



1

Introduction

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The strengths of human capital through greater productivity, efficiency and overall development has been recognized as one of the most critical factor in the growth of a nation. Many resource-poor countries have experienced exponential growth during periods of sustained investment in developing and training higher quality human capital which has led such countries transform themselves from underdeveloped to emerging markets. The economies of South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore are notable examples. On the other hand there have also been many resource-rich countries like Nigeria and Venezuela who are still largely struggling

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economies, partly due to a lack of developing their high potential and quality human capital. Thus, it is well known that a nation's human capital is a crucial ingredient and factor for its economic and social transformation. The World Economic Forum (2013) emphasizes that a "nation's human capital endowment—the skills and capacities that reside in its people—can be a more important determinant of its long-term economic success than virtually any other resource" (World Economic Forum, 2013).

Given the above rationale, for developing nations, the most substantial agenda and priority should be the development of human capital. However, developing more advanced and wide-ranging human capital for the attainment of sustainable national growth requires innovative approaches towards education and training to fulfil the gaps in the skill-set of the workers. To develop training programs and to establish a competitive curriculum, an in-depth investigation is required to identify the gaps and to plan relevant strategies that are timebound, achievable and practical when it comes to the development of competitive human capital.

The purpose of this book is to provide evidence on the role of human capital in the Middle East. The existing research evidence for this region with regards human capital is limited, despite the fact that the region attracts and caters to a significant number of employees (i.e., expatriates) from across the globe. From an academic point of view and also from a business and managerial perspective there are a variety of scholarly and practical reasons which support the topical need for the analysis and evidence provided by this book. An overarching one is the strong scarcity of reliable literature and its systematic contextual analysis on the topic of human capital and HRM, while at the same time observing a growing interest of both researchers and practitioners in the region of the Middle East (see Afiouni, Ruël, & Schuler, 2014; Budhwar & Mellahi, 2016; Budhwar, Pereira, Mellahi, & Singh, 2018). Moreover, the Middle Eastern context is a unique and interesting ground for studying and researching issues in relation to human capital and HRM because of the unique nature of the workforce in this region, who are predominantly expatriates from different parts of the world.

The organizational composition in the UAE includes employing a mixed workforce, consisting of individuals from varied nationalities seeking work opportunities (Budhwar et al., 2018; Suliman & Al-Junaibi, 2010). However, one of the challenges in promoting long-term growth

and global competitiveness in the UAE is employee engagement and happiness in the organizations, which is seen to be gain significance in the recent years. A survey by Tower Perrins in 2017 indicates that over 95 percent of the workers believe that they would be more productive if they were happier and engaged at the workplace (see also arguments by Khoury & Tozer, 2013).

More generally, the UAE is the most diversified economy in the GCC region. In 2019, the UAE was ranked 25th (out of 140 countries) by the World Economic Forum in the Global Competitiveness Report, which is two ranks higher than the previous year (http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_TheGlobalCompetitivenessReport2019.pdf). However, in 2015 the UAE government announced their vision to become among top ten innovative countries in the world by 2021. This raises the question of what global best practices are of importance which UAE companies can draw on to overcome their weaknesses in innovation and productivity in order to achieve the UAE's vision of 2021. The growing interest of businesses, researchers and policy makers in the region is increasing as it continues to economically grow amidst socio-political and security-related developments, some of which are still unfolding. In this regard, there are regular calls for such analysis that focusses on under-researched parts of the world (e.g., Gao, Zuzul, Jones, & Khanna, 2017). The influence of the unique socio-cultural and the rapidly changing institutional set-up of the Middle East, for example, in terms of the nationalization programs being pursued dealing with recruitment and development of citizens to increase their employability, thereby reducing the country's dependence on an expatriate workforce, is not yet adequately researched and understood.

In the absence of robust evidence on human capital development and strategy for the UAE, the nature and intensity of forces determining the approaches adopted by firms managing human resources (HR) is not clear. The same is true in failing to highlight the context-specific nature of human capital through the HRM function and the prevalence of dominant indigenous HRM approaches for the region (Afiouni et al., 2014; Budhwar et al., 2018; Budhwar & Mellahi, 2016). These crucial factors create significant research avenues for further theory development and deriving context specific best HRM practices, leading to better suited human capital development. Accordingly, the objectives of this book are twofold: first, to highlight the current state and role of human capital in

the sustainable growth of the UAE, and second, to set an agenda for future research in the context of human capital and HRM for the region.

