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**BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (HONOURS) IN
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

TASK 2 : REFLECTIVE ESSAY

MODULE : IUBA5002

CHANGEMAKERS : CREATIVITY AND VALUE CREATION

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This reflective essay explores and critically evaluates my research process on the topic about the importance and awareness of safety and health in the working environment using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle. This model is highly effective for promoting experiential learning and self-reflection, as it consists of six stages: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan. Using this model, I will address main stages in my research, such as identifying the issue, formulating research questions, choosing methods, collecting data, presenting findings, and conducting the analysis. I will report on outcomes of each stage and demonstrate my proficiency in core concepts related to safety and health in the workplace and their alignment with my research process. I will also reflect on my ability to utilize these concepts in real life and to learn from valid suggestions for improvement. I will provide evidence on my compliance with major academic standards, such as correct referencing and proper use of relevant theoretical frameworks. I will also point to potential professional and personal aspects of my growth triggered by this research.

2.0 DESCRIPTION

My research was related to health and safety and the level of their importance and awareness of the working environment, namely Malaysian working environments. I chose this subject because I felt that the occupational safety and health function are vital considering the well-being of employees and the absence of risks. I understand that the Malaysian legislative system regulated health and safety practice under their Department of Occupational Safety and Health function, but, comprehensive implementation and awareness of these practices performed unacceptable gaps. From my perspective, insufficient health and safety implementation creates the risks of workplaces catastrophes and low-quality performance both from employer and employee sides.

Thus, the central research question I addressed: How do Malaysia's employers and employees aware of the health and safety level of measures at their occupational environment. I believed that these questions would help me understand the overall situation in Malaysia regarding the low level of health and safety measures implementation. Throughout my research, I wanted the

employers and employees to share their points of view with me, and after analyzing them to determine where precisely awareness was low. I would also try to develop suggestions for the employers and employees about how to increase the degree of safety practices in the workplace and what they could do to enhance the awareness level about required practices. This research is relevant in both academic and social contexts since the field of health and safety is highly critical and influences not only employee safety at their workplaces but also their social life. As such, high-quality awareness of such practices will lead to an increase of informational quality of safety practices.

3.0 FEELINGS

Performing this research project induced a variation of emotions. I felt excited about the possibility to explore the topic as significant as the health and safety of workplaces in Malaysia. Moreover, I did realize that the findings could be used in practice to structure the environment where employees work and improve their and organization's productivity. The possibility to add to the knowledge about health and safety at workplaces was thrilling and motivating. Additionally, it was somewhat appealing to realize that there was a possibility to influence workplaces in such a way.

However, along with these feelings, I experienced emotions of uncertainty and anxiety. I had not performed any research of qualitative nature before, and the idea of leaks and exit was rather challenging. Moreover, measuring a number of interviews and then conducting thematic analysis including the identification of the thematic framework was challenging as well. I did not believe that I would be able to manage all of these tasks, and I felt uncertain about my capacity to lead interviews properly. In addition, I had worries about the attractiveness of the topic I had chosen. Examining the awareness with respect to health and safety and determining the importance of health and safety measures driven me to question whether the topic was expected to lead to powerful findings and conclusions. Although I had various feelings and emotions concerning the project and the performance of research, I was determined to perform the study, acquire new knowledge and skills, and overcome the challenges, liable with the performance of research of the qualitative nature. The obligation to produce findings and make

recommendations to employers and employees of Malaysia did foster the preparation for performance.

4.0 EVALUATION

In this section, I critically evaluate the methods and overall process I have adopted to conduct research on the topic “Employee and Employers Understanding, Risk Awareness and Implementation of an Occupational Safety and Health Management System in Malaysia.” As to my research, I have adopted semi-structured interviews within a qualitative research design framework. Overall, this approach has turned out to be beneficial as it has allowed me to explore in-depth how employers and employees in Malaysia understand and practice safety at work. I chose semi-structured interviews as they enable the researcher to combine the strength of qualitative and quantitative approaches. On the one hand, the semi-structured format of an interview has provided me with the opportunity to explore the research issue in-depth. I had a chance to discuss different aspects of safety and management performance with the interviewees. It is hardly possible to get any grade of such deepness by simply analyzing the data retrieved from questionnaires. Thus, these interviews have helped me explore the level of understanding and practices of the two groups under consideration. In addition, the semi-structured approach has also helped me to find out the levels of awareness on minor issues influencing overall safety awareness. On the other hand, semi-structured interviews have also provided me with a rigid format to minimize the risk of digression. Nonetheless, one of the main disadvantages of this approach is time constraints. Thus, while semi-structured interviews have provided me with opportunities to take advantages of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches, the format has a number of limitations.

As for the process, I have utilized purposive sampling. In the case of this research, the sampling procedure also proved to have been beneficial. I chose only those individuals who had experience in safety practice to be sure the results would be not anaphoric and truly representative. The latter is extremely important as the practice of safety systems implementation and performance at various organizations has proved to be very diverse. Therefore, the sampling strategy was instrumental in providing me with good results. Finally,

I have utilized the theme analysis. This approach has also proved to be advantageous as the analysis has helped me explore the results of my interview in-depth. In conclusion, one should note that the main disadvantages of my approach are the relatively small number of interviews I have conducted and limited experience in the frameworks of qualitative research. Overall, I have achieved the goal set initially, and have gained invaluable experience.

