HAPPINESS AT WORK IN THE UAE:
The Role of Leadership Style and Human Resource Management

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES ........................................................................................................... 5
LIST OF TABLES .............................................................................................................. 7
ABSTRACT ......................................................................................................................... 9
DECLARATION .................................................................................................................... 10
COPYRIGHT STATEMENT ................................................................................................. 11
DEDICATION ....................................................................................................................... 13
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ..................................................................................................... 14

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................... 16
1.1. PREAMBLE ................................................................................................................... 16
1.2. SUBJECT BACKGROUND ............................................................................................ 17
1.3. RESEARCH RATIONALE ............................................................................................ 23
1.4. RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES ...................................................................... 25
1.5. RESEARCH CONTEXT ............................................................................................... 25
1.6. RELIGION IN THE UAE ........................................................................................... 30
1.7. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS ................................................................................. 30

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW .............................................................................. 33
2.1. INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................... 33
2.2. BACKGROUND ........................................................................................................... 33
2.2.1. What is Happiness? ............................................................................................... 33
2.2.2. The Origin of Happiness ....................................................................................... 35
2.2.3. Money and Happiness ......................................................................................... 37
2.2.3.1. Happiness and Social Comparison .................................................................. 42
2.2.3.2. Income Inequality and Happiness .................................................................. 43
2.3. HAPPINESS AT WORK .............................................................................................. 46
2.3.1. What Makes Employees Happy? .......................................................................... 46
2.3.1.1. Employed People are Happier ........................................................................ 47
2.3.1.2. Happiness at life and Happiness at work ......................................................... 48
2.3.1.3. A Sense of Purpose ......................................................................................... 49
2.3.1.4. Social Support ............................................................................................... 50
2.3.1.5. Appreciation ................................................................................................. 52
2.3.1.6. Development Possibilities ........................................................................... 53
2.3.1.7. Empowerment ............................................................................................. 53
2.3.1.8. Autonomy .................................................................................................... 54
2.3.1.9. Organisational Physical Environment .......................................................... 55
2.3.1.10. Other Factors Relating to Happiness at Work in the UAE .............................. 56
2.4. RELIGION AND HAPPINESS: GENERALLY, AND IN THE WORKPLACE .................. 63
2.4.1. Religion and Happiness ....................................................................................... 63
2.4.2. Religion and Happiness at Work ......................................................................... 68
2.4.1. Islamic Ethics and Happiness at Work ................................................................. 71
2.5. ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE HAPPINESS .............................. 74
2.6. HRM PRACTICES AND HAPPINESS AT WORK ................................................... 78
2.6.1. Job Satisfaction: Definitions ................................................................................. 79
2.6.2. The Importance of Job Satisfaction ...................................................................... 79
### CHAPTER 5 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

- **5.1. INTRODUCTION** .................................................................................................................. 195
- **5.2. THE INTERVIEWS: MAIN CATEGORIES** .............................................................................. 196
  - 5.2.2. HRD Tasks ..................................................................................................................... 211
  - 5.2.3. The Final Part of the Interview ....................................................................................... 229
- **5.3. SUMMARY** ......................................................................................................................... 235

### CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- **6.1. DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS** ......................................................................... 241
  - 6.1.1. Research Question 1: To what extent do employees’ personal attitudes influence happiness at work? ................................................................................................................................. 249
  6.1.1.1. Raising employees’ happiness: what is required from the sample government organisation in the UAE? ................................................................................................................................. 253
  - 6.1.2. Research Question 2: How can employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies? ................................................................................................................................. 255
  - 6.1.3. Research Question 3: What are the factors that influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations? ................................................................................................. 257
  6.1.3.1. Leadership style ............................................................................................................. 257
  6.1.3.2. Organisational System/Culture..................................................................................... 260
  6.1.3.3. Organisational Structure .............................................................................................. 261
  - 6.1.4. Research Question 4: How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations? ................................................................................................................................. 262
  - 6.1.5. Research Question 5: How do we preserve the relationship between organisational culture and employee happiness in the UAE?...................................................................... 266
  6.1.5.1. Level of Consciousness ................................................................................................. 266
  6.1.5.2. Learning by Benchmarking .......................................................................................... 267
  6.1.5.3. Changing the Current Culture ...................................................................................... 270
- **6.2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AS MAPPED AGAINST THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES** ......... 272
  - 6.2.1. Research Objective I: To evaluate HRM job satisfaction strategies that could increase employee happiness in government organisations.................................................................. 275
  6.2.1.1. The current HRM is not an independent management.................................................. 275
  6.2.1.2. The Current HR Rule is a Key Issue that Negatively Affects Happiness ..................... 277
  6.2.1.3. HRM in the Sample Organisations: Contradictions Between Stated and Practiced Values ................................................................................................................................. 278
  6.2.1.4. The Action Plans Focus on the Short Term Only .......................................................... 279
  - 6.2.2. Research Objective II: To examine the role of religion in happiness at work in the UAE. ................................................................................................................................. 279
6.2.2.1. All the sample organisations follow UAE labour law, which shares a lot of the world’s work ethics as well as Islamic ethics ............................................................................................................. 280
6.2.2.2. It is not clear how Religion Affects Employee’s Happiness at Work ........................................ 280
6.2.2.3. Diversity Creates a Chance to Re-evaluate ........................................................................ 281
6.3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .......................................................................................... 284
   6.3.1. Part 1 ............................................................................................................................. 285
   6.3.2. Part 2 ............................................................................................................................. 287
   6.3.3. Part 3 ............................................................................................................................. 291
6.4. IMPLICATION FOR ACTION ......................................................................................... 294
   6.4.1. Practice-driven implications .......................................................................................... 294
   6.4.2. Research driven implications ....................................................................................... 297
6.5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS ............................................. 299
6.6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH ..................................................... 299
6.7. FINAL COMMENT ........................................................................................................... 301
REFERENCES .......................................................................................................................... 305
APPENDICES ........................................................................................................................... 336

(Word count: 69391-main text)
LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1.1: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IS RELIANT ON THE BASICS OF MORALE AND SATISFACTION ..........19
FIGURE 1.2: HAPPINESS AGENDA FRAMEWORK: ..................................................................................29
FIGURE 2.1: PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE AT HIGH RISK OF MENTAL ILLNESS ........................................40
FIGURE 2.2: THE VALUE OF SOMETHING....................................................................................................41
FIGURE 2.3: FOUR LAYERS OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE ................................................................95
FIGURE 2.4: VALUE-BEHAVIOUR ASSOCIATION ......................................................................................96
FIGURE 2.5: INTEGRATION OF VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS A DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL ........98
FIGURE 2.6: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF BUILDING A PARADIGM OF HAPPINESS AT WORK ..........100
FIGURE 2.7: THE MAIN THREE LAYERS ....................................................................................................102
FIGURE 2.8: LAYERS OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE .............................................................................104
FIGURE 2.9: EFFORT AND EFFICIENCY IN THE CULTURE OF HAPPINESS AT WORK .............................109
FIGURE 3.1: THE THREE DOMAINS OF REALITY AND ITS JUSTIFICATION TO THIS STUDY .................123
FIGURE 3.2: DEDUCTIVE RESEARCH ........................................................................................................126
FIGURE 3.3: INDUCTIVE RESEARCH .........................................................................................................126
FIGURE 3.4: QUESTIONNAIRES CATEGORIES AND RELATIONS .................................................................138
FIGURE 3.5: THE RELATION BETWEEN QUESTIONNAIRES VARIABLES AND FEELINGS TOWARDS WORK ........................................................................................................139
FIGURE 4.1: BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE PERSONAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS LIFE IN GENERAL AND FEELINGS TOWARDS WORK ............................................................................168
FIGURE 4.2: STATISTICAL CORRELATIONS BETWEEN QUESTIONNAIRE VARIABLES .......................192
FIGURE 6.1: TOP-DOWN INITIATIVES OF CHANGE EFFECT VS. BOTTOM-UP INITIATIVES OF CHANGE EFFECT ..................................................................................................................259
FIGURE 6.2: THREE LEVELS OF CULTURE ..................................................................................................278
FIGURE 6.3: WHAT MAKES DIVERSITY USEFUL .......................................................................................282
FIGURE 6.4: HAPPINESS AT WORK FRAMEWORK .......................................................................................284
FIGURE 6.5: ORGANISATIONAL FORESIGHT: COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES FOR ORGANISATIONS ........294
LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 2-1: DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESULT -DUBAI, 2006.................................................60
TABLE 2-2: HAPPINESS MEASUREMENTS .................................................................................................................88
TABLE 3-1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS ..................................................................................................................115
TABLE 3-2: RESEARCH GAPS IN RELATION TO RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS .............................................115
TABLE 3-3: RESEARCH DESIGN ..........................................................................................................................137
TABLE 3-4: PROFILE OF INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS BASED ON JOB TITLE ..................................................140
TABLE 3-5: PROFILE OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENTS BASED ON ORGANISATIONS AND DEPARTMENTS ....143
TABLE 4-1: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (PERSONAL ATTITUDE PART RESPONSES) (N= 140) ......................161
TABLE 4-2: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (FEELING TOWARDS WORK PART RESPONSES) (N= 140) .................164
TABLE 4-3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (CORRELATION BETWEEN PERSONAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE IN
GENERAL AND FEELINGS TOWARDS WORK) ......................................................................................................167
TABLE 4-4: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (ORGANISATIONAL SYSTEM) (N= 140) .............................................171
TABLE 4-5: CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL SYSTEM AND FEELING TOWARDS WORK ......173
TABLE 4-6: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (FUNCTIONING AT WORK) (N= 140) ....................................................174
TABLE 4-7: CORRELATIONS BETWEEN FUNCTIONING AT WORK AND FEELING TOWARDS WORK ..........176
TABLE 4-8: CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL SYSTEM AND FEELING TOWARDS WORK ........177
TABLE 4-9: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK AND AGE)
(N= 136)........................................................................................................................................................................178
TABLE 4-10: ONE WAY ANOVA RESULTS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK AND
AGE) ........................................................................................................................................................................179
TABLE 4-11: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK AND
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL (N= 140) ..............................................................................................................................180
TABLE 4-12: ONE WAY ANOVA RESULTS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK AND
EDUCATION) ..............................................................................................................................................................181
TABLE 4-13: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK AND
MARRITAL STATUS) (N= 138) .................................................................................................................................182
TABLE 4-14: ONE WAY ANOVA RESULTS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK AND
MARRITAL STATUS) ................................................................................................................................................183
TABLE 4-15: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK AND TOTAL
EXPERIENCE) (N= 139) ..........................................................................................................................................184
TABLE 4-16: ONE WAY ANOVA RESULTS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK AND
TOTAL WORK EXPERIENCE) ......................................................................................................................................184
TABLE 4-17: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK AND
CURRENT JOB EXPERIENCE) (N= 140) ................................................................................................................185
TABLE 4-18: ONE WAY ANOVA RESULTS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK AND
CURRENT JOB EXPERIENCE) ..................................................................................................................................186
TABLE 4-19: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK BY
ORGANISATION) (N= 140) .....................................................................................................................................187
TABLE 4-20: ONE WAY ANOVA RESULTS (THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEELING TOWARDS WORK BY
ORGANISATION) ......................................................................................................................................................187
TABLE 4-21: POST HOC OF ORGANISATIONS ....................................................................................................188
ABSTRACT

There is a wealth of literature on job satisfaction from both Western and Eastern experiences and perspectives, but the literature is limited when it comes to happiness at work, especially in the Arab region. This study is an attempt to encourage research studies in the field of happiness at work in the Middle East and specifically in the United Arab Emirates, the context of the present research, to influence planning in government organisations in implementing a strategy for long-term impacts on happiness levels.

This research uses a mixed methods approach of both questionnaires and interviews to collect data. The analysis is conducted by using quantitative and qualitative tools to recognise the gaps and the factors that influence happiness at work and suggests recommendations in order to raise happiness across organisations over the long run.

The findings of this study emphasise the necessity of correlating HRM practices, rules and systems with strategic planning that focuses on employee happiness as the greatest purpose of an organisation. The findings emphasise the power of three factors related to employees’ feelings towards work which are: Leadership style, organisational culture and organisation structure and how reflecting them in an organisation will positively influence satisfaction and build a strong, positive and happy workplace.

This research also discusses one of the controversial inquiries found in the literature about the relationship between job satisfaction and happiness. A conceptual framework is suggested to illustrate the connection between job satisfaction and happiness from a new perspective and clarify how these two concepts positively interact. It clarifies that organisations that indicate a high-level of happiness at work usually indicate a high-level of job satisfaction, and when an organisation achieves a high-level of job satisfaction, it can be deduced that people in the organisation are happy, even where happiness per se is not measured.

The findings also show that the role of religion in raising happiness in general is clearer than its role in raising happiness at work and that employees from the sample group, who emphasise the importance of practicing religious rituals, still indicate low feelings towards work regardless of all the facilities that are provided to them to practice their religion.
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DEDICATION

To my beloved family,

My parents, my husband and my daughter,

for their love, support and encouragement.
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First, I am very grateful and thankful to Allah, The Creator, for all the blessings that He has bestowed upon me. I am thankful for his kindness and for his plans that are better than our dreams and plans. I am thankful for his preparation, timing, for the people that He put through my journey and for the doors that He opened for me and even the doors that He has closed. It is mentioned in the holy Qur’an “Whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a [decreed] extent” (Ch 65:03).

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members for supporting me and for the encouragement that I have received over the years; and, finally to all my friends around for their continuous support, motivation and love.
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Preamble

Happiness is an ancient concept that has always drawn much interest across academic fields (Diener 2000; Berthon et al., 2009; Miles-Watson 2010; Johnston 2012; Fischer 2015). Many world leaders such as South Korean President Park Geun-hye, British Prime Minister David Cameron, Bhutan’s King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, have demonstrated their awareness of the importance of raising wellbeing and increasing people’s happiness. The United Nations Assembly recognises the need for the systematic measurement and analysis of happiness to aid sustainable development (Helliwell et al., 2011). Consequently, there is expected to be a link between happiness of people in general and happiness at work. How happy employees are in their lives and in their job are directly linked to how well employees perform their jobs. This research is focused on employee happiness with reference to leaders and Human Resource Management (HRM) job satisfaction strategies in government organisations. The primary geographical focus of the study is the United Arab Emirates. The main purpose of this chapter is to investigate a general outline of happiness, provide a general justification of why this research is important, the rationale for the study, the aim and objectives and a summary of the research methodology and a brief description of the field of study. The chapter concludes with an outline structure of the thesis.
1.2. Subject Background

For centuries, happiness has been debated by philosophers, thinkers, psychologists, scientists, theologians, and to know the meaning of happiness, many definitions have emerged over time. For example, psychologists use well-being to study happiness (Diener et al., 1985; Ryff, 1989; Dodge et al., 2012) while economists for a long time focused on the quantitative side such as individual’s income to measure happiness (Easterlin, 2003; Graham, 2005). Despite the multiplicity of definitions and views, however, there are commonalities encompassing well-being, quality of life and positivity.

In addition to the vast amount of research and studies that focus on happiness in general, there are many studies that focus on the relevance of happiness in the workplace and the positive impact of raising employees’ happiness at work at both individual and organisational level (Jaffaldano and Muchinsky, 1985; Connolly and Viswesvaran, 2000; Fisher, 2002; Weiss et al., 1999; Nelson, 2012).

Happiness at work is a crucial issue; and raising an employee's happiness has become a requirement of many HR professionals. Lambert et al. (2002) and Nelson (2012) discussed the linked between job satisfaction and employee performance, and that maximising satisfaction leads to organisations enjoying higher profitability and productivity as well as lower absenteeism and turnover rate. So, what is happiness at work? Fisher (2010, p. 385) defines the concept as “pleasant judgments (positive attitudes) or pleasant experiences (positive feelings, moods, emotions, flow states)”. In the workplace, Thomas (2010) attempted to understand happiness by collecting his clients, colleagues, and friends’ thoughts about happiness at work. He found that definitions of happiness at work tended to fall into the following classifications: freedom of managing
your own business, knowledge transformation, transparency, development of job knowledge and skills, appreciation, sense of accomplish, to be part of the team and to have a good relationship with a boss who trusts you. Accordingly, it has been argued that maximising happiness will tend to exert a positive effect on productivity (Oswald et al., 2009).

On the other hand, the concept of happiness in general went through many explanations makes happiness a deeper feeling than just being ‘good’. Thus, even if a person is facing difficulties or bad circumstances, they can cope positively, feel good and enjoy the small details and the moment (Pugno, 2014). The same is true for the work place; Rao (2010) discussed the meaning of happiness at work from a different perspective stating that happiness is not just about a positive mood and situations that people live, but the way that people accept things that face them during their work or their life, thus it is necessary according to Rao to prepare the employee to accept the bad things that arise, because strength can be built from good coping mechanisms which can positively influence a person’s happiness levels thereafter. Veenhoven (2015 p. 7) describes coping with problems as “life-ability” because it reflects an individual’s elegance and liveability.

Yet, even at this early juncture, the complexity of relationships involved should be noted; for example, do relatively high levels of job satisfaction tend to lead to relatively high levels of both happiness and productivity? These types of questions lead us to consider a second key term related to employees’ happiness at work, that is, job satisfaction.

According to Fisher (2010), Scheers and Botha (2014) and Lambert et al. (2002), ensuring employee job satisfaction has been an HRM priority for many years across the
glob. However, many researchers are discovering that employee happiness at work is more than just job satisfaction. For example, Warr (2011) has suggested that job satisfaction is one important indicator of happiness. Lambert et al. (2002, p.117) defines job satisfaction as “a subjective, individual-level feeling reflecting whether a person’s needs are or are not being met by a particular job”. While happiness at work is explained in terms of the reality of the job meeting employee expectations (Shang-Chang Ting, 2014).

Scheers and Botha (2014) state that even if employees are satisfied with their job in general, it does not mean that they are necessarily altogether happy. Stoehr (2012, p. 200) finds that “happiness at work is a function of engagement, morale, and satisfaction”. He states that 30 senior executives from Canada’s Founding Partner organisations and Board of Governors agreed that satisfaction is considered a ‘basic need’ for employees and it is the first step in seeking employee happiness as clarified in the figure 1.1 below.

**Figure 1.1: Employee Engagement is reliant on the basics of morale and satisfaction**


This figure according to Stoehr (2012) shows the necessity of job satisfaction as a basic level in an organisation. It also serves to clarify the difference between the two
concepts: happiness and satisfaction, from his point of view by illustrating satisfaction as a stage or tool to reach the higher goal, which is happiness at work.

Again, the complexity of the relationship between concepts such as satisfaction and happiness begin to emerge when considering the findings of these studies. Yet the picture becomes even more complex when subjects such as material well-being are introduced into the analysis. Thus, Lu (2006) and Easterlin (2004) discuss SWB as a term that is often used with happiness. It shows how the relationship between happiness and wealth is subjective and influenced by people’s values, attitudes and backgrounds. Even when considering this subject at national (as opposed to organisational and individual levels), Easterlin (1974) found no straightforward relationship between economic wellbeing and happiness; happiness does not increase as a nation becomes wealthier. Relative wealth, in other words is not necessarily a predictor of relative happiness. What is clear, however, is that some people describe themselves as happy in relation to other people and hence the comparative nature of the concept happiness begins to emerge in the discussion (Chapter 2).

According to Brown et al. (2008) wellbeing lies in comparison; namely, rank of wages. He observes that Americans appear happier compared to their poorer neighbours. It is therefore necessary to look at the circumstances that surround a person to discover the causes of happiness rather than just focusing on people’s income and wealth as indicators. In the workplace, the construction and maintenance of job-related circumstances of employees tend to revolve around HRM-related policies and practices. According to Kowalski and Loretto (2017) well-being must be a top priority in HR strategy and that HR experts must understand how to manage wellbeing, which might not
be an easy task. Verma *et al.* (2012) state that there is a strong relationship between HRM practices and employee satisfaction, and successful HRM can ensure employees’ satisfaction and loyalty, which arise from the direct contribution of HRM in strategic plans. Several studies find that most of the factors related to employee happiness at work, such as wages, leave, work duration and environment are connected directly to HRM rules and practices (Sharan, 1980). Bauer (2004) found that involvement of employees in high performance HRM practices related to higher job satisfaction and is considered a key factor in the sustainability of an organisation. Kowalski and Loretto (2017) added that despite the numerous studies on the link between HR practices and well-being, the relationship remains unclear. This research explores links between happiness and HRM policies and practices, given the centrality of HRM-related issues to the subject of employee happiness in the workplace.

This thesis also concentrates on the practices that organisations can follow to create a happy workplace. It is not about random initiatives that raise happiness temporarily, but a daily lifestyle that strengthens the organisational culture, thus raising core happiness. Despite the importance of HR practices and functions in employee happiness, the role of the leader appears to be more important. Many authors (Arnold *et al.*, 2000; Rowden, 2000; Chen, 2004; Dale and Fox, 2008; Oladipo *et al.*, 2013), concentrate on the great influence of leaders in creating an organisational culture as well as driving employees to adopt and live the culture (Chapter 2).

This research also concentrates on the relation between happiness and religion and how religion in many regions influences the shaping of the concept of happiness with people in everyday life. McFaul (2006) and Abuznaid (2006) recognise the vital role that
religion plays in different societies and how it influences many facets of human life such as culture, education and policy. McFaul (2006) believes that religion is at the core of culture, and it gives life value and meaning by clarifying right from wrong, and good from evil. According to Lerbinger (2014, P. 98) “nearly 75% of the planet’s population follows five of the most influential religions in terms of global impact: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism”. This is illustrated clearly in how religion is considered one of the important leading forces within employee perceptions (Ellison et al., 2001).

Moreover, Nielsen (1998) states that people who include religion in their daily life activity indicate higher levels of happiness than those who not. Mookerjee and Beron (2005) used a sample of 60 countries and find that the level of happiness is significantly influenced by religion across included countries. Cohen-Zada and Sander (2011) state that religiosity is positively correlated with happiness, not only that, but it also a determinant of happiness. Sander (2017) finds that people with no religion are less happy and that because religious activity offers spaces of communication and support, this helps to raise people’s happiness. Contrarily, there is a long history of controversy in the reality of religion and its association with happiness and this explained in detail in Chapter Two.

Indeed, the influence of religion exceeds to include happiness at work. Lyons et al., (2014) and Skuturna (2006) emphasise on the idea that those who own freedom to worship and are able to express themselves without discrimination show high levels of job satisfaction. Since Islam is the official religion in the UAE it is important to understand how Islamic ethics relate to people’s happiness. Many authors such as Al-Kazemi and Ali (2002),
Abdi and Dato, (2006), Yousef, (2001) and Vitell and Davis, (1990) find that Islamic ethics and principles have a positive influence at work, as it can positively influence an employee’s performance and raise satisfaction and happiness.

1.3. Research Rationale

There are many motivating factors behind this research. The first is the rapid changes in the UAE in fields such as economics, social, health, culture and politics. Just few years ago concepts like happiness and wellbeing were never used officially in government organisations until they launched the first Happiness Meter in 2014, which measures customer feedback about the government services (www.khaleejtimes.com) and the announcement of the first Minister of Happiness in May 2016 (thenational.ae). This does not mean happiness at work has been neglected, on the contrary, it always existed but now it has been highlighted and has a chance to be examined in a wider base. Since then, all the government organisations in the UAE have been instructed by the Federal Counsel to create happiness teams and plans that can increase overall happiness levels. The rapid changes make research on happiness and wellbeing essential, and to strengthen the change process the country needs to build a knowledge-based economy and benefit from both global and local innovation (Sundač and Krmpotić, 2011).

As indicated, the primary contextual focus of this research is the public sector in the UAE. In exploring happiness in this sector, it is emphasised that the research is not intended to be an examination, per se, of public sector management and reform in the UAE even though this would be a legitimate area of enquiry. However, it is within the
scope of this thesis to explore the impact of government policy towards public sector organisations specifically in relation to the happiness agenda.

The second motivating factor is the desire to understand why, despite all the efforts government organisations made to raise employees’ happiness globally or in the UAE, yet low levels of job satisfaction and happiness remain present. Where is the problem? Is it in their happiness plans, strategy or organisational culture? Is it worthwhile to understand and analyse the current strategies and practices in these organisations and try to uncover the factors that can raise the level of happiness and identify factors that can hinder happiness? and why do some organisations score better levels of happiness than others, while both might have the same salaries and the same social and geographical circumstances? Many authors such as Hammer and Champy, (1993); Beer and Nohira, (2000), McKinsey and Company, (2006) claim that 70% of all change initiatives fail, while Hughes (2011, p. 461) argues that “any inherent change failure rate is inappropriate” and that most of the above research is built on unscientific estimates and a lack of supporting evidence. This drives attention to two main issues: change initiatives are prone to fail regardless of the statistical rate; and, there is a need to invest on local studies rather than depending on others’ experience and results which might not reflect the real gap.

The third point of support for the rationale for this research is to address the under-researched issue of the link between top management and HRM practices on one hand, and current understandings of employee happiness in the UAE on the other. There is a lack in available research in the field of wellbeing in the UAE and Middle East and that the vast majority of literature relates to private sector companies and western
experiences. It is important to address the emerging need for organisations to prepare information that can be used as a basis for understanding the different issues related to HRM, especially their practices and rules related to employee satisfaction and happiness.

1.4. Research Aims and Objectives

This research concentrates on examining different HRM processes with specific reference to their potential relevance to the context of the UAE; exploring various workforce planning strategies and their potential to contribute to happiness in the UAE; and, determining how public sector organisations in the UAE can improve their HRM practices.

In summary, the main aim is to investigate how HRM functions in public sector organisations in the UAE contribute to maximising the happiness of employees with reference to organisational effectiveness.

The following objectives participate in achieving the research aims:

- To evaluate HRM job satisfaction strategies that could increase employee happiness in government organisations.
- To examine the role of religion in happiness at work in the UAE.
- To build a strategy that can ensure continued high rates of happiness at work.

1.5. Research Context

This part of the chapter summarises happiness over the past and present in the context of the UAE. First, the beginning of the journey of happiness in the UAE. “It is said that one cannot understand the UAE without understanding the life of Sheikh Zayed
and his vision, the way he devoted his life to the service of his people and his success at being a leader of men and a country” (khaleejtimes.com).

The UAE occupies the first position among Arab countries in the Happiness Index from 2012 until the latest happiness report of 2018 (worldhappiness.report). It also occupies the 21st position among 158 countries worldwide. Although the UAE only launched the ministry of happiness recently in 2016, the area of happiness in the UAE started earlier with the establishment of the country and the rule of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The UAE is blessed with optimistic and ambitious leaders who believe in the necessity to change to achieve happiness and prosperity to everyone living in this country. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the first ruler of the UAE and Sheikh Rashid the first ruler of Dubai are considered the driving forces behind the unification of the seven emirates and the UAE formation. They were leaders with a positive vision despite the obstacles, challenges and lack of resources. Al Maktoum, (2017, p. 26) described the situation as follows:

"Who could believe that in a tent in the desert in 1968, two men would set their sights on building a world class, developed country? Who could imagine that these two men would have enough confidence and optimism to transform the seven amicable emirates, governed by a tribal system and plagued by a lack of education, into a unified nation of institution and systems, authorities and powers, with an established education and university system? And all of this is only in few years”.

In terms of sustainable growth, Sheikh Zayed challenged international experts who tried convincing him of the impossibility of planting in this desert of “salty soil, lack of water,
harsh climate and other obstacles” (Al Maktoum, 2017, p.27); experts told him that the land was not suitable for agriculture, but he proved them wrong and invested in more than 40 million palm trees (Al Amri, 2011).

Another example indicating how happiness is a goal in the UAE, is an interview with Sheikh Zayed in the mid-1970s when a journalist asked him to explain his overindulgence in his people, why free education, free healthcare, free university education? Sheikh Zayed replied by relating parenting and finding common ground on which to explain: “There’s a difference between overindulgence and duty—you wouldn’t be unwilling to support your children” (Zayed, 2015).

Even after his death in 2004, his vision remains alive and Sheikh Khalifa (his oldest son), the current ruler of the UAE and the other rulers of the seven emirates, are inspired by him and follow his approach and school of leadership. The UAE goes through a lot of challenges and keeps working on change and investing in resources and people as it is used to be, recently new ministers have been lunched such as ministers for Happiness, Tolerance, Youth and the Future and there is a huge focus on concept of happiness in life and at work. According to Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE: “Happiness does not fall under programmes that are separate from the government’s daily work. Happiness is the main focus of government work and the government’s entire budget must be considered as dedicated to achieving the happiness of our people” (Al Maktoum, 2017, p. 14). The Ministry of Happiness, Ohood Al Roomi, discussed the components of the programme of happiness and announced that the programme seeks to “align government policies, programmes and legislation to deliver happiness and positivity in the community and encourage
government and private sectors to launch, recommend and adopt initiatives in that regard” (www.uaecabinet.ae).

Moreover, the UAE was the first Arabic country to have a “Happiness Meter”, set to measure public satisfaction with government services. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, Vice President and Ruler of Dubai, launched this initiative in 2014 to measure the public’s happiness by using electronic devices connected to a central network; the meter is designed to send daily reports to decision-makers, enabling them to understand which government services customers are pleased with (or not) on any day.

“Preparing annual or quarterly reports to measure the happiness and satisfaction of the public does not meet our ambitions because today the world is transforming very fast and people’s expectations too are changing rapidly. Therefore, government services must be monitored on a daily basis” said Sheikh Mohammed (emirates247.com, 2015).

The initiative is part of a range of programmes and strategies to enable a shift towards a ‘Smart Government’ and ‘Smart City’ through the use of technology to increase the effectiveness of government performance, in turn increasing public satisfaction and overall happiness in the society. The statistical results of this research indicate high employees’ attitudes towards life in general and this might be considered convincing evidence of the UAE government’s efforts in raising happiness (Chapter 4).

The researcher got a chance to visit the Minister of happiness and interview members of her team to discuss the new initiatives, the coming plans and gather more information about the Minister of Happiness, thus although it is too early to ask about outcomes, the minister has begun to take the concept of happiness and positivity as a core of public daily life. The focus is on the new generation currently school and the
government’s aim to raise them in a lifestyle that focuses on positivity and gratitude. Moreover, the government has prepared a special Diploma of Happiness, selecting employees from a range of government and private organisations around the UAE, seeking to prepare people who can lead the new attitudes of the country and participate in raising happiness.

The Minister set the happiness agenda seeking to build deeper awareness to create a cultural shift towards sustainable happiness. The first agenda includes a group of different events and training programmes to influence people at the first level. These programmes are targeted to make Dubai the happiest city in the world and to be a good example of best practice to other cities across the region. The ministry created a framework to help people in their journey of happiness; the framework focuses on four strategic portfolios which are: change, educate, discover and measure as displays in diagram 1.2 below:

**Figure 1.2: Happiness Agenda Framework:**

![Diagram of Happiness Agenda Framework](source: happinessagenda.ae 2018)
1.6. Religion in the UAE
In the UAE, the geographical focus of this study, Islam is the official religion of the country. Despite this, the government respects the freedom of worship and adopts a relatively tolerant policy towards other beliefs and religions; that is, it will rarely intervene in non-Muslims activities. This policy originates from the teachings of the Holy Qu’ran Ch109:6 “For you is your religion, and for me is my religion” and as evidence the UAE has been ranked the third most peaceful country in the Middle East and North Africa, according to the newly released annual Global Peace Index (Maceda, 2017)
The UAE is home to more than 200 nationalities who live together in peace and are secure, which reflects how the governments are able to manage diversity and respects different religions and cultures since they do not negatively affect UAE values. The UAE established the first Ministry for Tolerance in the world in conjunction with the launch of the Ministry of Happiness.
In addition, a survey conducted by the Emirates Policy Centre in 2016 aims to measure the value of tolerance in the UAE and currently finds that 63.8% of the Emiratis do not mind if their neighbours are from other religions. Christianity is the most widely accepted among religions at 76.1%, followed by other religions with 63.4% (www.alittihad.ae, 2016). These high percentages are considered as evidence that the historical tolerance of the UAE society remains a dominant value.

1.7. Structure of the Thesis
The thesis is structured in six chapters as outlined below.

- **Chapter 1**: Introduction – An overview to the study and general background about the happiness at work concept. It presents a rationale of the research and displays the aims
and objectives. The chapter also gives general information about the context of the research, which is the UAE.

- **Chapter 2: Literature Review** - Explores the concept of happiness in general and in the workplace, the factors that participate in employees’ happiness at work and the role that HRM process, leadership styles, organisational culture and religion play in an employee’s happiness. The chapter also discusses a suggested framework on the role of values and behaviours in raising happiness at individual and institutional levels.

- **Chapter 3: Research Methodology** – A brief description of research methodologies in the context of the UAE. The chapter explains the methodology used to conduct research in addition to epistemological and ontological perspectives. The chapter explains the quantitative and qualitative research methods used and illustrates the case study from a public organisation that provides the primary research in the form of a survey questionnaire and interviews with manager.

- **Chapter 4: Quantitative Analysis of Questionnaire Responses** – The fourth chapter provides a detailed analysis of questionnaire responses across four government organisations at the functional level to answer the first research question aiming to identify how an employee’s personal attitude affects them; whether a positive or negative personal attitude influences their happiness at work. It also studies the relationship between the following categories:
  - Organisational System + Functioning at Work
  - Organisational System + Feelings towards Work
  - Functioning at Work + Feelings towards Work
The chapter also discusses the relationship between seven variables: age, educational level, marital status, total work experience, years spent in current organisation, organisation and gender on the one hand, and feelings towards work on the other seeking correlations between variables and the overarching concept of happiness.

- **Chapter 5: Qualitative Analysis of Interview Transcripts** – The fifth chapter provides detailed interview analyses at the managerial level at five government organisations to cover the other two main research questions and two sub questions, which are:

  Main RQ2: How can employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?

  - Sub Q2.1 What other factors influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations?

  - Sub Q2.1 How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?

  Main RQ3: How do we preserve the relationship between the organisational culture and employee happiness in the UAE?

- **Chapter 6: Discussion of Findings and Conclusions** – This chapter aims to integrate the findings of both qualitative and quantitative results to reach conclusions and discuss connections to the existing literature. It also places the results in the context of the conceptual framework. This is followed by recommendations for organisations based on the research related to HRM job satisfaction strategy implementation.
Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the theoretical and historical elements of happiness as a national goal and as an objective of international organisations that aspire to satisfy their employees, increase motivation and thus raise the performance at the individual and wider organisational level.

This literature review covers recent research on happiness in general and in the workplace. The first part of this chapter addresses the background of happiness, its origin and its relation to money. The second part discusses the factors that affect an employee’s happiness at work such as social support, appreciation, development possibilities and empowerment, which are all gathered under the theme ‘organisational culture’. Moreover, other factors are discussed in relation to the UAE as a specific global culture. Then the focus moves to the role of both leadership style and HRM in terms of an employee’s happiness. The spiritual/religion factor and how it relates to happiness at work is also explored, focusing on the Islamic work ethic. The measurements of happiness used in the literature are addressed.

2.2. Background

2.2.1. What is Happiness?

Happiness means different things to different people, however previous studies have unanimously acknowledged that, regardless of its source, happiness is a key element of daily human life (Heizomi et al., 2015). Because happiness is characterised by relative permanence, scholars, especially in psychological research on happiness, focused on individual’s overall happiness (Oishi and Gilbert, 2016). According to Griffin and Ward,
happiness is a subjective evaluation of one’s emotional state and satisfaction covering several aspects of life; indeed, it describes the way that different individuals consider diverse aspects of life (Luchesi et al., 2018; Matus et al., 2016). One’s evaluation of life can be negative or positive or in terms of general life satisfaction. Lane (2017, pp. 62-63) describes happiness as subjective wellbeing which results from pro-social behaviour, and that behaviour is a cause of happiness, rather than a consequence.

In recent years, available evidence reveals that researchers have increasingly become interested in the study of happiness, focusing on several aspects such as its effects on wellbeing (Griffin and Ward, 2016), health (Sabatini, 2014), re-employment (Krause, 2013), and, consumption and brand loyalty (Šeinauskienė et al., 2015). This is because an individual’s level of happiness is a substantial indicator of their subjective welfare, which in turn holds the potential to affect both psychological and physical health (Matus et al., 2016; Agbo and Ngwu, 2017).

Previous studies have also shown that happiness is correlated with several desirable positive outcomes such as prosocial behaviour, economic progress, long-life and success (Agbo and Ngwu, 2017). This has made the pursuit of happiness a fundamental goal for many people. There is also evidence that the pursuit of happiness can be counterproductive. As a result, those who pursue happiness tend to avoid it under conditions that may result to aversive outcomes – a condition described by Agbo and Ngwu, (2017) as aversion to happiness. In this condition people have a negative attitude of positive emotional states, and this negative can result in fear and phobia of happiness (cherophobia) (Joshanloo and Weijers, 2014). This is might originate from their belief that external factors that can lead to happiness are not under our control, as McMahon
(2006, p. 19) states ‘‘happiness is what happens to us, and over that we have no control’’, thus happiness depends on luck, fate and God (Joshanloo et al., 2014) and good emotions followed by bad things (Joshanloo and Weijers 2014), thus it is better to avoid happiness in advance.

Previous studies have distinguished between two types of happiness: hedonic and eudaimonic happiness (Joshanloo and Jarden, 2016; Agbo and Ngwu, 2017). First, hedonic happiness is measured and described via (in) frequent feelings of negative and positive affect. Second, eudaimonic happiness is a diverse strand of views on an individual’s personal growth and progress. Features such as value realisation, goal attainment and self-actualisation are fundamental parts of this strand of happiness. Scholars however agree that affect, an aspect of hedonic happiness, is a robust indicator of happiness. As captured by Raibley (2012), these two strands of happiness are connected, as eudaimonic happiness can lead to the experience of hedonic happiness and the experience of hedonic happiness has the capacity to inform the further pursuit of eudaimonic happiness. One common assumption is that happiness is fundamentally influenced by culture (Stets and Trettevik, 2016; Agbo and Ngwu, 2017).

1.2.2. The Origin of Happiness

What defines and constitutes the origin of happiness has fascinated psychologists and philosophers for many years. Aristotle noted that ‘happiness depends on ourselves’, here, he suggests that happiness can be affective and cognitive or subjective assessments of life satisfaction (Kurtz and Welch, 2016).

In the 17th and 18th centuries, happiness was thought of as something related to virtue, luck or divine favour (McMahon, 2010). In recent times, happiness has been
perceived as a right and a skill that can be developed (Lyubomirsky, 2001; McMahon, 2009). The early presumptions of happiness suggest that because happiness takes substantial effort, discipline and devotion, many people are simply able (McMahon, 2006). In recent times however, these ideas of happiness have been overthrown (ibid. 2009). The present thinking argues that happiness has links to language and culture; it is not necessarily a product of pain as thought of in the past, but something that can be achieved, and even increased (Conzo, 2017).

According to Senik (2014) it was for the very first time in the event of human history that a subsequently large number of audiences were exposed to the novel perspective that they do not need to suffer in the form of an unfailing universal law and that they must expect happiness via good feelings and also by experiencing pleasure. This prospect was further supported by Donaldson et al. (2015) and Veenhoven (2015) and it spread gradually to include men, women, children or all races and backgrounds; the whole of humanity.

It is further supported by Gao and Edelman (2016) and also by Mulgan (2018) in that this new orientation pertaining to the origin of happiness was liberating from a variety of aspects and it laid the foundation for the most noble of the humanitarian sentiments in the form of declining the belief that the concept of suffering is inherently right. However, providing contradictory views and opinions pertaining to the concept of happiness, DelleFave et al. (2016) argue that there is another dark side to the vision pertaining to happiness. The vision, which is also supported by findings from Tay et al. (2015), highlights that happiness in present times has a perspective that it is a specific right. It is not to be won as a result of moral cultivation that is carried out during a
complete course of a well-lived life, but a concept that can be attained via continual pursuance, catching and consumption (Kashdan, 2004). Paulson et al. (2016) asserted that the concept of happiness is experiencing a shift in its perception from living a happy well lived life to experiencing moments in life that bring happiness in smaller infusions of pleasure.

It is further deduced via Paulson et al. (2016), marking a shift from the 17th and 18th centuries to the 19th century perception of the concept of happiness, that although there was no increase of the commitment to happiness but its multi-faceted applications in the field of daily life began to correlate. The advent of the idea via the new middle class as deduced from the findings of Veenhoven (2014) was that they initiated the belief that work must also become a source for the attainment of happiness. A vast literature in the form of Senik (2014); DelleFave et al. (2016); Pugno (2014); Donaldson et al. (2015) and Veenhoven (2015) began to emerge regarding the prominence of being happy along with the personal responsibility to become happy.

2.2.3. Money and Happiness

The connection between money and happiness has been debated for many years: can money buy happiness? Or money does not impact upon happiness. For more than 30 years, many have been convinced of the idea that money has nothing to do with happiness. The Easterlin paradox, which began in 1974 and became very popular as a social science classic, affected this view. The paradox claims that “economic growth did not necessarily lead to more satisfaction or to happiness” (Leonhardt, 2008). In 1974, Easterlin recognised that although income per capita doubled between 1946 and 1970, the average level of happiness remained consistent (Roszkowski, 2007). Moreover, in the
following years, the percentage of happiness remained the same (Diener and Biswas, 2002).

‘Poor but happy’ is an idea that captured significant attention for centuries. A lot of religious, philosophers, researchers and the media have discussed these titles ‘poor but happy’ and ‘rich but unhappy’ until they became common complementary stereotypes (Kay and Jost, 2003). These stereotypes might seem an attempt to decorate the reality and conceal injustice in established systems as described by Jost and Banaji (1994) as system-justification. In other words, it reflects that inequality and an unfair system are acceptable societal norms. While Lane (1959) found that the above stereotype is one way to convince poor people to accept their situation, at the same time it passes a message that “no one has it all” (Kay and Jost, 2003, p. 824).

Kay and Jost (2003) emphasise that even if there is no evidence that the ‘poor but happy’ stereotype aims to justify an unfair system, insisting on these common stereotypes might encourage the spread of further unhelpful tropes such as ‘men are competent but not likeable’, while ‘women are likeable but incompetent’. Thus, even if poor people appear to be happy, the reality is that rich people are in general happier (Firebaugh and Schroeder, 2009; Bundervoet, 2013) and there are many studies that prove the positive correlation between income and wellbeing (Diener and Diener, 1995; Ryan and Deci 2000).

Layard (1980) argues that happiness and riches go together, and people will not seek to become rich if they believe it will not make them happier. Swift (2007) argues that although lots of people are convinced with the idea that money is unimportant in making people happy, they still behave in a way that concentrates on increasing their
Lee (2006) believes that there is a positive relation between money and happiness. He argues that the idea of money cannot buy happiness is a discovery made by some social scientists and economists for the sake of their goals in drawing more taxes and improving the government exchequer. Although Lee insists on the relationship between money and happiness, he admits that seeking wealth and increasing one’s income cannot guarantee eternal happiness. Brooks (2013) argues that happiness dissipates after a few months even, if the material item leading to happiness was something that they really wanted. Swift (2007) summarises the vision of philosophers and religious leaders that to strive to improve one’s financial situation may contribute in increasing happiness if it is for the right reasons such charities and donations.

