

# Guidelines for promoting media literacy among youths with hearing impairments

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## ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were 1) to design and develop the effective training materials on media literacy for young people with hearing impairments, and 2) to develop and promote media literacy among youths with hearing impairment. The samples for this study were 100 youths with hearing impairments, and the statistics used for this study were percentage, mean, standard deviation, and paired-sample t-test. The study revealed that 1) the youths with hearing impairments used conventional devices such as television, radio, audiobooks, and electronic or digital devices such as telephones, smart phones, desktop computers, and tablets to access information suitable to their everyday needs, as well as learning and recreational devices designed specifically for the hearing impaired; 2) the youths' overall media literacy prior to the training was found to be at a very high level, with careful consideration given prior to making purchases advertised on various media platforms ( $\bar{X} = 4.17$ ) at the highest, followed respectively by the ability to recognize advantages and disadvantages in receiving information through various types of media ( $\bar{X} = 4.11$ ), refraining from sharing information if not certain of its accuracy ( $\bar{X} = 4.09$ ), and the decision to follow reliable sources of information ( $\bar{X} = 3.29$ ) at the lowest; and 3) the youths' overall media literacy after the training was revealed to be at a very high level, with careful consideration given prior to making purchases advertised on various media platforms at the highest ( $\bar{X} = 4.71$ ), followed respectively by refraining from sharing information if not certain of its accuracy ( $\bar{X} = 4.51$ ), the ability to recognize advantages and disadvantages in receiving information through various types of media ( $\bar{X} = 4.43$ ), and the ability to distinguish true from untrue information ( $\bar{X} = 4.00$ ) at the lowest; and 4) the youths' media literacy was revealed to be higher after training with a statistical significance of .01.

## Keywords:

media literacy, youths, hearing impairments

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## Introduction

At present, the body of knowledge on media literacy has reached another turning point as advances in information and communications technologies open up a number of new channels and platforms. Meanwhile, more information is being created and disseminated in the media arena than at any other time. The digital environment has turned a great number of people from passive *media viewers* to energetic and alert *media users* who produce, disseminate, exchange and forward messages by means of "journalism 2.0", which elevates and makes instantly interactive their publishing capabilities. Today, not only do "users" have different media patterns from the past, they also have easier and wider access to

social interactions with a larger mass of people unknown to them. As a consequence of these changes, the media and information are replacing the family, community, and other traditional social, religious and educational institutions in forming societal values and norms, and molding people's attitudes and behaviors. Media and information now highly influence almost all aspects of life, including education, work, social relations, political involvement, and entertainment (Tucson, 2015). In terms of media usage, youths are the group with a rising ratio of media consumption, particularly the internet, reflecting Thailand's number 2 position among Southeast Asian countries with the greatest high speed internet coverage (at 90% of geographical area).

(Satitworapong, Wasit, Plian Pan Column, Weekend Matichon, issues 7-13 April, 2017). This rapid increase in internet usage is causing concern among various sections about the influence of internet media on children and youths. Social Learning Theory stipulates that when a particular group (youths included) witness a certain behavior under a certain conditions, they will embrace and model that behavior. That is, the media is like a model for the audience, who may mimic the behavior performed by that model (DeFleur, 2010). Youths, likewise, may imitate behaviors to which they are exposed through social media due to its virtual reality characteristic, regardless of the fact that the behavior they imitate may be harmful (Bandura 1971 and 1974 cited in Baran and Davis, 2012 cited in Chaisuwan and Prachucknate, 25.58). In addition, some current social factors contribute to the risk of children and youths falling victims to the negative influence of the media. These social factors include: 1) the state of borderless communication, in which globalization is speeding up both true and useful information, and information that needs to be scrutinized, making it impossible for children/youths to protect themselves from the negative influences of the media; 2) social and family situations, in which many children/youths live alone, without proper guidance, or with guidance from peers of limited experience; 3) the needs for some children/youths to assume family responsibilities, depriving them of opportunities to learn social skills, and the ability to make critical decisions, all of which may have long term effects on children; 4) the desire for acceptance, particularly people of their own age, and the subsequent pressure to imitate, without proper guidance, behaviors presented to them by their peers, influencers, and main stream society; 5) an increasingly unsafe social environment, in which children are forced to protect themselves against growing insecurity and risk; 6) unequal opportunity or a lack of opportunity to learn according to their age and interests, which may result in those deprived of

learning opportunities or those having been exposed to bad experiences embracing destructive behaviors (Hoechsmann & Poyntx, 2012 cited in Kleechaya, 2016).

It is necessary to provide young people with media literacy, particularly those with hearing impairment, who are more reliant on online social media. Instructional media for these people should be relevant to their environment; it should build comprehension and creativity around the topics learned; it should enable them to connect things near them with those farther away, and it should foster intellectual curiosity so that they can learn from various sources of knowledge by themselves and are not entirely dependent on the lessons provided for them.

