

Research Article

# The Role of Organizational Psychology in Problem Solving at Workplace in UAE

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**Abstract:** The paper focuses on how organizational psychology could be applied to enhance the problem-solving behaviour at work places in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The issues of time-bound economic diversification, multicultural workforce and shifting business demands are placing companies in tricky situations, and these issues must be tackled in innovative and planned manners. Organizational psychology provides a paradigm through which the behaviours of employees including their motivation and the interrelationship among others can be understood and therefore helps organizations to provide a conducive environment that facilitates good decision making and conflict resolution. The paper highlights how psychological constructs such as cognitive flexibility, emotion intelligence and motivation theories can help identify the causal factors of the challenges at workplace, and how solutions to the same can be developed so that they are sustainable. It pays attention to the specific cultural and organisational context in the UAE where diversity and cross-cultural relations are the most important elements in the daily business. The case study examines cultural responsive leadership, employee engagement and practiced approaches and structured communication channels that facilitate cooperation, and problem-solving capability in the workplace across sectors. The methodological foundation of the paper relies on the literature, case studies and practices in the UAE context, relating the psychological theories to the practices in the organization development. The findings have revealed that the organizations that have involved psychological insights in the working practices have improved team cohesion, employee satisfaction and better conflict resolution. Furthermore, organizational psychologists contribution to training process, resilience, and change management guidance may also be pointed out as a major contributor to the suffering of productivity amid the changing environment. This paper has demonstrated that the contribution of organizational psychology cannot be overstated in terms of its strategic importance to the UAE organizations so that they are able to counter the challenges in the most efficient manner possible, as well as instilling innovation and adaptability. The lessons can be used in the real field of practice and the academic world to offer ideas to the leader, human resource practitioners, and policymakers on how the problem-solving strategy can be refined to operate in different workplace settings.

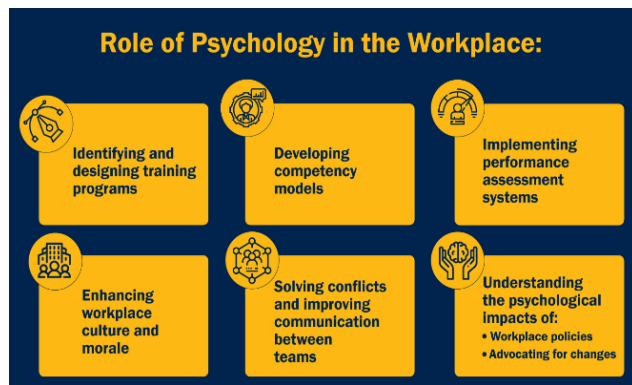
**Keywords:** Organizational Psychology, Workplace Problem-Solving, Employee Behaviour, Multicultural Workforce, United Arab Emirates.

## INTRODUCTION

In the modern competitive and dynamic business world, organizations must be increasingly sensitive to the swift changes and be able to operate with different teams in addition to solving somewhat complex issues. Working place has become a continuous problem solving place where the employees and the leaders must navigate through the organizational, interpersonal and structural problems. In this respect, organizational psychology plays a significant role in providing information and solutions in the attempt to facilitate decision-making, enhanced results in teamwork, and positive organizational climate. This field of research bridges the gap between psychology and the requirements of the organization by studying human behaviour at the workplace, which ultimately results in the successful amelioration of the issue.

Organizational psychology is needed in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in high regard. The nature of the workforce in the country is high cultural diversity, booming economic growth, and ambitious development agenda in

line with the vision of innovative and sustainable development. The outlined factors do not leave without any special challenges in the workplace that comprise managing the multicultural teams, balancing the personal and organization goals, and addressing the conflicts that occur in the fast-paced setting. The psychological side of the motivation of the employees, communication, and leadership are therefore relevant in improving the problem solving capability in the workplace in the industries.



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In addition, the field of organizational psychology is concerned with evidence-based practices that enhance the well-being of individuals, as well as organizational performance simultaneously. The conflict training resolution techniques, leadership development courses, stress management courses and team building interventions will not only improve the productivity of the individual but also the resilience of the organization to changes. As a potential remedy to the immediate workplace challenges, the application of psychological frameworks can be considered a valid option in the situation where the shifting labor market of UAE organizations requires to balance global competitiveness and the principles of the local culture.

The present research article is recognizing the application of organizational psychology in the resolution of employment issues in the UAE. It highlights the importance of psychological principles that may be employed to improve the process of solving the problems, improve the extent of engagement of employees, and have organizations in the region develop sustainably.

