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From Talent Attraction to Retention in Qatar¹

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Abstract

Beyond attracting talent, nations that heavily depend on skilled immigrant labor face a tactical challenge. Additionally, they must give credibility to the idea that talented people can establish long-lasting lives and careers in the nation. This study examines this issue using data from a recent survey conducted in Qatar and identifies workplace integration, migration goals, and the ability to stay as strategies for retaining talent. Four categories within the talent system are covered by the surveys: startup founders, human resource executives, university teachers, and high-achieving students. The majority of respondents in all four groups believe that talent retention is crucial to Qatar's long-term growth. Simultaneously, the surveys reveal a substantial discrepancy between respondents' evaluations of current government initiatives and the priority they place on retention. Although their relative importance varies across groups, long-term residency pathways, citizenship incentives, career growth, job security, and the broader professional environment appear to be important factors. Additionally, a more thorough econometric study is made feasible by the faculty data. Higher work satisfaction and more positive evaluations of the academic environment are associated with a lower reported likelihood of leaving Qatar and a more optimistic assessment of Qatar's future as a talent hub, according to ordered probit and binary probit models. The research finds that the stated conditions are most strongly linked to retention intentions within the largest respondent group, though the findings are descriptive rather than causal. Overall, the results indicate that, rather than concentrating solely on compensation and hiring, talent retention in Qatar should be seen as a matter of fostering long-term commitment.

Keywords: high skilled migration, talent retention, Qatar, residency policy, labor market integration, survey evidence

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1. Introduction

The lens of attraction is frequently used to view competition for highly talented individuals. Governments concentrate on attracting professionals, entrepreneurs, researchers, and students who can boost long-term economic development and efficiency. However, a more challenging topic frequently arises later for economies that depend significantly on foreign talent. What circumstances make staying in a place a credible and appealing option once skilled people have arrived, studied, worked, or founded businesses there?

In the Gulf region, addressing this issue is crucial. Qatar has made significant investments in highly technical sectors, entrepreneurship, health care, education, and research capability. However, since foreign nationals make up a significant share of Qatar's highly skilled workforce, long-term attachment to the nation depends not only on pay and working conditions but also on residency policies, financial security, career advancement opportunities, and perceptions of prospects in Qatar.

This study examines how various groups in Qatar perceive the factors that increase or decrease the likelihood of long-term retention, using data from a recent survey. Four respondent categories are included in the data: human resource executives, startup founders, high-achieving students, and university faculty. When taken collectively, these groupings reflect distinct phases and components of potential talent. Faculty offer perspectives on research and higher education. High achievers provide valuable insights on the shift from academia to the job market. Organizational limitations pertaining to recruitment and retention are clarified by human resources executives. Founders of startups offer insights on entrepreneurship and the broader landscape of corporate growth.

The primary descriptive finding is that support for the current policy is far weaker than agreement on the significance of retention. Participants from all four groups firmly concur that sustaining talent is important for Qatar's future. Respondents, however, are far less optimistic about the government's current initiatives and about Qatar's prospects of becoming a global center for talent. There are strong indicators from the survey that there is great support for the importance of talent retention from 95.0 percent of the selected faculty members, 96.4 percent of the selected HR executives, 100.0 percent of the selected startup founders, and 89.6 percent of the selected top students.

Although compensation is not the primary concern in every group, compensation is important, particularly among human resource executives. Long-term residency alternatives, career advancement, and job security are highly valued by faculty and students. Also, additional factors should be taken into consideration, such as government policies, which are particularly significant for startup founders. The crucial question is whether Qatar can offer a sustainable career in addition to offering incentives sufficient to draw talented individuals. The study employed econometrics modelling for the faculty sample as there is enough observations relative to the rest of the selected groups and we found that there many factors that should be taken in the consideration for talent retention such as; better evaluations of the academic environment, increased job satisfaction, and minimal uncertainty about long-term residency are associated with a lower perceived likelihood of leaving Qatar, according to ordered probit estimates.

By addressing retention through a genuine survey that examines whether highly skilled migrants can remain, this study advances research on migration and integration. This approach is important since Qatar is not merely looking to hire freelance workers for temporary projects. It is attempting to create systems for research, education, entrepreneurship, and innovation that rely on the ability of competent individuals to envision a long-term career in the country. The survey evidence in the study indicates how various players in the talent ecosystem recognize the institutional factors that influence the credibility of long-term connections.

