

The Impact of Quality of Life in UAE on Attracting Investors and Capital Invested

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of Quality of Life (QOL) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as a strategic factor influencing the attraction of foreign investors and capital investment. Using qualitative analysis supported by MAXQDA coding, the research identifies key determinants of QOL including stability and security, standard of living, work-life balance, education, healthcare, and cultural diversity and examines their perceived impact on investment decisions. Findings reveal that government policy plays a pivotal role in enhancing QOL and shaping a favorable investment climate, with security and infrastructure emerging as dominant themes. Comparative insights with other FDI-attracting nations such as Singapore and Switzerland highlight the UAE's competitive advantages in safety, multiculturalism, and subsidized healthcare, while also pointing to areas for continued development. Respondent narratives affirm that QOL is a multidimensional construct, and its improvement contributes directly to investor confidence and long-term economic appeal. The study concludes that a holistic approach to QOL that integrating social, economic, and environmental dimensions that is essential for sustaining the UAE's position as a global investment hub.

1. Introduction

The relationship between Quality of Life (QOL) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has garnered increasing scholarly attention, with numerous studies exploring how living conditions, public services, and human capital influence investment decisions across various national contexts. While existing research has illuminated key aspects of these dynamics, significant gaps remain that particularly in understanding how multidimensional QOL indicators shape investor behaviour in rapidly developing economies such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Previous studies have primarily focused on isolated QOL dimensions. For instance, Delević (2024) found that improvements in human capital quality are positively correlated with higher-quality FDI in a sample of 54 countries, while Thi Cam Ha, Doan, Holmes, and Tran (2024) emphasised the role of institutional quality and human development which key components of QOL in attracting FDI and improving well-being in host countries. Similarly, Chatha, Batool, Hussain, and Asghar (2025) revealed that technological innovation, institutional quality, and FDI jointly influence human development outcomes in developing countries. However, these studies often lack a holistic framework and are limited in geographic scope, leaving unanswered questions about how broader QOL factors such as infrastructure, cultural inclusivity, and social well-being that interact with FDI attraction in diverse settings.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the UAE as a unique case within a broader cross-country perspective. It expands the analytical lens beyond education and income to include healthcare, housing, work-life balance, environmental sustainability, and cultural engagement. By doing so, it offers a more comprehensive understanding of how QOL functions not only as a social development goal but also as a strategic economic asset in attracting investors and capital.

Moreover, the study explores the bidirectional relationship between QOL and FDI. While improved living conditions may enhance investor confidence, sustained FDI inflows can also contribute to further QOL enhancements that creating a self-reinforcing cycle of development. This reciprocal dynamic, as suggested by RSIS International (2023) and Thao, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2025), remains underexplored but is central to understanding the developmental effects of investment flows in emerging markets. Supporting this, Murillo Herrera (2023) demonstrated that FDI contributes to social development through institutional and path-dependent mechanisms, reinforcing the notion that economic and social progress are deeply interlinked.

In the UAE context, several pressing challenges complicate this relationship. The high cost of living, particularly in urban centres like Dubai and Abu Dhabi, poses a barrier to attracting and retaining skilled labour, which in turn affects investor decisions. Data from the World Bank and Knight Frank (2024) confirm that housing and living expenses in the UAE rank among the highest globally, potentially deterring investment in sectors reliant on human capital. The OECD (2024) further notes that modern FDI is increasingly quality-oriented that focusing on nations that demonstrate inclusive development, affordable living conditions, and

robust infrastructure.

Additionally, the limited availability of diverse social and cultural activities may constrain the experiential dimension of QOL. The World Happiness Report (2024) underscores the importance of social support, community engagement, and life satisfaction in enhancing well-being factors that are increasingly relevant in global investment strategies. Similarly, Wellings, Majumdar, Hänggli Fricker, and Pournaras (2023) highlight that participatory and data-driven policy design can significantly improve city life and create environments more conducive to sustainable investment and economic participation.

