

The Behavior of Use Social Media to Prevent and Tackle Corruption of Youth in the Central Region*

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Abstract

This research aims to study the behaviors of use social media to prevent and tackle corruption of youths in the central region of Thailand. The researchers employed questionnaires to collect the data from 2,200 youths aged between 15-25 years. The research found that Facebook was the most social media users in the youths' daily life. The best social media should present new contents consistently. The samples of the study wanted to be trained in social media using skills. The best online social media the samples wanted to receive the information related to preventing and fixing corruption from is Facebook. They also wanted the online social media to present information related to corruption prevention and tackle as the daily news.

Keywords: Social Media; Corruption; Youth; the Central Region

*Received April 10 2019; Revised April 22 2019; Accepted August 22, 2019

Introduction

Corruption is the problem faced the nation and the world for a long time. Many organizations in Thailand and international have been trying to prevent and suppress corruption; the members of the United Nations (UN) therefore negotiated the treaty called the United Nations Convention against Corruption (CoSP) in 2003 that aimed to prevent and suppress corruption. Thailand has ratified to be one of the state parties of the convention in 2011 with the strong intention to promote anti-corruption practices throughout the country. The implementation of the CoSP consequently benefits the country's law enforcement sectors in working with other parties to investigate, trial, forfeiture of property, and indict the culprits. This definitely will enhance the social and political stabilities of the country in the future (Office of the Educational Council, 2012).

According to the Council of Europe, corruption is using the state power for private gain, bribery, and misbehaviors of the officials both in government and private organizations (Wannakowit, 2011). In Thailand, corruption was once recognized as malversation meaning the abuse of official functions to gain personal or group benefits as well as using the connections or the conflicts between personal interest and public interest to facilitate oneself and imitates (Wichitwathakan and Anukaensai, 2009). There are many forms of corruption such as using the power of the one to take advantage for oneself or friends, concealing, revealing, or distorting some information to gain private interest as well as using the legal loopholes to make personal profit, and etc. (Royal Institute, 2012). Corruption or malversation is the reason for the negative impacts on society, economy, politic, culture, and lifestyle of people. Unavoidably, it is undermining the stability of the nation.

According to the ranking of Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) conducted by Transparency International or TI in 2012, it was found that Thailand was in the corruption crisis and the problem tended to be worse because of the complicated context that has been obstructing the prosecution to the culprits (Prasart Pongsiwapai, 2014). Moreover, the survey in 3,559 Thai citizens conducted

by Suan Dusit Poll revealed that most of the key informant agreed that Thai people featured a low level of transparency because of the social value had changed and people are valued by objects. We can see that corruption rooted in every circle. The informants pointed out that the main reason for the corruption growth was selfishness, greed, and passion as well as the poor cultivation of morals in children. They also agreed that it was time to raise the awareness of honesty in Thai society since the country had been declining and this would possibly lead to troubles e.g. wrong social value in teenagers. Families, parents, adults, schools, and teachers have to be responsible to cultivate honesty value in children (Suan Dusit Rajabhat University A, 2015)

Besides, the study conducted by Khon Thai Foundation in the project called “Khon Thai” Monitor 2014: Voice of Youth (Youth Today) interviewing 4,000 Thai teenagers aged 15 – 24 years throughout the country the aspects included lifestyles, attitudes, behaviors, needs, and opinion about corruption revealed that 81% of the teenagers cheated in the examinations, 63% of them helped their friends to skip the classes by signing their friends’ name in the book of attendance or ask their friends to do so, and 18 % of them offered the bribe to the police to avoid the police summons. Most of these teenagers did not feel guilty about the above actions; 75% of them felt that cheating was a bit wrong or not wrong meanwhile 38% of them felt the same in giving the bribe to the police to avoid the summons. Furthermore, in the fictitious situation that the teenagers failed the examination to get the driving license, a quarter of the teenagers agreed to pay 500 baht bribe to the officers to get the license (Khon Thai Foundation, 2014).

