that enabled the exploration of industry-specific factors influencing employee retention (ER) and EE strategies, which are often overlooked in more generalised studies. The approach also facilitated detailed environmental scanning and contextual analysis, which are crucial for understanding the internal and external factors that influence employee attitudes and behaviours in high-risk industries like the offshore oil and gas sector. This methodological approach not only ensured that the findings are relevant to the specific industry context under investigation but also provides insights that could be used to replicate similar research in other high-risk industries.

The methodological rigour employed in this study enhances its practical and academic implications, providing stakeholders with scientifically grounded insights for informing decision-making and policy changes.

Summarily, the study's contributions have significant implications for the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry and other industries, emphasizing the importance of addressing work-life balance as a critical factor in employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention while recognizing the unique challenges faced by different industries in achieving this goal.

6.3 Managerial Implications

The nature of the business environment is consistently changing, and this study has shown that the peculiarity associated with the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry faces several challenges regarding the retention of employees, and the achievement of WLB by employees which impacts engagement and commitment of workers. The findings from this study are consequently useful to organisations within the offshore domain relating to how to improve working conditions to enhance and improve the retention of employees.

The findings are useful to managerial stakeholders in terms of facilitating an understanding of issues surrounding WLB and how this could impact operations and the commitment of workers, and retention within the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector. The findings provide insight into the need for organisations to adopt strategies that enhance the achievement of WLB of employees including recommendations regarding strategies to enhance support to mitigate health and safety issues which mitigate the commitment of employees and their retention within their roles. This includes the use of strategies relating to improving organisational culture through use of policies to improve conditions which enhance the ability of employees in achieving satisfaction within the personal domain to improve commitment and retention of workers. For instance, to enhance retention, the study offers insights which could be leveraged by Qatar's offshore oil and gas stakeholders in developing flexible work arrangements, which has been cited by the literature as an effective strategy for enhancing their WLB and retention. They could also deploy strategies which facilitate an improvement in health and safety protocols due to the inherently high-risk nature of the sector, thereby reducing stressors and concerns of workers in the sector which could

impact retention and WLB in the sector. Additionally, based on the implication of the findings relating to culture, stakeholders could leverage the insights provided in fostering and developing an inclusive work culture through actions such as introducing policies to enhance organizational culture or adopt bespoke initiatives to bolster culture. Additionally other initiatives such as wellness programs could be introduced to enhance both physical and mental health, thus enhancing the WLB and potential retention of employees within the sector.

6.4 Limitations of Study and Suggestions for Future Research

The findings of this study have made valuable contributions to the existing research on WLB, engagement, and retention, particularly within the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations inherent in this study, which provide opportunities for future research to explore the concepts under investigation and address these limitations. Firstly, this study was conducted specifically within the context of the State of Qatar. Therefore, the deductions and generalizations made from the study's findings are constrained by the regional domain in which the study took place. Future studies could address this limitation by examining the concept of work-life balance within the offshore segments across all Middle Eastern countries. By doing so, researchers can facilitate the confirmation and replication of the findings from this study in different contexts, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the results. Additionally, further research could expand on the scope of investigation by incorporating a more diverse range of variables or exploring other factors that may influence work-life balance, engagement, and retention within the offshore segment. By considering a broader set of variables or examining additional contextual factors, future studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play and offer deeper insights into the topic.

Moreover, this study primarily relied on self-reported data gathered through surveys. While surveys are a commonly used research tool, they are subject to certain limitations such as social desirability bias and response biases. Future studies could employ mixed-methods approaches or alternative data collection methods, such as interviews or observations, to complement the findings obtained through surveys and provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the

topic. By conducting studies in different regional contexts, expanding the scope of investigation, and employing varied research methodologies, future studies can advance our knowledge and provide a more robust understanding of the complex dynamics of work-life balance, engagement, and retention in the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry.

Future research, it is recommended to employ alternative empirical approaches, such as qualitative methods. It can provide deeper insights into the specific issues unique to the offshore context that may impact the concepts under investigation. By conducting in-depth interviews, focus groups, or ethnographic studies, researchers can capture rich and contextualized data, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play.

Additionally, it was noted that the sample size for the study was small for a quantitative study which could have impacted the reliability of the results which were obtained by affecting the vulnerability of the study's results to various biases. The limitations in the size of the sample could be suggested to be due to the period when the study was conducted; COVID-19 as a social factor which was beyond the control of the researcher may have impacted the participant's effectiveness in responding/completing the questionnaires following distribution. Additionally, prior to the pandemic, the intention of this study was to conduct a second phase of data collection to enhance the quality of the research data obtained and research outcomes however due to COVID-19, this was not possible. This may have impacted on the deductions drawn in this study. Furthermore, this study was conducted using quantitative approaches which although facilitates generalization of the results obtained, does not allow for deeper probes into issues peculiar to the offshore segment which may influence WLB, engagement, organisational commitment and retention of workers.