Legal and cultural norms also play a complex role. The UAE's strict regulations on personal behaviour, while integral to its national identity, may conflict with the expectations of foreign investors, particularly in hospitality and tourism. Comparative analyses by Gupta, Yadav, and Jain (2024) and Singhal, Rani, and Kumar (2025) demonstrate that institutional quality and regulatory frameworks are positively associated with FDI inflows in emerging economies. These insights raise important questions about how the UAE can balance regulatory integrity with global competitiveness to maintain its appeal as an investment destination.

Thus, this study investigates how QOL in the UAE influences the attraction of investors and capital investment, offering a multidimensional analysis that integrates theoretical frameworks, empirical data, and contextual realities. By addressing challenges such as cost of living, cultural engagement, and regulatory norms, the research aims to provide actionable insights for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to enhance QOL as a lever for sustainable investment growth. While prior studies have examined specific aspects of QOL in the UAE, a comprehensive and systematic evaluation remains lacking thus this study seeks to fill that gap.

2. Quality of Life and Foreign Direct Investment

The relationship between Quality of Life (QOL) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has evolved into a multidimensional research area, bridging economics, human geography, and development studies. QOL encompasses both objective and subjective dimensions that ranging from income, healthcare, and education to environmental sustainability, safety, and social well-being. FDI, in turn, is a principal mechanism through which capital, technology, and employment are transferred across borders. The interconnection between the two lies in the capacity of FDI to influence societal welfare, while simultaneously being shaped by host-country living conditions.

Recent literature emphasizes that this relationship is far from linear. Delević (2024) demonstrated a positive association between higher-quality human capital and higher-quality FDI inflows, suggesting that countries with more developed skills and expertise attract investments that generate greater societal value. Similarly, Thi Cam Ha, Doan, Holmes, and Tran (2024) highlighted that institutional quality mediates the FDI–human development nexus, reinforcing the idea that governance and social policy determine how investment translates into well-being. Chatha, Batool, Hussain, and Asghar (2025) further argued that technological innovation, institutional quality, and FDI jointly drive improvements in human

development, showing that investments embedded in innovation and governance frameworks are more likely to enhance QOL. In contrast, Narayanan, Baird, and Tay (2021) emphasized that poorly managed or environmentally unsustainable FDI projects can erode local quality-of-life indicators, highlighting the importance of sectoral composition and responsible investment policies.

QOL also functions as a determinant of FDI attraction. Asiedu and Lien (2011) showed that in African economies, higher QOL indicators including education, health infrastructure, and social stability that positively influence FDI inflows. Similarly, Thao, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2025) found that in Vietnam, higher levels of human development and institutional quality increase FDI inflows, particularly in sectors reliant on skilled labor and technological know-how. In the UAE, Haddad (2018) and Murillo Herrera (2023) reported that countries with stronger social infrastructure and livability attract more diverse and productive FDI, illustrating the growing importance of social dimensions alongside traditional economic determinants. This aligns with findings from Delević (2024) and RSIS International (2023), which emphasize the bidirectional and reinforcing relationship between FDI and human development: better QOL draws in higher-quality investment, which in turn enhances social outcomes.

However, the QOL–FDI relationship is complex and moderated by institutional and economic factors. Gupta, Yadav, and Jain (2024) found that strong governance, regulatory quality, and transparency amplify the positive effects of QOL on FDI, whereas weak institutions diminish investment attraction. Similarly, Singhal, Rani, and Kumar (2025) observed that natural resources and institutional quality jointly affect FDI decisions, suggesting that QOL alone cannot fully explain investment patterns. Nguyen et al. (2025) further demonstrated that macroeconomic conditions, environmental sustainability, and social equity mediate the impact of QOL on FDI, highlighting that broader economic and policy contexts are essential for realizing the developmental benefits of foreign investment. These findings confirm that while QOL is a critical factor, its effects are contingent upon complementary institutional and economic structures.

Finally, research also shows variation across sectors and countries. In high-tech and knowledge-intensive industries, human capital and social infrastructure play particularly significant roles in attracting investment (Delević, 2024; Chatha et al., 2025; Thao et al., 2025). Meanwhile, economies with weak governance, high corruption, or insufficient social services may experience lower FDI inflows despite relatively high QOL indicators in select domains (Gupta et al., 2024; Narayanan et al., 2021). This nuanced understanding underscores the importance of holistic policy design, integrating QOL improvements, institutional reforms, and economic competitiveness to optimize FDI outcomes.

