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Strategic Human Resource Management, Organisational Culture and Firm Performance in the Insurance Industry in Malaysia.

Field of Study: Human Resource Management

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## ABSTRACT

The subject of strategic human resource management (SHRM) has attracted a great deal of attention among the academicians and human resource practitioners of its importance for firm performance. This attention reflects the growing development of human resource competencies and practices necessary for gaining competitive advantage. However, less is known about how SHRM process is implemented and what impact it has on firm performance to attain sustainable competitive advantage. Furthermore, by drawing on the literature on SHRM and firm performance, this study elaborates that firms can employ a specific combination of SHRM practices that are internally consistent and complement of each other to facilitate the achievement of superior performance in Malaysian context.

This study focused at firm level and demonstrates the potential for SHRM practices to serve as firm-level sources of enhancing performance that are consistent with the resource-based view of the firm and configurational perspective approach. In making this contribution to the SHRM literature, this study also attempts to examine the role of organisational culture in the SHRM implementation process and its effect on firm performance. In addition, the findings illustrate SHRM at macro level in established organisations and can further utilise these practices at small and developing organisations in Malaysia and other Asian countries.

The conceptual model of this study provides a valuable theoretical contribution by explaining the eight SHRM practices namely SHRM alignment in the organisation, recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation and benefits, performance appraisal, internal communication, career planning, and job design should

be combined and aligned that will lead to direct effects on different firm performance's outcomes (rate of productivity, customer service, quality of products, and sales growth). Organisational Assessment Culture Instrument (OCAI) was used to identify the perceived dominant culture type and examined organisational culture as mediator in the relationship between SHRM and performance.

The study was conducted through a primary data survey of seven major insurance firms in Klang Valley. Stratified random sampling was employed and empirical results from a sample of 312 insurance employees consisting of top management, manager, executive, and non-executive indicate that combination of SHRM practices generate greater synergy between the practices and effects on firm performance compare to single HRM practice. The empirical results of this study show that the combination between SHRM practices have positive effect on specific firm performance's outcomes; 1) recruitment and selection and performance appraisal on rate of productivity, 2) career planning and SHRM alignment in the organisation on customer service, 3) training and development and career planning on quality of products, and 4) recruitment and selection, career planning, and performance appraisal on sales growth. Overall, results indicate that the combination of recruitment and selection, internal communication, and performance appraisal utilisation is positively associated with overall firm performance.

Market culture was identified as the dominant culture type in the insurance industry. The hypothesised mediating role for market culture was partially supported. Similarly, adhocracy culture was also found to mediate the relationship between SHRM and performance. The results reveal that the existence of more than one culture type will create culture dynamism, hence improves firm performance. In sum, these empirical

findings show the importance of building up organisational culture and eventually pay off in terms of better firm performance.

Taken together, the results of this study offer a number of theoretical and practical implications. At a general level, this study supports the resource-based view of the firm and configurational perspective approach, by demonstrating SHRM practices and organisational culture serve as a firm-level source of enhanced performance. Insurance firms in Malaysia are undergoing tremendous environmental changes and business reforms. Therefore, human resource practitioners need to establish effective SHRM practices, building an appropriate and strong culture in order firm can ultimately achieve superior performance.

## ABSTRAK

Bidang pengurusan sumber manusia strategik menjadi tarikan perhatian di kalangan ahli-ahli akademik dan pengamal sumber manusia hasil kesan impak potensinya ke atas prestasi firma. Perhatian sedemikian menggambarkan perkembangan kepentingan kompetensi dan amalan-amalan sumber manusia yang diperlukan bagi mencapai kelebihan berdaya saing. Namun demikian, kurang yang diketahui bagaimana proses pengurusan sumber manusia strategik dilaksanakan dan apa impak ke atas prestasi firma dalam mencapai kelebihan daya saing mampan. Tambahan pula, penelitian pada literatur, kajian ini mampu menghuraikan bahawa firma boleh menggunakan kombinasi spesifik amalan-amalan pengurusan sumber manusia strategik yang konsisten dalaman dan menjadi pelengkap antara satu sama lain bagi memudahkan pencapaian prestasi cemerlang di dalam konteks Malaysia.

