

A Model Synthesis of on e-Distance Mentoring System Using Online Social Network Service

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to synthesize a models of e-Distance Mentoring System using online social network service by focus group discussion from 10 experts, and to evaluate the appropriateness of the synthesized model by 5 experts using questionnaire that aimed to use the synthesized model to apply in different 3 subjects on normal classroom. The research results revealed that the synthesized model consisted of 5 components as follows: 1) Social Network Service, use "facebook" for supporting communications, 2) Matching, for matching with mentee and mentor, 3) Monitoring, for monitoring, following, and presenting tasks between mentee and mentor, 4) Learning Guidance, for guiding, helping, recording about activities, and verifying between mentee and mentor, and 5) Learning Evaluation, for learning evaluation of mentee. The research results on the appropriateness of the synthesized model from the experts showed that in very good level (Mean = 4.67, SD. = 0.44). In conclusion, that can be used the synthesized model to apply into e-Distance Mentoring System properly.

Keywords: *mentoring system, online social network, online social network service*

1. Introduction

Education in the learning sector aims to develop learners' proficiency or encourages their innate potential which could be possibly a life-long pursuit. The learning sector relies on suitable environment, condition and education system to develop qualitative education and the abilities to catch up with educational changes. One of the major focuses at the National Education Act, Section 24 shows that the government should be able to provide open education for both formal and non-formal education to promote life-long learning among the public. One way to achieve this policy successfully is to apply communication technology, telecommunication systems and computer to support education access. (Office of the National Education Commission, 2003)

Since the National Education Act, 1999 B.E. enforcement, there has been re-engineering of national and local education departments including centralizing educational offices under the Ministry of Education, decentralizing education districts, and renovating student-based teaching and learning. The movement has shown that education reform has been going on. The office of Education Council, Minister of Education, has proposed the Second Decade Education Reform (2009-2018 B.E.) that emphasizes on the development of empirical education reform mechanisms. Especially for the learning system, the council has proposed self-study and lifelong learning systems which can encourage learners to seek knowledge, to be able to analyze, synthesize and solve problems effectively moreover, to be moral and to be armed with factors and tools that promote proficient and suitable learning. (Office of the Education Council, 2009)

Social networks are not only the connection of various people over the internet but it is also the connection of different networks and online social networks which are modern ways to make friends and connect with one another. Social network service or SNS has also created online societies where people are able to share and exchange utilities, activities or specific interests to one another. SNS relies on the websites basic system which allows people to communicate. Each website provides different services such as email and web-boards. It allows people to share space and information, or create their own webpage with the site's software application. Howard Rheingold, in his book "Virtual Community", defined the virtual community as the communication and information system of social network sharing utilities, thoughts, works, or specific outcomes of communication on the virtual community unlimited by time, territory or location. (Howard, 1993)

Internet based mentoring is, therefore, a kind of learning materials that connect networks and various information. Because Thai students some times struggle with learning achievement, the revolution of the internet network application with learning in ICT has been widely embraced, the social network mentoring system is now considered an advantageous tool and has become a major communication channel between the mentor and the mentee.

2. Objectives of the research

2.1. To synthesize an e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service with using group discussion techniques

2.2. To evaluate the appropriateness of the e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service in relation to the developed model by experts

3. Scope of research

3.1. The synthesis of an e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service with group discussion techniques derived from 10-expert brainstorming in terms of proposal, discussion and conclusion during the group discussion. (Werasit, 2003)

3.2 Elements of the learning model concept comprised:

3.2.1 Conceptual chart

3.2.2 Details of each element

3.3 Experts' concept evaluation was conducted with appropriateness questionnaires by five experts.

3.4 Experts were divided into two groups: group 1 consisted of ten experts to synthesize the model and group 2 consisted of five experts to evaluate the appropriateness of the synthesized model.

The expert qualifications included graduating in the master's degree, taking an academic position or experiencing in advising the master or doctoral degree graduates in terms of educational tasks or online teaching, and having at least two-year-working experience.

3.5 The research was done in the first semester of the academic year 2011 B.E.

4. Methodology

The research consisted of five stages as the following: 1) studying and synthesizing related literature and previous studies; 2) interviewing experts; 3) synthesizing the e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service with group discussion techniques; 4) evaluating and verifying the e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service; and 5) revising, improving and concluding the findings as the following details: (Suchart, 2001)

4.1 The principles, concepts and theories from related literature, texts, journals, local and oversea published researches via the internet were reviewed regarding the difference of individual learning, learning theory, educational inventions, online social network based learning, mentoring system, design and development of research tools and various software, together with the National Education Act and the second decade educational reform.

4.2 In the expert interview, findings from the study review and literature synthesis were applied to determine structured interview questions, along with the advice from advisors, and the interview of five experts. Obtained data was concluded to synthesize the concept of the e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service and proceeded group discussions later on.

4.3 To synthesize the e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service, ten experts were invited to the group discussion to generating the e-Distance

mentoring system model using online social network service as the following steps: 1) expert selection; 2) development of research tools in the group discussion; 3) qualitative assessment of questionnaires; and 4) data collection with discussion group techniques.

4.4 To assess and verify the e-Distance mentoring system model online social network service, related documents including the e-Distance mentoring system models questionnaires, conceptual chart of the e-Distance mentoring system model and related documents of assessment and verification were sent to 5 experts to investigate whether the synthesized model was applicable for normal classrooms and discover how much the model can promote learning achievement among learners.

4.5 To revise, improve and conclude the findings, the e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service based on experts' advice and developed conceptual chart of learning model, along with details of each elements was finally conducted.