Despite the limitations to the current study, the research conducted has its strengths including the performance of a pilot study which was undertaken to ensure the accessibility of participants in understanding and completing the questionnaires without any challenges. Additionally, the study made use of an online questionnaire distribution approach facilitated by Qualtrics which is a strength as neither the participants nor the researcher were required to be at specific locations or specific times to be able to complete the questionnaire. Further to this, ample time was provided to the respondents in completing the survey without putting pressure on them. More so, the Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire was ($\alpha = 0.5$) which indicates the high and excellent

reliability of the WLB measures and other variables used in the study. In future studies, replication of the research using larger samples is recommended to ensure that the results obtained are more reliable and to mitigate any biases which may impact the study's findings.

6.5 Reflective on Professional Development and Doctoral Journey

In this section, the professional development of the researcher in the journey to the completion of the DBA degree and submission of the thesis is provided. Reflections are important as they facilitate the identification of positive experiences and also because are useful for the identification of ways that can aid in the improvement of future practice and in relation to this research optimal practical outcomes for the organisation as it relates to employee retention and WLB (Leitch and Day, 2000). The section outlines challenges faced by the researcher in the development of the thesis including challenges relating to the research design approach, data collection, and analysis, providing details relating to the learning development which occurred as a result of this study. The section is concluded by outlining the transformation of the researcher's identity as a result of embarking on the doctoral journey.

Halse and Mowbray (2011) identify that the doctorate degree is one that is unique because it facilitates the researcher's development by improving their techniques, professional skills, and competencies, facilitating knowledge extension and contribution to academia and industry using original inquiry methods and approaches of inquiry. My research was undertaken to expand my knowledge of the concept of WLB, employee engagement, commitment, and employee retention due to the underlying issues faced by the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector, where my career is based. The research was also undertaken due to my personal belief in the importance of continuous professional development, particularly within my field due to the continuous transformation of the oil and gas sector, especially with the threats of retaining talent being a prevailing issue in the sector.

The DBA degree for the Nottingham Trent University is unlike other doctorates from other institutions in terms of structure. Traditionally, most doctorate degrees incorporate writing the thesis from the commencement of the first year, continuing on till completion. However, for the doctorate degree at Nottingham Trent University, there are four stage documents which researchers

needed to complete, with document 4 being the final thesis. This was quite challenging as it involved writing a lot of write-ups. Consequently I had to develop writing skills needed to achieve the requirements for obtaining the degree. Prior to the DBA, I was not fond of writing, especially coming from a background where Arabic language is my mother tongue. In order to develop my writing skills, I attended learning courses and workshops provided by the university where I learned the importance of criticality in writing at the doctoral level. This enhanced my ability to make arguments and explore different literature relating to my research. Attendance of the training and workshops also facilitated my ability to learn how to use various databases including SCOPUS and EBSCO in identifying relevant articles and papers regarding the issues being explored. This helped in extending my knowledge of the concept of WLB as I was able to read and review different articles and papers relevant to my study. Prior to the DBA degree, I had some knowledge of the issues surrounding my research topic but following the attendance of these workshops, my skills in identifying relevant articles by searching the keywords such as “Work life balance”, and “retention” helped in advancing my knowledge of the relevant concept. This is because by studying these articles, I was able to read and gain insights into the topic. Watson and Thompson (2006) indicated that in order to gain knowledge, there are cognitive and technical challenges faced by researchers, making the process a difficult yet intriguing one. Considering my journey, initially, it was difficult to learn the technical terms associated with my research and understand various models relating to the theme of the focus of my study. However, through consistency and hard work, I was able to learn to adopt these terms, which aided my knowledge development of the concepts under investigation.

The supervision team also played an important role in my development and my journey through their support which came in the form of providing advice relating to structuring my research writing, providing feedback on drafts of my research work, making recommendations relating to my research thesis which was helpful in improving my work. Prior to my studies in the U.K., I studied in the Gulf region, where the approach to study is different. Engaging with my supervisors was important to my development as they helped point out areas of challenges I faced. Through the advice, feedback, and comments from the supervision team, I learned better means of improving my research quality. I also learned about better means of structuring my research outputs and presenting my data for dissemination purposes.

I was also provided skill enhancement opportunities as a result of the DBA. The DBA enhanced my improvement in project management skills, data management, improvement of my confidence which is important for improving my leadership skills, research skills including analysis and critical writing skills, and self-management and planning skills.

I also developed dissemination skills including oral communication skills due to the design of the research being tailored towards researcher engagement with conferences and workshops where I had to present my research to other colleagues and researchers. Attendance of these conferences aided the development of my confidence which was useful to me in improving the dissemination of my research and networking with other professionals in my research domain/discipline. Before the start of my research degree as a professional, I was involved in several business presentations, which gave me some experience regarding dissemination publicly, but through feedback obtained from supervisors and other academics during dissemination events such as conferences, I was able to improve this skill.

In terms of research skills that I gained during my progress in my doctoral journey, this included developing knowledge of analysis skills including learning to use software including SPSS which I utilized in undertaking the analysis of my research data. Before I commenced my degree, I had a basic knowledge of data analysis using excel, but I had to learn how to analyse using more advanced quantitative approaches using SPSS. Through the DBA, I learned to use this software by attending training which provided me with knowledge about how to accurately use features of software such as correlation analysis, which I used in the examination of the relationship between the variables that were core to my study.

