

# Media and Information Literacy (MIL) for Thai Youths

Waralak Vongdoiwang Siricharoen, Nattanun Siricharoen

**Abstract**—The objectives of this study are to determine the role of media that influence the values, attitudes and behaviors of Thai youths. Analytical qualitative research techniques were used for this purpose. Data collection based techniques was used which were individual interviews and focus group discussions with journalists, sample of high school and university students, and parents. The results show that “Social Media” is still the most popular media for Thai youths. It is also still in the hands of the marketing business and it can motivate Thai youths to do so many things. The main reasons of media exposure are to find quality information that they want quickly, get satisfaction and can use social media to get more exciting and to build communities. They believe that the need for media and information literacy skills is defined as making judgments, personal integrity, training of family and the behavior of close friends.

**Keywords**—Media and Information Literacy, Making Judgments, Personal integrity, Behavior of close friends

## I. INTRODUCTION

IN Thailand, There were many studies of influence media from organizations such as Educational Institution, Media Institutions which studied of the influence of mass media and they were affected to the minds and behavior of the Thai youths especially in the habit of imitating. Media have the power to shape the opinion and beliefs of teenagers and society. The example of research about young people who watch TV, they are 1,000 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who lived in Chiang Mai, it showed the number of children who imitated the words and behavior of the TV 77.6 percent [1]. From research and academic work related to the media showed the influence of the media towards attitude, behavior, and a way of life for all people. Now, the most popular media for Thai youths is the internet, social media, and email such as sanook, kapook, mthai, exteen, dek-d, Facebook, Blogs etc.

A survey of media habits of children and Thai youths by ABAC Poll showed the significant influence of media on children and Thai youths. A case study in 2011 of the children age of 12 - 24 years founded that 90.5 percent following the news on television and the "Internet" as a second source of information on children and Thai youths accounting for 81.4 percent. Publication of newspapers in the third 42.5 percent, mobile phone / SMS 30.9 percent, radio 23.1 percent and 18.7 percent of the magazine (Table I).

W. V. Siricharoen, Author is a lecturer at School of Science and Technology, University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, 126/1 Vipavadeerangsit Rd., Dindang, Bangkok, 10400 Thailand.(e-mail: waralak\_von@utcc.ac.th).

N. Siricharoen, Author is a lecturer at the Faculty of Communication Arts Huachiew Chalermprakiet University 18/18,Bangna-Trad Road, k.m.18, Bangplee District, Samut Prakarn, 10540, Thailand. (e-mail: nattanun2004@yahoo.com).

TABLE I  
ABAC POLL THAILAND  
A survey of media habits of children and Thai youths  
Case study of the age of 12 - 24 years in 2011

Num ber	Media	Percent
1.	Television	90.5
2.	Internet	81.4
3.	Newspapers	42.5
4.	Mobile Phone / SMS	30.9
5.	Radio	23.1
6.	Magazine	18.7

The results of the survey pointed out that “hot media” are still popular with young people are the new media: Internet, Mobile Phone and SMS have been increasing in popularity, because they can access the information at any time. Media Influences effect young people's lives. The phenomenon of communication needs to be carefully considered with how they handle. The media may build young people's attitudes, values and behavior in a way that would be untrue or corrupted. The mass media control the information about the world and it can influence our ideas and societies. The following example; the problem occurs as individual level, attitudes, behavior, personal gratification, extravagant idea.

Moreover, lack of kindness and generosity, some people become aggressive. Problems in the family may not be understood. The gap between the idea of family members, parents, and sometimes they become disorganized and invaded because children absorb the opinions or behavior from the media. Many times conflicts with the family or school are not satisfied and so on. Enormous problems in society trends that showed on the media, they are not suitable for children, youth groups. The flow of information and communication technology, modern art film has become increasing. Cause of malnutrition among children and young people can be affected in the long run. National Bureau of Statistics survey found that people who smoke 9 of 10 people who regularly drink 3 of 4 people start smoking and drinking as a juvenile [2]. Situations and problems, as mentioned above, found that "the media" and "information" have influence bad behavior on children and youth such as unhealthy actions, indiscipline in life, etc. For the studies about overall of the youths found that they are lack of learning, lack of guidance on the accuracy and adequacy, etc. Therefore, the development of knowledge about media and information literacy (MIL) on Thai children and youth are likely to be another important mechanism to discipline the introduction of guidance from all sectors or related organizations to be more effective.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### A. Research questions

1. What is the situation about "Media and Information for Thai children and youths" of today?
2. What are the factors of life skills about "Media and Information for Thai children and youths"?

### B. Research purposes

1. To learn more about the present situation "Media and Information for Thai children and youths."
2. To develop knowledge "Media and Information for Thai children and youths."
3. To identify factors of life skills about "Media and Information for Thai children and youths."

