ICT, Human Capital Development and
Emiratisation of the Labour Market in the United Arab Emirates

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DECLARATION

"I, Omar Al-Qubaisi, declare that the PhD thesis entitled ICT, Human Capital Development and Emiratisation of the Labour Market in the United Arab Emirates is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma except where otherwise indicated".

Signed:...............................

Date:......... 29·10·2011 ....

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Abstract

The UAE's labour market policy of Emiratisation is intended to replace expatriates with local workers by imposing restrictions on the employment of expatriate workers in the public sector and enforcing the private sector to employ nationals in certain types of jobs. This policy has been focused rather narrowly on administrative jobs in the finance and oil sector, and has not addressed the newly emerging ICT sector which is a cornerstone of the government's long-term economic growth strategy. Moreover, strategies such as the Emiratisation policy and investment in the ICT sector are not currently taking place within the context of a proper analysis of labour market needs and problems.

The main aim of this study is to make a significant contribution to the knowledge base from which a sustainable national human resource policy in the UAE can be developed, by exploring the current barriers to successful working environments, and by assessing how the Emiratisation policy can be redesigned to focus more on new high-growth sectors, especially the ICT sector. The study also contributes more generally to the field of knowledge about how human capital supply can be improved through policy interventions and technology implementation. Furthermore, by adopting a conceptual framework based on established labour market and social network theories, the study is expected to improve understanding of the UAE economy and potential solutions to current labour market problems, thus offering considerable practical value to UAE decision-makers and policy officials.

The study employs a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of the relationship between human capital and ICT with special emphasis on harmonization. This is a mixed-methods study consisting of both quantitative and qualitative primary research data collection, as well as a review of literature. The quantitative research method used a semi-structured online questionnaire survey targeted at managers in the Oil/Gas and Banking/Finance sectors, future job-seekers (students), and other UAE labour market stakeholders and experts. This was followed up by in-depth interviews with ICT expert informants, to provide qualitative data. The results of the quantitative and qualitative components were integrated in a process of triangulation, to draw out their overall significance.

The principle finding of this research is that the mismatch between the supply and demand sides of the labour market in terms of skills and expectations is the main barrier to emiratisation. High percentages of Emirati students do not enter the labour market following graduation. UAE nationals have high job and salary expectations, and mainly focus on the public sector. Employers surveyed believe that the types of skills and qualifications they need are in short supply among UAE nationals, especially in relation to managerial and professional jobs. The cultural importance of contacts makes the recruitment process inefficient on both sides. Emiratisation can be expensive for organisations, would be more sustainable if compliance were better enforced by the UAE government, and needs to be better supported by a good education/training system which prepares UAE nationals for the needs of the labour market. The study concludes by advocating a gradual shift towards the knowledge economy as a way of rebalancing the labour market, proposing potential further research on the ICT field within the UAE's private sector, with close attention to indigenization. On the demand side, more detailed nationally representative data might be collected on the skills requirements of private sector jobs in a range of sectors, so that the UAE education system can be better designed to meet the needs of the economy through human resource development.

Table of Contents

List of figures

List of tables

Chapter 1 : Introduction

1.1   Background

An efficient labour market is crucial to the long-term growth of any economy and the well-being of a nation's population. In such a labour market, supply of and demand for workers are in balance and the labour force possesses the knowledge and skills needed by employers. However, inefficiencies and dysfunctional developments can arise in labour markets for many reasons, threatening economic growth and creating social and political problems. The factors giving rise to an efficient labour market can include, for example, the inadvertent effects of government policies, cultural preferences for particular types of jobs, and economic growth which occurs too rapidly to enable the labour market to adjust.

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), emerging labour market problems are likely to pose a serious threat to the social and economic well-being of the nation if they are not addressed in the near future. Like the other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries of the Gulf region of the Middle East, the UAE found that its indigenous supply of labour was inadequate to meet the demands of the rapid economic development resulting from the oil boom of the early 1970s, and adopted liberal labour policies to attract migrant labour. As a result, there was soon a flood of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour migrants into the UAE, mainly from other Asian countries. Between 1975 and 1980 alone, the population of the UAE almost doubled from 577,887 to 1,042,009, based on a 12.5 per cent average annual increase mainly due to foreign immigration (United Nations, 2002). The increase in population size in the region acted as an engine for further development and economic growth, encouraging even more inward labour migration. Between 1995 and 2005, the UAE population increased by 74.8%, one of the highest rates of growth in the world, and was predicted to reach 5.06 million by the end of 2009 (Vine, 2009).

The majority of population growth in the UAE has been due to immigration, and UAE nationals now account for a small minority of less than 20% of the population. However, the UAE is also experiencing a relatively high rate of population growth among the native population of more than 3% annually, and the age structure of the population means that large numbers of locals are enter the job market every year. It

was predicted, for example, that 19,610 nationals would enter the labour market in 2010 and 40,000 in 2020 (Al Abed and Vine, 2007).

1.2   Statement of the Problem

The problem that the UAE now faces is that there are relatively few employment opportunities for locals in the local economy due to its saturation by foreign workers: expatriates currently hold 99% of private sector jobs and 91% of jobs in government (Vine, 2009). This is exacerbated by the strong preference of UAE nationals for public sector jobs, which are seen to offer better salaries and more attractive career paths and to be more accommodating to their cultural and religious needs. Moreover it has been widely reported that many private sector employers are reluctant to recruit Emirati nationals, since they are perceived to expect higher salaries and more benefits than foreign workers and may not have the types of skills and experience needed by many organisations in this sector. Indeed, the Emirati education system has not generally prepared the native population to compete effectively for jobs in the general labour market: although many Emiratis are highly educated, the vast majority of graduates have studied subjects more suitable to a career in government than in business or industry. Moreover, the potential benefits of investment in education and training by the UAE government, including the cost of educating both girls and boys, are not being fully realized as a result of religious and cultural norms and traditions which prevent many women from fully participating in the labour force.

Since the early 1990s, the main policy tool used by the UAE government to address its labour market problems has been the policy of Emiratisation. Mirroring similar indigenization policies in other GCC states, this has attempted to replace expatriates with local workers by imposing restrictions on the employment of expatriate workers in the public sector and enforcing the private sector to employ nationals in certain areas (Barrientos and Madhi, 2003). However, the success of the Emiratisation policy has been very limited to date, largely because of the continuing strong influence of traditional patterns of employment in the UAE, as well as the relatively narrow focus of the policy on administrative jobs in the banking and finance sector and the relatively neglect in this policy of the newly emerging ICT sector which is a cornerstone of the government's long-term economic growth strategy. Moreover, strategies such as the Emiratisation policy and investment in the ICT sector are not

currently taking place within the context of a proper analysis of labour market needs and problems.

Currently, the evidence base on which to build a more effective and sustainable human resource policy in the UAE is lacking. Much of the empirical research in this area is at least several years out of date and a considerable amount of the available information is anecdotal. Moreover, there have been few attempts to analyse the UAE using a labour market theories framework. Such an approach would enable the UAE to develop a better understanding of the reasons for its current labour market inefficiencies and how these can be most effectively addressed in the development of a sustainable national human resource strategy.

1.3   Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide research-based information to inform the development of a sustainable human resource strategy for the UAE which will improve the functioning of the labour market, and to develop specific recommendations based on this information. The development of a sustainable human resource strategy will improve the stability and overall performance of the UAE labour market and economy, by reducing the country's dependence on migrant labour and promoting the development of a well-qualified indigenous labour force that is well-equipped and prepared to work in either the private or public sectors.

The study is also expected to make a significant contribution to the field of knowledge about how national human resource policies and strategies can be used to optimize the effectiveness of labour markets, not only in the UAE but in other countries with similar labour market characteristics.

1.4   Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the study is to generate primary research data to improve understanding of the current barriers to the successful working of the UAE labour market and how these can be removed, and to develop recommendations based on the findings. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To analyse the UAE labour market using a review of existing literature and established labour market theories. This was intended to improve understanding of the barriers and opportunities inherent in the existing UAE labour market and to highlight the key issues and information needs which primary research could address.

2. To conduct a survey of employers and managers in the UAE private sector oil/gas and banking/finance industries to explore their current recruitment practices, their views on employing of UAE nationals, and other relevant issues identified in the literature review which contribute to an understanding of the UAE labour market.

3. To conduct a quantitative survey of UAE university students to explore their views on working in the public and the private sector, their expected job-search strategies and other relevant issues identified in the literature review which contribute to an understanding of the UAE labour market.

4. To conduct in-depth interviews with a range of UAE labour market experts (i.e. academics, organizational HR) and key stakeholders including academic researchers, government policy officials, human resource managers, public and private sector employers and representatives of the UAE's ICT sector. These were intended to explore their views on what a sustainable UAE human resource policy should address; the likely long-term effects on the private and public sector and the UAE economy, the potential role of the ICT sector role of the ICT sector in the UAE's human resource development, and other relevant issues.

5. To use the research results to develop recommendations for a sustainable national human resource policy for the UAE.

1.5 Research Questions

The main research questions, as well as the more specific sub-questions to be addressed in this study are as follows:

1. What are the main supply-side and demand-side barriers to effective Emiratisation of the UAE labour market?

   a. What are the main factors that are currently preventing the expansion of private sector employment among UAE nationals? (For example, recruitment practices, procedures, job-seeking preferences, employer preferences.)

   b. What needs to happen in order to overcome these barriers to Emiratisation?

2. How can labour market theories and socio-cultural theories contribute to a better understanding of UAE labour market and the development of a more effective and sustainable Emiratisation policy?

   a. Which labour market theories and socio-cultural theories best explain the UAE labour market and its characteristics?

   b. What key lessons from these theories can be applied to the development of recommendations for a more effective and sustainable Emiratisation policy?

3. What are the key elements of an effective and sustainable Emiratisation policy for the UAE?

   a. Is the Emiratisation policy the best way forward for the UAE? What might any alternative or complementary measures consist of?

   b. How can the Emiratisation policy be designed in future in order to best meet the needs of employers and the national population of the UAE?

   c. How can the ICT sector and the development of ICT skills among the Emirati population improve the UAE labour market?

1.6 Nature of the Study

This is an empirical study of employers, jobseekers and other relevant stakeholders in the UAE. The primary research is grounded in a review of literature on the UAE labour market and in a conceptual framework based on established labour market theories and socio-cultural theories.

The research is based on a mixed-methods design involving both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. It has included:

- A questionnaire survey of middle managers in oil/gas and banking/finance organisations in the UAE.

- A questionnaire survey of male and female Emirati students at UAE universities and colleges, who are expected to be entering the labour market in the near future.

- In-depth interviews, conducted face to face or by email, with a sample of key stakeholders with interest in the UAE labour market, including academic specialists, government officials, employers and representatives of the education sector.

- In-depth interviews with a selection of UAE ICT sector experts, including academic researchers, government policy officials, to explore their views on the potential future role of the ICT sector as a driver, enhancer, and facilitator of change and improvement in the implementation of Emiratisation and the operation of the UAE labour market.

1.7 Summary and Thesis Outline

This research is intended to generate information and recommendations for use in the development of a sustainable human resource policy to improve the functioning of the UAE labour market. It is informed by the results of previous studies and conducted within a conceptual framework based on labour market and socio-cultural theories. The study consists of primary research with employers and managers, future job-seekers and key stakeholders in order to improve understanding of the problems of the

UAE labour market and how they can be solved, with benefits for all labour market participants. It is expected to be of considerable value to the UAE, other GCC states and countries with similar labour market structures and problems.

The following chapter presents the findings of an extensive review of literature which was conducted in order to help identify the issues currently facing the UAE labour market from an empirical perspective. Chapter Three is theoretical in focus; it examines various labour market and social network theories and their potential relevance to an improved understanding of the UAE labour market. Following this, Chapter 5 discusses the role of ICT in economic development and traces the recent history of the UAE, highlighting the considerable role that ICT has played in this in order to demonstrate its potential future role in resolving the UAE's labour market problems. Chapter Five sets out the methodology for the primary research component of the study, including the general methodological approach, sampling, data collection instruments and analysis and presentation techniques. In Chapters 6 and 7 respectively, the research results are presented and their significance discussed. Finally, in Chapter 8 the overall conclusions of the study are drawn and a number of recommendations are made for a more effective and sustainable Emiratisation policies to improve the operation of the UAE labour market.

Chapter 2 : UAE Labour Market: A Background

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of an extensive review of literature on the United Arab Emirates labour market and its Emiratisation policy. This review was conducted in order to ensure that the present study builds on and adds to the existing state of knowledge and research in this area. The chapter also builds a conceptual framework for the study by discussing a number of leading labour market theories and considering how these can be used for improving understanding of the UAE labour market and identifying solutions to its problems.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, empirical data is presented relating to the population and labour force composition of the UAE over recent decades. Next, the key findings of previous studies are used to identify the main labour market problems currently facing the UAE and potential reasons for these. The subsequent section provides an overview of policy responses to the labour market problems of the GCC states, and specifically the Emiratisation program of the UAE, along with a discussion of their outcomes and weaknesses, as documented in previous research.

In the final sections of the chapter, the main findings of the literature review are summarised and a general assessment of the current state of research and knowledge in relation to the UAE labour market is provided. Important information gaps which will be addressed in the current study are identified, and it is shown how the research will contribute to the state of knowledge in this area. The concluding section summarises the main points of the literature review chapter and introduces the next chapter of the thesis.

2.2 Population and Labour Force Composition of the UAE

2.2.1 Background

The United Arab Emirates (UAE), which became an independent country in 1971, is located in the oil rich Gulf region of the Middle East. Along with Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, it is one of six countries of the Gulf Cooperation

Council (GCC), formed in 1981 to facilitate coordination, integration and inter-connections between the Gulf States and their peoples. The objectives of the Council include the coordination of national policies and regulations in economic, financial, trade-related and other areas, as well as the promotion of regional scientific and technical progress through joint ventures and co-operation in both the public and private sectors (Gulf Cooperation Council, 2011).

With the Gulf oil boom in the early 1970s, these oil-rich countries had experienced rapid and major growth in their economies. Like the other GCC countries, the UAE found that its indigenous supply of labour was inadequate to meet the demands of the rapid economic development resulting from the oil boom, and its government adopted liberal labour policies to attract migrant labour. As a result, there was soon a flood of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled migrant labour into the UAE and neighbouring GCC labour markets, mainly from other Arab and Asian countries, a process which further stimulated their rapid economic growth. These liberal immigration policies were effective as a means of driving economic growth in the region because the immigrant workers, who were often facing severe economic hardship in their own countries, were prepared to accept considerably lower wages than the native workers of the GCC states (Bhagwati and Srinivasan 1983).

2.2.2   *Immigration and Population Growth in the UAE and other GCC States*

As Table 2.1 shows, the percentage of foreign nationals in the GCC region increased from 23 per cent in 1975 to over 38 per cent in 2002. However, these figures mask considerable differences between individual countries and in particular the very rapid rate of population growth due to immigration to the UAE over this period.

	1975	1980	1985	1995	2000	2002
Nationals %	77.4	67.1	63.5	61.4	65.1	61.5
Expatriates %	22.6	32.9	36.5	38.6	34.9	38.5
Total Population ('000s)	*9.7*	*13.6*	*17.3*	*27.2*	*29.3*	*32.5*

Table 2.1: Population composition of GCC 1975-2002 (Tattolo 2002)

Between 1975 and 1980 alone, the population of the UAE almost doubled from 577,887 to 1,042,009, a 12.5 per cent average annual increase mainly due to foreign immigration (United Nations, 2002). The most recent official estimates put the total

population of the UAE at 6 million (Ministry of Economy, cited in UAE Interact 2009), with inward migration still continuing to account for most of the growth. This represents an increase of around 2 million since the last official census of 2005.

The increase in population size in the region over time acted as an engine for further development and economic growth, and the UAE was transformed from one of the least developed countries of the world into a prosperous state with gross domestic product levels comparable to those of the most highly industrialized nations. Elhiraika and Hamed (2002) noted that its GDP rose from US$14.72 billion to US$44.63 billion in the twenty-five year period from 1975 to 1999. The UAE's economic growth has continued at a fast pace since then, although it has recently slowed considerably due to the impact of the global economic downturn.

By 2004 the total GCC population had grown to almost 34 million, with expatriates accounting for 12.5 million, or around 37 per cent of the total population of the region (Table 2.2). By this time, the UAE, Qatar and Kuwait all had a majority of foreigners in their populations, with the UAE having the highest proportion of foreign nationals, at 81% (Table 2.2). The most recent census conducted in the UAE, in 2005, indicated that there was at that time a population of 4,104,695 in the country, of which nationals accounted for less than 22% (Ministry of Economy, UAE 2007).

However, the UAE's native population has also experienced steady growth in recent decades and the combination of natural population growth and inward migration has led to an overall increase in the UAE population of 74.8% between 1995 and 2005, one of the highest growth rates in the world (Vine 2009). Even though the rate of population growth has declined somewhat since then it remains high, at 3.69% in 2009 compared with a corresponding rate for the United Kingdom of 0.28% (CIA, 2009). The total size of the UAE population was projected to reach just over 5 million by 2009 (Vine, 2009).

	Nationals 2004 (n)	per cent	Expatriates 2004 (n)	per cent	Total 2004
Bahrain	438,209	62.0	268,951	38.0	707,160
Kuwait	943,000	35.6	1,707,000	64.4	2,650,000
Oman	2,325,812	80.1	577,293	19.9	2,903,105
Qatar	223,209	30.0	520,820	70.0	744,029
Saudi Arabia	16,529,302	72.9	6,144,236	27.1	22,673,538
UAE	722,000	19.0	3,278,000	81.0	4,000,000
GCC	21,184,323	62.9	12,486,349	37.1	33,677,832

Table 2.2: Population composition of GCC states 2004 (Kapiszewski 2006).

Foreign nationals account for an even higher proportion of the *labour force* of each of the GCC states, especially the UAE. Table 2.3 shows how the proportion of foreign nationals in the labour force of each country changed between 1975 and 2000. Over time, the UAE and Qatar have consistently been the countries with the highest percentages of foreign nationals in their labour forces. In 2000, around 90% of all workers in the UAE were of foreign origin (Table 2.3).

2.2.3 Changing Patterns of Labour Migration

Traditionally, most migrants to the Gulf region were from nearby Arab nations such as Egypt, Yemen, Palestine and Iraq, and had mostly fled their own countries due to political instability or poverty. However, in the wake of the oil boom of the early 1970s the demand for foreign workers in GCC states outstripped the ability of neighbouring Arab countries to supply them (Chuocri,1983). Instead, immense numbers of Asians from countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Philippines migrated to take up the new employment opportunities (Kapiszewski, 2003).

	1975	1980	1985	1995	2000
BAHRAIN					
Nationals %	18.2	43.0	42.1	40.0	46.0
Expatriates %	81.8	57.0	57.9	60.0	54.0
Total Labour Force Population (' 000s)	60.0	142.4	170.6	226.5	NA
KUWAIT					
Nationals %	18.2	15.1	14.3	16.6	19.6
Expatriates %	81.8	84.9	85.7	83.4	80.4
Total Labour Force Population (' 000s)	304.6	491.5	670.4	1,051.5	1,320.1
OMAN					
Nationals %	68.9	60.0	48.2	35.8	35.7
Expatriates %	31.1	40.0	51.8	64.2	64.3
Total Labour Force Population (' 000s)	225.0	280.0	369	670.3	858.7
QATAR					
Nationals %	17.0	17.4	23.5	17.9	10.0
Expatriates %	83.0	82.6	76.5	82.1	90.0
Total Labour Force Population (' 000s)	68.7	95.6	100.2	218.0	NA
SAUDI ARABIA					
Nationals %	74.8	47.3	37.3	36.5	44.2
Expatriates %	25.2	52.7	62.7	63.5	55.8
Total Labour Force Population (' 000s)	1,923.7	3,212.7	4,342.1	6,450.0	7,176.3
UAE					
Nationals %	16	7.6	9.4	10.2	10.2
Expatriates %	84	92.4	90.6	89.8	89.8
Total Labour Force Population (' 000s)	278.8	706.3	865.3	1,088.2	1,355.7

Table 2.3 Percentages of expatriate/national workers in GCC country labour forces 1975-2000 (Tattolo 2002

The new patterns of migration were driven by immigration and labour policies that targeted Asian country nationals, who were seen by the GCC governments as being easier to control, cheaper to employ, more efficient and capable workers and less likely to settle long-term within their borders than Arabs (Kapiszewski, 2003;

Pakkisiamy, 2004). The GCC governments were particularly concerned about non-Gulf Arabs spreading radical social and political ideas as well as cultivating 'undesirable' loyalties at this time (Kapiszewski 2003). The overall composition of the GCC states' foreign workforces over time has also been influenced by occasional mass expulsions of Iraqis and other foreign nationals perceived to be sympathetic to Iraq, including Palestinians, Jordanians, Yemenis and Sudanese.

Table 2.4 shows how the *Arab* proportions of the foreign populations of the GCC member states declined between 1975 and the early 2000s, from around three quarters to only around a third of the total population, with considerable variations between individual countries. In the UAE, Arabs accounted for just over a quarter of the total population in 1975, but only 13% of the population in the early 2000s.

	1975	1985	1996	2002/3/4
Bahrain	22	15	12	15
Kuwait	80	69	33*	30*
Oman	16	16	11	6
Qatar	33	33	21	19
Saudi Arabia	91	79	30	33
UAE	26	19	10	13
GCC (total)	**72**	**56**	**31**	**32**

Table 2.4: Estimated percentages of Arabs in foreign populations of GCC countries 1975-2002/4 (Kapiszewski 2006)

In Table 2.5, the estimated numbers of the largest national communities in the GCC countries in recent years are provided. Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have emerged as the largest expatriate communities in the GCC states, while the largest non-Gulf Arab migrant communities are Egyptian and Yemeni.

Within the UAE, by far the largest foreign migrant population is from the Indian sub-continent, with more than a million Indian expatriates and nearly half a million Pakistanis residing there in 2002 (Table 2.5). By 2009 it was being reported that the numbers of Indians and Pakistanis had increased to 1.75 million and 1.25 million, respectively (UAE Interact 2009). There are also very large numbers of Bangladeshis,

Sri Lankans, Egyptians, Jordanians and Filipinos in the UAE, followed by substantial numbers of Yemenis, Iranians and Sudanese (Kapiszewski 2006). Western expatriates from a range of countries accounted for around 500,000 of the population, according to 2009 estimates (UAE Interact 2009). It can be seen, therefore, that the UAE has a very diverse expatriate population, mainly from a range of Asian countries.

	Bahrain 2004 (1000s)	Kuwait 2003 (1000s)	Oman 2004 (1000s)	Qatar 2002 (1000s)	Saudi Arabia 2004 (1000s)	UAE 2002 (1000s)
Indians	120	320	330	100	1,300	1,200
Pakistanis	50	100	70	100	900	450
Egyptians	30	260	30	35	900	140
Yemenis					800	60
Bangladeshis		170	110		400	100
Filipinos	25	70		50	500	120
Sudanese					250	30
Sri Lankans		170	30	35	350	160
Jordanians/ Palestinians	20	50		50	260	110
Indonesians		9			250	
Syrians		100			100	
Iranians	30	80		60		40
Turks					80	
Nepalese				70		
Bidun		80				

Table 2.5: Estimated size of major foreign national communities in GCC countries (various years, in thousands) (Kapiszewski 2006).

In general, the GCC governments have not naturalized their foreign migrant populations, preferring instead to control the duration of residence of migrant workers and to impose terms and conditions on migrant employment within their countries. This has been achieved by means of nationality and citizenship laws, work permit and visa requirements, employment and residency regulations, and employer sponsorship schemes (Kapiszewski 2003).

In the UAE the continuing high levels of immigration, especially of non-Arabs, has given rise to concerns about the potentially negative impact on Arabic culture and the use of the Arabic language, and on the availability of employment opportunities for the native population. The UAE was one of four GCC states (along with Kuwait,

Oman and Saudi Arabia) in which nationals indicated in response to a United Nations survey in 2004 that they were concerned at levels of immigration to their country and wanted to restrict the number of foreign migrants allowed to enter (Shah 2008). The Government of the UAE, along with those of neighbouring GCC states, has also expressed concerns about the increasing levels of financial remittances out of the country by migrant workers and the negative impact on its own economy (Harry 2003). It has been estimated that, in total, outward remittances from migrant workers in GCC states have amounted to around US$27 billion annually in recent years (Al-Bassam 2004). This accounts for a high proportion of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of each of the GCC countries (Al-Dosary 2003; Kapiszewski 2006).

2.2.4 *Women in the GCC Labour Forces*

The participation of women in the workforces of the GCC states has traditionally been very limited due to religious norms and patriarchal cultural traditions among the native Muslim populations. These vary widely between and within states; in general, however, there is systemic subordination of women in this region. This has severely limited native female labour force participation, and has also had a major impact on levels of expatriate female labour force participation. Through the cultural norm of "Veil" which is common throughout the region, there are high levels of female seclusion and sex segregation in many areas of life. These norms and practices are intended to protect the high standards of female modesty which exist in the Muslim societies of this region. Women are considered to be the repositories of a family's honour, and their chastity and good reputation is highly valued and guarded. Traditionally, women's activities have been limited mainly to the home, and when they venture outside, they are required to wear the concealing cloak known as the 'Ibaya', as a portable means of seclusion (Papanek, 1982). It is also considered inappropriate for women to speak in public to men they are neither married nor related to (Sharp 2005), which has severely limited their potential for employment.

This situation has been changing dramatically in recent years, with rates of female participation increasing throughout the GCC states, largely due to the impact of government policies which promote the education and employment of women (Kapiszewski, 2006; Gallant and Pounder, 2008). Indeed, the literacy rate among women has increased significantly in the region, especially in the UAE where it rose from 22.4% in 1980 to 88.7% in 2003, and where women have accounted for more

than 72% of all university students in recent years (Anonymous, 2003). Table 2.6 shows the significant rise in the female labour force in the GCC states between 1975 and 2000, when there was more than a tripling of the numbers of women employed in each country.

	Women as % of national labour force		
	1975	1980	2000
Bahrain	5	11	21
Kuwait	8	13	31
Oman	NA	6	17
Qatar	2	7	15
Saudi Arabia	5	8	16
UAE	3	5	15

Table 2.6: Women as percentage of labour force in GCC states, 1975-2000 (Willoughby 2004)

However, women still only comprise a minority of the workforce in all countries of the region, including the UAE, and there are continuing high levels of sex segregation between occupations and within workplaces in most GCC states (Gallant and Pounder 2008). For example, in the UAE, all government universities are single-sex. Moreover, it must be noted that the majority of women in the GCC workforces are foreign workers. In 2001 it was reported (Kapiszewski 2001) that 80% of women employed in the UAE were expatriates; Oakes (2004) observed that native women still only accounted for around 3% of the total GCC workforce in the early 2000s. Nevertheless, there has been a significant increase in *native* female labour force participation in the UAE over the past decade, as shown in Table 2.7, which shows the numbers of female UAE nationals participating in the labour force as employers, self-employed individuals, employees and non-waged workers, compared with the numbers of men employed in these categories.

	1993 (n)		2000 (n)		2005 (n)	
	Males	**Females**	**Males**	**Females**	**Males**	**Females**
Employer	9,167	276	7,081	172	14,500	1,279
Self-employed	14,384	96	9,070	287	10,706	1,003
Waged worker	275,456	38,084	481,569	61,663	839,223	114,919
Non-Waged	54	0	192	43	544	122
Total	*299,061*	*38,456*	*497,912*	*62,165*	*864,973*	*117,323*

Table 2.7: Employment (15 years and over) by sex and employment status (Statistics Center of Dubai).

Overall, the numbers of native women in the UAE labour force increased nearly threefold during this period. Perhaps most notably, the number of self-employed women increased more than tenfold between 1993 and 2005, while the numbers of men in self-employed declined over the same period. There was also a significant increase in the number of female employers in the country over this period. The UAE 2009 Yearbook reported that women accounted for 28% of the national labour force by that time (Vine 2009).

2.3   The Labour Market Problems of the UAE

Having described the general demographic and labour market situation in the UAE and the wider GCC region, this section will now draw on the findings of previous research studies and other literature to describe and discuss the specific labour market problems currently facing the UAE and the reasons why these have arisen.

2.3.1 *Population Growth and Unemployment*

The major problem currently facing the UAE is the high level of unemployment among its own nationals, and the inability of the labour market to absorb the additional large numbers of young people seeking jobs every year. This reflects a situation facing all the GCC states, which has been well documented in the literature and is directly related to their historically high levels of inward labour migration.

Kapiszewski (2000) observed that around half of the total GCC population is aged below fifteen and that 15-30 year-olds are the fast growing group in the region, with many in this age group graduating from schools, colleges and universities each year and seeking jobs. Fasano and Goyal (2004) estimated that there would be an annual increase in GCC job-seekers of around 4 to 5% in the medium term. In a study by the World Bank (2004), it was estimated that around 80–100 million new jobs in total would need to be created across the GCC region by 2020.

The UAE's native population was predicted to grow by 3.4% by the end of 2009, while its expatriate population was expected to increase by 6.9% (Vine, 2009). Although official statistics are not yet available to show whether these predictions were borne out in fact, they suggest rapid rates of growth for both groups, with large numbers of locals as well as expatriates entering the labour market every year in the foreseeable future. This would continue recent trends: official government statistics indicated that 16,187 native Emiratis entered the labour market in 2006 (cited in Forstenlechner 2008). It has been estimated that, if trends continue, the annual number of new job seekers in the UAE will reach around 20,000 by 2010 and 40,000 by 2020 (Al Abed and Vine, 2007). Of these, a large proportion will be highly educated; it has been reported that university graduates comprise 35% of all Emirati jobseekers (TANMIA 2008, cited in Al-Ali, 2009). Officials have calculated that around 300,000 graduates will join the country's labour force in the four year period from 2008 to 2012 (TANMIA 2008, cited in Al-Ali, 2009).

As a result of these trends the problem of unemployment, especially graduate unemployment, has been steadily increasing in the UAE. Al Shaiba (2009a) reported that there were more than 89,000 unemployed UAE nationals in 2008, and the country's official unemployment rate was predicted to reach 3.86% in 2009 (Vine 2009). Although this is not an extremely high rate compared with an international unemployment rate of 7% in 2008 (TANMIA, cited in Al Shaiba 2008c), the main concerns in the UAE are the high rate of structural unemployment, as well as the frequent occurrence of cyclical unemployment which results from the UAE's continuing high dependence on the oil industry and the fluctuations in oil prices which often occur (Ibrahim 2005). Of these two issues, it is the first which is the main focus of the current study and which is discussed further below.

2.3.2 *Structural Imbalance in the Labour Market*

In many countries, foreign migrant workers complement the national workforce to a large extent, occupying lower-status or poorly-paid jobs whilst nationals occupy more highly-skilled and professional jobs. In the UAE as in the other GCC states, however, the foreign workforce has become the dominant labour force in most sectors of the economy (Kapiszewski 2006) in both skilled and unskilled work (TANMIA 2005). Expatriates now comprise 91% of workers in the public sector (Vine 2009) and 99% of all workers in the private sector (Elhiraika and Hamed 2002), with the private sector reportedly accounting for just over half of all jobs in the UAE. If current trends continue, it has been predicted that nationals will account for less than 4% of the total workforce of the UAE by 2020 (TANMIA 2008, cited in Al-Ali, 2009).

Traditionally, most UAE nationals have sought jobs in government, but due to high levels of population growth in recent decades, the public sector is now saturated and can no longer meet the high level of demand from locals for jobs (Elhiraika et al 2002; TANMIA 2005). At the same time, Emirati nationals are either reluctant to seek jobs in the private sector or are unable to compete effectively with expatriates for jobs in this sector. It has been well documented in the literature that migrants in GCC countries either hold jobs which nationals refuse to accept or jobs that require a level of expertise which nationals do not have (e.g. Toledo 2005).

A study conducted by the UAE's National Human Resources Development and Employment Authority (TANMIA, 2008) documented a range of inter-related factors which have contributed to the increase in structural unemployment in the UAE. According to this report, these include: 1) an increasing skills gap between job-seekers and employer requirements; 2): a mismatch between the education system and the requirements of the economy; 3) unrealistic salary expectations; 4) differentials between the actual salaries of expatriates and locals performing the same jobs; 5) the low productivity of Emirati workers; 6) differences in employment terms and conditions between the private and public sectors; 7) a poorly regulated labour market, and 8) the increasing income levels in the country which have weakened the motivations of locals to seek paid work (TANMIA, cited in Al Shaiba 2008c).

The reluctance of Emiratis to enter the private sector and the reluctance of private sector employers to recruit Emiratis are two of the most serious problems currently facing the UAE labour market, and are considered further in the following sections.

2.3.3   Emirati Reluctance to Enter Private Sector

The strong preference of Emiratis for public sector jobs has been established through both anecdotal and survey-based evidence (e.g. Freek 2004). This indicates that young UAE nationals, especially graduates, have negative perceptions of private sector jobs which they associate with low salaries, few benefits, poor working conditions, hard work and long hours. For example, a survey of UAE students conducted in 1998 found evidence that although 95% of female students and 92% of male students planned to seek employment after completing their studies, 65% overall said that they would not consider working in the private sector, citing these types of factors as deterrents (cited in Kapiszewski 2000). It has also been widely reported that UAE nationals prefer to take jobs in the public sector because employers in this sector (who are also more likely to be Emirati) are more sensitive to their culture and religion, allowing time off for religious holidays and to meet family commitments, for example.

The UAE's National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority (TANMIA) conducted a national study in 2004 to examine why Emirati graduates were not generally entering private sector employment. This provided evidence of a widespread perception among the graduates that private sector jobs are generally lower-paid and involve heavier workloads and longer working hours, in comparison with jobs in the public sector (cited in Al Shaiba, 2008c).

Similar findings emerged from recent research by Forstenlechner (2008), which examined the implementation of UAE government measures aimed at increasing the representation of UAE nationals in the private sector. Forstenlechner's study included a questionnaire survey of sixty Emiratis aged between 18 and 23, including equal numbers of students, employed graduates and unemployed graduates. Respondents in all three groups indicated that, when seeking jobs, employee rights, job security, promotion prospects and working hours were, in general, more important to them than salary levels. The most unattractive aspect of private sector jobs for these

respondents, however, were the low salaries perceived to be on offer. Around a quarter of all the research respondents indicated that they would rather wait for an uncertain job in the public sector than take a private sector job. However, the salary expectations of these young people were found to be unrealistic, given the prevailing market rates. The researchers concluded that the students' and graduates' views on private sector jobs had been influenced at least in part by their minimal contact with the private sector, since very few Emiratis are employed in private sector jobs (Forstenlechner, 2008).

These findings also reflect the results of similar studies carried out in other GCC states such as Oman, where a lack of information and awareness about the private sector has been found to constitute a major obstacle to increasing the number of Omani employees in this sector (Al-Lamki 1998). Despite this, there have been reports in the literature of small improvements in the willingness of GCC member state nationals to take low-skilled jobs that were previously only held by foreign migrants, notably in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain (Shah 2008).

2.3.4   *Private Sector Employer Reluctance to Employ Emiratis*

On the other side of the coin, opportunities for UAE nationals to enter the private sector have been severely limited since many private sector employers have been reluctant to employ Emiratis. According to both anecdotal information and survey-based research on this issue, numerous employers – expatriates and Emiratis alike - hold negative stereotypical views of Emirati workers which have an adverse impact on willingness to recruit them (Al Ali 2009).

Forstenlechner's (2008) study included interviews with 120 Chief Executives and Senior Managers from the private sector, including both locals and expatriates. Almost three quarters of these respondents (73%) thought that UAE nationals in general have inadequate skills, education and experience. Twenty-nine per cent said that Emiratis have unrealistic salary expectations and 17% that they have unrealistic promotion expectations. These findings are supported by other research evidence that UAE nationals expect to earn larger salaries and receive more benefits than migrant workers (e.g. Oakes 2004; Bukhari 2006; Toledo 2005).

Additionally, 13% of interviewees in Forstenlechner's (2008) research believed that productivity and efficiency would be low among Emirati workers. Interestingly, the Emirati employers and managers interviewed were more likely (86%) than expatriate employers and managers (61%) to indicate that they would be reluctant to employ Emiratis due to their lack of skills and experience.

Despite the existence of stereotypical views about Emirati workers, there is also real evidence that this Emiratis, on the whole, do not possess the knowledge and skills required by many private sector employers, and that many fail to exhibit the work behaviour and attitudes required in this sector. On the other hand, it has been argued that international companies operating in the UAE have not adapted their recruitment methods and selection tests to the local population and culture (Harry 2003), thus putting Emiratis at a disadvantage when competing for jobs.

A recent study by the UAE's National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority found that many of the private sector jobs available in the UAE require a high level of English fluency and other skills which local graduates do not generally possess (TANMIA, cited in Al Shaiba 2008). This probably explains why Forstenlechner (2008) found evidence in his survey that Emirati students and young graduates were not confident of their ability to work effectively in the private sector or to compete for jobs in this sector against foreign nationals. However, a number of authors (e.g. Abdelkarim 2001; Freek 2004) have commented on the lack of a suitable work ethic or adequate motivation among Emirati nationals, factors which also hinder their ability to secure jobs in the private sector. This has been attributed mainly to cultural factors: as Harry (2003) explained, the rapid development of the GCC states over the past thirty years has not allowed adequate time for the attitudes and behaviours that were suited to traditional pastoral or trading societies to be transformed into those suited to modern industrial or service economies. The UAE's young people are unable to learn the required new behaviours and attitudes from their parents, only from the education system and workplace environment, a process which can take many years. The problems have been exacerbated by the emphasis in the working culture of the UAE on monetary rewards and top-down discipline, rather than the development of employee commitment to their jobs (Al Ali 2009). Another cultural factor which has been reported to affect

work and attendance behaviour among UAE nationals is the very high priority given to family responsibilities. In the Middle East, taking time off from work when necessary to care for children or the elderly is socially acceptable, but this may cause difficulties when working for a foreign employer (Harry 2003).

2.4 The Emiratisation Policy

2.4.1 Indigenisation Policies in the International Context

Since the early 1990s, the main policy tool used by the UAE government to address its labour market imbalances has been the policy of Emiratisation (Pejman 2005). Mirroring similar indigenization policies in the other GCC states, this has attempted to replace expatriates with local workers by imposing restrictions on the employment of expatriate workers in the public sector and forcing the private sector to employ nationals (Barrientos and Madhi 2003). These measures are intended to increase the cost of employing migrant labour, to the point at which it becomes more economical for employers to use native workers (Al-Dosary 2003).

These types of indigenization or "localization" policies are not new, but draw on the experience of other countries with large numbers of migrant workers in their labour forces such as Malaysia (Ahmad, Mansor and Ahmad 2003), Zimbabwe and South Africa (Muthien, Khosa and Magubane 2000). Within the GCC, a labour market indigenization policy was first implemented in the form of Saudisation in Saudi Arabia in the 1990s (Al-Harbi, 1997), and subsequently took the form of Bahrainisation in Bahrain, Qatarisation in Qatar and Omanisation in Oman (Barrentos and Madhi, 2003). Across the GCC region, these indigenization policies have generally taken similar forms but with more or less emphasis on different components. All of the GCC countries have put in place policies to restrict the number of work permits that can be approved for foreign migrants, imposed taxes on employers who hire foreigners and set quotas for the employment of native workers in particular sectors (Fasano and Goyal, 2004). Their various indigenisation policies have also included, for example, sponsorship systems, rotational systems to limit durations on the stay of individual foreign workers, restrictions on naturalization and citizenship rights and requirements to have local partners in order to establish a business within the country (Kapiszewski, 2006; Shah, 2006). However, the

enforcement of these regulations has been relatively weak in some states, particularly within the private sector (Kapiszewski, 2000), the very area in which nationals tend to be under-represented.

2.4.2   *Emiratisation Policy and Practice in the UAE*

Emiratisation has been defined as "a multi-level process through which dependency on the expatriate labour force is reduced and nationals are prepared to take up jobs formerly carried out by expatriates (Abdelkarim 2001:9). Such preparation involves equipping nationals with the skills they need to work as effectively if not more effectively than expatriates as soon as possible. The policy thus has two main components: 1) controlling the use of migrant workers, especially in the private sector, and 2) investing in the education and training of the native population so that they are able to compete for jobs in both the public and private sectors.

In order to implement its Emiratisation policy, the UAE government formed the National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority (TANMIA) in 1999. This is an independent body, the main objectives of which are to create job opportunities for UAE nationals (Toledo 2005); provide vocational training to young Emiratis and offer incentives such as public recognition to companies that employ nationals (Bukhari 2006). TANMIA's role also involves conducting labour market analysis and implementing other projects intended to support the employment or self-employment of nationals (Rees, Mamman and Bin Braik 2007; Al Shaiba 2009).

Until recently, the main thrust of the Emiratisation policy in the UAE has been focused on measures to control the entry and stay of foreign migrant workers in the country (Shah 2008) and to increase the representation of nationals in private sector employment. In particular, the policy has to date been focused mainly on the banking sector, which has been dominated by Indian and Pakistani workers and in which only around 7% of the workforce has traditionally consisted of Emiratis (Kapiszewski 2000). Under Emiritisation, all banks in the UAE were required to increase the proportion of Emiratis in their workforces by 4% every year from 1999 onwards (Kapiszewski 2000; Bukhari 2006) to reach a 40% native employment target by 2008 (Rees et al., 2007; Al Shaiba 2008). Banks were also required to offer new minimum

wages to nationals and offer them other benefits such as insurance provision (Kapiszewski 2000) and more flexible working hours (Rees et al., 2007).

More recently, the UAE government stepped up its requirements for the increased employment of nationals throughout the private sector, with an official announcement in May 2009 that all private companies would only be allowed to employ Emiratis when recruiting for secretarial and human resource manager job vacancies, and must replace all foreign workers currently occupying these job roles within eighteen months (Gulfnews.com, 3 May, 2009). Over time, the implementation of Emiratisation has come to rely less on voluntary compliance and more on enforcement of the rules, along with measures such as reducing numbers of expatriate work permits approved by the government (Rees et al., 2007).

Concurrently, in recent years the Emiratisation policy has incorporated a stronger focus on education in order to better prepare Emirati nationals for private sector employment. The importance of this measure was stressed in 2007 by Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Makhtoum:

> "It is very easy to impose Emiratisation. We can do this any time, but what would we gain if we did not provide our youth with the best knowledge, skill and expertise commensurate with these jobs?" (Gulfnews.Com Salama 2009:1).

This modified approach to Emiratisation builds on the recommendations of a 2003 report by TANMIA to the UAE government which recommended the adoption of a strategic plan for the development of the national human resources (TANMIA 2003). It also continues the longstanding policy of expanding educational facilities and improving literacy which began in the 1970s. Under this policy, the number of public schools in the UAE was increased from 206 in 1977 to 755 in 2004, and many colleges and a number of universities were also opened, including the United Arab Emirates University in 1977. Across the GCC region, primary and secondary school enrolment rates increased from less than 40% in the 1970s to around 80% or more by the 1990s (Elhiraika and Hamed 2002).

Despite the recent advances in literacy and academic achievement in the UAE, however, TANMIA recognised the need for the education sector to work more closely with business and industry in order to help overcome the ongoing mismatch between the demand for and supply of skills in the UAE (TANMIA 2003). Lately, reforms have been introduced which involve the private sector as an active partner in higher education (Al Lamki 2002). Additionally, under the 'Emiratization and Levy Payroll Fees' scheme, all expatriate residents in the UAE are required to make a small monthly contribution towards a fund for the training and development of UAE nationals (Rees et al., 2007).

2.4.3   *Implementation and Outcomes of Indigenisation Policies*

In the early 2000s, researchers were reporting that the indigenisation policy measures of the GCC states were producing some tangible results (e.g. Girgis, Hadad-Zervose and Coulibaly 2003). More than ten years from their initial implementation, however, it now appears that their impact has been very limited, and it can be observed that the imbalance between the numbers of nationals and expatriates continues to increase in the region.

Across the GCC as a whole, the percentage of nationals in the labour market did rise between 1990 and 2000 following the implementation of indigenisation policies, but the largest gains were in the public rather than the private sector. Girgis, Hadad-Zervose and Coulibaly (2003) reported that in the case of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and Saudi Arabia, the proportion of national employees increased between 1990 and 2000 from 65 per cent to about 80 per cent in the public sector and from 25 per cent to 32 per cent in the private sector.

Within the UAE, however, the Employment Departments established by the government in all Emirates reportedly only secured jobs for 105 nationals in total in their first year of operation, a number which represented a very low proportion of the 1800 or more jobseekers applying to private companies through the Employment Departments in that year (Kapiszewski 2000). Some progress was made towards meeting the Emirati employment quotas in the banking sector, which was reported in 2007 to have an overall workforce in which 29% were nationals (Mutawa 2007).

However, it has been argued that any gains in this area may have been offset by an increase in migrant workers in other sectors such as construction (Kuwait Times 2006; Shah 2008). Criticisms have been made of the narrowly focused quota-based policy, which some have argued should have been applied to a wider range of sectors (e.g. Al Shaiba 2008).

It is now widely acknowledged that TANMIA has had only limited effectiveness in achieving its objectives, with its weaknesses attributed to factors such as a lack of authority, inadequate budgets and the almost insurmountable challenges it faces (Al Shaiba 2009). The relative ineffectiveness of TANMIA has led to a situation in which some of the individual Emirates have established their own organisations to implement the Emiratisation policy, notably the Abu Dhabi Emiratisation Council and Dubai's Emirates National Development Programme. In order to co-ordinate the efforts of these bodies and develop joint policies and standards, the Emirates Council for Emiratisation was recently formed (Al Shaiba 2009). This Council will reportedly also have direct responsibility for ensuring that young Emiratis are adequately prepared to enter the workforce, and for establishing a national human resources database (Al Shaiba 2009).

2.4.4   Barriers to Successful Emiratisation

According to many observers, it will continue to be difficult to implement an effective Emiratisation policy until UAE nationals are better equipped through well-targeted education and training to take up private sector jobs (e.g. Al Shaiba 2008). Since the controls on migrant labour increase costs and business risks for firms, there has perhaps not surprisingly been a high level of resistance to the policies among private sector employers, who have complained that they fail to take into account the needs of the labour market and the skill levels and expectations of Emirati workers (Pejman 2005; Bukhari 2006). Empirical research among private sector employers conducted by Rees et al. (2007) found evidence of deliberate sabotage of the Emiratisation programme, including extensive non-compliance and the common use of loopholes. Rees et al. (2007) reported that the policies were unpopular with nationals and expatriates alike, and were often regarded as a form of taxation. Similarly, Forstenlechner (2008) found that a number of the foreign employers interviewed in his study were just paying lip service to the Emiratisation requirements by employing

the minimum number of Emiratis to meet the requirements, regardless of their suitability for available jobs.

Toledo (2005) conducted what he termed a "diagrammatical analysis" which demonstrated that Emiratisation could bring economic profits below normal levels in the competitive private sector, thus acting as a deterrent to implementation. The only viable solution, he argued, would be the substitution of labour for capital, which would potentially enable Emiratisation quotas to be achieved, but at the cost of creating fewer jobs for locals overall. Toledo concluded that Emiratisation is only really feasible in the case of non-competitive firms mainly serving the domestic market, such as telecommunications, construction and education, which benefit from government support and are mostly owned by Emiratis (Toledo 2005). If correct, this suggests that the cost implications of Emiratisation may form a major hindrance to its implementation by private sector employers in the UAE without strict enforcement by the government.