The DBA also enhanced my competencies relating to project management and data management. Through my journey, I learned the importance of managing the storage of relevant articles and research files. I learned to use Mendeley in the management of reference resources and to aid in easy access to references needed for the future. I also learned how to store research files using online storage which was useful in ensuring that essential progress files were easily accessed and documented.

Another important skill that I gained during my doctoral journey was the ability to plan effectively. Planning was useful to me in facilitating setting realistic research timeline objectives, enhancing the quality of my research outcomes by aiding me to focus on crucial issues around my research objectives. Developing my planning skills was also useful to facilitate managing my time for work requirements, family commitment and my research needs. The timelines for my research progress were planned using a Gantt chart. I learned to develop the Gantt chart in the first year of my studies and while I had some prior knowledge about time management using electronic diaries, learning about Gantt charts helped me in planning activities that needed to be done. The Gantt chart enhanced my ability to make priorities on activities that needed to be undertaken during the project at a specific point in time, and actions that could be taken concurrently to fulfil the achievement of the research aims. The Gantt chart was useful in helping me stay organized and in taking appropriate and timely methods in attending to research requirements and needs in order to facilitate the achievement of the research objectives.

I also faced some challenges during my DBA journey. Some of these challenges included personal challenges relating to managing finances which put some strain on my ability to progress. There were also challenges relating to data collection. I collected my data during the period when covid occurred. At this time, no face-to-face meetings were allowed in Qatar which impeded my ability to effectively distribute surveys effectively. Other challenges included the mental stress associated with coping with the doctoral program. I faced burnout as a result of the challenges but I learned the importance of taking some time off and resting. This was important to facilitate my re-strategisation and continuity with the research journey.

There were also personal challenges that I experienced during my program such as illness, which also impacted on schedules for the delivery of some research outcomes. However, I learned that hard work is as important as rest and ensuring that in times when I was facing stress and mental burnout as a result of trying to cope with managing the doctoral journey with work schedules, I took time off. This helped me in re-strategizing and coming up with better ways to advance in my journey.

Overall, the doctoral journey was an interesting one which enabled me in producing my doctoral thesis which is a focused piece of original research exploring issues surrounding WLB,

engagement, commitment and the retention of employees within the offshore segment of the oil and gas industry in Qatar. The research process and methodologies deployed facilitated the production of a research result which has findings that meets the standards of a higher education research study.

The research facilitated the development of a doctoral thesis evidencing the acquired knowledge I gained through my doctoral journey specific to WLB, engagement, commitment and its intersection with retention for employees in the offshore segment of the oil and gas sector.

I have been transformed in terms of my development as a result of the journey through the program. I transformed in terms of my competencies in skills, I learned and developed in terms of my knowledge of relevant research approaches and analysis methods. I also learned about project management process and dissemination procedures which has aided me in becoming more organized, self-reliant and able to take on more research challenges. Although I faced numerous challenges during my progress from the point of inception of the doctoral study till the end, support from academic and non-academic staff including my supervisors, and from family helped me overcome these challenges. Finally, I am thankful for the challenges and the opportunity which undertaking this degree has provided and I am looking forward to the future opportunities available to me following the award of my doctorate degree.

7.0 References

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8.0 Appendix

Questionnaire:

Proposed topic: The Impact of work-life balance and its effectiveness on offshore employee retention at Oil companies in Qatar

Description	Particulars	Yes	No
Age Group	20-40		
	40-60		
Gender	Male		
	Female		
Nationality	Qatari		
	Other		
Educational Qualification	Diploma		
	Graduate		
	Postgraduate		
Usual duty hours	8 hours		
	More than 8 hours		
Marital Status	Single		
	Married		
Family Staying together	Yes		
	No		
Travelling Time	Less than one hour		
	More than one hour		
Elements of work-life balance	Finding time for family		
	Harmony in life		
	Finding time for hobbies and personal interests		
	Taking a less demanding job		

		Reduced stress		
		Taking a job with less working hours		
		Improved work quality		
		Sharing household responsibilities with your spouse		
		Minimum work and private life conflict		
		Other: Please specify _____		
		Do you consider yourself to have a good work-life balance		
Reason of considering		Flexibility of working hours		
		Organisational facilities		
		Empathy and emotional support from supervisors		
		Good work-life balance		
Hazards of work life balance		High demanding job responsibilities		
		Longer working hours		
		No flexible working hours		
		No support from supervisors and colleagues		
Expectation from organisation		Flexible working hours		
		Short shifts of working hours		
		Better organisational facilities		

- **E-mail Survey Introduction**

Dear Participant,

We are happy to invite you to take a part in the subsequent project, that is being administered as part of the necessities of the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) degree at Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Trent University (UK) and supervised by two senior academics, Dr Stefanos Nachmias and Dr Ishan Jalan. If you've any questions about the project please don't hesitate to contact the lead researcher, Hussain Ashkanani, via email : hussain.ashkanani2015@my.ntu.ac.uk

The project aims to explore and examine the impact of work-life balance and its effectiveness on offshore employee retention.

