



**UNIVERSITI
TEKNOLOGI
PETRONAS**
engineering futures

DISSERTATION

**EXIT INTERVIEW APPLICATION for KNOWLEDGE
CAPTURING APPROACH**

BY

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the
Bachelor of Technology (Hons)
(Business Information System)

SEPT 2013

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ABSTRACT

This research project is conducted to emphasize on the new approach of implementing exit interview in business organizations. The main objective of this work is to develop an interactive application to conduct exit interview on leaving staffs. A questionnaire is design to gain information about the effectiveness of exit interview in business organizations. Most of the respondents are working for the private sector. The implementation of exit interview in business organizations is usually challenged by the some issues such as to what extent does the knowledge being captured is true. There were also complications in capturing critical knowledge (tacit), thus makes it hard for the business organizations to conduct an effective exit interview. Based on the conducted questionnaire, 62% of the respondents are aware that their business organizations are implementing the exit interview for the leaving staffs. About 79% respondents rate the effectiveness of exit interview in their business organization at an average level. Therefore, it is believed that an application to conduct exit interview effectively should be developed to benefits the business organizations. Feasible functions such as avatar features and tagging are included in the application so that it is interactive and usable for the users. Besides collecting views through spreading questionnaire, interview with HR personnel will also be conducted to gain opinions from parties that responsible in arranging and conducting exit interview in business organizations. It can be concluded that Exit Interview Application can aid business organizations in the process of capturing knowledge for the organizations' performance concerning with the matters of retaining employees knowledge.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

In business organizations, staffs leaving the organization are common and organizations are facing great challenges to keep its knowledge assets. As a way to cater the loss, human resource department has to find ways to secure the knowledge assets that resides in the staffs' mind. One of the effective ways is to conduct the exit interview for staffs that are leaving the organization.

Exit interview is conducted with the purposes of gaining feedback from employees in order to improve organization's performances as well as to retain employers' knowledge, experiences and skills (tacit knowledge). This interview is mostly conducted to staffs that are going to leave the organizations. There are few methods of conducting exit interview that are commonly done by the business organizations.

Methods	Advantages	Disadvantages
Recorded voice; - In person - Telephone	- Easy to capture complex knowledge - Being handle by professional	- Bias issues - Time consuming - Difficult to verbalize
Paper	- Ensures total anonymity - Convenient for employees who does not have internet access	- Time consuming to receive feedback - Data losing by missing feedback papers (Data is lost when papers gone missing)

Web; - Exit Interview Management System	- Accessible - High reliability, flexible and data are kept confidential - Data automatically tracked	- Technical issues - Not accessible for employees who does not have internet availability
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Table 1: Methods of Conducting Exit Interview

Exit interview is considered as one of the popular knowledge capturing techniques that can be used in business organizations. Knowledge capturing is a process where knowledge is being captured from someone's mind. The knowledge that has been capture may be reused and codified for future usage. In order for the knowledge to be captured, using correct techniques are vital. Examples of knowledge capturing techniques are:

- Interview
- On- site observation
- Brainstorming
- Protocol analysis
- Repertory grid

Knowledge capturer may face various challenges during the process of capturing knowledge. However, with the appropriate techniques that suit the purpose of capturing that particular knowledge, it will be very helpful for the process.

Another related aspect that can be associated with the project is the implementation of knowledge transferring process in business organizations. Knowledge transfer is a process of transferring knowledge from one location/ part/ person to another. Knowledge transfer is vital to business organizations as one of the means to manage and retain the organization's knowledge. The process of transferring knowledge depends on a few criteria that include:

- Knowing the intended receiver.
- Understanding the nature of the task.
- Knowing the type of knowledge that is being transferred.

1.2 Significance of the Project

Business organizations may experience the loss of important knowledge each time staff leave the organizations. Whatever information or knowledge that is collected from the exit interviews, they are very resourceful for future references. Organizations need to know the feedback from their staffs concerning the organization, with that they are well aware of what to include in future planning and the business strategies that are effective for their business processes. Staffs that are leaving might be the most valuable person in the organization, thus it is important to extract all the valuable knowledge from him/ her. Besides, by conducting this exit interview, business organizations can know the reason why this particular staff leaves the organizations.

Exit interview can definitely contribute to the business organizations in such that it can help to retain valuable knowledge. Besides providing content for improvement, business organizations can as well relate to their staffs' feedback and opinion to make future decisions. It is proved that a properly organised exit interviews are beneficial in improving chances of effectively gaining and transferring useful knowledge, insights from the leaving staffs. Exit interviews can also help the organizations to sort problem that they are facing as suggested by the leaving staff.

There might be limitation in conducting the most efficient exit interviews, and this project is focussed on serving improvement for the existing method of conducting exit interviews. Features like talking avatar might become an interesting approach that is available in the exit interview application provided with additional functions that may help organizations to handle interviews efficiently.

1.3 Problem Statement

From the literature review, it is found that some methods of exit interview may not be very efficient for certain business organizations, explained as follows:

- 1) To what extent does the knowledge being captured is true. (Neal, 1989)

This involves the honesty of particular staffs who conveyed the knowledge. Staffs that are leaving may not be able to express their true feelings or opinion or criticism concerning the organizations if they are being interviewed by their respective manager. This might occur in the face- to- face exit interview session.

- 2) Complications on capturing complex/ critical knowledge. (Garretson & Teel, 1982)

Complex/ critical knowledge can be considered as the knowledge that secretly or expertly owned by the leaving staffs. This knowledge might be in the tacit formed where it is only understandable by the respective staff. This complication might occur if the exit interview is conducted through the usage of papers such as in the form of questionnaire.

- 3) Time consuming. (Nobscoth Corp., 2004)

Some methods consume very much of time of the related personnel. For an example, if it is a face- to- face interview session, a HR personnel who might be responsible to conduct the interview might need to spend some of her precious time just for the sake of interviewing the leaving staffs. This could be inconvenient for her as well as the leaving staffs.

- 4) Technical issues.

If the exit interview is conducted using a management system (e.g. HR Management System) that need to be access through the internet or intranet, problems would then occur when there is no access to the internet or intranet. Some elderly staffs might as well not be good enough in handling internet facilities and to use the system, thus this create hassle for them to participate in the interview.

1.4 Objectives

- 1) To analyze the existing methods of conducting exit interview for leaving staffs in organizations.
- 2) To examine the challenges faced by organization while conducting exit interview.
- 3) To study the process of knowledge transferring in conducting exit interview.
- 4) To develop an interactive application to conduct exit interview on leaving staffs.
- 5) To assess/ test the exit interview exercises with the target audience.

1.5 Scope of Study

To focus on the issues of knowledge capture and knowledge transfer, this project is focussed on the implementation of exit interview in the form of an application. Exit interview is usually conducted for staffs that are going to leave a particular business organization.

Business organizations are chosen as the target audience because in the industry, organizations are the one who needs to manage their knowledge assets. In this rapid and competitive environment, an appropriate knowledge management implementation can provide organizations with competitive advantages over their competitors.

The exit interview application will be in a form of a standalone application that will be installed by the business organizations for their staffs to undergo the exit interview. The application will capture both the face and voices of the interviewee as a method to answer the questions given. The video collections (answer) will be saved according to respective named and later can be searched by another users. Therefore all captured knowledge can then be easily retrieved for future references.

The interview exercises questions will be asked according to specific scopes.

The scopes are:

- 1) Job and Development Programs
- 2) Problems and Hardships
- 3) Achievements
- 4) Benefits
- 5) Management and Company

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explains about previous research work in the area of Knowledge Management and exit interview. Since this research aims to design an effective exit interview for business organizations, this chapter is divided into three main subsections.

2.1 Knowledge Management in Business Organizations

Nowadays, knowledge management is said to be crucial in managing an organization. A successful implementation of knowledge management can guarantee the improving performance of an organization. Provided with the best tools and strategies required, the processes of managing the organization's knowledge can be conducted efficiently. As knowledge management is broadly covering most of every aspect in an organization, its fundamental contribution cannot be denied and the challenges it brings cannot be underestimated.

The purpose of knowledge management is always being related to the ability of an organization to manage knowledge as one of the organization's important assets. Karl M. Wiig (1997) defined that knowledge management in a working definition is 'to understand, focus on, and manage systematic, explicit and deliberate knowledge building, renewal and application – that is manage effective knowledge processes (EKP).' As what stated in his research paper, the objectives of knowledge management is (1) to practice an intelligent act(s) in order to maintain the enterprise's viability and overall success, (2) to acknowledge the best value of its knowledge assets. Concluding his knowledge management overall purpose, Karl stated that knowledge management is to make the most of the enterprise's knowledge- related and returns from its knowledge resources and to mend them persistently. Thus, knowledge management determine the ability of an organization to manage its important asset which is knowledge.

As what defines knowledge management, it has clearly reflected that knowledge management plays an important role in an organization. In this rapid growth of economic phenomenon, knowledge management can influence the innovation and competitiveness of an organization. According to Alberto Carneiro

(2000), knowledge management can assist the organization to build its competitive strategies. Knowledge management is considered as a valuable tool as it is known as the key resources in formulating the alternative strategies. Carneiro in his study stated that knowledge management should be able to unite the innovation efforts, modernized IT, and knowledge development in order to enlarge the competitive intensity. When both of the aspects (innovation and competitiveness) are well joined by the organization, it will lead to the formulation of the competitive strategies, which integrate innovative products and new technological gadgets to face its competitors. If knowledge management is positively influenced by the search of innovations, the investments in the development of new knowledge may propel companies into new business in more rewarding markets (Carneiro, 2000).