The widespread practice of visa trading in the UAE is another factor which has reportedly had an adverse impact on the effective implementation of Emiratisation. This practice emerged over the past three decades in response to the continuous high demand for foreign worker visas, which exceeded the supply of visas approved by the Government for particular types of jobs or sectors (Shah 2008; Migrant Forum in Asia 2009). As a result, it has become relatively common for some nationals to establish bogus companies in order to obtain work permits which are sold on to migrants. This practice is still believed to be widespread, although in recent years the Government has imposed heavy penalties on those found guilty of visa trading (Shah 2008).

Although the factors discussed above are likely to be the most significant barriers to effective implementation of Emiratisation, others have been identified in the literature which the government potentially has more control over. These include, for example, the reported lack of a clear national policy framework, and inadequate information about the policy and its requirements of employers (Rees et al., 2007)

Overall, it is difficult to disagree with Shah's (2008) conclusion that it will continue to be difficult to achieve successful Emiratisation while UAE nationals retain a strong

preference for public sector jobs and while the competitiveness of the UAE's private sector economy still depends heavily on more willing and well-equipped foreign migrant workers. While this situation continues, the underlying labour market problems of the UAE are increasing, with potentially devastating effects on the social and economic stability of the country if more effective solutions are not adopted in the near future.

Although the combination of circumstances currently facing the UAE labour market is fairly unique, the individual factors contributing to its current problems are not, and much can be learned about them from the extensive and well-established field of labour market theory. The remaining sections of this chapter discuss leading labour market theories and examine how these might be used to improve understanding of the UAE labour market and to help identify more effective ways of addressing its current inefficiencies.

2.5 Discussion and Conclusion

2.5.1 Summary of findings

This review of literature has provided background information relating to the UAE labour market and its Emiratisation policy. From the existing literature, it is clear that the UAE's current labour market challenges are predominantly due to the imbalances and distortions which have arisen due to the heavy reliance on expatriate labour to build and sustain the country's economy. These have resulted in the development of a dual labour market with severe inflexibilities and rigidities between the main segments. The public sector, characterised by more secure jobs, higher salaries and more employment benefits, is generally defined as the primary labour market whilst the foreign worker-dominated private sector, in which jobs are mainly low-skilled and low-paid, can be defined as the secondary market. The problems have been exacerbated by the strong influence of cultural factors and religious beliefs, which have led for example to the severe under-representation of women in the labour force, and the reluctance of locals to take jobs in the private sector. These factors, along with the heavy reliance on informal channels of information about job opportunities, have hindered the effective use of human capital in the UAE. As the population grows

rapidly, the country is facing an increasingly severe problem of unemployment among its natives.

The UAE's policy of Emiratisation is intended to increase the representation of Emiratis in employment, particularly in the private sectors. This policy has a dual approach which includes the enforcement of native employment quotas in relation to particular industries and types of jobs, as well as an emphasis on improving educational opportunities to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to enter the private sector. However, it has only had a limited impact to date, and many authors have argued that the policy will not succeed without more widespread attitudinal changes on the part of both Emirati job seekers and private sector employers.

2.5.2   Limitations and Knowledge Gaps

Although many relevant sources were identified for inclusion in this literature review, the review revealed gaps in the knowledge base that is needed to effectively underpin the development of labour market and human resource policies in the UAE. As previous authors have observed (e.g. Forstenlechner 2008) the majority of published information in this area is anecdotal. There is a general lack of scholarly material in this area, and robust empirical research on the UAE labour market has been particularly scarce. The empirical studies that have been conducted were mainly small-scale and are increasingly out of date. Moreover, there have been very few studies which have focused on generating empirical data for practical use in the development of labour market policies and strategies; the research that has been conducted has focused primarily on identifying and explaining the problems rather than identifying solutions. Given the specific issues currently facing the UAE labour market, it can be concluded from the literature review that the main current information need is for a better, up-to-date understanding of a) how to encourage Emiratis to apply for and accept jobs in the private sector, and b) how to encourage private sector employers to recruit Emiratis. In addition, a range of supplementary information needs can be identified from the literature that can be addressed in empirical research, including better information on the strengths and weaknesses of the Emiratisation policy to date, and on how the UAE's cultural traditions can be used to strengthen rather than weaken the effectiveness of the labour market.

Very few authors have analysed the UAE situation within a labour market theory framework, and the following chapter therefore considers a range of theories and labour market concepts for their relevance to improving understanding of the UAE labour market and how to resolve its current difficulties. These types of theories can be useful tools for understanding and explaining labour market problems, and the insights they offer can be invaluable in the development of policies intended to improve the operation of labour markets. The use of a labour market theoretical framework in this study also helps to ensure that the approach and underlying concepts used to examine the UAE are consistent with the larger body of labour market research, thus enhancing the value of the current study to the wider labour market research community and also improving the validity of the research results.

2.6   Summary

This chapter has set out the findings of an extensive review of the literature on the problems of the UAE labour market and its Emiratisation policy. These findings relate to the specific research questions to be addressed in this study, and will feed into the design of primary research intended to answer these questions. Previous research, as well as information from other published sources, demonstrates that the UAE faces major barriers to the effective implementation of Emiratisation due to the continuing strong influence of traditional patterns and preferences in relation to employment, and the ineffective development and use of human capital. The structure of the population as well as the continuous growth of expatriate population numbers in the GCC countries has been of grave concern to their respective governments. Most of these concerns are based on the high level of unemployment amongst nationals, which has steadily been increasing. The oversaturation of foreign workers in the labour markets of most GCC countries limits the opportunities for locals to get employment, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to compete with foreigners in the job market at a reasonable wage level. Furthermore, there is significant population growth, with half of the GCC population aged under 15 and the 15–30 age groups forming the fastest-growing segment of the GCC population.

The current situation in the UAE labour market in particular and the GCC countries in general is one whereby with the oil windfall of the 1970s, local manpower was not sufficient to meet the increased pace of development. During the last thirty years, there has been an influx of foreign labour into the GCC countries which has resulted in an explosion in the expatriate labour force. This in turn expanded the population size, resulting in not enough jobs available for the increased population, which has in turn led to unemployment of nationals in the affected GCC countries. As a whole, the percentage of nationals in the labour market did rise between 1990 and 2000 following the implementation of indigenisation policies, but the largest gains were in the public rather than the private sector.

The governments of the GCC countries have devised a number of policies to implement indigenisation in an attempt to generate jobs and employment for nationals. How effective are these programmes? The labour market in the UAE is adapted more towards dual and segmented labour theories (explored in more detail in the next chapter).

The GCC culture places strong emphasis on networking and social contacts, and as such social networking plays a prominent role in obtaining employment. Therefore, this research will not only try to find out the effect and extent of "Emiratisation" in the UAE, but will also dig deep into the role of social capital in the labour market of UAE, and explore how different concepts and theories of labour market development are applied in the region. As suggested earlier, the emphasis is on finding a strategy for the sustainable professional and economic development of the nationals in both public and private sectors. Emiritisation will be a long-term process which requires long-term strategies. These strategies should be drafted in conjunction with all the stakeholders to ensure their viability and success. Hence this research will acquire data from all the participants of the labour market, as this is aimed at finding a sustainable long-term solution to the problem of unemployment among GCC nationals. The next chapter will discuss the theoretical perspectives on human capital and human resource management, and will explain the importance of these theories in the context of the UAE Labour Market and its Emiratisation policy.

Chapter 3 : Human Capital, Human Resource Management and the UAE Labour Market: Theoretical Perspectives

3.1 Introduction

In simple terms a labour market can be defined as the mechanism by which labour is bought by employers and sold by workers. The supply side of the labour market consists of the labour force, or the economically active population of a country, while the demand side comprises employers or hirers of labour (Scottish Centre for Employment Research, 2001). Sattinger (2003) defined a labour market as "a collection of workers and employers that interact to allocate workers to jobs on the basis of wages and qualifications" (p.237).

Many different theories have been proposed which claim to describe or explain how labour markets work. Neo-classical theories focus mainly on the economic aspects of labour markets whilst others acknowledge to a greater extent the influence of social and political factors on them. Coughlan (1996) and others have observed that most labour market theories fall into two main categories: 1) Neoclassical theories such as Human Capital Theory, and 2) Labour Market Segmentation Theories. Also relevant to an understanding of labour markets are social network theories and the concept of social capital. This chapter draws on the literature to discuss each of these types of theories and to examine their relevance to the UAE labour. It will be argued that although none of these theories alone accurately describes or explains the UAE labour market, elements of each of them can be very useful as tools for understanding the current problems being faced and how they might be addressed. The theories might be regarded as complementary rather than conflicting explanations of the UAE labour market and can helpfully inform the development of strategies and initiatives to improve the success of the Emiratisation policy and other aspects of human resource management in this labour market.

The chapter goes on to discuss the concept and philosophy of human resource management and to explain the importance of this in the context of the UAE and its Emiratisation policy.

3.2   Human Capital Theory

3.2.1   Overview of Human Capital Theory

Neoclassical labour market theories such as Human Capital Theory assume that individuals freely make choices among a vast range of job options in the labour market and that they receive rewards based on their education and skills, or their human capital. The employment choices that people make, it is argued, are based on their personal tastes, preferences, skills and abilities (Leontaridi 1998). Datta (2000) observed that neoclassical labour market theories evoke the notion of an auction, in which workers openly and continuously compete for jobs, firms are persistently bidding to attract and retain labour services and wage rates are set by the market forces resulting from these processes.

Although modern human capital theory was originally advanced by Schultz (1961), Becker (1964; 1993) is generally regarded as the main early theorist in this area. Becker proposed that there is a direct correlation between the educational level that an individual has and the amount of money they will receive from employment. According to this theory, an increase in education leads to an increase in worker productivity, which in turn leads to higher income for the worker since employers are prepared to pay higher wages for more highly skilled and productive workers (Oscarsson 2001). By investing in human capital and improving their education or obtaining training, therefore, workers can expect to increase their income (Becker 1964; 1993). Conversely, a worker will only be motivated to undertake additional education if he or she can be certain that this will result in higher lifetime earnings (Grogan, 1997).

According to human capital theory, wage differentials are a function of skills investment decisions (Mitchell, Muysken and Welters 2005), and must be explained in terms of worker heterogeneity rather than differences between jobs. Workers who are prepared to invest in their own education and training in order to obtain better jobs will be rewarded more highly than unskilled or uneducated workers who have been unable or unwilling to make such an investment (Thomson 2002). An individual's life term earnings are expected to compensate for earnings forgone while studying, and

levels of education and training are therefore the dominant factors determining wage levels (Lachowska 2005). The theory assumes that individuals behave rationally and that they will choose to invest in their human capital, for example by paying for a training course, if they believe that the likely value of the additional revenues they will earn will exceed the cost of the investment (Heijke 1996; Grogan 1997).

Human capital investment does not just take the form of formal education but includes on-the-job-training and work experience (Bosworth, Dawkins and Stonbach 1996). Since employers bear the main cost of this form of human capital development, they are likely to favour recruiting workers who already possess relevant skills and therefore have lower training costs.

Taubman (1975) proposed that an individual's earnings or capacity are determined by skills. He identified four main types of skills which affect labour performance:

- Thoughtful Skills - learned facts and information, recall abilities, decision making abilities.
- Affective Skills - embracing leadership and social behaviour.
- Physical Skills - strength, coordination and dexterity.
- Psychological Skills - encompassing extroversion, reaction to stress, degree of neuroticism.

The type of skills required for an individual to meet employer expectations is dependent on the nature of the job at hand. Certain occupations such as highly skilled jobs require all of the four identified skills while others e.g. industrial jobs may require one or two. For example a factory worker who works on a factory line may require physical and psychological skills but may not really require other effective skills.

Becker (1961; 1993) also observed that the extent to which the acquisition of knowledge and skills is compensated by higher wages is highly dependent on the specificity of the abilities acquired. In other words, firms with a requirement for more specialised or higher level skills and abilities are prepared to compensate workers more highly for these. In this way, firms assume a greater share of the costs of acquiring these skills. From Becker's (1993) point of view, an employee will have

little or no interest in acquiring skills at his/her own expense if there is belief that these skills will be of no use upon leaving the firm. In order for a firm to retain employees in which they have invested specific human capital, firms tend to offer a wage premium to employees so as to be able to reap the benefits of investment.

Developing this further, Thurow (1975) developed Labour Queue Theory which argues that job applicants are placed in a queue based on their likely training costs and the long-term return on these for the employer. Thurow explains that more often than not, employers will attempt to save training costs and such would prefer to hire individuals who already have the requisite skills for the job and do not require much training. The screening process used to determine positions in the queue incorporates factors such as education, gender and age, which are seen to influence training costs and the likely return on investment.

3.2.2   Criticisms of Human Capital Theory

Human capital theory has been criticized for its over-emphasis on the relationship between education and earnings (Granovetter 1995) and inability to explain discrimination and inequality in the labour market (Decker 2001). Some writers have argued that classic human capital theory under-estimates the importance of on-the-job training compared with formal education; it is pointed out that although many individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds may be unable to invest in formal education, they often acquire vital employment skills on the job, which enable them to compete effectively in the labour market despite their low formal education levels (Briggs and Kitay 2000). According to Linsley's (2005) Career Mobility Theory, it is often the case that new labour market entrants who are highly educated, such as university graduates, accept job positions for which they are over-educated, in order to gain human capital in the form of experience and occupation-specific skills, and to improve their future job prospects and earning capacity. Workers may also be forced to take jobs for which they are over-qualified when there is an over-abundance of human capital in a society, due to high educational attainment levels. In this situation, relative wages for highly skilled work are likely to fall due to the abundant supply of educated labour (Linsley 2005).

Moreover, as Fleetwood (2002) pointed out, labour markets are at least in part formed from social and historical factors and do not just arise out of economic motives and behaviour. They consist not only of employers and workers but include a wide range of public and private sector business organizations, as well as social, political, and economic institutions operating at local, national and international levels, all of which may influence the ways in which they operate (Fleetwood 2002). First, it can be seen that the neoclassical approach to understanding labour markets is overly simplistic in the context of today's global economy, in which labour mobility across national boundaries has become a commonplace phenomenon and national labour markets are highly inter-related. This is particularly the case in relation to the GCC, in which liberal labour immigration policies have enabled member countries to fully exploit the global market for labour.

Arguably the most important criticism of human capital theory, though, is that it fails to take account of the influence of social rules and institutional mechanisms on wage differentials, as noted by Fleetwood (2002). As Marshall (1980) explained, these make the labour market significantly different from conventional commodity markets to which price mechanisms can be routinely applied, and have a significant influence on the distribution of workers by jobs depending on their demographic characteristics. For example social or cultural norms and beliefs have often led to women being stereotyped for particular types of jobs, such as teaching and nursing, while other occupations such as construction are regarded as being more suitable for men (Heijke, Matheeuwsen and Willems 1998).

Although cultural or religious norms about gender-appropriate jobs exist in many societies, the most extreme examples can be observed in the GCC countries and other Muslim societies where women are required to have minimum levels of interaction with men outside their own families. In such societies, although there may be high levels of female participation in education, the subsequent take up of jobs by women is often low, and both occupations and workplaces may be highly segregated by gender (Gallant and Pounder 2008). This situation is gradually changing in the Muslim world, where higher education and exposure to other cultures are bringing about life style changes among women. It is reported that some Muslim countries have high rates of female labour force participation, at 47% for Malaysia in 2004 for

example (UNICEF), although this rate will be influenced by the multi-racial and multi-religious composition of Malaysia's national population. In any case, the UAE and other GCC states are still lagging behind significantly as regards female labour force participation rates (see Chapter 2, Table 2.6).

Employer beliefs about gender roles may also lead to discrimination against women employees, leading to an over-representation of male workers in particular types of jobs, especially at senior levels. Anker (1997) explained this in terms of what he called Statistical Discrimination Theory. According to this theory, employer views on the abilities of females in general may lead them to discriminate in recruitment against individual women, even though these individuals may be more highly qualified than male applicants for their job vacancies. In the past, it was common for employers to pay women lower wages due to the expectation that they would leave the firm early in order to raise a family and would therefore represent a relatively poor investment in human capital. In many countries, discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age, disability etc. is now formally prohibited by equal opportunities legislation, although in practice it may still occur.

3.2.3   *Human Capital Theory and the UAE*

Human Capital Theory, as defined by the neo-classical labour market economists, is of limited value for understanding the nature of the UAE labour market. In general, workers here do not sell their labour freely on the open market; the many migrant workers in the private sector have restrictive immigration and employment conditions which limit their labour market mobility; whilst the concentration of Emiratis in public sector jobs is largely determined by cultural and social traditions rather than the relationship between human capital and economic rewards. Although previous studies have revealed that locals believe that salaries as well as working conditions are better in the public sector (Nelson 2004; Godwin 2006), the widespread preference among locals for jobs in the public sector is largely due to non-economic factors such as the more conducive working conditions; it has been reported (Forstenlechner 2008) that Emiratis will even choose not to work at all rather than take a private sector job. It has additionally been argued that Emiratis perceive themselves as the middle-class within UAE society, and will not consider the possibility of taking those jobs in the private sector that are thought to be below their

social standing (Morris 2005), or which are not seen to offer career development prospects (Al-Ali 2006). Empirical survey-based studies in the UAE have revealed that these patterns of employment are strongly influenced by subjective perceptions of the nature of private sector jobs, rather than actual knowledge and rational decision-making (e.g. Freek 2004; Kapiszewski 2000).

However, elements of human capital theory can be useful in helping to explain patterns of recruitment in the UAE and the limited effectiveness of Emiratisation to date. For example, from the perspective of neo-classical theories such as human capital theory, a large number of foreign workers in a country's labour force can be interpreted as the outcome of differences between countries in the supply and demand of labour. As Suter (2005) explained, workers from countries where wages are low and labour is abundant will be attracted to countries that have high levels of financial capital but low labour supply and where good wages are on offer, such as the UAE and the other GCC states. The UAE is now experiencing the effects of this in the form of a labour market which is dominated by migrant labour and in which the native workforce has difficulty competing for jobs due at least in part to the low cost of this foreign labour. In the evaluation of labour in the United Arab Emirates from a human capital perspective, it can be seen that the Emirati nationals are in low demand because they are have low levels of qualifications that are not needed by employers while their foreign national counterparts are in high demand because they have the needed qualifications that employers believe will serve them well.

From a neo-classical labour market theory perspective, therefore, the situation in the UAE indicates that the global labour market is working effectively in terms of supply and demand, and that individual private sector employers in the UAE are benefitting from this by recruiting appropriately skilled workers from overseas at low wage rates. At a national level, however, the heavy dependence on large numbers of foreign migrants over time has distorted the education and skills requirements of the labour markets. For a prolonged period, most highly skilled and low skilled jobs in the UAE, and almost all jobs in the free market sector, have been occupied by expatriates, and there has been little incentive for nationals to develop the experience or skills that are needed for these jobs (Yussof 2006). Private sector employers have a preference for employing foreign workers over local workers because nationals are perceived by

private sector employers as not having the required expertise and locals are viewed as being more expensive to employ, demand greater benefits and have lengthy dismissal processes (Nelson 2004; Oakes 2004; Toledo 2005).

Analyses of educational participation patterns in the UAE demonstrate the failure of the UAE to develop appropriate human resource management strategies to meet the demands of the private sector (Fergany 2001). Like other GCC states, the UAE is producing more graduates every year, but most of these are not equipped with the skills needed for an occupation where productivity determines salary and wages. Although the economy requires a range of technical and professional skills, the majority of UAE nationals study subjects more suited to a career in the public sector, in line with employment preferences among this group. For example, in 2002 it was reported (UN 2002) that 38% all university graduates across the GCC states had completed their degrees in Social or Islamic studies, 34% in Education, 11% in Business Studies and only 18% in technical subjects. Fasano and Goyal (2004) and Girgis (2002) confirmed that there were relatively few local graduates in "highly skilled" fields such as science, accounting and medicine. Table 3.1 shows the distribution of higher education graduates in GCC countries in the 1990s.

Country	Year	Total Graduates	Education	Human Science	Social Science	Natural Science	Medical Science	Others
Bahrain	1995	1,382	22.9	8.2	26.9	25.1	16.9	0
Oman	1995	733	51.4	na	16.4	26.1	6.1	0
Qatar	1997	1,360	41.2	26.2	8.4	19	na	5.2
Saudi Arabia	1996	17,901	38.8	19	17.4	21.4	3	0.3
UAE	1997	1,638	47.1	14.8	13.4	23.1	1.6	0

Table 3.1: Distribution of Higher Education Graduates in GCC countries (Gulf Industrial Bulletin 2005) (Figures for Kuwait not available)

This has given rise to a situation in which a high proportion of UAE nationals are highly qualified, but not in the fields required for many private sector jobs. In fact, a considerably lower proportion of those employed in this sector than in government are highly educated: a recent survey of 1,500 Emirati employees found that 65.4% of those employed in the public sector had a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared with

43% of those employed in the private sector (Al-Ali, Shee and Foley 2008). Perhaps even more worryingly, Al Shaiba (2008) has observed a decline in the annual numbers of national graduates from higher educational institutions in the UAE after 2005, which may suggest that Emiratis are becoming increasingly reluctant to invest in their human capital in order to improve their employment prospects.

It is particularly revealing to note the observation of Abubakr (2006) that even though the government recently imposed regulations requiring the private sector to replace expatriate secretaries and human resource managers with Emiratis, at present there are no institutions in the UAE that offer students a specialized degree or certificate in Human Resource Management, and the subject is only taught to a small number of business students. This is an example of the way in which the Emiratisation policy is being implemented with inadequate attention being paid to the human capital development requirements needed to support it.

The concept of human resource management can thus be very important in contributing to an understanding of how, at national level, economic growth and competitiveness can be promoted by making appropriate investments in higher education and professional training which is specifically targeted at the needs of employers and the economy in general (Yussof and Ismail 2002). This is particularly relevant to the current Emiratisation policy context of the UAE, in which the focus is shifting somewhat from the enforcement of quotas on the employment of nationals to the development of a native labour force which is equipped to meet the needs of private sector employers. This policy change is in line with the recommendations of Fasano and Goyal's (2004) econometric analysis of the UAE, which stressed the need to strengthen the government's investment in human capital.

Government spending on education in the UAE has historically been far below levels of spending on education in developed countries. A 2005 United Nations report on Education and Health in the GCC region reveals that; between 1975 and 2001, the UAE only spent an average of 1.8 per cent of its GDP on education; in comparison, the USA spent 6% and Norway 7% of their GDP on education during the same time period (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia 2005). This report noted that of the GCC countries, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia had spent the most

on education, at 5.9% and 6.9% of their respective GDPs on average, while the UAE lagged behind even though it had the highest income level in the region (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia 2005). By the end of 2007, only about 30 per cent of all UAE nationals had educational qualifications other than high school certificates (Ministry of Labour, cited in Al Shaiba 2009).

A study by Al-Ali, Shee and Foley (2008) revealed that a relative lack of technical skills and abilities among UAE nationals is having a negative impact on the willingness of private sector employers to recruit them, and also restricting the level of responsibility which they are being given in the public sector (also see TANMIA 2004). Al-Ali, Shee and Foley (2008) argue that in order to achieve the objectives of Emiratisation, it will be necessary to develop the skills of Emiratis and encourage them to take on higher levels of responsibility. These authors identify the importance of promoting a "climate of trust" between organisations and their national employees, but this is only likely to be achieved if employers are confident that their employees are skilled and competent.

Human capital theory can also be used to explain low levels of worker mobility within a labour market, which results in inflexibilities and a lack of responsiveness to economic change. Gilbert (2001) observed that there are often low levels of turnover among employees with organisation-specific skills, due to the incentives associated with this investment for both the employee and their organisation. In other words, employees are likely to remain with an employer who rewards them well for their human capital, and employers in turn want to retain these workers in whom they have invested highly. This is reinforced by the fact that organisation- or sector-specific skills may not be readily transferable to other organisations or sectors, so the employees concerned would be unlikely to secure comparable salaries or benefits from a different employer. In the case of the UAE, as noted above, the majority of highly qualified nationals are trained in knowledge and skills relevant mainly to the public sector, a phenomenon which introduces inflexibilities to the labour market and hinders movement into the private sector. A report published by the UN in 2004 found that at least part of the local unemployment in the GCC countries can be attributed to "queuing" for prospective employment in the government sector, even though this is now saturated and has relatively few opportunities for new entrants.

Further inflexibilities in the labour market arise because of the restrictive employment rights regulations in the public sector which make it virtually possible to dismiss native Emirati employees (Shah 2008).

Paradoxically, although the tendency for human capital theorists to neglect social and cultural factors is often cited as a criticism of their theories, it can also be argued that the impact of social and cultural factors on labour markets can be explained in human capital terms. This can be illustrated in the UAE context by the position of women in the labour market. Officially, all forms of discrimination against women have been abolished, and the UAE has seen a major increase in female employment in recent years, including an annual growth rate of 3.5% between 1985 and 2005. However, religious and cultural norms continue to have an impact on female labour force participation (Gallant and Pounder 2008). Women are still expected to have primary responsibility for taking care of the home and children, and the difficulty of combining this with paid employment has been found to be a major factor affecting female labour force participation rates (Aryee, Fields and Luk 1999). It was observed by Kapiszewski (2001) that although women account for more than 65% of the UAE's university graduates, a large number never have the opportunity to utilize their skills in the workplace. This means that much of the nation's investment in education and training does not bring about economic benefits. Those women who do enter the labour market are subject to strong cultural norms about the types of jobs that are suitable for them, such as teaching or office work (Gallant and Pounder 2008), arising at least in part from the belief that women should not have high levels of contact with men outside their own family (Rugh 1985; UNDP 2003). These types of factors reduce the job opportunities available to women (Soffan 1980; Hijab 1988) and hinder the most effective use of human capital at societal level.

3.3   Dual and Segmented Labour Market Theories

3.3.1   Overview of Dual and Segmented Labour Market Theories

In recent years, dual and segmented labour market theories have become more popular than neo-classical theories, with empirical evidence being presented that they reflect the nature of most labour markets more accurately. These types of theories are based on the proposition that labour markets are segmented or divided into specific

components or categories resulting from institutional or social factors. These labour market segments are separated by rigidities which hinder mobility across them, and which help to explain why some workers become trapped in low-paying jobs (Piore 1979). From this theoretical perspective, labour markets are divided into two non-competing main segments within which rewards for human capital tend to differ.

For example, Mitchell et al. (2005) identify a dual labour market as one which is segmented into a primary labour market and a secondary labour market, each with different entry and reward processes. In the primary market, human capital (education) is crucial as a wage determinant because this segment consists of highly skilled jobs which require high educational levels. In the secondary market which consists mainly of unskilled jobs, on the other hand, the individual's level of accumulated human capital is not the main determinant of wages received (Doeringer and Piore 1980). Piore (1970) argued that the segmented nature of labour markets explains the persistence of poverty in many societies, since many individuals cannot gain access to primary employment with its enhanced wages and benefits. Human capital, in the form of education and training, is important in the primary but not in the secondary market and workers in the secondary market are normally prevented from entering the primary labour market because they do not possess the required skills and education levels (Saint-Paul 1996).

In their empirical research, Hodson and Kaufman (1982) identified "core" and "periphery" firms which dominate the "primary" and "secondary" labour markets respectively. "Core" firms are generally large and influential within their economies, and are often technology-intensive, while "peripheral" firms in contrast tend to be relatively small and more labour-intensive in the way that they operate. Hodson and Kaufman (1982) observed that the skills needed for jobs in the "core" are specific to the firm and require high levels of education plus job-specific training, and that firms in the core invest highly in their staff. Levels of education and training already held by job applicants are important in the recruitment screening process, since firms will generally want to employ workers who will cost them less to train in company-specific skills. In the periphery, in contrast, the skills and abilities required tend to be widely available and not company-specific.

In order to minimize their costs by retaining trained workers, firms in the primary market are generally prepared to pay higher wages and will offer more better, better job security and better working conditions (Lachowska 2005). Since there is no such incentive to retain workers in the secondary market, who can easily be substituted by others with similar education and skill levels, peripheral firms tend to offer relatively poor wages and low levels of job security (Doeringer and Piore, 1971; Launov 2004; McGinnity, Mertens and Gundert 2004).

A hypothetical Dual Labour Market is shown graphically in Figure 3.1. In this diagram, the concave curve represents the primary market segment and the flat curve the secondary market segment. The shape of the curves reflects the ways in which experience and wages are associated in each of these labour market segments.
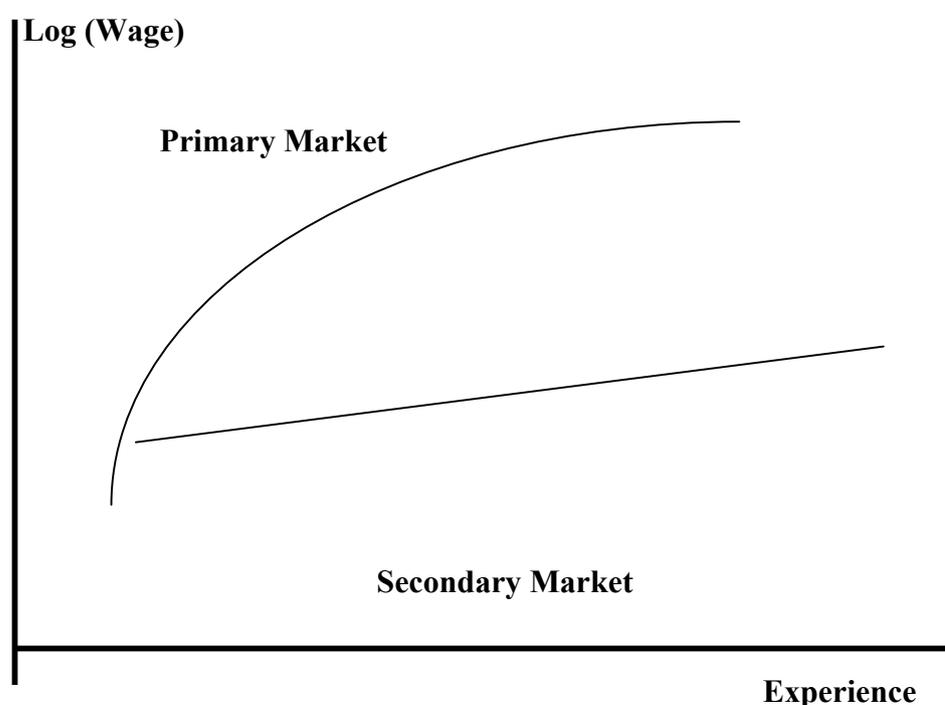
Figure 3.1: Hypothetical dual labour market (Lachowska 2005)

Lachowska (2005) explained that economic duality often results in discrimination within the primary market. When there is an excess supply of workers in this market, job applicants are placed in "queues" for job positions, and employers tend to discriminate amongst them on the basis of the estimated costs of training these applicants. Stereotyping is often involved in this process: if an employer believes specific characteristics such as gender or ethnicity to be indicators for additional

training costs, the applicants may be discriminated against by being turned down or placed farther down the queue for job vacancies (Hodson and Kaufman, 1982).

3.3.2 Criticisms of Dual and Segmented Labour Market Theories

In general, it has been widely acknowledged in the literature that most labour markets are indeed segmented in various ways. However, some writers have argued that dual labour market theory is of limited analytical value since it is primarily descriptive rather than theoretical in its approach (e.g. Wachter 1974; Kufman et al 1981).

It has also been argued (Hodson and Kaufman 1982) that dual and segmented labour market theories are based on assumptions rather than empirical evidence. The dual approach to understanding labour markets assumes that various dimensions of the industrial structure like firm size, profits and growth have parallel effects on the labour market outcomes, and that if these industrial dimensions are aligned in the right way, there will be uniform workplace effects in dimensions such as wages, stability of employment etc. This is regarded as a simplistic approach which does not recognise the wide differences that exist in practice between societies (Hodson and Kaufman 1982).

3.3.3 Overview of Internal and External Labour Market Theory

The development of dual labour markets has been attributed to factors such as the primary market substituting market processes with institutional rules regarding salaries and internal promotions (Sousa-Poza 2000). As a result, the use of price mechanisms is less important as a means of setting wages in the primary market, and the workers in this segment are largely protected from economic fluctuations.

An internal labour market has been defined in the literature as a specific form of primary labour market which is characterized by the development of internal job ladders, limited ports of entry, job security, internal promotion prospects and higher wages than could be obtained in the external market (Rubery and Wilkinson 2002). Lazear and Oyer (2004) described internal labour markets as those in which workers are hired only into entry level jobs, with higher level positions being filled from

within. In these labour markets, it has been observed, it is only entry-level wages that are set competitively; promotions are not based solely based on individual ability but on other factors such as seniority (de Kok, den Butter and van Gameren 2001). Even within these internal labour markets, however, there is normally some form of internal competition for promotions as well as attempts to ensure that the credentials of internal candidates meet the requirements for similar positions in the external labour market, for example by consulting external referees (de Kok et al., 2001).

Whereas internal labour markets are usually characterized mainly by permanent jobs, external labour markets frequently have large numbers of contract-based or temporary jobs (Luciani 2005). In external labour markets, workers are relatively interchangeable between firms, and wages are largely determined by aggregate processes over which individual firms have little influence (Lazear and Oyer, 2004). When labour is scarce, applicants for entry-level jobs might be competitively fought over by employers as they compete with one another for to hire similar unskilled and non-specialised labour.

3.3.4   Segmented Labour Market Theory and the UAE Labour Market

Several aspects of a dual labour market can be identified in the UAE and the other GCC states, although the unique features of their labour markets mean that they do not conform strictly to the classical theory of segmented labour markets.

In many societies, the primary labour market consists of skilled jobs in the formal economy whilst the secondary labour market consists of unskilled work in the informal economy. To an extent this is true of the UAE. Here, the primary market can be seen to consist of the relatively highly-skilled local workforce in stable employment in the public sector, while the secondary market of the private sector has a high foreign worker population which is largely low-skilled and in insecure employment. Elhiraika and Hamed (2002) cite the UAE Labour report (2000) in reporting that immigrant workers account for 99 per cent of labour in the private sector in UAE.

Public sector employment in the UAE, as in the other Gulf States, consists of better pay, favourable working hours and cultural homogeneity (characteristics of a primary

labour market), while most of the private sector employment is characterized by lower pay, unstable jobs and less promotion, which are typical of a secondary market (Oakes 2004; Girgis, 2002). Moreover, in GCC labour markets, public sector employment is generally permanent, while a significant proportion of private sector employment is contract-based, especially in the large construction industry for example.

Indeed, Rubery and Wilkinson (2002) argued that internal labour markets are a feature of the GCC states including the UAE. In this region, they observed, public sector employment is characterised by wages that are set by governments, internal job ladders, restrictions on entry, higher job security and better pay and conditions, factors which lead most locals to seek jobs in this sector but introduce distortions in the operation of national labour markets. Similarly, Al Ali (2008) identified pay-related dualism of the labour market as one of the main factors hindering the successful implementation of Emiratisation.

Additional levels of segmentation can also be identified within the UAE's secondary labour market. For example, there is a preference by employers for Asian workers rather than Arab workers due to the perception that Asians cost less to employ and are perceived to be more manageable, obedient and efficient than their Arab counterparts (Kapiszewski, 2003). Differential pay rates are applied to different nationalities within the private sector, with Emirati nationals and highly skilled western expatriates being at the top of the pay scales, followed by other western expatriates, then Filipinos, South Africans and Arabs from Lebanon and Palestine. Non GCC Arabs and south Asians, especially Bangladeshis and Nepalis, are the lowest-paid nationality groups.

As Lachowska (2005) observed, from the dual labour theory perspective, it is possible for there to be high wage differentials between similar jobs, depending on segment affiliation rather than worker endowments. In the GCC labour markets, for example, two workers performing similar types of jobs could be earning significantly different wages because one is in the primary market, where salaries and benefits are set by the government, while the other is in the secondary market where market forces are the dominant influence on wages. It is also often the case that new entrants to the public

sector receive higher salaries than existing staff for the same jobs due to the impact of pay agreements (Harry 2003).

Rigidities also exist within the secondary labour market due to the restrictions imposed on foreign migrant workers, which have been reported to result in severe exploitation and discrimination against them (Atiyyah 1996). Work visas are generally only issued for a year and for a specific job and single employer. There is documented evidence that many employers violate statutory pay and employment protection rights (Atiyyah, 1996) and also infringe the law by charging workers fees to let them change jobs (Harry 2003). According to Suter (2005) the poor working and living conditions and exploitation of low-skilled migrant workers in the UAE places them on a "constant verge of illegality" (Suter 2005, p. 6).

The position of women in the UAE also reflects the type of institutional discrimination that often characterizes segmented labour markets. There is reported evidence from research that although women in the UAE have been accorded equal educational and employment rights; in practice there is still widespread discrimination against them in both the public and private sectors (Al-Ali, Shee and Foley 2008). Women are generally paid less than men at all levels of employment in the UAE (Harry 2003).

Piore (1970) attributed international employment migration to the segmented labour market structure of developed nations, in which it is difficult to increase wages for relatively affluent local workers since this would result in structural inflation (cited in Suter 2005). The UAE is a good example of this, where native workers have been reluctant to take relatively poorly paid jobs in the private sector and there has been an abundant supply of foreign migrant labour available. In other countries where the labour supply has been more limited, perhaps because of immigration policies, there has been a greater focus on capital rather than labour in economic development policies, and an emphasis on human capital formation through education to support these policies. In the UAE, as the literature in this area suggests, skill formation within the native population has been hindered by the ready availability of low cost migrant labour and the development of a labour-focused society.

However, dual and segmented labour market theories do not fully explain the UAE experience. Although public sector jobs are generally preferred by local workers for the better pay and conditions that they offer, many of these are low-skilled. At the same time, the private sector of the UAE is not characterised by insecure, low-skilled jobs; indeed, one of the barriers to employment of more locals in the private sector has been the inability to meet the qualification and skills requirements of employers in this sector.

3.4   Social Networks and Social Capital

3.4.1   Overview of Social Networks and Social Capital Theories

Social network theories demonstrate how individuals generate "social capital" by putting their personal connections, including family, friends, professional and social acquaintances, to the best use in order to achieve their objectives, such as securing a job. Social capital has been described in various ways in the literature; for example, Putnam et al., (1993, p.35-36) defined it as "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and trust that can facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit", whilst Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) described social capital as "the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p.119).

According to the literature in this area, the benefits of investing in physical or human capital can be significantly enhanced by the generation of social capital (Putnam et al,, 1993). The interplay between social connections and social capital among professional workers, such as lawyers and doctors, was illustrated by Bourdieu. He showed how these workers are able to exploit their social capital - namely, "a capital of social connections, honourability and respectability" - to win the confidence of a clientele in high society (Bourdieu 1984, p.142). However, it is not just among professionals that social capital is used for personal gain: the literature provides examples of this occurring in many different social groups. Moreover, different forms of social capital generation have been identified.

For example, three distinct processes by which social capital can be generated in social networks were defined by Cote and Healy (2001: 1) bonding, or the

development of the types of close relationships that exist between relatives and close friends; 2) bridging, or the types of looser ties which exist between acquaintances, colleagues and associates, and which are particularly important in terms of "getting ahead" in society, and 3) linking, or the development of the types of connections that people have with organizations and institutions which provide them with various forms of support.

The transfer of information is one particular aspect of social networks and social capital that has particular relevance to the operation of labour markets. This was illustrated in the work of Rees (1966), who demonstrated the importance of social capital in labour markets by showing how formal and informal information networks are important in relation to securing jobs. In the present day context, these formal information networks may include state and private employment agencies, newspaper advertisements, school placement services and more recently the internet. Informal sources, in contrast, include personal referrals and direct or indirect enquiries through social contacts.

The particular importance of referrals in the employment recruitment process was highlighted by Granovetter (1995), who discussed how social networks have a beneficial effect in the labour market through the provision of better information. The relative importance of social networks in recruitment, however, varies from country to country depending on factors such as employment legislation. In some countries such as Sweden, for example, formal qualifications are particularly important when applying for jobs, and employers are required to formally advertise any vacancies. As a result fewer jobs will be allocated through the use of social networks (Korpi, 2001). In other countries, in contrast, workers depend highly on the use of social networking rather than formal job advertisements and educational qualifications when procuring employment. Ionnides and Loury (2004) documented the ways in which the use of friends, relatives and acquaintances in job searches varies by location and demographic group.

3.4.2   Social Networks, Social Capital and the UAE Labour Market

Social network theory and the concept of social capital can be used both to explain many aspects of the UAE labour market and to identify ways in which the current labour market problems might be addressed.   The UAE's strong social network tradition can be shown to be both a current hindrance and a potential asset to the labour market.

In order to understand the operation of social networks and social capital in the UAE context, it is helpful to refer to Hofstede's theory of national culture. Hofstede (2001) identified five dimensions of national culture which affect the attitudes and behaviour of employees, and proposed that all countries fall somewhere on a continuum between the two extremes of each dimension. These dimensions were defined as Power Distance; Individualism versus Collectivism; Masculinity versus Femininity; Uncertainty Avoidance; and Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation. According to Hofstede (2001), Arab societies rank very highly in terms of collectivism as opposed to individualism, scoring 38 compared with a world average of 64 on the individualism/collectivism index. In these types of collectivist societies, Hofstede (2001) asserted, people generally form cohesive in-groups which are very protective of their members in exchange for their unquestioned loyalty, and on which individuals rely for much of their day to day support. This indicates that social capital and social networks are likely to be very important in the context of the UAE and other GCC labour markets.

Indeed, a number of empirical studies have demonstrated the importance of social networks in Arab societies, particularly those focused on the family group. The family is of paramount importance in the GCC countries, with the extended family being at the centre of all aspects of life for most individuals, regardless of socio-economic background (Ali, cited in Pawan and Mellahi 2006). Personal networks of relatives and other contacts are very important in recruitment and job procurement among UAE locals, according to empirical research by Pawan and Mellahi (2006). They found evidence that information about job vacancies in the UAE is most frequently communicated in religious and social gatherings and that many jobs are never advertised formally (Pawan and Mellahi, 2006). As a result, jobseekers with the most

appropriate experience and qualifications for particular jobs may never find out about the vacancies (Pawan and Mellahi, 2006).

As previous sections have discussed, the vast majority of employed UEA nationals work in the public sector. Since various studies (e.g. Ali, 1996; Pawan and Mellahi, 2006) have found that most locals find jobs through word of mouth it can be expected that employment patterns in the public sector will largely be determined by the ways in which social networks operate. Relatively little research into this specific issue has been conducted, but what has been well documented in the literature is the practice of nepotism, known locally as "Wasta", in which employers are persuaded by their relatives or other personal contacts to offer a job to someone regardless of their suitability for the post. Since better qualified candidates may well have been available, this practice is unlikely to result in the most positive outcomes with regard to productivity or efficiency. For this reason, Al-Ali, Shee and Foley (2008) refer to "Wasta" as producing negative social capital which presents a barrier to good governance and hinders the implementation of labour market reform in the GCC states.

In many contexts, social networks are used as informal channels of information about job vacancies which complement formal channels of information such as published job advertisements. The literature suggests that among UAE nationals, however, social networks have become the dominant form of information about employment opportunities and are likely to be hindering the effective use of human capital. UAE employers constantly receive numerous unsolicited job applications from jobseekers or from people helping them to look for work (Harry 2003). Since it can be seen as offensive in Arabic culture to give a direct refusal to someone, many employers reportedly just ignore these unsolicited applications (Harry, 2003), and fail to even consider the possible suitability of the applicants. Harry also found that many UAE employers are reluctant to advertise vacancies due to the large number of applications they are likely to receive, which for public sector jobs often exceeds 150 for every vacant post (Harry, 2003) and therefore jobseekers have little choice but to submit unsolicited applications. These factors mean that there are few systematic procedures in place in the UAE for attracting only suitably qualified individuals to apply for job vacancies, or for screening out those applicants who do not meet the eligibility

criteria. As Al-Ali, Shee and Foley (2008) observed, in order to improve the operation of the UAE labour market, there is a pressing need to replace the heavy reliance on social networks and wasta with a competence or merit-based method of filling job vacancies.

A parallel system of social networks also operates among the UAE's migrant labour communities. Social networks among migrant workers have been demonstrated to be of great importance in determining international labour migrant patterns, providing channels of information about employment opportunities overseas and connecting migrants of common local or national origins within their host countries (Suter, 2005). As in many other countries with large populations of migrant workers, within the UAE this has resulted in a high concentration of particular nationalities or ethnic groups. For example, it was reported in 2002 that, of the million Indian workers in the UAE, at least half originated from the tiny Indian state of Kerala (Zachariah et al 2002).

The strong influence of social networks among both native and migrant workers in the UAE serves to reinforce existing patterns of labour market participation. Since the majority of Emiratis are employed in the public sector and have few personal contacts in the private sector, they are relatively unlikely to find out about job vacancies in the public sector or even to have adequate information about the nature of jobs in this sector. Conversely, migrant workers generally have numerous personal contacts in the private sector and are therefore well placed to find out about job vacancies there.

3.5 Human Resource Management

3.5.1 The Philosophy of Human Resource Management

The types of theories discussed above have to an extent underpinned the development of the field of Human Resource Management. This is important to individual organisations and to national governments alike: the management of human resources is crucial in order to achieve business, labour market and social objectives. In the UAE, the Emiratisation policy reflects human resource management at the national level, and is the main policy tool for tackling unemployment among nationals and reducing the country's over-reliance on expatriate labour.

In order to understand the role of human resource management in general, it is imperative to understand its core philosophy. Swanson et al. (2001) defined philosophy as the careful analysis of the motives for action, which is grounded in three core principles that define our engagement with the world: ontology, epistemology and axiology. Ontology is defined as how one views the world and the environment around us; epistemology explores the thought process and how we obtain knowledge of the world, while axiology is concerned with examining with value systems and how these influence behaviour. These principles are forever in flux and constantly respond to stimuli and change, for example in the context of HR these would include new initiatives and thinking regarding the development and management of human resources. The philosophy of human resource management can thus be seen as the management of a deep and integrated series of complex relationships that create, motivate and empower people to achieve organizational objectives. An appreciation of this will help provide understanding of the logic behind conflicting viewpoints, processes and systems which work together to create an apparently seamless structure.

The philosophical content of HRM has not been given much consideration in the literature, though works such as Kuchinke's (2003) discussion of paradigms have signalled a move in that direction. McAndrew (2000) used the concept of scientific paradigms (Kuhn, 1962) to understand HRM principles, and depicted the connection between people and companies as a mechanical relationship using the Newtonian paradigm. Other writers have taken a more flexible approach, while still emphasising the importance of HR philosophy in unravelling solutions to human resource-related social and organisational problems (for example, Swanson et al. (2000)).

3.5.2   The Purpose of Human Resource Management

Whilst the philosophy of HRM is still being discussed and debated, deeper questions regarding the fundamental significance and reasons for HRM are also being posed. The theory and practice of HRM have given rise to countless debates over time (Holton, 2000), in the context of questions such as the potentially conflicting responsibilities of HR towards a company's shareholders, on the one hand, and its

employees on the other. This section outlines some of the perspectives on HRM that have been identified over the years, in order to help improve understanding of the human resource challenges facing the UAE.

Hatcher (2000) argued that human resource management should account for profits, systems, processes, employee growth and well-being and compliance; thus connecting shareholder gains with employee benefits. Kuchinke (2003) divided the main roles of HRM into people, production and solutions, with the dominant approach depending on the core activity required in any given situation. Gourlay (2000) identified its main functions as being training and development, employee well-being and growth, the transfer of learning throughout the organization and acting as an agent of change. Sambrook, Gold, Watson and Rix (2002) interpret the role of HRM as one of a solution provider for the organisation.

