



Behavior of Social Media Usage for Working and Information Perception of the Director, Primary Level of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Lao People's Democratic Republic

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Abstract

This research focuses on studying and comparing the behavior of people using social media for work and information perception between Director of Division and Deputy Director of Division at the Director, Primary Level of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) and studies their interest to receive news and information through social media on quantitative approach. An online survey on 77 people was carried out using questionnaires on Google Form from October 2023 to January 2024. The data were examined and illustrated according to the frequency, percentile, average and standard deviation. Moreover, the independent-samples T-test for differential analysis with a statistical significance at 0.05. The results of the research showed that 83.12% of combined total used WhatsApp for working and information perception. The comparative results of the hypothesis testing between Director of Division and Deputy Director of Division show that five of the social media usage habits were similar with a statistical significance at 0.05. However, the "Frequency of Media Use" part was varying. Besides these, 92.21% of candidates chose to receive online information, 48.05% preferred to receive via Facebook and 55.84% preferred to receive information in infographic format.

Keywords: Information perception; Lao PDR; Social Media Use; Standard Deviation

INTRODUCTION

Social media has increasingly become essential not only as a source of income but also in shaping work practices and information perception. Platforms like LinkedIn, Instagram, and TikTok provide opportunities for professionals and businesses to monetize content, enhance brand visibility, and engage with audiences more effectively. According to a study by Kapoor et al. (2022) the use of social media in professional settings has significantly improved networking, job opportunities, and career growth. Additionally, research by Zhu and Chen (2023) highlights that social media plays a crucial role in how individuals perceive and process information, with algorithms tailored to user preferences impacting the dissemination and reception of news and professional content. This dual role of social media underscores its critical importance in modern work environments and information ecosystems, facilitating both economic gains and influencing public and professional discourse.

Enhancing social media usage for work and information perception has become increasingly vital in the digital age. Recent studies highlight the benefits of strategic social media engagement for professional development and effective communication. For instance, Smith (2022) found that professionals who actively use platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter for networking and knowledge sharing experience significant career advancements and increased job opportunities. Moreover, research by Johnson and Wang (2022) reveals that curated social media feeds can improve information perception by providing tailored content that aligns with users' interests and professional needs. This targeted approach helps users stay informed about industry trends and best practices, ultimately enhancing their work performance and decision-making abilities. By leveraging these insights, individuals and organizations can optimize their social media strategies to foster professional growth and informed information consumption.

The behavior of social media usage for work and information perception among directors, primary level of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Lao PDR serves as a model for effective digital engagement in educational administration. A recent study by Phonexay et al. (2023) found that these directors utilize platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp to streamline communication, share educational resources, and stay updated with policy changes. Their strategic use of social media not only enhances administrative efficiency but also fosters a collaborative environment among educators. Additionally, research by Nguyen and Tran (2022) indicates that social media can significantly improve information perception, allowing directors to access a diverse range of insights and best practices from global education communities. This model of social media usage demonstrates the potential for digital tools to transform educational leadership and information dissemination, promoting more informed decision-making and proactive management in the education sector.

Researching the behavior of social media usage for work and information perception among directors at the primary level of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Lao PDR is essential for several reasons. It helps identify how these leaders can optimize their use of digital tools to enhance communication, streamline administrative tasks, and improve access to educational resources. By understanding their social media behaviors, we can develop strategies to support more effective and efficient leadership within the education sector. Additionally, insights from such research can guide the development of training programs and policies that empower directors to stay informed and make better decisions, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes for students and schools in the region.

OBJECTIVES

This study aims to examine the behavior of the Director, Primary Level of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Lao PDR, regarding their use of social media for work-related purposes and information awareness. Additionally, this research seeks to analyze and compare the behavior of these directors, primary level in using social media at work and their information perception, categorized by job title. Furthermore, the objective of this study is to investigate the factors influencing directors, primary level in their decision to receive news through social media.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted at Ministry of Education and Sports, Lao PRD, following ethical clearance from the Kasetsart University Research and Development institute (KURDI). Quantitative approach by using questionnaires on Google Form from October 2023 to January 2024. A simple random sample of 77 participants was drawn, 34 Director of Division and 43 Deputy Director of Division. The survey utilized a specially designed, close-ended questionnaire validated by experienced subject experts for content accuracy (Somchai, 2000).

The questionnaire was divided into two parts: the personal information section comprised four questions aimed at gauging participants' fundamental knowledge, while the second section included fifteen questions regarding their social media usage patterns related to work and information perception (Aphiwat, 2021; Atthaphon, 2017). Along with the questionnaire, participants were provided with an information sheet and an informed consent form. Consent was secured from all participants after outlining the study's objectives, and responses were gathered with a commitment to maintaining participant anonymity. Participants were urged to complete all questions.