Knowledge management is indeed comes with challenges that need to be faced by the organization in this global business. Murali Raman & Ali Tehraninasr (2009) has conducted a survey to discover the issues and challenges that hinder the successful implementation of knowledge management initiatives in Malaysia. The survey was adopted from Susanne M. Zyngier in 2002 and the questionnaire is divided into seven segments in order to facilitate both qualitative and quantitative data collection. The data collected ranks lack of knowledge sharing culture among colleagues within organizations on the top and it is consider as a major obstacle in implementing knowledge management. Followed by difficulty in persuading staff to share their knowledge, employees' culture, employees' union, resistant to change, organizational structure, financial constraints, corporate culture and lastly was the fear of downsizing. They reflected that it is crucial to emphasize on the organization's culture (the human factor) which can impact on the successful implementation of knowledge management initiatives. Otherwise, another issues/ challenges that rank in the survey result should also be considered.

In conclusion, knowledge management brings great challenges throughout the implementation stages, but still it contributes great importance to the organization. Care must be taken that both tangible and intangible aspects of knowledge management initiative should be carefully evaluated while bearing in the mind that not all benefits of this strategic move can be readily measured in the value of money (Raman & Tehraninasr, 2009). Therefore, knowledge management is said to be essential to the organization in every aspect of its business management.

2.2 Benefits and Challenges in Conducting Exit Interview for Business Organizations

According to the BusinessDictionary.com, exit interview is known as the final meeting between the management and the staffs that are going to be leave the organization. The interview is conducted with the purpose of taking concern over related work problems faced by the former staffs. Meanwhile, exit interview is also said to be conducted in order to help the business organizations to determine the reasons why staffs are leaving the organizations, as well as taking chances to collect as much information that they can to make room for the organizations' improvement (Brown, 2006).

As part of knowledge management alternatives in business organizations, exit interview is conducted with regards that it will bring much benefit to the business organizations. According to Alan Chapman (2005), there are many contributions that can be obtained from conducting exit interview; (1) Exit interview help to support the business organization's HR practices, (2) Help managers to understand well about how to manage people and organizations, (3) Guides the business organizations with relevant and useful data about the best business practices and (4) Exit interview provide opportunities for the business organizations to retain their valuable staffs. All of the mentioned benefits proved that it is important for business organizations to manage their knowledge assets by not letting the knowledge out of the organizations together with the leaving staffs.

Exit interview can be considered as one of the knowledge transfer approach done in business organizations. Instead of competing in generating new ideas, business organizations need to realize that it is very vital to retain the existing knowledge and exploit them as one of the valuable assets (Dixon, 2000). As state in her book, entitles *Common Knowledge: How Companies Thrive by Sharing What They Know*, Dixon did mention that by the practice of exploiting the organizations' existing knowledge can lead to a huge cost savings.

Despite of its benefits, exit interview might as well bring challenges to business organizations. According to James G. Neal, the results evaluation of exit interview programs had never been well documented. This has been determine as one of the limitations in conducting exit interview. Besides, the critical skill of

interviewer is also being considered as one of the challenges in conducting exit interview (Neal, 1989). Due to this limitation, exit interview had always been criticized in terms of the reliability and validity of the collected data.

To conclude, exit interview might be the best approach for business organizations in order to retain their knowledge assets, however, challenges might also be faced in order to implement it efficiently. An effort on improving exit interview is thus very helpful for business organizations.

2.3 Tagging to Aid the Searching of Data

Tagging had been widely used in many KM systems as one of the features to guide searching process by categorizing particular data into specific groups. *“Metadata helps the identification, description, management and location of information resources in digital and non- digital environments”* (Macgregor & McCulloch, 2006). According to Macgregor & McCulloch, metadata can aid the process of resources discovery by categorizing relevant and irrelevant information according to the desired resources need. Provided with the beneficial use, tags is said to be very useful in the process of retrieval, easier to search for resources (Furnas et al., 2006). According to Furnas et al., tagging system can also allow users to share their resources/ information by creating specific tags for the particular resources/ information.

One of the types of tagging is collaborative tagging. Collaborative tagging is a practice of users to key in keywords for specific resources (MacGregor & McCulloch, 2006). The emergence of collaborative tagging is said to be the “forced move” in the process of resource discovery and knowledge organization (Shirky, 2005). Even though the usage of collaborative tagging might incur many complications, there are still positive lessons that can be learned in the aspects of interactivity of collaborative tagging (Macgregor & McCulloch, 2006).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Project Methodology

Agile Software Development methodology is chosen as the project methodology in conducting this project. This model provides clearer steps and stages in each phase of the project development.

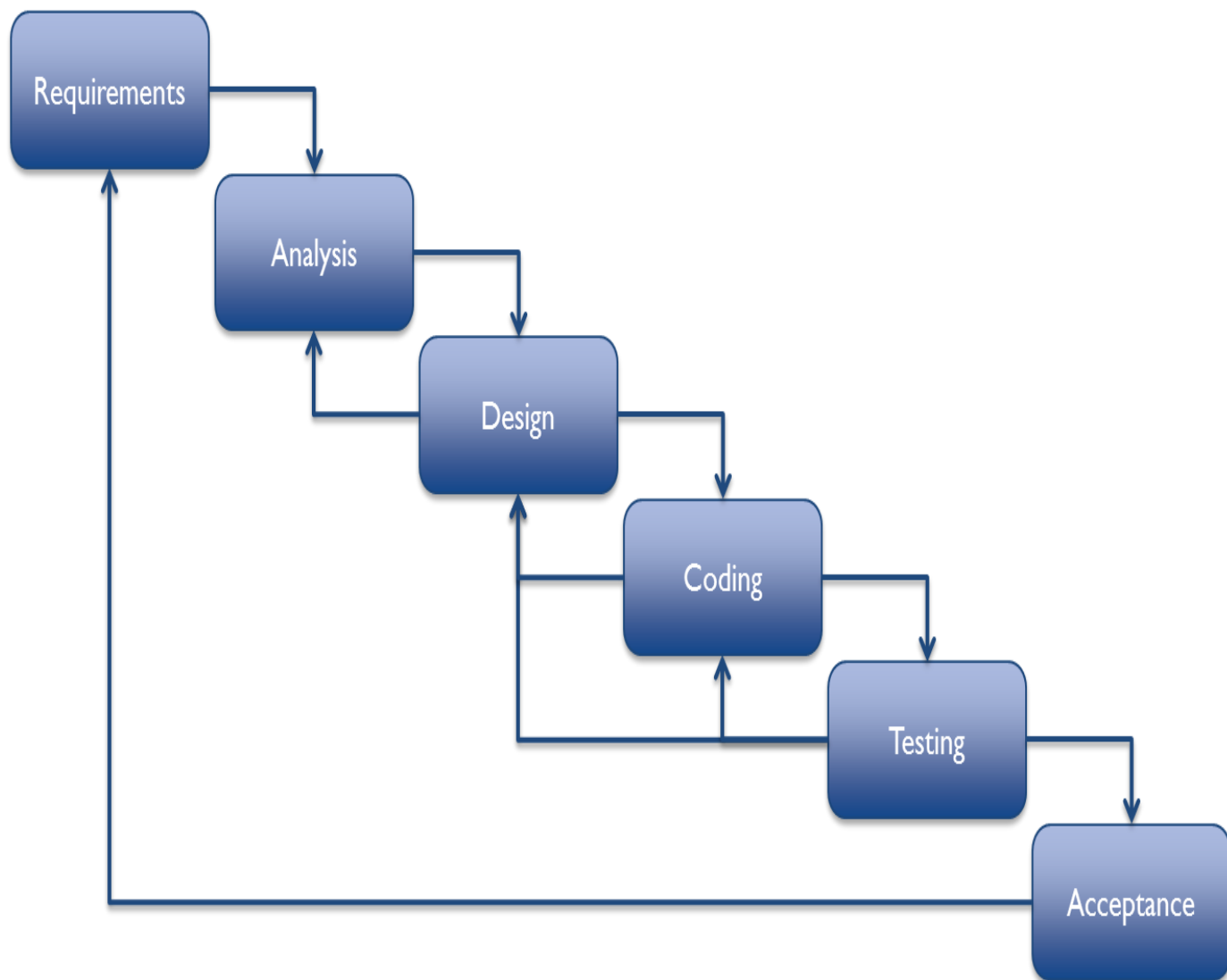


Figure 1: Agile Software Development Methodology

By using this methodology, it is adaptable to changes that occur in any stage. A complete repetition of working does not apply in this methodology and there is no need to go back to the very first stage if changes happen to occur. In the planning stage, all of the project requirements are determined. The objectives of the project implementation are examined at this stage to measure the project achievement at the end of the study. Next, the analysis stage is conducted in order to gain as much information as possible. Proceeding to the design stage, all the required tools are decided and the application functions are set. At this stage, the application will be designed to get a clearer view on how the application works. After completing the design stage, the project will proceed to the coding stage. Finally, the application will enter the testing stage, to decide whether it is well build or need further improvements.