### Background of the study

The modern workplace is becoming more complex and the organizations are forced to adapt to different pressures such as the workforce diversity, technology shocks, employee engagement and cross-cultural communication. These challenges are particularly evident within the United Arab Emirates (UAE) where the organizations operate within the environment that is highly multicultural, which creates some of the opportunities as well as challenges in their daily operations. Problem solving is needed in such environments to ensure productivity, innovation and the welfare of the employees. However, their ability to resolve issues is in most occasions determined by their cognition of human behaviour and psychological processes underlying the effectiveness of decision making and the work of team. Organizational psychology as a field, provides a methodical approach to the scientific study of human behaviour at the work place and identification of methods of enhancing motivation, interpersonal communication and group performance. It underscores the application of psychological concepts which improves the work performance regarding leadership performance, conflict management, and organizational culture. By incorporating psychological knowledge in the management processes, organisations can make an effort to establish the type of

environment that employees are in a better position to address challenges constructively and in a collaborative manner.

The task carried out by organizational psychology is duplicated in UAE due to the heterogeneity of the working population which is represented by individuals of various cultural, social, and professional backgrounds. Even though this diversity can be enriching, it can make people misunderstand each other and incur conflicts and inefficiencies in cases where it is not managed well. As a result, psychological orientations towards organizations are being accepted in order to complement problem solving machineries, inclusiveness and conformity of the well-being of the employees and organizational goals.

Organizational psychology analysis in the framework of the UAE is therefore highly significant to the study of the application of psychological principles in resolving the problems at the workplace. It provides an insight into how leaders and employees can use evidence-based practices to support their problem-solving skills, establish cooperation, and performance in the company. The research will assist in developing organizational psychology to problem solving functions in the workplace to ensure that the short term issues, as well as the long term sustainability of the organization are realized in the competitive and dynamic business environment in the UAE.

### Justification

Globalization, technological changes and strategic focus by the nation towards becoming the center of innovation and business excellence is rapidly revolutionizing the workplace in the United Arab Emirates. The changes have not only offered opportunities but also issues to organizations in regard to productivity, employee engagement, and conflict resolution. In this regard, organizational psychology offers useful information in the study of human behaviour at the workplace and offers evidence-based solutions to workplace issues.

The necessity to research in this direction is explained by the high diversity of the UAE workforce, which consists of the employees with various cultural, linguistic, and professional backgrounds. Although such diversity is good in promoting creativity and innovation, it enhances the chances of misunderstandings, communication barrier, and divergence in work expectation. These complexities can be overcome by applying organizational psychology principles to allow managers and employees to establish a healthy organizational culture with efficient problem-solving, improved collaboration, and increased collaboration.

Besides, the current emphasis on employee health, workplace happiness, and long-term organizational development by the UAE government demonstrates the necessity of the studies that would support the integration of psychological theory and practical workplace solutions. Through research into organizational psychology in problem-solving, this study will be in line with the national priorities and respond to the reality issues that

organizations in the region have.

Lastly, the research is relevant to the academic community and practice. Academically, it bridges the research gap in the literature by putting organizational psychology in the context of the socio-economic and cultural context of the UAE. In practice, it provides managers, HR professionals, and policy makers with strategies to manage workplace difficulties more efficiently, which in the long-term leads to an improvement in the performance, satisfaction of employees, and organizational resilience.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To examine the application of organizational psychology principles in workplace problem-solving within the context of the UAE.
2. To identify the psychological factors that influence employee behavior, decision-making, and conflict resolution in UAE organizations.
3. To explore the relationship between organizational psychology practices and the effectiveness of problem-solving strategies at the workplace.
4. To assess the role of organizational culture, leadership styles, and employee engagement in enhancing problem-solving outcomes through psychological approaches.
5. To provide recommendations for UAE organizations on how to integrate organizational psychology tools and techniques to improve problem-solving efficiency and workplace performance.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Introduction**

Organizational psychology studies how individual and group psychological processes influence workplace functioning and outcomes (motivation, decision-making, team processes). Its application to workplace problem solving is critical because problem solving is simultaneously cognitive (how individuals think), social (how groups interact), and structural (how organizational practices support or constrain solutions). Recent empirical work shows that both individual cognitive mechanisms and organizational practices jointly shape problem-solving effectiveness and innovation in contemporary workplaces, including those in the UAE context.