This is how the rest of the paper is structured. In Section 2, the policy context is explained, and the assumptions are developed. The third section presents the discussion of relevant literature. The data and survey design are explained in Section 4. The empirical approach is described in Section 5. The primary descriptive findings are shown in Section 6. The faculty econometric results are shown in Section 7. Heterogeneity and robustness are covered in Section 8. Policy consequences are covered in Section 9. Section 10 discusses the conclusion.

2. Background and Hypotheses

The talent retention issue in Qatar differs from a typical labor-market retention issue in several ways. To begin with, many highly skilled professionals are foreign nationals. The stability and certainty of residency status, opportunities for families, and the likelihood of a long-term future may all influence these workers' decisions about whether to stay in Qatar. Secondly, in sectors where international mobility is comparatively high, Qatar is working to increase its

capacity for research, higher education, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Researchers, entrepreneurs, faculty, and top students frequently have international possibilities. Finally, talent should be retained by the policy system at all phases of the pipeline, from education to professional employment and business creation.

These characteristics indicate that retention is more than just a pay issue. Although they are probably important, benefits and compensation are likely insufficient. A talented student might need to pursue a respectable career and graduate studies after graduation. A faculty member might require easy access to research support, clear guidelines for advancement, and assurance that a long-term residence permit is feasible. A reliable regulatory framework might be necessary for an entrepreneur. In a labor market where employees have other options, a company may need measures to retain talented staff.

The paper summarizes these mechanisms utilizing three concepts from research on migration and integration. The primary one is the goals and capacities approach to migration, which views retention as a set of decisions shaped by perceived opportunities and constraints as a full system rather than an independent or criterion-based approach. It means many factors should be taken as a system (social connection, work, rights, long-term residency, etc.). These concepts highlight a recurring empirical dilemma in the GCC region as a whole: whether competent respondents characterize retention as a matter of compensation alone, or as a broader concern of whether professional and legal circumstances make staying credible

The study is testing five hypotheses as follows;

H1. The stakeholders represented in the study should prioritize talent retention if it is a prevalent issue in Qatar's highly skilled labor market.

H2. Long-term residency opportunities and citizenship incentives should be particularly prominent in survey responses if the ability to stay is limited by legal status and future security concerns. This appeal should be strongest among groups whose ability to stay in Qatar depends on stable legal and professional status.

H3. Based on observed respondent characteristics, faculty members who report a better academic environment and higher levels of job satisfaction should report a reduced stated probability of leaving Qatar if workplace integration matters beyond compensation.

H4. If perceptions of Qatar's talent development prospects are shaped by professional settings, faculty members who report improved career growth, a more robust academic environment, and greater job satisfaction should be more optimistic about Qatar's future as a global talent ecosystem.

H5. Faculty members, students, HR executives, and startup founders should all report different retention challenges if the same national policy framework is perceived differently across the talent pipeline.

The purpose of these hypotheses is not to fully utilize all potential methodologies. They offer a framework for arranging the quantitative and descriptive data. They also explain why the study uses both within-faculty models and cross-group descriptive tables. The cross-group representations illustrate how opinions vary across the talent pipeline. Faculty-based models examine the associations with retention intentions in greater detail by focusing on the most significant respondent group.

3. Related Literature

Competitiveness for talent and skilled migration are the main topics of human capital literature. This aspect highlights self-selection, human capital, labor-market returns, and the significance of skilled migration for firm organization and development (Borjas, 1987; Docquier & Rapoport, 2012; Kerr et al., 2015). The rivalry for talent is directly studied in a related category. According to Kerr et al. (2016), national gatekeeping policies determine who enters the country and under what conditions, and global talent flows are concentrated in a small number of destination nations. Czaika and Parsons (2017) show that permanent residency is among the key factors attracting highly talented workers, and that the design of acceptance mechanisms affects both the size and the competence level of talent flows. This literature

may indicate the state of Qatar in a particular way. The GCC region competes for distinguished students, professors, entrepreneurs, and founders. It also includes whether the newcomers can create a sustainable future for the nation. Another strand of literature focuses on perceived opportunity structures and the limitations that dictate whether a preference to relocate or retain can be implemented. Choosing to stay can also constitute an act of agency, which is a key implication. For measurement purposes, the framework is also important. Instead of witnessed exits, this paper reports asserted goals and assessments. Such measurements may contain actual information, as evidenced by various contexts (De Haas (2021) and Carling and Schewel (2018)). Aggregate emigration intentions mirror documented flows quite well (Tjaden et al., 2019). According to Dustmann and Okatenko (2014), assessments of the professional environment should be treated as retention-relevant information, as migration intentions are influenced by satisfaction with local circumstances and amenities rather than by financial considerations alone. Therefore, even though the survey results are not migration records, they are interpreted as expressed beliefs about the ability to stay, which provide insight into areas where retention pressure is increasing.