The previously mentioned circumstance reflects that corruption has rooted deeply in Thai society for a long time. Samrit Yossomsak (2006) stated that corruption is one of the major problems extremely affecting the development of the country. The problem has existed for many years in every field in Thai society and related to lifestyle of Thai citizens. In other words, corruption is a part of Thai culture and it seems to enrage to teenagers who are the main power and the hope for the development of the nation. There is a lot of evidence showing that Thai corruption is normal and acceptable. Some of them even experienced

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corrupting. This is the anxious situation that urgently needs to be prevented and fixed before it is normalized to be a part of the teenager's lifestyle that would severely affect themselves and society.

Thus, every section in the society should work together to prevent and get rid of corruption, promote transparency in Thai society, and provide a better quality of life. It starts with the youths and one of the most powerful tools are communicating right to them as communication is main tool of socialization. The more complicated society is, communication is more important.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to use the right way of communication that access the youth easily. The most suitable one is online communication including data, information technology, photos, multimedia, digital media, or electric media that are interactive and shareable via internet or telephone networks. It is easy for everyone to communicate, present, share, and spread out information to the public by using personal PCs, notebooks, tablets, or smartphones. As a result, the social network is created by communication between people around the world (Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, 2013). In addition, Thai youths spend quite a lot of time on the online social media; the study of Bangkok University (Bangkok Poll) in the topic of "Daily life of youths in the age of online media" collecting the data from the 1,186 youths in Bangkok and nearby provinces indicated that 32.6% of the youths averagely spent their time for online media or online society 3 – 4 hours a day, 19.7% of them spent their time on social media 1 – 2 hours a day, and 17.1% of them spent 5 – 7 hours a day on the social media. This confirms that sending messages to the youths via online social media is the most effective way in this age of information technology, especially the information related to corruption and malversation that need to be more informative and practical.

Objectives

1. To explore the online social media user behavior that helps to prevent and solve the problem of corruption in the group of youths living in the central region of Thailand

2. To explore the needs of online social media to prevent or to solve the problem of corruption in the group of youths living in the central region of Thailand

Review of Literature

Concepts relating to corruption

The scholars have defined corruption as the followings:

Natepanna Yarirat (2006) stated that corruption was any method or action that a person used to gain unfair private interest and there would be the victims from such action e.g. telling a lie to covert the fact, using tricks to cheat others, or action of a person or group of people to gain money, benefits, any other services by cheating, concealing the fact, or other manners against the rules or regulations in the organizations.

From the above definition, the fraud or taking advantage from property or services of the organization where a person is working for that does not cover the benefits of people outside the organization such as fraud done the customers not affecting the organization in terms of property and reputation or fraud between people without connivance of the organization show that a person lack of morality, not the organization.

The actions reflect corruption in the organizations includes embezzlement of property in the organizations, espionage of stuff in the companies or factories, stealing the property for sale, creating false evident e.g. document of issue materials or money, forgery signatures or documents, receiving bribery from others, or leaving to working with the competitive company and reveal the confidential information of the ex-company to the enemy.

The hypothesis of corruption is originated by different factors. It can take place everywhere, in every age, every educational background, and every commanding level. Cheating people are clever and cautious beyond our imagination. Corruption takes place in the situation that contributes people to corrupt e.g. the society full of materialism or consumerism. These circumstances motivate people to cheat, to conspire to cheat and to conceal cheating.

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Ussana Pattaramontri (2006) defined corruption as any method or action of any person with the intention to gain unfair benefits and there was always a victim affected by that action including telling a lie to conceal the truth or using trickery to betray others.

Sinlapaporn Srichanpet and Thammarat Torpipat (1998) stated that corruption is a dishonest action intending to betray for the benefits against the laws for one or others. It includes distorting the truth. Besides, it also means the misusing of resources in the organization for the private gain of the executives, staff or others.