Garavan, Gunnigle and Morley (2000) elaborated on the role of HRM and highlighted its contributions to the organisation in terms of effectiveness and resources, organisational learning and the on-going implementation of learning and best practice achieve ensure the best organisational solutions. In this sense, HRM has different reasons for existing, depending on the specific issue being addressed. McGoldrick, Martin and Pate's (2003) similarly emphasised the role of organisational learning and the implementation of psychological contracts, defined as an understanding between companies and employees which includes beliefs, value systems, perceptions, viewpoints and mutual expectations.

HR theorists have also contested the importance and status of each of the functions of HRM, leading to debates on its purpose and potential organisational impact. Garavan, Gunnigle and Morley (2000), for instance, writing from an economic perspective which views land, labour and capital as the primary factors of production, argued that human resources should be viewed as a capital resource. Weinberger (1998) segregated systems theory from learning theory and discussed the respective impact of each on HRM initiatives. It is clear that while there is no clear convergence of ideologies on the nature and purpose of HRM, its purpose can be defined by the core philosophical elements behind it as it applies to each individual situation making it a fluid and dynamic stream.

3.5.3 Boundaries and Parameters of Human Resource Management

The former segment outlined the various functions, nature, scope and expectations of HRM, as discussed by various writers and theorists. These interrelated but separate functions make HRM a challenging field to understand. For example, Walton (1999) conceptualized strategic HRM initiatives and solutions as a standalone organisational element, while Serge (1997) focused more on the role of HRM in promoting organisational learning. Training and adult education are generally seen as an aspect of HRM, linking it with strategic organisational development and preparedness for the future. HRM practices and theoretical elements are constantly being evaluated, merged and segregated whilst structures, frameworks and models serve to create bridges between the two. Hatcher (2005) argued for the greater convergence of theory and practice to make HRM more meaningful and impactful in the business world.

HRM has come a long way from being merely an employee watchdog looking after employee needs, training and growth and carrying out administrative functions (Jacobs, 2000). According to Lynham, HRM was not traditionally seen as a theoretical concept but was always viewed as a practice carrying out a set of limited functions. From the work of writers such as McLagan (1983) and O'Brien and Thompson (1999) it can be observed that the personal growth of personnel, company profits and career planning have traditionally been the three main functions or goals of HRM. A recent expansion in HRM publications has now increased the platform for debate and information dissemination on HRM principles, practices, theories and policies (Jacobs, 2000) and has increased awareness of the subject (McGoldrick and Stewart, 1996). These include business school journals, books, and adult education publications and so on. HRM functions, roles and responsibilities have also seen a considerable shift and many areas are now covered by HRM which were previously not under its ambit such as leadership, value systems, company philosophy, labour management, employee growth and careers (Donovan and Marsick 2000). The content of HRM activities has expanded to include social impact, profit motive, shareholder responsibility, human resource capital management, career growth plans, performance measures, compensation and benefits, tax planning inputs, training and

development, behavioural management, mentoring etc., as well as monitoring compliance with ethical codes of conduct.

With so many theories as to the principles and practices of HRM, Hatcher's (2000) observation that HR was bankrupt for ideas both in theory and practice has been proved a fallacy. HRM is being recognized not only as an integral part of the corporate structure but as a key strategic and policy function contributing to business strategy and bottom line growth as well as national economic development. With its wide ambit and multi- dimensional facets, HRM can emerge as a key social and economic asset.

3.5.4 *Human Resource Management in the UAE*

The UAE government's human resource management in the form of the Emiratisation policy has until recently been based on quotas and restrictions on the employment of expatriate workers, but it is now shifting, in line with the wider paradigm changes in HRM, to an emphasis on human resource development through education and training. Like many of the GCC countries, which have some of the world's fastest growing populations, the UAE has recognised that education plays a dominant role as an instrument for large-scale achievement and progress in all spheres. Education enables an individual to study and understand the real life situations; provides the opportunity to develop confidence in the minds of younger generation, and provides a strong base for rational, value-oriented and nation-building progress (Myers and Harbison, 1965; Mingat and Tan, 1986). Technical and vocational courses in higher education play a significant role in this context. Additionally, human resource management and human resource development must reflect the requirements of the labour market, especially the emerging sectors such as ICT.

3.6 **Summary**

This chapter of the study has presented an overview of some of the leading labour market theories, and has explored how these types of theories can be used to improve understanding of the current UAE labour market and to identify solutions to current labour market problems, with this being developed into a fuller theoretical framework in the main research study.

Traditional human capital theories assume that individuals freely make choices among a vast range of job options in the labour market, and that they receive rewards based on their education and skills. Neo-classical theories refined these models by incorporating a supply-side dimension in terms of employer actions and preferences. In general, these theories have been developed and apply within the context of domestic labour markets, where jobseeker and employer choices are highly constrained by national boundaries. Skills and expertise are relatively specific to particular industries and types of jobs.

The UAE labour market can be identified as a neoclassical labour market in some respects: locals do formally have a choice whether to work in the public or private sector. But the UAE experience does not lend support to human capital theory as envisaged by neo-classical labour market economists. Here, a significant number of highly educated locals are unable to obtain public sector employment with its perks and higher wages, and have to settle for private sector employment with its lower wages and lack of progressive job opportunities. However, elements of human capital theory can be useful in understanding the need for the UAE government to invest in the education and training of the local population, a theme which will be developed in this study.

In recent years, dual and segmented labour market theories have become more popular than neo-classical theories, with empirical evidence that these reflect the nature of most labour markets more accurately. They are based on the argument that labour markets are segmented or divided into specific components or categories, separated by rigidities which hinder mobility across them, and help to explain why some workers become trapped in low-paying jobs, and are unable to move into higher-paying jobs. For example, Mitchell, Muysken & Welters (2005) identify a dual labour market as one which is segmented into a Primary Labour Market and a Secondary Labour Market, each with different entry and reward processes. Workers in the primary segment generally enjoy job stability, high wages, good working conditions and favourable career prospects. On the other hand, workers in the secondary segment generally have lower wages, unstable jobs, relatively poor working conditions and few career prospects (Launov, 2004).

Aspects of a dual labour market can clearly be observed in the UAE. Here, public sector employment generally offers good pay and conditions and good prospects for promotion, while much private sector employment is characterized by lower pay, unstable jobs and poor career prospects, which are common characteristics of a secondary labour market (Oakes, 2004; Girgis, 2002). Other cross-cutting labour market categories can also be identified, such as the skilled and unskilled segments, with the skilled segment comprising highly skilled jobs in areas such as management, administration, law, healthcare and education, and the unskilled segment comprising routine technical, manual, service and retail jobs. However, dual and segmented labour market theories do not fully explain the UAE experience. Although public sector jobs are generally preferred by local workers for the better pay and conditions that they offer, many of these are low-skilled. At the same time, the private sector is not only characterised by insecure, low-skilled jobs; indeed, one of the barriers to employment of more locals in the private sector has been the inability to meet qualification and skills requirements.

Another form of labour market theory which can be useful in examining the experience of the UAE is the theory of internal and external labour markets. This argues that large organisations often have internal job ladders and limited ports of entry, and offer greater job security, internal promotion prospects and higher wages than could be obtained in the external market (Rubery & Wilkinson, 2002). This becomes possible because wage levels are determined internally and are relatively free of market pressure. In external labour markets, on the other hand, where workers have fluid movement between firms, wages are determined by aggregate processes over which firms have little influence. Rubery & Wilkinson (2002) observed that internal labour markets are a feature of the GCC states including the UAE. In this region, public sector employment in particular is characterised by wages that are set by governments, internal job ladders, restrictions on entry, higher job security and better pay and conditions, factors which lead most locals to seek jobs in this sector but introduce distortions in the operation of national labour markets.

The preceding discussions have indicated that social and cultural norms and traditions have played a considerable part in shaping the UAE labour market. Social network

theories demonstrate how individuals generate social capital by putting their connections to the best use to achieve their objectives. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) defined social capital as "the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (119). Social networks have been shown to play a particularly important role in process of securing employment, for example through referrals and the communication of labour market information (Granovetter, 1995). As noted earlier, personal contacts have been shown in previous studies (e.g. Pawan & Mellahi, 2006) to play a very important role in recruitment and job procurement practices in the GCC states. It will be important to consider the role of social networking and social capital in this study in order to understand the labour market issues currently facing the UAE, and to identify how solutions to current problems might incorporate the use of the strong social networks that exist there.

The following chapter will discuss the recent developments in the UAE and the role of the ICT sector, in order to provide the context for the primary research, which has investigated the perspectives of various labour market stakeholders.

Chapter 4 : Development of the UAE Economy and the Emergence of the ICT Sector

4.1   The Contribution of Oil to Economic Development in the UAE

Before the discovery of its oil reserves, The Trucial States (now the UAE) had largely depended on subsistence agriculture, nomadic animal husbandry, pearl fishing and seafaring. In this period, the UAE was going through a subsistence economy phase of its history, in which it was highly dependent on its own natural resources other than oil. As recently as three decades ago, the UAE was lagging behind in development, and was considered as being among the least-developed countries of the world

Economic development in the UAE began only with the discovery of oil in the early 1970s. The UAE has extensive reserves of both onshore as well as offshore oil. The oil reserves are mostly in Abu Dhabi while its gas reserves are offshore. Crude oil production supports gas production while non-associated gas is also produced. The country's huge growth in recent decades can clearly be attributed to its colossal reserves of oil and its effective utilization by the country. The oil and gas industries don't just manage production well but ensure the application of modern technology to increase productivity and efficiency. As per the UAE Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, the maximum sustainable daily capacity of oil production is about two million barrels per day. In 2000, the oil reserves in the country were about 98.8 billion barrels, which represented the third largest oil reserves in the world after Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and around 10% of the world's total oil reserves as in June 2000. With the present day daily oil production of 2.2 million barrels daily, oil reserves in the UAE are expected to last for another 122 years.

From the Federation's formation on December 2nd 1971, and its subsequent formation of economic, social and political institutions, the UAE has never looked back. Oil production and exports have elevated the UAE to a position equal to some of the most developed countries of the world. Today, this country has surpassed many others and achieved incomparable success, bringing it on par in many respects with the industrialized nations across the globe. This incredible growth has been due mainly to the UAE's large oil deposits which helped the country skip many of the

development stages that most countries have to go through and to quickly attain the stage of high mass consumption. Additionally, its huge oil revenues have also enabled the UAE to side-track the tough and cumbersome path of saving and accumulation of capital that is so vital for economic progress and development. The UAE has been able to make the most of its abundant oil and gas resources through the use of a resource-based industries (RBI) economic development strategy and the creation of an industrial strategy for optimal utilization of natural resources optimally. The deployment of 'windfall income' from its oil reserves basically provided a 'one-time' boost for the social and economic macro infrastructure of the UAE, helping it to achieve substantial economic development in the short span of time from 1973 to 1982 during which time oil prices were relatively high.

With its rich oil and natural gas reserves, the UAE has become a powerful player in the Gulf region as well as in the world economy. Its oil exports now account for almost 25% of its GDP. The UAE's economy has been growing at a blistering pace in recent years, although the economic effects of the worldwide recession in 2008 and 2009 have had a negative impact on growth. Despite this, per capita income in the UAE ranks at No. 3 in the world, following Luxembourg and Norway.

4.2   Structural Change and Diversification in the UAE Economy

For an economy to experience strong economic growth there has also to be a significant transition in its economic structure over time. This kind of structural development includes of agricultural transformation, industrialization, demographic change, urbanization, transformation of domestic demands and production along with foreign trade, finance and employment. This section examines the different economic sectors of the UAE and how they function in the current scenario, in order to facilitate better understanding of the potential role of the ICT sector in contributing to the UAE's further development. It will be seen that the UAE's internal agencies are making a conscious effort, with the help of international organizations, to bring about economic progress and improved productivity along with modernization of its economy.

The UAE has grown tremendously since the discovery of oil in the region in 1958. Abu Dhabi, for example, saw its first proper roads in 1961 when the locals lived in

palm and mud huts. Now, 88% of the UAE population lives in urban areas with Dubai and Abu Dhabi contributing the highest numbers of urban residents. Thus it can be seen that the UAE has undergone a profound transformation from an impoverished region of small desert principalities to a modern state with a high standard of living. The UAE economy remains dependent on the oil and gas sector but the emirates have taken steps to reduce this dependency by developing sectors like finance, IT, trade and business.

Dubai was the first Emirate to effect changes in economic policy and trade, since it has smaller oil reserves under its jurisdiction than neighbouring Abu Dhabi. Starting its diversification efforts in the 1990s, the authorities of Dubai undertook legal reforms such as the right to property for locals (1997) and for international citizens (2002), which introduced exclusive areas earmarked for use by the international community only. In response, many high net worth Middle Eastern non-resident citizens returned to Dubai, being attracted by the wealth and investment being brought into the country as a result of these policies and reforms. At the turn of the millennium, Dubai saw a huge influx of people, international companies and money. World class shopping centres, office complexes, luxury hotels, entertainment centres, business parks, condominiums, infrastructure development, zonal and regional representative offices were located there, underpinned by major investments. Multinational companies, foreign governments and trade representatives all set up offices there. Dubai also became a much sought after travel destination with Saudi Arabians, British and Russian tourists accounting for the biggest spenders.

The financial crisis of 2008 which affected global markets impacted Dubai and the Emirate was faced with a negative trade balance and massive international debt. At that time, Abu Dhabi came to Dubai's rescue by buying USD 10 billion worth of bonds for a period of five years. Though Dubai still attracts high spending tourists, its ambition of being to the Gulf what Monaco is to Europe is far from being achieved. The other main issue faced by Dubai has been its reliance on foreign nationals in the labour force, as examined in the current study.

Investments in manufacturing in the UAE, especially in Abu Dhabi, have gone up significantly especially after the oil price crash in 2008. The quick pace of growth

has generated a high demand for industrial, commercial and consumer goods and products and Abu Dhabi's diversification plans include meeting industrial and commercial demand locally. The current estimated value of industrial and commercial projects in sectors other than oil and natural gas is USD 20 billion employing 290,000 people. These new industrial ventures are catering to the infrastructure, construction, ship building, power and retail industries. Besides traditional heavy machinery industries, Abu Dhabi is also investing in new modern industries and commercial enterprises. It is trying to chart a slightly different and more planned growth and diversification course than the one adopted by Dubai. After Shiekh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan's demise in 2004, his sons, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan took over with former being named President and the latter the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. Sheikh Mohammed has studied at the Sandhurst Military Academy, UK and has a more western outlook. Abu Dhabi has also started an international airline and built luxury hotels to attract leisure and business travellers but the most significant impact has been made by the change in property laws allowing citizens to sell property and allowing foreign nationals to lease property on long-term leases up to 99 years.

The UAE has also embarked on a rapid journey of political and social development since its formation in 1971. The UAE's political hierarchy reflects effective thought processes given to the tribal society in the country as well as the optimal distribution of heavy oil revenues in sectors that are meant to build the social and economic framework of the country, ensuring high salaries and a good level of socially-relevant services like health and education. This has had a very progressive influence on the people's lifestyle. It has also diffused any kind of political and social instability. Due credit must be given to the UAE government for having provided a very good standard of living for the citizens of the country. The UAE has also provided and promoted political and social stability with the help of a capable government.

Furthermore, the UAE is also actively involved in several regional as well as international bodies like the Arab League, the UN, the NAM or the Non-Aligned Movement, the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council, as well as the Organization of the Islamic Conference. There have been active efforts taken in maintaining good and cordial relations with countries all over the world. Investments in the industrial sector

(both domestic and international) have bloomed because of the political and social stability that is well complemented by liberal trade policies.

Underpinning the UAE's diversification and growth strategies has been an emphasis on the UAE's ICT sector. There is clear evidence from around the world of the key role that this sector plays in economic development, as discussed in the following section. Following this, developments in the UAE's ICT sector will be examined in order to highlight its increasingly important role in the country and to highlight the need for future human resource development strategies, especially the Emiratisation policy, to reflect this.

4.3 The Role of ICT in Economic Development

The role that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays in economic development has been firmly established. We have seen, for example, the way the American economy was revived in the late 1990s, thanks to the huge investment of the government into ICT initiatives; the existence of variations in socio-economic development between countries at the beginning of the twenty-first century is partly caused by the disparities in the level of development of the ICT sector (Stirok, 2002). This sector typically comprises computer hardware and software and other telecommunications equipment. ICT has also been described as a systematic set of activities that help the processing, transmission and the subsequent display of information. Given the role of ICT in economic development, it is essential to understand the efficacy of this process and the kind of effect it exerts on a country's economy. In this way, it will be possible to understand the potential of the UAE's ICT sector for addressing its current labour market problems.

Many countries have adopted the use of ICT to improve economic growth. For example, in the latter part of the last decade of the 20th century a number of European Union member states such as Ireland, the Netherlands, and Finland, as well as some OECD countries like the USA, Australia and Canada exhibited a remarkable revival of economic growth and productivity, along with steady or dipping inflation and reduced levels of unemployment. These developments are believed to be associated with increased implementation of ICT (Commission of European Community, 2001). The main metrics used to measure a country's economic growth and development are

the GDP (Gross Domestic Product), based on the actual value of the products produced within a country in a specific time span, and the GNP (Gross National Product), an indicator of output produced in a country along with its income from overseas (Bizel, 2004). The GDP/GNP per head/per capita is also considered to be an important indicator. Piatkowski (2003) shows how in Poland, investment in ICT investment brought about an average increase of 0.47 of a percentage point or 8.9% of GDP growth as well as 12.7% or 0.65 of a percentage point increase in overall labour productivity between 1995 and 2000. Similarly, in the United Kingdom (UK) between 1990 and 1995, ICT is reported to have contributed to about 0.43 of a percentage point increase in economic growth, while the Real Output Growth that took place in that particular period was about 3.48. These statistics demonstrate that investment in ICT can be a very effective driver of economic growth.

Generally, ICT capital overtakes other non-ICT capital in its ability to fuel economic growth; a larger ICT capital stock per capita helps a typical economy to register healthier growth rates for particular levels of growth in labour as well as capital inputs (Vu, 2004). This demonstrates that it is not necessarily the level of investment in an economy that makes the most difference; it is the ways in which capital is invested. One can also describe the economic growth of a country in terms of its ability to produce increasing numbers of goods and services (Miles, 2001). ICT plays an essential role here since it can improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of production and in a very limited time span with the help of computerized systems.

Economic growth can basically be defined as the overall increase of output from the inputs of land, labour, capital and well as other entrepreneurial resources. Growth often occurs when societies adopt modern and advanced technologies and management techniques, and improve the productivity of available resources and capital (Miles, 2001). One can therefore see the impact that ICT is likely to have on a nation's economic growth and technological progress. Economic growth is also related to the distances that need to be crossed: historically, it has generally been the case that the more people travel, the better and more dynamic is the economic activity and therefore the overall wealth of their society (Lake, 2004). Lake is of the opinion that with more and more use of information as well as communication technology of ICT, there has been a significant change in the nature of this relationship. This is

because of the increasing use of virtual mobility as a result of which consumers do not have to incur transport expenses and therefore are able to have more disposable income with them. In this way, ICT is becoming increasingly central to economic growth. When 'virtual mobility' occurs, ICT is able to create more means so as to carry out several activities required for physical transport (Lake, 2004). Facilities such as email, online banking facilities and other e-commerce tools have changed the way business is carried out by cutting transportation and telecommunication costs.

Though ICT can be very effective in bringing down the transportation costs of consumers and businesses, it is also very important for businesses to develop newer ways of working in order to optimize the benefits that can be realised from this technology. This can also be achieved by means of appropriate technical optimization in order to maximise speed, security and multi-functions. A dynamic management with a proactive focus on development is also very important. To complement these developments, there is a need for flexibility in international trade laws to ensure that businesses are able to import ICT kind of goods as per their needs and requirements from various parts of the world.

4.4   ICT Sector Performance in the UAE

ICT has become a driving force in economic growth in the UAE, and the high levels of performance of this sector, in a global context, have been documented in The Global Information Technology Report 2010-2011 (World Economic Forum, 2011). This report provides a complete account of the effects of information technology and communications on the growth and progress of the nations. It has surveyed data from 138 countries across several parameters and looks at how countries are willing to use technology through its Networked Readiness Index (NRI). It examines the business environment, the regulatory issues and the infrastructure pertaining to ICT within each country. It also examines the readiness quotient of governments and organizations in adopting technology and plots their usage patterns. A transformation 2.0 is the 10th anniversary edition of this report and looks at the changes in IT over time and its likely impact on people and governments in the coming years. The decade since the Global Information Technology Report was first commissioned and published has witnessed tremendous technological change over multiple digital platforms; as a result the collation and management of data have become huge

functions due to the immense wealth of information now available and accessible in real time across the world.

According to Transformations 2.0 (World Economic Forum, 2011), the UAE now stands at number 24 in the global rankings for the use of information technology in business and commercial transactions for growth and development. The other Gulf countries that are ranked high in this report include Qatar (25), Bahrain (30), Saudi Arabia (33) and Oman (41). Sweden and Singapore are at the top of this list, confirming the Nordic and South East Asian economies' reliance on technology and communications to fast track economic growth. In fact, all the Nordic countries feature in the top 10 except for Iceland which is at 16. Denmark is seventh while Norway is placed at number nine. Of the Asian economies, Singapore came second in the ranking, Taiwan sixth, China tenth and Hong Kong at number twelve.

The UAE has also attained a good position in the Global Information Technology Report rankings in relation to ICT usage (position 30) and technology environment (position 25). However the strongest performance indicator for the UAE is likely to be its readiness quotient, where it ranks 6th out of the 138 countries studied. In some sub-categories the UAE ranks even higher; for example, it came fifth in the ranking relating to the use of technology in the private sector and third where purchases by the Government of technology and related products are concerned. It has also been ranked first in relation to mobile phone connections density.

In the earlier Global Information Technology Report 2009-2010, the UAE was placed twenty-third out of 133 countries surveyed on the application of IT for commercial and social growth and its aggressive use of technology post-recession was noted. Other Gulf country rankings were Bahrain (29), Saudi Arabia (38) and Kuwait (76). Bahrain had grown at a brisk and improved its rankings by 21 places over the three years since 2006. According to Kamal Ahmed, Chief Operating Officer of the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB), Bahrain's growth reflects its resolve to not only invest in technology as a sector but use technology in all forms of governance to enable growth and development. In the 2009-2010 report, Sweden was top of the rankings, with Singapore and Denmark close on its heels. These top three countries have used ICT effectively focused on long term growth plans and the

implementation of solutions in governance, healthcare, education, commerce, innovation, accessibility etc., observes Irene Ma, Senior Economist of the Global Competitiveness Network and co-editor of the report. She notes that government commitment and implementation to IT has been at the core of their growth strategy with positive economic impacts and social benefits for their people.

According to Alan Marcus, Senior Director and Head of Information Technology and Telecommunications, World Economic Forum, information technology and innovation are the two centre pieces of development and any nation that focuses on these will be on the fast track to growth which will impact the lives of its citizens both qualitatively and quantitatively. He stressed that nations that are using data and technology in every aspect of their governance and enterprise solutions are likely to be much more competitive in the long run. Karim Sabbagh, senior partner and global leader Communications, Media, and Technology, Booz and Company reiterated the point that information technology has the capacity to impact the future of nations and stressed that gains in either sector lead to all round growth. A study by Booz and Company on broadband connectivity and its impact on governance and on social sectors such as health, transport and commerce forms part of the Global Report (World Economic Forum, 2011).

Within the UAE, the regional hub of Dubai is leading the adoption and development of new technologies in the region. In 2000, The Dubai Technology E-Commerce and Media Freezone (TECOM) were established. TECOM has a total of 650 companies (from IT, Telecom and Creative Media sectors) and is home to Dubai Internet City, Dubai Media City, Dubai Ideas Oasis and Dubai Knowledge Village. The ICT tools are used in creating employment, in absorbing manpower from other countries and in transforming their public services by increasingly taking advantage of new technologies. The vicinity of the Dubai hub to less developed countries provides a magnet for the development of the UAE's ICT sector.

4.5   ICT Policies and Strategy in the UAE

The UAE is among the countries that lead in the use of ICT to achieve economic goals and the effort to embrace ICT has been successful in the sense that it has led to rapid growth of the country's economy. The UAE has developed a strong information

as well as communications infrastructure. The government has implemented several initiatives which have contributed greatly to the development of the ICT industry in the country. For example, it has formulated and implemented policies which allow competition in the communication sectors and have greatly contributed to the development of the ICT infrastructure. In 2007, the UAE introduced liberalization in the communication sector by licensing different operators. This has increased competition since different operators try to use the best of technology to outperform one another, and the effect has been to promote innovation in the ICT industry. Another of the main strategies intended to improve ICT in the country has been to put in place an appropriate legal framework that allows development of telecommunication sector.

One result of these initiatives has been the tremendous growth in the UAE telecommunications industry. For instance, the telecommunication market according to International Telecommunications Union (2011) has grown from 8.2 billion USD in 2005 to $13.6 billion in 2011, representing a 20% annual growth in the industry. The government also introduced an e-commerce law in 2006, which allows the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) to license and oversees e-commerce activities in the country. This is critical because most consumers have embraced technology and would rather do business online. This means that in order to keep pace with consumers, different industry players have also to go online, thereby making the growth of online commerce an inevitable development in the UAE.

In addition, in order to drive e-commerce further a memorandum understanding was signed between the Dubai government and the TRA to create a trustee initiative. This allows online trading on a wider scope by protecting the rights of citizens with regard to online trading as well as enhanced quality of related services. Online trading can subject citizens to great risks, which makes it important to put in place measures to avoid or contain these risks. Quality of service is also key in encouraging consumers to adopt the greater use of ICT. There has been increased competition across the globe and countries and international entities tend to use service quality as a tool to gain competitive advantage. The United Arab Emirates is a cosmopolitan country with a lot of international business activities. In order to attract and maintain investors and traders as well as customers, its online trading businesses must compete effectively with other global players. The government's efforts to promote quality and ensure

security in online trading are good for the citizens of the country, for investors, and for the global consumers who may want to order commodities from the United Arab Emirates.

Moreover, apart from creating the required legal framework for the ICT sector in the United Arab Emirates, the government has also put in place funding programmes aimed at stimulating growth. This is crucial, because capital is key to development. The availability of information and the will to execute development will not materialize without needed financial resources. The funding programme for ICT is known to be one of its kind in the entire Middle East. The aim of the ICT fund is to perform several roles, which include supporting innovation and research, developing projects and providing education well as training in the ICT field. Research and development are the key to realizing remarkable development in any sector and this initiative demonstrates that the UAE government is committed to the development of the ICT sector. ITU news (2011) states "In terms of research and development, the fund will support start-ups and nurture business incubators as well as supporting the creation of high-quality research and development institutions. For education, the fund will make available scholarships".

The UAE's Information and Technology Fund speculates that UAE's market growth may reach USD 13.6 billion in 2011, significantly higher than the USD 8.2 billion attained in 2005 and representing a year on year growth of 20%. It ranks just behind Saudia Arabia in terms of the overall size of its IT industry (ICT Fund, 2011). The UAE plans to invest AED 80 million in education, new ventures and research and development, including AED 22 million in R&D to make its IT platform world class. The government is also investing in R&D initiatives by Universities and other bodies including investments in infrastructure, equipment and projects. The fund is encouraging R&D in companies and colleges and giving grants for research in IT to develop products, solutions and services to boost growth and governance. Besides funding projects, the UAE technology fund also extends support for patent filings and commercial applications. This will lead to new ventures and start-ups contributing to overall growth of the sector and the economy.

The Chairman for the ICT Fund has stressed its commitment to impact the UAE economy and to ensure that the country becomes a global leader in information technology and gains competitive advantage. The availability of research funding and commitment to information technology shows the UAE government's immense faith in the sector to propel growth and reduce their reliance on oil. This point was reiterated by Dr. Eesa Bastaki, CEO of the ICT Fund, who stated the desired aim of creating a self-sufficient IT eco-system working towards industry and social development goals. The stated overall goal is to create local brands and solutions manufactured and developed in the UAE and sold globally. Nurturing of business incubators as well as supporting start-up shows commitment of the United Arab Emirates to take the IT industry to the next level. It is such initiatives that have contributed to the development of ICT in countries where it is well developed. The country is also committed to producing talent in the industry by offering scholarship to those students interested in entering the ICT sector. This is critical because the growth of the ICT sector depends on the availability of human resources with relevant skills and experience to drive the industry forward.

Additionally, the Sheikh Khalifa Fund has also been instituted with the aim of supporting small and medium enterprises, of the type which often emerge in the ICT sector. This provides opportunities to the citizens of the UAE to become entrepreneurial and participate in driving the economy of the United Arab Emirates. These efforts have yielded results in the sense that the economy of United Arab Emirates has grown quite remarkably in recent years. The Sheikh Khalifa Fund was also intended to train the nationals of United Arab Emirates in order to manage different projects independently with a view to making or transforming Abu Dhabi into a regional, if not global, international investment hub. Investors and business people from across the globe are now utilizing the opportunity created in the city, demonstrating the success of the fund in realizing its objectives.

Among the benefits of ICT that contribute to increasing economic efficiency are the improved connections and interconnections between people in society. The UAE acknowledges the importance of good connections with its citizens and has instituted ICT-based initiatives to promote the transfer of information. This gives the country an opportunity to grow economically because information transfer is key to socio-

economic development. For example, the government has introduced systems that allow the people of the UAE to connect easily with different government organisations, as well as improving government operations and service efficiency. Improving the operations of the federal government and service efficiency of the government is one of the strategies that United Arab Emirates intends to achieve fully by 2013. This is expected to improve the well-being of citizens in the UAE. For instance, since the introduction of the government technology system, the citizens of United Arab Emirates can now interact easily with different sectors within the government such as the Ministries of Labour, Water and Electricity. The system allows citizens to give feedback with regards to the service provision by these arms of the government. This is very crucial because it empowers the citizens to monitor the performance of different sectors in the government thereby enhancing improvement of service delivery and life of the people of United Arab Emirates.

In addition, public employees also benefit from the technological developments in the IT industry. The government has mandated different authorities of the government to enhance the culture of creativity, excellence and loyalty among public employees, a development which is supported by the use of ICT. ITU (2011) states, "The Excellence Program completed its first phase in October 2010 by recognizing and awarding those models which had demonstrated how to achieve a sustainable information society within the federal government". This is an indication that the public employees of United Arab Emirates do benefit directly from the development of IT in the country. Other initiatives which have been promoted by the government to enhance connection with citizens include an e-library scheme and e-books store. These are pilot projects, which help students and scholars alike to access different books and audio books online, free of charge. In this way, the government is promoting education, research and development. In addition, technology has been implemented which allows students to access lecture notes as well as laboratory notes through smartphones and computers. Such initiatives promote learning through easy access.

Within the UAE, the recent developments in the field of ICT appear to have been associated with economic growth in a relatively short timescale; therefore, there seems to be a positive link between the two. One can safely say that research and

development (R&D) efforts in the ICT sector must be encouraged and constantly measured against the benchmarks of needs and demands of the market. As per Smith (2002), governments must also invest in creating and sustaining ICT industries as well as in diffusing ICT-developed products and services.

As a result of these initiatives, the ICT sector has been a strong determinant of the economy of United Arab Emirates (UAE) in recent years. The specific roles of ICT in facilitating the work of the UAE labour force have contributed to the more efficient dissemination of employment information, ease of access in employment search, and improved employment skills training, to name a few. Historically however, the migration of foreign nationals into the UAE has resulted in the limited access for the Emiratis (native UAE nationals) to obtain skilled employment. Although the private sector has begun implementing the mandatory quota system of allocating up to 4% jobs for the UAE nationals, most of these positions are not aligned with appropriate job descriptions or career growth mapping, and large numbers of resignations have been a result. The disparity between the scope of work and the qualifications of the nationals has also led to demotivation and resignations.

The UAE has a high literacy rate due in no small part to the high commitment and funding shown by the government to improve literacy. It is also investing in IT education in schools since it realizes that these children will be the future of the country. While focus on primary and secondary education remains paramount it is paying attention to increasing the number of IT teachers at the school level to ensure all the children are computer literate as well. At the college level, it has 14 colleges that are part of the Higher Colleges of Technology. It is also encouraging education of the girl child contrary to other Gulf countries. It is also creating employment opportunities for women and in fact, in the government IT departments there are more women working than men. With literacy rates at 90%, the highest number of illiterates belongs to the senior citizens since these opportunities were not available earlier. Education at primary and secondary levels is free and also compulsory at the primary level. It has introduced free programmes for adults as well where women wanting an education are in the majority. UNESCO's "Education for All" programme observes that UAE's education and literacy programmers are the most effective amongst the Gulf nations. English is the second medium of instruction and is used widely in school. Arabic is the main language but English is being used in business.

In the coming five years the literacy rate is expected to reach 100%. Primary and secondary education in the UAE is free and the government's responsibility. Data from the mid-2000s, however, shows that private schools account for more students than public schools (Table 4.1).

	Public Schools (2004/5)	Private Schools (2003/4)
Total number of students	287,098	315,797
Total number of male students	141 ,142	168,370
Total number of female students	145,956	147,427
Total number of teachers	23,807 (8,662 male and 15,154 female)	21,363
Total number of IT teachers	539	598

Table 4.1: Public and private school statistics 2003/2004

Computer education is a large part of the school curriculum in Government schools with some private schools also paying close attention to it. Programmes include the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) which is an international computer literacy programme recognized in 140 countries. While 120 teachers took the programme in 2005 form Abu Dhabi, the state has advocated that all schools must have ICDL certified teachers by 2008. The UAE Ministry of Education has an educational website for its primary and secondary school students. This can be accessed by private and public schoolchildren and it has contains links, information, educational resources, instructional tools among others etc. It guides them to various programmes, resources and information, which are available in schools and at Government agencies. The website is called moyea.ae.

The UAE has among the highest college education participation rates in the world: a staggering 95% of females and 80% males enrol in college. The number of students in 2004 stood at 85,200 of which 11706 (13%) were connected to the IT industry. In 1998, the UAE set up the Higher Colleges of Technology with four colleges and with a student base of 239. The college grew in reputation and stature with time and now

has 14 schools with 16,000 students. These are located in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Dubai, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah and Fujairah. The medium of instruction is predominantly English and only 20% of the content of courses is delivered in the local language. Companies such as Microsoft, Cisco Systems and Shell are partnering with the government and Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) to create training platforms. HCT has also started a commercial division called the Center of Excellence for Applied Research and Training (CERT) to provide enterprise solutions and a basket of services for the corporate industry. HCT has given 28600 credits to over 14400 students so far. The American University has close links with the American University of Sharjah (http://www.aus.edu/). The University has 21 bachelor degree courses, 35 minors, and 8 master degree programmes. Students can also get a degree in Computer Engineering and Computer Science.

Etisalat is the largest national telecom company in the region. It has set up an academy for the public and it provides training for professionals not only from its own company but is open to other technology companies as well. The Etisalat Academy represents international training companies form the US and Europe and provides high impact quality training under international standards. It was the first academy to provide certification for IT security engineers for the American Authority for Information Technology Security. The Information Technology Education Project (ITEP) was set up in 2000 to train manpower in IT. The programme works with 20 schools in Dubai and 20 in Abu Dhabi and trains nearly 13000 students annually, and focuses on IT training to meet the needs of industry and the Ministry of Education's policies of introducing innovation in education and making it more relevant. The IT institutions in Dubai and Abu Dhabi are also key players in ensuring the success of the programme and run train the trainer programmes, design courses, provide online training platforms and support and conduct quality audits. The project now also covers training government staff to become computer literate.

4.6   Conclusion

The UAE is a rich nation due in large part to its oil and gas reserves and low population. Thus, its trade balance is positive and the surplus is used to increase its investments in expansion and diversification. It has shown good growth indicators in the social sector as well as the economy. Its training and development programmes,

investments in education, research, industry and infrastructure, which make the UAE one of the most developed nations of the world, show the country's commitment to growth. Its tremendous development in just twenty years from the early 70's to the 90's brought about by the oil revenues has proven that planned expenditure and vision can lead to fast track growth.

The growth in the ICT sector in particular has the potential to enhance the skill-development opportunities and professional employments as well as the quality of life of Emiratis. According to socio-cultural theories that explore the most efficient learning processes on the part of K–12 and higher-education students and employees, ICT technology is best introduced as early as during K–12 education for the students to benefit from the social cognitive learning process. This integration is an important contribution to the development of more effective and sustainable policy, strategic framework, and sustainable implementation of ICT in the UAE.

Because of this growth in the ICT sector, it is critical to conduct ICT and practical skills training beyond formal education into the workforce. As part of this process, the division between the private and public sector in employee training should ideally be eliminated, with the training opportunities and quality standard being equal between the private and public sectors.

The multidisciplinary theoretical framework is used to demonstrate that the current Emiratisation theory, with its emphasis on rapid indigenization of the labour force, and relative lack of focus on technology transfer and skills development, is inherently risky for the UAE economy in the long run. In today's highly globalized economy, the nature of jobs is changing, with most sectors requiring a high proportion of highly skilled "knowledge workers" with strong information and communications technology expertise. Moreover, the impact of ICT on the nature of work means that national boundaries are relatively unimportant, with jobs potentially being conducted online and at a distance from the physical workplace.

Not only does the UAE need to strengthen its education and training systems to enable Emiratis to compete more effectively in its own labour market, but it must ensure that they develop the types of ICT skills needed to compete in the global economy. Until the domestic education and training system is adequately

strengthened, this may require some reversal of current Emiratisation policies to ensure high levels of technology skills transfer to the native population.

Chapter 5 : Methods

5.1 Introduction

The main aim of the study is to generate primary research data to improve understanding of the current barriers to the effective operation of the UAE labour market and to develop policy recommendations based on these, which incorporate the emerging importance of the ICT sector. In order to ensure that the study is well grounded in previous research and theory, and to help identify specific issues on which to focus, a comprehensive review of relevant literature and an examination of leading labour market theories was first carried out, the findings of which were reported in Chapters Two and Three. To provide additional context, discussion of economic development in the UAE and the emerging role of the ICT sector was presented in Chapter Four.

The current chapter discusses the research philosophy, the research design and the specific methods used in the primary data collection phase of this study, drawing on a range of reference sources to explain and justify these. It presents information how the samples of research participants were drawn and the methods of data collection, including an overview of the data collection instruments used. A description is provided of the procedures used to analyse and report on the research results, including the presentation techniques. Important methodological considerations such as the reliability and validity of the findings are considered, along with other key research issues such as ethics. Finally, the key assumptions and main limitations of the study are highlighted, before concluding with a summary of the chapter.

5.2 Research Questions

The research questions to be addressed in this study, as introduced in Chapter One, formed the starting point for the development of an appropriate design for the study. The secondary analysis of literature and labour market theories conducted in the initial stages of the study was used to identify the research questions on which the primary research should focus in order to meet its objective of improving

understanding of the barriers currently preventing the efficient operation of the UAE labour market. The resulting research questions and sub-questions were as follows:

1. What are the main supply-side and demand-side barriers to effective Emiratisation of the UAE labour market?

   a. What are the main factors that are currently preventing the expansion of private sector employment among UAE nationals? (e.g. recruitment practices and procedures; job-seeking preferences; employer preferences)

   b. What needs to happen in order to overcome these barriers to Emiratisation?

2. How can labour market theories and socio-cultural theories contribute to a better understanding of UAE labour market and the development of a more effective and sustainable Emiratisation policy?

   a. Which labour market theories and socio-cultural theories best explain the UAE labour market and its characteristics?

   b. What key lessons from these theories can be applied to the development of recommendations for a more effective and sustainable Emiratisation policy?

3. What are the key elements of an effective and sustainable Emiratisation policy for the UAE?

   a. Is the Emiratisation policy the best way forward for the UAE? What might any alternative or complementary measures consist of?

   b. How can the Emiratisation policy be designed in future in order to best meet the needs of employers and the national population of the UAE?

c. How can the ICT sector and the development of ICT skills among the Emirati population improve the UAE labour market?

5.3 Research Philosophy and Design

5.3.1 Introduction

This section discusses the underlying philosophy and the research design of the study. As Byrne (2001) pointed out, a research methodology is what "links a particular philosophy to the appropriate research methods and bridges philosophical notions to practical and applicable research strategies" (p.830). A researcher's philosophy, as highlighted by Saunders et al. (2007) is guided by his view of the relationship between knowledge and the process by which it is developed. At one extreme, the positivist research philosophy assumes that the social world is characterized by regular patterns and cause and effect relationships and can be studied in a similar way to the natural world (Denscombe 2003). On the other hand, the phenomenological research philosophy (e.g. Schutz 1967; 1970) examines human experiences from the perspective of the individual (Byrne 2001). Creswell (1998) stated that a "phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or phenomenon" (p. 55). This is grounded in a paradigm which focuses on the importance of subjectivity and personal knowledge in understanding social phenomena (Leady and Ormrod 2005). Without taking account of the day to day meaning of social phenomena from the perspective of the actors involved, Schutz argued, there is a risk of imposing 'a fictional non-existing world constructed by the scientific observer' (1970, p. 271).

The emphasis in phenomenological research on understanding the social world and specific events from the personal perspective of the actors involved means that this approach is usually associated with qualitative methods. In contrast, the positivist research methodology is more usually associated with quantitative research, since this is concerned with generating quantifiable data and subjecting it to statistical analysis in order to identify causal relationships and other generalisable research results.

Another key distinction in relation to the general approach used in a research study is that between deductive and inductive research. In deductive research, research data

are collected and analysed in order to prove or disprove an existing hypothesis or theory. In contrast, inductive research does not begin with a specific hypothesis or hypotheses but generates and analyses data for patterns and themes, in order to build up a picture and understanding of a particular social phenomenon.

5.3.2   *Research Philosophy and Design of the Current Study*

The choice of research philosophy and design for this study was determined by the nature of the research questions and the type of data required in answering these questions. This approach follows the recommendations of Denscombe (2003), who also pointed out that "the crucial thing for good research is that the choices are reasonable and that they are made explicit as part of any research report" (p.3). By providing full information about the methods used in a study, the quality of the research can be evaluated and the findings properly interpreted; also, the study methods can be duplicated in different contexts to see whether comparable results are achieved. This helps to add to the overall state of knowledge in the area and enhances the reliability and validity of the study, two concepts which are considered further below.

It can be argued that this study has both positivist and phenomenological elements in its underlying philosophy. Although the chosen research methods were intended to provide some numerical data relating to the views and experiences of employers and university students in the UAE, and to identify any patterns or relationships in this data, the main objective was to explore experiences and attitudes with regard to the key issues of interest from the point of view of the research participants themselves, and to improve the overall understanding of the UAE labour market. In general, the study can be thus regarded as using an inductive rather than a deductive research approach, since no specific hypotheses were pre-defined. Instead, information was collected from the research participants with a view to answering the research questions and building up a new knowledge base about the UAE labour market.

The primary research is based on a mixed-methods design which combines quantitative and qualitative methods. The specific primary methods used in the study were:

1. An online semi-structured questionnaire survey of middle managers in the oil/gas and banking/finance industries in the UAE.

2. An online semi-structured questionnaire survey of male and female Emirati students at UAE higher educational establishments, who were expected to be entering the labour market in the near future.

3. Face to face or online in-depth interviews with a sample of experts and key stakeholders with interest in the UAE labour market, including academics and representatives of the government, employment and education sectors.

4. In-depth interviews with a selection of UAE ICT sector experts, including academic researchers, government policy officials, to explore their views on the potential future role of the ICT sector as a driver, enhancer, and facilitator of change and improvement in the implementation of Emiratisation and the operation of the UAE labour market.

The following sections discuss the advantages and drawbacks of quantitative and qualitative research and how these methods can be usefully combined in a mixed-methods approach.

5.3.3 *Quantitative Methods*

In quantitative research, data is collected on variables that can be coded numerically – including true numeric data such as age or numbers of occurrences, or categorical data to which numeric codes can be allocated, such as gender. The main benefits of quantitative methods, such as structured surveys, are that they generate data which can be subjected to statistical analysis in order to examine relationships between variables (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007) and that, if based on a sufficiently large sample, the findings can be generalized to the wider population from which this is drawn. To an extent, it can be argued that the findings of quantitative research are more objective than those of qualitative research since the standardised format of questions reduces the possible influence of interviewer bias, that is, the impact of the way the questions are asked. However, this presupposes that the questionnaire has been well-designed and that the questions themselves are not leading. Quantitative

research offers the ability to collect empirical data from a large number of individuals at relatively low cost. However, it does not enable a researcher to examine issues in depth from the perspectives of the research participants, and it is often not possible to identify the underlying reasons for particular findings or observed associations between variables.

5.3.4   *Qualitative Methods*

In contrast, qualitative methods, such as in-depth unstructured or semi-structured interview or focus groups, enable a researcher to identify and explore attitudes and experiences in detail from the personal perspectives of the research participants themselves. However, qualitative methods can be time-consuming and costly, both in terms of data collection and analysis, and are generally based on small samples which mean that the findings cannot be generalised. Some writers argue that although qualitative data can better reflect the reality of true-life personal experiences, which often include ambiguity and contradictions, the collection and interpretation of this type of data can be heavily influenced by the "self" of the researcher (Denscombe 2003). It is therefore important to maintain an approach of objectivity and to ask interview questions in a neutral way when conducting qualitative research.

5.3.5   *Mixed Methods*

Mixed-methods research designs are based on the principal of triangulation which, in the field of navigation, facilitates the location of a true position by taking into account two or more co-ordinates (Denscombe 2003). This approach has been widely adopted in social research in recent years, and its benefits are described by Cohen and Manion (1986) as the ability to "map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint and, in so doing, by making use of both quantitative and qualitative data" (p. 254). Similarly, triangulation was defined by Olsen and Holborn (2004) as the mixing of data or methods so that different opinions are brought together to throw light upon a research topic, with the mixing of methodologies like survey data with interviews is the most often used form of triangulation. The use of mixed-methods research designs has become popular despite conventional wisdom that quantitative and qualitative methods should not be mixed (Horsfall, Byrne-Armstrong and Higgs, 2001).

For example, qualitative research is sometimes used in the early stages of a research study to identify key issues for inclusion in a quantitative survey, or alternatively indepth interview or focus groups can be used after completion of a quantitative survey in order to help the researcher to identify factors which might help to explain why particular quantitative research results were obtained. Another advantage of mixing different methods in a research study is that this approach offers the ability to corroborate the findings by comparing data on the same topic collected using different methods. The often circular relationship between quantitative and qualitative research was described by Newman and Benz (1998) as an "interactive continuum" in which qualitative analysis includes "feedback loops" which are used in the quantitative analysis process, whilst the quantitative analysis results and feedback are used to determine what will be asked in the qualitative research.

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) argued that mixed-methods research designs have a number of advantages over those based on a single method, which include the ability to build on the strengths of each approach; provide a more complete picture of the research problem, and generate findings that are both generalisable (quantitative) and rich (qualitative), as well as objective (factual) and subjective (from the perspective of the research subjects). However, they also cite as disadvantages the greater time and cost involved in mixed-methods studies and the need for expertise in both quantitative and qualitative research. It has also been noted (Jick 1979) that a weakness of using triangulation in research is that the design can be difficult to replicate by other researchers.

5.4 Sampling

5.4.1 Quantitative Survey Samples

The study included semi-structured questionnaire surveys of a) managers from the oil/gas and banking/finance sectors and b) university and college students in the final year of their studies.

