BUiD

**NON-WORK-RELATED FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE WORK COMMITMENT OF GENERATION Y UAE NATIONALS**

**العوامل غير المرتبطة بالعمل التي تؤثر على الالتزام التنظيمي لجيل الألفية من مواطني دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة**

**by**

**KHOLOUD SAEED ALHEFEITI**

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment**

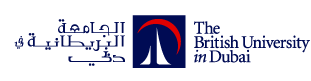
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# ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of non-work-related factors on organisational commitment among Generation Y UAE nationals. The three non-work-related factors that were investigated included family influence, neighbourhood influence, as well as religiosity. Organisational commitment is conceptualised into affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment based on existing literature for greater understanding of how it is manifested by Generation Y UAE nationals within the organisational environment. Based on the purpose of the study, it was determined that Generation Y UAE nationals are individuals aged 21 to 40 years in 2020 and mainly considered those who work in the public sector. To effectively explore the influence of non-work-related factors on organisational commitment among Generation Y employees, the qualitative methodology was applied. Both convenience and purposive sampling were used to get the appropriate respondents to take part in the study. With the application of the qualitative methodology, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from 30 Generation Y UAE nationals working in different areas of the public sector. Data was analysed using NVIVO and was structured into themes that emerged for easier understanding of the perspective of Generation Y UAE nationals on non-work-related factors that influence their organisational commitment. From the data that was collected, the results were based on three key non-work-related factors that influence work commitment among Generation Y employees in the UAE. Results were collected in regard to each of the three non-work-related factors of family influence, neighbourhood influence, and religiosity. The first result revealed that family influence plays a role in leading to organisational commitment among Generation Y employees in the UAE through of the encouragement from family members. More so, because of the financial support that family members offer, there is increased commitment to the organisation. The second result indicate that neighbourhood influence leads to increased commitment to the organisation. Increased commitment comes about as a consequence of the modern cultures that have been adopted in the neighbourhood allowing everyone to undertake different roles without being discriminated because of their gender. More so, the fact that neighbours appreciate roles that Generation Y play in the society increases commitment. Lastly, religiosity leads to greater commitment among Generation Y to their organisations especially if the work matches their religious values. Additionally, religiosity advances adherence to the desired ethical standards by Generation Y employees. Generally, it was established in this study that non-work-related factors including family influence, neighbourhood influence, and religiosity lead to increased organisational commitment among Generation Y UAE nationals.

*Keywords*: Generation Y, organisational commitment, family influence, neighbourhood influence, religiosity

**ملخص البحث**

الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو التعرف على تأثير العوامل غير المتعلقة بالعمل على الالتزام التنظيمي بين جيل الألفية من مواطني دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. العوامل الثلاثة غير المتعلقة بالعمل التي دُرست تشمل تأثير الأسرة، وتأثير الحي، بالإضافة إلى التدين. الالتزام التنظيمي يُتصوّر في الالتزام العاطفي، والتزام الاستمرارية، والالتزام المعياري على أساس المعرفة الموجودة من أجل فهم أكبر لكيفية ظهوره من قبل جيل الشباب الإماراتي داخل البيئة التنظيمية. بناءً على غرض الدراسة، حُدّد جيل الألفية من مواطني دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة لأفراد تتراوح أعمارهم بين 21 إلى 40 عامًا في عام 2020 وأُخِذ بعين الاعتبار بشكل أساسي أولئك الذين يعملون في القطاع العام.

إنّ المنهجية التي طُبّقت في هذه الدراسة هي المنهجية النوعية. لقد استُخدِمت العينات الملائمة والهادفة للحصول على المشاركين المناسبين للمشاركة في الدراسة. تطبيقاً للمنهجية النوعية، استُخدِمت المقابلات الشخصية شبه المنظمة بهدف جمع البيانات من 30 شخصاً من مواطني دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة العاملين في مجالات مختلفة من القطاع العام. استُخدِم برنامج NVIVO في تحليل البيانات ونُظّمت تلك البينات على شكل موضوعات من أجل تسهيل فهم منظور الجيل المستهدف بشأن العوامل غير المتعلقة بالعمل التي تؤثر على التزامهم التنظيمي.

استندت نتائج الدراسة إلى ثلاثة عوامل رئيسية غير متعلقة بالعمل والتي تؤثر على التزام العمل بين موظفي جيل الألفية في الإمارات العربية المتحدة. والتي تشمل تأثير الأسرة وتأثير الحي والتدين. باختصار ، كشفت النتائج أن تأثير الأسرة يلعب دورًا في قيادة الالتزام التنظيمي بين موظفي جيل الألفية في الإمارات العربية المتحدة من خلال التشجيع من أفراد الأسرة. أكثر من ذلك ، بسبب الدعم المالي الذي يقدمه أفراد الأسرة ، هناك التزام متزايد بالمنظمة. النتيجة الثانية تشير إلى أن تأثير الحي يؤدي إلى زيادة الالتزام بالمنظمة. يأتي الالتزام المتزايد نتيجة للثقافات الحديثة التي تم تبنيها في الحي مما يسمح لكل فرد بأداء أدوار مختلفة دون التعرض للتمييز بسبب جنسه. أكثر من ذلك ، حقيقة أن الجيران يقدرون الأدوار التي يلعبها جيل الألفية في المجتمع يزيد الالتزام. أخيرًا ، يؤدي التدين إلى التزام أكبر بين جيل الألفية لمنظماتهم خاصة إذا كان العمل يطابق قيمهم الدينية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، يعزز التدين الالتزام بالمعايير الأخلاقية المرغوبة من قبل موظفي جيل الألفية.

بشكل عام ، ثبت في هذه الدراسة أن العوامل غير المتعلقة بالعمل بما في ذلك التأثير الأسري وتأثير الحي والتدين تؤدي إلى زيادة الالتزام التنظيمي بين جيل الألفية من مواطني دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: جيل الألفية ، الالتزام التنظيمي ، التأثير الأسري ، تأثير الحي ، التدين

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

GCC – Gulf Cooperation Council

UAE – United Arab Emirates

HR – Human resource

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

# Background

Generations of people emerge with differences in experience, values, attitudes, ambitions, and mind sets. Changing demographic attributes across the world has a marked effect on human resources. The current population of the UAE comprises five generations: these are Traditionalists (1925 to 1945), the Baby Boomers (1946 to 1964), the Generation X individuals (1965 to 1979), the Generation Y individuals (1980 to 1999), and the Generation Z individuals (since 2000) (Lim 2013). These generations contribute to the workforce differently for they vary not only in their proportion but also in their experiences, values, mind sets, ambitions, and attributes.

As generational change is a major factor that influences shifts in demographic attributes of the workforce, the proportion of the generation determines the magnitude of the influence. In the UAE, Generation Y has formed a key part of the workforce more recently. Generation Z is still made up of much younger individuals and still has fewer people within the workplace (Andrea, Gabriella, and Timea, 2016). Basically, the choice of Generation Y is informed by their large presence in the workplace and the fact that they are contributing significantly to the UAE workforce. According to the research done by the Dubai Statistics Centre in 2016 and cited by Shyfer (2017), 50.9% of the male workforce and 51.7% of the female workforce is made up of Generation Y employees. These numbers are bound to rise by 2025. Based on this, it is apparent that Generation Y employees constitute the dominant segment of the workforce in the UAE and, thus, they contribute significantly to organisational activities. The present study focuses on Generation Y nationals working in the public sector as they constitute about 60% of the workforce in this sector, while they represent a minority in private entities (Lim, 2013). This breakdown by industries is discussed in more detail in section 2.5.

The analysis of Generation Y employees shows that their unique attributes and their proportion in the UAE make them stand out in the workforce. Additionally, career growth and development are considered key achievements for Generation Y employees (Valentine & Powers 2013). Thus, the fact that Generation Y employees have basically grown up in the age of technology and have a greater appreciation of teamworking and application of technology, they have a huge productive potential are more adaptive to the use of technological functions as compared to the older generation (Holt, Marques & Way 2012). Moreover, as Generation Y employees have grown up in the era where education is advanced and accessible, they constitute highly educated and skilled employees.

Valentine and Powers (2013) have described Generation Y as tech-savvy and highly connected individuals, particularly in the global world, as seen by their use of computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones, both for personal and business purposes. These technological skills coupled with the advancement in technological applications in workplaces make Generation Y employees productive when compared to employees in previous generations. Consequently, Viswanathan and Jain (2013) noted that Generation Y employees are adaptable to change and versatile since they have established innovative ways of doing work, which are more efficient and effective when compared to the conventional ways. Thus, based on their potential as highly skilled and tech-savvy employees, it implies that the organisational commitment of Generation Y in modern organisations has a huge impact.

Generation Y employees rely on intrinsic factors as the source of their motivation and commitment. Kong, Wang and Fu (2015) established that intrinsic factors such as career growth, work-life balance, meaningful work, and freedom values promote the organisational commitment among Generation Y employees. According to Flanagan (2015), Generation Y employees are committed to working in an environment where there is collaboration and teamwork as a source of motivation. In this view, it is apparent that intrinsic factors motivate Generation Y employees more than extrinsic factors do. Intrinsic factors are those that emanate from within the individual and are perceived self-rewarding while extrinsic factors emanate from the external environment and are based on the need to earn a reward or avoid punishment for one’s actions (Legault, 2016). The relationship between intrinsic factors and the organisational commitment of employees defines the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees.

Yundong (2015) established that intrinsic motivation predicts the organisational commitment of employees because it has a strong, positive relationship with the continuance, affective and normative factors of commitment. This perspective shows that organisations ought to provide intrinsic motivation for Generation Y employees to improve their organisational commitment and consequently their performance. Additionally, Generation Y employees are unique in the aspect of demographic experiences. Queiri and Dwaikat (2016) argued that Generation Y employees saw how their parents (Baby Boomers) endured hardships in their workplaces and they are not willing to endure the same experience. Therefore, human resource managers need to understand that Generation Y employees have unique demographic attributes, experiences and expectations.

The organisational commitment of employees in the workplace is subject to many factors, including work-related and non-work-related factors. According to Queiri and Dwaikat (2016), Generation Y employees tend to quit their jobs due to the absence of empowerment, training and career development, which are intrinsic motivators. In contrast, Generation X and Baby Boomers tend to rely on extrinsic motivators such as money, status and position. Previous studies have established that non-work-related factors that influence the organisational commitment of employees are economic status, spiritual values, gender, age, academic level and job status (Dehaghi, Goodarzi & Arazi 2012; Lee & Chen 2013; Nieuwenhuis et al. 2016).

According to Nieuwenhuis et al. (2016), the economic status of the neighbourhood in which employees stayed during their adolescence influences their future job commitment. Additionally, findings by McCunn and Gifford (2014) show that an employee’s current neighbourhood status also plays a role in influencing not only their organisational commitment, but also other aspects of adult life. Furthermore, many Western studies have shown that individuals residing in neighbourhoods with a higher socioeconomic status predominantly have higher organisational commitment; this finding may be extrapolated to the UAE which has been the case in a number of former studies. For instance, Kumari and Afroz (2013) showed that individuals living in neighbourhoods with a high socioeconomic status tend to report higher levels of satisfaction with their jobs and, respectively, display higher levels of organisational commitment.

Moreover, it is herein assumed that these studies mostly do not apply to the UAE because it is considered to have high or even excessive wealth; it is estimated that the UAE has “a high number of billionaires and individuals with over $100 million” who are predominantly the UAE nationals (Maceda 2016). There has also emerged the concept of the ‘UAE lifestyle’, which is typical mostly for Generations Y and Z representatives – i.e., young people.

As their social media profiles display, these young individuals do not focus on organisational commitment or even working, but rather enjoy the benefits of their families’ wealth (Cliff 2016). This focus on showcasing the luxury lifestyle makes them significantly different from Westerners who focus on personal professional fulfilment. Most UAE nationals can afford to live that way due to the fact that, in the past, their families invested heavily in industries and land, as well as in oil even though the latter comprises only 7% of total revenues in the country (Said 2017). This study therefore proposes a negative relationship between neighbourhood influence and organisational commitment among the UAE Generation Y nationals. Organisational commitment is based on the fact that an employee enjoys working in their respective field, tasks, and the organisation.

In the aspect of religiosity, Dehaghi et al. (2012) postulated that it increases the organisational commitment of employees by enhancing responsibility and involvement. In fact, religiosity is one of the key concepts of this study since its impact on organisational commitment is evident due to the pervasive influence of religion on all aspects of an individual’s life. Moreover, the UAE is a religious country, which implies that religion plays an integral role in the life of Generation Y individuals although it could potentially be assumed that since individuals from this age group belong to a rather young group of the population open to influences from abroad, they may be not extremely religious. However, this aspect is still essential and needs to be taken into consideration. Regarding demographic attributes such as gender, age, job status and academic level, numerous studies have established that these factors significantly influence organisational commitment (Affum-Osei, Acquaah & Acheampong 2015; Beloor, Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy 2017; Lee & Chen 2013).

Apart from the non-work-related factors, it is vital to understand what organisational commitment is. The concept of organisational commitment continues to be explored across literature for purposes of gaining an in-depth understanding of it. Organisational commitment is generally defined as the level of enthusiasm that an employee exhibits towards the tasks assigned to him or her at the workplace (Sjöberg, 1997). Essentially, organisational commitment is demonstrated through the feeling of responsibility towards the organisation, the work, as well as the goals of the organisation. Sjöberg (1997) opines that organisational commitment helps understand the commitment of employees to their jobs as well as the organisation. Basically, organisational commitment is all about the psychological attachment of the employee toward the given responsibilities and the organisation (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005). Across literature, organisational commitment has also been viewed as organisational commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990) explained the conceptualised and measured organisational commitment into three key components including affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. While affective commitment is about the emotional attachment of employees, normative commitment is the feeling of obligation to remain in the organisation, and continuance commitment is always anchored on the costs of remaining in the organisation or job (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Every organisation expects employees to remain committed to the work that they are given and deliver the best possible outcomes. Greater organisational commitment is always associated with increased passion among employees to deliver desirable outcomes while lower levels of commitment are seen to hamper the delivery of expected organisational goals. Naim and Lenka (2017) opine that understanding organisational commitment among Generation Y employees starts with understanding their different characteristics such as being individuals born of parents with stable financial backgrounds, being individuals groomed in multicultural backgrounds, techno-savvy individuals. Essentially, Generation Y individuals are highly responsive to factors within the organisational environment and every organisation has to understand their needs effectively to get them committed. Organisational commitment in this research is done based on the Generation Y population in the UAE. Overall, commitment comes in different forms and is critical to underscoring the extent to which the employee stays on the job or the organisation.

The present study proposes that, in the case of Generation Y employees who are the UAE nationals working in the UAE, non-work-related factors are bound to have a highly significant impact on their organisational commitment. As mentioned above, Generation Y employees differ from previous generations and tend to aspire towards new quality of work and life that would be different from the life of their parents. Therefore, as the previous findings demonstrated that non-work-related factors influence the organisational commitment of employees, this study assesses the extent to which family attributes, religiosity and neighbourhood influence the organisational commitment of UAE national Generation Y employees in the UAE.

# Statement of the Problem

Human resource managers experience challenges in the attraction, recruitment, and retention of Generation Y employees in various sectors and companies in the UAE (Affum-Osei et al. 2015). This study proposes that family influence, neighbourhood influence, and religiosity are factors that affect the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees. In the aspect of family influence, the research gap is that most studies have focused on demographic attributes of employees, but neglected influence of family members, religiosity, and even neighbourhood. Owing to limited findings, the study proposes that attributes of family influence such as academic qualification of parents, paternal job level and wealth status are familial factors that influence the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees. An earlier study by Lee and Chen (2013) established that demographical attributes, which form part of the family influence, have a marked influence on the organisational commitment of employees in their respective workplaces. In their literature review, Beloor et al. (2017) noted that gender, age, education level, and job status are some of the demographic attributes that influence the organisational commitment of employees in the workplace.

An empirical study by Affum-Osei et al. (2015) reported that demographic attributes, such as gender, marital status, age and academic qualification have a strong influence on organisational commitment. However, despite this knowledge, human resource managers continue to grapple with maintaining the attraction, recruitment and retention of their employees. Human resource managers also often neglect to take into consideration the family status of their employees and potential work-to-family or family-to-work conflicts that the latter may face. For instance, many employees may have extensive family duties and chores that they have to fulfil at home and, with the lack of managers’ understanding of this issue, they may face significant difficulties and problems with doing so. Therefore, this results in a relative decrease in organisational commitment as more people are bound to choose their family over their jobs. Hence, it is beneficial for companies to adopt and implement family-friendly policies as they help increase and maintain the organisational commitment of employees (Bae & Young 2017). It also allows the employees to achieve a better work-life balance. Therefore, the rationale of the study has its basis on these findings for it seeks to find out if the family influence of Generation Y employees in the UAE influences the organisational commitment in the workplace.

Religiosity is another non-work-related factor that influences the organisational commitment of employees. In countries that form the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) such as the UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, Islam is the dominant religion and thus has a significant influence on the work ethic of Generation Y employees. According to Dehaghi et al. (2012), adherence to spiritual values influences the organisational commitment of employees to their organisations by increasing responsibility and involvement in the workplace. Additionally, in their study among Emiratis, Sarwar and Abugre (2013) found that devotion to religious beliefs, values, principles, and practices reflect the commitment of employees to their organisations. In essence, religious behaviour of employees is directly proportional to their organisational commitment in the UAE.

According to Choerudin (2015), cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions of individuals reflect their religious commitment. The *cognitive* dimension reveals the extent to which individuals understand their religious beliefs and doctrines whereas the *affective* dimension shows the extent to which individuals attach their emotions to religious beliefs and doctrines. As individuals espouse their religious beliefs and doctrine, the behavioural dimension reflects the extent of adoption and promotion in the workplace. Choerudin (2015) has clearly demonstrated that religiosity accounts for 16.7% of the variation in organisational commitment among employees. Moreover, Imran et al. (2017) pointed out that there is a difference in the extent of the impact of extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity on organisational commitment. Thus, employees with intrinsic religiosity – i.e., those individuals who internalise values and principles from their religion and incorporate them into various aspects of their life – tend to display higher levels of organisational commitment than employees with extrinsic religiosity. Nevertheless, regardless of the particular nature of religiosity, it is apparent that religiosity is correlated with organisational commitment although the extent of it is yet to be established amongst Generation Y employees.

As religious commitment, involvement and responsibility are seen to stem from religiosity, they are critical factors that determine the organisational commitment of employees in the workplace. Salahudin et al. (2016) asserted that Islamic work ethics has a marked influence on organisational commitment of employees for it influences the three dimensions of commitment –*normative, affective* and *continuance*. Since Islam is the dominant religion in the UAE, it has incorporated its values, principles and beliefs into its work ethics. Moreover, it is assumed that religiosity and commitment are tightly interconnected, which should be taken into account by managers. In this view, the study implies that organisational commitment among Generation Y employees stems from their religiosity to Islamic values, beliefs and principles.

The study proposes that neighbourhood influence is a non-work-related factor that influences the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees. The research gap lies in the fact that current studies demonstrating the influence of non-work-related factors on the organisational commitment of employees in the workplace are limited globally and therefore lacking in the context of the UAE.

In their study of Dutch youth, Nieuwenhuis et al. (2016) have found that neighbourhood influence influences the organisational commitment of employees; it was shown that neighbourhood influences during adolescence determines the organisational commitment of employees to their work later in life. This is echoed by Acar (2014) who argued that experiences of Generation Y employees are influenced by their families, neighbourhood and society and these have therefore shaped their attitudes, mind sets and values. Thus, these influences are critical factors that determine commitment to a person’s respective organisation.

The study of the influence of a neighbourhood in terms of wealth and employment rates provides a parameter for organisational commitment among employees. Nieuwenhuis et al. (2016) explained that the socialisation mechanism elucidates how unemployment and low organisational commitment are common among poor neighbourhoods. The rationale for the socialisation mechanism is that young people share values, attitudes and mind sets which have a marked influence on their motivation and commitment to work or organisations. Brattbakk and Wessel (2013) asserted that there is a strong correlation between neighbourhood influence and the organisational commitment among employees.

In the UAE, the situation is quite different from many western countries in terms of the economic status of neighbourhoods where nationals reside since these neighbourhoods are mostly affluent and have a high economic status. Researchers in western countries mostly focus on observing the impact of predominantly poor and criminally inclined neighbourhoods on local residents in an attempt to reveal the mechanisms of influence. This way, there is an evident gap in knowledge and research literature relating to this particular concept in relation to the UAE. Based on this rationale, it can be argued that neighbourhood influence is a considerable factor that contributes to the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees.

Additionally, numerous studies have established that work-related factors such as intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence the commitment, attraction, recruitment and retention of employees (Franco & Lyapina 2016; Ismail & Ahmed 2015; Lim 2012; Mafini & Dlodlo 2014). Usually, the impacts on intrinsic factors are dependent on the satisfaction of extrinsic factors because they are considered to be primary motivators in the workplace. Hence, as the UAE is a well-established and wealthy country where extrinsic factors such as salary, status, and rewards no longer have a significant effect on the organisational commitment of employees, intrinsic factors play a central role in the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees (Lim 2013). From this perspective, the UAE has the challenge of meeting the intrinsic needs of Generation Y employees as they have matchless attributes and needs. Acar (2014) noted that Generation Y employees are unique because they focus on their careers, comprehend technology, exhibit collaborative tendencies, and prefer prompt reward and recognition. As a result, managers experience immense challenges in trying to motivate employees with generational diversity. Yusoff and Kian (2013) recommended that managers work to understand different needs of employees and customise their procedures and operations to meet diverse needs. Maceda (2017) added that managers in the UAE have not met the needs of Emirati employees because over 85% are disengaged from their organisations. Hence, the rationale of the study is that the understanding of needs and motivators of Emirati Generation Y employees is integral in promoting their commitment.

This section has provided a brief overview of three non-work-related factors as well as organisational commitment for the present study, as well as justifying their selection. These factors are described in more detail later in the literature review chapter.

# Purpose of the Research

The purpose of the research is to establish the influence of non-work-related factors on the organisational commitment of UAE national Generation Y employees. It is particularly important for these individuals to participate in the labour force in order to achieve the government’s Emiratisation labour localisation initiative. All of the GCC countries have traditionally relied heavily on expatriate labour, but with dwindling oil and gas resources and rapidly growing populations of Generation Y, it is essential that all citizens of these countries participate effectively in the labour market.

The non-work-related factors are family influence, religiosity, and neighbourhood influence; these factors apply, not only the UAE, but also other GCC countries. Ample studies have demonstrated that the demographic attributes of employees have marked influence on their commitment (Beloor et al. 2017; Lee & Chen 2013; Saha 2016). Consequently, the three non-work-related factors including family influence, neighbourhood influence, and religiosity were derived from literature. In separate literature, these factors have been explored as they influence the commitment of employees to work and hence literature formed the basis of getting these factors and applying them to Generation Y UAE nationals in the public sector. Additionally, the ecological systems theory was a key source of the four variables because it offers a perspective into how individuals relate with different elements of the society such as family and religion. Therefore, both the literature and the theory formed a fundamental source of the non-work-related factors that were applied in the study.

In their empirical study, Affum-Osei et al. (2015) established that gender, age, marital status and academic qualification are outstanding demographic attributes that influence the organisational commitment of employees in their organisations. According to Saha (2016), employees who are female, mature, married, and with high academic qualifications are more committed than employees who are male, young, single, with low academic qualifications. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to assess the extent to which families of employees influence employees’ commitment to the workplace.

The purpose of the study is also to ascertain the impact of religiosity on the organisational commitment of Emirati Generation Y employees. Being a country with dominant Islamic religion, its Generation Y employees have common religious beliefs, values and principles that shape their work ethics. In an Islamic setup, organisations cherish and incorporate religious beliefs and doctrines into their organisational values and principles, and therefore, in principle, the basis of organisational culture is Islamic beliefs and doctrines. Choerudin (2015) posited that the cognitive and behavioural dimensions of religiosity have marked impact on the organisational commitment of employees in the workplace. Additionally, in the context of the UAE, Salahudin et al. (2016) observed that Islamic work ethics predict normative and continuance aspects of organisational commitment. From this perspective, the study aims to assess how cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions of religiosity influence the organisational commitment of employees.

As the economic status of a neighbourhood has considerable influence on the organisational commitment of employees, the purpose of the study is to ascertain how neighbourhood of Emiratis influences their commitment to their organisations, particularly Generation Y employees. Numerous studies support the assertion that childhood and teenage experiences of employees play a critical role in their adult lives. A study conducted by Nieuwenhuis et al. (2016) confirmed that neighbourhood influence is a strong factor that influences the organisational commitment of employees. Acar (2014) added that the attitudes, values and principles, and the overall mind set of Generation Y employees emanate from early life experiences. The socialisation mechanism promotes sharing of values, attitudes, principles and mind sets, which shape the perception of work, and eventually, commitment to organisations. Based on the premise of socialisation, the purpose of the study is to ascertain the extent to which neighbourhood influence explains the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees in the UAE and apply the findings to other GCC countries.

Even with these three non-work-related factors, it is critical to also understand organisational commitment. Organisational commitment is basically the employee’s psychological attachment to the organisation (Mercurio 2015). Employees that have a deep connection with their organisations will show higher organisational commitment (Mercurio 2015). This tendency has become evident in many organisations in the UAE, including those within the public sector. For this reason, organisations have been trying to find ways to make their employees feel comfortable and enhance the connection that they have with their work. Generation Y employees tend to be highly expressive in what they feel about their organisations. This type of employee will easily approach HR and voice any grievances they might have (Mercurio 2015). Additionally, they are also are more likely to use technology to express their feelings concerning their organisations online, using methods such as online reviews for example. While these can be done anonymously, many of the reviews tend to be an honest opinion of employees working within the organisation under review. The employees who feel negatively about their organisations are likely to leave, and those who have positive feelings will stay.

Overall, the study is intended as a tool to ascertain the degree to which factors such as family influence, religiosity, and neighbourhood influence contribute to the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees in the UAE. Since family attributes, neighbourhood influence, and religiosity are non-work-related factors, their assessment among Generation Y employees should reveal how they influence organisational commitment. The theoretical basis of the research purpose is that background experiences at family level, neighbourhood influence and commitment to Islamic religions are latent non-work-related factors, which collectively determine the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees.

The key theoretical contribution of the present study is the development of a conceptual model about non-work-related factors, which is specific to countries with average, high or even excessive amounts of wealth. Particularly, the findings contribute to theoretical knowledge in the field as they seek to elucidate the influence of non-work-related factors such as family influence, religiosity, and neighbourhood influence on the organisational commitment of UAE national Generation Y employees in the UAE. This is important because, to the best of the author’s knowledge, there is currently no available research in the HR field.

As a practical contribution, the findings of the study will benefit managers in both the private and the public sectors and help improve the organisational commitment of employees by leveraging their demographic attributes, religiosity and neighbourhood influence. Moreover, as a low level of employment among nationals is a key factor in the GCC countries, the findings of the study may promote localisation by elucidating factors that influence organisational commitment among Generation Y UAE citizen employees and thus, by extension, the GCC region.

# Research Objectives

The overarching aim of the research is to explore how non-work-related factors such as family influence, neighbourhood influence, and religiosity influence organisational commitment among Generation Y UAE nationals in the public sector.

The separate objectives are as below;

1. To explore the influence of family on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees who are UAE nationals working in the public sector
2. To study the influence of religiosity on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees who are UAE nationals working in the public sector
3. To explicate the influence of neighbourhood on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees who are UAE nationals working in the public sector

# Main Research Question

* What is the influence of non-work-related factors (family influence, religiosity, and neighbourhood influence) on the organisational commitment of UAE national Generation Y employees in the UAE in the public sector?

The influences that the study is interested in are specified below (Research Questions).

# Additional Research Questions

1. What are the influences of family on the organisational commitment of UAE Generation Y employees who are UAE nationals?
2. What is the influence of religiosity of Generation Y employees who are UAE nationals on the organisational commitment in the public sector?
3. What is the influence of neighbourhood on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees who are UAE nationals in the public sector?

Further justification for the selection of the non-work-related factors is detailed in the literature review chapter.

## 1.6 Rationale/Importance of the Study

This study is important because it presents an opportunity for organisations in the UAE to understand how to boost commitment to work among Generation Y employees. Accordingly, Generation Y employees are mainly individuals who are seen as being complicated in terms of their needs especially because of their stable backgrounds and tech-savvy characteristics. Organisations have continued to grapple with ways of keeping Generation Y employees committed to their work. Through this study, organisations in the UAE, especially government organisations, will get an understanding of what issues should be considered from the family perspective, neighbourhood perspective, and religiosity perspective to keep Generation Y employees committed to their work. Importantly, public sector organisations in the UAE will have the opportunity to deal with the issues of Generation Y employees in a more specific manner hence maximize their contributions to the organisation in the long-term. Overall, there will be greater attention to the needs of Generation Y employees, which will help boost their organisational commitment. Therefore, organisations will stand the chance of gaining more from the services provided by Generation Y employees by retaining employees using desirable strategies.

More so, the study is important because it will give public sector organisations in the UAE the capacity to tap into family influences, religiosity, and neighbourhood influences into their organisational cultures. As has been noted above, Generation Y employees are generally responsive to different influences such as culture and technology within their societies. What this means is that the organisational culture needs to be set up in such a way that enhances their commitment. Organisations in the public sector will get the opportunity to maximise the characteristics from non-work-related factors such as religiosity and family influence to attain the needed employee goals and satisfaction hence leading to increased organisational commitment. Essentially, incorporating non-work influences into the organisational culture will put public sector organisations at an advantage in their efforts to improve the commitment of Generation Y employees.

The study is also significant because it will contribute to new knowledge for students and researchers in the human resource management. There are very few research studies that have been previously conducted to explore the influence of non-work-related factors on organisational commitment among Generation Y employees in the UAE. This is a new area of study that offers in-depth knowledge into how non-work-related factors such as religiosity, neighbourhood influence, and family influence on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees. Therefore, the rationale of this study is to basically add to literature with new knowledge that will enrich the field further.

# 1.7 Scope

The study focuses on examining the influence of non-work-related factors on the organisational commitment of UAE national Generation Y employees in the UAE. The study examines how the family, religiosity, and neighbourhood influence the employees’ decisions to remain committed to their work in their respective organisations.

Regarding sample size, the study selects a sample of 30 employees belonging to Generation Y with ages ranging from 21 to 40 years in 2020. Moreover, the study examines Generation Y employees who are citizens of the UAE and, thus excludes expatriates from its sample population. This is because expatriates come from different countries with different experiences of family demographic attributes, neighbourhood influence and religious persuasions and because the focus is on the government labour localisation policy (Emiratisation). The focus here is only UAE Generation Y employees in the public sector. Essentially, the UAE nationals provide a homogenous population with similar attributes of family setup, commitment to Islamic religion, and neighbourhood influence. Although Generation Y employees are in both the public and private organisations, the study focuses on employees in public organisations only. The public sector is government-owned and the semi-government sector is where it could be wholly or partially owned by the government, being operated by a private entity. Semi-government sector organisations such as Etihad Airways and Emirates in the airline industry and public sector organisations such as Dubai World and Abu Dhabi National Oil Corporation compete for businesses in the UAE. See section (2.5 Industry Structure) for the explanation of these categories.

According to Thompson and Wissink (2016), despite the efforts of Emiratisation, the proportion of Emiratis in the private sector is still very low. In this view, most of the Generation Y Emirati employees are in public organisations following the Emiratisation policy. According to a national survey, Emiratis prefer working in the public sector because it provides good working conditions and favourable remuneration (John 2015). Hence, the study assumes that the preference of Emiratis to work in the public sector would not confound the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees. Moreover, since Emiratis are dominant in the public sector and share the same socioeconomic and religious experiences, they represent a homogenous population that is appropriate for the study to come up with valid and generalisable findings. The expectation is that the findings can be used to study other Generation Y employees in the GCC sector. According to the findings presented by Mohsen (2016), Generation Y individuals within the GCC nations show a strong desire to succeed. Moreover, this generation also exhibits a robust need to obtain high-quality salaries and to acquire expertise and knowledge. Furthermore, over the last few years, GCC nations have been experiencing significant changes as they work towards modernisation. This is yet another justification for the generalisation of these nations. This is of great significance as these nations are currently experiencing transformation of their labour markets, a matter that carries utmost implications for their economies.

# CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH CONTEXT

This chapter sets the research context with the focus on different UAE dimensions such as the labour market, the sociocultural background, as well as overall areas of growth in the country.

# The UAE Background

The UAE is situated in the Arabian Peninsula bordering the Arabian Gulf (also known as the Persian Gulf) on the north-western region and the Gulf of Oman Gulf on the south-eastern region (Nationsonline.org, 2020). It emanated from the Trucial States that the British established in the early nineteenth century as sheikhdoms for their colonies. In 1971, the UAE gained its independence and became a federation consisting of seven emirates; namely, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah, and Fujairah (Sutton 2014). The discovery of oil in the early part of the nineteenth century and continual exploitation has significantly boosted economic growth and development of the UAE as an oil economy as well as improved the quality of life among the Emiratis Nationsonline.org, 2020). The oil economy attracted expatriates from different countries, mostly from the United States and Europe, who have contributed considerably to the economic growth and development of the UAE helping it to become a well-known country in the modern global economy (Sutton 2014). Currently, the economy of the UAE ranks second after Saudi Arabia in the GCC region with a gross domestic product of over $400 billion dollars. Comparative economic growth indicates that the UAE has multiplied by roughly 231 times since its independence in 1971 (Sutton 2014). The exponential growth of the UAE economy is due to oil exportation, diversified economy and favourable political environment that promote the establishment of businesses (Nationsonline.org, 2020).

Demographic analysis by the United Arab Emirates National Bureau of Statistics shows that the UAE has an extremely diverse population. The current population of the UAE is about 9.2 million with expatriates comprising 85% (7.8 million) and the Emiratis constituting the remaining 15% (1.4 million). In the early twenty-first century, the population of the UAE was barely three million, but it has tripled in the last 16 years to about 9.2 million. The population of the UAE is very diverse; 19% are Emiratis, 50% are South Asians, 23% are Arabs, and the remaining 8% are East Asians and Westerners (United Arab Emirates National Bureau of Statistics 2016). Across the GCC region, Indians and Pakistanis are the dominant expatriates; they account for 37% of the population in three emirates – Ajman, Dubai and Sharjah. Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Filipinos represent 25%, 12%, 9%, 7%, and 5% of the expatriates in major emirates (United Arab Emirates National Bureau of Statistics 2016). Owing to improved economy and lifestyles, the UAE has a life expectancy of about 75 years, which is higher than the global average of 71 years. The dominant religion in the UAE is Islam (76%) followed by Christianity (12.6%), Hinduism (6.6%) and Buddhism (2%). Therefore, religion has an overwhelming impact on principles, values, and norms of Emiratis and expatriates alike.

# GCC Countries

The UAE is a member of the GCC, which is a political and economic block of the Arab states in the Middle East. The GCC countries comprise the UAE, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The GCC countries are politically similar as they are monarchical states that came into existence in 1981 following the signing of the Charter in Riyadh (Ganguli 2016). The aim of establishing the GCC was to promote cooperation among member states and their citizens in politics and economics. To administer their operations, the GCC countries created a secretariat charged with the responsibility of formulating and implementing policies on behalf of the member states. Ganguli (2016) reported that the GCC countries are in progress to become an economic block because they established a customs union in 2003, formed a common market in 2007, and in 2009, initiated progress towards a single regional currency. The GCC has achieved the objective of a common market because organisations are able to move their goods and services easily without undue restrictions. In 2014, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain made progressive steps towards achievement of a single currency in the GCC (Ganguli 2016). In this view, GCC countries have a similar economic environment for they have the same customs union, share the common market, and are about to operate using a single currency.

With the diverse population of about 47 million, the GCC countries have a very rich culture. Owing to the common market, the GCC citizens can move freely among member states with their passports as identification documents without the necessity to acquire visas from different states (Ganguli 2016). As the dominant religion is Islam, the culture of the GCC citizens emanates from Islamic teachings which shape their way of life and business ethics. The existence of freedom of worship allows other religions to establish their churches and temples wherever necessary. Islamic culture is evident in legal and political arenas the criminal justice system has incorporated *Sharia* into their laws while political systems follow Islamic monarchical rules where governments and parliaments are not subject to democratic elections except in Yemen. The Islamic teachings also dictate the dress code for women and men, excluding expatriates, who have the freedom to dress differently. As the power lies in the monarchical systems, the GCC citizens prefer a hierarchical order in their society. Over 95% of companies in the GCC are family businesses as connections play a key role in the operations and successfulness of businesses (Ganguli, 2016) reported. Individuals and families have moral and divine duty to help the poor by donating to charity organisations. Thus, the culture of the GCC countries emanates from the Islamic religion and it plays a significant role in the lives, businesses, politics and economics of the GCC citizens.

Despite advancements in economic growth and development, culture, politics and social institutions, the GCC countries nevertheless experience local challenges. The existence of monarchical governments in different states implies that the GCC countries have limited space for democracy (Bank, Richter & Sunik 2014). As a result, GCC citizens do not have equal rights in governance because the noble families dominate in both political and economic arenas. Women belong to the marginalised groups in some of the GCC countries, particularly in Saudi Arabia and Oman, because of the religious traditions and norms restricting them from working and participating in politics like their male counterparts (Sjoberg 2015). The overreliance on oil production as the main economic activity can destabilise the GCC countries’ economies because they are subject to global oil prices and economic recessions. Moreover, Aissaoui (2013) added that the production of oil is levelling off because it is an unsustainable and non-renewable form of energy. Currently, the GCC countries have formulated regulations and policies aimed at promoting economic diversification to reduce the overreliance on oil production. Almutairi (2016) recommended that the diversification into renewable sources of energy and other industries would strengthen economic stability of the GCC countries. The labour sector has experienced saturation because both the expatriates and the Emiratis compete for limited job opportunities (Alhemoud 2013; Marzovilla 2014). Therefore, the GCC countries promote employment of locals through the Localisation policy, which requires the public and private organisations to use a quota system in employing the country’s nationals.