Themes of the Book

The chapters of this book will not only explore the limitations and gaps from different industries like the hospitality, e-commerce, marketing, real state and healthcare sectors, but will also look into the factors that affect the quality and retention of employees in UAE market, such as long working hours, total reward system, cross-cultural training, employee engagement and turnover. Each chapter of the book endeavors to provide practical implications that HR managers are able to use from global best practices as well as indigenous HR policies and processes.

This book will also provide insights on the impact of a merger between two large UAE banks on its employees. Furthermore, as is evident from the following model, we argue that the role of human capital is influenced by five themes, the evidence of which we reproduce throughout the various chapters. The five themes, as depicted in the following model are happiness; restructuring and integration; employer and nation branding; innovation; inclusivity and diversity; and employee incentives.

The book follows the structure of the following themes and, therefore, each of the chapters of the book aligns with one of the themes of the model and offer context specific evidence. These themes are discussed in Fig. 1.1.

Happiness

The enthusiasm and keenness of the UAE Government for building happy human capital is evident from the fact that in 2016, the post of Minister of State for Happiness was established. Her Excellency Ohood bint Khalfan Al Roumi is the appointed Minister of State for Happiness and Wellbeing. The purpose of this ministry is to create happy and productive work environment at federal government offices, local

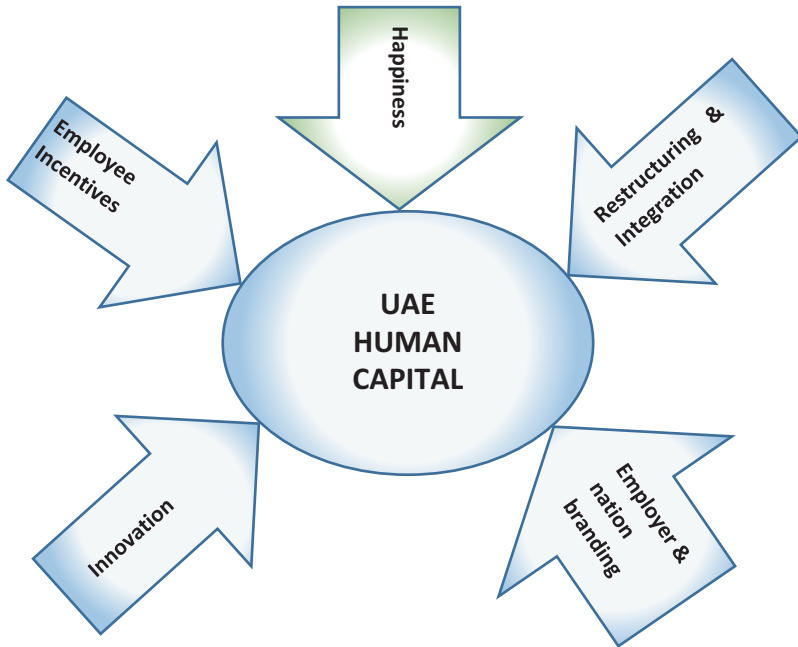


Fig. 1.1 Themes of the book chapters. Source: Authors

government entities and private sector. (<https://government.ae/en/about-the-uae/the-uae-government/government-of-future/happiness>).

UN World Happiness Report (2018) declared that the UAE is the top happiest country in the Arab world, a ranking maintained for the fourth consecutive year. Global ranking was 20th among 156 countries (<http://worldhappiness.report/ed/2018/>).

The Government of UAE is well informed of the critical fact that the employee's happiness and engagement at workplace is directly reflected in the quality and volume of services (Amhalhal, Anchor, & Dastgir, 2015; Di Paolo, 2016; Prajogo & Cooper, 2017). Happiness and wellbeing is the part of the UAE national agenda and the government uses composite indicator, 'Happiness Index', to measure and analyze the levels of individual happiness. By year 2021, the ambitious UAE government is aiming to be among top five happiest countries of the world (National program for happiness and wellbeing, 2019). The evidence-based research

of Walsh, Boehm and Lyubomirsky (2018) has shown that workplace happiness correlates with the career success and leads to improved outcomes of the employees.

