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Trust and Change: A case study of a University in the UAE Higher Education Sector

الثقة والتغيير: دراسة حالة جامعة في قطاع التعليم العالي في دولة الإمارات العربية
المتحدة

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper examines how effective change is managed in Higher Education sector in the UAE and the effect of employee trust of management on the success of such change projects. The motivation behind this paper is the lack of previous studies, which examines change and trust in the UAE's higher education sector. The qualitative research uses case studies of two change projects: Emiratisation and EGPRC, within a University in the UAE to collect data about trust in time of change. The research finds that when employees trust management, those individuals are 1. Less resistant to change, 2. More supportive of leadership and 3. Resource management is more efficient. However, the research draws attention to the reality that trust is also needed between people of all levels and different divisions in a University, to accomplish successful change. Further investigation reveals that level of trust is high when change projects encompass good communication, high employee involvement where motivation is high and innovation is encouraged, and where justice and career advancement opportunities exists. Based on the conducted analysis, this paper recommends keeping levels of trust high through the following actions: 1. Choosing the right project, 2. Creating strong leadership and management. 3. Improving internal processes, 4. Involving employees, 5. Promoting communication, transparency and openness, 6. Advocating creativity, autonomy and motivation, 7. Upholding justice, and 8. Providing training opportunities.

الملخص التنفيذي

يهدف هذه البحث إلى دراسة كيفية التغيير الفعال في إدارة قطاع التعليم العالي في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة وتأثير ثقة الموظف على نجاح مشاريع التغيير في الإدارة المؤسسات التعليمية. حيث أن الدافع وراء هذه البحث هو عدم وجود دراسات سابقة تدرس التغيير والثقة في قطاع التعليم العالي في دولة الإمارات. من خلال البحث العلمي، وجد أن البحث النوعي يستخدم مشروع تغيير: التوطين ومشروع إنشاء برامج الدراسات العليا ومراكز؛ وذلك من خلال البحوث وجمع بيانات حول الثقة في زمن التغيير من جامعة في دولة الإمارات. ويخلص البحث إلى أنه عندما يثق الموظفون في مدرائهم، يتربس على ذلك وجود أفراد يتسمون بصفات هي: الأقل قابلية للتغيير والأكثر مساندة للقيادة ويعملون على إدارة الموارد بشكل فعال. ومع ذلك، يلفت التقرير الانتباه إلى حقيقة أن هناك حاجة إلى الثقة أيضا بين الناس من جميع المستويات والأقسام المختلفة في الجامعة لتحقيق التغيير الناجح. وكذلك فإن المزيد من التحقيقات تكشف أن مستوى الثقة يكون مرتفعاً عندما تشمل مشاريع التغيير التواصل الجيد، وإشراك الموظف بطريقة عالية في وجود بيئة تحت على بذل الجهد وتشجيع الابتكار، وفي وجود العدالة وفرص التقدم الوظيفي. واستناداً إلى تحليل الذي أجري في هذا البحث، فإننا نوصي بالحفاظ على مستويات عالية من الثقة من خلال الإجراءات التالية: اختيار المشروع الصحيح؛ خلق إدارة وقيادة قوية؛ تحسين العمليات الداخلية؛ إشراك الموظفين؛ تعزيز التواصل والشفافية والانفتاح؛ الدعوة إلى الإبداع والاستقلالية والتحفيز؛ التمسك بالعدالة؛ وأخيراً وتوفير فرص التدريب العملي والمهني.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

During the time of strategic and organizational change, human factor is key to the success of the process. Without the support of employees, success is almost unachievable as the workforce plays a key role in making the change possible. Managing change in the workplace can be very challenging, especially in the higher education sector where many approaches and mentalities meet. Trust is one important factor in the human resource practice, but is usually neglected in the process of change. The research will focus on the relationship between organizational, and trust between management and employees. Trust between employees and management is put into the test in time of change where the working environment is intense and under tremendous stress. With lack of trust issues many management processes often fail to achieve their goals as conflict, for instance, may stem between employees and management.

This dissertation is important as the literature shows that there is a need to pay more attention to the differences between the professional cultures (Pieterse, 2012). The effect of trust can be different in each culture and need to be looked at more closely. The study will concentrate on the higher education sector in the UAE where many universities have gone through significant change due to the rapid growth of the economy in the region, as well as the increased interest in education. The literature also shows that the UAE Higher Education sector is becoming increasingly competitive due to the governments ambition of making the country a regional educational hub (Wilkins, 2010). The academic profession well-being is vital to the society and international community as it makes pivotal contributions to any country's development (Coates, 2010). The paper will assist in understanding how change in the higher education sector of the UAE can occur successfully.

The Higher Education is a fairly young sector as the first university, the United Arab Emirate University, in the UAE was established in 1976. The UAE University started with four colleges and has now expanded to nine, with future plans of further

expansions. There are now about 76 institutions in the UAE that are accredited and licensed by the commission for academic accreditation, with 656 accredited programs (Commission For Academic Accreditation, 2011). In order to ensure quality in curriculum and education service, UAE University and other academic institutions established in the country still seek international accreditation and external quality assurance reviews. Change is ongoing in the Higher Education sector (UAEUniversity, 2012), as improvement is always necessary especially when institutions are in competition with international schools.

2.2 Aims

This paper aims to investigate how effective change is managed in Higher Education sector in the UAE and the effect of employee trust of management on the success of such change projects. This will illustrate the importance of the role academics, support staff and administration can play in the success or failure of any change within this sector.

2.3 Objectives

1. To investigate the drivers, internal and external, for strategic and organizational change in the higher education sector
2. To examine the challenges and issues faced during a change project/initiative, focusing on the human factor
3. To critically assess how trust is affected during the time of strategic and organizational change in the higher education sector, and how trust in turn affects the projects and the process of change.
4. To investigate the role senior management can play in engendering trust during the time of strategic and organizational change to benefit the organization
5. To develop a set of recommendations of the effective management of change projects in Higher Education.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Drivers for Change in the Higher Education Sector

According to Keenan and Marchel (2007) there are many drivers of change in the Higher Education sector: “demands for improved accountability measures, increased private/ public and global competition, technology innovations, diminishing resources, diverse approaches to acquiring knowledge, evolving demographics, and the national need for competently adaptive and knowledgeable professionals”. Mazzarol and Soutar (2012) have found that even though a decade ago competition was limited to few developed nation such UK and US, now former sending nations are becoming destinations including the Middle East. Thus, like all businesses, institutes are also market-oriented except what makes management of institution more complex is the need to make a coherent link between the institutes academic and business processes (Jurše & Potočan, 2008).

According to Winston (1999), education is an unusual industry as even though it might seem similar to other markets, it would be inappropriate to assume that universities would be successful if run like other businesses. This can be attributed to the unique structure of universities, which might appear to be a highly hierarchical system, however the structure usually breaks down at the departmental level (Hammond, 2002). This occurs as responsibilities are delegated to department chair to manage their departments due to the unique needs of each specialty in the university, nevertheless this does not mean that higher management does not interfere in the decisions made by the department chair. According to Sporn (2010), universities have evolved from a bureaucratic model to a more collegial form of management. Democratization of the university management process is key for successful change and the production of a high quality institute (Asim et al, 2012). “Democratization process includes the ownership, the practice of sharing the authority and responsibility, group decision-making, horizontal network organizational structure and long term employment practices of university management” (Asim et al, 2012). Therefore, scholars now accept that prerequisites

of successful change are not the same for all sectors, as some models are not applicable in complex systems such as the Higher Education (Barnett, 2011).

Employees in educational institutes can be broken down into two main groups, (1) Administrative staff and (2) Academic staff and faculty. Administrative staff are supposed to play a supporting role to academic staff and faculty, but are often put in position of power. Faculties in the higher education sector have to main responsibilities: teaching and research. Often those two responsibilities are not given equal value even though both consume equal amount of time and effort (Mertova & Webster, 2009). This issue seems to be a common practice in academia all around the world (Mertova & Webster, 2009), as research is more rewarded financially and non-financially through academic and organizational promotions.

3.2 Definitions

The paper will be centered around the effect of organizational change on the level of trust, and its repercussions on the work environment in the higher education sector. Thus, organizational change and trust will be defined.

Battilana and Casciaro (2012) view organizational change as a social influence defining it as “the alteration of an attitude or behavior by one actor in response to another actor’s actions”. Organizational change can also be defined as process that effects the whole organization as it alters existing work routines and strategies (Shin et al, 2012; Dokko and Gaba, 2012). Bradley, Bryan and Smit (2012) underline that organizational change needs to involve three main steps: (1) Direction setting, (2) Strategy process setting and (3) Operating reality conversion of strategy. It is evident from previous research that strategy is almost always the focal point of organizational change, and is accordingly modified as time evolves.

With organizational change, particularly strategic change, obstacles and setbacks are inevitable due to the uncertainty of such effort. Those difficulties sometimes force the company to cancel change and revert back to the pre-change strategy, but this action is usually unsuccessful (Mantere *et al*, 2012). There are many reasons for failure such as: (1) Lack of resources, (2) Change of leadership during the time of

change and (3) Lack of trust between managers and employees. Tremendous resources need to be deployed to change, both tangible and intangible. Resources are important during time of change as it can: 1. Create value, 2. Provide firms with competitive advantage and 3. Guide firms to superior performance (Cui *et al*, 2011; Haynes & Hillman, 2010). Likewise, change in leadership is also another factor that can mean failure of the change effort, as new leader usually means new direction. According to Hutzschenreuter *et al* (2012), changing leaders is an event on itself that has consequences and contingencies, as each joins with substantial strategic change in mind. One of many consequences of change in leadership change is lack of trust that is natural during the time of change. Change can generate uncertainty, which in turn creates a sense of unease and discomfort for employees. Even without formal power employees' opinions and apprehension can be detrimental to change process as well as the organizations survival (Sonenshein, 2010). Details about the employee resistance will be discussed further in the next sections of the literature review.

Another term that needs to be defined is trust as it is another focal point of this paper. Mahajan *et al*, (2012) defines interpersonal trust as “the extent to which a person is confident in, and willing to act on the basis of, the words, actions, and decisions of another”. Majahan *et al*. (2012) also found that top management communication and employee involvement are crucial in increasing the trust of employees in top management. Similarly, Becerra and Gupta (2003) see trust as a facilitator between relationships within organizations, which brings about great benefits including reduced transaction costs. Hummels and Roosendaal (2001) refer to trust as a phenomenon that reduces complexity and uncertainty within the organization. Likewise, Argandona (1999) looks at it as the basis of which cooperation can be established.

The literature discloses numerous advantages of trust between employees of different organizational levels such as (1) Increased competitive advantage (Davis *et al*, 2000), (2) Improved performance (Wei *et al*, 2012) and (3) Enhanced organizational effectiveness (Laschinger *et al*, 2001). In contrast, Bews aand Rossouw (2002) warn that “trust can be abused resulting in unethical behavior”. Interestingly,

Grange (2003) looks at trust from yet another angle, stating that “skepticism (distrust) could serve as the basis for trust to develop... the foundation of knowledge production”. Another interesting view by Hedgecoe (2012) is that trust does not need to be mutual for the relationship to work, so for instance in the case of employees and management, employees trust in management is vital and could be enough to allow change to occur. Whereas, management might act as regulators meaning that they would sometimes not authorize some ideas or actions from their subordinates, but still involve them in the change process.

3.3 Challenges in implementing change

The current market is dynamic, transforming and adjusting in accordance with the changing needs of its target so ‘the only constant is change’ (Jaramillo *et al*, 2012; Summers *et al*, 2012). However, the success rate of change initiatives are extremely low, according to Jaramillo *et al*. (2012) it can be as low as 20 percent in some companies. The difficulty of implementing change can be attributed to many different reasons such as (1) Employee resistance, (2) Bad Leadership Change, and (3) Resource Management.

3.3.1 Employee Resistance

It is essential to have employees on board as their acceptance and support is vital for the success of any change effort. According to the literature, staff are usually resistant to change, as change creates ambiguity, uncertainty and sometimes insecurity (Perkins, 2012; Shin *et al*, 2012). Waddell and Sohal (2012), even say that employees do not actually resist change, they resist the “uncertainties and potential outcomes that change can cause”. Employee resistance is dependent on the extent change is seen as a threat on the individuals’ interest, as well as the degree of involvement and choice they have in the change process (Jaramillo *et al*, 2012; Jonsson & Jeppesen, 2013). According to Stanley *et al* (2005), cynicism defined as “the belief that others lack integrity and cannot be trusted” is also contributor in employee resistance. Accordingly, employee commitment is an important issue that needs to be addressed as any resistance can jeopardize the change efforts. (Nordin,

2011). Employees need to be involved in the change and decision making process in order for them to be motivated to perform.

Nonetheless, resistance is not always negative, as it could be beneficial to the change process. Waddell and Sohal (2012) display the positive aspect of resistance as it can draw the attention on the inappropriate or wrong aspects of change that was not well thought off. Communication and leadership, which will be further discussed in the coming sections, are key in utilizing resistance of employees to improve upon the change process instead of exacerbate the organizations' problems (Waddell and Soham, 1998). Likewise, Val and Fuentes (2003) say that communication barriers need to be knocked down by training in order to surpass difficulties and enhance capabilities required for the change process. Pieterse et al. (2012) also feel that non-aligned interactions are a source of resistance but can be overcome by the use of correct managerial tools, and paying more attention to the organizational and professional culture of the organization. Pitsakis et al (2012) discusses the importance of self-identification with the organization, as his research shows that there are three pathways employees take after the change is announced. These pathways are: (1) Strong identification with the organization, (2) Strong identification with the institutional pressure, and (3) Adoption of both organizational and institutional identities. The path that the employee takes reflects the level of commitment or resistance of employees involved. Bovey and Hede (2001) conclude that people that have the ability to cope with anxiety are less likely to resist change as they will be less inclined to use defensive mechanisms. Bovey and Hede (2001) propose two types of intervention that needs to be exercised during the time of change: Information-based interventions, which creates awareness and understanding of the process, supported by counseling interventions which assists in the analysis and interpretation of employees both singularly or as a group.

According to Hüsigg & Mann (2010), the success of change initiatives in the higher education system predominately depends on the degree of involvement. Likewise, Wright and Wilton (2012) found that the largest barrier of change is employee resistance. Like other sectors in the market, Higher Education has found individuals

to be resistant to the change process that is now unavoidable. It is vital that the institutions take the time to assess members' reaction and concerns, in order to avoid the repercussions of their resistance (Barnett, 2011). Opportunities are often missed due to the lack of adaptability of people involved in the restructuring phase. Chipunza and Gwarinda (2010) conclude that lack of commitment and empowerment of workers in the higher education sector would lead to dissatisfaction with the whole change process. Similarly, Weller and Van Gramberg (2007) have determined that the degree of involvement and collegiality of workers have declined in recent years, in the Higher Education sector, and replaced by managerial approach where productivity and efficiency are the focal points. Woods (2012) also recognizes that the Higher Education sector has a wide range of work roles and levels of organization, and individuals differ in their response to similar circumstances. For that reason it is inaccurate to attribute personality traits and individual resilience to their response to the process of strategic and organizational change. Other factors discussed below, such as leadership and resource management, are also seen as obstacles to change.

3.3.2 Leadership

The literature repeatedly mentions leadership when discussing organizational change. It is seen as an important element that cannot be neglected in the process of change. Smet et al (2012) suggest deploying leadership-development programs "to create a critical mass of leaders who share the same vocabulary and could collaborate across geographic and organizational boundaries more effectively". Similarly, Nordin (2011) identifies that emotional distress and lack of commitment, in addition to leadership style are three components that can lead to the failure of change efforts. For this reason leaders have a pivotal role during change as they need to be in charge of creating the right climate for change by resolving uncertainty and enhancing the abilities of employees (Eisenbach et al, 1999). Eisenbach et al. (1999) propose frequent communication, training and mentoring.

According to Burdett (1999), during the time of change, language is the most important tool a leader has, as what the leader says should always inspire employees

to work towards the proposed goals. Leaders should empower their employees during turbulent times even though the investment in learning and innovation, further discussed in coming sections of the literature review. Burdett (1999) finds that empowerment initiatives thrive when: (1) Roles of employees are clarified, (2) structural levels are reduced, (3) Employee's capabilities are aligned with the required work, and (4) Opportunities are taken advantage of through quick response.

Nordin (2011) stresses that there need to be an effective leadership and organizational commitment to have a good foundation for change in the higher education sector. The leadership should ensure that change is necessary, as employees will feel exploited and dissatisfied with an unnecessary change that wastes resources as well as further centralize, formalize and bureaucratize the institute (Todnem et al, 2008). According to Scott et al (2010) higher education leaders play a significant role in ensuring that institutions remain well positioned in times of change, by "making sure that desired change ideas are actually put successfully and sustainably into practice". The paper concludes that leaders need to: 1. Listen, link and lead in that order, 2. Model change, 3. Teach their staff how to make desired changes work and 4. Learn from experience. Nonetheless, there is no set equation for the successful implementation of change, as each institute is different with unique traits. Following Scott et al (2010) recommendation might be beneficial to some universities, where other organizations would need a different method of leadership. Leaders need to adopt a flexible mindset where there is no set way in doing work or learning. Learning need to be shared, roles need to be agreed upon by all parties, and competencies that fit the desirable change need to be present in current individuals (Coulson-Thomas, 1998). Similarly, Chipunza and Gwarinda (2010) confirm that leaders in institutions play an important role, as they are in charge of a 1. Shared vision, 2. Team work and 3. The creation of an enabling environment. According to Siddique et al (2011), there are three types of leadership in the higher education sector research, educational and administration leadership which is what makes educational institutes different than other organization. There are three different levels of leadership in academia that needs to be carefully

entwined, in order to reach organizational goals and visions. Any disharmony jeopardizes the success of change efforts and the overall success of the institute.

3.3.3 Resource Management

Numerous resources are needed during the time of change in order to meet the desired outcomes. Resources need to be deployed properly in order for it to positively impact performance satisfaction and schedule adherence (Robson et al, 2012). According to research, competitive advantage is closely related to companies' possessions and resources; the higher the value and rarity of resources, the higher the level of sustainable competitive advantage and performance (Talaja, 2012). Therefore, resource management is central to the change process; the availability of resource alone is not enough as the correct deployment is key. According to Sirmon and Hitt (2009), deployment decisions that effectively put the resources to use are important for the development of the firm. Implementing the right practice is essential to maximize the value of available resources, allowing a more efficient change process.

Sirmon et al. (2008) find that the acquirement of resources is not enough to realize the strategy and goals of the firm; the process of resource management is necessary through structuring, bundling and leveraging. This means that tangible and intangible resources needs to accumulated, integrated and then deployed in order to realize the firm's potential and enhanced competitive advantage. Kor and Mohaney (2005) adds that governance of resource deployment influence the economic performance and competitive advantage. Thus, the lack of resources is a great liability during the time of change, especially with increased pressure to optimize available resources due to the economic volatility (Shannon, 2012).

Resources are fundamental tools in achieving competitive advantage through aiding in increasing profits and market share, as well as accomplishing long-term success (Greco et al, 2013). Resources can be classified into two main categories tangible and intangible, and both are vital for change. However, Galbreath (2005) has found that intangible resources that are "valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable"

have a greater effect on change as they are more capable of generating and sustaining competitive advantage. This suggests that universities need to invest more in developing intangible resources such as development of the workforce capabilities by devoting attention to the training and recruitment of employees (Lockett and Wright, 2005). Human resource practices have a pivotal role as contribution and commitment of university employees to change is essential for improved performance (Graetz & Smith, 2005). Todnem et al (2008) puts emphasis on making sure the tangible resources are not wasted with unnecessary change, as this would contribute to dissatisfaction of intangible resources, employees. Leaders in the higher education sector should pay close attention to the reaction of employees, their main resource during change, in order to put any concern at bay to avoid setbacks and struggles (Karp & Helg, 2008).

3.3.4 Trust: resistance, leadership and resources

Robert Jr. et al. (2009) define trust as “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party”. According to Krot and Lewicka (2012), “trust is important in business environments because it reinforces and strengthens intra-organizational and inter-organizational relationships”. Not only that but trust is also an element of effective communication and teamwork, and increased employee commitment and productivity. For that reason, their needs to be a process in which employee resistance level is decreased, leadership is critically chosen and resources are readily available during the time of change.