# Oil and Gas Wealth

The economy of the GCC countries is dependent on oil and gas production. According to Alhemoud (2013), the GCC countries are major producers of oil and gas because the production accounts for 40% of the global production owing to huge deposits of recoverable fossil fuel. The gross domestic product accrued from oil and gas is about 50% in most states but reduced to 24% and 32% in Bahrain and the UAE, respectively, due to increased diversification. Saudi Arabia and Qatar are the leading producers of oil and gas in the GCC region. Across the world, GCC countries have the highest consumption rate; they consume about 32% of their production (Sakhrieh 2016). Wealth accrued from oil and gas industries has transformed the GCC region from a developing region to a developed region in the Middle East, which attracts significant labour from across the world.

## Socio-Cultural Factors in the UAE

Socio-cultural factors entail the culture and the social norms of the country. In the UAE, the relevance and importance of socio-cultural factors in shaping the country’s culture cannot be underestimated. According to Masovic (2018) the socio-cultural factors are made up of a combination of social and cultural factors such as language, religion, and attitudes toward different genders in the country. In the UAE, socio-cultural factors are relevant in terms of how they impact different elements of the society including the workplace. Suliman (2006) noted that that the importance of socio-cultural factors in shaping the UAE culture is seen in terms of it influences aspects such as the gender roles especially in the workplaces. With the conservative nature of the UAE especially because of the strong Islamic values and Arabic culture, socio-cultural factors are important in the growth of the country’s culture by responding to global dynamics of growth and accommodation of women into modern workplaces. With Generation Y being more modern, they tend to go beyond the limitations within the culture to work towards the set goals within the country regardless of the gender (Suliman, 2006). Therefore, the relevance and importance of socio-cultural factors is underscored by the impact that it has on the transformation of gender roles within the UAE workplace especially with a new emerging population of the workforce who are more open to accommodate everyone regardless of their gender.

More so, socio-cultural factors are important in the in shaping the UAE culture in terms of how they influence the relation between UAE nationals and expatriates. The UAE is one of the countries in the Middle East that has continued to experience an influx of expatriates in different sectors, especially the private sector (Suliman, 2006). This has gone beyond the policy of ‘Emiratisation’ that was focused on ensuring that more workplaces are localised. Socio-cultural factors are important in shaping the UAE culture especially in factors such as language to help interact with expatriates and also the measures created to work with people from other countries. Abdulla, Djebarni, and Mellahi (2011) talk about the significance of socio-cultural factors in influencing interactions with other employees in the organisation. Thus, socio-cultural factors play a key role in determining how the UAE culture is shaped in terms of the language and other cultural practices that lead to the accommodation of expatriates into the workplace.

# 2.5 Industry Structure

The industry of the GCC countries comprises of the private sector, the public sector, and the semi-governmental sector. These sectors significantly contribute to economic growth and development. The private industry is an industry where individuals own and undertake their business activities without the support of the government. Comparatively, the public industry entails organisations and institutions funded by governments to provide services to the GCC citizens. The semi-governmental sector has industries and organisations that the private and the government co-own and manage collectively.

According to Elborno (2016), the public sector and the semi-governmental sector employ more than 90% of the GCC citizens. This percentage shows that the private sector employs the minority proportion of employees. However, due to the declining gross domestic product from oil and gas industry, the government is encouraging the private sector to participate in the economic growth and development because it has the potential to boost the shrinking labour market. According to Gulf Labour Markets and Migration (2017), the percentage of the Emiratis in the public sector and semi-governmental sector is about 60% while the percentage of the Emiratis in the private sector is less than 10% (Gulf Labour Markets and Migration, 2017). These statistics show that expatriates dominate the private sector while the Emiratis dominate the public and semi-governmental sectors. Before the promulgation of the Emiratisation policy, the proportion of the Emiratis in the public sector was less than 40%.

# The UAE Labour Market

The labour market of the UAE has a similar structure to that of the GCC region in the sense that expatriates dominate the private sector while the Emiratis dominate the public sector. Lim (2012) highlights that the labour market of the UAE is dependent on expatriates as they are the majority and make up 85% of the total workforce, leaving only 15% represented by the Emiratis. In the UAE, out of about 9.2 million people, expatriates number nearly 7.8 million while the Emiratis are approximately 1.4 million. The small population of the Emiratis implies that they lack adequate labour to revolutionise the UAE. The booming economic growth in the late twentieth century attracted immigrants to the UAE who exploited job opportunities and contributed to the economic growth and development, resulting in their dominance in the private and public sectors of the economy.

# Movement to Emiratisation

The low proportion of the Emiratis in the labour market compelled the UAE government to formulate the policy of Emiratisation. In the public sector, the policy of Emiratisation has significantly increased the proportion of Emirati employees from less than 2% to the current proportion of 13% (Gulf Labour Markets and Migration 2017). However, Emiratisation has not had a significant impact on the private sector because less than 10% of the employees are Emiratis (Gulf Labour Markets and Migration, 2017). Thus, given the saturated labour market and shrinking economy, Emiratisation offers a feasible solution to increasing unemployment rates amongst Emiratis. Although the Emiratisation is a noble idea, its implementation faces some challenges.

In the public sector, the Emiratisation has made a considerable impact, but the main challenge is that few Emiratis have the required skills to replace the large number of expatriates. In the private sector, skills, as well as terms and conditions are not favourable to the Emiratis. Forstenlechner et al. (2012) explained that lack of motivation, ambiguities in rights and low wages are some of the major factors that hinder implementation of the Emiratisation in the private sector. Hence, to improve hiring and retention of Emirati employees, the UAE government has to come up with enabling legislations to encourage private sector hiring and equip the Emiratis with appropriate skills to be competitive in the private sector.

# Workforce in the UAE

Analysis of the workforce in the UAE shows the existence of a higher proportion of expatriates (87%) than the proportion of Emiratis. The low proportion of the Emiratis has compelled the UAE government to promote employment of the locals through the Emiratisation policy. In the private sector, the percentage of the expatriates is 96% while the percentage of the Emiratis is 4% (Rasheed 2016). Comparatively, the proportion of expatriates in the public sector is 85% while the proportion of the Emiratis is 15%. Gendered comparison of the proportion of the UAE workforce shows that women represent 17% while men represent 83%.

Emiratisation has increased the percentage of women participating in the labour force, as they now account for 16.9% of the total labour force (Smith, 2020). However, in the public sector, women hold an estimated 66% of government jobs showing their growing presence in the labour market (Smith, 2020). According to Lim (2013), Generation Y employees are the majority and they constitute about half of the workforce in the UAE. Thus, the study examines Generation Y employees in the public sector as they dominate both the public sector and in the UAE.

# Entrepreneurial Spirit

One of the popular trends impacting the labour force internationally and in the UAE in particular is that of entrepreneurship and promotion of the so-called entrepreneurial spirit by various means**.** In fact, there is consensus among researchers and governmental officials from all countries of the world that “Entrepreneurship is an unstoppable wave today” (Chakravarti 2017, p. 127). The word ‘entrepreneur’ comes from French and means to do or undertake something. It has been used in its current meaning since 1730 when Richard Cantillon used it to denote a person willing to undertake personal financial risk for a venture, which has now become one of the key characteristics of entrepreneurs (Chakravarti 2017).

Entrepreneurship has become a worldwide phenomenon, and it is more prevalent in some countries more than others. One of these countries is the UAE, which has been a luring point for entrepreneurs from all over the world for many years now. It is relevant for the population under consideration since entrepreneurship is encouraged by the UAE government. Moreover, it is encouraged that Generation Y individuals participate in entrepreneurial activities as they are underrepresented in the private sector. Although the present study focuses on the public sector, it seems important to provide a brief overview of this trend since it is government-induced and concerns the population under study.

The UAE has been known to be beneficial and profitable for e-commerce start-ups, which have been on the rise globally in the recent past (Invest U.A.E. 2017). One of the main reasons why the UAE has become a hub for entrepreneurs starting up their own business is devotion and commitment of its leadership to promote the entrepreneurial spirit. The country has a favourable regulatory framework, favourably low taxes, and strong government support. Moreover, the UAE has become an internationally recognised financial centre in the region, thereby providing entrepreneurs with access to potential investors. As the investment analysis report by Invest U.A.E. (2017, p. 6) points out, “As the emerging entrepreneurial capital of the MENA region, the U.A.E. has both given rise to a large number of local start-ups and attracted numerous regional start-ups seeking to scale their operations”.

The main reason as to why the leadership of the country considers development of the entrepreneurial spirit as a national priority is because of the orientation of the country towards becoming a knowledge economy. Moreover, this transformation of the economy has been associated with a decrease in the number of available opportunities for employment in the public sector, thereby encouraging leaders of the country to search for alternative employment opportunities for the local population. According to the UAE Vision 2021 Report, the country has to “diversify and create knowledge economy based on the principles of innovation and sustainability”, which is impossible without a rapid development of the entrepreneurship (Chakravarti 2017, p. 128). Most cities of the UAE, including Dubai, are recognised as excellent hubs for entrepreneurs since they are considered to be tax havens, politically stable, safe, with a low criminality rate, and lucrative in terms of being a connection between the West and the East. It is also beneficial because of well-developed infrastructure, diversity in terms of the population and specialists available, and abundance of investment opportunities.

The government has established a range of initiatives with a view to supporting enhancement of entrepreneurial spirit, the main institution being the Mohammed Bin Rashid Establishment and Foundation (MBREF; Chakravarti 2017). This institution has been set up with the purpose of supporting and motivating local citizens towards becoming entrepreneurs. In order to fulfil this purpose, the MBREF provides start-ups with viable business ideas with initial funds at a low interest rate in addition to giving them a three-year grace period and subsequent five-year settlement period. These conditions are highly advantageous for the development of businesses, with the only requirement being that entrepreneurs invest 20% of the total project estimated cost. The government also supports the entrepreneurial spirit by means of fostering it in educational institutions. Hence, the study of students from a renowned university in the UAE shows that they acquire basic qualities necessary to become entrepreneurs during their studies (Hameed et al. 2016). However, there are still ways to amend educational programmes in order to make them conducive to instilling the entrepreneurial spirit in the UAE students.

Due to this focus on the enhancement of the entrepreneurial spirit, the rate of self-employment has been on the rise in the UAE in recent years. Statistics shows that the number of the self-employed in the UAE amounted to almost 5% of all employed individuals in the country (Trading Economics 2018). This is a high figure considering that the UAE has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the region, ranking second after Qatar (World Economic Forum 2017). Respectively, considering the abovementioned description of Generation Y and their typical characteristics and traits, it becomes apparent that they constitute the majority of the self-employed in the country, which is also supported with statistical data about the labour force of the country (World Economic Forum 2017). They strive towards becoming entrepreneurs as then they will work for themselves, rather than being subordinates to others.

Entrepreneurs also have more freedom in decision-making and are not afraid to take more personal responsibility for their business ideas. In turn, this also means that they do not prefer to be employed in organisations and companies and are seen to have low levels of organisational commitment when they do get employed while searching for investment or elaborating their business plans. Managers need to be aware of this entrepreneurship tendency and realise that some of their Generation Y employees may be less committed to work due to their preference for entrepreneurship, which is actively being promoted in the UAE.

# CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is a literature review that discusses various pieces of literature on the topic. The theory informing the study is discussed alongside other key topics related to the study.

# Ecological Systems Theory

The theory that is applied in the current research to explore the influence that non-work-related factors have on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees in the UAE is the ecological systems theory. It is a well-known theory of psychology that provides some understanding of human development. The theory was developed by Bronfenbrenner in 1979 and focuses on the nature of social systems that individuals interact and operate within resulting in behavioural changes (Bone 2015). According to this theory, the environment in which an individual grows significantly influences their lives in every aspect. Therefore, social factors determine one’s way of thinking, their emotions, and the preferences they develop concerning various aspects of their lives. Bronfenbrenner (1986) based the development of his ecological systems theory on the General Systems Theory, which is founded on the assertion that living organisms can only be explored and understood due to the continuous and complex interactions between their component elements.

Initially, Bronfenbrenner (1986, p. 188) defined his theory as follows:

The ecology of human development is the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation throughout the life course between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate setting in which, the developing person lives. [This] process is affected by the relations between these settings and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded.

However, in the course of developing this theory, Bronfenbrenner (1986) summarised the fundamental aspects of growth among individuals. The work of Bronfenbrenner (1986) does not focus on a scientific approach that places emphasis on a given domain such as social relations or other aspects such as cognition and biological development. Instead, the theorist’s work focuses on a scientific approach that places emphasis on the existing interrelationship between different processes and their contextual differences. Therefore, Bronfenbrenner (1986) is credited with providing some significant insight into contextual variation within human development. Moreover, Bronfenbrenner (1986) played an instrumental role in moving developmental psychology from the science of strange childhood behaviours that develop when they interact with adults exhibiting the same behaviours.

From the work of Bronfenbrenner (1986), core domains to represent various domains of the theory were developed. The first domain is that the central force within development is an active person (Bronfenbrenner 2009). This force shapes the environment, evokes responses from it, and reacts to it. The second domain is a fundamental premise of the ecological systems theory. This is the phenomenological nature of the theory. Accordingly, it contributed to the perception that if people define situations as real, they become real in their consequences. The final domain is based on the perception, which suggests that different environments are likely to have different affordances (Bronfenbrenner 2009). For this reason, people will respond to such environments in different ways. Essentially, this shows that people are likely to find some ecological niches in which some distinct processes and outcomes will be observed.

Accordingly, in his development of the ecological systems theory, Bronfenbrenner (1986) explained that every person can be perceived as being embedded within a multitude of nested systems. Thus, their development takes place as a result of complex interactions between themselves and several systematic factors or components that influence each other. In other words, human development relies on several complex interactive processes that depend on numerous systematic or contextual factors (Kamenopoulou 2016). While assessing this, the concept of development according to this theory is defined as a person’s evolving understanding of the ecological environment and how they relate to it. For this reason, emphasis has been placed on a person’s changing and subjective understanding and interpretation of various contexts and systems.

The ecological systems theory includes the following major assumptions. First, individuals are active players who have the capacity to influence their environment to some extent (Bronfenbrenner 2009). Second, the environment is a compelling force that makes people adapt to its conditions and restrictions. Third, the theory assumes that the environment consists of entities of varied size that co-exist (Bronfenbrenner 2009). These entities are placed in their reciprocal relationship of the systems of the ecological systems theory.

According to the ecological systems theory, the development of people is influenced by a variety of environmental systems. In tandem with the ecological systems theory, the qualities of people and their environment work together to influence the manner in which they develop. In the course of developing this theory, Bronfenbrenner (1986) worked with children who were in multiple environments, which became referred to as ecological systems, so as to gain an understanding of their development. Thus, the theory indicates that it is common for children to find themselves in a variety of environments. They can range from the most intimate ones such as home to much larger systems such as schools and to a more expansive environment such as society (Kamenopoulou 2016). Therefore, each of these environments usually interacts with children and consequently influences many aspects of their lives and behaviours. Thus, people tend to behave differently when they are alone as compared to when they are in the presence of others. For instance, individuals would behave differently if they are in school compared to when they are at home.

The ecological systems theory holds that individuals live in a social environment comprising successive layers of social systems (Boon et al. 2012). In the course of their lives, people tend to encounter different environments, each of which impacts their behaviour to a different degree. These systems are elucidated below.

### 3.1.1 Microsystem

Microsystem is the innermost layer of the ecological systems theory. It refers to the smallest and most immediate environment in which one interacts. For instance, an individual remains under the direct impact of family, peers and religion, which forms the microsystem layer in the environment (Darling 2007). Therefore, this layer represents the direct environment of an individual. Microsystems may include family, friends, classmates, neighbours, teachers and, generally, persons that have a direct impact on an individual. Thus, a microsystem consists of people’s daily environment. The nature of interaction within such communities tends to encompass personal relationships with family, customers, colleagues and employers with employees (Penn 2005). Therefore, the manner in which these groups interact with employees will affect the degree of commitment they have to their work.

Fundamentally, people tend to interact with social agents in this system. Based on the perspectives presented by this theory, people are not mere recipients of the experiences they have in the course of socialising with other people within the microsystem environment. Instead, people tend to contribute to the development of such an environment (Bronfenbrenner 2009).

The ecological systems theory argues that there is a possibility that people who exist within the same ecological system experience different environments. It is for this reason that their development can take place differently. Accordingly, people will behave in a manner based on how they are treated by others as opposed to merely behaving as per the expectation of their biological settings. The same can be said about employees within the workplace; while they may be within the same ecosystem, they are likely to receive different treatment by colleagues and managers (Kamenopoulou 2016). Therefore, some employees are more likely to thrive when this treatment is positive. It is also worth noting that employees who are treated positively by their organisations are bound to remain committed to their respective work in the long term.

In contrast, employees who are treated poorly by their organisations tend to leave their organisations as they are not committed to work. Consequently, a relationship exists between this system and the development of the child. However, it is essential to note that the influence in line with this relationship can vary (Darling 2007). For instance, the belief that parents hold concerning their child can influence who the child becomes as an adult. At the same time, a child has the capability of changing the beliefs that a family has concerning them.

### 3.1.2 Mesosystem

At the next layer, there is the mesosystem, which depicts the interaction of individuals and different social factors of microsystem. The system involves the relationships between the groups from the first system (Bronfenbrenner 2009). It encompasses the interaction of various microsystems of a person; therefore, it is perceived as a system of microsystems. Mesosystem encompasses the connections between peer groups and family, workplace and home, and family and the community. Thus, this layer entails the relationship between the microsystems in a person’s life (Kamenopoulou 2016).

There is a possibility that the experiences that a person has with their families may affect their experiences in school or at the workplace. For example, a child neglected by their parents may have difficulty forming a positive attitude towards teachers (Kamenopoulou 2016). In addition, such a child is likely to develop some kind of awkwardness within the presence of their peers. For this reason, they are likely to withdraw within themselves and practice very little social interaction with classmates (Penn 2005). Within the context of this research, when a person’s family has positive things to say concerning the organisation, then such employees will develop a positive attitude towards their organisation. Another example of mesosystem is the relationship between parents and teachers and the impact which it has on a child.

### 3.1.3 Exosystem

Exosystem is the third layer of the ecological systems theory. This layer is made up of linkages and processes that occur between two or more settings (Darling 2007). At least one of these settings may not contain the developing person, but the events that take place in it tend to have an influence on the processes within the immediate settings of a person. This system comprises neighbours, politics and society at large (Kamenopoulou 2016). In other words, exosystem refers to the connections that exist between two or more settings.

As noted by Bronfenbrenner (2009), the elements of this system tend to have an indirect impact on a child’s life despite the fact that the child may not be within the immediate settings of the elements. An example of such connection is the impact that the workplace of a parent has on the child. As much as a parent’s workplace is not one of the settings of a child’s growth, it can significantly influence the child in terms of future decisions such as the career chosen. A specific example of such impact is the instances of stress that are associated with the workplace of a parent (Kamenopoulou 2016). In such cases, there is a possibility that the parent may integrate stress or its impact in the interactions they have with their child.

The role of parents impacts the development of individuals both directly and indirectly. Such impact is noticeable in a setting where a connection exists between the context in which one does not appear to have any active role and the context in which the person is an active participant (Kamenopoulou 2016). It can be demonstrated by the example of a child that is attached mainly to the father; in this context, when the father has to travel far for work and thus the child has to remain with the mother, there is then the possibility of conflict between the mother and the child’s social relationship. At the same time, there is the possibility of a much stronger bond forming between the mother and the child. This layer of the ecology systems theory demonstrates that people tend to be affected by the people and places with which they do not interact directly (Penn 2005). Some of these places include other workplaces such as the building where an employee works, the neighbourhood in which one lives, and family members, including extended family members.

### 3.1.4 Macrosystem

The fourth layer of the ecology systems theory is the macrosystem. It is also referred to as the outermost layer of the theory. Bronfenbrenner (1989) defined this layer based on Vygotsky’s theory concerning the psyche’s socio-historical evolution, which was responsible for the development of the macrosystem as a sociocultural setting. Furthermore, the source of this layer is also the concept of personal property accelerating development. The most significant one in this regard is the concept of conceptual systems.

Macrosystem consists of the overarching pattern of characteristics of the microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystems of given cultures, subcultures, and other broader social contexts (Kamenopoulou 2016). Therefore, it is the system representing attitudes, norms, ideals and values of a culture-shaping individual in the society (Musgrave & Woodward 2016). Also, this system explains the development of lifestyles, opportunity structures, life course actions, resources and patterns of social interchange that are embedded within each system.

This layer describes the actual culture of a person. Thus, cultural context refers to the socioeconomic status of a person or their family, race or ethnicity within a developing nation (Darling 2007). For instance, individuals who come from poor family backgrounds may want to work hard for the sake of fighting poverty in their families. Thus, macrosystem can be perceived as a type of societal blueprint for a given culture, sub-culture, or other broader social contexts. Bronfenbrenner (1986) also contended that the behavioural and conceptual models, which are the characteristics of macrosystem, are usually transferred from one generation to another. This transfer takes place via varying cultural institutions. Some of these institutions include school, family, workplace, or the administration intermediate socialisation.

As the outermost layer of a child, macrosystem lacks a distinct framework. Nevertheless, the system encompasses cultural values, laws and traditions. The influences of this system can be extended over all the other layers (Darling 2007). The impact of this layer of the ecological systems theory tends to be noticed in the future. For instance, the influence of macrosystem often becomes obvious only after drawing comparisons between children and young people that have grown up in different societies, such as developing and developed nations. Within the context of this research, a positive habit that was acquired in the employees’ background can be integrated into their work habits, which can be beneficial to organisations (Kamenopoulou 2016). Moreover, macrosystem is also described as the largest and most distant collection of persons and places that still have a substantial influence on people. This is demonstrated by the difference in beliefs between children that have grown in a war zone compared to those that have not.

### 3.1.5 Chronosystem

Chronosystem is a new layer of the ecological systems theory. Notably, Bronfenbrenner (1986) did not include the time element in the initial development of the ecological systems theory. However, it was later added as the fifth layer of the theory. Consequently, chronosystem is referred to as the element of time (Johnson 2008). The layer is described as the evolution, development, or stream of development of the external systems in time. The layer deals with either short or long periods of time. In the course of developing this system, a variety of terms have been used to make reference to time (Johnson 2008). Some of the terms used include time, history, development, change, and course of an individual’s life. Therefore, this system entails roles and rules that have a strong influence on development. This layer of the theory explains the transitions and shifts existing within a person’s lifespan; that is, the influence of both changes and constancy within a person’s environment. Additionally, the layer also describes the socio-historical context that may affect an individual (Darling 2007). The key example of this effect is the divorce of a couple, which will have an impact not only on the couple itself but also on the behaviour of any children they may have. It has been noted within psychological studies that children tend to be negatively impacted during the first year after divorce (Penn 2005).

However, with time, the interaction amongst family members can become amicable, and they are able to have a stable and agreeable relationship. This is further demonstrated by the changes that take place within the status of employment of spouses or parents. Consequently, chronosystems places emphasis on the need to have some understanding of the context of a person so as to accurately determine how they act within different settings at different points in time (Darling 2007). This shows the need to assess the behaviour of people within different settings. It should, additionally, include an analysis of the quality and type of connections that exist among the settings. The systems and their explanations are illustrated in Table 1 and Figure 1 below.

Table 1: Ecological systems theory

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **System** | **Explanation** |
| Microsystem | This system refers to the immediate context in which a person operates, including the people within that context. That is, it refers to the context that a person has a direct contact with. |
| Mesosystem | This layer refers to the influences that emerge from members of the microsystems. It may include influences that come from family relationships and school. |
| Exosystem | These are the external influences on an individual that come from systems that are indirectly related to the microsystem. It can include aspects such as legislation or policies. |
| Macrosystem | These are the influences that mainly emanate from cultural and social factors. Some good examples of this system include the social and economic status of an individual. |
| Chronosystem | These are the changes that take place in all systems over time. |

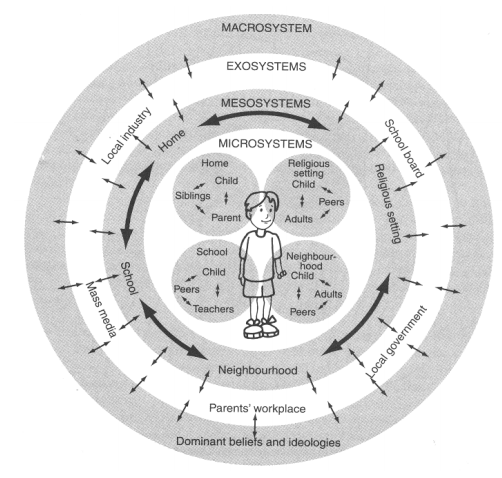


Figure 1: Ecological systems theory

Source (Penn, 2005)

### 3.1.6 Application of the Theory to this Study

This theory has been selected for the present study since it can be successfully extended to model the development of an organisation as influenced by the commitment of employees and the factors outside of the organisation that affect this commitment. This is even more important given that these factors can be categorised within the layers of the ecological systems theory (Darling 2007).

The present research contributes to the theory by extending its use to the study of the organisational commitment and related factors, thereby amending the theoretical framework to suit the context. This means that this theory can be useful in explaining how the early environment of the employees has an impact on the attitude and behaviour that they display within the workplace. This includes the attitude that they have concerning the careers they have to pursue and organisations they work or desire to work for.

Further rationale for the use of this theory is that it is essential in further understanding of literature. Thus, the ecological systems theory serves as a guiding framework for undertaking a critical review of research that has been carried out on the factors that impact people’s lives (Kamenopoulou 2016). Such factors include their family, as well as their neighbourhood. Therefore, the theory provides a means to synthesise the findings from research concerning factors that influence the lives of individuals. This is even more so, given that a substantial amount of existing research on organisational commitment used a similar framework. This framework has been used as a way of enabling the conceptualisation and categorisation of findings from the existing research (Kamenopoulou 2016). Therefore, the reason behind applying the ecological systems theory for this study is that it analyses factors that influence the commitment of people to the organisations they work for. In this regard, the theory affirms that most focus needs to be placed on the role of the biosystem of people and varying microsystem factors.

Additionally, use of the ecological systems theory can be rationalised by the fact that it is essential for the research design; the data gathered for this research involve the use of one-to-one interviews with the participants. This theory will be indispensable in providing an insight into employees’ interactions in settings other than the workplace as explained within the systems in the ecological systems theory (Kamenopoulou 2016). Thus, this matches the arguments of the ecological systems theory – mainly that different members of a system have an impact on a person’s development.

The application of this theory for this study is also justified by the understanding that it can provide useful insights into non-work-related factors which affect the organisational commitment among Generation Y employees. The non-work-related factors that this study is investigating are family, neighbourhood, and religiosity. These factors are embedded within the mesosystems of the ecological systems theory (Kamenopoulou 2016). Thus, this study assesses how various settings, including family and neighbourhood, impact the development of an employee within an organisation. Further, the study analyses how religious settings influence the decisions that employees make in an organisation concerning their development and commitment to work.

# Generation Y Individuals in the GCC Countries

In the Arab World, Generation Y comprises individuals with different age brackets when compared to the conventional definition. Where the definition that Generation Y constitute individuals born between 1980 and 1999 is conventional, the Arab World regards individuals born between 1982 and 2002 as the Arab Digital Generation (Shediac et al. 2013). The differences in the definition originate from the experiences that Generation Y individuals encounter in the modern society. Born in the era where GCC countries united for social, economic, and political progress, Generation Y experienced modernisation and globalisation.

Peters (2012) describes Generation Y as a pampered generation because they grew up in a period of economic and technological development and advancement coupled with globalisation which has enabled them to adopt aspects of international cultures. From this perspective, globalisation and technological forces have shaped the emergence of Generation Y employees in the GCC countries. Nevertheless, Shediac et al. (2013) noted that governments and organisations in the GCC countries have not realised the need to incorporate and consider generational differences in formulating their policies and regulations for equitable economic and social development. For instance, the Emiratisation policy provides a consistent strategy of curbing disproportionate employment of the GCC citizens without considering different generational needs.

The proportions of Generation Y employees in different GCC countries are relatively similar owing to the current trends in demographics across the world. The increasing proportion of Generation Y employees in the workforce across the GCC region and other Arabian countries signals massive changes in the demographics of the labour market. The exit of Baby Boomers (1946-1964) and the entrance of Generation Y (1980-1999) are the two main factors that explain the increasing proportion of Generation Y in the labour market across the GCC countries (Alkindi, Teoh & Naji 2017). Moreover, the localisation policies have also contributed to the dominance of the Generation Y employees in the labour market in the GCC region.

Lim, Tayeb and Othman (2012) tabulated that Generation Y forms 50% of the population in Saudi Arabia followed by Generation X at 20% and Generation Z at 18%. The challenge in the labour market of Saudi Arabia is that the proportion of Saudi Arabians is about 79% of the total population, but they comprise 20% of the workforce. Other states such as Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE experience similar disproportionate distribution of Generation Y in the population and the labour market due to the prevailing labour conditions that favour expatriates (Tong & Al-Awad 2014). Thus, analysis of the non-work-related factors that influence the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees would shed additional light on the existence of the current disproportionate distribution of employees.

# Generational Comparisons in the GCC

The comparison of Generation Y locals in the GCC reveals consistent patterns and trends of marked differences from one generation to another. A study conducted in GCC countries revealed that Generation Y employees have unique attributes because they speak their mind, share information, make instant decisions, and are always interactive with people (Schofield & Honore 2015). When compared to Generation X and Baby Boomers, Generation Y individuals tend to be more open about speaking their minds at the workplace. Gerenpayeh (2015) demonstrated that interviews performed among Generation Y Emiratis show that they speak their minds because they do not have any reservations about issues they talk about.

Since Generation Y individuals appreciate the use of technology, they acquire information and share this with their friends and colleagues in the workplace. This shared information has a considerable impact on the lives of employees because it empowers them and enables them to boost their expertise (Lim 2015). In organisations, decision-making follows a lengthy bureaucratic process to make and implement decisions. Whereas the previous generations find it normal for delays in decision-making to occur, Generation Y contrast them as they prefer instant decisions. The interactive attributes of Generation Y employees enables them to learn from their older and experienced counterparts as well as communicate effectively with customers. Thus, generational differences between Generation Y and previous generations bring forward unique attributes of Generation Y employees.

# Characteristics of Generation Y in GCC

The entry of Generation Y employees into the labour market coupled with their increasing dominance has significant importance to GCC countries given their demographic youth surplus and localisation trend. Born between 1980 and 1999, Generation Y employees have experienced the growth and development of the GCC countries, which was formed in 1981 following the need to have a common market, customs union, and single currency. Schofield and Honore (2015) stated that GCC countries were formed on the principles of a common religion, a single culture, shared language, similar socioeconomic conditions, and a free labour market. Therefore these principles have significantly shaped Generation Y employees.

Rapid changes in cultural norms, communication methods, the use of technology, and human resource management have transformed the labour market in GCC region and influenced Generation Y employees. Since Generation Y employees are completing their entry into the labour market as a small proportion, labour market analysis reveals that they learn in an advanced society, gain new skills, experience motivation by exceptional motivators, value learning and development, and deal with work relationships in unique ways (Luscombe et al. 2013; Schofield & Honore 2015). In essence, these attributes of Generation Y employees based on their experiences presents a challenge to managers as it implies that their commitment to work is different.

In the UAE, Generation Y embraces characteristics that are unique and differentiate them from characteristics of individuals in other GCC countries and across the world (Lim 2012; 2013; Schofield & Honore 2015). Lim (2013) illustrated that Generation Y individuals are highly-skilled individuals since they grew up in the era of information technology where they have unlimited access to information and experience modernisation and globalisation in various aspects of life. For example, in their schools and workplaces, Generation Y employees virtually employ technology in performing numerous tasks and activities (Khera & Malik 2016). However, the private sector holds on to the stereotype that Generation Y Emirati employees are unskilled and unqualified to perform tasks that require advanced skills and knowledge (Tong & Al-Awad 2014).

In their study to determine factors that influence the recruitment of employees in the UAE, Forstenlechner et al. (2012) found that Generation Y individuals have digital skills, encompass strong national identity, show love towards their career, commit to education, and cherish financial stability. The analysis of these attributes shows that Generation Y employees keep abreast with technology, education and globalisation forces that modernise society. An extensive study by Schofield and Honore (2015) revealed similar attributes; it establishes that individual, family and society drive Generation Y to succeed in their careers as determined by high salary, knowledge, expertise and work-life balance. Thus, characteristics of Generation Y employees show that their interests revolve around career development, acquisition of knowledge, and keeping up to date with technological and globalisation forces.

# Generation Y Career Growth and Development in GCC

Modernisation and globalisation are drivers of Generation Y employees in the workplace as they strive for higher academic qualifications and skills. Previous studies have noted that peer orientation, career development and a strong work-life balance are key attributes that differentiate Generation Y employees from the rest. An extensive analysis of Generation Y employees in the GCC countries reveals further attributes, which explains the drivers of success, development and social interactions. According to Schofield and Honore (2015), the pressure to succeed is one of the drivers that make Generation Y grow and develop their careers. Since the prevailing social, economic and cultural conditions value success, Generation Y employees strive to be successful and keep in touch with the modernisation trends.

GCC countries offer an environment for expatriates and citizens to compete for limited opportunities based on their skills and knowledge. A study performed in the GCC countries showed that the pressure to succeed is strong among Generation Y employees as seen by the fact that 76% of them agree that they want to succeed in their careers. The pressure to succeed varies according to state and gender in the GCC region. An in-depth study by Schofield and Honore (2015) exposed that the pressure to succeed is strong in the UAE (80%), Qatar (80%), Kuwait (76%), Oman (76%), Saudi Arabia (76%) and Bahrain (66%), while the pressure to succeed amongst male and female employees is 79% and 70%, respectively. These figures suggest that the strong urge to succeed among Generation Y employees is a motivating force that determines their performance.

The pressure to succeed among Generation Y employees stems from extrinsic and intrinsic motivators. Non-work-related factors such as the status of personal drive, family, parents, religion, society, friends, politics, and government, and work-related factors such as manager and organisation are some factors that define pressure to succeed among Generation Y employees. In their study across the GCC region, Schofield and Honore (2015) found that personal drive is the leading cause for pressure to succeed at 59% followed by religion (8%), society (5%), friends (3%), manager (2%), organisation (2%) and politics (1%).

These findings reveal that non-work-related factors significantly influence the drive amongst Generation Y employees to succeed in their careers. Although the personal drive is leading among all GCC countries, society and family have a strong impact in the UAE whereas religion has a strong impact in Saudi Arabia and Oman. Gender comparison shows that females seem to have stronger personal drive than males. In this view, managers ought to understand that Generation Y employees’ drive to succeed comes from themselves.

Perception of career success varies from one generation to another because it is a factor of salary, work-life balance, knowledge, expertise, reputation, job status, connections, independence and opportunity. A survey performed across GCC countries revealed that high salary (54%), knowledge and expertise (46%), and good work-life balance (37%) are the leading factors that Generation Y employees consider important for career success (Schofield & Honore 2015). The perception of career success is consistent across the GCC countries for Generation Y employees. Those in Bahrain and Qatar consider work-life balance as a key factor to career success while Generation Y employees in Saudi Arabia and the UAE consider knowledge and expertise important factors to achieve career success. While males prefer knowledge and expertise as a measure of career success, females prefer reputation, job status and independence as measures of career success.

Given that family and society are major drivers of success, this implies that high salary, expertise, knowledge and work-life balance are familial and societal attributes. According to Ismail and Lu (2014), Generation Y individuals in the GCC countries value education, development, experience, knowledge and respect. The existence of such themes shows that Generation Y employees in the GCC countries have specific preferences in their lives, which point to their unique interests in the labour market.

# Generation Y Participation in the UAE Workforce

Generation Y comprises a significant proportion of the world’s population. Essentially, Generation Y comprises individuals who were born between 1980 and 1999 who have similar values, experience, attitudes, and inspirations. Generation Y employees in the UAE comprises 45% of the population with unique attributes and needs that make them stand out in their workplaces (Lim 2013). The entry of Generation Y employees into the labour market of the UAE has significant implications because they represent a considerable proportion of the population. Born in the era of information technology, Generation Y individuals understand technology and have the best technological knowledge because they can easily access information on the Internet through smartphones, tablets, laptops and computers.

With the experience gained from their industrious parents (Baby Boomers), Generation Y individuals have understood the dynamics of labour and have created innovative ways to perform their tasks (Ozcelik 2015). For instance, Generation Y individuals are inquisitive and creative, prefer teamwork, value career growth, and desire empowering environments in their workplaces (Flanagan 2015). According to Guillot-Soulez and Soulez (2014), Generation Y employees prefer organisations that provide opportunities for training, career growth, and talent exploitation. The preferences of Generation Y employees impose pressure on human resource managers to adjust their conventional management strategies and adopt progressive and responsive ones in line with the dynamic needs of current employees. Therefore, with the above-mentioned requirements, human resource managers have the challenge of accommodating the unique attributes of Generation Y employees in the UAE.

The analysis of the labour market of the UAE shows that Emiratisation and retirement of Generation X have boosted the entry of Generation Y into the labour market. Demographics show that Emiratis and expatriates constitute 15% and 85% respectively of the workforce in the UAE (Lim 2012). Forstenlechner et al. (2012) asserted that Emiratisation has increased the proportion of Emiratis in the labour market, thus contributing to a significant increase in the proportion of Generation Y employees (Forstenlechner et al. 2012; Kitana & Vhebi 2015). As a result, Emiratisation and the emergence of Generation Y employees have changed the attributes of employees in the labour market. Moreover, the retirement of Generation X employees in the past five years has led to their rapid decline from 35% in 2010 to 26% in 2015 (Lim 2012; 2013). Meanwhile, although statistics show that Generation Y employees are increasingly becoming the dominant segment of the UAE labour market, studies regarding the impact of non-work-related factors on their performance is lacking (Lim 2012). Thus, a study to identify and determine the influence of non-work-related factors on the organisational commitment of these employees is essential to improve their performance.

## Organisational Commitment

According to Staniok (2016), organisational commitment is mainly the level of enthusiasm that employees have towards the tasks that are assigned to them at the workplace; organisational commitment is explained by the relative strength of employees’ identification and involvement with the goals of the organisation. Based on different jobs in the organisation, it is always expected that employees will deliver on the given tasks with the needed level of focus. Van Rossenberg et al. (2018) further explained that organisations need workers who are psychologically attached to their work in order to be in a better position to realise their performance targets. With the continuing transition of work from the traditional context to more modern approaches, it is vital for organisations to develop more efficient strategies to keep their employees attached to work. Oludeyi (2015, p.35) gave another clear definition of organisational commitment, “as the link that exists between the extraneous interests of individuals and the consistent line of activities that individuals undertake within the organisation”. From all the definitions that help understand organisational commitment, it is clear that organisational commitment is connected to both external and internal factors that exist in relation to the given work, which are further discussed below. Consequently, it is critical to understand the nature of organisational commitment and how it may be influenced by both external and internal factors.