3.2 Project Activities

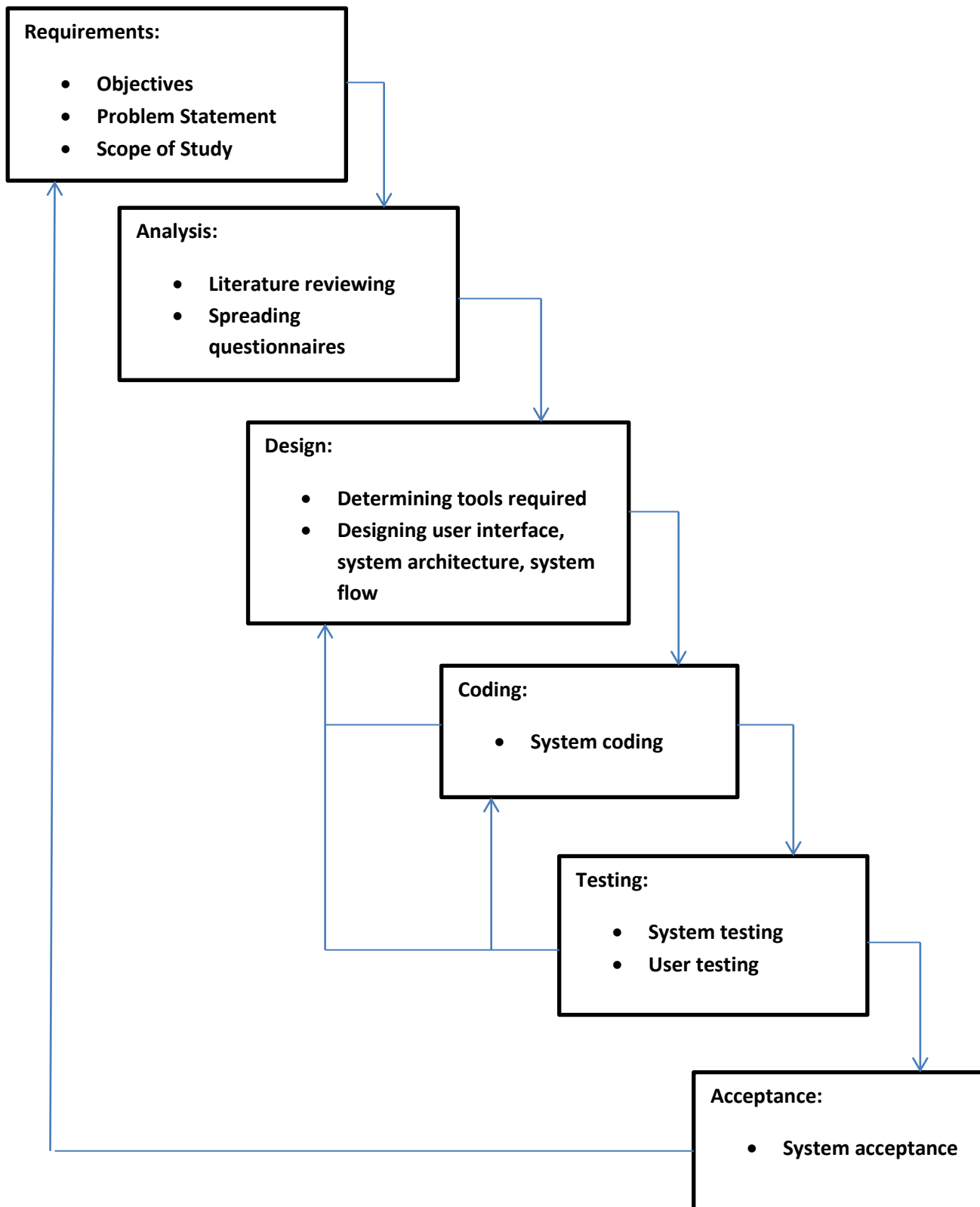


Figure 2: Project Activities

3.3 System Architecture

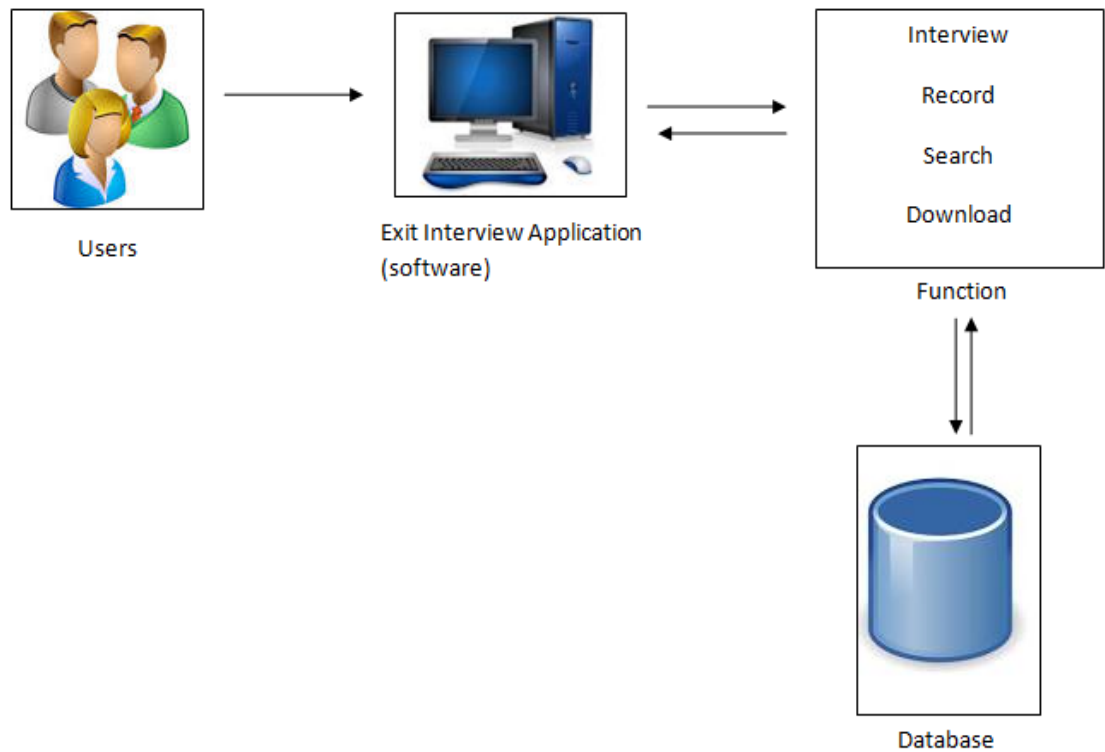


Figure 3: System Architecture of Exit Interview Application

The above figure shows the system architecture of the exit interview application. The users (leaving staffs) that will undergo the interview exercises does not have to login into the application and they can straight away undergo the interview. The user can start the interview process, by answering questions asks by the respective personnel through a series of videos. The voices and face (answer) will be recorded and captured, later be saved into a video file. Another type of users that will use this application is the HR personnel that are in need to search for the video collections. This user need to login to this application in order to gain access to the video collections. Once they have succeeded login to the application, they will be able to search for the desired video collections and can later download the video for future referencing.

3.4 Methods of Data Collection

- Interview;

Interview method is used in order to gain opinion and insights of the related parties. Personnel like the HR managers, are one of the targeted personnel to be interviewed because they often have the best experiences in conducting exit interviews.

- Questionnaire;

A survey form concerning the implementation of exit interview in business organizations is spread among staffs to get feedback and ideas from them. Questionnaires are considered a suitable method for spreading information to a number of participants.

- Literature Review Studies;

Internet and other reading materials (e.g. = journal and conference papers) are the main resources used in literature review studies. Internet source is used to find as much information related to exit interviews. Some reading materials are collected and borrowed from the libraries. Besides depending on the internet, journals and conference papers are very helpful in collecting reliable and well justified data.