Another strand of literature focuses on integration research, which is utilized in this discipline. According to Ager and Strang (2008), integration is a multifaceted process that encompasses social relationships, employment, rights, and the circumstances that enable individuals to engage with the host society. Although that framework was created in refugee and settlement-related contexts, the fundamental idea is universal: participation in the job market alone does not constitute integration. Whether job, professional reputation, family stability, legal status, and belonging all point in the same direction may determine whether high-skilled migrants are retained. The literature on highly skilled migrant's workplace integration provides a closer point of reference. The long-term integration of migrant workers is shaped by governments, employers, coworkers, intermediaries, and migrants themselves, according to a multi-level paradigm developed by Van Riemsdijk and Basford (2022). This research adheres to the same fundamental idea but employs a different empirical design and setting. The individual migrant is not the only pertinent unit. It is the group of organizations that makes a skilled career option feasible in the destination country. The study also relates to research on faculty retention in academia, where work-life perspectives influence job satisfaction and, in turn, intentions to quit (Rosser, 2004). Section 7's faculty models adhere to this general framework, linking quitting intentions to the academic setting, job satisfaction, and career advancement, while incorporating residency and nationality factors that are significant in a heavily migrant academic labor market.

Another justification for connecting retention to legal adherence is the Gulf context. In addition to raising concerns about disparities, status, and belonging, Ali and Cochrane (2024) demonstrate how Gulf residency and citizenship reforms have started to establish new, selective routes to longer-term stay. Legal status has historically borne a high threshold for the non-national majority since formal access to Qatari citizenship has been restricted, as Babar (2014) demonstrates. Ewers (2017) details how Gulf countries have used development techniques to establish themselves as major centers of international talent. This record highlights the extent of recruitment success, although it is unclear whether talented migrants become permanently rooted. The most suitable point of comparative analysis is the survey data from Qatar itself. Ewers and Shockley (2018) seek to determine whether expatriates in Qatar would stay or leave during a period of regional uncertainty using survey data on the drivers of expatriate retention, and Diop et al. (2017) demonstrate that citizen and non-citizen relations in Qatar can be studied with survey measures of trustworthiness and social wealth.

There is a distinct gap in the existing retention strand. The workplace integration research usually follows a single group of professionals in an advanced-country setting, whereas the Gulf literature on legal integration focuses on citizenship politics and the regulation of lower-wage migration. Previous surveys conducted in Qatar have focused on locals or expatriates in general rather than comparing groups along the talent pool. Our research compares four stakeholder groups, which are faculty, top students, HR executives, and startup founders, that are rarely studied in parallel to one another in a distinct national context and offers focused survey evidence on the presumed circumstances that make remaining credible in a migrant-intensive, high-income Gulf economy.

4. Survey Design and Data

Four survey instruments were used to collect data from groups participating in Qatar's talent system. Human resource executives, top students, university faculty, and startup founders are the four categories. Several fundamental concerns, including the significance of talent retention, long-term residency procedures and citizenship incentives,

career growth, government intervention, and Qatar's future as a talent hub, are shared by the questionnaires. Group-specific questions are also included in each questionnaire.

The survey questionnaire was initially distributed on April 20, 2026, with a two-day response period. On April 25, 2026, at 4:04:45 PM, another reminder was sent with approximately a two-day response time. According to the currently accessible survey data, 1,330 academic members, 144 human resource executives, and 101 startup founders were surveyed. The dean's office stated that all 434 postgraduate students, including PhD, master's, and 933 undergraduate Dean's List students, received invitations to participate in the student survey for Spring 2026. This resulted in 1,367 student invitations. Prior to the files being shared for analysis, no responses were disregarded.

Therefore, rather than being a representative student sample, the top student group is better defined as a focused, high-achieving sample of undergraduates and postgraduates. According to the current data, all postgraduate students for Spring 2026 (rated as the top 2% in Qatar) and undergraduate Dean's List students received invitations.

