

**EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EUROPEAN
FOUNDATION FOR QUALITY MANAGEMENT (EFQM) MODEL ON
EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN THE UAE PUBLIC HEALTHCARE
SECTOR**

Dissertation
Presented to
The Academic Faculty

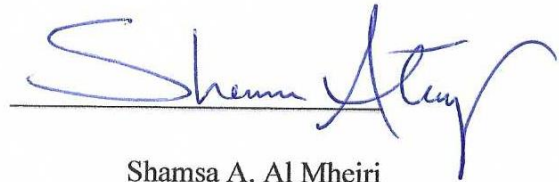
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**EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EUROPEAN
FOUNDATION FOR QUALITY MANAGEMENT (EFQM)
MODEL ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION OF UAE PUBLIC
HEALTHCARE SECTOR**



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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this research is to examine the effectiveness of European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Model on employee retention of UAE Public Healthcare Sector, particularly the employees in the Public Healthcare Sector that are working in a hospital which is accredited for excellence model performance (EFQM) are around 18,000 employees.

The study hypothesizes are to examine the effect of Knowledge and Capability (KC), Involvement & Empowerment (IE), Effective Communication (EC), and Reward & Recognition (RR) practices as the EFQM fundamental concept of succeeding through people factors, which this study used as the research model variables to assess its effect on the Employees Retention (ER) in the public hospitals in UAE. It also explores the effect on a detailed demographics of the sample responded to the research survey.

The results of the statistical analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM) with AMOS showed from the employees perception that neither Knowledge & capability practices nor the effective communication are considered factors effecting the employees retention. Only reward and recognition does show significant relationship with the employees retention. More details were investigated based on moderating role of the demographics such as job level, background, years of experience and organization size of the contributed groups of the study sample. This segregation among the groups helps to identify a partially impact on the rejected hypotheses.

Surprisingly and contrary to the study hypotheses that mentioned above gives indication for future studies to explore the mediating (maybe) factors that may play an important role in this relationship. Implications of the study model can be used for management/human resource management as well as for future research and exploration.

Keywords and definitions:

Excellent performance: The performance model of continuous improvement to sustain superior outcomes and exceed stakeholder expectations (EFQM, 2013).

Employee retention: The ability of an organization to keep its employees; the time they stay before moving to another organization (Samuel & Chipunza, 2009).

EFQM practices: The framework of excellence criteria and detailed practices as exemplars for excellent organizations (EFQM, 2013).

Healthcare talent management: Management that focuses on developing the skills and capabilities of employees in the healthcare sector, which usually addresses three strategic goals: reducing costs, improving patient satisfaction and improving patient safety (Ellis, 2017).

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that:

- This dissertation was prepared and all the work carried out by the candidate. All the resources used in the research have been acknowledged and /cited in the references section.
- The dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or qualification in any other educational institution and has not been submitted or considered for any award.
- The research stages reported in the dissertation were approved by the appropriate bodies such as the security information committee and authorized offices.

ABBREVIATIONS

AGFI	Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index
CFA	Confirmatory factor analysis
CFI	Comparative fit index
EC	Effective communication [factor]
EFA	Exploratory factor analysis
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
ER	Employee retention [factor]
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GFI	Goodness-of Fit Index
IE	Involvement and empowerment [factor]
KC	Knowledge and capabilities [factor]
NFI	Normed fit index
RMSEA	Root mean square error of approximation
RR	Rewards and recognition [factor]
SEM	Structural equation modeling
SRMR	Standardized root mean square residual

UAE

United Arab Emirates

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PUBLICATIONS ARISING FROM THE DISSERTATION

At the time of the dissertation submission, the following articles have been published:

Journal articles (Attachment 2)

Al Mheiri, T., Jabeen, F., & Abdulla S. (2020), "INHIBITORS OF TALENT RETENTION IN UAE PUBLIC HEALTHCARE", International Journal of Business and Society (IJBS), Volume 22, No 1, P15

Note: The acceptance email is attached as well for further research process approval.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction of the dissertation

This dissertation aims to help UAE public healthcare organizations to formulate efficient strategies for sustaining organizational performance through talent retention. Due to the criticality of the employee retention on the organization performance, many studies were conducted to assess the impact of the factors that influence the decision of the employee to stay.

Studies have tried to assess the factors influencing employee retention directly or indirectly, using different theoretical models (e.g., Brunges, 2014; Muthuveloo et al., 2013; Zeffane & Melhem, 2018). However, very few studies have assessed the impact of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Model on employee retention in general, or in health organizations in particular (Jafari, 2013). As far as can be ascertained, no studies have assessed the impact of one of the fundamental concepts of the EFQM model, “succeeding through the talent of people” (STP) on employee retention (ER). This concept claims that knowledge and capabilities (KC), involvement and empowerment (IE), effective communication (EC) and reward and recognition (RR) will enable organizations to achieve and sustain excellence through people (EFQM, 2013). This study focuses on assessing the impact of these variables (KC, IE, EC, & RR) on employee retention (ER) in public healthcare organizations in the UAE.

The next few sections discuss some of the previous literature assessing employee retention practices and the factors that influence employees’ decision to stay. This highlights the importance of organizational investment in retaining employees. It also gives some insights into other practices that could directly or indirectly affect the study’s model variables for future research. The scope of this research is the public healthcare sector. It focuses on retaining talent in hospitals in the UAE that have been accredited as having excellent performance.

After that, the chapter provides a broader view of the background on employee retention, the factors and practices that affect it, the impact of ER on the culture of the organization, the excellence culture and UAE excellence culture. This will contribute to the research significance and future research.

This chapter is structured in five main parts. In the first part, the chapter provides an overview of the research background and describes the relationships among the study variables and the research oversight context. In the second part, the research problem, significance and justification were detailed described. In the third part, the chapter presents the research questions and objectives, as well as the research model. In the fourth part, the research contribution and the research processes are provided. At the end of this chapter the research presents the outline of the thesis, which are going to discussed in the coming chapters.

1.2 Background to the study

Employee retention is the ability of an organization to retain its employees (Deo, 2014). Retaining talented and loyal employees is considered one of the major challenges facing private and public organizations in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries in general, and in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in particular (Singh et al., 2012; Suliman & Obaidli, 2011). Losing talented employees has high costs for organizations. Ernst & Young estimates that it costs approximately \$120,000 to replace 10 professionals (Laddha et al., 2012). Laddha et al. (2012) also reported that work by Sibson & Co. suggests that these costs apply irrespective of economic sector. For instance, they found that a fast-food restaurant must sell 7,613 combo meals at \$2.50 each to recoup the cost of losing just one employee. Typically, turnover costs for entry-level employee's amount ranging from 30% to 50% of their annual salary, which rises to 150% of annual salaries for middle-level employees, and

up to 400% of annual salaries for senior, specialized employees. Organizations therefore make considerable efforts to retain their employees. The UAE economy suffers from a high rate of voluntary employee turnover (Suliman & Al Kathairi, 2012; Suliman & Obaidli, 2011; Harhara et al., 2015; Khalife, 2016), but few studies have examined factors affecting turnover there. According to a recent Hays Salary and Employment Report (2016), 31% of employees in the UAE changed jobs in 2015, with no less than 50% intending to leave their job in 2016. This trend highlights the importance of the issue of turnover in the UAE context and justifies the need for further research (Hays Salary and Employment Report, 2016).

The healthcare sector in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi has been undergoing sustained expansion since 2008 (Health Authority of Abu Dhabi, 2012). This has meant increased demand for expert workforce in both the private sector and among public providers of healthcare services. This development has intensified the challenge of sustaining employee engagement and managing talent retention in public sector healthcare organizations, as they strive to compete with private providers. The EFQM model is widely used by public healthcare organizations in the UAE to build an excellence culture governed by a well-known structured framework. The importance of this study is partially derived from the UAE government's promotion of the importance of creating a culture of excellence in public and private sector entities, through different award schemes. These include the Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence Performance (ADAEP), the Dubai Quality Award (DQA), and the Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award (SKEA). These schemes seek to encourage government organizations to develop a culture of promoting best practice by providing recognition for complying. The model for excellence adopted by the UAE government is that of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). This supports the achievement and maintenance of performance levels that exceed stakeholder expectations. The EFQM was founded in 1988 to help European organizations to become competitive in the international

marketplace (Gómez Gómez et al., 2011). The first quality award was delivered in the UAE in 1992, using the organizational excellence model as a framework to evaluate organizational performance (Jafari, 2013). In this research, an organizational culture that leads to excellent performance is defined as a ‘culture of excellence’. Hence, this research assesses the impact of the EFQM model and practices on employee retention. More detailed information about the EFQM model is included in both the next section and in Chapter 2.

Several healthcare entities have received awards for creating an excellence culture and using practices from the EFQM model (EFQM, 2013, see Appendix 3). However, employee retention remains a challenge in the public healthcare sector. This research therefore investigates the effectiveness of current practices in retaining talent in healthcare organizations. The study aimed to address the issue that public healthcare entities maintain high standards of practice based on the EFQM model feedback report conducted by the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce in 2018 (SEHA Accomplishments; Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Awards Winners, n.d.), but the challenge of retaining talent remains critical in this sector because of competition from the private healthcare sector (Health Authority of Abu Dhabi, 2012). Talent management was originally a concept from the performing arts, but has now become a powerful strategic force in universities, businesses, hospitals and government units (Al Hammadi et al., 2020). After a boom in the UAE in both public and private sectors, many firms initiated plans for meeting their future talent needs (Ulrich et al., 2009). Retaining talent in the UAE government sector has been a major challenge for a long time. The benefits of a strong talent management strategy include recruitment and retention rates (Al Hammadi et al., 2020). Retaining knowledgeable employees provides a source to support rapid development (Sigler, 1999). The greatest benefit of talent management is its effect on recruitment and retention of valuable workers. Lalitha (2012) described employee retention as the biggest issue faced by HR in the education sector.

There are several factors that affect employees' decisions to stay in a job, including working environment (Zeytinoglu & Denton, 2005). Working environment is defined as all non-pecuniary elements in a workplace or affecting employees (Chang & Lee, 2008). It is considered an important aspect of employee retention (Bibi et al., 2016). Establishing a culture of excellence therefore affects the workforce retention rate by increasing employee commitment, engagement, and job satisfaction. Enhanced retention rates, sharing of knowledge, and recognition have been reported to raise individual and organizational performance (Suresh, 2014). Kassem et al. (2016) observed that alignment of employee retention practices with a framework of excellence is an essential part of standardization. Its goal is to sustain organizational performance standardization, as a strategy to support growth of the UAE economy and international competitiveness. AlQubaisi (2017) mentioned that the UAE government has committed to a robust framework of assessment of public sector organizational performance with a view to achieving the UAE Federal Vision 2021 and the Emirate of Abu Dhabi Vision 2030 of becoming among the best governments in the world. The UAE Vision requires all UAE public organizations, including hospitals, to comply with the framework adopted as a reference for the excellence awards, which draws on the EFQM model. A robust culture is necessary for the development of the UAE economy, growth and competitive advantage (Firdous, 2020). This is especially true because organizations in the UAE have a multicultural and multinational workforce looking for opportunities to work (Suliman & Al-Junaibi, 2010)

1.3 Workplace culture and employee retention

Employee retention strategies are intentional moves by organizations to encourage employees to remain with the organization (Samuel & Chipunza, 2009) as a way to improve long-term organizational performance. Many practices designed to improve organizational

performance therefore also affect employee retention and vice versa. The selection of employee retention strategies is usually supported by indicators that reflect both organizational performance and employee views and skills, including knowledge retention, efficiency, productivity, customer satisfaction, and employee engagement and job satisfaction (Brunges, 2014; Cappelli, 2000; Davidson & Wang, 2011; Hausknecht, Trevor, & Howard, 2009; Hill, 2009; Laddha et. al., 2012; Muthuveloo et. al., 2013; Suresh, 2014; Ton & Huckman, 2008).

Workplace culture is one of the factors that most affects employee commitment, engagement, and job satisfaction (Brunges, 2014), and therefore retention. Schein (2010) defined organizational culture as the shared beliefs, values, and norms in an organization. He noted that they affect how employees feel, think, and behave at work. Organizational culture creates the values of an institution through the manners and behaviors of individuals and the collective attitudes and behavior of the organization (Aksoy et al., 2014).

1.4 Models of organizational excellence

The right culture can enhance employee performance, leading to goal achievement and increasing the overall performance of an organization (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). A performance-improving culture is generally considered to be one that has a robust focus on excellence and quality. Quality has different meanings, but has been defined as excellence (Peters & Waterman, 1982). It requires an ongoing process of continuous improvement. This perspective informs excellence models, which provide a framework for the strategic management of organizations (Martín-Castilla & Rodrigo, 2003). These models are usually adopted to develop an organizational culture that will improve employee performance, satisfaction, and confidence in their ability to solve work-related issues (Kotter & Heskett, 1992). There are several excellence models, including the EFQM model, which is used in the

UAE. Quality and business excellence awards are usually based on one or more excellence models and underpinned by criteria. Organizations are judged against these criteria, or use them as guidelines to help them improve, by generating activities that promote a culture of business excellence among employees (Kassem et al., 2016, Zairi & Alsughayir, 2011).

Several studies and published papers have discussed factors affecting organizational excellence. The concept of organizational excellence is based on total quality management principles. Companies using the concept follow a range of initiatives, tools, and techniques (Adebanjo, 2001). An employee attitudes study in the late 1990s compared two groups of employees, those committed to the organization and those planning to leave. Many of the critical differences between the two groups related to the quality of performance management. The main factors were planning, developing, monitoring and rewarding (Mosley & Hurley, 1999).

There is considerable enthusiasm for models of excellence, but limited empirical evidence of their success. One meta-analysis examined 24 studies from the period 2002 to 2012 to establish what empirical evidence is available that performance is enhanced through interventions using the criteria of the EFQM Excellence Model. It concluded that there is very limited evidence because most studies were descriptive and lacked effective control groups (Doeleman et al., 2013). There were no random comparative studies or systematic reviews to support the reliability of the EFQM model. However, Santos-Vijande and Alvarez-Gonzalez (2007) conducted a survey to generate data for confirmatory factor analysis to test the relationships between total quality management practices and organizational performance. They aimed to provide empirical evidence about the relationship between management practices and measures of business performance using structural equation modeling. Their findings suggested that the use of total quality management practices, such as those used in the EFQM excellence model, allows firms to outperform their competitors. The model was

particularly helpful in improving services to achieve competitive advantage. This finding supports the UAE government's strategy of using excellence models to build a strong competitive economy, even though many other studies have noted that success in applying management models such as the EFQM Excellence Model is not guaranteed. The value of using models like the EFQM Excellence Model varies with commitment (Doeleman et al., 2013). Many companies have experienced challenges when using these models because of the sophisticated assessment criteria, excessive paperwork, bulky procedures or a lack of focus. This has limited their use in practice (Dahlgaard et al., 2013). This model was chosen because the UAE Government has consistently supported and used it to encourage excellence practices in the public sector, including healthcare organizations, and drive continuous improvement toward a leading position in the world. An excellence culture became mandated as part of strategic planning, and government documents state that government entities should move towards excellence. All organizations were required to include the term "excellence" in organizational core values, vision or mission (Abu Dhabi Planning Guidelines, 2014).

1.5 Developing an excellence culture in the UAE

The increase in the GDP from 1971, the year of UAE establishment, to 1996, the year of adopting the excellence model was 66.5 billion. Whereas the difference in GDP after adaptation of the excellence model till 2019 was 348 billion. The UAE is currently the world's seventh largest producer of both natural gas and oil (World Bank, 2019). However, the non-oil sector now contributes around two-thirds of GDP. The budget set by the government of AED 48.5 billion for 2016, with zero deficits, demonstrates its strong position and its determination to maintain its projects in major sectors such as social development, healthcare, and the preservation of the environment, infrastructure, and culture, linked to the UAE Vision 2021 (AlQubaisi, 2017). Abu Dhabi's Vision 2030 includes a detailed plan for

the expansion of the Emirate's economy and a marked rise in the contribution of the non-oil sector to GDP by 2030. The UAE government has allocated billions of funds for social services, including healthcare. For example, 47% of the budget in 2012 was for social services (Khan, 2012).

The UAE government has made considerable effort over the last ten years to increase the accountability of public organizations for outcomes. The main focus has been on enhancing the performance of government organizations or projects to improve government services (AlQubaisi, 2017). This has been reflected in a focus on building a culture of excellence, to increase employee retention rate, commitment, engagement and job satisfaction. Increasing retention, knowledge-sharing, and recognition are all seen as ways to raise individual and organizational performance (Suresh, 2014). Performance management is imperative to ensure the sustainability and competitiveness of an organization in modern-day global knowledge economies. The UAE government has aimed to develop an organizational culture using the excellence model in the public sector. The model adopted by the government has been modified to fit the governmental desire to support a more diverse economy, develop an innovative and agile governmental system to face international crises, such as pandemics, and improve overall performance and system efficiency (Al Muhairi, 2020). The model is supported by the UAE National Quality Awards, launched in 1989 (Mavroidis et al., 2007). The Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award and the Dubai Quality Award were the first two awards established, and both were influenced by the EFQM model (Nambiar, 2012).

1.6 Statement of the problem

The high turnover in the services sector in general and the healthcare sector in particular, especially the public healthcare sector, means that re-assessing current employee retention

practices in the UAE is becoming critical. Employee turnover in the UAE costs organizations about \$2.7 billion annually (Khalife, 2016). Several studies have suggested that around half of the UAE workforce is planning to move from their organization at any given time (Hays Salary and Employment Report, 2016; Nair, 2017). This results in a level of staff turnover in the UAE that is higher than the global average. These indicators suggest that it is important to investigate the excellence framework practices invested in and mandated by the UAE government as a way to create a robust work culture across all service sectors, and address the poor levels of employee retention in the region. The scope of the research is to investigate the current use of practices from the excellence model framework (EFQM, 2013), and employees' perceptions of these practices. Closing this gap in the literature will help HR specialists, government strategists, researchers, excellence experts, and decision- and policy-makers to define priorities and optimize investment in resources to sustain excellent performance among individuals and organizations.

This study also aims to address a gap in the research and explain why public healthcare entities still struggle with turnover, despite reports showing that they maintain high levels of practices from the EFQM model (SEHA Accomplishments, Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award Winners (2018), n.d.). In particular, the issue of competition from the private healthcare sector is considered critical (Health Authority of Abu Dhabi, 2012).

The aim of the thesis is to fill the research gap by introducing 20 hypotheses to define the precise impact of excellence practices on sample groups defined by demographic characteristics. Some studies suggest that the EFQM attributes may not be sufficient as an effective tool to improve organizational performance, although others disagree and support the outcome of the model. However, no studies have provided a detailed examination of the fundamental concepts as expected outcomes from organizational adoption of the EFQM model.

The healthcare sector is regarded as the one of the most critical sectors in the UAE. Rashid and Jusoff (2009) argued that healthcare services, relative to other service sector operations, are riskier. Increasing numbers of studies also now explore the public sector as a context (Bright, 2008). The healthcare sector is therefore an attractive setting for studying turnover intention in the UAE. Other reasons for this choice include:

1. There is a limited number of studies on the public healthcare sector that show that motivation factors can reduce turnover (Nowak et al., 2010; Willis-Shattuck et al., 2008).
2. The UAE government has allocated large amounts of money to improving healthcare (Khan, 2012).
3. Many studies in western countries have claimed that the healthcare sector is problematic and stress-inducing compared to the other sectors (Yassi et al., 2002). This is likely to increase turnover intention.

1.7 Research significance

The study's goal was to help organizations to sustain successful performance. This is a key part of the UAE government's Vision 2021 and Abu Dhabi's Vision 2030 to become one of the best governments in the world. It will also support the standardization of systems and frameworks for government, which will help to create sustainable competitive advantage for different governmental departments and entities (DQA, official website). Happy employees are essential for happy customers, and to enable innovation, and sharing knowledge and best practices. Many studies have explored the impact of business model on employee retention, but few have assessed the use of excellence models as organizational business models. The excellence model assessment tool RADAR (Results, Approach, Deploy, Assess and Refine), which is one of the main elements used to assess organizational practices

and maturity (EFQM, 2013), was used to measure effectiveness of practices in sustaining performance. Chapter 2 provides more information about the main parts of the EFQM model.

Gómez Gómez et al. (2011) cast some doubts on the impact of ISO 9000 standards and the EFQM model on companies' success. They found that the model does not behave in the way that its designers expected. In particular, two of the variables were not sufficiently correlated with the others to be part of the complete model. The model was therefore tested without these two variables. This suggests that these two variables are not enablers in the way envisaged in the EFQM model. The paper concluded that a deeper analysis of the EFQM criteria might present better outcomes. The sub-level criteria have also not yet been investigated, providing support for the initial aim of this thesis.

The healthcare sector in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi has been booming since 2008 (Health Authority of Abu Dhabi, n.d.). This has attracted an expert workforce to operate in either the private sector or public health services providers. It has, however, also made it challenging to manage talent retention in public sector healthcare organizations in an open market.

Employee retention is a global challenge that affects the sustainability of organizational success. Retaining talented and loyal employees is considered one of the major challenges for both private and public sector organizations in the GCC countries, and in the UAE in particular (Suliman & Al Obaidli, 2011). The government is therefore promoting an excellence culture as a way to enhance employee retention. Very few studies have investigated this issue in the UAE context, especially not considering several factors as moderators of relationships. This study therefore explored the implication of job level, background, years of experience and organization size as moderators of the relationships between the model variables. The UAE is the first country in the region to use this approach. It aims to leverage the government's ambition to move toward establishing e-government and

smart services through business excellence programs and quality awards (Kassem et al., 2016). The outcome of this research will help decision-makers to prioritize retention strategies. It should therefore help public sector healthcare organizations to compete more effectively for talent against the private healthcare sector, a particular issue in this context (Health Authority of Abu Dhabi, 2012).

1.8 Justification for the research

The efforts of employees can determine the success and survival of an organization (Krishnan et al., 2013). Previous papers have found a relationship between employee retention and other variables such as performance, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship. Others have explored the impact of business model on employee retention. However, few if any have assessed the effect of using a model of excellence as an organizational business model. The UAE government has promoted the use of a standardized performance model in public sector organizations, which makes them more comparable. The outcomes of this research will therefore help decision-makers across government to prioritize retention strategies based on their effect on organizational performance.

The research is rooted in the premise that employee retention requires organizations to create an environment in which employees are willing to stay. To encourage organizational loyalty among employees, the first step towards effective retention is accepting the reality that movement of employees is governed by both the organization and the market (Suresh & Krishnaraj, 2015). Culture is a critical dimension to explore, but other variables may also affect employee retention. This study focused mainly the creation of an excellence culture, because this has been promoted by the UAE government (AlQubaisi, 2017; Kassem et al., 2016).

A popular view is that the right culture leads to better performance (Deal & Kennedy, 1983). The UAE government's approach is rooted in this view, and the idea that wide implementation of the excellence model will create a standardized excellence culture over the whole public sector, which in turn will improve performance across the whole sector. As mentioned above (Kassem et al., 2016), the UAE is the first country in the region to use this approach to leverage the government's ambition to move toward business excellence programs and high-quality services. Organizational leaders are expected to set goals and objectives that are ambitious and realistic, but supported across the organization. This will enhance organizational excellence, through building a culture with a mission and clear strong strategic goals to achieve a common view of a desired future state. has a strong positive relationship with business excellence. Sharing perspectives improves coordination of projects across functional units. Establishing good alignment of goals across levels will enable organizations to reach excellence (Kassem et al., 2016).

This study therefore aimed to assess the impact of excellence model practices on employee retention, and test the impact of job level, background, years of experience and organization size as a moderator.

1.9 Research questions and research objectives

1.9.1 Research questions

The study's research questions were:

- RQ1. Do knowledge and capabilities affect employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations?
- RQ2. Do empowerment, involvement and alignment affect employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations?
- RQ3. Does effective communication affect employee retention in the UAE public

sector healthcare organizations?

- RQ4. Do reward and recognition affect employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations?
- RQ5. Does the job level moderate the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations?
- RQ6. Does background moderate the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations?
- RQ7. Do the years of experience moderate the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations?
- RQ8. Does the organization size moderate the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations?

