THE STUDY OF INTERNET EXPOSURE BEHAVIOR, PROBLEMS AND SOCIAL EFFECT OF TEENAGERS: A CASE STUDY OF SURATTANI VOCATIONAL COLLEGE

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to study internet exposure behavior, problems and social effect of teenagers: a case study of Surattani Vocational College at high vocational College level. The researcher had collected data by questionnaire for 400 sampling. The data were analyzed by frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation values. The result in general condition found that most of students were female, aged between 19-20 years old, who had revenue less than 4,000 baht per month. Their families had revenue about 10,001-20,000 baht per month. The parent’s education was primary school level. Their houses were detached houses and they were living with family. The internet exposure behavior were as follows: duration of using internet was about 1-3 hours, more than 3 years in internet experience, frequency of using internet in a week was less than 3 times, internet service place was the most favorite place to use internet, they mostly used internet for searching data and transferring data or program, did not get advice from parents. The problems were at low level (X = 2.48) such as the problem condition in behavior of using internet (X = 2.63), the problem condition in behavior of expressing opinion (X = 2.62), and the problem condition in behavior of study (X = 2.19). The social effect was at a low level (X = 2.11) such as the social effect in relationship (X = 2.09), the social effect in behavior (X = 2.25) and the social effect in study (X = 2.01) respectively.

Keywords

Internet Exposure Behavior, Problems, Social Effect, Vocational College

1) BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Globalization is caused by advances in sciences and technology, especially Information Technology or IT which is the main factor to make the world without frontiers, resulting in new regulations of economics, society and politics among the nations. There are opportunities and threats to the quality of life of the world’s population in many aspects. Thailand has encountered the effects of the globalization since the First National Economic and Societal Development Policy in B.E. 2504 until now because the approach was initiated in the Western world, that is to say, Modernization.

Teenagers in their late years have undergone many changes from their childhood, in terms of physical body, emotion, society and intellect.
All of the mentioned aspects are important, including changes related to their sex. This leads to their interest in themselves and looking for new experiences along with sexual impulse. Their curiosity often leads them to imitate the behaviors of their idols and go out at night, ending up with being addicted to drugs and cigarette. At present, the teenagers can access the information without limitations. Media production is easier than the past, making distribution from one part of the world to the other faster. That is the reason why sexual expression behavior from the West influences the Thai society.

There are numerous research works related to internet at the present time. However, most of them focused on the status, the problems and the requirements about using the internet in educational institutions or about using the internet in classroom. Due to the fact that internet is still new technology, the researchers recognized the importance of teenager's problems arisen by materialism. The researchers would like to study the exposure behaviors, the problems and the social effect of teenagers: a case study of Surattani Vocational College at high vocational college level. There were 2,643 students studying at Surattani Vocational College: 1,864 persons at high vocational college level and 779 at vocational college level. The data could be used as a background for the development of understanding and having a good attitude, resulting in students of high quality to society and good internet users.

2) RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To study the internet exposure behaviors of teenagers or students at Surattani Vocational College.
2. To study the social problems of teenagers: a case study of Surattani Vocational College.
3. To study the social effect of teenagers: a case study of Surattani Vocational College.

3) EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. The data concerning the internet exposure behaviors of Surattani Vocational College students were acquired.
2. The data concerning the problems of teenagers of Surattani Vocational College students were acquired.
3. The data concerning the social effect of teenagers of Surattani Vocational College students were acquired.
4. The data could be used as a background for the development of the internet exposure behaviors of Surattani Vocational College students.

4) RESEARCH SCOPE

This research was aimed to study “the internet exposure behaviors, problems and social effect of teenagers: a case study of Surattani Vocational College”.

5) POPULATION AND SAMPLING GROUP

Population in this research was composed of Surattani Vocational College students aged between 17 to 21 years old at high vocational college level and at vocational college level. There were 2,643 persons. They mostly surfed the internet in Internet café as well as in computer laboratories. The sampling group in this research was chosen by calculating the sample size and the error of the group at 5 per cent or at the significance level of 0.5. There were 400 persons.

6) RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1. Research tool

In this research, the researchers used questionnaire about the internet exposure behaviors, problems and social effect of teenagers: a case study of Surattani Vocational College.

6.2. Tool development procedure

6.2.1. The documents, textbooks and articles on such related fields as behavioral study, problem and social effect of teenagers in Thailand as well as opinion about internet were reviewed.

6.2.2. The objectives of the questionnaire were defined in order to collect the data in the research on the study of internet behaviors, problems and social effect of teenagers: a case study of Surattani Vocational College.
exposure behaviors, problems and social effect of teenagers: a case study of Surattani Vocational College.

6.2.3. The questionnaire was designed to comply with the topics in the research scope.

6.2.4. The questionnaire which was approved by the advisors was reviewed by 5 experts in terms of content validity and accuracy.

6.2.5. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated after the revision by advisors and experts. The questionnaire was tested with 30 Tapee High Vocational College students. After using Cronbach’s Alpha, the reliability of the questionnaire was 0.90

7) DATA COLLECTION

The researchers distributed 779 copies of the questionnaire to the selected students. 400 copies were sent back, in other words, 51.35 per cent.