Before you decide whether to participate in the study, it is necessary that you understand the details of the study and the significance of your contribution. We will be grateful for your contribution and you can ask questions at any point in the study if you are not clear about the purpose or nature of the study.

All your contributions will be treated as strictly confidential and all information is going to be used solely for addressing the objectives of the research study and completing the DBA. All personal information (e.g., name, location, etc.) will be anonymized to ensure your personal anonymity at all times and the data will be stored on an encrypted device and will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team mentioned earlier. There is minimal risk of discomforts by participating in this study. However, if participants suffer from any stress issues after completing the survey, a link with support and information will be made available at the end of the survey.

If you decide to participate in the survey, please note it is likely to last around 15-20 minutes. Still, you are free to withdraw without giving a reason. If you withdraw from the project, all individual data collected will be withdrawn from the study. You can withdraw your data a maximum of 3 weeks after completing the survey without needing to give a reason. The findings will be used only for written outputs and a defence discussion for the purpose of the research assessment and to complete the DBA.

Please note, in asking to withdraw via email, you could be identifying yourself (as we will be able to see your email address) unless you can use a non-identified or unnamed email account. Furthermore, when contacting us to withdraw, you will need to provide us the code that you had created at the end of the survey, as this will help to ensure anonymity of your identity within our data pool.

Should you wish to withdraw from the study, please email Hussain Ashkanani (hussain.ashkanani2015@my.ntu.ac.uk) stating that you no longer want to participate in this research.

By completing this survey, you agree and consent to the conditions previously mentioned.

Thank you for participating in the survey.

Hussain Ashkanani

Project Title: The Impact of work-life balance and its effectiveness on offshore employee retention at Oil companies in Qatar

You are being invited to take part in a research project. The project aims to explore and examine the informal learning activities in the workplace as a part of a DBA thesis in Nottingham Trent University (NTU).

You have been chosen because of you operate within Nottingham City Centre. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do, you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. If you withdraw from the project, all individual data collected will be withdrawn from the study. The findings will not be used for academic publication, only for written outputs and a defence discussion for the purpose of the research assessment. There is no risk or discomforts involved in this study apart from your valuable time. Any reporting of findings will ensure your personal anonymity.

If you decide to take part in the project, you will be asked to participate in an interview with a member of the research team (who is a DBA student in NTU). The interview will relate to your perception on informal learning, and various challenges you might face in learning informally in order to do your job. Each interview is likely to last around 20 minutes and will be audio-taped for transcription purposes.

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researchers, who will do their best to answer your questions. You can contact;

Hussain Al Ashkanani

(email: ashkananiha@yahoo.com, phone +974-77099777).

This research was given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct in the Nottingham Business School Ethics Committee.

Thank you for reading this information sheet, and for considering taking part in this study. If you decide you would like to take part in the research, please sign the following consent form. You will be given a copy of that consent form to keep.

Please advise if I should remove this page or can I use it to build the Qualtrics

Consent form

Title of project: The Impact of work-life balance and its effectiveness on offshore employee retention at Oil companies in Qatar

Name of researcher: Hussain Al Ashkanani

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated [00/00/2020] for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. I understand that should I withdraw, all information collected will be destroyed and not be included in the project.

☐

3. I give consent for my interview(s) to be audio-taped as set out in the information sheet.

☐

4. I give consent for direct quotations from my interview(s) to be used in written outputs during the project. I understand that any quotations will be anonymously used in a non-attributable way in the project.

☐

5. I understand that data collected during the project will only be used for the purpose of the module assessment requirements.

☐

6. I agree to take part in the above study and have received an copy of the consent form.

☐

Name of participant

Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent

Date

Signature

Please advise if I should remove this page or can I use it to build the Qualtrics

Dear Employee,

We are happy to ask you to take part in the subsequent project, that is administered per the necessities of the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) degree at Nottingham Trent University (UK) supervised by 2 senior teachers, Dr Stefanos Nachmias and Dr Ishan Jalan. Please contact the scientist Hussain Ashkanani within the 1st instance if you've got any questions about the project when you've got browse the below temporary (ashkananiha@yahoo.com).

Before you opt whether to participate within the study, it's necessary that you simply perceive the explanations why we tend to finish up the analysis and what your participation can involve. we might be grateful if you browse the knowledge fastidiously and acquire back if something is unclear.

This analysis can facilitate organisations in Qatar to grasp the simplest technique for learning within the geographic point to develop your data and experience once activity your daily tasks and jobs to outstanding and high qualities.

All your contributions are going to be treated as strictly confidential. All information is going to be used just for addressing the objectives of the study. Any news of the findings can guarantee your personal obscurity because the solely details needed within the study are demographic and work expertise data, omitting different details like location, and private names. Names won't be shared along with your manager. collective results, not your individual results, are going to be wont to turn out an instructional analysis report and ultimately be created accessible to the general public domain via journal article or/and conference proceedings. we assure that the arrangements delineated higher than can stop any of your data being shared with anyone outside the analysis team. there's no risk or discomforts concerned during this study, except your valuable time.

