



A CREATIVE AND LITERARY WRITING DIGITAL LMS IN
SUPPORTING WRITERS GROUP LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE
SHARING AMONG CREATIVE WRITERS

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A CREATIVE AND LITERARY WRITING DIGITAL LMS IN SUPPORTING WRITERS' GROUP LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG CREATIVE WRITERS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is attempted to examine the feasibility of a creative writing digital learning management system in sharing and social networking among creative and literary writers in improving the quality of their knowledge, creative literary writing skills and upgrading their livelihood. The creative and literary writers could use the internet facilities and connectivity of the platform not only to communicate but also to acquire knowledge on creative and literary writing skill as well as the world of literary publishing. The culture of using technologies in acquiring creative writing knowledge for the newbie, sharing experiences and the publishing of written creative works have great influence in determining the quality of their livelihood. Design and methodology used are by looking into the five dimensions of enhancing a creative writers' learning management system to support writers' group learning and knowledge sharing in improving livelihood of Malaysian creative writers through digital technologies (demographic, technology availability, creative writers learning culture and experiences, learners' efficacy in digital technology and digital technology leadership and managerial quality) were examined to determine the success of supporting writers' group learning and knowledge sharing in the digital age and improve livelihood among creative writers. In general, there are significant differences among factors stated above which will support writers' group learning and knowledge sharing in improving livelihood. The enhancing of digital technologies could be beneficial to the creative writers upgrading their knowledge on writing, sharing of experiences and publishing of their literary works. In addition, the creative writers could use the ICT facilities to foster friendship, exchange of ideas and networking among their peers in the region either individually or their respective writer's association in the country.

Keywords: creative and literary writers, digital learning management system, knowledge sharing.

1. INTRODUCTION

The United National Creative and Literary Writer Association (GAPENA) is a federation of 22 members states level creative and literary writers' associations that located in Kuala Lumpur. Its activities are mainly on the creative writing in the Malaysia national language (Bahasa Melayu). It also associated with some of the government agencies such as the Institute of Language and Literature (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka) etc. The sorry state is that almost all of the state level creative and literary writers' association does not collaborate and mainstream their activities, not to mention on sharing of writing skills and knowledge as well as publications. This affects the learning and acquiring of creative writing skills and knowledge among the young writers. The most they gather together to discuss on writing is through the social networking platform created for those who are interested only like the PENA Blog, writers' Blog, such as e-sasterawan; emails or facebook such as the Persatuan Pendidik Bahasa Melayu etc. There are much to learn from the existing national literary laurettes like SN Shanon Ahmad, SN Nordin Hassan, SN Anwar Ridhwan, etc. and those established literary writers in the country.

Since the application of digital technologies and its enhancement in education and training has always been placed as top priority in Malaysia especially in the education system. It not only upgrade the Malaysians' young generations' savvy in the usage of digital technologies for information but also

to fulfill the government's vision of increase the country's human capital, digital and electronic society and realizing Malaysia as a develop country by year 2020. The trend of utilizing digital technologies in social networking such as facebook, twiter etc. has gain tremendous impact in recent years when the government increase the bandwidth, wifi and electricity supply throughout the country, even with the solar energy and panel in the remote areas of East Malaysia. The application of digital technologies such as the internet and technology enhance learning system in the education process as innovation in the Malaysian education system has since prompts the development of distance, collaborative and e-learning in the andragogical process that has also proof as a very useful tool that contributed to the development of digital enhancement among the Malaysian citizen.

Tiffin and Rajasingham (1995) quoted that ICT would allow fully immersed, interactive real-time communication through audio, textual video and even touch and smell. This development would create a communication environment where all functions of a conventional classroom can take place. Therefore it would be proper to propose to commission the many states or national level creative and literary writing association could collaborate using a single regional digital technology platform to share knowlege on creative writing and publication skills. Many writers normally are sentimental in nature and do not wish to be disturb and would not like to mix but the creative writing skills should be share with the young generation, therefore a digital technology platform is the must suitable tool to share.