One of the key categories of factors that influence commitment to work are the individual factors. According to Staniok (2016), the most critical individual factors that influence organisational commitment include attributes such as age, education, and the gender of individuals. When focusing on improving the organisational commitment of employees, organisations need to emphasise the individual factors. The context of this research is to explore the impact of non-work-related factors on organisational commitment among Generation Y employees. Hence, key individual factors such as age and gender could help understand the factors that influence commitment to work among Emirati Generation Y employees in the public sector. Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) explained the individual factors of organisational commitment based on the personal goals that employees set based on their work. Apart from the immediate demographic factors such as gender, individuals also have more commitment to work when they have personal goals that they need to attain in the organisation. Therefore, personal factors play a significant role in influencing organisational commitment of employees.

Moreover, organisational commitment is influenced by the attitudes of employees towards the various dimensions of work experience. Particularly, organisational commitment is shaped by the attitudes that employees develop toward aspects such as work satisfaction and salaries, as well as the management and their colleagues (Staniok, 2016). Generally, employees want to be in careers that satisfy their needs in terms of both performance and the earnings that are derived from it. Organisations may influence the level of satisfaction by providing the necessary satisfaction with work. Satisfaction is influenced by aspects such as the provision of a good work environment where employees can realise their growth throughout their careers (Staniok, 2016). When growth is present or available, the level of organisational commitment may increase (Staniok, 2016); however, satisfaction decreases when opportunities for growth in the workplace are limited. Dimensions such as pay and autonomy that employees have in their workplace greatly influence their commitment to work. Oludeyi (2015) reiterated the influence of these factors on organisational commitment by revealing that noisy work environments, unsafe working conditions, insufficient resources, unhealthy personal relationships, as well as poor pay that is below the market rate, have a negative influence on organisational commitment. Hence, organisations must understand these dimensions to be in a stronger position to boost the level of commitment of employees by providing the right environment for their respective jobs.

Organisational commitment is manifested in three components. Meyer and Allen (1991) go beyond the existing distinction between attitudinal and behavioural commitment to argue that commitment to work, as a psychological state, has three notable separate components including desire (affective commitment), obligation (normative commitment), and a need (continuance commitment). Continuance commitment is the first component of component of commitment. Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran (2005) explained that continuance commitment means that an individual cannot leave their job for another job. This is because leaving the current job would mean that an individual incurs extra costs such as money and other resources. As individuals do not want to incur excessive costs, they choose to become more committed to their current work hence showing continuance commitment. Adding to this, Oludeyi (2015) restated that continuance commitment is best explained by the cost of leaving a particular job such as giving up pension plans and any potential form of profit sharing. Therefore, continuance commitment to work is mainly anchored on the need of the employee to avoid extra costs of leaving the job.

Another form of organisational commitment is *affective* commitment. Affective commitment to work stems from the attachment that the worker has toward the career as well as the organisation. Affective organisational commitment is mainly influenced by the personal desire of an individual to remain in the job and affection for the organisation (Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran 2005). The desire to remain in the job is shown by the employees’ similarities to the characteristics of the job as well as what the organisation offers in regard to the job. Oludeyi (2015) also observed that a worker who has affective commitment to the job strongly identifies with the goals of the job; additionally, emotional ties with the job define the affective commitment of employees to the work.

The last form of organisational commitment is *normative* commitment. According to Oludeyi (2015), normative commitment to work is evident by the sense of obligation shown by employees. The obligation to be committed to work stems from the normative pressures, which are usually internal. Consequently, employees become committed to their work, not because of the belief that they derive their earnings from it, but because they believe it is the moral thing for them to do. Factors such as the family and neighbourhood could influence one’s normative commitment to work. Normative influence can be explained based on the influence that non-work-related factors such as neighbourhood have on organisational commitment. Moreover, normative commitment could be influenced by the input that the organisation has to the advancement of one’s career through approaches such as training. An employee may want to repay the organisation by remaining committed to their work. Therefore, normative commitment is explained by an aspect of obligation on the employees’ part.

Sahertian, Setiawan and Sunayo (2018) explained the effectiveness of workplace spirituality on organisational commitment. More specifically, Sahertian et al. (2018) noted that spirituality is inseparable from the organisation because it explains the behaviour of employees. It was demonstrated that spirituality is a key determinant of personality and ultimately the commitment of employees to work. As individuals become more spiritually committed, they also show more commitment towards their work. Prominently, spirituality shapes the commitment of individuals to work by leading to greater outcomes in terms of job performance among individuals. This dimension will help in greater understanding of the influence that religiosity has on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees in the UAE public sector.

In this study, the unidimensional approach to organisational commitment as opposed to a multidimensional approach was adopted. This was in line with what Porter et.al (1974, p.1), who utilised the unidimensional approach to investigate the variations in organisational work commitment and job satisfaction, as they relate to the turnover rates of employees. In their study, Porter (1974, p.3), identified researched the turnover rates of individuals with the focus on the unidimensional approach to organisational with the focus on factors such as the strong belief in and acceptance of organisational values among employees, the willingness to make considerable efforts toward the realisation of organisational goals, and the definite desire to maintain the organisational membership. Based on these notable factors, the justification for use of a unidimensional approach rather than a multidimensional approach is to gain a clear understanding of the relative strength of the respondent’s identification with and involvement in the organisation, which is not offered by the multidimensional approach. The multidimensional approach focuses on varied elements that also include the economic factors that impact the attachment of individuals to an organisation. However, this study was not focused on investigating the economic factors that influence commitment, but the psychological attachment that individuals have toward their organisations. Based on the research by Porter (1974, p.3), organisational commitment could be better understood from the close connection that individuals have toward their organisations rather than issues such as continuance commitment that tend to be more inclined on job satisfaction. Hence, the justification for the application of a unidimensional approach was to get an in depth understanding of the attachment and identification with an organisation without consideration of issues such as economic factors.

More so, the justification for the application of a unidimensional approach to organisational commitment rather than a multidimensional approach is that it allows for the assessment of organisational commitment among different participants in a parallel manner. According to Klein et.al (2014, p.243), a unidimensional approach makes it easier to measure the level of organisational commitment across varied groups of participants in a parallel manner, hence, making it easier to compare results within and across participants. Having respondents drawn from different organisations is the target of this study and using a unidimensional approach to measure organisational commitment will set the ground for the attainment of generalisable outcomes in the study. In this study, the focus is on exploring non-work-related factors that influence organisational commitment among Generation Y employees in the UAE. With the use of unidimensional commitment, it will be easier to measure the level of organisational commitment and apply the results across Generation Y employees working in different areas of the public sector. The results could also be generalised to the entire GCC countries that have similar cultural dimensions to the UAE.

A final justification for the application of a unidimensional rather than a multidimensional approach to organisational commitment is because of the need to establish the social attachment between individuals and their respective organisations. In this regard, Menezes et.al (2015) present the argument that the continuance dimension of commitment fails to integrate the concept of organisational commitment, and attitudinal organisational commitment is a unidimensional construct that is mainly made up of affective commitment and normative commitment. Basically, Menezes et.al (2015) explain that continuance commitment does not mainly come into the picture when explaining organisational commitment among individuals because it has almost null correlation with affective commitment and a low positive correlation with normative commitment. This justifies why this study will adopt a unidimensional approach to organisational commitment with the aim of identifying how non-work-related factors impact the social attachment of Generation Y employees to their organisations. The unidimensional view is clearer compared to the multidimensional view because it delves deeper into how organisational commitment is built through the proactive behaviours of individuals toward the organisation rather than motivations such as monetary rewards.

# 3.8 Organisational commitment as a Challenge in the UAE

The organisational commitment of employees is one of the attributes that determine productivity of employees and therefore the performance of organisations (Nahm, Lauver & Keyes 2012). In essence, organisational commitment is the amount of passion that employees have towards their tasks, duties and responsibilities in an organisation (Nahm, Lauver & Keyes 2012). Human resource managers usually aim to promote the organisational commitment of employees to improve their productivity and overall performance of an organisation. The changing dynamics of employees in the UAE has a significant impact on the organisational commitment of employees. Despite efforts in campaigning for Emiratisation, public and private sectors continue to grapple with the diminishing job opportunities amongst UAE nationals due to low organisational commitment, thus resulting in a massive decline of available jobs (Askary & Kukunuru 2014; Saha 2016).

The organisational commitment of employees is hard to achieve because of the unique and dynamic needs of employees. For instance, in the context of this study, it is expected that Generation Y have unique and dynamic needs that make it difficult to achieve organisational commitment, and hence, the need for updated management strategies (Lim, 2013). Nahm et al. (2012) stated that human resource managers often experience low organisational commitment levels characterised by absenteeism, low interest, poor productivity, and a lack of motivation from their Generation Y employees. Askary and Kukunuru (2014) asserted that high organisational commitment levels indicate the extent of creativity, innovativeness, profitability, satisfaction and productivity of employees and this, therefore, reflects their retention. From this point of view, organisational commitment is an important parameter that reflects the utility and productivity of Generation Y employees in the workplaces.

As a critical parameter in human resources management, the organisational commitment of an individual enables the determination of not only the retention of employees but also their productivity and performance. Experts have come up with numerous models of assessing the organisational commitment amongst employees (Baba & Sliong 2012). In 1991, Meyer and Allen introduced a three-component model comprising of affective, normative, and continuance commitment (Bouckenooghe, Schwarz & Minbashian 2015). The three-component commitment model developed by Meyer and Allen (1999) has been selected as the basis for the development of the conceptual framework for the present study because of its applicability and validity. This model is expanded on in more detail in section 3.13.

To enhance validity and reliability of the commitment model, additional aspects such as passive continuance, active continuance, and value have been added as measurements of organisational commitment (Wong & Tong 2014). *Active* continuance measures the inclination of an employee to remain in an organisation because it offers opportunities for training and promotion while *passive* continuance is the tendency of an employee to stay in an organisation owing to lack of better opportunities in other organisations. *Value* measures how employees perceive their value to their organisations and are willing to exert considerable effort if they feel they are valued.

# Non-Work-Related Factors

Numerous factors influence the organisational commitment of employees in their workplaces and organisations. The emergence of Generation Y employees with unique demographic attributes presents challenges to human resource managers for these employees have complex needs related to non-work-related factors.

Human resource managers employ these non-work-related attributes when recruiting employees that exhibit a commendable commitment to their work. Numerous studies have confirmed that gender, age, academic level, and marital status affect the commitment of employees to work (Affum-Osei et al. 2015; Beloor et al. 2017; Lee & Chen 2013). As these factors have been extensively studied and confirmed that they have marked influence on the organisational commitment of employees, this study seeks to examine additional non-work-related factors that influence Generation Y employees in the UAE.

# Family Influence

Demographic factors related to family influence have considerable impact on commitment of employees to their work. In the UAE, where there is a significant increase in the proportion of employees in Generation Y, human resource managers are struggling to understand the complex needs of employees. Lim (2012) asserted that demographic factors mediate the impact of extrinsic and intrinsic factors on the commitment of Generation Y employees. As employees are influenced by their families, the examination of the demographic attributes of their families illustrates their experiences, values, and aspirations. Affum-Osei et al. (2015) identified demographic attributes surrounding the background of employees as products of experiences, which shape their commitment to their respective work. The study holds that additional demographic factors – namely, academic qualification of parents, paternal job level, wealth status, and sibling order – influence the organisational commitment of employees (Kultalahti & Viitala 2014). With this understanding, consideration of the impact of demographic attributes on organisational commitment of Generation Y employees is critical.

An in-depth study conducted by Schofield and Honore (2015) in the GCC countries confirmed that demographic factors influence Generation Y individuals. In this study, it was established that parents, family and society influence the organisational commitment of Generation Y individuals in the UAE. A review of the sources of an individual’s drive to success and commitment in the GCC countries has shown similar trends regarding the influence of non-work-related factors such as personal drive, parents, family, society, friends, and business leaders. The analysis of the UAE labour market has shown that personal drive has a leading influence on demographic factors at 37% followed by parents and family at 30% and society at 14% (Schofield & Honore 2015).

To establish the effect of family on organisational commitment amongst employees, Khan (2014) conducted a study on working women and revealed that familial conflict is a negative predictor of the commitment to work and employee performance. However, as no study has examined the influence of demographic concepts such as family and society on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees in the UAE, this particular study aims to determine their effects.

# Religiosity

Religion is a personal belief that influences organisational commitment of employees because it determines values, principles, morals and norms that individuals encapsulate. Basically, religiosity measures the extent to which individuals comply with their religious beliefs, values and practices. Choerudin (2015) asserted that religiosity comprises of affective, cognitive and behavioural dimensions that drive people to internalise certain values, principles, morals and norms.

The affective dimension of spirituality is the emotional status, which shows particular feelings towards certain aspects of their work. The cognitive dimension refers to the knowledge and understanding of religious tenets that form the basis of spirituality in an individual while the behavioural dimension represents how individuals espouse their religious beliefs in the workplace. In a study conducted by Choerudin (2015) on the reasons for variations in organisational commitment, it was shown that religious belief, commitment and behaviour explain 8.2%, 16.7% and 20.2% of the variations, respectively. This shows that religion has a considerable amount of influence on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees.

In the UAE, the presence of the dominant Islamic religion reinforces the influence of religiosity among the Emiratis. Salahudin et al. (2016) argued that Islamic teachings permeate workplaces and organisations because they help define work ethics by influencing the normative and the continuance dimensions of organisational commitment. Consequently, employee behaviours reflect Islamic values, beliefs and principles that individuals have in the UAE. In similar studies, the findings demonstrated that spirituality promotes the organisational commitment of employees to their work and organisation by enhancing responsibility and involvement (Marri et al. 2013; Miller, Shepperd & McCullough 2013). As Muslims make up the majority in the UAE, the Islamic religion has a major influence on their way of life and their behaviours. Thus this study proposes that religiosity as Islam has an immense impact on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees in the UAE.

# Neighbourhood Influence

The neighbourhood of an individual influences economic activities and status in their society. However, a majority of studies on the relationship between the influence of neighbourhood and individuals residing in it focus on poverty. For instance, one of the studies revealed a significant relationship between unemployment rates and neighbourhood influence (Brattbakk & Wessel 2013). According to Manley (2013), neighbourhoods have a profound impact on people, particularly in their early life, through socialisation mechanisms such as conditioning and imitation. This conclusion is oriented primarily at people with low socioeconomic status, although it can also be extrapolated to the wealthy.

Therefore, young people exposed to affluence and wealth internalise this behaviour and values through the same socialisation mechanisms. Additionally, Zhang et al. (2014) have shown in their study that neighbourhoods marked by a high socioeconomic status tend to promote materialism and respective values in their residents. As a result, these residents are more prone to engaging in over-consumptive behaviours and, in order to continue these behaviours throughout their lives they need sufficient funds, which in turn makes them strive towards maintaining and increasing their income levels.

Neighbourhoods and their economic statuses have also been studied with respect to their impact on organisational commitment of the people residing in them. However, again, many studies focus on poverty and poor neighbourhoods, including for instance, the study by Nieuwenhuis et al. (2016). Although they are rare, there are a few studies linking the wealth of neighbourhoods and organisational commitment, such as one by Eslamdost et al. (2014). This study researched organisational commitment of teachers and showed that an improvement in the socioeconomic status promoted and increased the level of their commitment to teaching.

Additionally, socioeconomic status has been a protective factor against professional burnout. It may be proposed that an improvement of socioeconomic status and the ability to reside in neighbourhoods that are successful from an economic perspective are regarded as a sort of gratification and reward for hard work. This idea is echoed by Kumari and Afroz (2013), who revealed that one’s neighbourhood, i.e., the place of residence, contributes to increased job satisfaction and thus enhanced organisational commitment. Nevertheless, a contrary proposition about rich countries with wealthy neighbourhoods where nationals reside exists, which also applies to the UAE. Hence, it is assumed that organisational commitment in such countries is low because people have considerable wealth and do not depend on their work in order to maintain their opulent lifestyles.

As Maceda (2016) pointed out; “there is a high number of billionaires and individuals with over $100 million” in the UAE, which significantly impacts their lifestyle. Moreover, their fortune comes primarily from investments made a few decades ago, thereby allowing a lifestyle where it is not a necessity for them to work. Wealthy individuals in the UAE have developed their own lifestyle as evident, for instance, from their social media profiles. As Cliff (2016) showcased, most young individuals who are the UAE nationals enjoy a luxurious lifestyle with no focus or even desire to work since they have no incentive to do so; this is because they originate from wealthy families with a steady source of income from investments and thus this negatively affects their organisational commitment by potentially lowering it. Moreover, studies show that globalisation and modernisation have significantly affected social structures common for Generation Y in the UAE (Maitner & Stewart-Ingersoll 2016).

Moreover, cultural peculiarities like high power distance and the hierarchical nature of society also impact people. Religion, nationality and culture are other factors that aid in the creation and sustenance of stable social structures, which stratify Emiratis in the UAE. Ahmed (2017) argued that social stratification is a problem of urban planning in the UAE as there are divisions between Emiratis and expatriates and, thus, the rich and the poor. Familial wealth is a factor that determines the economic status of individuals and neighbourhoods that they inhabit (Hanieh 2013).

As Generation Y employees come from diverse families in different neighbourhoods based on their social stratification, this study seeks to determine the influence of neighbourhoods on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees in the UAE. A previous study compared the behaviour of household consumption and established that Emiratis consume more than expatriates in the UAE in terms of housing, food and education (Katsaiti et al. 2017). These findings show that Emiratis either earn more than expatriates or spend a higher proportion of their income. According to Daleure (2016), Emiratis earn more income than expatriates despite having low professional qualifications due to the Emiratisation policy. From this perspective, consumption behaviour, citizenship and skills determine the income of employees and consequently their neighbourhood economic index.

# 3.13 Three-Component Model of Commitment

As mentioned in section 3.1., the ecological systems theory is the major theory used in the present research to which the latter strives to contribute. However, the literature review and consideration of research problems have revealed that using only this theory would be insufficient to fully understanding the complex notion of commitment. Citing this, the three-component model of commitment is used as a supplementary theory supporting the process of research.

Commitment is a vital psychological attribute amongst employees as it helps predict employee behaviours such as job performance, turnover rate, innovativeness, and collaboration. The three-component model (TCM) is an elaborate theory that elucidates employees’ commitment to work based on three psychological components, namely, affective commitment (AC), normative commitment (NC), and continuance commitment (CC) (Bouckenooghe et al. 2015; Meyer & Allen 1999). AC is the component that measures emotional attachment and the desire to commit to an organisation. According to Meyer and Allen (1999), demographic attributes such as age, gender, education and family influence are established factors that influence AC among individuals. According to Lim (2013), intrinsic motivators such as independence, freedom, supportive social networks and opportunities for career growth boost commitment of Generation Y employees to their workplace. In this view, it implies that managers should motivate Generation Y employees by focusing on intrinsic motivators as they have a marked influence on AC.

Affective commitment refers to the feelings that employees have about their organisations. It is described as a series of activities that are undertaken by employees that motivate them to be committed to work. These activities can include the time and even money spent for achieving this goal (Mercurio 2015). For example, an increased amount of time employees spend in an organisation is demonstrative of their affective commitment. The type of affective commitment that employees display predicts tenure; this type of commitment has an impact on certain outcomes within organisations, such as absenteeism and turnover levels (Sulima & Al-Kathairi, 2013).

Affective commitment is described as the emotional and psychological connection that employees have with an organisation. Therefore, it is emotional attachment that employees have to their organisation and, by extension, their work (Mercurio 2015). In the course of dealing with this level of commitment, organisations tend to focus on providing employees with certain incentives. Such incentives will go a long way in making employees feel some sense of belonging to the organisation, therefore positively impacting their organisational commitment (Tikare 2015). They also make employees empathise with the problems that the organisation faces and, thus, employees feel that the organisation holds some kind of meaning in their lives. Moreover, these incentives make employees begin to feel that the organisational goals are in line with their own, hence increasing their organisational commitment.

Personality is an indispensable aspect of the affective commitment that employees develop. When the work experiences of employees fulfil their needs and allow them to fully make use of their talents, they are more likely to develop affective commitment towards their work. Additionally, when organisations allow employees to express their values, it has the potential of resulting in greater organisational commitment (Mercurio 2015). In such cases where employees are validated, they are likely to experience more organisational commitment. Affective commitment has also been associated with the decentralisation of decision-making. Other essential factors that organisations use to cultivate affective commitment among employees include providing employees with the opportunities for advancement and participating in the decision-making process (Vandenberghe, Bentein & Stinghamber 2004); this is particularly important for decisions that directly impact them. Another motivator is the opportunity for the employees to express themselves (Mercurio 2015). Additionally, many organisations also work to ensure that employees recognise the value that they add to the company through their work, thus, enhancing their commitment to the organisation.

As the component assesses a moral obligation or a sense of obligation, NC drives employees to remain in an organisation because of organisational commitment gained through training, incentives, and rewards amongst other motivators. Given that Generation Y employees value career growth and development, Naim and Lenka (2017) established that mentoring and training help drive their intention to stay in their respective organisations. CC is the component that determines the extent of gains and losses that employees could make should they decide to leave an organisation. A study performed in the UAE showed that organisational justice, human relations and job performance have a positive relationship with CC (Sawada 2013; Suliman & Al-Kathairi 2012). Hence, with organisational justice in place, organisations can improve the commitment of their employees.

As a theoretical framework, ample evidence shows that employee commitment to work varies from person to person depending on generational attributes. Across the world, numerous studies have demonstrated that employee commitment to work is linked to aspects such as employee involvement, job performance, innovativeness and career development (Mathew 2016; Mohsen 2015; Schofield & Honore 2015; Yigit & Aksay 2015). Thus, evidently, employees’ commitment to work is a management parameter that defines relationships between organisations and their employees. Demographic changes over time have led to generational differences among employees in various countries and labour markets. The first empirical study in the Arab World applied TCM in studying generational trends and found out that AC and NC are significant components of employee commitment to work among Generation Y while CC is a significant component among Generation X (Mohsen 2016). All these are factors of commitment to the organisation. Based on these findings, it is apparent that TCM is an appropriate model that provides ample evidence showing the organisational commitment levels of Generation Y employees in the UAE.

In a recent survey among Emiratis, Maceda (2017) reported that 85% of employees are not engaged in their workplaces because of rapidly changing work conditions and competition in the labour market. The figure implies that organisations in the UAE do not optimise the performance of their employees, resulting in unnecessary losses. Mohsen (2016) argued that the extent of engagement amongst employees is a pointer to the management strategies, cultural values, and demographic attributes. Thus, in line with TCM, the management ought to improve commitment of the Emirati employees by motivating them and empowering them to engage effectively in their workplaces.

# CHAPTER FOUR: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 2 below is the conceptual framework depicting the three concepts of the proposed study as they relate to organisational commitment. As shown in the figure (2) below, the first notable factor explicated in the study is family influence. It mainly describes the influence that family members such as parents have on the individual’s organisational commitment. The second factor is religiosity, specifically the influence of the Islamic religion on the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees. The third factor is neighbourhood influence; the study will describe how neighbourhood factors such as cultures and beliefs influence the organisational commitment of individuals. In the conceptual framework below, organisational commitment is conceptualised as a multifaceted construct with three separable components including affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment as suggested by Allen and Meyer (1990) and Meyer and Allen (1991). The three separate components of organisational commitment help illustrate the different reasons that keep Generation Y employees committed to their work and organisations. These factors are explained in detail in the diagram below:

Family

Influence (FI)

Neighbourhood Influence (NI)

Religiosity

(R)

Organisational commitment (OC)

* Affective commitment
* Normative commitment

Family

Influence (FI)

Neighbourhood Influence (NI)

Religiosity

(R)

Organisational commitment (WC)

* Affective commitment
* Continuance commitment
* Normative commitment

Figure 2: Illustration of the proposed conceptual framework

# Family Influence and Organisational commitment

Since employees in various organisations are not only individuals but social beings as well, their commitment to work is dependent on non-work-related factors like familial influence. On a daily basis, employees oscillate between work and family as they are two major social domains. Primarily, situations that occur in the workplace and with family influence quality of life of employees and, consequently, their commitment to work. In their study, Mukanzi and Senaji (2017) explained that family has a substantial impact on the commitment of employees to their workplaces or organisations, as familial and work roles often conflict.

Family-to-work conflict occurs when employees shift their family-related issues to their workplaces, whereas work-to-family conflict ensues when employees transfer work-related complications to their families. For instance, mothers with children and household work experience great challenges in balancing family and work responsibilities. Khan (2015) for example established that family and organisational commitment of employees inversely influence each other. In line with this, recent findings of Bae and Young (2017) suggested that family-friendly policies such as childcare leave, and childcare subsidy and maternity leave boost commitment levels of employees. Evidently, the form and extent of duties that employees perform at their homes coupled with the help from organisations aid in determining their level of commitment in the workplace.

In addition to family responsibilities, marital status influences organisational commitment of employees. Tikare (2015) performed a survey and employed the Affective-Continuance-Normative scale to determine the impact of the marital statuses of nurses on their commitment to work. According to Tikare (2015), married individuals exhibited a higher level of commitment than unmarried individuals did.

The increasing turnover rates of employees in the oil and gas industry have puzzled human resource managers in the UAE. A study performed by Kultalahti and Viitala (2014) in the UAE among employees who work in the oil and gas industry revealed that individual attributes and family influence are some of the factors that influence employee commitment and turnover. The growth and dominance of millennials in the labour market of the UAE pose considerable challenges to human resource managers as they derive from diverse family influences.

Kultalahti and Viitala (2014) also found motivational drivers, such as work-life balance, flexibility, and social relationships, are factors that come from family influence, which have a significant impact on the commitment of employees. With this point taken into consideration, the study seeks to determine the influence of factors in the family, such as marital status, birth order, family size, family head and education level of family head, work-life balance, and job level of the head of the family. Thus, it is predicted that family has a strong influence on the organisational commitment of the UAE national Generation Y employees.

# Religiosity and Organisational commitment

Across the world, religion has a marked influence on individuals, families, organisations and societies. Being a source of values, principles, norms and ideals that guide humans in various communities across the world, ample evidence indicates that religion has a substantial effect on the commitment of employees to their respective organisations. To determine if religiosity matters to organisations, Farrukh, Ying and Ahmed (2016) investigated the relationship between religiosity and the three dimensions of organisational commitment. The findings indicated that religiosity significantly predicts normative dimensions of organisational commitment.

These findings are relevant because they show that religiosity and commitment levels of employees are inseparable elements which have to be considered in the management of employees. A study conducted amongst nurses suggests that religious beliefs of employees reflect in their organisational commitment (Bahrami et al. 2016). The findings reiterate the idea that human resource managers need to provide space for spiritual nourishment and a favourable environment for employees to strengthen their religious beliefs. In a bid to explicate the relationship between religiosity and organisational commitment, Imran et al. (2017) designed a conceptual framework where it was seen that individuals with intrinsic religiosity have a higher level of organisational commitment than those with extrinsic religiosity (Imran et al. 2017). Therefore, religiosity is an exceptional non-work-related factor that has a marked impact on the organisational commitment of employees.

In the context of the UAE, religion forms an integral part of life as ideals, norms, principles and values spring from Islam, the dominant religion in the region. As Islam has shown elaborate ideology for work ethics, Muslims have incorporated them into organisations and businesses. In a comprehensive study, Salahudin et al. (2015) surveyed 156 individuals from small- and medium-sized enterprises and found that Islamic work ethics influences organisational commitment. Individuals with a higher level of Islamic work ethics have a greater level of commitment to their work. Therefore, Salahudin et al. (2015) argued that commitment is high among Muslims because religion requires them to develop the emotional attachment to people, society, organisations and, above all, Allah.

Bouarif (2015) undertook a further study to determine the link between religiosity and the three modules of employee commitment. The study revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between religiosity and affective commitment. Hence, it is clear that religiosity and organisational commitment have an intricate link, thus explaining their positive relationship amongst employees. Therefore, in the second proposition, the study predicts that religiosity affects organisational commitment of Emirati Generation Y employees.

# Neighbourhood Influence and Organisational commitment

Neighbourhood influence is a non-work-related term that represents the socioeconomic status of individuals in this study. McCunn and Gifford (2014) found that neighbourhood attributes have a significant relationship with organisational commitment in their study. In Western countries, individuals in wealthy neighbourhoods are shown to have a high level of organisational commitment (Zhang, Howell & Howell 2014). Hence, the nature of neighbourhood influences on the organisational commitment of residents is clearly seen; wealthy neighbourhoods affect the materialistic stance of individuals in their societies.

In Western countries, poverty and low income are typically associated with low organisational commitment, as illustrated by evidence from various studies, including research by Luz, de Paula and de Oliveira (2018); their study showed the relationship between organisational commitment levels and poverty in Brazil; Goulden (2010) who explained the impact of low pay on work in the United Kingdom, and Mohamad, Cha, Ramlan and Azmi (2014) who studied worker commitment in Malaysia. Brattbakk and Wessel (2013) have additionally shown that low neighbourhood influence is related to the high unemployment rates. They explained this finding by claiming that unemployment is caused by low organisational commitment of individuals residing in such neighbourhoods. Relatedly, Manley (2013) suggested that young people growing up and living in such neighbourhoods develop low organisational commitment and are largely unemployed by means of socialisation mechanisms such as imitation and conditioning. Additionally, Nieuwenhuis et al.’s (2016) study revealed that Dutch youths’ exposure to poor neighbourhoods between the age of 16 and 21 results in low organisational commitment at the age of 25. The above-mentioned studies as well as many others in Western countries have shown that neighbourhood statuses do have an impact on people living there and their organisational commitment.

According to the findings of Zhang et al. (2014), neighbourhoods with high socioeconomic status augment materialism because they predispose individuals to increased consumption of products. As materialistic values arise from neighbourhoods, residents tend to keep abreast with prevailing socioeconomic conditions. According to Eslamdost et al. (2014), data collected from teachers showed that the improvement of socioeconomic conditions of teachers enhances their organisational commitment and reduces burnout.

Therefore, the current study proposes that in rich countries such as the UAE, there is reduced organisational commitment because employees are self-sufficient and do not see the need to be committed to their work. As previously mentioned, many affluent UAE nationals live primarily on the wealth accumulated by their families accrued thanks to heavy investments in profitable industries (Said 2017). Due to these investments as well as the rapid economic development of the country, locals enjoy a wide range of social benefits from the government such as generous subsidies, low utilities, low credit fees whilst purchasing real estate, as well as other benefits that ultimately discourage them from working.

Therefore, it is assumed that employed UAE nationals are motivated by factors other than money in their work. Moreover, foreigners who want to establish businesses need to have national sponsors who own at least 51%, which means that nationals have a higher stake in these businesses and accumulate wealth without investing their money or efforts into developing or managing businesses (Rapoza 2014). Correspondingly, the lifestyle adopted by most UAE nationals is unique to their economic position and they flaunt their wealth through various means; therefore, organisational commitment and employment as such are not considered to be priorities, particularly for young people (Cliff 2016).

The social dynamics in the UAE explain why neighbourhood influence has a significant effect on individuals. The analysis of cultural dimensions in the UAE shows that it has a high power distance index, which indicates that it is a hierarchical society. Nationality, profession, religion, and culture are some of the factors create social structures that place Emiratis in various hierarchies. Kumari and Afroz (2013) collected data from 200 employees and found out that place of residence is one of the factors that enhance satisfaction and increase organisational commitment. In different neighbourhoods, Emiratis have varied behaviours of consumption. Katsaiti et al. (2017) established that expatriates consume less than the emirates in aspects of life such as food, housing, and education. The differences in consumption patterns and levels between expatriates and UAE nationals show the stratification structure that is present in the UAE.

## 4.4 Components of Organisational commitment in the Conceptual Framework

### *4.4.1 Affective Organisational commitment*

Employees’ emotions towards their organisations affect their decision or desire to remain within that particular organisation; therefore, it is safe to assume that when the affective commitment of an employee is high, their organisational commitment is equally high (Mercurio 2015). Hence, employees with high affective commitment will remain committed to their organisations; because of their attachment to their companies, they will not want to make any considerable changes and have no desire to move (Al-Zeifeti & Mohamad, 2017).

As indicated in the literature review, affective commitment consists of employees developing high organisational goals and ultimately showing a sense of goal-orientation towards them (Allen & Meyer 1990). For this reason, they are willing to continue working within these organisations to ensure that these particular goals are achieved. Consequently, high commitment to the achievement of organisational goals has an effect on the extent to which employees remain committed to their organisations (Mercurio 2015); such employees are concerned with remaining in the organisation so that they can contribute to the achievement of organisational goals.

Studies indicate that employees who show affective commitment tend to feel that they fit in within their organisation and feel comfortable in that setting. In addition, they are highly satisfied with their work and the career that they are pursuing within the organisation. Accordingly, such employees do not have any plans to make changes to their career or the organisations they work for (Mercurio 2015). Thus, such employees have high organisational commitment given their affective commitment.

Additionally, employees with high affective commitment also tend to have high organisational commitment because they feel valued; they feel that their organisations treat them as assets based on their work (Mercurio 2015) and find themselves to be significant and relevant in their positions. For this reason, they develop considerable attachment to their organisations due to their perception of how much value these organisations places on them. Such employees are willing to act as ambassadors of their organisations through their work (Affum-Osei et al. 2015). It means that they are constantly positively representing their organisations even when they are not at their workplace (Mercurio 2015). As a result, their organisations tend to find them to be great assets and, ultimately, this creates a positive work environment for these employees, which influences their organisational commitment, making them want to remain in their organisations.

However, if there is a drop in employees’ affective commitment, then organisations are likely to experience lower levels of employee turnover and tenure and high levels of absenteeism because of a decline in organisational commitment (Adel 2016). The findings of research conducted on affective commitment show that employee retention in organisations remains a serious issue (Mercurio 2015) as employees with low levels of organisational commitment who are treated positively or negatively based on their work are less likely to remain in their organisations. Thus, absenteeism remains a challenge for many organisations where the organisational commitment of the employees is low (Mercurio 2015) and affective commitment serves as a major indicator of absenteeism in organisations. It is worth noting that higher levels of organisational commitment strongly contribute to lower absenteeism. In contrast, employees with low affective commitment will demonstrate low organisational commitment given that they are not willing to remain working for their organisations.

Affective commitment is vital when it comes to organisational commitment because the turnover rate amongst Generation Y employees can be quite high. This is the generation of employees who can easily resign if their employer does not fulfil their non-work-related needs. This poses a serious issue because inadequate organisational commitment will have a negative effect on organisations (Mercurio 2015); for instance, organisations that fail to have committed employees tend to spend more as they frequently have to hire and train new employees. Thus, organisations must find an effective way to engage with employees in order to increase their organisational commitment (Mercurio 2015); they should ensure that the employees remain satisfied with their job through the development of mentoring programmes, up taking challenges in job designs, and developing a workplace culture that encourages the development of interpersonal relationships (Abid & Farooqi 2015).

### *4.4.2 Continuance Commitment*

Continuance commitment is the second component of organisational commitment based on the conceptual framework. According to Allen and Meyer (1990), the continuance component is the commitment that is based on the costs that employees associate with leaving the organisation. Employees are generally aware of the potential costs that they are bound to incur in the course of leaving the organisation and this plays a key role in determining the level of commitment to their work. As Meyer and Allen (1991) explain, the different costs that employees consider in the process of making the decision to remain committed to their work include costs such as increases in pay, the opportunities for promotion, their freedom, as well as their status in the organisation. Employees would not want to leave their work in the organisation if they are being paid well and may not receive the same payment in another organisation. More so, losing promotional opportunities may make it difficult for employees to change their loyalty from one organisation to another. Therefore, continuance loyalty puts employees in a position where they have to weigh the costs of leaving their current work in the organisation to move to another organisation.

### *4.4.3 Normative Commitment*

Normative commitment is the third components of work or organisational commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990) explain that normative commitment refers to the feelings of employees in relation to the obligation to remain with the organisation. Normative commitment is considered the less common, but important approach of viewing organisational commitment among employees. Based on normative commitment, employees show commitment to their work as a moral duty that is also in line with their own beliefs about the organisation. In another study, Meyer and Allen (1991) note that normative commitment is about the feeling that an employee ought to continue working in the organisation. Therefore, normative commitment is mainly anchored on the feeling of an obligation on the part of employees to work in the organisation because of what the organisation has done for them at some particular point in the course of their work.

# CHAPTER FIVE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a concise overview of the methodology to be employed in the study under consideration. The methodology section aims to justify the reliability, trustworthiness and validity of the chosen research methods with the goal of achieving the purpose of the present research, i.e., revealing the influence of non-work-related factors – namely, familial influence, religiosity and neighbourhood influence – on the organisational commitment of the UAE national Generation Y respondents.

Furthermore, this section covers the research philosophy and approach selected for the study under consideration, the data collection and analysis processes, pilot study, validity and reliability, as well as ethical considerations. All these questions were thoroughly justified in order to develop a robust study that produced valid and reliable results answered the research questions effectively and clearly.

# Research Philosophy and Approach

Prior to conducting research, it was essential to select and justify the selection of a particular research philosophy and approach. All research philosophies focus on specific “correlations between ideas relating to knowledge, truth and reality” (Howell 2013, p. 4). Additionally, Howell (2013, p. 4) claims that “knowledge, truth or reality can either involve abstract conceptualization or be grounded and developed through practical situations and data”. Therefore, due to the existence of various research philosophies, it was important to choose the approach carefully and follow one that was relevant to the topic, objectives, research questions, and field of study. Moreover, the personal attitudes of the researcher also play a role in the selection of an appropriate research philosophy. Besides this, there are some problems relating to the personal attitude of the research to the problem or issue studied, which impacts the choice of the particular research philosophy.

In turn, Saunders et al. (2007, p. 101) recognise the concept of research philosophy as “the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge”. This implies that any researcher strives to develop knowledge in a particular field through the conduct of research, thereby contributing to the existing knowledge and expanding the understanding of a particular phenomenon. Moreover, Howell (2013) is convinced that virtually any research philosophy may be used and adapted for the given research purposes; however, it seems efficient and valid to provide an overview of the most prevalent philosophies in order to facilitate the understanding of said philosophies, thus allowing the researcher to select the one most appropriate to his or her study.