Through research, it is clear that trust links leadership, resource management and employee resistance. Lack of trust in leadership and resource management are two main causes of employee resistance. Kennedy (2011) establishes that with change comes high levels of uncertainty and loss of trust in senior management. When uncertainty is coupled with lack of trust, the most common result is high resistance of change (Boohene & Williams, 2012; Van Dam *et al*, 2008). Moreover, Pate et al. (2007) reports that levels of trust in management is declining, attributing it to the resentment employees have towards the ideology and value of the firm, which is naturally represented by senior manager. Pate et al. (2007) clarifies that the idea

that personality is to blame for the lack of trust is inaccurate, as employees distrust management due to the values of firm they symbolize.

In the higher education sector, trust seems to be an important issue that needs to be resolved as the lack of it hinders the development of institutes. The literature seems to be focused on increasing collegiality and decreasing bureaucracy in academic institutions in an effort to involve employees in change and reduce employee resistance (Aasen & Stensaker, 2007). Management in academic institutions needs to move towards finding the right balance between governance required for administrative intentions and autonomy necessary for academic purposes, in order to increase trust levels (Blewitt, 2011). According to Blewitt (2011), Change in the higher education sector “requires a considerable degree of participation and engagement, autonomy and trust, co-operation and collaboration between professions, trades, academic disciplines and various communities of practice”. Research have found that transformational leadership (Lomas, 2004) and participatory management which includes involving the academic staff, whom are usually outside the loop, in the decision making process is the best way to gain their trust and defer their resistance (Wilson et al., 2005).

3.4 Cost of change

Change is usually brought by low performance of firms seeking to improve their operations (Jordan & Audia, 2012). Organizations want to stay competitive and gain more market share but are usually faced with obstacles and problems that mandate change. However, change comes with financial and non-financial cost that need to be taken into consideration when evaluating change.

3.4.1 Financial cost

The economic crisis put companies in dilemma, on one hand pressured companies to cut cost, and on the other hand forced company to invest in change (Kamal & Abbas, 2011). Many companies were not able to survive the crisis, as they were not able to adopt change without the proper capital. According to Yi & Sang-Hoon (2008), change management need to be adopted in order for cost to be controlled. Scholars

stress the importance of transparency and involvement of all concerned parties when controlling cost (Orentlicher, 2011; Rajwani, 2010). Controlling cost, also called budgeting, needs to incorporate more than financial efficiency but also a reference point for performance evaluation, a tool for personnel motivation and an instrument for coordination and communication (Nicolae & Anca, 2010).

In a declining economic environment, management is usually forced to make changes that would increase productivity, and many resort to cutting financial cost (Pudlowski, 2009). Management often do not properly assess how change, specifically cutting cost, can have non-financial consequences which impacts the company's human population (Pudlowski, 2009; Agarwal *et al*, 2009). Non-financial costs such as increased turnover and lower performance would jeopardize the well being of the company, so it needs to be properly assessed in order to avoid irreversible consequences. Management and employers need to be more innovative when cutting costs, as both financial and non-financial cost need to be decreased (Kocakülâh, 2009; Ortiz, 2011). Nonetheless, the main concern is that cutting cost needs to be done without compromising quality of service and product or welfare of the company, and here is where the difficulty lies (Clark, 2010).

3.4.2 Non-financial cost

Change is unavoidable in the current time and a regular occurrence in firms due to the rapid change occurring in almost all markets. Companies need to keep up with the changing markets, in order to survive and increase their market share. Non-financial costs are ones that affect the human aspect of the organization such as decreased workforce (Siyabola, 2011) and lower performance (Beck et al, 2002).

Decreased workforce occurs during the time of change for two reasons: layoffs and resignations. Downsizing can have many implications such as individual, organizational and societal (Karren and Sherman, 2012). Nonetheless, layoffs have become a very common practice in firms, especially in this unstable economy, due to the pressure on organizations to constantly restructure or/and downsize in an effort to reinvent (Parzefall, 2012; Karren and Sherman, 2012). The idea of becoming more

efficient and competitive has forced employees to cut down the size of the workforce, getting rid of the less experienced employees. In his article, Parzfell (2012) discusses how scholars have dismissed the idea that layoffs have a positive impact on productivity because of the 'detrimental effects' it has on the surviving employees. In addition, Parzefall (2012) finds that the idea of justice is very important as it can make Human Resources processes smoother. Unavoidable layoffs need to be conducted with procedural and distributive justice in mind to minimize the inevitable cynicism and anger.

Resignations, on the other hand, are also a frequent occurrence during restructuring due to the emotional aspect that accompanies change. Organizations usually try to retain their 'key' employees that they feel would help with change which are usually the senior executives, neglecting 'normal' performers that are no less critical to change (Cosack, 2010). Those are the employees that look for opportunities outside the organization in search for career development, as individuals are fearful of career halt or slowdown (Chreptaviciene & Starkute, 2012). Change also causes stress (Dahl, 2011; Dool, 2009) due to a higher workload (Decker et al, 2001) and perceived instability and insecurity (Grady et al, 2011; Lawrence & Callan, 2011). Stress management is important in all phases of change to keep employees productivity high and decrease resistance through good leadership and communication (Darling & Heller, 2011).

During the time of change, lower performance is predictable temporarily, but is expected to rapidly improve. Temporary lower performance is attributed to the time needed to generate and communicate knowledge about change, as efforts are concentrated on learning rather than performance (Mohrman & Edward, 2012). Moreover, change needs to go through many stages before it is even implemented, taking time and resources, such as (1) assembling a group, (2) creating a vision and (3) teaching new behaviors (Kotter, 1995) (Figure 1). Moreover, development or/and change in leadership (Smet et al, 2012), as well as evaluation of goals and creation of new strategies, consume company resources resulting in lower performance but eventually have a positive impact (Gaal & Fekete, 2012). Lower performance can be

detrimental to the organization, if not reversed swiftly as competition could benefit from the company's lapse in profitability (Woo, 1983; Baofeng, 2008).



Figure 1: Eight steps to transforming your organization.
(Kotter 2007, p. 6)

Due to the nature of work in the higher education sector, academics need a large amount of autonomy in their work. Hoecht (2012) looks specifically at the impact of the quality assurance practices on the level of trust between colleagues as well as different levels of the organization. Many professionals know that quality assurance is needed, however they criticize the current processes in their universities, as to them it feels like a mechanism of control and restriction rather than a mean of enhancement (Hoecht, 2012). Clashes between academic freedom and accountability are becoming more frequent (Arimoto, 1997).

3.5 Creating a positive environment for successful change

According to Woods (2012), there is 'no recipe for the ideal workplace, nor a template for the model employee, or a set of individual characteristics or organizational policies or procedures that will guarantee a happy and productive workforce'. However, the literature is rich with diverse ways and approaches to create a positive environment. This include: (1) Communication and Language, (2) Employee Involvement: Innovation and Motivation, (3) Spirituality and Justice and (4) Orientation and Training.

3.5.1 Communication and Language

Communication in organizations comes in many forms both formally or informally. Harris and Ogdonna (2013) recognize that a form of informal communication such as word-of-mouth can have pervasive effect on organizations and the change process. Anti-management word-of-mouth, even if not true, can result in the lack of effectiveness of the change process as management's competence is put under doubt. Whereas, Pearson (2012) discusses communication in a formal setting suggesting that employees of all levels should meet to jointly define the metrics of success of any change in order to be successful operationally and financially. Hinds and Kiesler (1995) look at communication technology emphasizing its growing importance in both formal and informal setting for collaboration and information sharing purposes across the organization. The correct use of technology can be beneficial in the change process as it can ease communication and encourages collaboration between employees from different levels (Hinds and Kiesler, 1995). Birshan, Kar and Parry (2012) suggest (1) Experiential exercises, (2) In-the-moment discussion, not deferring issues and (3) Capable leadership, to boost communication between team members or employees.

"Communication and organizational change inextricably linked process" ('A Critical Analysis Of Communication Approaches For Implementing Organizational Change', 2012). Leadership needs to encourage effective communication in the workplace, as most employees are reluctant to disagree with management. The reluctance of

voicing opinions and opposing higher-ranking employees, and silence results in equivocation and suppression that acts as a barrier for organizational learning and adaptation (Bisel, 2012). Communication is also known to reduce uncertainty (Homburg et al, 2012) especially during the time of strategic change where ambiguity is high (Birshan *et al*, 2012). Uncertainty is reduced as communication fosters understanding and motivates employees to be proactive (Merrell, 2012). Moreover, communication should be a tool used by both employees and management as communication competence is linked to organizational success (Pundzienė, 2007), see figure 2.

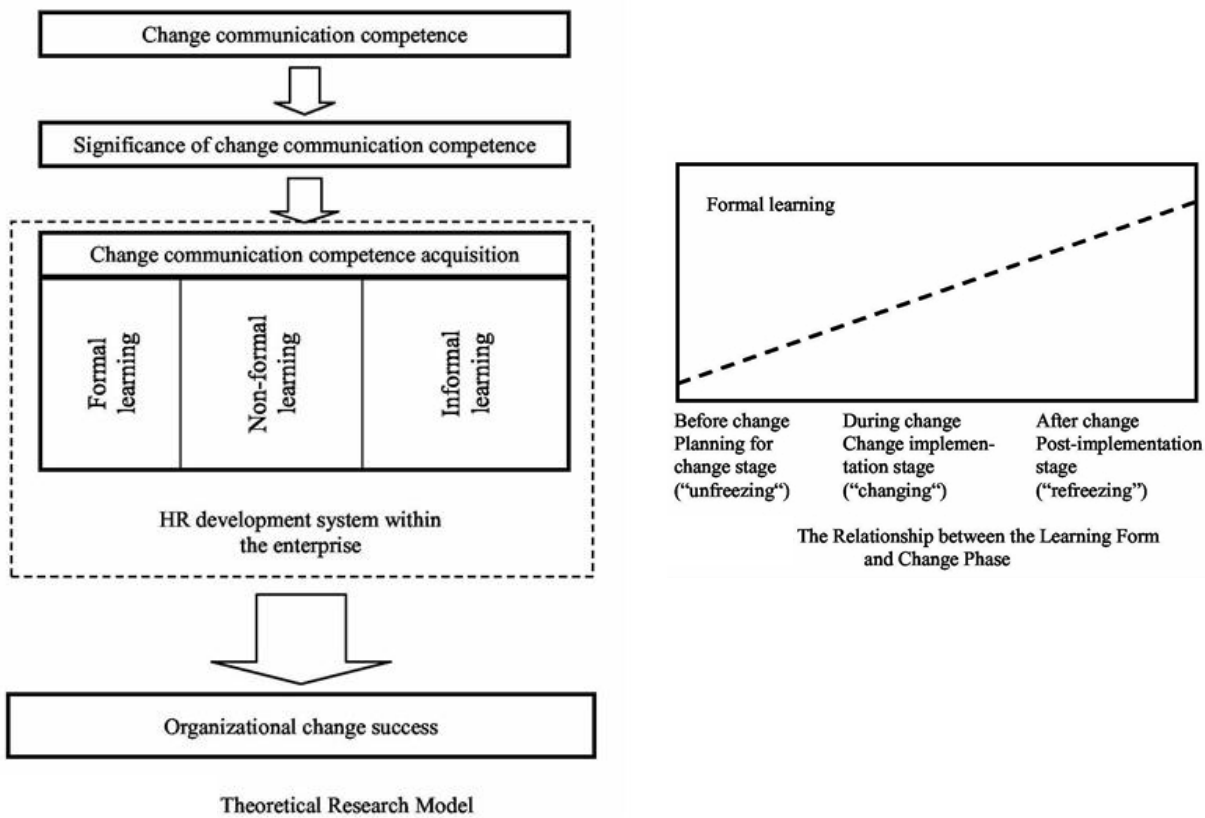


Figure 2: Formal Learning. (Pundzienė et al 2007).

Communication between employees of all levels in the higher education sector is of utmost importance during the time of change. Lozano (2006) emphasizes that the communication route during change is more beneficial than coercive strategies to gain the support of employees. However, communication in the higher education sector seems to be mainly done through digital channels which employees find risky for expressing concerns (Choi, 2011). Leadership should have open communication channels with employees involved in the process of change that are more inventive than emails, such as questionnaires which have been found to lead to commitment and involvement, and accordingly better performance (Sweet & Heritage, 2000).

3.5.2 Employee Involvement: Innovation and Motivation

Employee involvement is the empowerment of individuals by making them better informed (Green, 2012) and more involved in decision-making (Pihlak & Alas, 2012). Change is seen to “break the psychological contract between employee and employer” reducing job involvement (Khalid & Rehman, 2011). Therefore, especially in turbulent times, management should adopt a participatory management style in order to generate the perception of equity, and in turn increase job satisfaction and performance (Brown and Cregan, 2008; Litwin, 2011; Mushipe, 2011). According to Addomsent et al. (2007), the higher education employees’ “intensive involvement of all concerned shall enable solutions to be put together – solutions which are not conceived with little regard for practical application, but which are ready to be implemented and feasible”. Employee involvement is seen to enhance innovation (Tim et al, 2005) and motivation (Akhtar *et al*, 2011; Fernandez & Pitts, 2011) in the workplace, as it stimulates employees to put their knowledge and intellect into action.

Innovation is a frequent occurrence in the Higher Education sector due to research and learning element in universities, however it is usually in the academic disciplines rather than the university management level (Snyder et al, 2007). In order for reorganization and change to occur more focus need to be put on the managerial aspect of the institution without creating tension between managerial and academic practices, and here is where the difficulty lies. Van den Bosch & Teelken (2000)

suggest allowing faculty to take initiatives and make them responsible for parts of the administrative work. Taylor has also found that delegation of responsibilities to subordinates and decentralization can increase innovation and commitment (2001).

Innovation and creativity are crucial “to societal and economical well-being”, however a lot of patience is needed as the value such as increased profitability is only seen after a considerable amount of time (Rubenson and Runco, 1992). Likewise, Rubera and Kirca’s (2012) findings prove that innovation and creativity directly and positively effects financial position and value of the firm. This is especially true in the higher education sector, as research needs to pass through many channels of approval. Hunter et al (2012) recognize the importance of creativity but stress that there are elements that need to be present to yield the desired results, which include a supportive environment and employees with talent. The organization needs to have a scheme, which contributes in hiring talented individuals to facilitate such endeavor through integrating it in the strategy of the organization. Contrarily, Browning and Sanders (2012) state that novelty increases uncertainty and represent a lack of familiarity. Accordingly, learning is crucial at time of innovation and change in order to benefit from such venture.

Motivation, be it to innovate or increase productivity, is seen to be related to the degree of employee involvement (Mohsan, 2011). Motivation is a large part of the change process, as without the desire to perform, change would not be successful. Involving employee in the change process, as well as training and informal learning is substantial to increasing motivation (Akhtar, 201). Motivation has been associated with a better performance, as scholars find that the link between motivation and performance levels is positive (Wong-On-Wing et al, 2010; Böckerman & Ilmakunnas, 2012; Raju, 2011). According to Silman et al (2009) “Factors such as peaceful and comfortable work environment, sufficient equipment, recognition, and appreciation that came from the administrators for the instructors, and comfortable teaching, learning and research environment affected their motivation positively”. May-Chiun Lo (2010) found that there is a positive relationship between inspirational motivation and personal commitment to change.

3.5.3 Spirituality and Justice

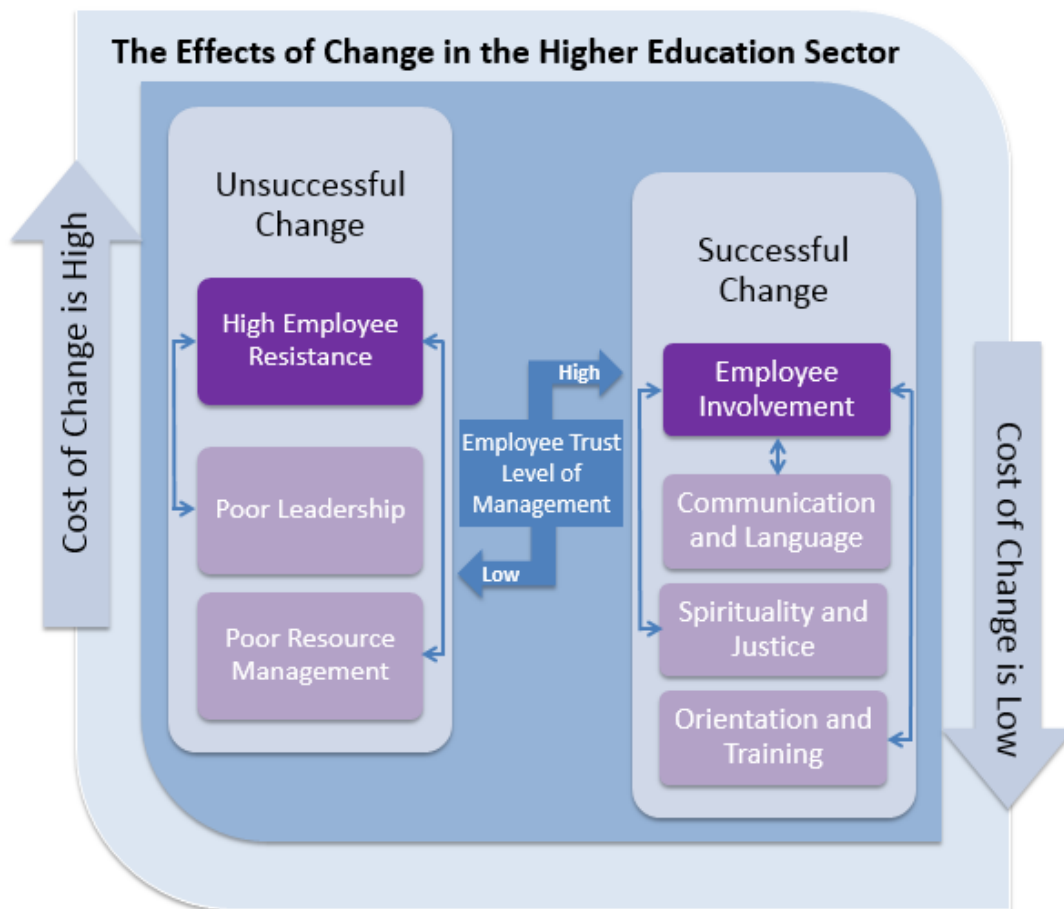
Many scholars have addressed spirituality; especially in the Middle East where many incorporate religion at work as it is seen to develop human potential that affects the organizational performance as well as fulfill the individual's societal role (Khan and Sheikh, 2012). Some scholars have also expressed the importance of incorporating Islamic principles into management in general, but most crucially in Human Resource Management (Khan and Sheikh, 2012; Hassi, 2012, El Garah et al, 2012). Ismail and Blaim (2012) focuses on the idea that even though Islam concepts are constant, the application of those concepts change over time, which emphasizes the idea that Islamic models can be beneficial in resolving current corporate issues. Nissan et al. (2012) also found that culture, which usually includes the religion aspect, has been seen to have a great effect on the behavior of employees, as it can be a promoting or discouraging agent in the innovation and change process. El Garah et al (2012) concludes from the findings of many scholars that due to the recent economic crisis, which was attributed to lack of governance, there is an increased emphasis on spirituality and religion. Spirituality is believed to affect the level of righteousness and justice. Justice is repeatedly mentioned in the literature as many scholars emphasize that lack of fairness and integrity in the different aspects of the corporate life can have a detrimental effect on the organization. Gupta and Kumar (2012) have found that the perception of justice in HRM practices such as performance appraisals is positively correlated to engagement of employees. Engagement of employees is seen to increase if benefits are clear to those workers.