Kajian ini fokus di tahap firma dan menunjukkan potensi amalan pengurusan sumber manusia strategik sebagai sumber firma bagi meningkatkan prestasi yang konsisten dengan “resource-based view of the firm” dan pendekatan konfigurasi. Dalam penyumbangan literatur, kajian ini mengkaji peranan budaya organisasi di dalam proses pelaksanaan pengurusan sumber manusia strategik dan kesan ke atas prestasi firma. Tambahan pula, keputusan kajian ini menggambarkan tahap pengurusan sumber manusia strategik di peringkat makro di organisasi mantap dan selanjutnya boleh menggunakan amalan-amalan ini di dalam organisasi kecil dan yang sedang membangun di Malaysia dan negara-negara Asia.

Model konsep kajian ini menyumbangkan teori di mana lapan amalan pengurusan sumber manusia strategik iaitu penjajaran pengurusan sumber manusia strategik di

dalam organisasi, perekrutan dan pemilihan, latihan dan pembangunan, pampasan dan faedah, penilaian prestasi, komunikasi dalaman, perancangan kerjaya, dan rekabentuk kerja harus digabungkan dan sejajar yang boleh membawa kesan langsung ke atas pelbagai prestasi firma (kadar produktiviti, khidmat pelanggan, kualiti produk dan pertumbuhan jualan). “Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument” digunakan untuk mengenalpasti jenis budaya dominan serta menilai budaya organisasi sebagai pengantara di dalam hubungannya di antara pengurusan sumber manusia strategik dengan prestasi.

Kajian ini dijalankan dengan menggunakan data primer tinjauan di kalangan tujuh firma insurans utama di kawasan Lembah Klang. Kaedah persampelan rawak berlapis digunakan dan hasil keputusan daripada 312 pekerja insurans yang terdiri daripada pengurusan atasan, pengurus, eksekutif dan bukan eksekutif menunjukkan kombinasi amalan-amalan pengurusan sumber manusia strategik menghasilkan kelebihan sinergi di antara amalan-amalan dan kesan ke atas prestasi firma berbanding dengan amalan sumber manusia tunggal. Hasil keputusan kajian merumuskan bahawa kombinasi amalan-amalan memberi kesan positif ke atas hasil prestasi firma iaitu; 1) perekrutan dan pemilihan dan penilaian prestasi pada kadar produktiviti, 2) perancangan kerjaya dan penajajaran pengurusan sumber manusia strategik di dalam organisasi pada khidmat pelanggan, 3) latihan dan pembangunan dan perancangan kerjaya pada kualiti produk dan 4) ) perekrutan dan pemilihan, perancangan kerjaya dan penilaian prestasi pada pertumbuhan jualan. Secara keseluruhan, keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa penggunaan kombinasi perekrutan dan pemilihan, komunikasi dalaman dan penilaian prestasi mempunyai hubungan positif ke atas keseluruhan prestasi firma.

Budaya pasaran dikenalpasti sebagai budaya dominan di dalam industri insuran. Hipotesis peranan budaya pasaran sebagai pengantara hanya mendapat sokongan separa. Sehubungan itu, budaya “adhocracy” juga dikenalpasti sebagai pengantara di dalam hubungan di antara pengurusan sumber manusia strategik dan prestasi firma. Hasil kajian ini mendedahkan bahawa kewujudan lebih daripada satu budaya organisasi menghasilkan dinamisme budaya untuk meningkatkan prestasi firma. Secara kesimpulan, keputusan kajian menunjukkan kepentingan pembangunan budaya organisasi untuk mencapai prestasi firma yang lebih baik.

Secara keseluruhannya, kajian ini memberi implikasi ke atas teori dan praktikal. Kajian ini menyokong pendekatan “resource-based view of the firm” dan perspektif konfigurasi dengan menunjukkan bahawa amalan-amalan pengurusan sumber manusia strategik dan budaya organisasi berfungsi sebagai sumber firma untuk meningkatkan prestasi. Firma insuran di Malaysia sedang menjalani perubahan persekitaran yang mendadak dan transformasi perniagaan. Oleh yang demikian, pengamal sumber manusia harus menghasilkan amalan-amalan pengurusan sumber manusia strategik yang efektif, membangunkan budaya yang kuat dan bersesuaian supaya firma dapat mencapai prestasi yang cemerlang.



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## **LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

SHRM	Strategic Human Resource Management
HRM	Human Resource Management
PM	Personnel Management
RBV	Resource-Based View of the Firm
CVF	Competing Values Framework
OCAI	Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument

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