

Development of Media Literacy Curriculum for Junior High School Students in Thailand

Kanokphon Chantanarungpak, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand

Sangkama Sarawat, Silpakorn University, Thailand

Prakobkiat Imsiri, Valaya Alongkorn Rajabhat University, Thailand

Sasithon Yuwakosol, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand

Danucha Saleewong, Valaya Alongkorn Rajabhat University, Thailand

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Abstract

Media Literacy is one of the essential 21st Century skills for students. They must be prepared for this skill for their life as a part of digital citizenship. This research aimed to develop curriculum and instructional manuals in media literacy for teachers to educate junior high school students. The methodology of this research was divided into 2 parts. The first part was documentary analysis and in-depth interview with 9 participants. Another part was 81 participants assessing the suitability of developing media literacy curriculum. The participants were students, teachers, parents, media scholars, civil society members, and representatives from relevant consumer protection agencies. From the study, this research was revealed in 2 parts. The first part of the study contained the scope of content in media literacy for junior high school students that was chunked into 7 modules and the curriculum structures including course descriptions, learning objectives, content, learning activities, instructional media and evaluation. Another part, assessment of the suitability of the developed curriculum showed that every module reached the very appropriate level with the suggestion to adjust the content into 6 modules to avoid redundancy content including Media Literacy, Media Ecology, Media Accessibility, Media Legal and ethics, Media Issues, and Media Literacy Participation. The media literacy curriculum has 6 modules. Each module contains course descriptions, learning objectives, content, learning activities, instructional media and evaluation will be hereafter studied the usage by teachers from 8 schools for junior high school students in the Central, Northern, North Eastern and Southern regions in Thailand.

Keywords: Media Literacy, Curriculum, High School Student

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Introduction

In the digital age, the media landscape is changing rapidly and immensely. The media, which is part of the social system, must be developed and adapted according to the advancement of information technology. The traditional media that are the source of information, including newspapers, radio, television, and magazines, have merged with technology like the Internet and are presented in a digital format, also known as online media with a variety of content and communication platforms.

In the digital environment, the growth of media usage behavior affects many positive outcomes, such as convenience and speed, variety of knowledge, a space for freely expressing opinions, etc. However, it can cause negative effects in society as well, if the user lacks skill and judgment in using media, especially among children and youth who use digital media the most and lack of skills to screen or distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate content.

According to a report from the 2018 DQ Impact Study by the Digital Economy Promotion Agency, Thai children are at 60% risk from online threats, higher than the average of 29 countries in the world studied. The most online threats or problems include cyber bullying, accessing pornography and discussing sex with strangers online, game addiction problems and being tempted to meet strangers (Digital Economy Promotion Agency, 2018).

Media literacy, which generally refers to the ability of citizens to access, analyze, and create messages in a variety of information (Christ and Potter, 1998), is an important concept that was addressed on the skills of citizens in this century. These four components - access, analysis, evaluation and content creation - together constitute a skills-based approach to media literacy (Sonia, 2004). Media literacy is a lifelong learning process and also an important factor in fostering active citizens who have the freedom to access and choose to receive information in order to have enough information to live and make decisions. They can also protect themselves and others from harmful, malinformation or inappropriate content (Silver, 2009).

Children and youth are important human resources. The learning process of children and youth has a direct impact on the development of children's and youth's potential as valuable human resources. Empowering youth with media literacy skills, especially digital media, therefore, is one of the characteristics of global citizens in the 21st century, to create quality digital citizens and live a safe online life. The definition that every country in the world expects for digital citizens is "citizens who use digital and social media understand the norms of appropriate behavior and are responsible for the use of technology." (Information and Communication Technology Center, 2021). The process of supporting learning in media literacy skills, then, is important to help encourage children and youth to grow up to be a citizen who understands various social phenomena, and live online in a safe, ethical and responsible way to others and the community. They also can select, analyses, and use the information received in a creative way as well as to produce appropriate content and media to drive or create social change.