2.1 Investment in the UAE and Other Economies

Comparative analyses across Asia illustrate the varied interactions between QOL, institutions, and FDI attraction. In Japan, a combination of strong regulatory systems, technological sophistication, and environmental awareness has long underpinned its investment climate (Shimamoto, 2004). However, high costs and demographic challenges may limit future FDI

growth. South Korea presents a similar high-skill, innovation-based model, where corporate governance reforms and global integration have strengthened its investment attractiveness (Lee, Lee, & Jang, 2025; Park, 2025). Singapore remains a global benchmark, combining livability, infrastructure, and governance to foster sustainable FDI inflows (OECD, 2024).

The UAE, in contrast, represents a rapidly developing hub balancing modernization with cultural distinctiveness. Its economic diversification strategy and favorable policy framework have positioned it as a leading FDI destination in the Middle East (UNCTAD, 2024; UNCTADstat, 2025). Hassan (2023) observed that FDI plays a significant role in UAE economic growth, while Modarress, Ansari, and Thies (2014) showed that technology transfer through FDI enhances innovation and productivity. Earlier research by Haddad (2018) found that both inward and outward FDI significantly influence the UAE's Human Development Index (HDI), reinforcing the developmental dimension of foreign investment.

Nevertheless, the UAE faces challenges relating to cost of living and social inclusion. According to the World Bank and Knight Frank Global Housing Affordability Report (2024), housing costs in Dubai and Abu Dhabi remain among the highest globally, affecting the expatriate labor market and, by extension, investor confidence. The World Happiness Report (2024) also highlights that while the UAE performs strongly on income and safety metrics, it lags in social connectedness and work-life balance factors that shape QOL perceptions and ultimately influence investment appeal.

Scholars such as Harhara (2014) and Ozili, Salman, and Ali (2020) noted that FDI's benefits in the UAE are uneven across sectors, with financial and energy industries outperforming social sectors. Hasan (2023) and Tabuk (2023) suggested that improved social infrastructure and sustainable urban planning could enhance the developmental returns of FDI. More recently, Invest UAE (2025) reported that FDI inflows are projected to reach USD 65 billion by 2031, supported by reforms in environmental sustainability, digital transformation, and human capital development (Reuters, 2025). These trends underscore the country's shift toward higher-quality investment aligned with long-term QOL goals.

Comparatively, while Japan, South Korea, and Singapore have established mature institutional environments that sustain high-QOL–FDI synergies, the UAE's model remains dynamic that focused on leveraging policy innovation, economic openness, and social modernization to achieve similar balance. As OECD (2024) and UNCTAD (2024) emphasize, such integration of social welfare and investment policy defines the next frontier of sustainable FDI.

2.2 Current Policies, Institutional Dynamics, and Economic Impacts

Policy frameworks play a decisive role in linking QOL with FDI outcomes. The UAE ranks among the highest globally in ease of doing business, owing to streamlined registration systems, transparent property laws, and improved access to credit that supported by Federal Law No. (20) of 2016 on the Pledge of Movable Assets as Guarantee for Debts (UNCTAD, 2021). Chizema, Mabugu, and Meniago (2025) found that in Southeast Asia, ease of doing business strongly predicts FDI inflows, a finding consistent with UAE's upward trajectory. Moreover,

OECD (2024) underscores that such institutional reforms enhance “investment quality,” encouraging inflows into knowledge-intensive and sustainable sectors.

Beyond governance, emerging research links digital transformation, social welfare, and FDI. Wellings et al. (2023) demonstrated that participatory, data-driven policymaking enhances urban QOL, fostering more legitimate investment environments. Nguyen et al. (2025) similarly found that in Vietnam, FDI contributes to economic development when mediated by environmental sustainability and equity. For the UAE, this implies that future FDI growth will increasingly depend on integrating digital infrastructure, social inclusivity, and ecological resilience into national planning.