1.9.2 Research objectives

The study aimed to assess the impact of one of the fundamental concepts of the EFQM excellence model on employee retention in the UAE public healthcare sector. This fundamental concept is “*succeeding through the talent of people (STP)*”, and the variables are

knowledge and capability; effective communication; and rewards and recognition. The research objectives were therefore:

1. To investigate the effect of the knowledge and capabilities on the employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.
2. To investigate the effect of the empowerment, involvement and alignment on the employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.
3. To investigate the effect of the effective communications on the employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.
4. To investigate the effect of the reward and recognition on the employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.
5. To investigate the moderating effect of job level on the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.
6. To investigate the moderating effect of background on the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.
7. To investigate the moderating effect of years of experience on the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.
8. To investigate the moderating effect of organization size on the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and

employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

This will help these organizations to formulate efficient strategies for sustaining organizational performance through talent retention.

1.10 Contribution of the study

1.10.1 Academic contribution

The research problem addressed by this study was how to sustain successful performance in UAE public sector healthcare organizations by sustained use of talent, assessing the impact of demographic factors such as job level as a moderator. It is thought that adoption of the EFQM excellence model has contributed to public sector development in the UAE over the past few years (Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award, n.d.). The drive has been the gradual development of smart government, and now digitalized government, as a matter of normal progress towards becoming one of the best governments in the world.

The EFQM model is used as a standard way to assess government performance towards the Vision 2021. One of the model concepts is to sustain success through talent. This was tested in this study by examining the factors affecting employee retention, including the moderating role of the job level, background, years of experience and organization size.

1.10.2 Managerial contribution

This research will help organizational decision-makers and academic researchers to define the factors that support employee retention in general, and in healthcare organizations in particular. The study focuses on public sector healthcare organizations using the EFQM model. The research assessed the relationship between employee retention and four factors: knowledge and capabilities, empowerment and involvement, effective communication and recognition and rewards. It also assessed the potential moderating role of job level,

background, years of experience and organization size on these relationships. The outcome of this research will help decision-makers to prioritize retention strategies. It should therefore help public sector healthcare organizations to compete more effectively for talent.

The research findings may also be useful in private healthcare organizations, although further research would be needed to determine if other factors may be more important there. The use of a standardized excellence model across public sector organizations in the UAE means that the results may also be more widely generalizable. Future studies might compare other sectors such as aviation, tourism, or manufacturing. Future research might also examine other regions where no model of excellence has been adopted to assess if the same outcomes will be achieved.

1.11 The research processes

Figures 1.1 shows the process used in this research study.

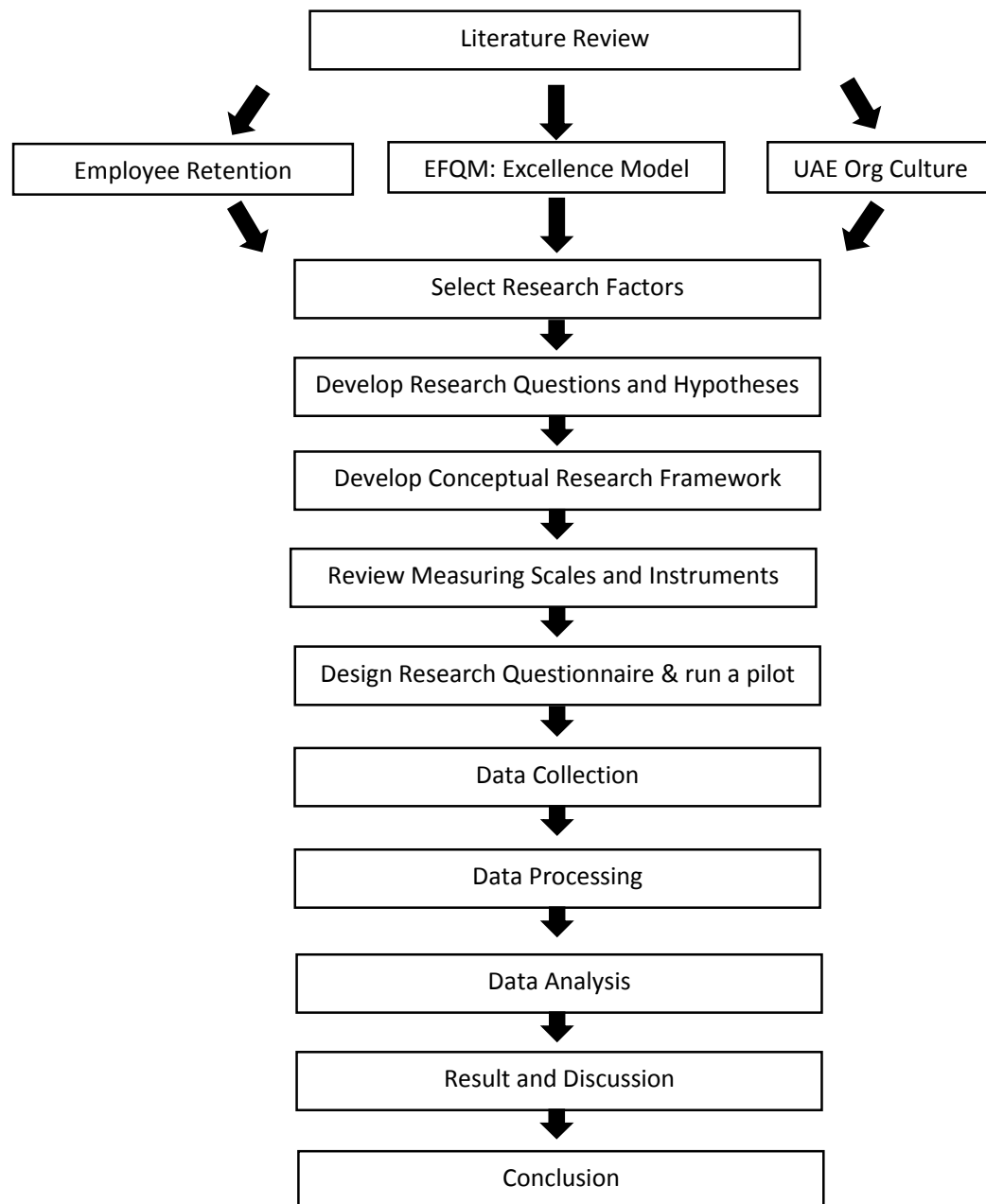


Figure 1.1. The research processes

1.12 Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is organized as follows. Chapter 2 presents the literature review, Chapter 3 discusses the research framework, and Chapter 4 the research methodology.

Chapter 5 describes the analysis, and presents the results. Finally, Chapter 6 discusses the results, and sets out implications, limitations and suggestions for future research.

1.13 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the thesis. It has provided the background to the work, including international practices in organizational culture and retention, and the development of an excellence culture in the UAE. It then set out the problem statement, gap analysis, research objectives and questions, research model, contribution of the study, research process and the structure of the dissertation. The next chapter reviews the literature and discusses research variables to develop the conceptual framework and related hypotheses.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews previous studies to identify possible model variables, and the relationships among them. It then develops research hypotheses to test using the research methodology, which is described in Chapter 3.

2.2 Employee retention

Employee retention strategies are intentional moves by organizations to build an environment which encourages employees to stay in the long term (Samuel & Chipunza, 2009). Deo (2014) noted that organizations need to hire knowledgeable and skillful people, but they also need to focus on retaining them. Deo (2014) suggested that retention was probably the more important process.

Working environment is defined as all the non-pecuniary elements that surround employees at work (Chang & Lee, 2008). Some authors have suggested that it is only one of the factors that affect employees' decision to stay with the organization (Zeytinoglu & Denton, 2005). However, others consider it vital in influencing employee retention (Bibi et al., 2016). Work environment can have both positive and negative effects on job outcomes like involvement, commitment, and intention to stay in an organization (Ollukkaran & Gunaseelan, 2012).

2.2.1 Retention Consequences

The problem of employee retention is not new (Kumar & Mathimaran, 2017). Human resources are among the most valuable and important resources for any organization (Bibi et al., 2016). Replacing an employee increases operational costs because of the cost of filling vacancies and training new employees (Dess & Shaw, 2001).

Employee turnover is estimated to cost companies 30 to 50% of the annual salary of entry level employees, 150% of middle-level employees and up to 400% for upper level specialized employees (Laddha et al., 2012). Tuzun and Kalemci (2012) found that the cost of employee turnover was even higher. For example, in the UAE, employee turnover costs organizations about AED 9.9 billion per year (Iqbal, 2010; Suliman & Obaidli, 2011). When experienced employees are lost, production suffers first from the loss of the employee and then from the time it takes to train a new employee (Krishnan et al., 2013; Surbakti & Ta'a, 2016). New employees have to be inducted, trained and developed, which all incur costs (Leena & Lissy, 2012).

Employee turnover often results in a drain on management time and creates pressures in workforce planning. Intangible costs include the negative impact on culture of poor employee morale and the adverse effect on social capital and erosion of organizational memory (Leena & Lissy, 2012). If organizations fail to retain employees, the workload of the remaining employees increases (Guha & Chakrabarti, 2015).

2.2.2 Factors affecting retention

To encourage organizational loyalty among employees, the first step towards effective retention is acceptance of the reality that movement of employees is governed by both the organization and the market (Suresh & Krishnaraj, 2015). Enhancing organizational justice and improving quality of work life can have practical effects that ultimately improve employee retention (Gifford et al., 2002). Kundu and Lata (2017) and Mangi et al. (2011) argued that creating a good working environment, including physical conditions, helps to improve performance, commitment and willingness to stay with the organization.

Several factors have been suggested to be helpful in retaining employees. Human resource management (HRM) practices such as compensation, training and development, and

performance appraisal are known to be particularly important. Organizations need to use proper HR practices, including compensation, training and development, and performance appraisal support (Walia & Bajaj, 2012). Studies have suggested that these practices explain why some employees are less committed and less likely to stay in organizations (Sohail & Delin, 2013).

Retention of high performers, in turn, is key to delivery of service quality (Bharwani & Butt, 2012). Ng'ethe et al. (2012) argued that retaining employees was necessary to improve operations and ultimately, to achieve competitive advantage. Akila (2012) argued that employee retention is beneficial for all organizations.

Employees are more likely to stay if they are committed to their organization. Hausknecht et al. (2009) found that job satisfaction, extrinsic rewards, constituent attachments, organizational commitment, and organizational prestige were the most frequently mentioned reasons for staying with an organization. Commitment is often associated with clarity and understanding of roles and responsibility (Ababneh, 2016). Studies have found a positive relationship between the level of sharing knowledge and individual performance measured by innovation, job satisfaction, job roles and responsibilities, communication in teamwork, and speed of completing tasks (Abdullah, 2017). Organizational performance is closely linked to individual performance.

Studies therefore suggest that creating a working environment that encourages commitment will improve individual employee commitment and performance, which in turn will improve organizational performance. Better human resource practices are associated with a better working environment, and therefore better performance, and in turn, a culture of excellence. This thinking underpins the adoption of excellence frameworks and models.

2.3 European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Model

The EFQM Excellence Model was created in 1990 to provide a framework for organizations wishing to improve (Kamoche et al., 2015). The model helps organizations or companies to assess performance and focus on performance improvement (EFQM, 2012). Watson (2002) stated that the EFQM model provides a quality system with a mechanism for achieving continuous organizational improvement. The model can be used as a diagnostic tool or standard to examine the ‘health’ of a business activity or process (Andersen et al. 2000). It can also help organizations to discover their strengths and identify areas for improvement (EFQM, 2001). Identifying areas for improvement guides organizations to take specific corrective actions to improve their performance (Pupius & Steed, 2003).

The EFQM model can also be used as an inter-organizational performance benchmarking tool. It therefore has an advantage over other models such as the performance prism model which do not explicitly address benchmarking procedures (Cartmell, 2014). Benchmarking encourages improvements in organizational performance (Andersen et al., 2000). The keys to successful implementation of the EFQM model are the availability of facilities and supportive management, bottom-up approach, orientation towards program improvement, specific programs, and reliable internal networking (Cartmell, 2014).

The model contains three components (EFQM, 2017):

1. Fundamental concepts that outline the principles providing the foundation for sustainable excellence;
2. A framework to help companies convert the fundamental concepts into practice; and
3. An effective tool for systematic development in all areas of the enterprise, following RADAR approach to assess the organization initiatives and practices. The word is a collective of the first letter of each assessment process (R: Results, A: Approach, D:

Deployment and AR: Assess and Refine). Each of these process is assessing the practices based on 100%)

2.3.1 Fundamental concepts of the EFQM model

The key concepts of excellence define the inspiration for achieving sustainable excellence in any business (EFQM, 2013). They also may be used to explain the attributes of unique organizational subcultures (Hamzah, 2017, Kamoche et al., 2015), and provide an important, unifying language for benchmarking (Figure 2.1). The model (EFQM, 2013) sets out “eight fundamental standards:

1. Adding value for customers: excellent organizations consistently add value for their customers by understanding, anticipating and fulfilling needs, expectations and opportunities.
2. Creating a sustainable future: excellent organizations have a positive impact on the world around them by enhancing their performance whilst simultaneously advancing the economic, environmental and social conditions within the communities they touch.
3. Developing organizational capability: excellent organizations enhance their capabilities by effectively managing change within and beyond the organizational boundaries.
4. Harnessing creativity and innovation: excellent organizations generate increased value and levels of performance through continual improvement and systematic innovation by harnessing the creativity of their stakeholders.
5. Leading with vision, inspiration and integrity: excellent organizations have leaders who shape the future and make it happen, acting as role models for its values and

ethics.

6. Managing with agility: excellent organizations are widely recognized for their ability to identify and respond effectively and efficiently to opportunities and threats.
7. Succeeding through the talent of people: excellent organizations value their people and create a culture of empowerment for the achievement of both organizational and personal goals.
8. Sustaining outstanding results: excellent organization achieve sustained outstanding results that meet both the short- and long-term needs of all their stakeholders within the context of their operating environment.”

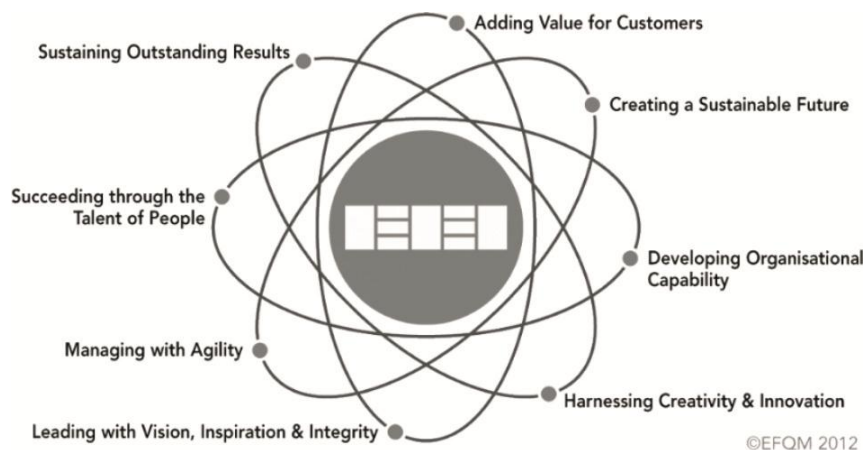


Figure 2.1. Fundamental principles of business excellence (EFQM, 2013)

2.3.2 EFQM model criteria

The EFQM model is based on a framework of nine criteria. Five of these are enablers and the rest are results. The enablers cover what the organization does, and the results cover what it achieves (Figure 2.2). The results are therefore generated or caused by the enablers. The enablers are leadership, people, strategy, partnership and resources, processes, and

products and services (Hamzah, 2017). The results are customer results, people results, society results, and business results (EFQM, 2012).

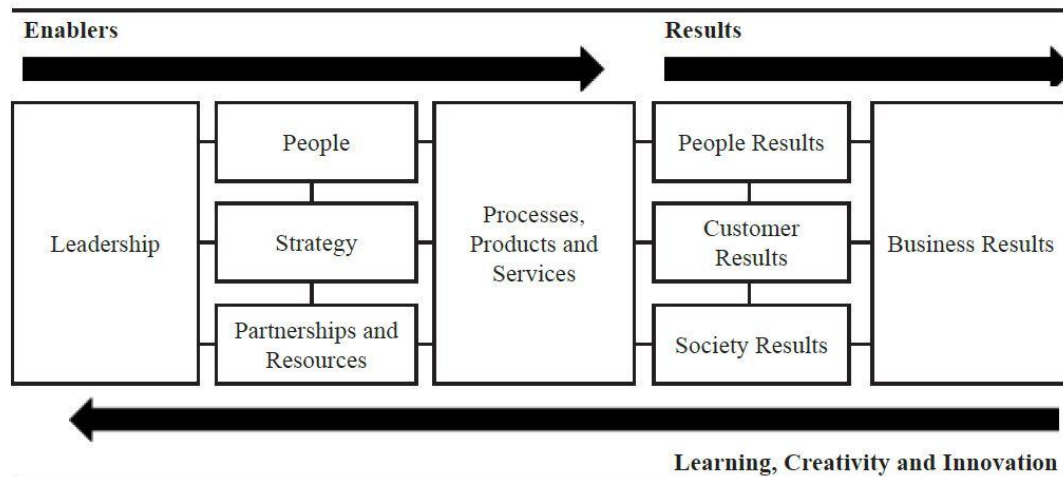


Figure 2.2. EFQM Business Excellence Model (EFQM, <http://www.efqm.org>)

2.3.3 Adoption of the EFQM model

In the early 1990s, the EFQM Excellence Model, also known as the INK management model or the CAF model in the Netherlands and Belgium, became widely used both nationally and internationally (Doeleman et al., 2013). Many organizations around the world have now adopted the model as an organizational development framework. Indeed, according to Dahlgaard et al. (2013), the use of business excellence models has become standard in the last twenty years. The EFQM model has been adopted in Australia, Singapore and other regions in Asia, with some modifications based on regional priorities (Dahlgaard et al., 2013). The use of the Excellence Model is designed to build a culture where excellence practices are embedded (Sandbrook, 2010). It therefore cannot be seen as “nine unconnected

boxes”, or a slogan, or empty scoring exercises. The purpose of the enablers must be clear. Dahlgaard et al., (2013) observed that senior managers need to use the model to develop a strategy for change including clarity about purpose and how its achievement is measured, to identify key delivery processes and how they are supported. Managers also need to agree on a method for improvement. Improvement works best where process owners are identified and made responsible, and where staff and other stakeholders are widely included. García-Bernal et al. (2004) suggested that organizations must recognize that the EFQM model is a holistic framework, and the elements interrelate. To improve performance, organizations need to consider the interrelationship of the factors. An improvement in only some criteria will therefore not necessarily result in an improvement in performance.

The EFQM model was chosen as a standard to assess government performance in the UAE, as a way to achieve the government’s Vision 2021 to be one of the best governments in the world. The idea was to develop a standardized excellence culture over the whole country. The UAE is the first country in the region to use this approach, and leverage the government ambition to move toward establishing e-government and smart services as a way to introduce business excellence programs and quality approaches (Kassem et al., 2016).

Savic et al., (2014) noted that the EFQM criteria can be used to develop and improve the functioning of the company system and develop Total Quality Management (TQM) practices. It is a powerful framework for improvement, change, and regular management at all levels, as well as for training and sharing best practices (Sandbrook, 2010). Santos-Vijande, and Alvarez-Gonzalez (2007) found adopting the TQM practices suggested in the EFQM excellence model allowed firms to outperform their competitors and contributed to improving services.

This study used concepts from the EFQM model to narrow down the field of the study. It focused in particular on the fundamental concept of succeeding through the talent of

people. The attribute mapping of the model suggests that this concept is influenced by several factors, or attributes of the model. It is expressed as:

- People's knowledge and capabilities are developed.
- People are aligned, involved, and empowered.
- People communicate effectively throughout the organization.
- People are rewarded, recognized and cared for.

Table 2.1: The theoretical framework of the research derived from the integration of the fundamental concepts with excellence model criteria

Criteria	1. Leadership					2. Strategy				3. People					4. Partners & Resources					5. Processes, Products & Services				
Criterion	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e
Succeeding through the Talent of People											✓	✓	✓	✓										

Note: Attributes 3.b, 3.c, 3.d and 3.e (below) are the factors that influence ability to succeed through the talent of people:

3.b People's knowledge and capabilities are developed.

3.c People are aligned, involved, and empowered.

3.d People communicate effectively throughout the organization.

3.e People are rewarded, recognized and cared for.

Source : EFQM (2013), p. 21 - see Appendix 3

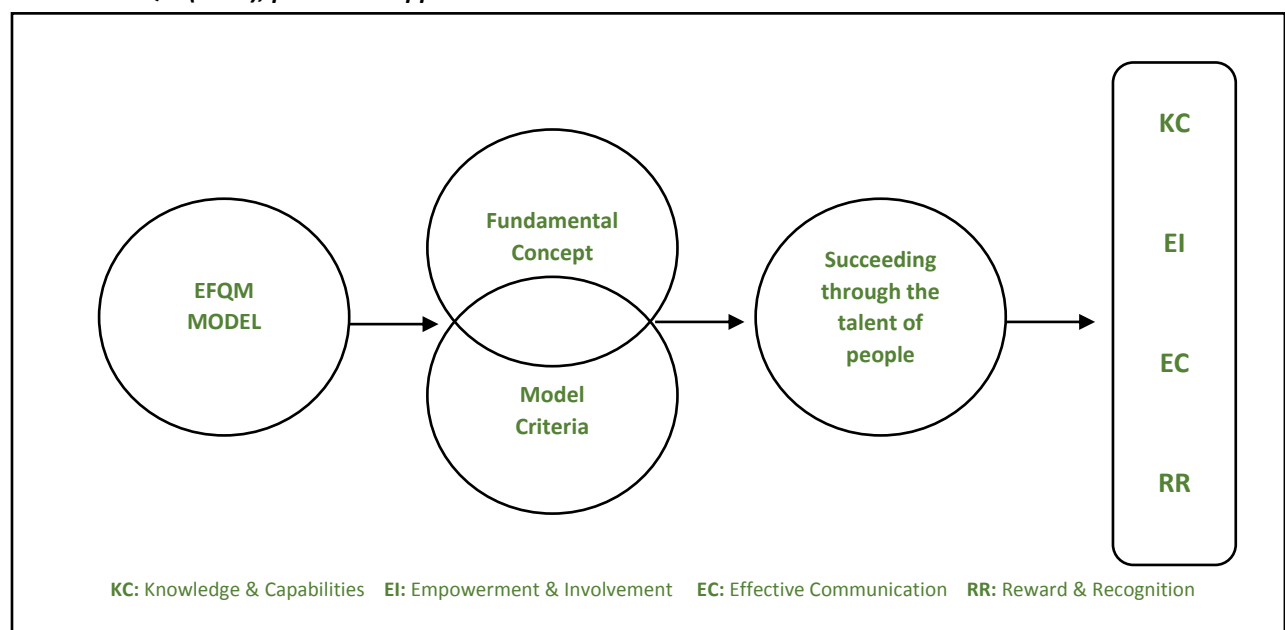


Figure 2.3: Exploratory model of the link between the EFQM model and the research model based on the fundamental concept “Succeeding through the talent of people”. *Extracted By the author from EFQM, 2013, p.21*

The above concept variables are represented in Figure (1.1) as a research model. This study aimed to explore the fundamental concepts that enhance ability to succeed through the talent of people. It therefore used the attributes considered to contribute, because these are likely to affect employee retention. These attributes were therefore used as a conceptual model for the theoretical framework of the research, with job level considered as a moderator of the relationships between these variables and employee retention.

2.4 Study variables and hypotheses

This study presents an exploration of employee retention using a conceptual model that discusses the factors underpinning the fundamental concept of “succeeding through the talent of people” in the EFQM Excellence model (EFQM, 2013). These factors are knowledge and capabilities, involvement and empowerment, effective communication, and rewards and recognition. The study also explored the impact of job level, background, years of experience and organization size as a moderator of the relationships between these variables and employee retention. Excellent organizations value their people and create a culture of empowerment for the achievement of both organizational and personal goals (EFQM 2013).