3.5.4 Orientation and Training

Implementing change is challenging, as there are many issues that can arise from such process. Battilana and Casciaro (2012) recognize that some methods in organization are perceived as the only way an action could be completed, discouraging any development or modification. Therefore, there should be steps taken to make sure the organization is prepared for the strain of change. According to the literature, orientation and training of embracement of change are essential to the success of the process (Jaramillo et al., 2012; Janjua, 2013). Similarly, Nordin's

(2011) research found that leaders should be charismatic and able to give provide attention for individualized development of employees, as well as intellectual stimulation to prepare employees for imminent change. This can be possible through management development programs, which are seen to increase the value of change through boosting the program's quality and impact. Equally, Shin et al. (2012) also found that the preservation of resources both tangible and intangible, such as training before the start of the change process, increases employee commitment and support of the desired route.

3.6 Conceptual Framework



The framework illustrates change in the Higher Education sector, based on the literature review, showing how the level of employee trust of management is central to the outcome of change; so either the success or failure of change. Low levels of *trust of management* instigate high levels of *employee resistance* of change, whereas high levels of *trust of management* prompt high levels of *employee involvement*.

On the one hand, the literature review shows that with high levels of *employee resistance* change is associated with failure, among other factors, which usually fuels this resistance such as *poor leadership* and *poor resource management*. On the other hand, the literature indicates that with high levels of *employee involvement* change is associated with successful change, among other factors, which usually drives this involvement such as *communication and language*, *spirituality and justice*, and *orientation and training*.

Moreover, the framework shows the outcome of *unsuccessful* and *successful change* on its cost. With *unsuccessful change*, the cost is high as a lot of resources financial and non-financial are used to implement change. Whereas, with *successful change* the benefits that comes with improvement and development covers the expenditures lowering cost. Nevertheless, with change there will always be a cost especially with employees who will differ in their reaction to change, as some will choose not to be involved, others will feel left behind and some might even be laid-off, as their services will no longer be needed.

4 METHODOLOGY

Qualitative Method

Data will be collected through open-ended interviews for two case studies, which will be conducted with administrative and academic staff. The qualitative approach best suits the project as the interviews is expected to give us insight about the staff views and opinions. Interviews will allow open and honest conversation that is required for greater understanding of change in the higher education sector and the issue of trust at such critical time. Quantitative approach is not sufficient for this research as “statistical formulae are irrelevant in validating this process of emphatic understanding of social actors and activities” (Wai-chung Yeung, 1995). According to Jepsen and Rodwell (2008) “qualitative research methods provide deeper insights into the research area than is possible using quantitative methods”. Qualitative method will be adopted through interviews of key people who have the proper understanding of the situation (Rowley, 2012). According to Baker and Edwards (2012) “Qualitative researchers generally study many fewer people, but delve more deeply into those individuals, settings, subcultures, and scenes, hoping to generate a subjective understanding of how and why people perceive, reflect, role-take, interpret, and interact”. Furthermore, Jepsen and Rodwell (2008) state “in-depth interviews as a means of investigating aspects of workplace relationships have been called for to supplement the quantitative studies, especially those related to workplace relationships”. So, after having looked at different research approaches and methods, it has been decided that conducting interviews with live note-taking would be adopted as the research method for the dissertation. The interview process will follow Kvale (1996) seven stages: Thematizing, Designing, Interviewing, Transcribing, Verifying, Analyzing and Reporting.

4.1 Thematizing

This is the pre-interview stage where the purpose of the study and the concept of topic are described. This was thoroughly done in the previous two sections: the introduction and literature review.

4.2 Designing

4.2.1 Interview questions and structure

The case study interview was designed in a way where all matters related to the research were discussed with each and every interviewee. However, the interview was also designed to allow flexibility for the interviewer to ask probing and interpreting questions for further understanding. The steps shown below suggested by Mason (2002) were used to plan and prepare for the qualitative interview. The final structure and questions of the interview is shown in figure 3.

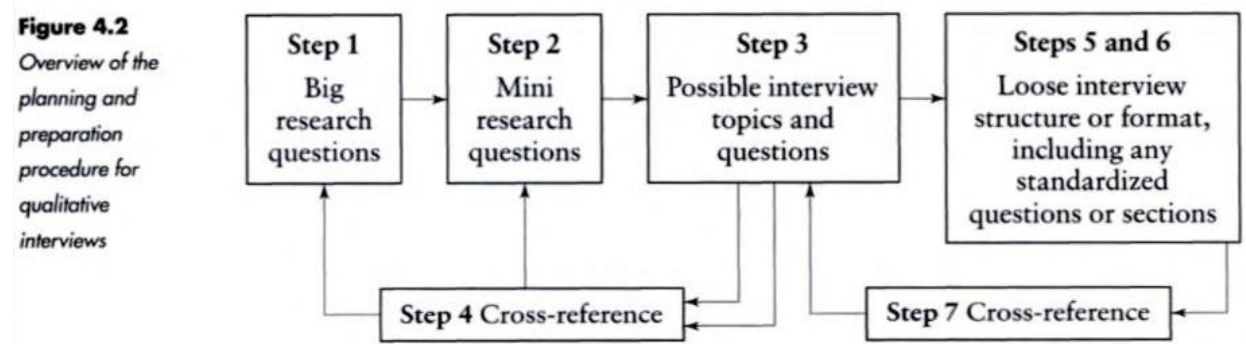


Figure 3: Qualitative Interview plan (Mason 2002)

4.2.2 Interview Techniques

To ensure that the interviews are equally high in quality, several techniques will be adopted during all the interviews that will be conducted. Consistency and high quality of interviews will be achieved through the following approaches (Mason, 2002; Kvale, 1996):

- Make the interview 'a conversation'
- Ask probing, follow up and interpretation questions
- Balance between listening and talking
- Ask short question and allow longer answers
- Engages in 'active' listening
- Stay on topic but still allow spontaneous answers
- Observe verbal and non-verbal cues

4.2.3 Sampling and Sample Size in Qualitative Studies

Criterion sampling, “participants who closely match the criteria of the study” (Rudestam & Newton, 2007), would be used for this study. This would ensure *appropriateness* of data in order for the theoretical needs of the study to be met. Knowing the right type of people that would be interviewed in order to create the most appropriate discussion is essential. Interviewees would be individuals who are closely involved in the change process of the academic organization including directors and managers from different levels, to provide *saturation* and *confirmation* of results. The aim is that at least 10 would be interviewed for each case study for ensuring *adequacy* of information for a total of 20. According to Baker and Edwards (2012), Adler and Adler advise graduate students to sample between 12 and 60, with 30 being the mean; and Ragin suggests that a glib answer is ‘20 for an M.A. thesis and 50 for a Ph.D. dissertation’. The relatively small number of participants would allow “thick description” and “sufficient detail” to be extracted from the interviews. Whereas, interviewing participants from the same organization from different levels and seniorities, in an attempt for *triangulation*, would help look at the problem from different viewpoints in order to grasp the main concerns and recommend the best course of action.

4.3 Interviewing

The interviews will be semi-structured, standardized and open-ended. All interviewees would be asked more or less the same question, the same topics in order for data to be more easily analyzed and compared. Nevertheless, some questions might be slightly modified depending on the position of the interviewee and the reason s/he was selected. However, the interviewee would have a great degree of flexibility on how to answer question and the freedom to discuss issues that s/he feels relevant. Therefore, the interview would comprise of a variety of questions in order to ensure effectiveness of interview and gain in-depth knowledge about the subject: Introducing questions, follow-up questions, probing questions, specifying questions, direct questions, indirect questions, structuring questions and interpreting questions. During the collection phase of the research, two individuals,

the interviewer and another individual, would take notes of what is said. The notes would then be compared shortly after the interview in order to ensure accuracy of the data. Additionally, body language, impressions and reactions would be noted down as supplementary information that can be utilized in the analysis phase.

4.4 Transcribing

Although, tape recording is recommended during interviews for validation purposes, interviews will not be recorded in order to allow the interviewee more comfort in conversing issues and concerns about the organization s/he is currently serving at. The interview will be transcribed during the interview, and will be checked and expanded shortly after the interview. For validation purposes the transcript will be then sent to the respondent for any needed amendment.

4.5 Verifying

The verification of interviews would take place during as well as the end of the interview for best results. The interviewer would be asked to describe the meaning of what is said until “there is only one possible interpretation left or the multiple understandings of a theme by the subject are known” (Kvale, 1996). It is necessary that the interviewer does not make assumption about what the interviewee is trying to converse. Instead the interviewer needs to declare his understanding and give the interviewee the chance to clarify his/her statements as well as elaborate on what has been said.

4.6 Analysis

In the analysis phase, the systematic approach of the Four Step Analysis by Green et al (2007) will be used for thorough analysis of interview data. (Figure 3)

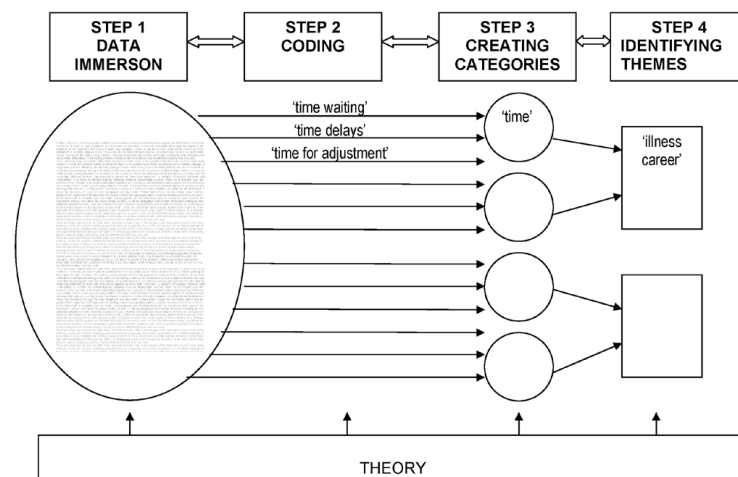


Figure 4: The systematic approach of the Four Step Analysis (Green et al 2007)

The first stage of analysis is immersion in the data, which means reading the transcripts several times, which allows detailed examination of the interviews. The second stage is coding which includes highlighting the important issues and organizing the data by moving forward and back through the transcript. The third step is creating categories with the help of the literature review, followed by the fourth steps of identifying themes through the shared ideas and topics of the different interviews in order to report findings. Categorizing patterns and themes would allow the critical analysis, evaluation and comparison of data collected with the literature in order to come up with sound conclusions and recommendations. Step three and four will allow us to comprehend the similarities as well as differences between the respondents' views and opinions.

4.7 Reporting

Reporting is to “communicate the findings of the study and the methods applied in a form that lives up to scientific criteria, takes the ethical aspects of the investigation into consideration, and that results in an readable product”. This will be done

through the last three sections of the dissertation findings, conclusions and recommendations.

5 CASE STUDIES

The study will concentrate on one university to answer the research questions. Two projects will be included in order to gain more insight about the topic that is tackled in this paper. Through a questionnaire two main projects have been chosen as having the largest impact on the university and its workforce. The two projects are ***Emiratisation*** and ***Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers***. Those two projects have been the source of large changes in the university.

Background about the University: Education and Research

The University is an institute dedicated to excellence in education and research. This commitment has allowed the university to grow at a fast rate with increasing number of applicants every year. The increasing number of students has resulted in the need to employ more staff and faculty, which is being fulfilled with the employment of new members. The recruitment of new staff and faculty has become increasingly necessary as the university has introduced master degrees and is planning to offer PhD degrees in the near future, in addition to its original undergraduate degrees.

The growth plans have come after the university has successfully obtained international accreditation vital for the prosperity and advancement of the institute. The accreditation did not only benefit in terms of the university becoming recognized internationally but it also resulted in the revisiting of all processes of the university in both administration and academia, and making all necessary improvements. The university was examined thoroughly by the accreditation body, which forced the university to reexamine their practices and progression; as a result many gaps and weaknesses have been found and fixed in an effort to realize the goal of the university. Many good things came out from such procedure, on one hand some employees have shown their hidden abilities and where able to showcase them. On the hand, people that were negatively influencing the workplace and standing in the way of development were identified. This cleansing process has

rerouted the mission, vision and goals of the organization, as well as made them clearer and more focused.

In addition to education, the university has also focused on the research part of institutes in line with the country's new interest in research and the realization of its importance to the wellbeing of the country. Some examples include projects such as Masdar, ECSSR (Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research), Takreer, Burooj and NYU Abu Dhabi are few research entities that have emerged in the country. The university is involved in a number of projects involving the building of research centers with the help of prominent companies in the UAE. The development of such centers has proved challenging with increased need of state of the art equipment as well as the right workforce and minds to operate and best utilize such tools. The importance of research has been evident in the university through the increased number of collaborations initiated by the formal president of the university. This initiative has been developed upon as the number of collaborations and projects have been on the rise, resulting in numerous publications in reputable peer-reviewed journals.

5.1 Overview of Project 1: Emiratization in the University

What is Emiratisation. The University is one of the academic institutes that has committed to the new vision for the Emirate, Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030, and therefore had to make some changes. One of those changes is increasing the Emirati workforce in the university especially in areas in the organization where Emiratis have not been involved in yet. Those jobs range from secretarial jobs to more senior managerial positions that have never been designated to Emiratis for various reasons. The lack of Emiratis in some of the jobs available in the university are due to both financial and non-financial issues. Financially it is cheaper to employ non-Emiratis, for instance secretarial positions' cost, in some instances, doubles if an Emirati is given that position compared to other nationalities. Non-financial issues include lack of Emirati workforce with certain expertise and educational background

such as PhD holders who are on the increase but not yet sufficient to cover the demand in the country. Moreover, diversity in universities is needed to create a vibrant working environment, and increase creativity and ingenuity. Being restricted to a certain nationality can be a hurdle in the advancement of education as it would stop the employment of valuable individuals. Nevertheless, Emiratisation is not about restricting the employment of different nationalities as this is not possible with the current pace of change in the country, as well as the reality of the population variation of the UAE. Emiratisation is about changing the mentality of the people about Emiratis work commitment and abilities, by creating “A policy of ‘positive discrimination’ which can increase the presence of nationals in firms” (Mashood, N., Verhoeven, H. and Chansarkar, B. 2009). Many more Emiratis are now experienced and educated, as many have realized the importance of education and have acquired degrees from renowned universities all over the world. This was supported by the government through generous scholarships for Emiratis looking to study locally or abroad. As the United Arab Emirates National Bureau of Statistics (2013) have found that in year 1975 the UAE had only 860 students studying in Universities, all abroad due you to the lack of such undergraduate and graduate programs in the UAE. This number has increased in the year 2013 to 34,271 national students studying in private universities and 38,097 national students in government institutions, and 416 students with government scholarships abroad. As Mashood, N., Verhoeven, H. and Chansarkar, B (2009) state

“Emiratisation is an example of “the interventionist approach often taken by governments of the region” (Harry 2007). It is a policy which “aims to reduce the country’s reliance on expatriate labour and increase the participation of nationals in the labour market” (Wilkins 2001:8). “Emiratization is an affirmative action quota driven employment policy that ensures UAE nationals are given employment opportunities in the private sector” Godwin (2006:8). In order to do so, “the government has selected industries they considered suitable for national men and women to work in and set quotas that the

organizations within these industries have to meet” Morris (2005: 6)... Thus, Emiratisation focuses on a package of policies which help nationals successfully carry out jobs which were formerly filled by non-nationals. “

The Decision. Recently, all departments have received a document stating that the Emiratisation policy of hiring Emirati nationals to fill all vacant positions in the organization will need to be implemented. The university has already been trying to find good caliber Emiratis to fill vacant positions at different levels of the organization. This has not been easy as there is still no proper system to locate and attract individuals with the desired backgrounds and in some cases nearly impossible to find, which has resulted in the hiring of non-nationals. Nevertheless, the organization has now decided to increase their efforts and start a project headed by the Human Resource Manager to increase the number of nationals in the university. The project includes preparing a recruitment plan for the national workforce for the next five years. The project includes putting a nationalization plan that would be executed in stages. The first stage is recruitment of nationals for vacant positions starting with business support services in HR, ICT, finance, etc., which require both fresh graduates and candidates with experience within the first two years. The second stage would be replacement of (lower skilled jobs) such as receptionists, secretaries and data entry, which only require high school degree or diplomas, with nationals within the first six months of the project. The third stage to hire nationals to fill higher administrative and managerial positions, such as senior specialist, project managers and senior project managers. The fourth stage includes the technical staff that needs to be recruited for the University, as they would need Masters degrees such as lab engineers. The last stage would be to attract PhD holders to work in the university as faculty, which is a longer process. The process would include finding PhD holders with experience to fill faculty positions, as well as preparing current national students to become future employees.

Preparing a nationalization plan is very important as the university has found that most non-nationals are here on a temporary basis and need more stable workforce in order to make advancement in the university. This is not to say that non-nationals are incompetent of making dramatic changes in the company but it has been clear through the years that the university has been operating that it is more difficult for non-nationals to make a long-term commitment. This is clearly illustrated by Toit and Jackson (2014) research, which shows that turnover in the higher education sector of the UAE is on the increase. Toit and Jackson (2014) state that due to “limited prior international experience and understanding of cultural differences” the Emirati higher education sector is in jeopardy. According to Bashir (2012), “as the number of expatriates is growing (in the UAE), the expatriate failure rate is also increasing” based on findings of his research which shows “a positive relationship between organisational support and expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment that includes work, general and interaction adjustment”. Bashir (2012) blames the lack of such support of the high turnover. In addition, non-nationals also decide to go back to Universities in their own country offering stability with tenure contracts, which is not offered here in the UAE.

5.2 Overview of Project 2: Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers

In recent years, interest in research has been growing in the region. The UAE government has illustrated in its Government Strategy 2011-2013 the importance of education and research for the development of the country. The “Highlights of the U.A.E. GOVERNMENT STRATEGY 2011-2013” document states under “Competitive Knowledge Economy”:

Promote and enhance innovation, research and development by promoting intellectual property (IP) development and protecting IP rights, enhancing research and developing talent - especially Emiratis - that are aligned with national priorities, providing

incentives and encouraging cooperation with the private sector and international institutions in innovation and applied research, exploring new channels of funding for research, and building and disseminating a database of research conducted within the UAE.

The Decision. In-line with that vision the University has decided to pursue research through introducing Graduate Studies both Masters and PhD in the university. The project would cause a lot of changes in the University as changes would include 1. Higher workload and increased responsibilities on administrative and academic staff, as well as, faculty, 2. The need for more efficient use of funds and resources, and 3. Changes in HR practices such as recruitment and staffing. However, the project is an opportunity for the University to attract and retain high caliber faculty, as they will have greater career opportunities. The graduate programs would provide a platform for faculty to exhibit their interest and work, through a better atmosphere for research and development. Faculty would be able to publish their work in renowned scientific journals , resulting in quicker advancement in their academic career. Yet, the university had to go through many stages before launching its graduate program and making this vision a reality: Collaboration, Learning and finally Launching.

First, in the collaboration stage, the University started creating relationships and agreements with renowned universities in the US, Asia and Europe. Those collaborations included the funding of research projects where THE faculty work with faculty from different universities on research projects in an effort to publish in well-known journals. This was important as the university has recently introduced research in its strategy. Prior to that teaching was the aim of the university and the main expectation of its faculty. However, with the change in the focus of the university changes had to be made to complement the new expectation. The university could not expect that faculty would conduct research without giving them the means to do so. Creating funds, collaborations and recently the building of research centers has been key to the advancement of research.

The second stage was learning from the collaborations that have been occurring the last few years. The faculty had the chance to co-supervise students from different

universities, where students would spend the summer in the University. This has allowed faculty to learn how to deal with graduate students and understand the needs of introducing a graduate degree. The university has realized that for research to advance at a quicker pace it is important to have students that reside longer periods in the university to ensure continuity such as PhD students. Having graduate students, masters and PHD, would allow research to be more focused on challenges and issues related to the region. This would give researchers the opportunity to work on advancing processes and technologies dedicated to business in the region. The learning stage has been a great process to establish and put together the graduate programs suited to the university. Looking at different universities gave the university the required background and knowledge about how to run a successful graduate program. Nonetheless, like any other country the UAE has its own set of properties and needs that had to be incorporated in the program. The realization of the differences in culture has been key in the establishment of the graduate programs.

