

## **The Impact of Socio-Cultural and Religious Factors on Omanis Employment in the Hotel Sector**

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**Abstract :** The Sultanate of Oman is located on the South-eastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula. It is bordered by the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea and has borders with the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Arabic is the official language. Islam is the official religion. Islam has a great impact on most Omanis, Shari'a law is the law of Oman. The tribal structure plays an essential role in the lives of Omanis. Most people in the Gulf States bear a tribal name rather than a family name. Religion, tribe, and family are highly influential in shaping individuals' values and behaviors, and have a very noticeable influence on a person's career choices. Tourism development has been given special attention by the Sultanate of Oman's government aspiring that the industry would assist in creating direct job opportunities as well as boost the economy through provision of hard currency to improve the balance of payments. This study aims to assess the impact of socio-cultural and religious factors on Omanis employment in the hotel sector. The socio-cultural and religious factors have serious impacts on Omani employment in the hotel sector. Some employees are concerned about the source of income because of the idea that since the hotel business is based on activities such as serving alcohol and pork, gambling, and accommodating unmarried couples, their source of income would be questionable religion wise. For females, the designated job uniform and the interaction with males are major concerns. Ability to fulfil family obligations for married Omanis, and marriage opportunity for singles were other raised concerns. Whilst the future prosperity of the hotel industry depends on the quality of its people, in Oman, the hospitality industry has failed, for a number of reasons, to project an image that could generate interest amongst Omanis. Furthermore, the characteristics and the very nature of the hotel sector are in direct conflict with Islamic doctrines which are embedded in Omani life and society.

**Keywords :** culture, society, hotel, hospitality, Islam, Oman

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