# ‘Resources’ vs ‘Feelings’ Approach

Saunders et al. (2007) claimed that all researchers may be roughly divided into *resources* and *feelings* researchers based on the topic of interest as well as their attitude towards the subject and objectives of the study. Therefore, they claim that before embarking on any research endeavour, a researcher should decide whether they are a resources or feelings researcher because this may have a profound impact on many corresponding choices such as the methodology, and thus the data collection and interpretation process.

The main difference between the two types of researchers lies in the objects studied. In line with this thought, resources researchers can focus on studying specific ‘real’ objects like machines, computers, or other tangible items that physically exist and may be considered as highly objective (Saunders et al. 2007). These objects are not subject to bias and, therefore, the resources researcher can respectively claim that the data collected involving these types of objects are reliable and not subjective to external biases.

Conversely, feeling researchers deal with far fewer objective phenomena, i.e., primarily feelings. Saunders et al. (2007, p. 103) summarised the difference between the two types of researchers as follows: “The ‘resources’ researcher would view the objects studied by the ‘feelings’ researcher – feelings and attitudes – as social phenomena which have no external reality”. However, human feelings are often aspects of research, particularly in sociology and psychology, thereby calling for the adoption of methods and research strategies that would minimise bias and maximise the reliability of findings.

The present research deals with intangible constructs that have little external reality, thereby making this research a feelings-oriented one. The fact is that although neighbourhood influence, familial influence and religiosity cannot be classified as feelings, they are immaterial and therefore the data concerning these concepts will be collected based on participants’ interviews.

# Choice of Research Philosophy

Having thoroughly reviewed several of the most common research philosophies, a subjectivist/interpretivist philosophy was selected. As this research was qualitative in nature and entailed the collection of perceptions, feelings and attitudes of participants, the subjectivist/interpretivist research philosophy was perceived the best to support this study. Various reasons justified the selection of the subjectivist/interpretivist approach in this study. First, the philosophy was justified by the fact that it offered a greater opportunity for the in-depth study of qualitative aspects, such as cross-cultural differences, and religious and societal issues (Saunders et al. 2007). With this understanding, it was expected that this philosophy would facilitate honesty and trustworthiness from the participants whilst they were given questions on non-work-related factors affecting organisational commitment. Thus, it was to help boost the validity of the results through such in-depth illuminations of the different aspects of non-work-related factors affecting employee job commitment.

Second, given that the subjectivist research philosophy provides the researcher with a good opportunity to build rapport with the participants, it was helpful in enhancing the success of this study. Essentially, the interpretivist/subjectivist research philosophy is that the researcher considers the social setting of research subjects unique and strives to enter and understand it from their perspective. As mentioned above, the setting in which the research subjects of this study reside – i.e., the UAE nationals working in the UAE public sector – is unique and differs from that of other countries, particularly the Western ones, mainly with respect to the relationship between neighbourhood influence and organisational commitment.

Consequently, the subjectivist/interpretivist philosophy was appropriate in this situation as this study involves the researcher working in close contact with their participants to the collect data by conducting interviews and asking questions. The key principle is to assure the participants of the study that the data collected was only to be used for academic purposes and inform them of confidentiality and their rights as participants.

The positivist/objectivist research philosophy has been rejected because it does not allow close contact with the research participants as required in the qualitative study setting. Remenyi et al. (1998, p. 32) pointed out that positivists are generally focused on “working with an observable social reality and that the end product of such research can be law-like generalizations similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists”. This implies that the positivist research philosophy envisions working with observable phenomena that can ensure collection of credible data and reliable results. The proposition is then developed on the basis of existing theories with the goal of testing to either prove or refute said theories. Saunders et al. (2007) pointed out that another key feature of positivism is that such research is carried out in the value-free way, which means that the researcher has no bias and no personal relation to the object of research; this ensures that data are collected in an objective and unbiased manner.

The distinction between the aforementioned types of researchers is seen in their behaviours; the resources researcher has to remain impartial and external to the study under the positivist approach, while the feelings researcher can usually be deeply involved in the data collection process. Another key characteristic feature of positivism is the use of highly structured methodology, which would allow replication of the research by others (Gill & Johnson 2002); these researchers mainly use quantitative research methods so that data can be analysed using statistical methods.

However, Saunders at al. (2007) pointed out that it is not mandatory to use only quantitative methods and that qualitative methods may also be used under the positivist research philosophy. Although the latter may be true, given the research objectives and questions of the present research, positivism does not seem to be the most applicable research philosophy for this study. This is because the work and non-work-related factors selected cannot be classified as objective, tangible phenomena and would be classified as feelings rather than as resources.

Another long-standing research philosophy besides positivism is realism and this research tradition has also been used extensively by researchers. Saunders et al. (2007, p. 104) pointed out that “The essence of realism is that what the senses show us the reality is the truth: that objects have an existence independent of the human kind”. Realism is not the opposite of positivism; but shares a range of similarities in terms of being focused on studying real objects that exist outside the human mind. Respectively, similar to positivism, realism adopts the scientific approach to the development of knowledge.

Saunders et al. (2007) thus stated that two types of realism exist as research philosophy – direct and *critical* realism. Under direct realism, it is assumed that the reality seen and experienced by people is an accurate representation of the world. On the contrary, critical realism assumes that “what we experience are sensations, the images of the things in the real world, not the things directly…So what we really see are sensations, which are representations of what is real” (Saunders et al. 2007, p. 105). In the field of social and business research, critical realism is widely used and considered to be applicable as it regards people’s perception of reality as the result of social conditioning and therefore cannot be understood separately from social actors (Dobson 2002). Thus, the positivist research philosophy is rejected and the interpretivist philosophy is selected for this study.

# Research Approach

For this particular research, the most suitable approach that applies is the deductive research approach. The deductive research approach uses reasoning from a particular point of view to a more general view of the data. According to Pearse (2019), the use of the deductive approach in qualitative studies has been ignored for a long time even though it is valuable when applied to such studies. Based on the research by Pearse (2019), this study deviated from the norm of applying inductive research to a qualitative study to using the deductive approach.

The justification for the application of the deductive approach in this research is to get a link between non-work-related factors and organizational commitment. The deductive approach is effective in establishing connections between the factors that are being explicated. In this particular study, the justification for using the deductive approach is to understand how non-work-related factors such as religiosity, family influence, and neighbourhood influence affect the organisational commitment of Generation Y UAE employees in the public sector. The three predictor variables were identified priori with the aim of establishing further how they lead to organisational commitment. Hence, it was worth identifying them earlier and further understanding what literature says about their link to organisational commitment.

A specific application of qualitative research is based on the understanding that a deductive approach focuses on deducting conclusions from the propositions, which in this case are participant responses. In justifying the qualitative research approach, Pearse (2019) opined that it plays an instrumental role in helping researchers collect results from real experiences and behaviours. This research explores the non-work-related factors influencing working commitment among Generation Y, and this will involve the collection of their real views, attitudes and perceptions. This makes the deductive research approach effective for this research based on the suggestions by Pearse (2019). Further justifying the deductive approach in qualitative studies, Sajjadi, Sun and Castillo (2012) stated that this approach is vital in testing the reliability of the findings that are related to the theory under study in practice through the attitudes and perceptions of research participants. By comparing the findings to the existing theory, the deductive approach makes it easier for researchers to analyse the validity of their findings. In essence, the data collected in this study will need to be applied to the entire Generation Y population and deductive research will work effectively in the attainment of this goal. Therefore, the deductive research approach would be suitable for this study based on the explanations mentioned above.

In line with the research approach, the researcher followed elaborate steps in the collection and analysis of data. The researcher first needed to collect the data relevant to the chosen topic; in the context of the proposed study, data relating to the non-work-related factors that impact the commitment of UAE national Generation Y respondents to their jobs. After a substantial amount of the relevant data had been collected, the process of data analysis then took place (Leavy 2017). During this process, the researcher searched for any identifiable patterns within the collected data, thus allowing the researcher to develop a theory that could be applied to provide an explanation for the observed patterns. It is one of the reasons why, when dealing with the qualitative data, the researcher should first begin with a set of observations that move from particular experiences to more general propositions concerning the experiences. This was then be followed by drawing key conclusions from the observed data and using them for the development of meaningful explanations.

## 5.5 Data Collection

Given the qualitative nature of this study, the data collection method that was used is face-to-face semi-structured interviews through the use of open-ended questions, as this allows for a discussion to take place between the researcher and the interviewees. The rationale for the use of this data collection method was based on the following key factors relating to semi-structured interviews. First, semi-structured interviews were used because they allowed for accurate screening (Leavy 2017). This was possible due to the face-to-face aspect of the interview. The significance of this was the reduced falsification of facts by the interviewees, contributing to the increased accuracy of data. Second, the use of this data collection method was rationalised by the fact that it permits the assessment of non-verbal cues that could be provided by the interviews (Bernard 2012).

Furthermore, the application of this data collection method is vindicated by how it allows the researcher to verify the collected data. That is, the researcher was able to verify whether the data was sufficiently varied by asking for clarification from the answers provided by the interviewees (Bernard 2012). This measure was essential in enhancing the degree of the accuracy of the collected data. Another reason that justified the use of the semi-structured interviews for data collection is that it allowed for the collection of detailed information. Thus, the researcher used the detailed information to analyse the research problem in depth.

In the course of collecting data from the participants, selected participants were contacted via telephone and informed about the interviews. The details of the call included where and when the interview would be held. Furthermore, the participants were provided with information on what their role was during the course of the interview and, by extension, the research (Bernard 2012).

Following this, the researcher was able to meet with each individual interviewee in a quiet room and proceeded with the interview. Each interview lasted for between 40 minutes to 1 hour. Participants were selected from different government entities around the country. Due to this, the interviews were conducted over a period of four weeks to allow for effective collection of data from all the participants. The end of the data collection process was the saturation point when participants could not give any more details of how non-work-related factors influence their organisational commitment. Importantly, the data collection process was about getting the maximum possible response from respondents to the saturation point where every aspect was exhausted in the collection process.

### 5.5.1 Procedure of Data Collection

In the course of conducting the interviews, the procedure was split in into different steps. The first step highlighted the research questions that needed to be addressed in the interview. In this case, the questions were of a semi-structured nature and open-ended to allow for the interviewees to provide as much data as possible (Bernard 2012). Furthermore, the questions were structured in a manner that allowed for effective exploration of the research problem.

The next essential step was meeting with the participants in the designated venues for the interviews. The interviewer once again took them through the essential aspects of the research and their role. They addressed any concern that the interviewee had and presented them with consent forms to sign as evidence of informed consent. The interview then commenced. Proper recording processes were applied with the significance of ensuring all the information collected could be retrieved when required. This is particularly essential due to the limits in human memory, which make it difficult for the researcher to remember every detail during data analysis (Leavy 2017). In addition, it was useful for the interviewer to take notes of all the essential points that stood out during the interview.

Furthermore, another essential step that needed to be considered was carrying out the interview in a highly ethical manner; this included having the researcher carefully consider the values and customs of the interviewees. For instance, as the participants were practicing Muslims, the questions needed to be developed in a manner that respects their religion. Respect also includes the manner of interaction between the researcher and members of the opposite sex given the strict rules set out in the Islamic religion. Ultimately, the data collection process stopped at the data saturation point when all the participants had answered the questions to fullness. At the saturation point, data could not be collected further, as participants had exhaustively answered all the questions that were presented in the semi-structured interviews.

# Research Population and Sample

In this research, a mix of convenience sampling and purposive sampling were used in the selection of the participants of the study. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that entails selecting the population based on their availability (Creswell, 2013). Purposive sampling is also a non-probability sampling technique and it is always aimed at producing a sample that is logically assumed to represent the target population (Saunders et.al., 2012). With the use of these two sampling methods, a sample of 30 participants was selected. 30 participants were deemed appropriate for this research because it fits into the requirements of qualitative research, which generally requires a smaller sample size that helps answer the given research questions and objectives. As Vasileiou et.al. (2018) explained, samples in qualitative research tend to be smaller to support the depth of case-oriented analysis that is fundamental to the mode of inquiry. With Generation Y participants, a sample of 30 was deemed sufficient to provide an exhaustive explanation of non-work-related factors that influence their organisational commitment. The mix of convenience sampling and purposive sampling is that while convenience sampling helped get the sample from the readily available population, purposive sampling simplified the balance between male and female participants, the determination of the needed age characteristics, marital status, work experience, profession, as well as the residential area of the participants.

One of the reasons for using convenience sampling and not a random sampling technique was because it requires less time and cost to utilise and because an accurate sample frame such as a list of all UAE Generation Y nationals was not accessible. Additionally, convenience sampling is suitable for getting primary data about a topic as it allows for access to big populations in short amounts of time.

Another reason for using convenience sampling and not random sampling is that it enabled the collection of data in areas that cannot be easily accessed with random sampling methods. This is because, unlike random sampling techniques, convenience sampling requires fewer formal procedures to access the research population of interest (Bernard 2012). Inclusion criteria for the sample are the following: (i) being Emirati nationals; (ii) being employed in the UAE public sector; and (iii) belonging to Generation Y. More or less equal representation of both genders would be important, but it is expected that most participants will be male given the gender set-up of the UAE labour force in the public sector. Nevertheless, this result will still be meaningful for analysis.

The advantage and justification of using purposive sampling as explained by Saunders et.al. (2012) is that it provides an opportunity to select participants who can specifically help meet the research objectives of the study. The focus of this study was to ensure that the objectives were specifically addressed based on the sample population. With the application of purposive sampling, the researcher was in a good position to get the sample with the needed characteristics to accurately help meet the research objectives that had been developed at the beginning of the study. Therefore, the objectives of the study were met in an appropriate manner with the needed sample that appealed directly to the nature of this research.

The researcher approached the management of several organisations in the public sector of the UAE with a request to give permission to approach their respondents to ask for participation in the research. A brief presentation of the topic selected and major steps of the study process was made with the interested respondents present. Afterwards, they were asked to provide written informed consent once they clearly understand all details pertaining to the research. Anonymity and confidentiality of participants was prioritised throughout the process.

The sample population was highly representative of Generation Y respondents in the UAE. Representativeness were assessed by the balance in gender of the respondents and the spread of the members of the population across different organisations and industries.

# Data Analysis

### 5.7.1 Thematic Analysis

This was a qualitative data analysis method. Thematic analysis is defined as a process of the identification of patterns within qualitative data. These patterns are known as themes in this data analysis method. The rationale for utilising thematic analysis for this study was based on the following; first, thematic analysis provided the researcher with the necessary skills that were useful in carrying out analysis of the collected data (Creswell 2013). The flexible nature of this data analysis method further rationalised its usage for this data; this is because thematic analysis is a qualitative method that is not tied to any particular theoretical framework (Leavy 2017). Thus, the goal of utilising thematic analysis was to identify themes in the collected data; i.e., those patterns in the data that appear interesting in relation to the research study that go beyond summarising a study (Leavy 2017). In this case, thematic analysis should encompass interpreting and making sense of the collected data.

To help carry out an analysis of the data, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis package, NVivo, was used. The computer data analysis package was useful in simplifying coding and identifying themes in data (Bernard 2012). This approach was essential in enabling the creation of data displays such as flowcharts, including the tabulation of frequent terms (Creswell 2013). Therefore, data analysis using this computer package can be done in the following way. The collected data that will encompass 30 transcripts will be uploaded in the NVivo software.

It was necessary to code the interview data using grounded theory coding. This approach encompassed the breakdown and categorisation of the data into codes. This procedure was essential because it caused the derivation of a theory-based analysis of the gathered data. The application of NVivo software was further useful for data analysis of the proposed study because the researcher will be able to create nodes (Leavy 2017). This is something that can take place during the process of open coding. Therefore, the open coding process was applied to all the 30 transcripts. It is imperative to indicate that open coding is a process that shows the different codes that are used to categorise and classify the data collected from the interviews (Creswell 2013). This step later results in the identification and comparison of patterns that demonstrate similarities and links in the different data sources.

A key benefit of open coding is that it allows for the building of a descriptive, multi-dimensional preliminary framework that could be used for later analysis. This is because open coding is able to do this directly from the raw data (Leavy 2017). In carrying out open coding, the researcher will read through the scripts line by line.

### 5.7.2 Analysis of Interviews

#### 5.7.2.1 Selective coding

Selective coding in the data analysis is used to facilitate the achievement of core categories that are presented in parent nodes. This can be defined as a process through which categories are unified along a core category or categories that require additional explanations and are filled with descriptive details (Creswell 2013). Furthermore, it is defined as a type of grounded theory method that is used to undertake the analysis of terms by identifying the codes presented in data during qualitative data analysis (Leavy 2017). Coding at this particular stage is described as representing the operations by which data are to be broken down, conceptualised, and placed back together in a new way (Creswell 2013). Selective coding is referred to as the main way through which codes are constructed in thematic data analysis.

For this study, the selected codes that were constructed from the data include religiosity, family influence, and neighbourhood. Accordingly, these three terms acted as a representation of the core terms that were constructed from the data coding process.

#### 5.7.2.2 Theoretical categories

Theoretical categories are the main way through which theories are built in the form of the collected data in a qualitative study. That is, theoretical categories are created from the selected codes that stem from the collected data (Leavy 2017). A theoretical category is deemed a final step that entails theoretical coding.

This step undertakes additional elaboration of selective coding by grouping the codes into necessary theoretical categories. The process has also been described as the conceptualisation of categories and the relationship existing between them (Bernard 2012).

In the course of determining theoretical categories through the application of theoretical coding, it is essential that the researcher considers a range of different techniques. This measure is meant to ensure that the researcher remains sensitive to adequately identify the subtleties of the relationship in the collected data. Furthermore, the coding techniques that are used ought to have some flexibility. For this reason, it is possible that they may overlap with each other (Leavy 2017).

The theoretical categories that were be developed were further compared and abstracted by the researcher. This included the use of memo writing, and open and theoretical coding. This procedure took place up to the point where all the categories became saturated (Bernard 2012). Saturation is defined as the point where it will no longer be possible to identify more new categories that relate to the emerging core category. Consequently, the resultant impact was the creation of a dense and rich database that integrated the categories and enabled the researcher to explain the points of variation (Leavy 2017).

Therefore, the categorisation of the theoretical codes resulted in the development of three categories - these are religiosity, family influence, and neighbourhood influence. The developed categories were analysed by means of thematic analysis. The developed theoretical categories were further visualised into axis diagrams (Bernard 2012). This was meant to further the data analysis. The above-mentioned categories are summarised in the diagram below.

Non-work-related factors

Family influence

Neighbourhood influence

Religiosity

Figure 3: Categorisation of theoretical codes

Source: Researcher’s compilation

# Pilot Study

A pilot study was done before conducting this study. This type of study can be described as a form of a small-scale study whose aim is to analyse essential components of a specific research (Leavy 2017) and is conducted when there is a need for the researchers to confirm if they should proceed with their study. Thus, for this study, it was necessary to conduct the pilot study for easier understanding of the expected outcomes from the interviews and the validity of the questions.

The rationale for a pilot study was supported by the following factors. First, carrying out a pilot study is of great significance to gain insights into whether a full-scale study can be conducted in the manner that has already been established. In this case, this serves to assess whether there is the need to make any changes that could improve the proposed main study (Leavy 2017). Second, another factor that indicates the rationale for conducting a pilot study is the need to have a high-quality study that allows for the correct interpretation of results, as well as the determination of their implications. In the case of the proposed study, carrying out a pilot study will ensure that the researcher will be able to correctly interpret the results concerning the non-work-related factors that influence organisational commitment of Generation Y nationals in UAE. Moreover, it is essential to indicate that the rationale for a pilot study lies in the need to ensure that the study that is to be conducted will be informative and thus adds value to the researcher’s field.

## 5.8.1 Benefits of a Pilot Study

A number of benefits came about as a result of carrying out this pilot study; for example, the researcher was provided with support regarding planning for the main study. This included planning for the pre-analysing tools and methods that were needed. Additionally, the researcher was able to gain useful feedback concerning the main study when a pilot study is conducted. Thus, this is yet another benefit of a pilot study because the researcher is able to use the gathered feedback to refine the chosen methodology (Bernard 2012). This ensured that the researcher was able to tackle any issues noted in the feedback before they emerge in the actual study. Furthermore, a benefit of conducting a pilot study is that it allowed the researcher to test the adequacy of the research instruments that have been selected for the main study. This measure helps reduce the number of problems that may be faced during the course of the actual study. Another essential benefit of a pilot study is preventing resource wastage and time. This is done by working to ensure that the proposed study is actually feasible (Bernard 2012). The final benefit that this proposal mentions for undertaking a pilot study is it enhances the degree of accuracy of a study by ensuring methodological accuracy.

## 5.8.2 Procedure for a Pilot Study

A pilot study was held with four respondents. The respondents were contacted by telephone to set the date and location for the pilot study (Leavy 2017). It was essential for the venue to be mutually decided and one in which the participants felt comfortable. The respondents were randomly identified and selected based on their willingness to participate. The focus of the researcher was to make sure that everyone took part in the study consensually and hence the emphasis was placed on random identification and selection.

The pilot study was carried out over a period of four weeks. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used, and lasted about 40 minutes to 1 hour for each participant. The first 15 minutes of the interview actually entailed the researcher taking the participants through the study and gaining their consent. Consent means understanding the study, its significance and role, and signing the consent forms. All the interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed. The researcher held a discussion with the participating respondents after the interviews. This was done in order to gain their insights into how the interview was conducted and what they felt was needed to improve to make the process a better experience (Leavy 2017). The details of the participants in terms of the date of the interview, place, gender, duration, and job title are in the table 2 below.

Table 2: Participant interview details

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Interview no.** | **Date of interview** | **Name / Code** | **Job title** | **Duration of interview** | **Gender** | **Organisation** | **Interview location** |
| 1 | 17th Nov, 2019 | F. N | Admin Assistant | 35 mins | Male | Government – Abu Dhabi | Sharjah University |
| 2 | 19th Nov,2019 | S.S | Networking Engineer | 40 mins | Female | Government- Dubai | Khorfakkan Public Library |
| 3 | 9th December | E.R | Customer Service Executive | 33 mins | Female | Government- Fujairah | Interviewee workplace |
| 4 | 11th December, 2019 | M.Y | HR Officer | 30 min | Male | Government- Ajman | Interviewee house |

### 5.8.3 Lessons Learned from the Pilot Study

The pilot study was the stepping stone to the main research. The first lesson learned from the pilot study was that gaining participant consent is critical. Consent has to be obtained before interacting with the participants in terms of the interviews, as it does not only indicate the researcher’s commitment to ethical standards, but also reflects the respect for the position of the participants. Therefore, the researcher paid close attention to the consent of the participants; she ensured they were fully informed of the nature of the study and the fact that they were free to ask questions and leave the study at any point.

The second valuable lesson from the pilot study is that the researcher has to effectively understand the schedule of the interviewees before planning the interview. The best way to get required responses from the target population is to begin by understanding their schedule. This is what was done with F.N., S.S., E.R. and M.Y. where the researcher began by first understanding their schedules and the time, they would be available for the interviews. The same approach will be applied to the final data collection, as it helps alleviate inconvenience on both the interviewees’ part and the researcher’s part.

The third lesson from the pilot study was that the questions need to be as specific as possible for the interviewees to understand and give the response. While designing questions, it is always vital to structure them in such a way that it resonates with what the interviewees have experienced. For instance, with the interviewees being Generation Y, it was critical that all the questions were designed to address the factors that affect their commitment to work. Without specific questions that address the group, it is always more challenging to get the desired answers from the target population.

Based on these lessons, the researcher made changes to some interview questions. Several changes were made to the questions to make sure that interviewees could easily understand them. For instance, question 6 was rephrased by adding the words, “jobs in general” to make it more comprehensive. Question 13 was totally rephrased from, “Is there any chance that you could be attached to any other organisation compared to the one you are currently working for? What would make the difference in your level of commitment to the organisation?” to “Would you consider leaving your organisation for another?” This was helpful in making clarifying the question for the interviewees. Additionally, question 14 was rephrased to make it clearer to the participants. Three more questions were added to the interview to help in the collection of more data from the interviewees increasing the total number of questions from 15 to 18. The questions were added to help the researcher collect more data on aspects such as the respondents working overtime, taking lunch breaks, and understanding the extent of the efforts that they put ion their work. The specific changes that were made as a consequence of conducting the pilot study are shown below.

Table 3: Summary of changes made after pilot study

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Interview Questions – Pilot | Interview Questions – Final | Remarks |
| 6. Are there any neighbourhood cultures and beliefs that affect the performance of your job? | 6. Are there any neighbourhood cultures and beliefs that affect the performance of your job or the jobs in general? | Added (jobs in general) to make it more comprehensive |
| 13. Is there any chance that you could be attached to any other organisation compared to the one you are currently working for? What would make the difference in your level of commitment to the organisation? | 13. Would you consider leaving your organisation for another? | Rephrased the question |
| 14. While working on your job, do you take the job problems of the organisation as your personal ones? If so, how do you help the organisation alleviate the impact of these problems to make sure that it is on the right track? | 14. Do you take the job problems of the organisation as your personal ones? If so, how do you help the organisation alleviate the impact of these problems to make sure that it is on the right track? | Rephrased the question |
|  | 16. Do you ever stay on at work after your official work hours to do work that you feel is your responsibility? | Added |
|  | 17. Do you always put 100% effort into your work? | Added |
|  | 18. How long do you take for lunch/tea breaks etc.? | Added |

# Validity and Reliability

### 5.9.1 Validity

Validity is a reflection of a study that demonstrates its accuracy. In this case, it is about a study lacking bias and relates to the context that is being measured. Thus, in the course of carrying out the study, it was vital that the researcher remained unbiased in relation to the research problem under study.

Construct validity, also referred to as measurement validity, is one of the ways that the validity of the proposed study was assessed. The application of this form of validity resulted in determining whether a result that has been derived in a study regarding a concept actually refers to it as intended. The questions developed in the semi-structured interviews were important in determining this construct validity. If cases where it was found that the questions do not measure the concepts in the research problem, then changes were made to make the questions appropriate for this study (Creswell 2013). This was done by making use of the feedback following the pilot study, which enabled the identification of any weaknesses in the developed questions.

Validity was also be determined using internal validity. Internal validity is a reflection of the work of the researcher who develops relationships and shows a reflection of them within the research analysis. This process eventually results in the understanding of a research result (Leavy 2017). The data analysis can entail a number of patterns that match and conducting comparisons through the use of handwritten notes and schemas that were developed by the researcher. In this case, the researcher needs to ensure that notes are taken during interviews with participants. This measure was useful in ensuring that the researcher was able to maintain control throughout the study.

Moreover, validity can also be determined using external validity. This refers to whether it is possible for the results of a study to be generalised (Bernard 2012). In this case, the study was deemed valid if its findings can be generalised beyond the given circumstances; this was done by utilising the feedback provided by the examiners. The examiners assessed and determined whether the findings of the proposed study support the collected data.

### 5.9.2 Reliability

Reliability is defined as the situation that determines whether it is possible to repeat the results of a study. Ensuring the reliability of this study is essential in order to prevent misinterpretation of the collected data or the occurrence of bias. Reliability is ensuring that the consistency of results is maintained of a study over a period of time (Leavy 2017). Thus, it is necessary to ensure that the results can be reproduced under similar conditions and remain the same. The elements of reliability are repeatability and replicability of a study.

Therefore, the application of consistent research methods assisted in ensuring the reliability of the proposed study. Specifically, it can help in assessing whether the methods’ consistency supports the experiences of the participants. Further, ensuring reliability also consisted of assessing the collected data to make sure that any data that are not understandable or unclear will be removed during the interview. In addition, the collected data was cross-checked using a variety of assessments by the supervising professors.

## 5.10 Recording

The recording process involved the use of smart devices, such as a phone or a tablet, given their convenience because they are easy to use and control, they are portable, and it is easy to retrieve data from them. The audio recorder was turned on during the interviews and recorded the entire process. The data was then be transferred into a computer and be developed into transcripts that were stored a password-protected marked folder.

## 5.11 Reading and Memo-taking

Insight into the collected data was gained by carefully going through all of them through the use of transcripts. It was essential that this is done several times with initial reading focused on getting to understand the collected data before in-depth interpretation during additional readings. In the additional reading of the transcripts, it was vital to break down the data into several parts in order to obtain as much meaning as possible. Notes and short key phrases were also used to keep track of emerging themes.

## 5.12 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are extremely significant in any field, including research activities, and they should be taken into account from the beginning, even at the stage of planning and development. This early inclusion prevented any unforeseen negative issues at later stages of the research. In fact, as the current research involves human subjects as the sample, ethics was the priority at all times. Most studies that involve people usually need approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), ensuring that those participants are subjected to no harm and that their best interests are always at the forefront of the researcher’s mind.

As mentioned above, ethical considerations were incorporated into the process of choosing the research approach and design; therefore, the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants was ensured. Whilst the interviews were conducted face-to-face, the researcher had the responsibility of ensuring that the identity of the participants was well protected. In this case, while interviewing the participants, the researcher ensured that their actual names were not used. Therefore, in the documentation used in the interview, the researcher used pseudonyms to refer to the participants. In particular, this entailed the use of names, such as interviewee 1, interviewee 2, and so on. Confidentiality and anonymity should also be ensured in the audio recording process (Bryman & Bell 2015).

Confidentiality of the collected data needs to be ensured to further protect the well-being of the participants (Bryman & Bell 2015). This can be done by ensuring that the collected data are stored safely. In this case, the hard copy data in the form of documents was stored in locked cabinets and the researcher kept key. The data was made available only to the academic staff that was involved in the research study. The data that was collected in soft copy format, such as audio recordings, was protected using a strong password and was stored in a flash drive, which was kept under lock and key in a safe drawer.

Another essential ethical issue that needed to be considered in the proposed study is informed consent. The information sheet consisting of a sufficiently detailed explanation of the research purpose and process was provided to prospective study participants with the goal of ensuring they understand their role and provide informed consent for participation. They were then asked to sign the informed consent form, which is aimed at ensuring that their participation in the study is willing and they were free from any coercion, as well as the knowledge that they know what they are agreeing to. The informed consent form was necessary to protect both participants and the researcher and therefore guarantee that the highest ethical standards of research conduct are maintained. Therefore, neither deception nor coercion were used to make them to participate in the study.

Additionally, ethical considerations have to be taken in relation to the process of data analysis and dissemination. Accordingly, the process of data transcribing is to be carried out in a private room using earphones. This is essential in order to prevent the possibility of the audio recordings being heard by other unauthorised parties (Bryman & Bell 2015). It is significant to ensure that at this point, the identity of the participants is concealed, including any identifiers, such as names of participants and organisations. Furthermore, identifiers should not be included during publication of the research.

The current research concerns a contemporary issue in the UAE labour market and focuses on the public sector, which may also hold some micro-political and ethical implications for the research. However, upon thorough consideration, it was concluded that the researcher had no personal interest or gain in the study except for purely scientific interest in the topic under consideration. Personal values and perspectives have not had a significant influence on the process of selecting the approach and design.

Regardless, it is necessary to remain constantly aware of the potential interferences of these values and perspectives at all stages of research, particularly during collection and analysis, so that biases do not affect the results in any way. Personal perspectives have been an influence while developing the proposition relating to the relationship between the neighbourhood influence in the UAE and organisational commitment of UAE nationals. Moreover, personal insight has allowed for the conclusion that the UAE neighbourhoods differ significantly from the ones in the Western countries where most research on this topic has been conducted.

Neighbourhoods with a high socioeconomic status do not have the same influence on organisational commitment in the UAE that has been proven to exist in Western countries as seen in the sections above. This idea has also been observed through the researcher’s personal observations and knowledge of UAE nationals’ societies. However, it is still important to remember their potential implications for this research and therefore the researcher maintained their distance during the data collection and research process. The conflicts of interest were also minimised by the fact that the researcher had no connections with UAE public sector organisations or HR departments in these companies.

Overall, this research attempted to take into account all required ethical considerations and implications. Protection of the participants’ interests was considered as one of the key objectives of the methodology development process. In order to ensure that the participants felt comfortable with participating in the research, they were offered a debriefing of the research results upon its completion. This served as an incentive for their participation as the researcher could not offer them any other incentives as compensation for their time and efforts.

# CHAPTER SIX: ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter presents the data collected and their analysis; it is also illustrative of the qualitative data that were collected through semi-structured, open ended interviews from 30 respondents across different emirates in the UAE. The analysis of the data was done using NVivo software where key themes were identified. The high frequencies that were mentioned by participants are displayed using Word Clouds that were automatically generated by the software. Through the identification of frequently used words, the researcher was able to easily recognise how each of the non-work-related factors influenced the commitment of Generation Y UAE nationals. To support the NVivo analysis, all transcripts were analysed individually by the researcher in order to make the presentation of data as clear and concise as possible. A sample of the manual analysis completed can be found in Appendix 1.

## 6.1 Findings, Themes

All the responses given by the participants were transcribed and linked to the mainstream lines. Accordingly, some of the responses appeared to be very similar whilst others differed; nevertheless, the key ideas of the answers were understood by the researcher.

The interviews lasted different times for each of the participants; they ranged from 40 minutes to one hour. From the researcher’s point of view, all the stories given by the participants were unique and interesting in their own ways. Every participant was happy to be part of the study and the interactions were cordial from start to end. Importantly, the participants offered maximum support to the researcher in the data collection process to understand the influence of non-work-related factors on affecting the organisational commitment of Generation Y UAE nationals. The interviews were framed in simple English hence making it easier for the respondents to understand. The essence here was to ensure that a clear language of communication and understanding was developed to ensure that participants easily answered the questions. Given that the language spoken in the UAE is mainly Arabic. Overall, the design of the interviews was focused on a simple language that could be understood by participants.

It was critical to identify key themes that emerged from the interviews. Hence, themes were developed from the responses that were given by all the 30 respondents from the Generation Y UAE citizens. The identification of the themes that ultimately appeared in the conceptual model was critical for this study. According to Ryan and Bernard (2001), themes, “come from the characteristics of the phenomenon being studied.” This means that it is critical to pay attention to the different aspects of the study phenomenon to be in a better position to derive the required themes. Nowell et al. (2017) also noted that “themes are identified by bringing together components or fragments of the ideas or experiences, which are often meaningless when viewed alone.” This suggests that themes directly emerge from putting together the views or thoughts presented by different participants rather than one particular participant. Therefore, with this knowledge, the themes in the study’s conceptual model were developed following the right protocol of going back to the responses that were given in the interviews.

Initially, I manually developed themes. Two approaches were used in the manual development of the themes that ultimately appeared in the conceptual framework. The first approach was to observe word patterns and repetitions in the participants’ speech. This is a word-based technique for the development of themes based on the responses given in the interviews. The researcher particularly focused on words that were common to different participants across the interview. This approach was done based on the understanding that the simplest way to develop thematic schemes is through the identification of the repetition of associative linkages (Ryan & Bernard 2001).

While using the word repetition approach, the researcher read the different responses by participants and highlighted the key repeated words that would later form the themes that were put into the conceptual framework. For instance, while addressing family influences, the researcher looked for words such as encouragement and financial support. All these words were effectively marked across all responses of the participants hence providing a key thematic pattern that would be used in the study. A list of the most repeated words was then generated for the purpose of identifying themes in the transcripts. Following the repeated word patterns made it easy for the researcher to find the key themes that emerged in the study. Therefore, the word repetition approach simplified the process of identifying themes in the conceptual framework.

The second manual approach used in the process of identifying themes was the compare and contrast method. According to Ryan and Bernard (2001), this approach is anchored on the understanding that themes are based on the ways in which texts are either similar to or different from each other. This is also called the constant comparison method where the researcher read through the different responses that were given by participants and compared them. This approach was a resourceful way of identifying the themes for the conceptual model. Following the grounded theory that was applied in this study, the researcher identified themes by conducting a careful line-by-line analysis based on the suggestion by Ryan and Bernard (2001). The responses were analysed based on what the participants said and how they consequently differed from the responses of other participants; points of agreement between these responses were also noted. For a rich analysis of the texts and derivation of themes, the researcher followed a recommendation by Bogdan and Biklen (2007) by carefully reading through the transcripts and asking, “What does this remind me of?” Consequently, the themes were developed based on the comparisons that were drawn from the texts of the individual texts. Therefore, this method ensured that the needed themes for the conceptual model were effectively identified and applied into the study.

The process of creating the themes using NVivo was precise as the researcher first highlighted the different responses of the participants and ultimately created nodes out of them; more content from the transcripts was added based on participants’ responses. The nodes were organised into hierarchies with the parent node detailing the main theme and the child nodes representing the sub-themes that were derived from the responses. The process was done question-by-question. In conclusion, the use of NVivo simplified the generation of themes, which were ultimately applied into the conceptual framework of the study.

After data collection, the deductive approach was effectively applied in the identification and allocation of themes to the predetermined aggregate dimensions. Therefore, using the deductive research approach simplified the whole process of allocating themes three key dimensions that were identified as non-work-related factors in the study.

The first step took into consideration the sampling and the design issues. In this particular study, the sampling and design issues were mainly about Generation Y participants in different professions. In the second step of condensing the data, the code manual was developed. The deductive approach involved the development of codes through the qualitative software, NVivo, hence ensuring that particular items are identified in making up the data. The development of the code manual involved labelling, defining, and describing the occurrence of themes that emerge based on the data collected. The third step that the researcher followed in the application of the deductive approach in qualitative data analysis was testing the reliability of the codes that had been developed. The previously mentioned step mainly involved the evaluation of items inserted in the code and the direct link between the questions and answers provided; this step basically focuses on the relevance of answers given by the participants.

The fourth step was to summarise the data and develop the initial themes in the study. In this step, the researcher identified the themes based on the commonality of the responses that were given by participants in the study. Increased usage of terms in the responses made it easier for the researcher to derive the themes that emerged from the study. The initial themes were developed based on the similarity of the answers that were given by the study participants. It was easier to develop themes from more similar responses that were given by participants; the greater the similarity of the responses, the greater the capacity for the researcher to come up with relevant themes.

The fifth step that the researcher followed was the application of codes to the study and she engaged in additional coding to develop more themes and sub-themes. The additional codes ensured that more specific themes were developed based on the data that had been collected initially.

The sixth step was about connecting the codes between the identified themes in the study. The codes were effectively linked to the themes that had been developed hence simplifying the whole process of understanding the data that had been developed. The last step was corroborating and legitimatising the coded themes. These were themes that were consequently applied to the study for data analysis.

There needed to be specificity in the coded themes for easier understanding and interpretation of the qualitative data. Essentially, the application of the deductive approach in qualitative data is systematic and the researcher adhered to the entire process for the development of the themes in this study, thus making it easier for the researcher to follow a step-by-step process to develop the themes and then allocate the developed themes to the predetermined aggregate dimensions including family influence, affective commitment, neighbourhood influence, and religiosity.