In a quantitative survey it is important to include a sufficiently large sample of research participants so that the findings can be generalized to the wider population from which the sample is drawn, in this case managers in the UAE oil/gas and

banking/finance sectors, and students in UAE higher educational establishments. Up to a point, increasing the sample size will decrease the "sampling error" and improve the accuracy of the results with regard to the wider population. However, after a certain stage, there are minimal benefits to be gained by further increasing the sample size: it is the absolute size of the sample that is more important than the proportion of the population that it accounts for (Denscombe 2003). The specific sample size required will vary between studies depending on the research questions being asked and the complexity of the data needed to answer them. The overall size of the sample is less important than having sufficient research respondents in each sub-category for which results are needed (for example females in a particular age group). The target sample size should also need to be increased to allow for the expected non-response rate, which may be well over 50% for many surveys, especially those conducted by post (Denscombe, 2003).

Ideally, in order to generalize from a sample to the population from which it was drawn, a probability sampling method should be used. In probability sampling, which each individual has a known probability of being selected from a list of all those in the defined population, which constitutes the sampling frame. In simple random sampling, individuals are selected completely randomly from the sampling frame, whilst in systematic random sampling a random starting point is selected and then every nth member of the list is included in the sample, with the n being based on the required proportion of the population for inclusion in the sample. In stratified random sampling, each member of the population within defined categories or sub-groups (e.g. gender, age groups) has a chance of being selected which equates to the proportion of the population for which that sub-group accounts (Denscombe, 2003). Stratified random sampling helps the researcher ensure that sufficient numbers of people or organizations within categories of particular interest or relevance to the research are included.

In many real-life social research situations, however, probability sampling cannot be used due to the absence of or lack of access to suitable sampling frames, and other methods such as purposive or convenience sampling have to be used. In such sampling methods, individuals or groups are selected for inclusion because they are of particular interest to the researcher (de Vaus, 1996), or are eligible for inclusion in the

study and can be easily contacted. The use of non-probability sampling methods may mean that the research results will not be strictly generalisable to the wider population from which the sample is drawn. If, however, the sample itself accounts for a high proportion of the total population of interest, and a good response rate is achieved, reasonable inferences can be made about this population from the sample-based results.

In the current study, no sample frames were available to the researcher for the populations of interest, so probability sampling was not possible. Instead, to ensure that the sample-based research findings could reasonably be expected to reflect the situation among the populations of managers and students from which they were drawn, the following sampling multi-stage sampling strategies were used.

5.4.1.1 Manager Survey

For the manager survey, the researcher drew on personal knowledge as well as conducting research into the UAE oil/gas and banking/finance sectors to identify organisations which account for a high proportion of the UAE's total employment in these sectors.

For the oil/gas sector, the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and all of its 14 subsidiary companies working in the various fields of the oil, gas and petrochemical industry were included in the first stage of the sample. For the banking/finance sector, 13 major public and private sector institutions operating in the UAE were purposively selected in the first stage of the sampling. Details of oil/gas organisations and banking/finance organisations included in the first-stage sample can be found in the Fieldwork Contacts list (Appendix 8).

An email addressed to the senior human resources manager was then sent to the selected organisations in each sector, explaining the purpose of the survey and asking them to distribute the electronic survey link to middle managers in their organisation for on-line completion. The human resource managers were asked to inform the researcher how many survey invitations were sent out, so that approximate response rates could be calculated.

As well as acting as organisational gatekeepers for the manager survey, the Human Resource Managers were also invited to complete the in-depth qualitative questionnaire (see below).

5.4.1.2 Student Survey

Seven major public and private sector universities or other higher education organisations in the UAE were selected for inclusion in the first stage of sampling for the student survey. These are believed to represent the largest higher education institutions in the UAE and the majority of organisations in the higher education sector. Details of these can be found in the Fieldwork Contacts list (Appendix 8).

In the majority of cases, the researcher's own senior academic contacts in these educational establishments were initially approached with an informal request to distribute the survey invitation and link to their students. These initial requests were often passed on to administration departments. Where the institutions had a particularly large number of students in many different locations, a further stage of purposive sampling was used in which the organisation was asked to distribute the survey invitation only to students in a sub-sample of locations. As in the case of the manager survey, the higher education establishments were asked to inform the researcher how many survey invitations in total were distributed to students in their institution, so that approximate response rates could be calculated.

The student survey sample was boosted by the use of snowball sampling techniques, in which a number of students personally known to the researcher were asked to forward the survey invitation and questionnaire link to their own friends and acquaintances who were also students at higher educational establishments in the UAE.

5.4.2   Qualitative Survey Sample

In qualitative research, there is no need for probability sampling methods as the greater time and cost involved means that relatively small numbers of research subjects are included, and the findings are not generalized to the wider population. Moreover, it is often necessary to hand-pick individuals with very specific

characteristics or knowledge in order to ensure that they will be able to provide the specific types of information needed (Denscombe 2003). Generally referred to as "purposive" sampling, this can be used in situations where the targeted sample can be identified quickly and where sampling for proportionality is not the primary concern (Denzin and Lincoln 2003; Patton 1990).

Purposive sampling was used for the qualitative component of this study since the main priority was to identify individuals holding an expert or specialist knowledge of the issues underlying the research questions. Individuals who were asked to participate in the study included senior academics located in the UAE and in the UK who have conducted and published research on the UAE; as well as representatives of prominent public and private sector UAE organisations working in the areas of recruitment, employment and education, and in the ICT sector. These were either interviewed by the researcher, or asked to complete an online interview consisting of a semi-structured questionnaire with open questions. Details of the interviewees are included in the Fieldwork Contacts list (Appendix 8).

5.5 Research Instruments and Data Collection

5.5.1 Semi-Structured Surveys

The semi-structured surveys were designed to generate both quantitative data for statistical analysis and additional qualitative information on participants' views on and experiences of the UAE labour market.

Structured or "closed" questions, using a "tick-box" format, are generally used in questionnaire surveys when the possible range of responses can be reasonably pre-determined by the researcher, and are most appropriate for collecting factual data or measuring attitudes in relation to key issues that have already been identified as relevant to the study. The use of structured questions facilitate ease of completion by respondents, and also ease of analysis by the researcher, since the range of possible responses can be pre-coded and examined using a survey analysis software program, such as SPSS. However, the inclusion of "open" questions to which textual responses are expected can be very useful when it is important to explore the phenomenon of interest in more detail from the personal perspectives of the research participants. In

any case, it is good practice in survey research to include an "other – please specify" response category in many closed questions to allow respondents to add responses that fall outside the pre-coded range, and also to incorporate a final open question which enables them to add any comments which they perceive as important and relevant to the subject of the survey but which has not been covered by the structured sections of the questionnaire. When a questionnaire uses a combination of "closed" and "open questions" it is referred to as semi-structured.

The questionnaires were intended for electronic self-completion by respondents using the SurveyMonkey online survey software package. All potential respondents were emailed, via their organisations, a covering letter which explained the purpose of the research and asked them to complete and submit the questionnaire, which was accessible on the Survey Monkey website via a URL link. The covering letter also provided assurances that the information provided by respondents would be treated in confidence and only released in aggregate in the research findings, and gave the researcher's contact details so that recipients could seek further information about the study or clarify any uncertainties relating to the questionnaire.

The advantages of conducting an electronic survey rather than a postal or telephone survey include the speed of questionnaire distribution, completion and return, and the ability of the researcher to analyse the findings within the same software package or directly export them to a more sophisticated analysis package such as Excel or SPSS. Moreover, respondents are able to take part at their own convenience rather than at a time determined by the researcher and can remain anonymous to the researcher if they wish, with sample members identified only by a code number for the calculation of response rates. Overall, these factors can result in considerable time as well as cost savings, as well as boosting response. In the case of self-completion surveys in general, the accuracy of the results can be improved since there is no direct "interviewer effect", which occurs when research subjects give responses which have been influenced by the way the questions are asked, or their desire to given acceptable responses to an interviewer (Meho and Tibbo 2003). However, the use of an electronic survey is only appropriate when members of the target group are all readily contactable by email and have easy access to a computer and the internet. In the case of the managers and students targeted in this survey, this was expected to be the case.

As with any self-completion questionnaire it is very important to ensure that all the questions are well-designed, clear and unambiguous and that any routing of respondents between sections of the questionnaire works effectively. More generally, care needs to be taken when designing survey questionnaires to ensure that the questions are meaningful and clear to the respondents, that the possible responses to structured questions are comprehensive but mutually exclusive (Denscombe 2003). It is also good survey practice to ask potentially sensitive or more complex questions later rather than earlier in the questionnaire, in order to avoid deterring respondents from participating. Often, factual information such as demographic or organizational data is collected at the beginning of the questionnaire, unless these are likely to be perceived as sensitive by respondents in which case they may be positioned at the end so that they do deter them from completing the questionnaire from the outset.

In the case of this study, two separate electronic questionnaires were designed in Survey Monkey for distribution to the employer and the student sample, respectively. In both cases, basic demographic and organizational information was collected in an introductory section, followed by a number of structured and semi-structured questions tailored to each group and intended to generate both factual and attitudinal information to answer the research questions. Word versions of the Survey Monkey questionnaires are included as Appendices 4 and 5.

Before conducting the main survey, each of the questionnaires was "piloted" on a small number of the researcher's personal contacts, to ensure that the questions were understood, that the questionnaire routing worked effectively and that there were no grammatical or spelling errors. Minor modifications were made to the final versions of the questionnaires as a result of the pilot.

Sample members were given a deadline for completing and submitting their questionnaire which was seven days after distribution of the survey. Responses were monitored using the Survey Monkey software, which does not necessitate the use of named contact information and preserves the anonymity of individuals. The surveys were closed after the deadline date and response rates were calculated.

5.5.2 In-depth Interviews

Initially, the researcher approached the identified experts and specialists by telephone or email, explaining the background to and purpose of the study and requesting their participation in an interview, either in person or by means of an online questionnaire. If they agreed to an interview, a mutually convenient time and place was arranged, which in most cases was the interviewee's own office. Each interview took approximately one hour and was tape-recorded with the informant's permission.

For the in-depth interviews, interview guides was designed which covered the main questions and a number of possible follow-up questions or probes. In qualitative research involving in-depth telephone or face-to-face interviews, there is more flexibility in the way that questions can be asked, as long as the key information needed to answer the research questions is collected. Since the range and depth of information provided by interviewees from their own perspectives is more important than strict comparability of answers across sub-groups of a sample, there is no need to ask the questions in exactly the same way, and the interviewer can probe or ask follow-up questions in order to clarify answers or get the interviewees to expand on points being made. Indeed, the ability to seek additional information when necessary is one of the main benefits of face-to-face or telephone interviewing, although it is important not to influence the findings by asking leading or biased questions.

Generally, an interview guide is used to provide a broad format for the discussion and to ensure that all the relevant issues are covered. In the case of qualitative interviews, the specific questions on the guide can be tailored to the characteristics of the interviewees or their organisations, to encourage them to identify with the study and provide relevant information.

Although in-depth interviews can be costly and relatively time-consuming, they are particularly useful for obtaining in-depth insights and information from key informants in a particular subject area, particularly when a relatively small number of interviewees are involved and these have access to privileged information (Denscombe 2003). The flexibility inherent in this method means that, within the broad topic area, the informants can identify the important issues on which to focus. It is very important for the interview to ask questions in a neutral way so as not to

influence the findings, particularly where attitudinal information was being sought. A copy of the interview guide used in this study is included as Appendix 6.

An online questionnaire consisting of a series of open questions was designed for those individuals who preferred self-completion of the interview. Although this method offers less flexibility to the researcher, it is less time consuming and costly and can help to secure a higher response rate since participants can complete the questionnaire at a time convenient to themselves. Overall, the majority of interviews were completed in this way.

The Human Resource Managers contacted for the purpose of distributing questionnaires for the manager survey were also invited to complete the in-depth questionnaire in order to capture their own specialist knowledge of human resource issues in the UAE.

5.6 Reliability and Validity

When designing research, it is important to ensure that the reliability and validity of the study and its findings are maximised. These important research concepts are more directly relevant to quantitative research, but are also important to consider when conducting qualitative research.

5.6.1   Reliability

In quantitative research, this refers to the degree to which the data collection instrument and its specific measures (or questionnaire items) are consistent, repeatable, and free of measurement error. These factors are important pre-requisites if the findings of a survey are to be generalized from a sample to a wider population.

As Anastasi (1988) observed, reliability reflects the extent to which scores reflect true differences in whatever is being measured, rather than being attributable only to chance. Internal reliability refers to the "internal coherence of a scale" or the extent to which it reflects a single idea rather than separate components (Denscombe 2003); this is particularly important in the case of questionnaire items which ask respondents to indicate their position on an attitudinal scale relating to a particular issue, whilst

reliability or consistency over time refers the ability of an instrument to be administered on more than one occasion and produce scores which only reflect true fluctuations in what is being measured rather than any effect of the instrument itself (Denscombe 2003).

In order to maximise reliability in quantitative research, therefore, it is essential to ensure that the questionnaire is well designed in order to accurately capture respondents' views and experiences on unambiguous, well-defined concepts and issues. It is also particularly important to minimize any potential researcher or interviewer effects on the research findings, for example by using self-completion methods of questionnaire administration and by maintaining neutrality in the wording of all questions and response categories. To obtain a meaningful measure of reliability also requires a sufficiently large and heterogeneous sample; if there is little variability between sample members, the reliability of the study and its data collection instruments will be difficult to determine. Finally, it is important to fully document the research methods and data collection instruments so that the study can be duplicated by other researchers and its reliability assessed. All these factors were taken into account when designing the quantitative components of the current study.

The reliability of qualitative research is difficult to measure in precise terms, but as Denscombe (2003) observes, it can be measured in terms of the question "if someone else did the research would he or she have got the same results and arrived at the same conclusions?" (p. 273). As with quantitative research, therefore, it is very important for a qualitative researcher to fully document and explain their methods to allow the study to be replicated or evaluated, as was done in the case of the current study.

5.6.2   Validity

Validity refers to the degree to which research results accurately reflect what the research instrument is intended to measure (Cook and Campbell, 1979). In other words, whether the underlying concepts have been "operationalised" using appropriate indicators and whether the research instrument is producing accurate measurements of these (Denscombe 2003). Again, careful questionnaire design, which is grounded in a good understanding of the issues, is the main strategy for maximising internal validity. As Bryman (1992) noted, internal validity in

quantitative research is what ensures that claims of causal relationships are robust and that alternative explanations for them can be ruled out. Like reliability, validity is more difficult to measure in the case of qualitative research, but by fully documenting the data collection methods and the steps by which the research conclusions were reached, a researcher can enable others to evaluate the validity of their study.

Often, triangulation is used to enhance the validity of a research study by generating data on specific issues using a range of different methods and comparing the results: if these are consistent with one another this is likely to reflect a high level of internal validity. In the case of this study, the in-depth interviewers with stakeholders were used to triangulate the findings of the employer and student surveys. In this way, the validity of the conclusions drawn from the quantitative surveys could be enhanced by drawing on the information and options generated in the key informant interviews.

5.7 Data Analysis and Presentation of Results

5.7.1 Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative data from the manager and student surveys was analysed using the SurveyMonkey software as well as Excel; the use of software in quantitative facilitates the process of examining data in many different ways to explore and identify relationships and associations between variables, and also enables the researcher to easily generate graphical representations of the results. The quantitative research results of this study are presented in a range of formats including bar-charts, pie-charts and cross-tabulations, and using summary statistics, such as frequencies, percentages and means, which describe the characteristics of the sample in relation to particular questionnaire items.

Initially, the response rates for the surveys were reported and the characteristics of respondents were described and graphically presented. Then, for each of the main research questions, relevant results from both surveys were presented as frequencies and cross-tabulated by key sub-groups within the samples. Any observed associations between variables which were perceived to be important to the research were described. Since the survey research data was collected from samples selected using

non-probability methods, it was not appropriate or possible to use inferential statistics to determine the precise nature of associations between variables.

5.7.2 *Qualitative Analysis*

The qualitative data from the in-depth interviews and from the open-ended and semi-structured questionnaire items was analysed using content analysis; this involves breaking down the research data into units of text which are then grouped or "coded" by relevant headings and sub-heading. It is an iterative process whereby material is coded, reviewed and re-coded in accordance as themes emerge from the data, in an inductive fashion. Where appropriate, quotes from the stakeholder interviews and the textual responses to the survey questionnaires have been included in the report to illustrate key themes and relevant points.

In accordance with the mixed-methods research design on which this study is based, the results of the quantitative and qualitative components were integrated in a process of triangulation, and their overall relevance and significance was drawn out in the case of each research question.

5.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher has ensured that the highest ethical standards have been preserved in this study. As Denscombe (2003) observes, it is important for social researchers to "respect the rights and dignity of their research participants, avoid any harm to them and operate with honesty and integrity", as well as observing any relevant data protection legislation and professional codes of conduct. The three main ethical issues of relevance to the current study were informed consent and voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity.

In order to meet these standards the research participants were all given full information about the purpose and scope of the study, the identity of the researcher and his academic institution, so that they could decide whether or not to participate on the basis of informed consent. It was made clear that participants would receive no incentive or reward payment.

Additionally, the questionnaire survey participants were assured that their responses would be treated in complete confidence and that they would not be personally identifiable in the results, which would only be released in aggregate form. Survey respondents were not asked for their names; the completed questionnaires were identified only by code numbers for the purpose of calculating response rates and identifying any potential non-response bias in terms of demographic or organizational characteristics.

In the case of the smaller sample of participants in the in-depth qualitative research, informants were asked whether they were prepared to be personally identified in the research as representatives of their organizations. In general, this was necessary in order to understand the interviewee perspectives and interpret their responses. However, if any interviewee requested confidentiality, this was fully respected and their answers only reported in general terms.

5.9 Assumptions and Limitations

The research design assumes that organisations selected for inclusion in the manager survey are broadly representative of major companies in the banking/finance and oil/gas sectors in the UAE, since the sample in fact includes a large proportion of the leading organisations in these sectors.

Although these sectors represent a large segment of the UAE economy, however, the extent to which the samples are representative of UAE employers more generally is not known. There may also be an element of non-response bias in that the experiences and views of non-respondent organisations may be systematically different from those who did respond. For example, those with more positive or more negative experiences of employing Emirati nationals may have been more or less likely to respond to the survey.

The research design also tentatively assumes that the sample of students is broadly representatively of Emirati national students at UAE universities and other higher educational establishments. Most of the leading institutions in both the public and private education sector were included in the study. The achievement of a good response rate has ensured that a good representation of Emirati students has been

obtained. However, it must be acknowledged that this sample may not be strictly representative of all national students, since there may be differences between UAE universities in terms of fields of study, geographical origin of students, male/female ratio etc. The student survey may also have been affected by a non-response bias, either at institutional or individual level, or both.

All questionnaire surveys and interviews rely on the truthful and accurate provision of information by the research participants. It is assumed by the researcher that this was the case in this study, but there is a possibility that some of the answers may have been skewed, for example because of a desire to provide "socially acceptable", non-controversial answers regarding job-search or employee recruitment processes.

It is also assumed that the research instruments and individual questionnaire items are based on appropriate indicators of the underlying concepts. Every attempt was made to ensure that this was the case by conducting a comprehensive literature review and drawing on existing knowledge and theory in the instrument design.

Although the research conclusions were based on findings which were robustly supported by the evidence, including statistical tests where appropriate, it is acknowledged that more extensive research based on larger sample sizes would be needed to fully prove or disprove these. However, for the purpose of meeting the research objectives, including the development of recommendations for future UAE labour market policy, the research design and resulting data are believed to be of a sufficiently high standard.

5.10   Conclusion

This chapter has set out the underlying philosophy and research design of the study and has described the data collection and analysis methods, as well as other relevant methodological issues. In order to improve understanding of the current labour market problems facing the UAE and the limited success of the Emiratisation policy, this thesis uses a multi-disciplinary theoretical framework which draws on human capital, economic growth and globalisation theories, and emphasizes the increasingly important role of ICT skills development in the context of the global economy.

This is a mixed-methods study using both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Quanititative data was acquired using an online survey of human resource managers in a sample of oil and financial companies in the UAE, and a survey of a sample of male and female students at UAE universities and colleges The quantitative survey was distributed and completed via the internet using the SurveyMonkey online survey software. Qualitative data came from email interviews with a sample of key experts and stakeholders with interest in the UAE labour market, including academic researchers, government officials and human resource managers, in addition to qualitative research with managers and employees in at least two major ICT companies currently located in the UAE, in order to capture both supplier and user perspectives.

These methods allow for the triangulation of data in order to allow the research questions to be answered more fully than if a single method were used, and to reduce the likelihood of error in interpreting information. As Cohen and Manion (1986) observe, triangulation enables the social science researcher to "map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint and, in so doing, by making use of both quantitative and qualitative data" (p. 254). Additionally, secondary data from previous research and other key documents has been used in the analysis to enhance the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the research results.

The sample for the quantitative survey of private sector managers was drawn from companies in the oil and finance sectors of the economy, both of which account for a major share of employment in the UAE (Business Middle East, 2003). Yet, the sample of companies for inclusion in the sample has been generated from personal contacts and a process of "snowballing". Snowballing is a technique for generating a research sample whereby research subjects are asked to recommend and provide contact details for other potential research participants (Vogt, 1999). The sample of university students was generated from the student records of several large universities and colleges in the UAE, and also by a process of snowballing. The use of personal contacts and snowballing techniques in generating a sample of stakeholders for interview may introduce an element of bias into the qualitative findings, but every effort will be made to avoid this by using objective criteria to identify relevant

organisations for inclusion. Finally, as with all primary research, this study depends on the willingness of respondents to participate and to provide accurate and truthful information.

Chapter 6 : Results

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the primary research that has been conducted in order to address objectives 3 and 4 of the thesis:

- To conduct large-scale quantitative surveys of employers and jobseekers in the UAE in order to provide information on the extent to which demand for and supply of labour are currently aligned or misaligned, and how a better balance might be achieved.

- To conduct in-depth interviews with a range of UAE labour market experts and stakeholders, including academic researchers, human resource managers and representatives of the ICT sector to explore their views on what a sustainable human resource policy for the UAE should address, and other factors including the role of the ICT sector in the UAE's human resource development.

The research findings are intended to contribute to answering research questions 1 and 3, as well as their corresponding sub-questions, as follows:

1. What are the main supply-side and demand-side barriers to effective Emiratisation of the UAE labour market?

   a. What are the main factors that are currently preventing the expansion of private sector employment among UAE nationals? (e.g. recruitment practices and procedures; job-seeking preferences; employer preferences)

   b. What needs to happen in order to overcome these barriers to Emiratisation?

3. What are the key elements of an effective and sustainable Emiratisation policy for the UAE?

    a. Is the Emiratisation policy the best way forward for the UAE? What might any alternative or complementary measures consist of?

    b. How can the Emiratisation policy be designed in future in order to best meet the needs of employers and the national population of the UAE?

    c. How can the ICT sector and the development of ICT skills among the Emirati population improve the UAE labour market?

6.2 Student Survey Results

6.2.1 Numbers and Characteristics of Respondents

In total 560 student respondents participated in the survey, but only 365 answered all or most of the questions including those relating to their socio-demographic characteristics. Of these, 326 (88.7%) were of Emirati nationality and the analysis has been based on this sub-group of respondents.

Of the 326 Emirati students who participated in the survey, 56.7% were female and 43.3% male. The majority (59.5%) were aged 21 to 25, 25.8% were aged 20 or under, and 14.7% were aged over 25. When asked about their fluency in written English, the vast majority indicated that they were either "very good" (42.9%) or "fairly good" (50.3%); similarly when asked about their fluency in spoken English, most respondents said that they were either "very good" (45.1%) or "fairly good" (49.1%), with the remainder in each case indicating that they were "fairly poor" in written or spoken English. Respondents were also asked to specify their current course of study. The qualitative responses were coded and the resulting distribution is shown in Figure 6.1
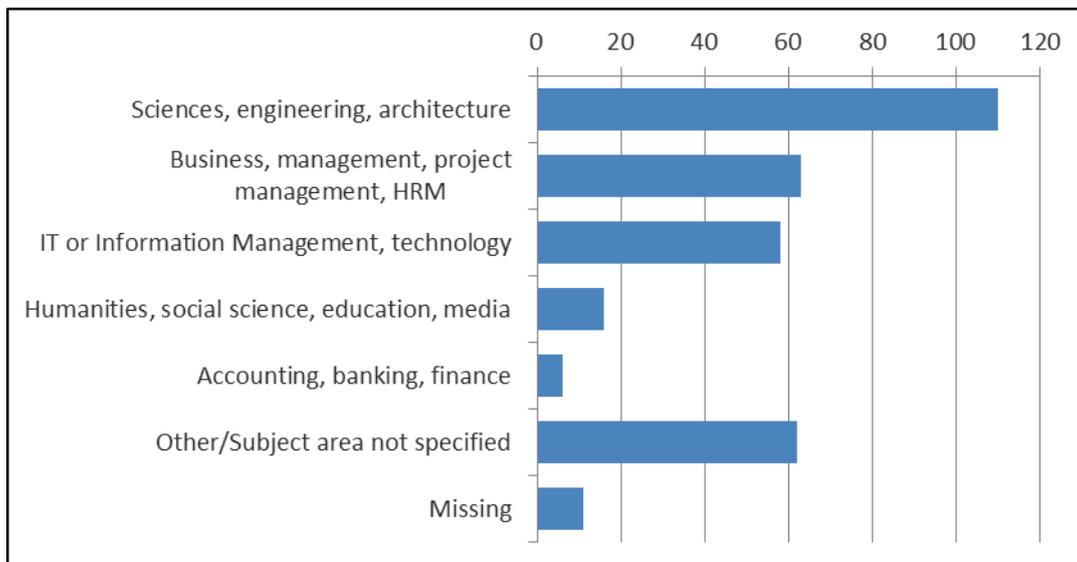
Figure 6.1: Distribution of Emirati students by course of study

6.2.2 Job Search Plans

Respondents were asked to indicate what they intend to do after completion of their course of study, and the results for the whole sample of Emirati national students are shown in Figure 6.2.
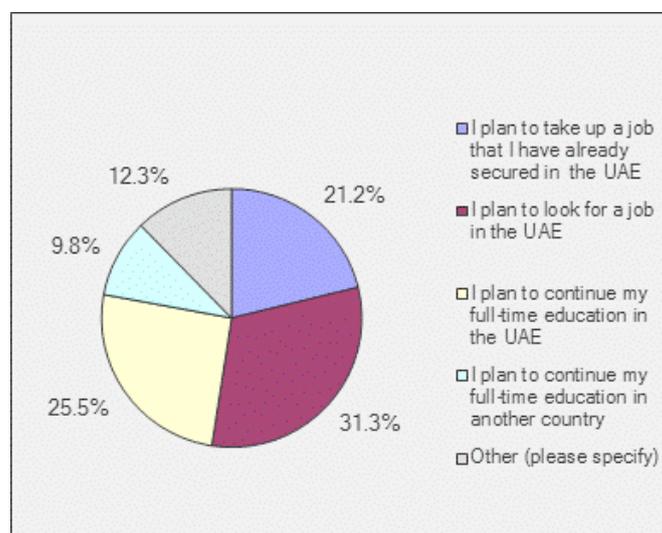
Figure 6.2: Emirati students' plans on completion of studies

Only around half of the respondents said that either they planned to take up a job (21.2%), or look for a job (31.3%) in the UAE on completion of their current studies; more than a third indicated that they would continue their studies in the UAE (25.5%) or abroad. Of the remainder, nearly all said that they planned to combine working and

studying, either in the UAE or abroad. There were differences in the future plans of male and female Emirati students (Figures 6.3 and 6.4).
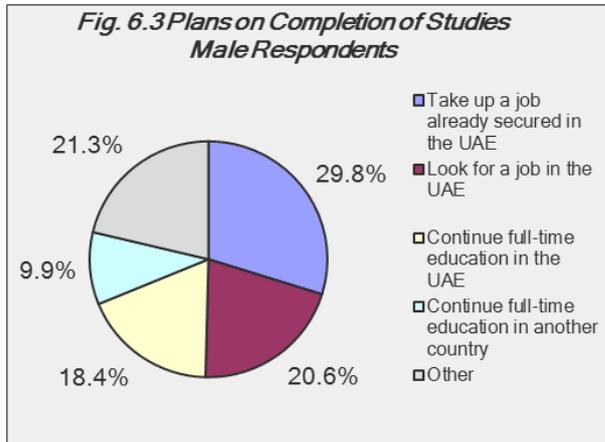
Figure 6.3 Plans on completion of studies - male respondents
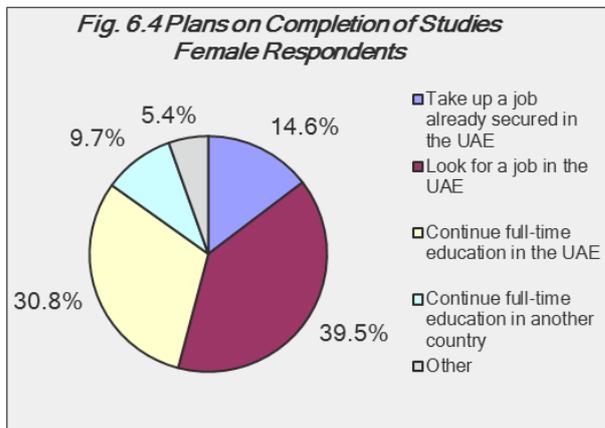
Figure 6.4: Plans on completion of studies - female respondents

Female respondents were considerably more likely to indicate that they intended to continue their studies either in the UAE or overseas, after completion of their current course of study (40.5%) than were male respondents (28.3%). Of those planning to work in the UAE after finishing their studies, males students were more likely than female students to have a job already secured - 29.8% of all male Emirati students, compared with just 14.6% of female Emirati students gave this response. There were no notable differences between students of different age groups in terms of their future plans.

When asked which sector of employment they expect to work in when they took up employment, the majority of respondents (81%) indicated that they expected to work in the public sector, providing further support for the finding of other studies of a

preference among Emirati students for government jobs. This does not appear to be changing over time: when the results were examined for respondents in different age groups it was found to be those aged over 25 that had a slightly lower expectation that they would work in for public sector jobs (70.5%), compared with 80.7% of students aged 21 to 25 and 83% of those aged 20 or under. Females were slightly less likely to indicate an expectation that they would work in the public sector (77.7%) compared with males (81.8%).

 When asked which specific sectors of industry they expect to work in, 43.9% said government, 40.2% the oil/gas industry and just 4.3% the banking/finance industry, while 11.7% were still undecided. Again, some notable differences emerged between gender and age groups; the majority of males (58%) said that they expect to work in the oil and gas industry, while among female Emirati students the largest proportion (50%) said that they expected to work in governnment jobs.

Respondents were also asked which occupational categories they expected to work in when they started employment. Around a third (34%) of all Emirati students participating in the survey indicated that they plan to enter management jobs, and more than a third in total plan to enter professional (15%) or technical (21.8%) occupations (Figure 6.5). The high percentage aspiring to go straight into management may be a factor hindering their ability or willingness to work in the private sector, where employers might perhaps look for previous management experience as well as qualifications for managerial vacancies.
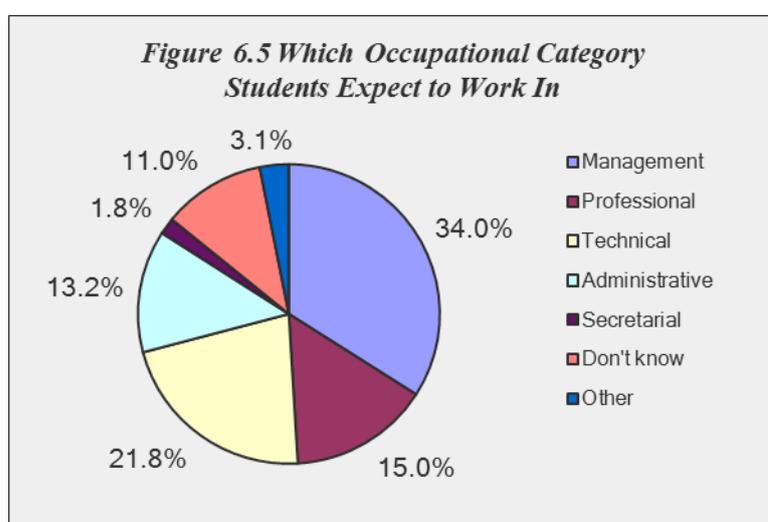
Figure 6.5: Which occupational category students expect to work in

6.2.3   Job Search Methods

The student respondents were asked to indicate how likely they would be to use various specific sources of information about job vacancies, when looking employment. For each source listed, they were required to indicate whether they would be "very likely", "fairly likely" "fairly unlikely" or "very unlikely" to use this. The overall distribution of findings is shown in Figure 6.6, with the sources of information arranged in decreasing order of popularity.

The findings confirm the very high importance of social networking and social capital in job-seeking practices in the UAE, as highlighted in previous literature, with nearly half of all Emirati respondents (46.9%) saying they would be very likely to use personal contacts or word of mouth to find a job.

This was closely followed in popularity by The Abu Dhabi Tawteen Council and TANMIA/government employment agencies, with 43.6% and 43.3% of respondents respectively indicating that they would be very likely to use these as sources of information about job vacancies, The UAE Recruitment Show was also found to be popular with Emirati jobseekers, with around a third saying they would be very likely to use this as a source of information. Private employment agencies and newspaper job advertisements were least frequently cited as sources that respondents would be very likely to use when job seeking.

Figure 6.7 compares job search methods by male and female students, in terms of the percentages saying they were "very likely" to use each of the sources listed. It was found that female students were somewhat more likely than male students to report being "very likely to use" each one of the listed sources of job vacancies, and were considerably more likely to report that they would use TANMIA/Government employment agencies and online job sites. The results also revealed some evidence that older job-seekers are more likely to rely on personal contacts/word of mouth while those in younger age groups are more likely to use a diverse range of sources of nformation about job vacancies.
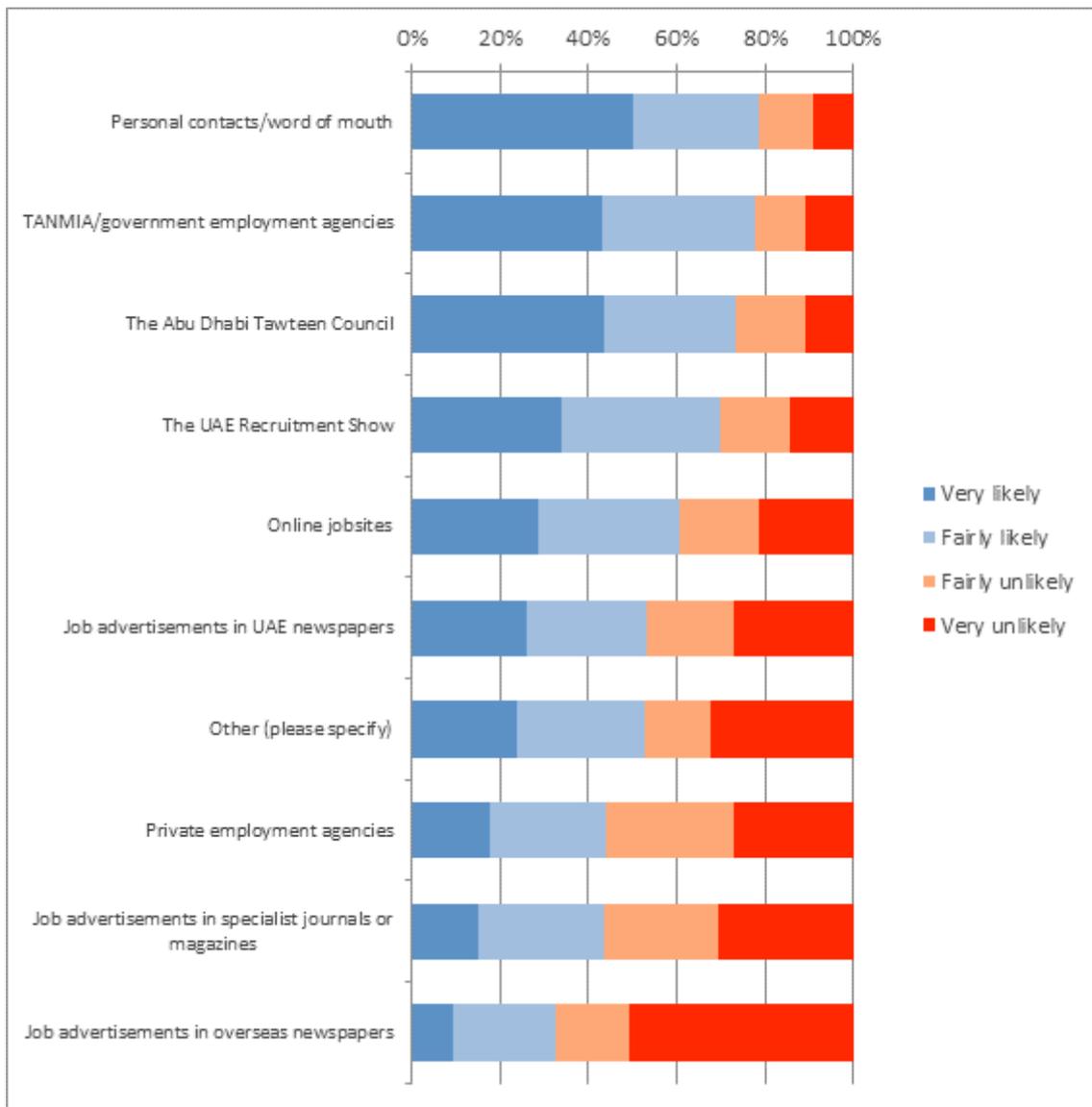
Figure 6.6: Likelihood of using specified job search methods
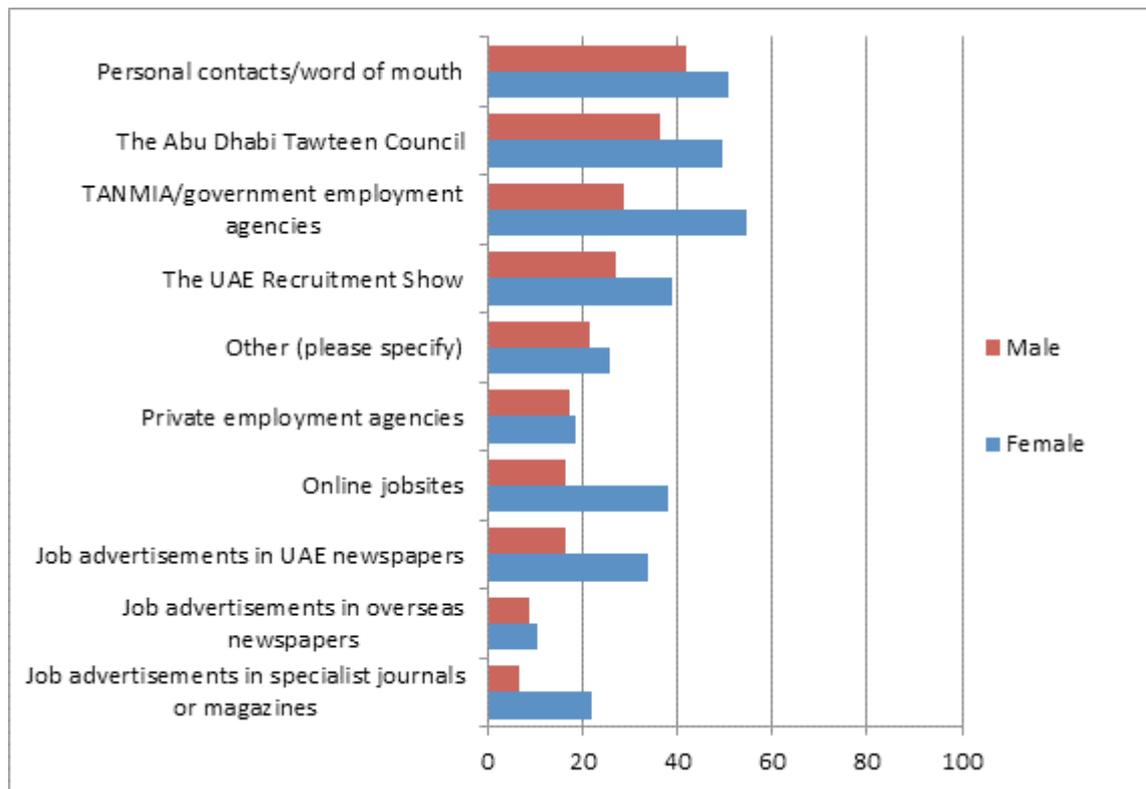
Figure 6.7: Percentages of male and female respondents saying they would be "very likely" to use each source of information about job vacancies

6.2.4 Factors of Importance in Job Search

The students were asked to rate a number of factors in terms of their importance to them when looking for a job (Figure 6.8). The findings were interesting and conflicted to some extent with the results of previous research and literature in this area.

Like many job-seekers all over the world, these students were most likely to rate factors such as interesting work, a good salary and ability to use their qualifications as "fairly important" or "very important" when looking for a job.

On the other hand, factors which previous literature has cited as being of importance to Emirati jobseekers, and possibly hindering their willingness to enter the private sector, were rated as "fairly important" or "very important" by lower percentages of the student respondents in this survey. These included, for example, having colleagues or a manager of the same nationality or religion as themselves, and the ability to go straight into a senior position.
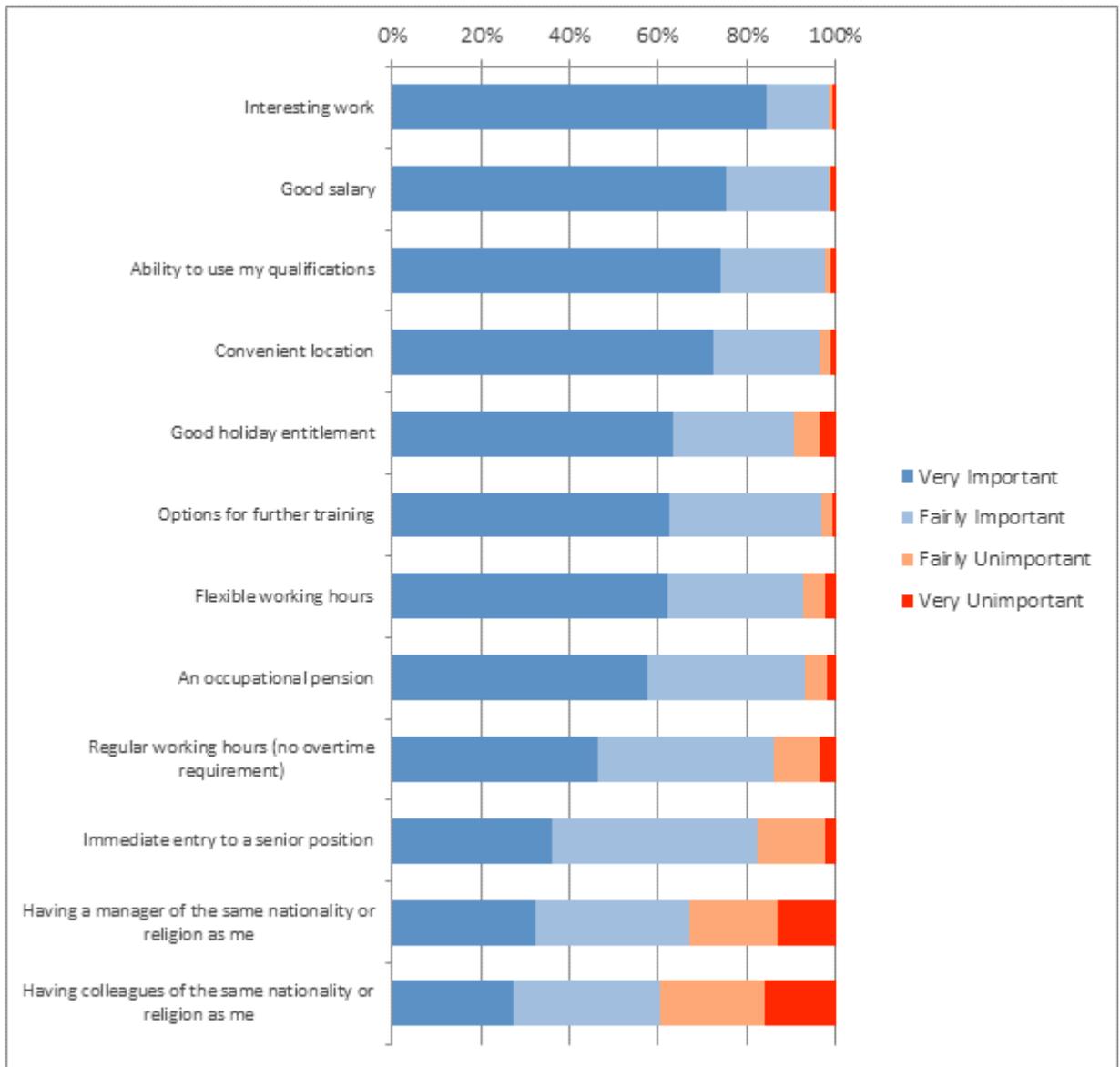
Figure 6.8: Relative importance of specified factors in job search

As Figure 6.9 shows, there were very few differences between male and female students in terms of the factors rated as "very important" when searching for a job. Similarly, no notable differences emerged between students in different age groups.
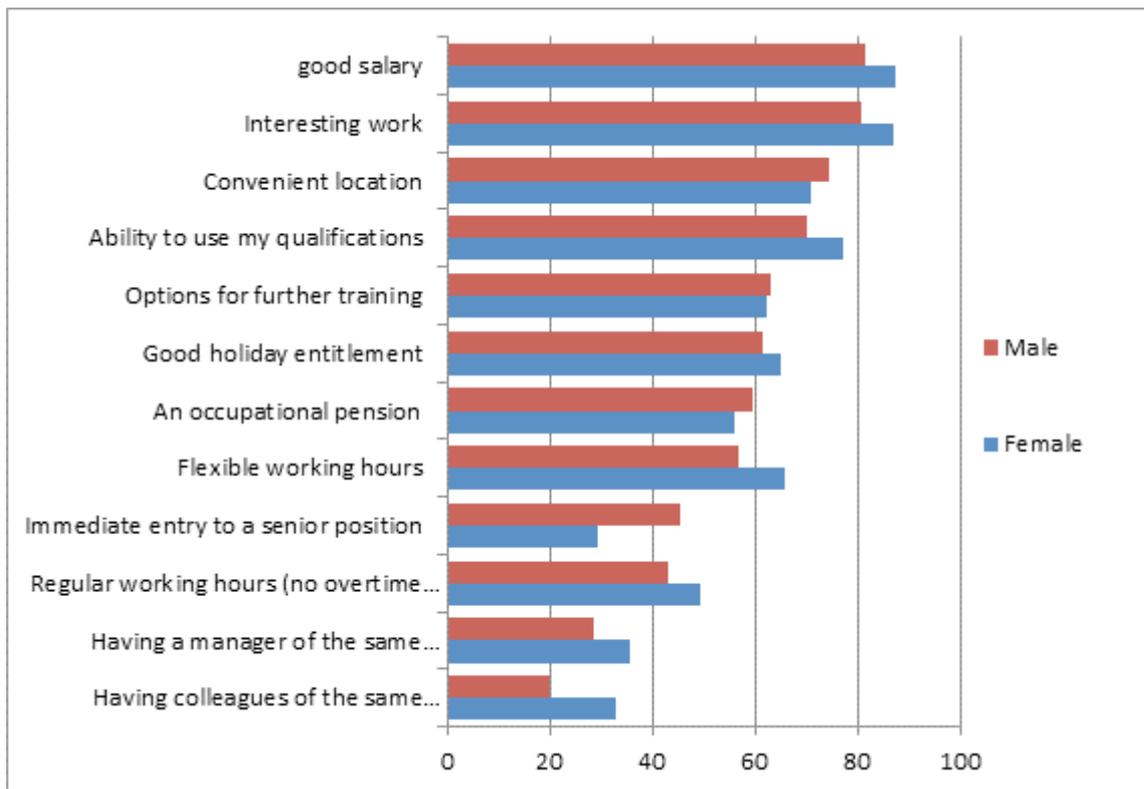
Figure 6.9: Percentages of male and female students ranking specified factors as "very important" in job search

The findings of this survey do, however, support the findings of previous research about Emirati preferences for work in the public sector. When asked to indicate whether the public sector or the private sector in the UAE is likely to offer better prospects in relation to each of the cited factors, a higher percentage of respondents said that they believe that the public sector offers better prospects in relation to every one of the factors listed (Figure 6.10).