5.0 ANALYSIS

Severe thematic analysis of the interview data establish a variety of themes concerning the importance and awareness levels of health and safety practices in the Malaysian workplace. The key theme that emanated from the literature is the critical importance of well-developed safety practices to reduce the incidence of accidents and foster a culture of safety. It was obvious from the interviews that the employees of various firms consistently stressed the importance of a well-defined and maintained safety framework to protect the health and well-being of the workers. For example, the employees of the Fire Department underscored the importance of implementing safety measures to prevent dangerous accidents that endanger the lives of other employees. It is also clear that success in the productivity of employees and reduction of absenteeism is directly correlated to safety awareness, which is a vital attribute of safety compliance and implementation. The thematic analysis also reveals a second theme, which is the disparity between safety awareness levels between the management and employees.

From the interviews, it is clear that the majority of employers have a basic comprehension of safety regulations and measures. However, the thematic analysis reveals that this knowledge does not necessarily transfer to the majority of the workers, leading to poor safety awareness through inadequate instruction and training to promote safety-aware behavior and attitudes. Indeed, many workers are unaware of the dangers of the industry they are in, the necessary safety measures that have to be implemented, or the types of training necessary to facilitate the preservation of the firm's interests. The analysis of the themes also reveals that employees are sometimes in contact with environments and materials that carry serious risks and hazards, but the workers in question have inadequate protective gear or the safety training necessary to

reduce the risks. The lack of awareness in these industries is dangerous, leading to higher accident rates and a more dangerous working environment. The most predominant theme that emerged was the necessity of a proactive safety culture within the organization. As pointed out by the majority of participants, the presence of safety procedures as such is not enough. Both employers and employees need to view the provision of health and safety as critical for the success of their work. In other words, the establishments that do acknowledge the importance of creating a safety-oriented culture have fewer accidents and incidents than those that do not, as the employees are more decent in their attention to their health and safety, and the safety of their co-workers. According to the participants, such a culture can be nurtured with the help of regular training, communication, and a system of rewards for the alerting of an accident risk. Nevertheless, the analysis also revealed some of the most significant problems that the organizations face in their attempt to manage health and safety. First, it turned out that a lot of the sample organizations and industries in general, struggle to maintain compliance with the rules and standards. A lot of the establishment on the market, especially some smaller ones, simply lack the finances to provide proper safety equipment for their workers, train them, and further enforce these rules. Several participants from smaller companies explicitly stated that they had struggles to provide the necessary safety procurement because they were stretched for funds. As such, even if a particular business owner did acknowledge the importance of certain safety procedures, they were still not able to apply them. Another issue from the analysis was a significant difference in the implementation of health and safety procedures between industries. For example, such workarounds as construction or manufacturing naturally have more safety regulations in place. Goods-producing sectors mainly manufacturing had a rate of 1.9 safety and health literacy that was significantly higher than the 0.5 rate in service-producing sectors". In such a way, the retail or service sectors do not have the same level of safety regulations, which means that the workers do not have the same level of awareness and protection. In conclusion, it can be said that although the significance of a concept of health and safety management is generally acknowledged, there is room for improvement in the bridging of the gap between policy and implementation in the context of the Malaysia workforce.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the process of researching the importance and awareness of health and safety practices in Malaysian workplaces has provided me with meaningful insights about the significance of safety measures for employee well-being and organizational growth. While it is known that health and safety provisions create safer working conditions for employees and are considered by the law as an integral part of employee management, as their employer, companies are also ethically bound to enhance the quality of life for their workers. However, my research also revealed that they often insufficiently aware of safety precautions in higher-risk industries and the need for spreading the message among both employers and employees.

The research also illuminated some of the many difficulties employers and employees face when interacting with health and safety provisions, such as limited resources and inconsistent enforcement practices in multiple sectors. Understanding these difficulties will be essential to ensure increased compliance in all sectors and the protection of workers from any potential hazards they may face on their jobs. In a personal sense, this research project has significantly improved my appreciation of qualitative methodologies, specifically in terms of the thematic analysis and semi-structured interviews. I have learned to perform data analysis in the context of such a complex discipline as qualitative research and enhance my skills in applying critical thinking as the research process develops around me. These skills will undoubtedly prove useful for me in future projects, particularly those related to corporate social responsibility, workplace safety and health, or human resources management. These undertakings have also firmly cemented my already existing belief that a proactive approach to workplace safety, well-informed by research, is essential for creating not just safe but also thriving workplaces in Malaysia.

7.0 ACTION PLAN

The research on the health and safety awareness status in Malaysian workplaces raised a number of insights that can be useful in my practice. The most important lesson is that to obtain a comprehensive vision of the phenomena, one should be able to choose the appropriate methods and tools for the research. For developing my future projects, I have learned that mixing methods can be effective because on the one hand, through qualitative research, one can learn about the opinions of participants, and, on the other hand, quantitative data provide evidence that is critical when generalizing results, reconstructing key trends and scenarios, and enhancing their validity. In addition, for the development of my future research, I will consider increasing the size of the sampled, recruiting participants from a wider range of companies and conducting the research within a longer period to improve the certainty that the results are representative. Regarding the methods of data collection, the integration of the interviews with the analysis of the official data is one of the options that seem particularly useful.

I also plan to apply the outputs of my current research in practice by finding means to practice what is preached with the companies that may be interested in implementing safety improvement measures. I plan to arrange trainings, workshops, and/or seminars in which both employers and the employees become familiar with the general standards of safety measures. In addition, I plan to present the findings to the general public and policy makers at conferences or in my publications to raise the issue of workplace safety to the higher level. Regarding the further development of my skills, I plan to study further the methods of quality research and thematic analysis. Overall, I plan to continue researching and advocating for a safe working culture in Malaysia to raise the level of responsibility of employees and employers in the workplace.

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