Table 1: Survey groups, invitations, and response completion

<i>Survey group</i>	<i>Invited</i>	<i>Started</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Completion rate: invited</i>	<i>Completion rate: started</i>
Faculty	1,330	564	370	27.8%	65.6%
Human resource executives	144	57	28	19.4%	49.1%
Startup founders	101	31	16	15.8%	51.6%
Top students	1,367	389	193	14.1%	49.6%

Table Note: For each survey group, the table displays the currently accessible survey data. "Invited" describes how many invitations were sent. Respondents with any documented survey participation are referred to as "started." Respondents categorized as "completed" in the cleaned analysis files are referred to as "completed." The number of full responses divided by the total number of invites given yields the invitee completion rate. The number of completed responses divided by the number of initiated responses yields the completion rate among starts. According to reports, 434 postgraduate students and 933 undergraduate students on the Dean's List received invitations to the spring 2026 survey. The final college-level invite composition and the precise student mailing dates are still pending confirmation. The files shared by the survey administrators are used in the analysis; no prior exclusions are disclosed.

Unless specified otherwise, the analysis uses full responses for the descriptive tables. This decision maintains the denominator's interpretability across tables. When respondents omit certain questions, denominators for item-specific statistics differ. Since the faculty sample is the only group in the existing data with a large enough sample size for multivariate models, the econometric analysis is restricted to that group. The company founder and HR executive samples are too small for accurate regression-based inference, although they are useful for descriptive analysis.

5. Empirical Strategy

The empirical strategy has three parts.

For each of the four categories, the analysis begins with descriptive tables and figures. Given that sample sizes vary significantly between groups and the questionnaires are comparable but not uniform, these results provide the strongest evidence of cross-group comparability. The descriptive analysis highlights group-specific results, top-ranked retention hurdles, and group-level proportions for common questions.

Furthermore, the faculty sample's ordered probit models are estimated in the paper. When the outcome is ordered but not continuous, the ordered probit model is suitable (McFadden, 1974; Greene & Hensher, 2010). Survey participants' claimed probability of leaving Qatar, for instance, can change from "extremely unlikely" to "somewhat unlikely" to "neither likely nor unlikely" to "somewhat likely" to "extremely likely." Although there is a natural order to these categories, it is unknown how far apart they are. The probability that a response falls into each ordered category, as a function of respondent traits and attitudes, is modeled using an ordered probit model. Two primary faculty outcomes are the focus of the analysis: the reported likelihood of leaving Qatar and faculty members' opinions on whether Qatar

will evolve into a global talent hub. The main explanatory variables are an index that measures how people feel about the academic environment, the significance of citizenship and long-term residency privileges, employment satisfaction, career advancement opportunities, and nationality status.

In formal terms, a latent index that is linear in the explanatory factors is used to model the two outcomes for each faculty participant.

$$y_i^* = x_i' \beta + \varepsilon_i, \quad \varepsilon_i | x_i \sim N(0,1) \quad (1)$$

where the vector of explanatory factors combines the primary measures mentioned above along with controls for gender, senior academic rank, quality of life and affiliation with Qatar University. There is no observation of the latent index, and the ordered response is recorded in the survey.

$$y_i = k \quad \text{if} \quad \kappa_{k-1} < y_i^* \leq \kappa_k, \quad k = 1, \dots, 5 \quad (2)$$

with the four interior cut points jointly computed with the slope coefficients and the two extreme cut points fixed at minus and plus infinity. Each response category's implied probability is

$$\Pr(y_i = k | x_i) = \Phi(\kappa_k - x_i' \beta) - \Phi(\kappa_{k-1} - x_i' \beta) \quad (3)$$

where Φ denotes the standard normal distribution function. Maximum likelihood is used to estimate the parameters for the talent hub, with outcomes based on 272 and 269 respondents who have complete data for the appropriate variables. Since the usual normalization absorbs the intercept into the cut points, no distinct constant is found.

Following that, the study presents robustness and heterogeneity checks. The models are re-estimated as binary probits on outcomes that disintegrate the five ordered categories at a single threshold in the primary robustness check.

Formally, for each outcome, define the binary indicator

$$d_i = \mathbf{1}[y_i \geq 4] \quad (4)$$

where the indicator function equals one when the response is at or above four, receiving the five-category response. This level distinguishes probably yes and certainly yes from the lower categories in the talent hub item and quite likely and extremely likely from the lower categories in the leaving item. The likelihood of exceeding the threshold is modeled by the binary probit as

$$\Pr(d_i = 1 | x_i) = \Phi(x_i' \gamma) \quad (5)$$

with the same covariate vector as in equation (1), but since no cut points are determined, a constant term is now included. There is a direct link to the ordered model. If the answers can be defined by equations (1) and (2), then

$$\Pr(y_i \geq 4 | x_i) = \Phi(x_i' \beta - \kappa_3) \quad (6)$$

Therefore, the binary probit is the ordered specification evaluated at a single cut point, and the negative of the third cut point is absorbed by the constant. The binary estimates would differ from the ordered results if the ordered results were a function of participants' distribution among the narrower categories. The results can be attributed to the content of the responses rather than to the scale used to record them if the two sets of estimates convey the same information.