Saunders (1996) and Roszkowski and Grabie (2007) believe that despite the relation between money and happiness being complicated, income is associated with happiness. Barford (2011) argues that the idea of the ‘happy poor’ is fictional and hard to believe. He provides plenty of evidence that the poor are more vulnerable to crises and psychological problems, especially the women, according to the Health Survey for England (2006). The bar graph in figure 2.1 below illustrates that the poor are the least happy group due to the inequality gap between them and the rich.
Saunders, (1996), Roszkowski and Grabie (2007) and Borrero *et al.*, (2013) state that the influence of money in raising the level of happiness is stronger in less wealthy people populations whose income is at the bottom of income distribution. This is because a raise of their income will change their social and financial level potentially taking them out of deprivation and poverty, thus raising their happiness level unlike wealthier people who live in comfort without suffering from the effects of poverty (Borrero *et al.*, 2013). This explains why an increase in income does not raise levels of happiness in the long run.

Bundervoet (2013) states that poor countries are not happier than rich nations drawing on the first World Happiness Report of 2012 that stated the Scandinavian countries are at the top of the list of happiness, while poor African countries occupy the bottom of the list. Wolfer (2008) states that even if it is easy to prove that the happiness index is higher in rich countries and that rich people are happier, that does not necessary relate to the money per se. It may be associated with other factors, such as freedom, health care and other public facilities that poor countries do not have. This again
emphasises the relation between richness and happiness, and that richness influences happiness regarding the options wealth can facilitate.

Wolfer (2008) suggests that it is better to have a balance in life and understand that money is not everything, but at the same time it is not unimportant. Dunn et al., (2008) argues that it is not about having money, but the way it is used that could make a person happier. They add that “spending on others may promote happiness” However, this was not supported with enough evidence.

It is noticeable from the previous arguments that the relationship between money and happiness is complex. Some think that money is not linked to happiness, while others believe that it is one of the main causes of happiness. It is hard to deny the role of money in people's lives. It might be considered something that people take for granted, but people mostly feel of how valuable an item they own is, when they lose it – see Figure 2.2 ‘The Value of Something’.

**Figure 2.2: The Value of Something**

![The Value of Something](image)

Source: University of Kent (2014)
This is similar to an example of an employee who might not become happier when their salary increases but is clearly upset if the salary is reduced. So, it affects people's feelings in one way or another.

2.2.3.1. Happiness and Social Comparison

In addition to the above arguments regarding the link between money and happiness, what is surprising is that the level of happiness according to Easterlin (1996) and Firebaugh and Schroeder (2009) is affected when people compare themselves with the social and financial situation of others. Easterlin (1996, p. 140) states that “happiness varies directly with one’s own income and inversely with the income of others”.

According to Firebaugh and Schroeder (2009, p.808) “happiness in a society does not increase as incomes rise, but it obtained from having more than one’s peers have—one’s relative, not absolute, income”. Thus, money by itself cannot give lasting happiness and this support strongly the Easterlin Paradox and raise another issue that social comparison makes the money matter.

The sociology and psychology emphasise the idea that individuals operate within reference groups that are considered standard to which people compare themselves. According to Thompson and Hickey (2005, p. 145) “Reference groups are groups that people refer to when evaluating their personal qualities, circumstances, attitudes, values and behaviours”. According to Tomlinson (1991) globalisation led to homogenisation across societies, thus impacts upon people's needs. People compare their status to those around them, and consequently adapt their behaviour and expectations, which in turn can affect long-term happiness.
It is not the idea of comparing richer countries with poorer countries, but happiness depends on people’s status ranking within their own country (Layard, 1980). Thus, happiness may not increase easily; even if the government raise the nation’s income (Easterlin, 1996) the happiness level will remain the same or people may become dissatisfied, not because they have a higher goal, but because of the social comparison (Borrero et al., 2013).

According to the above argues people care a lot about comparing themselves to others. They feel happy if their standard of living is better or at least equal to others around them. According to Kempen (2003), poor people care about their status and a lot of them adopt Deceptive Status Signalling (DSS), strategies that are either with zero cost depending on their talent of pretending that they can buy expensive products, or sometimes may cost a little amount of money to buy counterfeit versions of brand-name goods, for example. This phenomenon raises the question of why poor people buy such goods that are often of lower quality, while they can buy other items of higher quality and at a reasonable price. One reason behind this may be the desire to signal wealth to the surrounded community.

2.2.3.2. Income Inequality and Happiness

Many researchers find that there is a relation between income inequality and wellbeing (Kahn et al., 2000; Muramatsu, 2003; Chiavegatto Filho et al., 2013; Marshall et al., 2014). Income inequality, according to Charles-Coll (2011, p.17) is the “negative connotation for a distribution of whatever assignation of interest to a defined group of recipient units (commonly individuals, households, countries or any other combination of units who can be defined as identifiable entities)”.
Income inequality causes social problems, especially when the difference between the poor and rich incomes is significant (Pickett and Wilkinson, 2015). A notable example is the USA where the gap between the rich is vast and continues to increase year on year (Gardner and Abraham, 2011). Oishi et al. (2011) observe that income inequality is one of the reasons why Americans have not become happier over the last 40 years, and because of social-comparison processes, it is difficult to become happy when you believe that your income is unfair. Glass (2015) finds that income inequality has a negative impact on all groups in the society and not only poor people. Income inequality is associated with problems such as wellbeing, crime and life expectancy, and according to Boyceet et al. (2010) income itself has no impact on happiness, but the rank of income matters in raising life satisfaction. In other words, money makes people happier if they have a higher income than others (Diener et al., 1985). Layard (2005) describes an increase in income as a phenomenon that equals pollution because it causes misery and unhappiness in other people, which is why Layard suggested that employees with a higher income should face higher income tax (as a punishment) which will inform the person of the negative impact of their high salary. Layard (2005, p. 228) added “if we make taxes commensurable to the damage that an individual does to others when he earns more, then he will only work harder if there is a true net benefit to society as a whole”.

The question here is, does Layard think of the happiness of this employee who may have worked very hard indeed to gain such a salary? Added to that, does Layard encourage the employee indirectly to work less hard? Layard implies that if working hard benefits the employee only, and not society, it is worthless. Indeed, from a different dimension, income increases may benefit society in an indirect way such as the
employee's family who benefit as members of the society. The employee in this case deserves this salary, especially if it is accordance with fair financial policy that gives the salary through clear and written law. In addition, the net benefit to the society supposes to be part of the organisational attitude, not only an individual attitude. This is because the employee is a part and reflection of the organisational vision, not the opposite. Thus, instead of accusing the employee of being responsible for the misery of others because of their higher salary, the system of the organisation that discriminates negatively or positively between employees ought to be reconsidered.

The surprising fact here concerns why economic growth and the rise of national income in America does not make any difference to the happiness level of the people, while Oishi et al. (2011) claim that economic growth in other countries such as Denmark, France and Germany relate positively to happiness. Oishi et al. (2011, p.1099) state that “income growth without income disparity is likely to result in an increase in the mean happiness of a general population”. Whereas, Easterlin (2004) believes that the difference between America and other countries does not really reflect the relationship between economic growth and happiness, but rather factors such as family life, health and work.

On the other hand, Blanchflower (2004) in his exploration of the economics of happiness provided evidence that the result between randomly sampled populations from the USA and UK are very similar. The level of happiness decreased in the United States from the 1970s to the late 1990s. In addition, the life satisfaction in the UK over the same period of time has been flat. The data covered by Blanchflower supports the Easterlin paradox that economic growth may not relate to a nation’s happiness and that not every increase in income will cause an increase in happiness level.
The above discussion clarifies how social comparison as well as income inequality can influence happiness and make money a factor linked to happiness. Moreover, income development might not raise happiness in case of inequality and in case of raising the income in the same percentage between all income levels because it means that the gaps will remain the same.

Alter (2014) finds that when you ask people how happy they are, people tend to measure their happiness with what is happening now. They do not tend to associate happiness with what happened in the past or what is expected in the future. Alter (2014) states that a sense of purpose in life can make the people happy, even if they are not rich. In other words, people can find happiness in things such as a relationship with their God, family and friends. These things can offer them long term and stable happiness. This leads us to research happiness at work for factors that lead to employee happiness and discuss how it impacts performance.

2.3. Happiness at Work
2.3.1. What Makes Employees Happy?
Happiness at work is considered a new concept that is still poorly understood (Achor, 2010). For a long time, the focus was on measuring job satisfaction, which has a large amount of literature, rather than focusing on measuring workers’ happiness (Diener et al., 1999; Meer and Wielers, 2013). Currently many organisations pay attention to employee turnover and the impact of this on productivity. Turnover according to Gustafson (2002) costs an organisation around $3,000 to $10,000 per hour for each employee. Thus, raising loyalty and satisfaction is essential in reducing numbers of leavers (Guimaraes, 1997; Smith, 2000; Firth et al., 2004).
The positive results of the happiest organisations around the world proved that happy employee is more productive, healthier, and loyal to the workplace and that high level of happiness beneficial both individuals and organisation in short and long term and makes these organisations able to compete and sustain (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). That is why it is important for organisation to deliver happiness to gain happiness in return (Hsieh, 2012). According to the above views, if happiness at work is this crucial then what makes employees happy? The literature highlighted many factors and reasons which associate with employees’ happiness at work.

2.3.1.1. Employed People are Happier

First, it is important to know that in general employed people are happier than unemployed people (Kahneman and Krueger, 2006) and according to Goldsmith et al. (1996) unemployed people are also less likely to feel their life is worthwhile. On the other hand, that does not mean if the unemployed person was to get a job they will become happy, because the psychological impact of their past could lead them to be anxious and in fear of losing the job. The fear of future unemployment is explained by the ‘Clark hypothesis’ (Clark et al., 2003). Here, employees need to feel that they are secure in their job to become happier (Knabe and Tzel, 2011). It also shows how security is considered an essential element in people’s happiness at work. Clark et al., (2003) used the term ‘scarring descriptively’ to describe how unemployed people feel threatened and insecure, because their unemployment history affects their future outlook, consequently it decreases their satisfaction and overall level of happiness. So, what makes employed people happier than unemployed people is not the income they have, but as Meer and
Wielers (2013) state, the difference in happiness level between them and is due to the work itself and intrinsic rewards that give employees satisfaction and make them happy.

2.3.1.2. Happiness at life and Happiness at work

Individual’s attitude towards life affects their attitudes towards work (Achor, 2010; Barsade and Gibson, 2007; Schein, 1992; Hod Orkibi, & Yaron Ilan Brandt, 2015; Hobfoll, 2011). Their positivity as a personal resource affects their happiness in general and transfers into happiness at work (Hobfoll, 2011; Hod Orkibi, & Yaron Ilan Brandt, 2015). The reason of that is that positivity makes people able to cope with life and job despite the hard circumstances (Hayman, 2005) and it makes people focus on positive side of different situations (Achor, 2010). Alessandri et al., (2015, p. 4) state that “viewing oneself, life, and the future under a positive outlook attests to a basic predisposition that exerts an important biological function in making people prone to cope with life, despite adversities, failures, and loss”

Dugguh and Ayaga (2014) emphasis the reciprocal relationship between employees’ attitude towards life in general and their attitude towards work, and that satisfaction in general life reflects positively on satisfaction in the workplace. The issue with Dugguh and Ayaga’s research is that the context of the study was Nigeria, where finding a job is a significant concern by itself, more so than job satisfaction per se. Moreover, individuals in Nigeria, according to Dugguh and Ayaga (2014) might work in a few jobs because of their hard and poor life circumstances, thus looking for a job with specific criteria that makes them happy is not a priority; the priority is to have a job that “pays a decent wage” or indeed, “getting a wage just enough to ‘take them home’” (Dugguh & Ayaga, 2014 p. 17). On the other hand, the situation in the UAE is very
different because people do not have to work in multiple jobs to secure a living and the social facilities such as education and healthcare are free to them, thus job satisfaction and happiness at work is an important concern.

2.3.1.3. A Sense of Purpose

Having a higher purpose, something bigger than us may make us happy (Hsieh, 2012). A sense of purpose gives meaning to a job; people are more engaged (Ryff and Singer, 1998; Zika and Chamberlain, 1992; Rosso et al., 2010). It is important for employees to know why they are here, the difference they make and how they are a part of their organisation’s achievements and successes (Steger et al., 2012).

Meaningful work according to Steger et al. (2012) is work that participates positively across two levels: personal development of employees; and, their contributions at the organisational level. Nevertheless, what is meaningful for one employee might not be meaningful to another and what is meaningful now might not be in the future (Thacker, 2017) that is why Thacker (2017) suggests that employees themselves should aim to understand what is meaningful to them by recognising their own value and by knowing their unique character and the contribution they can make. In other words, rather than focusing on ‘what is the meaning of work’ it is better, according to Thacker (2017, p. 17) to focus on what is meaningful for the employee leading to more authentic outcomes.

It is worth mentioning that many researchers have linked between meaningful work and mental health (Bolger et al., 1989; Steger et al., 2012; Arnold et al., 2007; Allan et al., 2015) and find that meaningful work can participate positively in avoiding the negative effects of work stresses and minimise the risk of anxiety and depression. At
the same time, some researchers find that those who experience high stress indicate low job satisfaction, even if their job has a great meaning and an effect on the greater good such as nurses who participate in helping people and saving lives, they indicate low satisfaction (Zangaro and Soeken, 2007). Thus, even if meaningful work is an important issue, several researchers have debated whether it is directly related to job satisfaction (Fried and Ferris, 1987; Humphrey et al., 2007) or it comes in between job satisfaction and other issues such as autonomy and the nature of the job (Liden et al., 2000; Renn and Vandenberg, 1995).

It can be noted from the above that meaningful work is an important factor related to employee happiness, but its influence may depend on the job characteristics that the organisation offers. Another aspect that makes a job valuable and meaningful is the positive social impact that the organisation makes towards society. Many researchers have focused on the positive impacts of social activities on their profits, consumers and environment (McWilliams and Siegel, 2001; Arx and Ziegler, 2008). It has also been proven that cooperative social responsibilities influence an employee’s commitment and welfare. Moreover, it affects positively on organisational performance and sustainability (Ali et al., 2007).

2.3.1.4. Social Support

Another factor which associates with employees’ happiness is social support and the type of communication inside the organisation (Achor, 2010; Plester and Winquist, 2015). Social Support is support that the individuals have through social links or ties with other individuals, groups and the society (Kahn et al., 1964; Caplan, 1974; Linet et al., 1979; and House 1981). These social ties play a key role in minimising the negative
effects of pressures and strains (Park, 2004) and impact positively on employees’
physical health (Hemingway and Marmot, 1999) and happiness (Cohen et al., 2000). In
addition, employees with low levels of social support are more susceptible to different
illnesses such as depression and heart disease (Rozanski et al., 1999).

On the other hand, Buunk et al. (1989) found that social support does not have an
impact at work, but may reduce stress reactions; however, this effect for him was not
clear in high stressor environments. Although Buunk et al. (1989) stated that it is hard to
find a connection between social support and work, and there was no clear measurement
or evidence of the role of social support at work at that time, and the literature confirms
that a good relationship between employees and good levels of socialising has a
significant impact on satisfaction (Park, 2004; Meer and Wielers, 2013). Moreover, Park
(2004) states that social support at work and high job control leads to low depression and
high job performance. Although social support has an influence in employees’
performance and satisfaction, social support may become less effective according to the
structure of the organisation, type of work and environment (Park, 2004). We can note so
far that despite social support and a sense of purpose being related to employees’
satisfaction, employees’ feelings might be affected positively or negatively with other
factors. Thus, finding the right balance between different variables such as workload and
social support is essential to avoid the negative impacts of pressure leading to employees
becoming healthy and happy over the long term.
2.3.1.5. Appreciation

Appreciation is the recognition and enjoyment of the good qualities of someone or something (en.oxforddictionaries.com). It is a human need, which is why humans must be shown that they are useful and meaningful in the workplace, that they deserve respect, they matter, and that their contributions to the organisation are important. Many researchers study the significant role of appreciation on employees’ satisfaction and find that employee recognition is positively related to increasing an employee’s overall satisfaction (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999; Nelson, 2012; Roger, 2016). It also reflects an employee’s behaviour by raising their motivation and loyalty levels (Al-Hummadi, 2013).

Giving recognition can positively influence those who receive it as well as on those who give it (Roger, 2016). It raises the manager’s confidence and dedication level to the organisation since they are praising the work of those they supervise, meaning they are contributing positively. Thus, it is important to create a ‘well-rounded culture’ of recognition where all employees have a level of empowerment that allows giving and receiving recognition as part of the culture (ibid.).

Siegrist (1996) highlights the dangers of an imbalance between high efforts employees demonstrate and a low level of appreciation, because a lack of appreciation raises the chances of disengagement and a desire to leave the job (Abassi and Hollman, 2000). According to Alnaqbi (2011) and Al-Hummadi (2013), a lack of recognition is one of the main reasons behind employee turnover in the UAE and it is an important factor for motivating employees and increasing their productivity.

It can be observed that the factors that participate in making employees happy are interactional and multi-dimensional, in other words, these factors used to be seen as the
responsibility of managers; however, but it is not one-way process, it is an interactional process where employees must participate fully to raise their own happiness. For example, creating a meaningful job is something that the organisation can offer, at the same time the employee must seek a job that they will love to do and give meaning to their life. Moreover, employees need appreciation and positive feedback from their employers to motivate them and make them happy to work in the organisation, at the same time, they also must participate in the appreciation system by giving appreciation to other employees. The space of interactions depends on the job nature and the freedom given to the employees to express appreciation in such a way.

2.3.1.6. Development Possibilities
Meer and Wielers (2013) find that development possibilities influence workers’ happiness. London (1993) suggests that managers should be involved in the career development process by providing employees with professional planning that goes beyond the present. This plan includes reviewing employee training needs to achieve their objectives, aiming to move through a clear series of career stages.

2.3.1.7. Empowerment
Another factor associated with employees’ happiness at work is empowerment. Empowerment is the authority that has been given to employees from their managers to do their job (London, 1993), increase their autonomy as well as their responsibilities (Boudrias et al., 2009). Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2013) suggest that psychological empowerment (PE) such as supervision style; job design, which positively affects behavioural empowerment (BE); and, outcomes such as employees’ participation and creativity are all key factors. Leaders who set a good example, involve employees in
decision making and interact deeply with all employees are those that effectively empower employees through good supervisors’ empowering management practices (SEMP) (Arnold et al., 2000). Empowerment reflects the level of trust, flexibility and freedom given to the employees to involve them in organisational decisions and strategic planning (Ketokivi and Castaner, 2004). It is somewhat surprisingly from the observations of Fernandez and Moldogaziey (2013) that the impact of empowerment on performance and innovation requires patience from the management to show progress.

2.3.1.8. Autonomy

According to Meer and Wielers (2013) one of the things that make employees happy is challenging work with a high level of autonomy. They found that autonomy from a sociological and psychological perspective makes employees happier, above other factors such as hours of work and income. Thus, to raise employees’ happiness and encourage them to perform in their best Meer and Wielers, (2013) suggested “designing jobs that have a high amount of autonomy, in which employees can develop themselves, in which the work pressure is not high and in which employees do not need to work irregular hours” (Meer and Wielers, 2013, p. 367).

It is worth mentioning that more highly educated workers often indicate a low level of job satisfaction (Clark, 1999; Grund and Sliwka, 2005; Meer and Wielers, 2013). The negative relationship between higher levels of education and job satisfaction might be because highly educated employees seek jobs with more autonomy and more development opportunities, and if they do not have such opportunities, this will affect their job satisfaction (Meer and Wielers, 2013). Another reason might be that their
current job does not satisfy their higher expectations and do not fit their career plans (Hall, 1994) which in turn influences wellbeing.

What can be recognised from the discussions above is that even if there are factors that participate positively in raising employees job satisfaction, there are other factors that might negatively affect their happiness (Meer and Wielers, 2013) for example, a sense of purpose and having challenging work leads to worker happiness; however, specific pressure can lead to employees becoming unhappy.

Generally, identifying factors that help in raising an employee’s happiness and finding a mutually beneficial way to apply them at work will encourage rising levels of happiness at work. Applying these factors as well as other positive factors can be easier by creating a positive company culture (Hsieh, 2012) which encourages employees to feel happy and authentic and intend to stay in the organisation (Thacker, 2017). According to Denison (1984), organisations with a strong culture perform better than others, and this will be reflected on the “short-term performance and long-term survival” (Denison 1984, p.6). To guarantee the sustainably of the culture and employees’ wellbeing, leaders need to concentrate on one of the key components of culture, which is the values (Rokeach 1979).

2.3.1.9. Organisational Physical Environment

One of the main factors to affect employees’ happiness is the physical environment of the workplace. Some believe that changing the physical environment is not a major issue and has no influence on an employee, so some physical workspaces are designed according to functional effectiveness, without taking into consideration the influence of the physical environment on satisfaction (McCoy, 2002). While changing the physical environment is a proven factor in changing organisational culture, it also reflects
the organisational values and signals how leaders care about employees’ wellbeing (Miller et al., 2014).

The organisational environment should change according to the adopted values. Miller et al. (2014) shed light on the importance of the workspace in creating a positive culture. They believe that “space is the catalyst to disrupt and transform culture” (ibid. 2014, p. xvi). Changing the space and reshaping the organisation’s physical environment according to employees’ needs can help in shifting the culture, motivating the employees and making them more engaged, creative and productive. It also facilitates any implementation of new rules and programmes.

If leaders believe in the importance of employee happiness and strengthening a cooperative culture, they need to focus on changing the physical environment to fit with their values by making it healthier, more pleasant, full of fun, and well decorated. It is also important to mention that all employees should participate in the concept of the new physical environment and be a part of the change.

It is easy to recognise the difference between the organisations that concentrate on the positive physical environment and the other that still under the old style of the work environment from the first moment you visit.

2.3.1.10. Other Factors Relating to Happiness at Work in the UAE

Gregory (2009, p. 29) suggests many reasons that participate in employee dissatisfaction or discouragement at work such as “high stress, lack of communication within the company, lack of recognition, or limited opportunity for growth”. While Walker (2001) suggested seven factors that can raise job satisfaction level and enhance
employee retention. These factors are appreciation, compensation for work performed, provision of challenging work, chances to learn and be promoted, appealing organisational atmosphere, positive relationships with colleagues, good communications and healthy balance of both personal and professional life.

According to Kapur (2014) 75% of the UAE respondents on a survey done by Bayt.com agree that a good work-life balance will raise their motivation and ensure continuity of employment. What is wondering that 60% claimed that their organisations provide them with such a balance. In contrast, a research done by (Sulaiman 2007; Abdullaet al., 2010 and Al-Hummadi, 2013) revealed that job satisfaction level is very low in the UAE public sector and that affect employee’s performance and attendance. Another study done with 15,000 employees in the six Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC) (Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar) across 20 different sectors shows that the high cost of living in the Gulf countries leads to high level of dissatisfaction among the employees. Despite the recent increase in salaries in most of these countries, however, the high cost of living did not make the annual salary increase as a valuable component, which contributes in raising the job satisfaction level. For example, the increase of salaries in the UAE was 17% in 2008 while at the same time the increase in the average living costs reached 37% showing a gap of 20% lowering overall standards of living (Emaratalyoum.com).

A study conducted in 2010 in the Dubai police service with 1,017 participants indicated a low satisfaction; the main reason affecting satisfaction included salaries, allowances and promotions, which was deemed to be due to the high living costs in Dubai in contrast to other cities in the UAE. On the other hand, Al-Hummadi (2013)
finds that, although the public sector gives fewer benefits than the private sector, resignation rates in the private sector are higher than the public sector in the UAE. This is due to a variety of reasons, such as wages and fear of losing a job in private sector. This is because in the UAE's private sector, it is more common to lose your job due to market fluctuations, unlike the public sector where the Emirati's rights guarantee a secure position, but this alone cannot ensure happiness.

A question that might arise here is why the above results in the UAE show that people in the sample group care about money as a major factor in raising their job satisfaction, and many answers might come to mind based on the earlier discussion: 2.2.3. Money and Happiness, whereby people are concerned about money in terms of social comparison and for income inequality.

Another reason that might be deducted from this research finding is that when an organisation does not invest in cooperative culture and employee happiness, the only factor that might retain employees stay is the salary. This makes income a top priority within the sample responses in the UAE previews study. While it could be argued that if the organisation cares about other factors that participate in raising happiness, this might change employees’ attitudes and priorities towards their job and make money just a part of their wellbeing, but not everything.

A research report by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) in 2013 regarding job satisfaction and engagement with 600 U.S. participants shows the main factors that influence satisfaction, as follows: career development, relationship with management, compensation, benefits, work environment, conditions for engagement, engagement opinions and engagement behaviours. These elements are not limited to the
U.S. and could easily apply to any employee in any country around the world. However, priorities may vary from one society to another due to the differentiation backgrounds, cultures and societal values.

It is easy to note similarities in needs of employees, for example Kapur (2014) suggested eight ways to make UAE employees remain in their jobs: compensation and benefits, work-life balance, corporate culture/work environment, good rapport with co-workers, career advancement, brand/corporate reputation, growing business/opportunity and inspirational leadership; factors similar to the U.S. study above. Moreover, Alnaqbi (2011) suggests some changes that should be taken in UAE government organisations to raise satisfaction and meet needs as well as minimising staff turnover. The two main changes to implement, according to Alnaqbi, are: raise employee skills and self-confidence by providing them with the techniques that improve commitment to the organisation; and, give them the liberty to manage their work and projects.

One of the examples that has succeeded in raising employee satisfaction in a very short time is in the Department of Economic Development (DED) in Dubai. The results of their Job Satisfaction Survey for the second half of 2006 demonstrated remarkable development. According to Ali Ibrahim (the General Director Deputy for Executive Affairs in DED), the reason behind the significant increase in results as well as productivity is the focus the organisation gives to their employees by following the Dubai Strategic Plan, which is centred on achieving excellence in government through staff development and encouragement. DED began with using surveys to measure the overall levels of job satisfaction (alittihad.ae, 2007). The survey was conducted via a questionnaire, with five main categories according to the Dubai Government Excellence
Program as follows: motivation, transparency, workforce development, job satisfaction and support services. After that the questionnaire was distributed, over 77% of the total number of DED staff returned their feedback. The organisation analysed the questionnaires and recognised the areas for improvement and by determining such areas, the organisation was able to increase productivity as clarified in table 2.1.

**Table 2-1: Department of Economic Development Result - Dubai, 2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Categories</th>
<th>Questionnaire Results</th>
<th>First half of 2006</th>
<th>Second half of 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stimulation</td>
<td></td>
<td>61.6%</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td></td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce development</td>
<td></td>
<td>57.4%</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td>70.4%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support services</td>
<td></td>
<td>64.3%</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The issue in the above example is that raising satisfaction ought to be a continuous and organic process, as opposed to reactionary. This is because the satisfaction that rose so quickly might be a reaction to new initiatives that the organisation adopts, and not as a result of a strategy that focuses on strengthening organisational culture (Achor, 2010).

In addition to all the factors that affect happiness in general and particularly in the UAE, there is an important issue that is not covered in the literature: culture, but not
organisational culture, but rather the society culture and the relation between three dimensions: culture, social comparison and job satisfaction. High-context cultural needs are different to Low-context cultural needs. HC cultures according to Nishimura et al. (2008, p. 785) are: “Very stable, unified, cohesive and slow to change” and “rely on their history, their status, their relationships, and a plethora of other information, including religion, to assign meaning to an event” and this highly applies to the UAE. While in LC cultures “value individualism over collectivism and group harmony. Individualism is characterised by members prioritising individual needs and goals over the needs of the group” (ibid.).

The culture of the UAE has been built on communication and vital social events. It has been classified as high-context culture according to Nishimura et al., (2008), who indeed categorise all Arabic countries as high-context cultures.

What is worth mentioning is that in an HC culture the social life is always active, with a lot of family gatherings and occasions. This may be considered as a source of happiness, but at the same time it may be considered a pressure that effects people, jobs and life satisfaction. In other words, people see one another very frequently, and then arguably compare themselves, as discussed in this chapter 2.2.3.1 (Happiness and Social Comparison). Social comparisons effect happiness level and can lead people to prioritise money as a marker of their success and happiness. Thus, HC culture might be considered pressure that makes people always seek more money and direct their thoughts for more shopping of clothes, jewelleries and other expensive stuff. Some might consider this phenomenon as a contemporary global attitude and not only related to HC culture, but from this research view, an HC culture, especially in GCC countries, tend to care about
money because of the social comparison and the role that money plays in covering an expensive lifestyle and the expenses related to an HC culture, where people are expected to act in a certain way, such as regularly wearing new clothes and buying expensive gifts for different social occasions. This argument does not mean that HC culture must be replaced with LC culture, but rather encourages people in HC culture to stop comparing themselves with others and engaging in rivalry.

Although the fact that Islamic religion urges Muslims to be moderate and not extravagant or waste their money and the blessings they have, for example in Ch17:29 “And do not make your hand [as] chained to your neck or extend it completely and [thereby] become blamed and insolvent” (www.quran.com), customs and habits of the UAE are highly influenced by appearances and materialism (Moussly, 2011) leading to a large number of employees with low salaries comparing themselves to those with high salaries. This then tempts some people to leave their jobs to seek better wages to pay for the lifestyle they desire, and in doing so, minimising the gap between income ranks in the same community. Thus, it is crucial that an organisation concentrates on the cultural background to be able to control the factors that affect happiness.

The above factors that participate in an employee’s happiness are not the only elements; there are other factors that contribute in increasing happiness. The next section of this chapter will discuss an important factor, which is the spiritual/religious side and how it is strongly related to happiness.
2.4. Religion and Happiness: Generally, and in the Workplace

2.4.1. Religion and Happiness

The pursuit of happiness has long since been a huge area of debate over the centuries. Religion can influence the conceptual notion of happiness for people in the workplace and at home. McFaul (2006) and Abuznaid (2006) write about the crucial role that religion can have across various societies and is entrenched in many facets of human life such as our cultures, education opportunities and government policy. McFaul (2006) argues that at the centre of culture lies religion as it provides the lifeblood of our humanity and the values to which people live.

There are of course counter arguments, as illustrated below. One famous sceptic is Freud who announced in 1901 that religion is pure fantasy linked to a psychological aspect of human beings and their desire to be under control of external forces. He also insisted that happiness associated with religion is a fake feeling, which quickly fades (Banks 1973). Another famous critic of the idea of religion is Marx, who considered religion as a man-made product imposed on communities by people with power. He put forward the idea that religion does not meet true happiness, but in fact cancellation of religion would indeed achieve happiness (Swatos 1998). Now, many authors are affected by the communist ideas against religions such as Larrimore (2010) who argues that there is a huge gap between religion and real life. He believes that religion is something internal and not related to modernity. He also claims that religion is fragile in the face of challenges such as globalisation. He explains that the reason for associating happiness with religion may come with the surrounded environment such as “Lights a Shabbat candle in Judaism, Dances at a corroborée? (Australian Aboriginal dance) and Breaks a fast?” (Larrimore, 2010, p.575) in Christianity and Islam. In addition, Richard Dawkins
states that it is easy to get rid of religion, because of the lack of evidence when comparing to the power of science. He states: “I really, really would like to see religion go away altogether” (Chotiner, 2013), so religion in Dawkins’ and Larimore’s view, has no place in modern life.

In the UAE, the geographical focus of this study, Islam is the official religion of the country. Despite this, the government respects the freedom of worship and adopts a relatively tolerant policy towards other beliefs and religions; that is, it will rarely intervene in non-Muslims activities. This policy originates from the teachings of the Holy Qu’ran Ch109:6 “For you is your religion, and for me is my religion” and as evidence the UAE has been ranked the third most peaceful country in the Middle East and North Africa, according to the newly released annual Global Peace Index (Maceda, 2017).

As a Muslim society, Islam is an integral part of UAE daily life. According to the Holy Qu’ran Chapter 20:123 “whoever follows My guidance will neither go astray [in the world] nor suffer [in the Hereafter]”. Muslims interpret this as: the better Muslim people are the happier and more satisfied. It is noted that Muslims believe that Islam is linked to all aspects of the life (Azayem and Hedayat-Diba, 1994; Abdi and Dato, 2014), hence, it is necessary to focus on how Muslims view happiness directly and indirectly and how Islam relates to the work environment.

Islam contains many rules that help humans reach satisfaction, peace of mind and happiness and as a result, happiness in hereafter. An Islamic view of happiness is shown directly in many places in the holy Qur'an and Hadith: "The collected reports of what the Prophet Muhammad said and did during his lifetime" (Dodge, 2009), including methods and instructions to become happier. For example, it is stated in Qu’ran (Ch16:97)
“Whoever does good whether male or female and he is a believer, We will most certainly make him live a good life, and We will most certainly give them their reward for the best of what they did”. Prophet Mohammed also states: “Among the things that can bring happiness to the son of Adam are a pious wife, a good home and a good means of transport” (Sunnah.com, Ahmed, I, No. 168).

What is surprising is that the word happiness (Saada in Arabic) is not mentioned in the Holy Qur’an directly, except for twice in one chapter 11:105: “The Day it comes no soul will speak except by His permission. And among them will be the wretched and the prosperous (happy)” and in verse 108 “And as for those who were [destined to be] happy, they will be in Paradise, abiding therein as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except what your Lord should will - a bestowal uninterrupted”. Happiness in these verses is associated with people in heaven, which raises an important topic; there is a kind of happiness that people do not experience in this life: ‘eternal happiness’, which not distorted by any negative feelings. Associating the word happiness with paradise may explain what is mentioned in the Qu’ran as the first prayer for Muslims in heaven, which states in Ch35:34-35 “[and they will say], Praise to Allah, who has removed from us [all] sorrow. Indeed, our Lord is Forgiving and Appreciative - He who has settled us in the home of duration out of His bounty. There touches us not in it any fatigue, and there touches us not in it weariness [of mind]”.

What can be understood from this argument is that in this life, whatever people do to raise their happiness, they will not be able to reach the final happiness, that of Heaven, which is why the first prayer in heaven is thankfulness for God who removes all the reasons behind the negative feelings such as sadness, anger and depression, thus human
beings can live in eternal happiness. This supports the view of McMahon (2006) and Joshanloo et al., (2014) in that the external factors that raise people’s happiness in this life is not under the control of people, which is why there is no eternal happiness in this life.

On the other hand, happiness is mentioned indirectly in the Qu’ran and Sunnah. Muslims believe that Islam covers all the reasons of happiness spiritually and physically in detail (Azayem and Hedayat-Diba, 1994). This view becomes clear when compared to the principles of Islam within the global trends of the modern concept of happiness. One example of this principle according to Franks (2015, p.32) is “Practice acts of kindness”, meaning, give people life in engage for good deeds, thus they experience positive feelings and become happier. At the same time, kindness is one of the main things in Islam; Prophet Muhammad stated: “Do not think little of any good deed, even if it is just greeting your brother with a cheerful smile.” and “To smile in the face of your brother is charity given on your behalf.” and yet “Worship God and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the poor, the neighbour who is near of kin, the neighbour who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (they meet). Verily, God does not like those who are proud and boastful” (Qu’ran Ch4:36).

Another principle suggested as away to increase happiness is to express gratitude (Lyubomirsky, 2008); by expressing gratitude and counting blessings, people will experience better health (Emmons and McCullough, 2003) a high-level of self-worth, self-esteem and happiness (Franks, 2014). This issue is mentioned in many verses in Qur’an such as Ch2:108: “O you who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship”.
Counting blessings and be grateful as it is makes individuals less concerned about comparing themselves with others, especially those who may appear luckier by having more money or a good job. It helps a lot in increasing happiness levels when there are no grudges held against others. This modern method is similar to teachings of Islam. It is stated in the Qu’ran (Ch 20:131) “Do not strain your eyes in longing for the things that we have given to some groups of them to enjoy, the splendor of the life of this world through which we test them. The provision of your Lord is better and more lasting”. Aydin (2013) reported that Islam is a religion of peace and that Islamic laws aim to bring happiness to the individual and society by encouraging Muslims to avoid things that cause misery, thus hinder access for happiness such as envy, jealousy, anger, injustice, pessimism and arrogance.

Another point on how Islamic principles participate in increasing happiness is that the Islamic faith has an established set of clearly defined principles that govern the beliefs and behaviour of Muslims. These principles have their origins in the Qu’ran which teaches Muslims about their God and the reason for their existence in this universe: “And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me” (Holy Qu’ran Chapter, 51:56). Such a notion gives person a sense of purpose, a feeling of security and meets their psychological needs.

In addition, Islam has five pillars called “pillars of Islam”: Faith, prayer, alms, fasting and pilgrimage. As well as six pillars of "belief" “Belief in Allah; Belief in the angels; Belief in the revealed books; Belief in the commissioned Messengers; Belief in the day of Judgment and Belief in the predestination by Allah of all things, both the (seemingly) good and the (seemingly) bad. All of these Islamic foundations consider as a way to
happiness in this world and in hereafter”. Abuznaid (2006) discussed the influence of the five pillars of Islam in relation to people behaviour. He found a direct effect of the pillars on behaviour, as these pillars are something that are practiced daily by Muslims. One example is the influence of the second pillar "Prayer". He argues that prayer makes employee more organised, it also enhances time management skills. Muslims pray five times a day at accurate times; here, Muslims learn to commit to the prayer times, and to respect and manage time more effectively. This reflects the impact of practicing Islam ethics in the workplace and how it may affect employee performance and raise happiness. It also leads us to discover more about the practical side of religion and spiritual life at the workplace and this is what will be investigated in the next part.

2.4.2. Religion and Happiness at Work

The literature displays numerous examples that employees who are free to discuss their religious beliefs at work are often happier than those who not permitted. A study by Lyons et al., (2014) surveyed about 500 Christian employees from different industries in the USA and South Korea, which illustrates that workers who disclose their religion in the workplace have several positive outcomes, including higher job satisfaction and more highly perceived wellbeing, unlike workers who hide their religion and are afraid of discussing it with anyone in the workplace. Moreover, equality between employees’ rights with no religious discrimination have proved to increase productivity, engagement and satisfaction (Skuturna, 2006) and those who suffer discrimination because of factors such as religion, gender or ethnicity report decreases in commitment and job satisfaction (Ensheret et al., 2001) and tend to leave their jobs due to such treatment (Shellenbarger, 1993). Therefore, allowing religious rituals reflects a level of freedom and flexibility at
work and positively effects both employees and the organisation. Skuturna (2006) states that equality and freedom of beliefs participate in increasing productivity, engagement and satisfaction. Lyons et al. (2014), while encouraging religious expression at work, they highlight the difference between religious expression and religious proselytising, which might be considered an infringement on others’ privacy. They also highlight that even with religious expression, an organisational culture and an employee’s background must be considered when talking about religion in the workplace.

Additionally, there are many global laws, such as the Labour Law in the UAE developed in 1980 (www.abudhabi.ae), and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in USA set up to deal with religious expression in the workplace. The Equality Act 2010 in the UK protects employees’ rights and gives them the freedom to worship and practice their religion without any form of discrimination. Under Title VII, wearing a turban, hijab or yarmulke, which are considered basic requirements in each religion, the employer has a legal obligation to grant the request of wearing such clothing if it does not impose a burden or an undue hardship upon others (workplacefairness.org).

On the other hand, some managers consider religion as a problem when it comes to practicing at work (Miller-Merrell, 2012) and this is reflected in the conflict between employee value and manager value (see 2.6 Theoretical Framework). Some managers consider religion problematic because of the consequences arising when all employees go to practice their religion at work; for example, providing an employee time off to worship, attend a mosque or a church, and observe their religious holidays among other examples, can add up to significant absence (Miller-Merrell, 2012).
Since the relationship between a manager and an employee is one of the ten important factors of employee engagement and satisfaction according to Seijts and Crim (2006), a successful manager must find a balance between what is allowed at the workplace and what is not, taking into account people’s rights and the work schedule, which might not always allow employees to take days off or leave the workplace to attend religious occasions. Equality in the workplace (see: www.acas.org.uk) does not mean that the employers must give special attention to religious events, but the rules and policies must fit all the employees’ needs on an equal footing, and not discriminate against a particular group of people. Thus, both employers and employees must strive to achieve an organisational goal of equality.

Employees who feel free to express different aspects of their life, such as religious beliefs, feel more satisfied and happy. Thus, modern organisations need to offer a welcoming environment for all religions and cultures (Tidball, 2014). Vickers (2015) highlights the issue of religion in the workplace and argues that employees have the right to follow a religion, and also to be free from following a religion, highlighting that atheism is protected under statute law. These rights are given to religions and beliefs and apply to political, social and economic ideology (Vickers, 2015). One political example that is not protected by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) is the Klu Klux Klan Adolf Hitler rally, which considered as organisation with political messages (Vickers, 2015, p. 365).

Many leaders have recognised the direct and indirect role of religion in taking decisions and making employees and customers happy (Fernando and Jackson, 2006). This is because the role of religion has been noted as a source of decision-making among
leaders (ibid.). In Sri Lanka, business leaders descend from different religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Hindu and Islamic traditions, and religion plays a crucial role in business decision-making (ibid.). In addition, it is also found that many leaders in the USA are influenced by their religious background in making business decisions (ibid.). Hunt and Vitell (1993) claim that an individual’s personal religion has an impact on their ethical decision-making. In other words, highly religious people have clearly defined moral standards and norms, which play a stronger role in their decisions.

Some researchers separate the spiritual from the religious and insist on the difference between the two concepts (Fernando, 2005a; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003; Paloutzian and Park, 2005; Zinnebauer and Paragament, 2005). While others find that spirituality and religion are connected, and both influence a person’s attitude and life decisions (Kriger and Hanson, 1999; Dent et al., 2005). Whether one group more morally ethical than other beliefs - creeds and religions all have an impact on decision-making within organisations, thus inevitably impact employee satisfaction and happiness (Ali, 1992; Yousaf, 2001). Numerous studies link the internal values of a religion with leadership (Kriger and Seng, 2005). Even in other fields such as healthcare, theology and psychology, the findings show connections between religion-based spirituality in the workplace and a sense of rightness in decision-making (Fernando and Jackson, 2006).

2.4.1. Islamic Ethics and Happiness at Work

Many researchers have focused on ethics in the workplace and how ethics are necessary for any organisation to succeed and ensure business sustainability (Furnham, 1990; Al-Modaf, 2005, Jalil et al., 2010). At the same time, ethics can help in stopping unethical behaviour such as fraud, corruption and sexual harassment (Abdi and Dato,
This part of the thesis focuses on adopting Islamic work ethics and investigating the influence of these ethics in organisational outcomes and in raising happiness. According to Al-Kazemi and Ali (2002), Abdi and Dato, (2006), Yousef, (2001) and Vitell and Davis, (1990) applying Islamic ethics and principles at work positively influences performance, high satisfaction as well as overall organisation success.