To effectively analyse the qualitative data emerging from the interviews, the following steps were followed by the researcher.

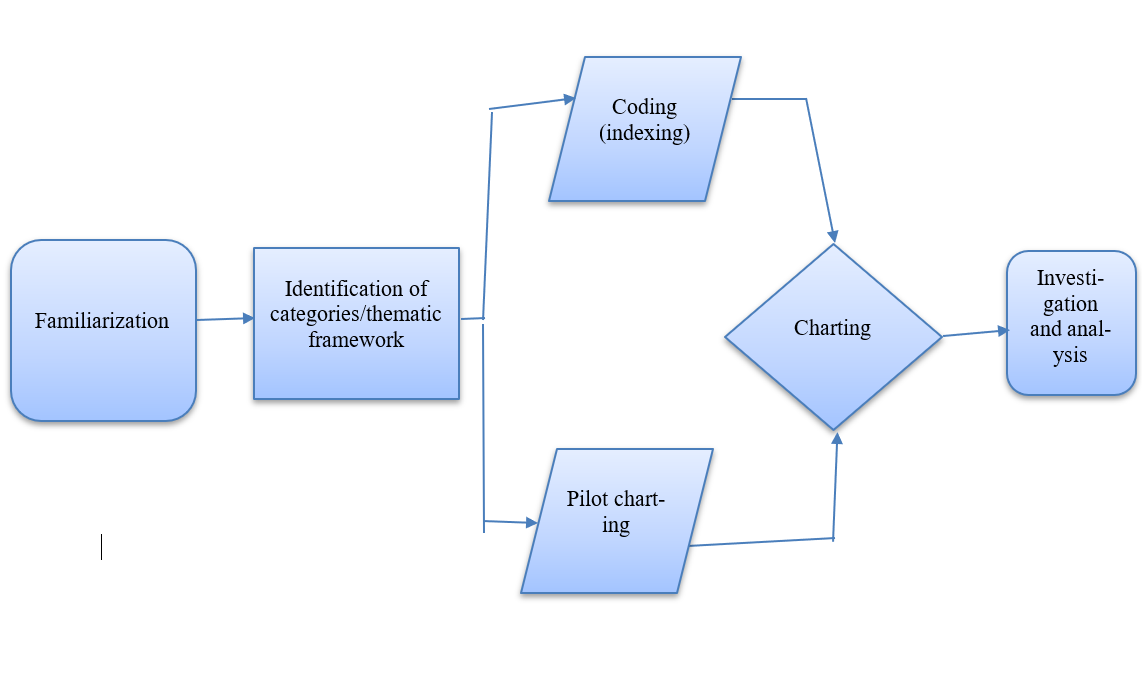


Figure 4: Data analysis steps

Process flow diagram for individual interviews

Figure 4 above demonstrates the steps that were followed for data analysis. The steps include familiarisation, identification of categories, coding (indexing), pilot charting, charting, and finally, investigation and analysis. These steps are further explored below.

## 6.2 Interviews: Participant Demographics

In this study, data were gathered from participants who fall within the category of Generation Y UAE nationals. The participants were aged between 24 and 40 years and work in different fields and companies. Moreover, the participants have varied levels of work experience and live in different emirates across the UAE. More importantly, the participants encompassed both genders and reported varied marital statuses. The detailed summary of the participant demographics is represented in the following table.

Table 4: Participant demographics

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Interview No** | **Date of interview** | **Name/Code** | **Gender** | **Marital Status** | **Age** | **Job Title** | **Years of experience in current role** | **City of residence** | **Duration of interview** |
| 1 | 10.01.2020 | N.A. | Female | Single | 37 | Head of Pharma and Special natures Department | 8 years | Abu Dhabi | 40 mins |
| 2 | 17.01202 | F.A. | Female | Single | 36 | Project Manager | 8.5 years | Dubai | 45 mins |
| 3 | 18.01.2020 | R.D. | Female | Single | 31 | Project Manager | 5 years | AlAin | 50 mins |
| 4 | 18.01.2020 | F.S. | Female | Single | 28 | Medical Resident/ physician | 3 years | Abu Dhabi | 45 mins |
| 5 | 1801.202 | L. S. | Female | Married | 35 | Financial Controller | 12 Years | Sharjah | 55 mins |
| 6 | 19.01.2020 | S.A. | Female | Married | 39 | Specialist Paediatric Dentist | 10 years | AbuDhabi | 45 mins |
| 7 | 19.01.2020 | J.B. | Female | Married | 32 | Manager Sales Performance | 1 Year | Dubai | 40 mins |
| 8 | 20.01.20 | A.N. | Male | Married | 40 | CEO Business Support | 19 Years | Dubai | 55 mins |
| 9 | 21.01.2020 | W.M. | Female | Married | 38 | Manager Project Control | 10 years | AbuDhabi | 1 hr |
| 10 | 23.01.2020 | T.A. | Male | Married | 38 | Director- Public Relation | 2 Years | Ajman | 40 mins |
| 11 | 26.01.2020 | S.L. | Female | Single | 36 | Fire Fighter | 3 Years | Ras AlKhaimah | 40 mins |
| 12 | 26.01.2020 | N.B. | Female | Single | 39 | Director PR | 15 Years | Dubai | 45 mins |
| 13 | 27.01.2020 | H.Y. | Male | Married | 33 | Assistant Director of Quality and Excellence | 8 Years | Sharjah | 40 mins |
| 14 | 27.01.2020 | H.D. | Male | Married | 33 | Family Medicine Specialist | 9 Years | Sharjah | 45 mins |
| 15 | 28.01.2020 | S.K. | Male | Married | 38 | Interventional Cardiologist and Electro physiologist | 13 Years | AbuDhabi | 1 hr |
| 16 | 03.02.2020 | S.H. | Male | Married | 36 | HR Section Head | 7 years | Ajman | 45 mins |
| 17 | 03.02.2020 | M.B. | Male | Single | 24 | Safety Supervisor | 5 years | Sharjah | 50 mins |
| 18 | 05.02.2020 | S.M. | Female | Married | 39 | Innovation and Excellence Director | 10 Years | AbduDhabi | 1 hr |
| 19 | 06.02.2020 | A.J. | Male | Married | 35 | Hospital Director | 4 Years | AlAin | 55 mins |
| 20 | 06.02.2020 | M.S. | Female | Single | 37 | VP Learning and Competency Development | 5 Years | Ras AlKhaimah | 45 mins |
| 21 | 23.02.2020 | A.M. | Male | Married | 35 | Account Receivable and General Account Manager | 3 Years | Dubai | 40 mins |
| 22 | 23.02.2020 | M.A. | Male | Divorced | 40 | Senior GIS (Geographic Information System) Analyst/ Developer | 15 Years | Dubai | 45 mins |
| 23 | 23.02.2020 | R.A. | Female | Married | 31 | Tax Manager | 6 Years | AbuDhabi | 55 mins |
| 24 | 24.04.2020 | S.S. | Male | Married | 33 | Aerodrome Inspector | 4 Years | Dubai | 50 mins |
| 25 | 24.04.2020 | N.M. | Female | Single | 34 | Manager Financial Planning | 8 Years | Fujairah | 45 mins |
| 26 | 08.03.2020 | I.Q. | Male | Single | 29 | Chief HR Officer | 7 Years | Fujairah | 55 mins |
| 27 | 09.03.2020 | S.I. | Female | Divorced | 37 | Political Researcher | 3 Years | Sharjah | 50 mins |
| 28 | 11.03.2020 | S.E. | Male | Single | 24 | Political Research Officer | 2 Years | Sharjah | 45 mins |
| 29 | 14.03.2020 | F.N. | Male | Married | 39 | Admin Officer | 6 Years | Ras AlKhaimah | 55 mins |
| 30 | 31.03.2020 | M.D. | Male | Married | 35 | Air Traffic Controller | 14 Years | Fujairah | 50 mins |

The participant demographics above were critical in the analysis of the qualitative data. They simplified the identification of the specific quotes with particular participants. Hence, the key details of the participants were helpful in guiding the presentation of results across the study.

**Step 1: Familiarisation**

It was critical for the researcher to familiarise herself with the different responses that were given by participants in the interviews. This involved the reading and re-reading of all 30 transcripts until the researcher was familiar with the ideas in each one. This process gave the researcher the opportunity to get a clear picture of the key message that was being communicated by participants. Moreover, looking at the word count indicated that, during the interviews, the researcher had a 31% contribution to the words, while the participants had a 69% contribution to the word count based on the NVIVO output. This is generally good because it shows that the researcher gave participants a greater opportunity to share their own perceptions on non-work-related factors that influence their commitment to work. More so, it is a good thing because it shows engagement between the researcher and the participants where the researcher did more listening than talking hence collecting data effectively. Overall, the approach is demonstrative of an entire proper approach to the collection of data in the research. This is as illustrated in the figure below.

*Word count distribution*

Figure 5: Word count distribution

**Step 2: Identification of Descriptive Categories**

The next step that the researcher took was to manually identify the themes and the sub-themes that emerged from their responses. An initial list of themes and sub-themes was gathered and is as illustrated in the table below.

Table 5: Initially identified themes and sub-themes

|  |
| --- |
| **Initially identified themes and sub-themes** |
| **Theme 1:** Religious beliefs  **Sub-theme 1**: Career has to match religious beliefs |
| **Theme 2:** Neighbours appreciate role in the community  **Sub-theme**: Neighbours only appreciate the job based on impact, but do not necessarily support individuals to reach career goals |
| **Theme 3:** Family support (influence)  **Sub-theme**: Family support understood through advice, financial help |

**Step 3: Coding (Indexing)**

The process of coding (indexing) was used in the allocation of concepts and themes to the predetermined aggregate dimensions in the study. According to Elliot (2018), coding is “a fundamental aspect of the analytical process and the ways in which researchers break down their data to make something new.” This is the approach that the researcher followed to allocate the concepts and themes to the predetermined aggregate dimensions. Breaking down the data into smaller pieces simplified the entire process of coding the data to come up with 1st order concepts as well as themes relevant to each of the predetermined dimensions that had been identified in the study. The allocation of the concepts and themes to the aggregate dimensions was done by indexing the data and linking every response to the questions that were asked based on each of the dimensions. For instance, the process of coding began by breaking down the data that were related to the aspect of family influence into meaningful pieces that generated 1st order concepts and ultimately narrowed down to generate the themes applied into the study. Therefore, each question was directly linked to the overarching dimensions and this significantly simplified the process of identifying and allocating the concepts and themes to each of the central dimensions.

The whole process of indexing began with the creation of codes from the larger data that had been collected. As discussed by Creswell (2013), coded themes are broad units of information that emerge when different codes are compiled to form a common idea. Thus, the 1st order concepts were drawn from the first stage of coding while the themes were drawn from the aggregation of the common points that were put forward. Therefore, both the concepts and the themes were allocated effectively to each of the dimensions. From these broad themes, sub-themes were further derived and linked to the predetermined dimensions in the study.

Indexing was used to categorise the large amount of data that were collected in the study and coding was done both manually and with the use of NVivo. After the data were input into NVivo, the themes and sub-themes that were initially developed were refined and further linked to concepts and statements that were articulated by the respondents. The data that were extracted from NVivo are demonstrated in Appendix 2. NVivo simplified the whole process of coding and ensured that there was a clear connection between the concepts, themes, sub-themes, and the aggregate dimensions. From the data, a total of six major themes and one sub-theme were extracted and ultimately linked to the three dimensions in the study. The finalised thematic framework in the table below for individual interviews is presented as 1st order concepts, 2nd order themes and sub-themes, and aggregate dimensions. The sample of word cloud query is shown in Appendix 3. The three aggregate themes that were derived from the analysis of the data were as follows:

1. *Family influence*
2. *Neighbourhood influence*
3. *Religiosity*

Furthermore, six major themes and two sub-themes were identified from the analysis of the data. The major themes and the sub-themes that were identified are:

1. *Encouragement*
2. *Financial Support*
3. *Neighbourhood cultures and beliefs*
4. *Neighbours appreciate roles*
5. *Career has to agree with religion*
6. *Ethics at the workplace (Sub-theme: Service to God and people)*

See the table below for the 1st order concepts, 2nd order themes and sub-themes, and aggregate dimensions.

Table 6: 1st order concepts, themes and sub-themes, and aggregate dimensions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1st Order Concepts** | **2nd Order Themes and Sub-Themes** | **Aggregate Dimensions** |
| Family members always talk to me | Theme 1: Encouragement | Family Influence |
| Family members encourage me to advance |
| Family members always advise me on my career |
| Family has supported me financially | Theme 2: Financial support |
| Family pays for/ has paid for my education |
| Cultures are updated | Theme 3: Neighbourhood cultures and beliefs | Neighbourhood Influence |
| Cultures are not restrictive |
| Men and women can work in any career |
| Cultures and beliefs do not affect work, but have to be respected |
| Neighbours appreciate career | Theme 4: Neighbours appreciate roles |
| Neighbours view career as helpful to society |
| Neighbours perceive the role as important |
| Career has to match religious beliefs | Theme 5: Career has to agree with religion | Religiosity |
| Career has to be in line with Islam |
| Career has to respect humanity |
| Choice of career is anchored on Islamic values | Theme 6: Ethics at the workplace |
| Religion helps boost honesty |
| With religious beliefs, cannot take bribes or other gifts |
| Always focused on ethical standards in career |
| Serving people is serving God | Sub-theme 1: Service to God and people |
| Career demands respect for people and God |

**Step 4: Charting**

Charting was done both manually and with the use of NVivo. With charting, the data were presented as a short summary for each theme and sub-theme. Please see Appendix 2 showing the NVivo software applications that were used in different processes including the generation of the thematic framework matrix, thematic framework for transcripts, and the development of the word frequency query.

**Step 5: Investigation and Interpretation**

The emergent three aggregate dimensions, six themes and one-sub-themes are clarified in the following section. This will present a clear perspective into exactly what was established in the research and the emerging findings from the research.

## 6.3 Aggregate Dimension 1: Family Influence

The first dimension was labelled as *Family Influence.* The data that were collected under this dimension revealed that family influence has an impact on career choice and commitment of the participants. The frequency consisted of words like family, support, encourage, career, and financially. As displayed in the word cloud (figure 6) and the tree map, dimension 1 supports the themes of encouragement and financial support.

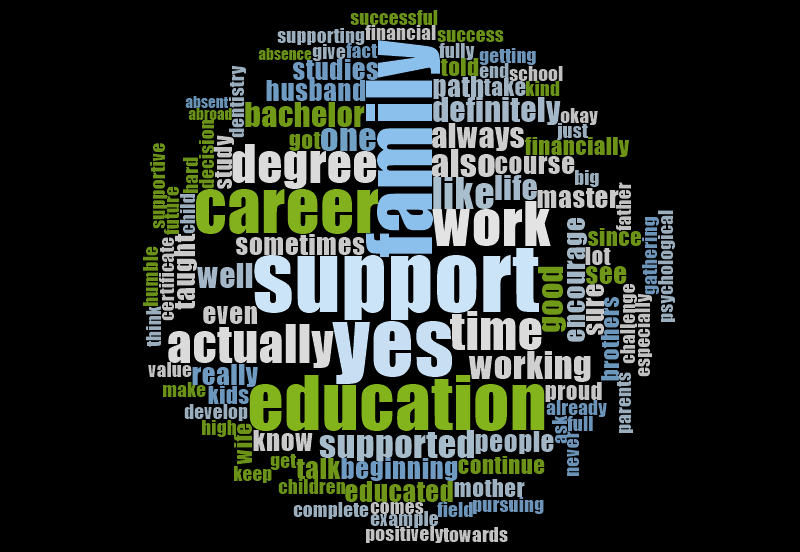
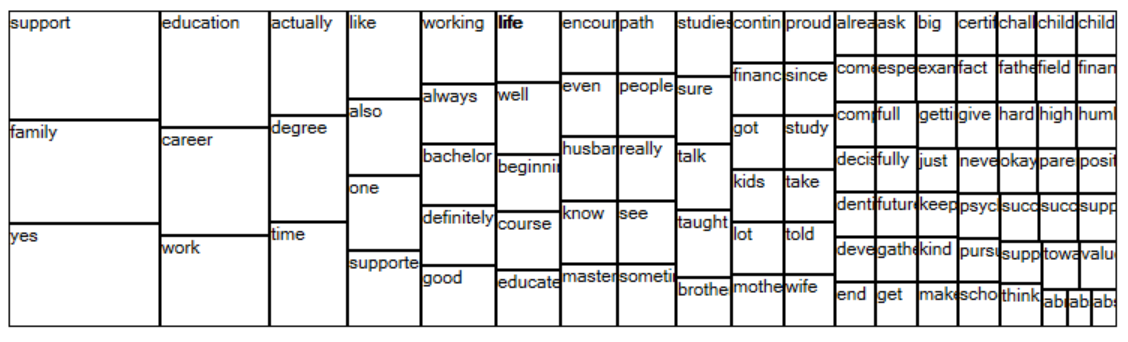


Figure 6: Word cloud, dimension 1, family influence

Figure 7 below shows the tree map for dimension 1, family influence. The tree map is demonstrative of key elements of family influence including support support related to education, career suppor, as well as issues such as embracing the work done by a family member.

Table 7: Tree map, dimension 1, family influence



**Theme 1: Encouragement**

Table 8: Thematic table for theme 1: encouragement

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1st Order Concepts** | **2nd Order Themes** | | **Aggregate Dimensions** |
| Family members always talk to me | | Theme 1: Encouragement | Family Influence |
| Family members encourage me to advance | |
| Family members always advise me on my career | |

For theme 1, in relation to family influence, it was established that the family has been crucial in providing necessary support to the participants. Encouragement emerged as one of the key areas of support that family provides to the different participants of the study. Encouragement stood out as one of the key tools that family members use to influence the career choices of individuals. Family is a source of encouragement based on their immediate experiences in the field or with other people working in the same field. In my view, the findings that the family influences commitment to the organisation through encouragement makes sense because respondents rely on what family members have gone through to make their own informed decisions about their careers. What the findings underscore is that Generation Y respondents have a lot of belief in their families and are always willing to follow their encouragement to perform well in their respective jobs and organisations. This explains why encouragement from family members makes more sense to Generation Y UAE respondents. Therefore, encouragement goes just beyond telling Generation Y UAE nationals about the advantages of their careers, as it entails an illustration of the experience that family members have gone through working within similar fields.

For instance, F.A., one of the participants stated: “They will encourage me to continue my studies, they will encourage me to go to any overseas training or conferences to get more educated about my work or my field of specialisation and so on”.This points to the encouragement that is given by the family to ensure that the participant is on the right path toward academic performance, thus increasing their commitment to their career path. This encouragement is a depiction of the strong influence that family has on the career choice and, by extension, organisational commitment of the individual.

To also demonstrate family influence through encouragement, A.M. pointed out the influence of his family by stating that, “yes actually they do and as a matter of fact they set an example of me for my little cousins and brothers that you should complete your education and get a Bachelor degree so you can be like me in the future and have a nice job and a professional career”*.* This statement is a clear example of how encouragement from the family members, in the form of using A.M. as an example for others, increases his desire to work hard. The family’s encouragement also helped him finish his higher education, thus proving that family influences lead individuals toward their chosen career choices.

Last, S.E. also illustrated the increased level of encouragement with this statement: “Yes my dad, he was actually in the military and a high ranking officer and he told me about mentalities and how to act in specific situations so he was a really good guidance for me and before he passed away he actually told me I have to keep up with my career and I don’t feel any, like upset, and do not be fearful of what people say about your career or your path because at the end it’s your life, salary and future”.This statement is also an illustration of the role that parents playing in encouraging individuals to make positive career choices. For instance, regardless of being in the military, the father encouraged S.E. to be confident and select a career that would be key to him having a successful life. It is through such encouragement that individuals are able to make the desirable career choices.

**Theme 2: Financial Support**

Table 9: Thematic table for theme 2: financial support

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1st Order Concepts** | **2nd Order Themes** | | **Aggregate Dimensions** |
| Family has supported me financially | | Theme 2: Financial Support | Family Influence |
| Family pays for/has paid for my education | |

As a part of family influence, the second key theme that emerged is that the family influences one’s career through financial support particularly during their academic career. Generation Y UAE nationals are individuals who are assumed to emerge mainly from homes that have a strong sense of financial stability. Hence, financial support comes in handy in terms of encouraging them to be committed to their respective organisations. The financial support always has to be in the form of providing funds that will ensure Generation Y UAE nationals will go to school to advance their education or support them in cases where they need financial support especially in matters that are connected to their careers. Financial support is vital because it puts Generation Y employees in a position where they can comfortably pursue their goals. With the intervention of the family to provide financial support, Generation Y respondents always feel the urge to remain committed to their work and organisations without letting down their own families. For instance, one of the participants, J.B., pointed to the aspect of financial support from the family by stating: “Yes my family supported me in the beginning even financially to work. And completing my Master’s degree. And now my husband and family are supporting me in my career development”.Through this statement, it can be seen that the family has been an instrumental influence by supporting the participant through education. With proper education, there is an opportunity to have a good career for individuals.

The same view was presented by H.Y., who noted that “they have already supported me financially when I was pursuing my Bachelor’s degree and when I was pursuing my Master’s degree recently”. Through the statement by H.Y., it is clear that the majority of the financial support has emerging from the aspect of education. The empowerment begins with financial input that is put into the education of the participants. As part of family influence, the family believes that it is significant to empower individuals in terms of education and this includes financial support to realise the educational attainments.

As much as financial support is appreciated, it is not seen as the only key influence that comes from the family. For instance, one of the participants, A.J., noted that, “yes, okay, actually for my Bachelor degree I got the full support from my family. I was single and I got full support from my father in particular. The support does not only mean the financial aspect but also spiritual as well. And psychological as well. More so, the support I got it from my brothers, and for sure my mom. She played a good role in this one by making duʿā**ʾ** (praying) for me to be successful in my career”. The meaning here is that beyond financial support, family influence has also been evident through other aspects such as prayers.

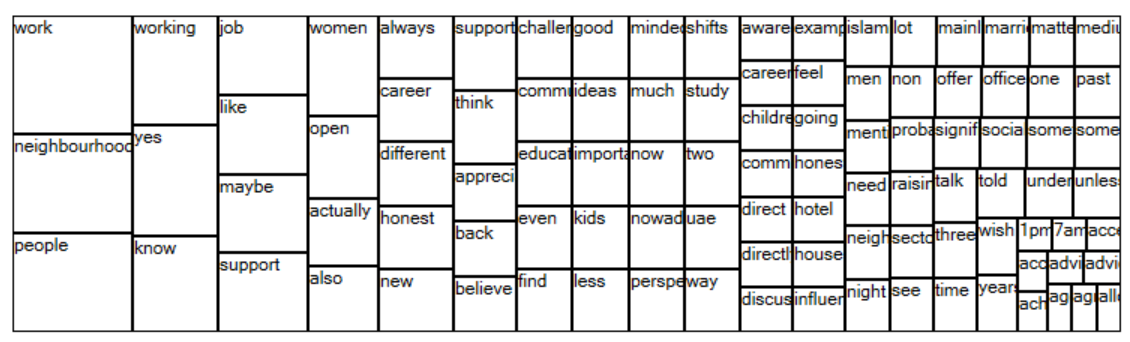
## 6.4 Aggregate Dimension 2: Neighbourhood Influence

The third dimension was labelled as *Neighbourhood Influence.* The data observing this dimension revealed that neighbourhood influences impact individuals based on the neighbourhood cultures and beliefs as well as the neighbours’ appreciation of the roles of the participants in their jobs. Words such as women, beliefs and support were derived. As displayed in the word cloud and the tree map, dimension 2 supports the theme of neighbourhood cultures and beliefs and neighbours appreciating roles of the participants.



Figure 7: Word cloud, dimension 2, neighbourhood influence

Table 10: Tree map, dimension 2, neighbourhood influence



**Theme 3: Neighbourhood Cultures and Beliefs**

Table 11: Thematic table for theme 3: neighbourhood cultures and beliefs

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1st Order Concepts** | **2nd Order Themes** | | **Aggregate Dimensions** |
| Cultures are updated | | Theme 3: Neighbourhood cultures and beliefs | Neighbourhood Influence |
| Cultures are not restrictive | |
| Men and women can work in any career | |
| Cultures and beliefs do not affect work, but have to be respected | |

The theme illustrated the impact of cultures and beliefs in determining the commitment of individuals toward their respective jobs and the choice made in these jobs. It was also seen that neighbourhood cultures and beliefs are not limiting when it comes to career choice, as both men and women have relatively equal opportunities. Generation Y UAE nationals are modern and highly tech-savvy individuals. What this means is that they get more positive influence from the cultural beliefs that do not repress women, but respect the position of everyone within the field. It becomes paramount for organisations to put in place gender-sensitive rules that also give women the capacity to work without any form of discrimination. More so, Generation Y UAE respondents revealed that they do not necessarily care about the gender of an individual and everyone should be allowed to work in any field, regardless of their gender. This underscores the accommodativeness of Generation Y UAE nationals in terms of working with everyone in their different fields. For instance, H.Y. noted: “In our neighbourhood, I would say we have a couple of things. We support education; we support women pursuing their own careers. Most families in my neighbourhood believe that women shouldn’t be working on shifts, night shifts, and the other thing is, in my neighbourhood we have a belief that we shouldn’t we working for non-Islamic banking in the UAE”. The indication here is that as much as the cultural factors in the society do not limit women from working in different careers, there is a perception that women should not do night shifts. The important point is that these cultures and beliefs are not restrictive to women in the careers that they would like to work in. However, it is safe to say that these collective neighbourhood beliefs do have an effect on the choices the participant makes in their career choices.

In addition to H.Y.’s comment, M.S. also agreed that neighbourhood cultures and beliefs do not lead to a limitation in career choices for either gender: “From my perspective, it does not exist nowadays. There’s no difference between men and women. I don’t see this kind of attitude/reaction from the neighbourhood”*.* The neighbourhood has given a fair platform to both men and women through more equal cultures and beliefs on career. A.M. added to the perspective of the impact of cultures and beliefs by pointing out :  
“As you know most of the societies today they are mixed, you will find some people who are open minded where they don’t mind, for example, having women working in a hotel or management of the hotel or even having night shifts or being engineers and there is some minority these days who would still not accept the ideas for women in the workforce but also regarding men working in hotels or non-Islamic banks”.This is only emphatic of the fact that neighbourhood cultures and beliefs have had a positive impact on career choice and commitment by giving everyone an opportunity to select the career that would fit them best. Individuals have the opportunity to make a choice based on their choice as there are no restrictions based on the neighbourhood cultures and beliefs. One of the significant findings on this theme, it was expected that neighbourhood in certain areas such as Fujairah, Ras AlKhaimah and AlAin are still strict with regards to the nature of work for women. However, the interviews results proven that even such areas/ cities which used to limit women work field are flexible in adopting the change that is happening around the country and the idea of women working in same field which used to be dominated by males are widely accepted.

**Theme 4: Neighbours Appreciate Roles**

Table 12: Thematic table for theme 4: neighbours appreciate roles

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1st Order Concepts** | **2nd Order Themes** | | **Aggregate Dimensions** |
| Neighbours appreciate career | | Theme 4: Neighbours Appreciate Roles | Neighbourhood Influence |
| Neighbours view career as helpful to society | |
| Neighbours perceive the role as important | |
| Cultures and beliefs do not affect work, but have to be respected | |

In this theme, it is observed that the commitment to work among Generation Y participants is driven by the appreciation for their roles. With the appreciation of the significance of the roles that they do within the community, there is more commitment to the respective jobs. The appreciation of roles is in itself an advantage to Generation Y UAE nationals. Being more sensitive individuals to non-work-related influences such as the neighbourhood influences, Generation Y respondents always look forward to being appreciated for their contributions to the society through their work. The greater the levels of appreciation from neighbours, the more they feel that they are more committed to their organisations and work. Generally, Generation Y UAE nationals want to feel their contribution to the different sectors of the country’s economy felt, and the appreciation from neighbours goes a long way into ensuring that they effectively become more committed to their work and organisations. Because of the impact felt on the neighbourhood, there is more commitment to remain within the organisation and deliver even more outcomes. For instance, N.A. pointed out the role that neighbours play when it comes to work by revealing that “they do appreciate. The number of Emirati pharmacists is much less compared to the other nationals. But they do appreciate”.The point here is that neighbours are at the forefront of showing appreciation for the job as a pharmacist. The same appreciation is critical in increasing the love and appreciation for the job. This appreciation therefore translates to higher levels of organisational commitment in the long run, because they are made to feel important and as though they are contributing positively to their society.

Interestingly, neighbours also show support through actions such as looking after the respondents’ children when they are busy with work. For instance, S.A. noted: “They offer to help me to take care of my kids if I’m staying late at work. Sometimes, some of them even offer to attend the parents’ meeting of my kids at school, if I have something I have to do at work. So, they are very supportive”*.* This is the point of support that is provided by neighbours as an illustration of their appreciation of the different roles that individuals perform in their jobs and society. With such support, there is more commitment to their respective works because the employee participants can trust that their children are well taken care of. This allows said respondents to focus more of their attention and effort into their jobs, leading to increased organisational commitment levels.

Working in sectors that directly have an impact on the community additionally increases the appreciation for the roles. Greater appreciation directly contributes to organisational commitment amongst Generation Y UAE nationals. For instance, A.N. noted that, “yes, indeed. Especially the fact that I’m working in the education sector and they are very appreciative of the support I give my neighbourhood, if they need any help in the education sector*”.* The point to emphasise in this quote is that neighbours are more supportive and appreciative of members of society who contribute positively to the welfare of their society. Therefore, individuals are more likely to enjoy this status in society and feel the desire to be more committed to their work.

## 6.5 Aggregate Dimension 3: Religiosity

The third dimension was labelled as *Religiosity.* The data that were collected under this dimension revealed that religiosity impacts the organisational commitment of individuals based on whether the career path agrees with the ethical standards set by the religion. Religious values are undeniably significant for Generation Y UAE respondents in the study. Just as it has been with the past generations, Generation Y UAE nationals believe that the Islamic teachings are fundamental to their own lives and provide a compass for their living in the society. Hence, religiosity is a critical influencer of organisational commitment because it sets the direction for general functioning of Generation Y UAE nationals at the organisation. The first notable thing that organisations have to do is to ensure that their values correspond to what Generation Y nationals expect to increase the level of commitment. Words such as religion, ethics, job, work, and honesty were derived. As displayed in the word cloud and the tree map, dimension 3 supports the theme ‘career has to agree with religion and ethics at the workplace’ and the sub-theme ‘service to God and people’.



Figure 8: Word cloud dimension 3, religiosity

Table 13: Tree map, dimension 3, religiosity



**Theme 5: Career has to agree with Religion**

Table 14: Thematic table for theme 5: career has to agree with religion

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1st Order Concepts** | **2nd Order Themes** | | **Aggregate Dimensions** |
| Career has to match religious beliefs | | Theme 5: Career has to agree with religion | Religiosity |
| Career has to be in line with Islam | |
| Career has to respect humanity | |

The influence of religiosity on career selection is evaluated in terms of their agreement with each other; all the participants in the interview are Muslim and hence the general perspective was that the career has to respect their religion and match Islamic values. The choice of career for Generation Y UAE nationals is always dictated by what then Islamic religion teaches them. Particularly, they would not want to go against the teachings of the Islamic religion in the course of performing their responsibilities. Organisations in the public sector in the UAE have continued to ensure that they pay attention to the needs of Generation Y employees by having values that represent Islamic teachings hence increasing their level of organisational commitment while working in the respective organisations. Therefore, if the values of the organisations reflect Islamic values, then the level of organisational commitment among Generation Y employees increases. For instance, N.M. noted that, “yes I would say yes it agrees with my work but I keep in mind that I don’t forget my religion and my beliefs and what I need to follow especially while working in a mixed environment”.The key point here is that the job is more appreciated in situations where it matches the Islamic religious values. An individual feels more comfortable in the job if it resonates with the religious beliefs that they have been taught. Additionally, it is implied that when a job respects these values, it helps in boosting organisational commitment in these respondents by making them comfortable in their environments.

Another participant, F.N., seems to have the same perspective as seen by the following extract: “Job selection and religiosity in my case are very relevant, as I remember when I was kid, we used to watch our parents talking about how important it is for the person to follow the religion even in terms of lifestyle. And when we talk about work in a sense it is lifestyle that would impact our daily interaction”*.* In this case, the selection of a job is seen to be more anchored on the capacity of an individual to link it back to religious beliefs. The job has to effectively resonate with the religious beliefs attached to the individual. Hence, there is more commitment if the job is in agreement with the Islamic religious beliefs for Generation Y UAE nationals.

**Theme 6: Ethics at the Workplace**

Table 15: Thematic table for theme 6: ethics at the workplace

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1st Order Concepts** | **2nd Order Themes** | | **Aggregate Dimensions** |
| Choice of career is anchored on Islamic values | | Theme 6: Ethics at the Workplace | Religiosity |
| Religion helps boost honesty | |
| With religious beliefs, cannot take bribes or other gifts | |
| Always focused on ethical standards in career | |

Based on this theme, it was established that religiosity has an influence on increasing the adherence to ethical standards at work. Aspects such as honesty are upheld because of the religious beliefs that are held. Because of the values that they are taught within the Islamic religion, Generation Y UAE nationals find it more necessary to be ethical in their organisations. With the emphasis of religion on relevant ethical standards to serve both God and humanity, organisational commitment increases with the adherence to the religion and its beliefs. Thus, ethical conduct arises from the fact that God teaches individuals to be genuine in their dealings in different tasks especially because it is reflective of serving God and humanity. For example, M.D. pointed to the significance of religiosity by highlighting its roles in one’s career, “being honest, being responsible, whatever, yea these kinds of things, ethically these kinds of things will be involved any kind of job, not just my job so yea it’s in all the jobs in the world”.Being honest and being responsible are key teachings of religion and the same is translated to work. Such adherence to ethical standards is representative of the increased level of commitment to work.

The same perspective was presented by N.B. who noted: “For sure you know we learn that we have to be honest and work with our heart at our work so all of that is a part of our religion and a part of our culture that we are raised on the beliefs that we learned when we are small. We learned that we have to be committed to the work until the last minute when we finish; for example, we have to be honest and give our opinion without discrimination against colour based on the country that the guy comes from”. Again, the issue of honesty comes up in the answer. The fact that religion teaches the importance of being honest in all aspects of job dealings is in itself helpful in improving the job performance of these respondents, through the upholding of ethical standards and fully delivering when they are given tasks.

Interestingly, religiosity also makes most of the participants reluctant to accept gifts or rewards that are given to them by customers. This is because of the feeling that they need to do their duties without expecting anything in return and hence upholding ethical standards. For instance, T.A. expressed: “I’ll tell you something, some of my clients, maybe they are bringing us gifts and maybe anyone would accept the gifts unless they have ethics and we can’t. It’s okay if it is a normal gift but a valuable gift is not allowed in our work. So I refuse to take it, because it is not allowed. Not because the organisation is advising us not to take it or it’s forbidden. But because of my faith, I can’t, it is not acceptable to do this”. As can be seen from the answer by T.A., religiosity emphasises the need to serve customers without expecting anything. This also helps protect the moral aspect of it because individuals would not need to expect gifts, which may ultimately lead into actions like bribery.

**Theme 6, Sub-theme 1: Ethics at the Workplace**

Table 16: Thematic table for theme 6: sub-theme 1: service to God and people

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1st Order Concepts** | **2nd Order Themes** | | **Aggregate Dimensions** |
| Serving people is serving God | | Sub-theme 1: Service to God and people | Religiosity |
| Career demands respect for people and God | |

Based on this sub-theme, the participants expressed the view that by following the Islamic religious teachings, they use their careers to serve God and humanity. This is attained by giving 100% at work. For instance, H.Y. voiced that, “In my religion or in my belief at least when we do something, we have to do it right and we shouldn’t be given at least 90 or 80% out of our performance, we should be giving 100% to whatever we do because in our beliefs, when we serve our country then we are serving our religion and we are serving God by serving humanity and serving the society that we live in”*.* In essence, religiosity has an effect on the extent of service that the participants are willing to deliver to their clients. With the satisfaction that by doing the work with maximum effort is not only serving humanity, but also God, there is increased commitment to work even better.

The same perspective was echoed by S.L. who stated: “So I believe a lot of, let me try to find a way to compress that … so a lot of religions believe, I find myself practicing my religious beliefs in my roles and responsibilities I practice being fair, if there is any hardship, I tend to have more faith, and having a positive outlook, in terms of, for example, my nature of work required me to save lives and I can’t neglect this role”. The fundamental point here is that religiosity advances the care that is given to other people. There is more focus on ensuring that people are being served with the required level of dignity. Hence, there is more organisational commitment observed in these individuals.

## 6.6 Summary of Findings

In this section, the key findings of the study are presented by going back to the overarching aim of the thesis and the research questions that were set out in chapter 1. There is the in-depth interpretation, analysis, and explication of the findings of the study. For clarity, this section also links the findings to the ecological systems theory and also particularly focuses on Generation Y respondents in the UAE public sector. These are individuals within the ages of 21 to 40 years and this was done in 2020. Hence, the data are very recent and mainly limited to the target sample population.

The thesis focused on exploring the influence of non-work-related factors on organisational commitment of Generation Y UAE national respondents. More specifically, the research explored the impact of different non-work-related factors including family influence, religiosity, as well as neighbourhood influence on the organisational commitment of the above-mentioned individuals. Data were collected from 30 Generation Y respondents across different fields such as healthcare, education, and the oil sector. Based on the data that were collected, six key themes and one sub-themes were derived from the data that were collected from the study. All the themes and the sub-themes of the study were derived from the responses that were given by participants in the open-ended interviews. These themes and sub-themes were labelled as below.

1. *Encouragement*
2. *Financial Support*
3. *Neighbourhood cultures and beliefs*
4. *Neighbours appreciate roles*
5. *Career has to agree with religion*
6. *Ethics at the workplace (Sub-theme: Service to God and people)*

The collected data were sufficient enough that they presented an opportunity to effectively present these themes and sub-themes. The findings of the study were critical in understanding the influence that family influence, religiosity, and neighbourhood influence have on the commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE.