The independent variables were identified from the EFQM Excellence Model attributes, and the literature review was used to identify other influencing factors such as demographic factors. The goal of this research was to examine the relationships between the elements contributing to succeeding through the talent of people and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations, and assess the moderating role of demographic factors such as job level on these relationships.

Figure 1.1 shows that the related factors were narrowed down to four research dimensions. Organizational culture was considered to be a critical dimension, but other variables were also considered to affect retention of talent in an organization. The study was therefore able to take into consideration the excellence framework promoted by the UAE government to improve the country's economy and competitiveness (AlQubaisi, 2017; Kassem et al., 2016).

2.4.1 Knowledge and capabilities

There are a number of practices that support excellence in organizational performance and facilitate the management of people's knowledge and capabilities (EFQM, 2013). They include knowledge sharing. This can be a way to develop people's skills and competencies, and enable future mobility and employability. It may be based on a well-defined career plan that effectively meets the needs of talented personnel. Paying attention to this aspect of organizational culture improves the viability of human resources and creates new opportunities.

Knowledge management has become increasingly important in recent years (Suresh, 2014). Studies have highlighted that knowledge sharing is a major aspect of knowledge management, and is also an important cause of employee retention that feeds directly into a positive attitude toward the workplace. It can therefore be used as a strategic tool by executives to keep teams motivated (Surbakti & Ta'a, 2016). The main purpose behind sharing knowledge is to spread expertise and enable decision-making at lower level. This will improve knowledge management and personnel retention, since employees are more likely to stay where their views and suggestions are considered important (Surbakti & Ta'a, 2016).

The term knowledge sharing is used to describe communication strategies, policies, and techniques intended to develop and sustain competitive advantages. All those practices

aim to create an optimal environment for realizing efficiency enhancement, modernization, and teamwork (Iqbal & Mahmood, 2012). Knowledge sharing nurtures the organizational capabilities necessary for creating economic value and sustainable competitive advantage, and achieving superior organizational performance (Keelson, 2014; Morris et al., 2014). Conversely, lack of knowledge sharing among employees and management causes frustration leading to confusion and inefficiencies (Laddha et al., 2012). A lot of talent can be lost if employees perceive themselves to be in dead-end positions (Surbakti & Ta'a, 2016).

Employee retention has been studied by many different scholars. Lynn and Kelly (1997) argued that organizations wanting to retain employees must provide career development opportunities that enable employees to achieve their objectives. When the jobs are at an intermediate level of complexity, job experience has a substantial direct impact on job knowledge and a smaller direct impact on performance capabilities as assessed by job sample measures. Job experience also has a substantial indirect effect on work performance through its effect on job knowledge. This, in turn, was found to be the strongest determinant of work performance (Schmidt et al., 1986). This suggests that creating an inspiring working environment and culture improves performance among individuals because it encourages them to share knowledge and improve their skills. This study therefore hypothesized:

H1: There is a significant relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

2.4.2 Involvement and empowerment

Empowerment is a dynamic and complex phenomenon. The term 'empower' means to give power and energize, or enable. However, there is no agreed theoretical definition of employee empowerment, or what it includes, in the literature. Definitions include increased

involvement of employees in decision making and goal setting or sharing of power or managerial techniques (Abd-El-Salam et al., 2013).

The pursuit of organizational excellence recommends certain practices for aligning, involving, and empowering the workforce (EFQM, 2013). These include personal and team objectives, and empowering people to realize their full potential in a spirit of true partnership. The EFQM model also encourages the creation of flexibility and a culture of innovation across the organization, to ensure people develop an open mindset, can respond quickly to challenges, and feel motivated to contribute.

Studies have confirmed that employee development results in higher engagement. Employee development is also aided by employee empowerment, alignment, and involvement in the workplace (Muthuveloo et al., 2013). In turn, organizational performance is improved when employee engagement is increased, and when staff are empowered and involved in their working environment. Both of these are essential for sustaining high achievement in customer satisfaction, employee retention, and organizational performance (Brunges, 2014; Hanif & Yunfei, 2013).

Interpersonal relationships nurture mutual reliance between employers and employees and, in turn, catalyze a process in which employees develop the skills to take charge of their own development and address their own problems (Abd-El-Salam et al., 2013). Abd-El-Salam et al. (2013) noted that employee empowerment is critically important in today's competitive environment, because it can give a company a sustained advantage. Empowering employees is therefore another valuable option to increase their job satisfaction. Enabling a high degree of empowerment also means that employees may come to possess the knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, and behavior to sustain a more creative and rational problem-solving approach, and to enrich the company's goal-setting (Iqbal & Hashmi, 2015).

Empowerment has a significant effect on employee retention, and it is enhanced by proper training—which in itself is also beneficial to employee retention (Deo, 2014). Brunges (2014) reported that hospitals perform better over time in virtually every measurable category when employees are engaged in what they are doing and committed to their jobs. Psychological empowerment makes individuals engage with decision-making processes on organizational matters by equipping them with a sense of control and independence (Iqbal & Hashmi, 2015; Krishnan et al., 2013; Parwez, 2013). These findings suggest that perceived organizational support yields considerable benefits, not least on employee retention.

According to Ollukkaran and Gunaseelan (2012), work environment can have both positive and negative effects on outcomes like involvement, commitment, and intention to stay in an organization. Kundu and Lata (2017) and Mangi et al. (2011) argued that an attractive working environment, including pleasant physical conditions, encouraged improvements in individual performance, as well as having a positive effect on employee retention and commitment. This study therefore hypothesized:

H2: There is a significant relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

2.4.3 Effective communication

EFQM (2013), organizations must understand the communication needs of employees and use appropriate strategies and tools to develop a dialogue with them. They also need to define the required communication skills, competencies, and requisite level of performance for achieving the organizational mission and strategic goals. Effective communication also captures some features of organizational culture specifically supported by the framework of organizational excellence (EFQM, 2013), to nurture a culture that continuously seeks to improve the effectiveness of team-working and cooperation.

Communication can be further enhanced by the adoption of technology (Laddha et al., 2012; Surbakti & Ta'a, 2016). These papers summarize that recent developments in information technology and communication make it possible to rely on business intelligence applications to scrutinize business processes, market presence, competition, customer control, and retention. In a transparent organization, employees may get a sense of achievement, and of belonging to a healthy work environment. Carney (1998) found that communication was a basic factor in retaining employees.

Organizations can also reduce the risk of high turnover intention among employees by communicating a brand image and its distinctive features (Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2014; Singh et al., 2012). Employer branding can help organizations to recruit and retain key employees (Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2014). Ambler and Barrow (1996) were the first to introduce the term 'employer brand' and defined it as 'the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by the employment and identified with the employing company'. Other studies have described employer branding in different ways. For example, Dabirian et al. (2017) described it as the 'sum of a company's efforts to communicate to both existing and prospective staff that it is a desirable place to work'. Ewing et al. (2002) noted that 'employment branding is concerned with building an image in the minds of the potential labour market that the company, above all others, is a "great place to work"'.

Muthuveloo et al. (2013) concluded that communication is directly related to employee engagement. When development plans, objectives and visions are laid out more clearly, the working environment will be more transparent, and this in turn will result in higher employee commitment. A focus on organizational service orientation and employee satisfaction can also improve retention rates (Kasekende et al., 2013). On a conceptual level, too many models ignore the fact that engagement is a two-way process (Singh et al., 2012), and therefore requires communication. In today's global economy, every organizational

leader must continually invest in human capital to combat the talent shortage (Oladapo, 2014). This study therefore hypothesized:

H3: There is a significant relationship between effective communication and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

2.4.4 Rewards and recognition

The framework for excellence in organizational performance encourages practices of employee reward and recognition. These motivate people to get involved in improvement and innovation efforts and recognize their work and achievements. The delivery of employee benefits through transparent strategies and policies is also recommended, as is promoting a culture of mutual support, recognition, and care between individuals and teams (EFQM, 2013).

Many studies of employee turnover have identified reward and recognition amongst factors consistently linked to turnover. These studies found a clear link between reward and recognition and employee motivation and willingness to stay (Krishnan et al., 2013; Mutsuddi, 2016). Effective management of employee performance, coupled with a robust reward and recognition structure, contributes to higher employee productivity, engagement, and therefore higher levels of employee retention (Krishnan et al., 2013). Muthuveloo et al. (2013) added that reward and recognition policies are direct contributors to the level of employee engagement. They also suggested that an improved regime of extended employee care will lead to higher employee engagement. They concluded that employee development is the most significant contributing factor to employee engagement. The list of contributing factors also includes organizational culture, rewards and recognition, and work–life balance (Arora, 2012). Benefits and rewards enable organizations to achieve competitive advantage, but are also important in retaining employees (Mendonsa, 1998). However, Oladapo (2014)

suggested that job security, compensation, and opportunities for career advancement might not have any predictive value for employee retention rate.

Organizations need to use proper HR practices to retain employees, including an appropriate compensation scheme (Walia & Bajaj, 2012). When employees receive benefits from the organization, they will repay it by being committed and staying for longer (Liao, 2011). A reward and recognition system is one of the most effective tools for motivating employees towards high performance. In an effective organizational reward system, employers ensure that employees are compensated through appropriate means (e.g. pay, merit pay, and bonuses) for achieving specified objectives (Milkovich et al., 2011). This study therefore hypothesized:

H4: There is a significant relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

The literature on the main variables is summarized in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Literature based on research factors

Knowledge	Empowerment	Effective communication	Recognition and rewards	Employee retention
Suresh (2014) Morris et al. (2014) Kashyap and Rangnekar (2014)	Brunges (2014) Morris et al. (2014) Abd-El-Salam et al. (2013) Iqbal and Hashmi (2015) Muthuveloo et al. (2013) Deo (2014)	Singh et al. (2012) Leena and Lissy (2012) Muthuveloo et al. (2013) Kashyap and Rangnekar (2014)	Krishnan et al. (2013) Mutsuddi (2016) Oladapo (2014) Muthuveloo et al. (2013) Arora (2012)	Leena and Lissy (2012) Arora (2012) Suresh and Krishnaraj (2015) Iqbal and Hashmi (2015) Deo (2014) Oladapo (2014)

2.5 Moderator variables in the relationship between employee retention and excellence variables

2.5.1 Job level

The Job level, in this study, was simply defined as managerial level and non-managerial level. The researcher uses this classification as part of the research demographics. Job design and knowledge sharing have become a heavily researched area for managerial studies (Foss et al., 2009). Job characteristics may result in different motivations to share knowledge, which suggests that job level could influence the knowledge and capabilities among employees. Surprisingly, no significant direct relationship has been found between perceived supervisor support and turnover intention. However, this could be worth further investigation (DeConinck & Johnson, 2009; Eisenberger et al., 2002).

Hafez et al. (2017) investigated the impact of demographic factors such as years with the firm on employee retention. They concluded that there were no links between gender, age, education and experience and talent management. However, other studies have suggested that longer employee tenure is associated with lower likelihood of employee turnover (Gary & Phillips, 1994; Somers, 1996). This study therefore decided to investigate the impact of job level on the relationships between the employee retention and the excellence variables.

Nursing could be in different job level, either managerial or non-managerial, have a role in monitoring and balancing the team load and recognize individual efforts by fair assessment of the work involved. They also provide the support as a coach or supervisor for strategic nursing projects. This can affect nurses' performance and commitment toward their work (Van Bogaert et al., 2015).

Previous studies have investigated the impact of nurse job level, and particularly the effect of staff nurse structural empowerment and its impact on nurse manager leadership roles

and style. Structural empowerment required change initiatives to be adopted in the hospital, which affected both units and the hospital. Nurse managers needed to balance their role and leadership style to accomplish these initiatives (Van Bogaert et al., 2015). The study interviewed nurse managers and confirmed that empowerment resulted in increasing staff nurses' communication skills and improved the quality and safety of services. However, Payne (2005) found that the level of job performance and job position (supervisor or non-supervisor) did not influence level of communication competence. This study therefore considered this to be an important area for investigation.

Srivastava et al. (2017) surveyed management teams to examine the roles of knowledge sharing and team efficacy in the relationship between empowering leadership and team performance. Team performance was measured through a time-lagged market-based source. Empowering leadership was positively related to both knowledge sharing and team efficacy, which, in turn, were both positively related to performance.

Empowerment was also affected by knowledge and effective communication, and had an impact on employee retention. Van Bogaert et al. (2013) found that there were many benefits of nurse empowerment, including that it affected nurses' intention to leave the hospital. Empowerment resulted in shared decision-making among staff nurses and others from different levels in the hospital, and greater involvement in influencing hospital policies and governance. It also encouraged staff nurses to develop a shared vision to meet their goals more autonomously (Van Bogaert et al., 2015).

Empowerment can also support both quality improvements and knowledge transfer. It has been found to have a mediating role in nurse–physician relationships. When nurses were empowered, both unit staff and nurse managers exchanged knowledge and clinical practices, and shared experiences (Davies et al., 2011). In an empowering working environment, nurses have access to information, opportunities for learning and personal development, and a

supportive relationship with supervisors, peers and subordinates. This environment therefore enhances both knowledge and capabilities and effective communication (Van Bogaert et al., 2015).

Van Bogaert et al. (2015) suggested that empowerment enhances knowledge and capabilities by offering healthcare workers the capacity to organize their work to meet organizational goals. Nurse managers' role is to provide the team with training recommendations and the essential resources to achieve their goals. These conditions will stimulate team members' empowerment and support continuous quality improvement (Van Bogaert et al., 2015). This will not be achievable unless the dynamics and resources of the clinical teams are respected (White, 2015).

Miles et al. (1996) found that the influence of a superior's communication on job satisfaction was significantly greater for supervisors than hourly employees. They defined four dimensions of superior-subordinate communication (positive relationship communication, upward openness communication, negative relationship communication, and job-relevant communication). All four were significant predictors of hourly employees' job satisfaction. Supervisors reported having a more positive relationship and more upward openness in communication, but these two dimensions were not significant predictors of their job satisfaction.

Payne (2005) applied a three-component model of communication competence (motivation, knowledge, and skill) within an organizational context and analyzed the relationship between job performance, level, and communication competence. High performers had significantly higher levels of motivation to adapt communication, and higher levels of communication skill (empathizing, adapting communication, and managing interactions). Supervisors were also more motivated to communicate and empathize than subordinates (Payne, 2005).

Kalleberg and Van Buren (1996) found that supervisors had higher earnings and more autonomy than non-supervisory staff, but not more fringe benefits or promotion opportunities. This suggests that recognition is affected by job level. However, the effect of job-relevant supervisory communication on turnover intention may be more important among workers at the early stage of their career. For example, Shechtman and Wirzberger (1999) concluded that workers differ in their expectations of supervision with their stage of professional development (Kim & Lee, 2009). This study therefore hypothesized:

H5a: Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention

H5b: Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention

H5c: Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between effective communication and employee retention

H5d: Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention

2.5.2 Background

The researcher defined the group background based on the different categorizations of the profession categorized in the UAE healthcare entities which are; physicians, nurses, allied health and admin staff.

Van Bogaert et al. (2015) also found that nurses' work became more structured, uniform and transparent across procedures and communication strategies as a way to support quality improvement. In other words, the background was affected by the model variables as per the research on hand. This also increased nurse engagement. McLean et al. (2011) found that there were differences between professional groups in communication skills. Nurses

tended to feel less confident about their communication skills than doctors, but both groups avoided discussions about psychosocial issues.

Ma et al. (2019) found that use of “commitment” had a significant relationship with both the doctor–patient relationship and doctors’ turnover intention. In the sample identified as low-pragmatism, commitment as practice was associated with a better doctor–patient relationship, and a good doctor–patient relationship was associated with lower turnover intention (Ma et al., 2019). Other studies have found that employees of different age, gender and educational level attach different meanings to and have different preferences for reward systems (Rynes et al., 2004; Spoor & Hoyer, 2014). The relationships between merit-based rewards and work-related outcomes may therefore depend on the meanings that individuals of various demographic backgrounds attach to them (Gietter & Hofmans, 2015). Froese et al. (2019) suggested that firms can use merit-based rewards to satisfy and retain highly qualified employees. Educational qualification is one of the primary indicators of individual capability and capacity (Becker, 1964), and this study therefore hypothesized:

H6a: Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention

H6b: Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention

H6c: Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between effective communication and employee retention

H6d: Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention

2.5.3 Years of experience

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) identified two types of knowledge: explicit knowledge, contained in manuals and procedures, and tacit knowledge, learned through experience and communicated indirectly, often through metaphor and analogy. U.S. managers focus on explicit knowledge. Japanese managers, however, focus on tacit knowledge. Kageyama and Sugiura (2017) argued that this is the key to the success of Japanese companies: they have learned how to transform tacit into explicit knowledge, which requires some time.

Cognitive styles may play a role in the processing of transformation. Cognitive style can be interpreted differently in cultural contexts, especially the use of the rational cognitive style where healthcare sector may fall in as a category. Younger staff nurses were familiar with the concept of empowerment because of their educational experiences (Van Bogaert et al., 2015).

Hausknecht et al. (2009) found that motivation for staying with an organization varied between types of employees. High performers and workers who were not paid by the hour were more likely to cite advancement opportunities and organizational prestige as reasons for staying with an organization. Low performers and hourly employees were more likely to cite extrinsic rewards. These findings highlight the importance of using different human resource management practices to retain different groups of employees.

Schmidt et al. (1986) suggested that job experience might have a moderating role on the relationship between ability and acquisition of job knowledge. When job experience was held constant, the direct impact of ability on the acquisition of job knowledge increased substantially, and this, in turn, increased the indirect effect of ability on job performance (Schmidt et al., 1986). Professional development through supervised practical experience was both negatively associated with social workers' burnout and positively associated with worker attachment to the organization (Kim & Lee, 2009). Bose and Maheshwary (2019)

suggested that it may be possible to improve employee engagement and commitment by considering variables such as experience, and rewarding employees by focusing on developing their ability and execution. This study therefore hypothesized:

H7a: Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention

H7b: Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention

H7c: Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between effective communication and employee retention

H7d: Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention

2.5.4 Organization size

Organization size can mean many things and can be measured in many ways (Kimberly 1979). This study defined organizational size by number of employees (full-time and part-time), an approach consistent with most previous studies. Number of employees is the most relevant measure of size for studying issues involving human resources, such as the effect of job rewards and other personnel policies and practices. The number of people employed by an organization also tends to be highly correlated with other aspects of size, such as economic scale, assets, sales, profits, volume of inputs/outputs, and other financial indicators. This study used the natural logarithm of the number of employees (Kalleberg & Van Buren, 1996).

There are several possible reasons for a relationship between job rewards and organization size, including industrial, geographic, organizational, and individual variables.

Whether a firm has internal labor markets is the correlate of organization size most consistently related to job rewards (Kalleberg & Van Buren, 1996).

Organization size is a frequently discussed characteristic of organization units, and has been studied for many years. For example, Mahoney et al. (1972) examined two size dimensions, unit size and size of parent organization, to assess their relationships with various dimensions of organizational behavior and managerial practice. Barhem et al. (2010) found that organization size also seems to affect the satisfaction level.

Several studies have assumed that the effects of total quality management practices on business results are mediated by internal factors, such as how long the practices have been used, or the firms' size, diversification or capital intensity (Brah et al., 2002; Hendricks & Singhal, 2001; Montes et al., 2003; Santos-Vijande & Alvarez-Gonzalez, 2007; Taylor & Wright, 2003; Terziovski & Samson, 1999). Ghobadian and Gallear (1997) examined the use of total quality management. They suggested that implementation of these principles could help SMEs to become more robust, and improve the quality of their output. However, they also noted that SMEs have been slower to implement the principles of total quality management than larger organizations. The size of the organization may therefore be important in this study.

Scott et al. (2012) found that organization size, industry and sector did not play a substantial role in the retention of key employees. However, other studies suggested that organization size can affect the commitment and performance of employees. Bayo-Moriones and Larraza-Kintana (2009) found a positive relationship between profit sharing and commitment, which was strongest in very small firms. Profit-sharing plans were also most effective in improving employees' affective commitment in firms with low job-related employee participation. They had little impact where employee participation was high, and even resulted in slight declines in affective commitment (Bayo-Moriones & Larraza-Kintana,

2009). Employees in large organizations have higher earnings, more fringe benefits and opportunities for promotion, but less autonomy on the job than workers employed by small organizations (Kalleberg & Van Buren, 1996). This study therefore hypothesized:

H8a: Organization size (Org) significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention

H8b: Organization size (Org) significantly moderates the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention

H8c: Organization size (Org) significantly moderates the relationship between effective communication and employee retention

H8d: Organization size (Org) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention

Table 2.3 summarizes the literature supporting the selection of four possible moderator variables on the relationship between employee retention and the excellence variables. These were job level, background, years of experience and organization size.

Table 2.3. Literature on research model moderators

Job Level	Background	Years of experience	Organization size
Van Bogaert et al. (2015) Hafez et al. (2017) Gary and Phillips (1994) Foss et al. (2009) Payne (2005) Miles et al. (1996)	McLean et al. (2011) Ma et al. (2019) Froese et al. (2019) Becker (1964)	Schmidt et al. (1986) Hausknecht et al. (2009) Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) Kageyama and Sugiura (2017) Bose and Maheshwary (2019)	Hausknecht et al. (2009) Kimberly (1979) Kalleberg and Van Buren (1996) Barhem et al. (2010) Hendricks and Singhal (2001) Santos-Vijande and Alvarez-Gonzalez (2007) Ghobadian and Gallear (1997) Scott et al. (2012)

The study hypotheses are summarized in Tables 2.4 and 2.5, and the relationship between the study variables and the hypotheses is shown in Figure 2.4.