The vast majority thought that the public sector performs better in terms of having colleagues or a manager of the same nationality; offering good holiday entitlement; a good salary etc. However, the private sector was regarded as better by significant minorities of Emirati students in relation to the ability to use their qualifications (45.1%); offering interesting work (43.6%) and immediate entry to a senior position (37.4%).
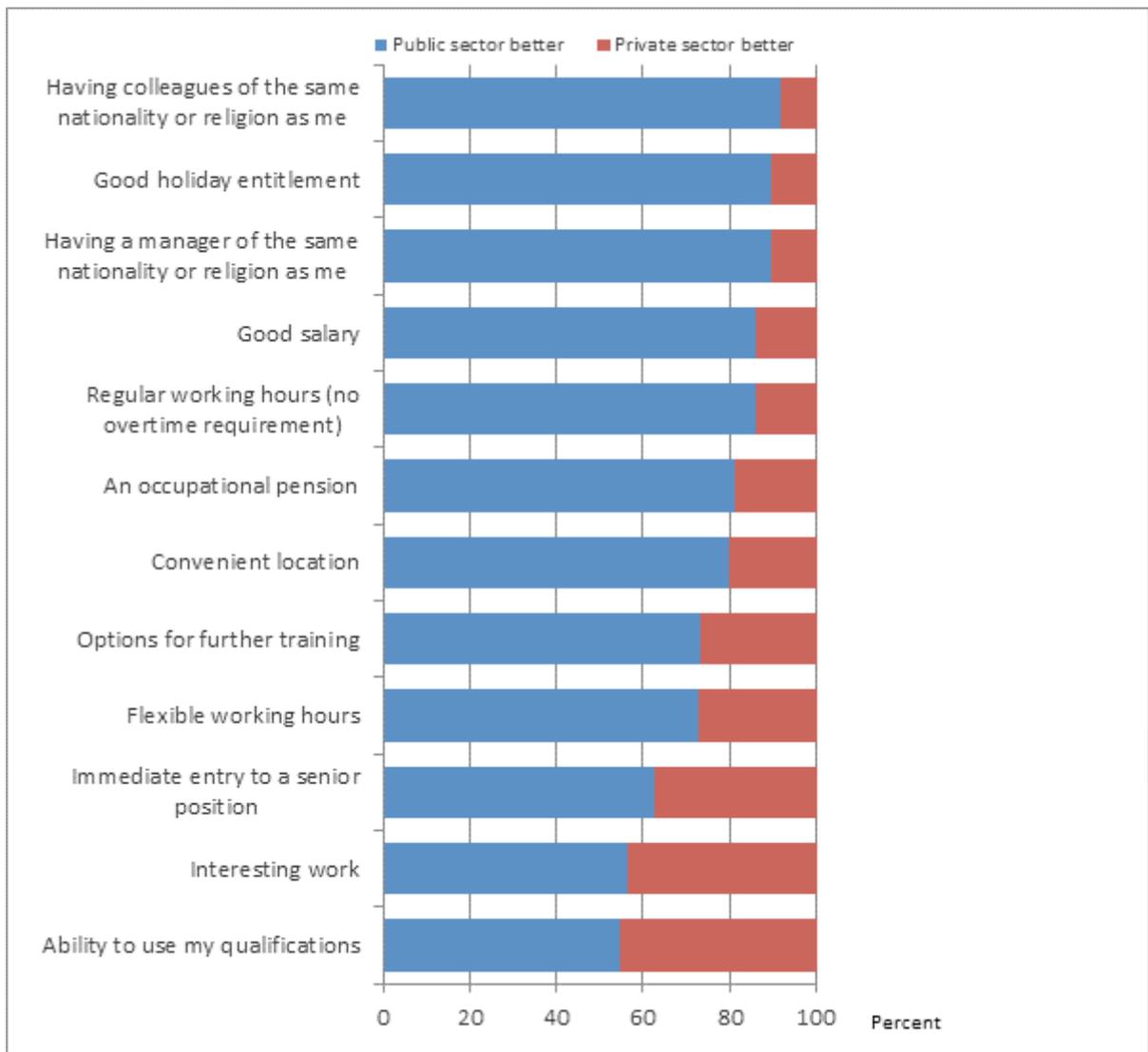
Figure 6.10: Relative performance of public vs. private sector in relation to factors listed

Overall, the students in this survey were fairly positive about the prospects for Emirati jobseekers within the UAE; however, views were somewhat mixed as it was also indicated that the job prospects for foreign nationals were in some respects better (Figure 6.11).
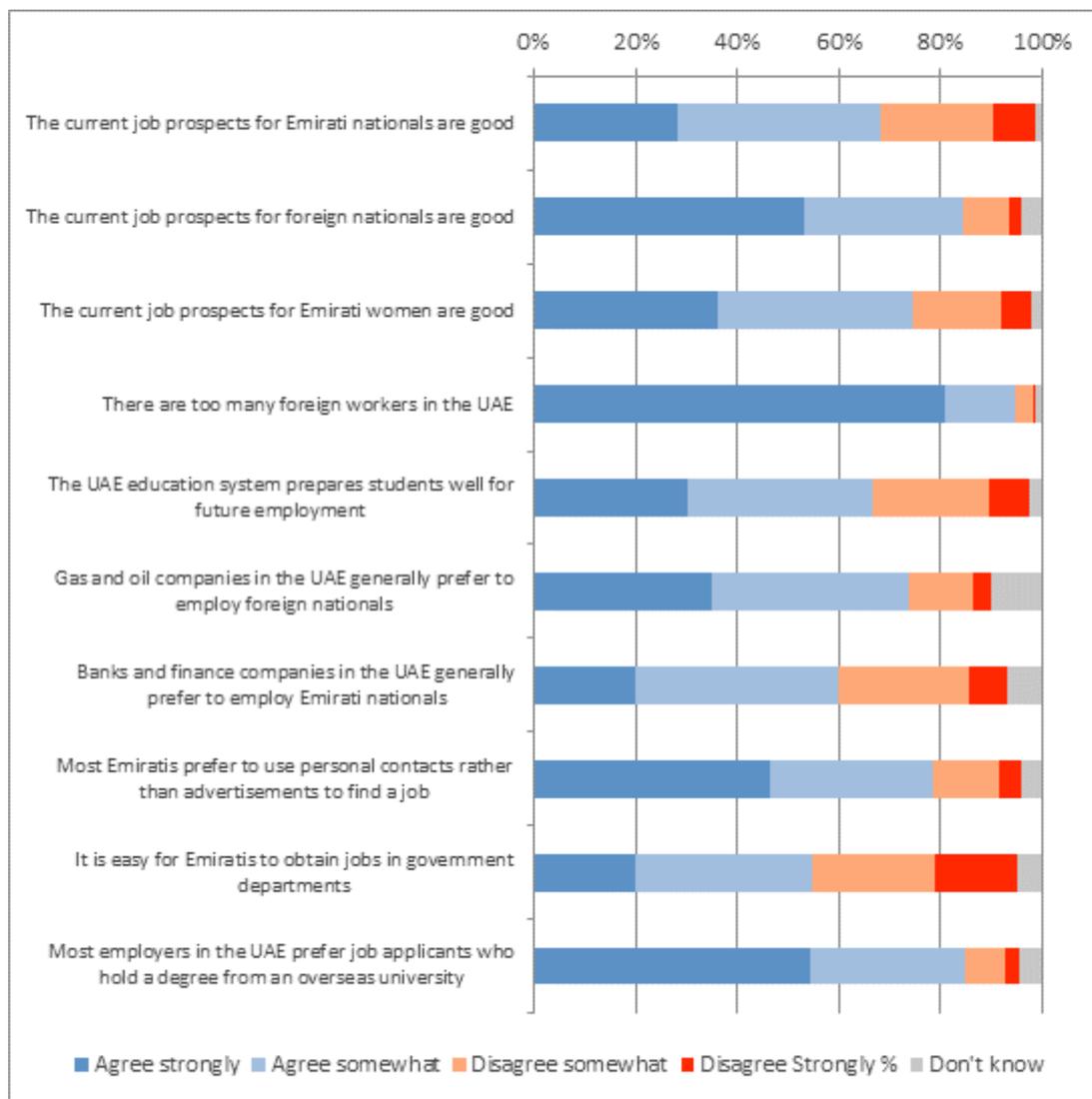
Figure 6.11: Extent of agreement or disagreement with statements relating to Emirati jobseeker prospects

Sixty-eight percent of respondents agreed (either "somewhat" or "strongly" that the current job prospects are good for Emiratis; but 84% agreed that job prospects are currently good for foreign nationals. Interestingly, 74.5% thought that the prospects are currently good for Emirati women.

Seventy-four percent agreed that Oil and Gas companies prefer to employ foreign nationals; but 60% agreed that banks and finance companies prefer to employ Emirati nationals.

Although 66% of respondents agreed that the UAE education system prepares students well for future employment, 85% thought that most employers prefer job applicants who have a degree from overseas.

123

Just 55% agreed that it is easy for Emiratis to obtain jobs in government departments. A very high percentage of respondents (95%) agreed that there are too many foreign workers in the UAE; 81% agreed strongly with this statement.

When asked what they think of as a reasonable monthly salary for an Emirati graduate to earn in their first job, the most commonly-cited response, given by nearly half of all respondents was at least 30,000 AED, the highest salary listed as an option in the questionnaire. This indicates that Emiratis have very high expectations in terms of what they expect to earn, which may not necessarily reflect the human capital they have to offer in terms of job skills and experience (Figure 6.12).
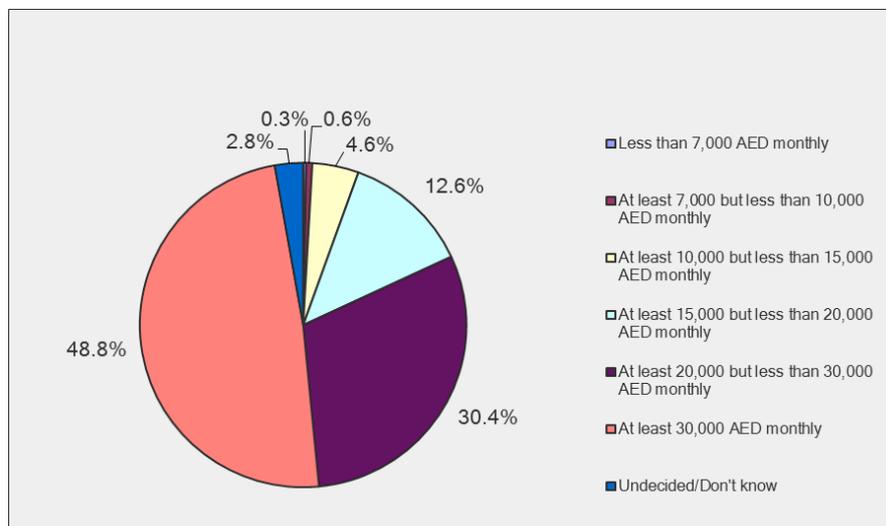
Figure 6.12: Perceived reasonable monthly salary for Emirati graduate in first job
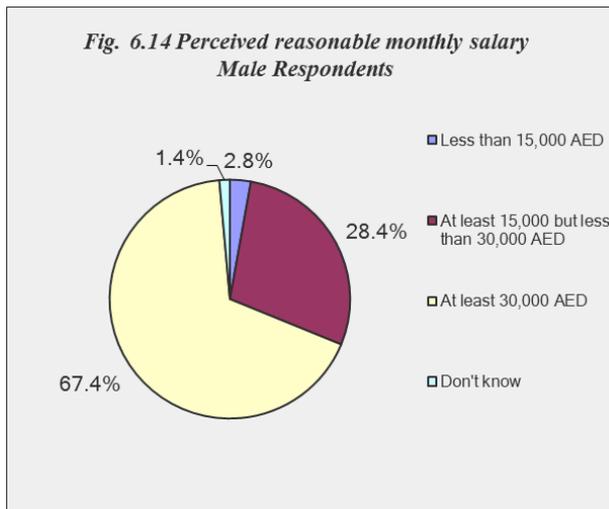
Figure 6.13: Perceived reasonable monthly salary - male respondents
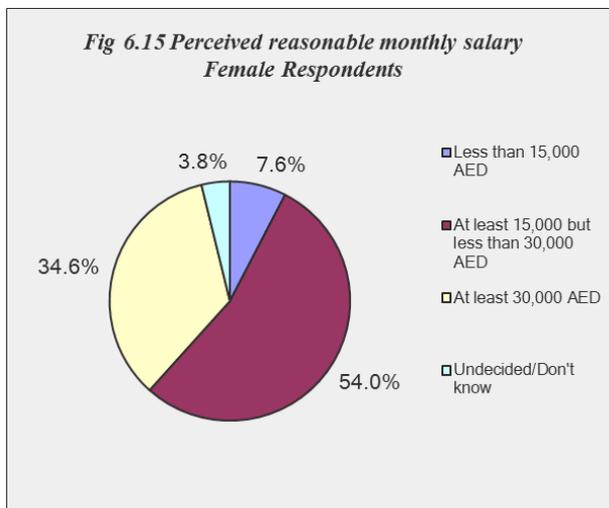
Figure 6.14: Perceived reasonable monthly salary - female respondents

However, there was a considerable difference between male and female Emirati students in terms of their salary expectations. More than two thirds (67.4%) of males but only around a third (34.6%) of females indicated that they felt an Emirati national with a Bachelor's degree should earn at least 30,000 AED in their first job. More than half of female respondents (54%) said they thought a graduate should earn at least 15,000 but less than 30,000 AED when starting employment (Figures 6.13 and 6.14).

In total, more than half of all respondents indicated that they thought it would be either "fairly difficult" or "very difficult" to find a job in the UAE. There was little difference in views by gender, and only small variations by age of respondents (Figure 6.15).
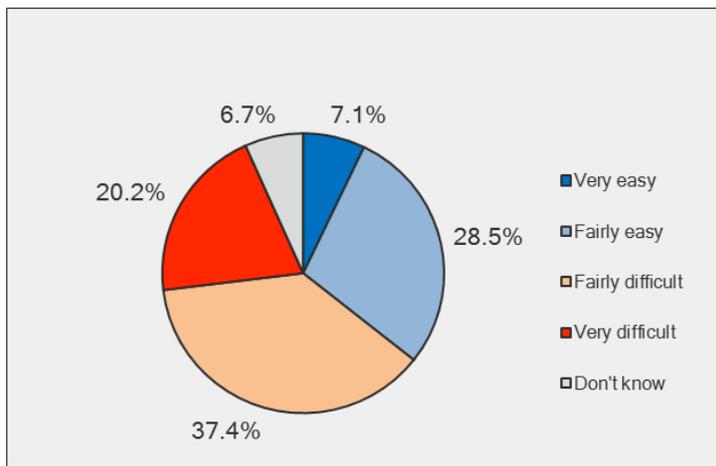
Figure 6.15: Expected level of ease or difficulty in securing job

Those who indicated that they thought it would be fairly difficult or very diffent to secure a job in the UAE when they finish their studies were asked to give the reason for saying so. The qualitative questions were coded and the distribution of 189 coded responses is shown in Figure 6.16.
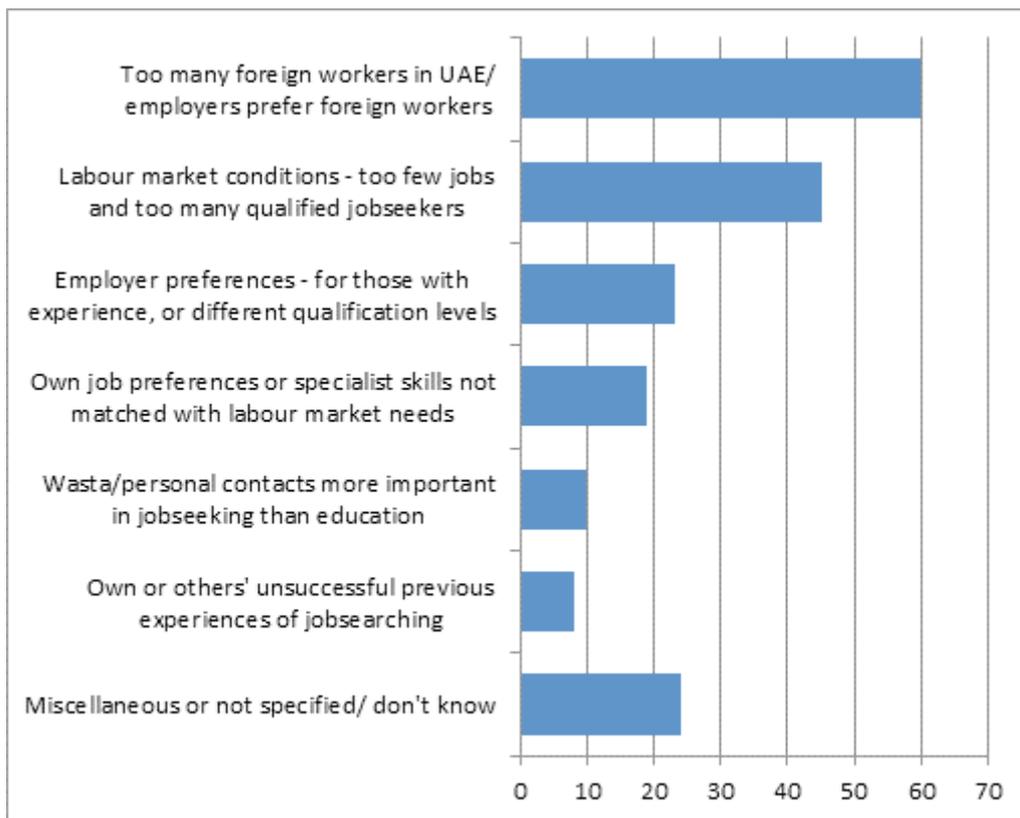
Figure 6.16: Reasons for expected difficulty in securing job (response numbers in each category)

Of those respondents who expected to face difficulty in securing a job because of too many foreign workers in the UAE, the specific responses included the following:

"Companies all the time want foreign people they think local people just want to work in offices"

"Firms are looking for graduates from overseas or expats."

"In last 5 years more foreign people come and take so many jobs opportunity"

"It's difficult to find a job because companies use foreign workers instead of Emirati workers. I do not know, maybe they find it its better because they do not pay them a lot of money

"Managers prefer expats and believe they can work much more harder than nationals especially in decent jobs"

"Many employers are not serious about emiratization."

"Most manager(s) in the UAE they are not Emirate. So that I think they will chose most employment for their country rather than my country."

"There are alot of foreign people take the most job in the UAE; when local students finsh university they dont have opportunity to work because they lack of training but the foreign people they have good experience."

The second most commonly cited type of reason for expecting difficulty in securing a job in the UAE related to current labour market conditions, such as too few jobs and too many qualified people looking for work. Among the specific responses that fell into this category were the following:

"Because most of the people enter the same major, the market satisfy their need with number of them where(as) the rest of them become unemployed."

"There are a lot of people who have already studied my major, and have a Bachelor's degree but they still can't find a job, so when applying for a job, it's going to be a challenge trying to prove that a you're the best among other people."

"There is a lot of graduates who are looking for work"

"The number of fresh graduation people are more than the number of suitable job opportunities for locals."

"The labour market job requirements always change. Recruitment strategies unstable!"

"The UAE labour market requirements massively change as aresult of the global economy suply/demand."

A considerable number of respondents expressed the belief that employer recruitment preferences would be likely to make it difficult for them to find a job.   The specific responses falling into this category included the following:

"A lot of firms want to hire you at the lower certificate which I will never accept."

"If a person has high qualification such as masters, employer dont accept them because the salary would be high . or they think that their expectation for salary will be high .. the higher the qualification the (more) difficult to find job."

"Most workplaces prefer those who have experiences and worked in many places like banks, companies, institutions ... A lot of employers doesn't look at the degree, but they concentrate the most on the experienced workforce as mentioned above, those who worked for many companies - the thing that could be unfair for the fresh graduates who didn't work previously and obviously don't have any experience in the job or don't know how to do the work as perfectly as an experienced individual."

"Because most employers need to hire people with experience, it will be very difficult for a student who is newly graduated to find a job."

"Every person, having a bachelor or above degree in the United Arab Emirates, finds difficulties to get a job. Sure he/she can apply for many jobs but now a days we're been asked to have for example 5 years experience. How can we get the experience and we just graduated 2 months ago ?!"

"To have a job students should have extra certificates including the higer education's certificate like; ILETS and ICDL."

Many respondents gave reasons for expecting difficulty in securing a job which related to their own specific job preferences or the skills that they have. These included the following verbatim responses:

> *"Because I have to find a job which allows me to implement what I have studied or to have a interesting job which will satisfy my ability and interest."*
>
> *"Because the culture of my family make me to search for special job."*
>
> *"According to your quailification it is difficult but you will find a job in other things not in what you studied."*
>
> *"Cause the market is down in Dubai and I might find it difficult to find the right job that interests me and fits my priorities."*
>
> *"I live in a city in Eastern cost where jobs with my qualification are not available."*
>
> *"Because there is no area in my city that can I work at, so I have to work a city which is far from us."*
>
> *I think it may be due to the fact that I am not interested in banking, communications or technical scientific work. I have studied a humanities based degree which, while providing one with good thinking and research skills, is difficult to catergorize. I can't just get a job as an accountant the way Accountancy students would. I will have to search for a position which will allow me to use my skills and improve them. On the plus side, my degree makes some of my options very flexible and I could, in theory, work in a variety of sectors...."*

Several of the students specifically the role of "wasta" and personal contacts in recruitment in the UAE and indicated that this might make it difficult for them to find jobs:

> *"Because every thing here is obtained by what we call it in Arabic " Wasta" not by how the person is educated.***"***
>
> *"if you have wasta you will work easilybut if you don't have wasta so difficult."*

"We need a strong personal contact to obtain a job."

Finally, some respondents based their expectations of difficulties in finding a job on their own job-search experiences to date, or the experiences of their relatives or friends:

> *"Because a lot of my relatives can't find job after they finish their study for many years."*
>
> *"I sent my CV everywhere in different job fairs and only 2 private companies called me for interview. One of them didn't reply me back which mean they didn't see me qualify enough for the job while worked in one of the banks while the other company didn't even call me back to set an appointment for the interview. On the other hand only one Government Company asked me for interview and I'm waiting. By the way, it is not about me only my sister graduated last year and until today she looks for a job but all the companies prefer fresh graduated. Also my brother he faced very hard time looking for a job and at the end maybe after one year he worked in one of the banks while his major is IT."*
>
> *"I'm still looking for the last 6 months."*

6.3 Employer Survey Results

6.3.1 Characteristics of Respondents and their Organisations

In total 237 managers participated in the survey, but only around 140 answered all or most of the questions. Of the 136 respondents who provided information about their personal characteristics, 30% were female and 70% male. The majority (69.1%) were aged 25 to 40 (Figure 6.17).
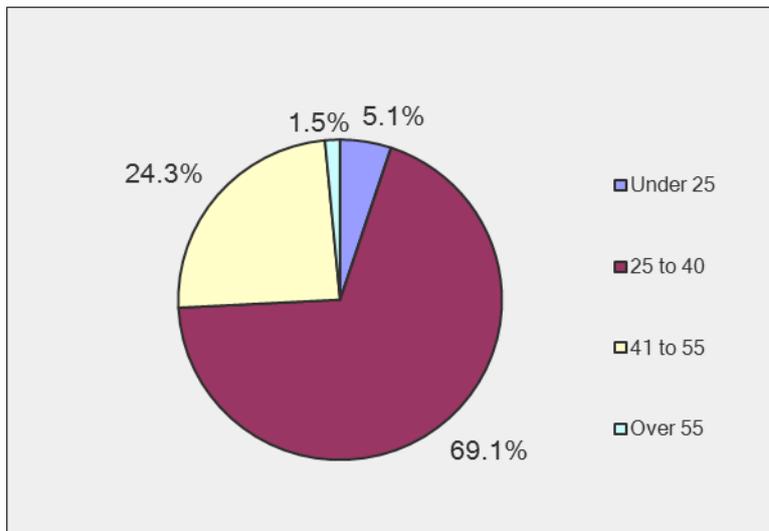
Figure 6.17: Distribution of employer survey respondents by age group

Nearly half (46.3%) were Emirati nationals, with the remainder mainly accounted for by the nationals of other Arab nations or by Asian nationals. Only a small number (8) were of western nationalities (Table 6.1).

Nationality	Number of Respondents
Emirati	63
Other GCC country national	15
Other Middle Eastern/Arab country national	30
Asian	18
European	3
North American	4
South African	1
Not specified	2
Total	136

Table 6.1: Distribution of employer survey respondents by nationality

Table 6.2 shows the distribution of the employer survey respondents by occupational category. It can be seen that the majority of the respondents occupy managerial or high level executive roles in their organisations, although a broad range of occupational categories were represented.

Occupational Category	Number of Respondents
Manager/Assistant Manager/Supervisor	22
Senior Manager	19
Administrator/Assistant/Officer	16
Expert/Specialist/Analyst/Programmer	13
Accountant/Financial controller	11
Division/Department Head	11
AVP/Exec VP	10
Engineer	7
HR Specialist	6
Not specified	5
Director/Executive Director	5
Teacher	5
Sales coordinator	2
Translator	2
Lawyer	1
Writer	1
Total	136

Table 6.2: Distribution of employer survey respondents by occupational category

As can be seen in Figure 6.18, 67% of respondents to the manager survey were employed in the finance/banking sector and 33% in the oil/gas/energy sector. Sixty four per cent were employed in the government sector and the remaining 36% in the private sector (Figure 6.19)
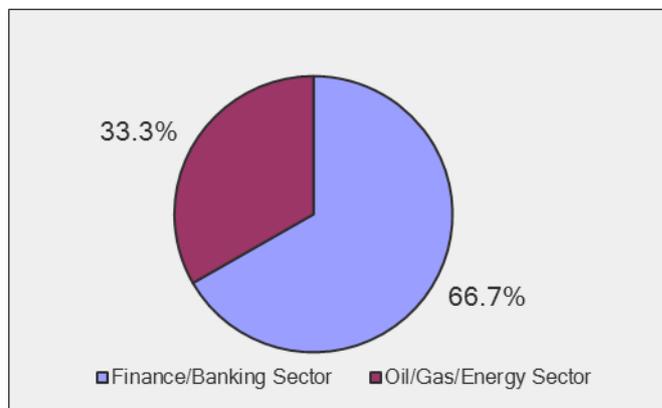
Figure 6.18: Distribution of respondents by industry sector
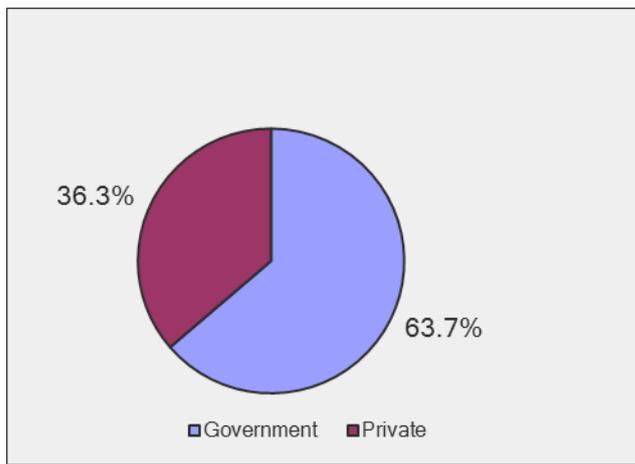
Figure 6.19: Distribution of respondents by public/private sector

In total, 63% of the respondents said that they either "play a leading role in staff recruitment in their organisation" or are "actively involved in staff recruitment for their own team or department". Just over a third (36.9%) said that they have little or no responsibility for staff recruitment (Figure 6.20)
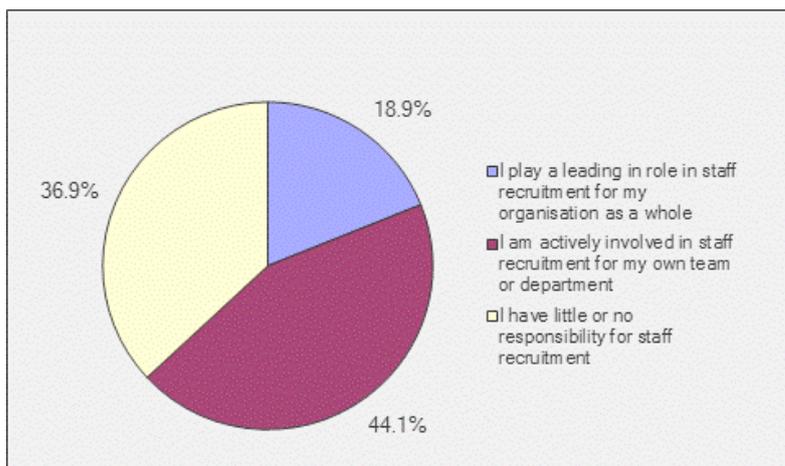
Figure 6.20: Role that respondents have in recruitment for their organization

Of the 205 respondents who answered the relevant question, half (50.7%) indicated that their organization has set its own goals for the employment of UAE nationals, while a further 42% reported that their organisation is required to meet UAE legal requirements for the employment of UAE nationals. Seven percent reported that their organisation has no formal requirements for the employment of UAE nationals (Figure 6.21).
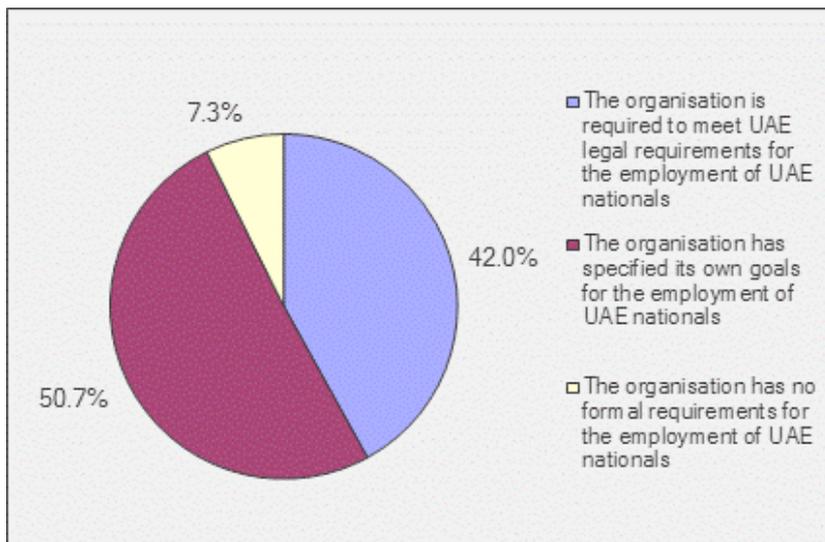
Figure 6.21: Organisations' requirements for employment of UAE nationals

Of the 99 respondents who indicated that their organisation did have requirements for the employment of Emiratis, 22% reported that these requirements had been fully met to date, and 61% said they had been met "to a large extent".

6.3.2   Recruitment Methods

Respondents were also asked which of a number of specified recruitment methods they commonly use for various types of occupations. The results are shown in Figure 6.23. These overwhelmingly confirm the findings of previous research, and of the student survey, about the very high dependence in the UAE on personal contacts and word of mouth in recruitment for jobs, with this being the most commonly cited response among employers in relation to jobs in all four occupational groups: management, professional/technical, administrative/secretarial and unskilled jobs.

Personal contacts were most likely to be used when recruiting for professional/technical jobs (used by 53.5% of respondents for this occupational category), but were also commonly used when recruiting for management jobs (47.1%) and administrative/secretarial jobs (43.9%). Personal contacts were less likely to be used when recruiting for unskilled jobs (30.3%) but this may reflect lower levels of recruitment of unskilled workers generally among the survey respondents; personal contacts were in any case still the most common recruitment method used for this job category.

The second most commonly used recruitment method for all four types of occupations was the use of private employment agencies. These were cited almost as frequently as personal contacts/word of mouth in relation to the recruitment of managers, professional/technical workers and administrative/secretarial staff, with the two perhaps forming complementary recruitment strategies.

It is of note that whilst managers frequently use private employment agencies to recruit staff for all types of jobs, and are relatively less likely to use TANMIA/government employment agencies, the opposite was found to be the case among job-seekers, with the respondents in our survey indicating that they would be considerably more likely to use TANMIA/governmental employment agencies than private employment agencies when looking for jobs.
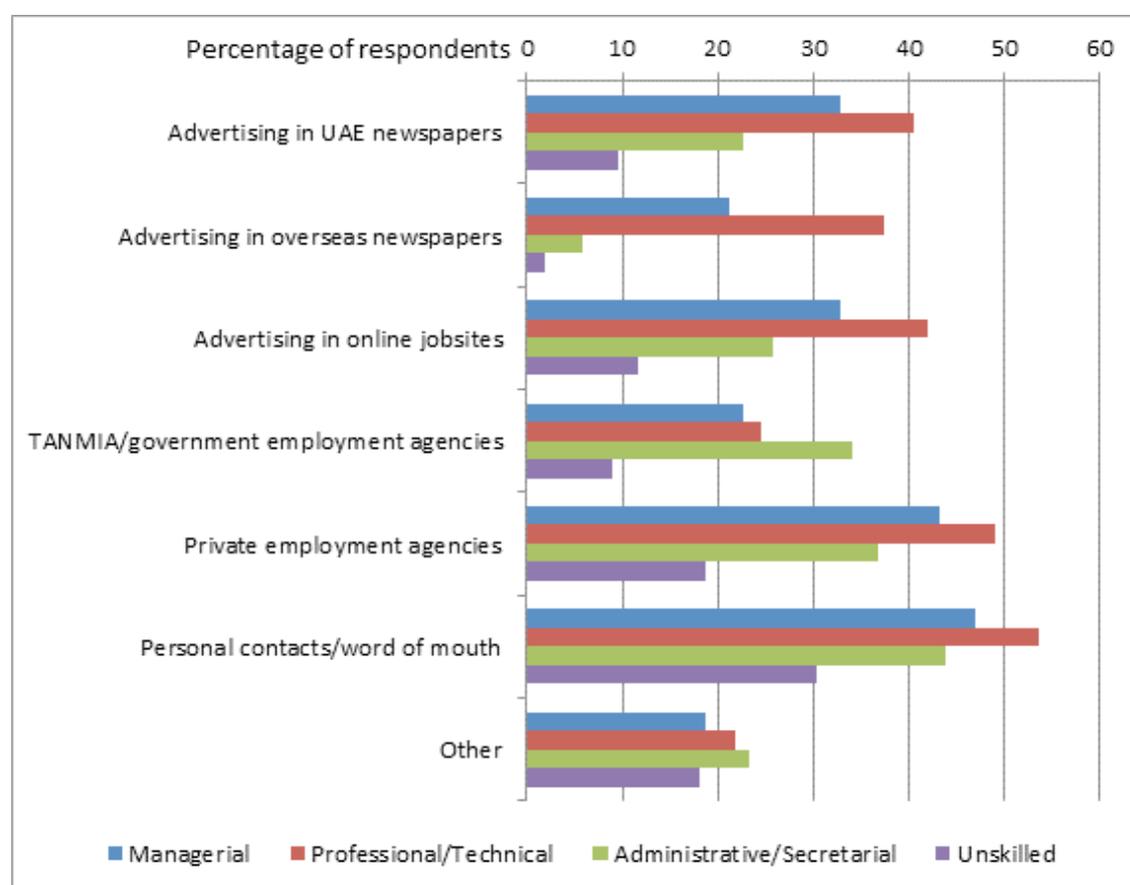
Figure 6.22: Commonly used recruitment methods for different types of occupations

For each job category, at least twenty per cent of respondents reported using "other" recruitment methods. Their responses were coded and Table 6.3 shows the distribution of responses by types of recruitment methods cited.

6.3.3   Recruitment Needs and Strategies

The employer respondents were asked to indicate whether they felt that management, professional/technical, administrative/secretarial or "other" types of job skills are in short supply among UAE nationals.   Of the 148 respondents who answered this question, only 3.4% indicated that they believe none of these job skills are in short supply among UAE nationals. Professional/technical skills were seen to be in short supply by the highest number of respondents, with 78.4% giving this response; followed by management skills, cited by 43.2% of respondents. Twenty-four percent indicated that secretarial/administrative skills are in short supply (Figure 6.23).

Alternative Recruitment Method	Number of Respondents
Internal recruitment methods	9
Job Fairs/university communications	7
Via National Programs (e.gEmiratization; ADNOC)	6
Networking/word of mouth/headhunting	5
Company website/online applications	4
Referrals by current employees	4
Direct applications/walk-in applicants	4
Other organizational/professional websites	1

Table 6.3: Other recruitment methods used by respondents
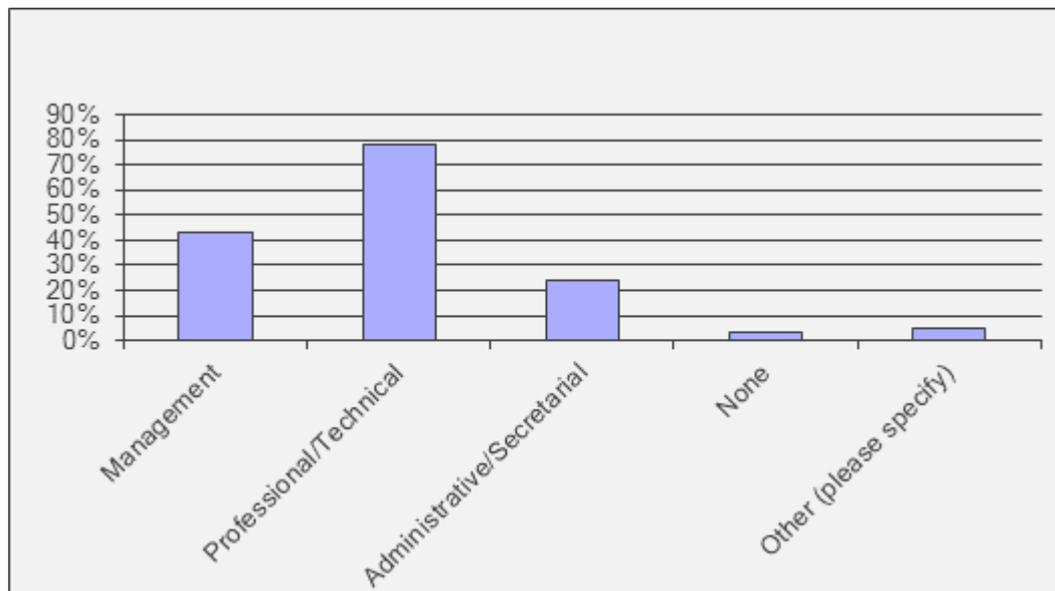
Figure 6.23: Percentages of respondents agreeing that specified skills are in short supply among Emirati nationals

6.3.4 Views on Emirati Workers

In order to explore employer views about the benefits and drawbacks of employing Emirati nationals, our survey asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed (on a 4-point scale) with a number of statements about Emirati workers. The answers were intended to help identify possible barriers to effective Emiratisation relating to employer perceptions of Emirati workers. Some statements were negative in nature and some positive, and the distributions of responses to each item are shown in Figure 6.24. Colour coding of the bar segments is used, with red/orange corresponding to negative findings and light/dark blue corresponding to positive findings.

On the positive side, around two thirds respectively of the 140 respondents who answered this question indicated agreement ("agree strongly" or "agree somewhat") that UAE nationals perform as well as expatriates at work, that they are generally hard-working and that universities in the UAE generally do a good job of providing students with the skills and expertise that employers are looking for. Just under half (47%) felt that Emirati nationals were generally happy to accept junior posts and accept their way up. Moreover, looking at levels of "disagreement" with the various negative statements about UAE nationals, there are also some encouraging findings. Around two thirds (65% respectively) disagreed with the statement "most UAE nationals do not have the qualifications or skills required for jobs in my organization" and "UAE nationals cannot be relied on to attend work regularly", and around half or more disagreed with most of the other negative statements listed. Despite the encouraging aspects of these findings, there were also significant minorities of survey participants, around a third in many cases, who gave responses that indicating that they hold negative perceptions of Emirati workers.

Moreover, the survey results revealed that the majority of respondents believe that Emirati nationals generally expect higher salaries and more employment benefits than expatriates (66% respectively expressed agreement), nearly half (47%) expressed agreement that it was more expensive for their organization to employ UAE nationals than expatriates.

6.3.5 Perceived Benefits of Employing Emiratis

Respondents were also asked to specify in their own words the perceived benefits and drawbacks of employing UAE nationals. 140 respondents provided a response. An analysis of their answers revealed that the majority could be categorized into three main perceived benefits of employing UAE nationals, as listed below with illustrative quotes.
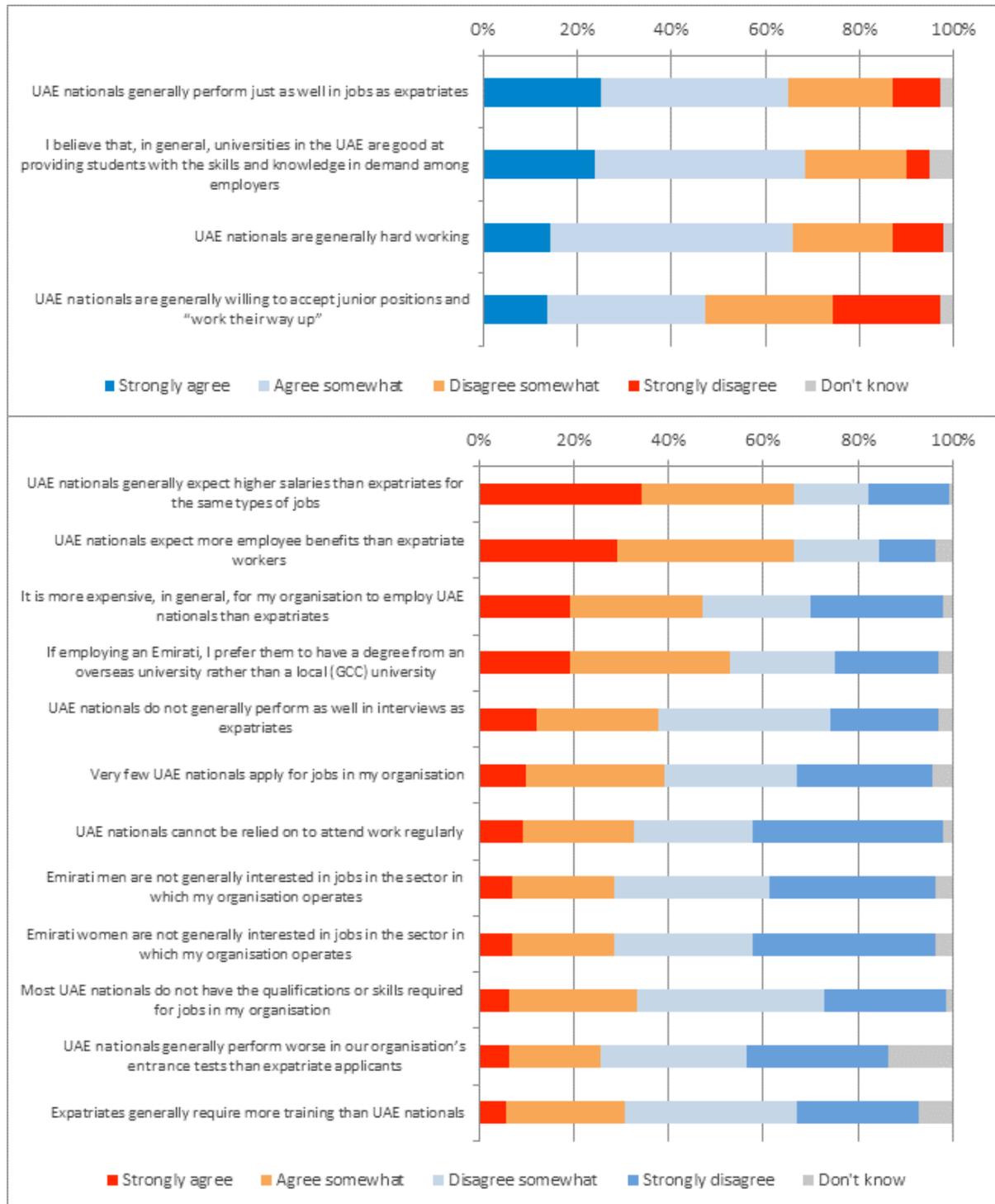
Figure 6.24: Levels of agreement with statements about Emirati workers

Greater Loyalty and Commitment (20 comments), for example:

"Good in customer service, loyalty, good communication skills, reliable"

"UAE nationals are more loyal in their service or performance at their work (regardless the level of their competency) for the benefit of the great country of ours …"

"UAE Nationals are secure and will not skip from the country like expatriates"

"They will be working for their own country so that means that they will work as hard as they can in order to develop it and enhance its reputation."

"They are hard-working, and generally more fair to work with than expats."

Local Knowledge, Language and Contacts (13 comments), for example:

"They can deal with their fellow Arabs well compared to expats so they can bring business to the company."

"Knowing the culture, Arabic speaking."

"They understand the people here in this country."

"Knowledgable about their country. Key relationships held with government authorities to expedite processing of documents. Key working relationships with stakeholders."

"Knowledge of how to conduct local business dealings taking into account own culture network of contacts/references for government agencies and businesses."

"Knowledge of local culture and required connections for certain jobs."

"The exposure and knowledge of local market."

Development of the UAE Economy (25 comments), for example:

> *"Building a strong culture of commitment and skilled generations that can benefit the country for years to come."*

> *"As a resource, UAE nationals will remain in the country where their knowledge and skills can be used for the benifit of the country (regardless whether they move from one company to another) while expatriates can leave and work in another country taking his/her knowledge and skill with them."*

> *"Organizations definitely benefit from employing UAE nationals, however, it is more for the benefit of the nation as a whole that UAE nationals should be given tasks equivalent to expatriates in order for them to gain confidence and control in their abilities."*

> *"Raising level of national competency and vocational independence in the country"*

> *"Retain the wealth within the country"*

> *"To help the development of the UAE in Various fields."*

> *"To make the country self-reliant on its own nationals rather than depending on expatriates and also to build a more stronger nation in terms of monetary values."*

> *"Transfer knowledge from expat to nationals because our sector is very critical and important for UAE as a country."*

6.3.6 *Perceived Drawbacks of Employing Emiratis*

Although some respondents commented that there were no drawbacks to employing UAE nationals, or did not know what these would be, a considerable number of the 140 responses fell into three main types of perceived drawbacks, as set out below with illustrative quotes:

Lack of Experience/Expertise (13 comments), for example:

> *"Generally training is required, difficult to find technically equipped staff"*

"Not fully ready for the job; requires more investment of time"

"Suitable candidates for technical fields are a bit difficult to find. However, the present generation is well educated and they are opting for technical areas as well."

