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RESEARCH REVIEW

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GRANTS

A Qualitative Study of Factors Influencing Employee Ecological Behaviour of Academics in Higher Education

Funding Organisation: FRGS

Amount: **RM87,000**

Project duration: 01/09/2019 - 31/08/2021

Development of Virtual Lifestyle Management Program for Promoting Health Behavior Changes

Funding Organisation: PRGS

Amount: **RM113,500**

Project duration: 01/01/2019 - 31/12/2020

Profiling and Segmentation of Urban Poor Children for Better Quality of Life

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Project duration: 01/09/2019 - 31/08/2021

Malaysia Sustainable University Campus Network/MySun

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Project duration: 15/1/2020 - 14/1/2023

DEVELOPMENT OF VIRTUAL LIFESTYLE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR PROMOTING HEALTH BEHAVIOR CHANGES

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1. INTRODUCTION

According to World Health Organization (WHO) (2015), tobacco use, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol, and unhealthy diets all increase the risk of dying from noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). In Malaysia, NCDs are the main cause of premature deaths among adults (MOH, 2016). In a recent WHO report, unhealthy diet contributed to 2/3 (68.9%) of lost productivity due to premature deaths from cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) while tobacco use contributed to more than one third (36.9%) of losses (WHO, 2020). These NCDs can be averted through prevention and lifestyle modification (WHO, 2015). Evidence exists to support the effectiveness of web-based intervention programs in promoting change in behaviors. Thus, development of a web-based application program tailored to a healthy lifestyle within the Malaysian culture is timely as the program will curb rising NCD cases potentially caused by unhealthy living practices including diabetes, hypertension, and mental illness. Therefore, the main purpose of this research project is to develop a web-based application program to promote health behavior changes, which will improve and elevate the health level of Malaysians.

ABSTRACT

Good health and well-being are one of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Malaysia for improving the life of the people. Healthcare service is one of the National Key Areas (NKEAs) under the Economic Transformation Program initiatives to ensure the sustainability of quality of life in Malaysia. Several national initiatives focus on health awareness and empowering citizens, including introducing self-health management into their lifestyle. However, there are limited web-based application programs that emphasize a holistic concept of healthy lifestyle within the Malaysian context. The present project therefore aims to develop a web-based application of self-management that promotes daily healthy living and fosters changes in health behavior. This web-based application program is developed using Persuasive Systems Design model. A Web Development Life Cycle is employed in designing this program. This program covers the body, mind, and soul dimensions. Interactive features will be highly employed to encourage user engagement. It is expected to assist people's ability to self-manage their own health, thus affecting individual behavior and improving their current health status. This platform will provide education, tools, and individual support as well as inform users of their daily progress in order to help them reach their health goal to live a healthy lifestyle. Overall, this web application has significant commercial value in Malaysia.

Keywords: Healthy Lifestyle, Web-Based Application Program, Changes in Health Behavior and Quality of Life

2. OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The web-based application program is known as eSmartHL. This program is a self-management mobile health (mHealth) application that provides essential information relating to healthy lifestyles and personalized health programs. This platform will guide user to reach their health goals, including sustaining a healthy weight, spiritual wellness, and wellbeing through education, tools, and individual support. This platform will provide a report on user's daily progress to help them achieve their weekly or monthly goals and live the healthiest life possible. Moreover, this platform also focuses on spiritual management, such as handling stress via meditation and Islamic approaches. This research project is funded by Ministry of Higher Education under Prototype Research Grant Scheme (PRGS). The total grant is RM113,000. The main collaborators of this research projects are divided into two categories; 1) internal collaborators (UiTM) – Faculty of Health Science and Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies (ACIS); and 2) external – Institute for Health Behavioural Research, the Malaysian Ministry of Health, and Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL).



3. MATERIAL AND METHOD

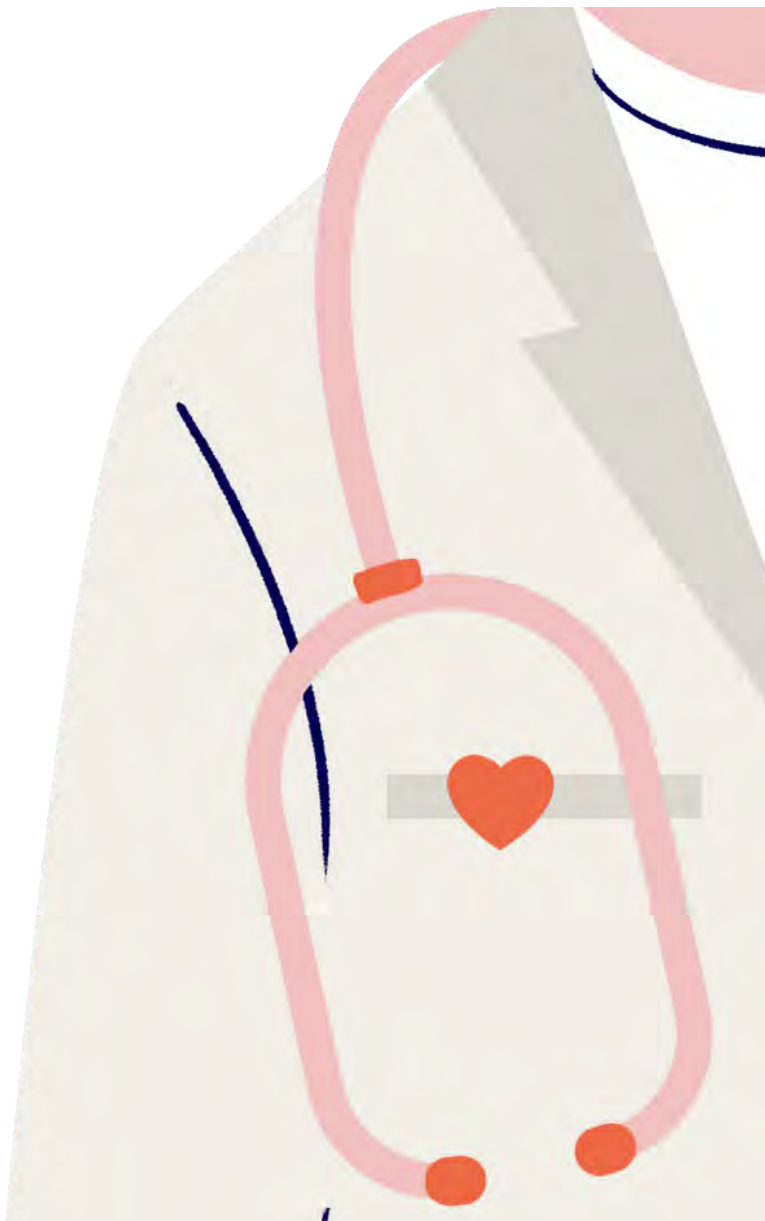
Consists of seven phases. The program will be improved according to the obtained feedback and information during the testing phase.

3.1 SYSTEM PROTOTYPE

The research project is currently in progress (i.e. testing stage). Figure 1 shows snapshots of the web-based application program..



Figure 1: Snapshot of eSmartHL



4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the web-based program is expected to assist people's ability to self-manage their own health, which will affect individual behavior thereby improving their health status. With the age of the Internet, this eSmartHL program is a manifestation of self-health management into daily lifestyle using virtual approach.

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