Islamic ethics defined is as “an indication of good values whether in behaviour, action, thinking or feeling” (Hayaati, 2007), and are considered as an outcome of belief (Rashid and Ibrahim, 2005). In addition to the positive impact of Islamic ethics at employees’ performance and satisfaction (Yousef, 2001; Vitell and Davis, 1990), it also motivates high moral behaviours thus ensures the continuous success of the organisation (Abdi and Dato, 2006).

It is also worth mentioning that Islam encourages working and for people to invest their time in good deeds: “The Prophet said, ‘No food is better to man than that which he earns through his manual work. Dawud the Prophet of Allah, ate only out of his earnings from his manual work’” (Sunnah.com, Al Bukhari, VI, No. 543).

One example of the influence of Islamic principles and ethics in an employee’s happiness is that: From an Islamic perspective the employer must understand their employees, their strengths and weaknesses. Buckingham (2005, p. 132) describes the best kind of manager as a person who has the ability to find a unique skill in each employee; he argues “They discover what is unique about each person and then capitalize on it”.

Islam highlights this issue and encourages understanding differences and diverse talents. Alqusi, (2008) states that Prophet Muhammed encourages people to choose the
right person without prejudice in the workplace. For example, the Prophet chose Maaz bin Jabal to take over the judiciary in Yemen due to his wisdom and justice expertise, and chose Musab bin Omair to be an advocate of Islam in the Saudi Arabian city of Madinah for his wisdom, knowledge and dealing tactically with people, and chose Khalid bin Walid as the commander of the army for his military skills and cleverness. On the other hand, the prophet Muhammed did not choose Abu Dhar to be a ruler of one city while he was his friend because, despite his good characteristics, he was a very soft person and he lacked the efficiency to rule (Alqusi, 2008). Buckingham (2005, p. 81) describes this situation: “Great managers play chess”, meaning each member of the team is a chess piece with specific capabilities which must be understood by the player (leader) in order to win (succeed).

Understanding employees and being able to observe their needs participates in increasing their happiness (Howell and Avolio, 1993). Prophet Mhammed said: “When any one of you leads the people in prayer, he should be brief for among them are the young and the aged, the weak and the sick. But when one of you prays by himself, he may (prolong) as he likes” (Sunnah.com, Muslim, III, No. 942). So, it is clear how understanding the differences in people is a crucial issue.

Another Islamic ethic that is reflected in work to raise employees’ happiness whereby employers should act with equality between males and females in terms of worker rights, and salaries: “Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another” (www.quran.com, Ch3:195). This advice or Islamic moral point was mentioned in the Qur’an more than 1,400 years

All the above factors and ethics participate in raising employee’s happiness when applied in a positive organisational culture. It is worth mentioning that despite the role of Islamic Ethics in raising an employee’s happiness, usually countries influenced by cultural beliefs take it for granted (Gergen and Gergen, 1983) thus organisations might reflect these beliefs rather than Islamic Ethics. For example, tribal systems in Arab countries affect managerial approaches and organisational structure (Rees and Althakhri, 2008). Moreover, Arab countries influenced by external factors such as capitalism and secularism (ibid.), where as organisations in Arabic countries might vary in reflecting Islamic ethics and rules, thus it is hard to take them as a “typical example of the implementation of Islamic rules and regulations” (Rees and Althakhri, 2008, p. 132).

2. 5.Organisational Culture and Employee Happiness

To create a happy workplace, organisations need to focus on their culture. Greg Smith, vice president of Goldman Sachs, states “The culture was the secret sauce that made this place great and allowed us to earn our clients’ trust for 143 years” (Guiso, et al., 2015, p.60). Thus, to create a successful and sustainable organisational culture, organisations should shine a light on an essential issue, which encompasses organisational values. Rokeach (1979, p.20) defined the value system as an “organised set of preferential standards that are used in making selections of objects and actions, resolving conflicts, invoking social sanctions, and coping with needs or claims for social
and psychological defences of choice made or proposed”. Values in general can be
categorised into two main sections: personal values, which are an internal reference for
what is good, beneficial, important, desirable and constructive (Rokeach, 1973), and
cultural values, which reflect a larger group of people, which is the society. It might be
difficult to separate the two because most people are driven by their values from their
cultural background, at the same time, cultural values cannot exist without personal
values (ibid.).

According to Schein (1992) there are several ways to think about values within
organisational culture. First, artefacts of culture refer to visible values and actions that are
easy to observe by outsiders such as corporate culture statements, company websites and
the company logo. It also includes the physical environment and the general policies and
actions that can be observed, such as open-door policies (ibid.).

The second way to think about value within an organisation is through the
espoused values (ibid.) and whether these values are the same as the organisation actually
lives by. In other words, people inside the organisation practice the actual values that the
organisation adopts. For example, if the organisation encourages innovation as a core
value, but punish employees who take risks, this represents a conflict between the
adoption value and the reality. Here, it is hard to judge or evaluate the culture according
to the “advertised values” (Guiso et al., 2015, p. 61), which is easy to proclaim because it
costs nothing (Guiso, et al., 2015). Values can also be classified into organisational
values, which reflect the values that the organisation believes and personal values of the
inner workings of the organisation (employers and employees) which go side by side to
serve a higher goal and are intended to be compatible with the organisational values.
A critical issue about organisational values is that these values aim to be reflected in leaders’ behaviours, and not just simply suggested in policy, whereby no one really puts them into effect. This is because behaviour that does not reflect values may lead to organisational collapse (greatplacetowork.co.uk). The financial crisis of 2008 is an example of what can happen when behaviours do not harmonise with values, and as a consequence, organisations need to set values to which both leaders and employees agree. Moreover, meaningful values adopted by leaders and reflected in daily behaviours inside the organisation will lead to words and principles becoming common behaviour of individuals where the leader has set a good role model for all employees.

Despite ensuring happiness appears to be a complex idea, the value of a strong corporate culture could be a great recipe of raising more broad-based happiness in the workplace. Organisations need to set good values and live by them, which will engage employees, motivate them and in turn, make them happier.

There is much evidence of the role of values in raising an employee’s wellbeing in the literature. There is a lot of evidence concerning the role of values in raising an wellbeing, for example, Barclays Bank, which adopted a transform programme to focus on the many aspects that can raise performance and build a new reputation (Barclays’ Response to the Salz Review, 2013). One of the main factors in this transformation programme, which began in 2012, is ‘Culture and Value’, especially the issue of how to build a sustainable values-based culture. What is worth mentioning is that the biggest responsibility in the Barclay’s Bank transform programme was that the change process must start with the management, and this shows the importance of the initiatives and adopted values in the way of implementing positive changes in the
organisation. Added to this is the role of HRM in the change process in terms of moderation to an employee’s daily routine by providing strong leadership that can cope with the challenges that face employees and the organisation in general during periods of change.

Rokeach (1973) highlights an empirical concept by developing a value survey system, which has been widely used by sociologists, psychologists and marketers. The survey classifies values into two sets: terminal and instrumental values. Terminal values encompass the ultimate goals of the person and what he or she wants to achieve during their lifetime, such as freedom, true friendship, self-respect and happiness. On the other hand, instrumental values are considered a tool to achieve terminal values. These values refer to the best modes of behaviour, such as cheerfulness, ambition, love and cleanliness. The idea of the survey is to ask participants to reorder values according to the level of importance to them personally (Rokeach, 1973, p. 27). It is worth mentioning that values might differ from one culture to another, and thus must be tailored appropriately.

Another factor that influences happiness and receives a huge amount of attention from researchers is leadership style and HRM practices and rules. Indeed, most of the above factors that participate in an employee’s happiness fall under the responsibility of leaders as well as HRM (Petrescu and Simmons, 2008). According to Mudor and Tooksoon (2011) job satisfaction is affected by many factors such as the physical environment and pay practice and it has been found that HRM practices are positively associated with job satisfaction. Since many of these factors are under the control of top management and HRM the next part discusses the role of them in an employee’s
happiness since “for many years HRM and leadership were separate research areas” (Bach and Edward, 2015, p. 213).

2.6. HRM Practices and Happiness at Work

Despite the known role played by HRM in managing staff affairs (Boxall and Purcell, 2008), the views in the literature are divided concerning the relationship between HRM and employee wellbeing. Some researchers find that HRM can influence an employee’s performance and wellbeing (Boxall and Purcell, 2008; Guest 1997; Petrescu and Simmons, 2008), while others claim that HRM might influence performance, but it has nothing to do with wellbeing (Legge, 1995; Ramsay et al., 2000).

Since the present research focus is on the elements that affect happiness at work, the focus will be on the views that agree on the role HRM plays in happiness. Many researchers have argued that HRM plays a significant role in raising an organisation's competitive edge by focusing on employee satisfaction (Pfeffer, 1994; Wright and Gary, 1992; Verma et al., 2012). Spector (1997) finds that job satisfaction is related to group of factors such as appreciation, personal growth, policies and procedures, promotion opportunities, recognition, security and supervision, many of which are factors are related to HRM practices and activities.

While Schmidt (2007) states that training and skills developments are the main HRM practices to influence worker satisfaction. Moreover, Petrescu and Simmons’ (2008) study the relation between HRM practices and employee satisfaction and find a statistically significant impact of all HRM practices on employee satisfaction.

Godard (2001) argues that the influence of HR practices on satisfaction might be positive or negative. He explains that focusing on raising performance and productivity
might increase stress on employees, thus have a negative effect on their wellbeing. Hence Peccei, (2004) argues that HR practices that affect performance might not be the same practices that influence wellbeing. Thus, it is important to reorder organisation priorities and classify wellbeing very highly (ibid.).

Since the literature shows a direct relation between HRM practices and job satisfaction, the next part focuses on what job satisfaction entails and why it is important to be measured.

### 2.6.1. Job Satisfaction: Definitions

Job satisfaction is one of the topics that has received a lot of attention in the literature and has gathered a number of definitions, theories and measurements. Many of these definitions link job satisfaction with the positive feelings or emotions that the employees have about their job (Locke, 1976; Feldman and Arnold, 1983; Andrew 1988). Kreitner and Kinicki (1995) state, job satisfaction must reflect employee satisfaction of all the various facets of one's job. While others, such as Davis and Newstrom (1989), explain that job satisfaction is about the emotions that employees express towards their jobs, positively or negatively.

### 2.6.2. The Importance of Job Satisfaction

Many researchers argue that employee performance is influenced by job satisfaction (Subba, 2000) and that high job satisfaction leads to stronger levels of motivation, loyalty and commitment, thus lower absenteeism and turnover. Goldberg and Waldman (2000) and Verma et al. (2012) agree that employees who experience high level satisfaction tend to be strong in terms of cooperation, helping their colleagues, punctuality coupled with time efficiency, they demonstrate more presence in the
workplace, and remain in the respective company’s employment for more time than those employees who are dissatisfied. Khadilkar (2017, p. 144) states that “the employees who are satisfied are the biggest assets to an organisation whereas the dissatisfied employees are the biggest liabilities”.

Organisations that aim to raise their outcomes, customer satisfaction and performance should focus on satisfying their employees (Baron and Kreps, 1999; Li and Tse, 1998; Lam et al., 2003; Karatepe et al., 2006). According to Nick Marks “Employee wellbeing is becoming increasingly important as organisations realize the link between happy, healthy staff and their long term success” (Anon., 2007). This notion drives many current organisations – they are centred around wellbeing and retaining happy, healthy staff.

Raising employee satisfaction is a crucial issue from a managerial perspective because dissatisfied employees will cost organisations if they leave due, as one example, to the costs of recruiting and retraining new people (Gregory, 2009). This supports the view of Judge (1993) and Murrells et al. (2008) in that where the relation between staff turnover and job satisfaction is negative, the higher job satisfaction the organisation is achieved, and the less turnover it will experience. Thus, managers need to understand needs and listen to feedback about the adopted policies and rules in an organisation. This will minimise the gap between an employee’s thoughts and their manager’s decisions and actions.

In addition to the above, it is important to shed light on practices and policies adopted by HRM in the UAE public sector that affect satisfaction at work. Alnaqbi (2011, p. 181) suggests that employee dissatisfaction in the UAE is “partly a product of poor HR
standards” and it is also important to concentrate on the leadership style adopted in the UAE public sector because it may be considered threatening to workers. Alnaqbi (2011) finds that HR standards in public organisations of the UAE score poorly and HR policies are “insufficient and inadequate and require change” (ibid.).

A survey by bayt.com (2009) with 13,376 participants across UAE organisations indicated that 41% consider a lack of recognition as one of the main factors that dissatisfy employees in UAE government organisations and it causes an increase in turnover percentage. Added to which, 30% state a lack of clear rules is also a critical factor that encourages resignations. The study also illustrates that 30% of the participants were looking for better opportunities and about 29% wanted to quit their current job, while 11% wanted to change their jobs.

Measuring employee satisfaction is a common practice in the business environment and most organisations give great attention to the issue, as it clearly describes the current situation of an organisation. In contrast, little attention is given to happiness and wellbeing at work, especially in the Middle East. Kjerulf (2014) explained the difference between satisfaction and happiness at work: job satisfaction is all about what employees think about their job, while happiness at work is how employees feel about their job. Moreover, Fouladgar (2015) adds that a leader who focuses on an employee’s happiness will care about how the employee does at work as well as at home, and the company will care about finding a balance between individual jobs and other aspects of life. On the other hand, even if these two concepts are different, as Calaguas (2017, p.110) argues, through job satisfaction results it is easy to predict the level of wellbeing. In other words, organisations with a high-level of job satisfaction have high
levels of happiness. In this case even if the literature on happiness in the Middle East and GCC countries is rare, the results of job satisfaction surveys might help in predicting the level of happiness.

Despite the importance of HR practices and functions involved in an employee’s happiness, the role of the leader is more important. Many authors such as Schein, (1998) and Laloux (2014) concentrate on the great influence of leaders in creating an organisational culture as well as driving employees to adopt and live the culture.

2.7. Leadership style and happiness at work

Leadership style is “the pattern of behaviour adopted by a leader to influence group members and make decisions regarding the nature of the mission, (group goal), strategy and operations of group activities to realise a set mission or goal” (Mangal and Mangal, 2015, p. 289).

It has received great attention of researchers because of it is influence on organisational success (Trice and Beyer, 1993; Kumar and Kaptan, 2007) organisational performance (Bass et al., 2003; Nahavandi, 2002) and sustainability (Trice and Beyer, 1993; Schein, 1998; Lok and Crawford, 1999, 2004; Chen and Francesco, 2000; Miroshnik, 2002; Laloux, 2014; Lussier and Achua, 2007). Many researchers emphasise the role of the leader on subordinate commitment levels (Chen, 2004; Dale and Fox, 2008; Lok and Crawford, 1999, 2004; Rowden, 2000) and that organisational success or failure is mainly due to leadership style (Oladipo et al., 2013).

Leadership styles have been categorised in literature, such as: Authoritarian, Paternalistic, Democratic, Laissez-faire, Transactional and Transformational (Mosadeghrad, 2003). Each style has its own characteristics that participate positively or negatively in shaping
organisational culture. The main two styles that this thesis concentrates on are the Transactional and Transformational and the influence of each style in organisational performance. A transactional leader who focuses on tasks and this style plays an exchange role between performance and rewards (Scott, 2003) as well as between managers and their teams (Jung, 2001). This leadership style is also called goal- and task-oriented or correcting style (Howell and Avolio, 1993). For this type of leader, achieving organisational goals is a priority and this happens by motivating people to, for example, comply with a policy, thus rewarding a good performance and sometimes using corrective actions and punishment (Bass and Avolio, 1990).

In contrast, a transformational leader invests in organisational values, the integration between values and behaviours and thinking in the long term (Jude and Piccolo, 2004). They also invest in people’s development and involve them in the organisation’s vision and values (Bass and Avolio, 1990), hence being people-oriented (Howell and Avolio, 1993). Transformational leaders have an awareness of how to satisfy the employees and transform them into becoming a part of business decision making processes (Bass, 1985).

This type of leader does not need to reward or punish employees to motivate them, rather they can easily influence performance by being a good role model leading to talent retention while involving everyone in the organisational family (Kapur, 2014). Kapur adds that a leader who cooperates with employees below them in a hierarchy and helps them in their career development journey can raise happiness in the long run. This is the main difference between a transactional leader who focuses on the accomplishment of organisational goals without focusing on involving individuals within the whole vision of
the organisation, and the transformational leader who understands needs and at the same time involves in the business decision making helping retain loyal staff.

A survey conducted with 210 employees across private and government organisations demonstrates that there are issues related to the managerial level (Ali and Azim 1996), and these issues are divided into subjective problems: “sensitivity to comments taken personally, weak inclination toward research and theory, and weak inner work incentives” and objectives problems: “centralisation of authority, inadequate planning and information systems” (Ali and Azim, 1996, p.165).

On the other hand, Scott-Jackson (2014) considers the Emirati leadership style as unique, which includes important lessons for global leaders. He states that this style focuses on “loyalty, relationships and family-like respect and obligations” (www.zawya.com). Scott-Jackson also found that rather than looking for Western approaches and adopting them in the UAE HRM, it is a fortiori to learn from Emirati leadership styles and reflect it at work.

“It is sad that a young Emirati may have to turn to the US or UK to learn about leadership when there are great examples in his or her own country. Up to now, the Emirati Leadership Style has not been written down, so a young Emirati could not even read about it! Of course, in times past, the young Emirati would have learned by working with their father or mother, but times have changed. We passionately believe that young Gulf nationals should have the chance to demonstrate leadership consistent with their own national identity and culture and we call on leaders of the UAE’s commerce and government sectors to support this new and important project”.

84
It can be deduced from the above points that there are differences between the positive attitudes of the UAE rulers and their continued efforts to raise happiness. This stands in contrast with the government organisations and their struggle with managerial problems. Thus, it is necessary to investigate why the top management in government organisations do not reflect the same attitude.

In addition to understanding the factors that influence happiness at work, such as religion, organisational culture and leadership styles, it is important to identify the methods used to measure happiness.

2.8. Happiness Measurement

Happiness is a subjective concept that cannot be measured easily, but it is not impossible. Recent years have seen a great interest in understanding the term happiness and the attempts to measure the concept and apply new knowledge in the workplace. Numerous researchers have developed ways to measure life happiness, such as Deiner et al. (1985), Watson and Clark (1988) and Kashdan, (2004).

Deiner et al. (1985) concluded that rather than using scales that measure single-items, such as health, a multi-item scale is better: a person’s overall evaluation of life: The Satisfaction with Life Scale(SWLS). Deiner et al. (1985) judged the scales that measure one item as inaccurate with numerous inbuilt problems compared to multi-item scales. On the other hand, Beuningen (2012) found that the SWLS is relatively low in finding correlations and not a good alternative to the single-item life satisfaction measures.

main dimensions in multidimensional scaling which are Positive Affect and Negative Affect. Although positive mood and negative mood have an opposing meaning, measuring the two moods together helps in covering the need for valid and reliable data. According to Watson and Clark (1988) the Positive Affect (PA) is related to social activity and satisfaction and to the frequency of pleasant events, while the Negative Affect (NA) is associated with self-reported stress and (poor) coping. Furthermore, not all the scales work with the same effectiveness. Some mood scales are better than others, because some clearly show the distinct correlation between NA-PA.

Positive Affect (PA) shows “the extent to which a person feels enthusiastic, active, and alert” (Watson and Clark’s, 1988, p.1063). The high level of PA is characterised by high energy, full concentration and delightful engagement, while the low PA reflects sadness and listlessness. In contrast, NA represents unappeasable engagement such as anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear and nervousness. Finally, low NA illustrates calmness and serenity (ibid.).

In the early 1990s a measurement called the Happy Life Expectancy index (HLE) was assessed in 48 nations (Vennhoven, 1996). This index combined the subjective and objective indicators. The subjective indicator measures the qualitative side 'life satisfaction', while the objective indicator measures the quantitative side 'life expectancy' (ibid.). The HLE showed realistic results in ranking countries and it positively correlated with various characteristics such as education level, self-perceived freedom, physical safety; basic elements of good life (Fleurbaey and Blanchet, 2008). Despite all the advantages of the HLE has such as gathering both substantive meaning and building theoretical significance, HLE faces some challenges, including: it is related to
“unemployment, state welfare and income equality, not to religiousness and trust in institutions. HLE does not differ either with military dominance and population pressure”. (Vennhoven, 1996). Diener (1994) proposed an Advanced Quality of Life Index, which also measures both subjective and objective indicators.

A new attitude towards measuring Subjective Wellbeing (SWB) has been informed according to theory-driven definitions of wellbeing and empirical research on the structure of wellbeing (Kashdan, 2004). One example is the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ). The difference between the OHQ and other constructs is the OHQ not only focuses on the cognitive side of SWB, but other components too, such as social interest, kindness, sense of humour and qualities such as perceived physical attractiveness and sense of purpose (ibid.). At the same time, SWB in the OHQ included the degree to which individuals are interested in other people, have warm feelings toward others, find things amusing, find beauty in things, and feel like they look attractive, among other items, but indeed not all of these qualities are defining components of happiness. Kashdan (2004) stated that some empirical evidence provides example of happy individuals who show low self-esteem but consider themselves as happy people. Furthermore, physical attractiveness was unable to distinguish between very happy people and less happy people.

The table 2.2 below summarises the methods used to measure life happiness and shows both the strengths and the weaknesses of each measurement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Happiness/Wellbeing Measurement</th>
<th>General Idea</th>
<th>Example of Use</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The single-item life satisfaction measure</td>
<td>- It measures satisfaction from one part of life, such as health.</td>
<td>Used by Statistics Netherlands in the Permanent Survey of Living Conditions from 1997.</td>
<td>According to Pavot and Diener (1993) this measurement is: inaccurate and very sensitive to context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)</td>
<td>- Multi-item scales (overall evaluation of life). - Two main dimensions (Positive Affect and Negative Affect).</td>
<td>Diener et al., 1985</td>
<td>According to Beuningen (2012) this measurement is low in finding correlations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy Life Expectancy index (HLE)</td>
<td>- It is a combination of the subjective and objective indicators.</td>
<td>HLE was assessed in 48 nations in the early 1990s.</td>
<td>According to Veenhoven (1996): - HLE has both clear substantive meaning and theoretical significance. - HLE differentiates well. - The indicator seems to have political appeal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Quality of Life index</td>
<td>It measure both subjective and objective indicators</td>
<td>Diener, 1994</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Subjective Wellbeing SWB</td>
<td>- OHQ included the degree to which individuals are interested in other people, have warm feelings toward others, find things amusing, find beauty in things, and feel like they look attractive, among other items. For example: Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ)</td>
<td>Kashdan, 2004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by the author

2.8.1. Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

In addition to the above measurements of happiness, economics utilises the Gross Domestic Product as a key economic measure. In economics, GDP is used as an indicator of measuring a country’s economy and can consequently indicate resident
happiness. GDP according to Wolla (2013) represents the total dollar value of all goods and services produced over a specific year. In other words, it reflects the size of the economy.

Some researchers such as Tay and Kuykendall (2013) believe that GDP is related to happiness and a healthy economy represents happiness due to, for example, high wages or low unemployment. Deaton (2008) analysed a larger sample of 132 countries from the 2006 Gallup World Poll (GWP), where there is a larger spread of country incomes. He showed that GDP was strongly associated with life satisfaction. Tay and Kuykendall (2013, p. 172) argue that GDP growth can promote SWB if accompanied by rising material living standards and average incomes.

In contrast, there are others who believe that it is a mistake to measure happiness as an economic measure and they insist on the necessity to look beyond GDP. Here, GDP cannot reflect social progress. One well-known example is the speech of Robert Kennedy (1968):

“The Gross National Product does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education, or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wit nor our courage, neither our wisdom nor our learning, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country; it measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile.” (University of Kansas, 2015).

Another famous comment on GDP is from President Nicolas Sarkozy: “there are significant shifts in our lives, but wellbeing standards and measurement have not kept
pace with these changes” (Stiglitz et al., 2010, pp. Vii-XV). Thus, regardless of national economic progress, happiness is some way behind; therefore, GDP alone is not a sufficient indicator of wellbeing.

Stiglitz et al., (2010) discuss the inadequacy of GDP as a measure of SWB finding that when GDP growth numbers are expressed in per capita terms, it fails to show the trend of growing global income inequality. Thus, to use the correct measurement, the following should be considered: “What we measure affects what we do” (Stiglitz et al., 2010, p.2). So, if the purpose is measuring wellbeing, the meaning of wellbeing should first be understood. Stiglitz et al., (2010) define wellbeing as a multi-dimensional concept with many dimensions to consider because it impacts people’s wellbeing. The key dimensions according to Stiglitz et al., (2010) are: material living standards (income, consumption and wealth), health, Education, personal activities and work, political voice and governance, social connections and relationships, environment (present and future conditions); and, security, of an economic as well as physical nature.

Much of the above is not considered in economic theory, thus, how can economic measurements such as GDP measure happiness? Ercole et al. (2008) suggest that using the GDP could be better if GDP is consistently and substantially corrected.

Fleurbaey and Blanchet (2008) view GDP as a weak marker of happiness, which measures wealth, but not welfare. In addition, it tells us little about the real prospects for future generations, while the measurement must help in presenting the reality and predicting the future effectively, unlike what occurred during the financial crisis, which shows the weakness of the used measurements (Stiglitz et al., 2010). Although some argue that the crisis was predicted to some extent, but largely ignored (Rajan, 2005).
Furthermore, Ercole et al. (2008) find that GDP is an old concept with many limitations that makes it a weak welfare indicator. According to them, GDP has two central weaknesses: (a) It is an aggregate and does not focus on the distributional issues, social activities and wellbeing; and, (b) it only measures flows with no attention given to the impact of productive activities on stocks.

2.8.2. World Happiness Report

The World Happiness Report is an annual publication that began in 2012 which measures global happiness and ranks countries according to their level of happiness. The report is published by United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network to display the state, the causes and implications of happiness. The report is drawn from various resources such as the Gallup World Poll and the World Values Survey. The report is edited each year, and in 2017 it included happiness at work analysis (http://worldhappiness.report/).

All the above are examples of measurements used to measure happiness in general. The following measurements are examples that have been used in many organisations around the world to measure happiness at work:

One of the widely used measurements is Job Satisfaction and measuring includes many tools such as the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss et al., 1967), the Job Descriptive Index (JDI), (Smith et al., 1969), and the Job in General Scale (JIG), (Ironson et al., 1989) and the faces scale of job satisfaction (Kunin, 1955).

Organisational commitment questionnaire (OCQ) is the “second most commonly measured in the family of constructs related to happiness at work” (Fisher, 2010, p. 388). The questionnaire includes three main parts: affective, continuance and normative. The
first part, affective commitment, is the one that specifically measures happiness at work (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

In addition, there are other measurements that belong to happiness at work measurements such as the Job Involvement Measurement (Lodahl and Kejner, 1965). Engagement measurement by Kahn (1990, 1992) is found by using the Utrecht Work Enthusiasm Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Thriving and Vigor Measurement by Spreitzer (Spreitzer et al., 2005; Spreitzer and Sutcliffe, 2007). Affect at Work Measurement such as Job Related Affective Wellbeing Scale (Van Katwyk et al., 2000) and the Job Affect Scale (Brief et al., 1988; Burke et al., 1989).

2.8.3. Engagement Survey

One of the most important measurements is the Gallup employee engagement survey (The Gallup Q12 Index). This survey is based on extensive research behavioural economics involving more than 17 million employees. It includes 12 core elements called the Q12 which has been believed to correlate strongly with organisational outcomes (www.gallup.com/workplace).

2.8.4. Happiness at Work Survey

The Happiness at Work Survey is a tool for organisations to measure and receive feedback on how their strength areas and risk areas link together. The survey was founded by Nic Marks in 2010. The survey is grounded in the latest psychological findings and the model of wellbeing developed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) for the Government Foresight project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing (see www.nefconsulting.com and www.happinessatworksurvey.com).

The pursuit of organisations to measure happiness of their employees shows their interest in change and sustainability. In addition to measuring an employee’s wellbeing
and feedback about their job, what is more important is how to benefit from the results of measuring satisfaction or happiness and taking decisions and plans that participate positively in employee happiness.

2.9. Theoretical Framework

Based on the literature review, many authors emphasise the importance of measuring employee needs and wellbeing to achieve high-levels of happiness at work. Moreover, the literature discusses the role that organisational culture and values play in raising happiness. What is missing is a model that clarifies the relationship between values and behaviours inside the organisation and how the integration strengthens the culture. In addition, despite the role that culture plays in happiness, those who design organisational culture models do not show where happiness lies within these models. Thus, this part of the research discusses two key issues: first it displays how the integration between values and behaviours affect organisational culture, thus happiness; second it displays a suggested model of organisational culture partly inspired some by the “Four layers of organisational culture model” by Schein (1998).
2.9.1 Value and Behaviour Association

Since organisation culture is proved by much evidence in the literature to be one of the main factors to influence happiness (Denison, 1984; Schein 2004; Kotter 2005; Kulkarni 2014), it is important to explore the concept of culture for a deeper understanding.

The definitions of culture in the literature emphasise the idea that organisational culture is divided into two main elements: visible and invisible. According to Nikpour (2017, p.66) organisational culture defined by (Needle, 2004) as “the representation of the collective values, beliefs, and principles of organisational members. It is a product of factors including history, product, market, technology and strategy, type of employees, management style, as well as national culture”. Culture includes the organisation's vision,
values, norms, systems, symbols, language, assumptions, environment, location, beliefs, and habits (Anitha and Begum, 2016).

Ravasi and Schultz (2006, p.437) define organisational culture as a set of shared mental assumptions that guide interpretation and action in organisations by defining appropriate behaviours for various situations. Cooke (2013, p.147) argues that thinking and behavioural styles might be implicitly or explicitly required for people to “fit in” and “meet expectations” in an organisation or organisational sub-unit.

Since cultures are made of two main parts, visible and invisible, the two sides are essential for the culture to exist and sustain itself. Values are a core element within any culture (Rokeach, 1973) and help shape the habits and customs of a society (Schein, 1998). Thus, it is important that people in the same society or organisation share values and behaviours to create a happy workplace as clarified in the following figure 2.4:

**Figure 2.4: Value-Behaviour Association**

![Figure 2.4: Value-Behaviour Association](image)

Source: compiled by the author
This figure suggests three factors that should be taken into consideration to create a strong culture, thus happiness. These factors are value, behaviour and time. If the management believes in the importance of happiness and of making employees happy, they need to adopt values that reflect their beliefs. In other words, setting values should be driven from the organisation’s aims and objectives. Then these values need to be translated into actions and behaviours to make a difference (Barrett, 2010). Hofstede (2001) argues that changing behaviour leads to a change in values, thus it is not necessary to convince employees with the importance of organisational values but rather encourage them to adopt behaviours that allow them to understand and then adopt.

Another issue is that some employees may do something that they do not believe in and argue that behaviour can exist without a value. For example, employees may be practicing activities that do not constitute any value or meaning to them personally. As mentioned above there is no problem if personal behaviours come before values (Hofstede, 2001), the problem is when behaviours do not lead to values or when the behaviours are not driven from adopted values. This is crucial because culture might not be able to sustain behaviour for the long run (Barclays’ Response to the Salz Review, 2013). Thus, it is important to integrate organisational values with behaviours.

Another argument is that some organisations have both values and behaviours yet do not create a strong happiness culture. This might be because of the rashness to reap the benefits of the actions. Considering time as a crucial factor will help the organisation to keep going forward, be more patient and overcome difficulties that the institution may face when adopting change (Kilpimaa, 2006).
Implementing a happiness culture at work might not be that easy. This is because individuals have their own values that might conflict with organisational values. The next figure 2.5 shows the different dimensions of values and behaviours inside an organisation.

**Figure 2.5: Integration of values and behaviours at a different organisational level**

Figure 2.5 shows that an organisation includes other dimensions to just organisational values and behaviours. It includes a leader’s values and behaviours as well as employees’ values and behaviours.

**2.9.1.1. Leaders’ Values and Behaviours**

Leaders’ values in general ought to reflect organisational values; otherwise, the organisational values will be only advertised and left unimplemented (Guiso *et al.*, 2015). Thus, the harmony between organisational values and leaders’ personal values is crucial.
However, what if the leader believes in something beyond the organisational values? Leaders have been found to drive their organisational values from their personal values and beliefs (Hsieh, 2012). In other words, leaders can change the current values to new values and in turn strengthen the culture. The problem is that most of the examples mentioned in the literature are from private organisations that have the flexibility to change at any time, while government organisations are more fixed as they are required to comply with government programmes. One of the suggested solutions discussed in the findings of this research (Chapter Six) aims to create an internal shared values system that runs parallel to the government attitude and at the same time facilitates the adoption of new attitude.

2.9.1.2. Employee Personal Values

Employee values might look like something personal that belong only to employees, but to strengthen an organisation, employees must adopt organisational values. Moreover, personal values ought not to conflict with organisation values, which is something that could be screened for in the recruitment process. Moreover, it is important to focus on training to help align overall values and beliefs (Chapter Six).

Based on the above, if leaders reflect organisational values through their own behaviour, it will be easier to transfer these values to employees (Carucci and Hansen, 2016) and show them practically how to live in these values. Moreover, leaders can play a role in facilitating the way employees practice their personal values, for examples, providing a prayer room.
Understanding the relations in the above figure helps in understanding why employees are happy or unhappy. Moreover, it helps in enhancing the communication between the leaders and the employees.

2.9.2. Paradigm of Happiness at Work

Although there are many models of organisation culture (see Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Denison, 1990; Reilly et al., 1991), none clarify where happiness or wellbeing lie on these models. Since organisational culture is a key factor in raising happiness, the existing models ought to include happiness as a part of them. The following figure 2.6 aims to fix this deficiency:

Figure 2.6: Theoretical Framework of Building a Paradigm of Happiness at Work
As can be seen from Figure 2.6, the happiness framework highlights the interactions between the values and behaviours of leaders and employees and positions these with reference to the values and shared behaviours that occur with the organisational culture. This framework draws on the literature that has been reviewed, for example, Anitha and Begum (2016); Carucci and Hansen (2016); Guiso et al. (2015). One of the main features of the framework is the centrality of leadership to the happiness paradigm.

2.9.2.1. The Leader

The above figure begins with the leader (top management) as the main fuel to change the culture. It shows that when the leader can set a good example by being passionate with their vision, values, and behaviours, they will be able to begin the transformation programme (Heifetz and Laurie, 2001).

One of the most important characteristics of a leader is their readiness to change. First, it is important to ask, what if the manager does not own the characteristics to prepare them to lead the change. Simply put, the organisation will not be able to change if the leader is not ready to change (Carucci and Hansen, 2016). Readiness to begin a change by changing oneself is a very important step to be able to lead change in an organisation (Cummings and Worley, 2004). It is also important to be patient, flexible and dare to personally change for the organisation to flourish and create a strong culture, thus a happy workplace (Heifetz and Laurie, 2001).
Unfortunately, a lot of leaders forget the real reasons for being in a position of authority; they stray from original goals and begin to isolate. They forget that while leading, they are all a part of the same team, they are all equal. So, leaders need to remember that they are there to “determine company policies and shape the workplace culture”; “set an example for their employees”; and “interact with the most people over the course of the day” (Achor, 2010, p.56). Remembering this will help managers be more engaged in their organisations and with their staff.

Stark and Kelly (2016) emphasise the idea that ‘every leader needs a great vision’ because a vision helps both managers and employees to know where they are going, and it helps in visualising future goals and outcomes that the organisation seeks to reach. Thus, they facilitate the process of reaching goals. Stark and Kelly give the picture on the puzzle box as an example, which is exactly what should happen in an organisation, not only at the level of the organisational vision but also the leader’s vision which is going to become everyone’s vision (the completion of the jigsaw); the ability to inspire and live the dream and allows everyone to believe and strive towards.

This vision or dream ensures employees gain a sense of purpose, direction and understand the importance of their roles within their workplace (Addleman, 1994).

Before explaining the other parts of the above figure 2.6, it is important to explain that in the journey of change people are divided into three main categories or layers: Leader, Supportive Team and Employees.

**Figure 2.7: The Main Three Layers**
Layer one is the leader; the fuel to change organisational culture. The second layer is the supportive team, “As there is no ruler without a people, there is also no leader without a team and no real achievement without team spirit” (Al Maktoum, 2017, p. 43). The leader does not carry all the efforts of change alone, but most leaders who succeed in leading a change and building a cooperative culture are surrounded by people who believe in them and support their vision (Kouzes and Posner, 2010). Therefore, a team that shares the same dreams and values is a crucial factor in a major transformation. Kouzes and Posner (2010) state that leaders need to build a team able to take action and act as leaders, which is what distinguishes good and poor leaders.

Having a supportive team will facilitate transferring change to all employees from various levels, thus the third layer is the organisation itself, and what is meant by the organisation is – all staff members are a part of the change.
2.9.2.2. The Values and Behaviours in Happiness at Work Paradigm

Another aspect that needs to be clear before explaining the theoretical framework (Figure 2.6), is that the values and behaviours in this framework are divided into two sub-layers: top management and the rest of the organisational staff.

Figure 2.8: Layers of Organisational Culture

Source: compiled by the author

Values and behaviours at managerial level are the same values and behaviours at functional level, the only difference is that values are meant to driven from the top management and supportive team first. “The top of the organisation should be very much in favor of the change in order to actually implement the change in the rest of the organisation” (De Caluwé and Vermaak, 2004, p. 9).

Another point in this figure is the concept of order or timing, where a leader should be a role model and reflect values and belief through their behaviour, but this does not necessarily mean that the behaviours must only begin via the leader, and then the
employees. In the transformation programme, the whole organisation adopts the new attitude and act in a way that reflects this attitude.

Since the transformation process begins with the leader, being a good role model is an important characteristic. Kouzes and Posner (2010, p. 200) state that “leaders either lead by example or they do not lead at all” and to be a positive example, leaders need to translate their values into clear behaviours, so for example, if leaders want employees to arrive on time, or to communicate in a certain way, they should do that first. The starting point of real change begins when a leader’s acts reflect their beliefs and understand what will directly influence people’s values and behaviours.

To be a good role model, it is very important to associate values and behaviours. Rokeach (1973) states that personal values are an internal reference for what is good, beneficial, important, useful, beautiful, desirable and constructive. Values cause our behaviours (Krystallis et al., 2012), thus the integration between these two factors shapes culture. The organisation will need to be aware of the importance of the association between values and behaviours. Taking this into account as a leader and being able to focus on the values as the core of an organisation’s culture, will gradually change the workplace and lead to increased happiness.

Many authors, such as Denison (1984), Krystallis et al. (2012), Horne (2017) and Al Maktoum (2017), concentrate on the association between values and behaviours in organisations, which will strengthen the cooperative culture and make the organisation perform better than others in both the short and long-term and be able to survive during difficult circumstances. Moreover, behaviour that does not reflect values may lead to organisational collapse (greatplacetowork.co.uk 2016). The financial crisis of 2008
displays a real example of what happens when behaviours do not harmonise with values, and consequently, organisations need to set the right values to which both leaders and employees agree. Second, values become meaningless if role models do not adopt them in their daily behaviours inside an organisation, so words and principles should turn into actual behaviour.

Being able to create shared values and behaviours will facilitate transformation in four main aspects of the organisation, which are: Environment, People, Organisational system and Community, now described in detail below.

2.9.2.3. Organisational Physical Environment

Some may conclude that changing the physical environment will have no influence on an employee, which is why they design workspaces according to functional effectiveness (McCoy and Evans, 2002). However, changing the physical environment is a proven crucial factor in changing culture, not only that but it reflects values and signals how the leaders care about employees’ wellbeing (Miller et al., 2014). The organisational environment should change according to the adopted values. Miller et al. (2014) shed light on the importance of workspace in creating a positive culture. They believe that “space is the catalyst to disrupt and transform culture” (ibid. 2014, p xvi). Changing the space and reshaping the organisation design according to employees’ needs helps in shifting a culture, motivates employees and make them more engaged, creative and productive. It also facilitates the implementation of the new rules and new programmes.

If leaders believe in the importance of making employees happy and strengthening the cooperative culture, they should focus on changing the environment to fit with their values by making it healthier, pleasant, and fun and well decorated. It is also
important to mention that the entire employee group should also participate in the concept of the new physical environment and be a part of the change. You can recognise the difference between organisations that concentrate on appositive physical environment and others, from the first moment you visit.

2.9.2.4. People

People can be divided into two main groups: new and old employees. Organisations need to recruit employees who fit with the culture and values, which are not conflict with their beliefs or attitudes. This helps in the success and sustainability of the culture (Denison, 1984). For example, Zappos Company hires employees who fit with their value system. The company sets two kinds of interview: one is standard looking at the person’s skills and experience, while the second is what distinguishes Zappos from many others and explores whether a person will fit in with the organisational culture. Here, if the first interview shows that the person is skilled and talented, that does not mean that they are automatically accepted, because the culture match is equally important at Zappos. For example, they will concentrate on the questions that highlight a person’s personality, such as a section called: *Create fun and a little weirdness* with a question: *On a scale of 1-10, how weird are you?* A judgement is made on how the candidate expresses themselves.

Organisation E one of the sample organisations of this research sets a good example on how to deal with employees who do not fit in the culture by job turnover, coaching or by helping them create a strong CV and find a new job because they believe in making people happy even if they are no longer working in their organisation.
2.9.2.5 Organisation System

Another factor in the transformation is the organisation system. It is sometimes difficult to change a system, especially when government rules and practices are embedded. Many current organisations have evolved to flexible working hours, which is an example of responding to employees and making changes that reflect their needs.

One way of adopting new systems and raising happiness without becoming in conflict with government policies and rules is to create an internal system that reflects culture, leadership style and encouraged attitudes.

2.9.2.6 Community

The last aspect is about changing the role of the organisation regarding its location: how does the organisation contribute towards the community? Hsieh (2012) states that having a higher purpose. Something bigger than us may make us happy. Making the job beneficial to the society will give employees a sense of purpose, make their job worthwhile and make them feel proud of themselves and their organisation. Therefore, most of the happiest organisations around the world connect what they are doing with a higher goal, which includes a human touch. They focus on how they can be useful to society, which in turn helps retain the best people in the organisation.

The above four aspects have been selected in this theoretical framework because of their comprehensiveness of the internal and external aspects of the organisation. Moreover, companies that are classified as successful and happy places to work around the world such as Google, Facebook, Zappos, Hilton, Delta Air Lines, LinkedIn and Microsoft focus directly and indirectly on these four dimensions. For example, offering development possibilities can be classified under the ‘people’ aspect; social support can
be classified under people too and under the physical environment, which encourages
good communication. Appreciation, empowerment and autonomy for example are within
organisational systems, and a sense of purpose can be classified under community and the
role that the organisations play towards the shared society. Flexible working hours can be
classified under organisational systems, and so on.

