

The Practice of Public Relations Departments in Increasing Social Support in the Diverse Workplaces of the United Arab Emirates

LA PRATIQUE EXERCÉE PAR LE SERVICE DES RELATIONS PUBLIQUES EN AUGMENTATION DE SOUTIEN SOCIAL DANS LES MILIEUX DE TRAVAIL DIVERSIFIÉS AUX EMIRATS ARABES UNIS

Badreya Al-Jenaibi^{1,*}

¹Mass Communication Program, United Arab Emirates University, United Arab Emirates.

Ph.D., Assistant professor, University of North Dakota. Research interests include International Communication, Public relations, organizational communication, the uses and effects of mass media, new media, particularly the international level, as well as public relations and communication.

*Corresponding author.
Email: aljenaibi@uaeu.ac.ae

Received 20 July 2011; accepted 27 August 2011

Abstract

This research examines the need for social support and cross-cultural management strategies to facilitate the organizational orientation of foreign employees. Such organizational support, if indeed it exists at all, is provided through the Public and Employee Relations departments of private-sector companies. Human Resource Management departments do not exist in the UAE per se; the current departments that address employee relations are dual in nature, fulfilling both public relations requirements and addressing the needs of employees. The research investigates how foreign employees find social support and who mentors them in the first year of employment. Information was collected and analyzed from interviews with both new employees and with members of the Public and Employee Relations departments in several companies. It seeks to identify the main problems and stressors that new workers face, the kind of social support foreign workers receive, and the way Public and Employee Relations departments respond to the challenge of working with foreign-born employees who are newly arrived in the UAE. The findings suggest that there is little understanding and/or recognition of the need for organizational support for newly hired foreign employees or human resource strategies to manage diversity and its challenges. Consequently, this article concludes with recommendations for improving the support structure for

diverse new employees. However, the primary purpose of this study is to shed light on the need for further research and insight on the needs of foreign workers, and the social, political and managerial consequences of relying on a foreign work force for the majority of labor needs. In other words, there is a need to conduct micro-research that would examine specific links between human resource strategies and their effect on a workplace of workers from a variety of national, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Key words: Employee relations; Public relations; Human resources; Social support; Stress and buffer theory; Immigrants; United Arab Emirates

Résumé

Les Emirats Arabes Unis sont unique en son ratio d'expatriés étrangers aux citoyens nationaux, ce dernier ne représente que 6%-10% de sa population actuelle. Bien que d'autres pays du Golfe Persique ont des ratios comparables, la force de la main-d'œuvre immigrée des EAU est sensiblement plus élevée due à ses efforts dans la modernisation rapide et le développement économique sans participation du secteur pétrolier. Avec un tel nombre significatif de salariés expatriés, des entreprises privées aux EAU offrent étonnamment peu de soutien aux travailleurs étrangers pour que ces derniers s'adaptent mieux à un environnement hautement stressant. En outre, il existe peu de recherches, le cas échéant, qui identifie les besoins et les défis de la gestion d'une telle main-d'œuvre diversifiée et transitoires. La recherche la plus récente souligne l'émiratization de la main d'œuvre aux EAU, montrant comment la gestion, y compris la GRH peut faciliter l'augmentation d'une population locale et active. En revanche, cette recherche examine la nécessité d'un soutien social et d'une stratégie de la gestion des ressources humaines inter-culturelle pour orienter plus facilement les employés étrangers. Un tel soutien d'organisation serait fourni par les services des

relations publiques et les employés de leurs entreprises d'accueil. Les départements de la gestion des ressources humaines n'existent pas dans les EAU en soi; les services actuels qui traitent la communication avec les employés sont de nature double, répondant à la fois les exigences des relations publiques et de répondre aux besoins des employés. L'information a été recueillie et analysée à partir d'entretiens à la fois avec les nouveaux employés et aux membres des services des relations publiques dans plusieurs sociétés. Les résultats ont montré que la majorité des nouveaux employés croyaient qu'il y avait un soutien insuffisant pour les aider à s'adapter afin qu'ils puissent devenir plus efficaces en moins de temps. Quelques recommandations ont été proposées pour améliorer la structure de soutien pour les nouveaux employés de différentes catégories. Cependant, le but principal de cette étude est de faire la lumière sur la nécessité de poursuivre les recherches sur les besoins des travailleurs étrangers et sur les conséquences sociales, politiques et gestionnaire de la dépendance sur une main-d'œuvre étrangère pour répondre à la majorité des besoins du travail. Actuellement, il n'ya pas de recherche portant cette circonstance dans une perspective de gestion stratégique ou tout autre modèle théorique qui pourrait être utile pour les gestionnaires d'entreprises privées dans le Golfe pour répondre aux besoins et aux défis de travailler avec une main-d'œuvre étrangère dominante.

Mots-clés: Relations avec les employés; Relations publiques; Ressources Humaines; Soutien Social; Stress et la théorie de la mémoire tampon; Immigrants; Émirats Arabes Unis

Badreya Al-Jenaibi (2011). The Practice of Public Relations Department in Increasing Social Support in the Diverse Workplaces of the United Arab Emirates. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 7(3), 41-54. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/ccc/article/view/j.ccc.1923670020110703.112> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/j.ccc.1923670020110703.112>

INTRODUCTION

Employment Issues in the UAE

The six nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman and the United Arab Emirates, have been limited by their small local populations and/or low levels of skilled laborers; consequently, these countries have had to rely on large numbers of foreign labor resources to meet the demands of their economic development objectives. Winckler (2000) describes the GCC countries as pure rentier states, a term referring to nations that accumulate most of their revenues from a natural resource such as oil instead of taxing citizens. One tool to distribute oil income was to hire the indigenous population into high-wage public sector jobs. "The end result was the creation of a dual labor market

with nationals employed almost exclusively in the public sector while the vast majority of the foreign workers were employed in the private sector" (Winckler, 2010, p. 3). Unfortunately, in recent years, unemployment of nationals has increased due to lowered oil revenues, and a reduction in public-sector opportunities. No country exemplifies this circumstance more than the United Arab Emirates, where hundreds of thousands of workers have migrated from both near and distant countries to find jobs. These workers fill a variety of positions, including construction work, domestic labor, tourism services, and a much smaller number of white-collar professional positions (Kamrava& Babar, 2011). The large immigrant/expatriate workforce comprises 95% of the labor in the private sector.

This trend does not appear to be abating. In fact, despite attempts across the region at nationalizing the work force, the reliance on foreign labor is expected to increase in the coming years as the region continues to embark upon ambitious plans for further industrial and infrastructural expansion (p. 11)

Consequently, finding a way to manage this foreign labor force "continues to be one of the most complex challenges for governments throughout the region as they try to meet their domestic labor requirements while containing potential socio-cultural and political consequences of hosting such large numbers of non-national workers" (Kamrava& Babar, 2011, p. 11). The high ratio of foreign workers also has adverse effects on the native population who finds itself displaced in the labor market by workers who can be hired more cheaply. In 2010, the Dubai Statistics Centre released current information about the nature of its employment environment, reporting that while the unemployment figures overall were only 0.8 per cent, unemployment of its native population was 8.7 per cent, a relatively high figure in comparison (Fitch, 2010).

