UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

USE OF IT AMONG ELDERLY PEOPLE

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ABSTRACT

IT can play a huge role in providing advantages to people nowadays in term of information in just one click, communication and so on. However, elderly seem to left aside and far behind from IT compared to youngsters. The purpose of this research was to identify the use of IT among elderly in Malaysia context. More researches had been done for teenagers and adult but little had been done for elderly people. Various studies had shown that these ageing or greying population are increasing in many developing countries including Malaysia. Thus, social as well as economic considerations suggest that they must be considered in the development of current and future technologies. Six set of questionnaires including interview with six participants in Shah Alam region take part in this study. This study uses a triangulation, mixed method of quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interviews) approaches. The use of IT, their experience with computer, Internet and mobile phone, and knowledge of current IT were covered in this study. From the study observed, non-professional working elderly are considered illiterate compared to professional elderly. The finding suggests that there is the digital divide among elderly people between professional working and non-professional working elderly in Malaysia. Furthermore, a lack of interest to information technology (such as Internet) means that elderly people experiencing difficulties to IT. The objective of this study is to provide the preliminary insight for future research. This paper addresses elderly experience of Internet access, computing, and mobile phone.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

Information technology (IT) has promise and showed people great potential in improving quality of life nevertheless for youngster or older people. However, the older population has a slight problem on how they use IT and they often left aside from technologies. According to Kontaxakis and Christodoulou (2000) said that elder individuals show low adjustment to the advent of new technologies compared to younger generations. Acilar (2011) mentioned that many citizens of developing countries have not been able to take advantages of the opportunities offered by ICTs. Among of the advantages of IT discussed are the potential to support economic growth, to provide opportunities everywhere, and to increase democracy in both either developed or developing countries like Malaysia itself.

It is obvious that there are significant differences between developed and developing countries in term of accessing and using IT. According to Boje and Dragulanescu (2003) this phenomenon is defined as global digital divide. There are different types of digital divide within a country, for example the gender divide, age divide and the income divide. For this study, the age divide was the type that researcher looked into. The gap that exists among professional and non-professional elderly. Many countries worldwide especially developing countries are facing ageing population. For instance, a survey and statistics from Statistics Singapore website (2005), senior citizens aged 65 and above are expected to make up 18.7% population in 2030, a tremendous increase from its 8.4% in 2005 in Singapore. Thus, the importance of the elderly group of IT users cannot be ignored. There is a need that elderly must cope and should be able to adopt technologies like computer, Internet, and new electronic devices like ipad, tablet and so on.