If you opt to participate in the survey, it will not take much time as it is designed for a very short time taking process. Do you have to determine to withdraw your information from the study (premature and when full participation), you'll be absolved to do this at intervals two weeks while not having to provide a reason, and with exemption. within the case you want to withdraw from the study, please email Hussain Al Ashkanani (ashkananiha@yahoo.com) expressing that you simply would love to try to. By finishing this survey, you agree and consent to the conditions as mentioned.

Thank you for participating in the project.

Hussain Al Ashkanani

Questionnaire

Demographic Profile;

A. Sex	
(1) Male	(2) Female
B. Marital Status:	
(1) Married	(2) Unmarried
C. Education	
(1) Less than high school	(2) High school
(3) Diploma	(4) Graduate degree
(5) High Diploma	(6) Masters or above
D. Age	
(1) Less than 20	
(2) 21 – 30	
(3) 31 – 40	
(4) 41 – 50	
(5) 51 or above	
E. Experience in the same organisation	
(1) One year or less	
(2) 2 - 5	
(3) 6 - 15	
(4) 16 - 21	
(5) 22 years or above	
F. Total Experience	
(1) One year or less	
(2) 2 - 5	
(3) 6 - 15	
(4) 16 - 21	
(5) 22 years or above	
G. Job Level	
(1) Higher level	

(2) Middle level	
(3) Lower level	
H. You are working as	
(1) Onshore	(2) Offshore
I. Nationality	
(1) Qatari National	(2) Non-Qatari National

Work life Balance (WLB) .

I have replaced the previous one with the one below , I couldn't find the resource.

For your approval please.

WLB benefits availability and their usage were measured using a nine point questionnaire developed by Allen (2001), and included questions such as availability and use of flexible time, compressed working week, telecommuting, part-time work, on-site childcare, subsidised local childcare, childcare information/referral services, paid maternity/paternity leave, and eldercare. Family-work conflict and work-family conflict were assessed using two separate scales: family-work conflict scale and work-family conflict scale. These scales were developed and validated by Netemeyer et al.,(1996) and measure interferences between work and family lives of individuals. Family satisfaction was assessed using a five-item life satisfaction scale developed and validated by Diener et al.,(1985). The individuals' level of job satisfaction was assessed using a three- item General Job Satisfaction subscale developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975). Psychological health in this study was measured by levels of psychological distress. Individuals' distress was measured using a twelve-item General Health Questionnaire developed and validated by Goldberg (1972).

Questionnaire:

Availability of work-life balance benefits at your workplace

Using the 1-4 scale please indicate your agreement with each item by ticking the appropriate circle

1. Flexitime - e.g. part-time work, rostered hours, night/day shifts			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not available + But Needed	4. Not available + Not Needed
2. Compressed work week - e.g. working approx 40 hours in fewer than 5 days			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not available + But Needed	4. Not available + Not Needed
3. Telecommuting - e.g. having the flexibility to work from home using a computer			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not available + But Needed	4. Not available + Not Needed

4. Part-time work - e.g. working fewer hours than a full-time worker			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not available + But Needed	4. Not available + Not Needed
5. On-site child-care center - e.g. child-care available at the location of the company			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not available + But Needed	4. Not available + Not Needed
6. Subsidised local child-care - e.g. the company's contribution to the needed child-care costs			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not available + But Needed	4. Not available + Not Needed
7. Child-care information/referral services - e.g. when the company offers assistance in locating a child-care when needed			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not available + But Needed	4. Not available + Not Needed
8. Paid maternity leave / paternity leave			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not available + But Needed	4. Not available + Not Needed
9. Elder care - e.g. the company provides financial support for elder care			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not available + But Needed	4. Not available + Not Needed

Family-Work Conflict

Using the 1-7 scale, please indicate your agreement with each item by ticking the appropriate circle

1. The demands of my family or spouse/ partner interfere with work-related activities						
2. Strongly disagree	3. Disagree	4. Slightly disagree	5. Neither agree nor disagree	6. Slightly agree	7. Agree	8. Strongly agree
2. I have to put off doing things at work because of demands on my time at home						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree
3. Things I want to do at work don't get done because of the demands of my family or spouse/partner						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree

4. My home life interferes with my responsibilities at work such as getting to work on time, accomplishing daily tasks, and working overtime						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree
5. Family-related strain interferes with my ability to perform job-related duties						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree

Work-Family Conflict

1. The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree
2. The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfil my family responsibilities						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree
3. Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the demands my job puts on me						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree
4. My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfil family duties						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree
5. Due to work-related duties, I have to make changes to my plans for family activities						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree

Family Satisfaction

1. In most ways my family-life is close to my ideal						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree

2. The conditions of my family-life are excellent						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree
3. I am satisfied with my family life						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree
4. So far, I have got the important things I want in my family-life						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree
5. If I could live my family-life over, I would change almost nothing						
1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Slightly disagree	4. Neither agree nor disagree	5. Slightly agree	6. Agree	7. Strongly agree