Employee Incentives

Motivated and happy employees are the assets of an organization. Previous and current researches have proved that the rewards and motivation have a positive relationship with job satisfaction (Arokiasamy, Tat, & Abdullah, 2013; Gabriel, Cheshin, Moran, & van Kleef, 2016; Jehanzeb, Rasheed, & Rasheed, 2012; Karadas & Karatepe, 2019; Pang & Lu, 2018; Victor & Hoole, 2017). According to Herzberg, increasing rewards can result in temporary motivation; whereas, the intrinsic factors like “achievement, recognition, responsibility and growth opportunity or career advancement” can increase motivation for longer period of time (Herzberg, 1968).

The UAE has diverse workforce and poses the challenge of managing rewards and incentives for both local and expatriate population. The expatriate work force outweighs the Emirati nationals, especially in the private sector (Younies, Barhem, Gantasala, & Al-Tawil, 2017). According to the results of empirical analysis by Fadillah and Ismail (2018), the employees of public organizations of the UAE are not satisfied with the current bonus system but believe that incentive system of the government is fair. However, the employees believe that the reward system in the Incentive Act of UAE needs further improvement because they rarely receive a reward for outstanding performance. In addition, the research revealed that most of the employees expressed the lack of information on the mechanism of the current incentive system.

In January 2019, the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources (FAHR) announced a unique conference, “The First Workers Incentives and End of Service Benefits Conference & Exhibition”, to be held on 26 February 2019 at Dubai. H.E. Dr. Abdulrahman Abdul Mannan Al Awar, Director General of the Federal Authority for Government Human Resources said: “We wish to improve the work environment for Employee Benefits and the rights of employees in the UAE. It is a vital topic for all stakeholders in the UAE and the world. The

UAE is a regional pioneer in following the best global practices in supporting and providing a strong foundation for a productive and fair business environment. Our goal is to increase productivity to the benefit of employers and employees, and the national economy in general” (FAHR, 2019).

Restructuring and Integration

Many organizations operating in the UAE have been witnessing organizational change in the context of merger and acquisition. Some of these examples include (but are not limited to) the merger of two big oil companies, Zakum Development Co. (ZADCO) and Abu Dhabi Marine Operating Co. (ADMA-OPCO); the consolidation of three firms Abu Dhabi Petroleum Ports Operating Company (IRSHAD), Petroleum Services Company (ESNAAD) and the Abu Dhabi National Tanker Company (ADNATCO); the US\$135 billion merger of Petroleum Investment Company (Ipic); Mubadala Development Company and International; the merger between Emirates Bank International (EBI) and National Bank of Dubai (NBD) (Salim, 2013) and the merger of National Bank of Abu Dhabi (NBAD) and First Gulf Bank (FGB) (NBAD, 2017).

The concept of merger and acquisitions (M&A) mainly originated from the western context, as it explored cases of change occurring to organizations from different sectors in the market (Yousef, 2017). Bebenroth and Ismail (2014) argues that according to statistical data, most M&A fail and urges that this failure is attributed to cultural conflict that arises during the integration process. Similarly, Lok and Crawford (2004) and Al-Ali et al. (2017) agrees that after merger, cultural differences between merged organizations lead to consistent downfall in employees’ performance. Thus, the consolidated firms begin to blame one another for the deteriorating performance, as reflected on proven evidence from the merger of Daimler-Chrysler case (Ager, 2011; Siegel & Simons, 2010).

According to Erwin and Garman (2010), Dorling and Dorling (2017) and Senior et al. (2017) merger initiatives fail because organizations put

too much focus on the potential benefits while neglecting the important factor of culture in the process. On the other hand, many authors have argued that other factors such as conflict of interest among employees, lack of shared trust and poor leadership and management practices, cultural incompatibility and cultural clash contributes to the failure of M&A (Bönigk & Steffgen, 2013; Islam, Khan, Ahmad, Ali, & Ahmed, 2014; Lawrence, Ruppel, & Tworoger, 2014; Ndaba & Anthony, 2015).