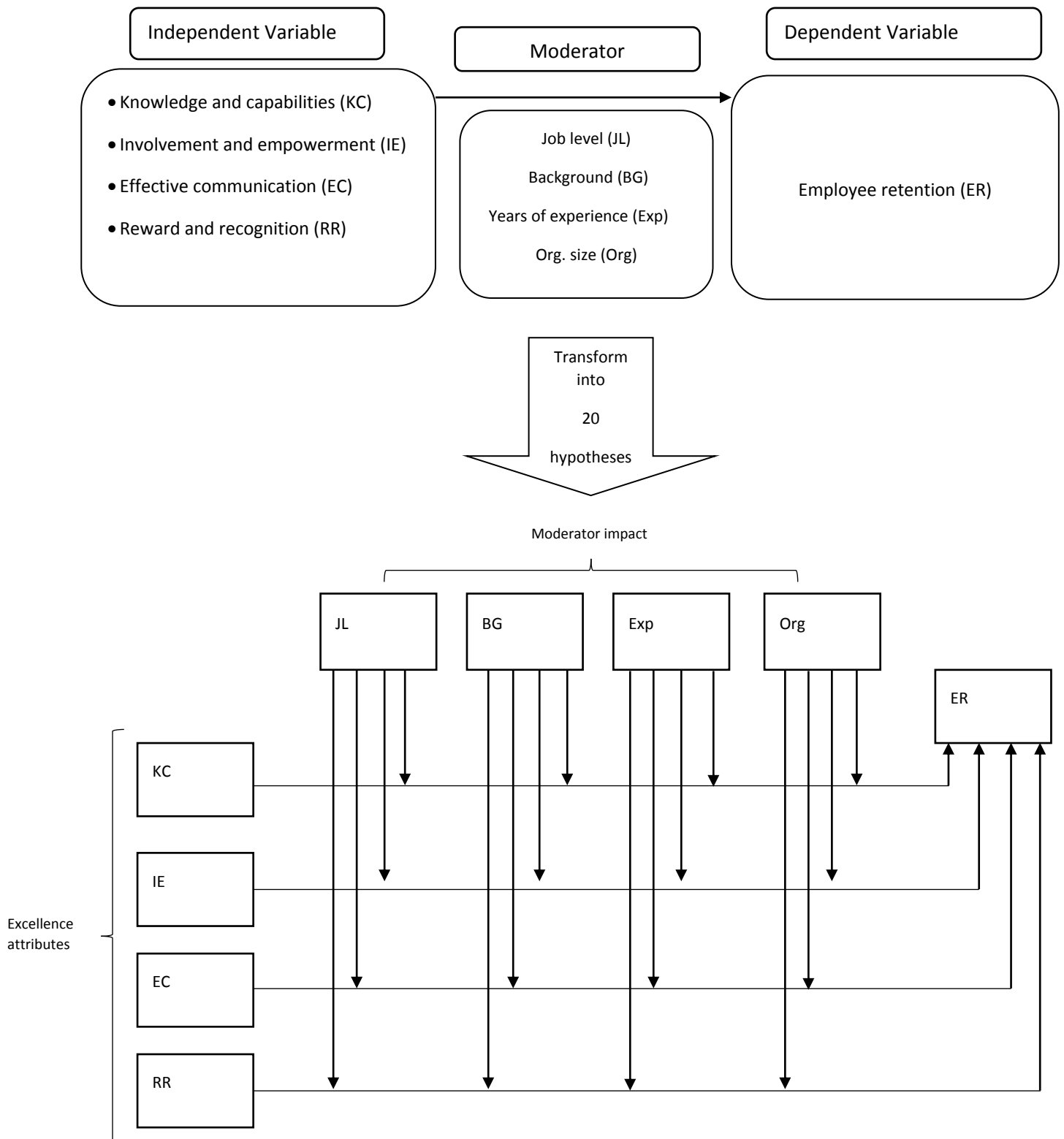


Figure 2.4. Translating the research model into hypotheses: the research relationships

Table 2.4 Study hypotheses on direct relationships with employee retention

No.	Code	Hypotheses
1	H1: KC→ER	There is a significant relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention
2	H2: IE→ER	There is a significant relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention
3	H3: EC→ER	There is a significant relationship between effective communication and employee retention
4	H4: RR→ER	There is a significant relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention

Table 2.5. Hypotheses on moderation of the relationships in the study

No.	Code	Hypotheses
5	H5a: JL ↓ KC → ER	Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention
6	H4b: JL ↓ IE → ER	Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention
7	H4c: JL ↓ EC → ER	Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between effective communication and employee retention
8	H4d: JL ↓ RR → ER	Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention
9	H5a: BG ↓ KC → ER	Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention
10	H5b: BG ↓ IE → ER	Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention
11	H5c: BG ↓ EC → ER	Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between effective communication and employee retention
12	H5d: BG	Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention

	$\downarrow$ $RR \rightarrow ER$	
13	H6a: $\begin{array}{c} \text{Exp} \\ \downarrow \\ KC \rightarrow ER \end{array}$	Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention
14	H6b: $\begin{array}{c} \text{Exp} \\ \downarrow \\ IE \rightarrow ER \end{array}$	Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention
15	H6c: $\begin{array}{c} \text{Exp} \\ \downarrow \\ EC \rightarrow ER \end{array}$	Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between effective communication and employee retention
16	H6d: $\begin{array}{c} \text{Exp} \\ \downarrow \\ RR \rightarrow ER \end{array}$	Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention
17	H7a: $\begin{array}{c} \text{Org} \\ \downarrow \\ KC \rightarrow ER \end{array}$	Organization size (Org) significantly moderates on the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention
18	H7b: $\begin{array}{c} \text{Org} \\ \downarrow \\ IE \rightarrow ER \end{array}$	Organization size (Org) significantly moderates on the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention
19	H7c: $\begin{array}{c} \text{Org} \\ \downarrow \\ EC \rightarrow ER \end{array}$	Organization size (Org) significantly moderates on the relationship between effective communication and employee retention
20	H7d: $\begin{array}{c} \text{Org} \\ \downarrow \\ RR \rightarrow ER \end{array}$	Organization size (Org) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention

2.6 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the literature on the research area. It explored models of excellence and the factors that influence employee retention. The factors identified from the EFQM model were knowledge and capabilities, involvement and empowerment, effective communication and reward and recognition. Potential moderator variables were identified, including job level, background, years of experience and the organization size. This literature suggests that these might influence the relationship between employee retention strategies

and employee decision to leave. The chapter concluded by deriving 20 research hypotheses. The next chapter describes the methodology used to examine these hypotheses.



Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the approach used to deliver the study's objectives, set out in Chapter 1. First, it presents the research philosophy underlying this study, then outlines the study's approach to scientific reasoning. It then describes the research design, including sample selection, sample frame and sample techniques, before setting out the research methods and instruments used for data collection. The chapter then discusses the research variables and measurement scales, and considers the issue of the response rate and the analysis techniques used. Finally, it sets out some ethical issues for the research and summarizes the overall process.

3.2 Research philosophy

The research philosophy is based on assumptions about world views, and particularly whether the world is constant or changing according to the dynamics of the social system (Bhattacharjee, 2012). It sums up the ontological and epistemological assumptions made by the researcher. Ontology is a field of philosophy concerned with the nature of reality, including the kinds and structures of objects, properties, events, processes, and relations (Floridi, 2004). Epistemology is the field of philosophy concerned with analyzing the nature and scope of knowledge (DeRose, 2009). It depends on the researcher's assumptions about the best way to study the world. There are two main approaches to studying social reality: objective (positivistic) or subjective (constructive) (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Saunders and Lewis (2012) noted that the research philosophy is driven by important assumptions about how the researcher views the world. These assumptions drive the strategy and methods of the research. Johnson and Clark (2006) agreed that the research philosophy has a significant impact on researchers' actions and how they understand the study subject. The research philosophy influences the view of the relationship between knowledge and the process

through which it is developed. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) suggested that researchers should consider philosophies as a continuum rather than absolute.

The combination of the two sets of assumptions of ontology and epistemology produce four research paradigms: (1) radical structuralism, (2) radical humanism, (3) interpretivism and (4) functionalism (Bhattacharjee, 2012). This study used functionalism because the reality under scrutiny, in this case employee retention, can be studied mainly through the patterns of ordered events, behaviors, or decisions (ontology) that reveal it. The studying itself (its epistemology) may take an objective or positivistic approach with some standard tools, such as surveys, whose meanings or interpretations are independent of the person conducting the investigation (Bhattacharjee, 2012). A positivist approach was selected because the study assumed that knowledge is real and objective, and can be observed, measured and quantified objectively (Sikes, 2004). AlQubaisi (2017) concluded that a positivist approach means that the researcher can: (1) measure the components of the research empirically by using well-established robust measures for each variable; (2) provide a description of the sample in numerical terms and test the relationships among the elements of the study; and (3) reach a sufficient sample to draw significant conclusions and generalize results to a population.

3.3 Research approach

The research approach describes how the study will obtain answers to the research problem or question (Al Dhaheri, 2019). There are two main approaches to scientific research: deductive and inductive (Barkhuizen, 2014). The deductive approach, also called deductive reasoning or top-down reasoning, begins with general observations or statements called premises, and comes to a specific conclusion through logical arguments based on theories and research findings. In contrast, inductive reasoning begins with specific

observations or sensory experiences and uses them to develop a general conclusion or theory (Walliman, 2010).

This research used a deductive approach, developing specific hypotheses from previously established theories supporting the published model (EFQM, 2013). It tested these hypotheses by collecting data using a questionnaire distributed to different levels of employees in public healthcare entities that have adopted excellence model practices.

This study started with a review of the literature to identify excellence model attributes that influence employee retention. This led to the proposed model and research framework, to be modified using the research findings. To develop the theoretical framework, the researcher identified the variables, components, and themes and the central issues in the study, and then formulated hypotheses (Yin, 2003). The final framework was confirmed through hypothesis testing.

3.4 Research design

The research design can be thought of as the master plan for the research. It specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the information needed to meet the research objectives and answer the research questions (Adams et al., 2007). It should address three main issues: a sampling process, research methods, and the operationalization of variables (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

The main research designs can be classified into four groups according to (1) the goal of the research (i.e. positivist designs for theory testing, and interpretive designs for theory building) (Bhattacharjee, 2012); (2) the control method (i.e. experimental design, quasi-experimental design, and non-experimental or observational design, which is sometimes also called descriptive or correlational research) (Nebeker et al., 2015); (3) the sequence of events (e.g., prospective and retrospective design); and (4) the sampling method (e.g., cross-

sectional, case control, or cohort study, and clinical trial) (Adams et al., 2007). In figure 3.1, Saunders and Lewis (2012) introduced the ‘onion’ research process to present the epistemological basis as a research design: (1) the research philosophy (i.e. positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism paradigms), (2) the research approach (i.e. deductive and inductive), (3) the research strategy (e.g. experimental, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography, and archival research), (4) the research choices (i.e. mono-, mixed- and multi-methods), (5) the time horizons (i.e. cross-sectional and longitudinal), and (6) techniques and procedures (i.e. data collection and data analysis choices).

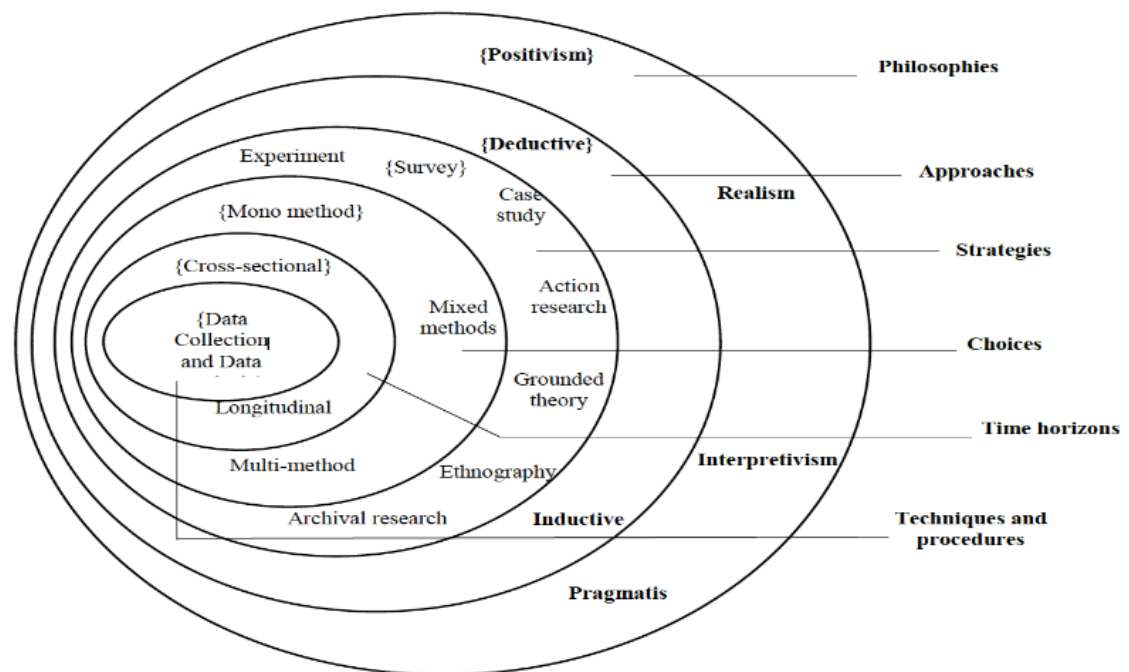


Figure 3.1: The So-Called ‘Onion’ Research Process (Source: Saunders & Lewis, 2012)

This study used a cross-sectional approach. Data were collected at a single point in time. It was correlational because measuring the independent variables involved no manipulation or change (Judd et al., 1991) and the study aimed to examine the effect of a number of independent variables on a dependent variable.

The next few subsections describe the sampling selection, unit of analysis, data collection process, research methods, and the instrument development process (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

3.4.1 Target population and sample selection

The target population was all the public sector healthcare organizations in the UAE that have been recognized as excellent based on the EFQM model. The population was obtained from the regional award office, Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce, which has been authorized to represent the EFQM in the region. The researcher obtained authorization to approach the institutions and their employees from Abu Dhabi Health Services Co. (SEHA), the operator of the public health institutions owned by the government. In total, around 17,300 employees working in different levels in public hospitals were invited to participate, and 1,044 contributed. The questionnaires included demographic questions such as job level (i.e. managerial and non-managerial), background (physicians, nurses, allied staff and admin staff), years of experience (i.e. less than 3, between 3 and 5 years, between 5 and 10 years and above 10 years of experience), and organization size (i.e. less than 500 employees, between 500 and 2000 employees and over 2000 employees). A question was added to verify the employee's awareness that their organization was a recipient of an excellence award, and all the answers confirmed this. This can also be considered as confirmation that it is acceptable to proceed with the research using that particular sample (Wiesner & Millett, 2012).

3.4.1.1 Population and sampling size

The population is all the units being researched, or all members of the group being studied, also called the research population. The research sample is the small subgroup chosen for study (Denscombe, 2010). Other aspects that must be considered include the statistical analyses used, the required degree of precision and confidence levels, and the time and costs associated with the method of data collection (Stylidis, 2012). The choice of sample size is governed by the confidence required in the data, the tolerable margin of error, the analyses to be undertaken (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This study used a survey questionnaire for data collection and structural equation modeling for analysis. Nunkoo et al. (2013) recommended a research sample of at least 200 respondents under these circumstances. Stylidis et al. (2014) argued that a sample of at least 300 respondents was needed for structural equation modeling. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) suggested that, as the population increases, the sample size increases more slowly, reaching a constant of slightly over 380. However, Kozák (2014) suggested a sample of at least 500 to allow for a margin of error (degree of accuracy) of less than 5% and a 95% confidence level. The sample size was determined using the sample size formula (Aaker et al., 1995, pp. 402–403):

$$n = z^2 \pi (1 - \pi) / (\text{sample error})^2$$

where:

n = sample size

π = population proportion

$z = 1.96$ for a 95 percent confidence level

The population proportion was unknown, but a common procedure is to assume the worst case (where the population variance is at its maximum) when the population proportion is equal to 0.50

$$\pi = 0.50$$

$$\pi (1 - \pi) = 0.25$$

The formula for sample size then simplified to:

$$n = z^2 (0.25) / (\text{sample error})^2$$

Thus, if the population proportion is to be estimated within an error of 0.05 (or 5 percentage points) at a 95 percent confidence level, the required sample size is: $n = (1.96)^2 (0.25) / (0.05)^2 = 384$.

3.4.1.2 Sampling frame and location

The sample frame contains information about the research population (Denscombe, 2010). It is a complete list of all cases in the population from which the sample will be drawn (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). A good sampling frame should be relevant (contain things directly linked to the research topic), complete (covering all relevant items), precise (excluding all irrelevant items), and up-to-date (incorporating recent additions and changes and with no redundant items) (Denscombe, 2010). The sampling frame should be complete to ensure that the sample is representative of the total population. It is important to ensure that the sampling frame is reliable and valid (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). In this research, the respondents were healthcare professionals working in public healthcare entities that have been accredited for more than 5 years by an excellence award office. These entities are operated by Abu Dhabi Health Service Co. (SEHA). The researcher invited SEHA to be part of this research, because

it fits the sample requirements perfectly. It operates nine healthcare entities, all of which have EFQM model certification, with more than 90 points of access to healthcare services across the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. The company employs more than 18,000 employees from different backgrounds. SEHA hospitals are the only government hospitals that have been accredited using the EFQM model and they have been using this model since 2010.

3.4.1.3 Sampling technique

There are two types of sampling techniques, probability or representative sampling and non-probability or judgmental sampling. For probability samples, the probability of each case being selected from the population is known and is usually equal. For non-probability samples, the probability of each case being selected from the total population is not known and this can make it difficult to answer research questions (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Probability sampling is most commonly used for survey-based research strategies. The probability sampling process includes identifying a suitable sampling frame based on the research questions, deciding on a suitable sample size, selecting appropriate sampling techniques and sample, and checking the representativeness of the population (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). There are five techniques for probability sampling: simple random, systematic, stratified random, cluster, and multi-stage (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This study used stratified random probability sampling. The respondents were chosen randomly, from across the population of excellent public healthcare entities. The questionnaire was distributed to all staff working in the selected sample of public sector healthcare organizations. The sample was chosen from healthcare professionals working in a culture of excellence that in part aims to retain them. Anyone at managerial or non-managerial levels was considered part of the survey population, including physicians, lab technicians, pharmacists, nurses, and administration staff.

3.4.2 Unit of analysis and informants

The unit of analysis is the entity (e.g. an individual, group, organization, or object) that is the target of the investigation (Bhattacharjee, 2012). This study attempted to draw inferences about the factors affecting the organization's ability to succeed through the talent of people. Employee retention was therefore its chosen unit of analysis.

Data on this unit of analysis were collected through a questionnaire designed for staff working in the public healthcare sector, in organizations that are accredited under the excellence model. These employees were from different job levels, backgrounds, and organization sizes and had different levels of experience. Some researchers have raised concerns about the validity of the data collected from specific groups (Starbuck & Mezias, 1996). This may create different cases requiring further investigations. This study therefore aimed to assess the organizational culture from an organizational practices point of view, using the EFQM model variables, rather than from the individuals' point of view. However, this may provide opportunities for future research. Previous studies established that perceptual data can be reliable if they are correlated with objective data (Boyd et al., 1993). The nature of the subject of this study requires data to be perceptual and collected from the model point of view.

3.5 Research methods

This section describes the choices for collecting data (i.e. the data collection methods and research instrument).

3.5.1 Data collection methods

Broadly speaking, data can be quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative data bind the inquiry to the defined variables and theory, anticipate some expected relationships, and minimize the importance of interpretation until the data are analyzed (Adams et al., 2007). They are used to maximize the objectivity, replicability, and generalizability of the findings (Harwell, 2011). Qualitative data seek to uncover relationships, and the meanings of these may differ for different researchers (Adams et al., 2007). The purpose is to discover and understand the experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of the participants (Harwell, 2011). These two kinds of data come from different sources. The common sources of quantitative data include experiments, surveys, questionnaires and structured interviews. Qualitative data are derived from observation, interviews, fieldwork (participant observation), focus groups, and written records or documents of events or opinions (Creswell, 2013). This study collected quantitative data through surveys using standardized questionnaires. Survey research allows researchers to collect data remotely about a population that is too large to observe directly (Bhattacharjee, 2012). However, they have some shortcomings, particularly non-response bias and common method variance, which can both negatively affect study findings if not addressed properly. These are discussed further in Section 3.6 on response rate.

3.5.2 Data collection process

Primary data for this study were collected using a questionnaire covering four main variables: knowledge and capabilities; empowerment, involvement and alignment; effective communication; and recognition. The questionnaire used the EFQM parameters for these factors and a few questions that were extracted from established questionnaires (Table 3.1). The questionnaire was distributed to all staff working in the selected sample of public sector

healthcare organizations. The questionnaire was distributed systematically via the headquarters of Abu Dhabi Health Service Co. (SEHA).

Each SEHA hospital has a research committee that had to approve the research. After gaining the approval from SEHA headquarters and from the research committees in all the hospital, an invitation email was sent to the sample to invite them to complete the survey. The researcher used the Survey Monkey tool to collect and analyze the data. The technical reports showed that the link successfully reached around 6000 employees across the nine public healthcare institutions. Technical inquiries from the SEHA platform showed that it did not reach all employees within the duration of the data collection period, between June and August 2018. The sample satisfied the research reliability parameters, and reached the targeted group of people.

Online surveys have numerous strengths but also some potential weaknesses. Their key strengths are global reach, flexibility, speed and timeliness, convenience, ease of data entry and analysis, question diversity, low administration cost, controlled sampling, the ease of obtaining a large sample, and control of answer order. The weaknesses are that they can be impersonal, respondents cannot ask if they are unclear about the instructions, there are potential privacy and security issues, low response rate, and technological variations and they only sample the population with internet access (Alreck & Settle, 2004; Evans & Mathur, 2005; Goldsmith, 1989; Holbrook et al., 2003; Presser & Zhao 1992).

About 2 weeks after sending the invitation email, SEHA sent a reminder to all employees. The researcher prepared the reminder to improve the response rate using a status live participation based on real time, which encourages people to share their input. An IP address check was used to ensure that respondents did not complete the survey more than once. In total, 1,040 employees responded within the period, of whom 873 submitted completed questionnaires. A total of 175 responses were removed, where the standard

deviation varied from 0.39 to 1.3. These controls improve the reliability of the data prior to further analysis. Once those surveys were discarded, the total number of complete valid responses for analysis was 698.

3.5.3 Operationalization of the variables

This section describes the operationalization of the dependent variable, independent variables, and control variables. Strategy implementation challenges and strategic planning tools were added for descriptive analysis purposes. All the variables were operationalized using existing measures. The measures and their sources are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1 Study measures and their sources

The Factor	Q Code	Q No.	Question	Reference
Knowledge & capability (KC)	KC1	KC07	My organization defines the skills, competencies and people performance level required to achieve the mission, vision and strategic goals.	EFQM 2013, Yang and Lin (2009), Akhtar et al. (2008), Kianto et al. (2016)
	KC2	KC08	My organization effectively plans to attract, develop and retain the talent required to meet these needs.	
	KC3	KC09	My organization appraises and helps people improve their performance and engagement.	
	KC4	KC10	My organization develops people's skills and competencies to ensure their future mobility and employability.	
	KC5	KC11	My organization ensures their people have the necessary competencies, resources and opportunity to be able to maximize their contribution	
	KC6	KC12	In my organization, the employees continuously acquire new job-related knowledge.	
	KC7	KC13	Job descriptions contain all the duties performed by individual employees	
	KC8	KC14	We have learning groups, where members can discuss their work experiences and problems	

Involvement & empowerment (IE)	IE1	IE15	My organization aligns personal and team objectives and empowers people to realize their full potential in a spirit of true partnership.	EFQM 2013, Nzuve and Bakari (2012), Yang and Lin (2009), Jahani et al. (2011)
	IE2	IE16	My organization recognizes that innovation can apply to products, processes, marketing, organizational structures and business models.	
	IE3	IE17	My organization creates a culture of reactivity and innovation across the organization, ensuring people have an open mindset and can respond quickly to challenges.	
	IE4	IE18	My organization encourages people to be ambassadors of the organization's image and reputation.	
	IE5	IE19	My organization inspires participation in activities that contribute to wider society.	
	IE6	IE20	My work gives me the ability to contribute to the success of my organization	
	IE7	IE21	Our employees discover and solve problems through mutual collaboration	
	IE8	IE22	Our department head encourages participative decision-making in the work group	

Rewards and recognition (RR)	RR1	RR30	My organization aligns remuneration benefits and terms of employment with transparent strategies and policies	EFQM (2013), Cardona et al. (2004), McKeen et al. (2006)), Jahani et al. (2011)
	RR2	RR31	My organization motivates people to become involved in improvement and innovation and recognizes their efforts and achievements.	
	RR3	RR32	My organization ensures a healthy work-life balance in the reality of 24/7 connectivity increasing globalization and new ways of working.	
	RR4	RR33	My organization promotes a culture of mutual support, recognition and care between individuals and teams.	
	RR5	RR34	My organization respects and embraces the diversity of its people and communities, and the markets it serves.	
	RR6	RR35	I really like working for this organization	
	RR7	RR36	My organization encourages and rewards the sharing of knowledge	
	RR8	RR37	The more I share my knowledge, the more my reputation is enhanced	

Effective communication (EC)	EC1	EC23	My organization understands the communication needs of its people and uses appropriate strategies and tools to maintain a dialogue.	EFQM 2013, Neterman et al. (1997), McKeen et al. (2006), Kianto et al. (2016)
	EC2	EC24	My organization communicates clear direction and strategic focus to ensure that people understand and can demonstrate their contribution to the organization's ongoing success.	
	EC3	EC25	My organization enables and encourages the sharing of information, knowledge and good practices, achieving a dialogue throughout the organization.	
	EC4	EC26	My organization develops a culture that continuously seeks to improve the effectiveness of collaboration and teamwork through their value chain.	
	EC5	EC27	My supervisor gives advance notice of changes and department objectives alignment	
	EC6	EC28	Communication with other members of my work group is efficient and beneficial	
	EC7	EC29	My organization has efficient and appropriate information systems	

Employee retention (ER)	ER1	ER38	When an experienced employee leaves, they are encouraged to transfer and distribute their knowledge to others	Kianto et al. (2016), Cardona et al. (2004), Landau and Hammer (1986), Sánchez-Manjavacas et al. (2014)
	ER2	ER39	I enjoy my work very much	
	ER3	ER40	I do not feel any obligation to continue working for this organization	
		ER41	It would not be difficult for me to find an interesting job in another organization	
		ER42	As soon as I can find a better job. I will leave.	
	ER6	ER43	I would prefer very much to continue working in this organization	
	ER7	ER44	I would like to stay for in this organization as long as I can	
		ER45	If I left this organization, I would definitely not decide to come back to work here again	

3.5.4 Research instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed as the research instrument. This was used for all staff working in the public healthcare sector, including different managerial levels and backgrounds, which could include physicians, nurses, allied health professionals and administrators. The quantitative approach meant that the hypotheses about the variables were empirically investigated using statistical techniques to establish relationships between employee retention in the UAE public healthcare sector and the excellence-related variables, knowledge and capabilities, involvement and empowerment, effective communication and rewards and recognition. It also examined the effect on those relationships of other moderating variables, using demographic information to categorize and group the moderator variables. The quantitative data were collected using a non-probability self-administered questionnaire based on the excellence model. The next few sections describe the questionnaire and its development.