3.5 Key Milestone

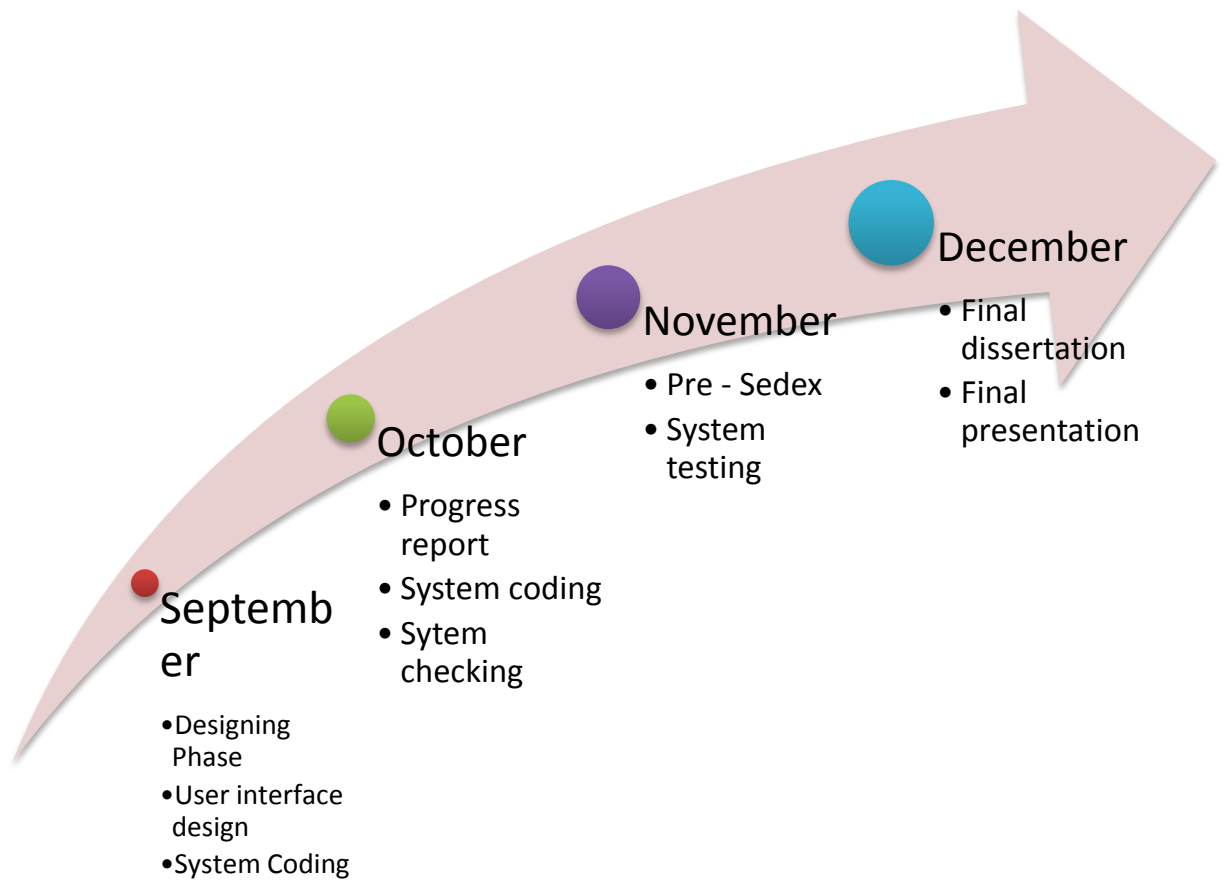


Figure 4: Key Milestone

3.6 Gantt Chart

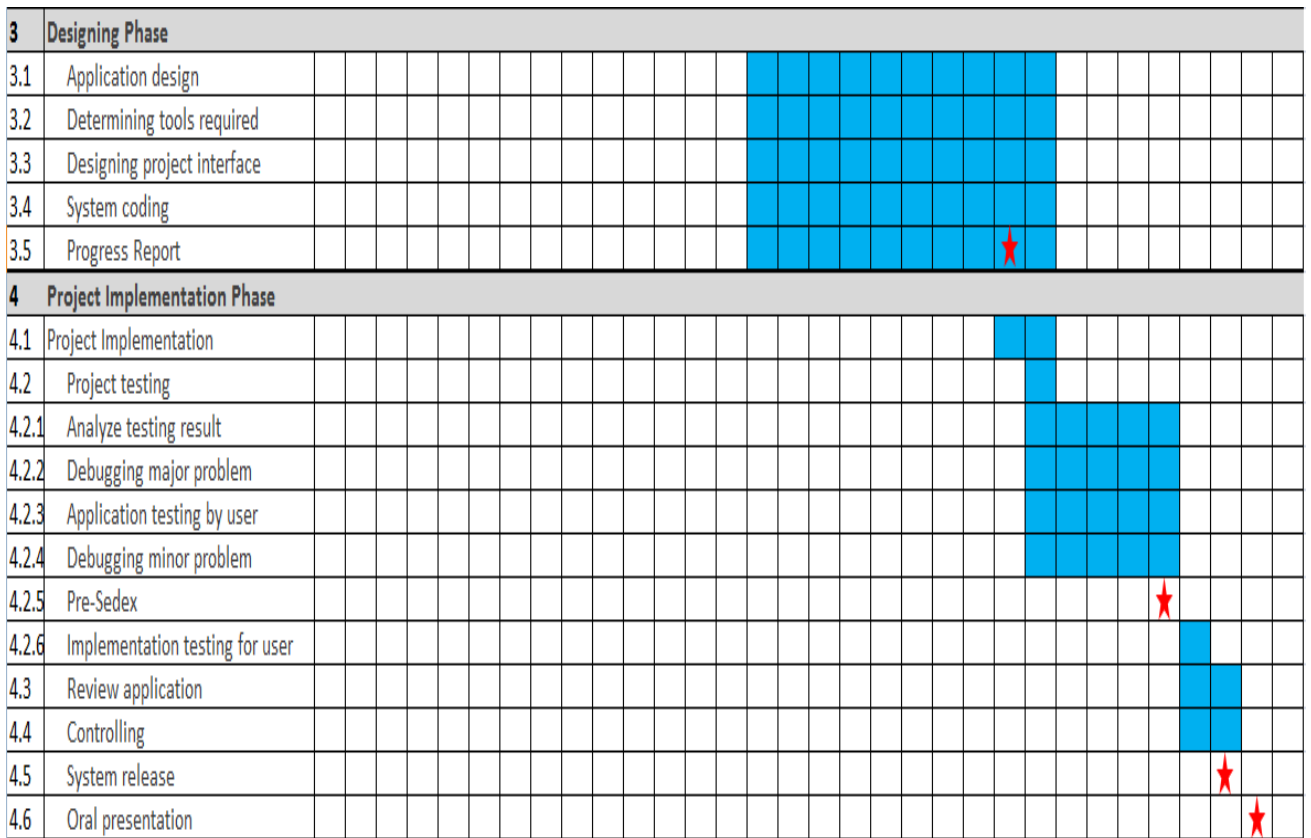


Figure 5: Gantt Chart

3.7 Required Tools

Hardware	Software
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal computer - Input devices - Output devices - Web Cam tools - Microphone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Microsoft Visual Studio 2012 Express Edition - Microsoft Access 2010

Table 2: The Required Tools to build Exit Interview Application

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS & DISCUSSION

This chapter explains about the current project implementation. Sections 4.1, present the user interface. Next, in Section 4.2, it explains about the system flow. Finally in Section 4.3, the discussion of result and findings is shown and explained.