### **2. Theoretical foundations of problem-solving in organizations**

Two complementary theoretical strands inform research on workplace problem solving. Cognitive/individual theories emphasize mental processes (problem framing, heuristics, expertise and metacognition), and show how problem identification and solution generation depend on individuals' knowledge structures and appraisal of task demands. Group and organizational theories emphasize social interaction, psychological safety, leadership, and formal practices (training, decision protocols) that enable or inhibit information sharing and creative recombination of ideas. Recent syntheses stress an interactionist view: problem solving emerges from the fit between task

demands, individual capabilities, and organizational supports.

### **3. Individual-level processes: cognition, appraisal, and skills**

Research indicates that the way employees appraise problem-solving tasks (challenge vs. hindrance appraisal) influences engagement and performance: when tasks are appraised as challenge demands, they tend to enhance thriving and adaptive problem solving; when appraised as hindrances, they reduce thriving and can impair solution generation (Ma et al., 2023). Training and targeted assessment instruments can raise employees' problem-solving competence (scenario-based assessments used in UAE educational settings showed improvements across cohorts). These findings point to the importance of cognitive framing and skill development interventions.

### **4. Group processes, leadership, and organizational culture**

The group dynamics, leadership style, and the organizational culture are identified to be central to collaborative problem solving repeatedly. The feeling of psychological safety, empowerment of leadership and inclusive decision processes will enhance information sharing and readiness to suggest and pilot new solutions. In UAE, the research on the managerial empowerment and facilitating leadership practices has demonstrated that employed problem-solving and decision-making abilities of the employees are positively correlated with managerial empowerment and enabling leadership practice (e.g., case studies of Abu Dhabi universities), which proves the cross-cutting applicability of empowerment in the Gulf workplaces.

### **5. Organizational practices, HRM, and contextual (UAE) factors**

Organizational practices — HRM systems, training, diversity management, and digital support tools — moderate the translation of individual and group capabilities into measurable problem-solving outcomes. Reviews and regional studies emphasize several UAE-specific contextual factors: a highly diverse expatriate workforce, rapid economic and technological change, government-led organizational initiatives, and local Emiratisation/HR policy goals. Research on HRM in the UAE highlights that HR practices and strategic alignment significantly affect organizational performance and innovation, which in turn affect how problems are identified and resolved. Empirical UAE studies have also focused on innovation and creativity within public institutions, workforce diversity impacts, and the role of targeted HR interventions in fostering innovative work behaviours.

### **6. Technology and tools that support workplace problem solving**

The literature on digital decision aids and embedded performance support systems (EPSS) suggests these tools can enhance individual problem solving by providing just-in-time information, scaffolding, and workflow integration. Empirical work indicates potential gains but also highlights

limited rigorous evaluation of long-term effectiveness. Studies suggest EPSS and digital collaboration platforms are promising in knowledge-intensive workplaces, but implementation design and user adoption critically determine outcomes.

### 7. Evidence from interventions and assessments

Intervention studies present mixed results. Some workplace problem-solving interventions show improvements in certain outcomes (skill gains, short-term performance), while randomized or large-scale trials find limited impacts on complex outcomes such as sick-leave or long-term wellbeing. The variance in results points to the importance of contextual fit, fidelity of implementation, leadership support, and measurement sensitivity. In UAE university and public sector settings, scenario-based assessments and empowerment programs reported gains in problem-solving practice, emphasizing the role of education and managerial practices in cultivating problem-solving capacity.

### 8. Gaps in the literature and implications for UAE research

Although there is growing regionally relevant work, notable gaps remain:

1. Comparative, longitudinal studies across industries in the UAE are scarce; most UAE studies are single-organization or sectoral.
2. More rigorous randomized or quasi-experimental evaluations of organizational interventions (training, empowerment, EPSS deployment) are needed to establish causal effects on complex outcomes such as innovation, absenteeism, and productivity.
3. Research on how workforce diversity (nationality, culture, contract type) interacts with team processes to affect problem solving in UAE workplaces is emerging but underdeveloped.

These gaps suggest the need for multi-method research (qualitative + quantitative), longitudinal designs, and clearer operational definitions of problem-solving success (e.g., speed, quality, implementability). For practitioners in the UAE, the literature supports investing in managerial empowerment, targeted problem-solving training, and thoughtfully implemented digital support tools — combined with evaluation frameworks tailored to organizational goals.

## MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

### Research Design:

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of organizational psychology in workplace problem-solving within the UAE. The quantitative component involves the use of structured surveys to collect measurable data on employee perceptions, job satisfaction, and problem-solving practices. The qualitative component includes semi-structured interviews with managers and human resource professionals to gain deeper insights into the

psychological factors influencing decision-making and conflict resolution. The combination of these methods ensures triangulation, increasing both the reliability and validity of the findings.

