

WORK PROCESS EFFICIENCY AT ASHAFIAH AGRO FARM ENTERPRISE

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DEDICATION

I dedicated my work to my family and friends,
especially to my beloved wife and son who sacrificed a lot for my success
throughout the MBA journey.

It is also dedicated to my parents for their abundance of prayers that lighten
my success path.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to discover the operational problems of Ashafiah Agro Farm Enterprise and plan interventions that can bring progress to the operational and organizational divisions. The main objective of this study is to investigate job satisfaction level of employees at Ashafiah Agro Farm that could impact the work performance. Other than that, the objective is to observe the current work process method at Ashafiah Agro Farm that would be the cause of inefficient and unproductive business operation. Using and promote technology in agriculture field is align with 4.0 industrial revolution in Malaysia where it increases efficiency, effectiveness, and performance of the work as well as able to reduce costs. The first intervention presents employees management aspect to improve the spirit of teamwork in order to increase motivation and work quality. Second intervention is to provide a new method into the work process which is Drone technology (UAV) to increase efficiency of the work process. This study employed a mixed method through the use of interview, survey, and observation as a data collection method and for the data analysis, PSPP and manual coding were applied. At the end of the study, Ashafiah Agro Farm Enterprise shall have a strategic roadmap and action plan that contributing to a better work process.

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengetahui masalah operasi Ashafiah Agro Farm Enterprise dan merancang intervensi yang boleh membawa kemajuan kepada bahagian operasi dan organisasi. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji tahap kepuasan kerja pekerja di Ashafiah Agro Farm yang boleh memberi kesan kepada prestasi kerja. Selain itu, objektifnya adalah untuk melihat kaedah proses kerja semasa di Ashafiah Agro Farm yang menjadi punca kepada operasi perniagaan yang tidak cekap dan tidak produktif. Menggunakan dan mempromosikan teknologi dalam bidang pertanian adalah sejajar dengan revolusi perindustrian 4.0 di Malaysia di mana ia meningkatkan kecekapan, keberkesanan, dan prestasi kerja serta dapat mengurangkan kos. Intervensi pertama membentangkan aspek pengurusan pekerja untuk meningkatkan semangat kerja berpasukan bagi meningkatkan motivasi dan kualiti kerja. Intervensi kedua ialah menyediakan kaedah baharu ke dalam proses kerja iaitu teknologi Drone (UAV) untuk meningkatkan kecekapan proses kerja. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah campuran melalui penggunaan temu bual, tinjauan dan pemerhatian sebagai kaedah pengumpulan data dan untuk analisis data, PSPP dan pengekodan manual telah digunakan. Pada akhir kajian, Ashafiah Agro Farm Enterprise hendaklah mempunyai pelan hala tuju strategik dan pelan tindakan yang menyumbang kepada proses kerja yang lebih baik.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ICT	-	Information and Communication Technology
UAV	-	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The agriculture sector is still the most prosperous area, faced with a variety of challenges nowadays. Other challenges or difficulties include severe weather events, insufficient quantity and inefficient method of use of fertilizers, infections, illnesses, diseases and other health problems attributable to chemical applications (fertilizers, pesticide, etc.). Utilization of drones, equipped through progressive ICT technologies as well as interconnected analytical approaches, has a significant opportunity to assist and tackle some of the most critical challenges facing the farming sector, specifically in accurate data collection, monitor and decision-making progressions, triggering the 4th Agricultural Revolution. Unmanned drones revealed to be one of those approaches that would allow the paddy crops to grow healthy and well with less potential attack.

Ashafiah Agro Farm is facing difficulty in their work process which are pesticide and fertilizer execution. Using a manual spraying method which is a backpack sprayer, it totally depending on human capability and ability. As a result, it effected on the speed of the work execution at the work site, eventually it caused more man hour to execute the work using backside manual spraying method. Other than that, when using backside manual spraying method, it caused of health issue for the manpower who doing the work due to the pesticide and fertilizer chemical particle, were near with the person who doing the work using backpack spraying method.