### Research objectives

1. To design and develop the effective training materials on media literacy for young people with hearing impairments.
2. To develop and promote media literacy among youths with hearing impairment

### Expected outcomes

1. Obtain basic information on media exposure, attitudes, and uses among young people with hearing impairments for use in instructional management in lower and upper secondary schools in order to promote and increase students' media literacy.
2. Develop learning models on information and media literacy for use with hearing impaired youths.
3. Increase hearing-impaired youths' (conventional and digital) media literacy and reduce or avoid risks of falling victim to current media and information technologies.

### Terminology

1. **Physically challenged youths** refers here to students 15 years of age or older in Chonburi Sot Suksa School (School for the Deaf), who

need individualized instruction( due to physical challenges.)

2. **Hearing- impaired youths** refers to those students with moderate to profound hearing loss. Two categories of the hearing impaired are:

2.1 **Deaf students** are those with profound hearing loss who cannot hear with or without hearing aids. Their hearing loss is measured at 90 decibels or above.

2.2 **Hard of hearing students** are those who hear adequately or better with hearing aids. Their hearing loss is measured between 29 to 90 decibels.

3. **Media literacy** refers to knowledge, attitudes to the media, the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act using all forms of communication (Child and Youth Media Institute and Civic Education Center for Democracy, 2017).

### Research population and samples

Research population : youths with hearing impairments.

Research samples: 100 youths with hearing impairments.

### Research procedures

The researchers observe the following steps.

#### Step 1

Literature review of knowledge, skills, attitudes toward media usage, and the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act using all forms of communication.

#### Step 2

Construction and improvement of the program to foster media literacy for youths with hearing impairments.

#### Step 3

Provision of training to foster media literacy among youths with hearing impairments.

### Data analysis

Statistics packages were used to analyze the following data:

1. General data concerning the sample group was analyzed using numbers and percentage.
2. The (mark) results from the media literacy lessons were analyzed using mean and standard deviation.
3. The difference between the mean before and after the training was analyzed using a Paired-sample t-test.

### The study results are as follows:

1. The youths with hearing impairments were found to use a variety of communication devices. These included conventional devices such as television, radio, audiobooks, and electronic or digital devices such as telephones, smart phones, desktop computers, and tablets to access information suitable to their everyday needs, as well as learning and recreational devices designed specifically for the hearing impaired.
2. The youths' overall media literacy prior to the training was found to be at a very high level, with careful consideration given prior to making purchases advertised on various media platforms ( $\bar{X} = 4.17$ ) at the highest, followed respectively by the ability to recognize advantages and disadvantages in receiving information through various types of media ( $\bar{X} = 4.11$ ), refraining from sharing information if not certain of its accuracy ( $\bar{X} = 4.09$ ), and the decision to follow reliable sources of information ( $\bar{X} = 3.29$ ) at the lowest.
3. The youths' overall media literacy after the training was revealed to be at a very high level, with careful consideration given prior making purchases things advertised on various media platforms at the highest ( $\bar{X} = 4.71$ ), followed respectively by refraining from sharing information if not certain of its accuracy ( $\bar{X} = 4.51$ ), the ability to recognize advantages and disadvantages in receiving information through various types of media ( $\bar{X} = 4.43$ ), and the ability to distinguish true

from untrue information ( $\bar{X} = 4.00$ ) at the lowest.

4. The mean of the youths' performance before and after the training was found to be different with a statistical significance of .01, showing higher media literacy among the youths with hearing impairments.

### Discussion

The youths with hearing impairments were found to use a variety of communication devices. These included conventional devices such as television, radio, audiobooks, and electronic or digital devices such as telephones, smart phones, desktop computers, and tablets to access information suitable to their everyday needs, as well as learning and recreational devices designed specifically for the hearing impaired. They tended to use their media devices after class hours since the use, particularly of smartphones, was not allowed during school times. Even so some of the students managed to use devices such as television, or desktop computers during prohibited times. The training on media literacy for youths with hearing impairments increased their media literacy since the content of the training was learner-focused, allowing learners to actively participate in discovering and creating knowledge, sharing and exchanging activities, and applying what they learned to their real lives. Their increased media literacy would subsequently broaden their thinking and their world view.

### Suggestions

1. The design of guidelines for promoting media literacy among youths with hearing impairments should take into consideration the physical limitations that prevent youths from fully using media. The design of learning technologies has to parallel the learning content. People with different types of physical challenges need different technologies to produce instructional media, different communications technologies, and different languages to communicate.

Likewise, youths with hearing impairments need sign languages, and subtitled media.

2. Age plays an important role in learning, so the design of the training to promote media literacy has to be based on and correspond to the age of the training participants.

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