Work Satisfaction

1. Generally speaking, I am very happy with my work						
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
2. I frequently think of leaving this job						
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
3. I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in my job						
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree

Psychological Health

Using the 1-4 scale please indicate your agreement with each item by ticking the appropriate circle

Have you recently:

1. been able to concentrate on what you are doing?
--

1. Better than usual	2. Same as usual	3. Worse than usual	4. Much worse than usual
2. lost much sleep over worry?			
1. Not at all	2. No more than usual	3. Rather more than usual	4. Much more than usual
3. felt you are playing a useful part in things?			
1. More so than usual	2. Same as usual	3. Less so than usual	4. Much less than usual
4. felt capable of making decisions about things?			
1. More so than usual	2. Same as usual	3. Less so than usual	4. Much less than usual
5. felt constantly under strain?			
1. Not at all	2. No more than usual	3. Rather more than usual	4. Much more than usual
6. felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties?			
1. Not at all	2. No more than usual	3. Rather more than usual	4. Much more than usual
7. been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?			
1. Not at all	2. No more than usual	3. Rather more than usual	4. Much more than usual
8. been able to face up to your problems?			
1. More so than usual	2. Same as usual	3. Less so than usual	4. Much less than usual
9. been feeling unhappy or depressed?			
1. More so than usual	2. Same as usual	3. Less so than usual	4. Much less than usual
10. been losing confidence in yourself?			
1. Not at all	2. No more than usual	3. Rather more than usual	4. Much more than usual
11. been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?			
1. Not at all	2. No more than usual	3. Rather more than usual	4. Much more than usual
12. been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered?			
1. More so than usual	2. Same as usual	3. Less so than usual	4. Much less than usual

2.WLB on Employee Engagement

In this study I will measure relationship between WLB and employee engagement - key dependent variable in this research. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) designed by Schaufeli (2003) is the most commonly used self-report instrument questionnaire operationalizing employee engagement with excellent psychometric features (Shimazu et al., 2010). UWES three-dimensional questionnaire has been popularized worldwide and translated into 22 languages. According to Schaufeli's definition, work engagement is „a positive and fulfilling work related state of mind reflected by vigor, dedication and absorption” (Schaufeli et al., 2006, p. 702).

Original questionnaire is comprised of 17 items for vigor (six items), dedication (5 items) and absorption (6 items) scales (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). However, 50

Schaufeli also published a shortened 9 item reliable version for three scales with three items each followed by a student version as well.

Schaufeli et al.,(2006) conducted evaluation of questionnaires used for the measurement of employee engagement. Meta-analysis of both versions confirmed reliable internal consistencies for vigor, dedication and absorption scales. Detailed analysis carried out in 8 countries across 33 samples returned psychometric features like Cronbach alpha ranging between .80 and .90 (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Seppala et al.,(2009) revealed that short version of UWES - 9 within 3-year time interval ranges from .82 to .86 confirming high rank order stability coefficients (Schaufeli et al., 2006)

The correlations between three engagement scales are highly reliable and the internal consistency of the shortened 9 item scale is satisfactory as well (Simazu et al., 2010). No systematic variations were detected in work engagement levels between female and male employees or across various age groups. However, in some occupational groups like management, engagement levels were evidently higher than blue collar workers (Shimazu et al., 2010)

Schaufeli highly recommended utilization of UWES as a screening and identification tool for employees requiring enhancement of levels of engagement (Schaufeli, 2013). Following extensive research, the author decided to deploy shortened 9-item scale to assess employee engagement in FET sector. The scale items match author's concept of employee engagement in the broad context of WLB.

The author felt that 17-item version was too long and overwhelming for participants. Employee engagement section of the survey is comprised of the following statements:

1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy. (VI1)
2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous. (VI2)
3. I am enthusiastic about my job. (DE2)
4. My job inspires me. (DE3)
5. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work. (VI3)

6. I feel happy when I am working intensely. (AB3)
 7. I am proud of the work that I do. (DE4)
 8. I am immersed in my work. (AB4)
 9. I get carried away when I am working. (AB5)

Note: VI = Vigor scale; DE = Dedication scale; AB = Absorption scale.

Each statement is rated through 7- point Likert scale from 0 – “Never” to 6 – “Always”.

The following 9 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, cross “Never” in the space after the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you felt it.

1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. I am enthusiastic about my job.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

4. My job inspires me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

5. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

6. I feel happy when I am working intensely.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

7. I am proud of the work that I do.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. I am immersed in my work.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

9. I get carried away when I am working.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. WLB Scale on Retention

The intention quit scale is measured against 14 items, and one was eliminated due to technical construction of the question. To measure talent retention, a turnover intention questionnaire was used. The turnover intention questionnaire is adapted from Roodt (2005). The questionnaire was also used in studies by Martin and Roodt (2008).

a. Rationale

The questionnaire was developed to measure an employee's turnover intention.

b. Administration of the questionnaire

The manager support questionnaire is a self-report measure. For this study, it was given to the participating employees of the utility organisation to obtain an indication of the* perceptions of manager support.