Benefits to Employers

The Dubai Statistics (2010) Report stated that the reason the unemployment rate for expatriates is so low is due to the elastic nature of expatriate workers who stay a few years and then return home once their employment is completed, and their work visas expire (Fitch 2010). However, as suggested by the high unemployment figures of Emiratis, the low unemployment of the immigrant workforce is also due to the preferences private companies show in hiring workers that receive less pay and benefits than a native worker would expect. Correspondingly, the report revealed a major wage gap between Emirates, whose jobs are mostly in public administration and defence (58%), with 69% of expatriate workers making less than Dh3,000 a month, while 67.7% of working Emiratis made more than Dh14,000 a month (Fitch 2010). Besides lower costs of employing expatriates, employers also exert significantly more control over the expatriate workforce as they are not allowed to leave and work elsewhere under UAE labor law (Forstenlechner, 2009).

Emiratization

To a certain extent, private industry has been pressured by the UAE government to hire more nationals as growing number of young Emiratis graduate with university degrees and seek employment. While the forces of Emiratization have been become increasingly emphasized over the last decade, the workforce in Dubai especially remains primarily foreign-born, with most efforts of private companies to hire nationals existing “only on paper” (Forstenlechner, 2009, p. 139). Besides low wages and control over the workforce, Winckler (2000) also blames the high number of foreign workers in the private sector on the political relationship between the government and the “merchant elite.” Private employers have been given a lot of latitude in their treatment of workers because of these powerful political relations. Winckler (2010) states,

this leeway given to the private employers, it should be noted, was and still is a cornerstone of the rentierrelationship between the GCC rulers and the merchant elite, who exchanged their political influence in the pre-oil era for economic benefits following the oil era (p. 10)

Nevertheless, the growing pressure on private companies to hire locally has increased the already uncertain and “elastic” (p.10) nature of an expatriate’s status in the UAE job market. The labor market in the UAE is highly fragmented between nationals and expatriate workers via industry, wages and permanency (Forstenlechner 2009), and even though efforts at Emiratization in the past have mostly failed, the realization of increasing resistance to a foreign workforce only adds additional stress to the expatriate worker, whose job is already viewed as transient and terminable.

The Elite Expatriate

According to Mashood, Verhoeven and Chansarkar (2010), with the thousands of foreign employees entering the United Arab Emirates each year, the foreign population brings cultural diversity to organizations, which could potentially enhance the experiences of both local Emirati and other foreign workers from various cultures. In fact, according to Vora (2010) because of the UAE’s more open policies allowing foreign interests into the country, many private-sector companies are actually managed by non-Emiratis. So, you could have an associate of the merchant elite from Italy managing a diverse workforce of migrant workers, none of whom are citizens of the Emirates. Vora (2008) states, “in Dubai the economic openness to wealthy foreigners means that it is most often expatriate elite managers and business owners who govern the day-to-day lives of migrant workers, thereby assuming responsibility for the migrants’ well-being” (Vora, 2010, p. 47). Unlike what might be imagined about the private-sector workplace being dominated by an Islamic/Arab culture, many private companies are managed by managers from an entirely different cultural background, adding to the

great diversity of the UAE workplace. Additionally, Vora argues that expatriate managers have no real interest, for the most part, in promoting the national culture. She states these expatriates,

were in no way interested in Emirati citizenship, even if it were available to them. In fact, many of them did not socialize at all with Emiratis and preferred to conduct business and define their social networks and cultural identities through their compatriots, who often also shared linguistic, regional, and religious backgrounds (Vora, 2010, p. 49)

It is hard to imagine that these same elite managers would become actively involved in valuing diversity in the workplace when they remain relatively isolated from the dominant culture themselves.

Research Issues

Although the UAE the private-sector workforce is dominated by expatriate and foreign workers, as reported by Kamrava and Babar (2011), little or no research has been conducted regarding the intensive and continuous migration of workers into the Arabian Gulf from a management perspective. The research studies that have been conducted concentrate on such issues as worker remittances to the home country and migrant identity formation in a foreign culture. In 2010, the Middle East Institute conducted a comprehensive study of migration issues in the GCC states. The range of the topics explored included: patterns of migration, the role of the state in migration, women’s issues, economic impacts, expatriate elitism, impact on family lives, and human rights issues. Although the Middle East Institute published a report of its findings from over 15 different researchers on the impact of labor migration to the GCC, not one explored the impact that such a highly diverse workforce on the organization itself. Kamrava and Babar (2011) argue that no research has been conducted on the impact this type of foreign workforce has on human resource management issues. Mashood et al (2010) argue that the Middle East in general is “an under-researched area in HRM literature” (p.1) and what little research does exist tends to discuss regional issues, i.e., the Middle East, rather than addressing the needs or challenges of individual countries. This is unfortunate as the Arabian Gulf region, and the UAE in particular, is unique in its labor demographics and resulting challenges. Although research has been conducted in Hong Kong and other locations regarding their extensive foreign workforces, even in those studies, little research has been devoted to the impact that these workforces have on human resource management challenges. What is missing is a micro-perspective which would examine specific links between human resource strategies and their effect on a workplace of workers from a variety of national, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Employee Challenges

Ultimately, foreign employees seek the same goals as any other worker group—an educational background that

will promote their careers and enhance their future lives (Knoll, Schwarzer, Pfüller&Kienle, 2009). Workers invest heavily in an effort to succeed. In their first work year, beyond the typical anxiety of those leaving home for a foreign country, these employees are under a great deal of additional stress (Revenson, Kayser&Bodenmann, 2005). Many are foreign workers who have never been outside their home countries. They are far away from home, in a foreign country, facing a foreign language, and trying to adjust to an unfamiliar culture. Unfortunately, social support systems for these employees are often inadequate and sometimes non-existent (Schwarzer& Knoll, 2007). Even if there are attempts to provide immigrant workers with a support system, there is no consistency in method or even cultural norms and standards applied considering that many managers come from a variety of national backgrounds themselves.

In the United States and other countries, the role of developing employee relations, providing employee orientation, training, career advancement and the like is the sole responsibility of the human resource department. HR support specializes in identifying the needs of workers and supplying them with the tools needed to be successful. However, in the UAE, no such Human Resource department exists. Rather, it is common that the employee relations function (the support for internal employees) is often combined with the public relations (PR) function (the handling of a company's external communications and public image) (Hendrix, 2004). Consequently, human resource development in the UAE falls under the umbrella of the "Public Relations" department-- a "Public and Employee Relations" department (PER). The distinction and tension between the ER function and purely PR function will prove important in our analysis.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Managing an International Workforce

Kanter and Drettler (1998) argue that companies who participate in international activities, including managing an internationally diverse workforce, often lack the ability to integrate their resources in order to build connections that would "allow them to think about all of their resources simultaneously and therefore tap the power of the whole" (p. 16). The key to success in the current global climate is for companies to be able to "tap the collaborative advantage that comes from being able to use all their resources and being able to work across boundaries" (Kanter&Drettler, 1998, p. 16). To be successful, the company must be skilled at understanding local needs and become "expert at forging cross-boundary relationships" (Kanter&Drettler, 1998, p. 16). Morris (2002) describes that the influx of immigrant workers into the workplace can provide an international flavor which better serves a diverse customer base.