The binary models estimate the correlates of the same quantities that are reported in the descriptive tables and are employed in policy debates because these criteria correspond to the limits used in the descriptive analysis. To ensure the results are not influenced by a single thematically specific survey item, another robustness check uses a more limited academic environment index that excludes Qatarization-related items.

The heterogeneity analysis provides a descriptive comparison between faculty respondents from Qatar and those from other countries. This contrast is crucial since nationals and expats are likely to have different perspectives on the long-term residency policy. This is not presented in the report as a causal comparison. Qatari and non-Qatari faculty

members may differ in different ways, and nationality is not assigned at random. Because it explains whether expressed worries and outcomes differ across groups with varying levels of exposure to residency ambiguity, the comparison remains helpful.

These are complementary checks. While keeping the regressors constant, the binary probit modifies the coding of the outcome variables. While maintaining the same results, the alternate index modifies the primary regressor's content. The heterogeneity comparison seeks to clarify whether the descriptive patterns vary among groups subject to different residency restrictions. Taken as a whole, they address the primary ways in which a single coding or specification decision may influence faculty outcomes.

There is no causality in the models. In a cross-sectional dataset, they establish a relationship between two sets of survey results. This is helpful in determining whether claimed limitations and perceptions evolve in parallel, but it cannot prove that altering career development, job satisfaction, or residence regulations will alter real retention behavior. Attitudinal endogeneity is a particular concern when respondents who are generally optimistic may provide higher ratings of Qatar's future, job satisfaction, and academic environment for reasons that are not independently observed. As a result, the findings should be interpreted as predictive relationships within the faculty sample.

6. Descriptive Results

6.1 Talent retention is seen as important across all groups

First, the majority in each category consider talent retention to be very or extremely crucial to Qatar's development; see Table 2. Human resource executives and startup founders had the strongest agreement, although the differences across groups are not significant enough to alter the fundamental findings.

Respondents' opinions of the government's current policies, however, are far less favorable. The discrepancy is clear, and many respondents believe that existing policy does not yet adequately address the issue's scope, even though they consider retention extremely important.

Table 2: Common survey measures by respondent group

<i>Measure</i>	<i>Faculty</i>	<i>HR executives</i>	<i>Startup founders</i>	<i>Top students</i>
Talent retention is very or extremely important	344/362 (95.0%)	27/28 (96.4%)	16/16 (100.0%)	173/193 (89.6%)
Long-term residency or citizenship incentives are very or extremely important	285/353 (80.7%)	26/27 (96.3%)	12/14 (85.7%)	149/185 (80.5%)
Government action is good or excellent	109/363 (30.0%)	8/28 (28.6%)	7/16 (43.8%)	62/190 (32.6%)
Career development opportunities are good or excellent	229/362 (63.3%)	19/28 (67.9%)	9/15 (60.0%)	97/181 (53.6%)
Qatar will probably become a global talent hub	175/354 (49.4%)	8/28 (28.6%)	6/16 (37.5%)	97/186 (52.2%)

Table Note: For each survey group, the table shows the figures and percentages of respondents who selected the specified response categories.

6.2 Retention barriers differ across the talent pipeline

The top retention variables for each group are listed in Table 3. The trend lends credibility to the idea that retention is more than just a pay issue. Faculty, students, and company entrepreneurs do not prioritize compensation, while HR executives do. The importance of career advancement, employment stability, and the absence of long-term residency possibilities was highest among faculty. The absence of long-term residency options, employment security, and professional advancement is the factor students value most. Government regulations and policies are importance to startup entrepreneurs.

When designing policies, these distinctions are crucial. Short-term recruiting incentives may attract faculty members but may not retain them if long-term job security is the main constraint.

Table 3: Leading reported retention factors by respondent group

<i>Survey group</i>	<i>First factor</i>	<i>Second factor</i>	<i>Third factor</i>
Faculty	Job security, 246/363 (67.8%)	Lack of long-term residency options, 172/363 (47.4%)	Career development, 152/363 (41.9%)
HR executives	Compensation, 18/28 (64.3%)	Career development, 13/28 (46.4%)	Job security, 13/28 (46.4%)
Startup founders	Government policies and regulations, 7/16 (43.8%)	Career development, 6/16 (37.5%)	Compensation, 6/16 (37.5%)
Top students	Career development, 108/192 (56.3%)	Job security, 104/192 (54.2%)	Lack of long-term residency options, 79/192 (41.1%)

Table Note: Within a group, percentages do not add up to 100% because respondents might select more than one criterion.