3.5.4.1 Questionnaire development

To keep the questionnaire short but comprehensive, it was designed to focus on a reasonable number of variables. It was eventually possible to restrict the length of the Arabic version of the questionnaire to fewer than three pages. All the measures used in the questionnaire were existing measures obtained from the literature, as shown in Table 3.1. There were five variables included in the conceptual model. One section of the questionnaire was also designed to capture demographic data about respondents (job level, number of years of experience, and background) and information about the responding organizations (number of employees, accreditation and rewarding status and the name of the organization). This part provided control variables. The research survey therefore included four control variables that

were used as a model moderator. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert-type scale. Some scales ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree (see Appendix 2).

3.5.4.2 Questionnaire translation

The measurement scales were originally developed in English. They were therefore translated into Arabic for this study, because some of the targeted respondents were Arabic speakers. The healthcare sector is dominated by non-Arabic speakers, and English is the first language in many of the hospitals. However, there are some employees who prefer Arabic as a language to communicate, and it was felt important to provide equal opportunity for all employees to participate in this survey. The questionnaire review process had two main steps. First, the questions were translated into Arabic by the researcher, whose first language is Arabic, and who is experienced in excellence awards. Second, the translation was checked by presenting the original material in English and the Arabic translation to four bilingual participants to compare both versions and suggest improvements.

3.6 Response rate

This study used a quantitative research methodology for data collection and structural equation model (SEM) for analysis. Various researchers have recommended samples of at least 200 (Nunkoo et al., 2013), 300 (Stylidis et al., 2014), 380 (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) and 500 (Kozák, 2014) for structural equation modeling at a reasonable level of confidence as mentioned in part 3.4.1.1. This study had an initial response rate of 1,040 and 698 responses that were suitable for analysis. It therefore exceeded all the available sample size guidelines in which it was calculated to allocate in the confidence level of .95.

3.6.1 Estimating non-response bias

Non-response bias is a type of statistical error introduced by the systematic exclusion of certain participants from the study (Bhattacharjee, 2012). It is an error that occurs if the collected data come only from certain groups of participants while excluding others. This means that the findings of the study are not safely generalizable to the total population because some categories will be over- or under-represented. This study used several strategies to address non-response bias and increase the response rate, such as using a short questionnaire (three pages only); gaining endorsement of its importance from the research committees at each hospital; following up non-respondents by resending countdown and reminder emails before the responses were overdue; assuring respondents of confidentiality and privacy; and including an incentive (sharing the study outcome with the organizations and any interested participants). These were all mentioned in the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire, which was signed by the research supervisor at the Abu Dhabi University.

The technical reports from the survey tool showed that the link successfully reached around 6,000 employees of about 17,000 in the nine public healthcare institutions. However, the SEHA platform showed that it did not reach all employees within the data collection period of June to August 2018.

3.6.2 Common method variance

Common method variance is the second concern with survey research. It describes the amount of spurious covariance between independent and dependent variables that are measured at the same point in time, such as in a cross-sectional survey, using the same instrument, such as a questionnaire. In these cases, the phenomenon under investigation may not be adequately separated from measurement artifacts (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Standard statistical tests are available to assess whether common method variance poses a threat to the

study's findings. Common method variance was addressed during the questionnaire design, mainly in the section on the dependent variable. The researcher included two or three similar questions to ensure that respondents' answers matched, assuring that the quality of responses is reliable (see Table 3.1).

There are several strategies that help assess the reliability of the data collection instrument (Elbanna, 2015). In this study, (1) the respondents were assured of their confidentiality and anonymity; (2) a number of reversed scale anchors were used in the survey; (3) objective data were used to measure organizational size; (4) the surveys were organized so that the independent variables were separated from the dependent variables, preventing respondents from making their own assumptions about possible cause–effect relationships; and (5) some questions that captured mediation or moderation effects were used, so that respondents could not have answered them speculatively.

3.7 Structural equation modeling

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a statistical methodology that takes a confirmatory (i.e., hypothesis-testing) approach to the analysis of a structural theory bearing on some phenomenon, (Byrne, 2001b). It examines multiple variables representing the causal processes (Bentler, 1988). Byrne (2001a) noted that SEM has two main elements: 1. The causal processes are represented by a series of structural (i.e., regression) equations; and 2. These structural relations can be modeled pictorially to enable a clearer conceptualization of the hypothesis being studied.

SEM is a very popular technique because it uses various types of models to predict relationships among observed variables, with the same basic goal of providing a quantitative test of a theoretical model. Various theoretical models can be tested in SEM that hypothesize how sets of variables define constructs and how constructs are interrelated (Schumacker &

Lomax, 2004). The researcher can simultaneously analyze the entire system of variables to determine the extent to which the hypothetical model is consistent with the data. If goodness-of-fit is adequate, the model is likely to be a good representation of the relationships among variables. If it is inadequate, the model is rejected. Byrne (2001a) suggested that the advantages of SEM are that:

1. It is a confirmatory rather than an exploratory approach to data analysis, although it can also address exploratory aspects. If a possible pattern of relationships between variables is specified, SEM can be used to analyze the data and draw inferences;
2. Traditional multivariate procedures are incapable of either assessing or correcting for measurement error. SEM, however, provides explicit estimates of the error variance;
3. Earlier methods of analysis, such as those rooted in regression, are based on observed measurements. Data analyses using SEM, however, can incorporate both unobserved (i.e., latent) and observed variables; and
4. Apart from SEM, there are no widely-used and easily-applied methods for modeling multivariate relations or for estimating point and/or interval indirect effects.

Kaplan and Depaoli (2012) divided the development of SEM into two stages. The first began with the initial merging of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and simultaneous equation modeling (e.g., Jöreskog, 1973). It moved on to important methodological developments to handle non-standard data. These developments dealt with non-normal data, missing data, and sample size sensitivity problems (see, e.g., Kaplan, 2009). The second stage is characterized by another merger, this time combining first-stage models for continuous latent variables with models for categorical latent variables (Muthén, 2001). The integration of continuous and categorical latent variables into a general modeling framework was enabled by the extension of finite mixture modeling to the SEM framework. This provided an elegant method, resulting in a marked increase in useful applications. These applications

include methods for handling the evaluation of interventions with noncompliance (Jo & Muthén, 2001), discrete-time survival mixture models (Muthén & Masyn, 2005) and examining unique trajectories of growth in academic outcomes (Jordon et al., 2002). Regression analysis is a statistical technique for estimating relationships between variables. It focuses on the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. In this study, the raw data were coded and analyzed using SPSS 25.

One of the most important requirements for a survey instrument is reliability. Cronbach's alpha is one of the most widely used criteria for assessing instruments that contain ordinal data. Cronbach's alpha evaluates the extent to which a measurement produces consistent results at different times (Cronbach, 1951). George and Mallery (2003) defined threshold levels for evaluating alpha coefficients, where greater than 0.9 is excellent, greater than 0.8 is good, and greater than 0.7 is acceptable. Kline (2005) and Morgan et al. (2005) gave a general rule that a Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.70 suggests that a latent variable has adequate internal consistency. This study therefore used a minimum of 0.70 as the criteria for the reliability analysis.

Many researchers suggest the use of the composite reliability index to check a latent variable's internal consistency. It was used in this study as the second check of internal consistency of the latent variables. Composite reliability of each latent variable was computed using the formula created by Werts, Linn, and Jöreskog in 1974 (DeShon, 1998). This formula divides the squared sum of the standardized factor loadings by the squared sum of the standardized factor loadings plus the variance of the error terms. Delmas and Toffel (2005) stated that a composite reliability index greater than 0.70 indicates adequate internal consistency for the latent variable. This level was therefore used in this study.

Table 3.3 shows that the variables in this study can be considered reliable, because the Cronbach's alpha coefficient values and composite reliability values for each variable and for the total variables were more than 0.7. The Cronbach's alpha value for all variables was 0.94.

In confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), several statistical tests are used to determine how well the model fits the data (Suhr, 2006). A good fit between the model and the data does not mean that the model is "correct", or even that it explains a large proportion of the covariance, but only that the model is plausible (Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). There are differing opinions about which model fit statistics to report. Kline (2010) recommended reporting the chi-squared test, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), the comparative fit index (CFI), and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR).

In this study, the fit of the CFA was acceptable with SRMR of 0.05, NFI of 0.932, CFI of 0.952, and RMSEA 0.057. This supported the unidimensional and convergent validity of the variables. The results for the fit indices indicate that all the indices values match the desirable/marginal range; therefore, the proposed model has a reasonable fit.

Table 3.2: Goodness-of-Fit Indices for the existing measurement model

Fit indices	Recommended value	Threshold	Existing Model
χ^2 / df	Wan (2002); Kline (2005)	< 4.00	3.276
SRMR	Hu and Bentler (1999)	< 0.08	0.05
NFI	Bentler and Bonett (1980); Jöreskog and Sörbom (1986)	> 0.90	0.932
CFI	Hair et al. (2010); Jöreskog and Sörbom (1986)	> 0.90	0.952
RMSEA	Hair et al. (2010); Jöreskog and Sörbom (1986)	< 0.08	0.057

Notes: χ^2 / df : chi-squared test; CFI: comparative fit index; NFI: normed fit index; RMSEA: root mean square error of approximation; SRMR: standardized root mean square residual.

Some questions that affected the level of acceptance were deleted to provide higher reliability. Cronbach's alpha increased when Questions 41, 42, and 45 were deleted (see Tables 3.3 and 3.4).

Table 3.3. Reliability statistics following deletion of certain questions

Reliability Statistics		Reliability Statistics (deleting questions 42 & 45)		Reliability Statistics (deleting questions 41, 42 & 45)	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.585	8	.731	6	.773	6

Table 3.4. Summary of Cronbach's alpha values if certain questions were deleted.

	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
R38	.515
R39	.529
R40	.497
R41	.550
R42	.641
R43	.526
R44	.525
R45	.612

A CFA was conducted using AMOS structural equation modelling software (Byrne, 2016). CFA is frequently used as a first step to assess the proposed measurement model in a structural equation model. Many of the rules of interpretation on assessment of model fit and model modification in structural equation modeling apply equally to CFA. The moderator impact is presented in Figure 3.2.

Table 3.5: Job Level

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Managerial	99	14.2	14.2	14.2
Non-Managerial	599	85.8	85.8	100.0
Total	698	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.6: Background

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Physician	82	11.7	11.7	11.7
Nurse	367	52.6	52.6	64.3
Allied Health	134	19.2	19.2	83.5
Admin	115	16.5	16.5	100.0
Total	698	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.7: Years of Experience

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 3 years	85	12.2	12.2	12.2
3–5 years	74	10.6	10.6	22.8
5–10 years	198	28.4	28.4	51.1
More than 10 years	341	48.9	48.9	100.0
Total	698	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.8: Organization Size

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 500	119	17.0	17.0	17.0
500–2000	380	54.4	54.4	71.5
More than 2000	199	28.5	28.5	100.0
Total	698	100.0	100.0	

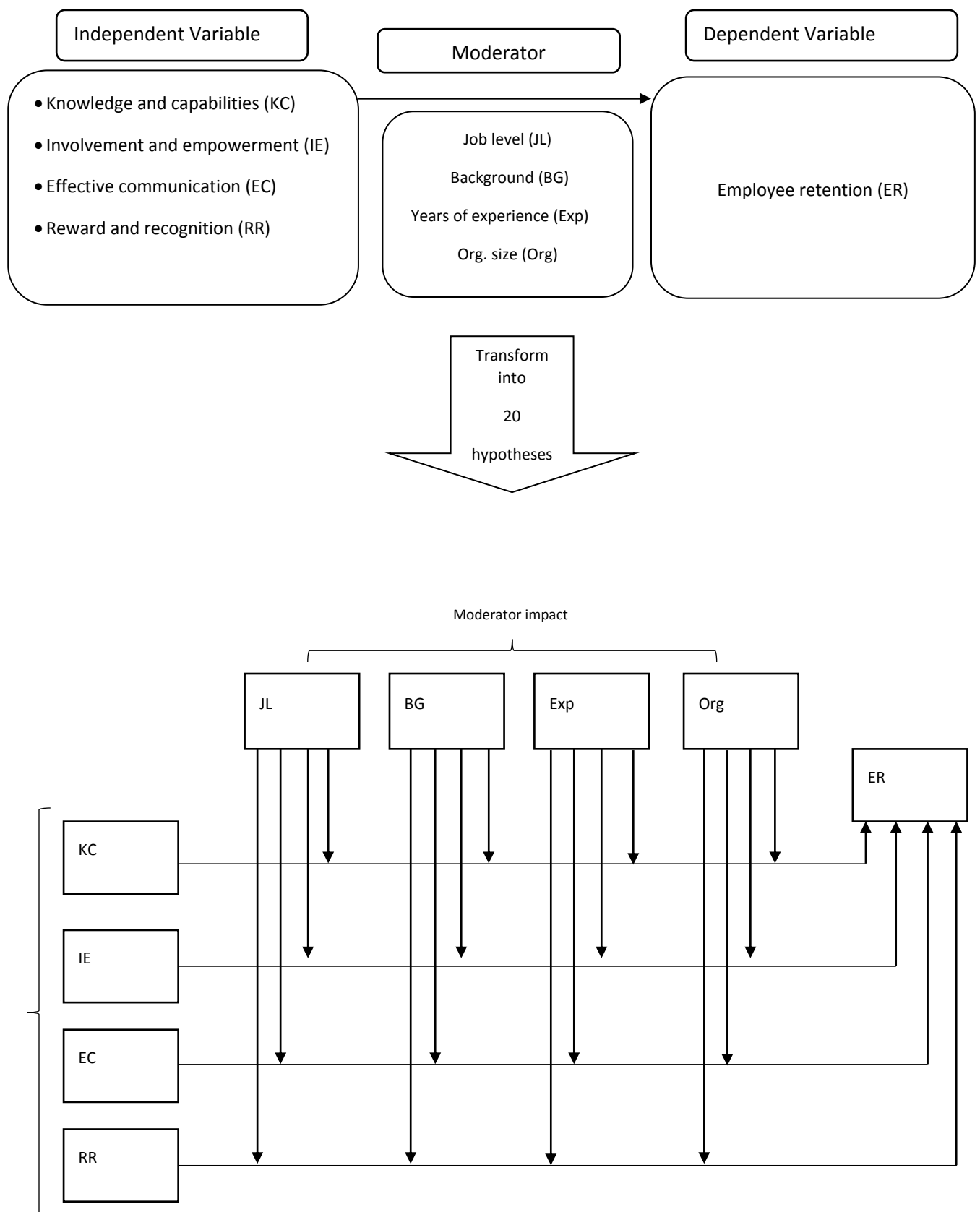


Figure 3.2 Research Paper detailed model

3.8 Research ethics

An ethical approach is essential in research. For one thing, it ensures the confidentiality of information and cooperation from participants. This helps to establish a relationship of trust between participant and researcher. For this study, a consent letter about the research purpose was shared with the organizations and a non-disclosure agreement was signed between the organization and the researchers to ensure the confidentiality of participants' personal data. The agreement guaranteed that the participants would remain anonymous and data would only be used for this study.

3.9 Summary of the process of data collection, purification and analysis

The flow chart in Figure 3.3 summarizes the research analysis processes. The next chapter will describe these in more detail. The questionnaire was developed in several steps. Procedures were followed to prepare the data for descriptive analysis and hypothesis testing, including handling missing data. The reliability and validity of the data set were tested through item–total correlations, Cronbach's alpha coefficients and exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The data were then analyzed to assess the sampled organizations and respondents and conduct hypothesis testing through path analysis, a special form of SEM.

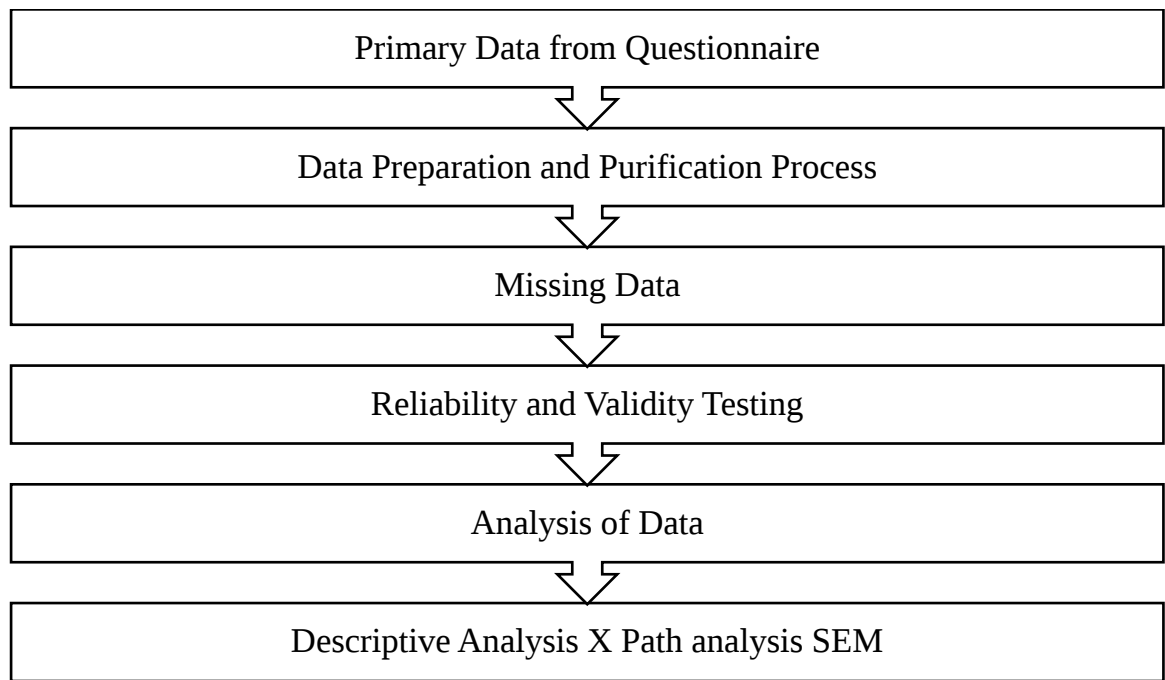


Figure 3.3 The process of the data collection, purification and analysis in this study

3.10 Summary

This chapter has covered nine areas. It described the research philosophy, approach, design, and methods, operationalization of variables, response rate, research ethics and data collection and analysis process. It has made clear that all the measurement scales and items were extracted from the literature, including the EFQM model, with some minor amendments required to transform statements into questions. It explained that 1,044 questionnaires were returned, of which 689 were suitable for analysis. The next chapter will describe the analysis of the data.

This study contains four excellence variables and four possible moderator variables.

- Job level partially moderated the excellence variables' relationships with employee retention. The main effect was seen for non-managerial staff and rewards and recognition.
- Background partially moderated the excellence variables' relationships with employee retention.

- Years of experience partially moderated the relationship between knowledge and capabilities, and rewards and recognition, with employee retention. However, it did not moderate the relationship with effective communication.
- Organization size partially moderated the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention.



Chapter 4: Analysis of the Measurement Model

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the analysis of factors relating to one of the fundamental concepts of the EFQM excellence model, *succeeding through the talent of people*. The study used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with AMOS 25 (Byrne, 2016) because the EFQM model is widely used by public organizations in the UAE including the healthcare sector.

Chapter 1 explained that the aim of this study was to assess the impact of one of the fundamental concepts of the excellence model, EFQM, on employee retention in the UAE public healthcare sector. A conceptual model was developed to investigate the hypothesized relationships between each factor of the excellence model and employee retention. This chapter describes the findings of the CFA, including the psychometric properties of the measurement model such as reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

4.2 Confirmatory factor analysis

The CFA measures whether the items in the model are relevant to the underlying construct (Hair et al., 2006). It is a precise method to test the uni-dimensionality and validity of measurements (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988; Hair et al., 2006; Tellefsen & Thomas, 2005; Yang & Peterson, 2004).

A CFA was conducted to assess the psychometric properties of the measurement model, including the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the observed variables. The model consisted of five factors: employee retention (ER), knowledge and capabilities (KC), involvement and empowerment (IE), effective communication (EC), and reward & recognition (RR). Figure 4.1 shows the measurement model.

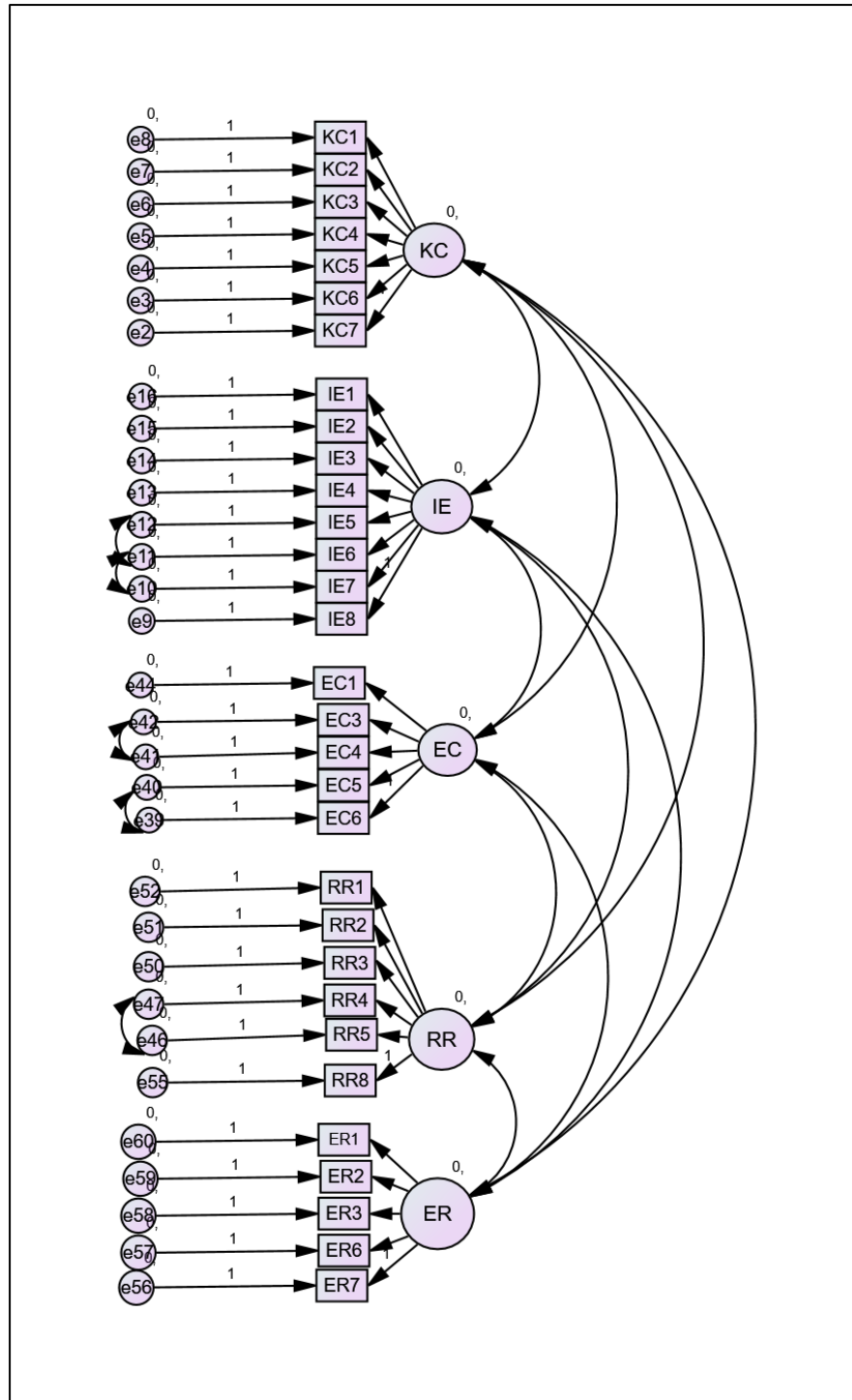


Figure 4.1: The existing measurement model of the EFQM.

