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# Employee Wellbeing in the UAE

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<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=OZhvzeUAAAAJ&hl=en>

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Employee Wellbeing in the Global South

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# Research Background

- Employee wellbeing has become a central concern for organizations globally due to its strong impact on productivity, retention, and overall organizational performance. In the context of the United Arab Emirates, this topic is particularly important because of the country's rapid economic growth, diverse workforce, and unique socio-cultural environment.
- The UAE workforce is highly multicultural, composed largely of expatriates from different cultural, social, and professional backgrounds. This diversity, combined with the coexistence of traditional values and modern work practices, creates a complex environment influencing employee wellbeing.
- Additionally, the concept of wellbeing has evolved beyond physical health to include mental health, job satisfaction, work-life balance, and organizational support. Understanding how these dimensions interact within the UAE context is essential for both organizations and policymakers aiming to create sustainable and healthy workplaces.



# Research Objectives

- Provide a comprehensive and critical analysis of employee wellbeing in the UAE by synthesizing existing literature.
- Understanding the key factors and dynamics shaping wellbeing in this specific context.
- Explore how different dimensions—such as work-life balance, job satisfaction, mental and physical health, and organizational support systems—interact and influence employee wellbeing.
- Examines the role of government policies, corporate initiatives, and cultural values in shaping these outcomes.
- Ultimately, the objective is to generate insights that can help organizations and policymakers design effective strategies to enhance employee well-being in a rapidly evolving environment.



# Theoretical Framework

The chapter adopts a holistic and multidimensional framework of employee wellbeing. This framework integrates several interconnected dimensions, including: Work-life balance / Job satisfaction / Mental and physical health / Organizational support systems.

The framework is also strongly influenced by the socio-cultural context of the UAE, where traditional values (such as family, religion, and community) interact with modern organizational practices. This creates a unique setting in which wellbeing is shaped by both individual experiences and structural factors.

Additionally, the framework highlights the role of government policies and corporate interventions as external forces influencing employee wellbeing. Overall, the approach can be described as integrative, combining cultural, organizational, and institutional perspectives.



# Research Methodology

- This study adopts a qualitative, literature review approach, based on the synthesis of existing academic studies and reports related to employee wellbeing in the UAE.
- The methodology involves reviewing studies on topics such as work-life balance, job satisfaction, health outcomes, and organizational practices within the UAE context.
- This approach allows for a comprehensive and contextualized understanding of employee wellbeing, particularly useful in a complex environment like the UAE where multiple factors interact.
- However, it also means that findings are interpretative rather than empirical, relying on existing evidence.



## Key Findings

- The study highlights that employee wellbeing in the UAE is shaped by a complex interplay of cultural, organizational, and economic factors. One major finding is that work-life balance remains a key challenge, especially due to long working hours, high job demands, and the “always-on” work culture.
- Job satisfaction is influenced by multiple factors, including compensation, work environment, career development opportunities, leadership, and organizational culture. While financial benefits are important, non-monetary factors such as recognition and inclusivity are equally critical.
- The study also emphasizes the growing importance of mental and physical health, with increasing levels of stress, burnout, and lifestyle-related health issues among employees. Although many organizations have introduced wellbeing initiatives, their effectiveness depends on proper implementation and organizational support.
- Finally, government policies and corporate programs play a significant role in improving wellbeing, but further efforts are needed to address gaps, especially in areas like mental health support and work-life balance.



## Academic Contribution

- Providing a comprehensive and context-specific analysis of employee wellbeing in the UAE, a region that remains relatively underexplored in this field.
- Advancing knowledge by integrating cultural, organizational, and policy perspectives, offering a more holistic understanding of wellbeing compared to traditional single-factor approaches.
- The study also highlights the importance of considering contextual factors such as cultural diversity and rapid economic development when analyzing employee wellbeing.
- Practical implications for organizations and policymakers, emphasizing the need for holistic wellbeing strategies that address both individual and systemic factors. It also identifies areas for future research, encouraging more empirical studies in the UAE context.