While many are able to assimilate with relative ease, others find this adaptation more challenging. She argues, "With the melting pot of workers streaming into the workforce, it is important for employers to understand the many cultural differences and nuances of immigrant workers so they can help them assimilate faster" (p. 3). Language and cultural barriers can interfere with effective communication and create complications, including issues with safety (Morris, 2002). Chitakornkijasil (2009) added that systemic barriers and employment practices can have adverse effects on certain employees. The challenges of managing a diverse workplace can cause complications for companies, and can limit the performance, morale, work environment and turnover if not handled well. "These challenges include merging workers who come from a variety of different countries and cultures, which often speak a variety of languages, and have different kinds of issues regarding business, products, markets, etc" (p. 39). Gentile (1996) agreed that diversity can cause a breakdown in performance, as also revealed by Cox (1993) when he points out that in a plural organization, conflict between groups is high. Why? Gong (2005) argues that our identities are so strongly connected to our nationality, and when bringing different nationality groups together, there is the common response of placing people in categories based on how they identify them. This leads to disintegration in behavior and lowers performance. Jackson and Alvarez (2009) also describe the problems of diverse groups working together by arguing "When people with different habits and world views come together in the workplace, misunderstandings and conflicts inevitably occur as a result of dissimilar expectations and norms. Employees who behave according to the cultural adage that the squeaky wheel gets the grease" (p.6), may be viewed as offensive and undesirable team mates by employees who were taught that "the nail that sticks out gets hammered down" (p. 6). As described by Anderson and Graham (1999), a major challenge of managing a culturally diverse company is whether or not managers are able to address the needs of people across cultures "who will become their employees and help the organization become convergent" (p. 54). One of the most effective ways for a company to become more convergent is to use internal networks for learning and communicating. Even when a company is large and dispersed physically, it can put into use mechanisms to help it create global communities to practice, to share what they learn, and to share processes (Dalton, 2005). Without adequate strategies to manage workplace diversity, a plethora of problems can result, many of which are hard to identify without more expertise. It is the responsibility and role of human resource professionals to tackle these challenges of the diverse workplace and develop the appropriate strategies (Alvarez &Jackson, 2009) to allow companies to reach their full human resource potential, a valuable objective in today's competitive global business

environment.

1.2 Social Support, Stress, and Well-Being

When immigrant workers enter a new workplace, they are faced with a variety of challenges. Most people feel stressed when tackling a new job, but when you add trying to assimilate to a foreign culture, language, customs and views, the stress levels for newly hired immigrant workers just entering a new country is extremely high. Research has shown, however, that social support networks can help relieve stress in a variety of ways.

The term “social support” has been defined formally in several ways. Social support is a group of family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues who are available at all times for psychological, physical and financial support (Liebler&Sandefur, 1998). Studies reaffirm the relationship between social support systems and the ability of people to adapt to stress (Clogg, 1995), and to develop effective coping strategies that allow for improved health (Peters & Kaiser, 1985) or personal performance. Social support includes social integration, or the structure and quantity of social relationships, such as the size and density of social networks and the frequency of interaction (Taylor, 2007). Conversely, individuals lacking a strong social support system often develop depression or other negative emotional or psychological conditions (Kenneth, Myers, & Prescott, 2005), especially during times of stress:

Social support has been widely studied both in the specific area of mental health and in the social sciences more broadly. The quality of social relationships predicts general health and mortality, psychiatric symptoms and disorders, and the emotional adjustment to stress (Kendler, et al, 2005, p. 250).

A lack of social support, or a perceived lack of support, can result in a variety of emotional, psychological, and physical health problems. “A vast amount of research has documented an association between social support and numerous mental health variables, including depression, self-esteem, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, and anxiety disorders” (Neely, et al, 2006, p. 1).

Understanding how social support systems affect individuals can impact the development of methods to help people learn to navigate personal relationships and personal experience. “Social resources can provide emotional support that bolsters feelings of self-esteem and belonging, as well as informational guidance that aids in assessing threat and in planning coping strategies” (Saltzman &Holoman, 2002, p. 309).

While many research studies validate the value of social support to individual well-being, the “specific mechanisms through which support operates have remained poorly understood” (Saltzman &Holoman, 2002, p. 309). Researchers are currently investigating support mechanisms and their effects under different circumstances. Studies have shown that different groups show different responses to social support systems (S.

L. Brown, R. M. Nesse, A. D. Vinokur, & D. M. Smith, 2003). For example, Kendler (2005) found men and women respond differently to stress and social support:

“A large literature has examined whether high levels of social support act directly to reduce risk of illness or act indirectly by buffering the effect of adversity. At least in women, we here found a strong direct effect of social support on risk for major depression.” (p. 250).

When people are under stress, they develop responses to mediate the situation causing the stress as best they can. Some people are more successful than others in this regard (Schwarzer&Leppin, 1991). McDonald (1998) notes hundreds of studies showing the relationship between stress and illness. When people have too many stressors at once, they have an impaired immune system and an increased risk for illness. Social support and/or the perception of social support have been shown to alleviate high levels of stress.

Wise and Stake (2002) provide a more precise discussion of the nature of the first factor, social support:

social support refers to social assets, social resources, or social networks that people can use when they are in need of aid, advice, help, assistance, approval, comfort, protection, or backing. It summarizes information that one is cared for, esteemed and valued, and part of a network of communications and mutual obligations. As such, social support will contribute to well-being (Vedder, 2005, p. 269). When people face stressful situations, their ability to cope is affected by the way they interpret the situation, and the strategies developed to help them cope with the stressors involved.

Lakey& Cohen (2000) advance a major theory linking stress and coping strategies to social support. According to the theory, people experience negative results from stress when they are unable to apply effective coping strategies to their circumstances. However, when people have effective social support systems, the support acts as a buffer to the negative effects of stress. Social support promotes adaptive appraisals and better coping abilities.

Drawing from Pugliesi and Shook (1998), Wise and Stake have examined the second factor, perception of social support. Their research suggests that perceptions of social resources (i.e., social support) have moderated the relationship between stressors and functioning by fostering well-being, by reducing distress, and by buffering the stress experienced by individuals. Conversely, low levels of perceived “social support have been associated with poor mental health” (Wise & Stake, 2002, p. 109). How people perceive their support, or ability to receive support if needed, is based on their particular history. To be helpful, “this perception should directly reduce negative appraisals of stressors” (Lakey& Cohen, 2000, p. 2).

Interestingly, the *perception* that support is available is often more important to the well-being of a person than the actual support (Vedder, 2005). In Lakey’s (2002) formulation, perceived (or “functional”) support is the belief or judgment on the part of a person that he or she has the support of family and friends whenever needed.

When people have a strong perceived support system, they feel they can count on family and friends for assistance in a time of crisis. Perceived support is distinguished from “enacted” support. Enacted support entails the same type of assistance as that perceived, but enacted support is in actuality provided, while perceived support is support individuals believe they will receive. “Surprisingly, perceived and enacted support are only modestly related” (Lakey, 2002, p. 1).

Wise & Stake (2002), found when people have high expectations of support systems in the workplace, they can cope with a variety of stress factors, including conflicting dual expectations from superiors. They were able to develop coping methods for the complexities and pressures of the workplace much more effectively than people who did not believe their work place offered much support. Self-esteem is also important regarding the ability to address stress. People with high self-esteem exhibit more adaptive coping strategies under high stress situations. High self-esteem is also related to strong support systems that provide positive assessments of people and their behaviors. Nevertheless, the perceptions people have about how much social support they might receive is often related to their social environment. “Based on social support theory... individuals in a positive social environments would show lower levels of strain when exposed to Stressors than would individuals in negative social environments” (Bliese, 2001, p. 425).