### 6.6.1 Encouragement

The thesis focused on exploring the specific ways in which non-work-related factors such as family influence influenced commitment to work among Generation Y in the UAE. Family is the central unit in an individual’s life from childhood and has noticeable influences on an individual’s commitment to the selected career. The central questions of the study were answered by this initial theme, which emerged in the course of the data that were gathered from the transcripts of the research. The initial theme that that was derived from the transcript was labelled as *encouragement*.

Encouragement

Family members, including parents, play a significant role in encouraging Generation Y employees through their education toward their careers and ultimately in their careers, thus increasing their commitment to work

Figure 9: Significant findings, theme 1

The theme brought out a clear perspective that the influence of the family toward Generation Y individuals, who are the scope of this study, stems from the encouragement that they receive from the time they pursue courses toward their selected careers. Even in cases where parents are in a different career, they were seen to consistently encourage their children to attain the goals that they have set for themselves. This encouragement is critical in boosting the level of commitment of Generation Y respondents toward their respective careers.

Furthermore, the responses given by the participants mainly pointed to the critical role that family members and especially parents have continued to play in their careers and particularly through the pieces of advice that they offer to them. Encouragement reduces the pressure on Generation Y respondents and gives them hope of being successful in the careers that they venture into. In addition, encouragement gives them the confidence that they are on the right track in terms of career choices hence remaining committed to these careers. Therefore, based on this theme, it can be concluded that Generation Y respondents depend on the encouragement from their family members, particularly their parents, to be more committed to their respective chosen careers.

It is also significant to understand the theme in the context of the ecological systems theory. Boon et al. (2012) noted that individuals live in a social environment that is made up of successive layers of social systems. The inner circle is representative of the individual under the direct impact of the family from which this theme stems. The significant role of the family on the life of an individual within the inner circle is illustrative of the family influence that arises as a result of the encouragement that parents give. As demonstrated from the inner layer of the social environment in which individuals live, the encouragement that is given by family members toward individuals with regard to pursuing their chosen careers ensures that they are more committed to these careers. From a more analytical perspective, it is clear that both positive and negative influences are bound to affect individuals in different ways. Negative family influence tends to reduce the level of commitment. However, encouragement is a positive aspect of family influence and this is the reason why it ensures that Generation Y respondents in the UAE are more committed to their careers. Therefore, based on the ecological systems theory, encouragement is a fundamental aspect of family influence on Generation Y when it comes to commitment toward their careers.

The important statements that underscore *encouragement* as a theme in the thesis are stated in the table below.

Table 17: Important statements for theme 1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Participant** | **Important Statements Theme 1: Encouragement** |
| F.A. | They will encourage me to continue my studies; they will encourage me to go to any overseas training or conferences to get more educated about my work or my field of specialisation and so on. |
| A.M. | Yes, actually they do and as a matter of fact they set an example of me for my little cousins and brothers that you should complete your education and get a Bachelor degree so you can be like me in the future and have a nice job and a professional career. |
| S.E. | Yes, my dad, he was actually in the military and a high-ranking officer and he told me about mentalities and how to act in specific situations so he was a really good guidance for me and before he passed away he actually told me I have to keep up with my career and I don’t feel any, like upset, and do not be fearful of what people say about your career or your path because at the end it’s your life, salary and future. |

In tandem with the table above, the important statements obtained from F.A., A.M., and S.E. (Generation Y respondents in the UAE) highlight the significance of encouragement from their families in ensuring that they are committed to their respective careers. Generally, it can be understood that all family members have a role in encouraging Generation Y respondents to be more committed to their careers.

### 6.6.2 Financial Support

Family influence on Generation Y participants was also evidenced through many participants pointing to the role that the family has played in regard to financially supporting them. The theme of financial support was manifested and the researcher concluded that it has been critical in fostering commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE to their current careers. The theme *financial support* is as illustrated below based on how the researcher derived it from the responses that were given by the participants.

Financial

Support

Family members are willing to support Generation Y employees financially. Financial support from the family begins from the time an individual is pursuing their education. The family is always willing to support Generation Y employees to attain their career goals by advancing education to higher levels such as Master’s and PhDs.

Figure 10: Significant findings, theme 2

To pursue a desired career, the family plays an important role by ensuring that Generation Y respondents have the required financial resources to pursue quality education. Quality education right from the lower levels to the higher levels ensures that they align their lives with the career choices that they dream off. The researcher determined that the theme of financial support is a fundamental reflection of family influence in leading to more commitment of Generation Y toward their careers. The fact that families are willing to financially support Generation Y respondents to advance their education to Master’s and even PhD levels to be successful in their careers highlights the high support for family influence leading to more successful careers and commitment to work. Overall, the role of the family influencing individuals to be more committed to their careers stood out as a key item.

While some participants appreciated the significant role of financial support from the family as a factor that has influenced them to be more committed to their careers, they stated that there are additional factors that also play a role; for instance, financial support accompanied by other elements such as prayers from the family play a greater role in increasing their commitment to their careers because this shows the family’s love and concern for the individual’s life and career choices. The participants find these additional behaviours to be manifestations of the supportive feelings of their family and this works in increasing their commitment to their jobs.

From the perspective of the ecological systems theory that was selected for application in this thesis, it can be seen that from the inner circle, an individual is always under the impact of family based on the theme of financial support. In the inner circle, Generation Y respondents are influenced by their families to develop more commitment to their work through the provision of financial support. This financial support goes beyond the lower levels of education to the higher levels such as PhD, as the participants noted that the family is always willing to help. Even in cases where they face challenges in their own careers, the family is always willing to step in and help them hence increasing their motivation.

The theory also directly points to the role that family plays through aspects such as providing the necessary financial support to the Generation Y respondents for career prosperity. To crown it all, the family also influences commitment to career through aspects such as prayers for the respondents. Thus, in line with the ecological systems theory, family influence is directly manifested through the financial support that they give to the advancement of the career.

The key statements that were given by the participants in regard to the theme of financial support are in the table below.

Table 18: Important statements, theme 2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Participant** | **Important Statements: Theme 2: Financial Support** |
| J.B. | Yes, my family supported me in the beginning even financially to work. And completing my Master’s degree. And now my husband and family are supporting me in my career development. |
| H.Y. | They have already supported me financially when I was pursuing my Bachelor’s degree and when I was pursuing my Master’s degree recently. |
| A.J. | Yes, okay, actually for my Bachelor degree I got the full support from my family. I was single and I got full support from my father in particular. The support doesn’t only mean the financial aspect but also spiritual as well. And psychological as well. Also the support I got it from my brothers, and for sure from my mom. She played a good role in this one by making dua and praying for me to be successful in my career. |

As seen above, the important statements that helped describe family influence as manifested in financial support are presented. Based on the different perspectives of the participants, it is clear that the families are always willing to step in to support Generation Y financially. The focus on providing financial support goes a long way towards ensuring that there is more commitment to the selected careers amongst these individuals.

### 6.6.3 Neighbourhood Cultures and Beliefs

The theme *neighbourhood cultures and beliefs* was derived from the responses that were given by participants in regard to whether there are cultures in the neighbourhood and the ultimate impact of this. The participants noted that there has been a significant change in the neighbourhood cultures and beliefs and this has been critical in shaping their own careers. The theme is as demonstrated below.

Neighbourhood cultures and beliefs

The neighbourhood has cultures and beliefs that directly impact the career commitment of Generation Y employees. There was the appreciation of the fact that cultures are updated, not restrictive, and that both men and women have been given the same position when it comes to venturing into their chosen careers.

Figure 11: Significant findings, theme 3

Neighbourhood cultures and beliefs were studied in terms of significant roles that they play in terms of increasing the commitment of Generation Y respondents in the organisation. Being between the ages of 20 and 40 in the year 2020, Generation Y respondents are mainly in the modern age where there has been a transformation of neighbourhood cultures with the emergence of the new ways of thinking. Hence, it was established that cultures within the neighbourhood are relatively modern. Neighbours have a new way of thinking about careers and they offer encouragement to every individual to pick careers that they feel are best for them.

The reason for this is because the existing neighbourhood cultures are not restrictive, and have been helpful in ensuring that individuals have the freedom to choose careers they deem are best for them. The lack of restrictions from neighbourhood cultures has given both males and females a balance in terms of the careers that they can choose. For instance, Generation Y respondents – whether men or women – are happy to work in different fields including the medical and engineering fields, among others. There has generally been a great shift across society in the ways both males and females are treated in the performance of careers and this has been vital in increasing the level of commitment to their careers and organisations.

In line with the ecological systems theory, the theme neighbourhood cultures and beliefs is at the third layer, the exosystem. The exosystem is the layer that comprises of aspects such as neighbours, politics, and social media (Musgrave & Woodward 2016). The cultural beliefs and cultures at the exosystem are reflective of the influence of the cultures and beliefs on the commitment of individuals. From the ecological systems theory perspective, neighbourhood influences, through their less restrictive cultures and beliefs, have increased the commitment of Generation Y respondents toward their careers and organisations. The fact that neighbourhoods have continued to allow individuals to venture into the careers of their choices is an encouragement to Generation Y respondents to take up responsibilities in different fields and realise desired levels of success.

As much as there is increased modernity and changes in existing cultures’ view of different careers among Generation Y respondents, they are still an important part of the neighbourhood. Participants pointed out that the cultures and beliefs do not negatively affect work, but have to be respected by everyone. Generation Y respondents believe that it is their responsibility to continue to preserve positive cultural practices that help in encouraging anyone to work in their chosen careers without any forms of limitation. Thus, neighbourhood cultures and beliefs generally shape the overall level of commitment to work among Generation Y respondents.

The summarised important statements illustrating the significance of neighbourhood cultures and beliefs in influencing Generation Y respondents’ commitment to work are shown in the table below.

Table 19: Important statements, theme 3

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Participant** | **Important Statements: Theme 3: Neighbourhood cultures and beliefs** |
| H.Y. | In our neighbourhood, I would say we have a couple of things. We support on education; we support women pursuing their own careers. Most families in my neighbourhood believe that women shouldn’t be working on shifts, night shifts, and the other thing is, in my neighbourhood we have a belief that we shouldn’t be working for non-Islamic banking in the UAE. |
| M.S. | From my perspective, it does not exist nowadays. There’s no difference between men and women. I don’t see this kind of attitude/reaction from the neighbourhood. |
| A.M. | As you know most of the societies today are mixed. You will find some people who are open minded where they don’t mind for example, having women working in a hotel or management of the hotel or even having night shifts or being engineers and there is some minority these days who would still not accept the ideas for women in the workforce but also regarding men working in hotels or non-Islamic banks. |

As demonstrated in the table above, the important statements that were made by different participants point to the openness of the society in terms of ensuring that both men and women can get into careers that they want. The progressiveness shown by people within the neighbourhood has been an enabler of increased commitment to work among Generation Y respondents in the UAE as can be concluded from the results. Therefore, there is a sense of positivity that the existing cultures and beliefs are not restrictive, but vital platforms for encouraging careers.

### 6.6.4 Neighbours Appreciate Roles

The fourth theme, *neighbours appreciate roles* was derived from the responses of the participants as they indicated the role that neighbours play in keeping them committed to their careers. Due to the frequent interactions with individuals in the neighbourhood, the response was that the neighbours appreciate the roles of Generation Y respondents hence consequently enhancing their commitment. The theme is as represented below.

Neighbours appreciate roles

Neighbours are always quick to appreciate the significance of careers to the society. For instance, pharmacists are appreciated for their role in the healthcare sector because neighbours perceive these roles as important. Thus, there is increased commitment y among Generation Y employees.

Figure 12: Significant findings, theme 4

Theme 4 is indicative of the fact that neighbours play a significant role in boosting the level of commitment to work amongst Generation Y respondents by appreciating the role that they perform to help their societies. For example, neighbours appreciate the careers of individuals particularly if they directly touch the lives of people such as teaching. As much as Generation Y respondents reiterated that they do not necessarily share information about the advantages or the disadvantages of their careers with neighbours, they are constantly appreciated based on their titles. Despite potential challenges at the workplace, the appreciation of the career by neighbours makes it less difficult to remain in the organisation. The main point is that, through their appreciation, neighbours directly impact the rate of commitment because Generation Y respondents feel that they are valued in the society.

More importantly, Generation Y respondents pointed out that there are instances where neighbours approach them and tell them how their careers are helpful and important to the society. In some instances, neighbours are willing to sacrifice their time to offer support such as looking after the children of Generation Y respondents when they are delayed at their workplaces because of the helpful nature of their work. This particularly applies to Generation Y respondents who have to do night shifts. The perception of the roles as important and helpful to the society increases the level of commitment among Generation Y respondents because of the feeling that they are doing something important to help their societies. In fact, there is a focus to improve the knowledge and skills in the given area to improve the society further. Thus, it can be noted that Generation Y respondents feel greater support with the positive comments from neighbours about the contributions that their careers make to the society.

In relation to the ecological systems theory, the theme falls in the third layer, the exosystem where neighbours are seen to have a significant influence on individuals in the society. Based on the theory, the fact that neighbours appreciate the roles of Generation Y respondents is enough evidence to illustrate the fact that they influence them positively in their careers. Neighbours may not know that the praise they give to Generation Y respondents based on their career contributions increases commitment, but this is an observed result. Generation Y respondents mainly take pride in their careers and remain committed to them based on what neighbours say about them and the willingness of these neighbours to come out and support their careers. From the theoretical perspective, it can be appreciated that the exosystem – that is, mainly neighbours – have a critical role to play in ensuring that Generation Y respondents become more committed to their careers. Therefore, from the exosystem, it is clear that both the appreciation and the emphasis of the significance of the roles of Generation Y respondents by neighbours go a long way towards influencing them to be more committed to their careers.

The important statements that help better understand the theme are presented in the table below.

Table 20: Important statements, theme 4

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Participant** | **Important Statements: Theme 4: Neighbours appreciate roles** |
| N.A. | They do appreciate roles. The number of Emirati pharmacists is much less compared to the other nationals. But they do appreciate the roles. |
| S.A. | They offer to help me take care of my kids if I’m staying late at work. Sometimes, some of them even offer to attend the parents’ meeting of my kids at school, something I have to do at work. So, they are very supportive. |
| A.N. | Yes, indeed. Especially the fact that I’m working in the education sector and they are very appreciative of the support I give my neighbourhood, if they need any help in the education sector. |

In line with the table above, the important statements made by the different participants are demonstrated. For instance, it is established that neighbours appreciate the roles of Generation Y respondents to the extent where they offer to take care of their children while at work. This is to allow them to fulfil their duties to the community without any worries. Additionally, with the lesser number of Emiratis in fields such as pharmacy, it was indicated that the neighbours appreciate those who take the initiative to get into these fields and serve the population. Overall, there is a general point to the fact that neighbourhood influence on commitment to career emanates from their appreciation of the roles that Generation Y respondents play in the society.

### 6.6.5 Career Has to Agree with Religion

The theme, *career has to agree with religion,* was derived from the responses of the participants about the religious considerations that they have to make while choosing their careers. Based on the scope of this study, all Generation Y respondents who were involved in the study are Muslims. The findings in relation to the theme are summarised below.

Career has to agree with religion

The selected career has to match the religious beliefs of individuals. Generation Y employees believe that the career has to match Islamic religious beliefs. Thus, to match religious beliefs, the career has to respect humanity at every given opportunity.

Figure 13: Significant findings, theme 5

The theme reflected the view that religion is critical in shaping the choice of the career. Participants indicated that the career they choose has to match their religious beliefs. The Islamic religious beliefs generally espouse upholding principles that respect humanity. For instance, careers such as teaching and pharmacy are seen to match the religious beliefs of individuals and hence the reason why they are chosen. More specifically, the religious beliefs have to reflect what is taught in the Islamic religion. The general position of the participants in the study was that the current jobs that they are doing match Islamic religious beliefs. More importantly, they revealed that they would not take up any job that goes against the Islamic teachings. The key finding here is that careers that reflect Islamic beliefs are critical in increasing the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their careers. Therefore, Generation Y respondents are more committed to careers that directly represent what has been taught in their religion.

From the ecological theory perspective, the theme can be analysed from the microsystem and the mesosystem layers. From the microsystem layer, the impact of religion is seen in terms of what it stands for and the impact that it has on the life choices of individuals. In this regard, Generation Y respondents in the UAE are influenced by the directions of Islam to choose the career that the best fits with religion teachings. The impact of religion is felt based on the tasks that are required to be performed in the given career.

In the mesosystem layer, the influence of religion is anchored on shaping what Generation Y respondents will choose to do as part of their responsibilities in the organisation. It is important that the ecological systems theory helps understand the link between the Islamic beliefs and career choices, and ultimately the commitment that they develop toward the career. Careers that match the religious beliefs of the participants generate more commitment to the participants as was established through the interviews.

The important statements that highlight the theme and the manner in which it reflects commitment to work are demonstrated in the table below.

Table 21: Important statements, theme 5

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Participant** | **Important Statements: Theme 5: Career has to agree with religion** |
| N.M. | Yes, I would say yes it agrees with my work but I keep in mind that I don’t forget my religion and my belief and what I need to follow especially while working in a mixed environment. |
| F.N. | Job selection and religiosity in my case is very relevant, as I remember when I was kid we used to watch our parents talking about how important it is for the person to follow the religion even in terms of lifestyle. And when we talk about work in a sense it is lifestyle that would impact our daily interaction. |

In the table above, the important statements that were made in regard to the theme are presented. As stated, participants appreciated the fact that the career that they chose agrees with their religious teachings and beliefs. This is in fact the most important consideration before accepting the job. The focus of continuing to work and deliver on their careers is anchored to the fact that they directly represent Islamic religious beliefs that are upheld by participants.

### 6.6.6 Ethics at the Workplace (Sub-theme: Service to God and People)

The theme was derived from the participant’s response to what they feel about their careers in regard to the Islamic religion. This mainly emerged from the response to what they do in their careers to reflect their religious beliefs. The theme *ethics at the workplace* and the sub-theme that emerged was *service to God and people.* The theme and the sub-theme are presented below.

Ethics at the workplace

Islam in the context of religiosity is vital in promoting ethical practices at workplace for Generation Y employees. For instance, the Islamic religion is vital in promoting adherence to values such as honesty and avoiding bribes.

Service to God and people

From the responses given by the participants, Islamic religion teaches that serving people is serving God. Hence, religiosity increases commitment to work because it helps employees serve both God and the people in the course of performing their duties.

Figure 14: Significant findings, theme 6

As per theme 6, religiosity is a critical aspect in the work of UAE national Generation Y respondents. An important point from the responses in the interviews is that the Islamic religion increases commitment to work because it encourages them to observe ethical practices at the workplace. For instance, the participants revealed that they must always adhere to Islamic values in the delivery of their services in their careers. This means that they always have to uphold significant ethical values such as honesty and stand for what is right. Honesty ensures that they do not engage in unscrupulous deals while serving in their respective sectors or do not steal any of the resources meant to deliver services. Moreover, Islamic beliefs encourage commitment to work without expecting anything in the form of gifts of rewards. Generation Y participants appreciated the fact that because of the nature of the Islamic religion, they are better-placed to deliver services in a more ethical manner, which reflects their overall commitment to work.

For the sub-theme, *service to God and people,* participants appreciated that their commitment to the career is a reflection of their service not only to people, but also to God. The service that they deliver through their careers is generally what they have been called by religion to do. Therefore, there is more commitment to the career particularly because it gives them the opportunity to serve God better. The participants also noted that it is important to be committed to their careers because it demands respect for people and God. Hence, by working on their given careers, they are respecting the will of God and service to the people.

As aforementioned, the aspect of religiosity is at the microsystem layer of the ecological systems theory. This means that Islam influences Generation Y respondents in the UAE to be more committed to values such as honesty in their jobs. Additionally, it influences their commitment to work because of the belief that, by satisfying their duties, they are doing it for God. Overall, the impact of religiosity on job commitment is highly significant as it is directed by the desire to provide services based on what God asks of us.

The important statements emerging from the theme and the sub-theme are summarised in the table below.

Table 22: Important statements, theme 6

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Participant** | **Important Statements: Theme 6: Ethics at the workplace (Sub-theme: Service to God and people** |
| M.D. | Being honest, being responsible, whatever, yea these kinds of things, ethically these kinds of things will be involved any kind of job, not just my job so yea it’s in all the jobs in the world. |
| N.B. | For sure you know we learn that we have to be honest and work with our heart at our work so all of that is a part of our religion and a part of our culture that we are raised on the beliefs that we learned when we are small. We learned that we have to be committed to the work until the last minute when we finish; for example, we have to be honest and give our opinion without discrimination against colour or the country that the guy comes from. |
| T.A. | I’ll tell you something, some of my clients, maybe they are bringing us gifts and maybe anyone would accept the gifts unless they have ethics and we can’t. It’s okay if it a normal gift but a valuable gift is not allowed in our work. So I refuse to take it, because it is not allowed. Not because the organisation is advising us not to take it or it’s forbidden. But because of my faith, I can’t, it is not acceptable to do this. |
| H.Y. | In my religion or in my belief at least when we do something, we have to do it right and we shouldn’t be given at least 90% or 80% out of our performance, we should be giving 100% to whatever we do because in our beliefs, when we serve our country then we are serving our religion and we are serving God by serving humanity and serving the society that we live in. |
| S.L. | So I believe a lot of, let me try to find a way to compress that …so a lot of religions believe, I find myself practicing my religious beliefs in my roles and responsibilities I practice being fair, if there is any hardships I tend to have more faith, and having a positive outlook, in terms of, for example, my nature of work required me to save lives and I can’t neglect this role. |

In line with the table above, the key statements that were made by participants on the theme and the sub-theme are presented. The important statements indicate that religious beliefs are directly related to the career and this is what leads to more commitment. The conclusion in this regard is that religiosity influences commitment by enhancing ethics at the workplace and by giving Generation Y respondents the understanding that they are serving God and humanity in their respective duties.

## 6.7 Implications of the Study

The study will have various implications for organisations in the UAE with Generation Y respondents. The first implication of the study is that it will give managers in the UAE the opportunity to understand how the values and ambitions of Generation Y respondents are shaped, particularly from a religiosity perspective. It is worth noting that Islam has strong values particularly when it comes to upholding ethical standards such as honesty and transparency in the organisation. Hence, the findings will provide empirical findings to managers on how they can get the best out of their respondents from a values perspective by relying on their religiosity. Managers in the UAE will be a better position to increase the commitment of their respondents to the organisation by matching the values and expectations of the organisations with the Islamic religious values. More Generation Y respondents will become committed to the organisation because of the practical demonstration of the Islamic religious values and how they help them work toward the attainment of their goals. Essentially, managers in the UAE will gain from the study not only in terms of promoting proper values in the organisation, but also matching organisational values to the Islamic values which increases commitment.

The second implication of the study is that managers in the UAE can utilise the findings to improve organisational commitment among Generation Y respondents by ensuring that there are proper working conditions in the organisation and opportunities for career growth. To improve organisational commitment to work, participants revealed that they need opportunities for long-term career growth based on their respective jobs. It is worth noting that participants in the study indicated that they are currently happy with their current workplaces and jobs. However, the emphasis is that the work environment as well as the opportunities must be right for their own career growth. Through this study, managers in the UAE will understand the significance of putting in place structures related to the growth of Generation Y respondents such as training and promotion schemes that give respondents the opportunity to move up their career. Essentially, managers in the UAE will be able to come up with more practical solutions to enable career growth in the organisation hence ensuring better working environments and career growth opportunities. The outcome of this will be greater commitment of Generation Y respondents to their respective organisations.

Another implication of the study is that managers will influence organisational commitment among Generation Y respondents by leveraging family values. The participants in the study indicated that their families have significantly influenced their careers through encouragement and financial support to realise their goals. Managers in the UAE organisations may leverage family values including offering the necessary support to respondents such as listening to them and providing them with necessary feedback for the realisation of improved commitment to work. Having managers understand the grievances of respondents, as a family would do, would go a long way towards creating a family within the organisation leading to the realisation of greater commitment. Overall, managers in the UAE will utilise the family values and approaches to working with Generation Y respondents hence ultimately increasing their commitment to the work.

Furthermore, managers in the UAE will be in a good position to understand how neighbourhood influence increases the commitment of Generation Y respondents across the UAE. It is worth noting that the neighbourhood in terms of cultures and beliefs as well as initiative of neighbours to appreciate the roles of Generation Y respondents in the community go a long way towards improving their commitment to work. Managers will understand the need to come up with more modern cultures and beliefs that respect all respondents whether female or male, thereby ensuring their progression in the organisation. By having more modern and less restrictive values that respect the position of Generation Y and by giving them the opportunity to work without discrimination, there will be increased commitment from these respondents. In the same breath, organisations will work based on what is done in the neighbourhood through the appreciation of the roles performed by these. The appreciation of the roles will give them the feeling that they are more appreciated and hence become more committed to their respective organisations and jobs.

Overall, the findings from the study will be vital in promoting the management of Generation Y respondents in the UAE. This is because managers will work toward the development of evidence-based decisions to improve the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their work. With the valid findings, the study will consequently add to the body of knowledge that is related to the management of Generation Y respondents in various organisations in the UAE. Therefore, the practicality of the findings generated in this study will see them applied to the organisational environment in the UAE.

## 6.8 Proposed Conceptual Model

The purpose of this research was to investigate the influence of non-work-related factors on the commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE. In line with the study findings, all the key themes and sub-themes associated with the dimensions of the study are presented. Below is the proposed conceptual model of the study based on its findings.

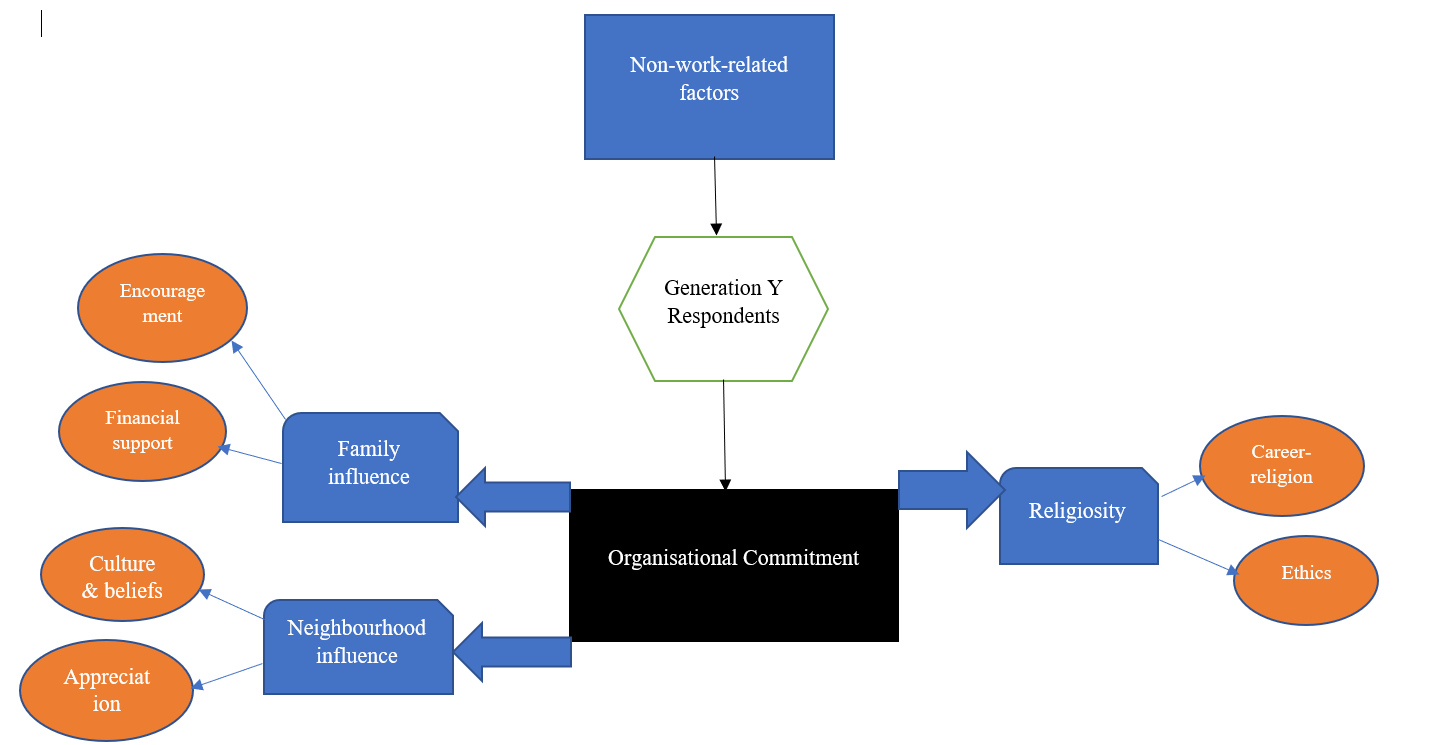


Figure 15: Proposed conceptual model

The proposed conceptual model above reflects the output of this research. For instance, the conceptual model shows that *family influence* is felt by the participants through encouragement and financial support. Additionally, it is shown that *neighbourhood influence* influences the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their jobs through the positive neighbourhood cultures and beliefs, which have allowed both men and women to work freely in their respective career choices. Furthermore, neighbours appreciate the roles that are performed by Generation Y respondents which makes them more committed. The last critical aspect that increases commitment is *religiosity;* by ensuring that the career matches the religious expectations of individuals and that religion ensures individuals uphold ethical standards. Religion mainly provides an opportunity because it ensures the delivery of service to God and people. Overall, the conceptual model is a clear illustration of the output of the study.

# CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

## 7.1 Summary and Analysis of the Key Findings

The key findings of the study provide strong evidence that non-work-related factors increase the commitment to work among Generation Y UAE nationals. Both male and female Generation Y respondents who work for different public sector organisations took part in the study. The first key finding discussed in the study is that family influence plays a significant role in improving the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their careers. Based on the themes that were established from the participants’ responses, family influence on the improved commitment to work amongst Generation Y respondents is manifested in two ways.

First, family influence increases commitment to work among Generation Y respondents through encouragement. In this regard, Generation Y respondents noted that within the family setup, they were encouraged to continue pursuing their careers. Family plays a central role in encouraging individuals to pursue quality education from childhood and upholds the same encouragement in adulthood, thus setting the ground for increased organisational commitment. Moreover, encouragement as a method of family influence was identified to play a vital role in leading to the attainment of career goals as Generation Y respondents are not likely to give up along the way with the quality of support that they receive from their family. Hence, encouragement from family members influences commitment to work among Generation Y respondents. Second, the general perspective that was presented by the participants was that their families played a key role in supporting them financially. Financial support is seen as support that ensures that individuals accomplish their academic goals. For instance, families provide financial support from the early stages of education to the highest learning levels such as PhD. Furthermore, the participants F.A. and R.D. appreciated the fact that they can receive financial support from their families at any point of their career when they need it. The fact that their families are always ready to support them financially significantly influences their commitment to work. Essentially, the key conclusion that was drawn from the responses in the study is that family influence has a significant role to play when it comes to influencing the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their work. Therefore, families need to be as close as possible to Generation Y respondents and provide the needed support to them to improve their level of commitment to work.

The third key finding made in the course of the study is that neighbourhood influence increases the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their work. Neighbourhood influence mainly focuses on understanding the significant role that the cultures and beliefs within the neighbourhood have on organisational commitment. Two key themes were identified in the study in understanding neighbourhood influence on organisational commitment among Generation Y respondents in the UAE. The first theme is the impact of the neighbourhood cultures and beliefs: the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their work increases because of the changes that occur in terms of the cultures and beliefs of the neighbourhood that they live in. With the transformation of the society and the emergence of new ways of thinking, it was established that neighbourhood cultures and beliefs have been highly dynamic. Dynamism in the neighbourhood cultures and beliefs means that attitudes toward gender roles in careers are gradually eliminated. For instance, women in the UAE are currently allowed to work in the fields that were previously considered to be reserved for men. The significance of transformed cultures and beliefs in the neighbourhood is that it has led to more commitment to careers. Generation Y UAE nationals can be more committed to their respective careers because they are not judged harshly by the cultures and beliefs within their neighbourhoods. The updated cultures present an opportunity for everyone to progress positively in their careers, thus increasing the level of commitment in these respective careers. Therefore, the transformation of neighbourhood cultures has been highly positive, leading to greater commitment among Generation Y respondents.

The second theme that emerged in relation to neighbourhood influence is that neighbours appreciate the roles that are performed by Generation Y respondents in the society. As identified in the research, Generation Y respondents are occupied in different career fields, including teaching and even health care. With the roles that impact directly the society, neighbours highly appreciate the roles that Generation Y respondents perform in the society. For instance, neighbours view careers such as teaching as helpful to the society. Neighbours’ perception of these careers influences the commitment of individuals toward their careers. When Generation Y respondents feel that they are positively contributing to the society through their careers, they become more committed to them. Neighbours play a significant role in making individuals feel more valuable to their communities by directly talking to them about the significant role that their careers play in the society.

In summary, with the changing cultures and beliefs within the society, there is an increasingly positive attitude of Generation Y respondents to their own careers and hence more commitment. Moreover, with neighbours being ready to appreciate the role that Generation Y respondents perform within the society; they show even greater commitment.

The last significant finding made in the study is that religiosity has an influence on career commitment among Generation Y respondents. All the Generation Y respondents who participated in the study are Muslims. With this in mind, it can be reiterated that Islam has played a significant role in influencing the choice of career among Generation Y respondents in the UAE. Two themes and one sub-theme were derived from the analysis of the influence of religiosity on the commitment of Generation Y to their career. The first theme explored in the study is that the career that Generation Y respondents choose has to agree with their religion. In this case, Generation Y UAE nationals become more committed to a career that agrees with the Islamic beliefs and teachings. Moreover, it is a priority concern when these individuals selected their career paths. For instance, the career has to espouse aspects of humanity, which is highly appreciated within the Islamic religion. Accordingly, if a career does not follow the established religious teachings, then it is less likely to be selected by UAE national Generation Y respondents. Importantly, there is more commitment to a career that aligns effectively with the Islamic religious beliefs of the participants.

The second theme that emerged is that religiosity leads to ethics at the workplace. The participants of the research appreciated the fact that the Islamic religious beliefs that they learn are not limited to their individual lives but also relate to upholding ethical standards within the organisation and wider society. Religiosity leads to more commitment to career among Generation Y participants by ensuring that they work in line with the established ethical standards. For instance, due to the religious beliefs that they uphold, respondents such as T.A. and N.A. noted that their role is to work to the best of their ability without expecting any gifts or taking bribes from their customers. The focus is always on service delivery rather than expecting rewards for the performance of particular tasks. Hence, commitment is based on the need to impeccably perform the assigned tasks. The sub-theme derived based on the second theme is that, because of their strong Islamic beliefs, Generation Y respondents become even more committed to their careers based on the realisation and belief that they represent a service to people and, ultimately, God. For instance, those employed in healthcare believe that by delivering quality care, they serve not only people but also God. The commitment to career is based on the fact that career demands respect for both God and people. Therefore, religiosity has an influence on the commitment of Generation Y respondents to work because it leads to better service.

## 7.2 Research Questions/Objectives

It is critical to ensure that this study effectively answers the research questions developed at the beginning of the study. Accordingly, the main research question of the study was, “What is the influence of non-work-related factors (family influence, religiosity, neighbourhood influence) on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents UAE nationals in the UAE in the public sector?” To answer this question, three specific research questions were developed to ensure that each element of the non-work-related factors is explored thoroughly. The subsequent research objectives were directly aligned with the three questions that were put forward in the study. These questions are answered below and linked back to the corresponding research objectives of the study.

***Research Question 1: What are the influences of family on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents who are UAE nationals in the UAE?***

In answering this research question, the dominant themes relating to family influence were identified by the researcher. The most notable outcome of the research question was that family influence has a great impact on the commitment of Generation Y UAE nationals to their careers. Family is the central unit that Generation Y respondents interact with. As was identified in the research, family consists of either the parents of the participant or their husband, wife and children. Regardless of the composition, family has a great influence on Generation Y respondents when it comes to their commitment to work.

Two key themes were used to answer the research question on family influence. As was identified in the research, one way that family influences career commitment is encouragement. Encouragement is manifested in three different ways, signifying the ways in which the family contributes to commitment among Generation Y UAE nationals. The family encourages these individuals by talking to them about the careers that they have chosen and the need to continue pursuing them. By talking to Generation Y respondents, their family members boost their level of commitment to their respective careers. Encouragement is also provided by insisting on the advancement of their respective careers through further education. By encouraging them to advance, families increase the level of commitment of Generation Y respondents to their careers.

The second way in which family influences career commitment among Generation Y UAE nationals is financial support. The readiness of the family when it comes to providing financial support to Generation Y respondents is a fundamental contributor to their organisational commitment. The family provides financial support from childhood by paying for the education of Generation Y nationals. It is through such investment in education that their careers are shaped, thus leading to increased commitment to career. Both parents and spouses are supportive enough when it comes to providing finances for the advancement of education geared towards the desired career. Moreover, family commitment to provide financial support to Generation Y nationals plays an essential role in leading to their increased commitment to work. Therefore, through financial support, family positively influences organisational commitment among Generation Y UAE nationals.

The answer to this research question can be directly linked to the first objective, which was to determine the influence of family on organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents who are UAE nationals working in the UAE public sector. The first research question helps address this objective because the participants were asked specifically about the role that their families play in boosting their commitment. The varied responses that reflected the significance of the family in leading to commitment among Generation Y respondents demonstrate that family influence is strong when it comes to organisational commitment. It is worth noting that for Generation Y respondents, encouragement can come in multifaceted ways, but it does not ensure that they are committed to their work immediately. Moreover, financial contribution towards meeting the career goals of the participants comes in different ways but still leads to their commitment towards work. This objective is also addressed well because, as much as families are different, they have common approaches to boosting the level of commitment of Generation Y UAE nationals to work. Thus, the first research question and the objective link up in a clear way and are both fully addressed based on the findings of this study.

***Research Question 2: What is the influence of religiosity of Generation Y respondents who are UAE nationals on the organisational commitment in the UAE in the public sector?***

This research question addresses the influence that religiosity has on Generation Y UAE respondents in the public sector. The main point to note is that all the Generation Y respondents who participated in the research are Muslims. For all the participants, Islam has played a significant role in shaping their lives and subsequently the level of commitment to their work. When answering this research question, it was established that religiosity has a significant influence on organisational commitment for Generation Y UAE nationals in the public sector. It was identified that the impact of religiosity on the commitment to work is manifested in two different ways.

