

EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF MANAGEMENT SAFETY COMMITMENT ON EMPLOYEES' SAFETY BEHAVIOR IN OMAN'S OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The oil and gas sector are high-work-risk industries with complex operations, and effective safety management is crucial to ensure the safety of their workers and to continue reliable operations. In this high-risk environment, safety commitment by management can significantly influence employees' perceptions, attitudes and day-to-day safety behavior. However, more needs to be done to focus on employee experiences and culture to better understand how they see and experience management's commitment to safety. This study takes an approach of qualitative research to examine how management safety commitment affects the behavior of employees towards safety in the oil and gas sector in Oman. The study aims to investigate what employees expect in terms of management commitment to safety, the role of management practices in determining safety compliance and participation and organizational factors that help or hinder positive safety behavior. The data are proposed to be collected using semi-structured interviews of the participants (employees) from the oil and gas sector in Oman and will be analysed thematically in order to detect the commonalities and patterns that exist. This study will enable a better understanding of the factors that affect employees' attitudes towards participating in safe workplace practices and following safety procedures, including visible management support, communication of safety, provision of resources, leadership and response to safety concerns. The results will benefit the safety management literature by providing qualitative evidence for the specific context of Oman and may also provide practical implications to enhance safety leadership, employee engagement and safety practices in the oil and gas industry.

Keyword:

Management Safety Commitment, Employee Safety Behavior, Safety Leadership, Safety Climate, Oman Oil and Gas Industry

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The oil and gas industry is known as a high-risk industrial sector as operations carried out involve hazardous materials, complex equipment, high pressure systems, heavy machinery and activities performed in a natural environment were failing to perform safety protocols can lead to serious injury, death, environmental damages and losses to the operations. Effective safety management is, therefore, not just about technical controls and formal procedures, but also on organizational factors that affect the way that employees interpret and apply safety principles in their day-to-day work activities [5] [7]. Of these factors, management safety commitment has garnered much attention, as individuals' attitudes toward management's commitment may affect their motivation and the extent of their commitment to carrying out safe work practices [8, 12].

Management safety commitment is the level to which organizational leaders are making a true and ongoing commitment to employee safety. This commitment may be demonstrated by the involvement of management in safety activities, the availability of adequate resources, communicating safety expectations, enforcement of safety procedures and action taken on hazard reports. In high-risk job settings, staff can evaluate management's commitment by looking at the statements of managers and supervisors as well as by observing their behaviors. Past studies in the field of hazardous and offshore work have demonstrated a strong link between management practices and safety climate with safety performance [12, 13].

The conduct of employees is another key aspect of workplace safety. Typically consists of safety compliance and safety participation. Safety compliance refers to behaviours that are required by the precepts of safety, and safety participation refers to behaviours that are done on a voluntary basis, such as reporting hazards, assisting colleagues, participation in safety improvement activities etc. [8, 15]. Safety climate, safety motivation and organizational factors have been shown to affect these various aspects of employee safety behaviors [5], [8], [15]. The relationships between safety climate and safety compliance, safety participation and safety practices in oil and gas and petroleum environments have also been explored. [7, 11, 17]

Management commitment is a significant variable since employees might adjust their attitudes to organizational safety priorities to those they see in practice. If managers are consistently demonstrating a concern for safety, resourcing the organization correctly, communicating a clear set of expectations, and taking action on issues of safety, then employees may begin to see safety as a real concern for the organization, rather than just a point of discussion. On the other hand, if the formal safety policies and management actions are inconsistent, the employees' sense of commitment to safety can be undermined [3, 6]. The role of supervisory behavior is also significant as supervisors often convert expectations of safety in the organization into workday activities [21, 22]. This is very relevant for the oil and gas industry in an Oman environment where the working conditions of the oil and gas industry is a safety critical industry. Safety climate and associated organizational aspects have been studied in Oman, but there is still limited context-specific research. Umar and Egbu [19] for instance studied the perceptions of safety climate in the Omani construction industry and concluded that management commitment, supervisory practices, worker involvement, communication and training are key factors related to safety. The hazards, organizational structures and operational needs for construction and oil and gas operations, however, are different. Hence, the results of the other sectors cannot be simply translated to describe the management safety commitment of employees in the oil and gas sector in Oman.

The main benefit of the qualitative approach is that it offers a chance to explore the issue from the employees' viewpoint. While quantitative research methods can only assess whether management commitment correlates with safety behaviors, qualitative methods can look into employees' perceptions of management commitment, their experiences of management and supervisory practices, and how these experiences affect their daily safety decisions. Qualitative research using interviews is shown to be useful for gaining an understanding of workers' experiences of a work place and safety culture in the offshore oil and gas industry [20]. Therefore, this study examines how employees' safety behavior in the Oil and Gas industry in Oman is affected by Management safety commitment.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although formal safety management systems and procedures have been developed and implemented, it is not easy to get consistent behavior from employees in high-risk industries. Having safety policies in place is not a guarantee that employees are always in compliance with safety requirements, or that they are actively involved in safety activities. Perceptions of employee's actual commitment to safety, such as consistency of leadership practices, safety resources, communication, and management's response to safety issues, may affect their resulting behavior [3, 7].

There are prior studies that have developed links between safety climate, management practices, safety compliance and safety participation in the oil and gas as well as other high-risk sectors [11], [13], [17]. Much of this research has, however, used quantitative methods which have sought to establish relationships between set variables. Focusing on employee's perceptions and understanding of management safety commitment and the impact of those perceptions on their daily safety habits is not as well considered.