The study of corruption in the Thai government organization in 2001 revealed the particularities of corruption as the followings:

1. Corruption is the minor culture of a group of people.
2. Corruption has the appropriate way to exist and grow.
3. Corruption can be done in many ways.
4. Corruption is complicated and hard to understand thoroughly.
5. Corruption features violating, avoiding, distorting, motivating, claiming, intimidating, detaining, defaming for the benefit of a person or group of people.
6. Corruption is the consent, connivance, neglecting or not performing the duty, embezzling the government properties, and counterfeiting or any false actions
7. Using the power of the position to act or neglect, force, motivate and ask for properties or benefits for one and others.
8. The commitment to the officials is the act of corruption performed by a natural person.
9. The actions against morals or ethics, for example, the case that the senior soldiers ordering the draftees or the officials to work for their personal affairs or getting returns from their positions.

Concepts of Online Media

Online media is an electric media facilitating communication between the senders and the receivers via online media every time and everywhere. It also

contributes to the interactions between the senders and the receivers; or even between the receivers themselves. The members of online society feature types of interaction and social network. The followings are the definition of online society by scholars:

The Royal Institute (2011) defined online social network as a group of people communicating via social media. Apart from sharing news and information, they also join activities they are interested together.

Natthaporn Makudomlap (2011) pointed out that online media was a social network on the internet where users share their common interests, stories, and experiences in websites as the channel for communication.

Tippawan Khanthana (2011) said that online society was the society connected by the internet. It focuses on creating social relationship between people who share common interest, favors, ideology, or doing activities together via the website where they can interact with each other.

It could say that online society is a group of people using online media to share what they are interested, photos, VDO clips, information, messages, or to start the conversation via Social Network Sites including web boards, Facebook, or Twitter.

Methodology

Population and Samples

The population in this study was the youths aging 15 – 25 years old living in the central part of Thailand and using at least 5 hours online social media weekly from the central provinces of Thailand including Angthong, Phra Nakhon Sri Ayutthaya, Bangkok, Chainat, Kampeangpet, Lopburi, Nakhon Nayok, Nakhon Sawan, Nonthaburi, Pathumthani, Petchaboon, Pichit, Pitsanulok, Sukhothai, Samutprakarn, Samutsakorn, Samutsongkram, Saraburi, Singburi, Supanburi, and Utaithani.

The samples were the youths aging 15 – 25 years old in the central province of Thailand who spent at least 5 hours a week on online social media, the population was uncertain. The researchers randomly selected the samples

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by cluster random sampling by setting the equal ratio of the samples in each province at 100 youths in each province, total 2,200 youths in 22 provinces.

Research Instrument

The research instrument employed in this study was the questionnaire of behaviors and needs of the youths in the central provinces of Thailand to use online social media to prevent and tackle corruption which could be divided into 3 parts including:

Part 1: The behaviors and needs of the youths to use online social media to receive news and information to prevent and tackle corruption. The questionnaire features 26 questions with the answers to select.

Part 2: The questionnaire of 15 questions with 5 level of Likert scales

Part 3: Questionnaire in the perception of solution to prevent and tackle the corruption which is 20 questions with 5 level rating scales.

Data Collection

The researchers collected data from the youths in the central provinces by accidental random. The researchers visited every province and spent 2 months to complete data collection.

Data Analysis

The statistic used in this study is the descriptive statistic to primary analyze the data and to explain the characteristics of what needed to explore including the maximum value, the minimum value, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

Results

Most of the samples were female, 1,294 or 58.8%, male, 906 or 41.2%. The majority of them aged 19 – 21 years old, 976 or 44.4%, 22 – 25 years old, 29.9%, 15 – 18 years old 24.0%, and unidentified age 1.7%. They were mostly university students, 969 or 44.0%, secondary students, 16.8%, graduates, 16.0%, and unidentified educational level, 8.9%. There were 1,462 samples, 67.8% who were the students, 8.1% of them own private business, 4.7% of them working in state enterprises, and 9.2% of them did not mention about their occupations.