All 77 questionnaires were completed achieving a 100% response rate. Data were tabulated using Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were examined and illustrated according to the frequency, percentile, average and standard deviation. Moreover, the independent-samples T-test for differential analysis, with the level of significance set at $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS

The distribution of the 77 study participants according to personal information, Behavior of Social media usage and Comparison of the average value of social media usage behavior by job position are presented in Table below.

Table 1 Demographic Data (Frequency Distribution and Percentage)

Personal information	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
26-35	3	3.90
36-45	49	63.60
46-54	22	28.60

Personal information	Frequency	Percentage
> 55	3	3.90
Education		
Below bachelor's degree	1	1.30
Bachelor's Degree	23	29.90
Master's degree	46	59.70
Doctoral degree	7	9.10
Working life in the organization		
6-10	4	5.20
11-15	22	28.60
16-20	21	27.30
21-25	24	31.20
> 26	6	7.80
Careers in the organization		
Director of Division	34	44.20
Deputy Director of Division	43	55.80

Table 2 Frequency and Percentage of Behavior of Social media usage for Working and Information perception of participants

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage
The most used communication devices?		
Computer Desktop	15	19.48
Computer Notebook	4	5.19
Tablet /iPad	4	5.19
Smart Phone	54	70.13
The most popular social media for work?		
Facebook	5	6.49
Instagram	0	0.00
WhatsApp	64	83.12
TikTok	0	0.00
Line	3	3.90
WeChat	0	0.00
YouTube	5	6.49
Twitter	0	0.00
Purpose of using social media at work?		
To communicate at work.	70	90.91
For information awareness.	66	85.71
To search for information.	47	61.04
To build a social network	29	37.66

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage
For modernity and up to date	27	35.06
How often do you use social media for work?		
every day	64	83.12
1-2 days at a time	3	3.90
3-4 days at a time	8	10.39
5-6 days at a time	2	2.60
Once a week.	0	0.00
Social media usage time?		
06:00 - 08:00 a.m.	29	37.66
08:01 - 10:00 a.m.	40	51.95
10:01 a.m. - 12:00 a.m.	32	41.56
12:01 - 13:00 p.m.	42	54.55
13:01 - 16:00 p.m.	41	53.25
16:01 - 19:00 p.m.	29	37.66
19:01 - 22:00 p.m.	29	37.66
22:01 - 00:00 p.m.	11	14.29
00:01 - 02:00 a.m.	0	0.00
02:01 - 04:00 a.m.	0	0.00
04:01 - 05:59 a.m.	2	2.60
Average time spent on social media?		
Up to 30 minutes	9	11.69
30 minutes - 1 hour	21	27.27
1-2 hours	22	28.57
2-3 hours	12	15.58
3-4 hours	6	7.79

Table 3 Comparison of the average value of social media usage behavior by job position

Social media usage habits	Deputy of Division		Deputy Head of Department		t	P-value	Test Results Between groups
	\bar{x}	S.D.	\bar{x}	S.D.			
Communication devices	3.18	1.24	3.33	1.21	- 0.531	0.597	No difference
Popular types of social media	5.94	2.04	6.53	1.43	- 1.436	0.156	No difference
Purpose of Use of Media	3.00	1.37	0.63	1.25	- 0.619	0.538	No difference
Frequency of media use	1.68	1.00	1.05	0.30	3.523	0.001*	Difference
Media Active Moments	3.06	1.61	3.51	1.84	- 1.130	0.262	No difference

Social media usage habits	Deputy of Division		Deputy Head of Department		t	P-value	Test Results Between groups
	\bar{x}	S.D.	\bar{x}	S.D.			
Average time spent on media	2.88	1.34	3.30	1.55	-1.252	0.215	No difference

Note: * Represents a statistical value with a statistical significance of 0.05.

Table 4 Frequency and Percentage of participants preferred to receive information

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage
Media reception channels?		
Online	71	92.21
Offline	6	7.79
Categories of media demanded via online platforms?		
Infographic	43	55.84
Electronic Book	4	5.19
Video	24	31.17
Determining the appropriate social media platforms for accessing various media categories?		
Facebook	37	48.05
Instagram	1	1.30
WhatsApp	17	22.08
TikTok	5	6.49
Line	0	0.00
WeChat	0	0.00
YouTube	10	12.99
Twitter	0	0.00
Types of categories of media through offline channel?		
Poster	0	0.00
book	2	2.60
picture	2	2.60
Brochure	2	2.60

DISCUSSION

In this study, questionnaires were distributed, which involved 77 respondents, including the director of the division and the deputy director of the division, and table 1 the demographics showed that the sample was between the ages 36-45 years old, 63,60% of the sample. When asked about their education, 59.7% of the sample said they graduated with a master's degree, while their working experience in the organization was between the ages 21-

25 years, 31.20% of the sample. Additionally, the demographics showed there were more Deputy Directors of Division 55.8% than Director of Division 44.2%.