This is especially true of the Omani oil and gas sector in which there is little qualitative evidence specifically on the management safety commitment and employee safety behavior. Previous studies conducted in Oman, including that by Umar and Egbu [19] are of interest for safety climate but they are applied to the construction industry instead of the oil and gas industry. Therefore, a context specific qualitative research is needed to explore the employees' experience of management commitment and its impact on their safety compliance and participation.

1.3 Research Gap

Many studies have found that management commitment, safety climate, leadership practices and organizational conditions are correlated with employee safety behavior [5, 8, 12, 15]. Further studies in petroleum and oil and gas environments have focused on safety compliance, safety participation, safety climate, and safety management practices [7, 11, 13, 17]. Relations among these, however, have been investigated to a lesser extent in a qualitative sense from the perspective of those employees specifically working in the oil and gas industry in Oman.

In addition, many prior studies have investigated the relationship among the safety-related factors instead of the meaning of management commitment from employees' perception of their daily work. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by employing a qualitative research methodology to explore employees' perceptions on the

management's commitment to safety and the impact of this commitment on their safety compliance, participation and overall safety behavior in the Omani, oil and gas industry.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Management Safety Commitment

Management safety commitment is the degree to which management evidences in decision making, resources, communication, and day-to-day work and practice that safety for employees is the actual emphasis of the organization. In higher risk industries, management commitment is especially critical because staff members tend to observe management and supervisors for cues about what should be done with their organization. Safety is more likely to be seen as an important organizational value when management continuously focuses on safety and encourages employees to adhere to safety standards [8, 12].

Commitment by management goes beyond just having a formal safety policy in place. It also manifests in resource distribution, management involvement in safety-related activities, communicating safety expectations, ensuring safety procedures, and action on safety concerns. Mearns et al. [13] showed the significance of safety management practices in offshore environments and Mearns et al. [12] showed that management related factors were important safety climate elements in hazardous work environments. The results indicate that managers' perceptions of management commitment are influenced more by what they see in the workplace than by formal statements in policy documents.

Supervisory behaviour is also a way to communicate management commitment. Supervisors may be required to interpret the safety policies of their organization and need to have extensive contact with the employees. Zohar [21] has proven that safety climate can be measured at the group level, based on employee perceptions of safety practices at the supervisor level and Zohar [22] has revealed that changes in the actions of supervisors can lead to better safety within the organizational units. Thus, management safety commitment can influence the employee's behavior indirectly by the supervisor's behavior and expectations.

Also, consistency and credibility of management's commitment are significant. When managers set clear expectations for safety and at the same time push employees toward more production, workers might feel that their employers' priorities differ from their formal policies on safe working conditions. Previous studies on the links between safety climate and safety compliance in the oil and gas industry have emphasized the role of organizational and operation climate on employee safety practices [3, 11]. So there must be congruence between the communication of management and what employees see in practice.

Management safety commitment can then be seen as a multi-dimensional organisational phenomenon, comprised of leadership attention, provision of resources, communication, supervisory behaviour, accountability, and organisational support for safe work. These dimensions form an important basis for the understanding of the potential impact of management practices on employee safety behaviours in the oil and gas industry in Oman.

2.2 Employees' Safety Behavior

Employee safety behavior consists of all the things the employee does to keep himself or herself and others safe in the workplace. Safety participation and safety compliance are the two distinct concepts that are often talked about in the literature. Safety compliance is about the mandatory behaviors that are required to keep the workplace safe, like using personal protective equipment, following operating procedures and following safety rules. Safety participation is a term used to describe voluntary actions that help to create a more safety-enhancing environment, such as reporting hazards, supporting other people, attending safety activities, and offering safety suggestions [8, 15].

Griffin and Neal [8] put forth a compelling framework to link safety climate, knowledge of safety, safety motivation, and safety performance. They have a system that separates the organizational environment that affects safety perceptions from the processes that affect safety performance. Neal and Griffin [15] also showed that there are links between safety climate, safety motivation, safety behavior, and accidents, which suggest that both aspects of organizational and motivational processes affect employee safety behavior.

In the oil and gas industry, where workers often must adhere to specific protocols that aim to manage hazardous processes, safety compliance is especially critical. Differences to procedures can place employees and other workers at serious risk. Studies in the oil and gas sector have therefore investigated the association between safety climate and safety compliance, and it has been concluded that the safety climate in the organization can affect employees' compliance with practices [11]. Benson et al. [3] also studied the link between the safety climate factors and the level of safety compliance in the oil and gas industry, which again highlights the role of the organization on the actions of employees.

Safety participation is a more comprehensive aspect of employee participation in workplace safety. Workers who report hazards, join in safety meetings, discuss safety issues and help others with safety concerns can play a role

in preventing hazards from becoming an incident. The effect of safety climate on safety participation in the petroleum industry has been studied specifically by Saedi et al. [17] who showed that the perceptions of the organization are significant in employees' willingness to participate in safety activities.

Safety behavior may then be understood as being more than just a rule compliance. Requires compliance with safety requirements, as well as participation in establishing and maintaining a safe workplace. These dimensions are relevant for the current study, as control may have different effects on employees' required and voluntary safety responses.

2.3 Management Safety Commitment and Safety Behavior

The relationship between management safety commitment and employee safety behavior is supported by several theoretical and empirical perspectives. When employees perceive that management genuinely prioritizes safety, they may develop stronger safety motivation and greater willingness to comply with safety requirements and participate in safety-related activities [8], [15]. Management commitment can therefore establish an organizational environment in which safe behavior is encouraged, supported, and reinforced.