When change spreads in the above aspects of Environment, People, Organisational system, and Community, the pattern of happiness at work begins to form
and people inside the organisation will become used to new and more positive ways of
working following the initial upheaval of change. Indeed, the effort that might be needed
to sustain is different to the effort needed at the beginning of a significant change, as
illustrated in figure 2.9 below:

**Figure 2.9: Effort and Efficiency in the Culture of Happiness at Work**

Source: compiled by the author
Figure 2.9 raises two dimensions: the efforts and the efficiency in one hand and the influence of time and knowledge on the other hand. At the beginning of change, a huge amount of effort is often required, to reach a huge amount of efficiency. The red zone might be described as a critical zone, where the organisation experience new things, learning, struggles and commits errors. Then the amount of effort suppose to decrease, and efficiency suppose to increase leading to the stable zone in green. At this stage, what was recently new to the organisation, becomes an every-day practice and even taken for granted. An example to clarify is applying an ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) system. This may well appear initially arduous for employees, but later, as it organises the work, it becomes a daily practice and documentation process relied upon by everyone in the organisation.

The following summary closes this chapter by drawing together the key points of the reviewed literature.

2.10. Summary

The literature review highlights a strong correlation between employee happiness and performance, indicating that how happy employees are in their lives and their level of job satisfaction is directly linked to how well they perform their jobs. Organisations wanting to upgrade the performance and effectiveness of their staff are beginning to focus on increasing employee happiness. The literature review has indicated that one of the most effective workplace happiness strategies is investing in organisational culture. This requires organisations to know about their employees’ lifestyles in relation to their individual happiness, health, religion, friends and family and activities pursued in their leisure time. Organisations wanting to increase employee happiness need a cooperative
leadership style and HRM job satisfaction strategies to ensure a widespread and sustainable work-life balance.

This chapter discusses the many aspects found to be related to happiness. One of these aspects is the link between money and happiness, and this is clearly a complex issue. Some believe that money is a fundamental factor in increasing happiness of employees, while others believe that money has little to do with happiness and that there are other factors more important such as family, friends and spirituality. Money may not directly impact upon or guarantee happiness, but there are other reasons from the literature regarding social comparison and income inequality, which can affect people's happiness. What is less clear from the literature is the importance of social comparison and how it relates to people's cultural backgrounds, thus impacts upon happiness levels.

To enhance a work-life balance, it is tempting to suggest that understanding people's culture and background will help the organisation to meet their needs and increase their happiness. This is because distinct cultures and backgrounds directly affect people's needs in some aspects of their lives and therefore impact satisfaction. As mentioned earlier in this chapter when clarifying the differences between high-context (HC) culture and low-context (LC).

Therefore, to cover all factors that may impact employees’ happiness, further studies may require exploring the relationship between three distinct dimensions: culture, social comparison and job satisfaction.

Another less clear outcome of the literature review is how employers might ensure continued high rates of happiness at work. In other words, even if the HRM or the employers did everything to meet an employee's needs and desires, the nature of human
beings and their ever-changing life priorities combined with fluctuations in the value of things (as clarified in Figure one in Chapter Two) make ensuring high-level of happiness a crucial issue. It is tempting to suggest that periodic measuring may lead to a strategy for maintaining higher levels of happiness at work, a suggestion that may require further practical studies, a longer observation and a period of data collection of organisation job satisfaction and employee happiness results.

Another challenge in measuring happiness in the UAE and an issue that needs investigation is income inequality (see 2.2.3.2 Income Inequality and Happiness), which considered one of the reasons why Americans have not become happier over the last 40 years (Oishi et al., 2011). The question here is: does this apply to the UAE community, where there is a difference in salaries and privileges from one city to another, and if so, to what extent may this affect an employee’s happiness? To examine whether this phenomenon applies to the UAE, studies that conduct tests of comparisons while collecting employees’ views are required. For example, a study comparing an organisation in Abu Dhabi with its counterpart of Ras Al Khaimah.

In addition, the literature review displayed many critical factors that affect happiness at work and one of them is organisational culture. What is less clear about organisational culture in the literature is that most of the offered examples concern private companies, businesses built by an individual who runs their own business and wants it to succeed, such as Twitter and Zappos. Thus, the question is: how can a successful experience of private sector be translated to a government organisation, which experiences differences in terms of staff demographics, career development opportunities, rules and policies?
Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Happiness is a key issue for leaders and managerial staffs as employees are increasingly displaying low loyalty levels and poor job satisfaction within organisations. The literature clearly shows that many factors impact people’s happiness with their lives and jobs. One of these factors is social comparison, which illustrates that people care a lot about comparing themselves to others, and this makes the rank of income a personal concern in increasing one’s life satisfaction; an important factor in raising employees’ happiness is income inequality. The literature review reveals that there is a relationship between income inequality and happiness, but there is still a need for more investigation into the psychological side of this relationship as well as how this relationship may be strong or weak according to the context of the particular country. Despite all the efforts on the part of theoretical and empirical research, there are gaps in the knowledge of the size of the link between happiness at work and cultural background and how social comparison relates to people's cultural backgrounds.

The literature demonstrates the readiness of employees to leave their jobs and seek new opportunities. Therefore, companies need to create a positive culture and an efficient workplace where employees are satisfied in their jobs for those employees to improve their overall happiness. The literature indicates many examples of organisations with a high level of happiness, such as Zappos, Google and Facebook, and it relates their happiness to the company culture and values. The critical issue is that most of the given examples are of private companies, and there is a lack of knowledge regarding how to implement such a successful experience within a government organisation.
It is also important to acknowledge the factors that may have caused a reduction in the level of happiness in America, Japan and other countries, such as income inequality, and in doing so, uncover whether the UAE suffers from the same problems. This may be done by considering the cultural and religious background of the UAE society and finding out to what extent the type of culture (such as high-context and low-context culture) affects levels of happiness, while considering individuals, organisations, programmes and policies as part of a broader view rather than as discrete or loosely connected concerns.

To ensure continued happiness at work and encourage an increase, it will be necessary to consider the organisational culture and the work-life balance that the organisation offers. It is also important to measure happiness, meet employees’ needs and find a long-term strategy, even if the organisation may be delayed in reaping the benefits of the new change.

To study some of the gaps that have been identified in the literature review, the following research questions have been developed:
### Table 3-1: Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main RQ 1</th>
<th>How do personal attitudes affect employee happiness at work?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main RQ 2</td>
<td>How can employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub Q2.1</strong></td>
<td>What other factors influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub Q2.2</strong></td>
<td>How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main RQ 3</td>
<td>How do we preserve the relationship between the organisational culture and employee happiness in the UAE?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

**Research objectives relative to research questions**

There should be a relationship between research objectives and research questions.

#### Table 3-2: Research Gaps in relation to research objectives and questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaps</th>
<th>Research Objective</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The need to translate successful experiences in raising employee happiness in private organisations to government organisations.</td>
<td>- To evaluate HRM job satisfaction strategies that could increase employee happiness.</td>
<td>How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>successful organisations.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To indicate the relationship between happiness at work and religion in the UAE.</td>
<td>- To examine the role of religion in happiness at work in the UAE.</td>
<td>How employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How can employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</td>
<td>What other factors influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Address the need to explore how to ensure continued high rates of happiness at work.</td>
<td>- To build strategies that can ensure continued high rates of happiness at work.</td>
<td>How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

The aim of this chapter is to clarify the research approach, and to illustrate the philosophical approach, its epistemological and ontological foundations and the research methodology and methods that been used to investigate the research questions.

This chapter elaborates on the main research position regarding the investigation and the reasons behind adopting a specific amalgamative approach, rather than focusing on particular and familiar ongoing philosophical debates.

Thus, this chapter describes in detail the philosophical assumptions of perceiving reality. In addition, it discusses the research paradigm, research strategy, and research
methods for collecting and analysing data. The chapter also provides a brief explanation of the organisations that the data was collected from. Additionally, the chapter provides a reflection on the research methodology. Finally, the limitations of the methodology are also discussed in this chapter.

In summary, this chapter outlines the theoretical stance that informs the research approach adopted, and the rationale for such a subjective, as well as interpretive approach.

3.2. Research Approaches

There are three main components of the research approaches of collecting and analysing data, that they represent the research attitudes of reality and way to knowing this reality. These approaches are discussed mainly under these three bodies of knowledge: Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology. These approaches usually fit in three main questions what is the truth? Is it accessible? How can it be accessed? (Guba, 1990; Johnson et al., 2007). In more details, Guba (1990, p. 18) describes the ontological question: What is the nature of reality? the epistemological question What is the nature of the relationship between the knower and the known? And the methodological question How do you go about finding out knowledge?

The researcher should first think about the reality of the subject: if the reality is a single or multiple realities, this query is ontological (Marsh and Furlong, 2002). Having multiple realities is also called constructivism because different contexts have different realities; in other words, the reality is constructed based on the context (Fairhurst and Grant, 2010). Constructivism is applied in many fields such as education and focuses on the idea that learning should be an active process in which learners construct new ideas or
concepts based upon their current or past knowledge with roots in philosophy, psychology, sociology, and education (Hoover, 1996).

The second step for the researcher from an epistemological perspective is to explore how people think and see the reality and to find the possible way to investigate the reality. Since the epistemological perspective is that there is no single reality, the researcher needs to think of creating new hypotheses and benefit from participants’ views to create a reality (Bergman et al., 2012). Further to that, the researcher needs to know how to collect the data, which leads to the third research approach - methodology, and how the researcher can find suitable methods to collect data.

Methodology is a systematic analysis of different methods, and views applied to a field of study. It comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge. Typically, it encompasses concepts such as paradigm, theoretical model, phases and quantitative or qualitative techniques (Ishak and Alias, 2005).

3.3. Research paradigms

A research paradigm is a “common set of beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how a problem should be understood and addressed” (Kuhn, 1962: p. 45). There are three main research paradigms (aspects): positivism, interpretivism, critical realism, or pragmatism.

Positivism focuses on individuals’ beliefs and actions an example of this is Comte who argues that society shapes beliefs and as physics can uncover laws of physics using scientific techniques, sociology helps us understand the social laws using the same techniques as well as empirical observations (Pasichnyk and Pet’ko, 2014) while
Durkheim (1895, p. 4) goes further by claiming that sociology will find society’s “inherent nature.” Positivism usually focuses on the relationships or correlations between two or more variables. The epistemology of gathering the knowledge here is to create a hypothesis and test it (Laurel, 2000). Positivist research uses quantitative methods, such as questionnaires, because of the strength of reliability and objectivity (Travers, 2001).

On the other hand, interpretivism views individuals as separate from one another; they have different experiences and different perspectives and it is not sufficient to apply social facts or laws to everyone (Saunders and Thornhill, 2012). The school of interpretivism follows qualitative methods to validate data. The researchers do not depend on the literature; they collect and validate the data through many methods including surveys and interviews (Anderson, 2006, pp. 1-6). It may consider subjective methods where the researcher can write the result according to their view and understanding.

Briefly, quantitative research draws on the positivist perspective where the reality is single, and it can be discovered by using experimental methods (Teherani, 2015). While, qualitative research is generally post-positivist where the belief is in the single reality, there are elements that can influence the reality such as the environment, capacity to learn (ibid.), language and communication (Fairhurst and Grant, 2010). Moreover, qualitative research depends on constructivist beliefs where there are multiple realities and the researcher can understand and interpret this reality from the data they collect and from people’s views on a subject (Bergman et al., 2012).

Although this research uses questionnaires for collecting data, it is not wholly positivist research, because positivism sees reality as a single entity, while this research
admits that happiness at work is a complicated and multi-dimensional issue. Moreover, despite the common elements between factors that influence employees’ happiness, this does not mean there is a single reality, because one thing that may increase the happiness of one employee might not affect another person in a similar role in the same organisation. Further, a factor that increases happiness one year for one person may not have the same effect in subsequent years.

Critical realism, or pragmatism, is a paradigm which combines the philosophy of science with the philosophy of social science (transcendental realism with critical naturalism) to find a link between social and natural phenomena (Bhaskar et al., 1998). It combines positivism perspectives with interpretive perspectives; thus it not only describes the reality in terms of positivism and the interpretive, but also criticises this reality and involves an ontology (Mingers, 2006). This involves creating a theory, and then testing this theory using different tools, such as simulation models and assessment tools (ibid.).

According to Bhaskar and Danermark (2006), critical realism means understanding the practices and participants and to interpret how the people in practice perceive and interact with different phenomena. This approach assumes that all phenomena have two inseparable sides of knowledge: intransitive objects that are either social or physical, and transitive objects of knowledge produced and reproduced by humans (Bhaskar, 1998). In other words, intransitive knowledge includes both physical and material objects, and includes their constitutive mechanisms. On the other hand, transitive knowledge is represented by the realm of theories, concepts, culture, and discourses. Thus, critical realists try not only to interpret the phenomena, but also try to
explain the constraining mechanisms of the social structures (Wilson and Greenhill, 2004). These social structures consist of different elements that cannot be treated in isolation, as they are dependent on each other.

According to Orlikowski and Baroudo (2002), this paradigm of research assumes that “agency for changing concerns to reveal the restrictive conditions of the status quo, thereby initiating change in the social relations and practices, and helping to eliminate the basis of alienation and domination” (2002: 73). Thus, the principle of the critical realism is to explain and to analyse the status quo of the social systems through a specific framework. Here, the researcher uses a multidimensional lens to build a comprehensive view of the phenomenon (Howcroft and Trauth, 2004).

Therefore, the important difference between critical realism and other approaches such as positivism and interpretivism, is that critical realism tries not only to describe, predict, or interpret the events under investigation, but also tries to evaluate the social reality (Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991).

In this research, the pragmatic worldview is justified as the lens through which to view happiness in the workplace. The study also aims to discover and explain why the interplay between different factors affects the performance of the organisation, with the ultimate purpose of identifying potential for change. In this research, critical realism is adopted as a research paradigm, because it includes an interpretive approach and an allowance for emancipatory casual explanations of social systems (Bhaskar and Danermark, 2006). Critical realism helps the researcher dig beneath the surface to perceive why things happen and to discover a new set of potential ways forward. This will be explained further in the following section.
3.4. Critical Realism as a Philosophical Paradigm

As a philosophical paradigm, the author has chosen to enact critical realism to critically investigate the current situation of happiness at work and its relationship with the functioning at work and organisational culture. Critical realism accepts neither a constructivist nor objectivist stance and instead takes the view that the “social world is reproduced and transformed in daily life” (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 628). This paradigm concerns a threefold ontological stratification between distinct real (what exists), actual (events), and empirical (observable events) domains (Kazi, 2003). The real domain exists independently of the researcher’s perception or knowledge, and includes objects both natural and social. Critical realism further posits that social reality is, or social objects are stratified according to mechanisms, structures and powers. The actual domain is what is, what happens or what is possible when, or if, mechanisms and structures are activated. In the actual domain, events may or may not be perceived by human actors. Finally, the empirical domain is when human actors observe or experience the happenings or events (Sayer, 2004). Figure 3.1 shows the three domains of reality and its application to this study.
Figure 3.1: The three domains of reality and its justification to this study

Source: Adapted from Bhaskar (1978)

As Bhaskar (1978; 1993) explains that, while these domains are separated, the actual domain is a subset of the real domain, and empirical domain is a subset of the actual domain. However, to start a critical research, focus should be first placed on the empirical domain in order to explain the events that were actually seen and experienced (Mingers, 2004). In the case of this research, reliable facts on the happiness phenomenon were studied, in order to explain the roles of leaders, HRM and religion at work in the UAE, and to implement strategies that can ensure continued high rates of happiness.

For instance, it was found that different factors that influence happiness levels including HRM practices, job satisfaction strategies, governance mechanisms and organisational culture. Happiness is in the actual domain, as the mechanisms and structures of staff loyalty, organisational culture and job satisfaction are difficult to observe, and a new framework needs to be constructed. Thus, the proposed model of this study, developed in Chapter 2, should be appropriate as a new framework with which to investigate factors that influence organisational culture, thus happiness. This study investigates the structures and mechanisms of happiness presented in the real domain.
Considering these facts, a newly developed analytical framework in the actual domain is used to investigate reality from selected case studies. Finally, the research findings present the levels of happiness at work and the factors that produce it. This section discussed the adopted philosophical paradigm; the next explains types of research strategy in more detail, to help the research choose the appropriate one.

3.5. General Research Strategies

Adopting specific research strategy helps the researcher to configure the flow and structure of the study (Saunders et al., 2009). There are many research strategies, including deduction, induction, retroduction, and abduction. The choice of strategy depends on the vision and the objectives of the research and the most suitable way to achieve the research aims. Milyankova (2015) suggests that the choice of research strategy or approach depends on many elements: wealth of literature, time and level of risk. First, in terms of the ‘wealth of literature’, having access to more sources and definitions aids the deductive approach. On the other hand, the inductive approach is suitable in the case of fewer sources. Also, choosing the approach depends on the time available, and the deductive approach is simple and quicker to complete than the inductive approach. The final element, according to Milyankova (2015), is the level of risk; for example, the deductive approach is a lower risk strategy since the research ends with a theory, while no theory may emerge by inductive research, which makes this approach riskier.

Both the deductive and inductive strategies ensure that there is logic in the research terms that describe the steps carried out by the researcher, from the moment of setting the goals to assessing the research results. Both approaches show the relationship
between theory and research but do so in separate ways. In a deductive strategy, the researcher starts from a general idea (social theory) which leads to a more specific idea, and this is considered a “Top-down Approach” (Blackstone 2012, p. 43). Researchers who maintain a positivist philosophy tend to use the deductive strategy (Babbie, 2005) because they are more in line with quantitative methods, such as questionnaires, analysing large datasets (Travers, 2001).

The deduction strategy appears in this study through:

1) Focusing on the current literature about happiness at work on one hand and the data collected in the United Arab Emirates as the research context on other hand and finding a link between what happens in the UAE against the literature background as well as global practices;

2) Using the questionnaires in collecting data, thus the results help to deduct the reasons beyond numerical data.

Moreover, the induction strategy appears in this research by:

1) Interviewing the sample groups and deducting depending on the responses;

2) Studying some government organisations in the UAE to identify what happens in other government organisations in the same context.

The figure below shows the stages of the deductive approach and how it begins from a theory to the development of hypotheses, then moving on to the collecting and analysing data stage and finally testing those hypotheses depending on the analysis of data (i.e. Top-Down Approach).
In contrast, the inductive strategy graduates to a theory from data gathered and through adopting what is called the “Bottom up Approach” (Blackstone 2012, pp. 41-43).

The differences in these two approaches do not prevent the need to use them together, in many cases. Sometimes researchers plan to use both approaches and sometimes they begin with one approach that leads them to the other. The two approaches can complement each other and help the researcher achieve more accurate results.

In addition to inductive and deductive, there are two other less familiar approaches, “abductive” and “retroductive” which have been identified in the literature (Blaikie, 2007).

Research adopted critical realism mainly uses the “abductive” or “retroductive”, as their main focus in facilitating the knowledge emergence cannot be achieved through
either inductive or deductive (Meyer and Lunnay 2013; and Kapitan, 1992). The retroductive approach, is defined by Sayer as a “mode of inference in which events are explained by postulating mechanisms which are capable of producing them” (1992, p. 107). Retroduction depends on a different examination of causation as “constant conjunction”\(^1\). In other words, retroduction indicates that knowing event C is followed by event D is not enough to say D causes C, but it is important to understand how C and D are constantly connected (Bhaskar, 1978).

Researchers use other approaches such as the abductive strategy, which is a logical inference beginning with an observation and ending with a hypothesis (Elsenbroich et al., 2006). Abductive reasoning does not concentrate on reaching a specific conclusion; rather, it focuses on providing the best explanation. According to Reichertz (2010), the abductive strategy is considered a magic formula by many social scientists. Reichertz (2010) adds that there is a misunderstanding of this approach, whereby people think that a ‘hypothesis’ and ‘abduction’ are the same thing, while Peirce (1898) states the difference between these terms by mentioning: quantitative ‘deduction’, qualitative ‘induction’ and operational ‘abduction’.

Similar to the retroduction approach, the researcher in abductive reasoning takes a central and demanding role. Abductive, unlike deductive – which proves that something must be done in a positive definite way – shows how something might be (Habermas, 1978; Popay and William, 1996; and Curry et al., 2009). Fundamentally, the abductive approach enables the researcher to distinguish connections and relations that are not otherwise obvious or evident. However, when using deductive, theory is proved

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\(^1\) This definition of causality was introduced first by David Hume who was the main philosopher of empiricism, skepticism, and naturalism
or disproved to be generalized even if the findings outside of the context may remain unanalysed. Therefore, the abductive approach can help the researcher to formulate a new set of ideas based on the contextual useful factors rather than claiming ultimate truth (Danermark et al. 1997).

The above discussions imply that the abductive approach is most appropriate for this study. Justification for this comes from the fact that abductive approach provides a critical analysis of the phenomenon and explains the conditions and factors that produce it. Therefore, since the purpose of this study is to investigate the role of HR practices in employees’ happiness and to explain the root causes of these relations, abductive approach is suitable. In applying abduction as a research approach, there are three major steps to follow for a critical realism study (Danermark, 2002):

First, the study begins by examining actual events that were investigated in the empirical domain, which is linked to social phenomena including events in the real domain. In this sense, Chapter Four and Five review the phenomenon in the studies of happiness in UAE public sector organisations.

Second, studying the happiness in a unique context such as UAE, and public organisations requires the development of a model, or the application of a theory, in order to describe the observed regularity in the actual domain. With this regard, the proposed model of the study developed in Chapter Two, serves as a theoretical framework with which to underlie the phenomenon, i.e. analysis of the strong or weak happiness in the selected case studies.
Third, the existence and operation of the structures and mechanisms are demonstrated in the *empirical domain* including data collection, as will be described later in this chapter. The data collection process aims to investigate happiness strategies and the real causes of high or low levels of job satisfaction. Finally, the results are presented in Chapters Five and Six).

In summary, this research uses mixed methods which combine some positivism perspectives with interpretive perspectives. It collects data through quantitative and qualitative methods. Data collection uses questionnaires as well as interviews to investigate the practices designed to increase happiness. Therefore, this research uses abductive approach concurrently.

3.6. Types of Research Methods

Research methods are tools used in the creative process of systematically seeking knowledge through the collection of data (Anderson, 2006). Based on Ackroyd and Hughes’ (1981) research methods are not simply a set of tools that the researcher can choose arbitrarily; indeed, in sociological studies it is hard to decide which tool to use because of the unclear purpose of these kinds of research (Ackroyd and Hughes, 1981). Research methods can be mainly divided into two types: quantitative and qualitative.

3.6.1. Quantitative Method

The quantitative method is ‘a formal, objective, systematic process in which numerical data are used to obtain information about the world’ (Burn and Grove, 2005: 32). It describes variables to examine the relationships between them and to determine cause-and-effect interactions (Bahari, 2010).
Data collection often takes the form of questionnaires. The questionnaire, according to Ackroyd and Hughes (1981), is an objective tool to collect data because it is practical, can cover a large amount of information in a brief time and the data analysis is more objective than other research methods. The data analysis is presented as percentages that are considered descriptive and conclusive. These findings can be used for future recommendations to a case study company on which actions should be taken to resolve problems or show improvements.

On the other hand, questionnaires have some disadvantages: Questionnaires are not always the best way to collect data. Sometimes questionnaires may only provide limited additional insight for complex problems. On one hand, the investigators may not have asked the right questions which allow new insight in the research topic. On the other hand, questions often only allow a limited choice of responses. If the right response is not among the choice of answers, the investigators will obtain little or no valid information. Another setback of questionnaires is the varying responses to questions. Respondents sometimes misunderstand or misinterpret questions. If this is the case, it will be very hard to correct these mistakes and collect missing data in a second round.

This research uses questionnaires as a quantitative method to test the relationships between four variables and to test the hypothesis rooted in the literature review.

3.6.2. Qualitative Methods

According to Bishop (2013), the main objective of qualitative research is to increase an understanding of the underlying motivations for the behaviour or attitudes of the subjects and gain insight into the problem at hand. This type of research study requires a small sample from a specific group of people selected for observational
purposes who do not necessarily represent the views of a larger group (often case study company managers, since they are easy to access) (Bishop, 2013, pp.1-3).

In addition, quantitative research methods attempt to quantify data so that the results can be put into a simplified form. The data is measured according to the sample group’s opinions regarding various issues related to the subject matter. In the mixed methods, most researchers include a section of qualitative analysis after the quantitative numeric results (Bishop, 2013) to explain the overall meaning of the statistical percentages and how they relate to the research study, which is chosen for this research. Regarding the sample group, it is usually a randomly-chosen large number of people who represent a specific population of interest (often case study company employees or university students, since the issue specifically affects them, and they have valuable insight) (Bishop, 2013, pp. 1-3).

Meyrs (1997) states that the term ‘empirical material’ is suitable and has been used by a lot of qualitative researchers instead of ‘data’ because most qualitative data is non-numeric. There are various methods of collecting data in the qualitative methods, such as action research, case studies, ethnography and grounded theory. Each method has a different influence on how researchers will collect the data. For example

3.6.2.1. Action Research

The action research aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework” (Rapoport, 1970, p. 499). Rapoport (ibid.) states that “action research aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social
science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework”. This explanation draws attention to the two main sides of action research: positive and negative. The positive side of action research is the collaborative aspect and the gathering of those efforts to reach a specific goal (Zeni, 1998). On the other hand, it demonstrates how action research may face ethical problems, and why it is necessary to set an ethical framework that satisfies both the researchers and the chosen group (ibid.). This work is not action research, since action research requires a longitudinal set of data and more time than the present researcher has to spend.

3.6.2.2. **Ethnography**

Ethnographic research refers to a case where the researcher or the ethnographer must spend a significant amount of time in the field. The ethnographer gets involved in the workplace, for example, and feels like a part of the organisation and in doing so, they understand the social and cultural context of the employees and organisation (Lewis, 1985, p. 380). Ethnography is not suitable to use in this research because it requires more time as well as access to different organisational levels and management, which is not possible at this time.

3.6.2.3. **Grounded Theory**

Martin and Turner (1986, p.1) state that grounded theory was created by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 and define the theory as “an inductive, theory discovery methodology that allows the researcher to develop a theoretical account of the general features of a topic while simultaneously grounding the account in empirical observations or data”. The reason of not using grounded theory in this research is because it is more common in information system (IS) research because of the profound influence in developing
context-based, process-oriented descriptions and explanations of the phenomenon (Orlikowski, 1993).

3.6.2.4. Case study

The case study as a research method is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in-depth within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2011, p. 18). The case-study method is the most common research strategy in social science. This could be for two main reasons: first, most of the social inquiries conduct “how” or “why”, where a case-study strategy is preferred. Secondly, the social inquiries, which focus on phenomena within real-life contexts, are dynamic, where researchers have little control over events (Yin, 2011; Yin, 2015). Additionally, many scholars argued that case studies enable researchers to use both numerical (quantitative and statistical analysis) and categorical responses (qualitative and thematic analysis) of social themes (Hosenfeld, 1984; Block et al., 1986).

However, the case study is a controversial approach that receives a lot of criticism such as: lack of robustness and rigour (Yin, 1984; Rowley et al., 2007) and is hard to generalise, especially in the case of a single case study (Tellis, 1997), it is an appropriate method to use in this research because it gives in-depth explanations for social problems through sample group responses (Zainal, 2007), and allows the researcher to mix quantitative with qualitative methods (Burton, 2000), which is practical in the case of a small sample.

There are two kinds of case study, namely single case study and multiple-case. The single case study is used where it is rare to find a similar replication, in other words,
there are “no other cases available for replication” (Zainal, 2007, p. 2) or in the case of covering data of just one organisation, while a multiple-case provides the researcher with a number of replications.

This study investigates “how/what questions”, by exploring a case study on real-life contextual phenomena related to the happiness and job satisfaction in the workplace using a multiple-perspective focus. The case study strategy focuses on context-based knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Moreover, the selected case study with mixed methods also prevents the researcher from having any control over any new phenomena under focus (Benbasat et al., 1987). This research uses the case study method to answer the research questions. More specifically, the multiple-case option has been used to enhance the validity of the process and help in gathering more data about the same subject from different sources, before reaching a generalised conclusion. Moreover, this research mixes the case study, which uses qualitative methods such as interviews, with other quantitative methods such as questionnaires to enhance the validity of the data and provide statistical results that show how strong or weak the correlations are between different key variables.

To study how HRM in public sector organisations in the UAE can contribute to maximising employees’ happiness at work, this research adopts a triangulation method by combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide results incorporating both statistical numbers and written analysis. The researchers intend to collect the qualitative and quantitative data in parallel, so the results reflect the same period. Another reason for this approach is to be objective, so the results of the questionnaires do not affect the management of the interviews.
This combination helps in enhancing the quality of the research study and in providing detailed data for the selected organisation. It also helps with understanding the subject from both managerial and functional sides in the context of the UAE. The next section explains the triangulation research method in detail.

3.6.2.5. **Time Horizon**

Research structure highlights the time horizon in which the researcher undertakes research. There are two types of time limit that can be specified: the cross-sectional and the longitudinal (Bryman and Bell, 2015). When research is concerned with the study of a specific phenomenon in a certain period, the cross-sectional time-scale is used in order to make particular use of strategies such as case studies. By contrast, a longitudinal time-horizon is used when the research is examining change over time, because it is concerned with repeated data collection over an extended period (Flick, 2015). The longitudinal studies are likely to make use of strategies such as action research, experiment and archival analysis (Goddard *et al.*, 2004).

This research intends to answer the research questions at a particular time: this “snapshot” is cross-sectional. The data were collected via mixed methods, using interviews and questionnaires in five governmental organisations in the UAE, over a four-month period, from April to August 2016.

3.6.3. **Triangulation**

The third paradigm is called the triangulation method. It is a combination of different methods together, for example, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods in one research project (Ragin, 1987; Kaplan and Duchon, 1988; Lee, 1991 and Gable, 1994). Creswell (2008) offers some explanation related to this type of data
analysis, by describing how the combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods is considered a mixed methods approach that enhances the quality of the research study. Denzin (2000) and Brannen (2004) state that mixed methods provides results of both statistical and written analysis, so that organisations being studied can analyse detailed data to address specific issues and develop appropriate strategies (Bishop, 2013; Creswell, 2008). Padris (2003) argues that researchers can take various approaches to conduct their studies, including a philosophical, epistemological technique for gathering knowledge to develop the researcher’s understanding.

This research triangulated the research findings using three approaches. First, the research’s theoretical framework was constructed based on factors discussed in the literature; these factors proved its effectiveness in strengthening the organisational culture, thus influencing the happiness level. At the same time, a conceptual framework is suggested in the last chapter (Chapter Six) to show the dynamic sides between the above factors. It also shows the relationship between happiness at work and job satisfaction from a visual perspective.

Second, evidence are obtained through applying mixed methods and by getting two main resources of data (interviews and questionnaires) in order to collect evidence for the research’s line of examination. Thus, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were used to gather the required data from participants from a range of different positions. Finally, the research findings were compared with the findings of other studies in the discussion chapter. Moreover, this research used the thematic-analysis method along with a statistical analysis (i.e. using ANOVA, post hoc and T-Test) as
analytic tactics of pattern-matching, in order to extract the knowledge from the qualitative and quantitative data and to construct validity in research.

### 3.7. Research Design

The process of collecting data goes through several stages, mixing quantitative and qualitative methods to consider the subject from all aspects. The stages are shown in the following table

#### Table 3-3: Research Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 4</th>
<th>Step 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees from functional levels inside the organisation</td>
<td>Quantitative Method (Questionnaire)</td>
<td>Questionnaire Analysis Using ANOVA, post hoc and T-Test (Chapter Four)</td>
<td>Combining the results of both method (Chapter Six)</td>
<td>Conclusion (Chapter Six)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Management and HRD managers</td>
<td>Qualitative Method (Interview)</td>
<td>Interview Analysis using Nvivo (Chapter Five)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

Because happiness elements may differ from place to place, it is vital that the research addresses the association between managers and employees by using mixed methods: a questionnaire that covers a large sample of employees from the functional level and interviews targeted at the managerial level.

The quantitative method used in this research is the questionnaire to find out how personal attitudes affect employee happiness at work, and to identify the factors that influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations. Large parts of this questionnaire are adapted from two questionnaires one by Lutterbie and Pryce-Jones
(2013) and the second is an online survey (happinessatworksurvey.com). The research design involves both primary and secondary methods as applied to theoretical concepts. The primary research includes a questionnaire survey with 38 multiple choice questions related to happiness and job satisfaction. The questionnaire aims to measure the level of happiness in four UAE public organisations and to recognise the factors that influence employee happiness by studying the relationship between three main categories: Organisational System, Functioning at Work, Personal attitude towards and Feelings towards Work, In addition the relation between Organisational System and Functioning at Work.

**Figure 3.4: Questionnaires Categories and relations**

![Diagram showing the relationship between personal attitude, Organisational System, Functioning at Work, and Feelings towards Work.]

The questionnaire also studies the relationship between seven variables: age, educational level, marital status, total work experience, years spent in current organisation, organisation and gender on the one hand, and feelings towards work on the other seeking correlations between variables and the overarching concept of happiness.
In order to refine the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with 10 employees from a government organisation which was not part of the sample used in this study. The draft questionnaire was completed by the 10 respondents who were then asked whether the items were clearly stated. Their responses were also checked to ensure that the administration instructions and response scales were clearly presented. The pilot study did identify three items which were causing a degree of uncertainty with some of the respondents. These three items were amended and re-checked with the respondents. The respondents confirmed that the revised items were more clearly stated.

3.7.1. The Targeted Sample for the Data Collection

This research has conducted 30 in-depth interviews, and 140 questionnaires in five different governmental organisations in the UAE (see Table 3.3.1). The case study organisations are: Sheikh Zayed Housing Programme (SZHP), Dubai Electricity and
Water Authority (DEWA), Ebrahi, bin Hamid bin Abuid Allah, The Knowledge and Human Development Authority, and Suhaila school.

### 3-4: Profile of interview respondents based on job title

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Job Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sheikh Zayed Housing Programme</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>- Executive Director of the Foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Vice President.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- General Director of Human Resources Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Head of Training and Development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Head of Recruitment and Selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Head of Employee Relation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dubai Electricity and Water Authority</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>- Chief operating officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- General Director of Human Resources Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Head of Learning and Development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Head of Talent Acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Head of Compensation&amp; Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Head of Recruitment and Selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ebrahi, bin Hamid bin Abuid Allah hospital</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>- Assistance Undersecretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Director of IBHOH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- General Director of Human Resources Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Head of Training and Development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Head of Recruitment and Selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Head of Employee Relation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4. Suhaila School | 6 | - Principal  
- Vice Principal  
- Primary Coordinators  
- Advisor  
- Social Specialist  
- Social Specialist |
|-------------------|----|---------------------------------------------|
| 5. The Knowledge and Human Development Authority | 6 | - Chairman of the Board of Directors and Director General  
- Chief of Creativity, Happiness & Innovation  
- Chief of Business Support  
- Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors and Deputy Director General  
- Chief of Strategy & Excellence  
- Head of Employee Relation |

Source: compiled by the author

The HRM from the targeted organisations help the researcher to distribute the questionnaire survey to managers and employees by email and hand out as part of the case study. This provides data for the quantitative research statistics (Chapter 4). The interview provides the qualitative research results which gives a fuller picture of employee happiness in the UAE public sector. The questionnaire and the interviews work in parallel as mentioned earlier to ensure that the collected data covers the same period since things change very fast in the UAE; the context of this research.
3.8. Organisational contexts of field study

This research aims to focus on organisations with a high percentage of Emiratisation; this term reflects the attitude of the leaders regarding reducing dependence on foreign workers and employing UAE citizens in the public and private sectors (Abu Mazen, 2013). Choosing organisations with a prominent level of Emiratisation means that their cultural and religious backgrounds are similar. On the other hand, one more organisation has been added for the interview stage, which is considered one of the top 15 happiest organisations around the world. The similarity between Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) this organisation and the others is that they are all government organisations, whereas this additional case employs multinationals, meaning different religions and cultural backgrounds. The reason why this organisation is not included in the quantitative part is because they did not agree to distribute surveys. Based on their internal policy not to force any staff member to fill out a questionnaire and to avoid putting additional pressure on their staff.

The research aims to study different organisations and compare them to understand the difference between their outcomes and to recognise the gaps that make some organisations unhappy while others succeed. The research findings might be of use in future to make a comparison between public and private organisations in the UAE.

The data was collected from 140 employees in four government organisations in the United Arab Emirates over period of 4 months. The case study organisations are: Sheikh Zayed Housing Programme (SZHP), Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), Ebrahi, bin Hamid bin Abuid Allah Hospital, and Suhaila school (see Table 3.3.2).
Table 3-5: Profile of questionnaire respondents based on organisations and departments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Departments Surveyed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The Financial and Administrative Affairs Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Strategy &amp; Future Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Departments of Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The Government Communication Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Customer Care Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Department of Housing Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Project Execution Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Corporate Services Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dubai Electricity and Water Authority</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>- Business Support and Human Resource Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Power &amp; Water Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Innovation &amp;The Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Technical Advisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Strategy &amp; Business Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Marketing &amp; Corp Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The Financial Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ebrahi, bin Hamid bin Abuid Allah hospital</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>- Human Resource Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Finance and Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Quality and Excellence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focusing on the demographic of the sample helps to understand factors that influence an employee’s views and how the answers differ from one group to another. It also gives a general idea of the relation between these factors and happiness in context of the UAE. To be able to achieve the research goals, the sample pertained to the following criteria: local employees, both male and female, and both employers and employees. The questionnaire adopts the Likert scale which is considered the most common method for collecting data regarding job satisfaction. The Likert Scale builds on five options with 5 = “strongly agree”, and at the other extreme 1 = “strongly disagree”. The number of available questionnaires that were used in this research is 140 out of 170. The demographics of the research include gender, age, marital status, education level, years of experience and, number of years spent in their current organisation.

This research aims to interview 30 top management and HRD managers to reveal the efforts and practices adopted to increase employee happiness. The interview includes 11 questions, classified into the following groups:
• An organisational attitude such as a happiness strategy, focusing on the importance of religion, the relation between the top management and the employees, including social activities (Question 1, 4, 5 and 9).

• HRD tasks: attracting new employees, recruitment, training and development and performance appraisal (Question 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8).

• The interview closes with two questions to summarise the whole interview and clarify any complex points raised (Question 10 and 11).

The interviews are conducted as one-to-one with managers in the sample group.

There are four kinds of interviews: structured, unstructured, non-directive and focused (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p. 273). This thesis focuses on in-depth interviewing because it allows the collection of more in-depth information, and it is widely used in educational and social research (Berry, 1999). It is intended to raise new issues and provide pointers for future research.

3.9. Organisational Contexts

In order to answer the research questions and to achieve the research objectives, this study was conducted in five different governmental organisations in public sector in the UAE. These organisations are:

1. The Sheikh Zayed Housing Programme
2. Dubai Electricity and Water Authority
3. Ebrahim bin Hamid bin Abuid Allah Hospital
4. Suhaila Preparatory School
5. The Knowledge and Human Development Authority

The following provides a brief explanation of the background of each organisation.
3.9.1. The Sheikh Zayed Housing Programme (SZHP)

The Sheikh Zayed Housing Programme (SZHP) is a national firm, which concentrates on the Emiratisation; the Emiratisation percentage in this organisation is 100% (Abu Mazen, 2013). One reason for choosing this organisation is that it has many branches in different cities in the UAE, and as such, provides an opportunity to compare the results, and in doing so, find out if the geographical location has something to do with the level of happiness. Finally, this organisation offers social services, so it is also relevant to observe if those who are responsible for delivering happiness are happy in themselves. It is also relevant to focus on employee happiness when the job of those employees depends on communication.

The Sheikh Zayed Housing Programme was established to provide suitable housing for families of UAE nationals to contribute to achieving the aspirations of the UAE government in the provision of a high standard of living for UAE nationals.

This institution aims to:

- Increase the number of approvals for housing requests and improve the programme's ability to deal with requests for housing.
- Increase and diversify the financial resources for the programme.
- Invest in qualifications and attract the best qualified personnel to ensure continued employee development.
- Develop mechanisms and methodologies for working in the programme and upgrading services.
- Enhance coordination between the programme and other sectors to improve the quality and effectiveness of completed projects.
The vision of the organisation is to “achieve stable housing for UAE national families through exceptional and pioneering community partnerships” (www.szhp.gov.ae).

Their mission is to “provide suitable housing for deserving UAE national families by strengthening cooperation with partners and developing financial and human resources through creative available mediums, provide exceptional service through a qualified working team and integrated electronic systems, and contribute to sustainable development by adopting best practices” (www.szhp.gov.ae).

The services that this organisation offers are divided into three categories: loan, grant and government housing. The loan is interest-free and it is for the purposes of buying or building a new home, carrying out maintenance or expansion, and building or purchasing more than one house if required due to family circumstances.

The grant is non-refundable for buying or building a new home, carrying out maintenance or expansion, and building or purchasing more than one residence if required due to family circumstances.

The final service is government housing, a programme that provides housing, either within residential compounds or as separate residential units.

Only UAE nationals who do not own a suitable house for their families and have not received housing aid from any government authority for 15 years are eligible for housing assistance provided by the Sheikh Zayed Housing Programme. The applicant must be the breadwinner of the family and their total income and assets should not be sufficient to own a house (Sheikh Zayed Housing programme's website).
3.9.2. Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA)

Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) was formed on 1 January 1992, by a decree issued by the late Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al Maktoum to merge Dubai Electricity Company and Dubai Water Department. Dubai Government fully supported the Electricity Company and the Water Department to provide Dubai’s citizens and residents with a continuous and reliable supply of electricity and water. Since then, DEWA has made considerable achievements, and is ranked as one of the best utilities in the world. DEWA provides services to more than 780,000 customers with a happiness rate of 95% in 2016.

DEWA has achieved competitive results, surpassing leading European and American companies by reducing losses in power transmission and distribution networks to 3.3%, compared to 6-7% in Europe and the USA. Water network losses decreased to 8.0%, compared to 15% in North America, achieving global results in reducing water losses. DEWA’s results are among the best internationally for customer minutes lost per year. DEWA’s figures reached 3.28 minutes, compared to 15 minutes recorded by leading utilities in the European Union. The UAE, represented by DEWA, has been ranked first in the Middle East and North Africa and fourth globally for the fourth consecutive year for electricity as per the World Bank’s Doing Business 2017 report.

DEWA is working to expand the M-Station, the largest power production and desalination plant in the UAE. The new combined-cycle power plant will add a further 700 megawatts (MW) to the installed generating capacity of the station, boosting its capacity to 2,760MW when the project is completed in 2018. This will boost DEWA’s current installed capacity of 10,000 MW of electricity and 470 million imperial gallons per day (MIGD) of desalinated water to meet Dubai’s demand. The Hassyan Clean Coal
Power Plant is another pioneering project implemented by DEWA based on the IPP model. Hassyan clean coal power project will have a total coal-fired capacity of 2,400 MW; the power station will be fully-operational by 2023.

DEWA is managing and operating the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, which is the largest single-site solar project in the world. It will produce 1,000MW by 2020 and 5,000MW by 2030, with total investment of AED 50 billion.

The Solar Park was launched in 2012 and the 13MW first phase became operational in October 2013. The IPP-based 200MW second phase will be operational in April 2017. The solar park has an innovation centre that includes several research and development laboratories in clean energy and will oversee research and development projects, with a total investment of AED 500 million until 2020.