6.3 Group-specific outcomes

The student outcomes indicate significant possibilities. Amongst the best students, 33.3% are unsure, while 60.2% say they certainly envision a future for themselves in Qatar upon graduation. The "not sure" category affects policy. These respondents do not yet express a clear intention to stay, but they also do not certainly intend to relocate. This implies that a crucial retention margin is the shift from university to professional life.

Estimates should be interpreted cautiously due to the limited sample size of company founders. However, 37.5 percent report that they have moved or are considering moving. This is in line with the notion that talent retention strategy includes entrepreneurship policies. For entrepreneurs, the important question is not just whether Qatar can attract startups, but also whether businesses can grow without assuming that another country offers a more stable or stimulating environment.

The most comprehensive evidence has been collected from a sample of faculty members. 21.9 percent of faculty members think they are somewhat or highly inclined to leave Qatar, compared to 60.7 percent who say the same. However, 68.6% of people are optimistic about the future. As a result, faculty members do not seem to be all gloomy. The most crucial problem is that a significant minority report being at risk of leaving the country, and the factors that account for this risk are closely linked to the academic environment and long-term prospects.

Table 4: Reported reasons and suggested retention policies

<i>Faculty item</i>	<i>Share</i>
Students may leave because there are no long-term prospects for non-Qatari graduates	49.5%
Students may leave for advanced research opportunities abroad	37.1%
Students may leave for better career opportunities abroad	30.5%
Students may leave because of limited progression or innovation in Qatar	25.5%
Faculty recommendation: long-term residency or citizenship incentives	42.9%
Faculty recommendation: clearer career progression or tenure	20.9%

<i>Faculty item</i>	<i>Share</i>
Faculty recommendation: research funding	13.2%
Faculty recommendation: salary and benefits	12.1%
Faculty recommendation: collaboration and exchange	6.3%

Table Note: The table presents a selection of faculty members' reactions to the questions on what measures could potentially help maintain academic talent and why high-potential students would leave Qatar.

7. Econometric Results

The faculty regressions investigate the importance of the academic environment, the perceived importance of creating long-term residency options, job satisfaction, career development, and citizenship status on talent retention in Qatar

Table 5 summarizes the ordered probit estimates for equations (1)-(3). Higher values of the explanatory variable are associated with a lower probability of reporting a more significant leaving category, as indicated by the negative coefficient in the leaving model. Higher values are associated with a more favorable evaluation of Qatar's future as a talent base, as indicated by the talent hub model's positive coefficient. The coefficients reflect changes in the latent index rather than marginal effects on category probabilities, because the model is nonlinear. Only for the two extreme groups does the sign of a coefficient indicate the direction of the link. For instance, a negative coefficient in the leaving model increases the likelihood of reporting extremely unlikely and decreases the likelihood of reporting extremely likely. As the distribution shifts across the cut points, the intermediate categories might change in either direction. Each column's coefficient pattern is still instructive. The academic environment index and job-related satisfaction had the highest attitudinal coefficients in the leaving model, with the residence variable coming in next. The Qatari nationality variable shows the strongest correlation, consistent with the descriptive conclusion that non-Qatari faculty members are more likely to leave. The academic environment index and professional growth exhibit the strongest positive correlations within the talent hub model. Senior academic rank negatively affects that model, as senior faculty are more cautious about Qatar's potential as a talent hub than younger colleagues who provide otherwise comparable responses. This could be due to greater system exposure or different reference points, though the survey cannot distinguish between these explanations.

Table 5: Faculty ordered probit results

<i>Explanatory variable</i>	<i>Likelihood of leaving Qatar</i>	<i>Qatar as future talent hub</i>
Academic environment index	-0.247*** (0.089)	0.338*** (0.091)
Importance of long-term residency options	-0.223*** (0.076)	0.114 (0.077)
Job satisfaction	-0.319*** (0.074)	0.239*** (0.075)
Career development assessment	-0.130 (0.097)	0.320*** (0.098)
Quality of life importance	-0.016 (0.102)	0.079 (0.106)
Senior academic rank	0.044 (0.147)	-0.424*** (0.150)
Qatar University	-0.256 (0.159)	0.046 (0.161)
Qatari	-1.036*** (0.231)	0.914*** (0.230)
Female	-0.245 (0.152)	-0.067 (0.152)
Observations	272	269
Pseudo R-squared	0.118	0.149

Table Note: Standard errors for ordered probit coefficients are shown in parentheses in the table. $P < 0.10$, $p < 0.05$, and $p < 0.01$ are indicated by *, **, and ***, respectively.

