UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

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A STUDY OF THE COMPETENCIES OF ICT USAGE AMONG

DIPLOMA IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION STUDENTS IN

THEIR STUDIES:

A STUDY IN UiTM MALACCA

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Technology permeates our society. But do institutions of higher education adequately prepare students to use this technology? The definition of computer literacy continues to change as technological innovations are adopted by the marketplace. The specific technology installed in any university setting constantly changes in both sophistication and function. The challenge for universities is to ensure their students meet a minimum level of competency when using new constantly changing technology. As this will be helpful for the students in finding future jobs. This study examines the level of competency of DPA students in using their basic computer skills in the course of the program.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Today, the use of computer technology on students' desktops for word processing, communicating with others, preparing class project presentations, searching the Internet, creating computationally-intensive spreadsheets, and record keeping in database management systems is now an accepted norm. Almost any university that creates, stores,

and retrieves information as part of its curricula expects students to have appropriate computer technology skills. In fact, most universities assume that new students are computer-literate when they arrive - in contrast to past expectations that all new students would need some basic computer training.

The future ramifications of adopting technology into instructional settings can be significant and far-reaching. As a direct result of technological innovations, methods of information delivery by instructors and reception by students in the future will be very different to the traditional methods employed today.

University students and instructors alike with little or no computer experience are often overwhelmed by the use of technology in the classroom. On the other end of the spectrum are those who are very proficient and comfortable in using computer-based technology. Yet, the expectation of computer literacy is both a burden and an opportunity. The specific technology installed in any university setting constantly changes in both sophistication and function.

Classrooms are being wired so that faculty can use the latest software, incorporate electronic presentations into their teaching, present video, and/or connect to the Internet. The technologies in these high-tech classrooms are often integrated and can include

permanently fixed computers, digital video, audio and still photos, CD-ROMs, VCRs, laserdisc players, and audiotape players *(Phillips, 2001)*. Thus, the continually advancing capabilities and the increasing variety of available functions and features result in a continuing need to test for the computer-skills necessary to ensure student success.

Universities must accept the challenge of ensuring a technologically-adept student population. Higher education today requires that all students have a certain basic familiarity with the tools used throughout their educational programs. These basic computer skills are a necessary component of a student's college education. Therefore we conduct a research to study the level of ICT usage by the students of Diploma in Public Administration (DPA) in UiTM Malacca. Here, we want to know whether the students have knowledge in using computer and if they have, do they apply the computer skills during their studies or not. We also want to measure the level of computer literacy among Diploma in Public Administration's students of UiTM Malacca and how far computer usage helps them in performing their studies. Besides, we want to find the level of involvement of lecturers in using computers to enhance knowledge. In this sense, we want to study whether lecturers give an encouragement and help the students or not in order to make computer usage is one effective way to improve level of learning in higher institution especially in UiTM Malacca.