The setting up, commissioning of a regional digital technology management platform in the National writers' Association (GAPENA) premise that wired and connected with all the state level writers' associations is a value added knowledge dissemination and writers' sharing tool for all the literary writers throughout the country. It would be better if the entire creative and literary writers' association and its premise ICT and digital technologies could be connected to form a regional lifelong creative and literary writers' management system in supporting the transformation of the Malaysian creative writers' societal development and human capital through a regional server. The much needed collaborative creative writers' digital infrastructure which could be connected to the central or regional mainframe will definitely contribute to the self learning in a networked human and information technology environment and will accelerate to the paradigm shift of creative and literary writing cycle in the country.

In the proposed regional creative and literary writers learning management system that will utilized by the Malaysian creative writers of the multi etchnic races from all walks of life could be beneficial because Wasonga (2005) found that a class in multicultural background significantly increased knowledge about diversity, attitudes towards multiculturalism as well as through the social networking and this perspective fit in nicely to the regional collaborative creative writers' digital management platform in Malaysia that could create racial harmony and integration for national unity.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A lot of researches has been conducted on distance, collaborative and e learning in education but none has been conduct on the utilization and enhancement of digital technology in the teaching, fostering and sharing of creative and literary writing skills among the writers' fraternities especially the young malaysian of all ethnicities and from all walks of life who teasured the importance of writing in national language that will enable accessibility to educate and transmit the much needed day to day knowledge for social transformation and development as to bridge the digital divide of between the young and old Malaysian creative writers. This is utmost important as people from all walks of life especially the young creative and literary writers need the know-how of accessing to creative writing skills, knowledge and education. Shirley (2001) quoted that collaborative digital learning environment can be used widely either for educational or training purposes. Therefore the enhancement of a creative and literary writers' digital learning management platform connected to all the 22 state level creative and literary writers' associations to a mainframe sever station in the GAPENA building is an effective way of utilizing digital technology not only for the present creative writers but also for the younger generation in acquiring the much needed livelihood education and the contents to the users on creative writing.

The creation of a creative and literary writers' digital learning environment by utilizing the existing state-of-art digital technologies, which will create a regional collaborative creative and literary writers' digital learning management system to connect and wired throughout the country, will

be a cost effective move in disseminations of knowledge to the young creative writers. This would enable the creative writers, both old and young to be center into one place not only for the purpose of networking among their peers, friendship, racial integration, religious tolerance and creative and literary writing knowledge. Therefore as Koatas, Psarras and Stefanos.(2002) quoted that academic community is addressing more and more on the rise of on-line community that will be instrumental in the realization of advanced learning society. Internet on-line environment enables new and interesting designs for the support of traditional learning for the development of new forms of learning. All this could also apply into enhance literary writing learning environment in transforming a regional creative writing and literary management system into a regional collaborative writers' and literary digital learning platform to create a literary learning society and human capital among the young generation of the country.

The much preferred digital literary learning platform for creative and literary writers would be to combine both the electronic-enabled learning system and traditional face to face group discussion methodology as the creative writers maybe comprise of those first time learners and users of digital technology that should be guided by an instructor probably come from among the local writer who is savvy in computer because Young (2001) suggested that collaborative and e- learning works best within a blended training solution which incorporates traditional methods as well as technology-led learning. One method is to utilize it as a method of providing a consistent level of skills within a team of delegates prior to them participating in an instructor-led session so they can get the most out of the training and the instructors' time and knowledge. Eisinger (2000) also mentioned that by combining traditional learning characteristics with the unique environment available on-line, elements that emerge would differentiate excellent in e learning, namely the sharing of knowledge through the blended learning environment for creative writers and upgrading knowledge capital for societal development in Malaysia. Therefore, before the usage of digital technologies in the creative and literary writers' association, they have to be guide step by step in the utilization of digital technology.

Young (2001) suggested that within the web-enabled environment, individuals can access learning materials, courses, individual topics and performance support resources any time, from anywhere centralize centers of office, at home or while traveling. Standard web browsers offer a consistent and seamless user interface across a wide variety of workstation platforms and networks. One might also ask for the fulfillment and requirements of the curriculum as well as the content relevancy because most of the courses followed, as Morris (1996) quoted, distance and collaborative interactive project. The production of learning materials could be enjoyed nationwide by those users in the collaborative digital learning station in the state level creative and literary writers' association and at their home irrespective of their location. New ideas and materials would become immediately available for discussions and trials after dispatch by e-mail to a central server. The central server would serve as main frame to enable the instructor to upload all learning files and document as well as instruction to the young creative and literary writers and learners throughout the country.

