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**The Impact of the Internet on Schools of
Library and Information Science in
Thailand**

By

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the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of
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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the research is to examine how the Internet has impacted on the schools of library and information science in Thailand. The study focuses on how it is used and the resultant changes in knowledge and skill of the academic staff, the teaching and learning process and the schools' curricula. In the research framework general systems principles were adapted to explain particular characteristics of the schools and the implementation of innovation in organisation process was used to clarify the phenomenon of Internet implementation in the schools' activities. The identification of the different pattern of change was arrived at by correlation and comparison tests between Internet use, its impact and the differential among the schools' characteristics and human factors. Questionnaires were provided to 146 academic staff in 16 schools of library and information science in Thailand. Sixteen heads of schools and 25 other information professionals were interviewed and an analysis of each school's curricula was also carried out.

The results of the study show that the library and information science schools in Thailand are keeping up with the changes in information and communication technology. Since 1997 some schools have changed the name of the programs to Information Studies, Information Science or Information Management. The study found a correlation between names of the programs, the number of courses and credits for information technology and the inclusion of the Internet in the curricula. As well, the visions and goals of the schools were found to be associated with technology infrastructure and support from parent universities. The study also found that the Internet has been integrated into the schools as an important part of their curricula and the teaching and learning process, especially the courses in information services, information resources and access, and information storage and retrieval areas. Furthermore, Internet use has impacted on academic staff knowledge and skills, their teaching methods and activities and their communication patterns and research behaviour. However, the use and impact of the Internet shows a correlation with the age of academic staff, their knowledge, skills and experience in using the computer and the Internet and information technology infrastructure and support in the schools. As a result of this research study, a new model of library and information science education in Thailand is proposed which takes all of these factors into account while considering its application to other countries in South East Asia.

Table of Contents

	Pages
Certificate of Authorship of Thesis	ii
Retention and Use of Thesis	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents	v
Lists of Figures	xii
List of Tables	xx
Acknowledgements	xxii
1 Introduction	1-10
1.0 Research Background	1
1.1 Aims and Objects of the Research	6
1.2 The Significance of the Study	7
1.3 Definitions	8
1.4 Limitations of the study	9
1.5 Structure of the Study	10
2 Literature Review	11-90
2.0 Introduction	11
2.1 The Impact of the Internet on Libraries and Librarians: An overview	12
2.1.1 The Impact of the Internet on Library Work	14
2.1.2 The Impact of the Internet on Librarians	22
2.1.3 Section Summary	34
2.2 The Impact of the Internet on Library and Information Science Education	35

	Pages
2.2.1 Schools and Educators of Library and Information Science Response to Change - Developed Countries	36
2.2.2 Requirements for the Changes to Library and Information Science Curricula - Developed Countries	47
2.2.3 Current State of Change in Library and Information Science Curricula - Developed Countries	55
2.2.4 Changes to the Teaching and Learning Process - Developed Countries	62
2.3 Current State of Libraries and Library and Information Science Education in Thailand	69
2.3.1 Current Situation of Libraries in Thailand	70
2.3.2 Library and Information Education in Thailand	82
2.4 Chapter Summary	89
3 Theoretical Framework	91-108
3.0 Introduction	91
3.1 Application of Systems Theory	91
3.2 Implementation of Innovation in Organisations	96
3.3 Research Framework	99
3.4 Research Questions	102
3.5 Research Variables	102
3.6 Chapter Summary	108
4 Research Methods	109-132
4.0 Introduction	109
4.1 Research Design	109
4.2 The Appropriateness of Survey in the Study	110

	Pages	
4.3	Data Collection Methods	112
4.3.1	Questionnaire Survey Method	113
4.3.2	The Interview	117
4.3.3	Document Analysis Method	119
4.4	Population Samples for the Research	120
4.5	Research Instruments Pre-test	123
4.6	The Field Research	126
4.7	Data Analysis Methods	127
4.8	Chapter Summary	132
5	The Schools of Library and Information Science Information and Population Characteristics	133-162
5.0	Introduction	133
5.1	Part I: Characteristics of Thai Schools of Library and Information Science	133
5.1.1	Schools of Library and Information Science Programs	134
5.1.2	Staff and Students of the Schools	135
5.1.3	Management and Support in the Schools	138
5.2	Integration of Information Technology and Internet in the Schools	141
5.2.1	Information Technology Provision in the Schools	141
5.2.2	Internet Provision in the Schools	143
5.2.3	Internet Effect on the Schools' Activities	147
5.2.4	Management Support for Information Technology and Internet Projects	148
5.2.5	Infrastructure Support for Information Technology and Internet Use	152