1.3 The Relationship between Human Resource Management and Social Support

There is an integral relationship between human resource management and social support. (Broom, Casey & Ritchey, 2000). This includes producing and maintaining files of material about their company’s activities, such as newspapers, brochures, booklets, and magazines, (Thomlison, 2000) for distribution among employees (new employees can participate by reading and writing their opinions in their publications); planning and creating various employee support programs (Dimmick, Bell, Burgiss & Ragsdale, 2000); answering calls from new workers and the public; writing and circulating news releases (Chiang, 2007), speeches, articles and other company related communications (Hall, 2007); preparing invitation lists and details for press conferences (Macnamara, 2005); and accompanying visitors and clients on tours of the company (Candy & Lazar, 2006).

Human Resource departments can benefit workers by fostering the development of internal organizational social support (Scott, 1994) in multiple ways. For example, if a co-worker is encouraged through the actions of a mentor, this can make a meaningful difference their and their company’s success (Garvey & Megginson, 2004). Workers need to feel they exist in a caring environment that includes emotional and social support (Gale Reference Team, 2010). At a different level, human resource

management can attend to accommodating the physical requirements of employees (Fraser, 2007), for example, by instituting changes like wheelchair access, adaptive office equipment, and private rest areas.

Another element of social support that HRM can develop is the establishment of employee support groups (Morris, 2011). Support groups are organized meetings often run by mental health professionals and intended for helping people who sometimes do not know each other (Wu, 1983). In a support group, people provide each other with different types of help, usually nonprofessional and nonmaterial, for a particular issue in their lives. The help may take the form of listening to and accepting others’ experiences, providing relevant information from personal experience, and helping enhance or establish social networks.

The human resource department can also support policies, forms of communication, and behaviors that at first might seem tangential or external to company business, but in the long run may prove reinforcing to an organization. The aforementioned support group may also work to inform the public or engage in advocacy about a learning experience at work (Lentfer, 2011). By encouraging wide (Yamagishi, Toshio & Karen, 1993) family and friend networks (activities as simple as going out with friends, visiting relatives, working out, preparing activities and meals, and joining a hobby group—all of which may or may not involve coworkers), HRM can help the employee avoid the serious negative effects of real or perceived isolation, especially in times of crisis McKinney (2010). Uehara’s (1990) work stresses the importance of employees keeping in touch in general with colleagues and supervisors when away from work through means such as telephone calls and postcards as a way to foster social support.

While social support for newly hired foreign employees is critical for their ability to adapt and become productive workers, the emphasis from various private companies on providing resources for these new employees to succeed is inconsistent at best, and all but lacking in many companies in the UAE. As described by Peter Capelli (2004), a human resource management professor from Wharton School of Business, who was sent to investigate the labor situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the priority of human resource support in many private companies in the Gulf states that hire foreign laborers is quite low. He states, “When employees have no choice but to leave the country, their bosses have little incentive to study labor relations, employee compensation or even leadership” (p. 1). Capelli is referring to the tight restrictions most Arabian Gulf states, including the UAE, place on migrant workers who either remain employed with their company sponsor via their visa requirements or face deportation.

2. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS AND QUESTIONS

Foreign employees working in the UAE face many stressors from their environment, especially during their first year when their language skills are usually inadequate for extensive socialization. Many are far away from home, and the support systems of family and friends that represents, for the first time. Unlike many locals, foreign workers cannot easily return to their home-based support systems because of distance. If the worker is coming from a culture that is very different from the UAE, and many do, they also face a change in location, climate, food, language, customs, norms, values, clothing, and even body language. This type of experience will undoubtedly shape their expectations of what kind of social support to expect from their sponsors. Even if their work environment offers support, foreign workers may not perceive the support in as positive a way as it is intended.

How do workers in the UAE navigate this territory and handle the stressors endemic to new and/or international workers? This paper will discuss the following research questions:

- What main problems and stressors do new foreign-born workers in the UAE face?
- How do PER departments foster the social support systems of these workers?
- What are newly-hired employees' perceptions of the social support systems provided by their host companies?
- Do employee perceptions differ from the PER department staff perceptions?

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This project spans multiple organizations with diverse workforces. The research explores the link between their PER departments and social support systems that offer individuals coping strategies enhancing individual and institutional well-being and success.

Two qualitative methods were used to conduct research and analyze data.

First, text analysis was conducted with data from online sources identified through internet and library research.

Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with key participants from two groups:

(1) The first group consisted of ten relatively new employees. All members of the group were first-year foreign workers in the UAE. There were six females (4 married, 2 single) and six males (all married). They held B.A and B.S degrees. They were between 23 and 45 years old. These employees hailed from different cultures, including India, Australia, USA, UK, and the Philippines.

(2) The second group consisted of 11 PER practitioners who often acted as mentors and advisors for foreign-born workers. There were eight married males and three single

females, all holding Bachelor degrees. They were between 25 and 52 years old. Interviewed to place face to face, in their offices, and by phone in cases where travel was not possible. The interviews lasted from 30 minutes to 90 minutes.

All participants in both groups worked in different emirates and organizations, including: Dubai Municipality; Ras Al-Kimah Municipality; Al-Ain Hospital; the Higher Corporation for Specialized Economic Zones in Abu Dhabi; the Al-Ain educational zone; Alain University, UAE University; Al-Ain Distribution Company, ADNOC (Petroleum Company), the integrated government services center; Etisalat (telecommunication company) in Al-Ain, Dubai, and Abu-Dhabi; the Al-Ain Airport, and a major petroleum company. These organizations were chosen for their strong, well-known PER offices and the diversity of foreign workers.

Qualitative methods were used for these interviews because there are limited numbers of Public and Employee Relations professionals available in the sampled UAE institutions, which made quantitative methods ineffective.

3.1 Interview Questions

3.1.1 Group 1 (New Employee) Questions

1. How long you have been in this work?
2. In the first year of your job, did you get orientation help from anyone, or you did you depend on yourself, and why?
3. Do you have a person in your work that supported you like a mentor? Who? And how so?
4. How much did you learn from him/her? Examples?
5. Do you think he / she is a good supporter? Why?
6. Are you satisfied with your supporter and the help given to you?
7. Did you face problems in your work? How do you solve them? Did you express your opinions to your supporter? Why?
8. Did you try to solve your problems with your supporter? Or did you search for alternative?
9. Who is your alternative supporter?
10. Did you fully trust to this person, or did you sometimes do just what you thought was expected?
11. After becoming more experienced at work, did you depend mostly on yourself, or did you still rely on someone else?
12. Do you give advice to co-workers?
13. How do you evaluate the PER department people and their support for your work? Did you get any support from this office or Department? If yes? What kind of support you did receive from them?
14. Do you think that the PER department takes care of new employees? How?
15. If you had a conflict in your work, did you ask the PER people to help you, and why?
16. Should PER departments in local organizations focus more on developing employee supports? What do

you suggest for improving PER staff responsibilities?