In Thailand, the Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) has a mission to promote the rights, freedoms, and equality of people in access and usage, promote, and develop the ability of media consumers. The Office of the NBTC therefore recognizes the importance of promoting media literacy abilities for media

consumers, especially among the youth. Therefore, a study was conducted to develop curriculum and instruction manual on media literacy for junior high school students. This study aims to promote teachers in secondary school to have knowledge, understanding, and a variety of techniques or methods, and being able to use content or media literacy textbooks for effective teaching and learning management promoting knowledge and media literacy skills, focusing on the broadcasting and television industry.

Research Objective

To develop curriculum and instruction manual on media literacy for junior high school students.

Literature Review

Media Literacy Concept

The change from converging media is related to the way people live in society. One obvious thing is increasing in online media usage behavior. According to the Digital 2020 statistics report by We are social for the first half of 2020, it was found that 52 million Thais have access to internet media, or more than 75% of the total population. They spend an average of 9.1 hours on the internet and 75% of them use social media. In addition, the group of people who use the Internet the most per day, according to a survey by the Electronic Transactions Development Agency (ETDA) in 2019 is a group of students which uses up to 10.5 hours per day.

The change in communication technology brings an impact on people, content, media channels, and communication technology in different economic, political, legal, social, cultural and community contexts both desirable and undesirable effects. One of the key factors that determines the direction that the media will be used in a positive way or use it in a way that may cause problems and harm to society is media literacy (Chainan, 2021).

Media literacy is a concept that looks the media consumers as powerful and active audiences, consumer who does not accept the influence of the media. They do not judge the media as harmful but accept and use the media from a social standpoint, understand themselves, understand society, understand what the media has offer (Virojtrairatt, 1997). They are also able to analyze, critique, evaluate what the media has to offer and be able to choose to receive and use media content effectively (Baran, 2004).

Oranop na Ayutthaya (2020) viewed that the problems of media literacy nowadays come from two main causes, namely problems in the audience's competence, such as media skills. Understanding and thinking, analysis, etc., and problems in the environment such as media policies, roles of the media industry, etc. Audience's competence can be developed by supporting the education and media literacy skills both directly through educational institutions and indirectly through the promotion of various relevant agencies.

Media Literacy skills

Media scholars have introduced a media literacy concept, which generally refers to the ability of citizens to access, analyze, and produce a variety of information. The definition of media literacy according to the conceptual framework of UNESCO is the ability to access, analyze,

critique, evaluate the media, and produce our own media to communicate in many forms. In addition, media literacy also includes educational activities to develop critical analysis skills and create opportunities for media access (Yenjabok, 2009).

In the age of digital media, academics have extended the concept of media literacy to cover new media. Hobbs (2010) referred to the competence of media and digital literacy as: access, analyze and evaluate, create, reflect, and act.

1. Access: searching and usage skill for the media and technology and usage of information that is appropriate and important to others.
2. Analyze and Evaluate: understanding media content and using critical thinking to analyze the quality, honesty, and credibility of the media and consider the consequences of media content.
3. Create: construct or create media content and have confidence in expressing one's thoughts by being aware of the purpose, audience, and techniques of creating.
4. Reflection: is a socially responsible and ethical application of the media to express one's identity and experience.
5. Act: working individually and collectively task to share knowledge and solve problems at the family, work, community level, including participation as members of local, regional and national communities.

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) has proposed the concept “Access, Understand, and Participate Skills”, which is a guideline aimed at creating citizens to have media literacy under the framework of the office. “Access” means having the skills to use technology that is appropriate for oneself and others. “Understand” is analysis, asking questions, evaluate information with 5 key questions and media literacy concepts. “Participate” involves participatory action in create content responsively, monitoring and reporting complaints and participate in the campaign building a citizen network that can drive to create some change in the society. In this study, to develop curriculum and instruction manual on media literacy for junior secondary school students, the media literacy competency framework will be used according to the guidelines of the Office of the NBTC.

Curriculum design

In order to achieve the goal of education, the curriculum is a tool to achieve the goal. Applying of media literacy to study in the educational system has to combine knowledge of both the components of media literacy skills and the design of the curriculum. Curriculum is important for teaching and learning because it is a plan or a guideline for educational management that provides knowledge and experience including cultivating attitudes, values, and practices for students in order to receive an education that efficiency and effectiveness (Roaprapan, 2015).