Senior et al. (2017) argue that organizational restructuring occurs due to mergers and acquisitions. This theme of the book would present and analyze three distinctive elements: organizational culture, employees' psychological perception and the influence of organizational restructuring post-merger on employees and will explain the link between the role of organizational culture and its influence on determining the success or failure of the aspired change initiative.

Employer and Nation Branding

Nation branding has factual and positive outcomes. Despite the debate around the existence of nation branding, many researchers agree on the fact that 'nation branding' is not a myth and that each nation has a brand and an image (Andrei, 2017; Anholt, 2007; Dinnie, 2008; Fan, 2010; Zeineddine, 2017). A well-planned progressive strategy for nation branding can enhance the country's ability to attract tourists, investors and talented workforce alike (Zeineddine & Nicolescu, 2018). Although, the UAE has taken initiatives to do branding of the nation and has achieved some success in the middle-eastern region, yet the need to investigate the global best practices to strengthen its nation branding, in order to be ranked among the Top 10 Most Valuable Nation Branding, still exists (Brand Finance, 2017).

The UAE is a multicultural work destination, reflecting many races, cultures, ethnicities and origins. It is estimated that more than 80 percent of the UAE labor workforce is made up of expatriate workers, a compound of more than 100 nationalities (Ababneh & Hackett, 2019). According to a 2018 report, the share of employed UAE nationals out of the total workforce, both expatriates and nationals, across all sectors was

7.19 percent only (UAE Vision, 2018, 2021). Thus, the UAE depends heavily on expatriate skilled labor. In coming years, the UAE is expected to face a shortage of highly skilled workers. The labor gap will widen by 2030 and is worth \$50 billion (Arabian Business, 2018; Khaleej times, 2018).

Due to mobility of the talent and unfavorable immigration policies, attracting talented workforce remains as an arduous challenge for the UAE. Contemporary nation branding strategy can play an effective and dexterous role in captivating the capable and expert labor pool (Silvanto, Ryan, & McNulty, 2015).

Innovation

According to global innovation index (GII) 2017, the UAE was ranked 35th among 127 countries, but in year 2018 the ranking dropped to 38th position (GII, 2019). The government is aiming to be among the top ten innovative nations. In the scope of Vision 2021, the government of the UAE has set the agenda, aiming at building a world-class healthcare system. The mandate is to achieve this objective by enhancing the healthcare system's readiness to deal with epidemics and health related risks. In the fiscal year 2017, a budget of AED 48.7 billion was allocated for the Innovation, out of which AED 4.2 billion (8.6 percent) was granted to healthcare innovation and protection of society (MOF, 2019).

The healthcare of the UAE is at the divergence and cusp of health innovation. Automation, artificial intelligence and nano-technology are being introduced in the UAE health system (Gulf News, 2019). The implementation of the healthcare innovation demands skilled human capital, which can foster the new challenges. An organization can improve the performance and enhance its innovation capability by building and employing efficient workforce (Kim, Pathak, & Werner, 2015). With innovation implementation strategy, the concerned authorities should diffuse knowledge to stakeholders to strengthen the human capital (Chatain & Meyer-Doyle, 2017; Greer, Lusch, & Hitt, 2017). Proactive behavior of employees acts as a precursor of the innovation performance (Escrig-Tena, Segarra-Ciprés, García-Juan, & Beltrán-Martín, 2018).

Cognitive flexibility of the employees plays an important role in discovering new strategies (Huebner & Fichtel, 2015).

The findings are that the UAE health system is challenged by physicians/nurses shortage, especially the national personnel, high turnover rate and retention problem, skill-mix imbalance, weak knowledge base and inadequate investment in human resources (Hannawi & Salmi, 2014). With these current problems, it is interesting to explore that how UAE healthcare can develop resilient human capital by knowledge integration to embrace the challenges of forthcoming healthcare innovation integration.

