Relationship between Psychological Factors, Self-Directed Learning and Attitudes towards Social Media of Youths in 5 Southern Border Provinces

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Abstract

This research aimed (1) to study the relationship between psychological factors, self-directed learning, and attitudes of youths in five Southern Border Provinces towards social media, and (2) to explore the effectiveness of factors like self-control, optimism, internal locus of control, and self-directed learning on the attitudes.

2,383 high secondary school students studying in schools in the five provinces during semester 1/2016 were sampled to the study. Questionnaires were used for data collection. The results revealed as follows. Psychological factors like self-control, optimism, internal locus of control, future orientation, and self-directed learning are statistically significant and correlated with the behavior of intellectually consuming social media and awareness on the negative impacts of the media. Correction reliability for prediction is at 39.90 and 40.90 percent, with a consequence. The implication of the study is mainly contributed for educational policy and parenting styles about youths' behaviors of using social media. Teachers can well manage their social media based teaching activities with consideration of the development of psychological factors and social media literacy. Setting up household activities that fulfill unaccomplished tasks for developing the youths' self-learning, parents can follow-up and take control of the youths' using social media. In doing so the use of social media should be allowed with rules, self-disciplines, responsibilities, and critical awareness on its negative impacts.

Keywords: Psychological factors, self-directed learning, intellectual consumption of social media, awareness on the media's negative impacts

Introduction

Presently, online social media has been more accessible through digital devices like digital television, radio, or even game player. One among the digital devices seen lately and being considered as on the top rank is mobile phone. The device has been more advantageous for learning development of children especially in a matter of computer-assisted learning for education and society. Learning how the modern technology assist leaning somehow is necessary for accessing online information on the internet and useful for creating knowledge and sustainable development of education, education, and entertainment either. However, if youths use the information incorrectly, there would be on them negative effects.

Jirawattanaset (2018) concludes that, though in this era, social media is being paid emphasis and accessible to/by our new generation (Gen Z) or digital generation, there is a risk for them to get its bad effects, for instance the effect on thinking approach, behaviors, and social norms which keep increasing in our society lately. Technology itself is a doubled-edge sword. The situation of our children and youths seen these days about social media usage is problematic, getting more negative rather positive impacts. They are addicted to Facebook, Lines, or even online games. They spend the most of their daily times on internet via smartphones or tablets rather than on study. "What obvious is the negative effect from social media on children's concentration. 42% of the parents agree that in 2020, new generation who spend a lot of their times on technology will have problems about concentration and deep thinking system, not be able to prolong their concentration. American teachers, whereas, believe that social media and technology will lead to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)" (Wallace, as cited in Jirawattanaset, 2018).

Similarly, Pakdikul (2015) summarizes a Canadian educator Ian Jukes's "Understanding the Digital Generation" that the factors of the digital generation are fruitful from the matter of learning through technology and digital devices at early ages. They perform better on visual memory and processing imagery information than memorizing texts. Comparatively, they are more capable to identify information in a form of images and sounds than the previous generations do. They are more attracted when looking at colorful than plain black-white images. Their technique of skimming on screens is different to that of the previous's technique's skimming on texts. Meaning is that when reading, the previous generations slowly skim from left to right side likely to drawing a "z pattern" with eyesight. In a contrast, the generations of screens will skim from the top down the bottom of the screens, only when they find the issues they interest in would they do the z pattern. Scanning and not reading the whole page, searching only the interesting, they are likely drawing an "f pattern". In addition, a study

in Japan found that computer users who spend long times continuously are at risk of having Computer Vision Syndrome. Furthermore, they have a significant relationship with glaucoma, an eye disorder which is often found within the society that the numbers of population keep increased.

Choochom, Thanachanan, & Thongpakdee (2011) studied reasonable factors of youths' mind immunity and found that the model structure of reasonable factors of youths' mind immunity is comprised of psychological factors (like self-control, optimism, and locus of control), and family factor (like parental relationships, social support from family, and socialization based on self-sufficiency economy philosophy). The structure has a positive effect on youths' psychological immunity that positively affects youths' quality and way of life according to the self-sufficiency economy philosophy, whereas, the factor such as *friends* (relationship with friends, social supports from friends, and friends' role model of self-sufficiency economy way of life) has a positive effect on the attitude of self-sufficiency way of life. Consistent with empirical information by the direct and indirect influence of family and friend's psychological factors, it is able to explain the quality's variance of youths with a 92.42 % confidence interval and that of self-sufficiency economy way of life, 67.32 %. Mind immunity plays a role as that of an intervening latent variable to the relationship between the youths' psychological factors and family.