The measurement model gave very good goodness-of-fit indices (see Table 4.1), which were in line with the cutoff points proposed by scholars (Bentler, 1990; Hu & Bentler, 1995; Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1982).

Table 4.1. Goodness-of-fit indices for the existing measurement model.

Fit indices	Recommended value	Threshold	Result obtained
χ^2 / df	Wan (2002); Kline (2005)	< 4.00	3.276
SRMR	Hu and Bentler (1999)	< 0.08	0.05
NFI	Bentler and Bonett (1980); Jöreskog and Sörbom (1986)	> 0.90	0.932
CFI	Hair et al. (2010); Jöreskog and Sörbom (1986)	> 0.90	0.952
RMSEA	Hair et al. (2010); Jöreskog and Sörbom (1986)	< 0.08	0.057

4.3. Reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity

4.3.1. Reliability analysis

Table 4.2 shows that the Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.773 to 0.940. and all were above the cut-off point of 0.7. The table also shows that the composite reliability of factors ranged from 0.828 to 0.941, exceeding the threshold of 0.8.

Table 4.2: Measure of constructs' reliability

Construct	Item	<u>Internal reliability</u>		Factor loading	Composite reliability
		Cronbach's alpha	Item-total correlation		
KC	KC1	0.940	.754	0.639	0.941
	KC2		.835	0.707	
	KC3		.854	0.673	
	KC4		.867	0.739	
	KC5		.837	0.717	
	KC6		.795	0.646	
	KC7		.686	0.603	
	KC8		.693	0.583	
IE	IE1	0.939	.803	0.570	0.939
	IE2		.778	0.477	
	IE3		.845	0.524	
	IE4		.759	0.593	
	IE5		.814	0.620	
	IE6		.785	0.700	
	IE7		.776	0.655	
	IE8		.724	0.557	
EC	EC1	0.933	.802	0.529	0.898
	EC2		.837	0.585	
	EC3		.809	0.616	
	EC4		.839	0.636	
	EC5		.730	0.548	
	EC6		.717	0.615	
	EC7		.782	0.626	
RR	RR1	0.938	.732	0.611	0.922
	RR2		.824	0.601	
	RR3		.783	0.644	
	RR4		.839	0.591	
	RR5		.810	0.550	
	RR6		.747	0.662	
	RR7		.812	0.542	

	RR8		.724	0.572	
ER	ER1	0.773	.561	0.623	0.828
	ER2		.680	0.770	
	ER3		.199	0.967	
	ER6		.720	0.804	
	ER7		.711	0.790	

4.3.2. Convergent validity analysis

Convergent validity analysis defines the extent to which indicators of a specific construct converge or share a high proportion of variance (Hair et al., 2006). Convergent validity can be measured using three criteria (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2006; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). First, factor loading for an item should be significant and not less than 0.70. Second, composite reliability should be at least 0.8. Third, average variance extracted (AVE) for a construct should be larger than 0.5. Table 4.3 summarizes the results of the convergent validity analysis. The results show acceptable convergent validity for all the scales of the study model. Finally, a more vigorous test of reliability was also measured using maximal reliability MaxR (H). The results for all factors ranged from 0.900 to 0.949, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.7 (Hancock & Mueller, 2001). This shows that all the factors have high reliability, and suggests that there is convergent validity for all the factors included in the measurement model.

4.3.3. Discriminant validity analysis

A correlation matrix and square root of AVE were used to assess the discriminant validity of constructs (see Table 4.3). Discriminant validity is satisfactory when the correlations between any combinations among any two pairs of constructs in the model are lower than the square root of AVE of each construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 4.3 shows that the discriminant validity of the factors included in the measurement model were

not confirmed using these criteria. The square root of the average variance extracted for each construct was lower than the inter-construct correlations for the five factors; *Knowledge & Capabilities* (KC), *Involvement & Empowerment* (IE), *Effective Communication* (EC), *Rewards & Recognition* (RR) & *Employee retention* (ER). There were high correlations between each factor and other factors in the same model, such as the correlation between KC and IE ($r = 0.919$), KC and EC ($r = 0.926$), IE and EC ($r = 0.988$), IE and RR ($r = 0.948$), and EC and RR ($r = 0.974$). Discriminant validity was therefore checked again using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio of correlations (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 4.4 shows that the heterotrait–monotrait ratio of correlations of 50% of the correlation between each pair of constructs ranged from 0.918 to 0.975. This is higher than the liberal threshold (HTMT.₉₀) of 0.90. This means that the existing five-factor measurement model has a discriminant validity issue (Henseler et al., 2015). It was therefore necessary to carry out exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and revise the measurement model before moving onto SEM and hypothesis testing. The use of EFA is described in the next chapter (El-Adly & Abu El Samen, 2018).

Table 4.3. Discriminant validity of the existing model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981)

Factors	CR	AVE	MaxR(H)	Intercorrelation				
				KC	IE	EC	RR	ER
KC	.941	.698	0.949	0.836				
IE	.939	.657	0.943	0.919***	0.811			
EC	.898	.639	0.907	0.926***	0.988***	0.799		
RR	.922	.665	0.928	0.886***	0.948***	0.974***	0.815	
ER	.828	.523	0.900	0.741	0.771	0.767	0.779	0.723
<i>Threshold</i>	.8	.5	0.8					
Note: Numbers shown in bold indicate the square root of AVE. AVE = average variance extracted, CR = composite reliability, MaxR(H) = maximum reliability.								

Table 4.4: Discriminant validity of the existing EFQM using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio

Fa ctors	KC	IE	EC	RR	ER
KC					
IE	0.918				
EC	0.918	0.975			
RR	0.887	0.939	0.957		
ER	0.821	0.852	0.848	0.879	

4.4. Summary

This chapter explained that the EFQM model is widely used by the government and private sectors, so the researcher started with CFA to assess the model's goodness-of-fit indices, as well as assessing the convergent and discriminant validity before hypothesis testing.

However, there was a discriminant validity issue, which meant that EFA is needed to modify the model before proceeding with further investigations.

Chapter 5: Analysis of the Revised Model

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explained that the measurement model showed a discriminant validity issue (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2015). This limited the ability to proceed with hypothesis testing using SEM. This chapter describes an attempt to rectify the issue by using exploratory factor analysis to revise the model items and make sure that the items have been loaded to their intended factors.

5.2 Purifying the data

To purify the data and make it suitable for the statistical analysis, the researcher identified and removed any outliers. A further 32 responses were excluded from the data analysis, giving a usable sample size of 666. This was still within all the recommended sample limits.

5.3 Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

The study used EFA (Anderson & Gerbing, 1982) with maximum likelihood and Promax rotation to group the remaining 33 items into the predetermined five factors of the EFQM model. The sample of 666 was appropriate for EFA. The highly significant value of Bartlett's test of sphericity (approx. $\chi^2 = 20330.388$, $df = 528$, $p = 0.000$) reflected the high correlations needed for EFA. The high value of the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of 0.981 also ensured that the sample was appropriate for EFA. Many iterations were carried out to ensure a high factor loading for the 33 items. EFA gave four factors instead of five, eliminating the eight items of the Involvement & Empowerment (IE) factor because they were dispersed over several other factors and highly cross-loaded with more than one factor. All the remaining items were highly loaded into four factors except three items from Knowledge & Capabilities (KC) (KC1, KC7 and KC8). Three items were also removed from

Effective Communication (EC) (EC5, EC6 and EC8), and five from Rewards and Recognitions (RR) (RR1, RR2, RR4, RR5 and RR6). One item from Employee Retention (ER1) was loaded highly onto the RR factor and therefore renamed RR9. Finally, two items were dropped from ER (ER3 and ER8). The 17 items across four factors accounted for 77.118% of the total variance extracted. Table 5.1 shows the results of the EFA. It also shows the reliability of each factor as Cronbach's alpha. The reliability coefficients ranged from 0.870 to 0.933, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.7 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 5.1. Results of exploratory factor analysis

Factors	Code	Components			
		1	2	3	4
Knowledge & Capabilities	KC2	.794			
	KC3	.826			
	KC4	.933			
	KC5	.727			
	KC6	.545			
Effective Communication	EC1		.633		
	EC2		.854		
	EC3		.853		
	EC4		.750		
	EC7		.531		
Rewards & Recognition	RR3				.543
	RR7				.695
	RR8				.824
	RR9				.561
Employee Retention	ER2			.610	
	ER6			.938	

	ER7		.860	
Initial eigenvalue	10.386	1.267	.767	.690
% of variance	61.093	7.456	4.511	4.058
Cumulative @	61.093	68.549	73.060	77.118
Cronbach's α	0.933	0.921	0.870	0.872

5.4 Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

The revised model was considered ready for CFA using AMOS 25 to assess the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the observed variables resulting from the EFA. Figure 5.1 shows the comparison between the first and revised measurement models. There was an improvement in all goodness-of-fit indices (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2. Comparison of the goodness-of-fit indices of the two measurement models

Fit indices	Threshold	Existing Model	Revised Model
χ^2 /df	< 4.00	3.276	2.342
SRMR	< 0.08	0.05	0.0263
NFI	> 0.90	0.932	0.973
CFI	> 0.90	0.952	0.985
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.057	0.045

Notes: χ^2 /df: chi-squared test; CFI: comparative fit index; NFI: normed fit index; RMSEA: root mean square error of approximation; SRMR: standardized root mean square residual.

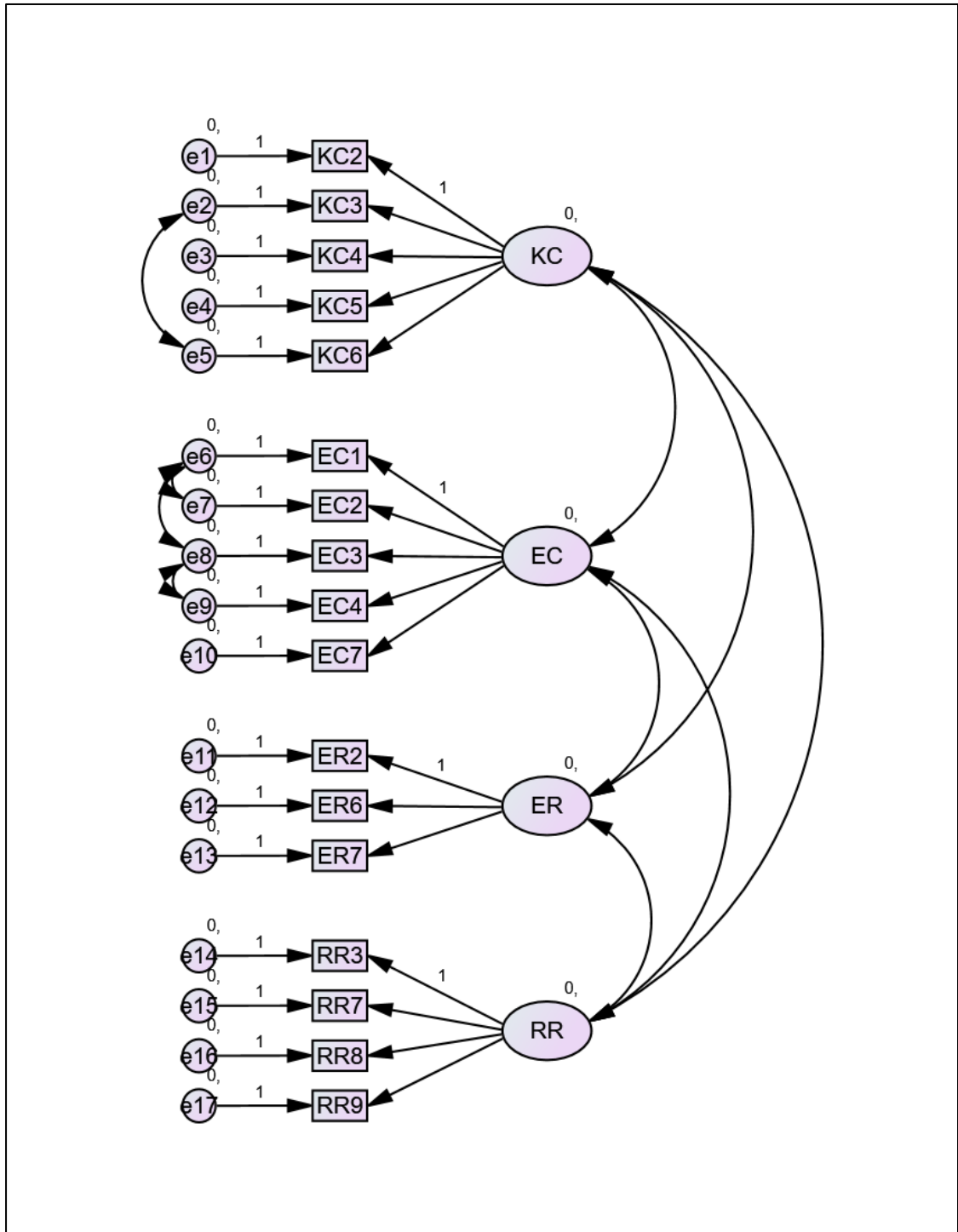


Figure 5.1: The new recommended measurement model based on EFA

5.5. Uni-dimensionality, convergent validity and discriminant validity of the measurement model

5.5.1. Uni-dimensionality analysis

Uni-dimensionality is defined as the extent to which the items of a certain factor are highly correlated with each other and together make up a unique factor (Ahire & Dreyfus, 2000). It is a precondition in determining convergent and discriminant validity. Typically, goodness-of-fit index values of 0.90 or higher indicate high uni-dimensionality (Ahire et al., 1996). Table 5.3 shows that all the items exhibited highly satisfactory uni-dimensionality.

Table 5.3. Model fit indices to assess the uni-dimensionality of each dimension of the GBHE scale

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>No. of items</i>	<i>Obtained fit indices</i>						
		χ^2/df	GFI	AGFI	SRMR	RMSEA	CFI	NFI
Knowledge & capabilities	5	5.281	0.984	0.952	0.0143	0.080	0.992	0.990
Effective communication	5	10.707	0.969	0.906	0.0194	0.121	0.980	1.000
Reward & recognition	4	4.628	0.993	0.966	0.0134	0.074	0.994	0.995
Employee retention	3	-	1.000	-	0.0000	0.732	1.000	0.991
<i>Suggested fit indices</i>								
		≤ 5	≥ 0.90	≥ 0.80	≤ 0.08	≤ 0.10	≥ 0.90	≥ 0.90

Notes: χ^2/df : chi-squared test; CFI: comparative fit index; NFI: normed fit index; RMSEA: root mean square error of approximation; SRMR: standardized root mean square residual.

5.5.2. Convergent validity

Table 5.4 summarizes the results of the convergent validity analysis. The results show acceptable convergent validity for all the scales of the revised model. The composite reliability for the new four constructs, KC, EC, RR and ER, ranged from 0.874 to 0.936, which is greater than the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al. 2006). The average variance extracted (AVE) for all factors ranged from 0.634 to 0.745, greater than the generally accepted value of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Finally, maximal

reliability MaxR(H) for all factors ranged from 0.878 to 0.940. This was greater than the threshold of 0.8 (Hancock & Mueller, 2001).

Table 5.4. Convergent validity of factors

Factors	Code	Measurement Items	Std. Loading	AVE	CR	MaxR (H)
Knowledge & capabilities	KC2	My organization effectively plans to attract, develop and retain the talent required to meet these needs.	0.852	0.745	0.936	0.940
	KC3	My organization appraises and helps people improve their performance and engagement.	0.903			
	KC4	My organization develops people's skills and competencies to ensure their future mobility and employability.	0.895			
	KC5	My organization ensures people have the necessary competencies, resources and opportunity to be able to maximize their contribution	0.849			
	KC6	In my organization, the employees continuously acquire new job-related knowledge.	0.813			
Effective communication	EC1	My organization understands the communication needs of people and uses appropriate strategies and tools to maintain a dialogue.	0.844	0.695	0.919	0.923
	EC2	My organization communicates clear direction and strategic focus to ensure that people understand and can demonstrate their contribution to the organization's on-going success.	0.863			
	EC3	My organization enables and encourages the sharing of information, knowledge and good practices, achieving a dialogue throughout the organization.	0.828			
	EC4	My organization develops a culture that continuously seeks to improve the effectiveness of collaboration and teamwork through their value chain.	0.862			
	EC7	My organization has efficient and appropriate information systems	0.769			
Rewards & recognition		My organization ensures a healthy work-life balance in the reality of 24/7 connectivity increasing globalization and new ways of working.	0.790	0.634	0.874	0.878
	RR3	My organization encourages and rewards the sharing of knowledge	0.841			
	RR7	The more I share my knowledge, the more my reputation is enhanced	0.807			
	RR8	When an experienced employee leaves, they are encouraged to transfer and distribute their knowledge to others	0.743			
	RR9					
Employee	ER2	I enjoy my work very much	0.755	0.707	0.878	0.892

retention

ER6	I would prefer very much to continue working in this organization	0.888
ER7	I would like to stay for in this organization as long as I can	0.873

Notes: AVE: average variance extracted; CR: composite reliability; MaxR(H): maximal reliability

5.5.3. Discriminant validity

A correlation matrix and square root of AVE were again used to assess the discriminant validity of constructs (Table 5.5). Discriminant validity is achieved when the correlations between any combinations among any two pairs of constructs in the model are lower than the square root of AVE of each construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). There was an improvement in the discriminant validity for this revised model compared with the five-factor model. However, the discriminant validity of the four factors included in the revised measurement model was still not confirmed using the criterion of Fornell and Larcker (1981). The square root of the average variance extracted of three out of four factors (KC, EC, and RR) was lower than the inter-construct correlations of these factors (see Table 5.5). Table 5.6 therefore shows the heterotrait–monotrait ratio of correlations between each pair of constructs. This ranged from 0.662 to 0.873, which is lower than the liberal threshold (HTMT₉₀) of 0.90. The revised model therefore has no discriminant validity issue (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 5.5. Discriminant validity of the revised model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981)

Factors	KC	EC	RR	ER
Knowledge & capabilities (KC)	0.863			
Effective communication (EC)	0.878***	0.834		
Reward & recognition (RR)	0.838	0.875	0.796	
Employee retention (ER)	0.646***	0.657***	0.717	0.841
Note: Numbers shown in bold indicate the square root of AVE.				

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Table 5.6. Discriminant validity of the revised model using heterotrait–monotrait ratio

Factors	KC	EC	RR	ER
KC				
EC	0.882			
RR	0.846	0.873		
ER	0.662	0.672	0.740	

This meant that the model was suitable for SEM and hypothesis testing, and this could therefore proceed.

5.6. Structural equation modelling and hypothesis testing

In this final stage of the analysis, SEM was used to test the hypothesized causal relationships between exogenous factors (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, effective communication and rewards and recognition) and the endogenous factor (employee retention), set out in hypotheses H1, H2, and H3 (see Figure 5.2 and Table 5.7).

Path analysis was conducted using the guidelines of Jöreskog and Sörbom (1982), applying the maximum likelihood estimates method. The path diagram for the causal model (Figure 5.2) shows the estimated standardized parameters for the causal paths, their significance levels, and the square multiple correlations for each construct.

The results indicate excellent goodness-of-fit for the causal model ($\chi^2/df = 2.342$; SRMR = 0.0263; NFI = 0.973; CFI = 0.985; RMSEA = 0.045). However, the results only support the third hypothesis H3, on the relationships between *Reward & Recognition* (RR) and *Employee Retention* (ER), because $\beta = 0.568$ ($P < 0.001$). The first two hypotheses H1 and H2 were not supported because the relationships between *Knowledge & Capabilities* (KC) and *Employee Retention* (ER), and *Effective Communication* (EC) and *Employee Retention* (ER) were not significant.

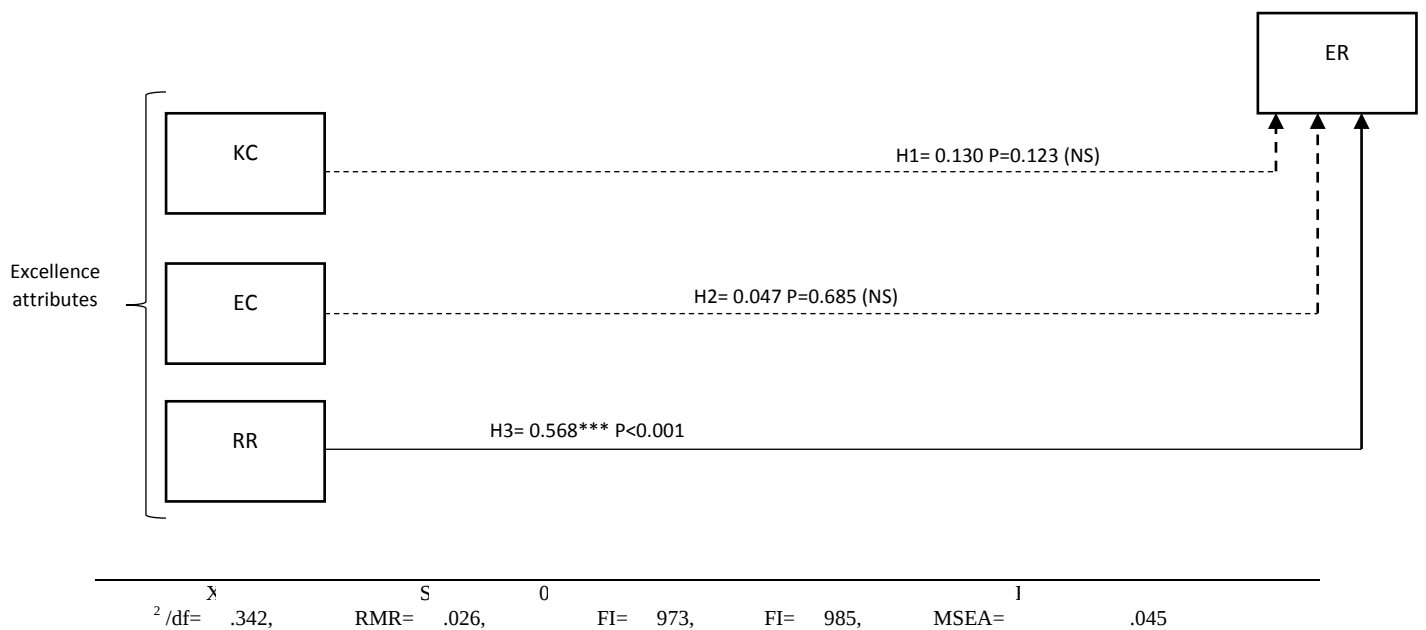


Figure 5.2. Structural equation modelling and hypothesis testing

Table 5.7. Testing the model hypotheses

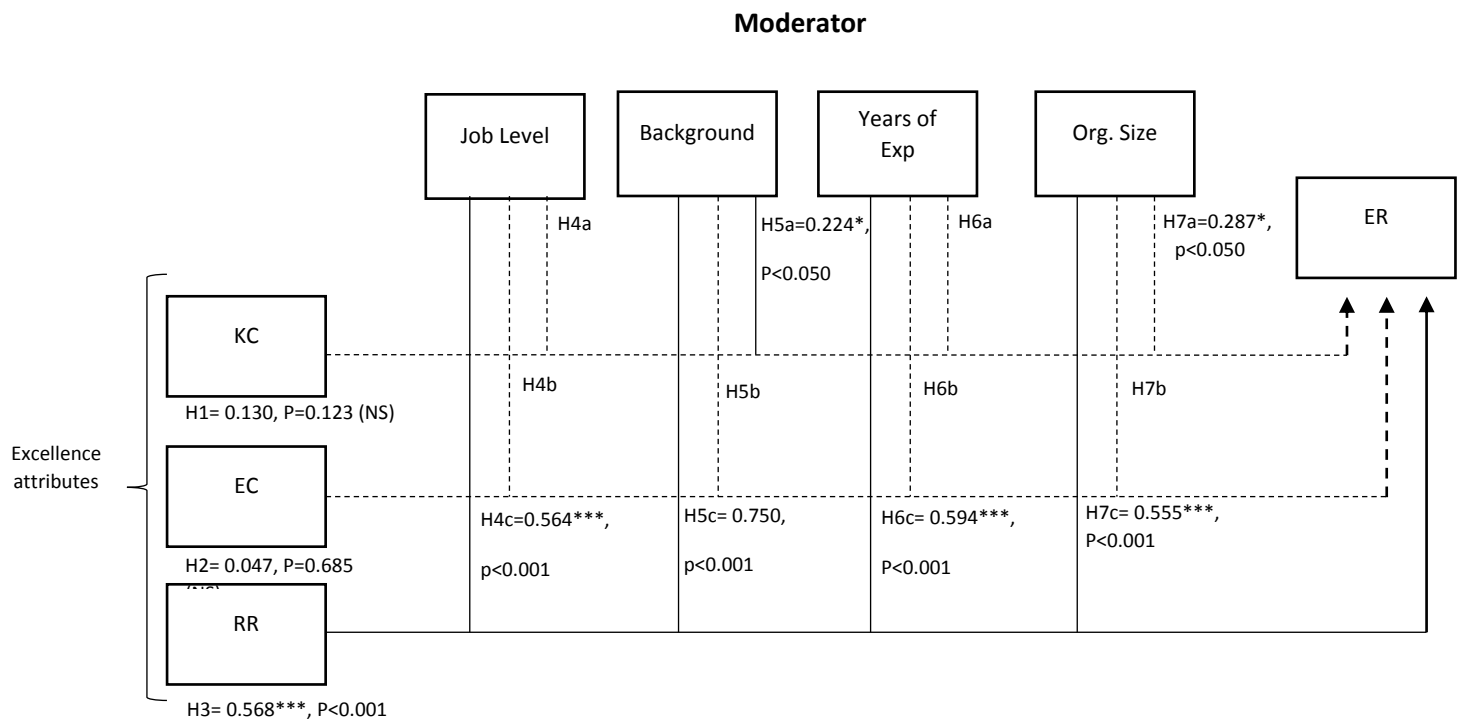
No	Hypotheses	Standardized Estimates (β)	Sig (P value)	Results
H1:	KC→ER	0.130	0.123 ^{NS}	Not supported
H2:	EC→ER	0.047	0.685 ^{NS}	Not supported
H3:	RR→ER	0.568***	***	Supported

*** = $P < 0.001$

5.7. Investigating the moderating effect of job level, background, years of experience and organization size on the relationships between the exogenous factors and employee retention

Multigroup analysis in AMOS 25 was used to investigate the moderating effect of job level (i.e., managerial and non-managerial), background (i.e., physicians, nurses, allied health

professionals and administrators), years of experience (i.e. less than 3 years, 3–5 years, 5–10 years and over 10 years) and organization size (less than 500, 500–2000 and more than 2000 employees) on the relationship between each of the exogenous factors (i.e., KC, EC, RR) and the endogenous factor (employee retention) (Figure 5.3 and Table 5.8). The results of global and local tests are set out in the next few sections.