Outline of the Book

The book comprises 11 chapters, including this introduction chapter. The rationale and story behind this book was the lack of primary research and investigation into topics of human capital management in this region. To this end, master's level students, at a foreign university in Dubai, the UAE, were encouraged to dig deeper into real-world cases, research questions and topics that were unique to the region. This interest was incentivized by the professors teaching the students, as it was announced that the work of those students who achieved a high grade would be rewarded by being included in this book series. Thereafter, each chapter was carefully chosen, based on availability of space under each theme that emerged against the above thematic diagram, that is, the fit and the score they achieved. Further, each chapter was then developed along with the students to a level acceptable to publish.

Chapter 2 by Latika Varlani explains that the globalization has led to increased cultural diversity in many industries, of which the hospitality industry stands out the most. The hospitality industry has not only a culturally diverse customer base to serve but also a very culturally diverse workforce to manage compared to other industries. This chapter aims to investigate to what extent developing cross-cultural competencies in the hospitality industry through cultural training of their employees will lead to improved ability and motivation in providing good customer service and consequently competitive advantage for the hotel. Although, the

previous literature shows evidence for this relationship, it is far from clear to what extent this is evident in the UAE hospitality sector. The qualitative research design is based on secondary data collected from online sources. Data was collected primarily for two international hotel chains which operate in the UAE, namely, Accor and Ritz Carlton. In addition, hotel industry analyst reports were used as these provided rich data on trends in human resource practices in the UAE hospitality industry. Data was thematically analyzed. The findings of this research indicate that cross-cultural training does have a positive and noticeable impact on the ability and motivation of individuals, especially on the ability of individuals. Hospitality industry firms recognize this link and have developed their cultural training programs to develop cross-cultural competencies of their employees. Increased interaction between employees especially with senior employees with valuable cross-country experience is one of the preferred strategies in this regard. The findings also show that the UAE hospitality industry also faces a number of challenges such as language issues, lack of understanding on when and what kind of training to provide. Such challenges must be overcome by adopting, if necessary, novel approach towards cross-cultural training as its benefits outweighs the costs.

Chapter 3 by Alia Al Nuaimi explores the common causes of low employee engagement at the workplace in the UAE and recommends solutions in order to minimize this issue. The UAE is one of the countries which have low employee engagement issue and can use the findings of this paper to minimize this issue. We use both secondary quantitative and qualitative data from various sources to uncover the UAE-specific factors that lead to low employee engagement which we relate to the vast literature on this topic. Our findings show that employee engagement is linked with other issues such as job satisfaction and turnover. In addition, common causes of low engagement are low salary, lack of career opportunities, low work life balance, lack of training and development, and lack of challenging tasks. The recommended solutions include revising the compensation plan, flexible working environment, employee recognition, training and development, supportive leaders and performance system. These findings are the contribution of this paper. However, this paper is limited to the secondary data. Therefore, future research can use this

thematic framework to build on the findings and validate using primary data. The results of the secondary data are used to develop a thematic framework which can be used by human resource managers in UAE organizations. The previous findings and the new findings of this paper are placed in a framework in order to clearly demonstrate the contribution of the author.

Chapter 4 by Amnah Qasim investigates the factors that lead to the exceptionally high turnover levels for employee in the hospitality industry in the UAE. Discussions on the increased turnover rates have for a long time been on the top of the agenda for human resource departments and professionals. In an industry where consistency in service is key, the majority of industry players spend substantial sums of money in training and development of systems but are still affected by high turnover levels. The trainings that are organization specific, in terms of methodology and services approach, are meant to enhance the human capital capability. However, high turn over rate can results into heavy impacts on an organization in terms of cost and time. The result has seen more and more organization going through the rigorous recruitment process so as to replace the employees that have left. These aspects are time consuming which limits the organization's ability to focus on the core activity of their businesses. The in-depth analysis revealed three main factors as the major cause of higher employee turnover in the UAE hospital industry. These are the low state of employee motivation followed by poor wage benefits to the workers and finally the imbalance between work and life. These factors can be addressed within reasonable HR approaches so as to improve employee retention rate in the UAE hospitality industry. Several recommendations are discussed and call is made for further research by the HR professionals for future policy development.