A study of Wiangkham, Seesant, & Tangkunanan (2013) found that the factors that affect high secondary students' behaviors of using social media are media (X3), friends (X2), and family (X1). All 3 factors can forecast the behaviors of using social media in general with 45.70% reliable. Such a finding adheres to the former findings about personal background: (1) its factors like self-control, media literacy, self-motivated learning, and awareness of the media's impact have a positive correlation with the behaviors of intellectually consuming social media at 0.01 significant, and (2) that three former factors (self-control, media literacy, self-motivated learning) with an inclusion of another factor (social influence: friends) can forecast 40 % of the university students' behaviors of intellectually consuming social media, at 0.001 significant (Tansuwannon, Wongpinpetch, & Leesatrupai, 2009).

Kruthasen (2013) found that the factors affecting media literacy of young leaders can be both *internal* and *external*. Three sub-factors are considered internal (critical thinking, awareness on the impacts of social media, and self-awareness) and four sub-factors external (friends and teachers, media exposure and media use, reading, and aesthetic). Further she found, there are four learning process components of media literacy among the leaders: 1) learning paradigm, 2) learning facilitator, 3) learning process design, and 4) learning continuity. While describing about addiction behaviors of

children on online games, Thongkhambanchong et al. (2011) reports that the key affecting factors for the addiction are the environment within family and that of a circle of friends. The addicted behaviors are directly affected by friends. Among the solutions suggested is a family role of maintenance and support towards its family member. According to her, the addiction is a result of students' boredom.

Another study about behaviors of the university students (Srinakharinwirot University's freshmen) by Komanee, Leesatrupai, & Wanno (2017) reveals that the students' emotional sensitivity has a negative correlation with a "critical social-media receiving behavior". Quite the contrary, the factors like the students' (1) characters of openness to experience, politeness, and being conscious (of right or wrong), (2) attitudes on critical social-media receiving behavior, (3) role models given by family, and (4) being influenced by friends show a positive correlation on their critical social-media receiving behavior and on that factors.

With an approximation of 56 percent, they are applicable for forecasting the students' critical social-media receiving behavior. That is not argued that of Joirod, Kasemnet, & Jinngee's study on a group of high secondary students (Year 4) in Bangkok. According to them, internal factors like rational thinking and social responsibility and external factors like friends influenced role models, social supports from teachers, and social supports from media can predict 39 % of critical social-media receiving behaviors. The finding goes further to which that there is an interaction among self-control and role models given by family. When compared with the opposite group, at 0.05 level of significance, the more students receive role models from their family, the more likely they have critical social-media receiving behaviors. In addition, there is a significant difference between students' sexes and GPA and the behaviors (2010).

After their study of the factors concerning intellectual consumption of social media on university students in Bankok, Tansuwannon, Wongpinpetch, & Leesatrupai (2009) found that the students' improper use of social media is due to: 1) Personality: (media illiteracy, self-control, and 2) Society: (friends).

Chareonrat (2012) found that intellectually consuming social media behavior was the most susceptible from such a factor like media literacy followed by self-control with indicated coefficient values of 0.800 and 0.698, respectively. The most influential direct factors of the behaviors of consuming social media intellectually are media literacy and self-control, consequently with the indicated values 0.800 and 0.110 of coefficient. The most indirect factors are self-control and good friendship with the coefficient values 0,588 and 0.492, respectively. 58% of intellectually consuming social media behaviors can be explained by causal factors in structural equation.

All the concerned issues mentioned above piqued our interest in studying the affecting factors of psychological factors and self-directed learning on social media usage behaviors of youths in five Southern Border Provinces. In general, we wanted to know about psychological factors (indicated by leveling), self-directed learning, and social media usage behaviors of the youths. How do the youths' self-directed learning and psychological factors have influences on their behaviors of intellectually consuming social media and their awareness of the negative impact of the media? was another deep question of ours to answer. The results would be applicable for (1) maintaining and developing proper social media usage behaviors of the youths for their own benefits and society's, and (2) planning strategies of proper and effective communication, in response to the requirements of current targets and situations.

Objectives:

1. To study psychological factors, self-directed learning, and attitudes towards social media of youths in five Southern Border Provinces.