c. Scoring and Interpretation

A score below 3 represents low intentions to quit, and a score above 3 indicates high intentions to quit, while a score of 3 indicates that the respondent was unsure whether the statement was true or not.

d. Reliability of the questionnaire

Reliability refers to whether the instrument can be interpreted consistently across different situations (Feld, 2009, p. 14). A reliability analysis was carried out on the intention to quit scale. The Cronbach's alpha is presented in Table 13 and reflects .88. According to Vale et al. (1997, p. 572), for comparing groups, 'a Cronbach alpha of 0.7 to 0.8 is regarded as satisfactory, and for clinical application, much higher values are needed'. On the other hand, according to Marti, (2037, p. 99) the reliability of the questionnaire is relatively unknown. Martin (2007) further asserts that Jacobs (2005) reported a 0.913 Cronbach's alpha coefficient' in this type of questionnaire. The study of Martin (2007) reported a 0.895 Cronbach's alpha on the 13-item analysis; this is inconsistent with this research with a Cronbach's alpha of .88.

The following questionnaire measure your intentions to quit questions							
You are requested to cross a circle (x) the number of uterus which most accurately with the extent of your answer.							

1. How often have you considered leaving your current job?	never	1	2	3	4	5	Most of the items
2. How frequently do you scan newspapers for job opportunities?	never	1	2	3	4	5	Most of the items
3. To what extent is your current job not addressing your important personal needs?	To no extent	1	2	3	4	5	To a large extent
4. How often are opportunities to achieve your most important goals at work jeopardised?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
5. How often are your most important personal values at work compromised?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
6. How frequently are you daydreaming about a different job that will suit your personal needs?	Low	1	2	3	4	5	High
7. What is the probability that you will leave your job, if you get another suitable job?	Always	1	2	3	4	5	Never
8. How frequently do you look forward to another day at work?	Always	1	2	3	4	5	Never
9. How often do you think about starting your own business?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Most of the items
10. How often do only family responsibilities preventing you from quitting?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
11. How often only vested personal interest (Pension Fund, unemployment fund, etc.) prevent you to leave?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always

12. How frequently are you emotionally agitated when arriving home after work?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
13. How often is your current job affecting your personal well-being?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
14. How often do the troubles associated with relocating, preventing you from quitting?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always

4. Employee engagement Scale on Retention

The most comprehensive study to date of employee engagement has come from The Gallup Organization's research using the Q12 instrument. For more than 50 years, the Gallup poll has been questioning customers and employees on a variety of workplace topics. Their surveys attempt to find out more than simply how satisfied persons are with their jobs. It addresses the extent to which employees' needs are being met and examines the emotional ties they have to their employment. According to Coffman and Gonzalez-Molina (2002), results of this Gallup research have shown that business units in which employees score in the top half on employee engagement have, on average, a 56% higher success rate with customer loyalty, a 44% higher success rate on staff turnover, a 50% higher success rate on productivity outcomes, and a 33% higher success rate on profitability outcomes.

One key component of the Gallup Q12 instrument is that it includes items that Gallup researchers have found to be under the influence of the manager. This allows for practicality of change based upon the survey results. Over a period of time, Gallup consultants have educated managers and have partnered with companies to implement change strategies. Between the first and second year of implementing changes those companies have, on average, scored one-half standard deviation higher on employee engagement and sometimes as much as a full standard deviation or more of growth after three years. Current evidence from the Gallup 12 studies has demonstrated that, to some extent, employee engagement is influenced by the manager, is changeable, and can vary widely from one workplace to another (Coffman & Gonzalez-Molina, 2002).

Kahn's research sought to identify the psychological conditions necessary to explain moments of personal engagement and personal disengagement among individuals across different situations at work (Kahn, 1990). His work used the methods of observation and interviewing to conduct a qualitative study of personal engagement among 16 camp counselors and 16 architectural firm members. Kahn found that people draw upon themselves to varying degrees while performing work tasks and they can commit themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally in the various roles they perform. Or, they may choose to withdraw and disengage from their work roles and work tasks. Results of Kahn's study suggest that there are three psychological conditions that shape how people perform their roles -- meaningfulness, safety, and availability.

In a 2006 cross national study, Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova (2006) surveyed 14,521 employees in various occupations, using a self-report questionnaire that measured work engagement.

Questionnaire

1. I have received recognition for doing my job well.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

2. My supervisor seems concerned about my welfare.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

3. The mission of the agency makes me feel like the work I do matters.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

4. I have friends at work.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

5. While on the job, my ideas and opinions are taken seriously.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

6. The materials, tools and equipment that I need to do my job are supplied by the agency and made readily available to me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

7. The people I work with do a good job.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

8. I will still be employed here two years from now.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree

5. Demographics scale on employee retention.

WLB benefits availability and their usage were measured using a nine point questionnaire developed by Allen (2001), and included questions such as availability and use of flexible time, compressed working week, telecommuting, part-time work, on-site childcare, subsidized local childcare, childcare information/referral services, paid maternity/paternity leave, and eldercare. Partakers were asked to specify which of those benefits are available to them and which have been or still are used by them. Gathered data allowed the obtaining of information about availability and use of family friendly initiatives amongst various employers in the private sector in Ireland.