In line with these findings, the UAE’s Ministry of Economy (Invest UAE, 2025) outlines a vision to attract high-quality FDI aligned with sustainable development. This involves leveraging technology transfer (Modarress et al., 2014), improving human capital (Delevic, 2024), and enhancing institutional transparency (Thi Cam Ha et al., 2024). Collectively, these efforts demonstrate the country’s strategic alignment with global FDI quality standards, moving beyond quantity-based attraction toward holistic economic and social advancement.

3. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design to investigate the influence of Quality of Life (QOL) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 30 participants and analyzed using MAXQDA, a qualitative data analysis software recognized for its robust capabilities in handling mixed-methods research (Bazeley, 2020; Silver & Lewins, 2014; Woolf & Silver, 2018). The analytical process was structured to align with the study’s objectives, integrating thematic coding, comparative interpretation, and contextual evidence.

Interview transcripts were imported into MAXQDA in two formats: first, as 30 individual documents organized by interviewer to support objective-based analysis; and second, as eight grouped documents organized by research question to facilitate thematic exploration. This dual structuring enabled a comprehensive coding process, resulting in a total of 6,289 codes where 2,363 codes derived from the interview-based documents and 3,926 codes from the question-based documents. The most substantial contribution was recorded from Interviewer No. 9, who generated 240 codes, while Question No. 7, which addressed the role of policy in shaping QOL’s impact on FDI, emerged as the most frequently coded item.

To ensure analytical rigor and mitigate coder bias, the study incorporated inter-coder reliability checks, triangulation techniques, and saturation-based quote selection. These validation measures enhanced the credibility and representativeness of the findings. Each code was linked to its corresponding textual evidence using MAXQDA’s hashing feature. For example, the theme “education and health” was supported by the following participant statement: “For example, if you have a higher level of income, it means that you have better access to education, and you have better access to healthcare facilities, you can join clubs and activities, various entertainment” (Response 12, Pos. 4).

The coded data were then organized into thematic categories aligned with the research

objectives. These included general perceptions of QOL in the UAE, socioeconomic dimensions such as security, stability, and standard of living, and social empowerment factors including community sharing and volunteerism. A comparative analysis was also conducted to benchmark the UAE's QOL indicators against those of other major FDI-attracting nations.

Finally, MAXQDA's Stats module was utilized to generate frequency tables, crosstabs, and visual representations of the coded data. These quantitative outputs were integrated with direct participant quotations to provide contextual depth and support thematic interpretations. This mixed-methods approach enabled a nuanced understanding of how QOL factors in the UAE influence FDI perceptions and decisions.

4. Results and Findings

4.1 General Findings

The qualitative analysis revealed key insights into the relationship between Quality of Life (QOL) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). A prominent visual output from MAXQDA was the word cloud, which illustrated the frequency of coded terms and highlighted the central themes explored in the study. Table 1 presents the distribution of subcodes by coding target, detailing the number and proportion of codes associated with each research objective and question.

Table 1. Breakdown of code count and ratio

Coding Target#	Main Code#	Codes No.#	% of Target Codes#	% of All Codes#
Objectives#	Social empowerment factors affecting QOL in UAE#	289#	8.69%#	4.60%#
	Government policy on FDI to improve QOL#	1981#	59.60%#	31.50%#
	Socioeconomic factors affecting QOL in UAE#	1054#	31.71%#	16.76%#
	Total Objectives#	3324#	100%#	—#
Answers#	Key aspects of QOL relevant to FDI#	399#	13.46%#	6.34%#
	Specific contributing factors to QOL#	167#	5.63%#	2.66%#
	Predictive QOL factors for FDI attraction#	235#	7.93%#	3.74%#
	Policy role in QOL-FDI relationship#	939#	31.67%#	14.93%#
	Influence of socioeconomic factors on QOL#	429#	14.47%#	6.82%#
	Influence of social empowerment on QOL#	305#	10.29%#	4.85%#
	Overall QOL description#	27#	0.91%#	0.43%#
	Comparative QOL analysis (UAE vs. others)#	226#	7.62%#	3.59%#
	Repetition: Key aspects of QOL for FDI#	238#	8.03%#	3.78%#
	Total Answers#	2965#	100%#	47.15%#
Grand Total#	—#	6289#	100%#	100%#