Chapter 5 by Tasleem Firdous investigates whether employee engagement has an influence on the turnover of employees in the UAE. A qualitative research design is used to analyze the relationship between employee engagement and three variables, namely culture, job tenure and the type of industry. The author has used the ability, motivation and opportunity (AMO) framework to explain the various relationships. It is important to note that although previous literature explains the relationships, there is a scarcity of literature aimed specifically at the industries in the UAE. Therefore, this chapter contributes to the existing literature where

all variables are studied together and in the UAE context. In terms of data analysis, secondary qualitative data is gathered from two online-based discussion forums, for four firms in the UAE—Apparel, DHL, Petrofac and Siemens—for a period of five months starting from 1 September 2017 until 31 January 2018. The comments have been analyzed through two techniques—content and thematic analysis. The findings show that employee engagement, indeed, affects the level of employee turnover for a firm. Furthermore, workplace culture can have an impact on the level of engagement displayed by employees. As a result, engaged employees tend to have longer job tenure with the firm. The type of industry, in which they are employed in, also seems to affect both engagement and turnover. The findings also correspond to the theory used in the research. Based on the findings, certain strategies are recommended for the management to help them create a supportive work culture in their respective industries, enhance empowerment and reduce turnover.

Chapter 6 by Yasmine Karim examines the relationship between productivity of individual employees and the company performance based on the length of the working hours. The length of working hours is a factor known to cause both positive and negative effects on an individual and the company in general. Despite extensive research in this arena, there is a limited evidence from emerging economies, such as the UAE with a large labor-force, lower-skilled jobs in the service sector. The commonly held view that a reduction in working hours leads to an increase in productivity is generally supported by the literature. This study finds that a reduction in working hours in combination with adequate break and rest periods yields benefits in three main areas: psychological, motivational and organizational. However, this correlation was found to be positive if weekly hours are dropped beyond a specific number of hours. To examine the findings in relation to the existing literature lower-end jobs in the service sector, the data was compared from four different countries developed and developing economies. The data relates to the service sector productivity ratio has (output) and weekly working hours (input) and found the results to be congruent with the literature. In addition to the working hours, the study identified set of other variables that impact productivity and analyzed these variables and established

interlinkages among them. As a result a model that is employable for studying productivity was developed by the author.

Chapter 7 by Nour Al Mojahed reviews the impact of a total reward system on employee's motivation among executive management in the real estate industry of the GCC, especially in the UAE context. The research is conducted on the basis of a quantitative data collection method and a research design using a survey questionnaire that has been used to gather the opinions of employees. The survey is conducted from a sample of 250 executive-level employees who are working in the real estate firms. The measurable responses are unwrapped in this research analyzed on the basis of a 5-point Likert scale and this secondary data has been analyzed by using SPSS. The regression analysis, descriptive statistics and correlation results show that monetary rewards have a positive relationship with the motivation level of the executive employees. Moreover, non-monetary rewards also have a positive relationship with the motivation of executive level employees working in the real estate firms. On the basis of the findings, the author offers several recommendations which includes having an appropriate mixture of monetary and non-monetary reward systems to be used in order for organizations to enhance the motivation level of their executive employees.

Chapter 8 by Tijan Muhanad Younus Al-Naeemy takes into consideration the effects of radical changes in the context of mergers and acquisitions in the UAE's banking industry and relates the findings with the existing literature, by learning from previous cases introduced in the western studies. Thus, it explores the effects it would have. More specifically, we focus our analysis on employees' psychology after the post-merger and their attachment to the organizations' culture and their work productivity. The papers draw analysis on the merger of the UAE's largest two banks, National Bank of Abu Dhabi (NBAD) and First Gulf Bank (FGB) and the approaches taken during such radical change. This study highlights the issues faced post-merger by designing three models. Moreover, a model of solution is also proposed; we also offer recommendations to reduce employees' negative psychological emotions, cognition and behavioral outcomes experienced post-merger.