2. To study the correlation between psychological factors, self-directed learning, and attitudes of the youths.

3. To study factors affecting self-control, optimism, locus of control, and self-directed learning on the attitudes (comprised of the behavior of intellectually consuming social media and the awareness of the negative impact of social media) of the youths.

Research methods

Describing the correlation and influences of two variables, this research is considered descriptive.

Population and samplings

The population under study refers to a group of 35,740 high secondary youths of 99 public schools located in five Southern Border Provinces (Songkhla, Satul, Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani). From the finite population, we determined our sample sizes by the use of Yamane's formula (1973). At 98% of confidence, we got 2,335 samples. To fulfill the left over percent of confidence, we added a number of the samples up to 2,383, totally. Our random technique was based on proportions of students in each province. We determined 800 students in Songkhla, doubled up in size with that of Satul and Yala (400 students) which is up in number with that of the rest (Pattani and Narathiwat). The technique also was applied for the proportion of schools in all the provinces and the proportion of class grades. The application revealed a number of schools under study: 29 schools.

Research tool

The questionnaires, designed for self-administered type, to be completed by respondents (the high school students) themselves without our intervention, were comprised of two main types of question: closed and opened, with 5 parts figured out as follows.

Part 1 (Demographic Factors): This part provides check-list.

Part 2 (Attitudes towards social media): This part of the questionnaire provides a multiple choice type of questions (MCQ), with 6 rating scales of quality, comprised of items concerning behavior of intellectually consuming social media. The design of this part was done based on our adaptation of that of Tansuwannon, Wongpinpetch, & Leesatrupai, (2009). whilst the part regarding awareness towards the negative impact of social media was adapted with an accordance of that of Tansuwannon (2007). Reliability and discrimination's quality of the assessment tool is high. The assessment tools either about the behavior and the awareness show that different means between two groups (high and low), at statistical significance of 0.01, of all the items. Cronbach's alpha coefficient used to rate the reliability revealed value 0.828 and 0.741, respectively.

Part 3 (Psychological factors): Covering question items about self-control, optimism, future orientation, and locus of control, with high quality level of reliability and discrimination, this part was as a result of our adaptation of the assessment tools used by Choochom, Thanachanan, & Thongpakdee, (2011). The assessment tool, measuring the four factors, shows a statistical significance of difference between the two groups at 0.01, in all the items. Reliability analysis shows that all the four factors have shown these following alpha values, with a consequence, 0.474, 0.753, 0.672, and 0.765.

Part 4 (Self-directed learning): This part provides an assessment measuring students' self-directed learning, with 6 rating scales of quality. The design of this part was done after our adaptation of Tansuwannon & Pianratpimol (2011)'s original assessment. Its quality level of reliability and discrimination is high, whilst statistical significance of difference between the two groups is at 0.01 in the entire items and the reliability analysis alpha's values of 0.713.

Part 5 (Suggestions and comments): In this part, a blank space for the respondents' suggestions or comments proposed is provided.

Data collection

Data was collected during the first semester of academic year 2016 with a participation of several educational institutes (mainly schools) in each district by a group of our trained researcher assistants. Of all the total number of questionnaires distributed, 2,263 of them, completely inspected by the assistants, were given back, indicated as 94.96 %.

Data analysis

The analysis of the quantitative data was done by the use of fundamental statistical techniques of percentage, means, and standard deviation (SD). Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and t-test was used to complete hypothesis testing of the correlation, whilst Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis, hypothesis testing of the influence.

Evaluation criteria

A technique of the class interval (CI) was applied to the analysis and interpretation of variable means through principle of difference between high and low value of means per class/ level being interpreted. The result depicts the probability of the existence of psychological factors, self-directed learning, and attitudes towards social media of the youth by means of different values and levels, rating numbers, as follows, "1.00-1.99=Low, 2.00-2.99=Rather low, 3.00-3.99=Average, 4.00-4.99=High, and 5.00-6.00=Highest".

Results

The results can be summarized as follows.