1. Flexitime - e.g. part-time work, rostered hours, night/day shifts			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not Available + But Needed	4. Not Available + Not Needed
2. Compressed work week - e.g. working approx 40 hours in fewer than 5 days			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not Available + But Needed	4. Not Available + Not Needed
3. Telecommuting - e.g. having the flexibility to work from home using a computer			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not Available + But Needed	4. Not Available + Not Needed
4. Part-time work - e.g. working fewer hours than a full-time worker			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not Available + But Needed	4. Not Available + Not Needed
5. On-site child-care center - e.g. child-care available at the location of the company			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not Available + But Needed	4. Not Available + Not Needed
6. Subsidised local child-care - e.g. the company's contribution to the needed child-care costs			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not Available + But Needed	4. Not Available + Not Needed
7. Child-care information/referral services - e.g. when the company offers assistance in locating a child-care when needed			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not Available + But Needed	4. Not Available + Not Needed
8. Paid maternity leave / paternity leave			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not Available + But Needed	4. Not Available + Not Needed
9. Elder care - e.g. the company provides financial support for elder care			
1. Available + Used	2. Available + Not Used	3. Not Available + But Needed	4. Not Available + Not Needed

6.1WLB & Culture.

I have added two examples of WLB & Culture , can you please confirm which one to be used.

Supportive work-life culture was measured with ten statements (see Appendix 1). The statements addressed respondents' perceptions of the organizational culture and the extent to which the organization supported their efforts to balance work and private life. The three components of supportive work-life culture, according to Thompson et al.,(1999) were measured. Those were management support, career consequences and organizational time expectations. For example, "In this organization employees can balance their work and private lives", "There is a team spirit within this organization" or "This organization supports and values the integration of employees' work and private lives".

Questionnaire on organizational culture and work-life balance *Please fill in the boxes with appropriate alternatives. Feel free to add relevant information.*

1. Sex ☐ man ☐ woman

2. Ageyears

3. Family status

☐ married /living with a partner ☐ single ☐ widow/widower ☐divorced

4. Do your children or your spouse's children live in your home?

☐ yes, permanently ☐ yes, regularly (for example every other week) ☐ no

Number..... Age..... Number..... Age.....

5. Education

☐ Have not finished obligatory education

☐ Have finished obligatory education

☐ Have finished more than obligatory education, but not finished college

☐ Have finished college

☐ Have finished more than college but not finished university

☐ Have finished undergraduate degree from university (BA/BS)

☐ Have finished postgraduate degree (MA/MS) or a Ph.D.

☐ Other, what?

6. Do you have a management position in the company ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Do you work overtime? (Over 40 hours a week based on full time job) ☐ yes ☐ no If

yes, how often? *(Please fill in relevant frequency, only one box)*

☐ monthly: approximately hours

☐ weekly: approximatelyhours

☐ daily: approximatelyhours

☐ other:

8. For how long have you worked at the company (including the parent company)? ...years
Please mark in the scale 1-5, to what extent you agree with the following statements:
1. strongly disagree, 2. disagree, 3. neither disagree nor agree, 4. agree, 5. strongly agree

9. In this organization employees can balance their work and private lives.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5

10. In general, managers in this organization have an understanding of private life needs.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5

(1. strongly disagree, 2. disagree, 3. neither disagree nor agree, 4. agree, 5. strongly agree)

11. In this organization, it is accepted that employees can take active measures to balance work and private life. (Examples can be various: work from home in the morning and come in late, not work overtime, go early and compensate in the evening).

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5

12. I feel secure about my career when I take such active measures.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5

13. There is a team spirit within this organization.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5

14. I feel that management has trust in the employees doing their job.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5

15. I feel that I can rely on understanding from my colleagues.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5

16. I feel that I have control over my job.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5

17. I experience time left after work to do what I have to/ like to do.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5

18. This organization supports and values the integration of employees' work and family lives.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5

6.2WLB & Culture

Each participant answered three interview questions measuring work-life balance. Based on Mukhtar's (2012) survey, questions were created measuring work-life balance. Culture was measured using 13 items from the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI, Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Complex items were cut from the original OCAI to shorten the survey for employees in consideration of time. Each employee interviewed was asked to fill out the OCAI measuring whether they agree or disagree with statements regarding their workplace culture and leadership of their organization. See Appendix for items used.

Appendix: Questionnaire

	Agree	Disagree
The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.		
The organization is very results oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement-oriented.		
The organization is a very controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.		
The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing.		
The management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation.		
The management style in the organization is characterized by individual risk taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness.		
The management style in the organization is characterized by hard-driving competitiveness, hard demands, and achievement.		
The management style in the organization is characterized by security of employment, conformity, predictability, and stability in relationships.		
The glue that holds the organization together is loyalty and mutual trust. Commitment to this organization runs high.		
The glue that holds the organization together is the emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment.		
The glue that holds the organization together is formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is important.		

The organization emphasizes human development. High trust, openness, and participation persist.		
The organization defines success on the basis of the development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for people.		