"The big gap in work experience and education between the UAE nationals and expats."

"Less experience than expats"

High Expectations and Associated Costs (14 comments), for example:

"High expectations of career growth, salaries and benefits."

"More demanding in terms of training and salaries."

"Do not want to climb up the ladder, but rather be managers immediately … Do not have the patience to learn before taking the next steps."

"They usually require higher salaries with less time than other workers"

Low Levels of Commitment and Productivity(13 comments), for example:

"External social commitments may lead toward lower commitment to the job."

"Attitude among some employees that they are there to collect salary under their terms, leads to big number of resignations due to feeling that working conditions and hours are intruding private life."

"Retention challenge, some of the Emiratis hop to the next best paying organization ignoring the investment that was made in them by their current employer."

"Some of the UAE nationals don't have commitment to their job, by coming late to work and not submitting work on time. Besides, they don't like to do difficult and challenging tasks."

"They tend to take things easy."

"Time keeping is an issue"

"Not prone to authority, absenteeism, some cultural issues for women."

6.3.7   Views on the Emiratisation Policy

In contrast with many of the findings of previous research the findings of this survey suggest that employers in the UAE are very supportive of the Emiratisation policy, as shown in Figure 6.25. Almost all of our respondents (96%) agreed that Emiratisation is good for the UAE economy; 76% agreed strongly with this statement. The vast majority of respondents agreed (somewhat or strongly) that Emiratisation will increase the numbers of UAE nationals in both the public sector (95%) and the private sector (91%), and will help them to secure jobs generally (93%). Perhaps even more importantly, 93% of all respondents agreed that Emiratisation is good for their own company, and more than three quarters (78%) indicated that the policy is popular with employers in the UAE. However, more than half (58%) agreed (somewhat or strongly) that Emiratisation is costly for employers, a finding which appears to conflict slightly with the finding that most respondents saw the policy as good for their own organisation.
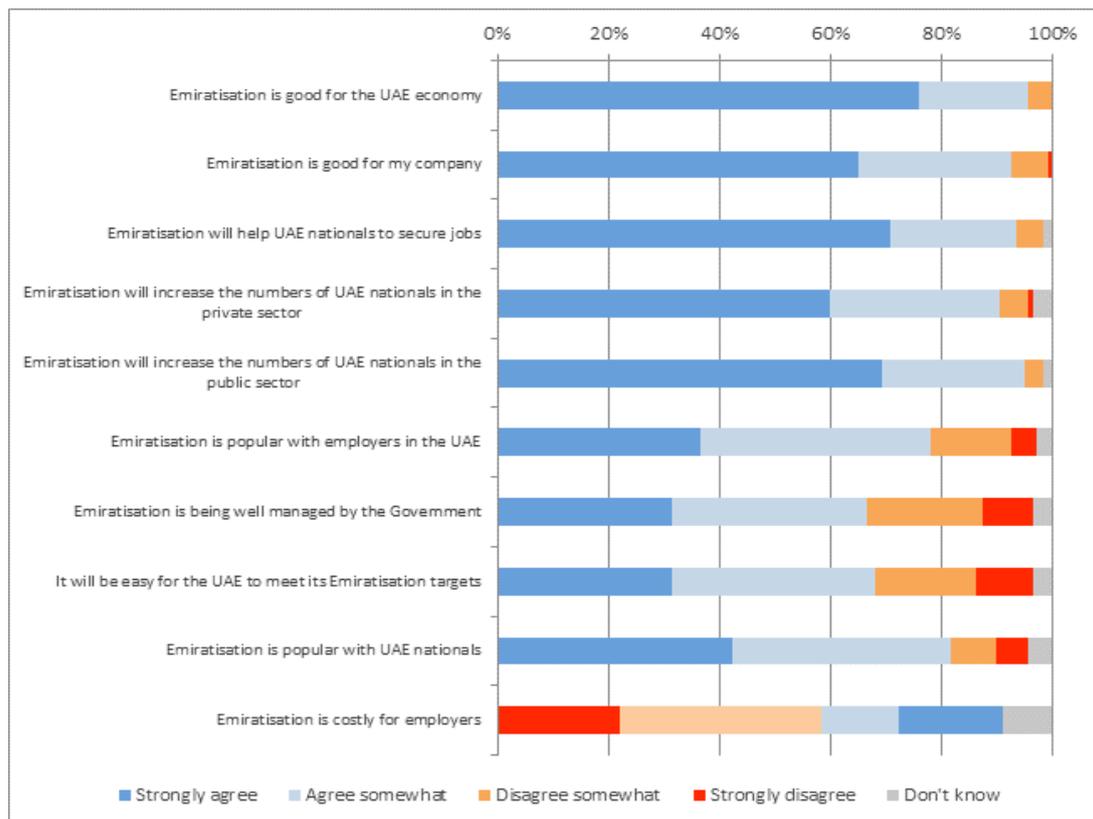
Figure 6.25: Respondents' levels of agreement with statements about the Emiratisation policy

142

In the last series of questions in the survey, respondents were asked for their views on what the UAE government, employers and job-seekers could do to help ensure the success of the Emiratisation policy. 109 respondents suggested ways in which the UAE government could help ensure the success of the policy, with 122 suggestions being made in total (some gave more than one). The types of responses given are shown below.

Improved enforcement/increased regulation (30 suggestions), for example:

> *"Further regulate and enforce the existing labour law"*

> *"Government MUST interfere and force all organization including private sector to have min. % of UAE nationals not only saying that, but enforce that by law."*

> *"Impose penalties on institutions that are lagging behind in achieving emiratization ratio."*

> *"Each sector who are involved should be accountable for its effective implementation."*

> *"Put a specific percentage for emiratization in each sector (public and private) and monitor its application. If not applied, disciplinary actions should be taken."*

Improve the education system/provide more training to increase employability of UAE nationals (17 responses), for example:

> *"Enhance education in a way that is suitable to meet employers' requirements"*

> *"Make nationals really ready for a position in terms of skills rather than just focus on number of nationals in the company."*

Make specific program and policy changes (17 suggestions), for example:

> *"Make more rigid rules for emiratization to happen throughout the organization instead of only at the entry level positions."*

143

> *"Not only rewarding the highest number of locals held only at end of the year and does not care about other months."*

> *"There should be a law that applies equally to all the sectors in the UAE (Gov't, banking, real estate, health, education, etc.)   Also every sector and company should have a realistic Emiratization percentage that relates to the size of the company, profit, and other factors as well."*

> *"To reserve all joiner positions for UAE Nationals , to recruit UAE National fresh graduates as trainees and introduce them to the " shadow program " which means working closely with managers and leaders to gain knowledge and experience. Also, to force private organization to increase the number of UAE National and provide them with a succession plan for each one of them ."*

> *"Implement salary/benefits structure as per the market/abilities of the individual, not as per the nationality."*

Monitor compliance/conduct research to evaluate impacts (14 suggestions), for example:

> *"Take a sample and start to make statistics studies about the result of any organization before and after the Emiratisation"*

> *"Conduct performance check on the program regularly."*

> *"Implement high method of follow-up for the whole process, the input, process and the output."*

> *"To follow up the UAE employee after recruitment and get feedback about performance."*

> *"To monitor the private sector more . the private sector hire random people just to meet there yearly quota and give the Emirates the lowest job which sometimes are less than their qualifications and they don't get promoted like the expats."*

Provide stronger management and greater range of supports for employers/jobseekers (12 suggestions), for example:

Perform greater match-making against the skills of prospects."

"Plan well for it, effective management of it."

"Good management and follow-up, strong rules on the companies."

"Clear up the goals and objectives to consolidate the trust among UAE nationals."

Provide specific benefits or incentives for to employers to encourage compliance (5 responses) for example:

"Share additional cost of employing National with Private sector like paying part of their pension and other expenses."

"Make sure that the % of locals positions are met in any organizations and extend benefits for those companies that support it."

"The government should financially support private sectors in employing UAE nationals."

Information and awareness campaigns, promoting attitudinal changes (12 suggestions) for example:

"Try to promote realistic expectations amongst nationals on how long it takes to properly learn to do a job and to place more emphasis on growing through learning rather than on seeking rapid promotion and titles."

"Increase career awareness."

"Theme messaging around the need to focus on quality not numbers."

"To do more campaigns and more awareness about the benefit."

Other (suggestions), for example:

"All sectors must be well represented with UAE nationals to encourage employment from the locals."

"Partner/collaborate with the corporate to identify and resolve issues jointly and to further enhance process on continuing basis."

"Bridge the gap in salaries between government and private / public sector companies."

"Cancel all other nationalities; and return them to their countries"

One hundred suggestions were given as to how employers can help ensure the success of Emiratisation. By far the largest number suggestions related to ways in which employers could support UAE nationals by offering them good quality jobs and providing them with training and other assistance in the workplace. Examples of these and of other commonly cited types of suggestions are provided below:

Supporting the employment of UAE nationals (48 suggestions), for example:

"To increase the percentage of the UAE nationals year after year"

"Trust young UAE nationals at work. Offer good working environment that includes justice and appreciation"

"Provide focused and function specific training and develop career and succession plan. and most importantly STOP poaching UAE nationals from other organizations rather employee from other sectors and new to the market (new graduates)"

"Provide internship training to UAE National help them understand the working and requirements of private sector."

"Hire and develop Emiratis and provide them with good training programs."

"Hiring more UAE nationals and giving them the chance to perform well in their jobs. Motivation and proper guidance is also needed."

"Invest time in training and retention of nationals."

Compliance with the policy (14 suggestions), for example:

"Adopt minimum nationalization ratio to be maintained during organization lifetime."

"Cooperate with the Emiratisation authorities within the government enforcement."

"Meticulously follow the Emaritization quota for their own institution."

Active participation in and commitment to the policy (18 suggestions), for example:

"Provide list of their job requirements to the Government, which will be used as a base to develop skills of UAE National"

"Advertise in national papers to encourage other companies to hire locals."

"Attend to forum on Emiratisation, take active role in observing the government mandate and advocate for change in attitude and readiness to take active role in economic progress for UAE"

Monitor compliance by their own organisation (6 suggestions), for example:

"Keep an anuual target of Emiratisation to be achieved and follow up the performance against the goal set if being met or no, and if no the they need to consider and address the lags or gaps they have missed to achieve the target after being analysed."

"Provide constant feedback on Emiratis turnover (those leaving the company and time spent with company and reason)."

"Regular monitoring and reporting to the designated authorities on policy implementation."

Finally, 102 respondents suggested ways in which UAE job seekers could help ensure the success of the policy. Overall, the responses were very similar and fell into the following categories:

- Be realistic in their job expectations
- Apply to the types of organizations that are committed to the Emiratisation policy
- Take their job seriously and work hard
- Ensure that they receive a good level of education and/or training to prepare them for work
- Have trust and confidence in the Emiratisation program

6.4 Qualitative Research with Expert Informants

6.4.1 *Sampling and Data Collection*

Purposive sampling in the form of personal networking was used for the qualitative component of this study since the main priority was to identify individuals holding an expert or specialist knowledge of the issues underlying the research questions. Individuals who were asked to participate in the study included senior academics located in the UAE and in the UK who have conducted and published research on the UAE, as well as representatives of prominent public and private sector UAE organisations working in the areas of recruitment, employment and education. These were asked to complete an online interview consisting of a semi-structured questionnaire with open questions. In total, 63 experts participated in the research and answered at least some of the questions (others were omitted by respondents).

6.4.2 *Impacts of Emiratisation*

The interviewees were asked for their views on what the positive and negative impacts of Emiratisation have been for various sectors and groups in the UAE. The responses were coded and categorized to identify the main themes and points, which are summarized in Table 6.4.

	Main Positive Impacts	**Main Negative Impacts**
Oil and Gas Sector	• UAE nationals taking control of the key economic sector – better for the economy and population • Nationals entering leadership and senior technical positions • Building a skilled national workforce • Taking advantage of UAE expertise in this area • Increase in admin jobs available for nationals • Greater industry stability	• Skills mismatch between job seekers and vacancies • Inadequate skills and knowledge among Emirati applicants • Loss of expat expertise from the sector • Unethical HR practices, e.g. paying Emiratis more for same jobs as expats • Emphasis placed on meeting quotas rather than needs of employers
Banking, Finance and Investment Sector	• Increased diversity in sector • Transfer of knowledge and skills to national workforce • Greater industry stability • Skill and capability development • Easier to work with local clients • Improved governance and transparency • Many thought positive impacts in this sector were minimal	• Underemployment • Unethical HR practices, e.g. paying Emiratis more for same jobs as expats • Reduced access to expatriate candidates • Lack of relevant skills and expertise, e.g. leadership • Emiratis often given junior positions with no prospects, to meet quotas
Education Sector	• Creating more national role models for young Emiratis • Greater alignment of education goals and policies with local needs and cultural values. • Improved HR practices to attract, develop and retain Emirati staff. • Introduction of the Abu Dhabi education council. • Increased higher education uptake	• High turnover of staff • Lack of interest in this sector among Emirati jobseekers • Mismatch between skills of job applicants and needs of sector • Less emphasis on retaining the expertise of expatriates
Private Sector Employers	• Increased employment of locals over time • Greater interaction with local population • Improved HR practices to attract and develop Emiratis • Offers sustainable growth for sector • Many thought positive impacts in this sector were minimal	• Mismatch between skills of job applicants and needs of sector • Different salaries being paid for same jobs • Higher costs of employing Emiratis • Loss of expatriate skills and expertise
Public Sector Employers	• Nationals taking lead on local issues • Strategic shift to long term human capital development • Stabilisation of sector • Reducing heavy reliance on oil as source of national revenue • Transfer of knowledge and skills	• Loss of expatriate skills and experience • Reductions in productivity and work standards • Reduced competition and accountability; Emiratis perceive ease of securing jobs in public sector
Emirati Jobseekers	• Greater employment opportunities • Improved salaries and job prospects • Gaining skills and knowledge through new job opportunities • More exposure to private sector • Government employment agencies offer job-seeking help	• Perceived job guarantees bring about complacency • Inflated view of their worth in job market increases demands for higher salaries • May be perceived negatively at work - not seen as securing job on own merits • Difficulties in meeting private sector job requirements
Expatriate Jobseekers	• Greater difficulty in finding jobs in public sector, still favoured in private sector • Highly qualified and experienced expatriates are even more valued, for knowledge transfer • Growing need to speak Arabic to compete in labour market	• Reduced employment opportunities, especially in lower-level jobs • Reduced job security • Salary differentials – paid less than Emiratis • Fewer opportunities to work in public sector

Table 6.4: Perceived positive and negative impacts of Emiratisation

149

6.4.3 *Emiratisation as a Labour Market Policy for the UAE*

Interviewees were invited to indicate whether they believe Emiratisation is a good choice of labour market policy for the UAE, and to briefly explain their answer. Of the 45 respondents that answered this question, all but one indicated that Emiratisation is a good choice of labour market policy for the UAE, although many gave qualified answers.

The main types of reasons given as to why Emiratisation is a good choice of labour market policy for the UAE included:

- Promotes sustainable economic development in the UAE by building local skills and expertise which are likely to be retained in the UAE over time.
- Can help address social problems arising from the underemployment of the native population
- Will help prevent the adverse impact on local traditions and culture arising from the current demographic composition of the UAE
- Increases employer competitiveness by employing staff who are familiar with the country and its culture
- Helps reduce the national unemployment rate

The main types of qualifying comments that were made included:

- Positive discrimination and salary differentials may not be effective, since this creates tension and hostility among employees
- There is a need to develop and implement clear objectives and goals for Emiratisation
- The private sector should be more involved in policy development
- Emiratisation should be emphasized more in the "semi-private" sectors (with 50% or more government share) where it is more likely to succeed
- Needs to be phased in gradually to ensure effective knowledge and skills transfer from expatriates to local
- Education and training system needs to be tailored to the needs of the labour market

- Emirati nationals need to become more focused on self-development and work ethic

6.4.4 Barriers to the Success of Emiratisation

Interviewees were also asked to indicate which factors, in their opinion, have prevented the Emiratisation policy from being more successful. The main barriers that could be identified from their answers were:

- Salary differentials and positive discrimination policies
- Weaknesses of the education system
- Cultural traditions and values that discourage female labour market participation
- Large size of the public sector
- Mismatch between Emirati skills and expertise and needs of the labour market
- Misconceptions among Emiratis about private sector careers, and preferences for public sector jobs
- Lack of career awareness and focus among young Emiratis
- Lack of employment opportunities outside Abu Dhabi and Dubai
- Cost to employers of recruiting Emiratis
- Lack of detailed plans and policies
- Inadequate attention to training needs in many sectors
- Inadequate monitoring and enforcement
- Lack of commitment to Emiratisation by employers and workers
- Expatriates over-represented among HR directors.

6.5 Qualitative Research with Expert Informants in the ICT Sector

6.5.1 Sampling and Data Collection

Four ICT experts located in the UAE were interviewed for this study, in order to provide information to help answer Research Question 3c: "How can the ICT sector and the development of ICT skills among the Emirati population improve the UAE labour market?" Purposive sampling in the form of personal networking was used for this final qualitative component of the study since the main priority was to identify

individuals holding an expert or specialist knowledge of the issues underlying the research questions. The respondents were carefully selected to include ICT professionals who have worked in the industry for longer than 3-5 years and are currently active in shaping the industry both on a strategic level and in the implementation stage. Interviews were conducted in person, and by completion of an online survey. This consisted of a semi-structured questionnaire, administered using SurveyMonkey with a number of open questions relating to the perceived importance of the ICT sector and ICT skills to the UAE economy, and the current state of ICT skills among the Emirati population. A copy of the questionnaire is included as Appendix 7.

Table 6.5 presents information on the individuals who participated in this stage of the research, with details of their job roles and responsibilities.

Respondent	Position	Organisation	Roles and Responsibilities
Professor. Abdullah Mohammed Al-shamsi	Vice chancellor	The British University in Dubai	
Dr. Eesa Bastaki	CEO	ICT Fund	
Dr. Muhammad Javeed	Head of IT Department	PSUAD	Leads campus-wide IT planning and operations, including telecommunications; coordinates development and delivery of IT services for instruction, research, and administration; supervises the IT organization; and represents the University's IT interests regionally and nationally.
Mohamed Amine Jallouli	ICT Expert Assistant	National Bureau of Statistics – UAE	Measurement of ICT use and access indicators (questionnaire design, data treatment, estimation); measurement of ICT impact indicators on the economy.

Table 6.5: Information on ICT sector interviewees

6.5.2   *Importance of ICT to the Economy and Society of the UAE*

All of the research participants stressed the importance of ICT to the economy and society of the UAE. They alluded to the strengthening of the ICT sector as an imperative strategy to boost the competitiveness of the UAE amongst other economies. One reasoned that UAE still needs to "catch up" with many other developed economies and that the growth of the ICT sector is the only way to achieve

this. He further argued that the small population of UAE nationals requires greater dependence on ICT to achieve more and to facilitate communication with other partners in the world.

Similarly, another participant emphasized the importance of ICT in all sectors of the economy and that noted it affects the business community, business processes, and development. Two mentioned that ICT is crucial in order to maintain competitiveness with other countries, improve productivity, and bring about sustained economic growth, enhanced employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, and a more inclusive society for young people.

Overall, all of the respondents expressed the view that ICT is very important as a key enabler or driver of economic and social development in the UAE. The main comments supporting this view were:

- Econometric studies have shown that ICTs generate productivity gains that bring about increasing economic growth and the creation of jobs.
- The observed trend is that the ICT sector is likely to become the top priority for "research, implementation and usage"
- An emphasis on ICT is crucial to ensure that the UAE can catch up with developed countries.
- ICT is important in all areas of life to the citizens of the UAE (business, education, at home).
- ICT enables the relatively small population of the UAE to achieve more
- ICT is important as a facilitator of communications with other countries (participation of UAE in global economy)
- ICT has an important role in promoting a culture of innovation which is important for sustained economic growth and global competitiveness, "enhanced employment and entrepreneurship opportunities" and "a more inclusive society".

6.5.3 ICT Skills and the Future of the Emiratisation Policy

The interviewees were asked whether they felt that improved ICT skills among the Emirati population would have an impact on the future of the Emiratisation policy, and to give reasons for their answer.

All agreed that improved ICT skills among the Emiratis population have an impact on the future of the Emiratisation policy. One noted that UAE nationals are currently competing with a large pool of foreign professionals for the same jobs within the UAE economy. In order to increase the UAE nationals' competitiveness, they need to have comparable skills. Another research participant concurred that the improvement of ICT skills among the Emiratis will help lead to nationalisation of the jobs currently given to skilled expatriates. It was noted by one individual, however, that the future success of the Emiratisation policy will depend not only on the ICT sector but on the support of other sectors such as health, education, and the finance industry.
Overall, the responses indicated that ICT skills improvement among Emiratis workers will naturally increase their competitiveness in the job market.

6.5.4 Role of the UAE Education System in Developing ICT Skills

The research interviewees were next asked to consider whether they feel that the UAE education system effectively prepares students to use ICT in the workplace, and to give reasons for their answer. The majority of correspondents agree that the UAE education system in general does a good job in providing students with ICT skills. To support their responses, the following points were made:

- The ICT survey for educational establishments, carried out in 2008 by the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority, provided evidence that:
    - All UAE educational establishments are equipped with the most recent technologies
    - 98% of teachers in higher educational establishments have been trained to use the ICT for instructional purposes
    - 100% of students are able to use computers and mobile phones.

- The use of ICT is embedded in all UAE university courses and all students are now required to have a laptop for use in their studies; registration and other administrative functions are also carried out online.

- The UAE education system now requires the incorporation of ICT in all levels of teaching and learning from P-12 schools through to higher education.

- Students need to acquire greater hands-on experience of ICT in order to be able to enhance the job prospects of graduates who are unable to find work in their chosen professions.

6.5.5 *Effectiveness of the UAE Public Sector in ICT Training*

When asked whether they feel the public sector does a good job of training its employees in ICT skills, the responses of the interviewees were mixed.

One noted that most public sector organizations have developed training and development activities to ensure that new graduates and existing employees are well equipped to tackle daily ICT issues, supplementing the ICT training that they received while in education. Another respondent, however, argued that although training in specific IT packages is provided, a more well-defined ICT training program needs to be developed by the public sector for its employees.

It was also noted that ICT adoption is generally poor in the public sector, and the limited training provided to employees reflects this situation.

One interviewee argued that an ICT survey of public sector training would be needed in order to answer this question effectively.

6.5.6 *Most Effective Ways of Improving ICT Skills*

Interviewees were next asked for their views on the most effective way of improving ICT skills among the Emirati population. The key points of responses given are as follows:

- Establishment by all employers of continuous ICT training programs for their employees

- Improved co-operation between the education system and businesses, to ensure that students are trained in the types of ICT skills that are required in the economy.

- Hands-on ICT experience in the K-12 education sector.

- An internship program for higher education students.

- Increased use of ICT in the public sector.

- More well-paid ICT-related employment opportunities.

6.5.7   Importance of ICT Skills in Other Sectors

Respondents were next asked for their views on how important it is for employees outside the ICT sector of the UAE - for example in the oil industry or the banking and finance sector - to have good ICT skills. The majority stressed the importance of having good ICT skills in every sector, since all industries and organizations depend heavily on ICT and must keep up with developments in this area in order to be able to compete effectively in the global economy.

Three of the four respondents strongly argued that it is important for employees to have good ICT skills outside the ICT sector. The reasons given included: (1) the fact that other industries are founded on ICT and thus workers with no ICT skills consequently are not employable in these industries; (2) ICT is the backbone of every organisations and the technological solution to most business processes. To lag behind the current ICT skills thus means to be unable to compete with other organisations; and (3) ICT is an essential graduate skill and no sectors are exempted from the application of ICT.

One interviewee noted that it is more important for ICT sector employees to have good skills in this area, since the other sectors are only "simple users" of ICT.

6.5.8   Barriers to Progress in the UAE's ICT Sector

When asked to identify any major barriers to progress in the UAE's ICT sector, only one interviewee indicated that there are no barriers in this area, and one other noted that there had been no research in this area specific to the UAE but cited findings

from the experience of other countries. Overall, the types of barriers to progress identified by respondents were:

- Lack of adequate ICT skills among the workforce
- High level of risk-aversion among businesses
- Lack of adequate funding of ICT sector
- A lack of applied ICT research, and little research collaboration between the academic sector and the ICT industry
- No patents or IPs in ICT sector
- Need for regulatory reform to increase competition in the ICT sector
- In e-commerce for example, suppliers and/or consumers may retain a preference for traditional commerce; alternatively, products being traded locally might not be suitable for online sales.

6.6 Summary

This chapter has presented the results of the large-scale quantitative surveys and the in-depth qualitative interviews that form the primary research conducted in order to address objectives 3 and 4 of the thesis. The following chapter will consider the full significance of these research findings, with reference to existing knowledge and previous information gaps in this area. In Chapter Eight, their implications in terms of recommendations for future labour market policy in the UAE will be drawn out. The overall conclusions of the research are used to develop a set of human resource development recommendations for the UAE.

Chapter 7 : Discussion

7.1 Introduction

An efficient labour market is crucial to the long-term growth of any economy and the well-being of a nation's population. In the UAE, the labour market is not working efficiently in the best interests of the country. There is an over-reliance on expatriate labour while at the same time unemployment is high and increasing among UAE nationals. An analysis of the UAE labour market using human capital and labour market theories, as well as the concept of human resource management, indicated that a range of inter-related factors are contributing to the current labour market problems, including the beliefs and attitudes of job-seekers and employers in the UAE. The policy of Emiratisation has been the main policy tool for human resource management at a national level, and the emphasis of this policy has been shifting from regulation to development of the country's indigenous human resources so that they are better matched with the needs of employers. In this context, it is important to consider the emerging ICT sector, which has been a key driver of recent economic development in the UAE, as a possible new focus of future human capital development.

7.2 Human Capital Development and Emiratisation in the UAE

In the world today, organizations are faced with intense competition. Human resources have been established to be one of the most important resources that organizations can use to gain competitive advantage. The focus is on using human resources or the workforce at the disposal of companies to enhance productivity to enable the organization to achieve higher productivity. Several studies have indicated that a skilled workforce equipped with the necessary competencies has considerable potential for enhancing organizational productivity. Successes that have been achieved by organizations and companies can be largely attributed to their human resources, that is the workforce, which does what it takes to achieve the specific objectives of the organization. The equipment, machinery, information, and technology that an entity has cannot on their own make an organization successful without the input of human resources. For this reason, human resources can be considered the most important resource in an organization. Good management of

human capital is therefore critical in entities because when properly acquired and managed this will drive the prosperity of organizations. In recognition of the value that can be derived from human capital in organisations, capital development programmes have been initiated by organizations in order to make their human capital as productive as possible and to maximise its benefits for the organisation. It is imperative to invest resources in the workforce to make sure that personnel in an organization have skills, knowledge and competencies needed to carry out their roles and responsibilities. It is particularly important to ensure that employees are productive and effective in their work in the current global economy which is characterised by rapid changes and the need to for business to remain competitive. Marimuthu, Arokiasamy and Ismail (2009, pp. 265) state, "Human capital development becomes a part of an overall effort to achieve cost effective and firm performance. Hence, firms need to understand human capital that would enhance employee satisfaction and improve performance". According to Marimuthu, Arokiasamy and Ismail (2009, pp. 265), well-developed human capital is very important with regards to enhancing cost effectiveness in organizations because competent and motivated employees are known to contribute to increased productivity and high quality of services. When employees' performance is improved, this is likely to lead to higher profitability. In addition, when an organization or company produces and offers quality products and services, customer satisfaction and loyalty will be ensured. This in turn will bring positive long-term returns for the company, and expand the customer base, since loyal customers will always refer potential customers to the organization. Knowledgeable, skilled and competent human resources are cost effective and key to enhancing performance in organisations, and will always represent a good investment for the organisation, with the resulting benefits by far surpassing the resource investment.

One of the issues currently facing the United Arab Emirates labour market is the high rate of unemployment among the Emirati nationals. The labour market does not have the capacity to absorb the UAE nationals who enter the job market each year. Unemployment can lead to instability in a nation as well as insecurity. It is crucial in order to maintain peace and promote socio-economic development for a nation to empower its people economically, and one of the crucial means to do so is to provide job opportunities. Shaiba (2009a) estimated the unemployed UAE nationals in 2008

159

to be 89,000 and predicted this figure to rise by about 4% the following year. In many countries around the world, foreign citizens mainly occupy the low-paying jobs and are in the minority compared with the native-born population. In the United Arab Emirates this not the case since majority of those occupying well-paid jobs are people from other countries, and the majority of the resident population is foreign-born. According to Al-Ali (2009), it is estimated that the number of United Arab Emirates working in both the public and private sectors will only be about 4% by 2020. According to Toledo (2005), Emirati nationals are reluctant to seek jobs in the private either sector or are unable to compete effectively with expatriates for jobs in this sector. It has been well documented in the literature that migrants in GCC countries hold jobs which nationals refuse to accept because they find such jobs degrading, or that migrants hold jobs that require a level of expertise which nationals do not have. This kind of evidence demonstrates that nationals of United Arab Emirates are less qualified for jobs especially those in the private sector, which require people with high levels of expertise. Migrant workers from many countries go to the UAE in search of employment and are prepared to occupy any position including those that the Emirati nationals consider degrading. Since many of the immigrants are highly qualified professionals, however, they occupy positions which require those who are highly qualified as well as those that do not require high levels of expertise. As a result, expatriate workers dominate the labour market in the United Arab Emirates.

There many additional factors that have been identified as contributing to the current level of unemployment among the Emirati nationals in the UAE. According to Al Shaiba (2008c) these include increasing skills gap between job-seeker aspirations and employer requirements; the mismatch between the education system and the requirements of the economy; unrealistic salary expectations, and differentials between the actual salaries of expatriates and locals performing the same jobs. Other factors include the low productivity of Emirati workers; differences in employment terms and conditions between the private and public sectors; a poorly regulated labour market, and the increasing income levels in the country which have weakened the motivations of locals to seek paid work. Moreover, has been an increase in the demands of expertise among employers in order to meet the emerging challenges of the global economy. Employers tend to look for the kind of expertise that will provide the needed skills and experience which will enable them to gain competitive

advantage in the economy. The workforce is expected to acquire the needed expertise and to continually update their skills according to the demands of the labour market. Compared to many of the immigrants, the nationals of United Arabs Emirates have lower levels of skills and expertise and are therefore not in demand among employers.

In addition, it is very important that education sector delivers the skills and expertise required by different industries within the labour market. It was highlighted by Al Shaiba (2008) that there is a mismatch between the UAE education system and the requirements of the economy. The products of the United Arabs Emirates education system do not generally have the kind of expertise that the private sector needs to drive the economy, and this has necessitated the sourcing of competent employees from other countries or the hiring of immigrants with the required education, skills and experience. This is the main reason why many Emirati nationals are unemployed while vast numbers of immigrants are employed in the country. Moreover, many nationals of the United Arabs Emirates enter the job market with unrealistic salary expectations given their level of qualifications, which the market cannot meet. In contrast, many immigrant workers are more highly skilled and qualified but have more realistic salary expectations in line with their qualifications. The main objectives of businesses are to minimise costs and make profits; and companies cannot therefore afford to hire employees with average qualification and pay them higher salaries than more qualified workers. As a result, UAE employers tend to prefer immigrant workers who have relevant expertise and are less costly to employ than Emirati nationals are. Another factor that leads to high unemployment among Emirati nationals is their lower levels of productivity. When employees are committed to their work and spend the required time working with dedication, productivity increases. Emirati workers are perceived by employers to be less productive than migrant workers.

In the case of the private sector, therefore, employers are either reluctant to employ the Emirati nationals or the Emirati nationals are reluctant to enter the private sector for one reason or the other. The reluctance on the side of the Emirati national has been attributed to several factors. According to Freek (2004) the reason why young Emirati nationals are disinterested in working in the private sector include perceived low salaries, few benefits, poor working conditions, hard work and long hours. They

expect to be paid high salaries that would increase the cost of production, so that employers are left in the position of having to use alternative cheaper immigrant labour. The Emirati nationals also perceive that the private sector does not offer good benefits compared to the public sector. For this reason, the Emirati nationals tend to look for employment in the public sector, but there are insufficient numbers of job opportunities in the public sector to absorb them all and many end up jobless. The Emirati nationals are also deterred by what they perceive to be long working hours as well as the hard work required by private sector organisations. It has been argued in the literature that in comparison to nationals from other parts of the world who come to the United Arab Emirates to look for job and are prepared to work hard, the natives or the citizen of the United Arab Emirates are reluctant to do so.

Research conducted in the United Arab Emirates among senior managers in different organizations reveals that employers in the private sector are reluctant to employ Emirati nationals because they lack adequate skills and at the same time, they are not fluent in English, which is the language that being used in these companies. Skills are very important to companies, because talented employees that give an organization the value that will enable it compete among its rivals with necessary competence. Language is also very critical in an organization. Since English is the official language being used in the multicultural organizations in the United Arab Emirates, it is expected that all employees should be able to speak English fluently. This is not the case among the citizens or Emirati nationals. Consequently, employers prefer employees from the international community who are both fluent in English and are at the same time highly qualified.

The Emiratisation policy has been used in the United Arab Emirates for over a decade to address the problem of imbalances in the labour market in the country. The policy was intended to force institutions in both the private and public sector to hire locals instead of expatriates. Restrictions were put in place that would make the employment of expatriates more expensive than hiring local workers. According to Al-Dosary (2003), these measures are intended to increase the cost of employing migrant labour to the point at which it becomes more economical for employers to use native workers. Other tough measures that have been put in place include restricting the number of work permits issued to expatriate workers, and the imposition of taxes on

the hiring of immigrants. These efforts are aimed at reducing the rate at which the employers employ immigrants at the expense of the local workers. Therefore, Emiratisation policy is aimed at securing the future of the Emirati nationals as well as solving the imbalance that exists in the UAE labour market. Fasano and Goyal (2004) argue that all of the GCC countries have put in place policies to restrict the number of work permits that can be approved for foreign migrants, imposed taxes on employers who hire foreigners and set quotas for the employment of native workers in particular sectors. Their various indigenisation policies have also included, for example, sponsorship systems, rotational systems to limit durations on the stay of individual foreign workers, restrictions on naturalization and citizenship rights and requirements to have local partners to establish a business within the country. The measures such as limiting the stay of the immigrant in the United Arab Emirates, restricting citizenship rights and restrictions in setting up a business in the United Arab Emirates was intended to boost the rate of employment of the Emirati nationals in both the public and the private sector. Shah (2008) pointed out that the main thrust of the Emiratisation policy in the UAE has been focused on measures to control the entry and stay of foreign migrant workers in the country and to increase the representation of nationals in private sector employment.

The implementation of Emiratisation has faced major challenges such as resistance from industry players. Since the level of taxation on employing expatriates is very high, organizations have reportedly been trying to undermine as well as to sabotage the policy. The cost of employing expatriates from the international community leads to high costs of production, which are not good for competition in both either the local or the global market. Entities are trying as much as possible to reduce the cost of production in order to be able to sell their goods and services at relatively lower prices in order to attract customers. Therefore, resisting implementation sends a message to the government that the Emiratisation policy is not working in the best interest of the labour market. This was realized after it was established that even after implementing such restrictions many of the Emirati nationals still suffer joblessness. The long-term solution to the imbalance in the United Arab Emirates labour market is not the imposition of restrictions on the industry players but to equip the Emirati nationals with necessary skills and experience to meet the demands of the labour market. This is supported by both Al Shaiba (2008) and Pejman (2005) who argue that it will

continue to be difficult to implement an effective Emiratisation policy until UAE nationals are better equipped through well-targeted education and training to take up private sector jobs. Since the controls on migrant labour increase costs and business risks for firms, there has perhaps not surprisingly been a high level of resistance to the policies among private sector employers, who have complained that they fail to take into account the needs of the labour market and the skill levels and expectations of Emirati workers.

7.3 Survey of Future Job Seekers

More than 300 final year students completed an online survey regarding their employment aspirations and plans. This was intended to help identify any supply-side barriers to the effective operation of the labour market in the UAE, such as reluctance to enter certain sectors or types of work, or unrealistic salary expectations.

When asked what they intended to do upon completion of their current studies, some student said they plan to take up a job that they had already secured in the UAE others planned to look for a job in the UAE while other students to plan to continue their full-time education in the UAE. Others said that they plan to continue their full-time education in another country. The participants were also asked to state the sectors they intend to take up employment in after completing their studies. The majority (more than 84%) indicated that they intend to secure employment in government and oil/gas and energy sectors after they complete their education. In relation to the gender of the students, 58% of male students said they would like to work in the oil, gas and energy sector, followed by 29.9% who said they would want to work in the government sector and the rest would want to work in the banking, finance and other sectors. Based on gender, majority of both male and female students comprising 81.8% and 77.7% respectively argued that they would take up employment in the government sector while only 18.2% and 22.3% said they would take employment in the private sector. This supports the findings of other studies on the UAE labour market which have found evidence of a reluctance of Emiratis to work outside the government sector. It is important that students become flexible with regard to their pursuit of employment. This is crucial because the government sector will not be able to accommodate large numbers of new graduates in future, and students will need to be prepared to take up other types of jobs.

The respondents were further asked to name the occupational categories they expect to work in when they take up employment: whether management, professional, technical, administrative, secretariat among others. The majority of the respondents said they would want to work in the management category followed by technical, then professional, administrative and secretarial in that order. The female students expressed a preference to work in the management category followed by professional and administrative then technical and secretarial. According to the male respondents, they would take up jobs in technical category, followed by management, then professional and administrative in that order.

Sources of information that students would use to get information on employment or job vacancies were also investigated. The majority of the respondents said they would use sources such as personal contacts/world of mouth, The Abu Dhabi Tawteen council, The UAE recruitment show, TANMIA/government employment agencies, online website and job advertisement in the newspapers. Information is very important in getting a job; therefore it is imperative that students after completing their studies establish good networks that will enable them have appropriate information about the available vacancies. They should not rely on only one specific source of information but should instead use different media or sources.

Factors that are considered important to students when looking for employment were also explored. According to the respondents, they consider as important all these factors as important when looking for employment: good salary, how interesting a job is; the ability to use their qualifications, location, holiday entitlement, opportunity for further training, flexibility of working hours, and immediate entry to senior position. Besides, the students consider working with a manager of the same nationality or religion and working with colleagues of the same nationality or religion as important considerations.

In addition, the respondents were asked to indicated whether the public or private sector offers better prospects as an employer in relation to the factors listed, which included Ability to use my qualifications, Interesting work, Immediate entry to a senior position, Flexible working hours, Options for further training, Convenient

location, An occupational pension, Regular working hours (no overtime requirement), Good salary, Having a manager of the same nationality or religion as me, Good holiday entitlement and Having colleagues of the same nationality or religion as me and indicate the sector that is likely to offer better prospects of the factors. The Majority of the respondents said that the government sector offers better prospects in relation to most of these factors, including a good salary, interesting job, ability to use qualification, convenient location, holiday entitlement, opportunity for further training, flexibility of working hours, and immediate entry to senior position, working with a manager of the same nationality or religion and working with colleagues of the same nationality or religion. There is clearly a negative attitude the Emirati workforce about the nature of jobs and employment in the private sector, which is not good for them or as the labour market. When a workforce holds negative attitudes towards a sector that has the potential of improving their livelihood by offering employment opportunity, they will not appreciate and see these opportunities. It is therefore imperative that steps are taken to change the attitudes of current and future job-seekers towards the private sector and to raise awareness of the and as well as those who are already in the job market to change their attitude about the private sector.

The responses of students were also sought concerning different aspects of the UAE economy and labour market. Respondents agreed that there are good job prospects for the Emirati nationals in the UAE, which they need to utilize accordingly. Besides, they agreed that the job prospects for foreign nationals are also good, as are the job prospects for Emirati women in particular. The students also agreed, however, with the assertion that there are too many foreign workers in the UAE.

According to the student responses, the UAE education system prepares them well for future employment. If this assertion is true, then the high levels of unemployment among UAE nationals are likely to reflect weaknesses on the part of the students, or the attitudes that prevent them from applying for available jobs. The students also agreed that the gas and oil companies in the UAE generally prefer to employ foreign nationals. This is generally the case, and is one of the reasons why the Emiratisation policy has been implemented in the country. These sectors among others prefer foreign nationals because they offer the skills and expertise needed in the sectors. The agreement that banks and finance companies in the UAE generally prefer to employ

Emirati nationals could be attributed to the strategies of the companies to attract customers, who are mainly the Emirati nationals. The students also agreed that most Emiratis prefer to use personal contacts rather than advertisements to find a job, it is easy for Emiratis to obtain jobs in government departments, and most employers in the UAE prefer job applicants who hold a degree from an overseas university. It is important for the Emirati nationals to use different sources of information in order to have access to information on job opportunities rather than relying on personal contact. This is critical because better opportunities may be found in other sources such as internet jobsites and newspapers.

The majority of the students that participated in this research constituting over 80% said that the reasonable monthly salary for an Emirati nationals with a bachelor degree to earn in their first job to be 20000 AED. This is an unrealistic salary expectation for newly qualified graduates with no employment experience, and no doubt contributes to the high levels of unemployment among the Emirati population.

The majority of the students said that they expect it to be difficult to find a job in the UAE labour market. When asked why they believe that finding a job should be difficult, the different reasons given included lack of experience; the companies preferring people with better qualification, not having high enough qualifications and the job market being saturated with graduates.

Job seekers have a crucial role in making the Emiratisation policy a success. According to the responses of the students, one of the things that they could do is to trust in the Emiratisation program. As job seekers, the Emirati nationals should accept all kinds of jobs they are offered and develop their careers in the process. This approach will help them to achieve the salaries they desire in future. Other ways they could support Emiratisation, according to the survey respondents, include understanding the requirements of the market and trying to focus on their core strengths with an aim of developing expertise required for the market segment. Job seekers should also focus on their career, rather than just getting a job, and show willingness to work extra hours to achieve what is expected from them. Besides, job seekers could also apply for jobs that are of serious interest to them and that could support their career aspirations and at the same time should try to be open to new

learning, adopting a working life discipline. Job seekers should be realistic in their expectations about employment. They should understand that getting the right job is down to 'experience and qualifications' and that it takes both to advance further. Job seekers should be willing to take any opportunity then to seek for better job instead of waiting for better job from the beginning.

7.4 Survey of Employers

A total of 136 employers from various sectors completed an online survey; this was intended to provide information regarding any demand-side barriers to the effective operation of the UAE labour market. The majority of the respondents were involved in staff recruitment for their organisations in one way or the other. This is quite a critical findings since it means they were likely to be well informed about and able to give meaningful responses regarding the labour market in the UAE.

The respondents were asked to state the position of their organization concerning the employment of UAE nationals and their requirement to meet Emiratisation. Half of the respondents (50.7%) said that their organization has specified its own goals for the employment of UAE nationals with 42% of the respondents saying that their organization is required to meet UAE legal requirements for the employment of UAE nationals. This implies that organizations are under pressure to implement the Emiratisation policy as required by the government of the United Arab Emirates. The assertion is supported by a number of authors such as Bukhari (2006), Shah (2008) and Kapiszewski (2000) among others. The authors argue that the Emiratisation policy in the UAE has been focused on measures to control the entry and stay of foreign migrant workers in the country and to increase the representation of nationals in private sector employment. In particular, the policy has to date been focused mainly on the banking sector, which has been dominated by Indian and Pakistani workers and in which only around 7% of the workforce has traditionally consisted of Emiratis. Under Emiritisation, all banks in the UAE were required to increase the proportion of Emiratis in their workforces by 4% every year from 1999 onwards.

The respondents were also asked to identify the specific requirements or goals for the employment of UAE nationals in their organizations. It was revealed by one that applicants are expected to be degree holders in any required discipline; possess the

proper attitude; pass the preliminary screening (interview and written exams); have the required number of years' experience, among other criteria. One respondent working in the government sector said that as a government sector his organisation especially aims at promoting and encouraging Emiratisation across the board. He reported that it was important for them to allocate the right talents, invest in developing the existing employees into assets; develop a high performing, highly effective team that understands and supports the mission. Another respondent stated "From what I am observing, nationalization is a very considerable goal for the organization at which I work, especially for the leading careers for the competent people as well as the fresh graduate posts which are being developed with a training program for qualifying the new nationals to the working field they joined". The workers need to be qualified and able to handle the tasks. The Emirati nationals have to be intelligent enough or educated well enough in order to be able to accomplish the work they are assigned accurately and efficiently. They also must have a sense of responsibility to enable them to accept and deal with pressure at work.

From the analysis, it appears that the government sector is very determined to absorb as many Emirati nationals as possible, while in the private sector, attitudes reflect the need just to meet requirements of the policy. The situation in the two different sectors is different: while the private sectors are concerned primarily about optimizing productivity, the government sector on the other hand is has the responsibility to offer employment to its citizens. Being elected to power by the Emirati nationals, the government is in its right mandate to ensure a better lifestyle for its people by empowering them economically. The way and means to achieve that is to create job opportunities for the Emirati nationals. It is also one of the reasons the government has formulated the Emiratisation policy: to enable different sectors in the country to contribute in ensuring the well-being of the people of Emirati. That is why in each department there is a minimum number of UAE nationals which has to be met, and that limit is increased annually.

The research sought the opinion of the respondents on how successful their organisation has been with regards to meeting the requirements of the Emiratisation policy. The majority of the respondents (57.7%) said that their organizations had been successful in meeting the requirements to large extent while 19% of the respondents

said that their organizations had been able to meet the requirements completely. The result of the analysis therefore indicates that implementation of the Emiratisation policy has been a success in most organizations in the United Arab Emirates. This is likely to mean that the number of United Arab Emirates entering job market will have been rising significantly since the introduction of such policy; however, there are increasing numbers of new graduates for the labour market to absorb. Other authors such as Girgis, Hadad-Zervose and Coulibaly (2003) argued that across the GCC as a whole, the percentage of nationals in the labour market did rise between 1990 and 2000 following the implementation of indigenisation policies, and that the largest gains were in the private rather than the public sector.

Moreover, the respondents were asked to identify methods of recruitment used in their organizations to hire managerial, professional and technical, administrative and secretarial as well as unskilled personnel. The respondents said that the methods used include advertising in the United Arab Emirates newspaper, advertising in overseas newspapers, advertising in online jobsites, TANMIA/government employment agencies, private employment agencies, personal contacts/word of mouth and others. The respondents who said that their organizations use other methods of recruitment were further asked to list the methods that the organization uses. According to the respondents, the other methods used in the organizations to employ personnel include internal recruitment, career fairs, communicating with universities to hire fresh graduates, the company website, referrals of friends and relatives by current employees, unsolicited applications, the Emirates National development Program and Abu Dhabi Emiratization Council, among others.

Advertising in overseas newspaper, advertising in online jobsites and the use of private employment agencies are being used in United Arab Emirates to hire managerial, professional, technical and administrative personnel. These are the most appropriate means to source expertise from other countries. Advertising job opportunities in overseas newspapers is likely to attract a wide range of qualified people from different cultural backgrounds. This is very crucial because in the process an organization will have to choose the best from among many qualified individuals from across the world. The role that human resource plays in organizations is very important and the more an organization has skilled, knowledgeable and competent

personnel the better because such qualities have a bearing in the performance of the employees. However, there is a need to develop the skills and expertise of Emirati workers so that they can compete effectively for these types of jobs.