1. *The Samples*

The majority of the samples are secondary muslim girl students of grade 12 (M. 6) who have GPA average between 3.01 – 3.50 (percentage 68.40 51.69 31.70 and 36.33 consecutively) Consideration in each province found that all provinces have the most related status and the majority are grade 12 muslim girl students who have GPA average between 3.01 – 3.50. Except Songkhla province that has more Buddhist. The sample group of grade 11 in Songkhla, Yala and Naratiwat. The deatails are as shown in Table 1.
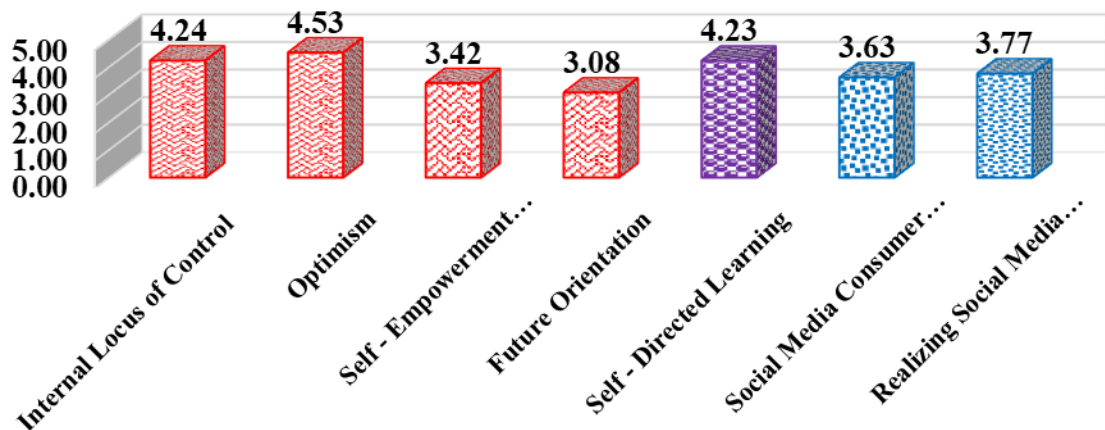
Table 1 Status percentage of sample grop classify by provinces.

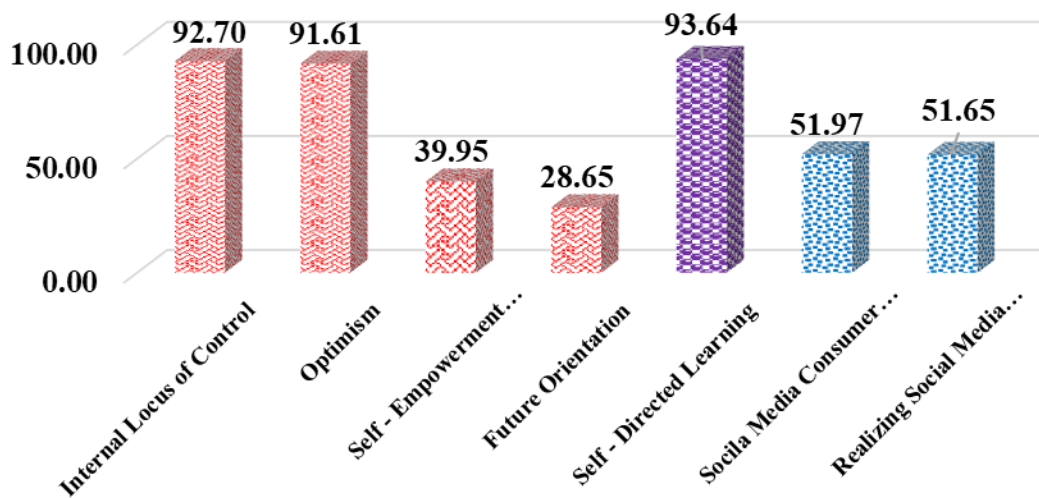|	Status	Songkhla	Satun	Yala	Pattani	Naratiwat	Total
Sex	Male	26.22	25.39	34.44	36.29	40.26	31.56
	Female	73.78	74.30	65.56	63.71	59.74	68.40
Religion	Buddhist	82.19	39.44	26.14	10.58	43.04	48.31
	Muslim	17.82	60.56	73.86	89.42	56.96	51.69
GPA	Lower 1.51	0.38	-	1.72	8.17	2.90	2.27
	1.51-2.00	5.31	3.76	9.17	24.25	9.76	9.61
	2.01-2.50	15.17	16.93	29.51	11.44	25.33	18.82
	2.51-3.00	30.59	24.45	16.62	17.17	25.33	24.35
	3.01-3.50	32.49	36.36	31.81	31.06	26.65	31.70
	3.51 Up	16.06	18.50	11.17	7.90	10.03	13.24
Grade	Grade 10	28.37	25.00	32.54	34.22	30.03	29.82
	Grade 11	37.69	16.14	40.00	32.36	36.81	33.85
	Grade 12	33.94	58.86	27.46	33.42	33.16	36.33

2. Psychological Factors, Self-Directed Learning and Attitudes towards Social Media of the youths

The senior highschool students' indicated level of psychological factors of self-control, optimism, and self – directed learning is high. As we can see that the psychological characteristic level of self–control, future orientation, and attitudes towards social media regarding intellectually consuming social media and the awareness of its negative impacts is average. When we considered the percentage of students who hold level of psychological characteristic of self-directed learning and attitudes towards the media, we found that more than 90 percent of the students' level of psychological factors in self-control, optimism, and self-directed learning is high, as depicted in Picture 1 and Picture 2.