First, it was established that religiosity influences the organisational commitment of Generation Y UAE nationals when it matches their religious teachings. All participants asserted that their careers must first agree with their Islamic religious beliefs for them to be committed to them. As public sector careers generally agree with the Islamic beliefs, they strongly influence respondents’ commitment to work. For instance, by respecting humanity, a career is deemed to be in line with Islamic religious beliefs of Generation Y respondents, thus making them more committed to their jobs. The job that agrees with religious teachings has a greater likelihood of positively influencing organisational commitment amongst respondents; therefore, the greater the agreement between the career and the Islamic religion, the higher the level of commitment.

Second, religiosity is linked to job commitment among Generation Y respondents because of its key role in encouraging their adherence to ethical standards established at their work. The Islamic religion teaches Generation Y respondents to realise that they need to offer professional, quality services to their clients without expecting any form of gifts and rewards. It ensures that they become committed to attaining high performance rather than work to sustain personal interests. Religiosity enhances honesty in the workplace and helps people make effective choices that match what religion teaches. It was noted that because of the strong Islamic teachings, the key principle for Generation Y UAE nationals in the public sector is that by working well, they serve not only people but also God. The teaching of service to God and people remains an outstanding contributor to organisational commitment among Generation Y respondents. Importantly, Generation Y respondents are more dedicated when it comes to working in particular career fields when they realise that their jobs are a representation of God’s will and that, by serving people, they serve God.

The research question is connected to the second research objective developed in this study, which was to determine the influence of religiosity on organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents who are UAE respondents working in the public sector. Based on the answers that were obtained, this research objective has been well-addressed in this study. While linking the research question to this objective, it is necessary to appreciate the fact that religiosity plays a critical role in leading to organisational commitment among Generation Y respondents. Because of the Islamic teachings that Generation Y respondents uphold, they have become more committed to their jobs by delivering quality services to their clients. The most important thing has been to work without greed or expectations that may affect work quality. The ultimate outcome has been increased commitment to work among Generation Y respondents due to appreciating the fact that by working for people, they are also working for God. Overall, the second research question and the objective link up clearly and are both well addressed based on the findings of the study.

***Research Question 3: What is the influence of neighbourhood on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents who are UAE nationals in the UAE?***

This question focused on addressing the influence that the neighbourhood has on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE. The neighbourhood was defined by the areas where Generation Y nationals live. In answering this question, it was established that the neighbourhood has a strong influence on the organisational commitment of Generation Y UAE nationals in the public sector. Two key reasons were identified through themes to reflect the influence of neighbourhood on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents to their careers.

The first reason based on the themes that were identified is that the neighbourhood cultures and beliefs have undergone immense transformations, allowing individuals to work in the fields of their choice. Traditionally, the UAE has been viewed as a restrictive country when it comes to its cultures and beliefs, particularly those related to gender roles. However, the participants noted that it has changed since, currently, there is more positive thinking within the neighbourhoods concerning different careers and the roles of women in the society. Given the fact that both men and women can work in the same career, most women have become more committed to their work as they gain more respect in these fields. Importantly, the neighbourhood cultures and beliefs are modern to the extent that they do not affect the career of individuals, thus leading to greater commitment.

The second reason for the strong influence that neighbourhood has on organisational commitment is that neighbours have been increasingly noticing and appreciating the roles that are performed by Generation Y respondents in the organisations. Neighbours are quick to notice and appreciate Generation Y respondents for the remarkable work that they do. As noted by a lot of participants, they do not talk to their neighbours about their careers; however, they revealed that neighbours always have a way of finding out about it. Respondents occupied in the fields such as education and healthcare are frequently appreciated by the neighbours for the exemplary work that they do in helping the society. Appreciation is demonstrated by neighbours viewing the career as helpful and highly important to the society. It is this appreciation that sets the ground for increased commitment to work. As a consequence of the overwhelming appreciation of the roles of Generation Y UAE nationals play in the public sector through their careers, the neighbours make them more committed to their jobs.

The research question is linked to the third research objective developed in this study, which was to determine the influence that neighbourhood has on the organisational commitment of Generation Y UAE respondents in the public sector. By answering the research question, this objective is adequately addressed. For instance, this objective was addressed by explaining a transformation in the neighbourhood cultures and beliefs, which subsequently improved respondents’ commitment to work. It is worth noting that the fewer restrictions are placed on the capacity of both men and women to work in their chosen careers, the higher their commitment to work is. The underlying reason is that they will not have to be judged harshly for being in their chosen careers. Furthermore, this objective is addressed based on the understanding that jobs are noticed and appreciated by those in the neighbourhood. These two main factors boost the level of commitment to work among Generation Y UAE nationals in the public sector. Therefore, the third research question and the research objective link up effectively in this study and were adequately addressed based on the responses provided in the interviews.

## 7.3 Comparing and Contrasting the Findings with the Existing Research

The findings made in the course of this study can be related to the existing research. In this study, it was found that family has a strong influence on organisational commitment among Generation Y UAE respondents in the public sector. The key themes that were derived to demonstrate the influence of the family include encouragement and financial support from the family. Given the context of this study, it was established that family members such as parents and spouses have the capacity to lead to increased commitment to work among Generation Y respondents in the UAE. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Schofield and Honore (2015), who also confirmed that parents, family, and society influence the commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE. In fact, they established that the family has a 30% contribution to the commitment of Generation Y respondents to work in the UAE (Schofield & Honore 2015). The scholars’ finding is in line with the results of this study because it highlights the significant role that the family has in leading to the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE.

In the context of family influence, encouragement was noted to be one of the standout themes that illustrate how the family leads to organisational commitment. In this study, encouragement was illustrated by family members by actions such as parents taking the initiative to talk to Generation Y respondents about the importance of starting or advancing a particular career. The initial influence of parents in encouraging Generation Y UAE respondents is pegged on their own education level and experience in their respective fields. This conclusion is line with the findings of Affum-Osei et al. (2015) who identified demographic factors that relate to the background of Generation Y respondents as outcomes of their experiences, which eventually shape their commitment to work. According to the current research findings, aspects that enhance encouragement include the parents’ academic qualification, their wealth status, and job level. Generation Y respondents feel encouraged by these factors in the course of making their career choices and ultimately becoming committed to their work. However, while this research established that financial support is a key demonstrator of family influence in organisational commitment among Generation Y respondents in the UAE, there is no evidence in the existing research of how financial support leads to more commitment to work.

Moreover, the findings of the current study did not establish any negative aspects surrounding the family when it comes to influencing organisational commitment among Generation Y respondents. However, Khan (2014) found contradictory results when he investigated factors that lead to job commitment among women and revealed that factors such as family conflicts have a negative impact on organisational commitment. This finding is different from what most Generation Y respondents in the UAE are experiencing as the participants of the study boast full support of their families to be committed to their respective jobs.

In regard to religiosity, this research established that the religious beliefs of Generation Y respondents in the UAE public sector have a strong influence on their organisational commitment. Specifically, religiosity influences organisational commitment amongst Generation Y respondents in the UAE when their job matches their religious demands and encourages them to be more ethical at their workplaces. Additionally, due to the Islamic beliefs that they uphold, Generation Y respondents in the UAE believe that the services that they render to their clients represent service to God. The findings of the current research are in line with the existing research. For instance, the fact that the job has to match the demands of Generation Y respondents’ religion is in agreement with the findings of Choerudin (2015), who noted that religiosity impacts the values and principles that individuals uphold. Thus, Generation Y respondents in the UAE are willing to work in an environment that matches the religious values that they uphold. If the job differs from what is taught in Islam, then it becomes more challenging for these respondents to be committed to their respective work.

In addition, as demonstrated in the research by Choerudin (2015), religious beliefs, commitment and behaviour respectively explain 8.2%, 16.7%,and 20.3% variation in the organisational commitment of individuals to their work. This finding helps underscore the findings of the current research that religiosity has a strong influence on the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their work. The most important point is that the current research is in agreement with the existing research on the fact that religiosity has a strong influence on the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their work. Furthermore, this study established that due to religiosity, Generation Y respondents in the UAE are always bound to uphold ethical standards in their work. A similar finding was established by Salahudin et al (2016), who argued that respondents follow Islamic teachings at workplace. It is these teachings that lead to greater commitment to the work, hence emphasising the role that religion plays in leading to organisational commitment. Similar to the current study’s findings, Salahudin et al. (2016) confirmed in their research that respondents’ behaviours are always bound to reflect Islamic beliefs, values, and principles. Therefore, Generation Y respondents become more committed to their organisations as a consequence of what they have learned in Islam. The same principles make them more committed to attaining ethical outcomes. The focus on delivering quality services is also based on the Islamic teachings that they received, which is confirmed both in the current research and the existing literature.

Marri et al. (2013) confirmed that spirituality plays a vital role in leading to greater commitment to work because it makes individuals more responsible in their actions. The responsibility in the action of individuals is always pegged on their religious beliefs and the desire to make an impact within their workplace. The belief that by serving people they are serving God is a driver for increased commitment to work. Therefore, as confirmed by both this research and the existing literature, religiosity plays an instrumental role in leading to greater commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE to their work.

Additionally, it was established in this study that neighbourhood influence leads to commitment to work among Generation Y respondents in the UAE government sector. More specifically, neighbourhood influence is manifested through the change in the cultures and beliefs existing in the neighbourhood and the appreciation of the roles that Generation Y respondents perform in the society. The current research established that the neighbourhood has become friendlier in cultures and beliefs, which made a major contribution to boosting organisational commitment as both men and women can work in career fields of their choice.

There is also no cultural discrimination by the roles that can be performed by men and women in the society. Similar findings on the impact of culture and beliefs on job commitment were made in the study by Ahmed (2017) who argued that cultural factors have an impact on people’s life and work. For instance, cultural peculiarities in the neighbourhood, including the existing power distance and the hierarchical nature of the society, impact the ways in which people live and work. As confirmed in the current study, from the cultural perspective, Generation Y respondents in the UAE are exposed to a new way of thinking since both men and women are allowed to work on the jobs of their choice. As a result, they tend to be more committed to their work.

Additionally, the current research found that neighbours appreciate the roles of Generation Y respondents, making them even more committed to their work. Nevertheless, this issue has not been explored in the existing literature which instead focuses on the impact that the economic status of the neighbourhood has on the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their work. For instance, Zhang et al. (2014) reiterated that in the neighbourhoods that are characterised by a high level of socioeconomic status, individuals tend to be materialistic. This means that, as they work, the focus is always on accumulating wealth and living up to the neighbourhood demands. The same view is held by Eslamdost et al. (2014), who pointed out that an improved socioeconomic status leads to a greater level of organisational commitment among individuals. It is worth noting that both these research studies offer a different perspective from what was established in the current research. Thus, in this research, more focus is placed on the impact that the socioeconomic factors have on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE. While the existing literature has primarily focused on factors such as the wealth of the neighbourhood, this study mainly established that factors such as appreciation from neighbours play a highly significant role in influencing the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their work.

## 7.4 Link to Theory

The ecological systems theory holds that inherent qualities and the environment affect a person's growth and development. Ecosystems such as the home environment and school inevitably influence an individual’s life. The first research question was to determine the influences family has on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE. The results of the study indicated that family strongly influences the commitment to work. Notably, family is the most intimate connection that individuals have from childhood; therefore, it influences their development and the decisions that they make, including career choices. The ecological systems theory suggests that there are several layers of an ecosystem, with family being the most intimate one (Darling 2007). Hence, Generation Y respondents have personal connections with each member of the family, which inevitably affect their growth. Based on the theory, siblings in the same microsystem can develop differently because of how they react to influences from family (Darling 2007).

In this study, commitment is intimately linked to encouragement and financial support. Children who are encouraged from a young age to pursue education and their career goals stay committed to their work, which is the same as in case with Generation Y individuals in the UAE public sector. However, based on the theory, support goes beyond financial support, as it also entails other factors such as psychological and social tenets that have to be taken care of for an individual to succeed and stay committed. Commitment starts when someone is young; hence, it has to be nurtured by the family. Encouraging individuals from a young age and ensuring that they get the needed financial support increases organisational commitment. Thus, in line with the ecological systems theory, the research confirms that family influence is essential as it contributes to commitment through the provided support and encouragement.

The second research question was about the influence of religiosity on the commitment of Generation Y UAE nationals to their work. Results indicated that religion has a significant impact on commitment because of the manner in which it shapes their lives and principles such as ethical standing. The religious values are fostered in the work environment, where ethical standards have to be upheld by respondents. Moreover, the job has to reflect the Islamic teachings of Generation Y respondents. Thus, respondents will have a low level of commitment to jobs that do not espouse the religious teachings.

Another way religion influences commitment is adherence to ethical standards. Islamic work ethics promotes the excellent provision of services and attainment of organizational goals without pursuance of personals goals. In the context of the ecological systems theory, religion forms a part of the macrosystem because it represents the overarching values and beliefs in a society (Bronfenbrenner 1986). As a part of the macrosystem, it influences the growth of all other systems and acts as a sieve through which a person interprets events in their life. When individuals participate in events aligned with their religious background, the outcomes are more favourable. The reason is that the activities reflect the beliefs and values the person has been taught since a young age. Generation Y respondents in the UAE public sphere adhere to their Islamic religious teachings, which is why they have high commitment levels. For the organisational commitment, religious teachings that are in line with the work guidelines enable them to work better, achieve goals, and stay committed to the employer. Religious education ensures that they are more honest and informs people that service to humankind is service to God. Hence, commitment is promoted because people understand they are working for the greater good, and workplaces that promote religious teachings experience higher employee commitment. Overall, the religious teachings from Islam are followed by Generation Y UAE nationals in the public sector from childhood, which greatly influences their commitment to work.

The third research question aimed to determine the influence a neighbourhood on job commitment among Generation Y respondents in the UAE. The neighbourhood cultures and beliefs shape the approach to work and ultimate commitment among Generation Y respondents in the UAE public sector. Notably, the UAE has changed from its restrictive laws that were present in the past. Women can participate in the workforce without interference from the neighbourhood. Therefore, women are more committed to the workplace in a bid to achieve personal and organisational goals. In turn, neighbourhoods serve as sources of encouragement for Generation Y respondents by appreciating their roles.

In line with the ecological systems theory, the aspect of neighbourhood influence is at the exosystem. In the context of this research, the interaction of Generation Y respondents in the UAE with their neighbours is always based on the existing cultures. Given that neighbours have accommodated the changing cultures and beliefs, Generation Y respondents become more committed to the work because they can work without being judged by the society. This is particularly important for female Generation Y respondents who now have the opportunity to work in areas that they consider are best suited to them. Hence, commitment is enhanced by the new ways of thinking within the neighbourhood, which does not limit the choice of careers among individuals. Moreover, with the neighbours being appreciative of the roles that are performed by Generation Y respondents at the exosystem, they encourage them to perform better in their careers and increase their commitment. The influence of the neighbourhood is also explained at the fourth layer, the macrosystem, which refers to the cultures and norms that exist within the society (Bronfenbrenner 1986). With the modernisation of the society and the subsequent change in the cultures and norms, there is a more positive approach to work. Hence, both the exosystem and macrosystem demonstrate the changes that have occurred within the neighbourhood in the UAE and boosted the commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE in the public sector. The most important thing to note in regard to the connection between neighbourhood influences and the ecological systems theory is that neighbours have a direct influence on the career commitment of individuals based on their actions.

### 7.5 Theoretical Implications

This study aims to make a significant theoretical contribution to the literature available by attempting to indicate how social systems influence the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees in the UAE. The findings of this study explains the mechanisms behind the ecological systems theory and specifically clarify how religiosity, neighbourhood influence, and familial influence are social factors that determine the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees. These contributions play a role in organisations and help them realise how to put the said factors into practice, thus allowing for an increase in employee commitment (Bronfenbrenner 1986).

The results of this study have significant theoretical implications in line with the ecological systems theory. It is worth noting that – within the context of the ecological systems theory – the development of an individual is evaluated based on the interaction of different systems, including the family, neighbours, friends, and time (Kamenopoulou 2016). Therefore, the first theoretical implication of this study is that it will help the ecological systems theory explain the microsystem further by illustrating how the family influences an individual, making them more committed to career through both financial support and encouragement. In its original context, the theory pegs its argument of the influence of family on factors such as the economic status and the values of the family. However, this study’s results will ensure a more direct explication of the influence of the family on Generation Y respondents in the UAE.

The second theoretical implication of the study is that it will help advance the new aspect of time, which is within the ecological systems theory. This study will help explain an individual as a being that is responsive to the changes in time, including the changes in skills and knowledge (Bronfenbrenner 1986). As individuals become more responsive to time, they also gain a better understanding of their needs and develop an attachment to environments that resonate with their demands. The findings of this study will lead to the realisation that time is critical in making individuals more committed to their environments, particularly when their expected goals are met.

The third implication of the findings of this study to the ecological systems theory is that it will help advance on the understandings of the intersection between the mesosystem and the microsystem. Based on the ecological systems theory, the microsystem consists of aspects such as religion, while the mesosystem comprises factors such as neighbourhood (Bronfenbrenner 1986). As demonstrated in the study, both the neighbourhood and religiosity have a strong influence on the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their job in the UAE. The results of this study will help advance the theory to explain the interplay between the religion and the neighbourhood and how both can be used to contribute to the commitment of individuals. For instance, by being more direct in the lessons that they give to individuals regarding work, religion can contribute to their development and hence commitment. On the other hand, being flexible, neighbours can contribute to the greater development of individuals. This research extends the understanding of these two aspects further based on the ecological systems theory.

The theory will be manipulated in a manner than can help inform how each of these individual factors can be employed to understand employees further. For instance, this study attempts to study the influence that Islamic religious values have on understanding employees in terms of their commitment. Additionally, aspects such as family values that determine commitment is explicated based on the findings of this study. Furthermore, aspects that increase the organisational commitment of employees as well as the factors within the neighbourhood that can be manipulated to achieve greater commitment is explored hence expanding on the knowledge present of the ecological systems theory.

The findings from this research can be further used by other researchers in their scholarly endeavours to test its validity and potential for extrapolation to other countries. It is worth noting that this research is limited to Generation Y UAE employees who work in the public sector; the findings derived would potentially contribute to the theory by extending the application of the theory to other countries, including non-Islamic countries. This will help in making comparisons between different populations and thus help in reaching a common ground on the non-work-related factors that influence the commitment of Generation Y employees. The study also directly contributes in making the application of ecological systems more universal, based on the impacts that factors such as religiosity have on the organisational commitment of employees.

As the study provides empirical findings, it contributes to the body of knowledge for students, researchers and human resources managers to apply in their respective fields of interest. Given that the UAE is grappling with the challenge of unemployment of Generation Y, the findings will strengthen and boost the level of Emiratisation, particularly with the understanding that Generation Y employees are changing in terms of their culture. For instance, there is a contribution to empirical understandings of how neighbourhood cultures could be positively to understand the work motivators, cultures and approaches of Generation Y employees and further increase their employment opportunities. Therefore, the theoretical contributions of this theory be seen based on the increased absorption into the employment sector within the UAE.

## 7.6 Practical Implications

The findings of this study have practical implications, particularly for public sector organisations in the UAE. One practical implication of the study is that it will lead to a greater initiative by organisations to present career growth opportunities to their Generation Y respondents. As suggested by the research findings, the respondents are satisfied with their work. However, they claim that a more challenging environment that presents career growth opportunities would make them more committed (Kamenopoulou 2016). In this regard, a practical implication of the findings is that it will prompt management in the public sector in the UAE to be more responsive to the career progression needs of Generation Y respondents by actively engaging them in coaching and training and giving them promotions when they advance their skills. This will ensure that respondents become more committed to the respective organisations for the longest time possible.

The second practical implication of the findings is that they prompt managers in public organisations in the UAE to ensure that they align their work and ethical standards with the Islamic religious views. Generation Y respondents who are UAE citizens have a strong Islamic background and follow the same religious principles in the organisation. Therefore, the work that they do has to match the religious beliefs that they uphold. Being a Muslim country, it is expected that organisations will be more responsive to the religious needs of Generation Y respondents and hence give them more reason to be more committed. In the formulation of the ethical standards of an organisation, the Islamic religious perspectives have to be presented clearly to ensure that these organisations are on the right track and commitment is attained among respondents (Bronfenbrenner 2009). More so, human resource managers can then use the above-mentioned factors in practice, for example, during recruitment and training. Given that these factors are non-work-related, potential researchers will need to spend time with the participants within their environment and outside of work. One way of doing this is through participating in education activities, as well as spending time with some of the participants in their homes. Overall, implementation of ethical standards in the organisation will be a positive practical implication to its management.

The third notable practical implication of the findings is that they will lead to a shift in the cultural perspectives and beliefs in the organisational environment. As the cultures and beliefs in the neighbourhood change, organisations also need to be dynamic in their cultures (Darling 2007). It means that public organisations will not have to be restrictive over the roles that are performed by male and female Generation Y respondents in the UAE. As a result, it will be easier to give an opportunity for female respondents to perform duties that were traditionally reserved for men, thus contributing to gender balance in the UAE public sector in the future. Therefore, the study is bound to revolutionise the perception of employee roles in the UAE organisational environment. Management will increase Generation Y employee commitment by following more modern cultural perspectives.

In essence, by assessing the influence of the family, religiosity and neighbourhood influence, human resource managers can predict the organisational commitment of Generation Y employees. However, if family influence, religiosity and neighbourhood influence are not found to be predictors of organisational commitment of Generation Y employees, the consequent line of action would be to use this study’s findings as a building block for further research in human resource management. Human resource managers will be in a stronger position to make decisions about their workplaces and also use this information to attain more commitment amongst Generation Y employees.

# CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

## 8.1 Introduction

The significance of this chapter is to demonstrate the extent to which the research objectives of this study were met, how the findings of the study contributed to the existing knowledge, present the main contributions, and suggest major recommendations. Further, this chapter determines the research limitations associated with this study, including the degree to which they impacted the study, and provide recommendations for future studies.

Understanding the non-work-related factors that impact the commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE is essential in helping organisations in this Middle Eastern nation to discover additional ways of retaining their respondents. At the same time, it contributes to the localisation of labour, which has remained a vital goal for the UAE. Accordingly, the purpose of this research was to determine the influence that non-work-related factors have on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE and other GCC nations. Undertaking this study was thus essential to help these countries to stop relying heavily on expatriate labour and instead use more of their human resources, thus providing effective utilisation of the labour market.

The non-work-related factors researched in this study are family influence, neighbourhood influence, and religiosity. This study demonstrated that these non-work-related factors play a role when it comes to the decision of Generation Y respondents to remain committed to work. They determined whether they will pursue a given career path within their organisation or start a different one and move to a different organisation. Therefore, this study was essential in providing some insight into how the aspects of an individual’s life affect their future careers and the commitment they have towards an organisation. The findings demonstrated that non-work-related factors such as family, religion, and neighbourhood influence are significantly positively related to their career growth in the organisations in which they develop it. Management needs to promote the influence of these non-work-related factors to be able to benefit from them.

## 8.2 Key Conclusions

The findings of this study were essential in demonstrating the influence that non-work-related factors have on the commitment levels of respondents working within the public sector. Thus, this study indicated that although the analysed factors are not found within an organisation, they impact the organisation. Its respondents are then exposed to these factors and when this takes place they carry their effects into their workplace. Ultimately, they affect the decisions they make within their workplace, which has an impact on the performance of their organisations. Accordingly, this study draws the following major conclusions concerning the major non-work-related factors that impact the commitment of Generation Y respondents to their organisations in the UAE.

First, the findings revealed that encouragement from family members is one of the ways that this factor impacts respondents’ commitment. When family members encouraged the respondents to continue pursuing their careers within the public sector organisations they were working for, they tended to feel the significance of their work and remained committed to their organisations. Furthermore, the findings of this study illustrated the significant role of family on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents, which stems from the financial benefits they received. With such support, many of the respondents experienced a lower amount of stress in the course of carrying out their work. Consequently, they were able to place more focus on their work and remain committed to the work they are in.

This non-work-related factor enhances the commitment of the respondents to the organisations they work for in the public sector. Therefore, these findings from the research study suggest that the first research objective was well met. That is, this study was able to determine the influence of family on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents who are the UAE nationals working in the public sector. At the same time, this finding was vital in addressing the first research question developed for this study.

In addition, this study investigated how religiosity impacts the workplace commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE public sector. The participants for this study were all Muslims and thus practiced Islam. It was found in the course of this study that the religious beliefs of the Generation Y respondents working within the public sector in the UAE largely affect their approach to work. Generation Y respondents show a considerable amount of commitment to careers which are in line with the Islamic teachings; respondents show little organisational commitment if the career they are pursuing within an organisation is against their religious beliefs and the teachings of Islam.

For many of the participants, religion played an essential role in determining their career because it defines the ethical standards they apply in the workplace. An example of this is demonstrated in instances in which the respondents work considerably hard and place considerable efforts in their work, expecting no form of bribe or awards. This is in line with the Islamic teachings on honesty and discipline. As a consequence, many respondents have been able to display a substantial amount of commitment to their work. Further, the Islamic faith affected organisational commitment of the respondents because they believed that devoting considerable effort to their work was doing service to God. Generation Y respondents remain committed to their organisations and the work they do because they believe that this pays respect to God. For this reason, the second major conclusion that this study reaches is that religiosity has an impact on the commitment of Generation Y respondents towards their organisations in the UAE. As a consequence, the second research objective was adequately met. For this reason, this research was successful in determining the influence of religiosity on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents who are the UAE nationals working in the public sector.

This study also sought to demonstrate the role of neighbourhood as a factor influencing the commitment of Generation Y respondents in the public sector. This factor provides understanding of their cultures and beliefs which, in turn, shape their actions, including the choice of the workplace and the career that they pursue. Neighbourhood has a significant impact on Generation Y, whose thinking and attitude is quite dynamic, with many of them adopting a new way of thinking concerning work and careers. That is, many women within this generation are pursuing professional careers and working in organisations, including the public sector. Therefore, neighbourhood is a factor that encompasses a transformed culture.

Many of the respondents working in the public sector feel strongly committed to their work because they are not judged harshly by their conservative culture and beliefs that used to be held within the neighbourhood concept. These respondents have been able to pursue the career of their dreams, which they are grateful for. Therefore, they are willing to continue pursuing their career because of the commitment to work. Thus, the finding herein is that the neighbourhood as a non-work-related factor influences the commitment that respondents have to their organisations. The above finding was instrumental in demonstrating that the third research objective was successfully met.

## 8.3 Contributions of the Study

This study has made numerous contributions. Particularly, it makes contributions to the human resource management literature, and literature relating to the public sector. The findings of this research as demonstrated in the points highlighted below contribute to new knowledge, particularly knowledge that relates to the experiences of Generation Y respondents and their career growth. It demonstrates the influence of these experiences on the commitment of respondents towards a given organisation or department within the public sector of the UAE government. Accordingly, the following sections elaborate on the theoretical, methodological, and practical and managerial contributions of this study.

### 8.3.1 Theoretical Contributions

This research conducted within the ecological systems theory offers a considerable insight into factors beyond the workplace that impact respondents’ behaviour. In particular, it demonstrates how the settings in which the respondents find themselves outside the organisation impact their development in activities, including their interest. Accordingly, this theory also provides an insight into the impact of the broader society on the activities that respondents become engaged in within the workplace. Therefore, knowledge of the different ecological levels that influence respondents’ activities at work should be taken into consideration by organisations to develop programmes that are aimed to motivate respondents to remain committed to them.

This study has contributed to the non-work-related factors and careers literature by providing some insight into respondents’ commitment to their organisations and impact of non-work-related factors on this commitment. The significance of this contribution is even more pronounced given the fact that the majority of existing research on organisational commitment by respondents focuses on work-related factors. Therefore, this study has provided some additional knowledge of how non-work-related factors such as family, neighbourhood and religion impact the decision of respondents to remain committed to work.

Regarding the career literature, this study offers an initial look into the impact of non-work-related factors on career growth prospects. That is, the study has provided some understanding of how the experiences of respondents outside of the workplace can impact their decision to pursue their career within a given organisation. This study provides a step at gaining an understanding of the relationship between active participation in one’s personal life and future career opportunities. Consequently, this study was able to show that family had an impact on the career opportunities that a person chose to pursue. They influenced the decisions that a person will have on the career they will take up including the interest that the respondents will have within a given organisation. Furthermore, this study demonstrates the relationship between religion and the decisions for a person to pursue a given career path. Therefore, religious beliefs largely impact the decision for some respondents to take up certain careers as well as not to follow other career paths. Additionally, this study has demonstrated that neighbourhood also influences the type of careers that some people will choose to get into which subsequently impacts their commitment to their organisations.

Further, the findings of this research contribute considerably to the human resource management literature. This is even more so within the context of the Middle East given that a substantial amount of literature focusing on HRM issues such as organisational commitment are majorly done within the western world context. This is further essential in demonstrating the extent of development of the UAE’s economy. The reason for this lies in the fact that a fundamental indicator of a nation’s economic progress is level and quality of human capital. Therefore, this study was essential in demonstrating the extent to which the human resources within the UAE’s public sector through their commitment has had a positive impact on organisational performance and the country as a whole.

### 8.3.2 Methodological Contributions

This study was essential in advancing the existing research on HRM practice, organisational commitment, and non-work-related factors. Most of the research on this subject has largely depended on the quantitative methods of analysis. Thus, this research enabled the use of a qualitative study, which provided a more subjective understanding of the experiences of Generation Y respondents.

Another significant methodological contribution of this study is the combination of methods that were used to address the research questions. Thus, this study did not rely on a single method in the interpretation of the data that were collected during the interviews that were held with the research participants. The qualitative component of this study played an integral role in exploring the complexities of the experiences of respondents outside the workplace and their impact on respondents’ behaviour in the workplace. This study thus used a small sample comprising Generation Y respondents that worked within the public sector in the UAE. In this case, there was no representativeness of this sample to other types of organisations with an attempt to generalise the findings to the population at large. Despite Nevertheless, this study was able to demonstrate noteworthy patterns of differences and similarities among the responses of the participants, which provided valuable information on the experiences of these respondents.

### 8.3.3 Practical and Managerial Contributions

The findings of this study have several practical and managerial contributions. First, the findings of this study provide an insight into the impact of non-work-related factors on respondents’ commitment to work. They enable organisations to recognise the fact that some factors beyond their control will impact their respondents’ commitment to work. This issue will continue to affect organisations and how they address the continuous global competition for human resources. Consequently, organisations have the responsibility to find a way of helping their respondents to have an adequate work-life balance, which will enable them to feel support from both the workplace and external environment such as their family, neighbourhood, and religious beliefs.

A managerial contribution of this study is provided by the several opportunities that managers may utilise to enhance respondents’ commitment to their organisations. That is, managers must accept the fact that the decision of the Generation Y respondents to remain working in their organisations is dependent on factors that are beyond their control. Thus, while organisations may strive to provide the best possible workplace, some external factors demonstrated in this study will have an impact on respondents’ commitment. Consequently, while management is able to control the work-related factors, it is not able to control the non-work-related factors such as family, religiosity, and neighbourhood. These factors impact respondents’ behaviour and beliefs, including the career decisions they make. For this reason, management needs to accept this fact and find a way that will benefit from the influences that these non-work-related factors have on the commitment of their respondents. Moreover, this is illustrative of the need for increased training among managers in the public sector on dealing with commitment issues among respondents that are beyond the factors in the organisation.

By developing an understanding of the impact on non-work-related factors of the commitment of Generation Y respondents to an organisation, this study makes a positive managerial contribution. Therefore, the findings of this study can help human resource managers within the public sector of not only the UAE but also other parts of the world to reach more informed decisions on retaining respondents. This information can also be used by private organisations. Therefore, organisations can employ these findings to develop systems that will enhance higher levels of commitment among Generation Y respondents. This will further be instrumental in fostering improved development of these organisations and the UAE as a nation.

An additional contribution of the study’s findings to organisations is acknowledgement of the fact that non-work-related factors can be antecedents to organisational commitment and subsequently organisational performance. This study was essential in providing some evidence to support this notion. However, there was limited coverage of this issue in relation to different sectors. That is, while this work focused on the public sectors, consideration was not given to their variety. Nonetheless, this research made a valuable contribution to the study of non-work-related factors on the commitment that respondents show to their work.

The findings of the study have some other practical and managerial implications. Thus, they serve as a baseline for practitioners on the perceptions of the localisation of labour by influencing organisational commitment. Among the rationalisations for this study was localisation of labour that the UAE has been working on, which will ensure that more residents participate in the labour market, which is what is referred to as Emiratisation. Thus, the findings of this study provide some additional insight into the accomplishment of this initiative. The recognition of this initiative coupled with clear data helps to identify the perceptions of localisation and what it provides for the area of HRM. Therefore, the findings of this study provide managers who desire to enhance their organisations with a framework that best meets the needs of their human resources, who are the UAE nationals.

A further implication of the findings of this research study is the provision of a substantial insight into the benefits and challenges that respondents’ personal lives may have on their work. That is, the challenges that Generation Y respondents working within the UAE public sectors face in other areas outside their work can impact the decisions they reach about their careers. Therefore, respondents’ participation in the areas outside work may in the end determine how an employee’s career will progress. It includes the decisions that they will reach on whether to continue working for the same employer or make changes by moving to a new organisation.

## 8.4 Limitations

The limitations of a study have to be recognised and accounted for in order to ensure the accurate interpretation and credibility of the study. Having stated this, one of the limitations of this study is that it is qualitative in nature; this means that the results are subject to idiosyncrasies that occur with the interpretation of qualitative studies. This is mostly because qualitative data tend to be of a personal nature (Bryman & Bell 2015). Hence, the researcher may be subjective in what they consider as an essential element of the data. Thus, this subjective aspect of the researcher might result in the collection of data that are generalised or relatively inaccurate when compared to quantitative studies.

One of the notable limitations of this study is not to include and discuss continuance commitment among Generation Y public sector employees in the UAE. In the contemporary understanding of organisational commitment, continuance commitment is included to understand commitment from a multidimensional perspective. As aforementioned, continuance commitment is anchored on measuring the economic costs of staying in or leaving an organisation. In this regard, this study did not consider the cost-benefit analysis that is always done by employees to remain committed to their organisations. This is a limitation that future research many consider by discussing organisational commitment from a multidimensional perspective. Therefore, the fact that the study focused on only affective and normative organisational commitment leaves continuance commitment unexplored, which is a significant limitation.

The use of the ecological systems theory as a basis for this research had some limitations. Specifically, the key limitation is in relation to criticism of this theory, specifically in terms of the researcher being forced to place focus on multiple factors and the possible interactions that can take place between them. Consequently, the researcher is faced with the challenge of setting up a multidimensional research design so as to be able to explore a variety of systematic factors. That is, the use of an ecological systems theory as a study’s theoretical framework requires the researcher to undertake an analysis of the association of variables and impacts across various levels of systems. At the same time, it is possible that factors within the system can interact with each other and the other systems in which a person is embedded.

Based on this study, the exploration was done in relation to the systems of the workplace, family, neighbourhood, and religious organisations. For this reason, simultaneous exploration of more than one system and the related complex connections between them was a challenging task to the researcher. However, this task was addressed by the researcher by being selective about the systems that they worked with and the systematic factors that the study targeted.

The fact that research involved only the public sector organisations is a limitation to the extent to which the findings of this research can be generalised; the limited the applicability of these findings. More specifically, it is that the results of this research study cannot be easily applied in the private sector. Neither can they be used by open government agencies given that the research participants were selected from public sector organisations. Therefore, the non-work-related factors that influence the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE public sector may not necessarily influence those working in the private sector.

Further, all the research participants had Arab and Muslim backgrounds. Therefore, there were no participants from other ethnic and religious groups. Accordingly, this is a limitation because there is a possibility that this may have skewed the findings. Hence, it may be challenging to accurately determine distinctions that exist between ethnic and religious groups in the UAE public sector. Furthermore, it is a challenge due to the fact that the research topic involved a substantial amount of ethnic contexts and religion as per the non-work-related factors that were under investigation, and use of the ecological systems theory.

Another limitation that was encountered is rigid data that makes analysis a challenge. Rigidity emanates from individual perspective serving as the foundation of the data collected in qualitative research. In this case, the human mind tends to remember things in a manner that is best suited for it (Bernard 2012). Therefore, in most instances, people tend to remember things in a positive light. Therefore, this aspect of positivity may have an impact on the degree of the validity of the collected data.

Furthermore, the study encountered the limitation of time constraint. This affected the number of participants that could be involved as well as the interview timelines for each participant. This came about because of the process of data mining that was gathered qualitatively; when collected, this type of data tends to amount to an overwhelming quantity (Bryman & Bell 2015). In this case, it takes a great deal of time to analyse the data and pull out significant details through pattern recognition. This is further complicated by the fact that this process tends to be subjective in nature.

A further limitation to this study is that replication is difficult with qualitative studies. The fact that the results are based on the qualitative research and that they were only based on a few participants, 30, makes it difficult to generalise. The challenges also stem from the fact that quantitative data collection is sensitive to the nature of the researcher and there is a risk of social-desirability bias from the participants who provide the data (Bernard 2012). Therefore, although the data being gathered is fluid, it is possible for the scope of the data to be limited.

Moreover, the study was limited to the UAE Generation Y nationals, which means that other age groups were not studied herein. Furthermore, these Generation Y UAE nationals of working in the *private* sector are also beyond the scope of the present research. These boundaries are intended to produce high-quality results within a limited sample with the potential of expansion to the private sector and other generations in the future. Despite these limitations, the results of this study were generalisable to all UAE nationals of Generation Y working in the public sector and – upon further research – to the private sector as well.

Personal traits or the influences of globalisation on organisational commitment and perceptions of the sample participants are not covered with this study except for the concepts selected. This has been an intentional limitation due to the limited research capacities. This study is also cross-sectional, meaning that it is not longitudinal in nature. Nevertheless, this study holds the potential for replication in the future within similar contexts, thereby offering a possibility of tracing the studied issue over time.

Despite the aforementioned limitations, it is believed that the present research might produce valid and reliable results and be of significant value to organisations in the public sector and potentially in the private sector as well. Moreover, it holds high scientific value due to its novel contribution to the field. The results are also expected to be generalisable and illustrative in terms of present contemporary trends and tendencies noticeable amongst the employed UAE nationals belonging to Generation Y.

## 8.5 Recommendations

This study provided some insights concerning non-work-related factors that are beyond the control of an organisation that influence respondents’ decision to remain committed to them. The following recommendations can be implemented by organisations in the future in order to deal with the impact of these factors on their ability to retain respondents. The recommendations are primarily based on the research findings regarding these non-work-related factors. These are captured in the practical recommendations for organisations. The recommendations are also based on what the researcher perceives can be done at some point in the future. These recommendations are captured in the future research studies that should be undertaken.