4.1 User Interface



Figure 6: The interface of front page of Exit Interview Application



Figure 7: The Interface of Interview Exercises

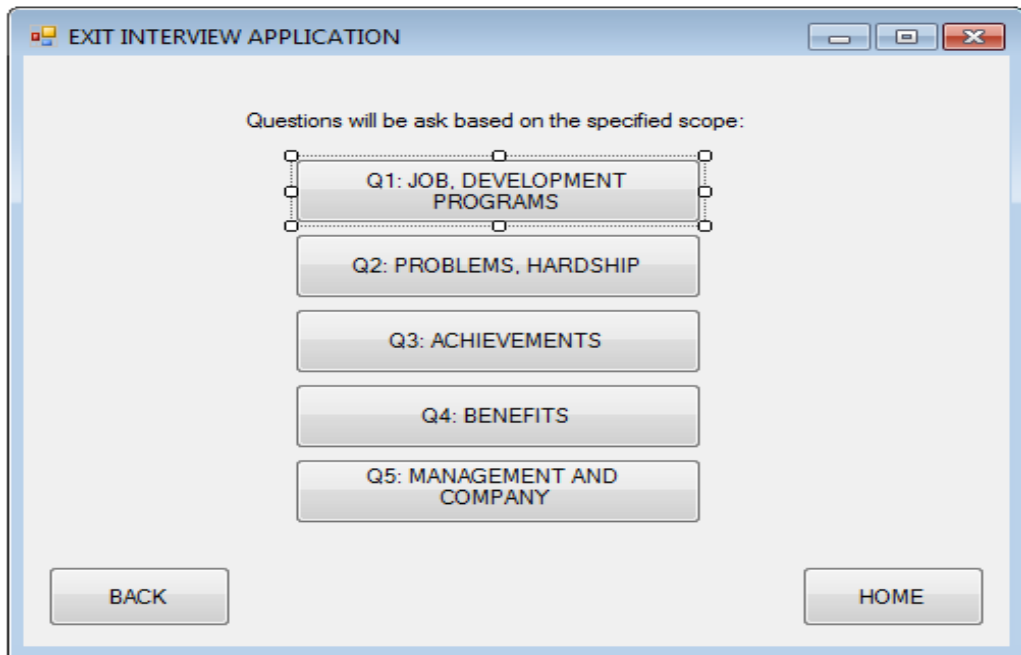


Figure 8: The Scope of Interview Exercises

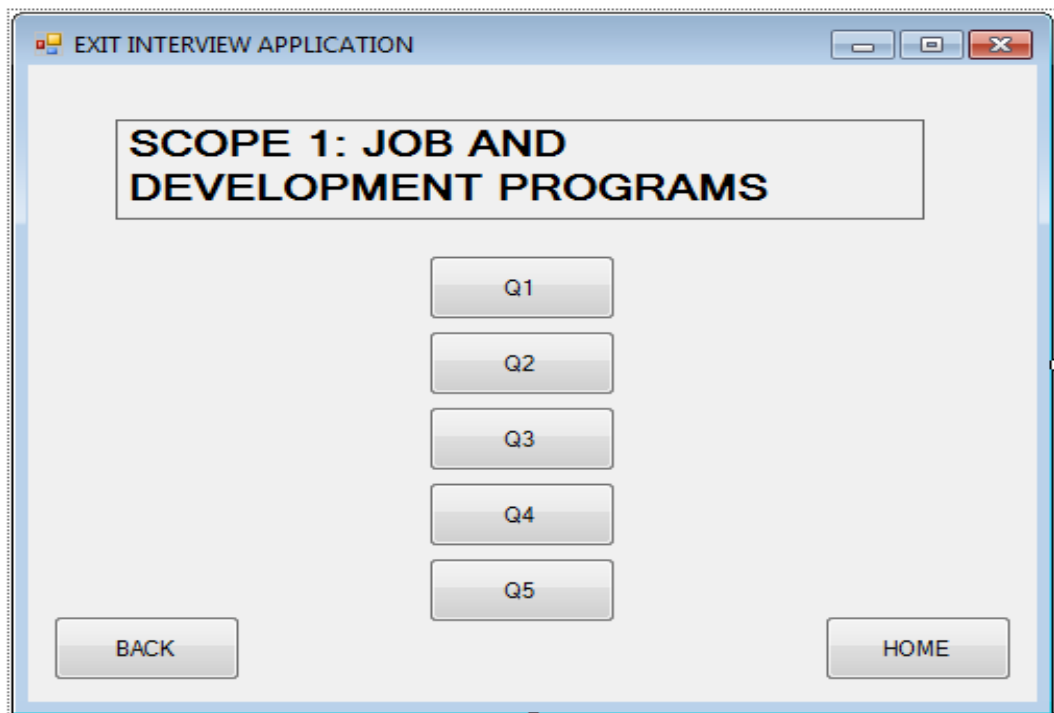


Figure 9: Scope 1 of Interview Exercises

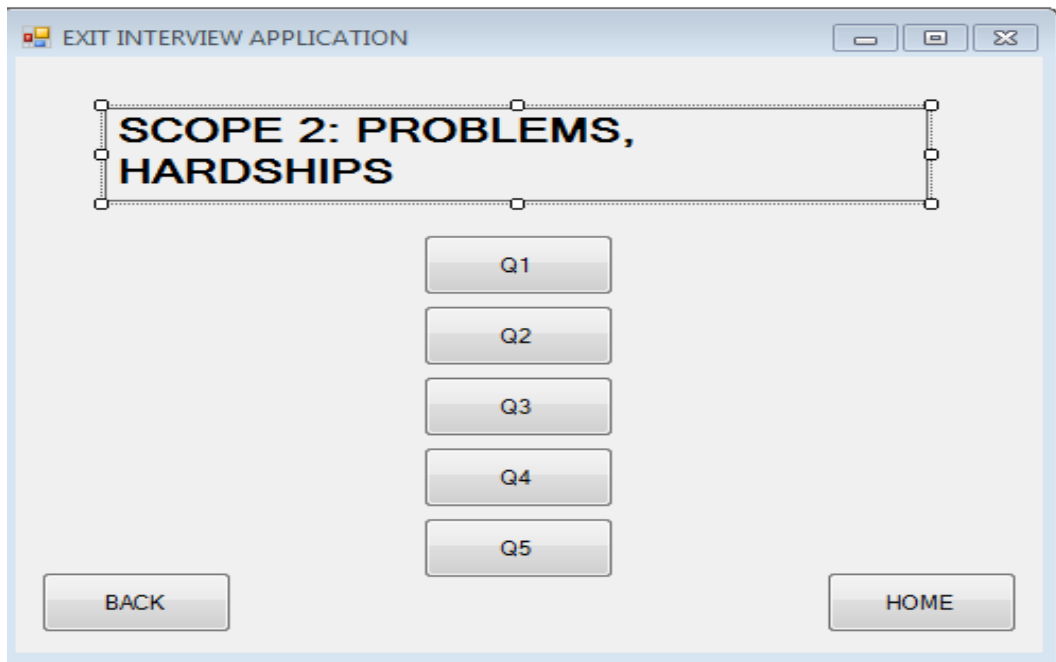


Figure 10: Scope 2 of Interview Exercises

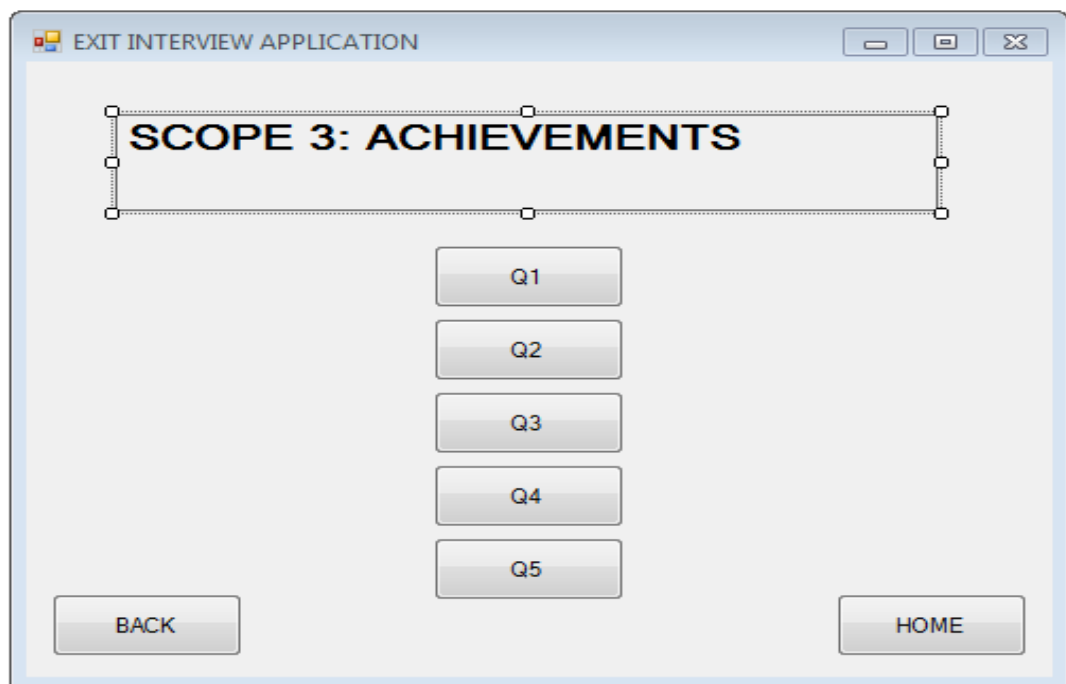


Figure 11: Scope 3 of Interview Exercises

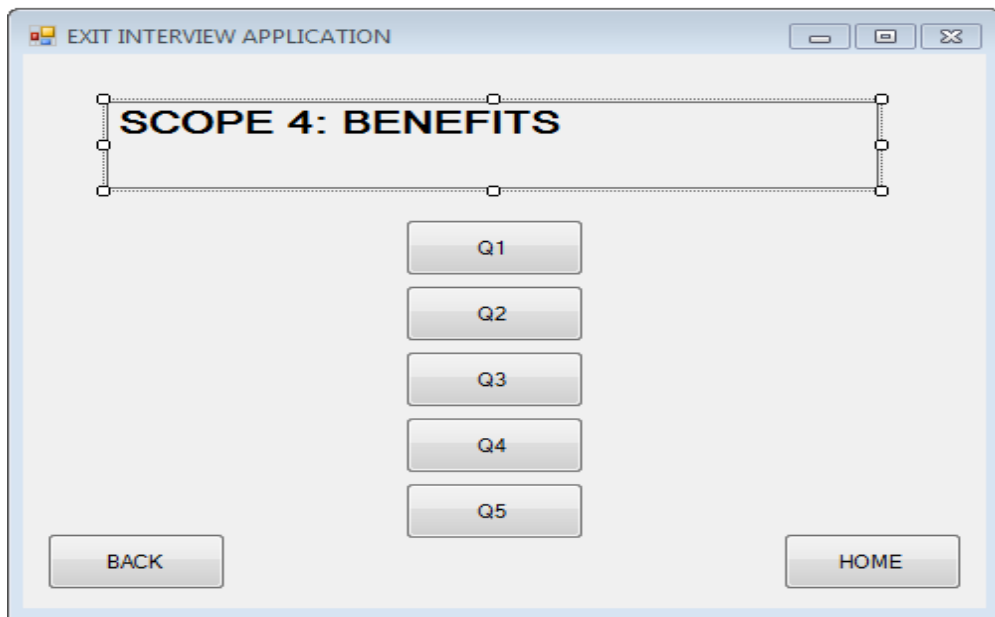


Figure 12: Scope 4 of Interview Exercises

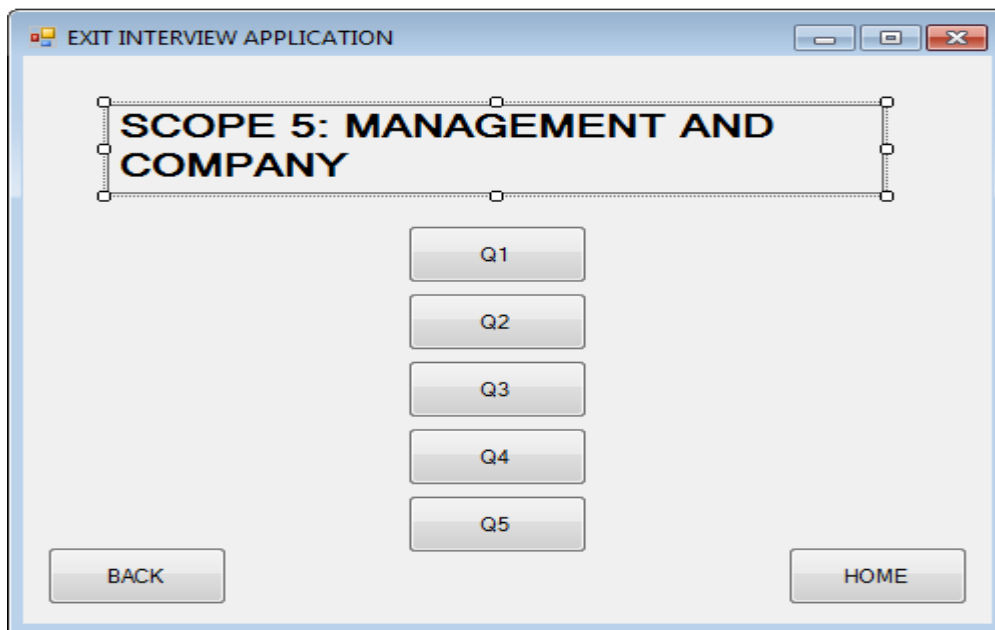


Figure 13: Scope 5 of Interview Exercises



Figure 14: The Video of Interviewer Asking Questions

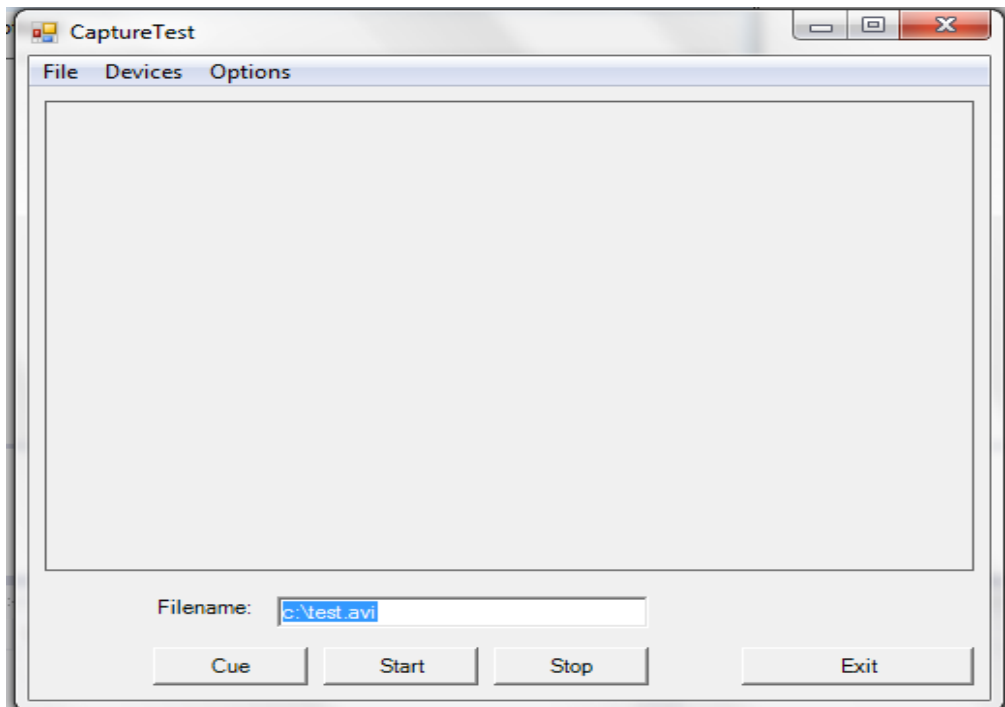


Figure 15: The Interface for Capturing Answer for Interviewee

Exit Interview Application involved two types of users that will use the application. The first user is the one who will undergo the exit interview session. This user does not need to login into the application. They can easily precede with the interview exercises as shown in the above, Figure 7. Once user clicked on the “Start Interview Exercises” button, user will be brought to the page that listed the scope of interview questions (refer Figure 8). Next, user will answer the questions according to the given scope. Each scope will consists of five different questions as shown in the Figure 9 – 13. To start the interview session, users need to click on the button “Q1” and a video will be play to start asking question related on the specific scope. To proceed with other questions, users need to continue clicking on the other button. As what is shown in Figure 14, the interviewer will ask the questions in form of a video. After listening to the question, the user’s answer is captured through the web camera and recorded, later saved in a form of video (Figure 15).