3.1.2 Group 2 (Public and Employee Relations Staff) Questions

- What are your main public and employee relations responsibilities in the PER department?
- What is the meaning of social support for new employees in your opinion?
- What are the difficulties facing new employees? How do you support them?
- What kinds of assistance do PER practitioners offer new employees? Ex: welcoming and meeting guest in the airports...etc.?
- What are the difficulties facing PR professionals when they have tried to support new employees? How did they address them?
- Did the work environment play a role in your work? Do you receive encouragement in your work? Did you get the motivation to support others?
- What are the main characteristics of the supporter role in employee relations?
- What kind of activities has your department offered for new employees who faced cultural shock or depression? How do you support them?
- What difficulties has the PER department faced when dealing with new employees?
- Do you think that new employees trust your department? Have they called the PER department to get suggestions, advice, training ...etc.?
- What do you suggest as ways to improve PER staff in their role supporting new employees?

3.2 Research Themes

Collected and analyzed data divided into six themes based on the initial research questions:

- a) Group 1 (new employee) Themes: Sources of support, employee relations versus public relations, internal employee conflicts, new employee recognition.
- b) Group 2 (PER staff) Themes: Welcoming new employees, employee workshops, supportive staff qualities, supportive printed materials.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As Kendler, Lakey and Cohen(2005), and other researchers have shown, social support can act as a buffer for stress and adversity, and that buffer is often personified in the form of a mentor, But how much mentorship did participants receive from PER staff?

• For two interviewees who worked at the Tam integrated government services center, the answer was: none.

In their two years working at the job, they received comfort of support, but from each other rather than from the PER department. One of the employees stated, "In order to adjust and become effective, I turned to other workers for

advice, direction and guidance. I also learned by observing how other employees conducted themselves. I received no feedback from a mentor during their orientation or initial work months" (Interviewee #3)

Another interviewee stated "I get my assistance from the manager and the other staff within the company. Indeed, employees usually choose their own mentor as best they could manage, if you can call that mentoring" (Interviewee #5)

• Only one interviewee reported having a satisfying experience after connecting with a PER staff member.

He stated, "I knew my mentor very well, and I still learn from him. I believe I had a fine mentor who understands my circumstances and the organization's environment; my mentor encouraged me to develop my personal skills and helped me sign up for different workshops" (Interviewee #8)

This employee did recognize the need for better leadership from PER departments in leveraging manager mentorship. He suggested PER offices arrange and organize relevant suggestions and feedback for the heads or managers in the organization to define clear directions, instructions and models for mentorship.

• Seven of the ten Group 1 participants felt that attention to public relations far exceeded efforts to accommodate the needs of employees, especial new immigrant workers. New workers understood in a general way that the PER department was supposed to give them assistance, but felt their efforts were oriented more externally than internally.

Interviewee # 1 expressed his opinion on a reason why: "Public and Employee Relations departments in non-profit organizations usually consider internal staff first because they are not looking for profit; we can see the lack of interest for orienting new employees in many for-profit organizations that consider clients and customers first."

One worker who had been working for over a year said, "I worry a lot about the safety of my environment, but I do not want to complain." (Interviewee #7)

"I always thought the PER department was mostly there to welcome guests at the front desk." (Interviewee #10)

• External over internal concerns factored the assessments by Group 1 employees of PER performance with respect to resolving conflict. Again, there was awareness of the need, from direct experience:

"In my first year, I faced a problem with other employees and one of them told me that I was not following the company rules...upsetting me at this level is against the employees' social support. I think if the organization applied the

best processes they could to meet the best ethics for staff, we as employees would succeed very quickly.” (Interviewee #2) He added that he felt the PER department does not care about internal conflicts.

Interviewee # 9 agreed that the PER departments are more likely to solve customer complaints and conflicts to benefit the organization: “Ignoring conflict among staff is a normal, but careless, action of a PER department.”

Six out of the ten employees said they never really considered going to the PER department with an issue or question because they never really felt the department was employee oriented.

- At a minimum, PER departments were expected to produce and make available important literature that new employees could reference to teach themselves the ins and outs of adjusting to work.

One interviewee described the function as follows:

"Numerous up-to-date PER publications, such as booklets, pamphlets, magazines, brochures, blogs, newsletters, and websites program announcements, are a good indicator of supportive organizations. It means that employees' news is regularly distributed by the PER department and the organization has strong communication." Yet, some workers felt that new employees do not always get needed materials: “without distributing the main manuals regarding each department in any organization or company, of course we as employees will face struggles in our work. For example, if I do not know anyone in this company and I got a job here, and no one supported me or gave me instructions, that means I do not know my tasks and I will not be active like other staff.” (Interviewee #11)

- While aware of general expectations, many interviewees felt they lacked information about the PER office's responsibilities in detail. When they started work, they did not know the extent to which the PER office was a resource for them.

One employee stated, “I did not even know that the PER existed for us. I was given a set of directions for my job, and then was mostly left on my own. If you asked me what the PER employees do, I would say they take care of public relations for the company. Now I know they are supposed to work with human resources also.” (Interviewee #12)

- Most employees received information and orientation from the PER office, but they were still confused regarding the actual responsibilities of PER practitioners. At times the written information and publications were not well-circulated among the organization's members. In addition, missing information regarding roles, heavy workloads, and cultural differences add to the stress

experienced by new foreign employees. All ten of the people interviewed received some informational materials on their first day from the PER office; seven believed the materials were not all that helpful in understanding their particular job.

Interviewee # 4 stated: “I felt so stressed at first at my job because I was not sure about the cultural differences in the UAE, what was really expected working in the company. I received an employee manual and was shown to my desk and introduced to my department, and that was the last time I saw the PER person who first helped me. I did not know that a mentor could have been provided; as has been the experience with some people I know working at other companies. I felt like I stuck out from the others, but I was lucky in that some of the people were very kind and helped me. It was because they understood my experience having been through it themselves, so I was able to be okay, even though at first I could not sleep and worried so much, I thought I might have to return home.”

Another person interviewed said, “I really love my job now, but at first, it was really, really difficult. I felt emotionally, intellectually and physically drained every day for the first few months. Several of my fellow employees made this time easier, and I finally felt well-qualified for what I was doing. After about three months, we did have a meeting where a PER person came and talked with everyone and welcomed us to visit if we had questions or problems, and that made me feel more supported by the company. It would have been nice to have more of these meetings, though.” (Interviewee #6)

Some people reported more physical and emotional stress than others. The mixed results in Group 1 might reflect differing individual capacities to cope with stresses, in agreement with Lakey & Cohen's (2000) findings that some people are more successful in facing stressors in their work environment than others. Yet, it is quite likely they also reflect strengths and shortcomings at a given site. Many interviewees said they tried to adopt the new culture by watching other groups at work, while others indicated they first tried to communicate with other employees to find new friends. So, work environment differences may have played a big role in reflecting their behavior.

Group 2 (PER staff) participants, as one might expect, were much more willing to discuss the philosophies and successes of their departments and staff than to introduce criticisms.

- All PER practitioners agreed that they welcomed new employees from different cultures. In several organizations, mostly those with numerous PER members, they mentioned the existence of official training programs and workshops for new employees from different cultures.

One PER professional said, in smaller organizations, “new employees work under the guidance of experienced staff members.” (Interviewee #8)

Therefore, PER staff did feel that guiding, advising, and counseling new employees was part of their specialty. For example, some PER staff felt it was their duty to meet new employees at the airport and offer them good accommodations.