Agriculture-based enterprises are capable of producing attractive returns and profits and are suitable for agriculturalists and entrepreneurs. It also helps to generate the economy and drive the country's growth. This sector needs to be revolutionized in such a way that it is prestigious for young people today. The benefit of this sector is also that it is capable of minimizing the import of food products from abroad, which

costs a large amount of money. In addition, people living in villages or inland areas may also be prevented from migrating to urban areas in order to pursue better job opportunities. The current process will also be evaluated by this study. Secondary data is gathered which can produce a more impactful innovative plan for this study.

1.2 Case Company Introduction

Ashafiah Agro Farm is a paddy cultivation company based in Perak. Ashafiah Agro Farm is a local company cooperated since year 2019 that running paddy cultivation business and service which has an area of 25 acres paddy cultivation field. Currently, Ashafiah Agro Farm recruiting a small-scale team member which consist of 10 employees including the manager to manage all the activities. The activities and services that provided by Ashafiah Agro Farm include planting site preparation, paddy cultivation process, fertilization, pesticide spraying, machines maintenance, harvesting activity as well as marketing the production to Bernas company for the market.

1.2.1 External Environmental Analysis

Paddy is one of the most important commercial crops in Malaysia, particularly for domestic consumption, and it continues to be an important source of food and nutrition. According to data from the Malaysian Department of Statistics, paddy plantation production has increased from 2,604 tons (2013) to 2,645 tons (2014). (2014). This demonstrates that paddy plantation in Malaysia can really take off, despite the fact that it is the third most widely cultivated crop after oil palm and rubber. Thus, self-sufficiency and food security can be achieved in the long run, while maintaining high paddy quality. Based on this background, rice is cultivated in ten main (10) designated producing areas, which are officially known as Malaysia Granary Areas, in order to boast production. Nonetheless, the technology practices were the independent factors that could effectively influence farmers' paddy production. In Malaysia, farmers' technology practices were based on a rice production manual adopted from

Australia, and MARDI was the driving force behind it in 2001. The Department of Agriculture is in charge of distributing it and providing it to growers.

1.2.2 Internal Environmental Analysis

Despite the application of current technology set in the agriculture has been promoted widely nowadays, there are still numerous agricultural corporations did not integrate the use of technology into their work process including Ashafiah Agro Farm company where the traditional method in their work process still being practised which led to a low motivation among workers and low efficiency of work operation. This affected the company performance and production internally.

1.3 Problem Statement

According to Redfern (2012) as reported in Hasan, et al (2020), the need of increment in food supply is becoming increasingly important with the current urbanization and industrialization. As a result, policy support for rice research and development is critical in order to introduce and transfer appropriate and efficient technologies and better understand the role of rice cultivation in drastic changes in socioeconomic status. Furthermore, it enables farmers to improve their production practices while adapting to the severe threats to food security posed by climate change.

However, this development and technology application in agriculture sector does not practice in Ashafiah Agro Farm company that contributed in poor work performance among workers, resulting to low efficiency of the production of the company particularly rice production. Ashafiah Agro Farm is facing problem with process when applying pesticides with backpack sprayers at the area located. When doing manual spraying on the paddy field, it takes more man-hours using backside spray on the paddy field due to its totally depending on human capacity at all. With this kind of processes if continuously without any action or improvement taken, it will

cause of performance impact on the business and inefficient and unproductive on business operation.

1.4 Research Questions

RQ1: Does employee job satisfaction affect the efficiency of the work process at Ashafiah Agro Farm?

RQ2: How to increase the efficiency of the work process at Ashafiah Agro Farm?

1.5 Research Objectives

RO1: To investigate job satisfaction level of employees at Ashafiah Agro Farm.

RO2: To propose a possible solution to increase the efficiency of the work process at Ashafiah Agro Farm.

1.6 Researcher's Role

The researcher's role is to organize research by positioning methodologies through research objectives, by using a variety of tools to collect info and analyze facts, by writing information and presenting findings and schedules to relevant parties, and by identifying trends and patterns, by conducting fieldwork and testing where possible.