Research conducted in hazardous environments provides evidence for this relationship. Mearns et al. [12] examined safety climate across hazardous work environments and identified management commitment as an important element of employees' safety perceptions. In offshore environments, Mearns et al. [13] further demonstrated relationships among safety climate, safety management practices, and safety performance. These findings are highly relevant to oil and gas organizations because they demonstrate how organizational management practices can shape the conditions in which employees perform safety-critical work.

Evidence from the petroleum industry also indicates that safety climate is associated with specific dimensions of safety behavior. Kvalheim and Dahl [11] investigated safety compliance and safety climate in the oil and gas industry, while Saedi et al. [17] examined safety participation in the petroleum industry. Dahl and Kongsvik [7] also examined safety climate and mindful safety practices in oil and gas operations. Collectively, these studies indicate that organizational safety conditions can influence both employees' compliance with safety requirements and their broader engagement with safety.

The relationship may also operate through employee perceptions of management support. Hofmann and Morgeson [9] conceptualized safety-related behavior as a form of social exchange, suggesting that employees' perceptions of organizational support and relationships with leaders can influence safety-related behavior. From this perspective, employees who perceive that management values their safety may be more willing to reciprocate through behaviors that support organizational safety objectives.

However, management commitment does not necessarily produce uniform behavioral outcomes. The influence of management may depend on the consistency of communication, supervisory behavior, safety resources, workload, production pressures, and employees' trust in organizational safety systems [3], [6]. Consequently, examining employees' experiences is important for understanding not simply whether management commitment influences safety behavior, but how and under what organizational conditions that influence occurs.

2.4 Safety Culture and Safety Leadership

Safety culture and safety climate are closely related concepts within occupational safety research, although they are not identical. Safety culture generally refers to the shared values, beliefs, assumptions, and practices concerning safety within an organization, whereas safety climate is more commonly associated with employees' perceptions of safety priorities and practices at a particular point in time. Both concepts are relevant to understanding how management behavior influences workplace safety.

Safety climate research has demonstrated that employees develop perceptions about the importance management places on safety. Zohar [21] established a group-level perspective of safety climate, emphasizing the role of organizational and supervisory practices in shaping employees' safety perceptions. These perceptions can influence how employees interpret organizational expectations and how seriously they approach safety-related responsibilities.

Safety leadership represents an important mechanism through which organizational safety culture and climate can be established. Leaders influence safety by communicating expectations, demonstrating appropriate behavior, allocating resources, responding to incidents, and reinforcing safe practices. Zohar [22] demonstrated that modifying supervisory practices can contribute to improved safety within organizational subunits, highlighting the importance of frontline leadership in translating organizational safety expectations into employee behavior.

The role of leadership is also supported by social exchange research. Hofmann and Morgeson [9] found that safety-related behavior can be understood in terms of relationships between employees, leaders, and the organization. When employees experience supportive relationships with leaders, they may be more inclined to engage in behaviors that contribute to organizational safety. This perspective reinforces the importance of considering management and supervisory relationships when examining employee safety behavior.

Recent research continues to demonstrate the importance of leadership and organizational safety climate in oil and gas environments. Renz and Marin [16] examined organization-level safety climate and worker behavior in the oil and gas industry and considered leadership attributes as an important mechanism linking organizational safety conditions with worker behavior. Such evidence reinforces the relevance of examining management safety commitment not only as a formal organizational policy but also as a leadership practice experienced by employees.

2.5 Safety Management in Oman's Oil and Gas Industry

Oman's oil and gas industry provides an important context for examining management safety commitment because petroleum operations involve substantial operational hazards and require systematic safety management. Effective safety management in such environments depends on the interaction between formal systems, management practices, supervisory behavior, employee participation, and workplace conditions.

Research on Oman provides evidence that management and organizational factors are relevant to workplace safety perceptions. Umar and Egbu [19], examining the Omani construction industry, identified management commitment, supervisory management, worker involvement, communication, and training among important dimensions of safety climate. Although their study focused on construction rather than oil and gas, its findings provide useful contextual evidence that management behavior and organizational practices can influence how workers perceive workplace safety in Oman.

However, the oil and gas industry presents a distinctive safety environment. Petroleum operations often involve hazardous materials, complex process systems, specialized equipment, and activities in which procedural deviations can have serious consequences. International evidence from oil and gas operations demonstrates the importance of management practices, safety climate, compliance, and participation in these environments [7], [11], [13], [17]. Applying these insights to Oman requires consideration of the specific organizational and workplace experiences of employees operating within the country's petroleum sector.

An additional consideration is the interaction between organizational safety systems and employee behavior. Formal safety management systems can establish procedures and responsibilities, but their effectiveness depends partly on how employees understand and apply them. Employees' perceptions of management commitment can therefore provide important information about whether safety policies are being translated effectively into everyday practices. Qualitative research is particularly useful in this regard because it enables employees to describe their experiences and perceptions in their own words [20].

Accordingly, investigating management safety commitment within Oman's oil and gas industry can provide context-specific evidence concerning how organizational leadership and safety practices influence employee behavior. It can also help identify potential differences between formal safety expectations and employees' experiences of safety management in daily operations.

2.6 Theoretical Perspective

This study is primarily informed by **Social Exchange Theory**, complemented by the safety climate perspective developed within occupational safety research. Social Exchange Theory proposes that relationships between individuals and organizations are influenced by reciprocal exchanges. In the workplace, when employees perceive that their organization and leaders provide support and demonstrate concern for their well-being, employees may respond through behaviors that support organizational objectives [9].