The third stage was the launch of the program. After the University's success with their undergraduate program and growing interest in research, the management felt that an expansion is necessary. They launched the graduate program in stages in accordance with the needs of the region. The university started with masters' degrees and will soon be introducing PhD degree in coming years, along with more masters' degrees. The launch of those degrees included the start of establishing several research centers funded by renowned organizations in the industry. The research center has been a great addition to the university's resources that have attracted students, faculty and other universities, as it has state of the art equipment that would allow experiments to be conducted. This rapid expansion has brought about a lot more responsibilities and a higher workload for all employees of the university. The recruitment rate naturally has been on the increase as the need for new staff, faculty and administrators has grown.

5.3 Interview

Employee Trust of Management during the time of change in the UAE Higher Education Sector: How Change Affects Employees and How Employees Affect Change

Aim of Study

This paper aims to investigate how effective change is managed in Higher Education sector in the UAE and the effect of employee trust of management on projects. This will illustrate the importance of the role academics, support staff and administration can play in the success or failure of any change within this sector.

Introduction of the project

- a. The interviewer will share and explain the research topic, as well as general aims and objectives of the study.
- b. The interviewer will allow questions regarding the subject of the research.

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description Faculty Administration Staff
- b. How long have you been working for?
- c. How long have you been in academia?
- d. How long have you been working at your current institute/university?

Interview Questions

“The open-ended interview often begins with a big question and proceeds in what some have called the funnel shape—beginning with large questions working down to details”. (Breener, 2006)

1. *Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project/ Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the University? Is it a good idea or not*

2. *What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project/ Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?*
 - Make reference to any of the following topics if the interviewee has not mentioned and discussed them: employee resistance, leadership and resource management.
 - Probable Probing question:
 - i. *Explain how employees of the University have reacted to change brought about by the project?*
 - ii. *Explain how the project leadership managed the planning, design, and implementation of this project? What was the level of support to this project from senior management*
 - iii. *What about resource management, is it an issue in the project?*
 - iv. *Can you give me an example of ...?*

3. *What are the main costs of the Emiratisation Project/ Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project?*
 - Make sure both financial and non-financial costs are discussed.
 - i. *How do you see the likely impact of this project on yourself, your department, the university?*

4. *What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratisation Project/ Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project successful or improve its success?*
 - Allow interviewee to answer and then ask the person what s/he think about the following areas: 1. Communication and Language, 2. Employee Involvement: Innovation and Motivation, 3. Spirituality and Justice, 4. Orientation and Training, through the following probing questions:

- i. *What about communication, is it an area that needs improvement?/ Do you think communication is an issue in the project?*
- ii. *To what extent staff were involved in the planning, design and implementation of this project*
- iii. *How was the main concept of the project developed? Were there any inputs from staff across the university? What innovation was introduced?*
- iv. *Do you feel there is a feeling of injustice among staff affected by this change project?*
- v. *Do you think training would be beneficial in this case?*
- vi. *What do you recommend that need to be done to improve..?*
- vii. *What do you mean by that? / How?*
- viii. *Some say... what do you think?*

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

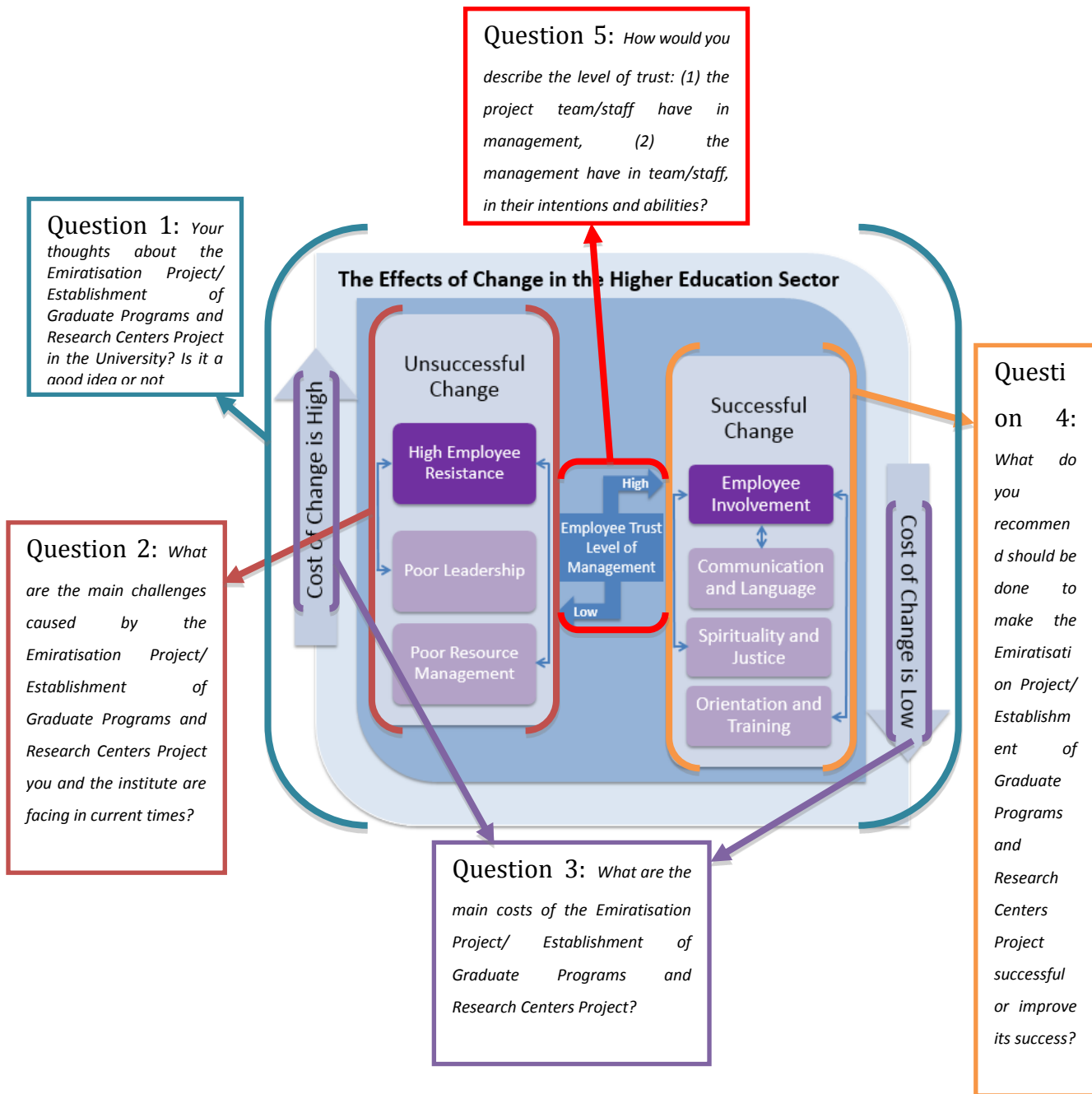
6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

This question is to make sure the interviewee was given the chance to share all information s/he would like us know, and is satisfied with clarifying and expressing his views and thoughts. It is important that the interviewee is left with no regrets and is fully satisfied with the information that s/he has shared with the interviewer.

Concluding remarks

- a. The interview will end by thanking the interviewee for agreeing to meet with the interviewer and the time that s/he has given the interviewer to ask and discuss desired topic and questions.

- b. The interviewer will assure once again that the identity of the interviewee would remain confidential.
- c. The interviewer will tell the interviewee that results of the research would be shared after finalizing the project.



6 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Even though the recession has brought change to all sectors of the market, Higher Education have been one sector that was still able to expand and prosper. Nevertheless, the expansion efforts in institutes have been with a guarded nature, as leaders are more cautious and under scrutiny by investors and donors. The UAE is transitioning towards a society eager for knowledge and research through the establishment of new institutes in collaboration with world-class universities. Institutes such as Masdar Institute of Science and Technology has recently emerged as the country's leadership aim to broaden the access to knowledge channels. Research has also become increasingly supported and funded, as it believed to be a tool for increasing the country's prosperity and advancement. As a result, change is constant in all market-oriented institutions and universities in the UAE, which are competing for high caliber students, a superior reputation and additional essential resources.

The employees that were interviewed were from various levels of the university, with varying type and extent of experience, as well as from different backgrounds. Interviewees hold different academic and administrative positions, some both such as department heads. Academic positions range from full professors to technical staff, whereas administrative positions include managers of different levels as well as supporting staff.

6.1 Reaction to change

The interviews conducted have shown a great amount of support to change in the university. Employees seem to find change a necessity to the growth of the university. For the Emiratisation Project, interviewees seem to welcome the change of the demographics of the workforce, as with Emiratisation more Emiratis would be employed and involved in all aspects of the university from administration jobs such as HR and finance, to academic jobs such as faculty positions. This change would result in less diversity in the workplace, which is now very high. Employees from all and Asian employees are all part of the workforce. Even though all interviewees

agree on the importance of change, each has expressed their own reasons for their support. Among the reasons for backing up this type of change is 1. Creation of stability in the workforce through decreased turnover 2. Having more success in attracting students and increasing funds through better communication and understanding of culture 3. Aligning the University's goals with the UAE's vision for the advancement of the higher education sector and prosperity of the UAE.

Likewise with the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project the interviewees were in support of changes that would occur as a result of the project. They too defer in the reasons of such support, which include: 1. Necessity of change for the development and growth of the University, 2. Importance of change for the UAE who is investing more and more in research, 3. Taking advantage of the increased demand for graduate programs and 4. Having more control and input over research conducted about the country, as well as increasing the number of academic papers published from the UAE in general but more specifically from the University.

Through interviews conducted, it is clear that change in the higher education sector in the UAE is important for the prosperity of the country. The UAE have been advancing in all aspects, and education is one sector that the country have been focusing on for the last few years through funding of new University's which have increased in number. According to the latest survey from the UAE National Bureau of Statistics, the number of educational institutes have reached 81 in the year 2013, 9 of the them are public and the remaining 72 are private. This shows the increased demand for higher education, as people are going back to University in an effort to improve their chances of career advancement.

6.2 Challenges in implementing change

Change is inevitable in any workplace, and is often quick and dramatic that rarely do employees have time to adjust and mentally prepare. Fear of the unknown and the unfamiliarity of change bring about challenges that can hurdle the process and sometimes even cause the failure of projects and/or initiatives. Three main areas were identified in the literature review when it comes to challenges of change: 1.

Employee Resistance, 2. Leadership and 3. Resource Management. Those three themes are used to categorize the data collected.

6.2.1 Employee Resistance. For the Emiratisation project, employee resistant was of concern but have been showing up in different forms. When members of the team were asked directly about employee resistance many answered “No”, but quickly followed their answer with statements that proves otherwise. For instance one answer to the question: *“So you feel that this has created resistance to Emiratisation?”* was *“No, but it makes the expats feel that they have little power in the decision making process, so they are less motivated”* (Interview 5, Emiratisation). Another said: *“No, but some have expressed fear from such step.”* (Interview 6, Emiratisation). Others have shown that they have witnessed resistance of change throughout the project, each with their own opinions behind this resistance. For example, *“some have been seen to try to hurdle the advancement of local staff and faculty”* (Interview 7, Emiratisation), and another statement *“some animosity towards locals have been occurring in recent times”*.

The main reason behind employee resistance can be attributed to the fear of instability and injustice in promotions and career development. Employees of the university seem to have fear over their future in the University, as much attention have been put on developing and employing people of UAE nationality. This step have been causing fear and unease as many feel that they would be terminated if a replacement has been found, or a UAE colleague of the same level would have better chance of career advancement. Resistance can also stem from unexpected sources as one have mentioned some of the people that are benefiting most from the project, the locals, have felt that employing more locals would mean that there would be more competition when it comes to promotions.

For the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project, employee resistance has also been a challenge, even though the reasons for the resistance are not the same. Higher workload and expectations are causing tension and pressure on employees of the university, as new responsibilities were delegated to individuals such as higher teaching load. Time pressures are also causing tension

as one states *“It is challenging to run such a huge team and get things done as scheduled. If one fails to do the task required, it affects the subsequent task and parallel task. So many become very tense and stressed”* (Interview 4, EGPRC), and another confirms *“Keeping everyone on schedule and asking people to put extra time and effort has caused some conflict”* (Interview 8, EGPRC).

6.2.2 Leadership. For the Emiratisation project, leadership seems to have the support of the university employees, as all our interviewees have stated their support of change. However, some concerns have been shared by members about the execution of the project. This shows that even when individuals expect some significant negative outcomes, individuals are still supportive of change as with change people expect that the positive outcome would outweigh the negative. Even though people fear change they still do seek it as change brings about greater chance of development and advancement. The concerns that were disclosed include in order of significance: 1. Creation of Inequality and demotivation, 2. Changing the structure: less flat to more hierarchical and 3. Lack of vision. Inequality is the most prominent of concerns as many feel that this would affect the overall success of the university in general, and the change in particular. The leadership have yet to control the feeling of inequality that have been created through their focus on a certain demographic of their employees. The focus has shifted from the start of the project, from developing and involving all employees, to the national demographic. Even if a deserving Emirati is promoted or employed, people would suspect that this is due to new vision rather than the capabilities of the Emirati. Leadership should put more emphasis in creating nondiscriminatory processes to eliminate the feeling of injustice. Transparency is worth considering in daily dealings in every aspect of the workplace. Many feel less influential in the decision-making process, as well as discrimination in the recruitment and promotion. The feeling of unease and insecurity has been a problem in the university causing high turnover for a while in the university. For example, an assistant professor who have been working the university for the two years stated:

“Emiratisation has increased turnover especially ambitious employees that are looking for development and progress in the university. For instance, I know someone in the ICT department who recently moved to another job because after earning his MBA felt that there is a ‘ceiling’ in the jobs here in the university and will not be able to beat local counterparts to management positions”. (Interview 1, Emiratisation)

Equally, many expressed their satisfaction with how the leadership is dealing with changes that have been occurring. The leadership have been successful in providing resources, as well as allowing a lot of freedom, autonomy and flexibility. *“For instant attendance in corporation are set”* meaning that employee have to abide to certain working hours, usually 8 working hours from 7am-9am to 3pm-5pm, *“and people are monitored and evaluated for that. Whereas, the special nature of the job brings people to work early and force them to stay late, and giving them flexibility has not caused us any problems with most people. Some people do abuse the system, but it usually is clear from their work and affects their evaluation”* (Interview 8, Emiratisation). Leadership has realized that controlling is not appropriate in this sector, academics have to be given enough space to innovate and work without constraints in order to perform well. This may have been one of the reasons people are drawn to this sector.

Leadership has inherited the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project from the previous management. The change of leadership during the project is a significant happening as this on its own is a challenge, however the leadership are supportive of this ongoing project: *“Even though they have inherited this project from the previous management, they seem to put in every resource and all their effort on making the project a major success”* (Interview 3, Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers). Like the Emiratisation project, there are some concerns about how the leadership have executed the project, the more significant one is the decision making process followed by the way management relationship with employees. University leadership and project managers are both in charge of the project; they are working together to execute the plan but are also affected by external bodies such as the board and government commissions.

Decision making processes is currently at a slow pace, which is hurdling the execution, and causing pressure especially with the leadership insistence on timely delivery. The leadership is expecting to see results and change quickly but not providing adequate time for proper execution. For instance, expecting positive outcomes within the allocated time frame when a decision, such as resource allocation or changing a policy, needs to go through a number of channels is sometimes unattainable.

In addition, dealings with employees need improvement, there seems to be a lack of communication between leadership and their employees. This lack of communication is evident through the concerns that the employees have raised such as lack of human resources that is required to complete the project at the desired time, as well as leniency and lack of adamancy in decision making. Leniency and lack of adamancy include not setting strict standards of desired work, and not holding people accountable of their work. Employees who are not performing at the desired levels need to be informed. In addition, measures need to be taken to improve their performance such setting clear and achievable targets for each employee, and those targets need be revisited periodically. Employees seem to prefer leaders that are decisive: *“With leadership, I think the leadership is a bit hesitant to make decision at the quick pace that is required in the University”* (Interview 1, EGPRC), and firm: *“The leadership in charge are doing a good job and seem to have the experience in the matter, however I think they need to be stricter with the team and push them harder in order for the whole team to work at a quicker pace”* when running a project (Interview 2, EGPRC).

6.2.3 Resource Management. For the Emiratization project most agreed that resource availability was of no problem in the University as funds were available and within access of employees. Statements such as *“Currently, the institute has no problem with resources as they are readily available”* (Interview 1, Emiratization), *“the university has appropriate level of funding and support from management and sponsors”* (interview 4, Emiratization), *“stakeholders have been generous in arming the institute with everything they need for advancement of research and teaching”*

(Interview 7, Emiratisation) and *"We are blessed to have ample resources"* are proof that the university has no issues with lack of resources. In addition to that, many agree that the university is successful in its management of resources when it comes to efficiency and effectiveness. Nevertheless, the university should continue in improving processes related to management of resources as there should not be end to the refinement of practices adopted by the university: *"we are continuously trying to amend our process to become more efficient. We are still learning and we still make mistakes, but we are doing our best to try to utilize our resources both monetary and non-monetary effectively"* (interview 9, Emiratisation). However, one of the main challenges of this project was based on resources, particularly the human resources. The project included developing locals that the University have within the university, as well as finding people with relevant experience in the higher education sectors. The University need of employees have increased, and many positions need to be filled, so developing local talent will not be enough, it is necessary to find local talents that would be able to run the University. The University has not realized how difficult it would be to find Emirati employees with experience in the higher education sector; many that they have employed were from other sectors with not much relevant experience. *"Challenges that we have include finding the right employees for the university due to the lack of experience people have in academia. Many people that we interview have no background and usually have not thought of working in the education sector. We have been trying to get locals to consider being more open to new sectors"* (Interview 9, Emiratisation). Poor planning and ineffective recruitment process could be blamed for such challenge, as relevant experience should have been a priority when employing Emiratis. Over looking such important aspect of employment in University illustrates the lack of knowledge or proper understanding of the goals of the project. The University has for a long time depended on non-locals, and the decision of stopping employment of non-locals for a certain period of time has had its negative impacts. Those consequences include a hit on the University's reputation in the non-local community as some were in the recruitment process but were suddenly informed of the decision of not going through with their employment. Another issue was the use of new recruitment body, which had its own problems such as slow processing. The

body's slow processing can be attributed to their lack of familiarity of the higher education sector. Many times the recruitment body has sent candidates that are a mismatch to the university due to their lack of knowledge and understanding of the sector. However, the University is also responsible to give awareness and inform the recruitment body of their needs and requirements and not completely depend on them to learn about the sector. This is particularly concerning in the higher education sector because of the rigid scheduling of terms and semesters, which means that certain employees are needed at certain times. For instance, if a course is offered for the fall semester and the faculty responsible is not employed by that time, it would affect the students who have been enrolled. *"Money and time were lost as committees have chosen candidates and somewhere in the negotiation phase and all that was put in a halt. People in academia usually start at the beginning of a given semester, as they leave one job at certain time, end of a semester, and start in the next job at the beginning of the semester. There are time limits when employing people in academia"* (Interview 2, Emiratisation). Time is a significant constraint in the higher education that needs to be considered with any decision or project, as extensions are often very difficult especially without the availability of an alternative.

For the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project, concerns were very similar. According to the data collected, the monetary resources have been made available to the University and the project is properly funded. However, the problem lies with providing the needed human resources of staff, faculty and administrative personnel. The difficulties have been expressed as 1) lengthy and complicated process, 2) higher workload on the current employees, 3) time restrictions imposed by the university yearly schedule, but most importantly 4) struggle of finding candidates with proper experience in the higher education sector.

Firstly, the recruitment process is rather time consuming but according to one individual *"You can't blame anyone really because there are a lot of unknowns in the process."* (Interview 6, EGPRC), *"Getting people with the right qualification is not easy. Most of our potential employees, come from abroad, so we are responsible of getting them here, interviewing them, evaluating them and then convincing them to*

come. *This is a rather long process*” (Interview 6, EGPRC). Another states: *“We do have shortage in staff and faculty, and the problem is not that the university does not want to employ more people, it is the process of recruitment... This is demotivated our faculty and delaying research”* (Interview 5, EGPRC) revealing that the university’s recruitment process is inadequate with the pace of change.