1.7 Research Ethics

According to Salmons and Salmons (2015), an academic online interview must be conducted by adhering to the ethical research guidelines. In this action research study, the researcher properly adheres to the ethical research guidelines throughout the research process whereby the researcher adheres to these six ethical aspects which are:

- a. Allows voluntary participation.
- b. Informs the consent processes.
- c. Builds rapport and maintain good relationship with the respondents.
- d. Ensure confidentiality and security of the company's and respondents' data.
- e. Practices secured data storage and management.
- f. Report the data genuinely, honestly and keep transparency.

An informed consent is vital as it allows the respondents to understand that they are engaging in research and what the research requires from them. Such details may include the intent of the study, the techniques used, the potential outcomes of the research, as well as the related demands, discomforts, inconveniences, and risks that may be faced by the participants.

Due to the current pandemic that requires the interview to be held via online, an online consent form has been disseminated to all the respondents through Google form. The consent form is adopted from the available consent form on the internet. The researcher re-type the consent points in Google form format whereby the respondents have to click and tick at all the consent points, and it requires no signature from the respondents due to the computer-generated form. (See Appendix D)

1.8 Significance of the Research

This study is important to examine the employees' job satisfaction and the efficiency of the current work process method of Ashafiah Agro Farm company. This study provides insight and adding value or significance to theory and practice.

1.8.1 Significance to Theory

Findings would be outlined in a parameter for farmers and small business of farmers. These events will raise visibility among the participating farmers involved in the subject matter. The findings would also provide state and national decision makers with information, which will in turn contribute to more suitable guidelines for farmers SMEs. On the other hand, this study will pave the way for certain departments concerned (paddy sector) which can do further improvement as it will reveal the factors that lead to the decline in service quality and challenges faced by paddy farmers in implementing quality management.

1.8.2 Significance to Practice

This study provides information about the needs of using Drone Technology in agriculture field as well as provides data for further improvements in insecurities of agriculture and economic issues. Apart from that, this research could be as a reference for the future researcher to find the gap and limitation within this research in more depth as well as to improve the research methodology in future research.

1.9 Definition of Terms

The following terms definition will briefly be described to provide understanding on key elements of this study to the reader.

1.9.1 Paddy Cultivation

On the Malaysian Peninsula, paddy is widely grown. Rice production takes up approximately 300,500 hectares on the Malaysia Peninsula where the country's temperature regime and rainfall distribution are ideal for year-round rice cultivation. Most farmers, on the other hand, plant, and harvest rice around the same time. Paddy cultivation included the activity of planting from the rice seeds by soaking the seeds in water, transferred to nursery beds before being transported to rice fields. Rice takes three months to grow, and the harvesting activity must be done at the right time. The rice field is usually ploughed twice before sowing or planting. After water is introduced, a round of puddling and land levelling is done.

1.9.2 Pesticide and Fertilizers

Fertilizers, where it come in a dry and liquid form, feed the crop with the necessary nutrients. Pesticides have been used in crops for the removal, prevention, or control of pests such as slugs, insects and fungal infections.

1.9.3 Backpack Sprayer

A backpack sprayer is made up of three parts: a tank, a hand-operated pump, and a spray wand with one or more nozzles. The sprayer is a versatile tool due to its small size, portability, and ease of use. It is a spray tank application method which to be put at back of the body. A backpack sprayer can cover a large area, but the effort of carrying the spray mix and walking over each area to spray depletes the worker strength and enthusiasm. To put this in context, many backpack applicators consider 4 to 5 acres of broadcast spraying (the entire area sprayed) to be a full day's work.

1.9.4 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

For the agriculture sector to improve productivity and sustainability, the use of data and information is becoming increasingly important. According to Walter (2017), ICT significantly improves the effectiveness and efficiency of data collection, storage, analysis, and use in agriculture.

1.9.5 UAV Drone Technology

Drones are even more generally recognised as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Basically, a drone is a flying device that can then be fully automated or run fully autonomous by purposes of development tools flight plans in its integrated devices, operating in conjunction with on-board sensors and GPS.

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