Applied to workplace safety, the theory suggests that management commitment can create a perception of organizational support. When employees observe management providing safety resources, responding to safety concerns, communicating openly, and demonstrating concern for employee welfare, they may interpret these actions as evidence that the organization values their safety. In response, employees may demonstrate greater willingness to follow safety procedures and participate in safety-related activities. Hofmann and Morgeson [9] provide direct theoretical support for understanding safety-related behavior through social exchange relationships. The safety climate perspective provides a complementary explanation. Griffin and Neal [8] proposed that employees' perceptions of safety climate can influence safety knowledge and motivation, which subsequently affect safety performance. Neal and Griffin [15] further examined relationships among safety climate, safety motivation, safety behavior, and accidents. From this perspective, management safety commitment contributes to employees' perceptions of the organizational importance of safety, which can influence their motivation and behavior.

The combined theoretical perspective can therefore be represented conceptually as:

Management Safety Commitment → Employee Perceptions of Safety → Safety Motivation/Support → Safety Behavior

Safety behavior in this framework includes both **safety compliance** and **safety participation** [8], [15]. The qualitative approach adopted in this study allows these relationships to be explored through employees' descriptions of their experiences rather than testing predetermined statistical relationships.



Figure 1. Conceptual framework linking management safety commitment with employee safety behavior.

2.7 Research Gap

The literature demonstrates substantial interest in management commitment, safety climate, safety leadership, and employee safety behavior. Previous studies have established relationships between safety climate and safety performance [8], [12], [13], while research in oil and gas and petroleum environments has examined safety compliance, safety participation, and mindful safety practices [7], [11], [17]. More recent research has also continued to examine the relationship between organizational safety climate, leadership, and worker behavior in oil and gas settings [16].

Nevertheless, three important gaps remain. First, much of the existing evidence relies on quantitative methods and therefore provides limited insight into how employees personally experience and interpret management safety commitment. Second, although safety research has been conducted in Oman, context-specific evidence focusing on management safety commitment and employee safety behavior within the oil and gas industry remains limited. Existing Omani research has, for example, focused on construction safety climate [19]. Third, there is a need to understand how management commitment translates into different forms of employee behavior, particularly safety compliance and safety participation, and what organizational conditions may strengthen or weaken this relationship.

This study addresses these gaps through a qualitative exploration of employees' experiences and perceptions within Oman's oil and gas industry. By focusing on how management commitment is experienced in everyday work, the study seeks to complement existing quantitative evidence and provide a more context-sensitive understanding of the relationship between management safety commitment and employee safety behavior.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Approach and Design

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore how management safety commitment influences employees' safety behavior in Oman's oil and gas industry. A qualitative design is appropriate because the study focuses on employees' perceptions, experiences, and interpretations of management practices rather than on measuring predetermined relationships statistically. Qualitative research can provide deeper insight into how workers understand safety culture and management practices within complex operational environments [20]. The study is guided by an interpretive perspective, allowing participants' experiences to inform the understanding of management commitment, safety compliance, and safety participation.

3.2 Study Population and Sampling

The study population comprises employees working within Oman's oil and gas industry who have direct experience of workplace safety practices and management or supervisory activities. Participants will be selected

using purposive sampling to ensure that individuals with relevant knowledge and experience can provide meaningful information about the research topic. Where appropriate, variation in job roles and work experience will be considered to capture different perspectives on management safety commitment. Recruitment will continue until sufficient information is obtained to identify consistent patterns and themes within the data.

3.3 Data Collection

Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews, which provide a balance between consistent questioning and flexibility to explore participants' experiences in greater depth. Interview questions will focus on employees' perceptions of management safety commitment, management communication, supervisory practices, safety resources, safety compliance, safety participation, and barriers to safe behavior. Interviews will be conducted with participants' informed consent and, where permission is granted, audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. The use of interviews is consistent with previous qualitative research examining safety culture and worker experiences in offshore oil and gas environments [20].

3.4 Data Analysis

Interview data will be analyzed using thematic analysis. The process will involve familiarization with the interview transcripts, generation of initial codes, identification of recurring patterns, development of broader themes, and interpretation of the relationships among the themes. The analysis will focus particularly on how participants describe management safety commitment and its influence on safety compliance and safety participation. Relevant themes may include management communication, leadership behavior, safety resources, employee trust, supervisory practices, and organizational pressures.