In November 2015, HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched the Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050 to make Dubai a global centre for clean energy and a green economy. The strategy aims to provide 7% of Dubai’s energy from clean sources by 2020, 25% by 2030, and 75% by 2050. It consists of five main pillars: infrastructure, legislation, funding, building capacities and skills, and an environmentally-friendly energy mix.

DEWA has also launched three initiatives to support the Smart Dubai initiative to make Dubai the smartest city in the world. These are Shams Dubai, to encourage building owners to install photovoltaic (PV) solar panels to generate electricity. The electricity generated is used inside the premises and the surplus is exported to DEWA’s grid. This encourages the use of renewable energy, increases its share in the energy mix and diversifies energy sources. The Smart Applications and Meters initiative contributes to
fast-service connection, fast response and rationalising energy use. The Green Charger initiative establishes the infrastructure and electric vehicle charging stations. DEWA has established 100 charging stations and is working on additional stations.

To emphasise its commitment to sustainability, which is one of the main pillars of World Expo 2020 in Dubai, DEWA is working in line with the vision of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to host the best World Expo that the world has ever seen in Dubai. DEWA will contribute to achieving this by building a world-class energy infrastructure that meets Dubai’s development demands. DEWA has launched a wide variety of initiatives in this regard, allocating AED 3 billion to boost water, electricity and renewable energy projects according to the highest international standards. This supports Dubai Expo’s theme of ‘Connecting Minds, Creating the Future’ and its three sub themes of sustainability, mobility and opportunity. (www.dewa.gov.ae)

3.9.3. **Ebrahim bin Hamid bin Abuid Allah Hospital**

This is a public hospital established in 2001 and provides the following services:

1. Basic treatment services: General medicine / family medicine, emergency, child health services and vaccinations, school health, oral and dental health and preventive dentistry, surgery and gum surgery, paediatric teeth, pulmonary medicine and root canal, postnatal care, breastfeeding consultations.

3. Specialised therapeutic services: Home care for the elderly and people with special needs

4. Facilities and supporting services: laboratories, pharmacy, radiology, and Hajj and Umrah


Mission: To enhance community health by providing comprehensive, innovative and fair healthcare services as per international standards, and performing the role as regulator and supervisor of the healthcare sector through a modern and integrated health legislative system.

3.9.4. Suhaila Preparatory School

This is a government preparatory school for girls and it admits students from grade six to grade nine and is under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education. The school’s vision and mission stems from the Ministry of Education, as follows:

Vision: Innovative education for a knowledge, pioneering, and global society.

Mission: Develop an innovative Education System for a knowledge and global competitive society that includes all age groups to meet future labour market demand, by ensuring quality of the ministry of education outputs, and provision of best services for internal and external customers.

It worth mentioning that it is hard to find more information about this school since it does not have an official website.

3.9.5. The Knowledge and Human Development Authority

KHDA is responsible for the growth and quality of private education in Dubai.

KHDA was established in 2006 with a mandate to develop all knowledge and human
resources in Dubai. The organisation support schools, universities, parents, students, educators, investors and government partners to create a high-quality education sector focused on happiness and wellbeing.

They guided by the strategy of the Government of Dubai and inspired by those responsible for Dubai’s future growth and innovation – The students. The KHDA publications, along with detailed school inspection reports, provide evidence-based information for everyone involved in education.

**Vision:** lifelong learning to fulfil Dubai’s aspirations.

**Mission:** To assure quality and to improve accessibility to education, learning and human development, with the engagement of the community.

“We are a team of 300 people from more than 30 different nationalities. We share a passion for education and a commitment to ensure that each student in Dubai has access to high quality education. We focus on what’s working locally and internationally and convene educators to share positive practice for the benefit of all schools and universities in Dubai”.

### 3.10. Reflection on the research methodology

This research might be one of the first to apply a critical realist perspective to study the happiness in the UAE public sector organisations. In taking a critical realist stance, this study has been able to go beyond the surface phenomena (i.e. personal and social happiness, job satisfaction and HR practices) to the critical examination of the motivation and action of actors who establish sustainable performance (understanding the interplay among happiness drivers, HRM job satisfaction and organisational culture). Through this investigation process, critical realism has offered a more detailed understanding of the
drivers of and barriers to the organisational policies (culture or sustainability) and happiness phenomenon in UAE public sector organisations. This was achieved through three domains of critical realism: the empirical, the actual and the real.

- Firstly, the empirical domain begins with observations on the real-world factors of happiness, and HRM practices. Interestingly, the facts indicate that happiness is influenced by different factors (i.e. HRM practices, job satisfaction, equality, organisational culture, and cultural background). When exploring this phenomenon, it is found that, most studies’ exploration is limited to just one aspect of the reward system and job satisfaction, which presents a lack of varied opinions from different perspectives that have their own impact on organisational performance, and sense of belonging (loyalty). This has been stated as a crucial gap in the organisational study.

- Secondly, in the actual domain, the proposed model of the study offers an integral model to observe the phenomenon of happiness in the workplace. The proposed model of the study shows itself to be a powerful tool to investigate how to improve and sustain the happiness and job satisfaction in UAE public sector organisations.

- Thirdly, this study seeks to find a new set of answers to happiness and loyalty in workplace in the real domain. For many reasons, such as establishing Minister of happiness in the UAE and allocating “Ministry of happiness”, five governmental organisations were selected as interesting cases. The process of identifying the realities of the lived experiences and perceptions of managerial actors involved in the HRM activities was conducted through (140) questionnaires, and (30) semi-structured interviews.
All data from different sources were analysed and sensitised through the lens of the proposed model of the study. We thus regard this study more as an illustration of the situation on the ground, rather than as a bird's-eye view of happiness in the workplace and HRM practices. Moreover, despite the common elements between factors that influence employees’ happiness, this does not mean there is a single reality, because a factor that may increase the happiness of one employee might not affect another person in a similar role in the same organisation.

Therefore, although this study does not claim to have found full answers to the main research questions, it can be said that some light has been shed. Also, observations show that a new set of drivers for and obstacles to improving happiness could be explained in the language of the proposed model of the study in the UAE public sector organisations. As a result, this study proposes a way of finding a new set of answers to explain happiness and job satisfaction by developing an integrated model of workplace development. By using this model, the numerous factors that influence happiness in the workplace can be investigated and identified under the same umbrella. Through conducting a critical realism approach to happiness and organisational culture research, the results critically identify issues that can used as suggested strategies for change. The findings of this study, therefore, could provide vital lessons to avoid the trap of failure and to help to ensure that HRM practices and happiness strategies can be carried out successfully.

3.11. Limitations and Ethical Concerns

Some of the limitations to the research involve having to work around the government’s schedule when preparing the survey and interviews. Some of the
participants may have to travel throughout the survey period (summer holiday), which may lead to substitution participants. Although this could cause certain issues with the research project, it should not negatively impact the results.

Another limitation is the language and translation issue. The researcher set up the questionnaires and the interviews in English to suit the language of the thesis, at the same time, the questionnaires and the interviews needed to be translated to Arabic to fit with the participants’ language, so it was simple for them to understand and respond. This of course takes a longer time than dealing with participants whose first language is English. It also meant that the researcher needed to translate the interviewee responses back to English to be able to use the data in this research. To minimise this issue in terms of time allocated, the researcher transferred the interview scripts directly in English.

Another critical issue is the sensitivity of the topic, since it is investigating factors surrounding happiness at work which means the participants might come across things that influence happiness that may be related to top management issues or government policies and rules. The problem is that the Arabic culture is not totally open to talking frankly about issues related to negative practices as set by the government or top management.

Moreover, the participants knew that the researcher was recording the interview discussions to facilitate the interaction and to make sure that all the key points were captured, but this could have affected their openness given that honest answers may portray their workplace in a negative light, and this is not something they would do lightly, hence there is a potential limitation in reliability and validity. To deal with this limitation, information sheet and consent form were distributed to confirm the nature of
the study, the importance the researcher has placed on confidentiality and anonymity and that they have given their informed consent to participate fully. These forms provide an explanation of the basis of the research, their involvement as participants and guarantee data confidentiality with respect to their position in the company. It provides enough information for interviewees and asks for their consent prior to the interviews and questionnaires. It also makes them aware that they are able to withdraw from the study without giving a reason, without prejudice and at any point. The participants were given a two-week period on receiving the information sheet and consent form to decide on whether they would like to participate. This process illustrates how the researcher values the privacy of the participants’ involvement and aims to make them confident about participating in the questionnaires and the interviews for the enhancement of this research area.

In addition, when dealing with the recording issues, most of the participants expressed consent, especially after the author had a friendly chat with them before the interview and allowed them time to relax and feel confident that their personal information and the recording tapes will be used for research purposes only and that no one was allowed to use them or have an access except the researcher and her supervisors. Another issue that might be seen as a limitation is that the researcher is from the same culture, thus might be subjective in collecting and analysing the data and objectivity is a key element to consider in social research. However, overly subjective influence does not affect the process of collecting data for the following reasons: the researcher does not belong to any of the sample organisations and has never worked with them in the past. The researcher put a list of some government organisations together and then contacted
them to see which were willing and able to support the researcher and provide access to meet the top management and then divided the questionnaires to the relevant employees under participating top management teams. The researcher tried to include both genders, different ages and different education levels to cover different variables and provide robust outcomes. It is worth mentioning that, despite efforts to include variables, the results show higher percentages in one variable over another in several cases, for example regarding gender, 65.7% of the employees were female, while males represented 34.3% and as for the participants’ ages, 84% are less than 40 years old. However, these percentages may reflect the demographics of those who work in government organisations in the UAE and do not have anything to do with subjectivity. Moreover, subjectivity does not create a picture of reality when conducting research therefore the researcher always aimed to be as objective as possible in order to achieve the aims of this research.

During the analysis phase, the SPSS data collection application has been used. SPSS operates by using encrypted values allowing the participants to feel confident that their jobs will not be in jeopardy due to their involvement in this research given that there is no obvious reference to their responses. There are also certain data that are considered confidential and must be protected in order for the government organisations to allow the study to be conducted, such as the name of the organisations which are replaced with letters: A, B, C, D and E.

Other issues to be taken into account before beginning the data collection process are: ensuring that participants are not placed under any undue pressure to complete questionnaires and interviews; ensuring that participants are in a position to provide
informed consent relating to their involvement in the research; maintaining the confidentiality of the organisation as a condition of access; and, ensuring that data is stored and accessed in ways that do not compromise the confidentiality and integrity of the data. In addition, to avoid participants becoming bored, the researcher prepared a clear questionnaire with short questions that do not take a lot of effort to answer. Further, all data collection (via interviews and questionnaires) will be conducted in the public offices of the same organisations.

3.12 Summary
This chapter has clarified the research approach used to gather primary data. It has presented the philosophical assumptions, research questions, research strategy, design of data gathering instruments, the perceived limitations of the research and ethical considerations associated with the design of the research and its associated practicalities.

Chapter 4 A Quantitative Analysis of Questionnaire Responses
4.1. Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to display collected data and analyse in order to understand the dimensions that influence the level of happiness at work within government organisations in the United Arab Emirates and gain an overall idea on the factors that contribute to happiness in the workplace.

This chapter focuses on describing the results of the quantitative analysis used in the data collection process. A questionnaire has been conducted on a sample of 140 employees and was chosen for several reasons: firstly, it is a method that can cover a large number of people, potentially generating a huge amount of data. Secondly, it can be analysed in an objective way unlike other forms such as interview which can suffer elements of interviewer bias, for example, the psychological and physical characteristics of the researcher (Miyazaki and Taylor 2008). Thirdly, and the most important reason for selecting the questionnaire is to reach a group of people that might not have been asked about their views, attitudes, and feelings towards work before – and the privacy of a questionnaire may encourage candid answers. It is also worth mentioning that it was very important to reach the target audience because a lot of researchers have faced this problem, especially if they are using an online survey, which might not reach the right respondents in this case.

This chapter covers one of the five research questions aiming to identify how an employee’s personal attitude affects them; whether a positive or negative personal attitude influences their happiness at work.

It also studies the relationship between the following aspects:

- Organisational System + Functioning at Work
- Organisational System + Feelings towards Work
Functioning at Work + Feelings towards Work

Then, the chapter discusses the relationship between seven variables: age, educational level, marital status, total work experience, years spent in current organisation, organisation, and gender on the one hand, and feelings towards work, on the other seeking correlations between variables and the overarching concept of happiness.

ANOVA is used to test and find significant differences between the means of three or more groups. In addition, post hoc is used to gauge where the differences exist between the groups. While a T-Test has been conducted in the case of two groups, namely male and female, to recognise the difference between the means of these two groups.

4.2. Descriptive Demographics of the Sample

The questionnaire was conducted with a sample of 140 employees in four government organisational sectors in the United Arab Emirates. Focusing on the demographic of the sample helps us to understand factors that influence an employee’s views and how the answers differ from one group to another. In this research, as for the participants' ages, 84% are less than 40 years old. Regarding the educational level, 33.6% had attained less than a Bachelor’s degree, which represents the high school and diploma certificate, 57.8% were holders of a Bachelor’s degree, while only 8.6% participants were holders of a Master’s degree. In terms of marital status, 32.6% were single, while 64.5% were married. Regarding the employees’ work experience, there are four groups: 24.5% of whom held less than five years' experience; 30.2% had 6-10 years’ experience and 29.5% had 11-15 years, while 15.8% had 16 and above.
Regarding employees’ total experience in their current job, the largest number segment was 31.4% representing those with 6-10 years’ experience, the second highest group was 27.85% representing employees with between 1-5 years. Lastly, 23.5% had 11-15 years of experience and 12.8% employees had completed 16 years or above. Regarding gender, female 65.7% of the employees, males represented 34.3%.

4.3. Statistical Correlation
4.3.1. Correlation One: How Do Personal Attitudes Affect Employee Happiness at Work?

To answer the first research question and to see whether there is a relationship between personal attitudes towards life in general and employee happiness at work in the UAE, statistical analysis is used to form conclusions.

It has been claimed in the literature that personal attitude influences an employee’s feelings at work and their negative or positive vision to life in general makes them visualise their job in some different ways (Barsade and Gibson 2007; Calaguas, 2017). This part of the research concentrates on the correlation between attitudes and feelings towards work by first giving a general idea of the sample responses according to a 5-point Likert scale which builds on these options 5= “strongly agree”, and at the other extreme 1= “strongly disagree” on two parts of the questionnaire. First, the sample responses on the respondents’ ‘attitude towards life in general’ are reported in Table 4.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employees’ attitude towards life in general</th>
<th>Likert Scale</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-1: Descriptive Statistics (Personal attitude part responses) (N= 140)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel happy in my life in general.</td>
<td>41.4% 52.9% 4.3% 1.4% 0%</td>
<td>4.3  .632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel happy compared with most other people I know in my life.</td>
<td>30.7% 62.1% 6.4% 0% 0.7%</td>
<td>4.24  .598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In general I am very positive about myself.</td>
<td>32.85% 62.85% 4.3% 0% 0%</td>
<td>4.29  .569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I enjoy my life in general regardless of all the hard circumstances I encounter.</td>
<td>34.28% 54.28% 9.28% 0.7% 1.4%</td>
<td>4.21  .757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is important to me to have a high salary compared to the people around me.</td>
<td>21.4% 36.4% 25% 15.7% 1.4%</td>
<td>3.61  1.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My life is as good as I wish.</td>
<td>25.7% 67.85% 4.3% 1.4% 0.7%</td>
<td>4.18  .638</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

Overall, people claimed to be very satisfied with their life in general, with a mean score of 4.14, and standard deviation of 0.47 which was expected, namely because of the UAE culture. The culture in the UAE has been classified as a high-context culture, according to Nishimura et al., (2008), meaning it is a culture built on communication and vital social events. It involves religion and customs in almost all the aspect of life. In high-context culture, people tend to rely on their history, status, relationships, religion,
among other aspects, to assign meaning to an event and this applies very much to the UAE (Nishimura et al., 2008, p. 785).

The social life in the UAE is always active, with a lot of family gatherings and social occasions and this may be considered a source of happiness. In the literature those who interact with people and have an active social life are healthier and happier than people with high levels of loneliness (Tomaka et al., 2006) and this is what high-context culture offers to the people. It offers social support for both good and bad occasions in life.

Another direct source of people’s happiness in the UAE is the religion and spiritual life which also influences the UAE culture. Islam has great impacts on shaping the values of the UAE citizen and their feelings towards life in general. McFaul (2006) and Abuznaid (2006) recognise the vital role that religion plays in different societies and how it influences many facets of human life such as culture, education and policy.

Another expected reason to why employees’ attitude and feelings towards life in general is high might be because of the UAE government’s efforts in raising people’s well-being. The World Economic Forum publishes the Networked Readiness Index (NRI) that measures the extent to which an economy is prepared to use information and communications technology - or technologies (ICT), to accelerate competitiveness and well-being. In the 2016 NRI, the UAE was placed 26th out of 139 economies as a result of the efforts made by the UAE government in economic diversification and finding new resources, such as tourism and renewable energy, rather than depending only on oil. In addition, the use of ICT is now active in all sectors and segments of UAE society (marketline.com 2016).
Moreover, the United Arab Emirates demonstrates its interest in raising the level of happiness by many initiatives to raise the well-being of the people. According to the second World Happiness Report (2013) which contains data from 2005-2012, the UAE ranked 14th of 85 countries. Although the UAE dipped to 28th position in 2016, arguably due to the Gallup polling system which included the non-Emirati population, the UAE was able to recover and jumped back to position 21 in 2017 (GULFBUSINESS 2017) and position 20 in 2018 (Zakaria, 2018).

The first Ministry of Happiness role was developed in the UAE in 2016. According to Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, Vice President and Ruler of Dubai the “Minister of State for Happiness will have the responsibility to align and drive government policy to create social good and satisfaction” (thenational.ae 2016). Additionally, Ohood Al Roumi the current Minister of Happiness, announced that the role of the ministry is “to create an environment where people can flourish – can reach their potential – and choose to be happy” (thenational.ae 2016). This appears to be clear evidence of the efforts and long term vision to ensure UAE citizens are happy.

Responses to the section of the questionnaire that deals with employees’ ‘feelings towards work’ are reported in table 4.2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling Towards Work</th>
<th>Likert Scale</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Std.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I like my current job</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I enjoy what I am doing</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. My job affects my health positively</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. My current job fit with my career plan</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. My values and the values of the organisation are similar</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I feel motivated to do more in my job</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. This job is worthwhile</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. I feel full of energy at work</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. My organisation is a good organisation to work for</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. I would recommend my organisation to friends</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. I am proud of my organisation</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It can be observed from Table 2 that generally people are less satisfied with their work. Fewer respondents ‘strongly disagree’, showing a more positive lean in answers towards the extreme negative end of the scale. This is expected because of several reasons, which will be detailed in the next chapter (Qualitative analysis of interview transcripts). One of the factors directly connected to job dissatisfaction according to the interviews is: the continuing changes in human resource laws in recent years as directed by the UAE government. Another important factor is the performance appraisal system that has been used by HR as well as many other reasons that participate directly in making employees less happy with regard to their feelings towards work. Both qualitative and quantitative data highlighted the negative impact of performance appraisals on employees’ feelings. The employees’ answers on question 11 show that 34% feel that their organisations do not offer equal opportunities in terms of performance evaluation and promotions, and 23.6% were neutral.

Pearson correlation is conducted between the means of the attitudes towards life in general and feeling towards work to find out to what extent personal attitude about life in general influences the level of happiness at work (see table 4.3 below). The Pearson correlation result must be between zero and one, and when the result is higher than zero, this reflects a positive relationship. While if the result is less than zero (a negative number), this reflects an inverse relationship: when one variable increases the other variable decreases.
Table 4-3 Descriptive Statistics (Correlation between personal attitude towards life in general and feelings towards work)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Feeling Towards Work</th>
<th>Attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Towards Work</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Attitude</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.406**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towards Life in</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

The correlation between personal attitude and feelings towards work is \( r = .406 \), which represents a positive relationship in the available statistical data. Correlation in this case does not necessary mean causation because when employees were asked about their attitudes and feeling towards life in general, they showed a high level of satisfaction with a high mean score. While when employees were asked about their feelings towards work, they displayed less satisfaction and the answers varied to include all the parts of the scale from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’. Not all of those who described themselves as happy towards life in general show high feelings towards work, but all of those who were less satisfied about their life, showed a negative attitude about life in general and expressed less satisfaction and low feelings towards work.
This means that being a positive person with a positive attitude towards life may affect the other aspects of life such as work, relationships and health, but it does not necessarily mean that this employee is happy at work. Positivity in life may lead an employee to be a positive person in their work but will not necessarily raise the level of happiness at work, especially when there are other external factors that may influence the employee’s feelings and disappoint them, such as leadership style in the organisation and the rules and conditions that have been set.

On the other hand, the negativity will always cast a shadow on the other aspects of life such as work, which can mean negative people see negative aspects in their job and highlight it even if the job offers a good and pleasant workplace. It can be noted from the employees’ answers on feelings towards job, that those who think that their job influences their health negatively are not happy at work. A total of 25% claimed their health was negatively affected, while 20% were neutral when asked if their job influenced their health positively.
In summary of the above discussion, positivity in life in general affects positivity and happiness at work. It helps the employee to be more motivated, productive and creative (Barsade and Gibson 2007; Schein, 1992). It also helps them to solve problems that they face in a clearer and more efficient way while testing new and innovative ideas. Achor (2010) discusses the positive effect on life and that positivity and happiness fuel success. He adds (2010, p. 17) “positive brains have a biological advantage over brains that are neutral or negative” and that “the brain works well when people are positive”. Thus, positivity can help employees to create their own happiness at work, but again, this does not mean that all positive people are happy at their work across the whole population.

On the contrary, all participants that were dissatisfied with their life in general also show dissatisfaction in the work place, which shows how negativity in life in general may influence the feelings of the employees at work. It can lead to people assessing the negative parts of their life and job where negativity traverses both sides, affecting one another (Achor, 2010). According to the Topchik (2000) negativity is a virus that can easily spread inside the organisation. It may be brought in by an individual employee and create a negative attitude where they may not have been prior; if the power of this poor attitude spreads, the organisation can suffer potentially leading to lower productivity and a higher turnover of staff. Negativity in the work place can also be a reaction of job dissatisfaction because of many factors such as insecurity, a lack of recognition, and stress (Hundley, 2001; Landy, 1989, Topchik 2000).

It is important to mention that in this research the number of those who show a negative attitude is very small in comparison to the number of those reflecting positive
attitudes towards life in general, which is considered a good sign, but at the same time, it is difficult to show both sides in a balanced manner. Moreover, judgment of a human trait such as happiness or wellbeing is not straightforward and subject to historical, social and environmental factors, many of which are beyond the scope of this research (Schwarz and Strack, 1999). The responses affected by personal mood at the time of taking the survey should also be considered in analysis (Mueller et al., 2009).

Generally, having positive employees is considered an added value for an organisation, especially when the organisation’s leaders care about culture and values, and seek to make the work a good place for all employees. It is clear now why successful organisations such as Google and others select employees who fit with their positive culture; hence why Zappos pay for the employee to quit their job if they cannot go forwards (Hsieh, 2012).

In addition, a question to raise here is: what can be done in organisations that already hold negative employees? Do they need to be fired? Of course not, and the answer to this question will be covered on the next chapter. During this research, interviews helped a lot in understanding how managers deal with problems such as negativity, and how they go about turning the situation around.

4.3.2. Correlation Two is between Organisational System and Feelings Towards Work

Organisational system/culture refers to the workplace, how the job is outlined and how the organisation is run (happinessatworksurvey.com 2015). It is about the physical environment and whether it is pleasant and encouraging, or not. It is also about the moral side, which focuses on the organisational culture and values significant (Lutterbie and
The table 4.4 below displays employees’ views about their organisational systems.

**Table 4-4: Descriptive Statistics (Organisational System) (N= 140)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational System</th>
<th>Likert Scale</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My organisation is well managed</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>.861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My work facilities a balance between my time at work and my personal life</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>.939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. There is a harmony in my relationship with my manager</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>.821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. My values are similar to the values of the leaders of this organisation</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>.886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. My organisation offers equal opportunities for all employees</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>1.316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I feel secure at work</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>.978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The work physical environment is pleasant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The job I do is useful to the society in general</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>.655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I always receive constructive feedback on my performance</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I feel trusted by my manager</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>.782</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

It can be observed from table four that the participants are less satisfied with the organisational system, with a mean score of 3.89 and standard deviation of .647. Fewer respondents ‘strongly disagree’, indicating a lean towards the extreme negative end of the scale. The correlation between organisational system and feelings towards work $r = .755$ show a fairly strong positive relationship. It reflects how organisation systems participate in employees’ feelings towards work. Moreover, it shows various factors categorised under organisation system are: well managed organisation, job design, fair opportunities, job security, management system, constructive feedback, trusted by manager, good work environment and societal benefits all matter to the employees.
It is clear from the result of the correlation in table 4.5 below that there is a positive relationship between the two variables and that organisational systems influence employees’ feeling towards work.

**Table 4-5: Correlations between Organisational System and Feeling Towards Work**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling Towards Work</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Feeling Towards Work</th>
<th>Organisational System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.755**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational System</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Feeling Towards Work</th>
<th>Organisational System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.755**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

**4.3.3. Correlation Three is between Functioning at Work and Feelings Towards Work**

Functioning at work shows how an employee acts in the organisation and how they manage their roles, the autonomy that is given to employees to do their tasks and take important decisions. How the organisation helps the employee to develop their skills as well as their relationships with other employees at work is also significant (Lutterbie and Pryce-Jones 2013, happinessatworksurvey.com 2015).

This part focuses on how these factors affect employees’ feelings at work and the table below displays the results with reference to functioning at work.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functioning at Work</th>
<th>Likert Scale</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I have control</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over the important</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sides of my job</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I can be myself</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>.703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at work</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I am regularly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>able to do what I</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do best</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. The time within</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>.807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my normal working</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hours is enough to</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get my job done</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>.807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. My work helps</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>.858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me to learn new</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skills</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I get the chance</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be creative in</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my job</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. My job offers</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>.976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good opportunities</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for professional</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Percentages</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. My relationship with my colleagues at work is good</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>.635</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. The team within my organisation works well together</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>.885</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I can influence decisions that are important for the work</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>.922</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

It can be observed from the above results in table 4.6 that there are variations in employees’ answers on their functioning at work with the mean score of 3.97 and standard deviation of .572. It is also clear that the answers include all the scales of the survey. Pearson correlation has been conducted to investigate the kind of relationship between Functioning at Work and Feelings Towards Work on the following table 4.7:
Table 4-7: Correlations between Functioning at Work and Feeling Towards Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Functioning at Work</th>
<th>Feeling Towards Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functioning at Work</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Towards Work</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.702**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

This correlation indicates that there is a static relation between Functioning at Work and Feelings Towards Work. $r = .702$. This reflects a positive relationship between the two variables and how employees act in the work place and finds that the encouraging environment supports their professional development and gives them a chance to be creative and to participate in making decisions to participate in raising the level of happiness at work.

4.3.4. Correlation Four is between Organisational Systems and Functioning at Work

It is important to find out how these two variables influence one another, which is why a Pearson correlation is conducted again and the result is $r = .828$. This correlation reflects the highest number among all the other correlations as presented in this chapter. This displays a strong positive relationship between the two variables and that organisation systems influence how employees function at work.
Table 4-8: Correlations between Organisational System and Feeling Towards Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Organisational System</th>
<th>Functioning at Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.828**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functioning at Work</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

Fining at correlation between surveys leads to the next part of the chapter that presents the relationship between all demographics (age, educational level, marital status, total experience, years spent in current organisation and gender) and feelings towards work.

4.4. The relationship Between Seven Demographics Variables and feelings towards work.

4.4.1. The Relationship between Feeling towards Work and Age

The relationship between age and feelings towards work is also statistically examined through a one-way ANOVA test. More specifically, the aim of this test was to see whether feelings towards work changes with different age groups. The sample sizes, means and the standard deviation are shown separately for each group of age in the table below. The means represent the sample responses according to the 5-point Likert Scale which builds on these options 5= “strongly agree”, and at the other extreme 1= “strongly
disagree”. It is in this research as for the participants’ age 115 employees out of 140 are less than 40 years old age.

**Table 4-9: Descriptive Statistics (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Age) (N= 136)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-31</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>3.9109</td>
<td>.64058</td>
<td>.08717</td>
<td>3.7361</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-40</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3.9279</td>
<td>.59369</td>
<td>.07601</td>
<td>3.7758</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-49</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.0873</td>
<td>.53715</td>
<td>.11721</td>
<td>3.8428</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>3.9458</td>
<td>.60353</td>
<td>.05175</td>
<td>3.8434</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

Table 4.9 above shows that the mean of positive feelings towards work increases with age. The results also show that there is a statistically no significant difference between age groups as determined by one-way ANOVA table below (F (2,133)= 0.691, p<.503). Studies have found that job satisfaction generally increases from midlife to retirement (Clark et al., 1996; Schalk and van Veldhoven 2010; Magee and William 2015). According to Luchman et al. (2012) “older employees report more positive job attitudes than younger employees even when controlling for the latent attitude construct”, which supports the presented results.
In this research the participants aged between 41-49 are those with the greatest mean, while the youngest are those with the lowest. An explanation for these results according to Warr (1992) is that older employees change their attitudes at work due to gradual changes in their personality and job conditions. Although Luchman et al. (2012) believe that getting older is related with becoming happier at work and that old employees indicate higher job satisfaction, but at the same time Luchman et al. (2012, p. 546) state that such a result may not reflect the daily experience of the older employees and should be analysed with caution. It is also worth mentioning that there is a category that indicates a higher mean, but it is not listed in the table 4.9 above because of the low number of respondents in this category, which represents 50 years old and above.

Table 4-10: One Way ANOVA results (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Age)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA results</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>.506</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.253</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>.503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>48.667</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>.366</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49.173</td>
<td>135</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

4.4.2. The Relationship between Feeling towards Work and the Educational Level:

As for whether feelings towards work change with educational level, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The sample sizes, mean scores and standard deviation are shown for each group of educational level in the table 4.11 below.
Table 4-11: Descriptive Statistics: The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Educational level (N= 140)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than Bachelor’s</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4.1169</td>
<td>.58556</td>
<td>.08541</td>
<td>3.9450, 4.2888</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>3.8586</td>
<td>.62960</td>
<td>.06996</td>
<td>3.7194, 3.9978</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.0764</td>
<td>.45845</td>
<td>.13234</td>
<td>3.7851, 4.3677</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.9640</td>
<td>.61132</td>
<td>.05167</td>
<td>3.8618, 4.0661</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

The results of this statistical measure illustrate that there is no significant difference between the educational level groups as determined by one-way ANOVA \(F(2,137) = 2.958 \ p = .055\). Overall, those with less than a Bachelor’s degree are very satisfied in regard to their feeling towards work with a mean score of 4.11, and standard deviation of 0.58. This is consistent with Clark 1999; Grund and Sliwka, 2005; Meer and Wielers, 2013, who find a negative relationship between higher levels of education and job satisfaction. Lower educated workers indicate higher levels of satisfaction which may be because of the job opportunity they enjoy despite their low level of education or maybe because of the low expectations and responsibilities on this category. According to Hall, (1994) high expectations might lead to dissatisfaction that is why a highly educated worker may not be happy. According to the collected data, 16.67% of the highly educated employees declare that their current job does not fit their career plan.

On the other hand, the Bachelor’s degree category which represents the largest number of the sample indicates a low feeling towards work with a mean score of 3.8 and
standard deviation of 0.6. This might be because of the poor equality with the lowest level of education in regards to salary and job characteristics. Studies have shown that social comparison is one of the main reasons why people are dissatisfied in their life as well as their work (Easterlin, 1996; Brown et al., 2008; Firebaugh and Schroeder, 2009; Card et al., 2012).

On the other hand, the Master’s degree holders display a high mean in their feeling towards work and that might be because of several reasons, first reason is that some of the sample organisations support the employees to complete their studies and cover their study fees so completing their higher study did not cost them. Moreover, career paths change after finishing higher education and people obtain a better quality job with a higher income and that can raise their satisfaction (Verhofstadt et al., 2007). On the other hand, the high mean of this category might not give the right indicator because of the low number of respondents in this category.

**Table 4-12: One Way ANOVA results (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Education)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA Results</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2.150</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.075</td>
<td>2.958</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>49.796</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>.363</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51.947</td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

**4.4.3. The Relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Marital Status:**

As for the results related to whether the marital status affects feelings towards work, the table below shows a various means and standard deviations of different groups
of the marital status. It also shows that married participants who represent 64.5% of the sample is scored a higher mean = 4.0784 in compare to the single employees who represent 32.6% of the sample and represent the lowest mean among all the groups of the participants. The highest mean in this chapter represent the highest feeling towards work and that highlight that married participants have stronger feelings towards work than unmarried employees. Although it is not clear from the literature how the personal status participates in making people happy. Many authors such as Burt, 1987; Williams, 1988; Stack and Eshleman, 1998 find that married people report higher levels of happiness rather than unmarried people. Stack & Eshleman, 1998 stated that the financial and health protection offered by marriage affects the level of happiness.

Table 4-13: Descriptive Statistics (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Marital Status) (N=138)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Minimun</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3.7440</td>
<td>.58819</td>
<td>.08768</td>
<td>3.5673</td>
<td>3.9207</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>4.0784</td>
<td>.60335</td>
<td>.06395</td>
<td>3.9513</td>
<td>4.2055</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.0000</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.1667</td>
<td>.57735</td>
<td>.33333</td>
<td>2.7324</td>
<td>5.6009</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>3.9707</td>
<td>.61243</td>
<td>.05213</td>
<td>3.8676</td>
<td>4.0738</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

It is difficult to apply post hoc analysis because of the low number of respondents in widowed and divorced categories. However, one-way ANOVA results show that there
is a statistically significant difference between marital status groups as determined by the table below (F (3,134) 3.226 p= 0.025).

**Table 4-14: One Way ANOVA results (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Marital Status)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA results</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>3.462</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.154</td>
<td>3.226</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>47.923</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>.358</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51.385</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

**4.4.4. The Relationship between Feelings towards Work and Total Work Experience:**

People with different work experience show different standard of feelings towards work. Nonetheless, the statistical results show that participants with the greatest experience have the highest mean of feelings towards work. However, the mean of feelings towards work in the group of 11-15 years of experience is the lowest among all the experiences group categories as it is clarified in the table 4.14.
Table 4-15: Descriptive Statistics (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Total Experience) (N= 139)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Work Experience</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Minim</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.9283</td>
<td>.65434</td>
<td>.11222</td>
<td>3.7000</td>
<td>4.1566</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4.0451</td>
<td>.64581</td>
<td>.09965</td>
<td>3.8438</td>
<td>4.2463</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3.8150</td>
<td>.52557</td>
<td>.08208</td>
<td>3.6492</td>
<td>3.9809</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 and above</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.1477</td>
<td>.60473</td>
<td>.12893</td>
<td>3.8796</td>
<td>4.4158</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3.9649</td>
<td>.61343</td>
<td>.05203</td>
<td>3.8620</td>
<td>4.0678</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

A one-way ANOVA was conducted in order to show whether feelings towards work are influenced by the total work experience reveals that there is no significant difference between the groups on the basis of experience (F(3,135) = 1.776 p= .155).

Table 4.15: One Way ANOVA results (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Total Work Experience)

Table 4-16: One Way ANOVA results (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Total Work Experience)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA results</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1.972</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.657</td>
<td>1.776</td>
<td>.155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>49.958</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>.370</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51.930</td>
<td>138</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author
4.4.5. The Relationship between Feelings towards Work and Current Job Experience:
The different year’s groups vary statistically with regards to their feelings towards work. The statistical results show that the participant who spent less than one year and those who spent 16 years and above have the highest mean of feelings towards work. However, the mean of feelings does not increase with the other groups with a 1-5, 6-10 and 11-15 number of years spent in the current organisation.

Table 4-17: Descriptive Statistics (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Current Job Experience) (N= 140)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Job Experience</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Minim</th>
<th>Maxim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Than 1 year</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.3889</td>
<td>.44618</td>
<td>.18215</td>
<td>3.9207</td>
<td>4.8571</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.9311</td>
<td>.62567</td>
<td>.10019</td>
<td>3.7283</td>
<td>4.1339</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3.9275</td>
<td>.70966</td>
<td>.10699</td>
<td>3.7118</td>
<td>4.1433</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3.8914</td>
<td>.46327</td>
<td>.08065</td>
<td>3.7271</td>
<td>4.0557</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 and above</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.1157</td>
<td>.58308</td>
<td>.13743</td>
<td>3.8258</td>
<td>4.4057</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.9640</td>
<td>.61132</td>
<td>.05167</td>
<td>3.8618</td>
<td>4.0661</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

To show whether feelings towards work are influenced by the numbers of years spent in the current organisation, one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results of one-way ANOVA shows that there is no statistically significant differences between the groups (F(4,135) = 1.192 p=.317).
4.4.6. The Relationship between Feelings towards Work by Organisation:

A one-way ANOVA was conducted as well to investigate whether there is a relationship between feelings towards work by the organisation. As it was the case with the other variables, such as the preceding total experience variable, the statistical results demonstrate that there is statistically significant difference in the means of feelings towards work among the various organisations examined in the current study. This is due to the fact that the significance value was less than 0.05 (0.038), indicating, as a result, that feelings towards work change on the basis of the organisation, in that employees at different organisations could have different feelings towards work. Though not significant, there is some difference between the means of feelings towards work among the participants working at different organisations. Accordingly, those working at organisation A have the greatest mean of feelings, while those working at organisation D have the lowest one (see table 4.18).

Table 4-18: One Way ANOVA results (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Current Job Experience)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA result</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1.772</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.443</td>
<td>1.192</td>
<td>.317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>50.174</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>.372</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51.947</td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author
Table 4-19: Descriptive Statistics (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work by Organisation) (N= 140)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Minimu m</th>
<th>Maximu m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3.6994</td>
<td>.48397</td>
<td>.09146</td>
<td>3.5117</td>
<td>3.8871</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.0505</td>
<td>.60856</td>
<td>.11935</td>
<td>3.8047</td>
<td>4.2963</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>3.9560</td>
<td>.58644</td>
<td>.08055</td>
<td>3.7943</td>
<td>4.1176</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4.1331</td>
<td>.69323</td>
<td>.12068</td>
<td>3.8873</td>
<td>4.3790</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>3.9640</td>
<td>.61132</td>
<td>.05167</td>
<td>3.8618</td>
<td>4.0661</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

Table 4-20: One Way ANOVA results (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work by Organisation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA results</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>3.102</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.034</td>
<td>2.879</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>48.844</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>.359</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51.947</td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

Post Hoc test has been used to recognise the group that makes a significant difference. The table below on Post-Hoc Tests shows the mean difference between feeling towards work of 4 different organisations. Organisations B and C are not statistically significant at 0.5 level of significance (P-value=0.912). However, the mean difference between feeling towards work of organisations D and A is statistically significant (P= .028) While there is no significant different between the other groups since the p-value is higher than 0.05.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Organisation</th>
<th>(J) Organisation</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>-.35106</td>
<td>.16322</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>-.7756</td>
<td>.0735</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>-.25657</td>
<td>.14001</td>
<td>.263</td>
<td>-.6208</td>
<td>.1076</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>-.43374*</td>
<td>.15398</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>-.8343</td>
<td>-.0332</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>.35106</td>
<td>.16322</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>-.0735</td>
<td>.7756</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>.09449</td>
<td>.14349</td>
<td>.912</td>
<td>-.2787</td>
<td>.4677</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>-.08268</td>
<td>.15715</td>
<td>.953</td>
<td>-.4914</td>
<td>.3261</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>.25657</td>
<td>.14001</td>
<td>.263</td>
<td>-.1076</td>
<td>.6208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>-.09449</td>
<td>.14349</td>
<td>.912</td>
<td>-.4677</td>
<td>.2787</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>-.17717</td>
<td>.13289</td>
<td>.543</td>
<td>-.5228</td>
<td>.1685</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>.43374*</td>
<td>.15398</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.0332</td>
<td>.8343</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>.08268</td>
<td>.15715</td>
<td>.953</td>
<td>-.3261</td>
<td>.4914</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>.17717</td>
<td>.13289</td>
<td>.543</td>
<td>-.1685</td>
<td>.5228</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

### 4.4.7. The Relationship between feelings towards work and Gender

In order to investigate the differences between gender feelings towards work, a T.Test, rather than ANOVA, was run, since there are only two groups involved, namely, females and males. Through this test, the aim was to see whether there is a difference between the genders with regards to the mean of feelings towards work. In order to say that there is such a difference, the upper and lower values should be both either negative or positive.
As the statistical results demonstrate both of the upper and the lower values of the two means were positive, leading to understanding that it is possible to postulate there is a statistical difference between the means of males and females with respect to feelings towards work.

**Table 4-22: T-Test of Male and Female (N= 140)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T-Test</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Towards Work</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4.2292</td>
<td>.64377</td>
<td>.10729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>3.8227</td>
<td>.51031</td>
<td>.05705</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author

**Table 4-23: Descriptive Statistics (The relationship between Feeling Towards Work and Gender)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling Towards Work</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>4.344</td>
<td>.039*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>3.345</td>
<td>55.621</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: data analysis performed by the author
This entails that gender significantly affects feelings towards work, in that both genders have characteristically different feelings per gender. Males, according to the statistical data, have the greatest mean of feelings towards work, and hence their feelings are shown to be stronger than those of females. Although the number of females in the sample is greater and they have equal payment with male peers, women indicate a lower mean of feelings towards work.

The literature shows different job satisfaction levels when it comes to gender. A lot of research finds that women report greater job satisfaction even when they earn less than men (Clark, 1997; Donohue and Heywood, 2004; Phelan, 1994). Further, women display higher overall job satisfaction than men in 10 out of 14 European countries (Kaiser, 2005).

Females tend to integrate work and family life (Garey, 1999) which can lead to problems when this affects their work (Barford, 2011), thus may affect job satisfaction. Women tend to work in jobs that allow them to find a balance between work and personal life, which is why, according to Garey (1999) they prefer a part-time job. It can be noted from the answers on question 8: (My work facilities a balance between my time at work and my personal life) a total of 18.5% disagree and strongly disagree, while 13% were neutral.

One reason for female low job satisfaction in the literature is the relation between their expectations and the reality/nature of the work. In other words, the higher female job satisfaction does not necessarily reflect that their job is better than their male peers, but it might reflect lower expectations that women attribute to their current job as a result of bad work experiences in the past (Clark, 1997; Sloane and Williams, 2000).
female employees’ answers on question 31 ‘My current job fits with my career plan’ a total of 25% stated that their current job does not fit their plans, while 26% were neutral. In addition, 48% claimed that their organisations do not offer equal opportunities for all employees and 25% were neutral.