- One employee stated, “Workers from different cultures have their own assumptions; they always get confused and misinterpret information in the beginning of their stay...such as when choosing small houses with low rents or nearby locations” He added “the PER office tries to communicate with them first, by providing them with formal online forms and options. The forms are filled out before they arrive to limit problems.” (Interviewee #5)

PER employees noted the function of coordinating with local institutions and suggesting interactive workshops with local people, especially for new employees, who can meet local people, exchange information, and working with new groups. They also stated that foreigners always need special courses, such as ones in learning the Arabic language, local dialects, and local customs. All PER practitioners believe that activities are vital to the organization. Conferences, lectures, presentations, workshops, and training courses were highlighted as essential tools organized by the PER offices to assist new employees. And regarding communications, one employee mentioned:

- “I have been suggesting to my company that a method for enhancing both communication and a sense of self-esteem by integrating employee opinions in company publications. Putting new employees in groups with PER practitioners to share their ideas was said to improve their confidence and limit their work stress... Good communication is awesome in such a stressful atmosphere.” (Interviewee #7)

- Another employee said, “It is clear that offering support to the new immigrant workers help them to feel less nervous in their first weeks. I try to introduce them to other employees that speak the same language or I know to be very helpful. I also let them know they can come and see me if they need something. Still, my company has no formal strategies in place to take care of the needs of new employees. Everyone sort of finds their own method and tries to help when they can.” (Interviewee # 10)

There were some concerns expressed among the PER employees, however. There was recognition that many companies do not adequately offer support of any kind to employees. One PER employee talked about when he was working in the private sector in construction. He said,

- “I noticed that many of the workers were stressed. They seemed to feel they had little support, and they had a lot of concerns about safety on the job. But they felt if they said anything, they might be fired. They did not seem to realize they had an outlet for support from the

PER department. I believe this is because not much time was devoted to communicating with the employees on the part of management or the PER department itself.” (Interviewee #2)

Another employee stated:

- “Although many companies may have PER departments, there is usually no leadership. Everything is managed rather randomly, so any support systems are very weak.” (Interviewee #9)

One talked about how changes in management always brought change to the way employees were treated. Another talked about budget cuts:

- “In the past, we paid a lot of attention to the needs of the employees. We would have awards and dinners honoring outstanding workers and their performance. We offered all kinds of incentives. But every few years, new managers take over and change things. Now, nothing is being done for workers that provide support or incentives.” (Interviewee #11)

- “With the budget cuts the company took, the first thing to be reduced was support for the employees in terms of actual personnel that handled employee issues.” (Interviewee #6)

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on data from both new employees and PER staff members, the following practices are recommended:

Offering time: Time limitation and work stress for PER practitioners working in busy offices is normal. Deadlines and tight work schedules can be stressful for them. But new employees create demands that must be met, forcing PER employees to re-organize their time and divide their schedules between PER and employees. PER staff must seek a balance between external duties, such as contacting the media, and internal duties, such as improving communication between themselves and other employees.

Clearly Designated Mentors: Mentors are critically needed in the first year, and selecting the best mentors will best support new employees. The mentor must understand the roles, personal skills, and efforts of the new employees. He or she must support the employee by helping limit his weaknesses and increasing his strengths. Whether taken from PER staff directly, or leveraged from managerial staff, the clear designation of mentorship responsibilities from the moment an employee begins work is crucial.

Education and training: Supporting employees and increasing internship opportunities in public and employee relations provides workers with valuable experience and training, and is the best route to entry-level employment. Some organizations and companies, particularly those with big PER teams, have formal training programs for new employees. All interviewees suggest improving the PER offices by providing practical and unique training

courses solely for new employees – services lacking in many PER offices.

Literature: Both internal communication and a sense of new worker self-esteem can be enhanced by integrating employee opinions in company publications. Putting new employees in creative groups with PER practitioners to share their ideas can improve their confidence and limit their work stress..

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

It has been well documented that people living in a foreign culture for any length of time often experience a lot of stress from culture shock. Employees from distant locations who work in the UAE are often away from home for the first time. They are often overwhelmed by feelings of isolation, fears of being unable to manage everything, stress, anxiety, and so forth as they attempt to adapt to a variety of stressors in their environment. Foreign workers face challenges of language barriers, discrimination, unfamiliar customs, a strange climate, strange foods, and so on. They are particularly vulnerable because they often lack a social support system they can turn to deal with multiple stress factors. Some organizations are more successful than others in helping foreign members by providing a supportive environment where the members can form social support systems. Overall, however, it is likely that most newly hired foreign employees do not have the resources needed to cope with stress effectively.

Both the new employee group and the PER staff group were in general agreement on the basic needs of new employees and what should be the proper role of the PER department. But the two differed significantly in their awareness and evaluation of the effectiveness of PER activity. New employees were mostly dissatisfied with the level of PER support they had received, while PER staff themselves were often, though not always, lacking in their discussion of the limitations of company support for new employees, who expressed the typical need for a company orientation and for developing their skills.

It is clear that there is not enough emphasis placed on human resource management because of the dual nature of the PER department in the UAE organizations. Although the PER professionals understood that they had certain responsibilities, none of them described that their companies had formal methods and strategies in place that were comparable to international human resource strategies known to help companies become most effective. At best, PER professionals did their best to welcome new workers and provide support. But more commonly, assistance was random, inconsistent and informal. There did not seem to be much organizational support or leadership, which indicates a lack of understanding of the value of integrating human resource management activities with other business strategies. Most private companies seem quite complacent about

paying attention to their immigrant workers' needs. This is a short-sighted approach. While many of these same companies might feel they are gaining profits because of their ability to pay low wages, they are not tapping the potential of their workplace, and they are not integrating their resources in a way that brings the most value to their profitability or sustainability.

Limitations of this Research and the need for Future Research

This was a very limited study, but it highlights a critical need in the UAE and other Gulf nations—comprehensive research is required to better understand the impact of high reliance on foreign sources of labor. The research could and should explore the varied issues and the unique circumstances of working with a mixed foreign workforce who derive from a variety of different cultures. Currently, there is no research that addresses this circumstance from a human resource strategic management perspective or any other theoretical model that could be useful for the managers of private companies in the Gulf to address the needs and challenges of working with a dominant foreign labor force.

Most private companies in the UAE rely primarily on foreign labor, to the extent that there is high unemployment among local Emiratis seeking jobs. There are social and political consequences, of course, and some of these have been examined. For example, the Center for International and Regional Studies of Georgetown University in Qatar has begun to publish various studies regarding migrant work in the Gulf. However, few, if any, studies have been conducted on the impact that reliance on a foreign workforce has on the human resource management from a strategic management perspective. Fortunately, the Arab Gulf poses a unique opportunity for HRM development because of the tremendous wealth of the states which makes it possible to fund initiatives independent of corporate forces that may not take into consideration the cultural needs of the workplace. Interestingly, human resource development has been considered a key partner in the development planning of the UAE government. Researchers who are interested in a variety of subjects would likely find support in investigating further the issues of a foreign workforce and its impact on sociocultural, economic, and political factors, and from organizational behavior, strategic management, human resource management, cross-cultural communications, and many other fields of study.