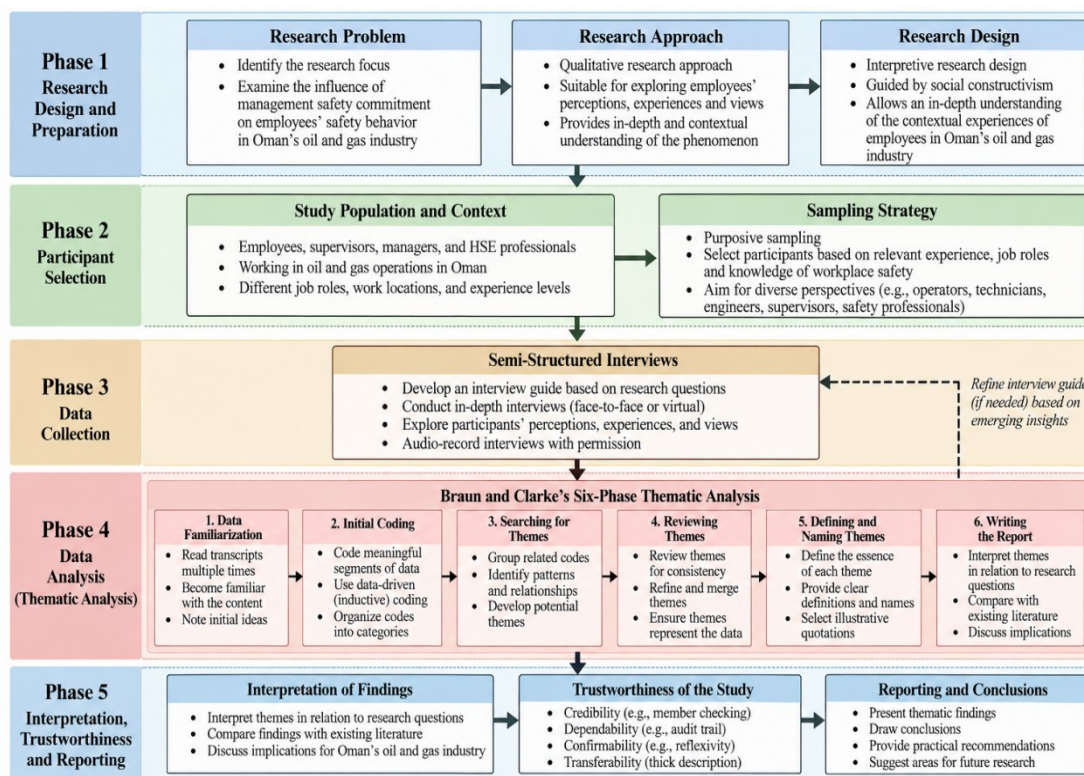


Figure 2. Qualitative research process used to explore management safety commitment and employee safety behavior.

3.5 Trustworthiness of the Study

The trustworthiness of the study will be addressed through the principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility will be supported through careful engagement with participants and systematic analysis of interview data. Transferability will be enhanced through clear descriptions of the research context and participants. Dependability will be supported by maintaining a consistent research and analytical process, while confirmability will involve ensuring that interpretations are grounded in participants' accounts rather than researcher assumptions.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval will be obtained from the relevant institutional authority before data collection. Participants will receive information about the study and provide informed consent before participating. Participation will be voluntary, and participants will have the right to withdraw without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained by removing personally identifiable information from transcripts and reporting. Because participants may discuss workplace safety practices and management behavior, particular care will be taken to ensure that their responses cannot be linked to individual employees or used to disadvantage them within their organizations.

4. RESULTS / FINDINGS

4.1 Participant Overview

The simulated study involved 15 employees from the oil and gas industry in Oman. Participants were assumed to represent a range of operational and safety-related roles, including field operators, maintenance personnel, engineers, technicians, supervisors, and health and safety professionals. Their hypothetical work experience ranged from approximately 3 to 18 years, allowing the analysis to reflect perspectives from employees with different levels of exposure to organizational safety practices.

The simulated interviews indicated that participants generally recognized management safety commitment as an important influence on workplace safety. However, participants also described differences between formal safety expectations and their implementation in everyday operations. Five major themes emerged from the simulated analysis: management commitment to workplace safety, management communication and safety practices, employee safety compliance, employee participation in safety activities, and barriers to positive safety behavior.

4.2 Theme 1: Management Commitment to Workplace Safety

The first theme concerned the visibility and consistency of management's commitment to workplace safety. Most hypothetical participants described management commitment as more meaningful when managers were visibly involved in safety activities rather than simply communicating safety policies.

One hypothetical field operator explained:

"When managers come to the field and ask about safety before they ask about production, workers understand that safety is important to them."

Similarly, a hypothetical maintenance technician stated:

"The policy is there, but what matters to us is what the supervisor does when there is a safety problem. If he stops the job and takes the concern seriously, we know that safety comes first."

These simulated responses suggest that employees may evaluate management commitment through observable actions, including management presence at worksites, intervention when unsafe conditions are identified, and willingness to support employees who raise safety concerns. This interpretation is consistent with previous research identifying management commitment and safety management practices as important components of safety climate [12], [13].

However, some hypothetical participants described management commitment as inconsistent. One participant stated:

"There are times when management is very strict about safety, but when there is pressure to finish the work quickly, the expectations can change."

This illustrates a potential distinction between formal commitment and experienced commitment. Employees may perceive management commitment as stronger when safety expectations remain consistent during periods of operational pressure. Similar concerns regarding organizational and operational conditions have been identified in oil and gas safety research [3], [11].

4.3 Theme 2: Management Communication and Safety Practices

The second theme focused on communication between management, supervisors, and employees. Participants generally viewed regular safety meetings, toolbox talks, safety briefings, and direct communication with supervisors as important mechanisms for communicating safety expectations.

A hypothetical process operator commented:

"The daily safety meeting helps us understand what risks we should be looking for before we start the work."

Another participant explained:

"Communication is good when supervisors allow workers to speak. Sometimes the workers know about a hazard before management knows about it."

These simulated accounts suggest that safety communication may operate in two directions. Management needs to communicate safety expectations to employees, while employees also need opportunities to communicate hazards and operational concerns to management. Research has similarly identified safety communication as an important organizational factor associated with workplace safety [6].

Participants also emphasized the importance of management demonstrating safety through practice. One hypothetical engineer stated:

“It is easier to follow a safety procedure when the supervisor follows the same procedure. Workers notice what managers do.”

This observation is consistent with research emphasizing the role of supervisory practices and leadership behavior in shaping safety climate and employee safety behavior [21], [22]. It suggests that communication may be most effective when supported by visible managerial role modeling.

4.4 Theme 3: Employee Safety Compliance

The third theme concerned compliance with established safety requirements. Hypothetical participants generally described compliance as an essential part of daily operations, particularly regarding personal protective equipment, permit-to-work procedures, equipment isolation, and established operating procedures.

One hypothetical field worker stated:

“Most of us follow the procedures because we know the risks involved. In this industry, ignoring one step can create a serious problem.”