5. Summary of research

5.1 The findings from the synthesis of an e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service.

The findings from group discussions of the e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service consisted of five elements as below:

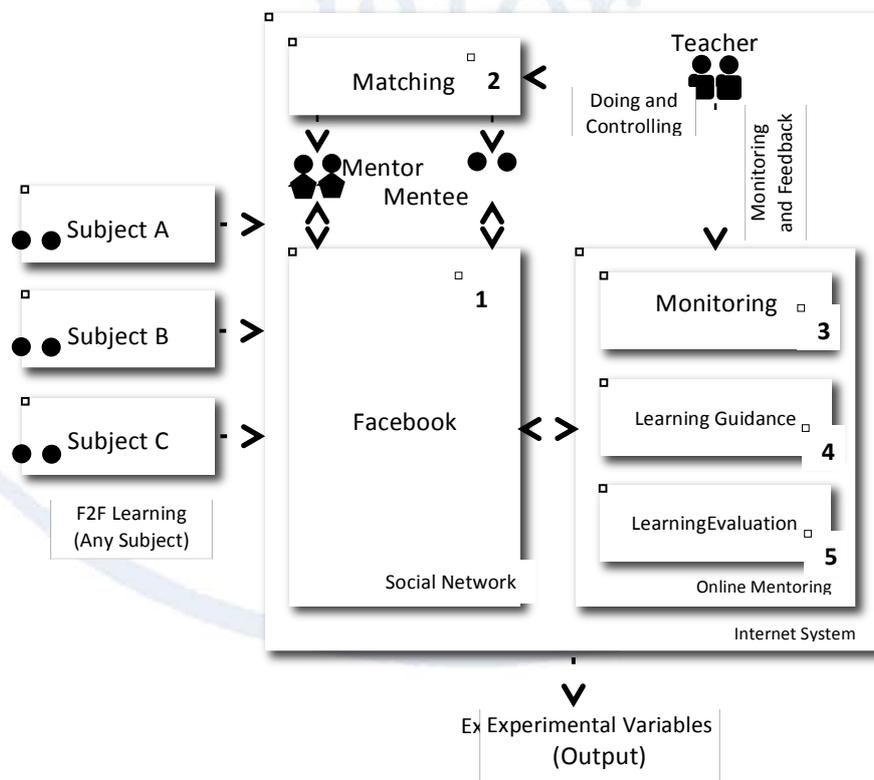


Figure 1: Concept of Model Synthesis

5.1.1 Social Network Service was part of the social network which was the channel of communication between a mentor and a mentee. Facebook was used as

the communication channel between a mentor and a mentee to share their opinions and thoughts.

5.1.2 Matching was controlled and administered by the instructors. It matched a mentor with three mentees. Mentors' qualifications included enrolling in the research subject, studying in the second or the third years, obtaining grade B+ or above, being knowledgeable, and being able to use "facebook" social network application. Mentees were the first year students who enrolled in three different courses and were able to use facebook.

5.1.3 Monitoring was subject to follow up students' learning. The instructor was able to present assignments to the learners, publish news, inform learning data for both individuals and groups, and inform mentors about guideline for cooperative group learning. The instructor was also able to trace login records of individual learners, mentor and record their learning activities.

5.1.4 Learning Guidance was an assistant element to guide learning for both mentees and mentors. It was a guideline to study with the online society according to one's need. It also provided learning sources that coordinated with monitoring.

5.1.5 Learning Evaluation was the element to review and assess learning of mentors and mentees.

5.2 Appropriateness assessment of the e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service.

Appropriateness assessment of the e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service by experts as show below in Table 1.

Table 1 Results of the model evaluation in terms of module

Number	Evaluation	\bar{X}	S.D.	Meaning
1.	Social network service was appropriate as part of the social network by using facebook as a channel of communication between a mentor and a mentee.	4.80	0.45	highest
2.	Mentor and mentee matching module was appropriate in terms of system control by the instructor .	4.60	0.55	highest
3.	Monitoring was appropriate to follow up learners with supportive channel for learners to access learning activity.	4.40	0.55	high
4.	Learning Guidance was appropriate as a learning support and guidance for a mentor and a mentee to study upon one's need through online social network.	5.00	0.00	highest
5.	Learning Evaluation was appropriate to monitor a mentor and a mentee's learning.	4.60	0.55	highest
6.	The overall of practiced concept.	4.60	0.55	highest
	Total	4.67	0.44	highest

The assessment mean score of the e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service appropriateness by five experts equaled between 4.40-5.00, the

level of which was high to highest. The overall assessment mean score of the model was at a highest level ($\bar{X} = 4.67$).

In addition, the experts suggested that the model should be empirically improved and applied in accordance with the National Education Act, 2542 B.E. and the second decade education reform (2552-2561 B.E.) to satisfy different needs of individual learners which was the major aspect of this research.

6. Summary

This study aimed to synthesize an e-Distance mentoring system model using online social network service with group discussions. Data was obtained from literature, textbooks, academic articles and previous studies. Findings indicated that there were five elements of the e-Distance mentoring system: 1) Social Network Service, using facebook as the channel of communication; 2) Matching, the developed system to match a mentor with a mentee; 3) Monitoring, the supportive part to follow up mentors and mentees and let the mentors give assignment to mentees; 4) Learning Guidance, a guiding part to support learning, record learning activities and trace login record; and 5) Learning Evaluation, evaluating learning of mentors and mentees. Then the results were also proposed to five experts for assessment in terms of model appropriateness. Further to their assessment, the appropriateness was at a high level with $\bar{X} = 4.67$ showing that the model was practical.

7. Reference

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