In relation to this particular study, more in-depth research is needed into the composition and workings of new employee support networks, particularly examining the manner in differences based on race/ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, religion, and other aspects of identity shape employee relation buffering networks and coping mechanisms. Leveraging this study's findings regarding divergent evaluations of PER performance, more

studies are needed to tease out the differences between perceptions and realities for foreign workers and PER staffers. Finally, more studies are needed on the impact of worker involvement in PER publications and its effects on individual self-esteem and employee/company satisfaction.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, A., et al. (2011). *Migrant Labor in the Gulf*. Center for International and Regional Studies. Georgetown University, School of Foreign Service in Qatar. Retrieved on July 25, 2011 from <http://www12.georgetown.edu/sfs/qatar/cirs/MigrantLaborSummaryReport.pdf>
- Anderson, V. and Graham, S. (Feb. 25, 1999). Border Checks. *People Management: CIPD*, 25, 54
- Bailey, M. (1994). Do Physicists Use Case Studies? *Research in Public Administration*. Sage Publications.
- Biagi, S. (2005). *Media/Impact: An Introduction to Mass Media*. Chicago: Thomas Wadsworth.
- Bliese, P. & Britt, T. (June, 2001). Social Support, Group Consensus and Stressor-Strain Relationships: Social Context Matters. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 22(4), 425.
- Broom, G, Casey, S., & Ritchey, J. (2000). Concept and Theory of Organization-Public Relationships. (Ed.). (2000). *Public Relations as Relationship Management*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers. Mahwah, NJ.
- Candy;T& Lazar, P. (2006). *Public Relations Manual*. Sydney: Tymson Communications.
- Capelli, P. (2004). A Management Professor in Bahrain: Helping to Reform One Country's Economy. Human Resources, Retrieved on July 25, 2011 from <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article.cfm?articleid=1044>
- Chitakornkijasil, P. (2009). Communication in Global Cultural Teams and International Communication Challenge. *International Journal of Organizational Innovation*, 1(4), 102-112.
- Cox, Taylor Jr. (1993) *Cultural Diversity in Organizations: Theory, Research and Practice*. San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler.Clifford C. (1995). *Latent Class Models*, in *Handbook of Statistical Modeling for the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Edited by Gerhard Arminger, Clifford C. Clogg, and Michael E. Sobel. New York: Plenum Press.
- Chiang, H. (2007). Roles of Public Relations, Retrieved on July 20, 2010 from <http://ezinearticles.com/?Roles-of-Public-Relations&id=659268>
- Chitakomkijasil, P. (Winter 2009). The Future Perspective of International Human Resource Management. *International Journal of Organizational Innovation (Online)*, 1(3), 39, 9 pgs.
- Cox, T.H., & Blake, S. (1991, August). Managing Cultural Diversity: Implications for Organizational Competitiveness. *Academy of Management Executive*, 47, 45-56.
- Cutrona, C. E. (1996). *Social Support in Couples*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dalton, C. (2005). Human Resource Management in a Global Environment: Keys for Personal and Organizational Success: An Interview with Eliza Hermann. *Business Horizons*. 48, 193.
- Dimmick, S., Bell, T., Burgiss, S. & Ragsdale, C. (2000). *Relationship Management: A New Professional Model: Public Relations As Relationship Management*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers. Mahwah, NJ.
- Edelman. (2010). Good Purpose Goes Global. Retrieved on Nov. 6, 2010 from http://www.edelman.com/speak_up/blog/
- Fitch, A. (July 13, 2010). *Dubai Reveals Snapshot of Its Workforce*. The National. Retrieved on July 25, 2010 from <http://www.thenational.ae/business/travel-tourism/dubai-reveals-snapshot-of-its-workforce>
- Forstenlechner, I. (2010). Workforce Localization in Emerging Gulf Economies: The Need to Fine-tune HRM. *Personnel Review*, 39(1), 135-152
- Fraser, S. (2007). *The Practice of Public Relations*. NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Gale Reference Team. (2010). Giving and Receiving Social Support at Work: The Roles of Personality and Reciprocity [An article from: *Journal of Vocational Behavior*] Reviews. p.b3
- Gannon, L, Vaux, A & Rhodes, K. (1992).Two-domain Model of Well-being: Everyday Events, Social Support, and Gender-Related Personality Factors. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 26(3), 288-301.
- Garvey, B. and Megginson, D. (2004). Odysseus, Telemachus and Mentor: Stumbling into, Searching for and Signposting the Road to Desire. *The International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching*, II (I).
- Gong, Y. (2005). Toward a Dynamic Process Model of Staffing Composition and Subsidiary Outcomes in Multinational Enterprises. *Journal of Management*, 29, 259.
- Gentile, Mary (1996). *Managerial Excellence Through Diversity*. Prospect Hills, Waveland Press. Hall, P. (2007). *The New PR*. Mount Kisco, NY: Larstan Publishing
- Glanz, K., Rimer, B. K. & Lewis, F.M. (2002). Health Behavior and Health Education. *Theory Research and Practice*. San Francisco: Wiley & Sons.,
- Hill, R. (1949). *Families Under Stress*. New York: Harper and Brothers.
- Hendrix, J. (2004). *Public Relations Cases* (6th ed.). Thomson Wadsworth. Belmont, CA.
- Jackson, S. and Alvarez, E. (2009). Working Through Diversity as a Strategic Imperative. Retrieved on September 19, 2011 from <http://www.radford.edu/~kvharring/docs/HRMDocs/2diversityimp.pdf>
- Janesick, V. & Denzin, N. (1998). *Strategies of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Johnson, W. B. (2007). *On Being a Mentor*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Jou, Y. & Fukada, H. (June, 2002). Stress, Health, and Reciprocity and Sufficiency of Social Support: The Case of University Students in Japan. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 142(3), 353.