### C. Research Areas

Thai children and youths between the ages of 12-25 years old are the research samples. Media mentioned in this research are including radio, television, print, and Internet. The issues are related to values, attitudes and behaviors.

The concept of Media Literacy is a technical term in the mass media, occurring in widespread used in Canada and the United States. Some countries in Europe and Japan, can be called the media studies, media education, and media literacy. It is a concept that has been recognized internationally. As stated in the communication strategy of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), which is about the concept of "promoting freedom of expression and capacity building, access to information and knowledge across the screen and equal "with the principles stated by "The behavior for the media to a higher level", the member countries of UNESCO has responded to this principle and to be driven in the country. For Thailand, Media and Information Literacy (MIL) has been an interesting topic for more than 10 years and still continue to deliver to the youths all over the nation. Principles for media analysis, there are 6 skills to be taken into the consideration that are followings: Media Agencies, Media Languages, Media Audiences, Media Representations, Media Technologies, and Media Categories. These skills will help children and youths to analyze the information from the media. The opinion of many experts shows that MIL should provide as a curriculum in schools. And teaching materials should be distributed to teachers and students across the country.

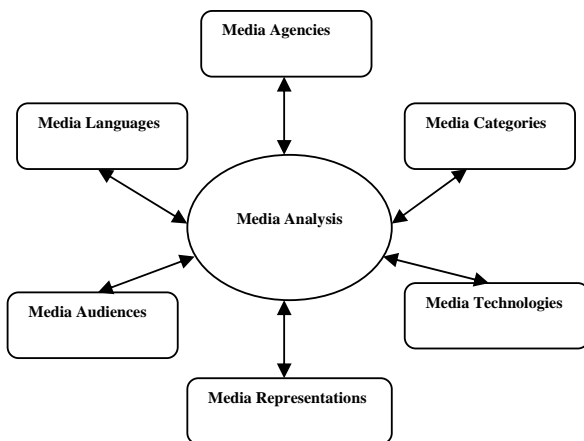


Fig. 1 Key Concept Model of Media Analysis  
(from: Porntip Yenjabok, 2011 <http://www.milthailand.org/>)

Table II represents the work processes within the four dimensions. The ability to know the influence of the media, it will be a peer of the work processes within the four dimensions that works together very well, i.e.

TABLE II  
THE WORK PROCESSES WITHIN THE FOUR DIMENSIONS

1. Awareness
2. Emotions
3. Music or Aesthetics
4. Moral

#### Dimension 1: Awareness

They are the processes of thinking, analyzing, recognizing from the contents.. It requires a basic knowledge that is good enough in order to summarize them.

#### Dimension 2: Emotions

Emotions as a result of media exposure that depends on the sensitivity to understand what the media tries to make people feel more involved at least just for fun. Some people may or may not express emotion. But some of them are very emotionally involved.

#### Dimension 3: Music or Aesthetics

The ability to understand the power of music or aesthetics depends on brain and creative potential. The art and science must be learned over and over again in order to deeply understand and appreciate them.

#### Dimension 4: Moral

Moral culture is the foundation of society. Some media will be presented to destroy moral. The moral framework intended for the good of society and it is necessary for maintain the value in the media. For example, content of dramatic scenes, an improper sexual relationship, film presentation of a fight were brutally abused by the media.

### III. MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY

Information literacy is the life-long learning of the youth life skills. These are the key elements of the skills for information literacy

1. The awareness of the needs of information or recognize information needs is to know what information they require.
2. The ability to access it and quality assess. The reliability of the information locates and evaluates the quality of information. The information they need can be obtained from any source.
3. The ability to store search and information sources as they want which are stored and retrieve information. It is the knowledge and skills to be stored. And used more efficiently.
4. The ability to effectively use information in accordance with the ethics of the society, it makes effective and ethical use of information.
5. The ability is to apply information technology to communicate effectively and apply information to create and communicate knowledge.

Knowledge in the media behaviors, UNESCO has created a course to learn the behaviors from the media and information literacy (Media and information Literacy: MIL) in order to the guide learner to understand how the media work and integrate of component parts and technology.

Thailand as a member of UNESCO have been introduced such courses. The guide is designed for teachers involved in developing for the children.

These courses are created according to each country's media culture, because the differences of effect and influences of media in their countries. Assistant Professional Dr. Pornthip Yenjabog (2011), the MIL project leader said "The preparation of course materials and information for teachers is to know the media behaviors and to brainstorm how to make good courses for teaching students in schools. We have principles or guidelines for the children and youths for learning and can analysis MIL in basic."