8) RESEARCH RESULTS

1. The internet exposure behaviors of students at Surattani High Vocational College were as follows: 70.5% spent on the average 1-3 hours per time, 19.3% spent less than 1 hour per time and 7.3% spent 3-5 hours per time.
2. The experience of internet exposure behaviors of students at Surattani High Vocational College was as follows: 41.3% had 3-5 years of experience surfing the internet, 25.8% had 1-3 years of experience and 27.5% had over 5 years of experience.
3. The frequency of internet exposure behaviors of students at Surattani High Vocational College was as follows: 44.5% spent less than 3 times per day, 37.3% spent 3-4 times per day and 12.3% spent 5-7 times per day.
4. The places where students at Surattani High Vocational College frequented were as follows: 52.8% went to Internet café, 35.5% went to educational institution and 11.3% surfed at home.
5. According to the usage, 26.5% of students at Surattani High Vocational College used internet for searching for data and transferring data or program. 22.5% used internet for online games and 22.0% used internet for chatting.

6. As for advice and guidance from the parents, 45.8% did not get advice from their parents, 42.5% rarely got advice and 9.3% often got advice.

7. Problem conditions in society in terms of internet exposure behaviors were at low level ($X = 2.48$). When each item was considered, the most critical problems were behavior of using internet ($X = 2.63$), behavior of expressing opinion ($X = 2.6$) and behavior of study ($X = 2.19$), respectively.

8. Social effects in society were at low level ($X = 2.11$). When each item was considered, the most critical effects were social effect in behavior ($X = 2.25$), social effect in relationship ($X = 2.09$) and social effect in study ($X = 2.01$), respectively.

9) DISCUSSIONS

According to the study of the internet exposure behaviors, problems and social effect of teenagers: a case study of Surattani Vocational College”, the results could be discussed as follows:

The behaviors in using internet were at moderate level. Some spent more than 1 hour per time. This complies with the research work done by Chatirot Karawake, Saowaporn Muangkaew, Waraporn Tarawanich and Kobkul Sappakitchamnong which studied the behaviors and objectives of using internet of government university students in Bangkok Metropolitan. The sampling group from 6 government universities (420 persons in total) was surveyed and yielded the following results: Most of them had surfed the internet for 1-2 years and over 5 times per week. Each time took over 4 hours. They surfed between 6pm – 12 pm.

As for problem conditions in society, the behavior of expressing opinion was at moderate level. It was found that the sampling group had difficulties communicating in English. This complies with the research work done by Somlek Leelapratak which studied the conditions of graduate students at Ramkhamhaeng University in 3 dimensions:
students themselves, service, and peripherals. The research also explored the comparison of internet usage by students from different faculties and relationship between computer background and English background. It was found that Law students and Education students showed different difficulties using the internet at the significance level of 0.05. Students at other faculties did not show any significant differences. English knowledge was not related to internet usage at the significance level of 0.05. This could be concluded that the difficulties were directly caused by the factors “computer background” and “English knowledge” but from the interaction between the two factors.

As for social effect on study, it was at low level. It was found that most students opened educational pages as their first page. This was in accord with the research work by Casey in that information highway of teachers and students on the network designed by California State University could lead to students more eager to search for information and they often surf internet at home.

Social effect on relationship was at low level. There was evidence that students made friends with others on the internet. This complies with the research by Zimbardo, Ebbesen and Maslach in that attitude of each person depends on their knowledge. If they have good attitude towards something, they usually express good behaviors. Therefore, knowledge, attitude and behaviors are related to one another.

Social effect on behaviors was at low level. There was evidence that the students surfed internet for longer time than expected. This was in accord with the research by Amphaisi Soprathum which studied the behaviors about being exposed to information and factors affecting acceptance of computer communication through internet with computer users in Bangkok. It was found that study was related to work improvement. Ownership was related to frequency of using. The features of internet were related to the frequency. The necessity was related to communication in business nowadays.

10) SUGGESTIONS

1. Suggestions from the results

1) According to the research results, students at Surattani High Vocational College never got advice from parents about their internet exposure behaviors. We, therefore, suggest parents take care of their children surfing the internet, especially new influences. At present, the information from the internet is very influential in changing teenagers’ behaviors. Therefore, the first thing the parents should do is to adapt themselves to be able to give guidance and advice on using internet the right way.

2) According to the research results, problem conditions in behaviors of using internet were critical when students spent over 1 hours surfing internet per time. Therefore, using internet the right way is very important. In other words, students should surf the internet for the real purpose and should divide their time to receive the most effective results in learning, searching for data, planning, communicating as well as entertaining.

3) According to the research results, it was found that social effects on society in terms of relationship were the most critical. The less critical effects were that students surfed the internet for longer time than expected and that they thought internet could bring success to them as it did to other people they noticed. Therefore, surfing the internet should not take longer time because it might lead to effects on health, body and mind, including responsibilities and time management. If students have good time management, they could manage to do other activities to develop themselves in other creative manners.

2. Suggestions for further study

1) A study of knowledge, attitude and behavior in using information technology and exposure to information media in Tapee Vocational College should be conducted.

2) A study of behaviors and objectives of internet usage of students at Surattani Vocational College should be conducted.

3) A study of requirements and problems of
internet usage in instruction in institutions at high education level should be conducted.

11) REFERENCES


Chatirot Karawake, Saowaporn Muangkaew, Waraporn Tarawanich and Kobkul Sappakitchamnong, (2003), Behaviors and Objectives of Using Internet of Government University Students in Bangkok Metropolitan, Faculty of Education, Kasetsart University. pp.71-75.

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