- Kamrava, M. & Babar, Z. (2011). Migrant Labor in the Gulf, Center for International and Regional Studies, Retrieved on September 19, 2011 from www12.georgetown.edu/sfs/qatar/cirs/MigrantLaborSummaryReport.pdf
- Kanter, R. & Drettler, T. (1998). Global Strategy and its Impact on Local Operation. *The Academy of Management Exclusive*, 12(4), 60-68.
- Kelly, K. (2003). Good Practice in the Conduct and Reporting of Survey Research. *International Journal for Quality in Healthcare*, 15, 261. Retrieved on Nov. 6, 2007 from <http://intqhc.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/15/3/261>
- Kendler, K. et al. (Feb. 2005). Sex Differences in the Relationship Between Social Support and Risk for Major Depression: A Longitudinal Study of Opposite-Sex Twin Pairs. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 162(2), 250.
- Kenneth S. Kendler, M.D., John Myers, M.S., & Carol A. Prescott (2005). Sex Differences in the Relationship Between Social Support and Risk for Major Depression: a Longitudinal Study of Opposite-Sex Twin Pairs, Retrieved on May 14, 2007 from <http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/abstract/162/2/250>
- Knoll, N., Schwarzer, R., Pfüller, B., & Kienle, R. (2009). Transmission of Depressive Symptoms in Couples Undergoing Assisted Reproduction Treatment. *European Psychologist*, 14, 5-15.
- Lakey, B. (2002). Social Support. Health Behavior Constructs: Theory, Measurement & Research. National Cancer Institute. Retrieved on Oct. 25, 2007 from http://dcps.cancer.gov/brp/constructs/social_support/ss2.html
- Lakey, B. & Lutz, C. (Dec. 2001). How People Make Support Judgments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81(6), 1070.
- Lakey, B., & Cohen, S. (2000). Social Support Theory and Selecting Measures of Social Support. In S. Cohen, L. U. Gordon & B. H. Gottlieb (Eds.). *Social Support Measurement and Interventions: A Guide for Health and Social Scientists*. New York: Oxford.
- Laudicina, P.(2010). The Diversity Imperative: Fostering Institutions that Put a Premium on Inclusion, Retrieved on November. 4, 2010 from <http://www.atkearney.com/index.php/Publications/the-diversity-imperative-commentary.html>.
- Lentfer, J. (2011). The Wisdom of Dlananathi: Reflections on Organizational Growth, Retrieved on May. 30, 2011 from <http://www.how-matters.org/2011/03/17/the-wisdom-of-dlananathi/>
- Liebler, G.&Sandefur, C. (1998). Exchanging Social Support with Friends, Neighbors, and Coworkers, Retrieved on May. 14, 2010 from <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/cde/cdewp/98-19.pdf>
- Macnamara, J. (2005). *Jim Macnamara's Public Relations Handbook* (5th ed. ed.). Melbourne: Archipelago Press.
- Mashood, Verhoeven & Chansarkar (2010). Proceedings of Annual Hawaii International Business Research Conference. Retrieved on November. 5, 2010 from <http://www.wbiconpro.com/>
- Marshall, Catherine & Gretchen B. (1999). *Designing Qualitative Research, 3rd Ed.* London: Sage Publications, p. 115.
- McDonald,L. (1998). A Multi-Family Approach: Families and Schools Together (fast) Builds Protective Factors in Potentially Neglectful Families. *Proceedings of the Conference Held in Madison, Wisconsin April 19-21, 1998*. Retrieved on Nov. 5, 2010 from <http://parenthood.library.wisc.edu/Parenthood.html>.
- McKinney, M. (2010). Develop New Social Support Systems. Retrieved on Oct. 6, 2010 from http://www.successfulacademic.com/success_tips/faculty/index.htm.
- Morris, C. (2002). Cultural and Language Barriers in the Workplace. Workforce Development Board. Retrieved on Sept. 15, 2011 from <http://www.charlotteworks.org/clbpositionpaper.pdf>
- Morris, M. (2011). Duties of an International Public Relation Practitioner, Retrieved on July. 6, 2010 from http://www.ehow.com/list_6146482_duties-international-public-relation-practitioner.html
- Neely, L. et al. (August, 2006). Social Support and Affect: An Experimental, Laboratory Investigation. *Journal of Personality*, 74(4), 1.
- Olson, L. (2009). Social Recognition Increases Employees' Support for Companies. Retrieved on August. 8, 2010 from http://www.innovationsreport.com/html/reports/social_sciences/social_recognition_increases_employees_039_support_133195.html
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Peters, G.R. & Kaiser, M. A. (1985). The Role of Friends and Neighbors in Providing Social Support. In *Social Support Networks and the Care of the Elderly: Theory, Research, Practice*. Edited by W. Sauer and R. Coward. New York: Springer.
- Pugliesi, K. & Shook, S. (Feb. 1998). Gender, Ethnicity, and Network Characteristics: Variation in Social Support Resources. *Sex Roles*, 38(3/4), 215.
- Rahman, M. (2010). The Changing Face of Human Resources Management in the Gulf Region: An Oman and UAE Perspective. Capstone Collection. Paper 2381. Retrieved on July 25, 2011 from <http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/capstones/2381>
- Revenson, T. A., Kayser, K., & Bodenmann, G. (Eds.). (2005). *Couples Coping with Stress: Emerging Perspectives on Dyadic Coping*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Saltzman, K. & Holahan, C. (June 2002). Social Support, Self-Efficacy, and Depressive Symptoms: An Integrative Model. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 21(3), 309.
- Schwarzer, R., & Knoll, N. (2007). Functional Roles of Social Support Within the Stress and Coping Process: A Theoretical and Empirical Overview. *International Journal of Psychology*, 42(4), 243-252.
- Schwarzer, R., & Leppin, A. (1991). Social Support and Health: A Theoretical and Empirical Overview. *Journal of Social*

- and *Personal Relationships*, 8, 99-127.
- Scott, C. (1994). *The Unseen Power: Public Relations, a History*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum Associates.
- Shah, N. (January, 2008). *Recent Labor Immigration Policies in the Oil-rich Gulf: How Effective are They Likely to be?* International Publications. Cornell University. Retrieved on July 25, 2011 from <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/intl/52/>
- S. L. Brown, R. M. Nesse, A. D. Vinokur, & D. M. Smith (2003). Providing Social Support May be More Beneficial than Receiving It: Results from a Prospective Study of Mortality. *Psychological Science*, 14(4), 320-327.
- Taylor, S. E., Welch, W. T., Kim, H. S., & Sherman, D. K. (2007). Cultural Differences in the Impact of Social Support on Psychological and Biological Stress Responses. *Psychological Science*, 18, 831-837.
- Taylor, S. E. (2006). Tend and Befriend: Biobehavioral Bases of Affiliation under Stress. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 15, 273-277.
- Thomlison, T. (2000). *An Interpersonal Primer with Implications for Public Relations, Public Relations As Relationship Management*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers. Mahwah, NJ.
- Uehara, Edwina. (1990). Dual Exchange Theory, Social Networks, and Informal Social Support. *American Journal of Sociology*. 96, 521-57.
- Vedder, P. et al. (2005). Perceived Social Support and Well-being in School: The Role of Students' Ethnicity. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. 34(3), 269.
- Wasserman, Stanley, and Katherine Faust (1994). *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vora, N. (February, 2010). *Business Elites, Unofficial Citizenship, and Privatized Governance in Dubai*. In Viewpoints: Migration and the Gulf. Middle East Institute. p. 9-13. Retrieved on Sept. 15, 2011 from http://www.mei.edu/Portals/0/Publications/Migration%20Gulf_Viewpoints.pdf
- Vora, N. (2008). Globalized Higher Education in the United Arab Emirates – Unexpected Outcomes, Globalhighered, Retrieved on Sept. 23, 2011 from <http://globalhighered.wordpress.com/2008/06/25/globalized-higher-education-uae/>
- Wellman, Barry, and Scot Wortley (1990). Different Strokes from Different Folks: Community Ties and Social Support. *American Journal of Sociology*, 96, 558-88.
- White, Douglas R. & Karl P. Reitz (1983). Graph and Semigroupomorphisms on Networks and Relations. *Social Networks*, 5, 193-234.
- Winckler, O. (February, 2010). Labor Migration to the GCC States: Patterns, Scale, and Policies, In *Viewpoints: Migration and the Gulf. Middle East Institute*, p.9-13. Retrieved on Sept. 15, 2011 from http://www.mei.edu/Portals/0/Publications/Migration%20Gulf_Viewpoints.pdf
- Winckler, O. (2000). Population Growth, Migration and Socio-Demographic Policies in Qatar. *Tel Aviv: The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies*.
- Wise, D. & Stake, J. (2002). The Moderating Roles of Personal and Social Resources on the Relationship Between Dual Expectations (for instrumentality and expressiveness) and Well-being. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 142(1), 109.
- Wu, Lawrence (1983). Local Blockmodel Algebras for Analyzing Social Networks, p.272-313 in Samuel Leinhardt (ed.). *Sociological Methodology 1983-84*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Yamagishi, Toshio and Karen S. Cook (1993). Generalized Exchange and Social Dilemmas. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 56, 235-48.