4.5. Summary

In conclusion, the quantitative analysis of the questionnaire responses plays a great role in studying the relationship between different variables in organisations demonstrating a correlation between: Personal Attitude and Feelings Towards Work, Organisational Systems and Functioning at Work, Organisational System and Feelings Towards Work, and Functioning at Work and Feelings Towards Work. The quantitative analysis also helped in recognising the type of the relation between the variables, showing the strength of the relationships, which is difficult to understand without numerical analysis given the number of responses.
Based on the results showing employees’ views and responses (see figure 4.2), the organisational system/culture appears to be the main factor associated with functioning at work as well as attitudes towards work. To deeply understand how organisation systems affect the employee performance and happiness at work, it is important to reach the people who are responsible for the system and interview them to know more about the organisation’s strategy to increase employee happiness and to understand more about other factors that are classified under the organisational system such as the relation between managers and employees. In addition, the interview method helps in recognising how HRM shows employees that they are respected and that their work and ideas help towards the organisation. Moreover, it is important to ask about the employees’ functioning at work and the freedom that is given to them, the professional development
opportunities in the organisation and how the organisation evaluates an employee’s performance.

The quantitative analysis helped in answering the first research question: How does personal attitude towards life in general affect happiness at work? Although there is a correlation between the two variables, it does not mean causation. The results show that personal attitude towards life in general, does not necessarily affect happiness at work. In addition, not all the employees who showed a high attitude towards life in general, indicate a high level of happiness at work. On the contrary, all of those who were less satisfied with their life showed a negative attitude about their life in general and expressed less satisfaction and low feelings towards work. Based on this result, the next chapter will concentrate on the importance of the recruitment process in the organisation and how personal attitude is considered a reason to recruit or not to recruit an employee in some of the organisations in the UAE.

On the other hand, the results of the relationship between the demographic variables and feelings towards work show that there is statistically no significant difference between the different groups except in three demographical variables: marital status, gender, and organisation. Marital Status showed that married participants have stronger feelings towards work than unmarried employees. Based on gender, males, according to the statistical results, have the greatest mean of feelings towards work, hence their feelings are shown to be stronger than those of females, even though the actual number of females was greater. Based on feelings towards work among the various organisations, those working at organisation A have the greatest mean of feelings, while those working at organisation D have the lowest one.
Although, the quantitative analysis provides the research with the necessary data, there are still some challenges and limitations. One of the limitations of analysing the quantitative data is the disparity in the sizes of the groups, for example in demographic information those who represent 50 years old and above stood only at 4 employees among 140 participants. Another variable is the marital status which shows only one widowed and 3 divorced cases. The diversity in the sizes of the groups makes it difficult to present the evidence in a balanced manner.

To enhance the quality of the research the next chapter will concentrate on the qualitative analysis of the interview and will provide the research with the written analysis detailed data to address specific issues and develop appropriate strategies for resolving them.
Chapter 5 Qualitative Analysis of Interview Transcripts

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the results of the quantitative analysis. According to the statistical results the main factors that influence an employee’s happiness in the chosen sample from the UAE government organisations are: organisational systems and functioning at work. Organisational systems refer to the cultural and moral values and environment of an organisation. Functioning at work refers to how an employee performs in their role, and the level freedom and authority they enjoy. It is also about how an organisation cares for an employee and develops their skills. In order to understand how these factors relate positively to employee happiness, this chapter will outline the results from the chosen qualitative methods applied. It will describe the results of the qualitative analysis used in the data collection process.

This chapter focuses on the people who are responsible of the systems at work inside the organisation; the people who take decisions and run the work place. The target samples of the interviews are top managers and HR managers. According to Laloux (2014, p. 239) “the level of consciousness of an organisation cannot exceed the level of consciousness of its leader” and what is going on in an organisation is a reflection of the principles and values espoused by the leader. This means it is important to see how senior managers run the work place as well as the efforts they make to raise the happiness and strengthen overall organisational culture. This chapter also aims to answer two main research questions and two sub questions, which are:
Table 5-1: Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main RQ 2</th>
<th>How employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE can be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub Q2.1</td>
<td>What other factors influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub Q2.2</td>
<td>How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main RQ 3</td>
<td>How do we preserve the relationship between the organisational culture and employee happiness in the UAE?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

The objectives of these questions are: to evaluate HRM job satisfaction strategies that could increase employee happiness in organisations; and, to build a strategy that can ensure continued high rates of happiness at work.

5.2. The Interviews: Main Categories

The interviews included 11 questions, classified into the following groups:

- An organisational attitude such as a happiness strategy, focusing on the importance of religion, the relation between the top management and the employees, including social activities (Question 1, 4, 5 and 9).
- HRD tasks: attracting new employees, recruitment, training and development and performance appraisal (Question 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8).
- The practices that can build a positive culture, thus happy employees (Question 10 and 11)

The interviews were conducted across 5 government organisations. Notably, there is a huge difference between what is happening in Organisation E and others 4 government organisations. This will become clear through an analysis of the responses that follow.
5.2.1. Organisational System/Attitude

Despite the diverse responses to the questions, there is consensus on some major issues.

**Q1. Can you tell me whether the organisation has a strategy to increase employees’ happiness? Why/why not?**

From the managerial perspective

“The first step we made in the field of happiness was creating a team responsible of employee happiness. The team will design happiness plans and spread it across the organisation. This team includes people from senior management and selected employees from the operational level”. (B13)

“We created a team of employees to find out new initiatives and activities that can make employees happier”. (C24)

“We are just at the beginning in understanding happiness in the workplace. We chose some employees to be happiness ambassadors; those ambassadors must learn more about how to make employees happy by new suggestions and developing initiatives”. (D18)

It was observed from the above that the interviewees did acknowledge the importance of happiness at the workplace. The interviewees’ mainly answers on this question are that the government organisations created happiness team regarding the request of the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs & the Future in the UAE. This group is responsible of making happiness plans and designing initiatives that create a happier workplace; the Happiness Ambassadors. These are new initiatives, and at the time of writing it was not possible to critique their success. It appears obvious that choosing this group is managed according to the UAE government policies, and the choices of the
employees is by the management; criteria for choosing the suitable employee is differ from one organisation to another. It is noticeable that most of the answers are similar in terms of creating a happiness team; however, the role of the leader who creates the team is not clear.

On the other hand:

“We have received guidance from the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs & the Future to form one team that includes three institutions headed by the same minister. There are two employees who have been selected from this institution. The first has been chosen because of his experience in communicating with various presses and his experience in social media publishing. The second employee is new who has been chosen because he holds a master’s degree and we can benefit from his knowledge”. (A1)

The above shows that this organisation has a happiness team, but this team has been created to design one plan to fit three different organisations. Although the three organisations share the same minister and share some strategic goals, it is hard to know how effective this team is, especially because each organisation has unique needs, circumstances and cultures. It is also important to know whether joining this team might be considered as extra work while adding more pressure to the members of the team.

In addition, the criteria of choosing employees as happiness ambassadors is not clear and no interviewees mentioned the necessary characteristics, such as positivity, leadership.

At the level of HRD managers, responses follow:
“We are always ready to follow new attitudes of the government to make the employees happy. Indeed, we all need someone who really cares about our happiness”. (C25)

“We, as an organisation, will do our best to make the employees happy, but it is hard to make them happy because human needs are not static”. (A2)

“Last year the government asked us to focus on innovation, and we success in finding initiatives that supported innovation and encouraged employees to be creative. This year we are focusing on happiness and we will do our best to make the employees happy”. (B16)

It is clear from the HRM responses that they are followers of ideas rather than decision makers. They are following directives of leaders and the decisions they take as a department are in accordance to the government and senior managers’ guidance. It also appears that some think that achieving happiness inside the organisation is temporary initiative that will take a certain time to apply and then finish.

On the other hand, responses that were provided by the management of E organisation were different:

“From the establishment of this organisation the director general said: I have two priorities customers and people. Initially, we wanted to know why people were not engaged and how to solve the problem. The job satisfaction survey showed that the lowest areas of satisfaction are pay and working hours, which are set and out with our control, leading us to consider focusing on what we do have – and enhancing the situation. At this moment, a change began to occur drawing on global best practice and learning from others”. (E7)
“We focus on employee happiness and ensuring that they are passionate about the vision of the organisation. We met Nick Mark, the inventor of the happiness index and also drew upon other successful organisations, such as Google and Zappos”. (E8)

“Things come out of the closet after having a minister of happiness. But before that people consider happiness as a luxury” (E8)

“We moved from measuring job satisfaction in 2007 to using the Engagement Survey by Gallup in 2009 and then to a happiness survey in 2013. It takes huge efforts at the beginning, but now the positive practices are a part of organisational culture. The happiness level according to the 2013 survey was 6.5, rising to 7.3 in 2014 and we reached the top 30 in 2013, then top 20 in 2014 and in top 15 on 2015”. (E6)

“We took the five elements of wellbeing which are Connect, Be active, Keep learning, Give and Take notice to heart as an organisation and we created an opportunities for the people to live them not by force but by choice. The aim of adopting these elements is to strengthen the culture and to raise wellbeing”. (E7)

“The management of KHDA built a culture of trust to raise employees’ happiness, the culture focus on three main values: evidenced based strategy, team work and do few things better”. (E10)

“WE conducted a small research project on the characteristics of people who thrive in the organisation and we found common characteristics, such as curiosity, creativity, challenges, enthusiasm and reliable the people who are seen to thrive
are engaged in their projects and are happy. That led us to create a system in support of such characteristics”. (E9)

Table 5-2: Overview of Question 1 Analysis

Q1. Can you tell me whether the organisation has a strategy to increase employees’ happiness? Why/why not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>- Happiness team (prepare happiness plans and initiatives)</td>
<td>- Happiness team (prepare happiness plans and initiatives)</td>
<td>- Happiness team (prepare happiness plans and initiatives)</td>
<td>- Happiness team (prepare happiness plans and initiatives)</td>
<td>- Relay on organisational cultural vision, values and elements of wellbeing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>Focusing on the short term</td>
<td>Focusing on the long term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>Happiness plans are not connected with an organisation strategic plan.</td>
<td>There is no gap</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>Main RQ2</td>
<td>How employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE can be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub RQ2.1</td>
<td>What other factors influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

The overview to the first question shows the difference between two experiences. Organisations “A, B, C, and D” which are just at the beginning of their journey of pursuing happiness, creating initiatives and designing ideas that could make their employees happy on one hand and organisation “E” on the other hand. Organisation “E” is at a mature stage and they have been through many experiments and learning curves
from other organisations that are considered global best practice companies and this will appear clearly within their responses to the rest of the interview questions.

Organisation E also correlates their happiness plans with their organisation strategic plan, hence everything they do directly influences their purpose of making the employees happy. They are focusing on the long-term vision that guarantees continuous success.

The next interview question is related to research question focusing on practicing religious rituals at work as part of strategy towards caring for an employee’s needs and values, and examines the role of religion and happiness at work. The question is:

**Q4. How can we make it easier for employees to practice their religious rituals at work? Is there is any example or initiative?**

All answers were similar in relation to how easy it is for them to practice their religion rituals at work. The management facilitates worshiping process by providing private prayer rooms in the workplace:

“*Regarding religious rituals, we provide special rooms for praying, considering the isolation between women and men by providing a special room for men and another for women*. (B12)

“We prepare a prayer room for employees and we split times, an hour for men and the next hour for women*. (C28)

“In this institution we have 100% local employees (Emirates) that means the common religion is Islam so the rules and services that we offer in regards to practicing religion rituals such as prayer room and religious official holidays could fit them all*. (A5)
In addition, not only prayer rooms have been taken into account but other rituals such as wearing clothes that reflect a specific religion or fasting during Ramadan (the ninth month of the Muslim year, during which time Muslims have no food or drink during the day).

“All government organisations have fewer working hours during Ramadan and this includes all employees, including non-Muslims”. (D20)

“The female employees are free to wear niqab “a piece of cloth worn by some Muslim women to cover the whole face except the eyes” (Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary & Thesaurus2017). (C29)

All the above views reflect how the organisations facilitate the practices of religion rituals. For example, female employees are free to wear niqab and this can make them feel comfortable while demonstrating a commitment to their personal convictions and there is no conflict between their values and organisational values. A total of 77.8 % indicated that their values and the values of the organisation are similar. Similarly, 77.2 % indicated that their values are similar to the values of the leaders of this organisation.

The case is the same at organisation E, except that the majority of government organisations employees are local and their religion is predominantly Islam, where organisation E includes 30 different nationalities, and when asked about how they deal with the differentiation, they stated that

‘We deal with employees as human beings regardless of their religion; we provide facilities to all employees to practice their religion at work’. (E8)
Table 5-3: Overview of Question 4 analysis

Q4. How can we make it easier for employees to practice their religious rituals at work? Is there is any example or initiative?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Facilitate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of religion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rituals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- (Prayer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>room/Shorter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in Ramadan/</td>
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<td>holidays)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>All the organisations follow the labour law of the UAE which shares a lot of the world’s work ethics and are customised to fit UAE society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>There is no gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Main RQ2: How employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE can be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Sub RQ2.1: What other factors influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

The overview of the fourth interview question shows that government organisations in the UAE respect religion and facilitate practice. In addition, it is part of labour rights and leaders are expected to facilitate. It is also important to note that
because it is within employees’ rights, employees take it for granted and do not consider it as something that affects their satisfaction, unlike comparing their feedback with others who do not have freedom to express their beliefs in the workplace and cannot practice their religious rituals.

Focusing on the organisational culture and how to raise employees’ happiness leads us to ask about the relation between employees and managers.

**Q5. How can you describe the relations between the managers and the employees in the organisation? What are the social activities that have been adopted by the organisation in general and HRD to help these relations?**

From the managerial perspective, all the government organisations describe the relation between managers and employees as a good and open relation. They proclaim that the employees can contact their line manager at any time with no obstacles or barriers.

“The relation between employees and top managers are open and an employee can discuss issues with top managers in regular meetings and they can suggest new ideas, express their feelings and freely talk about negative issues, and they can also request a private meeting with us if they feel this is necessary”. (B14)

“The relationship is very good and we believe in the policy of the open door. We keep encouraging employees to talk and tell us about their needs and issues that matter to them. Our offices are always ready to receive them at any time.” (A1)
At the level of HRM Director and HRD Managers, the view appeared congruent.

“It is easy to meet with HRM at any time; it is not like the relationship from employers to employees but, employee to employee. There are no barriers and we share a lot of activities inside the organisation”. (C26)

In regard to the social activities, a variety of initiatives take place

“We have internal and external activities that strengthen the relations between staff members, such as quarterly meetings, discussions or brainstorming sessions as well as external trips and friendly gatherings outside the organisation”. (D19)

On the other hand, organisation E senior manager describe the relations as:

“It is friendly relations since the management and employees have no offices; they all sit together as one big family, talking together and discussing work and life issues at any time”. (E9)

“We have people with good hearts who care about each other, we meet every day in a very friendly atmosphere and we share different fun activities and social events”. (E6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5-4: Overview of Question 5 Analysis</th>
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</thead>
</table>

| Q5. How can you describe the relations between the managers and the employees in the organisation? What are the social activities that have been adopted by the organisation in general and HRD to help these relations? |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

206
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>- Open Door policy</th>
<th>- Open relation</th>
<th>- No barriers</th>
<th>- Internal and external activities</th>
<th>-Open walls policy  (No offices)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Contact the line manager at any time</td>
<td>- Regular meeting and activities</td>
<td>- Share a lot of activities</td>
<td>- Share activities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Social activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>- Focusing on activities and events that can increase communication.</td>
<td>- The activities are arranged and not within organisations daily routine.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Unprepared and friendly communication.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Within daily routine.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaps</td>
<td>- The type of communication between top management and the functional level.</td>
<td>- Arranged actions/activities that not all the employees are engaged.</td>
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<td>There is no gap</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>Main RQ2</td>
<td>How employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE can be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub Q2.1</td>
<td>What other factors influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main RQ3</td>
<td>How do we preserve the relationship between the organisational culture and employee happiness in the UAE?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

All the organisations are focusing on the activities and the events that can increase the levels of communication and loyalty. The only difference is that in organisations A, B, C, and D the activities are arranged, not part of the daily routine and not all employees feel engaged. Moreover, there are still barriers between the top management and the
employees because they can only see them in meetings or the activities or by booking an appointment. On the other hand, organisation E has no offices and the organisation is open plan, which might lead to more unprepared and friendly communication.

Q9. How can the organisation build a positive culture that can attract the employees and increase their loyalty?

This question might look like the first, but there is a clear difference because the first asked about a happiness strategy and it aimed to identify understanding of the happiness concept in general, while this question focuses on specific practices and implications that they follow to create a positive culture.

From the managerial perspective:

“The positive culture can be built through events and activities that we adopt inside the organisations. This helps in making employees communicate and build a good relationship and leads to greater loyalty”. (C24)

“Our organisation offers a lot of privileges such as housing and car loans, study allowance for the children of employees, and these privileges can always attract new staff and makes them loyal”. (A5)

“We adopt a lot of activities that can spread positivity and make the employees happy, such as friendly meeting as well as entertainment trips”. (D18)

HR perspective:

“We tried by many initiatives and activities to better communicate by celebrating the employee’s birthday, informal gatherings, entertainment trips, all aimed to raise the level of happiness”. (B11)
“Positive culture might build through better communication; in this organisation the relationships between the employees is very strong, but because of work pressures it becomes harder to see each other. Additionally, I guess we need more social activities to create a positive culture and we want the managers to facilitate the communication” (A4)

When we asked about the role of the vision and values in creating a positive culture and how they abide by them, the top managers commented

“We keep reminding the employees about the organisation’s vision and values by sending emails that include the vision, mission and the values of the organisation”. (D21)

“We do our best to let the employees understand our important vision. That is why you can notice that each office hangs a picture frame with the vision, mission and values of our organisations”. (B15)

It is clear from the senior managers as well as HRM views, that there are a lot of initiatives and ideas that are applied to ensure happiness. At the same time, such initiatives can be described as random acts that lack the real understanding of the importance of focusing on organisational culture. In addition, despite the efforts and initiatives that some government organisations adopt, they are suffering of a low level of happiness and staff retention. For example, the level of job satisfaction in organisation A in 2015 was 50% while the level of happiness stood at 30% according to the HRD declaration.

On the other hand, organisation E managers’ responses were totally different:
“Our vision and values are the core of everything, they became a part of everyday life in this organisation and this is cannot be done without our inspiring leader who considered a true role model. He reflects the organisational values through his behaviour and he believes in our abilities”. (E9)

“Organisational vision, values and elements of wellbeing helped greatly in creating a positive culture and a sense of purpose”. (E7)

Table 5-5: Overview of Question 9 Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responses</strong></td>
<td>-Initiatives and activities</td>
<td>-Initiatives and activities</td>
<td>-Social events and activities</td>
<td>-Different activities</td>
<td>- Vision and values are the core of the positive culture and part of everyday routine.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Different privileges to attract and raise the loyalty</td>
<td>-Spread vision, mission and values on the offices walls.</td>
<td>-Reminding the employees with organisation’s vision and values.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>- There is a lack of understanding of the critical role that the vision and values play in changing the organisation positively and strengthen the culture.</td>
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<td>- They are aware of the role of the vision and values.</td>
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<td>- They involve all employees</td>
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<td><strong>Gaps</strong></td>
<td>- The lack of understanding of the organisational cultural concept.</td>
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<td>- Lack of correlation between organisational culture and organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>RQ3</td>
<td>How do we preserve the relationship between the organisational culture and employee happiness in the UAE?</td>
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Source: compiled by the author

Again, there is a difference between the answers of organisations A, B, C and D on one hand and E on the other. The senior managers across the four sample organisations do not understand the critical role that the vision and values play in positively changing the organisation and strengthening the culture. This creates an emphasis on the importance of turning the written vision and values into a living system that could strengthen the culture as well as heighten the importance of connecting organisational culture with organisation strategy.

The next part of the interview focused on HRD tasks such as recruitment and training, and how can these tasks raise employees’ happiness.

5.2.2. HRD Tasks
The first question in this part is

Q2. How does HRM show employees that they respect and appreciate their ideas, opinions and help them with their careers? Do you have examples?

The respondents tended to answer the question in one of two main ways. First, some expressed the view that HRD is responsible for all that happens to the employees, while others think that it is beyond HRD responsibility even if it looks like they are responsible of everything.
“We consider HR as a vital department which is responsible for delivering all senior management instructions to the employees, that is why they have the authority to find out the solutions that can support the employees and help them with their career” (D21)

Many of the respondents’ views on encouraging employees’ ideas were focusing on the Government’s Unified Suggestions System as one way of encouraging new ideas.

“We support employees’ ideas through a special electronic system that has been set according to the government guidance. All employees can access the system, write and explain their suggestions. Then the internal suggestion group, which includes members from both managerial and functional level, discuss the suggestions and see how it could benefit the organisation, and decided to accept it or refuse it” (A3)

“We have a special system for suggestions. We encourage the employees in the first year of applying the system by giving them a certain amount of money for all accepted suggestions which made us receive a huge amount”. (B14)

The HRD managers provided similar responses to the managerial responses; they added that they also focus on rewarding employees while benefitting from the talented people.

“We created a list of the employees’ talents and we benefitted from the talented people we have in different occasions”. (A5)

“We reward the best suggestions and the most successful employees from time to time”. (C23)

When asked if they do this regularly, their answer was:
“It is not something that we do regularly because we try to apply different ideas and be creative” (C23)

In contrast, the view of organisation E was totally different and surprising. About the role of HRD in encouraging the employees’ ideas they said:

“From about three years we cancelled the HRD, this is because if something is not working in the organisation the blame goes directly to the HRD; for example, if the number of employees in one department is not enough - this is an HRD problem; if the performance is poor, it is an HRD problem. That is why we cancelled the department, because as they are not responsible for all the employees’ happiness”. (E7)

“In HR we eliminate the line manager; nobody needs to manage you, because you have the ability to have a full authority”. (E7)

“Instead of blaming the HRD, we cancelled the department and create a panel that focused on talent. We built a team and give them the accountability and authority to focus on talent. This team is responsible for bringing in the best talent to the organisation, how to manage the performance, how to manage rewards, and, how to make the people thrive through the training” (E8)

“We do not have a HRD, indeed we are moving gradually to a dynamic hierarchy that includes five talented circles. The new hierarchy is called a holocracy”. (E6)

Then how do they encourage the employees’ ideas:

“We designed a system based on personal review called Pearls. All the employees can log in to the system and give a pearl to another employee based on a good part of their character that they notice, such as creativity. The system is
transparent, and everyone can see the pearl that someone is giving to another employee and the employees can also see the reason behind the positive action. Pearls are translated into money, which is saved on to a special credit card for each employee. To control the system, each can give up to 6 Pearls and receive any number over a specific period”. (E7)

“The employees’ ideas and suggestions turn so quickly to reality because of the everyday interactions that makes it easy to listen to the employees’ ideas. Add to that the applications that been used to encourage the discussion and give a chance for all the employees to express their feelings and idea such as (F10) and(Yammer)”. (E9)

“Our leader teaches us that it is ok to commit mistakes or to fail because we learn from failures. That is why we celebrate the failure and move on”. (E6)

**Table 5-6: Overview of Question 2 Analysis**

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<tr>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government’s Unified Suggestions System</td>
<td>Government’s Unified Suggestions System</td>
<td>Government’s Unified Suggestions System</td>
<td>Government’s Unified Suggestions System</td>
<td>-They cancelled HRD</td>
<td>- Electronic reward program</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Reward system</td>
<td>- Reward system</td>
<td>- Reward system</td>
<td>- HR initiatives</td>
<td>Rewards</td>
<td>- The hierarchy gives more</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Benefit from the talented people</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q2. How does HRM show employees that they respect and appreciate their ideas, opinions and help them with their careers? Do you have examples?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Appreciation system run from top-down (vertical system)</th>
<th>Autonomy to the employees and encourage them to do more.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>Organisational structure considered a barrier in applying an appreciation system</td>
<td>There is no gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>Main RQ2 How employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE can be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub RQ2.2 How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?</td>
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</table>

**Source:** compiled by the author

Overall, the responses show that leaders support and encourage employees’ ideas and all government organisations in the sample have an electronic system that archives all ideas. The system gives equal opportunities for all employees to express their ideas and register their suggestions. The gap is in the way of communication and appreciation.

In sample organisations A, B, C and D the appreciation system is vertical where the top management controls the whole process, while in organisation E the appreciation system is horizontal. All employees support one another within a dynamic hierarchy that focuses on teamwork, as opposed to job titles.
Q3. How do you help employees to manage work pressures? How is it affecting their health? What more do you do to maintain their health (i.e. a working hours policy)?

This question has been answered in many ways, and most responses were focus on how to reward employees who do more than others, while simultaneously suffer from the high pressures. Here are the main answers to this question:

“We reward and pay for the overtime hours, so this motivates the employees and lets them know that their efforts are worthwhile”. (A4)

“Our organisation provides employees with medical insurance, so they do not need to worry about paying medical fees”. (B13)

“We recruit young people so they can tolerate the physical pressures, but frankly employees and departments managers suffer from higher work pressure than top managers”. (A3)

“The organisation supplies healthy office chairs, showing care about employee health and comfort”. (C30)

“We are following known security and safety procedures to guarantee a healthy physical environment and we have Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series certification (OHSAS 18001 certificate)”. (D18)

While organisation E was different, they focus on how to deal with the pressures:

“We should to admit that the stress is always there and what we can do is handle the pressure and deal with it. We are focusing on managing stress through yoga, tai chi, cross fit and cooking sessions. Also, participating in charity campaigns occurs continuously because the organisation believes in the importance of
physical activities, giving and practicing favourite hobbies in making the
employees happy and minimise the negative impact of the stress upon them” (E7)

“We have trainers for mindfulness practices such as taping and havening, these
physical practices bring the cortisol down and the employee will feel better able
to connect with people in a more positive way”. (E6)

“We provide the organisation with training equipment so the employees can use
them at any time, even during a meeting; they are permitted to use the walking
machine or bicycle”. (E8)

“We have a Happiness tool whereby we wear a necklace to remind us how to deal
with different situations. For example, if we are afraid to take a decision, or if we
are sad or worrying about something, we go back to the tool which includes many
cards and choose the card that can fit to this situation and read the
recommendations. This is a very useful tool and I have used it in many situations
and a lot of employees have also used it with their families”. (E10)

**Table 5-7: Overview of Question 3 Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>-Reward employees who do more than others&lt;br&gt;-Recruit young people</td>
<td>-Medical insurance</td>
<td>-Healthy Furniture</td>
<td>- Security and safety procedures</td>
<td>-Focus on how to deal with the pressures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes
- Systematic process/viewpoint which focuses on the immediate task rather than connecting each process to organisation strategy.

Gap
There is no practical method of dealing with work pressure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ2</td>
<td>How employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE can be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2.2</td>
<td>How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ3</td>
<td>How do we preserve the relationship between the organisational culture and employee happiness in the UAE?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

The overview of this question shows the sample organisational procedures to deal with the pressures. Organisation E focuses on how to handle the pressures while others focus on rewarding employees regarding their extra efforts regardless of how these pressures might affect their health and their attitude towards work.

It is also clear that the sample organisations A, B, C, and D work according to systematic and respondents’ views. The systematic viewpoint focuses on what is done inside the organisation. It focuses on the immediate actions and results (Stacey, 2007). In contrast, organisation E focuses on the greater purpose and why we are doing this; namely, the systemic viewpoint, which aims to improve outcomes (Stacey, 2007). However, organisations should not lose their systematic processes; both systemic and
systematic processes are crucial (Drucker, 2012). A systemic perspective examines each task and system inside an organisation, meaning it is an important aspect of the wider strategic purpose.

Q6. What degree of freedom is given to the employees (in relation to work hours, empowerment-autonomy)?

Another aspect that arose during the interviews was the freedom that is given to employees. This question aims to recognise how the rules and the policies of HR can support employee freedom and independency, thus increase happiness. The responses from a managerial perspective are very similar to the HRD responses.

From the managerial level:

“Empowerment and autonomy are given to department managers. They have a delegation of authority, provision of alternative and granting powers to department’s managers without referencing the direct managers” (B12)

“We set rules that can guarantee employee freedom such as flexible working hours which is very important, given familial responsibilities, among other personal challenges”. (A5)

“We have a lot of HR rules that guarantee employees’ feelings of freedom such as flexible working hours, medical release as well as sick leave.” (C27)

“We have flexible working hours for all employees and special working hours for new mothers, which counties for the first 18 months.” (D18)
“Employees are free to move and talk, the security cameras are only found in corridors and not in offices so employees feel free and comfortable at their desks.”

(C23)

Organisation E responses to this question are:

“We believe that no one needed to be directly managed; and we are doing whatever it takes to ensure employee happiness. Here, empowerment and autonomy are given to all the employees, because the hierarchy changes every three months and this gives a chance for every employee to try different roles inside the organisation and to be free and more active”. (E7)

“Flexible working hours, no desks policy and you can work from wherever you want”. (E10)

“We do not have an attendance and departure signature system, we give the employees the trust and they don’t abuse it”. (E6)

“To get trust you must give it first, you will have to pay the price and the price is going to be a tax, and there are people who will misuse it. In every innovation, there is a tax. If 20% of the people misuse a new system, it is ok because this is the price that we should to pay, but if 50% misuse it then I have a problem with the system not the people. If I say I want an organisation with no offices I should to do this first. In the battle, you as a leader should to be first” (E8)

**Table 5-8: Overview of Question 6 Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q6. What degree of freedom is given to the employees (in relation to work hours, empowerment-autonomy)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

220
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>Empowerment and autonomy are given to department managers.</td>
<td>Empowerment and autonomy are given to department managers</td>
<td>Empowerment and autonomy are given to department managers</td>
<td>Empowerment and autonomy are given to department managers</td>
<td>Empowerment and autonomy are given for all the employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Flexible working hours</td>
<td>- Flexible working hours</td>
<td>- Flexible working hours</td>
<td>- Flexible working hours</td>
<td>- No desks policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No attendance and departure signatures</td>
<td>- No desks policy</td>
<td>- No attendance and departure signatures</td>
<td>- No desks policy</td>
<td>- No attendance and departure signatures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Trusting culture</td>
<td>- Trusting culture</td>
<td>- Trusting culture</td>
<td>- Trusting culture</td>
<td>- Trusting culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>-Empowerment is given for the managerial level only.</td>
<td>-Empowerment is given for all the employees</td>
<td>-Empowerment is given for the managerial level only.</td>
<td>-Empowerment is given for all the employees</td>
<td>-Empowerment is given for the managerial level only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Regard to working hours (freedom is limited within the rules)</td>
<td>-The attendance system is related to organisation values and happiness.</td>
<td>-Regard to working hours (freedom is limited within the rules)</td>
<td>-Systemic process links each system inside the organisation with a higher purpose to ensure sustainability.</td>
<td>-Systemic process links each system inside the organisation with a higher purpose to ensure sustainability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Systematic processes that can temporally motivate employees.</td>
<td>-Systematic processes that can temporally motivate employees.</td>
<td>-Systematic processes that can temporally motivate employees.</td>
<td>-Systematic processes that can temporally motivate employees.</td>
<td>-Systematic processes that can temporally motivate employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>-The hierarchy (Empowerment approach does not support all the levels)</td>
<td>-The hierarchy (Empowerment approach does not support all the levels)</td>
<td>-The hierarchy (Empowerment approach does not support all the levels)</td>
<td>-The hierarchy (Empowerment approach does not support all the levels)</td>
<td>-The hierarchy (Empowerment approach does not support all the levels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Lack of connection between the internal systems and the strategic plan.</td>
<td>-Lack of connection between the internal systems and the strategic plan.</td>
<td>-Lack of connection between the internal systems and the strategic plan.</td>
<td>-Lack of connection between the internal systems and the strategic plan.</td>
<td>-Lack of connection between the internal systems and the strategic plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main RQ2</th>
<th>How employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE can be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub RQ2.2</td>
<td>How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

It is clear from the responses that all sample organisations are trying to give an amount of freedom, authority and autonomy, the difference is that organisations A, B, C, and D give power to the managerial level only, while organisation E finds a way to empower all employees through their dynamic systems that give each person an opportunity to participate in taking decisions as well as participating in the planning process.

This ensures that the process of organisation E is a systemic process and again they are focusing on the greater purpose which is ‘happiness’ and this is why all the processes help to accomplish this purpose. In addition, each internal system is related to their strategic plan and their employees are aware of the purpose of what they are doing. This ensures the sustainability of productivity thus increases happiness levels.

Q7. What are the professional development opportunities in the organisation? (i.e. personal growth)

From the managerial perspective

“Our organisation offers the highest training hours among other government organisations and we are considered as best practice in the training field. We
also offer the Presidential Leadership Program for nine months, which qualifies the employees for job permissions and it is supported by the government. (A5)

“The training programmes are set according to an employee’s needs and according to the employee’s evaluation and the strengths and weaknesses of their personality and skills”. (B17)

“We help the employees’ professional development by minimising the working hours for employees who complete their studies, and facilitate exam leave”. (B12)

“We facilitate bachelor and master’s degree studies to employees who complete in a field that is related to their job. We sponsor three employees every year”. (A1)

“There is a clear career path for all managerial jobs, but not for the lower skilled employees”. (C27)

The answer given by organisation E is the same, except that they focus on the training programme as a powerful way to develop an employee’s skills. They stopped the usual training that depended on attending workshops and finishing a certain number of training hours and focused on new things to more closely serve their purpose.

“Instead of attending a workshop about leadership skills we train the employee through volunteering. We took a group of the employees to Cambodia, Nepal to try something new and to live in different circumstances to teach them how to deal with things in a different way, especially since many in the UAE live luxurious lives in comparison, with electricity and good transportation. Such trips mentioned came with zero budgets, because of the charity money that we collect weekly” (E8)
“The idea of minimizing workshops began in the financial crisis when the organisation needed to save money, but we maintained the new programmes due to positive feedback”. (E7)

“We have two training approaches: the thrive training, workshops that only for new things that employees need to learn such as info graphics. The other approach is to learn new skills through attending conferences and external coaching. Attending conferences helps people to remain up-to-date while coaching helps in developing other skills like business communication, public speaking and presentation. (E7)

“We took a group of people to Disney Land last year as a training programme; we want to inspire them and let them observe the customer service process. We have faced many criticisms that this is a luxury and a waste of time. One thing that I know, even if we assume that we got all of these wrongs and we do not increase production, we do not reach the target number, how wrong it is to make people happy? We cannot do wrong with making people happy”. (E8)
Table 5-9: Overview of Question 7 analysis

Q7. What are the professional development opportunities in the organisation? (i.e. personal growth)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>- Training programme (workshops/conferences)</td>
<td>- Training programme (workshops/conferences)</td>
<td>- Training programme (workshops/conferences)</td>
<td>- Training programme (workshops/conferences)</td>
<td>- Training programme (workshops/Conferences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sponsor high study</td>
<td>- Clear career path for managerial jobs</td>
<td>- Clear career path for managerial jobs</td>
<td>- Clear career path for managerial jobs</td>
<td>- External Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Clear career path for managerial jobs</td>
<td>- Training programme (workshops/conferences)</td>
<td>- Training programme (workshops/conferences)</td>
<td>- Training trip</td>
<td>- Volunteering programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Training programme (workshops/conferences)</td>
<td>- Clear career path for managerial jobs</td>
<td>- Clear career path for managerial jobs</td>
<td>- External Coach</td>
<td>- Training trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>- Training programs are according to job and individual needs</td>
<td>- Close learning system</td>
<td>Open learning system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>- Training need does not connect with organisational strategy</td>
<td>- Training strategy does not include happiness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>There is no gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>Main RQ2</td>
<td>How employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE can be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub RQ2.2</td>
<td>How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

The overview of question seven shows that all government organisations offer different professional development opportunities that allow the employee to become up-to-date and enhance their skills according to their needs. Organisation E deals with
training as a process that is related to the organisation purpose that is why it is an open learning system that focuses on the quality rather than achieving an amount of training hours. It is also connected to organisation strategy which focuses on employees’ happiness. When you help people become happier, you are effectively planning for the organisation rather than thinking only in the short run.

Moreover, government organisations lack the clarity of a career path regarding the functional level. It is the same in organisation E except that their hierarchy allows the employees to practice different roles inside the organisation and thus give them authority and empowerment.

Q8. How do you evaluate an employee’s performance? How do the employees react to such an assessment? (i.e. performance appraisal).

The respondents argue on the effectiveness of the used evaluation is the current concern in the government organisations:

“Employee performance is evaluated according to the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources, launched in 2012. Evaluating people according to the quantity not quality is what happen.” (D18)

“The existence of ratios and a limited number in each category of assessment cause a decrease in satisfaction and motivation level. We tried with the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources to maximise the number of people who deserve a distinct assessment and they allowed us to add four more employees, but people were still dissatisfied with this kind of evaluation.” (A5)

“This Kind of Evaluation causes sensitivity between the employees because of the ceiling ratios and inequality in evaluating the employees.” (C28)
“For the first two years of applying the assessment we tried not to choose any one from the top management as distinguished employees because the numbers in this category are limited and we wanted to give a chance to the other employees to be rewarded and promoted.” (B13)

Although, the majority agreed on the negativity of this evaluation, one of the HR managers has a different opinion:

“This is a new government attitude that might require more time to be fully understood and accepted, and I fully agree to this manner of evaluation.” (A2).

In organisation E

“We are now looking for the best practices in evaluating employees, so we can apply it in our organisation, and we are now studying the Swedish performance appraisal. In Sweden, it is illegal to evaluate others, so they created a review meeting to evaluate employees.” (E7)

“Previously, the employees themselves identified the areas that they want their direct manager to evaluate them. It was two parties’ assessment self-assessment as well as direct manager assessment. Currently the evaluation depends on the projects, the employee can work in many projects and can sit with the leaders of the project and ask about their strengths sides and how can they develop themselves. The employees benefit from others’ feedbacks and take them into account for the next projects. This assessment is constructive and positive which help the employees to develop themselves.” (E9)
Q8. How do you evaluate an employee’s performance? How do the employees react to such an assessment? (i.e. performance appraisal).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responses</strong></td>
<td>-Employee performance is evaluated according to the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources</td>
<td>-Federal Authority for Government Human Resources</td>
<td>-Federal Authority for Government Human Resources</td>
<td>-Federal Authority for Government Human Resources</td>
<td>-The evaluation depends on the projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>They are all using one performance appraisal system</td>
<td>They use review meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaps</strong></td>
<td>- Performance appraisal holds inequality from two sides: Inequality in the limited number set from the system and inequality in evaluating and choosing the employee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Question</strong></td>
<td>Main RQ2 How can employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub RQ2.2 How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

Overall, the responses show that organisations A, B, C, and D evaluate the performance of employees according to the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources. It is explained in detail in chapter two, that this assessment has a lot of limitations and weaknesses. It predetermines specific numbers in each evaluation category; for example, the ceiling ratios require only 5% of all employees as exceeds
expectations significantly distinguish and 10% as exceeds expectations even if they have more employees that deserve such an evaluation. Moreover, salary increases, which are associated with the number of years spent at work, has been cancelled and all bonuses are linked to employee performance.

All the above points might not be the real problem, but the bias that occurs at the time of evaluation and choosing employees according to internal interests or because of sympathy that managers show to some employees who have certain circumstances, is problematic. This reflects the negative side of the current evaluation system in addition to the details mentioned in chapter two and how the limited number set from the system causes inequality in evaluating the employees.

5.2.3. The Final Part of the Interview

Two questions were asked at the end of the interview to summarise the top management views, as well as the HRM opinions about what makes other organisation’s staff dissatisfied, and what can they suggest to making this organisation happier.

Q10. Why do you think other organisations suffer from low job satisfaction level?

There are mixed of responses from the managerial level:

“It might be because of the performance appraisal as well as the changes in HR laws, for example minimizing the days of the holidays, and a lack of privileges, such as the medical insurance”. (C24)

“Linking the promotions with the employees’ performance leads to low job satisfaction level”. (B12)

“A healthy working environment, the spirit of teamwork, cooperation and respect is missing in a lot of organisations and these are sufficient reasons to be unhappy”. (D18)
“What makes the organisations suffer from the law job satisfaction is the weakness in communication and listening to the employees”. (A1)

From an HRD manager’s perspective:

“The job appraisal causes a lot of problems and leads to low job satisfaction. For example, I have been working here for more than 6 years and I always have a good assessment outcome until a new system comes and minimises the number of excellent people to 3 employees among 40 employees. Not only that, but also linking our promotions which was according to years working at the organisation with the results of the evaluation”. (B15)

“We used to score high levels of job satisfaction scores, but lately the new rules and the lack of communication and transparency led to maximise the gap between the managerial level and the employees, thus causing low job satisfaction”. (C29)

On the other hand, organisation E stated that

“Some organisations focus on what they do not have, and they need to twist their vision rather than focusing on dissatisfaction and highlight the positive aspects to raise happiness”. (E7)

“There are many things that might cause low job satisfaction such as the barriers between the top management and the employees. The lack of equality and encouragement influences employees’ motivation and loyalty. Even if the institution provides the highest monthly income, but they do not care about the happiness of the employees, and people will not be happy because money is not happiness”. (E9)
“Don’t think they are wrong, think about them like they are on the same journey we are, but they are a little behind for whatever reason, maybe we are luckier that we stumble along with the right people and we get on. I can see where they are, but they cannot see where they are, but because you are here and because we have been there before, it is only a matter of time. The fact is, at least they are saying we want to be happy, maybe they don’t get it today and it is not genuine, but at least there is a desire”. (E8)

Q11. In general, how happy are your employees? How can you make them happier?

The responses on this question were valuable for many reasons. Firstly, it summarises how managers evaluate the current situation. Secondly, it is a ‘moment of truth’ when managers recognise their weaknesses and suggest solutions to change the organisation and make people happier.

“A comfortable work environment can make us happier.” (C27)

“To be happier we need better communication with all employees at different levels of the hierarchy.” (A3)

“We aspire to enhance the relations between the employees by becoming more informal and friendly.” (D21)

In organisation E, they describe themselves as happy in the workplace:

“We can say about ourselves that we are a happy organisation and our evidence is the numbers which speak for themselves. On the world happiness scale, we score 7.3 out of 10, and we are one of the top 15 happiest organisations around the world”. (E7)
“We are on a journey of learning and applying new ideas that could strengthen our organisational culture and make our employees ever happier”. (E8)

It is worth mentioning that the term ‘communication’ and its synonyms came up 23 times in questions 10 and 11, and ‘performance appraisal was noted 14 times. This indicates show critical the two aspects are from the point of view of the respondents and how they influence the employees’ happiness.