Faculty members who point to a better academic setting are less likely to say they intend to leave Qatar, as the first column illustrates. Reduced risk of deciding to leave is also closely linked to job satisfaction. Conditional on the other parameters of the model, the residency and nationality variable is statistically significant and negative, meaning that respondents who prioritize this policy margin are less likely to leave. Careful interpretation of this relationship is necessary. It does not imply that individuals remain due to residency issues. The residency parameter reflects a wider sense of long-term connection and policy importance, which is a more likely explanation.

The estimated results of “in the leaving Qatar’s column” reveal that the nationality coefficient is likewise negative. For example, Qatari respondents are less likely than non-Qatari respondents to indicate that they would leave in the event of danger. This supports the notion that non-nationals are disproportionately affected by residency uncertainty. It is crucial for interpretation, even though it is not startling. When determining whether to stay in Qatar, a faculty sample comprises respondents who face a wide range of personal and legal constraints.

The second estimation, “Qatar as future talent hub,” demonstrates that a more favorable perception of Qatar’s potential as a global talent ecosystem is linked to an improved academic environment. Career advancement and job satisfaction also indicate the anticipated favorable trend. In the talent hub model, the citizenship and residence variable is positive but less well predicted. This trend implies that confidence about Qatar’s talent future is more strongly associated with immediate perceptions of the academic environment than with the residency criteria alone.

For cross-sectional attitude data, the model fit falls within the predicted range. Given that stated intentions also reflect family dynamics, alternatives, and other factors the survey does not observe, the pseudo-R-squared values of 0.118 and 0.149 show that the covariates account for a meaningful but limited share of the variation in responses. The standard itself has two warnings. The same coefficient controls the change in probability at each response threshold since the ordered probit enforces a single index with shared cut points. Furthermore, the estimates continue to reflect correlations between contemporaneous survey responses rather than policy impacts. The extent to which these modeling decisions affect the primary results is examined in Section 8.

8. Robustness and Heterogeneity

8.1 Binary probit robustness

The ordered probit findings agree with the binary probit estimates from the specification in Section 5. Regarding the estimated leaving (Table 5), the Qatari coefficient remains negative, and a lower likelihood of reporting leaving risk is associated with improved academic environments, greater work satisfaction, and a higher expressed priority for developing long-term residency opportunities. Once more, the residency connection should not be seen as a result of mechanical policy. Alternatively, it can suggest that those who value long-term residence are also more focused on a sustainable future in Qatar. The binary specification has some presentational value, as policy audiences may more easily understand a change in the likelihood of breaching a leaving-risk threshold than a change in an ordered latent index.

Additionally, dichotomization has a cost, which accounts for the worse robustness outcomes. The information that distinguishes, for instance, those who are highly unlikely to quit from those who are just slightly unlikely becomes irrelevant when five categories are collapsed into two. Therefore, even when the fundamental relationship is intact, estimates based on the coarser outcomes should be less accurate. Reduced accuracy in the binary models is not proof against the ordered findings but rather the expected cost of the check.

This is how the talent hub outcome should be interpreted: “Second estimation in Table 5”. Although the estimate is less accurate, the binary talent hub result points in the same direction as the ordered model, with the academic environment staying favorable. The information lost due to dichotomization is partially reflected in the difference. The remainder is significant. A less significant person-level correlation is not surprising, as a respondent’s perception of Qatar’s future as a talent ecosystem likely depends on several macro and policy variables that individual assessments of job satisfaction and academic environment do not capture.

8.2 Alternative academic environment index

Additionally, the results hold up well when a more limited four-item academic environment measure is used, which excludes elements linked to Qatarization. Because Qatarization is conceptually different from the wider academic world, this is important. The interpretation would be more limited if the Qatarization item was the sole factor influencing the outcomes. The main outcome of the alternative index is the same, and a more favorable academic environment is linked to a lower risk of leaving and a more favorable outlook for talent hubs.