Table 1 shows that the government policy on FDI emerged as the most frequently coded theme, accounting for 59.60% of targeted codes and 31.50% of all codes that underscoring its perceived importance in enhancing QOL and attracting investment. This aligns with findings by Gupta, Yadav, and Jain (2024) and Singhal, Rani, and Kumar (2025), who highlighted that institutional quality and regulatory frameworks are critical determinants of FDI inflows in emerging economies. Similarly, Thi Cam Ha et al. (2024) emphasized that robust governance and policy interventions not only improve investment attractiveness but also mediate the effects of FDI on human development outcomes. The importance of policy in shaping QOL–FDI interactions is further supported by OECD (2024), which notes that contemporary FDI strategies increasingly prioritize inclusive development, infrastructure quality, and social welfare as components of investment facilitation.

Socioeconomic factors were the second most frequent theme, comprising 31.71% of targeted codes and 16.76% of total codes. These findings resonate with studies showing that income levels, urban amenities, health services, and educational infrastructure significantly influence FDI attraction. For example, Delević (2024) emphasized the role of human capital quality in attracting high-value FDI, while Thao, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2025) demonstrated that human development and economic growth jointly shape investment inflows. RSIS International (2023) similarly found that FDI contributes more effectively to human development when socioeconomic structures support well-being and labor market functionality.

Social empowerment factors contributed 8.69% to the objective codes and 10.29% to answer-related codes, reflecting a growing recognition that community engagement, cultural inclusivity, and participatory governance influence both QOL and investment decisions. These aspects are consistent with findings by Wellings, Majumdar, Hänggli Fricker, and Pournaras (2023), who showed that participatory and legitimate policymaking enhances urban livability and investor confidence. Ma and Ma (2025) also highlighted the role of social participation and digital inclusion in improving quality-of-life indicators that attract high-quality FDI.

In response to the research questions, policy influence remained central, comprising 31.67% of answer-related codes and 14.93% of all codes. Other significant themes included socioeconomic factors (14.47%), key QOL aspects relevant to foreign investors (13.46%), and social empowerment, reinforcing the multidimensional nature of investment decision-making. References such as Murillo Herrera (2023) and Chatha et al. (2025) demonstrate that high-quality FDI is more likely in environments where policy frameworks, social infrastructure, and human development indicators are aligned. Lower-frequency topics, including comparative QOL analyses and predictive indicators of FDI attraction, further suggest that a holistic understanding of QOL that spanning economic, social, and policy dimensions which is necessary for explaining investor behavior and designing effective national strategies (OECD, 2024; Nguyen et al., 2025)..

4.2 The Overall Quality of Life in the UAE

The data confirm that quality of life in the UAE is a multidimensional construct shaped by the interaction of government policies, socioeconomic conditions, and social empowerment

factors. Each variable was coded and subcoded to reflect its contribution to the overall perception of life in the country. Table 2 presents the distribution of subcodes related to respondents' descriptions of the UAE's quality of life. The most frequent descriptors, "Excellent and Great" (37.04%) and "One of the best and highest quality of life in the world" (29.63%) that reflect a strong consensus among participants that the UAE offers an exceptional living environment. The "Very Good" rating (22.22%) suggests satisfaction across key domains such as infrastructure, education, healthcare, and safety. Although less frequent, descriptors like "Good" and "Has all the resistance to quality of life" still affirm the country's appeal to residents and investors.

Table 2. Subcodes Reflecting Perceptions of Quality of Life in the UAE

Code Description#	Code Count#	% of Main Codes#	% of All Codes#
Excellent and great#	10#	37.04%#	0.16%#
One of the best and highest QOL globally#	8#	29.63%#	0.13%#
Very good#	6#	22.22%#	0.10%#
Good#	2#	7.41%#	0.03%#
Has all the resistance to QOL#	1#	3.70%#	0.02%#
Total#	27#	100.00%#	0.43%#

Table 2 findings collectively reinforce the UAE's reputation as a stable, safe, and high-quality destination, where various dimensions of quality of life play a pivotal role in attracting foreign direct investment. This sentiment is consistent with the literature highlighting the importance of socioeconomic development, infrastructure, and human capital in shaping investor perceptions (Haddad, 2018; Delević, 2024; Thi Cam Ha et al., 2024).