Chapter 9 by Myriam Saad examines the main elements influencing nation branding and explores potential opportunities for the UAE to

strengthen its nation branding. Although the existing literature regarding nation branding has analyzed many developed and emerging countries, there is surprisingly limited work on the UAE as a brand. Hence, this chapter investigates the best global practices which the UAE can take into account in order to be ranked among the Top 10 Most Valuable Nation Branding. This study uses an exploratory qualitative research design applied to the UAE and aims to provide insights into nation branding and recommendations to follow from global practices. Findings from this research can guide to develop the nation branding in order to understand the basics of the topic, and main elements to focus on to enhance nations' ranking. Products, tourism, political and cultural brandings has been classified as main elements of nation branding after analyzing main determinants' rankings from Anholt-GfK Roper Index. Therefore, this study contributes to existing researchers by providing a thematic study based on indices.

Chapter 10 by Sabahat Momin investigates the factors that have led to the gradual acceptance and implementation of B2C cross border e-commerce in the GCC region, comparing the trend with the neighbor Saudi Arabia. The steady rise in information technology and social media and e-commerce over the past few years has shaped the way MNCs multinationals manage and conduct international business. Having contributed to the growth of many organizations, online retailing has been adopted and implemented by sellers and buyers all over the world as a thriving trend. It can be observed that until 2015–2016, researchers and industry experts strongly presumed that there would be no scope for cross-border ecommerce and online retailing in Dubai. However, as of 2017, there has been a gradual but steady rise in cross-border B2C online shopping amongst the consumers in Dubai. It also examines ecommerce adoption as a technological innovation by using the adoption model of theory and finally draws a comparison between the performance of online retailing in Dubai with that of Saudi Arabia, by using consumer demographics and buying patterns as inferences. Also, the possibilities and opportunities of future jobs in the e-commerce sector will also be discussed. Based on the current trends of e-commerce, it is recommended that how the UAE can develop future human capital.

Chapter 11 by Wardah Qureshi discusses the pressing need of knowledge integration towards the development of resilient healthcare human capital, which is ready to endorse and embrace the implementation of the forthcoming healthcare innovations. The UAE healthcare system is challenged by physicians and/nurses shortages, especially the national personnel, high turnover rate, retention problems, skill-mix imbalance, weak knowledge base and inadequate investment in human resources. The UAE government is aiming to be among the top ten innovative nations by the year 2020. In the scope of Vision 2021, the government of the UAE has set the agenda, aiming at building a world-class healthcare system. The mandate is to achieve this objective by enhancing the healthcare system's readiness to deal with epidemics and health related risks. The healthcare innovation strategy is meant to promote advanced technologies and to stimulate the growth of the biotechnology, pharmaceutical industries and medical research. This chapter investigates the current challenges and will explore the UAE healthcare system's preparedness and human capital readiness for the upcoming healthcare innovation strategy. The implications of healthcare innovation strategies require a sophisticated approach of continuous improvement, carefully crafted change management procedures and above all, well-trained and competent human capital (i.e., physicians and nurses). If innovation is imposed superficially, then desired outcomes cannot be achieved. Moreover, outsourcing technologies and experts will not lead to sustainability of healthcare innovation. Professional research and development is pivotal for well-established and sustainable innovation because abrupt deployment of the technologies can lead to generation of fear and resistance among the employees.

Comprehensively, this book aims to contribute in three pivotal ways. *One*, there is a lack of a collection of studies on human capital and HR issues in the Middle Eastern context, as recent confirmed by Budhwar, Pereira, Mellahi and Singh's (2018), who recommend the need for such outputs, which we aim to do through this book. We, therefore, highlight the current state and role of human capital in the sustainable growth of the UAE. *Two*, the Middle East is evolving with a drive to become more innovative on the back of liberalization policies. However, the complexity of managing people working in this context from over the world and the

high number of expatriates compared to the locals brings up challenges which need to be addressed. We, therefore, outline an agenda for future research in the context of human capital and HRM for the UAE. *Three*, there is a certain gap in the existing body of literature (i.e., books) the exceptions being Budhwar and Mellahi (2016) and this will be a welcome addition which we plan to continue and update every two years. This addition to new knowledge will not only be helpful to students and academics but also to practitioners interested in the region.

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