Figure 16: The Interface for User Login



Figure 17: The Interface for User Successfully Login



Figure 18: The Interface of Exit Interview Application

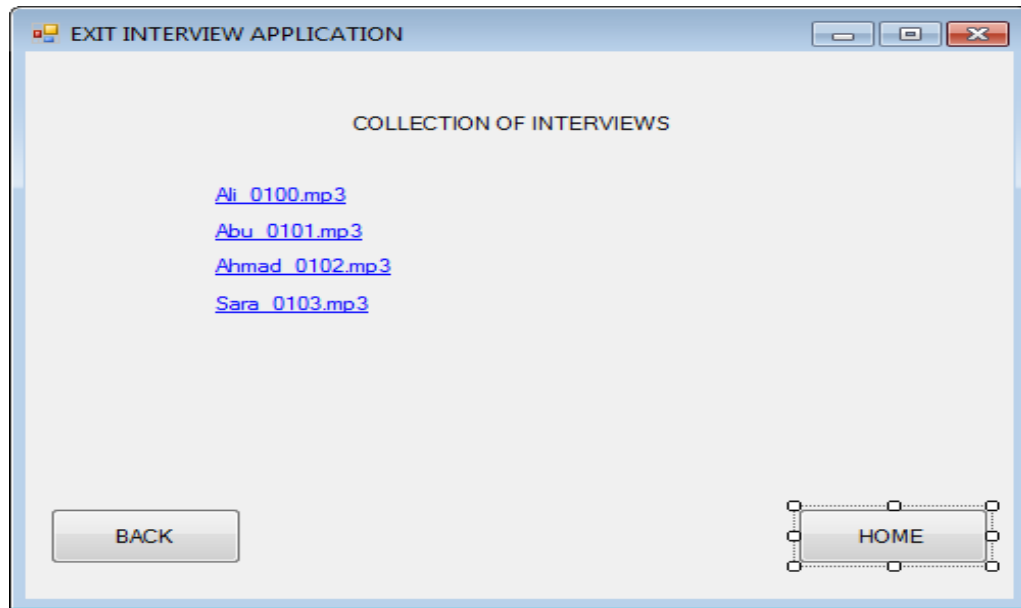


Figure 19: Lists of Interview Collections (Answers)

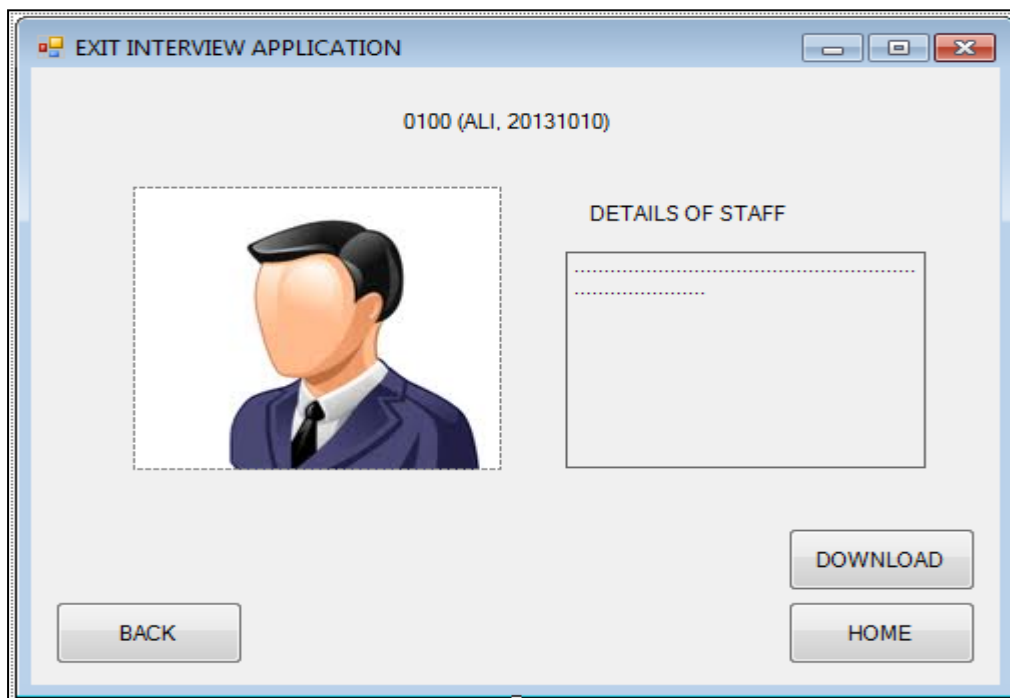


Figure 20: The Details of the Leaving Staffs (Interviewee)

The second user is the administrator who intends to search for interview collections. The administrator of the application need to login to the system in order to gain access to the interview collections. Figure 16 shows the interface of user login to the application. Once the user had already success to login process, user will then be brought to the next page that to start the search process. Users are given with two choices for searching their desired answer collections. First options are user can choose to use the search box to look for the answer collection as shown in Figure 18. The second options are users can browse through the lists of interview collections manually when users clicked on the “Collection of Interviews” button. Users are then brought to the page of interview collections (refer Figure 19). Figure 20 shows the details of the interviewee and users can download the video collection (answer) through this page.

4.2 System Flow

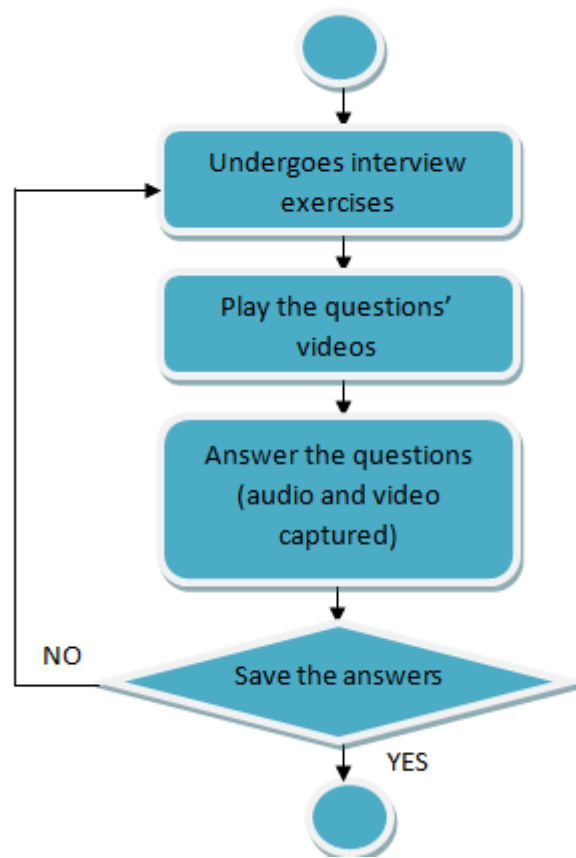


Figure 21: System Flow for Exit Interview Session

Figure 21 shows the system flow for users who are going to undergo the exit interview session. Once the users had installed the software application, they can proceed with the interview session. As the interview goes on, their answer (voices) will be captured and recorded. It will then be saved in a form of video.