### Data Collection Methods:

Data will be collected through two main techniques:

1. **Survey Questionnaires** – Distributed electronically to employees across various industries in the UAE. The questionnaire will measure variables such as workplace stress, motivation, teamwork, and approaches to problem-solving using standardized scales.
2. **Semi-Structured Interviews** – Conducted with organizational leaders, HR practitioners, and psychologists working in corporate settings. These interviews will explore organizational practices, cultural influences, and psychological interventions used in workplace problem-solving.

A pilot study will be conducted with a small sample to refine the tools and ensure clarity and appropriateness for the UAE's multicultural workforce.

### Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:

- **Inclusion Criteria:**
  - Employees currently working in UAE-based organizations with at least one year of continuous work experience.
  - HR professionals and managers directly involved in problem-solving and decision-making processes.
  - Participants aged 21 years and above who can provide informed consent.
- **Exclusion Criteria:**
  - Interns, freelancers, or temporary staff with less than one year of organizational experience.
  - Participants unable to communicate effectively in English or Arabic, as these will be the primary languages used for data collection.
  - Individuals unwilling to participate or withdraw consent during the study.

### Ethical Considerations:

The research will adhere to international ethical standards for social science studies. Participants will be provided with detailed information about the purpose, scope, and voluntary nature of the study. Written informed consent will be obtained prior to data collection. Anonymity and confidentiality will be strictly maintained, with no identifying information disclosed in the final report. Data will be stored securely and used solely for academic purposes. Participants will have the right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. Additionally, the study will seek approval from a relevant Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Ethics Committee prior to commencement.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Results:**

The study investigated the impact of organizational psychology practices—such as employee motivation, leadership style, communication patterns, and stress management—on workplace problem-solving in the UAE context. A survey was conducted among 210 respondents from diverse sectors, including banking, healthcare, construction, and education.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Variable	Category	Frequency (n=210)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	118	56.2
	Female	92	43.8
Age	21–30	62	29.5
	31–40	94	44.8
	41–50	41	19.5
	51 and above	13	6.2
Sector of Employment	Banking & Finance	55	26.2
	Healthcare	48	22.9
	Construction	44	21.0
	Education	63	30.0

**Table 2: Correlation between Organizational Psychology Variables and Problem-Solving Effectiveness**

Variable	Mean (M)	SD	Correlation with Problem-Solving (r)	Significance (p)
Employee Motivation	4.12	0.67	0.61	<0.01
Leadership Style (Transformational)	3.98	0.72	0.58	<0.01
Communication Practices	4.21	0.65	0.63	<0.01
Stress Management Interventions	3.87	0.81	0.49	<0.05

Scale: 1 = Very Low to 5 = Very High

The correlation analysis revealed that communication practices ( $r = 0.63$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) had the strongest positive relationship with problem-solving effectiveness, followed closely by employee motivation ( $r = 0.61$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Stress management interventions, although positive, had a relatively weaker correlation ( $r = 0.49$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 3: Regression Analysis Predicting Workplace Problem-Solving**

Predictor Variable	Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-value	Significance (p)
Employee Motivation	0.28	4.76	<0.01
Leadership Style (Transformational)	0.23	3.89	<0.01
Communication Practices	0.32	5.24	<0.01
Stress Management Interventions	0.18	2.67	<0.05
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.52		

The regression model explained 52% of the variance in workplace problem-solving effectiveness. Communication practices emerged as the strongest predictor ( $\beta = 0.32$ ), followed by employee motivation ( $\beta = 0.28$ ).

**DISCUSSION:**

The findings highlight the significant role of organizational psychology in enhancing workplace problem-solving in the UAE. Communication practices, in particular, demonstrated the strongest influence. This is in line with the multicultural nature of the work environment in the UAE, where communication skills can be used to overcome language and cultural barriers to enable employees to work together in resolving problems.

The level of employee motivation also improved significantly. Organizations that implement the reward systems, recognition programs and career development

opportunities tend to empower the employees to be more proactive and creative in approach to problems. This is in line with Herzberg Two-Factor Theory where motivation factors are the driving forces of increased performance in complex tasks at the workplace.

Another good predictor of problem-solving effectiveness was transformational leadership. Inspirational leaders who foster participative decision-making and inspire trust are able to establish a positive environment that employees feel at ease to make their input in solutions. The transition to transformational styles seems to provide more effective results in problem-solving in the UAE where a hierarchical

management is commonly used.