The five factors of Media Literacy Body of knowledge of Thai society are followings: (Fig. 2)

1. Media Exposure
2. Media Analysis
3. Understanding Media
4. Media Evaluation
5. Media Benefits

Wilasini Adulyanon (2011), Director of Campaigns and Communications Society. Department of Health Promotion (Promotion Foundation) provides that "in the collaboration between the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology and Ministry of Education with the support from UNESCO to help the people of this course, everyone has the ability to learn the media themselves. The MIL program is to make a concrete individual, social, nation change."

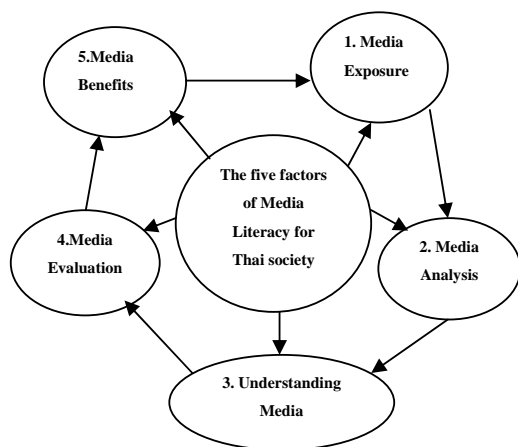


Fig. 2 The five factors of Media Literacy Body of knowledge of Thai society

Internet is the new media and its power and influence in the lives of the people is enormous. The Media and information literacy especially the "internet", it is very important for all the family because the young age who usually have high energy so they want to channel it out in some ways. The internet has been gaining popularity among young people, in much slower pace than television and radio.

In spite of significant differences among the developed and developing world, the use of computers and the internet is rising steadily, fastest among young men.

That there are many more computer-literate young people than adults indicates the younger generation's greater interest in and aptitude for technological advances. Around the world, young users are increasingly turning to the internet as a source of information, communication, socializing and entertainment.

At the same time, web access is the source of the greatest divide, both between countries (internet use in industrialized countries far more use in the developing world), and within countries (internet use concentrated among wealthier and better-educated urban youth).

Nevertheless, even in countries where internet and computer use is low, young people actively seek access whenever possible, most often in internet cafes. Young people are enthusiastic about the internet because, more than any other medium, it helps them establish contact with the outside world and freely seek information. Perhaps it is 'free' access to information that also accounts for the higher levels of trust young people (and adults as well) often place in information on the web than in information from traditional media.

The Situation of Media Literacy Body of Knowledge around the World, United States is one of the driving skills to media literacy that has been building since grade school children and youth. Since American society is a society that has been a wealth of information from the media. The television is more than other types of media even the news media with the same content. As Americans, we tend to focus on. "A picture is presented through the media" rather than a chemical method. The United States is focused on skills training for youth media behavior of the United States itself.

Hampel, J. S., Wharton, C. M., Taylor, C. A., Winham, D. M., Block, J. L. and Hall, R. (2004) [3] conducted a research on the impact of television viewing during prime-time with a sense of youth in the areas of body weight. The sexual attractions and consumptions of foods and beverages, the purpose is to determine whether teens are using television and the impact of television, however. A survey research data collection via the Internet by students aged 12-19 years, 524 people in the United States. The results show that

One of the Pew Internet Project [4] report reveals that 93% of teen's ages 12-17 go online, as do 93% of young adult's ages 18-29. Three quarters (74%) of all adults ages 18 and older go online. Over the past ten years, teens and young adults have been consistently the two groups most likely to go online. From the collection of information, shows those teens and young adults' ages 12-29 are using the internet a lot. We need to keep this young people exposure to these and negatively impact the health and education. And another survey of teens and adults reveal a decline in blogging among teens and young adults and a modest rise among adults 30 and older. In 2006, 28% of teens ages 12-17 and young adults ages 18-29 were bloggers, but by 2009 the numbers had dropped to 14% of teens and 15% of young adults. During the same period, the percentage of online adults over thirty who were bloggers rose from 7% blogging in 2006 to 11% in 2009. Although the Internet has consistent positive impacts on modern society, it has also caused various societal concerns about privacy, security, pornography, Internet crime, and

virtual community. [5] Its easy accessibility poses greater risks and dangers for youth as compared to other forms of media. According to the National Altitudinal Poll, the number one media concern for parents has shifted from television to the Internet: 85% of parents reported that among all forms of media, the Internet posed the greatest risk to their children. [6] Parental concerns are valid, especially considering that teens are essentially free to view and post whatever they choose and communicate with whomever they want.

Based on the information presented, Trends can be seen that the hot new media or hot media. The trend has spread to a similar group of young people around the world. The result is that every family, every institution, every organization and all sectors must work together to help each other to create awareness of and protection to youth. The life skills are very important for analysis and logical thinking, synthesis and screening of useful information to themselves and others.