Rajasingham (1996) noted that effective, cost-efficient instruction that can match the needs for skills related to technological change, delivered interactively, at the convenience of the young creative and literary writers and learners. The young creative and literarywriters or learners, no matter where their physical location would be, should be able to interact with the instructors and other peers, with the content and with one another in synchronous and or asynchronous mode. This digitalization allows the mergers of tele-communications and computer giving us information technology, new ways of learning and teaching in this digital age and further to provide alternatives to all levels of learners especially the young.

Another issue need to address is the effectiveness in the management of the creative and literary writers digital learning environment in collaborative learning state level creative writers' association throughout the country whereby the collaborative creative and literary writers digital learning management system platform needs to have certain quality. As Roffe (2002) proposed, elements of quality control and assurance system in distance learning should produce learning materials and monitoring correspondence learning activities. Thus the sheer newness of e-learning for many individuals and groups brings pressure on evaluation to yield information about its effectiveness and efficiency as a learning solution especially the young and old creative and literary writers come from the digital technology have not. Therefore all the state level creative association need expertise and qualify instructor cum knowledge disseminator to guide the creative writers both old and young the proper ways to use the sophisticated digital technology to create and enhance a creative writers' digital

learning environment. The management perspectives of digital technologies in the regional collaborative creative and literary writers digital learning platform are of utmost importance to ensure the success of the creative writers' approaches of teaching and learning. By doing so, we are able to see the impact and its effectiveness towards the implementation of a wholesome collaborative creative and literary writers digital learning platform. In the management perspective, as Nicholson (1997) quoted that techniques and technologies can be taught as principles prior to application, whereas the management processes and their complications have to be experienced to be sensed prior to a theory being needed. Therefore trained ICT facility management instructors need to be appointed as a permanent staff in the digital learning environment at the state creative writers' associations.

Computer literacy is the basic for both the young and old creative writers to master and it takes time. Normally the old creative writers still insist in using the manual type-writer. But upon the acquiring the knowledge of using computer, only then the networking and dissemination of the much needed social and creative writing skills and knowledge will be introduced to the creative writers. Research has proven that computer and Internet are an added advantage towards knowledge and information or educational application because of its effectiveness in the teaching and learning process. The computer assisted learning approach is in fact a very useful and effective tool in learning process. Kulik, Bangert and William (1980) have proven that faster learning process; easily remembered; positive attitude and active response towards the application of computer in their learning process and the best part is acquired learning flexibility.

3. Research Objective

The objective of this study is to determine ways to achieve an effective managerial and application perspective of ICT in the regional collaborative creative and literary writers digital learning management system in GAPENA and all the 22 state level creative writers associations throughout the country in the learning process which has an influence on the level of writers' creative knowledge and writing skill achievement and the nation's human capital building

Research Framework

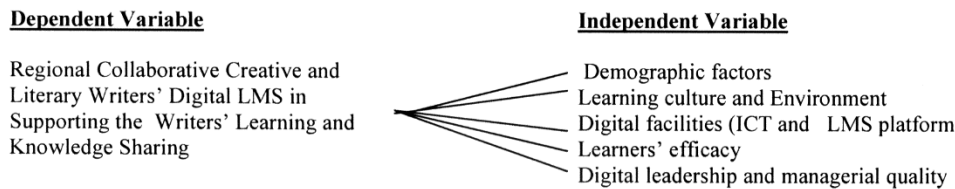


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Research Methodology

A set of questionnaire was given to a total of 80 respondents from both the old and young creative and literary writers fraternity randomly selected from various states in Peninsula Malaysia. The questionnaire consists of Part 1 on the respondents' demographical data and Part 2 that includes the dependent and independent variables. Non-parametric and parametric statistical tests were used to analyze the data.

Results

Reliability of instruments:

Cronbach Alpha statistic is found to be 0.980. Therefore the reliability of the questionnaire is acceptable.