The table 5.11 below displays responses to questions 10 and 11 and connects them with the gaps from the other interview responses. The table aims to uncover gaps found in other interview responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Question 10</th>
<th>Question 11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why do you think other organisations suffer from low job satisfaction?</td>
<td>In general, how happy are your employees? How can you make them happier?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views</th>
<th>Gaps</th>
<th>HR Laws</th>
<th>Performance Appraisal</th>
<th>Promotion system</th>
<th>Working environment</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Learning and applying new things</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Happiness plans are not connected with the strategic plan.</td>
<td>HR Laws</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The communication between top management and the employees from functional level.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5-11: Responses to Questions 10 and 11
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Working environment</th>
<th>Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The activities are arranged, not part of the daily routine and not all employees feel engaged.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>There is a lack of understanding and awareness of the organisational cultural concept.</td>
<td>Working environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The organisational culture is not related to organisation strategy.</td>
<td>Working environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Organisational structure may be a barrier in applying an appreciation system.</td>
<td>Performance Appraisal</td>
<td>Promotion system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>There is no practical method of dealing with work pressure</td>
<td>Working environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The hierarchy (empowerment approach does not support all levels)</td>
<td>HR Laws</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Lack of connection between the HRM internal systems and the strategic plan.</td>
<td>HR Laws</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Training needs do not connect with organisational strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Training strategies do not include happiness.</td>
<td>HR Laws</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Performance appraisal is not equal.</td>
<td>HR Laws</td>
<td>Performance Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. Performance appraisal focuses on the quantitative rather than qualitative outcomes.</td>
<td>HR Laws</td>
<td>Performance Appraisal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by the author

Table 5.11 displays all the views summarised as in groups: HR laws, performance appraisal, promotion system, working environment, communication and Learning and applying new things, which ensure all gaps have been discovered through analysing the responses.

The table also shows that HR rules have occupied the top issue; it has been repeated as responsible for most of the gaps. In addition, the second aspect that occupied a high number of repetitions is working environment. This affirms the importance of these two aspects in employee happiness.
5.3. Summary

This chapter had outlined the results of the qualitative analysis from the interview transcripts. It clearly shows the efforts that top management take to ensure their employees are happy. It also helps to figure out what makes the organisational system one of the main factors that associate with ‘functioning at work’ as well as ‘happiness at work’. The similarities of the responses indicate that the sample government organisations are sharing the same policies and the same attitudes, and more importantly, they share the same problems. At the same time, the different views of the respondents of the sampled organisation E, helped us to recognise the gaps that the other government organisations suffer. It might be hard to note what is missing or what is went wrong until we compare with other experiences.

The qualitative analysis helped to understand the current situation, thus be able to answer the second research question: How can employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies? Also, the sub-research questions: What are the factors that influence employee job satisfaction within the UAE public organisations? And, how do HR practices affect employee happiness in the UAE public sector organisations?

Current HRM job satisfaction strategies focus on short-term initiatives and activities. Such initiatives boost happiness immediately but are not sustainable in the long term. HRM job satisfaction strategies in current organisations are also unrelated to happiness plans as well as an organisation’s overall strategy. This means that each HRM system inside the sample organisations work separately, even randomly, and are not connected to a higher purpose, which supposes to encompass employees’ happiness. This explains the low job satisfaction despite all the efforts. It also emphasises the necessity of
correlating HRM practices, rules and systems with strategic planning that focuses on employee happiness as the greatest purpose of the organisation.

Regarding the factors that influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations, the analysis concluded that in addition to organisational system, organisational structure as well as leadership style are considered the main factors that influence happiness at work. Organisational structure is considered critical reason beyond the high or low level of happiness. This is because the structure shapes the type of communication between various levels of the organisational hierarchy. The flexible structure, according to the analysis of the qualitative data, provides a chance for greater and more effective communication, while the normal structure that depends on the classic hierarchy might be considered a barrier between top management and employees from the functional levels. In addition, the freedom, empowerment, autonomy and career path are given to people at the top of the hierarchy, thus most employees find themselves unsatisfied when comparing to more senior roles inside the same organisation.

The other critical factor that causes high or low levels of happiness at work is the leadership style. According to the qualitative analysis, a leader has profound influence in creating a strong organisational culture as well as driving employees to adopt and live said culture. The analysis of the responses leads to a deduction that the leadership style in the sample organisations A, B, C and D are considered goal- and task-oriented. This kind of leader manages by objectives and this leads them to concentrate on achieving setting goals and following common instructions. The management in these organisations focus on doing things right and on time, even if this contradicts their values to raise employees’ happiness. One example is in applying a performance appraisal system that the majority
of the respondents are unsatisfied, but it is still used.

In contrast, the leadership style in organisation E is consensus-oriented, meaning to participate and service. According to Laloux (2014) this kind of leadership focuses on culture and empowerment to achieve extraordinary employee motivation. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the top management in organisation E follow the common instructions that the government requests, but this does not stop them from creating their own systems and programmes that support their vision and values.

The analysis also concluded how HR practices correlate positively with employees’ happiness in the UAE. According to the reviews and responses the current rules and practices only applied to manage people and finish certain tasks without relating it to an employee’s happiness this leads to negative feedback and low job satisfaction. The performance appraisal system in the current organisations focuses on the quantitative rather than qualitative, which negatively influences motivation and attitude.

In addition, training systems in current organisations are closed learning systems that focus on achieving certain training hours through training sessions and it is hard to see how these hours would influence employees’ personalities and skills. Added to that, training needs do not connect with organisational strategy as well as happiness plans, in other words, the training system is supposed to be a long-term vision about what is required ‘for and from’ employees. What does a leader think when deciding to take customer service employees to Disneyland? Also, will this create a new training attitude and reflect well on the organisation? Relating an action with a vision ensures it holds its value and will help in raising happiness at the work place at the same time as guaranteeing sustainability, loyalty and high production.
Another gap is in the way of communication and appreciation. In sample organisations A, B, C and D the appreciation system is vertical where the top management controls the whole process, while in organisation E the appreciation system is horizontal. All employees support one another within a dynamic hierarchy that focuses on teamwork, as opposed to job titles.

Another HRM practice to influence job satisfaction is working hours, even if the working hours are flexible, employees are still supposed to come on a certain time, this might lead employees to drive fast thus raise a threaten employees’ lives. If the organisation cares about employee health for example they will not put them in such a situation. If there is a culture of trust there is no need to count the minutes and seconds simply to apply a system regardless of how this system influences happiness. Moreover, there is no practical method of dealing with work pressure, all the procedures focus on rewarding for extra hours, but it does not teach employees to deal with pressures, handle them effectively and cope within the organisation’s daily routine.

Regarding research question three: How do we preserve the relationship between the organisational culture and employee happiness in the UAE? Based on the results showing managers’ views and responses, employees’ higher or lower levels of satisfaction and happiness relates to organisational culture. Leaders, who seek an ever-stronger organisational culture and can handle it, achieve higher levels of happiness in the workplace. The responses from organisation E helps us to identify that a strong and cooperative organisational culture that focuses on wellbeing as a priority and core value, achieve high levels of happiness. In addition, five main elements have been generated from the conversations and responses of senior managers of organisation E to understand
how to build a strong value-driven culture, and these are: sense of purpose, the quality of the communication, having fun, giving equal chances to all employees regardless of their level in the organisational hierarchy and finally focusing on personal and career development.

On the other hand, the sample organisations A, B, C and D show a lack of understanding of the critical role that visions and values play in positively changing an organisation and strengthening the culture, thus raising happiness. They instead focus on achieving tasks and the strategic plans, which might not be related to workplace happiness. They lack grouping of these tasks under one main umbrella, which is organisational culture.

To provide further discussions on the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis, the next chapter will provide more detailed analysis to cover different issues and suggest appropriate solutions and strategies.
Chapter 6 Discussion of Findings and Conclusions

In recent years, various governments around the world such as Bhutan, Ecuador, Japan, Venezuela, the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates have been paying attention to the subject of happiness. This global interest in happiness is also emerging in many work organisations that are seeking to establish better working practices to improve levels of job satisfaction and employee loyalty. The literature in this field highlights many specific examples of organisations with reportedly high levels of employee happiness and various studies have sought to establish links between levels of employee happiness and, for example, organisational values and cultures. Notably, the vast majority of these studies relate to private sector companies. The transferability of findings from the literature to public organisations is hence problematic.

The previous two chapters provide a detailed analysis of data collection in the United Arab Emirates. Chapter four presents an analysis through questionnaire responses in four government organisations at the functional level, while chapter five provides detailed interview analyses within the managerial level at five government organisations.

This chapter aims to integrate the findings of both qualitative and quantitative results, to reach conclusions and discuss their connection to the existing literature. It discusses the findings in relation to the research questions, then move to summarising the overall findings of the research in relation to the research objectives. It also aims to put the results in the context of the conceptual framework and then the chapter concludes by summarising the main implications and conclusions drawn from the study.
6.1. Discussion of Research Questions

To study happiness at work within the UAE context, this research addresses five research questions to cover the gaps in the literature. First, to what extent do employees’ personal attitudes influence happiness at work? Second, how can employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE be increased using HRM-related job satisfaction strategies? Third, what are the factors that influence employee job satisfaction within the UAE public organisations? Fourth, how do HR practices affect employee happiness in the UAE public sector organisations? Fifth, what is the nature of the relationship between the organisational culture and employee happiness in this context? To address these questions, questionnaires and interviews were used to explore various aspects of happiness. The questionnaires and the interviews were conducted with 170 employees across three hierarchical levels: Top management, HRM and employees from functional levels. The analysis of the collected data provides answers to the above research questions based on the respondents’ answers from five public sector organisations in the UAE (see table 6.1 below).
Table 6-1: Main Finding Summary

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Main Findings</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qualitative data</td>
<td>Quantitative data</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. To what extent do employees’ personal attitudes influence happiness at work?</td>
<td>- The results show that personal attitude towards life in general does not necessarily affect happiness at work.</td>
<td>- Not all employees who demonstrated a highly positive attitude towards life in general, indicated a high level of happiness at work.</td>
<td>The government organisations in the UAE are required to:</td>
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<td>- Recognise the power of attitude on employees’ feelings towards work and the benefit of positivity on employees’ performance, lifestyle, and health in general.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Focus on recruiting positive staff who fit with the organisational culture.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Focus on changing current employees’ attitudes.</td>
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2. How can employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE be increased using HRM-related job satisfaction strategies?

- Current HRM job satisfaction strategies are considered to be systematic processes that focus on the immediate task, short-term initiative or activity rather than connecting each process to organisation strategy.
- HRM job satisfaction strategy in the sampled organisations is not connected to happiness plans.
- The current job satisfaction survey used in the sample organisations asks about issues that might not be under the control of top management.

- Each HRM system inside sample organisations (A, B, C and D) works separately, even randomly, and is not connected to a higher purpose, which supposes to encompass employees’ happiness.
- The adopted initiatives and activities might immediately boost happiness but are not sustainable in the long term.
- The job satisfaction survey used in the sample organisations measures what is out of the top management control such as the salaries, thus the action plans that are setting regards to the employees’ feedback not offers solutions for the problems.
- Action plans focus on short

- To correlate HRM practices, rules and systems with strategic planning that focuses on employee happiness as the greatest purpose of the organisation.
- To move from focusing on systematic and immediate actions to a systemic viewpoint, this means that every internal system is related to the strategic plan and the entire vision of the organisation.
- To change job satisfaction surveys by focusing on measuring what is under the control of the organisations such as training plans.
- To build new action plans that focus on short and long-term issues that are connected to happiness
| 3. What are the factors that influence employee job satisfaction within the UAE public organisations? | - According to the qualitative data analysis, the main factors that influence happiness at work in the sampled organisations are organisational structure and leadership style. | - In addition, the statistical results display organisational system/culture as one of the main factors that influence feelings towards work. | - Organisational system/culture refers to the cultural and moral values and environment of an organisation. The organisational system influences the functioning at work as well as happiness. It is a positive relationship, so when employees are satisfied with the organisational system, they will perform better and become happier at work. | - Recognising the power of these three factors and reflecting them in the organisation will positively influence satisfaction and build a strong, positive and happy workplace. |
communication between various levels of the hierarchy. In addition, organisation structure controls the level of freedom, empowerment, autonomy and career path that given to the employees.

- The analysis of the responses leads to a deduction that the leadership style in the sample organisations A, B, C, and D are considered goal- and task-oriented. This kind of leader manages by objectives and this leads them to focus on achieving specific goals and following common instructions even if this might affect employees’ satisfaction negatively.

- In contrast, the leadership style in organisation E is
consensus-oriented, meaning to participate and service. Moreover, the top management in organisation E follows the common instructions that the government requests, but this does not stop them from creating their own systems and programmes that support their vision and values.

| 4. How do HR practices affect employee happiness in the UAE public sector organisations? | - HR practices correlate positively with employees’ happiness in the UAE.  
- The main HRM practices that influence employee happiness in the sample organisation are: performance appraisal, training system, and appreciation system. | - According to the data analysis results, organisational culture, organisational structure and leadership style are mainly responsible for employees’ feelings towards work. These three factors shape how HRM practices and procedures work. This is because HRM, according to the data analysis, are followers of ideas rather than decision makers. | - Having HRM or cancelling this department is not the issue, but rather, an awareness of ‘why’ the organisation is doing this and ‘how’ this can make it a happy workplace is central.  
- It is important to connect all the HR practices and rules with happiness plans.  
- or to melt HRM practices |
| 5. What is the nature of the relationship between the organisational culture and employee happiness | - Organisational culture is a core aspect in what makes organisation E stand out.  
- Organisation E has a high-level of | - The reason for low levels of consciousness in organisations A, B, C and D is that they are managed by setting and | - Organisations A, B, C and D need to identify the current and move to a higher level by creating environments that facilitate moving to the next stage. |

- HRM affects an employee’s happiness positively or negatively depending on the top management perspective.  
- There are no strong ‘best practice’ examples in terms of happiness.  
- The appreciation system in the four sampled organisations is run from top-down (Vertical system) because it is affected by the organisational culture, structure and leadership style.  
- Government organisations in the UAE are almost at the same level in term of happiness that is why it is hard for the sample organisations to benefit from local organisations’ best practice.  
- with other departmental practices to expand the level of empowerment, and to raise happiness.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>in this context?</th>
<th>consciousness about the importance of strength of culture, they learn by benchmarking and they apply changes deep to the heart of the organisation.</th>
<th>achieving specific goals, even if these goals or tasks contradict with employee’s happiness.</th>
<th>- They need to relate every process and to strategic goals, to strengthen the culture and guarantee sustainability.</th>
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<td>- The structure, practices and culture of organisation E reflect a high-level of consciousness.</td>
<td>- Learning by benchmarking in organisation E is smart learning because it fills current gaps, unlike other organisations that blindly imitate to (fill a checklist or follow the latest practices without connecting it to strategic goals or filling real needs.</td>
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Source: compiled by the author
Having summarised the main findings of the research in relation to the research questions in Table 6.1 above, the findings of the research are discussed in more detail below with specific reference to the research questions.

6.1.1. Research Question I: To what extent do employees’ personal attitudes influence happiness at work?

To examine how positive or negative personal attitude influences an employee’s personal happiness at work, the questionnaire was distributed to employees across government sector organisations. According to the results, the relationship is positive and an employee’s attitude towards life in general correlates with their feelings towards work. This is consistent with other studies (Barsade and Gibson 2007; Calaguas, 2017). Calaguas (2017) states that happiness in life can influence happiness at work and suggests that, based on longitudinal results over a five-year period, that the effect of life satisfaction on job satisfaction is significant unlike, the effect of job satisfaction on life satisfaction, which is comparatively weak. Barsade and Gibson (2007) reveal that positivity is critical to success and that positivity has a great influence at both the personal and organisational levels. Barsade and Gibson (2007, p. 54) add that employees “bring all of themselves to work” their traits, their feelings and their experiences. Thus, an employee’s background and attitudes influence their feelings towards work.

When studying whether all employees who show positive attitudes towards life are happy at work, the results show that not all employees who show a positive attitude indicate a high level of happiness at work. This means that even if there is a relation, it does not necessarily mean causation and that even if positivity in life leads an employee to be a positive person at work, this will not necessarily raise the level of happiness at work,
especially if there are external factors that influence the employee’s feelings such as work pressures (Meer and Wielers, 2013) or, simply, they cannot express themselves at work as they do at home. This brings to mind the point set forth by Erickson and Wharton (1997) on the need of employees to work in an organisation where they have freedom to be authentic. A study done by Bosch and Taris (2013) finds that working in a welcoming workplace that encourages authenticity will lead to high levels of job satisfaction and happiness.

On the contrary, the results show that all who were less satisfied with their life expressed less satisfaction and low feelings towards work, which highlights how negativity in life may influence the feelings of employees at work. This might lead to people assessing the negative parts of their life and job where negativity traverses both sides, mutually affecting one another (Achor, 2010). Calaguas (2017) finds that there is a significant difference between the behaviours of happy and unhappy employees, and that those who indicate dissatisfaction with life adopt adaptive behaviours such as withdrawal, including poor punctuality or resignation.

In addition, the negativity that the responses show might be related to their personal mood at the time of taking the survey (Mueller and Hausmann, 2009) or a reaction of job dissatisfaction for many reasons such as insecurity, a lack of recognition and stress (Hundley, 2001; Landy, 1989;Topchik, 2000). Thus, negativity in this case, as Barsade and Gibson (2007:45) describe is “a good signal to people that something is wrong” and that there is a need to analyse the situation and recognise the reasons beyond the negative responses, especially if negativity represents the reaction of many of the employees.
It is important to mention that in this research the number of those who show a negative attitude is very low in comparison to the number of those reflecting positive attitudes towards life in general, which is considered a good sign; however, it is difficult to show both sides in a balanced manner. This might also indicate a need for further study to explore the reasons beyond the strong and poor attitudes towards life and how such attitudes influence life in general and job satisfaction in the UAE context.

To explore the external factors that affect employees’ happiness in the sample government organisations, the questionnaires studied the relationships between the following three categories:

- Organisational system + Functioning at work
- Organisational system + Feelings towards work
- Functioning at work + Feelings towards work

Based on the statistical results, the correlation between ‘organisational system and feelings towards work’ (r = .755) shows a strong positive relationship. It reflects how organisation systems are related to employees’ feelings towards work. The second correlation also gave a strong positive relation between ‘functioning at work and feelings towards work’ (r = .702). Lastly, the highest number among all correlations were between ‘organisation systems and functioning at work’ (r = .828). This displays a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The findings of the present study corroborate earlier findings by Lok and Crawford (2004) who study the effect of organisational culture and leadership style on organisational commitment and job satisfaction by using a questionnaire sample of 377 participants holding middle/senior management positions in Australia and Hong Kong. The results of their study revealed that the Australian
managers scored more highly in innovative and supportive culture measures, and on job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

Moreover, interviews with senior managers in sample organisations highlighted two additional aspects that relate to happiness alongside the ‘organisational system’, there are ‘organisational structure’ and ‘leadership style’. The above findings support a great deal of previous work in the field that emphasise the crucial role of a leader in creating a strong cooperative culture, thus raising job satisfaction (Trice and Beyer, 1993; Schein, 1998; Lok and Crawford, 2004; Chen and Francesco, 2000; Miroshnik, 2002; Laloux, 2014). In addition, Chen (2001) and Whitley (1997) emphasise the influence of the flat structure in job satisfaction, which facilitates leaders to focus on communication and empowerment.

It seems that the factors mentioned in the literature, associated with employee happiness such as social support (Park, 2004), sense of purpose (Alter, 2014), empowerment (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013) and appreciation (Nelson, 2012) are located within the above three factors (organisational culture, organisational structure and leadership style), which associate with employee happiness.

The question that might arise here is whether the current government organisations in the UAE are prepared to undertake the required changes to create a strong organisational culture and raise happiness. In other words, is it easy to adopt a new attitude, such as moving from the classical hierarchical to horizontal, flat organisational structure? Lok and Crawford (2004,p. 324) observe that “Asian firms tend to be more bureaucratic, hierarchical, have central decision making and are policy driven. Leadership tends to be based on position, authority and seniority”. In terms of the UAE,
there is some evidence that the happiness agenda and change process is being implemented within work. For example, according to the global Change Readiness Index which ranks 136 countries around the world, the UAE ranks third after Sweden and Switzerland. The CRI ranks countries according to their ‘ability to manage or adapt to change and nurture opportunity’ (GULF NEWS, 2017). Moreover, the UAE topped the charts for enterprise capability, and claimed the second highest rating for government capability and 17th for peace and civil society capability (GULF NEWS, 2017). This is enough evidence to prove the high readiness of the UAE government to adopt new initiatives to develop the countries to their best and raise the happiness of the nation.

6.1.1.1. Raising employees’ happiness: what is required from the sample government organisation in the UAE?

Based on the discussion above, having positive employees is considered good investment and added value for an organisation, especially when the organisation’s leaders place culture and values at the core, and seek a positive place of work for all employees (Hsieh, 2012). The sample organisations must recognise the power of attitude on an employee’s feelings towards work and the benefit of positivity on performance, lifestyle and health in general (Joshua-Amadi, 2011). Moreover, the power of attitude in strengthening organisational culture, thus raises the level of happiness (Schein, 1992). Calaguas (2017) suggests that changing people’s attitudes can enhance job satisfaction and make employees happy. He adds that changing the physical environment can also raise job satisfaction even if the organisation does not spend much on changing attitudes, and this shows how much the physical environment plays in raising happiness levels and this will be explained in detail later in this chapter.
The statistical results might not display cause and effect between a positive attitude towards life and feelings towards works, but they highlight how poor and negative feelings towards life are related to the level of happiness at work. Thus, focusing on recruiting positive staff as well as changing current employees’ attitude is crucial and this is what happens in successful global organisations, such as Zappos (Braynt, 2013).

In organisation E, job interviews are conducted to understand potential new employees’ strengths in positive and creative problem solving. They care about employees’ attitude and they select positive employees because positivity is added value that helps organisations to sustain and flourish.

Moreover, the leaders who seek to change their organisation make it a better place to work and seek to raise the happiness level need to analyse the current culture to see whether they are responsible for the negative attitudes or not with their policies and practices. It is worth noted that changing an organisational attitude should be across all levels inside an organisation and leaders should be part of the change and begin the change by setting a good example (Laloux, 2014).

Changing attitudes comes by changing individual beliefs about different aspects of life and this can take time but will benefit both individual lives and organisation performance (Heifetz and Laurie, 2001). This is why Barrett (2010) emphasises that the first thing that needs to be changed in an organisation is values. Focusing on changing the values of individuals will facilitate in changing their behaviours and drive towards a better culture (Barrett, 2010).

Answering the first research question intersects with the second, which now follows.
6.1.2. Research Question 2: How can employee happiness in public sector organisations in the UAE be increased with HRM job satisfaction strategies?

According to the literature, as well as the collected data, HRM is a critical part of government organisations (Pfeffer, 1994; Wright and Gary, 1992) and they play a significant role in making employees happy. (This is explained in detail in 6.2 Summary of Findings as Mapped against the Research Objectives).

One out of the five sampled organisations chose to be different; they cancelled the HRM and melted their roles and practices within their flexible hierarchy so that this department is no longer blamed for employees’ dissatisfaction and their policies can be practiced within the organisational daily routine. This decision reflects that an employee’s happiness is a priority in organisation E and this includes employees in HRM too, who might look responsible for the whole thing.

Organisation E cares about finding out their own systems and applications even if this might not be acceptable in other government organisations in the UAE nowadays. On the other hand, the other four sampled organisations still have an independent HRM. This is not the problem; the problem is that HRM strategies are not connected to happiness plans. While HRM strategies need to relate to organisational goals to work effectively and comprehensively (Armstrong, 2006).

Current HRM job satisfaction strategy is considered a systematic process that focuses on the immediate task; short-term initiatives and activities rather than connecting each process to the organisation strategy (Stacey, 2007). In addition, each HRM system inside the sample organisations work separately, even randomly, and are not linked to a higher purpose, which supposes to encompass employee happiness. To move from focusing on systematic and immediate actions to a systemic viewpoint, organisations
need to connect every internal system to the overall strategic plan and the entire vision of
the organisation. Drucker (2012, p. 9) gives an example that clarifies the above idea:

“You can't do carpentry, you know, if you only have a saw, or only a hammer or
you never heard of a pair of pliers. It's when you put all those tools into one kit
that you invent. Thus, in order to achieve more in regards to employee happiness,
it is important to be aware of the whole picture and associate all the actions and
systems with that this picture”.

It is worth noting that in addition to the importance of connecting all the internal
systems with the organisational strategic plan, it is even more important to create a happy
workplace to connect the happiness plans with the organisation’s overall strategy. Unlike
what happens in current sample organisations of adopting random initiatives and
activities that might raise an employee’s happiness, this may not work in the long run
since it is not related to organisation strategy (Armstrong, 2006).

In addition, the current job satisfaction survey measures whether current jobs
match potential employees’ needs, and it asks about things that might not be under the
control of the top management, such as salaries and working hours, thus the action plan
that is set regards to employee feedback might not suggest deep solutions for the
employees’ concerns because it focuses on short term satisfaction rather than long term
vision.

Continuing to measure what is difficult to change in the sample organisations will
reflect employees’ desires and probability in leaving their job. Thus, there might be a
need to change the job satisfaction survey by focusing on enhancing what is under the
control of the organisation, such as training plans, and focusing on things that boost
happiness, such as changing the physical environment to strengthen the culture and make a difference. (This explained in detail in 6.3.2).

It is worth noting that, culture reflects the leader’s beliefs (Barrett, 2010). Thus, the changes need to be adopted by a passionate leader with a strong vision (Stark and Kelly, 2016) and they also need to relate to happiness as a core part of the organisational culture.

6.1.3. Research Question 3: What are the factors that influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations?

The sub-research question that comes under the previous research question is: What are the factors that influence employee job satisfaction within UAE public organisations? As mentioned earlier in this chapter the three main factors that relate to employees’ feelings towards work in the sample organisations are: leadership style, organisational system/culture and organisation structure.

6.1.3.1. Leadership style

The data analysis points out that to be able to change an organisational culture the change and the initiatives must begin from the managerial level. The analysis of the responses leads to a deduction that the leadership style in the sample organisations A, B, C, and D are considered goal- and task-oriented/correcting style (Howell and Avolio, 1993). This kind of leader according to Laloux (2014) manages by objectives and this leads them to concentrate on achieving setting goals and following common instructions. In contrast, the leadership style in organisation E is people-oriented, and stimulating leadership style versus (Howell and Avolio, 1993) meaning to participate and serve.

Moreover, the analysis highlights that the effectiveness of a transformation programme that is adopted by a leader inside the organisation is deeper and longer.
Research carried out by Heifetz and Laurie, (2001) reveals that the leader plays a key role in beginning a transformational programme and changing the organisational culture, thus creating a happy workplace and crucially that, the organisation will not be able to change if the leader is not ready.

On the other hand, according to Kotter et al. (2006), the initiatives that come randomly from individuals inside the organisation are insignificant and fade quickly if it is not supported and begin by the leaders. Thus, the data analysis highlights that the efforts the sample organisations A, B, C, and D made to make employees happy might fail and not guarantee happiness over the long run because it is not fully adopted by the leaders. In addition, these efforts and activities are not strong, for the following reasons:

- These activities were there but under another name. For example, gathering for a coffee or breakfast every quarter or going on an organised trip. What happens in these organisations is that they replace the name of former activities and connected to happiness such as, ‘happiness gathering event’. Since these activities did not affect employees’ job satisfaction before, they might not have a positive influence on happiness in the future.

- A lot of these activities are there to satisfy a check list.

- Some are new activities, but not fully adopted by the top management or unrelated to organisational values and strategy. Thus, even if these activities are good, they may not continue or succeed in raising happiness level.

- A lot of these activities are consider as arranged activities and not within an everyday routine. This means they are forced activities, which dissatisfy employees instead of making them happy (Plester and Winquist, 2015).
The figure 6.1 below clarifies the idea in a simple way. The initiatives of change that come from individuals or groups of employees or even from a department inside an organisation but not fully adopted by the top management cannot create a long-term effect on employee happiness or strengthen organisational culture. This brings to mind the point set forth by Kotter et al. (2006) on how individuals in an organisation find it hard to create a change if it is not supported by top management and that “culture change must be managed from the top of the organisation, as willingness to change of the senior management is an important indicator” (Cummings and Worley, 2004, p. 490). Thus, initiatives developed by employees might boost happiness for a certain time and then the employees’ positive feelings may decrease again, hence it is worth structurally implementing such initiatives for longevity of overall happiness.

**Figure 6.1: Top-Down Initiatives of Change Effect vs. Bottom-Up Initiatives of Change Effect**

![Diagram showing top-down and bottom-up initiatives of change effect](source)

Source: compiled by the author

It is exactly like the impact of the stone that falls from the top down, for example, from the roof of a building, it has a stronger impact and leaves an effect in the place of its
fall as opposed to a stone thrown by a person standing on the ground and trying to make the stone reach the height of a floor or two above, and then descend down.

Although the figure 6.1 emphasises the idea that initiatives of change must first begin from the top management level to create stronger impact and raise happiness for a long time, this does not mean that the employees should not participate in the transformation process. It simply means that to create new organisational values and culture the first step should be taken from the leaders (De Caluwé and Vermaak, 2004; Barrett, 2010; Kulkarni, 2014). Then all the followers will adopt this attitude and behave in a way that reflects the new values, as what can be seen happening in organisation E.

6.1.3.2. Organisational System/Culture

As discussed in the literature review, organisational system refers to the cultural and moral values and environment of an organisation. According to the results of this study, organisational culture correlates positively with functioning at work as well as happiness at work. This supports a great deal of previous work in this field (Denison, 1984; Schein 2004; Kotter et al., 2006; Kulkarni 2014). Although culture is important to success and sustainability, it is largely neglected (ibid.) or taken by default (Barrett, 2010). To create happy workplace, leaders need to focus on building a positive culture and involve employees from different levels in the process of change. It is also important for leaders to avoid making what Kulkarni (2014, p. 1) describes as “learn this the hard way” in other words, learning how important organisational culture is, when it is too late, such as after a huge fail or crisis.
Simply put, leaders need to focus on strengthening organisational culture, and happiness will come as a result. It is a positive relationship, according to Chen and Francesco, (2000); Miroshnik (2002) when employees are satisfied with the organisational system, they will perform better and become happier at work. This is particularly evident in the results of the current study as reported in the findings; leaders have profound influence in creating a strong organisational culture and organisational culture strongly correlates with functioning at work ($r = .828$) as well as feelings towards work ($r = .755$), which shows a fairly strong positive relationship.

6.1.3.3. Organisational Structure

Organisational structure shapes the type of communication between various levels of the organisational hierarchy. It controls the level of freedom, empowerment, autonomy and career path that is given to employees (Chen, 2001; Whitley, 1997). According to the collected data, employees in a horizontal structured organisation, indicate a higher level of happiness. This might be because equal opportunities are offered to all employees, unlike the vertical or tall structured organisations. Porter and Lawler (1965) state that the average span of control within an organisation is linked to the organisational structure whereby that flat structure offers greater freedom and less control, in contrast to the tall structure. Similary, Finlay et al. (1995: 439) who emphasise that a “high degree of openness in the information flow across the different levels of the organisation and having a low degree of standardisation of procedures had significant independent positive effects on job satisfaction”.

It is worth mentioning that the size of the organisation might play a role in shaping the kind of organisation structure and thus influences the level of satisfaction and
that an organisation with 5,000 employees or more might not be affected by the structure of the organisation (Porter and Lawler, 1965). The implication of these findings gives the typical size of most of the public sector organisations in the UAE.

Although the Government of the UAE displays their readiness to change and demonstrate the efforts required to raise happiness (see 6.1.1), the cultural assumptions, such as “the tribal systems adopted by the majority of Arab societies” (Rees and Althakhri, 2008, p.130) might negatively influence the top management mindset and cause a delay in the process of change. This kind of assumption supports top-down management and centralised decision making and authority (Cummings and Worley, 2001). This management style also supports vertical hierarchy and indirectly encourages one-way interactions where top management take decisions and give orders while subordinates apply without questioning (Mellahi, 2003). Thus, to implement new changes successfully, strong support from senior management who possess strong authority is an essential requirement (Rees and Althakhri, 2008), which might take a long time. This emphasis shows again the powerful role that leaders play in the process of change and the strength of change that is supported by the top management as mentioned earlier (Top-Down Initiatives of Change and Figure 6.1). Each research question leads and intersects with the next research question.

6.1.4. Research Question 4: How do HR practices affect employee happiness in UAE public sector organisations?

According to the results, HR practices positively correlate with employees’ happiness in the UAE. The main HRM practices that appear to relate to an employee’s happiness in the sample organisations are: the performance appraisal, training process system and appreciation system.
It is worth mentioning that, according to HRM responses in the interviews, they are followers of ideas rather than decision makers. They are following directives of leaders and the decisions they take as a department are in accordance with the government and senior managers. For example, the appreciation system in the four sampled organisations is run from the top-down (vertical system) and is affected by organisational culture, structure and leadership style.

Thus, even if the HR practices positively correlate with employees’ happiness in the UAE, they are still part of the organisational system and they are considered a reflection of the leadership style. In other words, their performance reflects the attitudes of top management (Barrett, 2010). Arguably, this means that HRM affects an employee’s happiness positively or negatively depending on the top management perspective and how the top management influence subordinates and “the level of consciousness of an organisation cannot exceed the level of consciousness of its leader” (Laloux, 2014, p. 239).

The question that might arise following the above point: Is the HRM still important in raising employees’ happiness? Based on the results of the current study the answer is yes, it is an important department and according to the interview analysis, HR rules ranked the highest among the six factors that related to the current gaps in sample government organisation process (as clarified in Table 11 in Chapter Five).

HRM is important because of the responsibilities that are given to them as a department, where by their processes directly relating to employee happiness (Mudor and Tooksoon, 2011). Yet what is more important is the role that top management play (Barrett, 2010) in integrating entire departments in the change process and relating all
their inside systems to the overall organisation strategy. The top management act as a role model that influences internal policies and systems and their vision becomes everyone’s vision. Thus, the HRM cannot act or take a decision that contradicts the senior team.

In this study, when organisation E cancelled HRM they proved that what is more important than an action taken by an internal department is a decision taken by the top management. Organisation E recognises that leadership is key fuel in changing organisation culture and making employees happy. On the other hand, Organisations A, B, C, and D are trying hard to raise employee happiness, but without a leader who fully adopts the proposed change and is able to set a good example and be passionate with their vision, values and behaviours, a long-term change would prove difficult (Barret, 2010). In other words, they are not investing in creating a paradigm to encourage continuous happiness. To sum up, having HRM or cancelling this department is not the issue, but rather, an awareness of ‘why’ the organisation is doing this and ‘how’ this can make it a happy workplace is central.

Another issue is centred on how HR practices affect employee happiness in the UAE and what encompasses best practice in terms of employees’ feelings towards the workplace. Organisation E takes best practices in raising employees’ happiness from other successful global organisations such as Google and Zappos. In addition, inspired by some of the best hotels in the world, their open greeting environment was developed to a high standard. On the other hand, other sample organisations chose best practices from local organisations according to the rewards that these organisations gain in some fields. Thus, it is hard for the sample organisations to benefit from local organisations’ best practices in terms of happiness because they are almost at the same level and adopt
happiness initiatives and activities according to the UAE government instructions. There is also another weakness with the issues of learning from the best practices in sample organisations A, B, C and D (See 6.1.5.2: Learning by Benchmarking).

Government organisations can benefit from the experience of the happiest organisations around the world such as organisation E’s experience in raising positive feelings. Organisation E proved that it is possible to apply a strong value driven culture in public sector organisations as well as the private sector. They could encourage other government organisations in the UAE to do the same and learn from their experience. Organisation E distinguished itself by a horizontal system, a flexible hierarchy and employee empowerment. The difficulty that the other government organisations might face in imitating or learning from organisation E experience is that this experience is not written, which is why this thesis is an attempt to collect the unwritten experiences and translate them into a framework that guides organisations in their pursuit to raise employee happiness.

What is required from the government organisations regarding HRM is to connect all HR practices and rules with happiness plans, since their practices are connected to an employee’s happiness. Moreover, government organisations can take a bold step, like organisation E, by melting HRM practices with other departmental practices, thus it is not one department’s responsibility, it is everyone’s responsibility. This approach might expand the level of empowerment and in turn raise happiness.
6.1.5. Research Question 5: How do we preserve the relationship between organisational culture and employee happiness in the UAE?

By comparing the efforts of the government organisations: A, B, C, and D on one hand and organisation E on the other, it became clear that organisational culture is a core aspect in what makes organisation E stand out. Organisation E has a high level of consciousness about the importance of strength of culture. They learn from the best organisations around the world (learning by benchmarking) and they apply changes deep to the heart of the organisation.

6.1.5.1. Level of Consciousness

It can be deducted from the collected data that the level of consciousness on what leads to employee happiness is very low at sample organisations A, B, C and D when compared to organisation E. The main reason for such a deduction is that these organisations are managed by setting and achieving specific predetermined goals, even if such goals or tasks contradict with employee happiness. For example, the performance appraisal; although both top management and HRD managers expressed dissatisfaction with the evaluation method, they are still using it in evaluating employee’s performance. Laloux (2014, p.40) explains how to recognise the level of consciousness by: an “organisation’s structure, its practices, and its cultural elements”. He provides this example: “a system that stresses individual incentives if people reach predetermined targets probably stems from an Achievement-Orange worldview”, The orange colour according to him reflects a lower level of consciousness.

However, even if the four sampled organisations A, B, C, and D are less aware of what makes employees happy, they are working hard to create change, but they do not own the right tools to begin change that focuses on organisational culture. What is
required from these organisations is to move to a higher level of consciousness by following the recommendation of Laloux (2014, pp. 39-40).

- “Let go of old certainties and experiment with a new worldview”.
- “Create environments that are conducive to growing into later stages”. “When someone is surrounded by peers who already see the world from more complex perspective, in a context safe enough to explore inner conflicts, chances are higher that the person will make the leap”.

On the other hand, looking to the structure, practices and culture of organisation E leads to a deduction that their level of consciousness is higher than the rest. Organisation E focuses on a flexible hierarchy with high levels of empowerment and self-management and their processes change according to people’s needs, which helps raise happiness.

It is worth mentioning that the level of happiness in organisation E kept increasing when they decided to raise their level of consciousness and change their worldview in 2013. They also benefitted from best practices and successful organisations with greater experiences in the field of happiness. This indicates that organisation E has a passionate leader who effectively leads change while being surrounded by a positive team who believe and support their vision. This ranks organisation E at the top of the UAE government organisations, as they continue to compete globally.

6.1.5.2. Learning by Benchmarking

It is noted from organisation E’s experience that they benefitted from the successful organisations’ experiences through observation, imitation and innovation to learn from them and fill the current gaps, thus strengthened their organisational culture and raised happiness. This kind of learning from others’ experiences might be considered
a smart imitation, where the organisation imitates others yet own the decision to choose and change according to their needs. Moreover, although organisation E is an independent entity, they still support the idea of innovation by imitation as described by Shenkar, (2010, p. 4) as “imovators” who understand the advantage of mixing imitation with innovation in their ability to succeed, compete and sustain positive outcomes. Some examples of imovator’s organisations include: Wal-Mart, IBM and Apple (Shenkar, 2010).

Imitation has demonstrated its effectiveness in competitiveness, saving research and marketing costs. It also empowers organisations to gain a strategic edge (Shenkar, 2010). Thus, other sample organisations can benefit from organisation E’s experience and practice, learn from it and then imitate. It is important for leaders to change their view of imitation and focus on the positive side and strategic benefit of imitation, as highlighted by Shenkar (2010, p. 4):

“We need to lose the mind-set that imitation is an embarrassing nuisance residing at the margins of business life, and bring it into centre stage strategically and operationally. Business leaders need to appreciate the value of imitation but also be aware of its costs and risks, and learn to see imitation not as an impediment to innovation but as a driver of innovation, done right”.

At the same time, sample organisations do not have to go through all the steps to gain the same results. Organisation E for example used to measure job satisfaction by using job satisfaction surveys, then they moved to the Gallup survey and they end up to measure employees’ happiness. Other organisations who want to benefit from organisation E do not have to go through all these measurements; they can ‘leapfrog’ as
Shenkar, (2010, p. 3) states into the final step which is to measure employees’ happiness. However, not all imitation means to jump to the final stage because organisations needs time to change their processes and practices; for example, sample organisations do not have to imitate organisation E structure and move directly from the classic pyramid structure to holocracy or flat hierarchy as organisation E. This is because moving to flexible hierarchy in organisation E was as a result of a long process of focusing on creating a value driven culture and fostering an empowerment and trust-culture. Thus, to imitate this kind of change, the organisations might have to go through a lot of processes as can be seen from organisation E’s journey.

In contrast, other government organisations learn by benchmarking and are doing this for different reasons such as filling a checklist, or to imitate successful initiatives without connecting them to strategic goals or filling real gaps and needs, as organisation E managed to achieve. This described by Cherchem (2012) as blind imitation, which cannot influence for a sustained term because they are not connected to strategic goals and happiness.

Briefly, what is required from the sample government organisations is to ask: why are best practices in other organisations an important point of reference? They need to focus on the larger picture and to connect each process and initiative with a strategic goal, which in this case is happiness. Thus, learning by benchmarking will be seen from different perspectives, such as seeking to fill needs and gaps in an organisation, thus enhancing the culture and raising happiness.
Changing the Current Culture

According to the above discussion, to change an organisational culture and make it a pleasant place to work, the organisation first needs to understand their current situation and evaluate the culture, and then clarify their new vision and what kind of culture they want in the workplace (Barret, 2010; Cummings and Worley, 2009; Cameron and Quinn, 2011) and why. It is also important to figure out the level of change that the current organisations need, i.e.: change/ transformation/ evolution (Barret, 2010).

Based on the results, transformation programme worked successfully in organisation E because of the availability of three main groups of people: a leader who was ready to lead the change and be part of the change, a supportive team who shared the same dreams and values with the leader and was able to take actions, and finally, motivated and engaged staff who demonstrated a positive attitude and adopted organisational values and reflected them in their daily behaviours. The whole organisation is involved in the transformation programme; they adopt a new attitude and act in a way that reflects this attitude.

Moreover, the transformation programme success because organisation E take the change to the heart of the organisation, in other words they worked on changing the personal and the corporative beliefs, values and behaviours as well as other organisational aspects such as structure and physical environment.

The transformation programme means that organisation E is different in several ways: sense of purpose, quality of communication, having fun, giving equal chances to all employees regardless of their level in the organisational hierarchy and finally, focusing on personal and career development and this is what other government organisations need to follow.
- Organisation E created a value-driven culture and lives by these values, while the other organisations have only written values of which most employees are unaware.

- Organisation E created an environment that encouraged fun, so having fun is part of their daily routine, while other sample organisations apply forced fun, where activities are on their to do list. Plester and Winquist (2015) encourage organic fun that comes within the job and through productive ways, rather than in a forced manner. They clarify that forced activities negatively affect employees and are collectively ridiculed.

- The flexible hierarchy in organisation E as well as the physical environment encourages the employees to communicate easily and in a friendly way to help transfer and manage company knowledge. While the other organisations suffer from poor communication and arrange meetings that might not involve employees from all levels.

- Organisation E gives equal chances to all employees regardless of their level in the organisational hierarchy, while other organisations categorise people according to their structure. According to their organisational structure only the top management and department managers are allowed to be involved in making decisions. In addition, they have empowerment, autonomy and their career path is clear.

  Categorising people means only some are involved in organisational culture. This becomes clear when employees at the functional level do not understand the real role that their organisation plays and the values they are expected to adopt.