Secondly, with change come new ideas and processes, which result in higher workload on the current employees. Additional time and efforts need to be put in order to learn those new processes, as an interviewee states: *“some like to work in a stable environment, so asking them to do more and adding to their list of responsibilities for most a burden. Also, change means learning new things, it sometimes means changing the way you work and putting you outside your comfort zone”* (Interview 4, EGPRC). Another verifies the stress that change puts on employees: *“Some people have been asking for extension of time, less work load, and lower expectations. At a start of any project, expectations are very high but once the project starts and individuals start to understand the requirements to reach the goals discussed, here is when pressure and stress start to take its toll on people”* (Interview 8, EGPRC).

Thirdly, another difficulty faced by the university while executing the project is the time restriction imposed by the university yearly schedule. Universities offer courses throughout the year in three semesters, those semesters start and end at the same date every year. This is taken into considerations with any project in the higher education sector. With this project, the university needed some facilities to be ready at a certain time and staff to be recruited before the start of the semester, which means a high degree of promptness and efficiency is needed: *“A university always starts its programs at a specific time of the year, there are the September intake and the January intake for graduate programs. If the program is not ready by September, the University loses a whole semester and need to wait to the start of the next one to operate”* (Interview 1, EGPRC).

Fourthly, the difficulty of potential employees with proper expertise in the UAE have been an issue, as an interviewee says *“More people with experience in academia and*

higher education management are needed to fill the different roles of the projects” (Interview 9, EGPRC) and another states *“This has not been easy as we are in need of more experienced employees to complete the needed tasks... We have a lot of opportunities and available positions that are being slowly filled, because it is not easy finding people with the right credentials”* (Interview 10, EGPRC). This can be attributed to the lack of knowledge and understanding of the higher education sector. Without the proper comprehension about the needs and requirements of the sector, it would be challenging to determine the right candidates for the University. Employing unsuitable would create disharmony and conflict that would otherwise be avoidable.

Through our qualitative method we have seen that the three areas: 1. Employee Resistance, 2. Leadership and 3. Resource Management, were of concern in the two projects conducted in the University, however, the degrees of importance vary from one project to another. For instance, for the Emiratisation project employee resistance was a more significant issue to the individuals involved as the project was focused on the human resource aspect. Whereas, leadership was of more importance in the EGPRC project because of the change of leadership during the execution of the project as well as the complexity of the project that involves employees from all levels of the university. In addition other areas of challenge have been identified.

6.3 Cost of change

Change does not come without a cost, however cost varies depending on the change made. Cost can be categorized into two different categories, as cost can be financial or non-financial. Not all costs can be expressed in numbers and cash, which might be one of reasons many fail to evaluate change properly having dire consequences on organizations. For the Emiratisation project financially it is an opportunity to save money as candidates were referred by a non-profit government organization, which meant decreased need of using headhunters and advertisements, which are costly to any university in the higher education sector. Nevertheless, the university will have complete freedom to employ referred staff and will not be obligated to employ any

of them. The government entity is there to help in finding the desired level of employees and not to force the university to employ any undesired employee. This has been an effective means of saving money, which shows a cost was low in this aspect. Nevertheless, many available positions were in the process of being filled, but as a result of the recruitments were stopped and the team had to start their search from the beginning. The cost of advertisements and other means of recruitment were lost due to the necessary changed for Emiratisation. Having said that, the non-financial cost was more prominent, as decreased diversity and the perception of inequality has been an outcome to the project. Both the decreased diversity and the perception of inequality has come as a result of the focus on employing nationals in all available positions. Reputation has also been discussed by employees who feel that although Emiratisation has been a project of development and progression, it has resulted in some feeling of insecurity in the non-national community. A person from the non-national community who is considering joining the University would have second thoughts about his future and career. Furthermore, at the past the HR were less involved in the employment of individuals, as the HR were usually involved in finalizing employment rather than from the beginning stages of recruitment. Decreased autonomy and more centralized decision making has been undesired outcome for some: *“The HR are now more involved, whereas before the department had complete freedom of who to employ, the HR were only involved in later stages, the technical stuff like benefits, packages and salary negotiations”* (interview 3, Emiratisation). It can be concluded that for Emiratisation as one interviewee stated *“Costs of Emiratisation is not financial, it is mainly non-financial. Some tension and feeling of unrest have been created. But apart from that ... Emiratisation has been successful and is exceeding the expectation of leadership and everyone else involved”* (Interview 10, Emiratisation). One non-financial cost has been observed by a Project Manager that he describes as *“unhealthy animosity”*, which causes disharmony between team members making them more distant and less likely to perform at their best of their abilities (Interview 7, Emiratisation). Tension among employees can lower performance levels by creating an atmosphere of resentment rather than collaboration to reach desired goals.

Unlike the Emiratisation project, Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project the cost is mainly financial. This is due to the size of the project and the recruitment of the successful completion of such plan. However, the project is thought to be beneficial in the long term for the country as students with expertise in required fields would graduate every year to cover the need of the local organizations, as well as research that would benefit the UAE. As interviewees stated: *“there are financial cost associated with any change and any project done in the organization, but I think this cost will be well worth when the project is finally completed”* (Interview 3, EGPRC), *“We have our unique issues in the country that we need to investigate so our work is very much necessary”*, (Interview 1, EGPRC) and *“The cost is rather high but well-worth... The benefits will be further apparent with time.”* (Interview 5, EGPRC). What many considered a negative aspect of the project is the time that the project required from members of the university, *“Time is the main cost in my opinion. Time is money”* (Interview 6, EGPRC). Many had other responsibility so dividing and managing the time to complete all their responsibilities and assignments was a challenge.

6.4 Trust

From the Emiratisation interviews, 90 percent stated that trust levels are high. However, occasionally with conflict and tension the level of trust decreases, *“The trust levels seems to be high with some rare exceptions which is expected in any project and between team members”* (Interview 1, Emiratisation). Furthermore, *“Trust levels are high between some individuals, and low between others which is normal in any organization. Some people work well together and other groups are a mismatch”* (Interview 5, Emiratisation) as one individual put it. Mistrust between staff and management are usually of more concern, as communication is a bit more difficult and closed. Staff usually spend more time together and are more likely to discuss issues and be more vocal about their concerns. Whereas, staff and management meet certain number of times to discuss work in a more formal atmosphere. The informal atmosphere that is eventually created between staff of

the same level allows more open communication. Even lack of trust can be more evident between staff as eventually it can be observed through the quality of work that is produced, as well as the interactions between the staff. For instance, two individuals that mistrust each other will not be able to collaborate to produce the best quality of work, as one will not trust the other individual's efforts. Conflict will eventually surface and productivity will ultimately be affected.

Another recognized that *"In general, trust between the different employees is good. But, the institute has faced some issues regarding miscommunication and misalignment of goals. Conflict cannot be completely avoided because of the differences in opinions and lack of trust"* (Interview 10, Emiratisation). The source of mistrust between employees is usually from the work history and experiences that they had together in the past. Bad experiences such as low work ethic and unwillingness to be a team player are two of many issues that can create tension in the workplace. Even with high trust levels it seems that there should be always effort put into maintaining it *"with proper leadership and management of project"* (Interview 6, Emiratisation) for instance.

Likewise, trust seems high with the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project according to the statement of 70 percent of the interviewees. The decrease in percentage in comparison to the Emiratisation could be due to the increased complexity of Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project. Like the Emiratisation project, *"Trust seems to be hit with delays and setbacks, but improves with accomplishments and realization of goals"* (Interview 1, EGPRC). When delays and setbacks occur, individuals' commitment and dedication levels are more evident, which means that individual who is not performing at the level s/he needs to can be identified. The trust of others of an individual who is not committed and whose lack of devotion affected the productivity of the team, will ultimately lower. Whereas, with accomplishments individuals' who have been mistrusted in the past can improve their reputation and become more trusted as their dedication and potential would be showcased. The level of trust of this individual will become higher as his work has improved to realize

goals that have been set. This is why with achievements and triumphs peoples' relationships improve and with continuation of this dedication the mistrust will eventually be replaced with a more trusting relationship.

Also, the following statement closely resembles one said about the Emiratisation project *"I am sure that some individuals will not be a match for the group, so we need to find out any potential mismatch quickly before they affect the progress of the project"* (Interview 4, EGPRC). Individuals that are a mismatch are ones that create a negative atmosphere and are toxic to the work environment. Some of such individuals characteristics might be 1. Procrastination and unreliability as in unable to complete work in timely manner, 2. Selfishness as in taking credit for the team's good work, 3. Ineffective communication as in unable to constructively communicate and actively listen, 4. Lacks commitment and cooperation as in unwilling to put in the effort to work with others to complete work, and reach set goals and vision. There are many more characteristics that makes an individuals a mismatch; it imperative for leaders and managers to recognize those characteristics. Being able to deal with those individuals quickly and effectively is crucial for the well being of the team. Toxicity need to be eliminated in order to focus on work rather than destructive conflict and issues.

Some have also feel that the nature of the higher education sector makes people a somewhat trusting, as stated *"In academia there is less of a hierarchy so people seem to trust and work together well"* (Interview 10, EGPRC), whilst others feel that the nature of work in academia makes individuals more likely to resist change that effects their environment, *"People are a bit more individualistic in the higher education sector. I am not saying that they can't work in a group, but the nature of their work makes them used to flexibility"* (interview 5, EGPRC).

6.5 Creating a positive environment for successful change

The literature review showed four main areas of improvement for the execution of successful project and accomplishment of positive change. The four areas are: 1. Communication and Language, 2. Employee Involvement, 3. Spirituality and Justice

and 4.Orientation and Training. The research have showed that some of those areas are of great importance in the higher education sector, whereas others are not as applicable in the UAE. It also suggests more areas that are worth considering when working on a project

6.5.1 Communication and Language. Communication and language shows to be very important in both of the investigated projects. The clarity of communication seems to be key to successful change. Data collected shows that the flat structure in the university is beneficial as it eases the communication process. Access to the highest ranking individuals in the University is open to all allowing open and effective communication. As one individual states *“People are not afraid to speak out in person or by email as senior management are easy to access. Many times people have expressed concerned and it actually made a difference. If you compare the University just five years ago to how it is today, you would see that it has changed and improved dramatically”* (Interview 1, EGPRC). Communication allows the expression of opinions and thoughts putting issues to bay before problems escalate to create negative conflict and tension. *“From my experience the longer the issue is ignored the worse the effect it would have on the project and on the organization. We need to encourage our employees to speak out their minds and we need to listen and solve problems”* (Interview 7, EGPRC). With the Emiratisation project, importance of communication was more evident, as 70 percent of the interviewees discussed significance of open communication. The following statements have been made: *“Communication is vital”* (Interview 1, Emiratisation), *“they were transparent about their plan”* (Interview 2, Emiratisation), *“better communication”* (Interview 3, Emiratisation), *“communication as you know is key in any sector not only academia”* (Interview 4, Emiratisation), *“Being open and honest ... Leaving the conversation to happen informally about the reasons behind such project only allows rumors to fester and wrong information to be circulated”* (Interview 7, Emiratisation), *“communicating to the employees the reasons behind it”* (Interview 8, Emiratisation), and *“Communication channels need to be always open in order for us to be aware of the affect the project is having on the workplace”* (Interview 9, Emiratisation).

6.5.2 Employee Involvement. Employee involvement is significant to the project success according to researchers (Hüsig & Mann, 2010). Findings support the literature as in both projects, it has been realized that without proper involvement of employees the project will not be able to progress in an efficient manner: *“employee involvement is crucial for any change to be successful. Some of the young faculty in the university are fully committed and they have the required skills and energy to make the University succeed, involve them”* (interview 2, Emiratisation). Who to involve is also important: *“The leadership are involving some individuals but others are not involved... there are some individuals in the department for instance that have the wrong mentality when it comes to involving people... For instance, in our weekly meeting the department head decided to include all faculty and staff as he thinks that everyone need to know what is going on in the department. Some individuals have been against this as they have said that ‘staff do not contribute to meetings and are of no use attending with faculty’”* (Interview 3, Emiratisation). Involvement is not only concerned with decision-making, it starts with transparency including up dating employees with progress that has been made and openness to talk about current issues and new gained knowledge. *“People need to be involved so that they don’t feel left behind”* according to one interviewee (Interview 5, Emiratisation) and *“People do not like to be left behind or in the dark. I have seen hard working individuals demotivated because they feel out of the loop and unjustly treated”* (Interview 6, EGPRC). The split between people of different levels and responsibilities such in the University’s case between admins and academics would only bring about more resentment. Understanding that small gestures and actions of consideration of people of all levels and backgrounds is necessary especially in the manager-employee relationship. So employee involvement is beneficial as it keeps members satisfied and informed, as well as improve their productivity and commitment to the organization. Furthermore, academic institutes need to focus on involvement not only through providing data and updates of project but also through allowing their employees to have a role in the decision making process: *“Involving people in the decision is important too as their opinions and suggestions might be of value to the institute”* (Interview 10, Emiratisation). Involvement in the Emiratisation project included allowing employees of all backgrounds to have a hand

in choosing the national force that would join the University. Having recruitment committees that include people from different levels and backgrounds would insure that the right staff and faculty are chosen. National staff employed need to have the right skills to join an entity of the higher education sector as the great rate of diversity requires people that are experienced and tolerant of range of nationalities.

6.5.3 Spirituality and Justice. Justice in the workplace is also an area of interest; actually many of the participants have affirmed its importance whilst working on a project and in time of change, as well as every aspect of the workplace. Justice in career advancement, promotion, job security, training opportunities and employment were among the conversations with the participants. One of the participants immaculately stated: *“Giving equal chances for all employees to have a say and be involved in the process. Secondly, give all employees the same rights like training, conferences and other opportunities. Actually, the university has recently put clear guidelines about this, application of those is necessary. Decreasing exceptions is absolutely necessary, because once you start making exceptions you start creating the feeling of favoritism. Rules need to apply on everyone, leniency is not always good”* (Interview 6, Emiratisation). *Avoiding injustice is essential to the workplace as “If people are faced with injustice, they usually become negative and less effective at work because they think that if work is not being just with me why should I commit and do my best. People become less efficient and less caring about the workplace’s best interest, and only do what will bring them benefit”* (Interview 9, Emiratisation). An example of new systems adopted by the University was using rotational system for administrative positions. This means that each administrative such as dean, provost would serve for a particular set period of time and can only renewed for one extra term depending on his/her performance. This system is applied on both national and non-nationals who would be chosen based on solely merits rather than nationality.

However, what the research have illustrated is that spirituality has little influence on projects and change. People seem to separate those two aspects, and the reason might be the diversity in the UAE population which forces people to separate work

from religion. *“When it comes to spirituality, the respect of culture and religion is usually not a problem in university. Our employees are educated and open-minded which helps them in become accepting of all religions and backgrounds, so this is not an issue at all”* (Interview 9, Emiratisation). Especially in the higher education sector where the workplace is usually a mixture of various nationalities that are united by an interest in a specific field of work and research. These communalities between employees in academia seem to create a strong bond between individuals regardless of background. Spirituality was not discussed thoroughly as interviewees seem to disregard such issue due to its lack of importance. Spiritual believes seem not to be of concern in the sector. From observation of employees of the various departments, it is clear that spirituality was not contemplated when employing different members of the team as people seem to be from a spectrum of backgrounds.

6.5.4 Training and Orientation. Training and Orientation is important to keep employees up to date according to the data collected. However, training needs to be specific and purposeful in order to be beneficial. Educating administration and staff of the specific need of academia is important, and of utmost importance especially as many move to the higher education from a completely different sector. Training of faculty especially whom are in charge of departments and groups is also important as they usually come with limited experience of management. Management is a skill that can be taught as well as learnt through experience, which is necessary for any project especially with projects that bring about great changes.

6.5.5 New Findings. The research has also brought about other areas of interest, which is thought to improve project outcomes and make change a more successful and smooth process. Those areas include creating the right structure, mission, vision and goals, and making sure that projects are in line with the universities agenda. Projects that fail to cover the needs of the academic institute are usually unsuccessful at bringing about positive change to the workplace. Those can have very negative effects as projects and change come with a cost, and thus project proposals need to be closely investigated before starting the implementation phase. The lack of hierarchy and the tendency for university to have a flat structure have

been of concern in the UAE as people are wanting quick advancement of career similar to other sectors, that have many more levels and opportunities of promotions. Another area of interest that the data shows is human resources aspect of the academic institution, as recruitment, staffing, promotions and other HR specialties have been discussed. Especial attention from participants have been on recruitment and staffing that is usually a difficult aspect in the higher education sector in the UAE due to the lack of candidates with experience from the education sector. The University usually hires individuals from other sectors or resort in looking abroad for candidates of relevant experience.

6.5.6 Trust and Change Projects. In time of change, trust should always be a concern to people in charge of executing change projects. The paper has found that employee trust of management is vital for the success of change projects. Results have shown that the higher education sector, especially in a University, need trust between academics, support staff and administration to accomplish change. Members of the Emiratisation and the EGPRC projects team have illustrated through the data collected that trust creates a more effective project team. When employees trust management, those individuals are less resistant to change, more supportive of leadership and resource management is more efficient. All those factor help to reach desired goals as performance is elevated when trust is high. In addition, level of trust is high when change projects encompass good communication, high employee involvement where motivation is high and innovation is encouraged, justice and career advancement opportunities. A positive correlation between level of trust and level of performance can be concluded through the qualitative data. For instance, the Emiratisation project have decreased the level of trust for a time period impacting performance, as some individuals were feeling some injustice and felt that their careers were in jeopardy. Yet with improved processes, the level of trust increased shifting the focus to the change projects' success and thus performance has improved.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research conducted, it is important to overcome challenges and create the right environment to execute projects in order to have high levels of trust in time of change. With low levels of trust, implementing change would be difficult as the tension and conflict that accompanies mistrust would not allow smooth execution of projects. Challenges that effect trust levels, such as employee resistance, poor leadership and poor resource management, need to be detected early or better yet avoided through the following steps:

1. **Choosing the right project.** Making sure change project is inline with mission, vision, goals and academic institute's agenda is essential for the success of a change project. The change project cannot be named successful without it contributing to the institute's overall aims and objectives. Otherwise, the project would be using up resources and costing the institute without having any positive consequences.
2. **Creating strong leadership and management.** Change projects cannot be successful without having the right people in control. The research has shown that adamancy in decision-making and lack of leniency with toxic individuals are some of the desired traits in a leader. People seem to trust and support strong leadership that encompasses knowledge, and understands the vision of the institute and the work it takes to make it a reality.
3. **Improving internal processes.** Institutes should regularly improve processes and practices used in the workplace in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the methods utilized. For instance, recruitment methods should always develop in a way, which would allow choosing the right candidates for the workplace. Another example would be having decision-making protocols, which are proactive and effective but not complicated and time-consuming. Decisions need to be made quickly but wisely through putting trust in the institutes experienced managers and leaders. Slowing down processes hurdles advancement and change projects.

4. **Involving employees.** This includes making employees informed about the change project and involved in the decision-making process. Trust levels increase as more information is shared and individual's views are taken into consideration.
5. **Promoting communication, transparency and openness.** In order for trust to exist, there need to be transparency in the workplace. Communication between employees of all levels and divisions would be smoother, since transparency allows clarity and openness. Clarity in sharing information, and being open to listen and express opinions without the fear of reprehension allows people to share any concerns and issues, which otherwise would not be discussed. Certain issues that are left unresolved intensify with time and create problems that otherwise are avoidable.
6. **Advocating creativity, autonomy and motivation.** Especially in the higher education sector, people need room to create and work without being restricted by too many rules and constraints. Giving individuals the right tools and resources is also important, as it would be a means for creativity and a source of motivation.
7. **Upholding justice.** Sense of fairness is essential to keep levels of trust high. Educational institutes that have injustice fail in many aspects such as maintaining their workforce and attaining desired goals and visions. Justice in promotion, career development and training opportunities are among the many aspects that make a workplace attractive to employees. People are less likely to leave and more likely to be drawn to institutes that show appreciation of their employees' work. Being fair to employees by promoting and/or providing opportunities based on merits alone is best to maintain the good members of the institute.
8. **Providing training opportunities.** Institutes need to have an interest in developing their own employees. This is an investment that can bring about improvement in trust levels and success to change projects. Taking care of employees is a motivating factor for them to give back to the institute. Putting trust in them to use knowledge they gain from specific and

purposeful training could develop skills they have, as well as learn new ones increasing their productivity.

