

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary and Conclusions

High-involvement work systems are often difficult to define specifically moreover in the healthcare sector in Malaysia. As it is guided by specific design principles such as employee involvement and empowerment, HIWS sometimes receive little or no executive support because of their difficulty in implementation and uncertain payoff. However, in this study, looking at just 10 healthcare centers in Malaysia proves that incorporated in the traditional human resource management system, HIWS exists subconsciously.

The findings in this study reveal important practical implications of HIWS. The study suggests that HIWS leads to employee satisfaction that, in turn is associated with a host of cost-sparing consequences such as reduced stress and employee turnover, fewer leave of absences and lower work-

related disability claims. On the positive side, HIWS also is able to lessen dissatisfaction amongst employees, promote commitment and involvement as well as retain good employees. In all, this would lead to better quality of patient care and better level of healthcare. Furthermore, although this research leaves unexplained the actual service costs assumed by the HIWS construct, it is an amendable design to direct human resources interventions and control.

Several limitations of the findings in this study should be acknowledged. First, the practically none available research on such HIWS in Malaysia makes it difficult to benchmark and differentiate the differences in HIWS in each healthcare center. Second, the employee satisfaction and HIWS were drawn from employees perception which are subjected to the assessors' distortions, rather than through more objective indicators. Although perception is a powerful tool in this method of research, it is still questionable how perception reflect reality. Third, other imperatives and organizational measurements are not considered such as employee benefits, previous employment and co-worker relationships which can also affect employee satisfaction and HIWS. Finally, each HIWS design at each healthcare center could be different and specific to the organization only.

The overwhelming emphasis on the holistic nature of HIWS design makes it clear that the implementation of HIWS will take time to ensure its success.

In summary, HIWS has a great deal to offer organizations looking for ways to improve their operational and financial performances. However, it is important that organizations interested in implementing HIWS keep their focus while choosing the appropriate design. Merging current work systems and HIWS would prove to be tricky and tedious. Sound, systematic employee systems can provide necessary platforms that keep managers and employees alike informed of changes in the company's design changes. More sophisticated models can be devised but these metrics should be part of a broader score sheet that reflects the health of the healthcare organization.

5.2. Suggestions for Additional Research

As HIWS play an essential role in unleashing and leveraging the human potential that resides with all organizations, it is possible that future research extended from this initial research will cover more areas of interests.

Other aspects of HIWS can be measured such as service delivery costs, customer satisfaction, quality of patient care, financial performances as well as market share and market value. Additional research could also be done to assess the various differences in work systems and employee satisfaction in both the private and government healthcare organizations. Research could also be extended to other industries such as banking and manufacturing here in Malaysia.