Picture 1 Percentage of pshychological in self-direct learning and ideal

5.00 4.00 3.00 2.00 1.00 0.00

4.24 — Internal Locus of Control
4.53 — Optimism
3.42 — Self - Empowerment...
3.08 — Future Orientation
4.23 — Self - Directed Learning
3.63 — Social Media Consumer...
3.77 — Realizing Social Media...

Percentage

100.00 50.00 0.00

92.70 — Internal Locus of Control
91.61 — Optimism
39.95 — Self - Empowerment...
28.65 — Future Orientation
93.64 — Self - Directed Learning
51.97 — Socila Media Consumer...
51.65 — Realizing Social Media...

3. *The relationship between psychological factors of Self – Directed Learning and Attitudes towards the media of the youths*

Psychological factors of self-control, optimisim, internal locus of control, future orientation, and self – directed learning have a significant relationship with statistically indicated as 0.01. On the contrary, optimism and future orientation have no relationship showed. The Table 2 exhibits that the psychological factors of self-control, optimism, internal locus of control, future orientation and self- directed learning all are related with the attitudes towards the media regarding intellectually consuming media behavior and realizing the media's negative impacts, with statistical sifnificane level 0.01.

Table 2 The Correlation Coefficient between pshchological factors of Self- Directed Learning and Attitudes towards social media

Variable	A_1	A_2	A_3	A_4	B	Y	Z
Internal Locus of Control (A_1)	1.00	0.567**	0.181**	0.154**	0.529**	0.203**	0.247**
Optimism (A_2)		1.00	0.121**	0.006	0.589**	0.202**	0.226**
Self –Empowerment Beliefs (A_3)			1.00	0.659**	0.177**	0.569**	0.576**
Future Orientation (A_4)				1.00	0.048*	0.533**	0.529**
Self – Directed Learning (B)					1.00	0.188**	0.239**
Social Media Consumer Behavior (Y)						1.00	0.685**
Realizing Social Media Effect (Z)							1.00

4. Factors (self-control, optimism, internal locus of control, future orientation and self – directed learning) influencing the attitudes towards social media

Following factors like self-control, optimism, internal locus control, future orientation and self- directed learning all are participated in forecasting, or in another word, have influence on following behaviors of the youths: intellectually consuming social media, and awareness of the media's negative impacts, at 0.01 statistical level of significance. They also can be able to forecast intellectually consuming social media behaviors and awareness towards the media, with 39.40 and 40.90 percent of correction reliability, respectively. Our selection of only more important and influential factors (optimism, internal locus of control, future orientation, and self-directed learning) by an analysis technique of Stepwise revealed the result to the forecasting that 39.30 and 40.90 percent of correction reliability.

The details are shown in Table 3 and Table 4, and the forecasting formula used is showed as follows.

$\tilde{Y} =$ 0.588 (A_3 : Internal locus of control) + 0.456 (A_4 : Future Orientation) + 0.261 (A_2 : Optimism) - 0.708

$\tilde{z} =$ (A$_3$: Internal locus of control) + 0.418 (A$_4$: Future Orientation) + 0.209 (A$_2$: Optimism) + 0.080 (B : Self – Direct Learning) + 9.524

Table 3 Stepwise analysis for forecasting the attitudes towards social media from psychological factors and self – directed learning

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F
Online Social Media Consumer Behavior				
Regression	63,424.297	5	12,684.859	281.408**
Residual	97,635.605	2,166	45.076	
Total	161,059.903	2,171		
R = 0.628 R^2 = 0.394 R^2_{adj} = 0.392 R^2_{adj} = 0.392				
Tolerance between 0.542-0.599 VIF between 1.669 – 1.847 Durbin-Watson = 0.813				
Realizing Social Media Effect				
Regression	58,726.744	5	11,745.349	299.518**
Residual	84,781.065	2,162	39.214	
Total	143,507.809	2,167		
R = 0.640 R^2 = 0.409 R^2_{adj} = 0.408 R^2_{adj} = 0.408				
Tolerance between 0.542-0.599 VIF between 1.669 – 1.847 Durbin-Watson = 0.707				