The curriculum must have the elements in its structure. Therefore, it can be used to organize learning experiences effectively. The internal structure of the curriculum is an important component. This will help to understand the scope of the course more clearly and to indicate how the course will be implemented. Tyler (1949) identified that the course components should consist of 4 main components, including 1) objectives 2) content 3) organizing learning activity 4) evaluation.

Conceptual framework

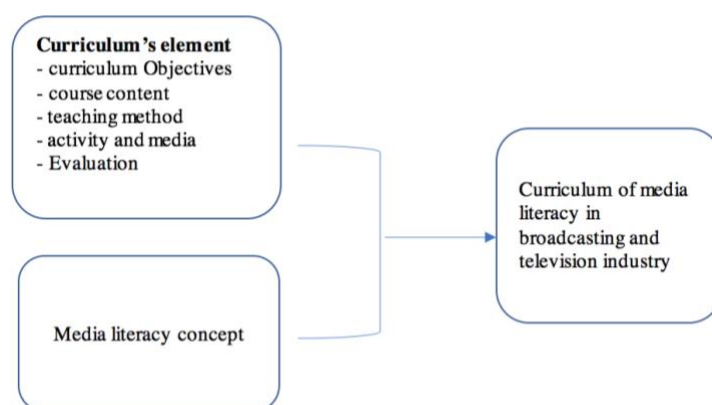


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Methodology

In this study, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. Qualitative research consisted of document analysis and in-depth interviews. Document analysis technique was conducted for analyzing papers related to media literacy and teaching method then used the information that had been synthesized as a preliminary guideline in the development of media literacy skills of youth.

In In-depth Interview, 9 participants were in education specialists, broadcast and television expert, media literacy scholars, civil society representative, and teachers. The question guideline collects the answers about the characteristics or necessary skill indicators to become an active media consumer in Thailand, development of learning skills tools, and content in the curriculum for learning media literacy skills. Survey research as the quantitative method was designed for assessing the suitability of media literacy textbook and teaching activities manual for junior high school. The 81 respondents comprised of students, teachers, parents, media scholars, civil society members, and representative from relevant consumer protection agencies across the country. The suitability assessment uses a 5-level rating, including: 5= Most Suitable, 4= Very Suitable, 3= Moderately Suitable, 2= Slightly Suitable, 1= Least Suitable. Data analysis used descriptive statistics, which are mean and Standard Deviation. Interpretation of evaluation criteria are 4.51 – 5.00 = most appropriate, 3.51 – 4.50 = very appropriate, 2.51 – 3.50 = moderately appropriate, 1.51 – 2.50 = slightly appropriate, 1.00 – 1.50 = least appropriate.

Results

The results of this research were divided into 2 parts, i.e., The first part was the scope of Media Literacy content and the curriculum structure, and the second part was assessing the suitability of media literacy textbook.

Part I: The scope of the Media Literacy Content and the curriculum structure

As Hobbs (2010) referred to the competence of media and digital literacy as: access, analyze and evaluate, create, reflect, and act. It's shown the content that scoping in Media Literacy in 7 modules i.e.:

Module 1: Media Literacy
 Module 2: Media Ecology
 Module 3: Media Accessibility
 Module 4: Media Owner
 Module 5: Five Critical Questions
 Module 6: Media Assessment
 Module 7: Media Literacy Participation

After scope the media literacy content, the curriculum was drafted with the course description, learning objectives, content, learning activities and evaluation in each module.

Part II: Assessing the suitability of media literacy textbook

items	suitability	
	mean	meaning
Module 1: Media Literacy	3.90	Very appropriate
Course description	3.81	Very appropriate
Learning objectives	3.71	Very appropriate
Content	3.54	Very appropriate
Learning activities	3.53	Very appropriate
Evaluation	3.51	Very appropriate
Module 2: Media Ecology	3.83	Very appropriate
Course description	3.85	Very appropriate
Learning objectives	3.69	Very appropriate
Content	3.62	Very appropriate
Learning activities	3.53	Very appropriate
Evaluation	3.53	Very appropriate
Module 3: Media Accessibility	3.86	Very appropriate
Course description	3.75	Very appropriate
Learning objectives	3.67	Very appropriate
Content	3.56	Very appropriate
Learning activities	3.51	Very appropriate
Evaluation	3.57	Very appropriate
Module 4: Media Owner	3.75	Very appropriate
Course description	3.70	Very appropriate
Learning objectives	3.65	Very appropriate
Content	3.55	Very appropriate
Learning activities	3.57	Very appropriate
Evaluation	3.60	Very appropriate
Module 5: Five Critical Questions	3.86	Very appropriate
Course description	3.74	Very appropriate
Learning objectives	3.73	Very appropriate
Content	3.65	Very appropriate
Learning activities	3.65	Very appropriate
Evaluation	3.70	Very appropriate
Module 6: Media Assessment	3.93	Very appropriate
Course description	3.73	Very appropriate
Learning objectives	3.67	Very appropriate
Content	3.63	Very appropriate