8 CONCLUSIONS

Research has found that change is a regular occurrence in all sectors including the higher education sector, through projects and other tasks and developments. In the University, the main driver of change is the need to develop due to the growing number of competitors in the country. Projects and change comes with a cost, both financial and non-financial. The results were in agreement with the framework, which illustrates that the cost of unsuccessful change is high as it brings about irreversible negativity through exhausted personnel and wasted funds. Whereas, cost of successful change is covered through the fruitful outcomes that come with a productive project.

Based on the two case studies investigated, the study concludes that even though trust is an important factor in projects and during the time of change, thus trust on its own cannot guarantee success. Nevertheless, trust can eventually lead to the failure of a project. The trust in the University is shown to be high between employees of all levels due to the organizational structure and nature of work in the higher education sector. However, the high levels of trust have not eliminated conflict between members of the project team and problems with the execution of the projects. Through our study we have found that even with high level of trust there were still cases of employee resistance fueled by issues such as poor leadership and poor resource management.

Trust between different members is not enough to successfully execute a project, however with the creation of a positive environment the chances are much higher. The results of the study were in agreement of the literature in this aspect, as communication, justice and training were amongst the recommendations of the participants. Nevertheless, the University has shown that there are additional areas which would improve trust in the work place worth investigating and two of the most significant are: 1. Creating, as well as constantly evaluating and developing the organizational structure, mission, vision and goals of the academic institute, in addition to substantiating that project are in line with those goals, and 2. Attending

to the HR needs of the organization in general, and of each project in particular:
recruitment, staffing, promotions and other HR related matters.

9 LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

There is a lack of data and studies about the UAE as a country. The higher education sector in the country would greatly benefit from research, which would help in the development of this important sector. Future research can look at different institutes, instead of only focusing on one. The reason the paper focused on one educational institute was to get more in depth information and understanding of the cases chosen. However, comparing different academic organizations can assist in generalizing information and recommendations for the UAE higher education sector. Documenting and analyzing case studies and experiences can be beneficial to understanding trust in time of change as well as other issues such as employee resistance, leadership and resource management. Using a different approach to investigate trust and change is another possibility, such as quantitative approach, which could help in further investigating findings of this paper. Quantitative data gathering would allow the inclusion of a larger number of participants from different institutes. This too can be used to generalize findings. Furthermore, correlations can be investigated such as between trust and productivity.

Future research could also compare trust and change in the higher education sector to other sectors. This might allow the adoption of techniques used in other sectors to be applied in the higher education sector. Also, comparing institutes and universities of the UAE to others from the region and even universities all over the world can also be very informative. Similarities and differences can be studied, and again practices from foreign universities can be recommended and adopted. Areas of interest covered by this paper can also be further investigated such as communication, employee involvement, spirituality, justice, and training in the higher education sector of the UAE.

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11 APPENDIX

Transcript of the Qualitative Research

Case Study 1: Emiratisation

Interview 1

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Assistant Professor*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *3 years*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *2 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not

I believe it is a good step especially for general jobs such as secretarial, finance and other administrative position because locals understand the systems and norms of the country. This would allow more stability, as well as better customer service as they understand the culture of the country. Also, language can sometimes be barrier between expatriate staff and our students. So I believe having local employees would mean better communication with students who are our main targets.

This was necessary because of the realization that with, god forbid, any political instability many expats would leave their jobs and the country and will understandably be looking for more stable countries to work in. I have been in a course in the USA recently where Bahrain was mentioned. It was said how the political instability has caused many cancellation in conferences and events, as well as revision in the current school and university curriculums. Many people that were considering jobs in the education sector of Bahrain have been discouraged of doing so. Another example, a coworker of mine was offered vice chancellor position in his own country and he is not considering it due to instability in the economy and the fear that his country is vulnerable to the 'Arab Spring'. We have for so long depended on expats to run our universities as it was necessary due to the lack of people with the proper degrees and backgrounds, but we should slowly recruit local minds to fill position for the sake of stability in the university.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

Some of my expat coworkers feel that Emiratisation threatens their jobs and are concerned about stability in the institute. This is especially evident with bachelor degree and vocational jobs that are now more challenging with increased number of people obtaining such degrees. Many say that they are waiting to be terminated at any given time. The other issue is that even if those expats remain in their jobs their career development is 'frozen' as they will have less ability to progress in their careers. Unfortunately, Emiratisation has increased turnover especially ambitious employees that are looking for development and progress in the university. For instance, I know someone in the ICT department who recently moved to another job because

after earning his MBA felt that there is a 'ceiling' in the jobs here in the university and will not be able to beat local counterparts to management positions. There is now an obvious preference to employ and promote locals even if they are of less caliber because there is a belief that locals can be trained to improve their skills and are more loyal to their jobs. Another challenge include the perception by some locals that he or she cannot be terminated so the employee does the minimum requirement and there is no motivation to perform better. Some Emiratis do the bare minimum as their jobs are secured, but expatriates are always trying to perform better as they work to keep their jobs. The problem is those few individuals are creating tension, as the feeling of inequality between local and non-locals stem from such actions. The leadership are currently coming across like they prefer locals, because they listen to and engage with important decisions more than the others in the university. So before it was the non-locals that made all the decision and now it is the locals that take part in the process. It doesn't have to be either locals or non-locals, everyone should be equally involved and feel heard in order to create a 'harmonious' working environment. What about resource management? Currently, the institute has no problem with resources as they are readily available and we have a good team managing those resources. So I personally do not see any problem with resource management in this project.

3. What are the main costs of Emiratisation?

Non-financial, as I mentioned before: Feeling of instability for expats, lack of motivation of some locals to improve their performance and feeling of inequality. Financially, locals are more costly to employ with the current remuneration packages offered by universities. However, costs such as advertisements, head hunting agencies and travel expenses have decreased because 'Tawteen' provides us with applicants.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratisation project successful or to improve its success?

Communication is vital especially with expats that need to feel more secure with their current jobs. Decreasing their fears about job instability and halt of job progression is important to keep the current employees at their jobs in order for them to pass their knowledge and experience to future employees. It is undeniable that expats have 'richer backgrounds' as most worked in different parts of the world where they have seen some of the problems that we have in the university so are of great help. Most of our local staff and faculty are young and at the learning stage but eager to be involved in change and gain experience. So working hand in hand would be the desired solution for us as employees and for the university's overall success. So you feel that involving employees is important? Emiratisation is about employing Emiratis but everyone needs to be involved in the recruitment of those Emiratis. This is currently occurring as the top management are non-locals and the HR department is managed by locals. Also, the recruitment committees in each department include expats and locals so the decision of who to employ are made by people from different backgrounds. Do you feel there is a feeling of injustice? The most important issue that need to be dealt with this project is the feeling of injustice when it comes to promotions. This needs to be dealt with by the HR and other responsible of making such decisions. The academic department have no problems as there is a certain procedure for promotion in academia but I hear that administrative jobs are facing such problem.

5. How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?

Majority of the institute is involved in one way or another in this process. The trust levels seems to be high with some rare exceptions which is expected in any project and between team members.

6. Is there anything you would like to add?

No.

Interview 2

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. *Job Description Associate Professor*
- b. *How long have you been in academia? 5 years*
- c. *How long have you been working at your current institute/university? 4.5 years*

Interview Questions

1. *Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not*
Emiratization at both Administration and Academic level have been well welcomed. So you think it is a good idea? I think this happens in universities all over the world, if not formally informally. It is always easier and safer in terms of practicality as you know how to deal with people that have the same history and background. Even students feel more comfortable dealing with Emiratis, it's just more comfortable.
2. *What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project you and the institute are facing in current times?*
Lack of commitment from faculty/staff to the university. Employees are usually committed for a few years which often influence badly the outcome of any policy, project or future plans. This is a problem with all projects not only Emiratisation. Does that mean employees are resistant to change, to Emiratisation? No, like I said the idea was welcomed by all, actually most feel that it is better for Emiratis to be involved as they are more committed since they are wanting to improve education in their own country. What about the leadership and people running the project, have they been facing any challenges from your observations? The top management, even though non-local have been supporting the idea and work towards the success of the project. However, the difficulty lies in recruitment of the right people where I see them sometimes in disagreement about. One problem that occurred at the beginning of the project is that it was decided to stop all recruitments even the ones that were pending. Many felt this was not the right move as academic research and projects were in jeopardy. Money and time were lost as committees have chosen candidates and somewhere in the negotiation phase and all that was put in a halt. People in academia usually start at the beginning of a given semester, as they leave one job at certain time, end of a semester, and start in the next job at the beginning of the semester. There are time limits when employing people in academia. So what your saying is there were lost resources? Yes, definitely. Also, this gives a bad impression of the university especially for candidates that were in the recruitment process.
3. *What are the main costs of Emiratisation? Financially and non-financially*
Financially, the resources that were wasted as I mentioned before. And non-financially was a hit on the reputation of the university among candidates that were interested in working at the university. Word travels fast and people talk about their experience with a particular university and you don't want them to have a bad one.
4. *What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratisation project successful or to improve its success?*

For Emiratisation and other projects, you need more committed people. How do you think you can get people to be more committed? Involve them, employee involvement is crucial for any change to be successful. Some of the young faculty in the university are fully committed and they have the required skills and energy to make the

University succeed, involve them. Do you think communication is an issue in the project? No, because the management have been clear about the goals of the projects, and what they intend to do and how. An email was sent to all about the decision so they were transparent about their plan. That's good, does that mean there is no feeling of injustice? Well, I am sure that some feel threatened but as long as people's jobs are not in jeopardy I think people would be ok with it. Locals are minority especially in academia so recruiting more would only make the number more balanced. There is not enough Emiratis to fill all the required positions so expats will still need to be employed. This is just an effort to boost the numbers and focus on getting more Emiratis involved in the education provided in their own country. Do you think training would be beneficial in this case? I don't believe it is necessary in this case, open communications and continued transparency are key I believe. Being open to talk to your employees and listen to their feedback would make the process much easier.

5. How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?

I would say that trust is not a problem and high between employees. Academia due to its special nature is much more peaceful when it comes to conflict between employees. The work is usually individual, you don't compete as much with your colleagues like other sectors. You have a certain goal for yourself that you need to meet to advance in academia. Your work is then assessed and weighed by external bodies along with internal members. So the environment is a bit different and less tense, in my opinion. This reflects even in projects such as Emiratisation as people who are involved joined the team with less bitterness or animosity from past experiences. In other sectors the competition is higher and relationship are always put under test.

6. Is there anything you would like to add?

No.

Interview 3

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Professor*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *11 years*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *8 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not

The involvement of Emirati nationals is steadily increasing which is a very good sign for the university, so if your question is do I think Emiratisation is good, for sure. Why is that? Because the university is going through a transition in its goal to become one of the pioneers of undergraduate education in the UAE and GCC, so they need people that understand the region and can communicate effectively with people in the area. Locals can be the key for continuous success of the university. They have played a great role in past successes such as the successful international accreditation, launch of new graduate programs amongst others.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

With the steady growth of the university, such as new programs, increased number of students, etc., there is more need for new members in the university. Emiratisation is slowing the recruitment especially that they are involved with other entities outside the university who provide them with candidates. However, the process is now slowly picking up pace as many have now been employed, we for instance have a new Emirati Business Officer position in the department which was usually filled by non-locals. But having said that, as a department we met the candidates and have found one with great potential and amazing character and work ethic. However, this individual turned down the offer, at first we didn't realize that the reason behind losing such talent is that the HR department have communicated to her that there are not a lot of potential for job advancement in the university. Although, this is not accurate as any person who proves they are hard workers will be able to advance and progress with training and other tools. With continued miscommunication we will lose the good Emirati candidates and settle for less committed individuals. We need to encourage them to join and making them feel that there is no limit for advancement for hard working individuals. People responsible for Emiratisation need to be more effective in execution of the project, the university does not only need Emiratis, they need the best Emiratis. So you think the leadership needs some improvement? Certainly, there is some lack of overall vision, framework and planning. Does that mean there is also a problem with resource management? Strength and reliable resource management is the strength of any organization so I do believe that they need to engage more sophisticated and planning for the recruitment process. And do you think there is any resistance to change and specifically Emiratisation in the university? I don't feel employees are resistant to this change, most people are supportive and feel that it is in the best interest of the university.

3. What are the main costs of Emiratisation? Financially and non-financially

The main cost is I think departments have lost some autonomy in employing the needed people as it has become a more centralized process. The HR are now more involved, whereas before the department had complete freedom of who to employ, the HR were only involved in later stages, the technical stuff like benefits, packages and salary negotiations. What about financially? Well, I don't have that kind of information, I am sure the HR and finance department have this data.

4. *What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratization project successful or to improve its success?*

There should be better communication with potential candidates, we should be encouraging them to join and creating an environment for career advancement. What do you recommend that need to be done to improve communication? Some of the recruitment staff might benefit from training to improve communication and negotiation skills. However, training should be provided to faculty/staff showing commitment to the organization. You don't want to waste money on people who are not looking to stay for a substantial amount of time. Do you think the leadership are involving employees in the process? The leadership are involving some individuals but others are not involved, maybe because they don't think they can contribute to the project. Actually, there are some individuals in the department for instance that have the wrong mentality when it comes to involving people. What do you mean by that? For instance, in our weekly meeting the department head decided to include all faculty and staff as he thinks that everyone need to know what is going on in the department. Some individuals have been against this as they have said that 'staff do not contribute to meetings and are of no use attending with faculty'. The feeling of superiority and hierarchy are impeded in some people's minds, so they feel that people who are lower in the hierarchical ladder should not be involved. This is mostly traditional individuals who are from certain backgrounds where they feel that relationships need to be based on levels, instead of the more modern approach of collegiality. Some have said that Emiratization creates a sense of injustice, do you agree with that statement? I think that in any country, locals will always have more advantage than other candidates because they understand the culture and they usually know more about the organizations in their own country. So I think most people know that this happens in every country, formally or informally, so this should be expected. There is no injustice except if the university starts employing less able individuals or promote undeserving employees.

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

Thankfully, management are trusting of faculty and staff, and vice versa.

6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

No.

Interview 4

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Senior Finance Specialist*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *7 years in academia, 4 years in other sectors*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *7 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not

Well, I think the intention behind this project is very good, as I have understood that the university is trying to work with the government to improve the quality of the Emirati workforce. However, I think it is being done without proper planning which is creating some undesired outcomes. That means there are some challenges with this project. Which takes me to my next question

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

*The main challenge in my opinion is that the administration staff are mostly from the industry, and so have little experience in academia. Procedures that are appropriate in industry might not be appropriate for an academic institution with focus on research. The people in charge are trying to run the university like a company not like a university, which is not effective. Universities tend to have a unique set of procedures and a certain way in which it is run. Can you give me an example of that? So as we are talking about Emiratisation, I see the university trying to create as many levels as a company has so that people are more inclined to join the academia. What I mean by that they are trying to create an organization ladder with more and more steps in which one can be promoted to. Even though this might seem a good idea as people will feel that they are progressing in their career, it is not the right way. What I mean is that the leadership with good intention are trying to make it more systematic so that Emirati workforce feel that they are progressing in their career as they want to keep Emiratis in the university. I think there is a better way in doing so which does not include changing the system of academia and its unique rules. So I sense that there is some room of improvement in leadership style and techniques for this project? *Certainly.* Do you feel that there is employee resistance to change which is driving the management to take such route? *I don't think people are resistance to change especially no one I know is against Emiratisation, actually I see people wanting more Emiratis to be in charge as they seem to have better understanding of how to attract local corporations to support the institute. The management of the corporations seem to want to deal with locals and hear from them, so it is certainly more beneficial for the university and for us. Do you feel that resources are effecting in any way the success of the project? No, the university has appropriate level of funding and support from management and sponsors, and thankfully has good resource management and utilization.**

3. What are the main costs of Emiratisation? Financially and non-financially.

There are not many, but I would only say the delay in recruitment might have been there at the beginning. But financially I believe the university is saving money as candidates are being referred through a government organization.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratisation project successful or to improve its success?

We should be trying to change the rules of academia, we need to educate people about its unique processes. So you think orientation or training would be appropriate. Yes I know it is hard in this region to find people experienced in academia as the sector is fairly new, but we can send them training programs specifically targeting the academia in order for our employees to be more understanding of the university. Do you think that would improve the success of future projects? Most certainly, it would allow people to better understand each other's jobs. So do you mean communication would improve? Yes most certainly, communication as you know is key in any sector not only academia, if there are problems in communications nothing can be done effectively. People would not be working together towards the projects goals as each would have different expectation. One issue that I thought of when I decided to research the Emiratisation Project is that some people would have a sense of injustice, do you think this is the case here? Well, I am sure some people would think that some are being hired and promoted just because of being Emirati but I also feel that Emiratis working in the university know that. Some are working harder to prove those people wrong which one positive outcome. So do you think some effort need to be put into changing that view, the feeling of injustice? I think there should not be any injustice and I do believe that Emiratisation is temporary and after reaching certain numbers and targets, it will start to become less of an issue. But don't you think until those targets are reached the feeling of injustice will be creating some negative vibes in the university? Maybe some people would be threatened by the new Emirati workforce, but I am believer that you work hard you will be awarded at the end. Actually, if anything I feel that this step made people work harder to keep their jobs.

5. How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?

Trust levels should be higher, in my opinion. Management seem to be more trusting of some individuals; valuing their opinions, and less trusting of others and not involving them as much. There should be more of a balance and less discrimination for trust to be higher. This in turn affects how much employees trust management, if they feel that they are not trusted the feeling of injustice will result in less trust of management.

6. Is there anything you would like to add?

Yes, one more thing I would like to add, is that people need to understand the culture of this country, there are some norms and customs that might be appropriate in other countries but not here in the UAE. We have people from all over the world, and sometimes they face problems due to their lack of understanding of the culture. People here are proud of their nationality and have rapidly made huge improvements and changes to their lives. They worked hard, many realized that education is the key to success and now we have a good number of Emirati faculty something that was nonexistent a short ago. So I see Emiratisation as just a reward to those efforts.

Interview 5

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Administrative Assistant*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *3 years in academia, 10 years in other sectors*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *3 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not

As an Emirati, I do appreciate such step as we need to have more locals on board, we need more people in academia. We as Emiratis need to have some say about our education. Emiratisation is important in all sectors, we need Emiratis to be involved and present in or organization. At the past, most people from the previous generation where employed in a government organization and worked in the same place until they retired. Now, everyone is looking to change, improve and find opportunities. This is what the university is trying to do, create opportunities for Emiratis to be involved in the higher education, where locals were less involved in before.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

Well there are many challenges. The main challenge is finding the right balance. What I mean by that is the university wants to involve Emiratis but not leave behind the expats because undeniably they are playing a great role in the university. I think what is happening now is that Emiratis are getting all the attention, and expats are left behind. So do you feel that this has created resistance to Emiratisation? No, but it makes the expats feel that they have little power in the decision making process, so they are less motivated. You want Emiratis to work harder but you don't want to demotivate the rest of your workforce. Do you feel that the management are aware of such problem? No, because they are focused on the success of the project that they are not paying much attention to the negative outcomes. Would you say resource management is an issue in this project? We have ample resources in the university, but we need to reduce overall waste of those resource and better manage what we have. Actually there are many examples of that happening in the university, as there are better regulations put in place to monitor expenditure of travel, training and other.

3. What are the main costs of Emiratisation? Financially and non-financially.

There are not many costs as this project have saved a lot of recruitment cost. But it did take longer to employ people at the beginning, however we are now seeing new people around the university. I think the delay was because there is an external entity that the university had to communicate with in order to receive CVs of potential employees.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratisation project successful or to improve its success?