It is found that the samples mostly use Facebook 26.4%, Line 23.4%, Youtube, 18.4% and Instagram, 12.8% respectively. The use of smartphones to connect to social media, 43.1%, followed by computers, 21.8%, notebooks, 20.5%, and tablet, 13.7% respectively. There was 80.4% of the samples used social media every day, 7.8% of them used social media 5 – 6 days a week, 5.2% of the samples spent 3-4 days a week on social media, and 4.7% of them rarely connected the social media. There was 70.0 % of the samples having more than 3-year experience in online social media, 23.0% of them had 1 – 3year experience, 5.9% of the samples having less than 1 online social media experience respectively. The majority of the samples spent more than 3 hours on online social media each day, 63.3%, more than 2 - 3 hours, 13.7%, more than 1 – 2 hours, 11.3%, and 30 minutes – 1 hour, 8.0% respectively. The samples always use online social media during 4.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m., 25.6%, 12.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m., 25.0%, 8.00 a.m. – 12.00 a.m. 23.4%, and 8.00 p.m. – 12.00 p.m., 19.2%.

There were 31.9% of the samples using online social media at home. Meanwhile, 25.1% of them spending time on online social media via smartphones, schools, and internet cafes for 25.1%, 19.6%, and 13.4% respectively. The online media was mostly used to connect with friends, 43.1%, families, 30.8%, schools, 17.7% and strangers, 8.4%. Besides, it is found that the samples used the online social media as the learning channel or expanding learning opportunity, 22.7%, develop self-learning, 20.9%, promote learning beyond classroom, 14.1% and increase more learning channel, 13.1%. The online social media was a channel for them to connect with friends, 19.3%, update personal information and pictures, 17.4%, finding new friends and following the news of artists and celebrities, 10.2% respectively.

According to the opinions of the samples, the good online media should be the source of new information, 19.7%, the information from the online media should be practical, 18.2%, the information should be correct, 14.2%, and the information should be easy to understand, 11.2%, respectively. To promote the usage of online social media, the majority of the samples felt that training was the best way to promote effective and appropriate use of online social media,

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34.2%, provide the activities to promote online social media between the youths and their parents, 25.6%, provide the area where the youths can use online social media in a safe and creative ways (White Internet Area), 18.3%, and build up online social media learning network under the concept of “Friends teach friends” to create the learning society, 15.25%, respectively.

Apart from these, the interview with the experts in corruption prevention and tackle, it is found that 90.8% of the school included the subject focusing on corruption prevention and tackle, while 9.1% of the schools did not provide such subject for their students. In the schools or university where the samples are studying, 86.0% of the schools launched activities to promote corruption prevention and tackle for their students, meanwhile, 13.9% of the schools do not provide any anti-corruption campaign for their students. Furthermore, it is found that in the schools the samples studying, there were the discussions and opinion sharing about corruption prevention and tackle, 87.0%, however there were 12.8% of the schools where discussions, opinion sharing related to anti-corruption campaign never take place. Most of the samples followed the news related to corruption and corruption prevention and tackle, 87.4%, while 12.6% of them are not interested in such news.

The majority of the samples experienced or heard about corruption in government officers, 12.4%, policy corruption, bias using of policy, laws, rules, and regulations, 12.3%, giving and offering bribery, 9.9%, and extortion and offering temptations, 9.5%, respectively. Moreover, only 2.7% of the samples have heard about corruption by the destruction of government power investigation system. Most of them followed the news related to corruption on TV, 28.9%, newspaper, 21.6%, internet, 19.8%, and online social network, 16.0%, respectively. The online social media that the samples acknowledge news of corruption were Facebook, 26.2%, followed by Youtube, 19.1%, Instagram, 18.7%, and Line, 14.4%, respectively. The samples wanted the sources of the news to present the corruption news as the daily news, 40.3%, as the tales, 22.8%, as the academic content, 19.6%, and as the case study, respectively.