### 8.5.1 Practical Recommendations for Organisations

Practical recommendations have been provided which can be applied by managers to understand the role of non-work-related factors in employee performance. Moreover, these recommendations can be implemented by the organisations to ensure that they positively benefit from these factors. Accordingly, the following major practical recommendations that this study provides will be essential in helping organisations that are struggling with maintaining a sense of commitment among their respondents due to external factors such as family, neighbourhood influence, and religion.

The first practical recommendation this study makes to organisations is to abandon the approach of one size fits all in the course of developing activities that are meant to influence respondents’ commitment to work. Instead, more focus should be placed on applying research findings to design high quality activities; that is, activities that will enable positive employee development. If this development takes place, the employee can benefit even when they are not present within the organisation. These should be activities which they are able to engage in outside of work while they still benefit from them because of their work. These activities will have a positive impact on the extent to which these respondents will be willing to remain committed to their organisations.

The second practical recommendation provided by this research is that organisations should work on finding some effective ways of providing some non-work supportive environment. Thus, as respondents’ personal lives impact the decisions that they reach towards the organisation, being able to find some ways of meeting the personal needs of their respondents will ultimately impact their future performance. Thus, meeting the personal needs of respondents has recently become a strategic imperative. It is even more important within a globally competitive work environment, in which retaining a talented pool of human resources is of great significance for organisational survival. The support of the personal life of their respondents will help them to effectively establish a balance between their work and non-work responsibilities. Particularly, those organisations that are able to provide sufficient support to respondents’ non-work-related responsibilities can help mitigate the negative effects of non-work-related factors on the employee’s commitment to work.

### 8.5.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Organisational commitment can be considered as a continuous process for respondents. For this reason, the factors that impact this process are equally continuous. While the findings reported in this research made a substantial contribution to understanding the non-work-related factors influencing the commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE to their organisations, additional research on the problem is needed.

Specifically, one of the limitations identified in this study was the lack of diversity of the research participants, with a considerable number of them being of Arab ethnicity and practicing the religion of Islam. Therefore, in the future, there may be a need to investigate cultural, religious and ethnic differences that exist in an organisation. Thus, future research should include an analysis of the influence of other religions and neighbourhoods and families that are not only Arabic and Islamic on the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents towards organisations. Additionally, it will significantly enhance the degree to which the results of this study can be generalised. At the same time, it will provide a more accurate picture of the impact of non-work-related factors on the commitment of Generation Y respondents towards their organisations.

This research has attempted to provide a starting point for further research into organisational commitment in the UAE public sector. Thus, content analysis is recommended for future research, which will provide an insight into the theoretical distinctiveness of the impact of non-work-related factors on organisational commitment. At the same time, consideration can be given to undertaking a longitudinal study, which will be useful in providing some additional insight into the temporal dynamics in non-work-related factors. The findings of this research provide additional opportunities for more comprehensive research in the future based on the theory that was tested herein.

Furthermore, it will be useful to determine if the three non-work-related factors impacting the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents in the UAE are applicable to respondents in other parts of the GCC. It will be useful to determine the applicability of these factors to other GCC countries for purposes of data generalisation. Since the UAE and other GCC countries have almost similar characteristics in terms of religion and even familial factors, it is critical that these factors are studied as they apply to these other countries. Their applicability would be critical in making fundamental regional decisions across the GCC in relation to increasing organisational commitment among Generation Y respondents. For instance, future research can be conducted on the impact of non-work-related factors on organisational commitment in other nations within the GCC. It will be essential in helping to determine differences between countries and highlight the overlapping contributions of the ecological systems theory.

Additionally, there is a need for a more comprehensive and expanded study on the non-work-related factors impacting the organisational commitment of Generation Y respondents. Therefore, providing a perception of this impact across the UAE will be of great value. This study began by pointing out the large gap in literature on this research topic, with most focus being placed on western nations. Although this study provided some new information on this issue as it relates to the Middle East, it was focused on a single country, the UAE. However, few studies have researched this topic while focusing on more than one country. Therefore, future research on this topic can focuses on a large-scale project that will investigate this topic across the GCC. In this regard, a study involving more countries will provide some invaluable information for both evaluating and developing localisation tools. This will be instrumental in providing organisations with additional information on those factors that are beyond their control and impact the decisions of respondents within Generation Y to continue working for them. At the same time, such large-scale study will provide an opportunity for these organisations to identify specific sectors in the public sector that are most successful in retaining respondents due to the high rate of organisational commitment among their respondents.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Sample Manual Transcripts Analysis

**TA**

K: first of all thank you so much for taking the time to do this interview. This interview is audio recorded. My name is Kholoud Al Hefeiti, I'm a PhD student studying in the British University in Dubai. The thesis title is trying to explore the factors that influence work for UAE Nationals. Are you ready for the interview?  
TA: yes I'm ready  
K: may I know if you are married or single?  
TA: I am married.  
K: okay so you are married, I'm assuming you have your own house.  
TA: yes  
K: and I assume that you go for visits to your in-laws house and your family house  
TA: yes

**Family Influence: Partially Supported**  
K: okay let's talk about both houses. Does your family support your education towards a particular career of your interest?  
TA: yes  
K: okay and what exactly what kinds of support are they ready to give?  
TA: for example my Bachelor degree, my Master’s degree, they supported me by giving me money to pay my expenses for university  
K: okay, so does your family talk positively about your career at family gatherings?  
TA: yes  
K: what kinds of things do they say about your career at family gatherings?  
TA: they say things about my work and about the business itself. We are working for the federal authority. So we have a lot of relations with well-known people. And my family they already know the people I am in contact with. They are proud of me for working with these kinds of people.  
K: okay, so let's talk about the family members, not necessarily your parents but could be the siblings and in laws. Have your family members shown you the way or advised you in the way to be successful in your career or given you advice in general about your career?  
TA: in our UAE, we don’t have this kind of motivation for career because we have this motivation by ourselves. So we have self-motivation and the motivation that comes from the work itself and your leaders in the organisation. From the parents, from my side, I don’t have.  
K: so let's sum up what we have said about the family factor. The family supports you, whether it is financially or indirect support towards your education. Also you said that your family talks positively about your career in family gatherings and in terms of advice you don’t get it from your parents because they are not familiar with the nature of your job, can I say that?  
TA: yes you can, because they are very old so they don’t involve themselves deeply in my job  
K: but how about your siblings, do they advise you?  
TA: see, from siblings I receive some advice.

**Neighbourhood Influence: Partially Supported**  
K: okay, so let's talk about another factor. We will talk about neighbourhood or society around you.  
TA: yes  
K: can you describe for me the building structure of the houses around yours in the community, is it two floors or one floor or a mix.  
TA: actually I live in a community with two floors; it's a freehold community  
K: okay, maybe you might find this question strange but from your perspective can you tell me what the income levels of other people in your communities might have? Is it high, medium or low?  
TA: both medium and high.  
K: okay, so we will say it is medium to high?  
TA: yes  
K: let's talk about your neighbours specifically. Do your neighbours appreciate the significance of your job in the community?  
TA: yes, I want to be honest with you, because we are in the new freehold, not very new, it's been two years now, there is a mix of nationalities, I am a UAE National, there are Chinese, Indian, Pakistani and so on. They are people who are moving and coming and going so we do not have a very strong relationship with the them unless there are some Arabic people, who are very far from my house but we have good relations because we are going to the mosque and we are having good gatherings there sometimes.  
K: so your current neighbours are not aware of your job?  
TA: no  
K: how about when you are staying with family, or your in laws; are the people around you aware of your job?  
TA: yes that one is different because my town is in another place, not in Dubai and when we are going there at the weekends, we know each one of our neighbours.  
K: okay so can we speak about the neighbours there because it is the perfect example of an Emirati neighbourhood. Can we do that?  
TA: yes, tell me.  
K: okay, so are they appreciating the significance of your job in the community?,   
TA: yes  
K: from your perspective, are there any neighbourhood cultures and beliefs that affect your performance at your job; for example, some of the neighbourhood communities don’t allow the ladies to work the night shift, or they don't let ladies work at certain types of jobs. Do you have the same where you come from?  
TA: yes  
K: what kind of cultures and beliefs do they have?  
TA: nowadays a lot of changes are happening here in the UAE in our culture, that the ladies she can work sometimes at night but in the night shift we don’t have this kind of culture. Maybe I see it here in Dubai because some women do the night shift, but in my town it is not easy for the ladies to work the night shift.

K: so what are the other cultures that exist in your neighbourhood?

TA: there is nothing else because ladies are working everywhere. Some ladies they are working in Abu Dhabi, in Dubai, Sharjah, everywhere, they are moving around, they have meetings, everything. There are no issues like that except maybe working at night.

K: how about specific types of jobs? Is there anything like that where the neighbours say that this kind of job is not acceptable in the community, do you have anything like this?

TA: nowadays, there is no job that is not acceptable.

K: okay, so has your neighbourhood supported your career growth or have they given you any indirect support that has helped you with your career?

TA: maybe indirect support and advice but not direct support.

K: so how about the neighbourhood back home, are they aware of where you are working?

TA: yes

K: have they been responsive to the challenges you face at work, like do they ask you if you’re okay and if everything is okay, and do they interact with you when you have challenges?   
TA: some of them do, but in general when they are talking. Some of them ask although they are not my neighbours, they are my friends. We are sometimes talking in depth, and when we speak this way, yes, some of them ask.

K: so let me sum up what we spoke about the neighbourhood, that they do appreciate the significance of your job in the community. And there are cultures and beliefs in your neighbourhood about specific jobs and performances. And you said the neighbourhood supports you indirectly in your growth in your job. Also, you said your neighbourhood is responsive to the challenges in your work but so are your friends.

TA: yes that is correct.

**Religiosity: Partially Supported**

K: so let us move on to another factor called religiosity. Religiosity is defined here not as Islam, because you and I are Muslim and we live in a Muslim country. The word religiosity means the faith or your beliefs that comes from a person’s religion. Maybe a person is Christian but their religiosity is very high in certain things, like ethics. So, has your religiosity influenced your career selection?  
TA: not really

K: okay so has your religion influenced the roles and responsibilities in your job?

TA: yes

K: how?

TA: for example, I’ll tell you something, some of my clients, maybe they are bringing us gifts and maybe anyone would accept the gifts unless they have ethics and we can’t. It’s okay if it is a normal gift but a valuable gift is not allowed in our work. So I refuse to take it, because it is not allowed. Not because the organisation is advising us not to take it or because it’s forbidden. But because of my faith, I can’t, it is not acceptable to do this.

K: okay, so let me sum up what we have said about religiosity. You strongly agree that your religiosity helped in selecting your career. And religion agrees with the nature of the job you are currently doing. Also, you said that religion influences the roles and responsibilities in your job.

TA: yes

**General Summary**

His family does support him financially when required but there is not a lot of extrinsic motivation to be seen in him, in terms of family, neighbourhood and close circle as he clearly states how he does not receive direct support. The advice he gets is not job-specific. His faith does affect his job a lot, in terms of the way he performs daily tasks. His use of the example about gifts shows the ethical values he carries from his religiosity. In terms of office environment he does seem to be willing to do additional work if required. Leaving his current job would require a lot of external motivation such as money and higher prestige.

**SL**

K: First of all, thank you very much for considering undertaking this interview and taking the time. My name is Kholoud Al Hefeiti. I am a PhD student at the British University in Dubai. I’m doing my thesis around exploring the factors influencing the work for UAE nationals. Before I start asking you the questions, let me tell you that this interview will be audio recorded for the purpose of research and all the information shared during the interview will be kept confidential. Are you okay with that?

SL: yes I’m absolutely okay with that thank you for having me as a part of your research.

K: okay, so I was asking for some marital information and you are single correct?

SL: yes

K: so I’m assuming you are staying with your parents?

SL: yes

K: okay, so let’s talk about family from that perspective - your family, your siblings and maybe your uncles or aunties.

SL: okay

K: okay so let’s talk about the first factor which is family.

SL: okay

**Family Influence: Strongly Supported**

K: so does your family support your education towards a particular career of your interest

SL: yes a 100%. If you are talking about support in terms of encouragement towards a particular career then yes they are very supportive of that.

K: okay so does the family talk positively about your career at family gatherings or any social events?

SL: yes, when the opportunity comes, they definitely do talk positively but they do not initiate it, they do not take the directive of talking about it but whenever it comes up in conversation they frequently do talk positively.

K: what kind of things do they say about the career for example?

SL: it adds value to my personal growth and they mention how it has made me a better person, a stronger character. They mention the effects on society they also mention other than that effect overall in the community they do mention these things.

K: okay, so have your family members shown you the way to be successful or given you any advice in general about the career?

SL: to be honest they don’t do it actively, so I’m usually the person who finds out ways of how to be successful in my career and finding the ways to improve and all that but I always revert back to them saying I came across that it would support me in my career and they always give me advice along that, so they don’t actively give me advice on how or what way to support it but when I bring it up they give the right advice. I’m not sure if I passed the message across correctly.

K: it is clear. So is the family ready to support you financially for your education to advance your current career, in terms of education or certification, are they ready to support you like that?

SL: yes they are 100% ready although during my past certifications and Master’s I have paid for it although they are always ready, they were always offering but personally I felt there were opportunities where my organisation could cover it. There were opportunities where I could cover it so there was no necessity for that but they were 100% ready to do that.

K: okay, so let me recap what has been said about the family factor, you said family supported your education towards a particular career of your interest. They talk positively about you at family gatherings and any other social events. In terms of advice they don’t do it directly but when you bring it up they give you the right advice. And you said the family is ready to support you financially to advance your current career whenever you require that

SL: yes, yes

**Neighbourhood Influence: Partially Supported**

K: okay, so let’s move to another factor which is your neighbourhood, your society, your community in general.

SL: okay

K: before we start getting deeper in the neighbourhood can you describe the building structure of your neighbourhood, is it two floors or one floor or a mix?

SL: I live in the suburbs of Dubai; there are villas of two floors and that’s the structure of our neighbourhood.

K: from your perspective, I know this requires a lot of aspects to answer, but can you let me know what the income level of your neighbourhood is? Is it high, medium or low?

SL: I would say medium to high, I think it is more to the high.

K: okay, so let’s talk about the neighbourhood, do your neighbours appreciate the significance of your job in the community. Are they aware of where you are working and the things that you are doing

SL: I do not think they are aware of where I work and its significance. Some of them might know vaguely that I work in x organisation but the details of that job and the significance I don’t think they are aware of it.

K: okay, do you think there are some neighbourhood cultures and beliefs that affect the performance of the job; for example, some of the communities maybe they are seeing ladies working in a shift as something not acceptable or ladies working in a mixed environment as not acceptable, or any cultures and beliefs? Do you have something like this in your neighbourhood?

SL: no, see here’s the thing, I think I need to clarify, the neighbourhood that I live in, is mostly 95% my family or my extended family. Okay I know that they should be aware of my job and my role and the industry that I work in, I know they will support in a way. I know they will do that. That comes not only because they are our neighbours; it’s because they are our extended family. If our neighbours were not extended family I’m not sure if that would be the case.

K: okay and since your neighbours are mostly your extended family, somehow maybe they know exactly where you are, working I believe.

SL: yes I wouldn’t say, like I’m saying 90-95% are my extended family, I’m saying currently at this level now, this stage, only 20-30% of them know where I work exactly and what I do

K: so those who know where you are working, are they responsive to the challenges that you face, even if it is working hours or distance or the workload? Are they responsive to the challenges? Do they talk to you about this?

SL: when we are gathering yes sometimes these conversations will come up, working hours, different environments, things like this.

K: so they are responsive when they hear these things, they do react?

SL: some reactions are positive and some reactions are negative.

K: so let’s talk about if they are encouraging you to keep working through challenges?

SL: I’d say most of the people I know, my family and my neighbours they know about this, they are not mostly encouraging. Their first response would be why not move to more of a desk job or better working hours, a better job environment. That’s their first response

K: okay, so let me sum up what we said about the neighbourhood. The neighbourhood they are not aware but if they are aware they would appreciate the significance of your job in the community and when we spoke about cultures and beliefs and if they exist in the neighbourhood you said yes it could affect a person’s job or performance. Also you said those who are aware of your job, they do support your career. And responses can be positive or negative and some of them might not encourage you to keep working but they will tell you to change your job itself.

SL: yes

**Religiosity: Partially Supported**

K: okay, so let’s talk about another factor here which is religiosity. Now the term religiosity here is not referring to Islam, because you and I both are Muslims and the UAE is a Muslim country. The religiosity here means ethics, faith or beliefs that come from the religion – it doesn’t matter which religion. So someone could be Christian but they have strong beliefs about how to work for example. So has your religiosity influenced your career selection? For example some people would say I don’t want to work in a non-Islamic bank because my religion or my faith does not allow me but another Muslim may not have trouble with working at a non-Islamic bank. How about you?

SL: I don’t think so. I don’t think my religiosity influenced my career selection, no.

K: does your religion agree with the nature of the job you are currently doing?

SL: yes

K: has your religion influenced your roles and responsibilities?

SL: yes

K: how?

SL: so I believe a lot of, let me try to find a way to compress that … so a lot of religions believe, I find myself practicing my religious beliefs in my roles and responsibilities I practice being fair, if there is any hardships I tend to have more faith, and having a positive outlook, in terms of, for example, my nature of work required me to save lives and I can’t neglect this role.

K: okay, so let me recap what you said about the religiosity. You said that religion did not affect your career selection. You said that the religion agrees with the nature of the job you are currently doing. When we spoke about the influence of the religion on the roles and responsibilities you said yes, there is an impact.

**General Summary**

She is mostly motivated by herself because it does not seem like her family or neighbours fully support her in terms of advice and encouragement. Any advice she receives is initiated by her. The religiosity also does not play a very big role in her work,;she adheres to the rules but there is no specific position that religion plays in her work. She enjoys her work environment and this helps her and motivates her to do a good job as seen in the fact that she commits to long working hours and puts in 100% of her effort.

**NB**

K: First of all, thank you very much for considering undertaking this interview and taking the time. Let me introduce myself; my name is Kholoud Al Hefeiti. I am a PhD student at the British University in Dubai. I’m doing my thesis around exploring the factors influencing the work for UAE nationals. Before I start asking you the questions, let me tell you that this interview will be audio recorded for the purpose of research and all the information shared during the interview will be kept confidential. I assume you are single; correct?

NB: yes

K: and I’m assuming that you are living with your family.

NB: no I am staying alone in Abu Dhabi.

K: okay, so are you originally from Abu Dhabi?

NB: no my family is from Dubai.

K: okay, so let’s talk about the family where you are staying in Dubai. My questions will be around the family in Dubai.

NB: okay, great.

**Family Influence: Strongly Supported**

K: does the family support your education towards a particular career of your interest?

NB: yes for sure they always support. Whatever decision I take, in education or work they support me.

K: okay, does your family talk positively about your career at family gatherings or any other social events?

NB: you know what shocked me during family gatherings and friends gatherings, for example my uncle will come to me and say that I heard a lot of good things about you from my colleague at work so I am amazed at how he knows me when I didn’t deal with these people so these kinds of positive comments, you know, encourage me to be more positive at work and help people as much as I can.

K: great. Have your family members shown you the way to be successful in your career or given you advice in general for your career?

NB: always my mother, before she passed away she encouraged me to complete my education and first of all I was a pharmacist and then I took a Master’s in business administration and she always pushed me to do my PhD education. So that was always my ambition and I got through this journey and I got this certificate also.

K: is the family ready to support you financially to advance your current career? In case you need any financial support, will they be ready to support you?

NB: for the financial, nowadays everyone has their own responsibilities, you know, and life is very expensive. And now my mother has passed away, before she was supporting me financially and whatever I want. You know we are ladies; we want emotional support sometimes so she was supporting me. In my family now, my brother supports me emotionally more than financially and sometimes I feel shy to ask him about money because you know I am older than him and I have to depend on myself and he has his own family and his own responsibilities so I don’t want to bother him with more responsibilities. And by the way my work is very supportive and I have to admit that and they pay all the financial part for my studies so I really appreciate their help.

K: you think if you asked your brother to support you financially, would he appreciate that and be ready to support you?

NB: you know based on my last weekend talk he said, I told him if I retired you will support me financially. He said yes I will support you and he said by the way you have a PhD so don’t worry also.

K: so, let us recap what we have said about family and then move to another factor. The family supports your education towards a particular career of your interest. Family talks positively about your career at family gatherings and other social events. Also family members shown you the way to be successful in general and if you require any financial support to advance your career, the family would support you if ever you asked them, correct?

NB: yes, yes

**Neighbourhood Influence: Partially Supported**

K: okay, so let’s move to another factor which is neighbourhood, community or society. So back home in Dubai can you describe the building structure of the neighbourhood? Are they all two floors or one floor or it’s a mix.

NB: it’s really a mix but more two-floor villas. Because it is a new area they build it on two floors.

K: my next question might need lots of factors to take into consideration but, from your perspective, what do you think the income level of the neighbourhood would be? Is it low, medium or high?

NB: I think it is medium, I will say it is medium because some of them they are expats they are renting the houses around us and the others they are working in the government sector, mostly police, so let’s say medium.

K: okay, so the neighbourhood around you, the two or three houses, do the neighbours appreciate the significance of your job in the community, are they aware where you work?

NB: not actually all of them, some of them who I know mostly, like they are very close to me so maybe two or three houses like you said they know where I work.

K: and do they appreciate the significance of the job in the community?

NB: yes, and they appreciate how I stay alone in Abu Dhabi and you know I am very… if they know anyone in the community who needs help I can help them, I don’t hesitate to help.

K: do you think there are some neighbourhood cultures and beliefs that exist that affect the performances of the job; for example some of the neighbourhood in some of the areas they would say we don’t allow ladies to work the night shift or we don’t want them in a mixed environment, or sometimes it is we don’t allow sons to work for example in hotels or something. Is there any neighbourhood culture or belief that exists in your community?

NB: in my community no, you know in Dubai they are very free. We get to use to a multicultural environment but I have another friend who has problems working with men, for example.

K: so you think there are still these kinds of cultures in the community?

NB: okay, so how about the neighbourhood that knows you. are they supportive towards your career growth but sometimes ladies they feel jealous like why I reached for example a director level. This is very few ladies I am talking about who I can help and they can give you phone calls to make sure you are fine or if you need anything.

K: great, so those who know where you work and they are knowing the challenges you face at work; for example, some work challenges could be workload and distance. Are they responsive? Are they aware that you have these challenges?

NB: yes they are aware .

K: and are they responsive to the challenges?

NB: yes and sometimes they feel sorry because all these factors – workload, working after hours working in the evening – it’s part of my job and responsibilities and they respect that I am working in this kind of high pressure job.

K: so they do encourage you to keep working hard despite the challenges.

NB: yes they do.

K: okay, so let me recap what you have said about the neighbours. You said the ones who know your job appreciate the significance of your job and also you said there are neighbourhood cultures and beliefs that exist that affect the performance of the job. You said that the neighbourhood are supportive of your career growth and they are supportive of the challenges and they do encourage you to keep working despite challenges – yes?

NB: yes

**Religiosity: Partially**

K: so let’s move to another factor which is religiosity. And the term religiosity here is not referring to Islam, because you and I both are Muslims and the UAE is a Muslim country. The religiosity here means ethics, faith or beliefs that comes from the religion, doesn’t matter which religion. Some people might be Christian but they have a good work ethic, so has your religiosity influenced your career selection? For example some people might say I don’t want to work in a non-Islamic bank because it is against my religion but another Muslim might say I have no problem working in a regular bank. How about you?

NB: you know I never linked these thoughts to my work. I have never thought about it.

K: so does your religion agree with the nature of the job you are currently doing?

NB: for sure I think so you know I am working to be honest with local people and expats but the expats they are aware of Emirati culture and religion so, for example, in the meeting they will not shake my hand they know what to do and what not to do with ladies so they are respecting us.

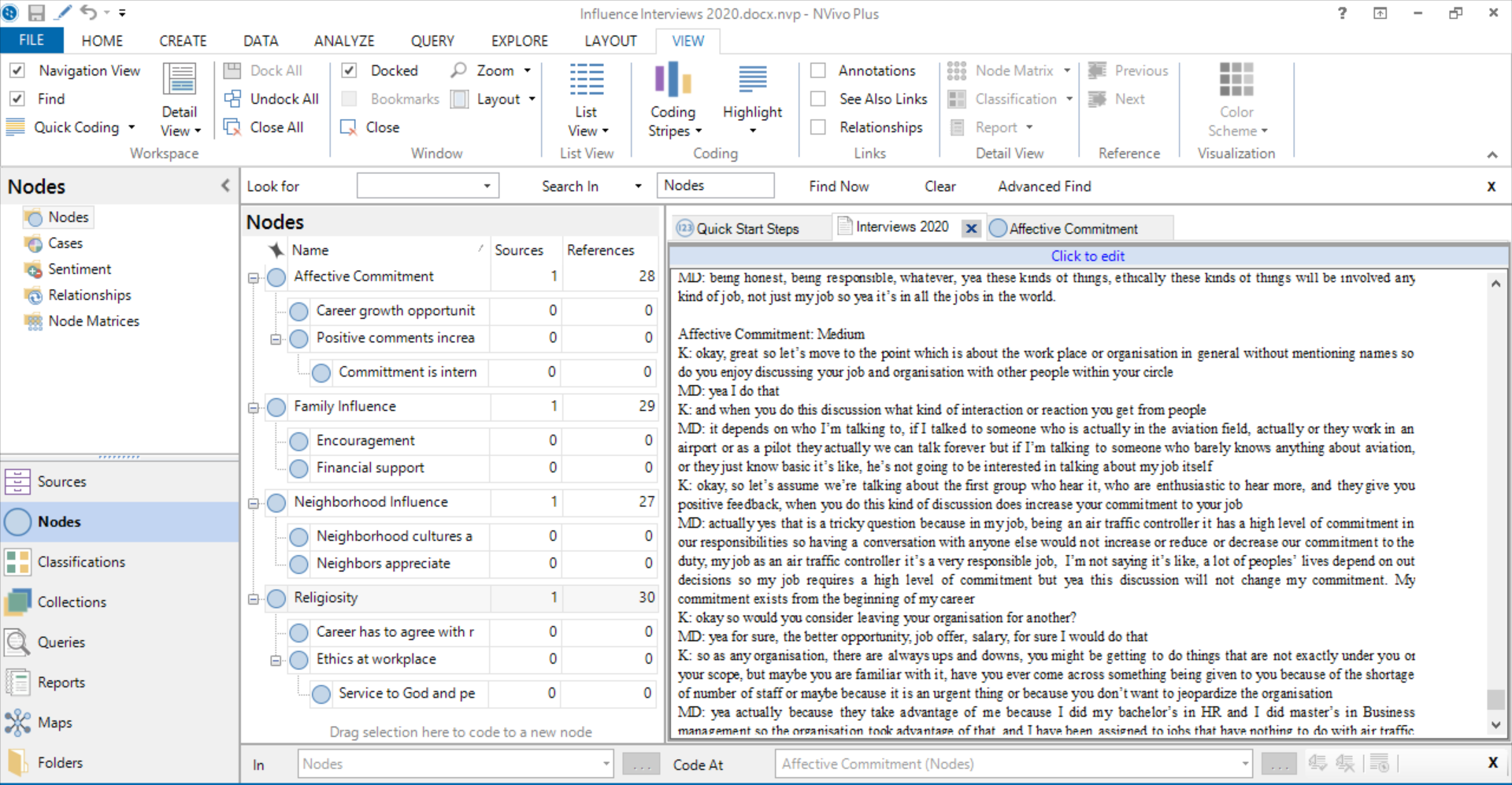
K: okay, so has your religion influenced the roles and responsibilities of your job?

NB: for sure you know we learn that we have to be honest and work with our heart at our work so all of that is a part of our religion and a part of our culture that we are raised on the beliefs that we learned when we are small. We learned that we have to be committed to the work until the last minute when we finish; for example, we have to be honest and give our opinion without discrimination against colour or the country that the guy comes from.

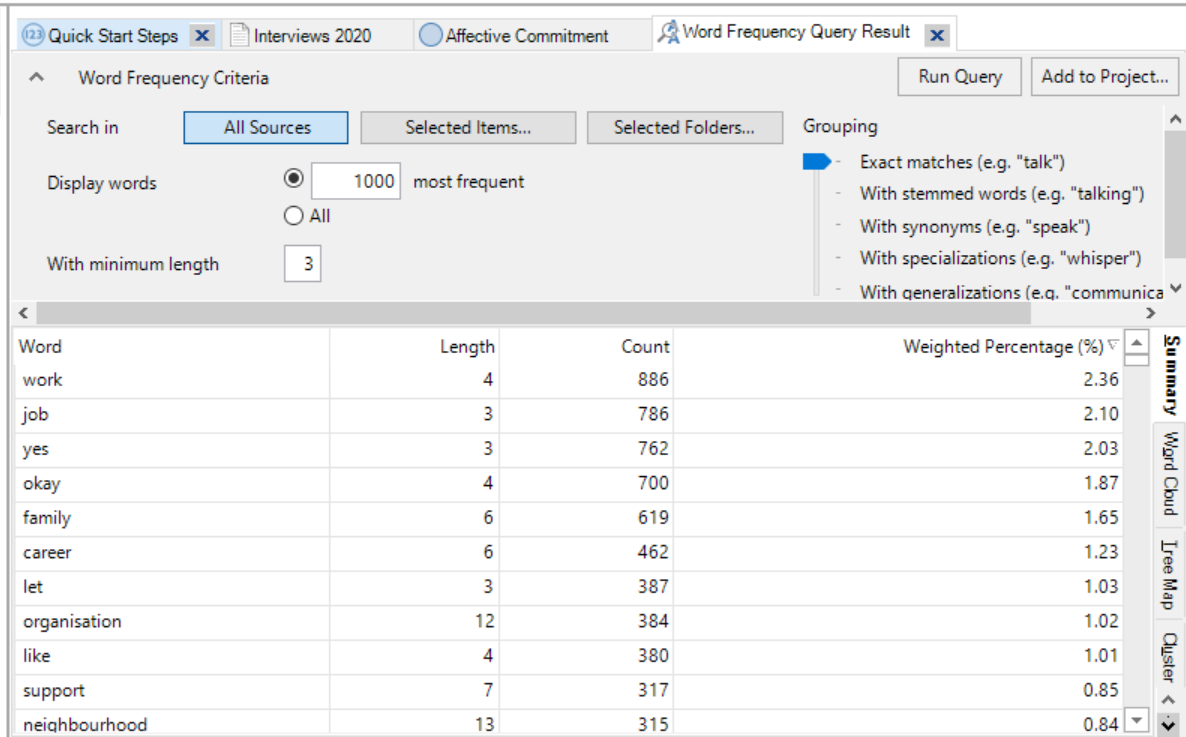
K: okay, so let me recap what has been said about religiosity so we can move to another factor. You said that religiosity has no influence on your career selection but the religion agrees with the nature of the job and agrees with the roles and responsibilities you are doing at your job. Correct?

NB: yes

## Appendix 2: Creation of Themes and Sub-themes



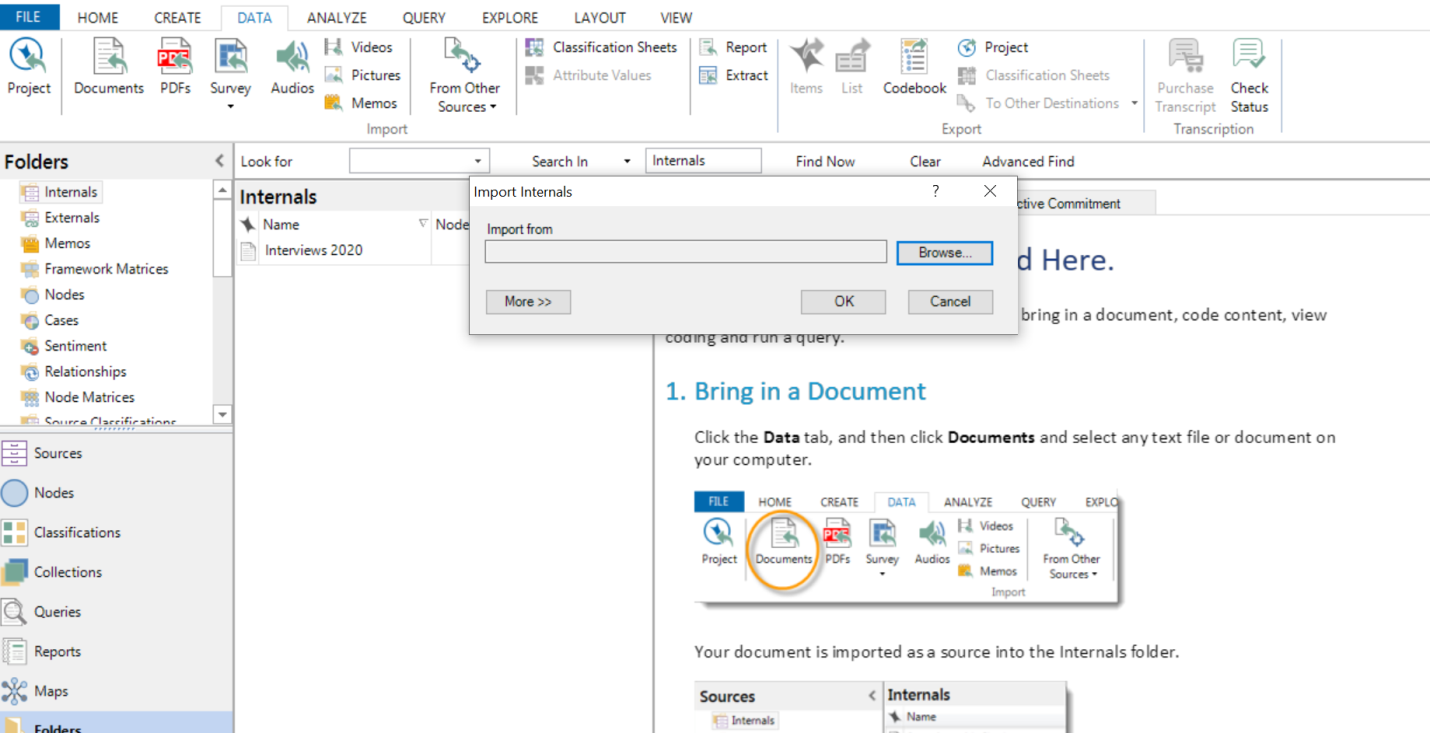
## Appendix 3: Sample word frequency query



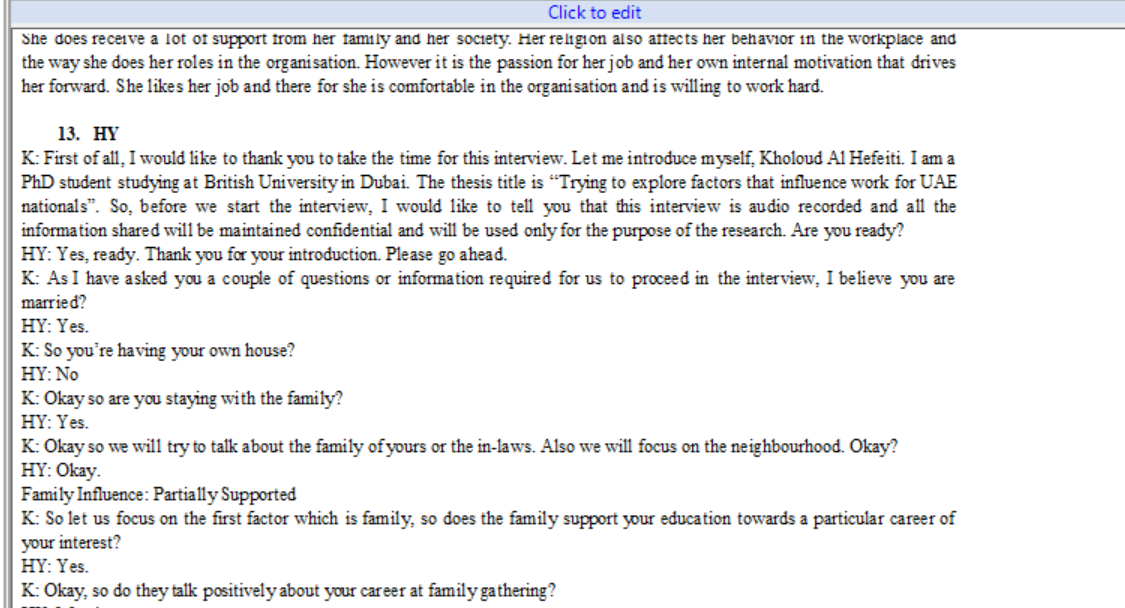
## Appendix 4: Generation of Thematic Framework Matrix

The two stages followed in the generation of the thematic framework matrix were

* From the import portal, the word icon was selected and it helped import data to NVivo
* With the importation cases (answers of participants), nodes, and attributes were automatically defined



**Thematic Framework Matrix for Transcripts**



## Appendix 5: Final Interview Questions

**Interview Questions**

1. Does the family support your education toward a particular career of your interest?
2. Does your family talk positively about your career at family gatherings or any other social events?
3. Have your family members shown you the ways to be successful in your career? If yes, how?
4. Is the family ready to support you financially to advance your current career?
5. Do your neighbours appreciate the significance of your job in the community? Do they believe that you are doing the right thing by doing your job?
6. Are there any neighbourhood cultures and beliefs that affect the performance of your job?
7. How have neighbours supported your career choice and growth in the job up to the level that you are in now?
8. How are neighbours responsive to the challenges that you face in your job? Do they encourage you to keep working hard despite the challenges that you face on your job?
9. Has your religiosity influenced your career selection?
10. Does your religion agree with the nature of the job that you are currently doing?
11. Has your religion influenced the roles and responsibilities that you perform in your job in the organisation? If so, how has religion influenced the performance of your duties and responsibilities in the organisation?
12. Do you enjoy discussing your job and the organisation with other people within your circle? How do people take this discussion and does it increase your commitment to your job?
13. Would you consider leaving your organisation for another?
14. Do you take the job problems of the organisation as your personal ones? If so, how do you help the organisation alleviate the impact of these problems to make sure that it is on the right track?
15. Is the work environment enough to keep you in the organisation for the longest time possible?
16. Do you ever stay at work after your official work hours to do work that you feel is your responsibility?
17. - Do you always put 100% effort into your work?
18. How long do you take for lunch/tea breaks etc.?