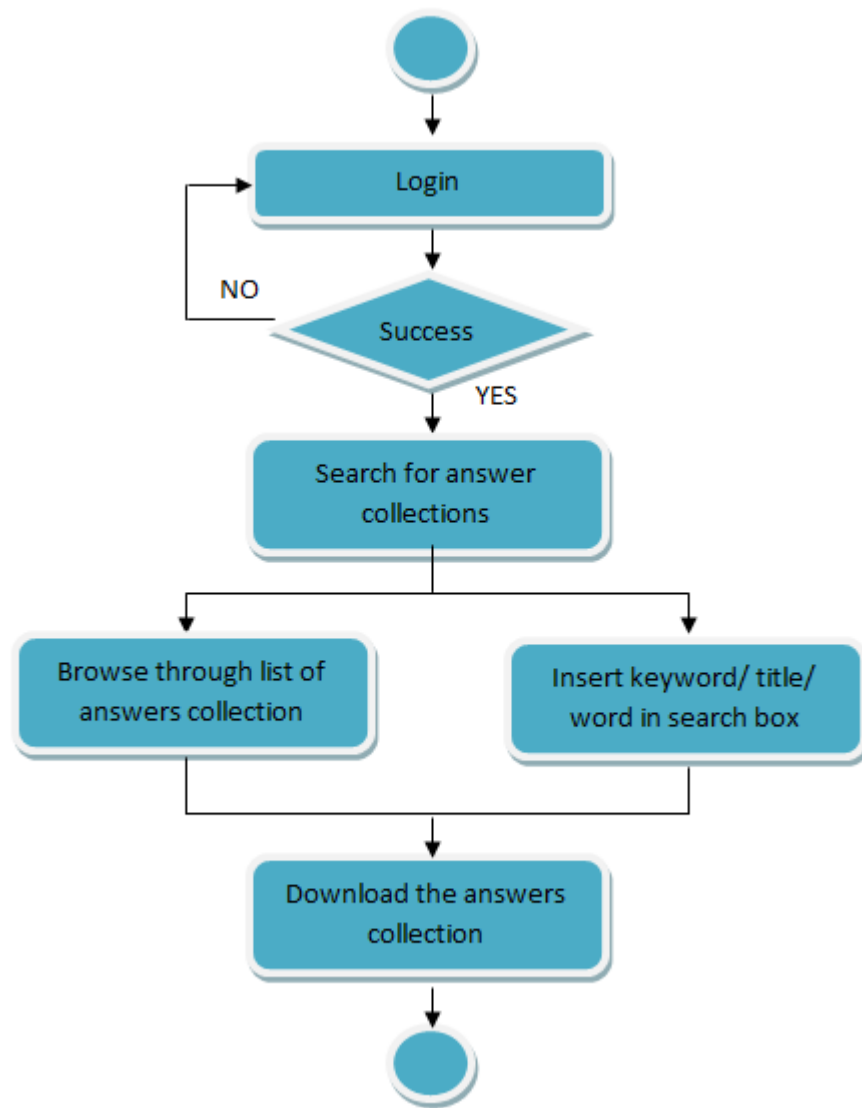


Figure 22: System Flow for Accessing the Interviews Collections

Figure 22 shows the system flow for users who wants to access the interview’s answers collection. The process will start when users start searching for their desired information and knowledge. Users will be brought to the page where they can start searching in the search box or choosing from the tagging lists. Then after finding the desired documents, users can click on the videos and download it.

4.3 Discussion of Results & Findings

4.3.1 Questionnaires' Results & Findings

A questionnaire concerning exit interview implementation in business organizations had been build and spread to the respondents in order to collect their feedbacks and ideas on exit interview in their organizations. A total of 26 respondents had responded to the questionnaire.

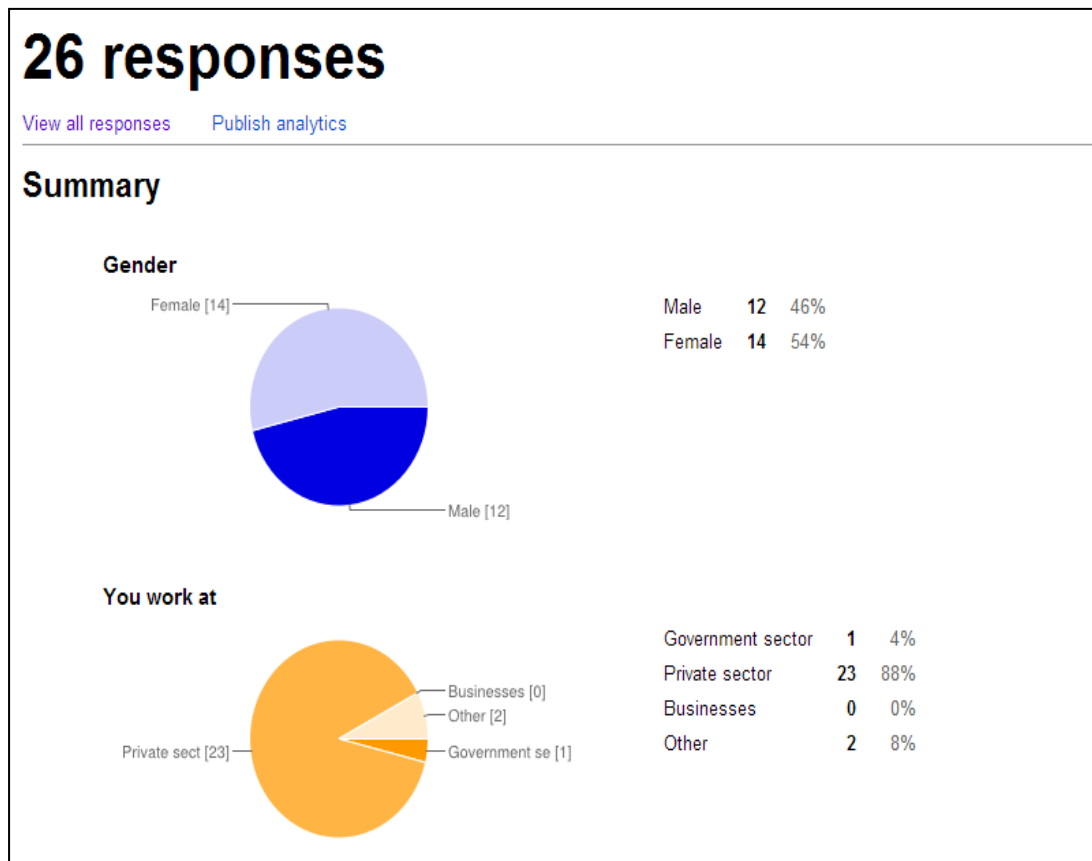


Figure 23: The Respondents' Detail

Figure 13 shows the details of the respondents that had responded to the questionnaire. Based on the figure, most of the respondents are working for the private sector, with 88%.