Table 4 Stepwise analysis in forecasting the attitudes towards social media from psychological factors and self – directed learning

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F
Online Social Media Consumer Behaviour with Wisdom				
Regression	63,355.281	3	21,118.427	468.604**
Residual	97,704.622	2,168	45.067	
Total	161,059.903	2,171		
R = 0.627 R^2 = 0.393 R^2_{adj} = 0.393 R^2_{adj} = 0.393				
Tolerance between 0.550-0.972 VIF between 1.029 – 1.819 Durbin-Watson = 0.803				
Realizing Social Media Effect				
Regression	58,659.303	4	14,664.826	373.843**
Residual	84,848.506	2,163	39.227	
Total	143,507.809	2,167		
R = 0.639 R^2 = 0.409 R^2_{adj} = 0.408 R^2_{adj} = 0.408				
Tolerance between 0.542-0.649 VIF between 1.540 – 1.846 Durbin-Watson = 0.698				

Discussion

The results found the level of psychological factors of internal locus of control and optimism and self – directed learning of youths in five Southern Border Provinces is high, whilst the level of their attitudes towards social media regarding intellectually consuming the media and awareness on its negative impact and that of psychological factors of internal locus of control and future orientation is average.

90 percent of the high secondary school students' level of psychological factors of internal locus of control, optimism, and self- directed learning is high. This is probably due the fact that, the students are middle adolescents aged between 15 – 17 years old and some are in the late adolescents aged between 18 -21 years old or 24 years' old. They are the generation C, whose factors / behaviors are likely to be that of groups of people who are self-dependent, liberal, independent, impatient, and polymath. They believe they have an internal locus of control, optimism, though, they put their trust on friend rather than on themselves, and rather they always live in the present than plan for the future.

The results found that the psychological factors of internal locus of control, optimism and self – directed learning are related among each other at 0.01 level of statistical significance. There is a significant correlation among psychological characteristic of optimism and future orientation. The psychological factors of internal locus of control, optimism, self– control, future orientation, and self – directed learning have a significant relation with the attitude towards social media regarding intellectually consuming the media and the awareness of its negative impacts, at 0.01 level of statistical significance. The factor of optimism, internal locus of control, and future– orientation can predict the youths' behavior of intellectually consuming social media, with 39.30 percent of reliability. Whilst, the factors optimism, internal locus of control, future – orientation and self- directed learning can predict the youths' awareness of the media's negative impacts, with 40.90 percent of correction reliability.

Such a result is consistent with the finding of Wiangkham, Seesant, & Tangkunanan (2013) that the following three variables (social media: X3, friends:X2, and family: X1) can forecast 45.70 percent of the behavior of social media usage. That is in line with the finding of Tansuwannon, Wongpinpetch, & Leesatrupai (2009) that the factors about personal background (like self-control, media literacy, and awareness on social media's negative impacts) have a positive correlation with the behavior of intellectually consuming the media, at 0.01 statistical level of significance. On the one hand, the personal factors like media literacy, self-control, recognition, and the social factors like the influence of a circle of friends can forecast 40 % of university students' behavior of consuming social media with intellects, at 0.01 level of statistical significance.

In addition, internal factors like rational thinking, and corporate social responsibility and the external factors like the role model perceived from friends, supports received from teachers, and supports received from society can forecast 39 % of university students' critical social-media receiving behavior (Joirod, Kasemnet, & Jinngee, 2010).

Implications of the study

This research contributes to the understanding of educational institution's policy management and parenting styles about youths' behaviors of using social media. In this regard, teachers can manage their teaching activities or lesson plans to pay more emphasis on social media that is popularly consumed by the students. For instance, there would be a promotion among teachers on social media-centered learning activities, submission of assignments online, and sharing opinions via social media. However, for the development of psychological factors and life quality of the youths and knowledge creation about social media literacy for the prevention of the impacts, all of the activities must be organized with the consideration of its use, with rules, disciplines, responsibilities, and awareness with criticality on its negative impacts on the youths. Parents can follow-up and control the youths in using social media. The result also can help parents understand the youths' behaviors of use. It is the key element of setting up household activities that fulfill unaccomplished tasks for developing the youths' self-learning, the essential skill for living in this rapidly changing society.

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