The use of ICT in this process is also important since most entities use online websites to advertise for employment opportunities. In the current world, the use of ICT is quite common and most workforces across the world embrace technology. Therefore, use of the internet is likely to be an effective way of reaching people that have the desired qualification. For the Emirati nationals, use of the internet and online jobsites will be crucial in job-seeking in order to identify job opportunities suited to their skills and qualifications.

In addition, the study established that some organization use private employment urgencies to secure the right people to occupy different job positions in the entities. Sourcing for competent employees through private recruitment urgencies is on the rise and the method is also appropriate in getting to the right type of candidates in the market. Managerial and professional positions are important and sensitive roles that cannot just be easily filled in the name of meeting Emiratisation goals. These positions need to be occupied by well-qualified and experienced individuals. There are other positions that do require such high qualifications and such can be filled without such a high level of attention to individual candidates. According to the respondents, the methods of recruitment used for non-managerial candidates include career fairs, communicating with universities to hire fresh graduates, company websites, current employees referrals of friends and relatives, CV's being sent in to the recruitment department directly, data base – organisation, Emirates National development Program and Abu Dhabi Emiratization Councel, internal resumes data base among others. These methods can be used and applied in the process of honouring the Emiratisation policy.

The study sought to find out whether management, professional/technical and administrative skills, among others, seen as being in short supply among the UAE nationals. The majority of the respondents (78.4%) said that professional and technical skills are in short supply among UAE nationals, followed by management skills at (43.2%). Administrative and secretarial skills are not regarded as being in

short supply among Emirati nationals. Since crucial skills such as management, professional and technical skills are perceived to be in short supply among the United Arab Emirates nationals, it is currently imperative for employers to source these by the recruitment of expatriates. These positions require certain skills that are critical in gaining competitive advantage as well as ensuring the organization can compete effectively in the current competitive market. The respondents were also asked to identify the kind of qualifications that their current organization needs which are believed to be in short supply among the United Arab Emirates nationals. Specific types of job skills or qualifications mentioned lawyers, auditors, engineers, sales, insurance underwriting, operations, accountants, all seniority level of Oil/Gas technical engineers, banking operations, business intelligence and MIS field, IT technical workers as well as professional senior accountants among others. This kind of analysis indicates that there are indeed employment opportunities in the UAE despite the fact that there is a high level of unemployment among UAE nationals. There are diverse employment opportunities available in a range of organizations but the inability of the United Arab Emirates nationals to offer the skills and qualifications needed in those positions automatically excludes them from consideration for these jobs. The only logical thing to do is to ensure that the United Arab Emirates nationals acquire the necessary skills to be able to compete effectively with immigrants. If UAE nationals are well-skilled and competent to perform these jobs, it will be cheaper for the local organizations in the United Arab Emirates to hire them than rather than those from other countries. Educating the United Arab Emirates nationals in a bid to equip them with the right skills and knowledge is the one sure long-term solution to the imbalance in the labour market in the United Arab Emirates.

The research also sought opinions of the respondents regarding different attributes of United Arab Emirates nationals, which confirmed that there is currently a mismatch between supply and demand in the labour market. The majority of the respondents agreed that UAE nationals generally expect higher salaries than expatriates for the same types of jobs; UAE nationals expect more employee benefits than expatriate workers and that it is more expensive, in general, for organisation to employ UAE nationals than expatriates. According to the research findings, Emirati nationals expect higher salaries from their employers but the kind of input they can offer to the organization is not commensurate with their demands. In addition they expect more

benefits than expatriate workers, which makes hiring United Arab Emirates nationals even more expensive and close to impossible for many employers. If they were demanding higher salaries but were well qualified and able to put much effort into their work, it might be possible for the organization to recover the amount spent on salaries through their output and its contribution to organisational productivity, but this is clearly not the case. Most of the employer respondents did indeed agree that it is more expensive, in general, for organisation to employ UAE nationals than expatriates. The implication is that by employing UAE nationals, the organization would be reducing their productivity as well as their profitability. Respondents also agreed that if employing an Emirati, they prefer those that hold a degree from an overseas university rather than a local (GCC) university. This brings about a different perspective concerning the quality of education from education institutions in the United Arab Emirates. It implies that the education standard of university in GCC is perceived by employers as being low compared to other countries from which they source employees. Since a substantial number of employers in the United Arab Emirates hold this opinion, it is imperative that appropriate measures are taken to make the level of education match the labour required in the labour market of United Arab Emirates, or at least improve employer awareness of the quality of education offered by the local education system. Otherwise, it will be very difficult to address the imbalance in the labour market in the United Arab Emirates.

It is for such reasons that the United Arab Emirates nationals become unemployed in the labour market of UAE. In the recruitment and selection process, it is imperative that only the best candidates that demonstrate competence and abilities above others are employed. Since United Arab Emirates nationals cannot compete effectively with immigrants, it is important that they adopt the concept of survival of the fittest and bridge the gap that exists in qualifications and competence. The education sector needs to be instrumental in ensuring that such objectives can be achieved. The education sector should train students to become the best competitors in the job market; consistency in doing so will solve the problem of imbalance in the labour market.

There were some positive findings from the employer survey that provide hope that the situation can improve. The majority of the employer survey respondents

disagreed with the statement that very few UAE nationals apply for jobs in my organisation and UAE nationals cannot be relied on to attend work regularly. According to the respondents, moreover, it is false that Emirati men are not generally interested in jobs in the different sectors in United Arab Emirates, Emirati women are not generally interested in jobs in different sectors, most UAE nationals do not have the qualifications or skills required for jobs in my organisation, UAE nationals generally perform worse in our organisation's entrance tests than expatriate applicants and that expatriates generally require more training than UAE nationals.

Respondents were also asked to cite the specific benefits of employing United Arab Emirates nationals rather than expatriates. Several reasons were provided as to the benefits that employing locals would generate for different stakeholders. Employing United Arab Emirates nationals is seen as good for the UAE economy; they can be hired at lower cost than expatriates and hiring locals gives the country a chance to develop its skills and expertise. It means investing in the country's own resources, which is seen as positive. Additionally, employing UAE nationals increases the number of UAE national workers in all sectors, which will have positive impacts on the whole UAE economy and society and reduce the reliance on expatriates. In addition, UAE nationals are considered more loyal to the country than others and expected to work in the best interest of their country unlike immigrants whose main purpose and drive is to make money even if they do so at the expense of the locals. The employment of UAE nationals is also perceived as a corporate responsibility; organizations based in the UAE should try to give back to the society and one of the means of doing so is by employing the nationals and giving them the highest share of job opportunities. Some perceived that Emiratis would be more reliable, as this is their country and they will have the general sense that they are not working only for the organisation but for the development of their homeland. A feeling of patriotism and personal achievement for the greater good is an excellent motivator. Employing the United Arab Emirates nationals also ensure their development as well as improving their living standards and those of their families as well. Such initiatives are also aimed at making the country more self-reliant on its own nationals rather than depending on expatriates and building a stronger nation in terms of monetary values. This has both short term and long-term benefits. Making United Arab Emirates nationals the right candidates for any form of employment is likely to be good for the

economy of the UAE, and also for the well-being of the people of the United Arab Emirates and employers. Equipping the United Arab Emirates nationals with appropriate skills and knowledge means there will be a constant supply of cheaper labour, which industries require to make them effective in the competitive market. United Arab Emirates nationals will also use such opportunities to enrich themselves as well as well as family members. Therefore, it is imperative to educate the United Arab Emirates nationals and make them a good resource in the United Arab Emirates labour market because the benefits of doing so are likely to be considerable for a range of stakeholders.

The perceived drawbacks associated with employing United Arab Emirates nationals were also investigated in the survey. Respondents held different opinions on this subject. The work-related attitudes of the United Arab Emirates nationals are one of the drawbacks that affect employers' likelihood of employing UAE nationals rather than expatriates. The Emirati attitude of wanting to be managers without having to climb the career ladder is one of the perceived problems of employing United Arab Emirates nationals. Unlike expatriates from other countries, many Emiratis only want well-paid jobs without taking into consideration what they can offer in such positions. Many immigrants are willing to start from a low level and by their dedication and commitment in their work they are sure to climb up the ladder to the highest level possible. This is the best way to go so that by the time one becomes a manager he knows what this role involves and he has what it takes in terms of skills and experience to drive the organization to the next level of prosperity. Some respondents argued that other drawbacks include higher expenses associated with hiring United Arab Emirates nationals, significant turnover, lack of trust about the United Arab Emirates nationals' competency, and their inability to climb up the ladder. Therefore, it is assumed that United Arab Emirates nationals find the governmental jobs more attractive, since they involve less work stress and high benefits.

Another drawback is the UAE nationals' high expectations about career growth, salaries and benefits. United Arab Emirates nationals seek job opportunities with very high hopes, which the employer cannot meet because the private sector does not have trust funds just for paying employee benefits for the sake of it; instead, proper decisions have to be made concerning the cost-effective nature of the benefits as well

as salaries that employees are given. In one organization, one employee can receive a salary that is considerably higher than those of his or her colleagues without the company complaining because the efforts of such a person are productive and are worth this level of salary and benefits. In contrast, in the public sector there is little stress and accountability but the benefits and salaries are attractive and assured. The UAE nationals therefore need to change their mentality and be able to prove that they deserve high salaries and benefits.

The language barrier is another drawback that is sometimes faced in employing United Arab Emirates nationals. It true that some United Arab Emirates nationals are not able to speak good English and considering the fact that most of the organizations and companies are characterized by cultural diversity, English is the main international language used in such entities. In such situations, it becomes difficult to hire United Arab Emirates nationals who do not speak the English language fluently. Employing United Arab Emirates nationals who do not speak or understand English properly can cause communication breakdown in the organization and considering the important role of communications, the success of such organizations can greatly be affected by such mistakes.

In addition, other respondents said that managing expectations of super-fast career growth i.e. promotions, pay-rise, etc. without having the necessary training or experience to prove themselves in these jobs makes hiring United Arab Emirates nationals a challenge. Such a situation will only lead to a continuation of reliance on expatriate workforce to 'guide', 'mentor', or 'coach' UAE Nationals for an infinite period.

Retention issues also affect the willingness of employers to hire United Arab Emirates nationals. There is a perceived retention challenge whereby some United Arab Emirates nationals hop to the next best paying organization ignoring the investment that was made in them by their current employer. Organizations spend a lot of resources in the recruitment and selection of employees as well as training them so that they can effectively discharge their responsibilities in the company. Losing employees after a very short time before regaining the investment into them is another challenge that makes employer reluctant to hire United Arab Emirates nationals. One

respondent states, "The issue here is on how the employers would promote stakeholdership concept in employing UAE nationals. The challenge lies on the employers to see to it that the vision and mission of the organization are well understood by their employees and on how they could motivate them to embrace the corporate values and become efficient and effective as an employee, worthy of the privileges intended for the UAE nationals". There are a lot of drawbacks with regards to employing United Arab Emirates nationals rather than expatriates from other countries that need to be addressed appropriately and accordingly.

In addition, the opinions of the participants were sought about the UAE government policy of Emiratisation. The study sought to establish whether Emiratisation is good for the UAE economy, whether Emiratisation is good for companies, whether Emiratisation will help UAE nationals to secure jobs, and whether Emiratisation will increase the numbers of UAE nationals in the private sector. Others questions included whether Emiratisation will increase the numbers of UAE nationals in the public sector, whether Emiratisation is popular with employers in the UAE, Emiratisation is being well managed by the Government, whether Emiratisation is being well managed by the Government, whether Emiratisation is popular with UAE nationals and whether Emiratisation is costly for employers.

More than 95% of the respondents agreed that UAE government policy of Emiratisation is good for the economy of United Arab Emirates. This is true because when the Emirati nationals are empowered economically, it will be reflected in both the local and national economy of the United Arab Emirates. Once the youth and the people of the United Arabs Emirates are employed in different sectors, they will use their income and benefits to improve their lives and those of their families and the end result is that the living standard of the people of UAE will have improved. This is the benefit and the eminence of economic development of any given country. It is true that Emiratisation is likely to be good for the economy of the United Arab Emirates. In addition, more than 80% of the respondents also agreed that indeed Emiratisation is good for their company. When an organization sources its labour from the locals, the cost of is likely to be lower compared than importing labour. This will contribute significantly to the development of the organization because their cost of production will be reduced. A lower cost of production means a lot with regards to success of a

company. Low cost of production due to reduced cost of labour means that the organization will be able to offer their services and products at prices which are relatively lower than the prices in the market. This will attract many customers since price is one of the most important factors that affect customer decision-making process. In the current world where there is a very high level of competition both in the local and global market, the low cost of production will be beneficial to the company in one way or another, especially with regards to achieving a competitive advantage.

The majority of respondents (58%) agreed that Emiratisation will help UAE nationals to secure jobs. The main of objective of the UAE Government's policy of Emiratisation is to ensure that the Emirati nationals secure jobs in the country irrespective of the sector or industry. Since immigrants dominate the private sector, the UAE Government's policy of Emiratisation is seen as likely to reduce the number of immigrant employees while those of United Arab Emirates nationals will increase to the benefit of the people of the UAE as well as the industry players. The UAE Government's policy of Emiratisation will also ensure that even the public sector is under obligation to increase the number of United Arab Emirates nationals in the sector. Since the UAE Government's policy of Emiratisation has been effective in the country for more than a decade, it true that majority if not all employees are aware of the policy. The policy is popular with the nationals of United Arab Emirates because it champions their rights to employment even though employers find it relatively costly due to a number of factors.

Respondent were asked for their opinions on what the UAE Government can do to ensure that its policy of Emiratisation is a success. The respondents agreed that in order to make UAE Government's policy of Emiratisation a success the government could address the issue in different stages. The stages might include enforcement and regulation, management and support, following up and evaluation, incentives to employers, education, program and policy changes, awareness raising and promoting attitudinal change among others. The government should ensure that all stakeholders, especially employers, comply with the regulation of the Emiratisation policy. This can be achieved in different ways such as imposing a fine on institutions that do not meet the required percentages, creating a special body or team to see through the proper

observance of Emiratisation law among the private and government sectors, and greater restriction of immigration and the labour market among others. Improved management and support of the policy are also seen as necessary whereby qualified personnel are used to provide proper training to the people mandated to oversee the implementation of the policy. There is also need to monitor the implementation to ensure that all stakeholders are complying with the policy requirements. Incentives are also a very important tool that can be used to accelerate the implementation of the Emiratisation policy. Incentives should be given to employers to encourage them to employ more Emirati nationals. The incentives can be in the form of a tax waiver, whereby employers get tax relief according to the proportion of the Emirati nationals that their company has. This is likely to make employers try harder to hire more Emirati nationals. Education and awareness creation is also vital for the effective implementation of the Emiratisation policy.

The study also sought to ascertain from the perspective of the respondents what role employers have in the UAE to ensure that the Emiratisation process is a success. Topping the list of the responses is compliance. According to the respondents in order to comply employers should meet UAE Legal requirement for Emiratisation, adopting a minimum nationalization ratio to be maintained during the organization's lifetime; obeying the Emiratisation policy; complying with the labour laws; cooperating with the Emiratisation authorities within the government enforcement. Employers could also contribute by improving the work conditions of locals, offering good salaries to the Emirati nationals, and making job opportunities available to them. Other measures include conducting training sessions with UAE nationals and encouraging them to be hardworking and flexible with the other nationalities around them. Employers should also hire more UAE nationals and give them the chance to perform well in their jobs and provide proper motivation and guidance. One respondent stated "Provide focused and function specific training and develop career and succession plan and most importantly stop poaching UAE nationals from other organizations rather employee from other sectors and new to the market (new graduates)".

Employers can play a significant role in implementation of the Emiratisation policy by embracing the Emirati nationals with their weaknesses and trying to develop them to become a resourceful workforce in the United Arab Emirates. Active participation

is another role that employers can play in ensuring that Emiratisation policy is a success. This can be achieved by thinking positively about the Emiratisation program as a must for the country's economic development, and cooperating with the government by getting actively involved in Emiratisation strategies. The individual goals of the workers/employees should be re-aligned with those of the organization or company they are working with. Recognition of good performance and other motivational activities in the workplace will be of great help in encouraging the UAE nationals to strive to become the best in their chosen careers. Periodic evaluation and mentoring should be integrated as a vital role of the HR department.

Employers should also adopt the Emiratisation policy and try to implement it as one of their primary roles. Monitoring the implementation of the Emiratisation policy is also very critical in ensuring the success of its implementation. Employers should take it upon themselves to conduct internal assessment to monitor the progress of the implementation of the policy. Another means of monitoring the implementation is by providing constant feedback on Emirati national turnover provide input on what United Arab Emirates nationals are demanding for and on their work ethics and behaviour, and inquire about relative pay scales given to United Arab Emirates nationals by different players within same industry, possibly to standardize within a certain range.

7.5 Impact of ICT on the UAE Economy

A qualitative approach to data collection was taken, with both managers and students being were identified and interviewed in accordance with the study objectives. Several interview questions were presented to respondents regarding the contribution of ICT to the United Arab Emirates economy. Some of the issues that the research sought to address include importance of ICT to the economy as well as the society of United Arab Emirates, barriers to progress of ICT sector in the United Arab Emirates, important of employees to employees outside ICT sector of the UAE - for example in the oil industry or the banking and finance sector. Others included how the education system of United Arab Emirates effectively prepares students in the country to use ICT at workplace and whether public sector in United Arab Emirates is doing enough to train its employees in ICT skills. In addition, the study sought to establish the best way to promote ICT skills among the Emirati population, whether improved ICT

skills among the Emirati population would have an impact on the future of the Emiratisation policy.

While reacting to the significance and the role that ICT plays in the United Arab Emirates economy and the society, one respondent said that ICT plays a very important role in the growth of economy. He stated that science, technology and innovation are key factors contributing to economic growth and development of any society. The ICT sector plays an important role, notably by contributing to rapid technological progress and productivity growth. Since "Innovation is the incorporation of invention and creativity that leads to the generation of social and economic value", a culture of innovation within UAE society can lead to sustained economic growth, greater global competitiveness, enhanced employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, and a more inclusive society for youth. Another respondent concurred by stating that ICT is considered an important enabler for economic and social development and for enhancing the competitiveness of the domestic businesses. In fact, ICT impact studies through econometric models show that ICTs generate productivity at the level of all production factors, increasing the economic growth and the employment creation. ICT is very important to the economy of UAE and is affecting every sector of the society. The new trends of ICT will place the sector at the peak and will be the hottest area to be tackled in terms of research, implementation and usage in order to keep pace with the developed countries. ICT touches every aspect of our lives. It touches our personal lives at home, at work and at the society. It affects the business community, business processes and business development.

According to the respondents, ICT integrated with science and innovation is a great factor that determines the development of an entity or of a country. Entities as well as countries which have embraced science, technology and innovation, have manifested the power of science, technology and innovation in achieving success. Today developed nations wield the great power of ICT, which they have used to the benefit of their respective countries. On the other hand, developing countries can hardly feed themselves despite the great resources that they have. Instead, they depend on the international aid and on the developed states for basic needs as food. One of the main reasons why developed countries produce more than they can consume is because

they have embraced technology and developed technology according to meet the needs of their very demanding population. Developing countries have very poor development performance and they cannot even exploit the natural resource, which they have due to lack of appropriate technology among other factors. Third-world countries rely on developed countries that have the ICT to explore the resources they have. Countries, which were once less-developed but have embraced information and communication technology, have realized remarkable development. The United Arab Emirates is one of the nations that have used ICT for the benefit of its citizens as well as the entire region. The economy of United Arab Emirates is stable and has realized remarkable growth witnessed in different sectors in the country. This has helped the society in the sense that they have access to their daily needs to the extent that the international community does also benefit from the economic development of the United Arab Emirates. With high growth of the economy, the living standard of the people of the United Arab Emirates have improved for the better, thanks to ICT contribution to the economic development of the country. The citizens as well as the residents of United Arab Emirates are also able to access different commodities as well as services at relatively lower prices than other parts of the world. This is because the use of ICT in production leads to lowered commodity and services' prices because the use of ICT is cost effective, which reduces greatly the cost of production which translate to reduced prices of goods and services in the country. The use of ICT has also benefited people living in United Arab Emirates because it has created new job opportunities, which the people have used to improve their living standard and that of the friends and relatives. The international community has also benefited greatly from the used and development of ICT in the United Arab Emirates because it has made it necessary to produce commodities at relatively reduced prices thereby attracting trade of all kinds.

There is a positive relationship between technological development and productivity in the sense that the more advanced technology a country has the more the possibility of the country to have greater productivity. This true because advanced technology enable production of several commodities with a relatively short time. There is a culture of innovation in the United Arab Emirates and such culture plays a significant role in developing the country's economy and making sure that such the economic development is sustainable. A society that embraces both innovation and ICT has the

potential of involving the youth in the developmental initiatives in the country. The technology is at the disposal of the youth and it the youth that command technological ability and skill compared to the old generation. Therefore, since the United Arab Emirates embraces Information and communication technology, it implies that the country has included the efforts of the youth in the nation building.

The respondents were also asked to identify the barriers to ICT in the United Arab Emirates. Some respondents said that there are no barriers while others said that there are barriers to integration or adoption of ICT in the United Arab Emirates. One of the respondents stated that barriers to progress of ICT in the United Arab Emirates include the need for further reforms and monopolization of ICT sector in the United Arab Emirates. Another respondent said that barriers to progress of the ICT sector in the United Arab Emirates include the lack of a skilled workforce in ICT, and lack of bold talents who are willing to take risks in innovating new ideas and implementing them. Others include lack of ICT applied research, lack of patents or IP's in ICT sector and lack of collaboration between the academia and the ICT industry in terms of research. Regulation plays a very important role in integration of ICT in any sector. Therefore, failure to have necessary regulation to regulate the use of ICT and all activities as well as operations associated with information and communication can a great hindrance to adoption and progress of ICT in any given country. The reason being is that without proper regulation, the use of certain technologies becomes illegal and at the same time they can be used by wrong people to serve the ill motives that can harm those using the technology. Without proper regulation, technology can be used to perpetrate wanton deeds that are not healthy for those who use the technology as well as those who do not use it. The government of United Arabs Emirates has tried to formulate and implement necessary legislations needed to make the progress of adoption of ICT in United Arabs Emirates easy and fast. However, the regulations should be reviewed from time to time to ascertain their suitability and necessity since technology is quite dynamic and keep on improving with each day.

Another barrier that can hinder the progress of information and communication is lack of skilled workforce. ICT does not work on its own but needs the technical management and application by the human resource. It is therefore imperative to have the population equipped with appropriate technical skills and experience to operate

technological systems. Failure to have a skilled population would mean that the ICT would not be used for the purposed for which it is intended. Therefore, lack of skilled workforce in a country or an organization can be a great barrier to progress of ICT. It is recommended that for a country to effectively manage and apply ICT, its population must be equipped with necessary skills needed to make ICT applicable and effective. It is the responsibility of all stakeholders to educate the population and train workforce, which are meant to manage the technology. This should be done in sustainable manner to ensure that there is always the workforce to manage the ICT. The same applies to organizations and companies. Most companies fail to apply effectively ICT because of lack of personnel with relevant skills to apply and manage the IT. The management of organizations as well as companies in United Arabs Emirates should educate its employees about the technology at the disposal of the company. They should also ensure that there is adequate workforce in organizations to manage ICT before introducing it because failure to do would mean that the organizations and companies would not benefit much form the technology. Since technology keep on advancing, it is also important that the people that have ICT skills should keep updating their knowledge according to the level of advancement of the technology. Such goal can be achieved by having experts teach the rest about the new skills of ICT. In United Arabs Emirates, the government has created room and programmes to enable people learn ICT skills at cheap and affordable cost. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the people of United Arabs Emirates to seize the opportunities to acquire relevant skills needed to apply ICT accordingly. One respondent argued one of the barriers to progress in ICT as is the case in other developed countries is failure by customers to embrace the technology such as online trading or e-commerce. This is attributed to the tendency by some individuals as well as sectors to maintain the traditional strategy of doing business. Resistance to change is another major barrier to progress of ICT in any given industry or sector.

The research also sought to establish the opinion of respondents about the necessity of ICT skills in the sectors outside the ICT sector such as oil industry, banking and finance sector. All the respondents agreed that ICT skills are very important even in the industries and sectors outside the ICT sector. For instance, in the banking industry, this is a service industry needs information technology more than other sectors because of the level of development and the demands of consumers.

Businesses that tend to meet the needs of consumers are the ones that are said to be in a position to gain competitive advantage as well as the market share. It is therefore; quite appropriate for the industry players to establish the needs of consumers before putting measures to meet the needs of consumers. Research and development is a key in determining the needs and requirements of consumers. The demands of consumers in the banking industry have become so technical that to the extent that banks have to cope with the pace of consumers in order to not only remain relevant in the market but also to remain in business. A case in point is the fact that consumers of banking services need mobile banking services. Consumers would like to operate and manage their finances from wherever they are especially over the phone so long as they are have internet connection, this means that the industry has to embrace ICT that will enable consumers manage their finances over the phone as well as to do transaction online. In Kenya, for example, this has been made possible since consumers in the banking industries can now access their accounts from their mobile phones. This has been necessitated by collaboration between banks and mobile phone operators. As a result, consumers can withdraw money from their bank account into the mobile phone account called m-pesa, airtel money and orange money account. From the mobile account, the consumer can purchase anything from that account or they can withdraw from any anywhere at their convenience. This is a manifestation of technological advancement, which has been adopted in the banking and telecommunication industries. Therefore, employees in such industries need the relevant ICT skills to competent manage the technologies associated with the services they offer or the system they run. The same applies to the oil industry, which has different sectors such as communication and finance which also use very high-tech technologies. The equipment that are also used in the oil industries also need proper skills to manage therefore the respondents are right to state that ICT skills is needed even in other sectors outside the ICT sector. One of the respondents while addressing the need for ICT skills among employees working in sectors outside ICT sector states, "I think ICT Skills are an essential graduate Skill in today's global economy and none of the sectors are exempted from it". The other respondent states 'It is extremely important to acquire excellent ICT skills in their industries. People with no ICT skills are not appoint able in such industries. These industries are now founded on ICT".

Respondents were also required to state to their best knowledge whether the United Arab Emirates were doing enough to train employees in ICT skills. One respondent said that public sector lacks ICT adoption in general and thus reflecting the need for training employees in ICT skills. The other respondents agreed that ICT. Another respondent said that United Arab Emirates is doing commendable job in training employees in ICT skills. The respondent states "Most of the graduates are prepared in the foundation of their chosen fields in ICT. However, they need some practical skills that will help them to tackle daily ICT issues that were not part of their curricula in the academia. Most of the public sector organizations have a plan to train these fresh graduates and develop the existing professionals". Training of employees in ICT skills is very important because it equips employees with relevant skills needed to use the available technologies in the departments where they work. Failing to train employees in the ICT skills can be quite detrimental because to an organization or a nation because the technologies need manpower to operate without which the benefits of such technology may not be realized. Entities do gain competitive e advantage by frequently making sure that their employees have the relevant skills in ICT. ICT of ten or two years ago cannot be the same as that of today. It keeps on advancing. It is on such account that there is needed to train employees on constantly to be able to remain acquainted with technological advancement in the IT industry. According to the respondents, the public sector is doing enough to make sure that those that are already employee are given the necessary training to continue using the ICT systems even in their advanced state. Students that enter job markets are also trained in ICT skills, which make them suitable to handle ICT with the needed competency. The universities tend to train students in ICT skills that is relevant in their field of profession, which is very important.

Concerning whether United Arabs Emirates education system is doing enough to prepare students to use ICT in the workplace, one respondent states "The UAE education system is well established and graduates students who are well prepared to choose their profession. However, the market is not yet ready to embrace them in their chosen profession. No education system is perfect. So, we need to enhance the contents of the curricula to inject in them some hands-on experience in ICT fields". According to another respondent, the UAE education system effectively prepares students to use ICT in the workplace. In fact, an ICT survey for educational

establishments, carried out in 2008 by the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority indicated that all the educational establishments are equipped by the most recent technologies: 100% of establishments have computer laboratories, 100% of establishments have some form of internet connection (98% of them have broadband internet). Another indication is that 98% of teachers in higher educational establishments had been trained to use the ICT for instructional purposes and that 100% of students are able to use computers and mobile phones. Such developments are very important because for ICT to be effective nationwide it is imperative that all sectors play their role in equipping the people with relevant ICT skills as well as acquiring necessary equipment and systems to make ICT a reality and productive. One of the most important sectors in ensuring that the benefits of ICT are achieved in a country or organization is the education sector. It is the education sector that is responsible for producing the workforce that will use the ICT. Therefore, if such products become ineffective with regards to using ICT, it means that work force will not have relevant ICT skills to command ICT. Respondents interviewed acknowledge the significance of the role played by ICT in making operational and effective. By training students in ICT skills, the education sector is contributing greatly to economic development of the nation because it would be meaningless to have technology that is advanced and lack the manpower to operate such skills. Sourcing skilled labour from other countries to manage ICT in one country can be quite expensive, which is likely to lead to high costs of production. United Arab Emirates might have not attained the level of perfection in ensuring that the all that enter the job market are computer literate but it is doing well in equipping students with relevant ICT skills.

It is important to try to ensure that the whole Emirati population is equipped with relevant ICT skills because when a whole population of a nation embraces technology, only the sky would be the limit for such a country. Efforts should be made to equip the workforce in different industries as well as ordinary citizens because technology enhances access to information, which is very critical for success of any individual. Most of the people working in different industries do not have the latest technological knowhow because they entered the job market without being equipped with necessary ICT skills because most of the advanced ICT came into

being in the recent past. It should therefore be taken seriously by all industry players to equip its workforce with relevant ICT skills accordingly.

The respondents were asked what in their opinion would be the most effective way of improving ICT skills among the Emirati population. One respondent stated, "Great incentives and incorporation of ICT in curriculum especially in Public Schools is very effective. Additionally, motivation of ICT related employment opportunities coupled with higher wages". Another one stated, "In my point of view, the most effective way for improving ICT skill among the Emirati population is establishing a system of a continuous training with a reasonable frequency and a good relevance to establishment activity. This was for the economic sector". According to this respondent, the relationship between the educational system and the enterprises must be strengthened by projects that should have good applications in the economy. To reach that point, a good coordination must be achieved between the educational system and enterprises. Incentives will go a long way in improving ICT skills among the Emirati population because in offering these, different stakeholders will be encouraged to participate in the process. For instance, offering incentives to investors and different players to invest and promote ICT in United Arab Emirates is likely to be effective since different corporations will try to benefit from such development and in the process, the population will become more enlightened and educated about ICT skills.

Incorporating ICT in the education system of United Arab Emirates would be a long-term solution to ensuring that the Emirati have adequate ICT skills. By the government ensuring that both private and public schools equip students with ICT skills, the education sector would be helped to do a great job in ensuring that the products of their institution have relevant and required skills to fit into a job market which is driven by information and communication technology. In addition, the motivational factor of making sure that ICT related job opportunities offer higher wages will indeed attract very many students and other people to acquire ICT skills. People who are already in the job market need better wages and if ICT related employment opportunities offer better wages, the people will be motivated to take ICT courses in order to be able to earn such wages and in the process, more Emirati people will become ICT literate. Besides, such initiatives will encourage students to

take ICT related courses or undertake ICT related courses as additional training just to make sure they become qualified to earn good wages. It will take the responsibility of different departments as well as stakeholders to make sure that the Emirati people are well educated about ICT and to acquire ICT skills. The role that ICT plays in the economy and nation building is likely to be great. Empowering the Emirati population with ICT skills will enable the people to obtain the information they need to improve their living standards. The government of United Arab Emirates should take the lead by formulating policies that will create an environment that makes dissemination of ICT skills among the Emirati people effective and faster. Then all other stakeholders should combine their efforts in ensuring that the country achieves the goal of equipping the Emirati people with ICT skills by making the knowledge not only accessible but also affordable.

7.6 Summary

This chapter has discussed the findings of the primary research with job seekers, employer and representatives of the ICT sector in the UAE, has put these into the context of existing literature and has discussed the implications of the findings for the future of the UAE labour market.

After the introduction of the Emiratisation policy more than a decade ago, there were some improvements in the employment of UAE nationals in certain sectors, but significant barriers remain that hinder the effective implementation of the policy. This study has established that one of the main drawbacks to Emiratisation is the attitude of the UAE nationals. Many wish to enter senior or management roles immediately after graduation, and are reluctant to accept junior positions or the benefits and salaries offered by the private sector. They strongly prefer to be employed in the public sector, but the available jobs in this sector are too few to absorb all Emirati graduates seeking work, while most of the employment opportunities are found in the private sector. Another barrier to Emiratisation is the prevailing salary disparity between expatriates and UAE nationals. The employer survey findings indicated that expatriates are generally prepared to accept lower salaries than Emirati nationals despite the fact that they are often more qualified and more hardworking than the Emirati nationals. The tendency for UAE national to demand high salaries and benefits, makes them expensive to employ. Many private sector employers prefer

foreign nationals because they are more competent and qualified and most importantly, they are prepared to accept lower salaries, a critical factor in reducing the costs of production. Language is another barrier to Emiratisation in the United Arab Emirates. Most of the Emirati nationals are not fluent in spoken and written English language and since English is the international language used in such multicultural organizations in the United Arab Emirates, this can be a major problem. The solutions to these and other barriers hindering implementation of the Emiratisation policy are likely to include improved education as well as awareness raising campaigns among the UAE nationals to promote change in their attitudes towards work and to redress their expectations with regards to salaries and benefits. Emirati nationals also need to embrace the available career and development programs in order to become more competent and marketable in the United Arab Emirates labour market.

In the final chapter, the key findings of all stages of research will be summarised and integrated in order to answer the research questions, and recommendations will be developed for the future of the UAE's Emiratisation policy.

Chapter 8 : Conclusion and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

Although the UAE's emerging labour market struggles have often been interpreted as an over-dependence on expatriate labour force in a country in which expatriates account for more than four-fifths of the population, a review of the literature as well as the primary research conducted for this study have shown that the real situation is more complex and can be attributed to a range of economic, social, cultural and policy issues, which have led to imbalances and conflicts in the supply of and demand for labour. Currently, around 89% of the population of the United Arab Emirates consists of expatriates of the populations, and there is a high level of unemployment among the Emirati population, who comprise only 9% of employees in the public-government sector and 1% of employees in private sector.

The UAE's main recent labour market policy of Emiratisation is intended to replace expatriates with an Emirati workforce by imposing limitations on and regulating the employment of expatriate labour in the public sector, and enforcing the private sector to employ Emiratis in certain types of jobs. To date, this policy has been focused rather narrowly on managerial jobs in the banking and finance sector, and has not addressed the newly emerging ICT sector which is considered as cornerstone of the government's long-term economic growth strategy. Moreover, strategies such as the Emiratisation policy and investment in the ICT sector have not been developed within the context of a proper analysis of labour market needs and problems. In order to address this, the current study has used primary research with students, employers and other UAE labour market stakeholders to explore the barriers to successful Emiratisation of the UAE workforce, and examine various possible approaches to improve the impact of the Emiratisation policy. The results indicate that the main problem is not lack of employment opportunities for Emiratis; the fundamental issue facing the UAE labour market is that many Emirati nationals are not suitably qualified to take up the current opportunities available to them. This is largely due to the rapid developments in labour market supply and demand, and the failure of the education system to keep pace with these and prepare nationals for the demands of the labour market, particularly the need for ICT skills.

This study has attempted to generate information from primary research with job seekers, employers, labour market experts and ICT sector stakeholders in the UAE to help address this situation. The following section summarises the key, integrated findings in response to the research questions that were formulated to guide the study.

8.2 Research Question 1:

What are the main supply-side and demand-side barriers to effective Emiratisation of the UAE labour market?

The key research findings in relation to this question were as follows:

- High percentages of Emirati students are not entering the labour market following graduation (first degree) – there is a large stock of highly qualified labour in the UAE which is not being made available to employers.

- UAE nationals continue to seek employment mainly in the public sector and where they perceive the employment terms and conditions are better, even though their skills and qualifications may not be best matched to this sector.

- Very few UAE nationals expect to work outside government or the oil/gas industry, and are therefore not making their qualifications and skills readily available to employers in other sectors.

- There is evidence that UAE nationals have high expectations when entering the labour market, in terms of job seniority and salaries, which may not be aligned with their qualifications and experience.

- The findings of both the student and employer surveys confirmed the continuing importance of social networking and "wasta" in both job-seeking and recruitment practices in the UAE. These practices are not likely to be conducive to an efficient labour market, since skills/expertise and information about vacancies are not being made generally accessible and available to all employers and jobseekers.

- There is also a mismatch between students and employers in terms of other recruitment and job seeking methods; for example high percentages of students use government employment agencies when seeking jobs, whereas

employers are more likely to use private employment agencies when seeking recruits.

- The student respondents strongly believe that the high numbers of foreign nationals in the UAE, and preference of employers for this group or for workers who qualified overseas, will make it more difficult for them to secure jobs. Around half expected to find difficulty in finding a job.

- Employers believe that the types of skills and qualifications they need are in short supply among UAE nationals, especially in relation to managerial and professional jobs.

- Around a third of employers hold some negative perceptions of Emirati workers, but the remainder generally believe that they are hard-working, well qualified and perform as well as foreign nationals, and that there are other benefits in employing them. However, their high job and salary expectations mean that they can be very expensive to employ, which is a deterrent to employers.

8.3 Research Question 2:

How can labour market theories and social network theories contribute to a better understanding of the UAE labour market and the development of a more effective and sustainable Emiratisation policy?

- The study has examined a number of leading labour market theories and socio-cultural theories and identified a number of lessons from these theories that can be applied to the development of recommendations for a more effective and sustainable Emiratisation policy.

- Human capital can be considered the most important resource at the disposal of labour market entities, providing the main asset with which organisations can secure and maintain a competitive advantage. Organisational productivity is determined largely by the performance of employees. When employees are well managed and are equipped with the right knowledge and skills to carry out their jobs, they are more likely to be highly motivated and committed to their work, and their productivity is likely to increase. Human capital is the resource that different entities across the world have employed to gain

competitive advantage. This is because human capital can easily be used to gain competitive advantage in the market, whether local or global. Organisations therefore need to devote a lot of resources to the development of their human resource because when fully equipped with skill, knowledge and competency, this will ensure quality and quantity performance leading to higher productivity. At a national level, human capital is very important to the development of a country's economy and this must be the central focus of the Emiratisation policy.

- Indigenous human capital in United Arab Emirates does not currently meet the demands of the labour market. The majority of Emirati nationals do not possess the requisite knowledge and skills to meet the demands of employers; neither do they currently possess the work attitudes and ethos needed to rise to the challenges of jobs in the private sector. As a result, employers tend to source foreign nationals instead to provide the needed expertise and positive work ethics, and there is an imbalance in the UAE labour market, with expatriates dominating most areas of work especially in the private sector. Some of the factors that have led to this situation include the reluctance of Emirati nationals to enter certain types of jobs, their lower qualifications compared with the foreign nationals and the inability of the education sector to produce efficient candidates in the job market. The Emiratisation policy was developed to address this situation but has so far had only limited success in redressing the imbalance in the labour market.

- Analyses of educational participation patterns in the UAE demonstrate the failure of the UAE to develop appropriate human capital among its nationals to meet the demands of the private sector (Fergany, 2001). Like other GCC states, the UAE is producing more graduates every year, but most of these are not equipped with the skills needed for an occupation where productivity determines salary and wages. Although the economy requires a range of technical and professional skills, the majority of UAE nationals study subjects more suited to a career in the public sector, in line with employment preferences among this group. There is a need, therefore, to raise awareness among UAE nationals of the need to study different disciplines more suited to the needs of the labour market, such as ICT.

- The concept of human capital can thus be very important in contributing to an understanding of how, at national level, economic growth and competitiveness can be promoted by making appropriate investments in higher education and professional training which is specifically targeted at the needs of employers and the economy in general.

- Social network theories are also very relevant for enhancing understanding of the UAE labour market, where the concept of "wasta" and personal referrals for jobs have traditionally been much more important than formal recruitment channels. While there is on the one hand a need to encourage the use of a more diverse range of recruitment and job-seeking methods, there is also scope to build on the strength of local networks and communities to raise awareness of and disseminate information about job vacancies in a range of occupations, industries and sectors, and to help ensure that suitably qualified Emiratis are brought to the attention of employers.

8.4 Research Question 3:

What are the key elements of an effective and sustainable Emiratisation policy for the UAE?

- In the current labour market context, compliance with the policy can be expensive for organizations – the salary and job expectations of UAE nationals need to be better managed to reduce these costs.

- The policy will be more effective and sustainable if compliance with the regulations are more effectively enforced and monitored by the UAE government.

- The policy needs to be better supported by a good education/training system which prepares UAE nationals for the needs of the labour market and makes them more employable.

- It is likely to be more effective if the government establishes better support systems – with assistance to help match jobseekers to vacancies, understand the needs of employers and develop ways of meeting these.

- There is also a need for more education and awareness-raising about the Emiratisation policy, among both employers and jobseekers.

- Crucially, the policy must be closely linked with the development of the UAE's ICT sector, which is already a cornerstone of the Government's economic development strategy. ICT has been demonstrated to be a key driver of national development in countries around the world, and the UAE population needs to be equipped with the skills and expertise to staff this expanding sector.

8.5 The Important Role of the ICT Sector

Previous studies as well as reports on the UAE Government's ICT initiatives have highlighted the important role of the ICT sector as a driver of the UAE economy.

As shown within the collected qualitative data in sections (123), the Emirati nationals must be equipped with the latest ICT skills in order to compete within the primary labour market segment (i.e. DLM). For instance Employees must obtain International Computer Driving License (ICDL) in order to apply for any job level. Therefore, this research confirms the body of knowledge in terms of the ICT importance within UAE context. This result has been supported by Becker (1993) when he confirmed that investing in human capital based on rational benefits and cost that include a return on investment as well as a cultural aspect.

The government is supporting these initiatives through the provision of ICT infrastructure that allows the efficient process of business activities and communication for the UAE corporations with their business stakeholders in both the domestic and international markets. As an enhancer, the ICT sector is spurring the growth of other industry sectors such as Government, health, energy, construction, services, and other industries to improve manufacturing and services efficiency to increase their competitiveness in their respective markets. As a facilitator of change, the sector provides the infrastructure and platform to disseminate information and facilitate discussion amongst the Government, industry players and public regarding labour policy initiatives to implement the Emiratisation. Lastly, the efficient working of ICT sector has to be seen in the increasing use of technology to facilitate job search, employment skills training, and efficient dissemination of labour market information for job seekers.

Information and communication technology as a tool is crucial in determining productivity growth. ICT is used in different sectors and industries to perform

196

functions such as operations and management roles and it is also used in the supply chain. ICT is known to be cheap, fast and effective. It gives high production within a very short time at a low cost. IT is used in business and commercial transactions and United Arab Emirates have employed the ICT in the business industry. Studies have indicated that ICT has been used in different parts of the world to facilitate growth in different sectors such as communication, infrastructure, trade, finance and banking. ICT has facilitated development in different industries. The Global Information Technology Report 2009-2010 has placed UAE at No. 23 out of 133 countries surveyed on the application of IT for commercial and social growth and notes its aggressive use of technology post the recession. Therefore, it is right to say that ICT has contributed greatly to the development of the economy of United Arab Emirates. ICT has connected the United Arab Emirates market with the rest of the world and it can access labour and other resources from any part of the world, while customers and investors from across the world can also access the United Arab Emirates. ICT has therefore been instrumental in enhancing productivity of the economy of United Arab Emirates.

Its training and development programmes, investments in education, research, industry and infrastructure to make UAE one of the most developed nations of the world show the country's commitment to growth. Its tremendous development in just twenty years from the early 1970s to the 1990s brought about by the oil revenues has proven that planned expenditure and vision can lead to fast track growth. The potential future roles of ICT in the UAE labour market is as an enhancer in the overall economy through providing the infrastructure to improve the efficiency of business processes; a driver as the means through which the economic development, and thus employment opportunities are created; and a facilitator through providing the platform through which the ICT and other sectors are enabled to achieve rapid growth. Hence, the ICT impact on the UAE economy can be justified through the following:

1. The growth in ICT sector enhances skill-development opportunities and professional employment of the Emiratis through conducting ICT training in growth sectors and practical skills. Additionally, the dichotomy between private and public sector in employee training should be eliminated with the

training opportunities and quality standard being equal between the private and public sectors.

2. The HCT and social network theories can contribute to better understanding of ICT sector through understanding the most efficient learning process by K–12 students, higher-education, and employees. ICT is best introduced as early as during K–12 education for the students to benefit from the social cognitive learning process. Further research concludes that improvement of utilisation of ICT technology in the K–12 education system and university are the key factor to the barrier of effective ICT utilisation in the education system.

This understanding will contribute to the development of more effective and sustainable policy, strategic framework, and sustainable implementation of ICT in UAE.

8.6 The Future of the Emiratisation Policy - Considerations

The main objective of the Emiratisation policy is to deal with the labour market imbalance that exists in the UAE by reducing the number of foreign nationals in the workforce and increasing the employment rate of the Emirati nationals. Emiratisation is defined as a multi-level process through which dependency on the expatriate labour force is reduced and nationals are prepared to take up jobs performed by expatriates. One of the main reasons why employers especially in the private sector prefer expatriates is because Emirati nations do not possess the knowledge and skills required by employers. Unless the Emiratisation policy is designed to appropriately address the specific challenges facing the labour market, it is not likely to be effective in achieving its goal. Making it difficult or impossible for employers to recruit expatriate labour for specified jobs, while the locals do not have the requisite skills and experience to fill these jobs, is likely to be a damaging strategy for employers and the economy, and may lead to businesses relocating to other countries where there is a ready pool of suitably qualified, affordable labour. The best solution is to address the requirements of the UAE labour market and to underpin a more successful Emiratisation policy is by putting in place measures aimed at improving the skills and the attitudes of the Emirati nationals to be able to meet the needs of the market. The various dimensions of this approach are outlined in turn below.

Organisational Values and Norms:

Organisational culture is considered to be a very important factor that leaders develop and use to the best interest of organizations bringing together HCT and social networking theories has led to the identification of organizational culture as a significant factor and also showed how its significance is realized in practice. Several authors agree that organizational culture incorporates both national as well as personal values which include beliefs, attitudes and established ways of doing things. The norms and values shared by employees and managers are critical in determining how different parties interact in an organization as well as how they interact with parties outside the organization. Organizational culture is very important in business because it determines the ideas and beliefs that people in the organization need to pursue as well as the right standards that should be employed to pursue organizational goals. Positive organizational cultures embrace cultural diversity; fair treatment of all employees; recognition of the role employees play in the organization; career development through training and opportunity for growth; strong leadership and good communications, among other factors. In the UAE, organizations accept and appreciate cultural diversity and at the same time, they encourage hardworking and quality service. The kind of organizational culture that is dominant in private sector organisations here is that which encourages commitment to the organization and in turn offers professional development. From the quantitative investigation it has emerged that there is a conflict between these organizational cultures and the personal attributes and preferences of Emirati nationals, who may place family obligations and commitments over and above work responsibilities, or be reluctant to accept the lower salaries and benefits that are on offer in exchange for professional development opportunities.