$\chi^2/df = 342, RMR = .026, GFI = .973, NFI = .985, RMSEA = .045$

Notes: CFI = comparative fit index; df = degrees of freedom; EC = effective communication; ER = employee retention; KC = knowledge and capabilities; NFI = normed fit index; RMSEA = root mean squared error of approximation; RR = rewards and recognition; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual

Figure 5.3. Testing the hypotheses on the moderating effects

Table 5.8. Hypotheses on the moderating effect

No.	Code	Hypotheses
5	H5a: JL ↓ KC → ER	Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention
6	H4b: JL ↓	Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention

	IE → ER	
7	H4c: JL ↓ EC → ER	Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between effective communication and employee retention
8	H4d: JL ↓ RR → ER	Job level (JL) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention
9	H5a: BG ↓ KC → ER	Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention
10	H5b: BG ↓ IE → ER	Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention
11	H5c: BG ↓ EC → ER	Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between effective communication and employee retention
12	H5d: BG ↓ RR → ER	Background (BG) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention
13	H6a: Exp ↓ KC → ER	Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention
14	H6b: Exp ↓ IE → ER	Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention
15	H6c: Exp ↓ EC → ER	Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between effective communication and employee retention
16	H6d: Exp ↓ RR → ER	Experience (Exp) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention
17	H7a: Org ↓ KC → ER	Organization size (Org) significantly moderates on the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention
18	H7b: Org ↓ IE → ER	Organization size (Org) significantly moderates on the relationship between involvement and empowerment and employee retention
19	H7c:	Organization size (Org) significantly moderates on the relationship

	Org ↓ EC → ER	between effective communication and employee retention
20	H7d: Org ↓ RR → ER	Organization size (Org) significantly moderates the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention

Notes: BG = background; EC = effective communication; ER = employee retention; Exp = years of experience; JL = job level; KC = knowledge and capabilities; Org = organization size; RR = rewards and recognition.

To match the revised model, the number of research hypotheses was reduced to 15 from the original 20.

5.7.1 *The moderating effect of job level*

Job level was divided into managerial and non-managerial. Table 5.9 shows the global test between the unconstrained and constrained models. The P-value of the chi-square test for difference between the two models was not significant (0.397), showing that there were no significant differences between the two groups.

Table 5.9: Global test for job level

	2	f
Unconstrained	11.865	18
Constrained	14.831	21
Difference	.966	
P value	0.397	

Further investigation using the local test (see Table 5.10) showed that the path from knowledge and capabilities to employee retention was not significant in either managerial or non-managerial staff ($\beta = 0.046$; $\beta = 0.070$) and was also not significantly different between groups. Job level therefore does not moderate the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention. This was also true for effective communication. The path from effective communication to employee retention was not significant in either staff group ($\beta = -0.266$ for managerial and 0.091 for non-managerial) and did not differ between groups. However, there was a positive and significant relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention for the non-managerial group ($\beta = 0.564$, $p < 0.001$). This means that when more rewards and recognition are given to the non-managerial group, they are more likely to stay with the hospital. Non-managerial staff include nurses, technicians, and administrative staff. Many are expatriates and have lower incomes than the managerial staff. It therefore makes sense that more monetary reward and recognition enhances their retention. H4 is therefore partially supported, specifically H4c: $RR \rightarrow ER$ for non-managerial staff only.

Table 5.10. The moderating effect of job level

Hypotheses	Managerial β	Non-managerial β	P-value	Interpretation
H4a: $KC \rightarrow ER$	0.046	0.070	0.964	There is no difference
H4b: $EC \rightarrow ER$	-0.266	0.091	0.324	There is no difference
H4c: $RR \rightarrow ER$	0.977	0.564***	0.501	The positive relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention is only significant for non-managerial staff.

Notes: Significance: † $p < 0.100$; * $p < 0.050$; ** $p < 0.010$; *** $p < 0.001$

Abbreviations: EC = effective communication; ER = employee retention; KC = knowledge and capabilities; RR = rewards and recognition

5.7.2 The moderating effect of background

This section describes the results of the tests for the moderating effect of staff background, including physicians, nurses, allied health professionals and administrative staff, on the relationship between each of the independent factors and employee retention. Table 5.11 shows the global test between the unconstrained and constrained models for pairwise comparisons (physicians vs nurses, physicians vs allied health professionals, physicians vs administrative staff, nurses vs allied health professionals, nurses vs administrative staff, and allied health professionals vs administrative staff). It shows that there were no significant differences between any of the groups.

Table 5.11. Background global test

	Physician vs Nurse		Physician vs Allied Health		Physician vs Admin		Nurse vs Allied Health		Nurse vs Admin		Allied Health vs Admin	
	X ²	DF	X ²	DF	X ²	DF	X ²	DF	X ²	DF	X ²	DF
Unconstrained	721.677	436	344.722	218	317.335	218	403.550	218	376.254	218	353.882	218
Constrained	736.267	445	345.647	221	324.143	221	408.795	221	378.050	221	357.803	221
Difference	14.590	9	0.925	3	6.808	3	5.245	3	1.796	3	3.921	3
P. Value	0.103		0.819		0.078		0.155		0.616		0.270	

Notes: AHP = allied health professional, df = degrees of freedom

Results from the local test on background are shown in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12. The moderating effect of background: results of local tests

Hypotheses	Physician β	Nurse β	P-value	Interpretation
H5a: KC→ER	-0.323	0.224	0.275	The positive relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention is only significant
		*		

					for nurses
H5b: EC→ER	0.425 [†]	1	-0.22	0.040	Almost no difference
H5c: RR→ER	0.607	***	0.750	0.410	The positive relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention is only significant for nurses
Hypotheses	Physician β	AHP β	P-value	Interpretation	
H5a: KC→ER	-0.323	-0.080	0.639	There is no difference	
H5b: EC→ER	0.425 [†]	0.486	0.797	Almost no difference	
H5c: RR→ER	0.607	0.276	0.659	There is no difference	
Hypotheses	Physician β	Admin β	P-value	Interpretation	
H5a: KC→ER	-0.323	0.296	0.158	There is no difference	
H5b: EC→ER	0.425 [†]	-0.123	0.260	Almost no difference	
H5c: RR→ER	0.607	0.583	0.696	There is no difference	
Hypotheses	Nurse β	AHP β	P-value	Interpretation	
H5a: KC→ER	0.224*	-0.080	0.176	The positive relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention is only significant for nurses	
H5b: EC→ER	-0.221 [†]	0.486	0.026	Almost no difference	
H5c: RR→ER	0.750***	0.276	0.103	The positive relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention is only significant for nurses	
Hypotheses	Nurse β	Admin	P-value	Interpretation	
H5a: KC→ER	0.224*	0.296	0.746	The positive relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention is only significant for nurses	
H5b: EC→ER	-0.221 [†]	-0.123	0.796	Almost no difference	
H5c: RR→ER	0.750***	0.583	0.975	The positive relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention is only significant for nurses	
Hypotheses	Admin β	AHP β	P-value	Interpretation	
H5a: KC→ER	0.296	-0.080	0.208	There is no difference	
H5b: EC→ER	-0.123	0.486	0.211	There is no difference	
H5c: RR→ER	0.583	0.276	0.415	There is no difference	

Notes: Significance: [†] p < 0.100; * p < 0.050; ** p < 0.010; *** p < 0.001

Abbreviations: AHP = allied health professional, EC = effective communication, ER = employee retention, KC = knowledge and capabilities, RR = rewards and recognition.

Table 5.12 shows that there is a significant relationship between two of the independent variables (knowledge and capabilities, and rewards and recognition) and the dependent variable (employee retention) only for nurses (KC to ER: $\beta = 0.224$, $P < 0.05$; RR to ER $\beta = 0.750$, $p < 0.001$). Background is therefore a partial moderator of the relationship, affecting only nurses, and only for the impact of knowledge and capabilities and rewards and recognition on employee retention. Background does not moderate the relationship for any of the other professional groups.

5.7.3 The moderating effect of years of experience

Staff were grouped into less than 3 years, 3 to 5 years, 5 to 10 years and more than 10 years' experience. Table 5.13 shows the global test between the unconstrained and constrained models for the pairwise comparisons of the experience groups (less than 3 years vs 3–5 years, less than 3 years vs 5–10 years, less than 3 years vs more than 10 years, 3–5 years vs 5–10 years, 3–5 years vs more than 10 years, and 5–10 years vs more than 10 years). The P-value of the chi-square difference tests was significant for some groups but not others.

Table 5.13. Global test of years of experience

	< 3y vs 3-5 y		< 3y vs 5-10y		< 3y vs > 10y		3-5y vs 5-10y		3-5y vs > 10y		5-10 y vs > 10y	
	X ²	DF	X ²	DF	X ²	DF	X ²	DF	X ²	DF	X ²	DF
Unconstrained	750.074	436	595.326	327	444.616	218	305.433	218	373.559	218	369.274	218
Constrained	766.859	445	602.814	333	451.148	221	313.554	221	381.107	221	370.707	221
Difference	16.785	9	7.488	6	6.532	3	8.121	3	7.548	3	1.433	3
P. Value	0.052		0.278		0.088		0.044		0.056		.698	

The results of the local test are shown in Table 5.14.

Table 5.14. The moderating effect of the years of experience

Hypotheses	< 3 years β	3–5 years β	P-value	Interpretation
H6a: KC→ER	0.754 [†]	-0.140	0.153	Almost no difference
H6b: EC→ER	-0.795	0.109	0.591	There is no difference
H6c: RR→ER	0.941 [†]	0.495	0.615	Almost no difference
Hypotheses	< 3 years β	5–10 years β	P-value	Interpretation
H6a: KC→ER	0.754 [†]	0.167	0.219	Almost no difference
H6b: EC→ER	-0.795	0.179	0.385	There is no difference
H6c: RR→ER	0.941 [†]	0.401*	0.506	There is no difference
Hypotheses	< 3 years β	> 10 years β	P-value	Interpretation
H6a: KC→ER	0.754 [†]	0.126	0.082	Almost no difference
H6b: EC→ER	-0.795	0.031	0.268	There is no difference
H6c: RR→ER	0.941 [†]	0.594***	0.408	There is no difference
Hypotheses	3–5 years β	5–10 years β	P-value	Interpretation
H6a: KC→ER	-0.140	0.167	0.180	There is no difference
H6b: EC→ER	0.109	0.179	0.827	There is no difference
H6c: RR→ER	0.495	0.401*	0.767	The positive relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention is only significant for those with 5–10 years of experience
Hypotheses	3–5 years β	> 10 years β	P-value	Interpretation
H6a: KC→ER	-0.140	0.126	0.255	There is no difference
H6b: EC→ER	0.109	0.031	0.879	There is no difference
H6c: RR→ER	0.495	0.594***	0.475	The positive relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention is only significant for those with >10 years' experience
Hypotheses	> 10 years β	5–10 years β	P-value	Interpretation
H6a: KC→ER	0.126	0.167	0.727	There is no difference

H6b: EC→ER	0.031	0.179	0.484	There is no difference
H6c: RR→ER	0.594***	0.401*	0.494	There is no difference

Notes: Significance: † $p < 0.100$; * $p < 0.050$; ** $p < 0.010$; *** $p < 0.001$)

Abbreviations: EC = effective communication, ER = employee retention, KC = knowledge and capabilities, RR = rewards and recognition

Table 5.14 shows that there is a significant relationship between only one exogenous factor (rewards and recognition) and the endogenous factor (employee retention). It also shows that the impact of rewards and recognition is stronger with more years of experience. This may be because experience increases rewards and recognition, enhancing retention. However, years of experience does not play any moderating role for the relationship between either knowledge and capabilities or effective communication and employee retention.

5.7.4 *The moderating effect of organization size*

The organization size groups tested were fewer than 500 employees, 500–2000 employees and more than 2000 employees. Table 5.15 shows the results of the global test between the unconstrained and constrained models for pairwise comparisons (fewer than 500 vs 500–2000 employees, fewer than 500 vs more than 2000 employees, and 500–2000 vs more than 2000 employees). None of the P-values of the chi-square difference tests between the two models were significant, indicating that there were no differences between groups.

Table 5.15. Global test for organization size

	< 500 vs 500–2000		< 500 vs > 2000		500–2000 vs > 2000	
	χ^2	df	χ^2	df	χ^2	df
Unconstrained	669.458	327	432.302	218	456.818	218
Constrained	676.419	333	434.200	221	434.200	221
Difference	6.961	6	1.898	3	4.901	3

P-value	0.324	0.594	0.179
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Table 5.16 shows the results of the test for the moderating role of organization size.

Table 5.16. The moderating effect of organization size

Hypotheses	< 500 β	500–2000 β	P-value	Interpretation
H7a: KC→ER	0.296	−0.019	0.159	There is no difference
H7b: EC→ER	−0.448	0.225	0.193	There is no difference
H7c: RR→ER	0.833*	0.546***	0.693	There is no difference
Hypotheses	< 500 β	> 2000 β	P-value	Interpretation
H7a: KC→ER	0.296	0.287*	0.964	The positive relationship between knowledge and capability and employee retention is only significant for organizations with > 2000 employees
H7b: EC→ER	−0.448	−0.084	0.463	There is no difference
H7c: RR→ER	0.833*	0.555***	0.691	There is no difference
Hypotheses	500–2000 β	> 2000 β	P-value	Interpretation
H7a: KC→ER	−0.019	0.287*	0.090	The positive relationship between knowledge and capability and employee retention is stronger for organizations with > 2000 employees
H7b: EC→ER	0.225	−0.084	0.171	There is no difference
H7c: RR→ER	0.546***	0.555***	0.596	There is no difference

Notes: Significance: † $p < 0.100$; * $p < 0.050$; ** $p < 0.010$; *** $p < 0.001$)

Abbreviations: EC = effective communication, ER = employee retention, KC = knowledge and capabilities, RR = rewards and recognition

Table 5.16 shows that there is a significant relationship only for rewards and recognition and employee retention. It also shows that the positive impact of rewards and recognition on employee retention is greater for larger organizations (fewer than 500

employees, $\beta = 0.833$, $p < 0.05$; 500–2000 employees, $\beta = 0.546$, $p < 0.001$; and more than 2000 employees, $\beta = 0.555$, $p < 0.001$). This could be because larger organizations tend to use more reward and recognition programs. The table also shows that organization size had an effect on the path from knowledge and capabilities to employee retention ($\beta = 0.287$, $p < 0.05$), although this was only significant for the largest organizations. This may be because of the complexity of these organizations' operations.

5.8 Summary

This chapter describes the testing of seven hypotheses using SEM in AMOS 25. Three covered the impact of exogenous factors (knowledge and capabilities, effective communication and rewards and recognition) on the endogenous factor, employee retention. The other four hypotheses covered the moderating effect of job level, background, years of experience and organization size on the relationships between the exogenous and endogenous factors. Only one direct path was significant (rewards and recognition to employee retention), supporting Hypothesis H3. Hypotheses H1 and H2 were therefore rejected. Job level had a partial moderating role, for the non-managerial group on the relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention, supporting Hypothesis H4c. Background was also a partial moderator, with both knowledge and capabilities and rewards and recognition having a stronger relationship with employee retention for nurses. This supported Hypotheses H5a and H5c. Similarly, years of experience had a partial moderating effect for the effect of rewards and recognition on employee retention, where the relationship was strong for employees with more years of experience. This supported Hypothesis H6c. The same was seen for the size of organization, supporting Hypothesis H7c. No other hypotheses related to the moderating effect were supported. These findings are discussed further in Chapter 6.



Chapter 6: Discussion of the results

6.1. Introduction

The main goal of this thesis was to assess the impact of one of the fundamental concepts of the EFQM excellence model on employee retention in the UAE public healthcare sector. It therefore examined the relationships between knowledge and capabilities, effective communication and rewards and recognition as independent variables and employee retention as the dependent variable. The research also investigated the potential moderating role on these relationships of job level, background, years of experience and organization size. This section discusses the results and answers the research questions in the light of the findings.

This research is one of the few studies of which the researcher is aware to propose a comprehensive quantitative investigation of one of the fundamental concepts of the EFQM excellence model on employee retention in the UAE public healthcare sector. The study's results differed in some aspects from previous findings on employee retention and the effect of knowledge and capabilities, empowerment and involvement, effective communication and rewards and recognition. The impact of the four factors has been revised based on the first round of testing to reduce these factors to three factors based on the EFA testing conducted in chapter 5. The three factors were changed after further testing by adding job level, background, years of experience and organization size as moderators. As below the four factors effect are discussed based on the current research findings:

6.2. The effect of knowledge and capabilities on employee retention

This section discusses Research Question RQ1. Do knowledge and capabilities affect employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations? and Hypothesis H1: There is a significant relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

Knowledge and capabilities had no relationship with employee retention, so

Hypothesis 1 was not supported ($\beta = 0.130$, $p > 0.05$). This result contradicts other studies that found a positive relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention. For example, Suresh (2014) found that firms focus on some aspects of HR such as awareness and retention to enhance employee performance, which in return affect the intention to stay longer in the organizations. Krishnan et al. (2013) found that enhancing employees' capabilities had a positive effect on employee retention because it increased loyalty. Surbakti and Ta'a (2016) found that when employees feel that their company values their knowledge, experience and insights, they tend to stay in their jobs for longer. Both Solomon (2014) and Surbakti and Ta'a (2016) showed that knowledge management and knowledge sharing had a positive impact on organization performance and employee retention. Morris et al. (2014) suggested that codified knowledge enables employees to access knowledge easily, and share it with others. Liu et al. (2006) found that increasing employee knowledge through training also made employees more likely to stay. Similarly, low levels of training can lead to poor job performance and high employee turnover (Armache, 2014). A study in the UAE found that committed staff wanted to stay with their company, and that commitment was related to the level of clarity and understanding of their roles and responsibilities (Ababneh, 2016).

Previous studies have found that personal development and job satisfaction vary among healthcare organizations, as do both personal knowledge and capabilities in terms of managing medical equipment, facilities and employee support. These dimensions are vital for job satisfaction in both private and public healthcare organizations (Barhem et al., 2010), and job satisfaction directly affects employees' intention to stay (Hausknecht et al., 2009).

This suggests that further investigation of the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention is necessary, to understand these results. It may be that a hierarchical culture has a detrimental effect. It may be a good idea to study the knowledge

management process, including knowledge codifying, organization and sharing. The reason for these findings could be the questions asked, and possibly that there is a lack of training, or a work environment that does not encourage employees to enhance their skills and competencies. It could be difficult to retain well knowledgeable talents due to the market demand on their knowledge, therefore, it support the finding of rejecting H1.

6.3. The effect of involvement and empowerment on employee retention

This section as per the modifications conducted on the proposed model as per chapter 4 findings, which suggest removing the involvement and empowerment as a factor influencing the employee retention due to the CFA statistical measures. The findings are presented in table 4.3 shows that the discriminant validity of the factors included in the measurement model were not confirmed using these criteria. The square root of the average variance extracted for each construct was lower than the inter-construct correlations for the five factors; There were high correlations between each factor and other factors in the same model, such as the correlation between KC and IE ($r = 0.919$), KC and EC ($r = 0.926$), IE and EC ($r = 0.988$), IE and RR ($r = 0.948$), and EC and RR ($r = 0.974$). Discriminant validity was therefore checked again using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio of correlations (Henseler et al., 2015).

The heterotrait–monotrait ratio of correlations of 50% of the correlation between each pair of constructs ranged from 0.918 to 0.975. This is higher than the liberal threshold (HTMT_{.90}) of 0.90. This means that the existing five-factor measurement model has a discriminant validity issue (Henseler et al., 2015). Therefore, it became critical to carry out exploratory factor analysis (EFA) which suggested to reallocate the involvement and empowerment items under other variables and end up no attributes belong to this variable.

6.4 The effect of communication on employee retention

This section discusses RQ3. Does effective communication affect employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations? and Hypothesis H2: There is a significant relationship between effective communication and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

The research showed that effective communication has no impact on employee retention ($\beta = 0.047, p > 0.05$). Hypothesis H2 was therefore rejected. Like the results on knowledge and capabilities, this contradicts previous studies that found a positive impact of effective communication on employee retention, including low turnover and higher engagement (Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2014; Mutheveloo et al., 2013). A similar positive impact was also found in a qualitative study that investigated the importance of business intelligence on firm competitiveness in the marketplace (Surbakti & Ta'a, 2016). Another study in India found that employer brand perception and 'servant' leadership were positively correlated with employee retention intentions (Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2014). The emotional support given to employees by 'servant' leaders can increase employee loyalty and reduce intention to leave the organization. This suggests that managers in organizations (particularly service organizations) who face issues of turnover should concentrate on building trust between their employees as well as between employees and managers. This could be achieved by increasing frank and open communications between employees and managers and encouraging teamwork (Zeffane & Melhem, 2018). However, this is not consistent with the findings of this thesis, perhaps because of the nature of the study organizations.