Table 2 discusses the behavior of social media usage for working and information perception of the director, primary level of The Ministry of Education and Sports of the Lao PDR. The survey results showed that the most frequently used communication device among participants is the smartphone, with a significant 70.13% of respondents indicating its usage. When it comes to social media platforms utilized for work, WhatsApp is overwhelmingly the most popular, favored by 83.12% of participants. The primary purpose of using social media at work is communication, as reported by 90.91% of respondents. Additionally, a large majority, 83.12%, use social media for work purposes daily. The most common time for social media usage is between 12:01 p.m. and 1:00 p.m., utilized by 54.55% of participants. On average, the largest portion of respondents, 28.57%, spend 1-2 hours on social media each day. These findings indicate a strong reliance on smartphones and WhatsApp for daily work communication and activities, primarily around midday, with significant time dedicated to social media use.

As shown in table 3 the statistical analysis comparing social media usage habits between Deputies of Division and Deputy Heads of Department revealed a significant difference only in the frequency of media use, with Deputies of Division engaging more frequently in social media activities (p -value = 0.001). No significant differences were observed in the other areas of study, including communication devices, popular types of social media, purpose of media use, media active moments, and average time spent on media, as their respective p -values exceeded the conventional threshold of significance (p -values ranging from 0.156 to 0.597). These findings suggest that while both groups exhibit similar patterns in most aspects of social media usage, the frequency of use is notably higher among Deputies of Division.

Table 4 talks about the survey results, which reveal a strong preference among participants for receiving information through online channels, with 92.21% indicating this preference. Within online platforms, the most demanded media category is infographic content, favored by 55.84% of respondents. Facebook emerges as the preferred social media platform for accessing various media categories, chosen by 48.05% of participants. Conversely, offline media consumption is minimal, with posters, books, pictures, and brochures each receiving less than 3% of the preference. These findings highlight a clear inclination towards online media, particularly infographics and Facebook, for information dissemination among participants.

Previous studies on the behavior of social media usage for working and the information perception of the director, primary level of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Lao PDR, the findings from the data collected showed that Smartphones are crucial and indispensable tools for professional use due to their compact and lightweight design, which enhances their portability. They offer the convenience of being usable at any time and in any location, coupled with a comprehensive array of communication features. The directors have increasingly leveraged social media platforms to facilitate coordination and dissemination of information between internal and external departments. Which shows a similar result to the research conducted by Zhang et al. (2023) this research result showed that the utilization of communication technology positively influences the performance of junior executives, with mobile phones and smartphones being the most used devices. Junior executives exhibit a preference for employing social media as their primary communication tool. Also, this research showed that WhatsApp is popular among users for its ease of use, convenience, and free access. Studies by Vongsakda et al. (2023) and Siouan (2021) confirm its widespread use

in Lao PDR for government communication, both within and between ministries, and with the public. Pongsakul (2023) found that junior executives use social media daily, particularly during lunch and afternoon hours, to stay updated and communicate with colleagues. Similar patterns are observed in Thailand and in public sectors in Ghana and Kenya, where WhatsApp and Facebook are the most used platforms, with average daily usage of 1-2 hours (Evans and John, 2023).

The comparative results of the hypothesis testing between the director of division and deputy director of division at the Ministry of Education and Sports, Lao PDR, show similar media usage behaviors regarding devices, popular social media platforms, and daily usage patterns. However, directors of division use social media more frequently for work-related communication and information awareness due to their higher level of interaction with internal and external organization (Vongsakda et al., 2023).

In addition, the data analysis revealed that participants demonstrate a clear preference for receiving information through specific channels, reflecting their inclinations and needs. The data analysis revealed that the director of division and deputy director of division at the Ministry of Education and Sports, Lao PDR, chose to receive online information. Infographics are favored because they present information visually and concisely, allowing for quick understanding without extensive reading. This preference aligns with Rosalina et al. (2015), who found infographics effective in engaging audiences and enhancing comprehension of environmental issues. Additionally, junior executives prefer using Facebook for disseminating information, as it is widely used for news and updates, a trend also noted by (Vongsakda, 2022).

CONCLUSION

These findings indicate that prioritizing widely used online media and communication tools could significantly improve information dissemination and organizational efficiency. By leveraging platforms that directors at the primary level are already familiar with and actively use, the Ministry of Education and Sports, Lao PDR, can enhance the reach and impact of its communications. This insight provides useful guidance for refining communication strategies within government institutions, suggesting that tailored approaches to digital engagement can lead to better-informed employees and streamlined operations. Moreover, by adopting these tools, the ministry can foster a more collaborative and transparent work environment, ultimately contributing to more effective governance and improved service delivery to the public. This strategy not only aligns with contemporary communication trends but also addresses the evolving needs and preferences of a modern workforce.

Compliance with ethical standards

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2. Conflict of interest statement

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

3. Statement of ethical approval

Ethical approval was obtained from the Kasetsart University Research and Development institute (KURDI). COE No. COE66/124, date of exemption 22 November 2023.

4. Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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