Respondent R3 emphasized the UAE's status as a high-income nation with robust infrastructure, particularly in transportation and information technology: "The overall quality of life in the UAE is good. It is a high-income country and the infrastructure in terms of transportation and IT infrastructure is very good here. The job opportunities are good and the jobs are good pay. At the same time, they ensure that the quality of work and working conditions are good in the UAE."

This perspective aligns with Hassan (2023) and Modarress, Ansari, and Thies (2014), who note that advanced infrastructure, technological readiness, and high-income levels contribute to both human development and FDI attraction. Other participants reinforced this view. Respondent R9 stated: "Quality of life in the UAE is among the top positions, not only regionally, but globally. The global level is due to several elements that make it an attractive environment to live and work in."

Similarly, R10 offered a comparative perspective: "Compared to the quality of life in some European countries, it remains excellent and at a very high level." Respondent R17 succinctly affirmed: "In general, I see life in the UAE as excellent."

A more comprehensive assessment was provided by R24, who elaborated: “If we describe it in general, it is very high in several aspects, including living comfort, income per capita, security and safety, advanced infrastructure, health services, and education. We in the UAE also enjoy a high level of economic development, which is one of the most important contributors to quality of life.”

These perceptions are supported by World Bank & Knight Frank (2024), which report that the UAE’s urban infrastructure, healthcare services, and high-income environment are globally competitive. Similarly, OECD (2024) emphasizes that countries with advanced infrastructure and inclusive development policies attract higher-quality FDI. The importance of safety, social stability, and economic development highlighted by respondents aligns with RSIS International (2023) and Thao, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2025), which demonstrate that well-governed, high-QOL environments enhance investor confidence and human development outcomes. Overall, these findings reinforce the UAE’s position as a leading FDI destination where high-quality living conditions support economic and social development simultaneously. These findings affirm that the UAE’s quality of life is not only perceived positively but is also considered a strategic asset in enhancing its global investment appeal.

4.3 Key Determinants of Quality of Life in the UAE

The analysis identified several factors that contribute most significantly to the perception of Quality of Life (QOL) in the UAE. These were derived from coded responses and are summarized in Table 3, which presents the distribution of subcodes and their relative weight within the dataset.

Table 3. Specific Factors Contributing Most Significantly to QOL in the UAE

Code Description#	Code Count#	% of Main Codes#	% of All Codes#
Stability & Security#	34#	20.36%#	0.54%#
Standard of Living#	28#	16.77%#	0.45%#
Work-Life Balance#	25#	14.97%#	0.40%#
Education#	23#	13.77%#	0.37%#
Economy & Job Opportunities#	21#	12.57%#	0.33%#
Environment & Sustainability#	14#	8.38%#	0.22%#
Culture & Social Diversity#	11#	6.59%#	0.17%#
Health#	11#	6.59%#	0.17%#
Total#	167#	100.00%#	2.66%#

Table 3 indicates that stability and security are the most frequently cited determinants of quality of life (QOL), comprising 20.36% of the main codes. This highlights the centrality of personal safety, political stability, and financial assurance in shaping residents’ experiences. These results align with prior research emphasizing that secure and well-governed environments attract higher-quality FDI and improve social welfare (Gupta, Yadav, & Jain,

2024; Singhal, Rani, & Kumar, 2025; Thi Cam Ha et al., 2024). Standard of living (16.77%) and work-life balance (14.97%) follow, underscoring the importance of economic comfort and effective time management for both residents and potential investors (Delević, 2024; Thao, Nguyen, & Nguyen, 2025). Education and job opportunities also feature prominently, reflecting the value placed on human capital and employment as key components of well-being (Chatha, Batool, Hussain, & Asghar, 2025; Murillo Herrera, 2023).