Discussion

From the result of the study in online social media user behavior, it is found that the majority of the youths living in the central part of Thailand used several types of online social media including Facebook, Line, Youtube, and Instagram. They connected to those online social media via smartphones, computers, notebooks, and tablets daily for more than 3 hours during the day. As the most frequently used online social media, Facebook gains popularity because of the concept to build the community of old friends as well as finding new friends. The application features interaction via messages comments and it also manages the close communication that the users can experience (Boyd and Ellison, 2007 referred in Kasemchainan, 2011). Similar to Williamson (2013 referred in Wichitboonyarak, 2011) stated that online social media was a tool working on the internet that people could access, coordinated, and interacted with others such as people or businesses as they had selected. Online social media can be divided into several categories including Blogging, Twitter and Microblogging, Social Networking, and Media Sharing. The reasons that these online social media are getting more popular are that they are easy to use, reach a large number of people, and fast to interact and share opinion. Moreover, the content shared in these online social media are diverse and the consistent development of communication technology and internet (Wichitboonyarak, 2011). This is correspondent to the study of Siam Internet Poll Research Centre in communication through online social media of the youths in Bangkok, the samples of the study were 1,135 youths aging 15 – 25 years old. The result of the study reveals that 5 important reasons the samples used online social media were large target accessible in the same time and in a short time, 88.14%, no travel needed but connected to several groups of people at the same time, 87.02%, having varied communicating channels, 83.65%, being able to send pictures, VDO clips, messages, 82.37%, and free, 80.29%. The online social networks which are most popular among the samples were Facebook, 80.26%, Twitter, 76.92%, and Youtube, 71.37% (Daily News, 2013).

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The samples used online social media to connect with people they know, update personal information, photos, find new friends, and follow news about their favorite artist and celebrities with the intention to show people their personal interests. This is similar to the concept related to communication behavior indicating that communicating behavior of people was influenced by thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Expressing the feeling to friends in the same social network is a response to the mental need of people on the basic interest of people agreed to be in the same social network, therefore, communication could take place effectively as well as self-acceptance of people in the network.

In addition, even there were contents or subjects related to corruption prevention and tackle in schools or universities, most of the youths did not realize bad effects of corruption because of the changing social value that people paid more attention to objects. It could say that corruption took place in every circle of society. Children have not been cultivated in anti-corruption. Hence, it is the responsibility of families, parents, schools, and teachers to implant honesty in their children. In same way, Dusit Poll's survey in opinion of 2,032 parents, teachers, and citizens nationwide revealed that most of the corruption in Thai youths were related to cheating on examinations or copying homework. The possible reasons for such behaviour are the more extravagant society and environment, therefore, adults have to be to role model for the youths to live in the honest way (Suan Dusit Rajabhat University, 2012)

Recommendations

Recommendations for Practice

1. The academic institutes can use this study as the guideline to develop the curriculum raising awareness of corruption prevention and tackle in youths studying in secondary schools to university. The key is that the teachers have to realize the bad effects of corruption on the country and provide anti-corruption activities to raise awareness among the students consistently.

2. Marketers or public relation officers working on spreading the news via online media have to the platform for information presentation that directly reach

the samples and the presentation should be done consistently as a part of the youths' routine.

3. Both government and private sectors have to be responsible for giving information related to anti-corruption campaign not only to the online media, but also the original media such as radio stations, TV channels, or newspapers.

4. Promoting the learning of Self Sufficiency Economy that possibly prevents the youths from materialism the origin of corruption. This is time-consuming and has to be done consecutively in every system of the society under the strong connection between the Sender and the Receiver in every part of the society.

Recommendation for Further Study

There should be the follow-up study in every 3 – 5 year due to social context and youths possibly changed by the future communication technology, therefore, the further study should be done in the different groups of youth.

Acknowledgment

Thank you, Political Development Council, Phra Pok Klao Institute for supporting researching fund for the Study of Cultivation for Corruption Prevention and Tackle by Online Social Media in the Youths Living in the Central Part of Thailand; this journal is a part of the study.

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