The results of qualitative research for Media and Information literacy skills in Table III for Thai youths are;

TABLE III  
MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS

1. Making judgments
2. Personal integrity
3. Training of family
4. The behavior of close friends

“Making judgments” is a part of everyday life, as you often come to conclusions about media and information you see. The decisions you make can have a drastic impact on your life, opportunities and personal perception, but having a strategy when making decisions will teach you how to make better judgments along the way. The judgment is not arbitrary. The word judgment itself is used to describe a process of assessment exercised before making a decision or taking an action. Some young people possess better judgment than others. That is, they are able to think like a chess player who is able to see consequences of actions several moves ahead. A person with good judgment is able to evaluate a group of data and make a decision to act in a particular way such that to increase the probability of a positive result [7].

“Personal integrity” is the quality of being honest with yourself and others, and living a life that is aligned with your moral principles. Developing personal integrity requires examining your beliefs and value system, and taking conscious steps to behave in ways that are consistent with your personal moral code. Suppose then the questions [8];

1. Is personal integrity a basic human instinct, or is something that is taught by parents, neighbors, teachers or others?
2. Is it something that can be learned through observation or discipline?
3. What if you were born without it?

“Training of family” is trained to the concentrate. Taught to know and consider all the things in the media and information. Taught to be suspicious and do not believe it easily. Practice and patience are for the media restraint in sexual provocation and violence. A close imitation is for the behavior or values that the media is not good.

“The behavior of close friends”: Behavior is almost contagious among teenagers. Good behavior by peers can spread through the group. But bad behavior can also be modeled. “The influence that friends exert over one another as teenagers is clearly powerful and, far too often, undesirable,” says Mitch Prinstein [April 11, 2011] director of clinical psychology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and editor of the Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology.

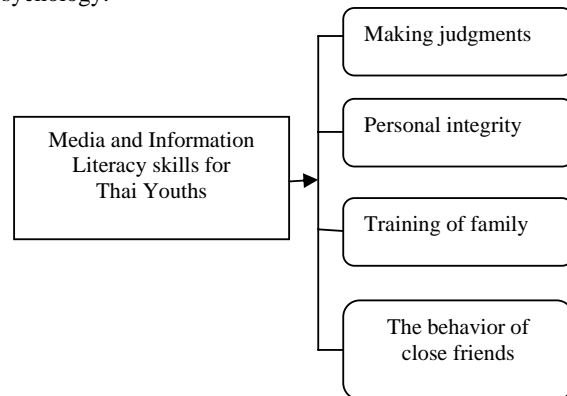


Fig. 3 Media and Information Literacy skills for Thai Youths

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

From individual interviews and focus group discussions in Table VI with journalist's comments are Media should be responsible in providing information to young people.

Sample of high school and university students' comments are all media types had implanted material, sexual and more violent. Parents' comments are: all parents have the feeling that social media networks are the important media and becoming a serious concern for young people to do the bad behaviors.

TABLE VI  
FROM INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Sample	Comments
Journalists	Media should be responsible in providing information to young people than it is
High school and University students	All media types had implanted material, sexual and more violent All parents have the feeling that social media networks are the important media and becoming a serious concern for young people to go in the wrong way
Parents	

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Monchai Ninnatanon reported research. *The influence of television on the youth in the district town; Chiang Mai*: Department of Mass Communication. Faculty of Humanities University, 1983
- [2] Supreya Adulyanon *Mobilize young people do not have tens of thousands of these ads*. Source: Bangkok. Business Day, September 16, 2005. [Online] Resources:<http://www.thainhf.org/index.php?module=article&page=detail&id=13>.
- [3] Hampl JS, Wharton CM, Taylor CA, Winham DM, Block JL, Hall R. Primetime television impacts adolescents' impressions of body weight, sex appeal, and food and beverage consumption. *Nutrition Bulletin*. 2004;29:92-98.
- [4] Pew Research Center (2004) *Teen and Young Adult Internet Use*. <http://pewresearch.org/millennials/teen-internet-use-graphic.php>

- [5] Greenfield, P. & Yan, Z. (2006). *Children, adolescents, and the Internet: A new field of inquiry in developmental psychology*. Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 42 (3), 391-394
- [6] Common Sense Media [www.commonsense.com/](http://www.commonsense.com/)
- [7] Dreyfus, E.A. Using Judgment, Making Judgments, Being Judgmental. Clinical Psychology. [Online] Resources:<http://www.docdreyfus.com/psychologicallyspeaking/psychology/using-judgment-making-judgments-being-judgmental/>
- [8] RKHenry. *What is Personal Integrity*. 2012 [Online] Resources: <http://rkhenry.hubpages.com/hub/What-is-Personal-Integrity>