items	suitability	
	mean	meaning
Learning activities	3.63	Very appropriate
Evaluation	3.60	Very appropriate
Module 7: Media Literacy Participation	3.89	Very appropriate
Course description	3.73	Very appropriate
Learning objectives	3.62	Very appropriate
Content	3.67	Very appropriate
Learning activities	3.68	Very appropriate
Evaluation	3.62	Very appropriate

From the table revealed that Media Assessment is the highest suitable module, but every module is in the range of the high suitable for using with junior high school student.

After studied the suitability of media literacy textbook, the curriculum was been grouping into 6 modules which module 5: Five critical questions blended into module 1: Media Literacy and using in every module. So, the Media Literacy curriculum has 6 modules that each module consist of course description, learning objectives, content, learning activities and evaluation in each module. The curriculum structure includes Objectives, Content, Learning Activities, Media and Activities and Evaluation.

The curriculum objectives are

- To gain knowledge in media literacy to junior high school student.
- To enhance Media Literacy skills to junior high school student.

Content

The content of Media Literacy curriculum after studied shown that there are 6 modules including,

Module 1: Media Literacy -- Description Important Components of Media Literacy Skills Media Information and Digital Literacy and Digital Quotient DQ

Module 2: Media Ecology -- Description Components feather of media ecology Media Ecology to Media Literacy Media Disruption Dynamic of Media Category of Media

Module 3: Media Accessibility -- The channel of media in every category for example printed media electronics media digital media, media objectives and understanding in media category

Module 4: Media Legal and ethics -- Customers' rights, Media Legal in content and advertising Laws relating to media consumer, Media ethics

Module 5: Media Issues -- Knowledge and understanding in fake news, Hate Speech, Sex Language Violence Representative (SLVR) and Cyberbullying

Module 6: Media Literacy Participation -- Media Producer, Media publisher and creating content in various context, adaptation and creation of changing

Learning Activities

The learning activities in the curriculum are the onsite with active learning that let student has participation in classroom both pair work and also group work.

Media and Activities

The curriculum provides media both digital media files and instructional media to use in each module following the Learning activities. The example of Media and activities are Games, Clip VDO, Case study.

Evaluation

The student who will pass this media Literacy curriculum must take at least 3 modules.

Conclusion

Media literacy is an ability to understand the influence of the media, get access, analyze, evaluate, and actively interact with mass media with a critical thinking strategy and complete information (Wood, 2006). In the digital age where media users can also be content creators, media literacy skill provides users being able to protect themselves from getting influenced by media content and are able to use media responsibly. One way to develop media literacy is by providing knowledge for people in educational institutions. Teaching and learning media literacy, especially for students, will encourage media users actively and mindfully use the information during exposure to media messages. So, The Media Literacy Curriculum that developed in this research is one of the tools to help us enhancing media literacy skills for junior high school students. The curriculum that is developed includes the objectives of curriculum, content, learning activities, media and activities, and evaluation. For the objectives, this curriculum aims to gain knowledge of media literacy for junior high school students and to enhance Media Literacy skills for junior high school students. About the scope of content in the curriculum there are 6 modules, including Module 1: Media Literacy, Module 2: Media Ecology, Module 3: Media Accessibility, Module 4: Media Legal and Ethics, Module 5: Media Issues and Module 6: Media Literacy Participation. The curriculum also provided the guidelines for learning activities, media and activities both online and offline instructional media, and the method of evaluation. The Media Literacy Curriculum can drive the student to gain knowledge and skills in Media Literacy to literate junior high school students using the media.

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