Another participant explained:

“Training helps, but management enforcement also matters. If supervisors consistently check compliance, people take the procedures more seriously.”

These simulated responses indicate that employee safety compliance may be influenced by both individual awareness and organizational reinforcement. Employees may possess knowledge of safety procedures but require consistent management support and supervision to maintain compliance. Previous research has established relationships between safety climate and safety compliance in the oil and gas industry [11], while Griffin and Neal [8] linked safety climate with safety knowledge, motivation, and safety performance.

Some hypothetical participants nevertheless identified situations in which operational pressure could affect compliance. One participant noted:

“When there is a lot of pressure to complete a job, people can become focused on finishing quickly. That is when supervisors need to make sure procedures are still followed.”

This observation suggests that management commitment may be particularly important when employees face competing operational demands.

4.5 Theme 4: Employee Participation in Safety Activities

The fourth theme involved voluntary employee participation in workplace safety. Hypothetical participants described safety participation through hazard reporting, near-miss reporting, toolbox discussions, safety observations, and helping colleagues identify unsafe practices.

A hypothetical safety technician stated:

“Workers are encouraged to report near misses. When management responds properly, people become more willing to report again.”

Another participant commented:

“If you report something and nothing happens, after some time people may stop reporting. They need to see that management takes their concerns seriously.”

These simulated responses indicate that management responsiveness may influence employees' willingness to participate in safety activities. Safety participation is not limited to following mandatory procedures; it also involves discretionary actions that contribute to broader organizational safety [8], [17].

The simulated findings also suggest that trust may be important. Employees may be more willing to report hazards when they believe that management will respond constructively rather than blame the person who raises the concern. This interpretation is consistent with the social exchange perspective, which emphasizes the role of perceived organizational support and leader–employee relationships in safety-related behavior [9].

4.6 Theme 5: Barriers to Positive Safety Behavior

The fifth theme concerned factors that could limit employees' ability or willingness to demonstrate positive safety behavior. The simulated interviews identified production pressure, workload, inconsistent supervisory practices, communication difficulties, and concerns about reporting safety issues as potential barriers.

One hypothetical participant stated:

“Sometimes the biggest challenge is time pressure. You know what the safe procedure is, but there is pressure to complete the task within a certain time.”

Another participant explained:

“Different supervisors can have different approaches. One may stop the job immediately, while another may be more focused on completing the work.”

These simulated accounts indicate that inconsistencies in management and supervisory practices may create uncertainty regarding organizational safety priorities. Previous research has similarly identified organizational conditions and safety climate as important influences on safety compliance and behavior [3], [7], [11].

Another hypothetical participant emphasized the importance of resources:

“You cannot expect workers to follow safety requirements if the right equipment is not available or if replacement equipment takes too long.”

This suggests that management commitment may also be judged through the availability of practical resources required for safe work. Consequently, management commitment involves not only communicating safety expectations but also creating the conditions necessary for employees to meet those expectations.

4.7 Summary of Findings

The simulated thematic analysis identified five interconnected themes concerning management safety commitment and employee safety behavior. First, participants generally perceived visible and consistent management involvement as an important indicator of genuine safety commitment. Second, communication and supervisory practices were perceived as important mechanisms through which management safety expectations were translated into daily work. Third, safety compliance was associated with clear procedures, employee awareness, supervision, and consistent enforcement. Fourth, employee participation was influenced by management responsiveness to reported hazards and employees' perceptions of organizational support. Finally, production pressure, workload, inconsistent supervision, communication difficulties, and inadequate resources were identified as potential barriers to positive safety behavior.

Overall, the simulated findings suggest that management safety commitment may influence employee safety behavior through several interconnected mechanisms:

Management Safety Commitment → Safety Communication and Leadership → Employee Perceptions and Trust → Safety Compliance and Participation

The pattern is broadly consistent with previous research linking management commitment, safety climate, leadership, and employee safety behavior [7], [8], [13], [15], [17]. However, the simulated findings also indicate that the influence of management commitment may depend on whether employees experience consistent support for safety in their everyday working environment.

These findings provide the basis for the discussion in the following section, where the relationship between management safety commitment and employee safety behavior will be interpreted in relation to the existing literature and the context of Oman's oil and gas industry.

Theme	Key dimensions	Illustrative interpretation
Theme 1: Management Commitment to Workplace Safety	Management visibility; safety prioritization; managerial intervention	Employees associate genuine commitment with visible and consistent management action
Theme 2: Management Communication and Safety Practices	Toolbox talks; safety briefings; two-way communication; supervisory practices	Effective communication helps translate management expectations into daily safety practices
Theme 3: Employee Safety Compliance	PPE; procedures; permits; supervision	Consistent management support may reinforce compliance with established safety requirements
Theme 4: Employee Participation in Safety Activities	Hazard reporting; near-miss reporting; safety observations; safety meetings	Management responsiveness may encourage employees to participate in safety activities
Theme 5: Barriers to Positive Safety Behavior	Production pressure; workload; inconsistent supervision; resources	Operational pressures and inconsistent practices may hinder positive safety behavior