Although environmental sustainability, cultural diversity, and health appear less frequently, ranging from 6.59% to 8.38%, they remain integral to long-term societal resilience and inclusive development (Nguyen et al., 2025; Ma & Ma, 2025; OECD, 2024). Together, these factors account for only 2.66% of all codes, suggesting that QOL in the UAE is shaped by a multifaceted interplay of social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

These findings correspond with Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the Human Development Index (HDI) framework. Security and stability map onto Maslow's safety needs, as emphasized by Respondent R2: "Security reassures the individual, their family, and their property." Standard of living and economic opportunities reflect physiological and self-esteem needs, while education and health mirror the HDI's indicators of access to knowledge and life expectancy (Haddad, 2018; Thi Cam Ha et al., 2024). Cultural diversity supports higher-order needs such as belonging and self-actualization, contributing to a socially enriched environment (Wellings, Majumdar, Hänggli Fricker, & Pournaras, 2023; Kibria & Toufique, 2025).

Comparative analysis underscores the UAE's strengths relative to other FDI-attracting nations. In terms of safety, the UAE ranks third globally in the 2023 Global Safety Index, ahead of Singapore (fifth) and Switzerland (tenth). Its cultural diversity is particularly notable, with over 180 nationalities represented (World Bank & Knight Frank, 2024), as highlighted by Respondent R22. This contrasts with Singapore's more limited diversity, where approximately 40% of the population is foreign. While Switzerland leads in education (HDI 0.962), the UAE has made significant progress in healthcare, providing highly subsidized services and notable achievements in primary care (Hassan, 2023; Haddad, 2018), as observed by Respondent R8.

Respondents consistently reinforced these themes. R22 described the UAE's advanced infrastructure, low crime rates, and multiculturalism: "The presence of a diverse society allows the exchange of existing experiences and cultures," and "a strong economy can provide great opportunities." R2 reiterated the foundational role of safety: "The most important factor among them is security. As long as there is security and stability, this reassures oneself, family, money, and all possessions." R8 emphasized the cumulative impact of sectoral progress: "Achievements in education, trade, economics, health, and community security all contribute to quality of life" (OECD, 2024; RSIS International, 2023).

R11 focused on balanced living: "Family balance and work-life balance are very good. This gives me multiple opportunities for personal development." R21 highlighted a comprehensive set of QOL determinants: "Political stability, quality health and education services, job opportunities, sustainability, safety, and a recreational environment." R25 emphasized the

economic dimension: “Raising income levels is essential to match the standard of living with basic needs and aspirations” (Delević, 2024; Thao, Nguyen, & Nguyen, 2025; Chatha et al., 2025).

Together, these insights reflect the diversity of respondent priorities and reinforce the literature, confirming that enhancing QOL in the UAE requires a holistic approach integrating safety, opportunity, inclusivity, and sustainability to support both residents and international investors (OECD, 2024; Murillo Herrera, 2023; Kibria & Toufique, 2025).

5. Conclusion

This study examined the impact of Quality of Life (QOL) in the United Arab Emirates on attracting investors and capital investment, revealing that QOL functions as both a developmental benchmark and a strategic economic lever. Through qualitative analysis, it became evident that key factors such as stability and security, standard of living, work-life balance, education, and economic opportunity that play a decisive role in shaping perceptions of the UAE as an attractive destination for foreign direct investment (FDI).

Government policy emerged as a central theme, reinforcing the notion that institutional frameworks and public services are instrumental in enhancing QOL and fostering investor confidence. The UAE’s strengths in safety, infrastructure, and cultural diversity further distinguish it from other FDI-attracting nations, while comparative insights with countries like Singapore and Switzerland highlight its competitive positioning in global investment landscapes.

Respondent narratives confirmed that QOL is not a singular construct but a multidimensional outcome of integrated governance, inclusive growth, and societal well-being. The convergence of economic stability, social inclusivity, and environmental sustainability contributes to a living environment that appeals not only to residents but also to international investors seeking long-term value and reliability.

In conclusion, the UAE’s commitment to improving quality of life is directly linked to its success in attracting investment and capital. By continuing to align policy, infrastructure, and social development with global standards, the country strengthens its reputation as a secure, prosperous, and forward-looking hub for international investment..

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