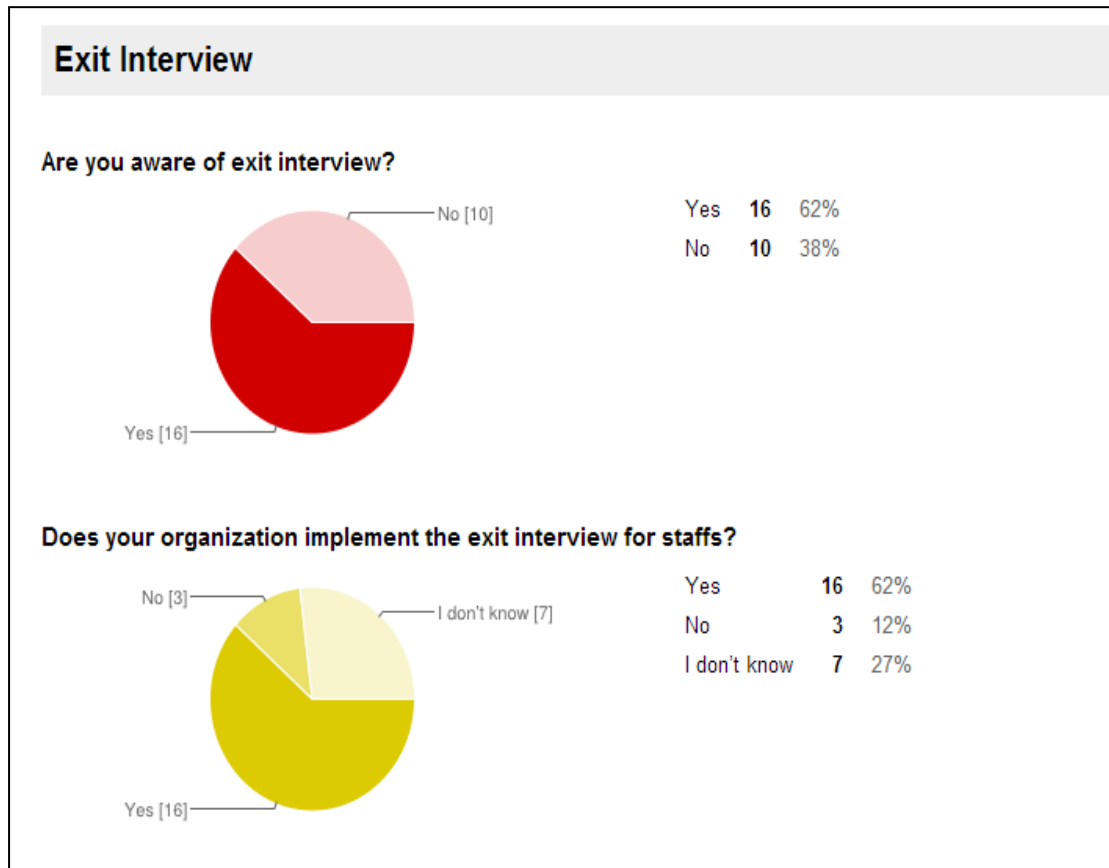


Figure 24: Awareness on Exit Interview

Figure 14 shows the questions consist in the questionnaire concerning about the awareness of the respondents towards exit interview. 62% of the respondents are aware of the existence of exit interview. A question asking about the implementation of exit interview in the business organizations results in a total of 62% on stating “Yes” that shows most of their organization implement the exit interview for the leaving staffs. 12% of the results stating “No” and 27% stating “I don’t know”. This is probably due to the factor that the exit interview was implemented secretly to the staffs that are going to leave the organization. Thus, the staffs may not realize and concerned whether the interview was conducted or not.

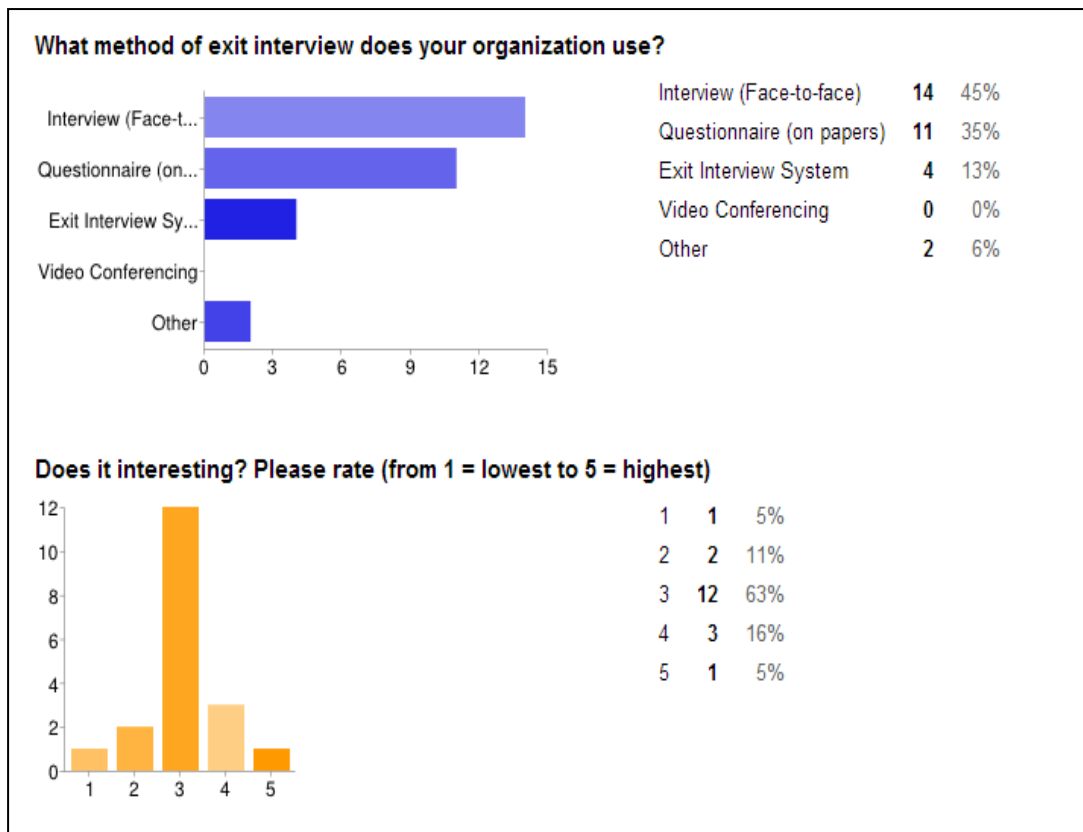


Figure 25: Degree of Interactive Methods

Figure 25 shows the questions regarding the degree of interactive methods in the implementation of exit interview in the business organizations. The common methods of conducting exit interview is listed and most of the organizations are using the face- to- face method of interviewing, 45%. Face- to- face interview might be the easiest method to conduct the interview as it is the most common method of interviewing.

Respondents were also asked to rate the interactive level of the exit interview in their organizations. Most of them rated at the level of 3 with 63% which is considered as moderate level of interactive. Based on this rating, it is proved that an interactive method should be included when conducting the exit interview in most organizations.

4.3.2 Interview Results & Findings

The author had conducted an email interview with human resource personnel of a private company. This interview is conducted for the purpose of gaining opinions on the awareness of exit interview in an organization as well as to determine the proper method of conducting exit interview.

According to the HR personnel, most of the staffs in the organization are well aware of the exit interview. Besides, exit interview is currently being implemented in the organization. However, there are numbers of staffs that did not aware of this interview. The reasons behind this un- awareness are:

- 1) The new/ young employed staffs that are just recruited into the organization are not yet exposed to the retirement issues.
- 2) The exit interview is usually conducted secretly, without anyone else noticing except the related personnel.

The author also asked regarding the method used by the organization to conduct exit interview. According to the HR personnel, the organization is currently using the common method of interview which is the face- to- face interview session. However, there are limitations while conducting the interview. The method of interview is said to consume much of a time, and in some cases, the exit interview is not able to be conducted as schedule due to time constraints. Then, the interviewer usually failed to ask all of the questions listed for the interview.

Based on the interview results, exit interview application will provide solutions to the limitations that occur in the common method of interviewing.

4.3.3 Sample of Exit Interview Questions

After collecting and gather samples of exit interview questions that are commonly used, numbers of questions are selected to be the most impactful questions and will be include in the exit interview questions:

- What is your primary reason for leaving?
- What was the most and the least satisfying about your work?
- What will you miss most about working here?
- What are the most important changes you would recommend for your department/this organization to make it better?
- At work, did you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
- Did you receive enough training to do your job effectively?
- Did you receive adequate support to do your job?
- Were you happy with your pay, benefits and other incentives?
- What was the quality of the supervision you received?
- What could your immediate supervisor do to improve his or her management style?
- Would you consider working again for this company in the future?
- How do you generally feel about this company?

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Relevancy to the Objectives

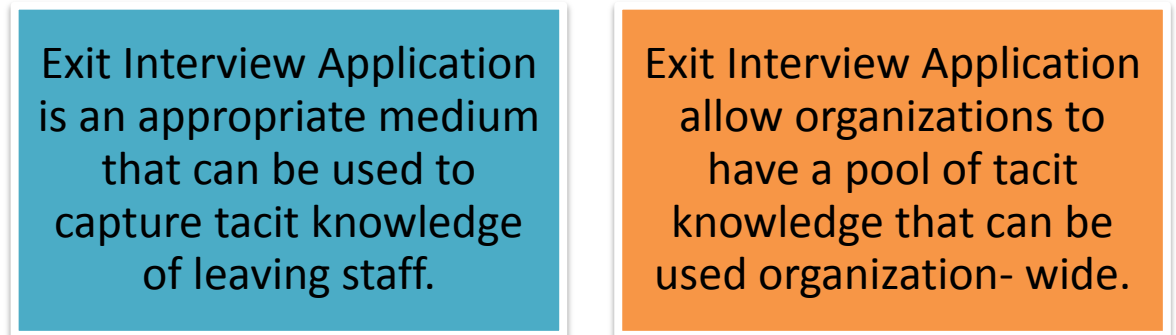


Figure 26: Relevancy of Exit Interview Application

In conclusion, it is found that Exit Interview Application is relevant to business organizations as it helps the organizations to conduct exit interview efficiently. It is interactive for users to conduct the exit interview exercise as users are able to communicate with a virtual actor. Users will also find that Exit Interview Application does not complicate them during the interview session. Users only need to answer the questions asked, and directly saved the answer in form of a video. The functions of Exit Interview Application are build to bring benefits to the users instead of complicate them with complex functions.

Due to the challenges of capturing knowledge in some business organizations, Exit Interview Application can aid the process of capturing knowledge (tacit) in business organizations. Collection of exit interview answers will help the business organizations to analyse the beneficial knowledge regarding their knowledge assets. It can help business organizations to improve their performance by leveraging on the pool of knowledge they currently have to create innovative products and ideas.

5.2 Suggestion for Future Works/ Recommendation

Further improvements such as adding the functions of the application might as well be considered in the future. Besides conducting the interview for the leaving staffs, exit interview may be conducted to the staffs that are just complete with training and development programs or a merit working staffs. This is work for the purpose of capturing the valuable knowledge that resides in the staffs' thoughts. Business organizations are recommended to take Exit Interview Application as one of the medium available in their organizations to conduct exit interview.

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