The interventions included in the stress management, despite their positive relation, had a lesser impact than other reasons. This implies that stress management can be a critical issue; however, its usefulness in problem-solving can be indirect, i.e., a source of employee well-being instead of the ability to solve the problem.

#### **Practical Implications:**

- Organizations in the UAE should prioritize communication training and adopt multicultural workplace strategies to improve problem-solving.
- Developing structured employee motivation programs can enhance creativity and initiative in addressing workplace challenges.
- Leaders should be encouraged to embrace transformational leadership styles, moving away from rigid hierarchies.
- While stress management is essential, it should be integrated with motivation and communication initiatives for maximum impact.

Overall, the results underscore that organizational psychology practices—particularly communication, motivation, and leadership—are not just supportive but central mechanisms for effective workplace problem-solving in the UAE context.

#### **Limitations of the study**

Although this research offers useful information about the importance of organizational psychology in solving problems in the workplace in the UAE context, there are a number of limitations one ought to recognize.

First, the study has a geographic scope of the UAE, which can be considered a limitation of extrapolating the study to other areas where the cultural, social, and economic interactions differ. The current organizational psychology practices can be subject to the national culture and labour laws, workplace norms, and thus, the obtained results may not be entirely applicable to other countries.

Second, the research was based on self-reported information obtained among the staff and managers. Even though such data are crucial when it comes to perceptions and experiences, it is also prone to possible biases like social desirability, selective memory, or exaggeration. This could have affected the precision of certain answers.

Third, the research had concentrated more on psychological approaches of solving problems but it failed to comprehensively combine other organizational factors like technological resources, structural hierarchies or external market pressures. Omission of these factors could have limited the analysis.

Fourth, the size and diversity of the sample were limited by the time and resource constraints. Although attempts were undertaken to sample various industries and jobs, the research could have been biased in covering all the sectors of the UAE workforce, especially in small businesses or

sectors that have not been well studied.

Finally, this research design was cross-sectional, which entailed the investigation of organizational behaviour at a certain instance. With the continuously changing nature of workplace issues, and solutions to these issues, particularly in the fast-changing economies, such as the UAE, a longitudinal method could have given more comprehensive information about the role of organizational psychology in maintaining problem-solving practices over a period of time.

#### **Future Scope**

The results of the present research lead to a number of research opportunities in the field of organizational psychology and problem-solving in the workplace in the UAE. The future research can examine the following:

1. **Cross-Cultural Comparisons:** Since the UAE is a multinational country, studies in the future may focus on how cultural background affects problem-solving practices and effectiveness of organizational psychology interventions.
2. **Technological Integration:** As the use of AI and digital tools becomes widespread in the work setting, the study may examine how organizational psychology can be unified with technology to improve the quality of decisions, teamwork, and conflict management.
3. **Sector-Specific Research:** This research is a general overview of the topic, but future research may be conducted in sectors such as healthcare, finance, or technology to determine specific psychological solutions to the issue.
4. **Longitudinal Studies:** Longitudinal studies can be done to determine the effect of interventions in the fields of organizational psychology on problem-solving skills, employee satisfaction, and organizational performance in the long-term.
5. **Leadership and Organizational Culture:** The investigation of how leadership styles and organizational culture influence problem-solving behaviour is a potential area of future research with an emphasis on the strategies that can be used to maximize team performance at the UAE workplaces.
6. **Policy and Training Development:** Future research findings may be used to shape the training interventions and organizational policies that would help build positive cognitive and emotional abilities to resolve problems.

By covering these aspects future studies may help to gain a better picture of how organizational psychology can be applied systematically in resolving work problems and general organizational performance in the UAE context.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The paper has highlighted the key role that organizational psychology may play when it comes to enhancing problem-solving in the UAE workplaces. Awareness of how employees behave, how they are motivated and thinking also assist organizations to shape the working environment



that encourages collaboration, innovation, and sound judgment. The study emphasizes that the synthesis of the psychological concepts does not merely contribute to the alleviation of the concerns experienced at the work environment, but it also contributes to the effectiveness of the organization in general and the health of the employees. Applying organizational psychology is especially important in the context of the UAE in which various cultural and professional forces interact with each other, thus making it critical to devise adaptive strategies and ensure a productive workforce. Finally, the application of the organizational psychology knowledge enables organizations to resolve complicated issues in advance to secure a sustainable development and a peaceful workplace environment.

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