Crossing Borders: Enhancing Mental Health Literacy through Digital Innovation

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TAG

[Research] [Mental Health] [Digital Health] [Adolescents] [Malaysia][Saudi Arabia] [Reusable Learning Objects]

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AlMaarefa University, Saudi Arabia

The research team, Assoc Prof. Dr Haslina and Dr Nurul Fazmidar at AlMaarefa University

Enhancing Mental Health Literacy Among Adolescents through Reusable Learning Objects (RLO)

— **By Nurul Fazmidar Mohd Noor, Nasriah Zakaria, Eylia Nurwani Ab Razak.**

Transforming Adolescent Mental Health Literacy through Reusable Learning Objects

The Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology together with Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Arts & Social Science at University of Malaya is currently leading a cross-country research project titled *"A Cross-Country Comparative Study on Mental Health Literacy Among Adolescents Using Reusable Learning Objects in Saudi Arabia and Malaysia: A Quasi Experimental Study Design Protocol."*
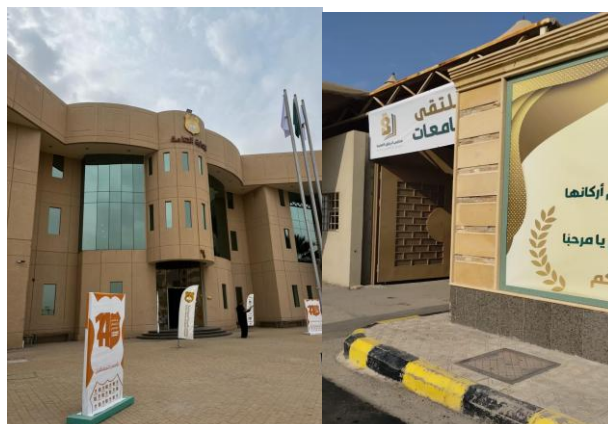
This international initiative explores the use of Reusable Learning Objects (RLO) which is an interactive digital learning module as an educational tool to improve mental health awareness among adolescents. The project is led by Associate Professor Dr. Nasriah Zakaria from College of Applied Science, Al Maarefa University with core team members from Universiti Malaya, Associate Professor Dr. Nik Daliana from Faculty of Medicine, Associate Professor Dr. Haslina Muhamad from Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences and Dr. Nurul Fazmidar Mohd Noor from Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, supported by the project research assistant, Eylia Nurwani Ab Razak.

Utilizing a quasi-experimental design, the research engages both high school and university students in Malaysia and Saudi Arabia to assess the impact of RLO and enhance their understanding of mental health issues through interactive digital learning modules.

Data Collection: Saudi Arabia vs. Malaysia

The project adopts a dual-phase data collection strategy to reveal in-depth insights into mental health literacy across two countries. High school students in both Malaysia and Saudi Arabia completed pre- and post-intervention assessments to gauge the effectiveness of the RLO.

In Saudi Arabia**,** similar activities were conducted in Riyadh. On 30th January 2025, Dr. Nasriah Zakaria collected data from students at Al Bayariq school and **Al Nuzhah schoo**l. The materials were adjusted to suit the language and culture of the participants in Saudi.

Al Bayariq School and Al Nuzhah School in Riyadh.

In Malaysia, data was collected from both secondary and tertiary-level students within the Klang Valley. On 10th January 2025, data collection took place at Maahad Tahfiz Integrasi Dar Al-Hikmah, followed by another session on 13th January at the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology (FSKTM) with university students.

Data collection at Maahad Tahfiz Integrasi Dar Al-Hikmah

Data collection at MM6, FSKTM UM

Research Visit to AlMaarefa University, Riyadh

From 15th to 19th February 2025, a team of researchers from Universiti Malaya visited AlMaarefa University in Riyadh for academic collaboration and fieldwork. During the visit, the team facilitated multiple data collection sessions with university students, successfully gathering responses from over 60 participants.

Data collection sessions at AlMaarefa University.

The visit also included several high-level engagement sessions. Meetings were held with the President of AlMaarefa University, Professor Walid Al Farraj, Research Dean, Professor Sultan Al Shehri, and the Head of the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems (CSIS), Dr. Mohamad Al Ghabri to share project progress and discuss potential directions for future research collaboration between Malaysia and Saudi Arabia.

Meetings with the President, Research Dean and Head of CSIS of AlMaarefa University

Discussions also took place with Professor Amen Bawazer from the College of Medicine to examine data analysis strategies for the project.

Meeting with Prof Amen Bawazer, co-researcher in the cross-country RLO study

On 19th February, the team participated in a Digital Health Seminar hosted by AlMaarefa University. Assoc Prof Dr Haslina Muhamad presented a session titled "2Heal: Innovating Mental Health Assessment for Young Adults," while Dr. Nurul Fazmidar Mohd Noor delivered a talk on "Virtual Reality in Healthcare." These sessions sparked vibrant discussions and laid the groundwork for future knowledge exchange.

Group photo during Digital Health Seminar

Adding to the cultural richness of the visit, the team also joined vibrant campus-wide celebrations at AlMaarefa University, including Kuwait International Day, International Women's Day, and

Saudi Founding Day, offering valuable opportunities for cultural exchange and meaningful networking with the students and staffs. The researchers also had the opportunity to visit Turaif Castle and Al Bujairi Terrace in Diryah area, the foundation of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Moving Forward

This collaborative initiative highlights the potential of digital education tools in advancing mental health literacy across different cultural contexts. The next phase of the project will focus on in-depth data analysis and further refinement of the RLO, with the long-term aim of expanding their use in educational settings.

Through the synergy of international collaboration and digital innovation, the project aims to make a lasting impact on adolescent mental health literacy and inspire further cross-border research efforts in digital health education.