The hospital management and systems that oversee medical operations within a hospital reduce empowerment of individuals, because they rely on systems and medical teams to govern the internal process. The motives driving healthcare professionals are systematic, based on medical teams, scientific reviews and international medical guidelines

that decentralize medical decisions, and affect the leadership style and communication in highly technical and governed working environments (Al Mheiri et al., 2020). For example, the key challenge for modern organization is to recognize the effects of strong leadership upon the nursing performance and success of the organization. A proficient leader leads nurses and provides direction for the organization towards its goals. The advantages of leadership effectiveness should be stated for nursing administrative and healthcare policy makers (Alloubani et al., 2014).

There are considerable differences between groups of healthcare professionals, especially background. This requires communication alignment through clear management systems, which by default will govern the hospital working culture and management style. However, some studies have concluded that the best leadership style in healthcare organizations is transformational leadership in both one-on-one and group situations. Using this approach, the manager (leader) and the associates (followers) are “transformed” to enhance job performance and help the organization be more productive and successful (Alloubani et al., 2014; Force, 2005; Hall et al., 2008). Azar and Asiabar (2015) suggested that strengthening the scientific basis is essential for leadership readiness and leadership effectiveness in healthcare systems. This creates a potential area for future investigation, building on the outcomes from this study, with a focus on the effectiveness of leadership style in public healthcare organizations that are managed with a robust excellence and quality culture.

A negative relationship between effective communication and employee retention in the healthcare sector would raise concerns about the role of senior management. Low levels of retention are expensive to organizations and replacing employees could have a negative impact on competitiveness. When employees leave an organization, knowledge can be lost if there is no proper knowledge management and communication strategy.

A study from the UAE found that meeting communications expectations had a direct positive impact on trust and commitment, which influenced intention to stay. Delivering these expectations is therefore a communication strategy designed to retain talent (Ababneh, 2016).

The lack of impact of effective communication on employee retention in this study could therefore be linked to the style of leadership in healthcare organizations. However, more research would be needed to explore this, and particularly to investigate the leadership style inside these organizations. The type of questions asked in this study focused on understanding the needs of individuals, communicating a clear strategy, sharing knowledge and helping employees to achieving the organizational goals and objective. The result may, however, also suggest that healthcare organizations may have areas for improvement to work on in relation to the excellence standard (EFQM, 2013). The excellence model suggests that organizations should develop a culture that promotes teamwork and knowledge sharing, and use key performance indicators to ensure effective communication between leaders and followers.

6.5. The effect of reward and recognition on employee retention

This section discusses RQ4. Do reward and recognition affect employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations? and Hypothesis H3: There is a significant relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

The study found that rewards and recognition have a positive impact on employee retention ($\beta = 0.568$, $p < 0.05$). This result is consistent with other studies that also found positive relationships between reward and recognition and employee motivation and willingness to stay (Krishnan et al., 2013; Mutsuddi, 2016). Arora (2012) found that organization culture, rewards and recognition and work-life balance were the main

determinants of employee retention. Another study found that bonuses were effective when employees expected them (Deci & Ryan, 2014). Byron and Khazanchi (2012) and Zhang et al. (2017) both found that a motivational environment promoting non-financial rewards and supportive feedback had a positive impact on innovation. The findings were also consistent with the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which sets out that employees perform better when they feel that the organization values and supports them or their expectations are met (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Mossholder et al., 2005). This increases employee embeddedness and commitment, which in turn increases retention.

A recent study in the UAE assessed the factors that determine employee commitment and loyalty, and how these affect profitability and employee retention. It found that adopting a well-structured reward and recognition system helped to retain talented employees and sustain outstanding organizational performance (Albalooshi et al., 2017). This finding supports the use of excellence standards because it reflects organizational efforts to promote a healthy motivational environment that recognizes the efforts and achievements of employees (EFQM, 2013). However, a more comprehensive study on the most effective type of rewards in the public healthcare sector in the UAE would add value.

6.6. The moderating role of job level on the relationships between exogenous and endogenous factors

This section discusses RQ5. Does the job level moderate the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations? and Hypotheses H4a: Job level has a significant effect on the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations, H4b: Job level has a significant

effect on the relationship between effective communication and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations and H4c: Job level has a significant effect on the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organization.

The chi-square test for the differences between managerial and non-managerial staff was not significant (0.397). In other words, there was no difference between the two groups, suggesting that job level had no moderating effect. However, when the effect was separated by variable, the picture changed slightly. Job level did not have a moderating role on the relationships between knowledge capability and employee retention for either group ($\beta = 0.046$; $\beta = 0.070$). Similarly, the effect on the relationship between effective communication and employee retention was not significant for either group ($\beta = -0.266$; $\beta = 0.091$).

However, the path from rewards and recognition to employee retention was significant for both managerial and non-managerial groups ($\beta = 0.564^{***}$, $p < 0.001$). It was also stronger for non-managerial staff, showing that job level has a moderating effect on this relationship. This suggests that rewards will have more effect on retention when used with non-managerial employees such as nurses and administrative staff. This could be because of the difference in salary between managerial and non-managerial staff. Supporting the finding of that non-managerial staff include nurses, technicians, and administrative staff. Many are expatriates and have lower incomes than the managerial staff. It therefore makes sense that more monetary reward and recognition enhances their retention. This study therefore concluded that Hypothesis H4 was partially supported, and specifically H4c: RR→ER for non-managerial staff only. Hypotheses H4a and H4b were rejected.

This result is similar to work by Payne (2005), who studied the level of job performance and the job position for both managerial and non-managerial staff, and found that job level had no relationship with the level of communication competence. Foss et al.

(2009) investigated job characteristics, including autonomy, feedback and task identity, and their impact on different types of motivation to predict knowledge sharing behavior. Three types of job characteristics had significant relationships with different types of motivation. Job design had a moderating effect on the relationship between promotion and employee retention (Subramaniam et al., 2019). Ababneh (2016) found that commitment, trust and job satisfaction mediated the relationship between expectations being met and employees' decision to stay.

The reasons for the differences between the results in this study and previous results are not clear. The differences may be related to the type of the organization or culture, because the study organizations tend to have a hierarchical and diversified culture. This could slow decision-making. It could also be related to third parties such as patients. It is, however, clear that rewards could be used to increase retention of non-managerial staff, but will have less effect on managerial staff. Other findings conclude that perceptions of positive supervisor support are not necessarily conducive to employees' intention to remain in the organization (Zeffane & Melhem, 2018).

6.7 The moderating role of background on the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables

This section discusses RQ6. Does the background moderate the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations? and Hypotheses H5a: Background has a significant effect on the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations, H5b: Background has a significant effect on the relationship between effective communication and employee retention in UAE

public sector healthcare organizations and H5c: Background has a significant effect on the relationship between reward and recognition and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

Background had a role in moderating some of the relationships between exogenous variables (knowledge and capabilities, effective communication and rewards and recognition) and employee retention, but only in certain groups and for some variables. It was significant for nurses for the relationship between knowledge and capability and employee retention ($\beta = 0.224$, $P < 0.05$); and rewards and recognition and employee retention ($\beta = 0.750$, $p < 0.001$). Hypotheses H5a and H5c were therefore partially accepted. There was no moderating impact of background on the relationship between effective communication and employee retention ($\beta = -0.221$, $P > 0.05$). Hypothesis H5b was therefore rejected. This was consistent with the results of other studies that investigated the moderating effect of demographic factors. Froese et al. (2019) investigated the moderating effects of education level, employee gender and age on the relationship between merit-based rewards and job satisfaction. They found that the level of education and gender moderated the relationship between rewards and job satisfaction, especially for male, well-educated employees.

6.8. The moderating role of years of experience on the relationship between exogenous and endogenous factors

This section discusses RQ7. Do the years of experience moderate the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations? and Hypotheses H6a: Experience has a significant effect on the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations, H6b: Experience has

a significant effect on the relationship between effective communication and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations, and H6c: Experience has a significant effect on the relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

The number of years of experience had no significant moderating effect on the relationships between either knowledge and capabilities or effective communication and employee retention. Hypotheses H6a and H6b were therefore rejected. However, years of experience had a significant moderating effect on the relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention, and increased with level of experience ($\beta = 0.401$, $P < 0.05$ for 5–10 years' experience and $\beta = 0.594$, $P < 0.001$ for >10 years). This may be because employees with more experience gain more rewards and recognition, which in turns enhances their intent to remain. This study confirms previous research on the moderating impact of experience in a well-educated workforce. For example, Kim and Lee (2009) found that experience and professional development had a positive impact on worker attachment to the organization. However, in the early stage of employees' development, it is difficult to assess the impact of job-relevant supervisory communication on turnover intention (Kim & Lee, 2009). A more recent study suggested that focusing on experience and rewards will improve employees' ability, commitment and performance (Froese et al., 2019).

6.9. The moderating role of organization size on the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables

This section discusses RQ8. Does the organization size moderate the relationship between each of the model variables; (i.e., knowledge and capabilities, empowerment, involvement and alignment, effective communication, reward and recognition), and employee retention in the UAE public sector healthcare organizations? and Hypotheses H7a:

Organization size has a significant effect on the relationship between knowledge and capabilities and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations, H7b: Organization size has a significant effect on the relationship between effective communication and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations, and H7c: Organization size has a significant effect on the relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention in UAE public sector healthcare organizations.

Organization size had a significant role as a moderator for the relationship between knowledge and capability and employee retention, but only for large organizations with more than 2000 employees ($\beta = 0.287$, $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis H7a was therefore accepted for large organizations. However, Hypothesis H7b was rejected because the organization size had no effect on the relationship between effective communication and employee retention. Organization size had a positive and significant moderating role on the relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention for all sizes of organization, although it was stronger for larger organizations (fewer than 500 employees, $\beta = 0.833$, $p < 0.05$; 500–2000 employees, $\beta = 0.546$, $p < 0.001$; more than 2000 employees, $\beta = 0.555$, $p < 0.001$). This could be because larger organizations can offer more rewards and recognition. However, this is not clear, and further investigation is needed to explore the reasons for this finding. However, the result is similar to other studies that investigated the impact of organization size. For example, Bilal et al. (2010) found a significant difference in satisfaction level between employees in small and large public sector healthcare organizations in the UAE. Medium-sized organizations with between 100–200 employees had a high level of employee satisfaction regardless of job nature. Bilal et al. (2010) suggested that this was because of the ease of communication between managers and employees.

6.9 Implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research

This study's findings have a number of implications for decision-makers in the healthcare sector, strategists, consultancy companies and those delivering training and development programs for leaders and talented employees. It will also help organizations wishing to retain expert staff in the healthcare sector.

The EFQM excellence model suggests that excellence requires a systematic approach to recognition, systems to improve the knowledge and capabilities of employees and an effective communication approach. Bringing these together coherently will sustain organizational excellence.

This research focused on assessing the impact of different practices on employee retention within organizations in the public healthcare sector in the UAE. Jobs in the public sector are usually more secure than in the private sector, so the outcomes might be different if assessing private sector employees, and the results may not be generalizable to private sector hospitals. Future studies should therefore examine the situation in private sector healthcare providers to explore similarities and differences. The culture in UAE public sector hospitals is quite restricted by Government authorities and directions. This means that the results may also not be generalizable to other countries. Future studies might compare UAE public sector hospitals and others in the region from both private and public sectors. Private and public sector hospitals in the UAE operate within similar government regulations and have similar levels of diversity. However, the management style and priorities vary (Barhem et al., 2010). A future study may therefore help to understand the private sector culture if the outcomes are different.

Despite these limitations, it is possible that the study findings could be generalized to other sectors within the UAE, such as education, transportation, and hospitality. The findings may help organizations and government to improve performance by benchmarking, and learn

from different practices. The focus on one of the excellence model's eight fundamental concepts may be valuable for excellence model developers, to help them to see the impact. This approach could be extended to the remaining concepts to enhance proper model development based on scientific evidence.

One recommended area for future investigation would be to compare organizational performance outcomes and individual perspectives. Management performance evaluation is to demonstrate commitment to organizational excellence and align performance with the strategic goals of the organization. This process is designed to improve individual performance, increasing institutional effectiveness (Albalooshi et al., 2017). However, this approach has limited the use of the excellence model in practice, this study agrees with the general finding that the use of any excellence model does not guarantee results (Dahlgaard et al., 2013). Previous researchers suggested the use of a business excellence framework which recommends adapting, rather than simply adopting, the EFQM excellence model (Dahlgaard et al., 2013). Many governments have therefore modified the EFQM model to align it with their own long-term agenda. This was true in the UAE, where the government introduced its own model, G4, in 2017–2018, adapting the EFQM model published in 1993, 2010, and 2013. This was part of work to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and to develop a competitive position for the UAE. The government also wanted to add value to the accumulated experience of excellence practices developed in the 25 years since the EFQM model was first published. The G4 was also introduced to deliver government priorities based on changing trends worldwide, especially a strategy to capitalized on the fourth industrial revolution, which is shaping the future of the region. Sandbrook (2010) suggested that to make full use of the Excellence Model, it needs to become the agenda for the leadership team. The business excellent framework (Dahlgaard et al., 2013) helps to integrate the excellence model with management tools and techniques, and the organizational

culture and characteristics that will guide an organization towards business excellence. Sandbrook (2010) suggested that the excellence framework helps organizations to achieving increase clarity about key delivery and support processes. Recognition of good practices and team work is essential, which is consistent with the results of this study that rewards and recognition are crucial to employee retention.

This research study suggest future qualitative research could be conducted amongst these groups to find out what influences their willingness to stay. This could then be linked back to excellence strategies to retain the talented people as a vital factor to sustain the excellence performance in public different sectors in the UAE.

6.10 Conclusion

This research has contributed by reviewing the fundamental concepts of the EFQM model, which is used as a standard way to assess government performance towards the UAE Government's Vision 2021 and 2030. The research covered several groups from public healthcare organizations. The thesis findings provide a new model relationship, and suggest that it may be helpful to merge some attributes from one factor into another (see Chapter 5). This will enable students, researchers, and model developers to improve their strategies to retain professional and skilled employees.

One of the model concepts is to sustain success through talent. This was tested in this study by examining the factors affecting employee retention, including the moderating role of the job level, background, years of experience and organization size.

This study aimed to investigate the impact of knowledge and capability, effective communication, and rewards and recognition on employee retention in healthcare organizations in the UAE. It found that neither knowledge and capability nor effective communication affected employee retention. Public sector healthcare organizations,

therefore, do not gain any employee retention benefits from the use of strategies affecting knowledge and capability or effective communication. This may be because of the nature of the organizations, which have a lot of rules and procedures. Another reason could be the high diversity of the workforce and the ability to recruit nurses and physicians from different countries, which may make it harder to share knowledge or communicate effectively despite organizational efforts.

There was a positive relationship between rewards and recognition and employee retention. This relationship was also moderated by job level, background, experience and the size of the organization. This suggests that to increase employee retention, organizations should focus more on their rewards and recognition system. It may also be helpful to link it to knowledge management and effective communication among physicians, nurses and administrative staff, as it may be possible to improve these more generally. The findings from other studies suggest that this may also affect employee retention in future. It will also support the integrated approach of the excellence model, which links the separate parts of the organization to improve overall performance and loyalty. Silvestro (2002) defined job loyalty as the ability of an employee to stay with an organization in the long term. Employee loyalty is therefore linked to both commitment and retention (Albalooshi et al., 2017), and commitment also has a positive impact on job satisfaction (Hausknecht et al., 2009). The final part of this chapter discusses the study's limitations and implications, and makes suggestions for future research opportunities.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: References
- Appendix 2: Questionnaire
- Appendix 3: EFQM 2013

Appendix 1: References

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Appendix 2: Questionnaire

<u>A. General Information</u>							
1	Name of Organization	Drop list					
2	Background	(i) Physician	(ii) Nurse	(iii) Allied Health		(vi) Admi n	
3	Job level	(i) managerial (ii) non-managerial					
4	Years of experience in the healthcare sector	(i) Less than three years (ii) Between 3 and 5 (iii) Between 6 and 10 (iv) More than 10 years					
5	Total number of employees at the organization	(i) Less than 500 (ii) Between 500 and 2000 (iii) More than 2000					
6	Does the organization get excellence award accreditations	(i) Yes (ii) No					
<i>Please select "one" response to each of the following questions:</i>							
<u>B-Knowledge & Capabilities:</u>		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strong ly Agree	
7	My organization define the skills competencies and people performance level required to achieve the mission vision and strategic goals.						
8	My organization ffectively plan to attract, develop and retain the talents required to meet these needs.						
9	My organization appraise and help people improve their performance and engagement.						
10	My organization develop people's skills and competencies to ensure their future mobility and employability.						
11	My organization ensure their people have the necessary competencies resources and opportunity to be able to						

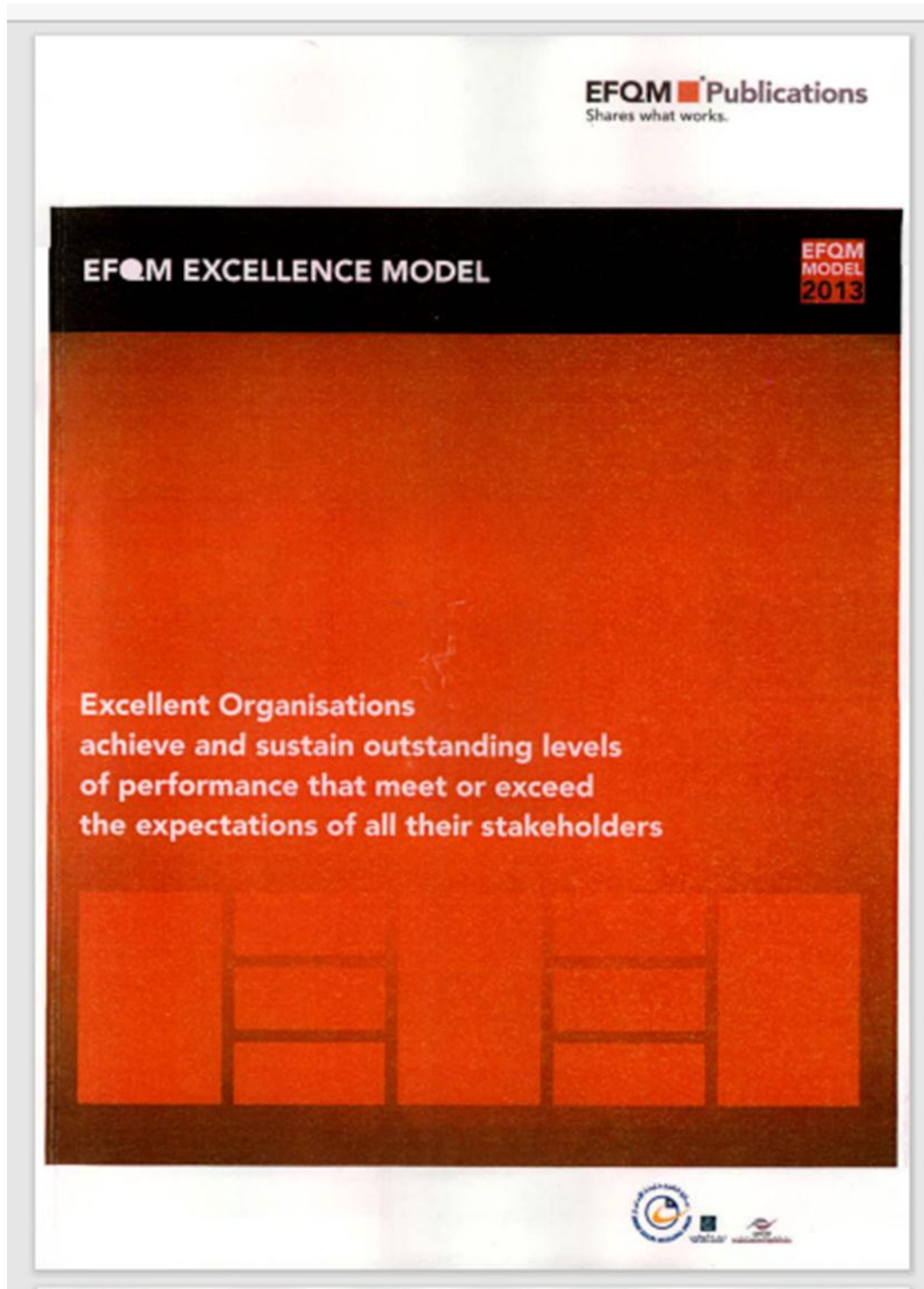
	maximize their contribution						
12	In my organization the employees continuously acquire new job-related knowledge.						
13	My job descriptions contain all of the duties performed by individual employees						
14	We have learning groups, where members can discuss their work experiences and problems						
<u>C- Involvement, Alignment and Empowerment:</u>		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
15	My organization align personal and team objectives and empower people to realize their full potential in a spirit of true partnership.						
16	My organization recognize that innovation can apply to products, processes, marketing, organizational structures and business models.						
17	My organization create a culture of reactivity and innovation across the organization ensuring people have an open mind-set and can respond quickly to challenges they face.						
18	My organization encourage their people to be ambassadors of the organization's image and reputation.						
19	My organization inspire participation in activities that contribute to wider society.						
20	My work gives the employee the ability to contribute to the success of my organization						
21	Our employees discover and solve problems through mutual collaboration						
22	Our department head encourage participative						

	decision making in work group						
<u>D- Effective Communications:</u>		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
23	My organization understand the communication needs of their people and use appropriate strategies and tools to maintain a dialogue.						
24	My organization communicate clear direction and strategic focus to ensure that people understand and can demonstrate their contribution to the organization on-going success.						
25	My organization enable and encourage the sharing of information, knowledge and good practices, achieving a dialogue throughout the organization.						
26	My organization develop a culture that continuously seeks to improve the effectiveness of collaboration and teamwork through their value chain.						
27	My supervisor gives advance notice of changes and department objectives alignment						
28	Communication with other members of my work group is efficient and beneficial						
29	My organisation has efficient and appropriate information systems						
<u>E- Rewarding and Recognition:</u>		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
30	My organization align remuneration benefits and terms of employment with transparent strategies and policies						
31	My organization motivate people to become involve in improvement and innovation and recognize their efforts and						

	achievements.						
32	My organization ensure a healthy work life balance in the reality of 24/7 connectivity increasing globalization and new ways of working.						
33	My organization promote a culture of mutual support, recognition and care between individuals and between teams.						
34	My organization respect and embrace the diversity of their people and the communities and markets the organization serves.						
35	I really like working for this organization						
36	My organization encourages and rewards the sharing of knowledge						
37	The more I share my knowledge, the more my reputation is enhanced						
<u>F- Employee Retention</u>		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
38	When an experienced employee leaves, they are encouraged to transfer and distribute their knowledge to others						
39	I enjoy my work very much						
40	I do not feel any obligation to continue working for this organization						
41	It would not be difficult for me to find an interesting job in another organization						
42	As soon as I can find a better job. I will leave.						
43	I would prefer very much to continue working in this organization						
44	I would like to stay for in this organization as long as I can work						
45	If I would quite this organization, I would definitely						

	not decide to come back to work here again						
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Appendix 3: EFQM 2013



Integration of the Fundamental Concepts within the Criteria

One of the aims of this revision of the EFQM Excellence Model was to achieve a full integration of the Fundamental Concepts of Excellence and the framework of the Model.

The Fundamental Concepts were reviewed and updated first and these were used as the basis for the bullet points in the criterion parts of the EFQM Excellence

Model. In some cases, the text from the Fundamental Concepts is repeated in its entirety in the relevant criterion parts. In other cases, the text from the Fundamental Concepts has been adapted to fit the specific context of the criterion part.

This is illustrated in the table below.

Criterion	1. Leadership					2. Strategy					3. People					4. Partners & Resources					5. Processes, Products & Services				
Criterion Part	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e
Adding Value for Customers																									
Creating a Sustainable Future																									
Developing Organisational Capability																									
Harnessing Creativity & Innovation																									
Leading with Vision, Inspiration & Integrity																									
Managing with Agility																									
Succeeding through the Talent of People																									
Sustaining Outstanding Results																									

The model concept Page 21 from the EFQM 2013 Model