8.3 Nationality heterogeneity

One of the most significant descriptive causes of variability in the faculty member sample is nationality. Long-term residency and citizenship incentives are very or extremely significant for 85.2 percent of non-Qatari faculty members with observed nationality. The comparable percentage among Qatari faculty members is 56.8%. Additionally, Qatari faculty members are more likely to express a favorable outlook for the future, whereas non-Qatari faculty members are more likely to express concerns about relocation.

These variations align with the way the policy problem is structured. Since many colleges, businesses, and research institutions depend on non-national talent, the long-term residency policy is particularly important for non-nationals and affects Qatar's broader talent system. It is not always implied that different sets of policy suggestions should be made for Qataris and non-Qataris. Instead, universal standards should acknowledge that various groups may experience the same policy via distinct channels.

9. Policy Discussion

The results point to four policy implications.

First, rather than focusing just on short-term attractiveness, Qatar's talent retention strategy should emphasize long-term professional commitment. According to the study results, many stakeholders view retention as a matter of residency, job security, career opportunities, and institutional credentials. Faculty members and student samples make this particularly evident. Secondly, the apparent policy issue revolves around citizenship incentives and long-term residency opportunities. This does not imply that all respondents are requesting a comparable legal instrument. It indicates that respondents consider a lasting commitment to Qatar when making retention decisions. The Mustaqel talent initiative in Qatar offers executives and entrepreneurs long-term residency paths, which provide important policy background for analyzing the survey results (Jusour, n.d.). Thirdly, sector-specific limitations are crucial. Long-term prospects, job security, and the academic setting are priorities for faculty. Students place a strong emphasis on job stability and professional growth. HR directors place a strong emphasis on pay and professional growth. Government policies and regulations are important to new business owners. Therefore, a credible retention plan should incorporate both sector-specific execution and broader national policy. Fourth, it is crucial to set up a long-term talent-retention monitoring system that allows institutions and policymakers to monitor retention trends, spot new challenges and evaluate variations in the factors affecting talent preferences over time. By including metrics pertaining to employment security, career advancement, pay, professional development, residency considerations and overall employee happiness, such a system might facilitate evidence-based legislation. Fifthly, developing Qatar's academic and research environment through improved research prospects, institutional assistance, industrial engagement, access to professional platforms and systems that acknowledge academic and research achievements should be prioritised concurrently. Finally, the findings encourage cautious but proactive modeling. Although the statistical results do not prove causal effects, they are helpful in identifying connections within the faculty sample. Therefore, rather than stating that one intervention has been shown to increase retention, policy suggestions should be articulated as evidence-informed priorities.

10. Limitations

To begin with, not all employees, students, businesses or faculty members in Qatar are represented by the samples. These are samples of targeted stakeholders. Although it limits population-level inference, this strategy is useful because it reaches groups that are important to the policy concern. Secondly, there are differences between the four questionnaires. While group-specific questions can't always be combined, common questions make cross-group comparisons easier. For this reason, the study estimates models only within the faculty sample, after reporting cross-group descriptives. Third, the samples of company founders and HR executives are small. The results they provide are helpful for understanding stakeholders' viewpoints, but they shouldn't be taken too literally as exact

approximations. The fourth is that stated attitudes and intentions, rather than actual retention behavior, are the results. Although useful, a respondent's expressed likelihood of leaving differs from an observable preference to depart. If such information becomes available, future research might connect survey results to administrative outcomes. Finally, there is a correlation in the econometric estimates. Conditional on observed variables, the models display which answers are associated with talent hub optimism and leaving risk. They do not specify the causes of policy amendments.

11. Limitation and Conclusion

Using survey data from academia, top students, HR executives and entrepreneurs, this study examines talent retention in Qatar. Along with more cautious evaluations of current government initiatives and Qatar's future as a global talent ecosystem, the results demonstrate a solid consensus that talent retention is important for Qatar's sustainable future. Respondents identify long-term residency, career growth, job stability and the workplace setting as key retention reasons across all categories. More specific evidence is provided by faculty member analysis. Positive perceptions of Qatar's talent future and reduced leaving risk are linked to improved evaluations of the academic environment and increased work satisfaction. Incentives for citizenship and long-term residency are also quite important, especially for non-Qatari faculty members. These findings reveal that Qatar's retention issue should be seen as a long-term adherence issue rather than just a recruiting or compensation issue. The key takeaway for migration and integration strategy that retention is contingent upon highly skilled individual's perception of Qatar's ability to provide a stable and sustainable future. Job environment, professional advancement, family and residency security and the reliability of government policies all influence this view. The survey data is more in line with a retention approach that addresses these margins collectively than one that views retention as a specific recruiting or pay issue.

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