

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**INTERNET LITERACY AMONG THE
OLDER ADULTS: A CASE STUDY IN
INFORMATION SEARCHING**

NAZIMA BINTI MUHAMMAD NAZIR

Computing Project submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Information Technology

Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Sciences

January 2017

ABSTRACT

Literacy is an important concept in determining the level of skills and knowledge in a particular field. Internet literacy is a capability to use the Internet for many purposes such as information gathering. On the other hand, the older adults are a group of people who assumed to be left out in terms of Internet usage. Their skills of using the Internet is in grey area. The aim of this study is to understand the Internet literacy among the older adults and to see what capabilities they had in manipulating the Internet. A qualitative method was used in this study. Data collection process was gathered through a face-to-face interview with the participants, a user testing session to assess the participants' skills, and observations of the participants' behaviours during user test being conducted. Thematic analysis was used as the main guideline to analyse rich data that been gathered. The study suggested that the older adults have skills in using the Internet, even though were limited to the functional literacy. It is hoped that this study could give more insights in improving the older adults' skills and knowledge in maximizing the Internet facilities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all, thank you to Allah S.W.T for giving me courage, strength, motivation and good health in completing this study. With His blessing, I managed to complete this journey until the end.

Secondly, I would like to express my deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness to my supervisor, Dr. Fariza Hanis Abdul Razak, for her guidance, inspiration, encouragement and patience throughout the completion of this study. My deepest appreciation also goes to Dr. Jasber Kaur a/p Gian Singh for guiding and supporting us in completing this computing project. Next, I would like to thank all participants for giving me full cooperation during the study was conducted, therefore ensuring the success of this study. My appreciation also goes to my group members, Norami Mastura and Mohd Faris, who struggled every challenge together and support each other in good and bad times along this journey.

Above ground, I am indebted to my family, whose constantly cares and concern which I owe my life. A special gratitude goes to my loving husband, Afzam Zulkifele, for his support, patience, encouragement, advice and for being my hero. Last but not least, I would like to extend my appreciation to those who could not being mentioned here but have well played their role to inspire me, directly or indirectly.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

SUBMISSION APPROVAL BY SUPERVISOR

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ix

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Background of the Study	1
1.3	Problem Statement	3
1.4	Research Questions	4
1.5	Research Aims	4
1.6	Research Objectives	4
1.7	Research Scopes	4
1.8	Research Significances	5

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	The Definition of Literacy	7
2.2	Internet Literacy	8

2.2.1	IT Literacy Assessment Framework	10
2.2.2	Functional Internet Literacy	14
2.3.3	Analyzing Data For Internet Literacy Assessment: The Thematic Analysis	16
2.3	Defining the New Era of ‘Olds’	17
2.3.1	Benefits of Access to the Older Adults	19
2.3.2	Barriers of Being Literate	19
2.4	Summary	20

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	21
3.2	The Qualitative Methodology	21
3.3	Methodology Phases	22
3.3.1	Phase 1 – Problem Identification and Preliminary Investigation	23
3.3.2	Phase 2 – Planning	23
3.3.3	Phase 3 – Data Collection and Testing	24
	3.3.3.1 Face-to-face Interview	25
	3.3.3.2 User Testing	25
	3.3.3.3 Observation	27
3.3.4	Phase 4 – Analysis and Discussion	28
3.3.5	Phase 5 – Documentation	28
3.4	Preliminary Supposition and Implications	29
3.5	Research Schedule	29
3.6	Summary	30