I think everyone in the university need to be involved in the process. The management has started doing that by sending out an email of the new decision so that everyone is aware. But people need to be involved so that

they don't feel left behind. So you want people to not feel any injustice, is that what you're saying? Yes exactly we want everyone to be at our side, we don't want to create conflict and tension between people. We for sure don't want rumors flying around about people getting better treatment and being unfairly promoted. I have worked abroad for couple of months, I noticed that with less tension and rumors people tend to achieve more. There is a lot of time and energy wasted on conflict and unnecessary encounters with colleagues. Do you think people can benefit from training? Or maybe for new members some orientation? Well, the university seems to be doing well with that as people are given a guide when they join the university. But some individuals especially in the administration can benefit from courses about academia. I know I would have benefited, as things are slightly different in this sector. The people you deal with here are better educated and expect less control on their work. It's much more flexible here compared to other organizations, who have certain working hours and a more controlled workforce.

5. How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?

Trust levels are high between some individuals, and low between others which is normal in any organization. Some people work well together and other groups are a mismatch. What about the Emiratisation team? Well they seem to be in harmony and trusting of each other as the project seems to be desired by many. But again more attention need to be put on individuals with fears and doubts of the outcome of the project.

6. Is there anything you would like to add?

No.

Interview 6

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *HR specialist*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *1 year*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *1 year*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not
Great idea and well welcomed in the institute. For a long time, we had lack of local minds. Now they are increasing, even before this project but after this initiative it is happening at a greater pace. Why do you feel that this is a good thing? Universities are usually dependent on funds from external sources and companies. Those local companies and entities can be better reached with local members of the university. Local staff and faculty have a better understanding of their local companies and people as they come from the same culture and background. I am not saying non-locals do not play an important role, but we need support from locals, need support and knowledge from the local population.
2. What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project you and the institute are facing in current times?
The challenge is not to be unfair to any member. Keeping everything in line with the goals and vision is also a challenge. We do not want to employ any Emirati, we want to find the ones that are deserving, talented and that would be a valuable addition to the university. Do you feel that employees are resistant to change, to Emiratisation? No, but some have expressed fear from such step. Do you feel that the management are aware of such problem? Yes, of course. Do you think they are doing enough to tackle the issue? I feel that they are concentrating on making this project a success, and doing everything they can to avoid negativity about such step. For example, they have been working on making pay equal amongst employees of the same level, as there has been an issue of inequality. So they are trying to balance their attention to locals and non-locals. It is important to make everyone feel equally important. Would you say resource management is an issue in this project? Absolutely, not. To my knowledge resources have never been a problem.
3. What are the main costs of Emiratisation? Financially and non-financially.
Cost is mainly non-monetary. Favoring one demographic over another understandably causes some distress and panic. But, like I said this is somewhat controlled by the leaderships constant reassurance of job security for people that are loyal and hard-working regardless of nationality.
4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratisation project successful or to improve its success?
Giving equal chances for all employees to have a say and be involved in the process. Secondly, give all employees the same rights like training, conferences and other opportunities. Actually, the university has recently put clear guidelines about this, application of those is necessary. Decreasing exceptions is absolutely necessary, because once you start making exceptions you start creating the feeling of favoritism. Rules need

to apply on everyone, leniency is not always good. Do you think people can benefit from training? Or maybe for new members some orientation? I think specially for people in charge like department heads, deans and other people of some power need to be trained to how to run their departments in a smooth fashion and with efficiency and equality in mind.

5. How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?

Trust is thus far high and need to be kept this way with proper leadership and management of project.

6. Is there anything you would like to add?

No.

Interview 7

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Project Manager*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *6 years in academia, 5 in other sectors*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *4 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not

Emiratisation was necessary as for a long time Emirati nationals were a minority in the institute. Emiratis need to be more involved in education in the country as they know the needs and wants of the UAE people. Usually the expats perform their jobs as they have been used to in previous experiences. They are not to blame as there is no one to guide them to the unique needs of this cultures and the differences of the higher education in the country compared to their own. Many are willing to learn but need guidance and direction from people that completely understand the culture, and who better to assistant than UAE's own people.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

The acceptance that at current times locals would be receiving special treatment and naturally be the frontrunners in any job opening. This has been causing some fear and unease in the non-local community of the institute. Do you feel there are some resistance by employees? Of course some are skeptical about the reason behind such project, and if that would affect their career and advancement in the institute. The resistance comes in different forms, some have been seen to try to hurdle the advancement of local staff and faculty, some animosity towards locals have been occurring in recent times. Would you say leadership is to blame? Definitely, the people in charge have been focusing on increasing the numbers a bit too much. They want to increase the number of locals in the institute as well as promote locals disregarding the non-locals. This was never the idea behind the project but focus of the motive of such decision has been lost. What about resources management, has it been an issue in the project? Alhamdu lillah, resources have never been a problem in the institute, stakeholders have been generous in arming the institute with everything they need for advancement of research and teaching. Even though some have been abusing the generosity of the institute, in recent years the resource management have dramatically improved and is better controlled. You need to remember the institute is still young and is still considered at the learning stage.

3. What are the main costs of Emiratisation? Financially and non-financially

Financially, I cannot say that Emiratisation has directly affected the institute, though I have no access to such information or any reason to look at such data, you need to ask the HR and finance department for such information. Non-financially, like I said before some unhealthy animosity has been created which naturally effects the relationships among staff and among faculty.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratisation project successful or to improve its success?

With any project, just informing the staff about its occurrence is not enough. It was clear from the beginning that this is happening, everyone was informed through an official email from higher management which was a great first step. Being open and honest is a great way to build trust between people from different levels. But what I would improve is to explain to all employees the goals behind such initiative as well as updates to the projects outcomes and benefits. Leaving the conversation to happen informally about the reasons behind such project only allows rumors to fester and wrong information to be circulated. Better management and leadership is needed in such difficult times. This should not be a battle between locals and non-locals, it should be a joint effort to improve the institute instead.

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

I feel that they are working well together, so they must be trusting of each other. Many new members were recruited and we have seen big improvements in the HR department. Trust within the project team is not an issue, however trust of members of the institute who are effected by the team's decision need to be considered and evaluated. People are somewhat skeptical of the decisions and abilities of the team and need to be reassured about the intentions behind the project and the team's decision. More transparency need to be adopted in order to clear up any misunderstanding that's all.

6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

No.

Interview 8

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. *Job Description HR manager*
- b. *How long have you been in academia? 3 years, 10 years in other sectors*
- c. *How long have you been working at your current institute/university? 3 years*

Interview Questions

1. *Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not*

I think it is a great idea to increase the Emirati work force as there is a lack of Emirati minds in the university. The number now is increasing and more and more Emiratis are being recruited. We are also looking hard for faculty who are more difficult to find, but we have found some that we are considering now. It is not easy to find qualified and experienced Emirati workforce for the university but they are out there, and we will find them.

2. *What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project you and the institute are facing in current times?*

Finding the right people who are qualified to work in a university, as academia is completely different than the industry. I have worked in both and I am still learning and adopting to the differences in needs and processes of the two sectors. Do you feel employees in academia are more adoptive or resistant to change, like the Emiratisation project? Well compared to industry people in the university are more flexible and more acceptant of change. Education is constantly changing and new ways are being experimented, so people are usually more willing to try new things. In other organisations, there is usually more rigid systems and set ways in conducting business, whereas people in academia need more flexibility. Can you give me an example of that? For instant attendance in corporation are set and people are monitored and evaluated for that. Whereas, the special nature of the job brings people to work early and force them to stay late, and giving them flexibility has not caused us any problems with most people. Some people do abuse the system, but it usually is clear from their work and affects their evaluation. Have you been facing any resistance to emiratisation? Well, not directly, but we are in charge of the project so I understand that people would not be very open in sharing their opposition to the idea. But from my observation and conversations with the staff most people seem to be on board.

3. *What are the main costs of Emiratisation? Financially and non-financially*

Well financially, we have been saving a lot on recruitment fees that we usually pay to recruitment agencies, the head hunters. Tawteen have been providing us with potential candidates and we are constantly interviewing applicants for various openings we have in the university. Though Emiratis are somewhat paid more in certain jobs, we think the benefits of recruiting Emiratis out way the costs. Can you tell me what those benefits are? Emiratis seem to stay longer, so we would be decreasing turnover, and they naturally have more knowledge about the culture which allows them to settle in more quickly and deal with issues more effectively.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratisation project successful or to improve its success?

I think the only issue we have with Emiratisation is communicating to the employees the reasons behind it. We don't want people to feel that are being treating differently. The feeling of injustice would create destructive conflict which we want to avoid. We are currently working to decrease injustice in the university, as we have been trying to balance and match salaries of people at the same position for example. We don't want Emiratisation to effect that in any way. Currently, we are trying to involve all members of the university in the recruitment process, as we have committees with members of diverse nationalities and levels. Everyone has a say on the decision of which Emirati candidate is recruited. We are not trying to get rid of non-nationals or disadvantage them in any way, that's not our goal. It is just that we need to align our university with the country's vision of giving Emiratis more opportunities.

5. How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?

Some people are trusting of us, others not so much. The HR is always looked at as the enemy as we are in charge of compensations, pay along with other sensitive aspects of employees careers. As a team, I feel we are working well together specially that we have had some changes occur in the department as new members have joined and others have moved to other jobs. What about your relationship with employees? We trust our employees and we have great faith in them. I am not saying that we have no problems and conflicts, because this is not possible in any workplace, actually it is not even good. Some conflict is important because it brings about change and improvement. We have been through ups and downs in the university, and many things have changed thankfully to the better. Emiratisation have been one of those things that allowed us to have better relationships with our current staff and faculty. Nationals and non-nationals have been very supportive.

6. Is there anything you would like to add?

No.

Interview 9

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. *Job Description* **HR specialist**
- b. *How long have you been in academia?* **3 years**
- c. *How long have you been working at your current institute/university?* **3 years**

Interview Questions

1. *Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not*

Emiratisation has been a priority of the UAE government for a while now, however recently more focus has been put on the issue of employment of the local population. So adopting this project is not only good, it is a necessity. How is it a necessity, can you further explain? Well, for instance in recently years here in the institute there was a high turnover due to the change that has been occurring in the institute in the senior management level as well as lower levels. Locals have been the most stable employees, we were even able to re-recruit a local employee who has us because she was unhappy with the previous managements' decisions, and the lack of motivation and incentives. That local employee felt that she would not be delivering with the dissatisfaction she was feeling so she left even before finding a new job, so clearly the reason behind her resignation was not monetary. I am not saying non-locals don't have the best interest of the university but locals are here to stay. We need to have faith in our local population and build their confidence, and what better way than try to recruit and find them ourselves.

2. *What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project you and the institute are facing in current times?*

Challenges that we have include finding the right employees for the university due to the lack of experience people have in academia. Many people that we interview have no background and usually have not thought of working in the education sector. We have been trying to get locals to consider being more open to new sectors. Many are used to the oil sector, or other purely government based organization, so this is completely new idea to them. What about challenges internally within the university? Well, some people have been concerned about creating a gap between locals and non-locals, which is a valid concern. We have considered that this might create a sense of injustice in the institute but we think the benefits outweigh the drawbacks. Have you faced any resistance from employees? Sure, but resistance is expected with any change or project. However resistance was not only from non-locals, surprisingly resistance came from some locals. My guess would be that locals as I said before are here to stay so they create more of a threat and create greater competition. What about leadership, have that been a challenge? We are lucky that the leadership have been very supportive of the project, both the board and the senior management in the university. We have been given a lot of flexibility and freedom to employ individuals which in turn we passed to the different departments who are given the liberty to choose their own employees. Have resource management been an issue? We are blessed to have ample resources, so we don't have any lack of resources. But having said that, we need to better manage those resources to get the maximum out of them. We are not a profit making organizations but we have certain goals and visions that we want to realize, so we are continuously trying to

amend our process to become more efficient. We are still learning and we still make mistakes, but we are doing our best to try to utilize our resources both monetary and non-monetary effectively.

3. *What are the main costs of Emiratisation? Financially and non-financially*

Financially from an HR perspective, in the short term it is less costly to employ with the help of Tawteen, as we don't have headhunters involved. Similarly, in the long term, we expect decrease in cost especially if it creates the stability we are aiming for. Non-financially, we know that this might create tension with some non-locals but we are still employing non-locals as we are aware that we will not be able to fill all positions with locals. We realize the importance of diversity and its benefits to the work place. Without the non-locals we wouldn't have advanced as much as we have done in the past years. It is normal for change to come with costs but we are aiming to for the benefits to outweigh the costs and challenges that the new initiative creates.

4. *What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratisation project successful or to improve its success?*

Well, to improve the success of the project we need to always be aware of the affects that the project is having on the institute. We should regularly evaluate the project and communicate with everyone involved. Communication channels need to be always open in order for us to be aware of the affect the project is having on the workplace. Without feedback we would not be doing our jobs affectively, because we would be working blindly. We need updated information to stay on the right track. Would you say that involvement of employees is important? Definitely, this is what I meant when I said we need to have open communication about the project. Without the involvement of employees and open communication, we would not be successful in implementing change. I personally like to interact with employees from all levels and consult them before any change or project, from my interactions with them I can sense were they stand, are they supportive or are they against the idea. Getting people to agree and be supportive of any project, even before it is officially announced greatly effects its success. People need to know why, when and where change is happening for them to be comfortable with it. The more information they know and the more they understand about the project, the more likely they are to support the change and actively try to make it work. Do you believe that the perspective of justice, governance and respect of spiritual beliefs effects projects? When it comes to spirituality, the respect of culture and religion is usually not a problem in university. Our employees are educated and open-minded which helps them in become accepting of all religions and backgrounds, so this is not an issue at all. But, if you are talking about governance and justice, this is actually very important and is addressed in every project. If people are faced with injustice, they usually become negative and less effective at work because they think that if work is not being just with me why should I commit and do my best. People become less efficient and less caring about the workplace's best interest, and only do what will bring them benefit. This needs to be a priority with any manager or leader because governance if not employed would create tension between employees, as well as cost the institute. Injustice creates a lot of negative feeling and reactions from employees, some just shut down and would then be distant from work, people might leave and decide to move in order to avoid confrontations and problems, but worse of all some would sabotage the project and the advancement of the institute due the feeling of being treated unfairly.

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

As a leader in this project, I feel that trust is mutual, we are trusting of our employees and they are trusting of us. Of course I have people that I trust more than others due to past experiences and my relationship with them. With this project in particular, I feel people are being understanding and very supportive because everyone seems to feel that it is important, from the provost down to the lowest ranking employee. Thankfully, the trust levels are high.

6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

No.

Interview 10

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Executive Assistant*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *10 years*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *10 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Emiratisation Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not

I have been working in this country for many years and I have seen how Emiratis have evolved to becoming highly educated and intellectual. I find it to be natural for the country and the institute to want to give Emiratis more control over their organizations. It is no longer as it was before, were non-Emiratis are in charge and leading the organization and our institute is no exception. I am fully supportive of the idea and hope that it would be successful.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Emiratisation Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

The main challenge is getting all administrative departments to work well together in order for the project to be successful. There seems to be miscommunication and tension between those departments. I am not fully sure about the reason behind this problem but what I have concluded is the differences in views and ways of thinking. Each person seems to have a different view point about how the changes need to be made. Do you feel that some are resistant to change? Sure, some feel threatened which is expected because with the new project everyone who is not performing well is in jeopardy. Do you feel leadership is up to par? The leadership styles are very different in the institute, the departments are not in agreement, and the lack of synchronization is surely effecting the outcome. What about resource management? Resources were never a problem in institute, managing it has been becoming increasingly efficient so I would say that this is one of the good aspects of the university.

3. What are the main costs of Emiratisation? Financially and non-financially

Costs of emiratisation is not financial, it is mainly non-financial. Some tension and feeling of unrest have been created. But apart from that I think Emiratisation has been successful and is exceeding the expectation of leadership and everyone else involved.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Emiratisation project successful or to improve its success?

I feel that the project is very successful. It just needs to be evaluated on a regular basis to make sure that it is doing what it is intended to do which is improving the viability of the institute. If in any time it starts to become a high cost or a burden, only then it would be a necessary to reevaluation of this decision. Do you have any suggestion on how to maybe create a more positive environment? I think keeping people motivated at all times because if they lose interest than the success rate would drop. How? By regularly meeting with and

updating them with latest results. Involving people in the decision is important too as their opinions and suggestions might be of value to the institute. Keeping employees informed and trained to react to any changes and problems.

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

In general, trust between the different employees is good. But, the institute has faced some issues regarding miscommunication and misalignment of goals. Conflict cannot be completely avoided because of the differences in opinions and lack of trust. For instance, with this project, the problem we had at the beginning was that the administration wanted Emirati faculty with certain number of years of experience, but the HR where fighting to change that as they thought that Emiratis with less experience can be employed and developed as they are still scarce. This conflict has caused some issues as the board was then involved along with other senior management, affecting the relationship and trust between the administration and HR. Involving others to push your views instead of negating and convincing other members of the team resulted in some tension.

6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

No.

Case Study 2: Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers

Interview 1

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Business Support Director*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *4 years*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *18 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the institute?
Is it a good idea or not

The university is growing and need to expand both in programs and buildings. The students need more classes and space, and faculty need more labs to conduct research. This project is necessary for the university's development. Definitely a good idea.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

Well with any project of this scale there are delays and constant changes that need to be made. We have many groups and organizations involved in the project so getting everyone to agree and work together to complete the project is a difficult task. Do you feel employees are resistant to such expansion in the University? Not at all, the expansion is welcomed and people are competing for new positions that have been created with such expansion. Are there any issues with the leadership that is in charge of such change, their style or way of conducting the change? With leadership, I think the leadership is a bit hesitant to make decision at the quick pace that is required in the University. As you know, a university always starts its programs at a specific time of the year, there are the September intake and the January intake for graduate programs. If the program is not ready by September, the University loses a whole semester and need to wait to the start of the next one to operate. You mean a delay of a month equals four in this sector. Exactly. What about resource management, is it an issue in the project? Well, we are not in charge of managing resources that are related to research centers but we don't have authority over the research projects that take place in the university. However, what we do is that faculty members apply for funds and a committee decides which projects would be funded. After that the faculty is in charge of allocating the funds. So they have some autonomy and freedom to use the money. Yes, but of course they have to inform us of how is was utilized before the money is paid. It is important to have rules and governance in place or it would cause other problems that the University does not desire.

3. What are the main costs of the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project? Financially and non-financially

Financially, it is not cheap building research center and setting up new graduate programs. You need faculty to run such projects and staff to support students and faculty too. A lot of admin work is required, and all aspects of administration are involved like HR, finance, etc. We are a non-profit, all we do is supply local

companies with employees and the country with research that is done locally for local issues rather than export knowledge from outside. We have our unique issues in the country that we need to investigate so our work is very much necessary. Non-financially cost, I would say is the time that is required from everyone involved. So instead of only concentrating on undergraduate teaching, they now need to work on research and graduate teaching.

4. *What do you recommend should be done to make the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project successful or to improve its success?*

Training I think is important. Skills like time management and strong leadership are important in such times. Our employees need courses to improve such skills and bring new methods and techniques that would improve efficiency maybe. We know that that the work load is high and with every project that work load increases, so it is important to keep them up to date with the new techniques. Do you think innovation is a necessary skill? For sure, we want our employees to show some initiative and be innovative when making suggestions. New ideas are very much welcomed. However, what we lack is building an environment where innovation is rewarded, this we do not have yet. Rewarded how? When I say rewarded I don't only mean financially, I mean with time, space and systems were this can occur. We have innovative individuals but the work load is high so there is not enough time to do so. So are you saying that employees are not motivated? No, there are motivations to work for example faculty that teach extra courses are rewarded, research is also rewarded, however there is no system in place to reward innovation. This is not only here in the University but nearly in all workplaces. What about communication, is it an area that needs improvement? I feel that communication is no problem in the University, employees have access to the highest ranking member of the University. I have worked in other sectors, where lower ranking employees never meet the senior managers, but this is not the case in the University. People are not afraid to speak out in person or by email as senior management are easy to access. Many times people have expressed concerned and it actually made a difference. If you compare the University just five years ago to how it is today, you would see that it has changed and improved dramatically.

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

Trust seems to be hit with delays and setbacks, but improves with accomplishments and realization of goals. This is not a small project, so problems do occur and trust does become low in various times between managers and their subordinates, or employees amongst themselves, but when dealt with the trust is retained.

6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

No.