Public Sector vs. Private Sector

The labour market of the United Arab Emirates is dominated by the private as well as the public sector, both of which play a very significant role in the economy of the country. Following the high level of competition in the market at local, regional and global level, organisations in the private sector face particular pressures to develop human capital in order to operate effectively and remain competitive. More so than

the public sector, the private sector is therefore forced to invest heavily in human capital in order to have employees that will help their organisations to overcome prevailing economic challenges and stay competitive. At the same time, there is pressure on them to reduce the human capital investment costs. As a result, the private sector in the UAE has mainly sourced expatriate workers from foreign national communities or other countries, while the public sector has tended to offer the types of employment opportunities preferred by Emirati nationals. The private sector resorts to the foreign national employees because they possess the skills, qualifications and competencies needed in the UAE labour market. The United Arab Emirates nationals have been found to be less qualified and not competent enough to compete effectively with foreign nationals for jobs. In addition, their demands for salaries as well as benefits are also unrealistic and the private sector finds it quite expensive to employ Emirati nationals. As a result, the government of the United Arab Emirates introduced the Emiratisation policy with a view to encouraging the private sector to reduce the number of foreign nationals employed and to increase the employment of Emirati nationals.

Emiratis' attitude toward the private sector workplaces

The attitude of Emirati nationals towards the private sector as has been ascertained by this research is not good for the labour market. The study established that the majority of students hold a preference to work in the public sector for a number of reasons. These include the perceived better salaries and benefits on offer, and the perception that workloads and accountability are lower. Unlike the private sector, where employees are paid according to their labour market value, the government sector pays established high salaries and offers a range of good benefits to its employees, regardless of their specific labour market value. As labour market theories stipulate, employers demand labour which value according to the qualification and ability of the employees. According to this research 77.7% of female respondent said they would prefer to work in the government while 81.8% of the male respondents made the same assertion. In addition, the attitudes of the United Arab Emirates nationals towards private sector is also indicated in their demand for very high position as managerial position as their first jobs, which is unacceptable to most employers in this sector. Such positions are very crucial for the organization with regards to enhancing productivity and attaining competitive advantage. Therefore, most private sector

employers prefer to recruit expatriates with very high qualifications and competence to fill these significant positions, than new Emirati graduates. In addition, the salary demands of the UAE nationals are higher than many private sector employees are prepared to consider, especially for new graduates. This situation has created negative attitudes towards the private sector on the part of the UAE nationals, as well as negative attitudes of Emiratis on the part of many private sector employers.

Compensation

Compensation is a very important aspect of both private and public sector employment. In the private sector, compensation is generally related to the quantity and quality of labour that employees offer to an organization. The level of productivity is key in determining remuneration in competing entities such as companies and organization. Therefore, when employees offer quality and quantity services leading to high performance, which make productivity to go up, the organization is likely to pay its employees high salaries and benefits because these are deserved based on the level of their performance. Compensation is a tool that can be used to motivate employees in organizations. Therefore, it should be used wisely in order to achieve such end. Performance appraisal is a strategy that many organizations employ to establish the level of performance of employees in order to decide on the compensation and benefits to offer to them. The level of compensation also affects the productivity of organizations (Rubery and Wilkinson 2002). Most investors prefer to invest in places where labour costs are low because this enhances profitability and it can be used to gain competitive advantage by transferring the low cost of production to the price of the organisation's products and services. This helps to explain why the private sector organisations of the UAE do not offer compensation to the levels demanded by the UAE nationals.

Skills and Career Development

Training and career development is very important in organizations because of the crucial role of human resources in determining organisational effectiveness and productivity. It has been established by several scholars that human capital is the best resource at the disposal of entities that can be used to obtain competitive advantage. It is therefore imperative to invest reasonable resources in equipping human resource

with necessary skills and knowledge. When employees are given the opportunity to develop their skills and their careers, they feel motivated by the organization, and are likely to be dedicated and committed to the service of the company; this in turn will enhance organisational productivity.

UAE nationals are generally considered by employers to be less qualified than foreign nationals (Al-Dosary 2004; Al-Lamki 1998), which mean that they miss out on job opportunities available in the country. Training and career development is one of the most important ways of ensuring that the UAE nationals are prepared to compete effectively in the labour market. Emiratisation policy should therefore address the issue of training and career development of the United Arab Emirates nationals who are already in the job market while making sure that the education sector meets the demands of the labour market by produce candidates that will compete effectively in the market. This can be attained by making sure that students are highly qualified with relevant skills and by instilling an appropriate understanding and attitude regarding realistic earnings, which are commensurate with one's qualifications and level of experience. This is both a short-term and long-term solution to the imbalance in the United Arab Emirates labour market.

Labour Market Changes

Since the internal labour market has been defined in the literature as a specific form of primary labour market, (Rubery and Wilkinson 2002). The worldwide Developments in labour markets can be attributed to the constant changes in the demand for labour. These are caused in turn by developments in the demands of consumers, the rise of new business challenges and the advancement of ICT. Most organizations are driven by the requirements of customers because meeting these is crucial in order to remain competitive and to retain a good share of the market. Changes in customer needs require organizations to develop new business strategies, and for labour to develop the skills and expertise needed to meet these demands. Similarly, there is a need for labour to keep up with rapid developments in information and communications technology (ICT), which is one of the main drivers of business around the world. For instance, with the introduction and increasing popularity of online banking, it has become important for banks to recruit employees with the requisite skills to manage the ICT developments, representing a change in labour demand. There are other

challenges that rise with time that need redress from different stakeholders as well as the organization. For instance, there is an increasing need to embrace the concept of green supply, which may demand specific types of knowledge and expertise.

8.7 Summary of Research Outcomes

ICT and human capital are very important components of any given industry or nation, in which growth and benefits can often be attributed to the good use of human capital and ICT. The imbalance in the labour market in the United Arab Emirates has necessitated the formulation and implementation of the Emiratisation policy, which stipulates that both the private and public sectors should reduce the number of foreign nationals and increase the number of United Arab Emirates nationals in the organizations. This research was conducted to investigate ICT, human resource management and Emiratisation of the labour market in the United Arab Emirates. ICT was established to play a very important role in the growth of economy. ICT sector plays an important role, notably by contributing to rapid technological progress and productivity growth. ICT integrated with science and innovation is a significant factor in the development of an entity or of a country. The use of ICT has also benefited people living in United Arab Emirates because it has created new job opportunities, which the people have used to improve their living standards and those of their friends and relatives. The international community has also benefited greatly from the use and development of ICT in the United Arab Emirates because it has made it possible to produce commodities at relatively reduced prices thereby attracting trade of all kinds. There is a culture of innovation in the United Arab Emirates and such culture plays a significant role in developing the country's economy and making sure that economic development is sustainable. The barriers to progress of ICT in the United Arab Emirates include the need for further reforms and monopolization of ICT sector in the United Arab Emirates. Another key factor is the lack of a workforce with adequate skills in ICT. ICT does not work on its own but needs technical management and application by human resources. It is therefore imperative to have the population equipped with appropriate technical skills and experience to operate technological systems.

The student survey established that only around half of the respondents said that they planned to either take up a job or look for a job in the UAE on completion of their

current studies. Moreover, the majority of respondents indicated that they expected to work in the public sector. The UAE Recruitment Show was found to be popular with Emirati job seekers. The students were most likely to rate factors such as interesting work, a good salary and ability to use their qualifications as important when looking for a job. The majority of students believed that the public sector performs better in terms of having colleagues or a manager of the same nationality; offering good holiday entitlement; a good salary among others. Moreover, the majority of respondents believed that Oil and Gas companies prefer to employ foreign nationals; but 60% felt that banks and finance companies prefer to employ Emirati nationals. Concerning the monthly salary for an Emirati graduate to earn in their first job, the most commonly cited response given by nearly half of all respondents was at least 30,000 AED. In addition majority of respondents indicated it is difficult to find a job in the UAE the main reason being the presence of too many foreign workers in the country, or that employers prefer to recruit foreign workers.

The employer survey findings results confirm the findings of previous research, and of the student survey, about the very high dependence in the UAE on personal contacts and word of mouth in recruitment for jobs. Almost all respondents argued that they did not feel that UAE nationals have the skills required by their organization. Besides, it was established that Emirati nationals generally expect higher salaries and more employment benefits than expatriates do. The main perceived benefits of employing UAE nationals were seen to be greater loyalty and commitment, local knowledge, language and contacts, and contributing to development of the UAE economy. The drawbacks of employing UAE nationals were seen to be their lack of experience or expertise; their high expectations and the costs associated with these; and their perceived lower levels of commitment and productivity. Almost all the respondents agreed that Emiratisation is good for the country and that UAE government could help ensure the success of Emiratisation by increasing enforcement of the policy; improving the education/ training of UAE nationals and providing greater management and support for employers and jobseekers alike. Employers in the UAE could help ensure the success of the policy by employing more UAE nationals, complying with the regulations and by being actively committed to the policy. Job seekers can also play a role in ensuring the success of Emiratisation by being realistic in their job expectations, applying to the types of organizations that are

committed to the Emiratisation policy, ensuring they receive a good level of education and training and by taking their job seriously and working hard.

8.8 Recommendations

ICT, human capital and Emiratisation are all good for the development of the United Arabs Emirates. In order to effectively adopt and develop ICT in the United Arabs Emirates proper education is needed among the nationals so that they can understand the concept and remove the fear of the risks that are associated with ICT. The government should also put in place appropriate regulations that will check the use of ICT in order to limit the potential social risks associated with ICT. This is important because, ICT can also be used to the peril of society. For instance, ICT or internet can be used to perpetrate pornography, which can be accessed by under aged. It is therefore, important that the government address all loopholes that can be used to perpetrate the vices associated with ICT such as fraud among others.

In addition, Emiratisation is a very good concept that will ensure prosperity of the United Arabs Emirates on a long-term basis. All stakeholders in the United Arabs Emirates should be involved in the implementation of this policy. Education and awareness are key to its adoption and implementation. The Education sector should play a very active role in ensuring that they release to the labour market candidates that are able to compete effectively with nationals in the United Arabs Emirates labour market. Quality of education should therefore be enhanced in accordance with the market demands. Proper modelling and education is needed to change the attitude of the United Arabs Emirates nationals with regards to their job expectations and perception of the private sector.

The study is based on analytical and empirical analyses. The final objective is to conclude a number of policy recommendations in the direction that enhances the industry environment in the UAE to sustain the economic and social development.

The study confirmed that the strategy of low relative cost of labour (at aggregate level) in resource rich countries with low populations (i.e., GCC economies particularly the UAE) is the right strategy to adopt. The low-skill and labour-intensive

development model has attributed to a remarkable growth rate of the UAE economy over the last three decades.

There are four contributing factors to this growth:

- The investment in building domestic physical capital has been advocated as an optimal strategy for resource management in a resource rich but capital poor economy such that of UAE;
- Low skilled labours in comparison to the higher-wage skilled counterparts and the labour market segmentation creates "rents" that allow a wage premium for the nationals;

- Finally, the study concludes that UAE should consider a switch to a more knowledge-intensive development model. However, this must be a gradual and incremental process. The shift to a knowledge economy requires higher productivity in both the public and private sectors and consequently this economy model is projected to accommodate high wages for nationals and immigrants. Additionally, the new model would also require a realignment of the current wage system to promote positive labour market incentives by rewarding educational attainment, innovation and the development of human capital, especially for the Emirati citizens.

The studies presented above agree with the qualitative research study presented in these points:

- Against the human capital theories' argument, the current education system has not resulted in higher wages and job satisfaction for the majority of Emiratis due to the following reasons:

    - Employers preference for higher-skilled expatriates and low perception of Emiratis employability
    - The disconnect between the required practical skills of the industry and the largely theoretical skills taught by the tertiary education system
    - The disconnect between the required skills in the growing industry and the courses offered by the educational institutions

- Lack of incentives for the Emiratis discourages taking the higher degree in the population

- Companies have benefited from the low-skilled expatriates, but the future economy will be knowledge-based and this trend will create opportunity for Emiratis to take advantage of the economic "rent" higher wages. This would require the Emiratis to partake in the ICT training that is sustainable for the future.

- From the socio-economic theories, it can be further observed that the training and practice of ICT skills from early education age is more effective than individual training, i.e. self tutoring and other forms of self learning. Even though the Government has provided ample computers and Internet access at early education system, the utilisation is still ineffective and thus education system needs to introduce programmes with incentives that reward the completion of specific computer skills courses.

- The socio-economic theories further help to show that the dichotomy of training in the public and private sectors need to be aligned so the Emiratis have common learning experience with their skilled foreign workers counterparts and/or private companies' employees.

8.9 Limitations

Throughout the research, a number of limitations were experienced especially with regards to time, finance and geographical locations. The research was to be structured in such a manner that the time available could be used to complete the research successfully. Time was a limiting factor in the sense that the research had to be completed within a given time frame. For instance, the activities of the research such as data collection could have not been conducted among 200 more respondents because time was limited and could not allow that. There were also limited funds available for the research. Therefore, the logistics associated with the research were to be made in such a way that the financial resources available could accommodate them. The operations and activities of the research were to be carried within the budget thereby limiting the scope of the research. Data could have not been collected

from all the United Arabs Emirates. Data was collected from specific locations and specific individuals. This made geographical location a limiting factor.

One of the limitations of this study is that the quantitative findings regarding employer recruitment and human resource management practices have been drawn only from the oil/gas and banking/finance sectors. This is not regarded as a major weakness, since these sectors are among the largest employers in the UAE. Moreover, in excess of 200 responses were received from a diverse sample of organisations, which means that the findings do represent the experiences and views of a large number of UAE employers in key sectors of the economy. However, since the sample of managers was not drawn using probability methods, it is not possible to make firm statistical inferences from the findings to the UAE's oil/gas and banking/finance sectors as a whole or to other areas of the economy.

Similarly, the sample of students was not selected using probability sampling methods, and this reduces the overall representativeness of the student survey results. However, the achievement of more than 500 responses has helped to ensure that a diverse range of students by gender, subject area and other demographic factors is included.

It is acknowledged that the use of personal contacts and snowballing techniques in generating a sample of stakeholders for interview may have introduced an element of bias into the qualitative findings, but every effort was made to include representatives from a broad range of stakeholder organisations. In total, more than 60 in-depth interviews were conducted, which is a very good level of response for qualitative research.

A further limitation relates to the reliance on data and information provided by the research participants. Though care was be taken to collect such data from the relevant authorities that hold such positions to provide accurate information, data accuracy could not be authenticated due to lack of personal access to such details.

Any potential limitations arising from the researcher's interpretation of the research results should also be noted. Cook and Reichardt (1979) described qualitative

methods as including ethnography, case studies, in-depth interviews, and participant observation and as subject to "a phenomenological, inductive, holistic, subjective, process-oriented, and social anthropological world view" (pp.9-10). Any strategy that includes observations and interviewing may be influenced by the researcher's own subjective interpretations of the findings. This limitation is to be considered since it may undermine the validity of the qualitative research. However, every attempt was made by the researcher to maximise the research validity through high quality research instrument design and by ensuring that the interpretation of findings has been grounded in a thorough understanding of the relevant issues and has taken into account a wide range of stakeholder perspectives.

Finally, whilst the study is expected to contribute to a general understanding of labour market problems and potential solutions in other countries with large expatriate workforces, the specific findings and recommendations are relevant only to the UAE.

8.10   Conclusion

Previous research by various scholars has attempted to solve the unemployment problems faced by nationals in GCC countries using a variety of different approaches. This research is unique as it attempts to use various theoretical approaches to the labour market coupled with investigation of the practical problems faced on the ground by job-seekers and employers in the UAE. It has attempted in particular to explore the current gap between the supply of and demand for labour, in other words between the educational system and industry in the UAE, and to identify solutions in this way to the problem of national unemployment and the weak Emiratisation strategy.

Using the established institutional labour market and socio-cultural theories as a conceptual framework illustrates the strong relationship between the human capital and socio-cultural theories. In addition, in order to analyse the UAE labour market, to improve understanding of the barriers and opportunities inherent in its current structure, and to highlight the key issues and information needs which primary research can address, there was also a need to use Human Capital theories, and subsidiary theories such as the dual and segmented labour market theories, amongst

others. These theoretical approaches were of assistance in identifying the UAE labour market problems and answering the core research questions.

Ensuring that the study builds on existing theories and knowledge about how labour markets operate also allows the significance of the findings to the wider field of knowledge about labour markets to be readily inferred. Moreover, the mixed-methods study, using both quantitative and qualitative data collection, generates a large, up-to-date, empirical evidence base on recruitment practices, job-seeking intentions and other relevant information with which to inform the development of future policies in the UAE. It also contributes more directly to policy development by formulating a series of recommendations derived from the results of primary research, including proposals for a focus on ICT as a key driver of change and improvement. This represents a central contribution of this research: the potential future roles of ICT in the UAE labour market are as an enhancer in the overall economy through providing the infrastructure to improve the efficiency of business processes; as a driver, offering the means by which economic development, and thus employment opportunities, are created; and as an enabler/facilitator, providing the platform through which the ICT and other sectors are enabled to achieve rapid growth.

ICT has already played a very instrumental role in turning around the United Arab Emirates economy. However, there is need to develop further the ICT sector and encourage the populations of the United Arab Emirates to embrace ICT. One of the measures that might be used to ensure successful progress of ICT in the United Arab Emirates is through incentives. If ICT-related jobs are relatively highly paid, this will enhance career development and attract potential employees especially graduates.

Human capital on the other hand is crucial for the success of organizations. Therefore, it is imperative that organizations invest in their respective human capital, since doing so is likely to bring significant benefits to organizations in terms of profitability and competitive advantage. There is currently an imbalance in the labour market of the United Arab Emirates, which has been created by the sourcing of human resources from foreign nationals rather than Emiratis. The private sector in United Arab Emirates maintain that it is expensive to employ Emirati nationals because they demand high salaries and benefits while their input levels are low compared to those

of the foreign nationals who are seen as more highly qualified and industrious. The Emiratisation policy was introduced to redress the imbalance in the UAE labour market, by propagating that both the private and public sectors should reduce the number of foreign national employees and increase the employment rate of the UAE nationals. The Emiratisation policy has had limited success since its introduction but it still faces certain challenges, which can be addressed by various stakeholders, such as employers, government and job seekers. Attitudinal change among UAE national job seekers remains crucial in order for the Emiratisation policy to succeed.

The subjects of ICT, human capital, and indigenisation of the labour market are very important to industry players in the United Arab Emirates as well as stakeholders from other parts of the world. Conducting further research on the ICT field within the UEA's private sector with close consideration to indigenization prospect is one of the key areas for scientific progress in multi-disciplinary research that aims to inform policy and practice. On the demand side, more detailed nationally representative data might be collected on the skills requirements of private sector jobs in a range of sectors, so that the UAE education system can be better designed to meet the needs of the economy through human resource development.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Awareness Letter

iCOM - Information, Computing and Communication
Royal Holloway, University of London

Postgraduate Ethics Awareness Form

The supervisor is required to discuss with the student any potential ethical issues relating to the proposed research project during the first or second term of enrolment on the MPhil or PhD programme. The date of this meeting must be recorded on this form along with other relevant details. The form must appear at the start of the completed thesis (immediately after the abstract).

Student's surname: **Al-Qubaisi**

First name: **Omar**

Degree for which registered: **MPhil/PhD**

Date of initial registration: **27.9.2004**

Thesis title: **"ICT, Human Capital Development and Emiratisation of the Labour Market in the United Arab Emirates".**

Date(s) at which ethical issues related to the proposed research have been formally discussed:

Have these discussions highlighted any ethical concerns with the proposed research plans?

If yes, briefly describe these concerns and confirm that the iCOM Research Centre Research Committe College Ethical Committee has been notified and has granted approval for the study (please specify relevant dates) or, for issues where the iCOM Research Centre Research Committee has considered that it was not within its remit to grant approval, that the .College Ethical Committee has been notified and has granted approval for the study

Name and signature of supervisor: **Professor Duska Rosenberg**

Name and signature of student: **Omar Saeed Al-Qubaisi**

Appendix 2: Survey Participation Request Letter

iCOM - Information, Computing and Communication
Royal Holloway, University of London
Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX
United Kingdom.

Subject: Research Study – Employment in the United Arab Emirates

Date: / 04 / 2010

Dear Sir or Madam,

 I am Omar Al-Qubaisi, a doctoral researcher in Royal Holloway, University of London -
 School of Management. I am undertaken a research project entitled *"Human Capital
 Development and Emiratisation: A Management Development Model for UAE Nationals in
 the Oil/Gas and Financial Service Industries."* This research project intends to develop and
 integrated a comprehensive strategy for increasing Emirates participation in the United Arab
 Emirates labour market.

You are invited to take part in important research about recruitment and job-seeking practices
in the UAE. The research is being conducted to examine the current problems facing the UAE
labour market and how these might be resolved.

The findings will be used to make recommendations to the UAE Government for improving
the employment prospects of Emirati nationals and ensuring that employers are able to meet
their recruitment requirements without a heavy reliance on expatriate workers.

As a central part of the study, online questionnaire surveys are being conducted among
selected employers and future job-seekers. Your co-operation in completing the attached
survey is greatly appreciated; it should only take around 10 to 15 minutes of your time.

Although completion of the questionnaire is voluntary, your co-operation is greatly
appreciated, since a good response rate to the survey will help to ensure the overall success of
the study. You are not required to provide your name and will remain anonymous to the
researcher. Only the combined results from all completed questionnaires will be presented in
the research report, so you will not be personally identifiable. There are no known risks or
costs to you of participating.

If you agree to take part, simply click on the link below and follow the survey instructions.
Please complete and submit the questionnaire by (Date: / 04 / 2010).

By completing the electronic questionnaire you are voluntarily agreeing to the terms and
conditions of participation in the study as set out in this letter.
If you would like further information about this study, please contact:

Kind regards,
Omar Al-Qubaisi
Doctoral Researcher
E-mail: omaralqubaisi@gmail.com
Website: http://www.rhul.ac.uk/Management/About-Us/postgrads/alqubaisi.html

Appendix 3: Fieldwork Organisations Letters for Contributors

3.1 ADIA Finance & Administration Department

ADIA
جهـــاز أبـوظبــي للاستثمـــار
Abu Dhabi Investment Authority

Date: 21 April 21, 2010

To Whom It May Concern

This is to certify that **Mr. Omar Saeed Al-Qubaisi** is sponsored a scholarship by Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) to attain a PhD in Organisation Studies and Human Resource Management at Royal Holloway, University of London - School of Management. He is undertaking a research study on " *Human Capital Development and Emiratisation: A Management Development Model for UAE Nationals in the Oil/Gas and Financial Service Industries.* "

At this level of his study Mr. Al-Qubaisi is seeking your assistant and full support in providing him with the equivalent necessary data and information for his thesis within your esteemed organization/institution.

This letter has been issued upon his request to fulfill his research study essentials requirements.

Thank you in advance.

Salem Rashed Al Mohannadi
Executive Director, Finance and Administration Dept.

P.O.Box : 3600
Abu Dhabi
U.A.E.

Abu Dhabi Investment Authority 211 Corniche, PO Box 3600 Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Phone: +971 2 415 0000 Fax: +971 2 415 1000 Email: pressoffice@adia.ae Web site: http://www.adia.ae

227

ΛDIΛ
جهـــاز أبـــوظبـي للاســـتثمـــار
Abu Dhabi Investment Authority

Date: 15.4.2010

To Whom It May Concern

This is to certify that **Mr. Omar Saeed Al-Qubaisi** is sponsored a scholarship by Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) to attain a PhD in Organisation Studies and Human Resource Management at Royal Holloway, University of London - School of Management. He is undertaking a research study on " *Human Capital Development and Emiratisation: A Management Development Model for UAE Nationals in the Oil/Gas and Financial Service Industries.*"

At this level of his study he is seeking your assistant and full support in providing Mr. Al-Qubaisi with the equivalent necessary data and information for his thesis within your esteemed organization/institution.

This letter has been issued upon his request to fulfill his research study essentials requirements.

Thank you in advance.
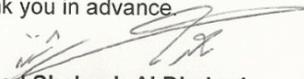
Ahmed Shabeeb Al Dhaheri

Executive Director, Scholarship Dept.

15.4.2010

Abu Dhabi Investment Authority 211 Corniche, PO Box 3600 Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Phone: +971 2 415 0000 Fax: +971 2 415 1000 Email: pressoffice@adia.ae Web site: http://www.adia.ae

3.3 Central bank of UAE

CENTRAL BANK OF THE U.A.E.   مصرف الإمارات العربية المتحدة المركزي

Date: 4 / 5 / 2010

Ref.: 13 / 951 / 2010

To :   **All Banks and other Financial Institutions**

After Greetings,

Mr. Omar Saeed Al Qubaisi will be contacting you in order to obtain information for his doctoral research project titled " Human Capital Development and Emiratisation : A Management Development Model for UAE Nationals in the Oil/Gas and Financial Services Industries", at Royal Holloway, University of London-School of Management.

Accordingly, please grant him any assistance that he may need in completing his task.

Yours faithfully,

Saeed Abdulla Al Hamiz
Senior Executive Director
Banking Supervision & Examination Dept.

3.4 Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC)

Ref. No.   : NRC/GEN/06/10
Date   : 23 May 2010

Mr. Salem Rashed Al Muhannad
Executive Director, Finance and Administration Dept.
Abu Dhabi Investiment Authority (ADIA)
P.O. Box: 3600,
Abu Dhabi, U.A.E

Dear Sir,

Subject: HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMIRATISATION

Reference is made to your letter dated 21st April 2010.

Please note that Mr. Mubarak Al Mehairbi, Manager, HR Planning & Recruitment has met and discussed with Mr. Omar Saeed Al Qubaisi regarding his research study on Emiratisation and accordingly, will be provided all the necessary information/data to complete his task.

This is for your kind information.

Best regards,
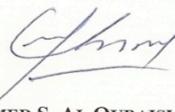
MOHAMMED S. AL QUBAISI
DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

شركة بترول ابوظبي الوطنية (أدنوك) ص . ب : ٨٩٨ أبوظبي – الامارات العربية المتحدة – تلفون : ٦٠٢٠٠٠٠ (٢-٩٧١) –تلكس : ٢٢٢١٥ اي ام – برقيا : «أدنوك» – فاكس : ٦٠٢٣٣٨٩ (٢-٩٧١)
Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) P.O. Box : 898 Abu Dhabi - U.A.E., Tel. : (971-2) 6020000 - Telex : 22215 EM - Cable : "ADNOC" - Fax : (971-2) 6023389

230

3.4.1 Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research
United Arab Emirates University

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION
& SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة الـتـعـلـيـــم الـعـالـــــي
والـبـحـــث الـعـلـمـــــي
مكـتـــب الـمـديـــر الـعـام

Sunday , june 13, 2010

Dr . Abdullah saeed al khanbashi
Vice chancellor
United arab Emirates university

Dear Dr. khanbashi

Mr. omar Saeed Al Qubaisi will be contacting You in order to obtain information for his doctoral research project titled " Human Capital Development and Emiratisation : A Management Development Model for UAE Nationals in the Oil/Gas and Financial Services Industries" , at Royal Holloway, University of London- School of Management.

Accordingly, Please grant him any Possible assistance that he may need in completing his task .

With My Best regards,

DR. Saeed Hamad Al Hassani
Director General
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
United Arab Emirates

3.4.2 Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research
Zayed University

ZAYED UNIVERSITY
Office of Research

جـــامـــعــة زايــــد
إدارة البحوث

10 May, 2010

Dear Dr Al Qubaisi

Your application for ethical clearance at Zayed University was considered and approved by the Research Ethics Committee on 9 May, 2010. Your approval is recorded as #ZU10-023 for the title:

'Human Capital Development and Emiratisation of the Labour Market in the UAE'

If there are any major variations to your proposed research as reviewed by this committee, then please resubmit a revision to your sought ethical clearance.

Please address any queries in relation to this clearance to the Chair, ZU Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research, Dr. Brigitte Howarth, or myself on the contact numbers below. Dr. Howarth can be contacted via telephone on 04-4021189 or email brigitte.howarth@zu.ac.ae.

Best wishes with your research.

KMCKenzie

On behalf of
Janet Martin
Ex-Officio for the ZU Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research, 2010.
Telephone: 02-5993365 or janet.martin@zu.ac.ae

الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة الـتـعـلـيــــم الـعـالــــي
والـبـحـــــث الـعـلـمــــي
مـكـتــــب الـمـديــــر الــعـام

Sunday , june 13, 2010

Dr Soliman Mousa Al Jasim
Vice chancellor
Zayed University

Dear Dr. Soliman

Mr. omar Saeed Al Qubaisi will be contacting You in order to obtain information for his doctoral research project titled " Human Capital Development and Emiratisation : A Management Development Model for UAE Nationals in the Oil/Gas and Financial Services Industries" , at Royal Holloway, University of London- School of Management.

Accordingly, Please grant him any Possible assistance that he may need in completing his task .

With My Best regards,

DR. Saeed Hamad Al Hassani
Director General
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
United Arab Emirates

www.government.ae

هـاتـــف: ٨٢٧٢ ٦٤٢ ٢ ٩٧١+ ♦ فـاكـــس: ٨٧٧٨ ٦٤٢ ٢ ٩٧١+ ♦ ص.ب ٤٥٢٥٣ ♦ أبـوظبـــي ♦ الإمـــارات العربيـــة المتحـــدة
TELEPHONE: +971 2 642 8272 ♦ FACSIMILE: +971 2 642 8778 ♦ PO BOX 45253 ♦ ABU DHABI ♦ UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

233

3.4.3 Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research
Higher Colleges of Technology

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION
& SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة التعليم العالي
والبحث العلمي
مكتب المدير العام

Sunday , june 13, 2010

Dr Tayeb Kamaly
Vice chancellor
Higher Colleges of Technology

Dear Dr. Kamaly

Mr. omar Saeed Al Qubaisi will be contacting You in order to obtain
information for his doctoral research project titled " Human Capital
Development and Emiratisation : A Management Development Model
for UAE Nationals in the Oil/Gas and Financial Services Industries" , at
Royal Holloway, University of London- School of Management.

Accordingly, Please grant him any Possible assistance that he may need
in completing his task.

With My Best regards,

DR. Saeed Hamad Al Hassani
Director General
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
United Arab Emirates

www.government.ae

هـاتــف: ٨٢٧٢ ٦٤٢ ٢ ٩٧١+ ♦ فـاكــس: ٨٧٧٨ ٦٤٢ ٢ ٩٧١+ ♦ ص.ب ٤٥٢٥٣ ♦ أبـوظـبـي ♦ الإمـارات العربيــة المتحـدة
TELEPHONE: +971 2 642 8272 ♦ FACSIMILE: +971 2 642 8778 ♦ PO BOX 45253 ♦ ABU DHABI ♦ UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

234

Appendix 4: Students Survey Questionnaire

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES LABOUR MARKET – STUDENT SURVEY

<u>**Your Job search Plans**</u>

1. **Which of the following statements best describes what you intend to do on completion of your current course of study?**

I plan to take up a job that I have already secured in the UAE ☐

I plan to look for a job in the UAE ☐

I plan to continue my full-time education in the UAE ☐

I plan to continue my full-time education in another country ☐

Other (please specify) ☐

2. **Which of the following sectors do you expect to work in when you take up employment?**

Government ☐

Oil/Gas ☐

Energy (Either Private or Public; Government) ☐

Don't know ☐

Other (please specify) ☐

3. **Which of the following types of jobs do you expect to work in when you take up employment?**

Managerial ☐

Professional ☐

Technical ☐

Secretarial ☐

Administrative ☐

Don't know ☐

Other (please specify) ☐

4. **Please indicate how likely you would be to use the following sources of information about job vacancies:**

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Fairly unlikely	Very unlikely
Job advertisements in UAE newspapers	☐	☐	☐	☐
Job advertisements in overseas newspapers	☐	☐	☐	☐
Job advertisements in specialist magazines or journals				
Online jobsites	☐	☐	☐	☐
TANMIA/government employment agencies	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Abu Dhabi Tawteen Council	☐	☐	☐	☐
The UAE Recruitment Show	☐	☐	☐	☐
Private employment agencies	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal contacts/word of mouth	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. **Please indicate how important the following factors are to you when looking for a job:**

	Very important	Fairly important	Fairly unimportant	Very unimportant
Good salary	☐	☐	☐	☐
Convenient location	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interesting work	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability to use my qualifications	☐	☐	☐	☐
Immediate entry to a senior position	☐	☐	☐	☐
Options for further training	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flexible working hours	☐	☐	☐	☐

Regular working hours (no overtime requirement) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Having colleagues of the same nationality or religion as me ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Having a manager of the same nationality or religion as me ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Good holiday entitlement ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

An occupational pension ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Other (please specify) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

----

6. **Now please indicate whether you believe the public sector or the private sector in the UAE is likely to offer better job prospects in relation to each of the listed factors:**

	Public Sector is better	Private Sector is better
High salary	☐	☐
Convenient location	☐	☐
Interesting work	☐	☐
Ability to use my qualifications	☐	☐
Immediate entry to a senior position	☐	☐
Options for further training	☐	☐
Flexible working hours	☐	☐
Regular working hours	☐	☐
Having colleagues of the same nationality or religion as me	☐	☐
Having a manager of the same nationality or religion as me	☐	☐
Good holiday entitlement	☐	☐
An occupational pension	☐	☐

237

Employment Prospects in the UAE

7.   **Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the UAE:**

	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly
The current job prospects for Emirati nationals are good	☐	☐	☐	☐
The current job prospects for foreign nationals are good	☐	☐	☐	☐
The current job prospects for Emirati women are good	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are too many foreign workers in the UAE	☐	☐	☐	☐
The UAE education system prepares students well for employment	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gas and oil companies in the UAE generally prefer to employ foreign nationals	☐	☐	☐	☐
Banks and finance companies in the UAE generally prefer to employ Emirati nationals	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is easy for Emiratis to obtain jobs in government departments	☐	☐	☐	☐
Most Emiratis prefer to use personal contacts rather than advertisements to find a job	☐	☐	☐	☐
Most employers in the UAE prefer job applicants who hold a degree from an overseas university (e.g. US, UK, Canada)	☐	☐	☐	☐

238

8.   **What do you believe is a reasonable monthly salary (in AED) for an Emirati national with a Bachelor's degree to earn in their first job?**

Between 1,000 and 2,000 AED monthly ☐

Between 3,000 and 5,000 AED monthly ☐

At least 5,000 but less than 10,000 AED monthly ☐

At least 10,000 but less than 20,000 AED monthly ☐

At least 20,000 but less than 30,000 AED monthly ☐

At least 30,000 AED monthly ☐

Don't know ☐

9.   **How easy or difficult do you think it will be for you personally to secure a job in the UAE when you finish your studies?**

Very easy ☐ Go to Q11

Fairly easy ☐ Go to Q11

Fairly difficult ☐ Go to Q10

Very difficult ☐ Go to Q10

Don't know ☐ Go to Q11

10. **Why do you think it will be difficult to secure a job in the UAE when you complete your studies?**

[ ]

Background Information

11. **What is your current course of study (academic area and qualification)?**

[ ]

12. How would you rate your level of fluency in written and spoken English?

	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor
Written English	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spoken English	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. What is your gender?

Male ☐

Female ☐

14. Which age group do you belong to?

Under 20 ☐

21 to 25 ☐

Over 25 ☐

15. What is your nationality?

Emirati ☐

Other GCC country

national ☐

Other nationality   (please

specify) ☐ ....

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP

Appendix 5: Employer Survey Questionnaire

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES LABOUR MARKET STUDY – EMPLOYER SURVEY

1. **Please indicate which of the following organizations you are employed by:**

   Abu Dhabi National Oil ☐

   Company (or subsidiary)

   Central bank of UAE ☐

   Other – please specify ☐

   ----

2. **Which of the following statements best reflects your role in recruiting staff for your organization?**

   I play a leading in role in staff recruitment for my ☐

   organization as a whole

   I am actively involved in recruiting staff for my ☐

   own team or department

   I have little or no responsibility for staff ☐

   recruitment

3. **Which of the following statements best describe your company's position regarding the employment of UAE nationals (tick as many as apply):**

   The company is required to meet UAE legal ☐ (please answer questions 7 and 8)

   requirements for the employment of UAE nationals

   The company has specified its own goals for the ☐ (please answer questions 7 and 8)

   employment of UAE nationals

   My company has no formal requirements for the ☐ (go straight to question 9)

   employment of UAE nationals

4. **Please describe briefly the requirements or goals for the employment of UAE nationals in your company:**

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                             │
│                                                             │
│                                                             │
│                                                             │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

5. **When there are job vacancies in your organization, which of the following methods of recruitment are used for various types of jobs (tick as many as apply):**

	Managerial	Professional/ Technical	Administrative/ Secretarial	Unskilled
Advertising in UAE newspapers	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advertising in overseas newspapers	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advertising in online jobsites	☐	☐	☐	☐
TANMIA/government employment agencies	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Abu Dhabi Tawteen Council	☐	☐	☐	☐
The UAE Recruitment Show	☐	☐	☐	☐
Private employment agencies	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal contacts/word of mouth	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐

----

6. **In general, which of the following do you think are most commonly used by UAE nationals who are looking for work in the following categories (tick as many as apply):**

	Managerial	Professional/ Technical	Administrative/ Secretarial	Unskilled
Advertising in UAE newspapers	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advertising in overseas newspapers	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advertising in specialist journals or magazines	☐	☐	☐	☐

Advertising in online jobsites	☐	☐	☐	☐
TANMIA/government employment agencies	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Abu Dhabi Tawteen Council	☐	☐	☐	☐
The UAE Recruitment Show	☐	☐	☐	☐
Private employment agencies	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal contacts/word of mouth	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐

----

7. **In your view, which of the following type of job skills are in short supply among UAE nationals? (tick as many as apply)**

Management ☐

Professional/Technical ☐

Administrative/Secretarial ☐

None ☐

Other (please specify) ☐

----

8. **Which specific types of skills or qualifications currently needed by your organization are in short supply among UAE nationals?**

9. **Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

	Strongly agree	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Very few UAE nationals apply for jobs in my company	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emirati men are not generally interested in jobs in this sector of the economy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emirati women are not generally interested in jobs in this sector of the economy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Most UAE nationals do not have the qualifications or skills required for jobs in my company	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
UAE nationals generally perform just as well at work as expatriates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
UAE nationals do not generally perform as well at interview as expatriates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is more expensive, in general, for my company to employ UAE nationals than expatriates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Expatriates generally require more training than UAE nationals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
UAE nationals generally expect higher salaries than expatriates for the same types of jobs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
UAE nationals are generally willing to accept junior positions and "work their way up"	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
UAE nationals generally perform worse in our company's entrance tests than expatriate applicants	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
UAE nationals are generally hard working	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
UAE nationals expect more employee benefits than expatriate workers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
UAE nationals cannot be relied on to attend work regularly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If employing an Emirati, I prefer them to have a degree from an overseas university (e.g. US, UK, Canada) rather than a local (GCC) university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

| I believe that, in general, universities in the UAE are good at providing students with the skills and knowledge in demand among employers | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

10. **In your view, what are the main benefits of employing UAE nationals rather than expatriates?**

```



```

11. **In your view, what are the main drawbacks of employing UAE nationals rather than expatriates?**

```



```

12. **In your view, what the main benefits or drawbacks of employing UAE nationals who have obtained a higher education overseas?**

```



```

13. **Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about the UAE Government's policy of Emiratisation:**

	Strongly agree	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Emiratisation is good for the UAE economy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emiratisation is good for my company	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emiratisation will help UAE nationals to secure jobs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emiratisation will increase the numbers of UAE nationals in the private sector	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emiratisation will increase the numbers of UAE nationals in the public sector	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emiratisation is popular with employers in the UAE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Emiratisation is being well managed by the Government	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It will be easy for the UAE to meet its Emiratisation targets	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emiratisation is popular with UAE nationals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emiratisation is costly for employers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. What, if anything, could the UAE government do to help ensure that Emiratisation is a success?

>

15. What, if anything, could employers in the UAE do to help ensure that Emiratisation is a success?

>

16. What, if anything, could UAE job-seekers do to help ensure that Emiratisation is a success?

>

Background Information

17. What is your gender?

Male ☐

Female ☐

18. Which age group do you belong to?

Under 25 ☐

25 to 40 ☐

41 to 55 ☐

Over 55 ☐

19. What is your nationality?

Emirati ☐

Other GCC country national ☐

Other nationality - please specify ☐

....

20. **What is your job title?**

┌───┐
│   │
│   │
│   │
└───┘

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP

Appendix 6: Labour Market Experts Interview Guide

1. **This study is concerned with the topic of Emiratisation of the UAE labour market. Can you please briefly explain what you understand by the term Emiratisation?**

2. **What, in your view, have been the main positive or negatives effects so far of Emiratisation on the following sectors or groups in the UAE?**

Emiratisation	Positive effects	Negative effects
a) Oil/Gas and Energy sector		
b) Banking/Finance and Investment sector		
c) Education Sector		
d) Private sector employers in general		
e) Public sector employers in general		
f) Emirati jobseekers		
g) Expatriate jobseekers		

3. **In general, would you say that Emiratisation has been a good choice of labour market policy for the UAE?**

Yes / No / Don't Know

Please explain the reason(s) for your answer:

4. **What factors, if any, have prevented the Emiratisation policy from being more successful, in your view? Please explain briefly the reason(s) for your answer.**

5. **If you were asked to identify the most effective way to improve the success of the Emiratisation policy, what would you suggest? Please explain**

6. **Are there any additional measures which you believe would help improve the effectiveness of the Emiratisation policy? Please explain briefly the reason(s) for your answer.**

7. **Which organization(s) or groups in the UAE will need to take action in order for the Emiratisation policy to achieve its goals, and what will be needed from them, in your view?**

Organization/Group	Actions Needed

8. **If Emiratisation achieves its goal of significantly increasing the numbers of Emiratis employed in the private sector, what do you think the effects will be on the UAE economy and society more generally?**

9. **In the UAE, many jobseekers use personal contacts and word of mouth to find employment. Do you think that this makes the UAE labour market more or less effective?**

   More effective / less effective / no difference / don't know

   Please explain the reason(s) for your answer

10. **In the UAE, many employers also use personal contacts and word of mouth when recruiting for job vacancies? Do you think that this makes the UAE labour market more or less effective?**

   More effective / less effective / no difference / don't know

   Please explain the reason(s) for your answer

11. **Can you suggest any other policies or measures which might be usefully adopted by the UAE in order to tackle rising unemployment among Emiratis? Please explain the reason(s) for your answer(s)**

_____

_____

12. **Finally, do you have any other comments regarding the UAE labour market and/or the Emiratisation policy?**

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your help

Appendix 7: ICT Sector Representatives Interview Guide

Name of Respondent:	
Organisation:	
Location:	
Job Title:	
Length of Time in Role:	
Brief Description of Responsibilities	

1. **In your view, how important is ICT to the economy and society of the UAE? Why do you say this?**

2. **Are there any major barriers to progress in the ICT sector of the UAE, in your view? If yes, what are these?**

3. **Outside the ICT sector of the UAE - for example in the oil industry or the banking and finance sector - how important is it for employees to have good ICT skills? Why do you say this?**

4. **Do you think that the UAE education systemeffectively prepares students to use ICT in the workplace? Please give reasons for your answer.**

5. **Do you think that the UAE public sector does a good job of training its employees in ICT skills? Please give reasons for your answer.**

6. **Do you think that the UAE public sector does a good job of training its employees in ICT skills? Please give reasons for your answer.**

7. **In your view, what would be the most effective way of improving ICT skills among the Emirati population?**

_____

_____

8. **Do you think that improved ICT skills among the Emirati population would have an impact on the future of the Emiratisation policy? Please give reasons for your answer.**

_____

_____

9. **Finally, do you have any other comments?**

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your help

Appendix 8: Example ICT Representative Interview Transcript

 Date: Monday, August 08, 2011

Omar Saeed Al-Qubaisi
iCOM Centre for Research in Information Computing & Communication
Royal Holloway, University of London
11 Bedford Square
London
WC1B 3RF
United Kingdom
Email: omaralqubaisi@gmail.com
        Omar.AlQubaisi.2004@rhul.ac.uk
http://www.rhul.ac.uk/icom/people/omaralqubaisi.aspx

INTERVIEWS WITH ICT SECTOR KEY REPRESENTATIVES

Name of Respondent:	**Dr. Eesa Bastaki**
Organisation:	**UAE ICT Fund (Information & Communication Technology Fund)**
Location:	**ICT Fund (Information & Communication Technology Fund)** **PO Box 116688 Dubai, UAE** **Tel +971 4 2300089** **Fax +971 4 2300161** **Email info@ictfund.gov.ae**
Job Title:	**Chief Executive of UAE ICT Fund**
Length of Time in Role:	**Since Commencement on 2008**
Brief Description of Responsibilities	

13. In your view, how important is ICT to the economy and society of the UAE? Why do you say this?

ICT is very important to the economy of UAE. ICT is affecting every sector of the society.

The new trends of ICT will place the sector at the peak and will be the hottest area to be tackled in terms of research, implementation and usage in order to keep pace with the developed countries.

ICT touches every aspect of our lives. It touches our personal lives at home, at work and at the society at large. It affects the business community, business processes and business development.

14. Are there any major barriers to progress in the ICT sector of the UAE, in your view? If yes, what are these?

The barriers are always there in any project.
- Lack of skilled workforce in ICT
- Lack of bold talents who are willing to take risks in innovating new ideas and implementing them
- Lack of VC funding in ICT sector
- Lack of ICT applied research
- There are no patents or IP's in ICT sector
- Lack of collaboration between the academia and the ICT industry in terms of research

15. Outside the ICT sector of the UAE - for example in the oil industry or the banking and finance sector - how important is it for employees to have good ICT skills? Why do you say this?

Of course, it is very important.

Nowadays, ICT is the backbone of every organization. There are so many solutions that facilitate the business process of any organization.

To keep up with the vast changes in ICT happening in the world so that to be able to compete with the others

16. Do you think that the UAE education system effectively prepares students to use ICT in the workplace? Please give reasons for your answer.

The UAE education system is well established and graduates students who are well prepared to choose their profession.

However, the market is not yet ready to embrace them in their chosen profession.

No education system is perfect. So, we need to enhance the contents of the curricula to inject in them some hands-on experience in ICT fields.

17. Do you think that the UAE public sector does a good job of training its employees in ICT skills? Please give reasons for your answer.

Yes, it does.

Most of the graduates are prepared in the foundation of their chosen fields in ICT. However, they need some practical skills that will help them to tackle daily ICT issues that were not part of their curricula in the academia.

Most of the public sector organizations have a plan to train these fresh graduates and develop the existing professionals.

18. Do you think that the UAE public sector does a good job of training its employees in ICT skills? Please give reasons for your answer.

This question is repeated.

19. In your view, what would be the most effective way of improving ICT skills among the Emirati population?

- Introducing hands-on experience in the K-12 sector
- At the university level, a good internship program will help the students to understand the market skill needs & requirements
- A strong relationship between
- Every organization should have continuous education and training programs to enhance the skills of the professionals

20. Do you think that improved ICT skills among the Emirati population would have an impact on the future of the Emiratisation policy? Please give reasons for your answer.

Of course, improvement of ICT skills amongst the Emiratis will have a big impact on the ICT sector as a whole.

This will lead to nationalizing the jobs that are given to the skilled expatriates.

Emiratization process will not be successful if we have not prepared them to enter the job market.

21. Finally, do you have any other comments?

ICT Fund in UAE was established to help the ICT sector to nourish and create the ICT eco-system in order to be innovative and create the environment to downstream ICT entrepreneurs for the future of this nation.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP

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