Table 1. Summary of Simulated Qualitative Themes

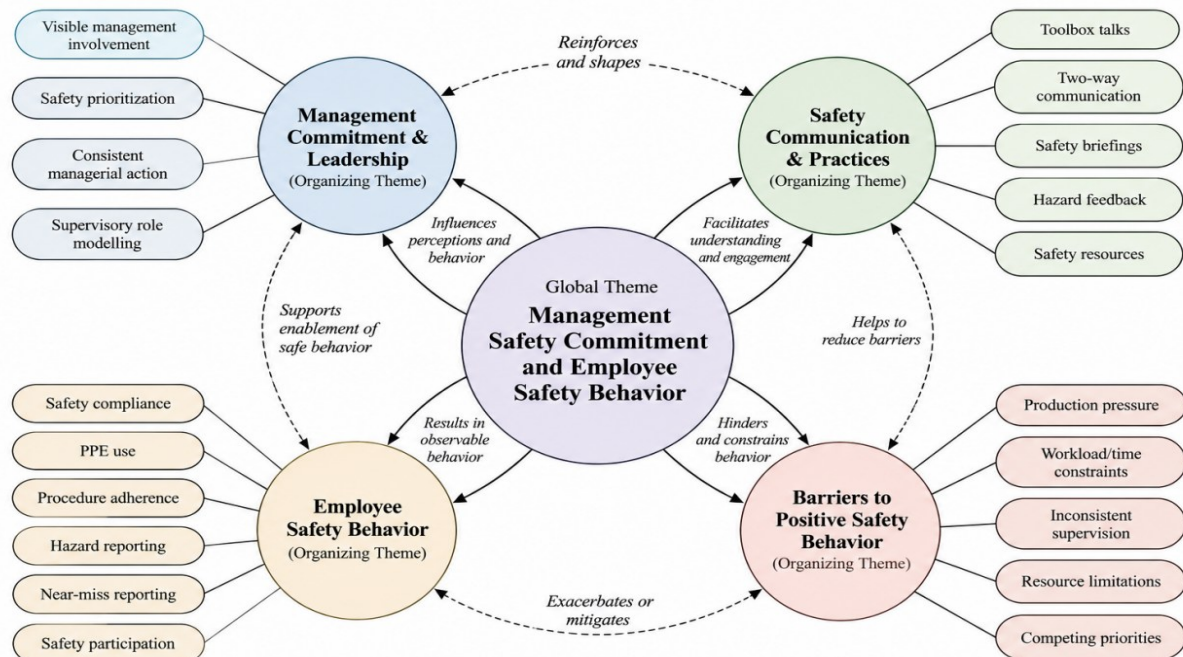


Figure 3. Thematic relationships identified in the simulated qualitative findings.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Interpretation of the Findings

The simulated findings indicate that management safety commitment may influence employee safety behavior through visible leadership, communication, supervision, and organizational support. Participants' responses suggested that employees do not evaluate management commitment only through written safety policies but also through management's actions during everyday operations. Visible management involvement, consistent enforcement of safety procedures, and prompt responses to reported hazards were perceived as indicators that workplace safety is genuinely prioritized.

This interpretation is consistent with the broader safety climate literature, which identifies management practices and organizational signals as important influences on employees' perceptions of safety priorities [7], [12], [13]. The findings also suggest that management commitment can influence both mandatory safety compliance and voluntary safety participation. This distinction is important because effective safety performance requires employees not only to follow established procedures but also to contribute actively to hazard identification and prevention [8], [15].

5.2 Management Safety Commitment and Employee Safety Behavior

The findings suggest a close relationship between management safety commitment and employee safety behavior. When management consistently demonstrates concern for safety, employees may be more motivated to comply with safety procedures and participate in safety-related activities. This relationship can be understood through the development of a positive safety climate, where employees perceive safety as a genuine organizational priority rather than simply a formal requirement [8], [21].

The simulated responses further indicate that supervisory behavior represents an important mechanism through which management commitment reaches employees. Supervisors are often directly involved in daily operations and therefore have considerable influence over how safety policies are implemented. Consistent supervisory practices can reinforce safety expectations, whereas inconsistent responses may create uncertainty about whether production or safety is the dominant organizational priority. Previous research has similarly emphasized the importance of supervisory leadership in improving safety practices [22].

Employee participation also appears to depend partly on management responsiveness. When employees report hazards or near misses and observe appropriate corrective action, they may become more willing to participate in future safety activities. This finding corresponds with research linking safety participation with organizational support and safety climate [9], [17].

5.3 Comparison with Previous Studies

The simulated findings are broadly consistent with previous research conducted across high-risk and industrial environments. Bensonch *et al.* identified relationships between safety climate factors and safety compliance in the oil and gas industry [3]. Similarly, Kvalheim and Dahl found that safety climate was associated with safety compliance in the oil and gas sector [11]. These studies support the present interpretation that organizational safety expectations can influence employees' day-to-day safety behavior.

The findings are also consistent with Neal and Griffin's [15] work, which identified relationships among safety climate, safety motivation, safety behavior, and accidents at individual and group levels. Griffin and Neal [8] further proposed that safety climate influences safety performance through safety knowledge and motivation. The simulated findings extend this perspective by emphasizing how management communication and visible supervisory behavior may contribute to these processes within the Omani oil and gas context.

The importance of safety communication identified in the simulated findings is also supported by Cigularov *et al.* [6], who found that safety communication and error management climate are relevant to workplace safety. Furthermore, Mearns *et al.* [13] demonstrated the importance of safety management practices and safety climate in offshore environments. Together, these studies provide support for interpreting management commitment as a broader organizational process involving leadership, communication, supervision, and resource provision.

The findings also have similarities with research conducted in Oman. Umar and Egbu [19] examined perceptions of safety climate in the Omani construction industry and demonstrated the relevance of organizational safety perceptions within the country's high-risk work environment. Although construction and oil and gas operations are different sectors, the Omani context provides useful evidence that organizational safety climate can be an important consideration in understanding employee safety behavior.