  In sum, government organisations can benefit from organisation E and other experiences in a way that serves their strategic plan and in turn, raise happiness. They can imitate yet be independent, rather than copy others’ experiences without connecting them to a larger purpose. They need to know that whatever they do, small or large, should
relate and stem from their strategic objectives, their values and beliefs to strengthen the culture and guarantee sustainability.

6.2. Summary of Findings as Mapped Against the Research Objectives

The main aim of the study was to evaluate HRM job satisfaction strategies that may increase employee happiness to build a strategy that can ensure continued high rates of happiness at work.

The research focuses on happiness at workplace in the UAE government organisations because of the shortage of literature available concerning happiness at work in the region well as a shortage of literature available concerning happiness at work in public organisations. The table 6.2 below represents the research objectives in relation to literature gaps and how this research attempts to cover them.

**Table 6-2: Research Objectives attainment in relation to Research Gaps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaps</th>
<th>Research objectives</th>
<th>Summary of each finding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The need to translate successful experiences in raising employee happiness in private organisations to government organisations.</td>
<td>- To evaluate HRM job satisfaction strategies that could increase employee happiness in government organisations.</td>
<td>- The findings show that HR rules have occupied the top issue; it has been repeated as responsible for most of the gaps accrued in the sample government organisations. This affirms the importance of HRM job satisfaction strategies in employee happiness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The need to summarise and gather unwritten information about culture that is responsible for happiness at the successful organisations.</td>
<td></td>
<td>- At the same time, the findings show that the current HRM job satisfaction strategies in organisation A, B, C and D did not connect to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
organisational strategies as well as happiness plans.

- HR job satisfaction strategies influence employee happiness according to the leadership style. The leader is responsible of creating a sustainable strategy that helps to increase the level of happiness.

- The action plans designed by HRM after measuring employee job satisfaction focuses only on short-term influence rather than connecting the plans with HR job satisfaction strategy.

- To indicate the relationship between happiness at work and religion in the UAE.

- To examine the role of religion in happiness at work in the UAE.

- All sample organisations follow UAE labour law, which shares a lot of the world’s work ethics as well as Islamic ethics.

- All the sample organisations facilitate the practices of religion rituals.

- Religion does not appear to be a key factor that affects satisfaction in organisation A, B, C and D. It is within employees’ rights, it is taken for granted and is not considered something that affects their satisfaction. This might be contrary to feedback.
with others who do not have the freedom to express their beliefs in the workplace and cannot practice their religious rituals.

- Religion in organisation E seems to have a reflection on their happiness not because of religion by itself, but because of the freedom given within the diverse environment which makes each person’s perspective valuable.

- Diversity is an advantage especially when the employees are not forced in any direction according to company values.

- People in organisation E are open to diversity leading to company-wide gratitude. Thus, this makes practicing their religion at work an added value that influences their happiness.

In this case, diversity is a chance to re-evaluate what they have depending on who they are. In other words, not everyone might benefit from diversity, but organisation E does because of the positive attitudes of the top management and the employees.
Thus, diversity is taken seriously leading to more happiness and makes the religion appear to be important.

- Address the need to explore how to ensure continued high rates of happiness at work.
- To build a strategy that can ensure continued high rates of happiness at work.
- A conceptual framework is suggested step in strengthening organisational culture, reaching a paradigm of happiness, thus enabling the organisation to ensure continuous high rates of happiness.

Source: compiled by the author

6.2.1. Research Objective I: To evaluate HRM job satisfaction strategies that could increase employee happiness in government organisations.

6.2.1.1. The current HRM is not an independent management

According to the results HRM in the sample organisations is not an independent management and their activities are either a reflection of the leadership style and policy in the organisation (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007) or other external factors such as government rules and obligations. Thus, even if issues seem to be under HRM control, their freedom is limited to what they have been asked to do. They do not have freedom to choose what is suitable for the organisational culture, yet they are blamed for low job satisfaction.

The leadership style in the sample organisations A, B, C, and D is the reason beyond the used amount of HR practices. The leadership style in these organisations follows a ‘correction style’ (Howell and Avolio, 1993; Vandenabeele et al., 2014) which depends on criticising and correcting what others do, placing employees in a template;
unlike organisation E’s leadership ‘stimulating style’, which affects HR practices positively (Vandenabeele, et al., 2014).

A Question may arise here, will HRM be able to strengthen organisational culture and raise employees’ happiness if they are fully empowered? It is hard to be certain if HRM or a leader can change the current situation, unless they know ‘why’ they want to begin a change, ‘what’ it takes and ‘where’ they want to reach.

Giving empowerment to a person or a department in general does not mean that things will be better, because you may give power to someone who is not qualified. Then rather than investing the authority they got, they might ruin everything. Although the result is not certain, the literature supports the empowerment of HRM to raise employee satisfaction (Howell and Avolio, 1993; Guest, 1999). Guest (1999, p. 180) argues that “the more HR practices are used, the impact on workers will be larger”. Thus, to be able to change the current situation and raise happiness in the sample organisations, readiness and understanding of the necessity of change is crucial.

This research highlights that giving empowerment to HRM is as important as giving empowerment to other departments to make them involved in decision making. HRM have critical responsibilities, yet building a trust culture where everyone is able to participate and where people are empowered which is associated with employee wellbeing (Jafari and Iranzadeh, 2013; Sun et al., 2012).

The type of organisational culture depends on the type of the leadership style (Guest, 1987; Zhu et al., 2005). Thus, the types of HRM, whether it is hard or soft management, depend on the leadership style and whether it is a ‘correcting’ style or ‘stimulating’ style (Guest, 1987).
6.2.1.2. The Current HR Rule is a Key Issue that Negatively Affects Happiness

The literature review found that HRM is an important department that is responsible for employees’ satisfaction (Guest, 2002; Steijn, 2004) at the same time, the findings show that HR rules and practices are a key issue affecting happiness in the UAE. Hence, this research explored top management as well as HR managers; it appears that both managements have a low awareness of how to connect HR plans to the happiness plans. Although HR department seems to have power over issues related to vital processes and an employee’s daily routine, they did not take advantage of their position in the sample organisation due to the current leadership style.

The findings indicated that performance appraisal is the second reason after communication of why employees in the sample organisation are not happy. The current performance evaluation system in the sample organisation is under HRM control. This makes this department responsible for employee dissatisfaction associated with performance evaluation. Since the current system is based on inequality in the limited numbers set by the system and unfair criteria which focus on the quantitative rather than the qualitative, this means HRM is blamed for the low level of job satisfaction. It also means that this department’s processes appear to be in contradiction with organisational values and happiness plans. Previous studies have shown that performance assessment is associated with employee’s higher or lower levels of job satisfaction (Green and Heywood, 2008; Prendergast and Topel, 1996).

In addition, the performance appraisal in the sample organisations is related to promotions that include a limited number of employees, and it has been proven in the literature that the comparisons that are related to salaries, affect employees’ satisfaction negatively (Brown et al., 2008; Card et al., 2012).
6.2.1.3. HRM in the Sample Organisations: Contradictions Between Stated and Practiced Values

The second issue related to HRM job satisfaction strategy is that they do not live up the values they represent, such as integrity and transparency. It also shows that the values do not translate to behaviours and that they stand for one thing, and do the opposite. While, to raise happiness, espoused/artefacts values should transfer to practiced values (Schein, 1992). This is because the culture will not build on what the organisation proclaims, but what it says and does to make the employees happier (Schein, 1992).

**Figure 6.2: Three Levels of Culture**

In sum, values must translate to behaviours, and both values and behaviours must be reflected in organisational processes (Barrett, 2010). Moreover, the behaviour that does not reflect values will lead to a decrease in happiness and in some cases to organisational collapse (Barclay’s Response to the Salz Review, 2013) (Chapter two). Since HRM is responsible for employees’ issues, it is necessary for this department to stand for the values and turn them into practice.
6.2.1.4. The Action Plans Focus on the Short Term Only

The third issue that comes under HRM responsibilities is the designed action plans. The current action plans in the sample organisations come up with short term recommendations rather than connecting them to a wider view; vision and strategy.

Another weakness is that it does not come up with solutions for a lot of complaints that the employees display, such as low salaries. Asking about an issue that the HRM cannot change is similar to the case of contradicting values. Both points participate in upsetting the employees and decreasing the level of happiness across the organisation.

In considering both short term and long term action planning, it is relevant to highlight that, even though the respondents were not asked to provide definitions of happiness, they provided indications of their view of the types of factors which, in their eyes influence happiness. These factors are likely to be of interest to HRM staff who are formulating action plans in this area. For example, employees, including HRM staff, who were interviewed about happiness, raised issues relating to having a comfortable work environment, a spirit of teamwork, communication at different levels of the organisation, and the desirability of informal and friendly relationships at work. The findings of the research indicate that these types of factors are perceived by employees to influence their happiness at work and hence should be considered by leaders who are interested in creating and fostering happiness at work.

6.2.2. Research Objective II: To examine the role of religion in happiness at work in the UAE.
6.2.2.1. **All the sample organisations follow UAE labour law, which shares a lot of the world’s work ethics as well as Islamic ethics.**

The data analysis gave an idea of labour law that is used in the sample organisations and how this law gets along with Islamic ethics. It appears that the UAE government organisations ensure employees’ rights since these laws are global. On the other hand, the UAE is different in other global laws such as Article 32: “A female wage shall be equal to that of a male if she performs the same work” (UAE Labour Law) than for example the USA labour law.

Islamic ethics harmonise with a lot of global laws such as the UK labour laws. These ethics ensure the rights of employees and suppose to influence employees job satisfaction. Although several studies have shown how Islamic ethics influence happiness (Rahman and Othman 2006; Rokhman, 2010; Yousef, 2001; Zaman *et al.*, 2013), this was, however, not clear in the collected data. In addition, the practices of Islamic rituals have been facilitated for all employees, both males and females, in the five sample organisations. Moreover, the freedom of practicing other religions and beliefs in addition to Islam appears clearly in organisation E since it includes different nationalities from different countries around the world.

6.2.2.2. **It is not clear how Religion Affects Employee’s Happiness at Work**

Based on the results, the role of religion may appear to raise employees’ happiness towards life in general, but it is not clear how religion affects happiness at work. Although, most employees highlighted how important it is to them to practice religious rituals at work, yet their feelings towards work is still low. This means that there
are other essential factors that have a greater correlation and impact on happiness at work and that practicing religion rituals are taken for granted.

One possible reason as to why employees take religion for granted is that they do not experience the opposite. In other words, they do not experience how it is to be in an environment that shows racism or discrimination against a religion or a nationality. The employees in the sample organisations do not compare what they have with others who do not have freedom to express their beliefs in the workplace and cannot practice their religious rituals, thus they take their rights for granted.

Moreover, as mentioned in chapter two (2.4.1), cultural beliefs and factors affect how managers operate their organisations (Gergen and Gergen, 1983; Ali and Azim 1996), thus they can cause a weakness in the communication and the culture. In this case, managers do not reflect Islamic Ethics (Rees and Althakhri, 2008). Thus the relation between religion and happiness needs more investigation in regards of whether managers reflect Islamic Ethics on their behaviours and how this affects happiness.

Raising happiness in the sample organisations does not appear to be associated with religion, but other factors such as organisational culture and leadership style. Thus, to create a better attitude towards work and raise happiness, the sample organisations need to concentrate on changing internal factors.

6.2.2.3. Diversity Creates a Chance to Re-evaluate

The role of religion in organisations A, B, C and D was not clear on employee happiness at work, in contrast to organisation E where religion appears to be important and is reflected in happiness. This is might not be because of the religion itself, but because of the freedom that is given within the diverse environment which makes each
perspective, such as religion, valued by itself. Diversity might be considered an advantage, especially when employees are not forced as clarified in the figure 6.3 below:

**Figure 6.3: What makes diversity useful**

![Figure 6.3](image)

Source: compiled by the author

The above figure 6.3 shows the main three elements that help an organisation benefit from diversity. These elements are: freedom, equity and positivity. These elements lead to a positive re-evaluation or reaction, meaning that the employee will benefit from diversity by learning new things, appreciate what they have and develop or enhance their life and career skills.

People in organisation E are open to diversity and this openness makes them grateful to what they have, thus makes practicing their religion at work an added value that influences their happiness levels. In this case diversity is a chance to re-evaluate what people have depending on who they are. In other words, not all organisations will benefit from diversity (Cox, 1994), but organisation E does because of the afforded freedom, equity and positivity of both top management and the employees. Thus,
diversity makes religion appear to be an important aspect through gratitude and that organisations might not be able to reap the fruits of diversity if one of the above elements is missing. This supports arguments by Craig and Clark (2010), which illustrates that the level of diversity is growing in world populations, and the unfair discrimination in an organisation leads to low job satisfaction and creates an unattractive work environment. Thus, to benefit from diversity, organisations need to create strategies that encourage equity while decreasing discrimination.

This research does not encourage or prefer diversity and multi-nationality in the workplace over Emiratisation, but rather aims to shed light on a new dimension that make one organisational culture stronger than another.

In addition, the literature review demonstrates social comparison as one of the main reasons that upset people leading them to be concerned about money, materials and the salaries of peers across society (Card et al., 2012, Easterlin, 1996; Firebaugh and Schroeder, 2009). Organisation E focuses on strengthening their culture and this has a strong influence on changing each employee’s vision of life and encourages them to improve their attitude, which is intended to encourage people to reduce their impulse to compare themselves to others in terms of materiality; they will be more grateful, thankful and compare themselves with people who are less fortunate. This kind of comparison will positively lead to a feeling of gratitude where you learn to appreciate what you have and become more confident (Le, 2013).
6.3. Conceptual Framework

In the light of findings, the researcher returned to the research framework presented in chapter two and revised it to integrate the knowledge acquired through the interviews and the questionnaires undertaken in the UAE. Thus, the researcher proposes a revised framework that attempt to sum up the important aspects and elements as mentioned in this research relating to happiness at work in figure 6.4 below:

**Figure 6.4: Happiness at work framework**

First, the figure 6.4 is on the shape of an air balloon and includes three main parts that are mutually dependent. The first part is the basket which represents job satisfaction.
The second part is the organisation and the third is the cooperative culture. While ‘flying high’ represents how happy the organisation is; in other words, the space between the flying balloon and the earth is the degree of happiness for each organisation. The figure aims to provide a model to demonstrate happiness at work and the difference between happiness and job satisfaction. It also aims to clarify the role of positivity as the flame denotes the energy to develop the company and flourish.

In drawing comparisons between the framework presented in chapter 2 and the revised framework, it can be seen that the revised framework presents a more dynamic interpretation of the relationships between the factors of the framework. For example, the work environment, the system, the employees and the outside community are viewed as providing an inter-related influence on happiness in the workplace. Further, the strength of these factors varies according to the culture of the organisation especially leadership behaviour and attitude.

6.3.1. Part 1
Organisations seek to raise an employee’s job satisfaction and the basket of the air balloon may fly high. This research summarises the relationship between job satisfaction and happiness in three main cases, as follows:

Case 1: (High level of happiness→ High level of job satisfaction) the level of happiness that an organisation reaches, helps employees to appreciate what they have and feel satisfied with different aspects of their job even if they do not use to like it before. This leads to a deduction that those who indicate a high-level of happiness at work usually indicate a high-level of job satisfaction.

For example, employees in organisation E expressed their upset about the low salaries years ago, but their attitudes changed because of the transformation changes that
the organisation went through when they decided to focus on organisational culture and employee happiness. Thus, being in a place with a strong organisational culture and being part of this culture provides an opportunity to reorder priorities and be grateful. Diener et al., (1999, p. 295) state that “happy person is blessed with a positive temperament, tends to look on the bright side of things and does not ruminate excessively about bad events”. This illustrates the link between happiness and satisfaction, and that high level of happiness leads to a high level of job satisfaction.

Case 2: (High job satisfaction → High level of happiness)

When an organisation achieves a high level of job satisfaction, it can be deduced that people in the organisation are happy, even happiness per se is not measured (except if the numbers do not reflect the reality and employees have been forced to answer the job satisfaction survey in a certain way). Happy employees express a high level of job satisfaction, thus those who indicate high levels of satisfaction are happy; hence, the two aspects positively interact. This supports Calaguas (2017, p. 110) that ‘job satisfaction significantly predicting subjective well-being’. Although, current job satisfaction asks about things that they cannot change, such as salary and workings hours, the employees who work in an attractive and comfortable organisation and who see how the organisation invests in their development will find many reasons to be happy.

Case 3: (Individual high level of satisfaction = individual high level of happiness at wok)

When individuals express high levels of job satisfaction, this reflects a high level of happiness on an individual level, as opposed to the whole organisation. Therefore, it does not give a generalised description of feelings and attitude towards work. Thus the
high level of job satisfaction that these individuals show might be due to personal reasons related to their life, such as: having a good friendship at work, the workplace is near their home, or possibly due to reasons related to their job, such as: autonomy and empowerment, a great department and effective manager. Wilensky (1960) emphasises that happiness can be a result of integration between different dimensions, such as family life, leisure life, community life, and work life, and that work life cannot be separate. So, to be able to raise happiness at work, the organisation needs to focus on the whole organisation and not simply on some individuals. In case one and two the balloon can fly high, while in case three the happiness of individuals does not represent the happiness of the whole organisation and that means that the basket of the air balloon is still grounded, unable to fly (unless the top management focus on these individuals now and aim to be part of the supporting team that leads the change with the top management later and that the top management will move to expand the focus on a greater number of the employees). This leads to the next part of the framework: the ropes.

6.3.2. Part 2
The ropes in figure 6.4 represent the main four aspects that need to be changed in the journey of change. These aspects are: people, environment, system and society (Chapter two).

**People:** Organisations need to focus on the inside community, which means that the people inside the organisation become one big family who care for and encourage each other. This requires robust social support and no barriers between employees from different levels of the hierarchy. It also requires quality communication which comes
automatically and smoothly within everyday routines, and not only by arranged events that occur every few months as some of managers state (Plester and Winquist, 2015).

This category includes two dimensions: the people that are already in post, and new employees. The organisation needs to focus on recruiting people who fit into the organisational culture, can participate in strengthening the culture and that the organisational values do not lay in conflict with their beliefs or attitudes (Chapter two, 2.9.2.9) Zappos Company hires employees who fit with their value system. This, according to Denison, (1984) helps in the success and sustainability of the culture. Moreover, it is important to help current employees to change their attitude to fit to the new organisational culture.

**Environment:** One of the main four factors that are supposed to change in the transformation program to strengthen the culture and raise the happiness level is the organisational physical environment. Some might think that changing the physical environment is not a big matter and has no influence on the employee, that’s why they design the physical workspaces according to its functional effectiveness, without taking a consideration to the influence of the physical environment on the employees’ satisfaction (McCoy and Evans, 2002).

Changing the physical environment proven to be a crucial factor in changing the current organisational culture (McCoy and Evans, 2002; Calaguas, 2017), not only that but it reflects the organisational values and signals how the leaders care about employees’ wellbeing (Miller *et al.*, 2014). Changing the workspace and reshape the organisation design according to the employees’ needs help in shifting the culture, motivate the employees and make them more engagement, creative and productive (Miller *et al.*, 2014).
It might also help in facilitating the implementation of the new rules and new programmes. If the leaders believe in the importance of making the employees happy and strengthening the cooperative culture, they are supposed to focus on changing the environment to fit with their values by making it healthier, pleasant, full of fun, and well decorated. It is also important to mention that the entire employee’s group should also participate in the concept of the new physical environment and be part of the change.

You can recognise the difference between the organisations that concentrate on the positive physical environment and the other that still under the old style of the work environment from the first moment you visit.

**System:** the organisation needs to connect its system to happiness plans, which means that the system should not contradict organisational values. In the sample organisations, they follow the government instructions and sometimes these instructions and obligations contradict their values and can upset the employees. In this case, and in addition to following government instructions, the organisation can create their own system to show understanding and compassion to current staff as what happen in organisation E.

**Society:** the organisation needs to open their doors to the outside community and feel responsible in making it better. This will benefit both the outsider community as well as the insider community of the organisation. It has been proven that ‘giving’ participate in making people happy (Alden and Trew, 2013). Organisation E is a good example, since they offer volunteering tasks as training programmes, because in their view, employees will gain a lot from volunteering and interacting, as opposed to restricting them to corporate training only.
Hsieh (2012) states that having a higher purpose. Something bigger than us may make us happy. Making the job beneficial to the society will give the employees a sense of propose, make their job worthwhile and make them feel proud of themselves and their organisation. This is why most of the happiest organisations around the world connect what they are doing with a higher goal, which includes a human touch. They focus on how they can be useful to society, which in turn helps the internal mechanism positively.

Part two of the balloon also includes the pilot, who is an important aspect in the flying process; it might be possible to fly without them, but the direction would be unclear. Hence, an organisation will not be able to go forward without an inspiring leader who can lead the change and passionate the whole organisation to adopt the same values and creates the difference (Heifetz and Laurie, 2001).

The flame in figure 6.4 represents positivity; it fills the envelop and this help the balloon to fly high, the positivity is like the blood or the breath that return back the life to the organisation and each time the organisation facing a problem, they can surpass this problem by the positivity, thus be able to fly again.

Moreover, to be able to fly high the balloon needs to get rid of the propane tanks. The tanks represent negativity; you may be able to fly even if the tanks are there, but not higher than a particular level, and not for very long.

Negativity acts as a contagious disease or a virus that could spread, infecting all in its path (Topchik, 2000) (Chapter 4). Organisations might not be able to go forwards if the negativity outweighs positivity, and this is why it is important to get rid of the negativity by adopting new positive attitudes (Calaguas, 2017; Joshua-Amadi, 2011, Mueller and Hausmann, 2009). Otherwise, organisations might need to get rid of the
causes of negativity that are under their control, such as some applications or certain people. However, does firing people contradict with the attempts to make employees happy? And the answer is yes unless the organisation gets rid of negative people in a way that does not conflict with their values, like what happened in organisation E. (Chapter Two). (2.9.2.4. People)

6.3.3. Part 3
The third part of the figure is the balloon itself, which represents organisational culture. Organisational culture needs to be strong to make employees happy and to change the current culture - the organisation needs to focus on their vision, values (Cummings and Worley, 2009; Cameron and Quinn, 2011) and the integration between values and behaviours (Chapter 2). This step might require starting from the beginning even if that means setting a new group of values and giving a chance for all staff to participate in this transformation programme. The ropes that represent ‘people, system, environment and society’ will be strong and tight if the organisation concentrates on part three: ‘organisational culture’. The more culture can be feed and strengthened, the more can be achieved.

All happy organisations have the same aspects and the same criteria, and what makes one organisation happier than another, is culture and experience that comes with time and practice (see Chapter two for details on how organisational values that become everyone’s values are reflected in daily behaviour that can strengthen the overall culture). The question that might arise following the above point is: why do some organisations achieve the same successes as the old organisation, but in a short time and with less experience? And does this mean that experience has little to do with achievement? The
answer is that although experience is important in putting an organisation into a stage of solidification, yet there are other factors in addition to experience such as investing in knowledge and research and shortening the time of harvest at the organisational level. Moreover, benefiting and learning from successful existing practice saves time, effort and avoids a lot of expense associated with change. One successful example is Masdar, a company owned by Abu Dhabi government and is considered a leader and a major international player in renewable energy and sustainable urban development. This company was established in 2006 and in a short time gained more than 15 prestigious awards in the industry for its unique buildings, projects and areas of innovation (www.masdar.ae).

Part three of the figure not only includes the balloon, but the space around it - the external environment includes opportunities and challenges that face the organisation. An organisation that has not ‘flown’ has not seen same opportunities that their competitor may have seen – given their progress, and height. Challenges that face a happy organisation might turn into opportunities, while the challenges that face the dissatisfied organisation might become a crisis. The financial crisis in 2008 was a reason for a lot of organisational collapse, but successful organisations, such as organisation E, was able to turn this challenge into an opportunity and progress, and one way was by minimising formal training workshops and redirecting staff towards volunteering missions, which was a decision that inadvertently benefitted the company and the staff.

Finally, and the most important aspect of the framework is ‘happiness’ which represents the space between the flying balloon and the earth. Happiness will come because of collective efforts that the organisation has given to change. These efforts will
raise employee’s satisfaction and thus raise the happiness automatically, creating a paradigm that the organisation will thrive within. So rather than pursing happiness, happiness will come from preparing the balloon to fly, in other words, it will come as a result of focusing on strengthening all the necessary aspects of the organisation mentioned in the framework. To help the sustainability of happiness, the organisation will always need to concentrate on the positivity flame and keep this flame alive as it will form long term motivation and company success.

Foresight is a competitive advantages that allow the organisation precede others and think about things in a new way that others did not think about is foresight (Burt, et al., 2006). In this model, the space between one balloon and another, either upper or lower, reflects the ability of an organisation to take the lead and the foresight. Foresight represents how an organisation is prepared to receive any future surprises (Tsoukas and Sheppard, 2004, p. 140), as clarified in the figure 6.5 below:
There are a lot of factors that help organisations in terms of foresight, such as investing on research and expanding their zone of knowledge.

### 6.4. Implication for action

Based on the results of this research, there are many practicable implications in both practice and research. Organisations with close and comparable experiences to the sample organisations can benefit from the findings and turn them to actions.

#### 6.4.1. Practice-driven implications
At the organisational level, top management may benefit from the model in figure 6.4: Happiness at work framework which demonstrates the meaning of happiness at work, the role of positivity and the importance of organisational culture in raising employee happiness. This model gathers the results in one figure that can be followed by an organisation to change their perspective about organisational culture and happiness.

This research also provides strong evidence of the importance of leadership style, organisational structure and organisational culture as the main factors that directly correlate with an employee’s feelings towards work in the UAE. Recognising the importance of these three factors and reflecting them on the organisation will positively influence satisfaction and build a strong, positive and happy workplace. Moreover, organisations can benefit from the best practices of the happiest organisations, particularly on these three areas, and this will automatically influence the sub-factors mentioned in the literature and influence satisfaction levels, such as communication, social support and appreciation, thus raise employee happiness.

The research discusses the correlation between job satisfaction and employee happiness, and shows how these two concepts positively interact and that those who signal a high level of happiness at work usually indicate a high level of job satisfaction and those who indicate a high level of job satisfaction are happy at work even if the organisation do not frankly measure happiness or set out happiness plans. This is clarified in the framework of the balloon which shows how these two concepts affect each other directly and automatically.

In addition, this research displays how personal attitudes affect an employee’s feelings towards work. Although the relation between high attitude towards life in general and
happiness at work was not clear, the correlation between negative attitude about life in general and low feelings towards work was clearer. Organisations need to understand the power of attitude on employees’ feelings towards work and the benefit of positivity on employees’ performance and lifestyle. Focusing on attitude means that organisations need to invest on developing employee personal attitudes towards life and towards work through methods such as private and team coaching as well as recruiting employees with a positive attitude who can enhance and strengthen the culture. This might seem like a difficult task, but a lot of organisations, such as organisation E success in their recruiting process through their creative way of interviewing people, training and hiring, saw positive results.

This research found many gaps that make the adopted efforts and initiatives in the government organisations fail to raise happiness for the long term (Chapter 5 table5.11). One of the main gaps is that happiness plans are not connected with the strategic plans. Organisations need to look at the whole picture rather than focusing on small pieces of the puzzle separately. In other words, they need to focus on the systemic viewpoint and link all internal systems and actions with the entire vision, strategy, values and behaviours. Moreover, organisations need to correlate HRM practices, rules and systems with strategic planning that focuses on employee happiness as the greatest purpose of the organisation.

Another gap is that government organisations in the UAE allow systems that conflict with values and causes a limitation over their goals of raising job satisfaction; for example, the performance appraisal system imposed by the higher government authorities. The top management expressed that they are not responsible for designing and setting
this system and that they are following government regulations. Although the organisations showed positive responsiveness to these instructions, they can do more than simply follow. Organisations can design their own internal systems that reflect their concerns about organisational culture and their desire to raise happiness.

6.4.2. Research driven implications

Although the UAE government is paying great attention to employee happiness and encourages the government organisations to create happiness plans and process implementation, there is a shortage of happiness studies in both life level and job level across the UAE. This makes this research crucial since it studies happiness at work in the government organisations across multi-component levels (top management, HR managements and employees from functional level).

This research is an attempt to collect unwritten experiences and translate them into a conceptual framework. This makes it easy for the organisation to understand the bigger picture, begin their transformation programme, and thus work towards raising happiness.

This research is considered an important addition to the body of literature since the vast majority of literature relate to private sector companies and western experiences.

This research contributes to field knowledge by showing that the role of religion in raising happiness in general is clearer than its role in raising happiness at work and that employees from the sample group who emphasised how important to practice religious rituals at work are, still indicate low feelings towards work. Thus, other factors such as organisational culture, leadership style and organisational structure have a greater influence on happiness at work.
The conceptual framework may add to the body of literature since this model shows the connection between job satisfaction and happiness from a new perspective.

This study emphasises the role of the leader in leading change, creating the difference, and even if the HRM are shown to be an effective department responsible for employees’ issues, they remain followers of the leader’s attitude and consciousness.

Another important aspect that this research sheds light on is through figure 6.3 ‘What makes diversity useful’. This model is effective in providing a summary on how diversity participates in increasing happiness at work. Diverse environments characterise freedom, equity and positivity will incite employees’ positive reactions such as learning new things, appreciating what they have and developing or enhancing their life and career skills, thus collectively participating in raising happiness.

In relation to existing theory; one of the implications of the research is that it offers insights into the application of Schein’s (1998) work to a public sector context in the Middle East, that is the UAE. The study offers support to the applicability of Schein’s work on values and behaviour to this context even though the Arab and Muslim features of this context are far removed from the initial Western-orientation of his work. Nevertheless, the research also highlights a number of ways in which his work can be adapted to suit this context more fully. For example, the hierarchical nature of the UAE leads the author to conclude that, when using Schein’s work in this context, heavy emphasis should be placed on levels of values and behaviours of employees, employers and the organisation.
6.5. Limitations and Future Research Directions

The rapid mobility across the UAE and the fast changes that have occurred during the last two years regarding happiness, have led to a challenge, meaning the researcher needed to update the information many times during the writing process. When the researcher began this study the term happiness had not yet been officially announced in any government organisations in the UAE. Just one and a half years later, the UAE federal council launched programmes of happiness under the chairmanship of the Minister of Happiness, Ohood Al Roumi. Although this was one of the challenges that the researcher faced, it provided a good indicator that the study is in parallel with the UAE government policies and attitudes.

Regarding the limitations of the study, this is a single research project, hence the researcher cannot cover all the gaps addressed in the literature review within the available time. In addition, in a socially constructed study, the time of both the researcher and the sample group is a concern.

Although, the quantitative analysis provides the research with the necessary data, there are still some challenges and limitations. One of the limitations of analysing quantitative data is the disparity in the sizes of groups, which makes it difficult to present the evidence in a balanced manner.

6.6. Recommendations for further research

In regard to an employee’s wellbeing, there are a lot of issues that need to be studied; such as, social comparison and how this relates to people’s cultural backgrounds, thus impacts happiness levels. For example, high-context (HC) culture needs are different to low-context (LC) needs.
In addition, another issue that needs investigation is income inequality across the UAE. Income inequality is considered one of the reasons why Americans have not become happier over the last 40 years (Oishi et al., 2011). Does this apply to the UAE community, where there is a difference in salaries and privileges from one city to another, and if so, to what extent might this affect an employee’s happiness? To examine whether this phenomenon applies to the UAE, studies that conduct comparison tests while collecting employees’ views are required. In addition, there is a need for further study regarding the demographics and to expand upon statistically significant variables such as marital status and gender. What makes married participants indicate stronger feelings towards work than unmarried employees? And why do males, according to the statistical results, show stronger feelings towards work than females.

Moreover, an issue that requires attention is top management behaviours in government organisations and how much they reflect Islamic behaviours and the effect on employee happiness.

Another issue that needs further study is the Emirates who work in the private sector in the UAE; would they indicate similar results to Emirates who work in government organisations? In addition, it is also important to focus on the non-Emirates working in the UAE. How are their feelings towards work and working abroad effect their feelings, are they effected positively or negatively, and do they suffer from income inequality?

Research on the GCC countries is required to see if the countries in the same region share attitudes and feelings towards work.
Moreover, there is a need to investigate the relation between the UAE government and rulers’ attitudes with organisational attitudes. Although the government expresses its readiness and ability to cope with changes and look ahead, this seems slower in the level of government organisation leaders. Is this because of the repeated changes in the rules and policies of the government organisations, or because of the mindset of the top management or because they are not prepared to follow such changes. All of these aspects need to be studied in future research.

6.7. Final Comment
At the outset of the thesis, it was stated that the main aim of the dissertation was to investigate how HRM functions in public sector organisations in the UAE contribute to maximising the happiness of employees with reference to organisational effectiveness. The main conclusion drawn in relation to this main aim is that, in this context, HRM strategy tends not to be directly connected to organisational strategic plans which are intended to promote happiness in the workplace. The research found that the three main factors which influence happiness at work are organisational structure, organisational culture and leadership style. In highlighting these factors, one of the main contributions of the research is to provide direction to HRM professionals with responsibilities for happiness at work. Interestingly, the role of religion in happiness at work was not clearly established; the research highlighted that the respondents were constantly aware of religion in the workplace but appeared to place greater emphasis on external factors when asked about what makes them happy at work.

The research displayed the results of happiness implementation strategies and practices in the UAE public organisations and the role of both top management as well as HRM in
raising happiness. By answering the research questions, the research finds gaps in current practice and systems, thus suggests solutions and a conceptual framework to help organisations fill these gaps and begin their transformation programme to strengthen organisational culture and increase happiness.

The results confirmed the positive attitude of the UAE policies in investing in Emirates’ well-being and prepare all the circumstances to make them happy. This appeared clearly in the statistical results, which indicated a high-level of positive attitudes and feelings towards life in general.

Moreover, the results help to explore the current strategies and their potential in contributing to employee happiness since there is a lack of research about happiness at work in relation to HRM functions in the UAE. Studying the current strategies helps us to determine what went wrong with the organisations’ internal systems and why the efforts did not achieve long-term success and overall happiness.

Finally, this research provides organisations with information that can be used as a basis for understanding what is going on and how to strengthen their culture in order to raise happiness.

As a result of gaining a broader understanding, these results need to be taken into practical stage, which means to transfer the conceptual model into a business model applied in government organisations. This may mean organisations are requested to change their practices, policies and adopt new attitudes to achieve a greater goal, namely, ‘happiness at work’.
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Kriger, M. & Hanson, B. (1999) A value-based paradigm for creating truly healthy


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Scott-Jackson, W. (2014) Gulf Leadership Style is Example for Leaders Worldwide, Based on studies in GCC countries, the Gulf Leadership Style is an example for leaders worldwide, Professor tells International Management Conference in Oxford.


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The purpose of this Questionnaire is to identify happiness at work issue and to know more about the factors that participate in making the employees happy. This study is in partial fulfillment of PhD study at University of Manchester. Please tick (√) your responses below and all information provided by you will be highly confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Thank you for cooperation.

Researcher,
Asma Ahmed Alnuaimi

Personal Information
- Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
- Age: ☐ 23 - 31 ☐ 32-40 ☐ 41-49 ☐ 50 and above
- Education: ☐ High School ☐ Bachelors ☐ Masters ☐ PHD ☐ Other
- Marital Status: ☐ Bachelor ☐ Married ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced
- Overall years of experience: ☐ 1-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16 and above
- Number of years spent at current organization:
1. **Employees’ attitude towards life in general**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel happy in my life in general.</td>
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<td>2. I feel happy compared with most other people I know in my life.</td>
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<td>3. In general I am very positive about myself.</td>
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<td>4. I enjoy my life in general regardless of all the hard circumstances I encounter.</td>
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<td>5. It is important to me to have a high salary compared to the people around me.</td>
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<td>6. My life is as good as I wish.</td>
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<td>The Questions</td>
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<td>7. My organisation is well managed</td>
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<td>8. My work facilities a balance between my time at work and my personal life</td>
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<td>9. There is a harmony in my relationship with my manager</td>
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<td>10. My values are similar to the values of the leaders of this organisation</td>
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<td>11. My organisation offers equal opportunities for all employees</td>
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<td>12. I feel secure at work</td>
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<td>13. The work physical environment is pleasant</td>
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<td>14. The job I do is useful to the society in general</td>
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<td>15. I always receive constructive feedback on my performance</td>
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<td>16. I feel trusted by my manager</td>
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### 3. Functioning at Work

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<th>The Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<td>17. I have control over the important sides of my job</td>
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<td>18. I can be myself at work</td>
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<td>19. I am regularly able to do what I do best</td>
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<td>20. The time within my normal working hours is enough to get my job done</td>
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<td>21. My work helps me to learn new skills</td>
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<td>22. I get the chance to be creative in my job</td>
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<td>23. My job offers good opportunities for professional development</td>
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<td>24. My relationship with my colleagues at work is good</td>
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<td>25. The team within my organisation works well together</td>
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<td>26. I can influence decisions that are important for the work</td>
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## 4. Feeling Towards Work

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<th>The Questions</th>
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<td>27. I like my current job</td>
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<td>28. I enjoy what I am doing</td>
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<td>29. My job affects my health positively</td>
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<td>30. My current job fit with my career plan</td>
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<td>31. My values and the values of the organisation are similar</td>
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<td>32. I feel motivated to do more in my job</td>
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<td>33. This job is worthwhile</td>
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<td>34. I feel full of energy at work</td>
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<td>35. My organisation is a good organisation to work for</td>
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<td>36. I would recommend my organisation to friends</td>
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<td>37. I am proud of my organisation</td>
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<td>38. I feel happy at work in general</td>
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Thank you for participating in this questionnaire. Any further comments are welcome below

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Asma Ahmed Alnuaimi
Appendix 2

**Happiness at Work Interview**

1. Can you tell me whether the organisation has a strategy to increase employees’ happiness? Why/why not?

   ………………………………………………………………………………………

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2. How does HRM show employees that they respect and appreciate their ideas, opinions and help them with their careers? Do you have examples?

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3. How do you help employees to manage work pressures? How is it affecting their health? What more do you do to maintain their health (i.e. a working hours policy)?

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4. How can we make it easier for employees to practice their religious rituals at work? Is there any example or initiative?

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5. How can you describe the relations between the managers and the employees in the organisation? What are the social activities that have been adopted by the organisation in general and HRD to help these relations?

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6. What degree of freedom is given to the employees (in relation to work hours, empowerment-autonomy)?

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7. What are the professional development opportunities in the organisation? (i.e. personal growth).

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8. How do you evaluate an employee’s performance? How do the employees react to such an assessment? (i.e. performance appraisal).

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9. How can the organisation build a positive culture that can attract the employees and increase their loyalty?

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10. Why do you think other organisations suffer from low job satisfaction?

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11. In general, how happy are your employees? How can you make them happier?

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Appendix 3

Happiness at Work Interview

1. Can you tell me whether the organisation has a strategy to increase employees’ happiness? Why/why not?

“From the establishment of this organisation the director general said: I have two priorities customers and people. Initially, we wanted to know why people were not engaged and how to solve the problem. The job satisfaction survey showed that the lowest areas of satisfaction are pay and working hours, which are set and out with our control, leading us to consider focusing on what we do have – and enhancing the situation. At this moment, a change began to occur drawing on global best practice and learning from others”.

2. How does HRM show employees that they respect and appreciate their ideas, opinions and help them with their careers? Do you have examples?

“How from about three years we cancelled the HRD, this is because if something is not working in the organisation the blame goes directly to the HRD; for example, if the number of employees in one department is not enough -this is an HRD problem; if the performance is poor, it is an HRD problem That is why we cancelled the department, because as they are not responsible for all the employees’ happiness”.

“In HR we eliminate the line manager; nobody needs to manage you, because you have the ability to have a full authority”.

“Regarding your question on how to appreciate employees’ ideas we designed a system based on personal review called Pearls. All the employees can log in to the system and give a pearl to another employee based on a good part of their character that they notice, such as creativity. The system is transparent, and everyone can see the Pearl that someone is giving to another employee and the employees can also see the reason behind the positive action. Pearls are translated into money, which is saved on to a special credit card for each employee. To control the system, each can give up to 6 Pearls and receive any number over a specific period”.

3. How do you help employees to manage work pressures? How is it affecting their health? What more do you do to maintain their health (i.e. a working hours policy)?

“We should to admit that the stress is always there and what we can do is handle the pressure and deal with it. We are focusing on managing stress through yoga, tai chi, cross fit and cooking sessions. Also, participating in charity campaigns occurs continuously because the organisation believes in the importance of physical activities, giving and practicing favourite hobbies in making the employees happy and minimise the negative impact of the stress upon them”.
4. How can we make it easier for employees to practice their religious rituals at work? Is there any example or initiative?

“We are a multinational organisation, we respect all religions and facilitate the practicing of religious rituals at work for everybody”.

5. How can you describe the relations between the managers and the employees in the organisation? What are the social activities that have been adopted by the organisation in general and HRD to help these relations?

“Since we have no offices, this gives us a chance to communicate, create friendly relations with all employees regardless of their level in the organisation and feel like we are a family who share our daily lives together. As I mentioned before, we have an environment that encourages practicing hobbies and sharing social activities. We always bring new ideas that can strengthen these relations; as I mentioned before, we have a chance to practice our hobbies”.

6. What degree of freedom is given to the employees (in relation to work hours, empowerment-autonomy)?

“We believe that no one needed to be directly managed; and we are doing whatever it takes to ensure employee happiness. Here, empowerment and autonomy are given to all the employees, because the hierarchy changes every three months and this gives a chance for every employee to try different roles inside the organisation and to be free and more active”.
7. What are the professional development opportunities in the organisation? (i.e. personal growth).

“We do not have specific hours of training to complete to know that a person has achieved the required training, indeed, we minimize the training sessions and largely depend on two training approaches. The idea of minimizing workshops began in the financial crisis when the organisation needed to save money, but we maintained the new programmes due to positive feedback”.

“We have two training approaches: the thrive training, workshops that only for new things that employees need to learn such as info graphics. The other approach is to learn new skills through attending conferences and external coaching. Attending conferences helps people to remain up-to-date while coaching helps in developing other skills like business communication, public speaking and presentation.

8. How do you evaluate an employee’s performance? How do the employees react to such an assessment? (i.e. performance appraisal).

“We are now looking for the best practices in evaluating employees, so we can apply it in our organisation, and we are now studding the Swedish performance appraisal. In Sweden, it is illegal to evaluate others, so they created a review meeting to evaluate employees.”
9. How can the organisation build a positive culture that can attract the employees and increase their loyalty?

“Organisational vision, values and elements of wellbeing helped greatly in creating a positive culture and a sense of purpose”.

10. Why do you think other organisations suffer from low job satisfaction?

“Some organisations focus on what they do not have, and they need to twist their vision rather than focusing on dissatisfaction and highlight the positive aspects to raise happiness”.

11. In general, how happy are your employees? How can you make them happier?

“We can say about ourselves that we are a happy organisation and our evidence is the numbers which speak for themselves. On the world happiness scale, we score 7.3 out of 10, and we are one of the top 15 happiest organisations around the world”.