Interview 2

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. *Job Description* **Laboratory Engineer**
- b. *How long have you been in academia?* **8 years**
- c. *How long have you been working at your current institute/university?* **4 years**

Interview Questions

1. *Your thoughts about the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not*

There is a need for research and graduate programs in the country, so this project is good for everyone.

2. *What are the main challenges caused by the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?*

Well, the main issues within the team in managing the money and people. In any project those two elements are always involved and need to be dealt with. We are building a research center that is costly, so we are always in need of justifying where the money is going. Sticking to the budget is not easy as there are a lot of unexpected costs. What are some unexpected costs that you have encountered in this project? For example, the budget for the equipment needed for the research center was insufficient, as you know the specialized equipment are not cheap. Sure, you said managing people is also a challenge in the project. Yes, we are increasingly needing more and more employees to run those equipment in the new labs and the graduate programs: faculty and staff that have experience in the academic field. Our staff are having to step up and take more responsibilities. This is not easily executed as we need to engage more and more of our employees in the project, as well as hire new people. I really sympathize with the HR team involved as they are responsible of this huge task. I personally joint from the oil sector and needed time to adjust and learn about this sector. The employees are different, the expectations are different. People expect to be heard and there are much less rankings and levels. You have a problem, you can easily talk to the senior management and have an impact. In the industry, you need to go through the proper channel. How would you describe the role of leadership in the project? Leadership skills is of course very important, without it the project would not be successful. The leadership in charge are doing a good job and seem to have the experience in the matter, however I think they need to be stricter with the team and push them harder in order for the whole team to work at a quicker pace. I recognize that it is not easy, that's why for a while a senior vice president of administration affairs was employed from one of our supporting and funding companies for the operations to be better managed as we didn't have enough expertise to run such a huge operation.

3. *What are the main costs of the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project? Financially and non-financially*

The project required a huge budget so financially it required a lot of funding and endorsement. Non-financially, a lot of our staff and faculty were involved which meant they were less focused on their other responsibilities. When you involve people who already have a lot of responsibilities in such project you cannot expect their performance to be as high as it was before. Can you give me an example of that? For

instance, faculty who were involved in the graduate program are less likely to involve themselves in committees that are part of universities.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the *Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project* successful or to improve its success?

Recruitment of faculty, we have a lot of positions vacant in the university that need to be filled, and quickly. Recruitments of staff that have experience in the education sector so that they have more knowledge about how things are run. The language here is different, people talk about research, journal papers and accreditation, things you would never hear about in the industry.

5. How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?

Trust is there. Everyone seems to work towards specific goals and the vision is clear, so people trust each other to reach those goals.

6. Is there anything you would like to add?

No.

Interview 3

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Associate Professor*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *7 years*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *3 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the institute?
Is it a good idea or not

As a faculty, I feel that it is a great opportunity to have more involvement in research. The more opportunity we have to do research, the more we can advance the academic field. So it's great, but it is a lot of work.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

To get everyone on board is a challenge, some feel that more effort need to be put in improving the programs that we are running right now. There is a lot of opportunity for improvement in the undergraduate program, so convincing people that this is beneficial is not easy. How about the leadership are they on board? Yes, even though they have inherited this project from the previous management, they seem to put in every resource and all their effort on making the project a major success. Are resource management an issue in this project? With ever project, there are always some mistakes made in allocating resources, there are rarely projects that are perfectly planned and executed. So keeping that in mind I think the team has done a really good job.

3. What are the main costs of the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project? Financially and non-financially

Of course there are financial cost associated with any change and any project done in the organization, but I think this cost will be well worth when the project is finally completed. Non-financially I also think that the change was positive so it has not negatively impacted the organization, so no major costs in this aspect either. If anything, the university has become more attractive to potential employees due to open positions and opportunities available.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project successful or to improve its success?

Resolving problems in a timely manner, and not letting it foster to bigger issues so that people are not in conflict. Although I have learnt the conflict is sometimes good from experience and training, I do think is not dealt with properly it will affect the project. Have you noticed any conflict in the project, can you give me an example? Yes, as I said before, the project have created opportunities and open positions, so we have noticed that some are disappointed with the appointment of colleagues and not them. This is normal but we need to ensure that the process of recruitment internally and externally is done in a fair matter to avoid creating animosity. People have complained and some have even threatened with resignations.

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

We just talked about recruitment which has created some mistrust. So right now that trust levels are not very high. However, with more transparency and more systematic staffing, I think this would improve soon.

6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

No.

Interview 4

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. *Job Description Senior Project Manager*
- b. *How long have you been in academia? 4 years, 3 in other sectors*
- c. *How long have you been working at your current institute/university? 3 years*

Interview Questions

1. *Your thoughts about the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not*

As a part of the team, I am happy with such decision, the university is becoming more and more established and so change is beneficial.

2. *What are the main challenges caused by the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?*

There are so many challenges and issues. It is challenging to run such a huge team and get things done as scheduled. If one fails to do the task required, it affects the subsequent task and parallel task. So many become very tense and stressed. We are pressured by the higher management to execute the project, and so we pressure our team to perform the tasks required of them. It is just not easy managing everyone, and keep them on track. Do you think resistance to change is an issue? Sure, some like to work in a stable environment, so asking them to do more and adding to their list of responsibilities for most a burden. Also, change means learning new things, it sometimes means changing the way you work and putting you outside your comfort zone. So resistance is no surprise. But we are committed to such change and we want to show everyone involved that this is an opportunity to become more competitive, as there are a lot of educational institutes and universities that are potentially able to steal away our students. If we don't become more recognized and more established we will not survive in the long run, because there are many universities that are much easier to get into and complete.

3. *What are the main costs of the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project? Financially and non-financially*

The main potential cost is losing people in the process. So this we need to keep in mind during this time, we do not want to increase turnover. The turnover right now is quite high as the university has gone through many changes. Changes in higher management and administration, with a lot of hiring and firing that went along with the restructuring. We do not want the project to further create insecurity, but instead we want to create opportunity for our employees. Do you feel you are doing that? I think we are as, we have opened up the opportunity for our employees to be involved. We have noticed that some people want to be more involved in the administration part of the university, so the project having created some job openings that they can take over if qualified.

4. *What do you recommend should be done to make the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project successful or to improve its success?*

More support from the higher management, and more opportunity creation for our employees rather than employing from external sources. Our employees know the university better than anyone would if employed externally. We have seen many unable to add any value due to their lack of knowledge in academia. They have not been trained to work in the sector and have brought industry thinking from their companies, which have not been beneficial in this environment.

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

The team members are trusting of each other. I feel with time the trust will further improve as they get to work with each other more and more. However, I am sure that some individuals will not be a match for the group, so we need to find out any potential mismatch quickly before they affect the progress of the project. I will give you an example. We had a team member who everyone seems to dislike because of his attitude but no one would say anything because of his association with decision makers of the university. The team members were not willing to share their opinion about him for a long period of time. Until, one decided to speak out his views which most agreed with, the individual was then removed from the team. After that incident people were more open about their opinion, as their confidence to speak out was more apparent. Although, this was a hard decision to make, but it has created more harmony and less tension amongst the team members. The individual is not a bad person, but his personality was not a match to the team and his presence in meeting was creating unnecessary tension that affected the productivity of the team.

6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

No.

Interview 5

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. *Job Description Supply Chain Specialist*
- b. *How long have you been in academia? 3 years, 2 in other sectors*
- c. *How long have you been working at your current institute/university? 3 years*

Interview Questions

1. *Your thoughts about the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not*

It is a big project but achievable with our project team. This step was necessary for the university because we want to expand and develop. The demand for graduate programs is very high in the UAE, having a bachelor degree is not enough anymore to compete for higher positions. A bachelor degree might get you a good but in most cases is not enough allow you to advance in your career.

2. *What are the main challenges caused by the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?*

Like I said this project is no small task, so we have had some issues here and there. Most problems have been from disagreement of views. What I mean about that people have different ideas and views that they see to be right, and many don't have the skills or maybe they have the skills but do not use those skills to convince the team. Also, if the idea is not the best for the project, people are usually not whiling to admit that, rather they take it personally in most cases. Can you give me an example of that? Sure, we once had a meeting about the graduate program and one faculty suggested we start with a certain number of programs, while the other wanted to the programs to increase with time as we do not have sufficient faculty to cover all the courses that would be required. The disagreement continued until the project manager agreed with one. The other faculty took it personally and even went further to suggest that the project manager was biased. Do you feel that leadership is helping to solve issues or are they part of the issue? Well, leadership although mean well are making some mistakes running this project. They look at the project from the perspective of wanting to complete it on time sometimes disregarding that we don't have enough employees to work at the pace they require. Do you feel that you have lack of resources, or management of available resources is an issue too? We do have shortage in staff and faculty, and the problem is not that the university does not want to employ more people, it is the process of recruitment. It takes a rather long time to recruit an individual. Some faculty have complained that they have the funds they need to employ staff and recruit students for their projects, but those funds expire before anyone is employed due to the slow process. So nothing is completed and people are not able to take advantage of the resources that they are assigned. This is demotivated our faculty and delaying research.

3. *What are the main costs of the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project? Financially and non-financially*

The cost is rather high but well-worth. Like any project it has created some conflict and some broken relationship but overall is has greatly benefited the university. The benefits will be further apparent with time.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the *Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project* successful or to improve its success?

Training would help a lot I think (training). Maybe taking the team to a retreat would somewhat help to build tighter relationships. I have found people that usually do not interact to get to know each other during retreats. The organization I have worked in before used to organize those gatherings and many people became friends and got to know each other on a personal level. This then reflects in the workplace where people are more comfortable to work together and better understand each other. Do you feel there should be more innovation in the project by the team members? Sure, but innovation takes time, with strict deadlines and goals innovation would not be a regular occurrence. Innovation need to be part of everyday culture and environment in the university and not be introduced during such project. It takes time.

5. How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?

Trust could be better (Good but can be improved). People are a bit more individualistic in the higher education sector. I am not saying that they can't work in a group, but the nature of their work makes them used to flexibility. They are self-motivated and work well on their own, not needing people to dictate what they need to do, they choose their work load as each knows what they need to do to get where they want in their career.

6. Is there anything you would like to add?

No.

Interview 6

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. *Job Description* *Professor*
- b. *How long have you been in academia?* *17 years*
- c. *How long have you been working at your current institute/university?* *8 years*

Interview Questions

1. *Your thoughts about the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the institute? Is it a good idea or not*

In education, there are rather few ways you can expand your operations. You can expand through introducing new undergraduate programs, introducing graduate programs, masters and PhD. We are starting with masters programs and soon a PhD program too. Without graduate programs, research would not be really possible in the University. We are asked to do research as faculty but there are certain conditions that need to be present for that to happen. We have been collaborating with universities to do research but now it is time for us to have more control over the research, and the graduate programs and research center is a step towards that.

2. *What are the main challenges caused by the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?*

Staffing and recruitment, for a long time this has been a problem. Why is that do you think? Getting people with the right qualification is not easy. Most of our potential employees, come from abroad, so we are responsible of getting them here, interviewing them, evaluating them and then convincing them to come. This is a rather long process. Sometimes after all our efforts we are not able to recruit them sometimes because the university is faced with issues, and other times it is because the candidate is not able to come for personal or professional reasons. A lot of time is wasted with recruitment. A lot of people are involved and committees so it is rather challenging. Who do you feel is to blame for this issue? You can't blame anyone really because there are a lot of unknowns in the process. But sometimes I feel that we are a bit slow and the process need to be updated and improved because it is not working. We need to adopt new ways.

3. *What are the main costs of the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project? Financially and non-financially*

Time is the main cost in my opinion. Time is money as you know. Also, turnover can become a problem if improvements are not made and advancement is slow.

4. *What do you recommend should be done to make the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project successful or to improve its success?*

Improving processes such as staffing. Keeping people motivated to do their best by involving them in every step of the way. People do not like to be left behind or in the dark. I have seen hard working individuals demotivated because they feel out of the loop and unjustly treated.

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

Its good but there is always room for improvement. You need trust if you want to achieve the goals of the project and the vision of the university.

6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

No.

Interview 7

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Laboratory Technician*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *9 years*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *5 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the institute?
Is it a good idea or not

This idea started with the previous management and the new management decided to continue the project. I have been on the team from the start and I am happy to say that we are making great strides towards the completion of the project, successfully.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

The change of leadership was one of the challenges that we have thankfully overcome. Another challenge was getting people to understand the importance of such project, because we want most people to be on board, supporting us. Are you trying to involve them in the project? We have committees and teams making decisions. Employees from different parts of the university are a part of the committee because we do not want to miss any needs, we want to have all the information necessary.

3. What are the main costs of the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project? Financially and non-financially

Employing professionals from and for the education sector is costly because they are rather hard to find. Building research centers and introducing graduate programs are also costly. We are still depending on other universities to support us in research and even teaching and supervising graduate students. This is also costly and hard to manage. So the projects has its difficulty and costs but we do believe the outcome will eventually outweigh the cost.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project successful or to improve its success?

Always listen and encourage people to talk about concerns that they have or communicate any distress they feel because we want to deal with issues early on. From my experience the longer the issue is ignored the worse the effect it would have on the project and on the organization. We need to encourage our employees to speak out their minds and we need to listen and solve problems. We have experienced some problem in the past where people were not being well treated well and not taken seriously, that have caused a lot of distress in the university by getting people on board with their ideas and communicating it to the board. We need to get people the chance to get their ideas heard and executed for the good of the university. If every idea is belittled and there was no room for innovation, employees will end up putting the least possible effort into their work. It has happened in the past, and we have learnt from that.

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

We have worked on making sure people are comfortable to work with each other, so I believe trust is rather high between the group members.

6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

No.

Interview 8

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Project Manager*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *3 years*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *2 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the institute?
Is it a good idea or not

This is a project that has been one of our priorities for a while. We are closely monitoring and managing it along with other companies that will benefit from such project. I do think it is important even though its benefits might take quite a number of years to become evident, so we need to be patient. Completing this project successfully we bring about great benefits to us, to the companies involved and to the country.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

The project is no small job. So many elements are involved. We deal with contractors, suppliers, consulting companies in addition to funding companies and our own staff and team. Dealing with all those people, which means meetings and constant communication has been a tough job. Keeping everyone on schedule and asking people to put extra time and effort has caused some conflict. I am one of those people and I do understand the pressure of work especially when you also have other responsibilities such as your own family. Some team members, in addition, to family and work have been involved in further education and training courses. This type of pressure have made some individuals a bit more stressed than we would like. Do you feel people are somewhat resistant to the quick pace of change? Some people have been asking for extension of time, less work load, and lower expectations. At a start of any project, expectations are very high but once the project starts and individuals start to understand the requirements to reach the goals discussed, here is when pressure and stress start to take its toll on people. Do you feel high expectation is to blame for the stress? Somewhat, but not exactly. I think when you put goals and timelines, you need to understand that there are requirements that need to be met, like certain number of staff and larger funds maybe. You mean more resources? Yes the quicker you want the work to be done the higher it will cost you, plus you will be faced with costs that you have not taken into considerations at the beginning.

3. What are the main costs of the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project? Financially and non-financially

Financially, like I said the quicker the Management want to complete the projects the more money they need to allocate to the project. Also, with raising expectations and prospects also would require more resources so would mean higher financial requirements. Non-financially, people need to be somehow motivated to do the work. Can you give me an example? Well, some projects have been very important to the University, so people that were involved were financially rewarded, promoted and recognized. Any of those would greatly

help in involving more people. I do not mean you need to pay everyone, what I am saying people like to be recognized for what they do.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the *Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project* successful or to improve its success?

Rewards and compensations would be good. Maybe listen to the team and recognize their ideas and thought. Do you feel that innovation should be rewarded? There is no question about it. Innovation should be recognized, however the problem is being fair to everyone, we have noticed that people are rewarded differently, some less some more. So there should be consistency in the reward and compensation system so that no one is treated unfairly. Consistency, consistency, consistency is very important. People do not like to feel inferior to anyone or less important, or less deserving of recognition. So many people have left in the past because of this reason, even going for less paying job because of the feeling of injustice. This is another problem that we are facing currently, people are coming more for the money and less to make a difference and work for the good of the university. We need to balance between the two, we understand that people move for higher pays but we need to attract employees that would be loyal and caring about the advancement of the university.

5. How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?

We trust our employees. We hired them because we trust their abilities, and we have faith that their intentions are good. But we need to make some changed and improvements from our side to gain and keep their trust. Employees trust in management is different with every individual some are highly trusting and seem to have a good relationship with management, and some are less trusting and have been communicating their lack of contentment. So it depends from one person to another.

6. Is there anything you would like to add?

No.

Interview 9

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- a. Job Description *Research and Development Director*
- b. How long have you been in academia? *10 years, and 12 in other sectors*
- c. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *4 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the institute?
Is it a good idea or not

I have been a supporter of the idea from the get-go, so I do think it is a great idea. The university wants to be involved in research and this is not possible without graduate students and labs to conduct research and write papers. We want to be able to do research and publish papers.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

I feel that some individuals involved have not yet understand academia properly. I do know that some are new to the sector and need time to learn and understand about the special nature of higher education compared to other sectors and industry. But this has been causing some delays and wrong decision have been made regarding the execution of the project. I do not have a great deal of experience in project management, so if I was put to make such decision I will be making mistakes too. So I do believe that some allocation of roles have not been spot-on. More people with experience in academia and higher education management are needed to fill the different roles of the projects. Who would you say is in charge of dealing with such challenge? Higher management need to be stricter in agreeing to the recruitment of new members, and the HR need to find more suitable individuals for the University. However, the HR has also little experience in academia and higher education.

3. What are the main costs of the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project? Financially and non-financially

The cost of funding such project financially is high, not sure of exact amount. Non-financially it is using up a lot of human resources that we have at the university to complete the project through their involvement in committees formed to complete the project in properly and successfully.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project successful or to improve its success?

Hire more people that have experience in the sector for the project, and in general throughout the university. Or we need to invest in training individuals to be able to run the different operations required in a university. General courses will not be beneficial, it needs to be more specialized courses that are targeted to the higher education sector specifically in the region. Many individuals have been sent to train abroad and have come back to say that many of what they learnt cannot be applied or irrelevant to the region. The culture

differences need to be considered. Some have tried to apply ideas from abroad and have failed because what works in the US for instance might not work here in the UAE.

5. *How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?*

Trust is no problem I think, people seem to work well together. It is only the lack of knowledge about the sector that seems to be a hurdle. Increasing the awareness about the special nature of the sector and training people to work with that in mind would greatly help.

6. *Is there anything you would like to add?*

No.

Interview 10

General Information and Demographics of the Interviewee

- d. Job Description *Associate professor*
- a. How long have you been in academia? *6 years*
- b. How long have you been working at your current institute/university? *4 years*

Interview Questions

1. Your thoughts about the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project in the institute?
Is it a good idea or not

As a faculty member, it would benefit me and my students greatly.

2. What are the main challenges caused by the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project you and the institute are facing in current times?

Well, I am involved in the graduate programs trying to plan on how to attract good students to join the graduate programs. The research center has been a positive aspect, as having equipment and resources are necessary to complete Masters but more importantly PhD degrees. This has not been easy as we are in need of more experienced employees to complete the needed tasks. Those people are individuals that we would need even after the successful completion of the programs and centers project, because there are some ongoing processes that would not end with the completion of the project. We have a lot of opportunities and available positions that are being slowly filled, because it is not easy finding people with the right credentials. So resources are a bit of a problem. Yes, for sure.

3. What are the main costs of the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project? Financially and non-financially

Costs of this project was the increased need for resources. We need more employees and students more than any time before. This is a costs financially because those people will need to be paid and non-financially because our current HR need to work harder to obtain those individuals.

4. What do you recommend should be done to make the Establishment of Graduate Programs and Research Centers Project successful or to improve its success?

Attracting more experienced employees would benefit all of our projects. Involving our employees, maybe promoting some individuals to run the operations of the programs and centers.

5. How would you describe the level of trust: (1) the project team/staff have in management, (2) the management have in team/staff, in their intentions and abilities?

In academia there is less of a hierarchy so people seem to trust and work together well. I feel the employees of the university from different levels are trusting of each other, they just need more and more support through employing more staff, speeding up all procedures from the HR, Finance and other departments.

6. Is there anything you would like to add?

No.