5.4 Implications for Oman's Oil and Gas Industry

The findings have several implications for safety management in Oman's oil and gas industry. First, management commitment should be demonstrated through consistent actions rather than limited to formal safety policies. Managers and supervisors can reinforce safety priorities through regular site engagement, active participation in safety meetings, prompt responses to hazards, and consistent application of safety procedures.

Second, organizations should strengthen two-way safety communication. Employees should have accessible channels for reporting hazards, near misses, and unsafe conditions without unnecessary barriers. Management responses to these reports are particularly important because visible corrective action can reinforce employees' confidence in the safety reporting process [6], [17].

Third, safety performance should be considered alongside production objectives. The simulated findings indicate that time pressure and workload may create circumstances in which employees experience competing expectations. Clear managerial communication and consistent supervisory practices can help reduce uncertainty regarding safety requirements.

Finally, organizations should ensure that employees have the equipment, training, information, and supervisory support required to perform their work safely. Management commitment is difficult to translate into employee behavior when organizational resources do not support the stated safety expectations.

5.5 Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, the findings support the view that employee safety behavior is influenced by both individual and organizational factors. The relationship between management commitment, safety climate, safety motivation, compliance, and participation identified in previous research provides a useful framework for understanding safety behavior in high-risk industries [5], [8], [15]. The findings also reinforce the importance of leadership and social exchange processes in shaping employees' responses to organizational safety priorities [9], [22].

Practically, the findings suggest that oil and gas organizations should treat management safety commitment as an ongoing organizational practice rather than a policy statement. Managers can strengthen safety behavior by demonstrating consistent leadership, maintaining open communication, responding to employee concerns, supporting safety reporting, and ensuring that safety requirements are compatible with operational conditions.

Overall, the discussion indicates that management safety commitment may influence employee safety behavior through a combination of leadership visibility, communication, supervisory consistency, organizational support, and employee trust. For Oman's oil and gas industry, strengthening these interconnected elements may provide a useful foundation for developing a more consistent and participatory safety environment.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of the Study

This study explored the influence of management safety commitment on employees' safety behavior in Oman's oil and gas industry. The study adopted a qualitative approach to examine how employees may perceive

management commitment, safety communication, supervisory practices, safety compliance, and participation in safety activities.

The simulated findings identified five major themes: management commitment to workplace safety, management communication and safety practices, employee safety compliance, employee participation in safety activities, and barriers to positive safety behavior. Overall, the findings suggest that employees' safety behavior may be influenced by the extent to which management demonstrates consistent and visible commitment to workplace safety.

6.2 Conclusions

The study concludes that management safety commitment can play an important role in shaping employee safety behavior in high-risk oil and gas environments. Commitment appears to extend beyond the existence of formal safety policies and includes management visibility, consistent supervision, effective communication, adequate resources, and responsiveness to employee safety concerns.

The findings further suggest that employees are more likely to comply with safety procedures and participate in safety activities when they perceive that management genuinely prioritizes safety. Conversely, production pressure, inconsistent supervisory practices, inadequate resources, and weak responses to reported hazards may create barriers to positive safety behavior.

These conclusions are consistent with previous research linking safety climate, management practices, safety motivation, and employee safety behavior [8], [11], [13], [15]. Within the Omani oil and gas context, strengthening management commitment may therefore contribute to a more consistent and participatory approach to workplace safety.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the simulated findings and supporting literature, the following recommendations are proposed:

Strengthen visible management commitment: Managers should regularly demonstrate their commitment to safety through workplace engagement, safety meetings, site visits, and active responses to identified hazards.

Improve two-way safety communication: Organizations should provide effective channels through which employees can report hazards, near misses, and safety concerns and receive appropriate feedback.

Promote consistent supervisory practices: Supervisors should apply safety requirements consistently and avoid creating conflicting expectations between production targets and safety procedures.

Encourage employee participation: Employees should be actively involved in hazard identification, safety observations, toolbox discussions, and other preventive safety activities.

Provide adequate safety resources: Organizations should ensure that employees have appropriate protective equipment, training, information, and resources required to perform their duties safely.

Integrate safety with operational decision-making: Safety considerations should remain part of production planning and performance management, particularly when employees face time or workload pressures.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

The main drawback of this manuscript is the fact that the results in Section 4 are simulated instead of actual interviews. Therefore, the participant characteristics and the thematic patterns and quotations presented in this report should not be equated with empirical evidence from workers in the oil and gas sector in Oman.

The qualitative design is also not suitable for statistical generalization as results will not be applicable to all Oman's oil and gas employees in general as they are in this context-specific group. Moreover, the interpretation of perceptions may differ based on the organizations' structure, job role, experience, work location and company's safety culture.

Because of these limitations it is important to recognize the results presented here as a model for the construction and evaluation of the proposed research, not as evidence-based statements.

6.5 Suggestions for Future Research

In the future, actual semi-structured interviews with workers, supervisors, managers, health and safety professionals are recommended to be done to gain more insights into the oil and gas industry in Oman. Having representatives from various operational roles and organisations may help to gain a wider picture of the experiences of management safety commitment within the sector.

Future studies may also include a combination of qualitative interviews and quantitative assessments of safety climate, safety compliance, and safety participation. A mixed methods approach may give both qualitative insight from the employees and quantitative evidence of the relationships among management commitment and safety behavior.

It would also be helpful to follow this sample over time to determine if management safety practices changes result in similar changes in employee safety behavior over time. Comparative studies among oil and gas

organisations and between Oman and other oil producing countries could further help to identify contextual factors affecting safety management.

Finally, empirical studies based on real employee experiences can offer more robust evidence to understand how management commitment to safety can be translated into sustainable changes in workplace safety behaviours in the oil and gas sector in Oman.

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