	Pages	
5.3	Part II: Population Characteristics	156
5.4	Chapter Summary	160
6	Academic Staff Internet Use - the Schools of Library and Information Science	163-198
6.0	Introduction	163
6.1	Knowledge, Skills and Experience in Using Computer and the Internet - Academic Staff	163
6.2	Academic Staff Utilisation of the Internet	170
6.3	Internet Use Activities	178
6.4	Internet Use in the Teaching and Learning Process	183
6.5	Internet Use Problems - Academic Staff	189
6.6	Chapter Summary	198
7	Impact of the Internet on Schools of Library and Information Science	199-259
7.0	Introduction	199
7.1	Changes to Library and Information Science Programs	200
7.2	Program Change - Undergraduate Programs	200
7.3	Program Change - Graduate Programs	206
7.4	Internet Integration in the Curricula - Undergraduate and Graduate Programs	208
7.5	The Analysis of Changes in the Teaching and Learning Process	220
7.6	Self Analysis - Changes in Academic Staff Knowledge and Skills	226
7.7	Self Analysis of Communication Patterns - Academic Staff	232
7.8	Self Analysis of Research Behaviour - Academic Staff	236
7.9	Academic staff Opinions about the Impact of the Internet	242

	Pages
7.10 Self Analysis – Academic Staff Opinions about New Direction of Library and Information Science Education	251
7.11 Chapter Summary	258
8 Impact of the Internet on the Library and Information Profession in Thailand: Perspectives of Information Professionals	260-286
8.0 Introduction	260
8.1 Changes in the Library and Information Profession	261
8.2 Information Professionals Strength and Weaknesses	267
8.3 Competency Requirements of New Generations of Information Professionals	270
8.4 Comparative Analysis Between Past and Current Competencies of Information Professionals	276
8.5 New Direction of Library and Information Education in Thailand: Perspectives of Information Professionals	278
8.6 Chapter Summary	285
9 Conclusion and Discussion	287-318
9.0 Introduction	287
9.1 Review of Research process	288
9.2 Research Question One: <i>How is the Internet Being Used in the Schools?</i>	290
9.3 Research Question Two: <i>How Does the Internet Impact on the Schools?</i>	295
9.4 Research Question Three: <i>What are the Opinions of Academic Staff About the Impact of the Internet?</i>	303

	Pages
9.5 Comparative Tests Among the Variables and Discussion of Theoretical Base	304
9.6 Discussion of the Impact of the Internet on the Schools of Library and Information Science in Thailand	309
9.7 The Need for Change in the Information Profession	313
9.8 Competencies Needed for new Generation of Information Professionals	314
9.9 Chapter Summary	317
10 Suggestions and Implications	319-352
10.0 Introduction	319
10.1 Suggested Changes to Library and Information Science Education in Thailand	319
10.2 Proposed Model for Library and Information Science Education in Thailand	327
10.3 Implications of the New model for Library and Information Science Education in Thailand	339
10.4 Implications of the Research	341
10.5 Implications of the Research for Developing Countries	349
10.6 Recommendations for Further Research	351
References	353-379
Appendixes	1-127
Appendix A Tables of Chapter 6	1-38
Appendix B Tables of Chapter 7	39-98
Appendix C Research Instruments	99-127

	Pages
C 1: Questionnaires	100
C 2: Interview Schedule for Heads of the Schools	116
C 3: Interview Schedule for other Information Professionals	121
C 4: Curriculum Analysis Form	126

Lists of Figures

	Pages	
Chapter 3		
Figure 3.1	The Study's System Components and Concepts	100
Figure 3.2	The Research Framework	101.1
Figure 3.3	The Correlation Among Variables in Research Framework	106.1
Chapter 5		
Figure 5.1	Respondents Distributed by Age	157
Figure 5.2	Respondents Distributed by Education Level	157
Figure 5.3	Respondents Distributed by Majors or Specialisations	158
Figure 5.4	Respondents Distributed by Period since Finished Last Educational Degree	158
Figure 5.5	Respondents Distributed by Academic Positions	159
Figure 5.6	Respondents Distributed by Working Experience	159
Chapter 6		
Figure 6.1	Percentage of Knowledge and Skill in Using Computer (Academic Staff Distributed by Age)	164
Figure 6.2	Percentage of Knowledge and Skill in Using E-mail (Academic Staff Distributed by Age)	165
Figure 6.3	Percentage of Knowledge and Skill in Using WWW (Academic Staff Distributed by Age)	166

	Pages
Figure 6.4 Percentage of Knowledge and Skill in Using Computer (Academic Staff Distributed by Majors)	167
Figure 6.5 Percentage of Knowledge and Skill in Using E-mail (Academic Staff Distributed by Majors)	167
Figure 6.6 Percentage of Knowledge and Skill in Using WWW (Academic Staff Distributed by Majors)	167
Figure 6.7 Percentage of Academic Staff using Internet Services Distributed by Age	171
Figure 6.8 Percentage of Academic Staff using Internet Services Distributed by Use Experience	172
Figure 6.9 Percentage of Academic Staff using Internet Services Distributed by Computer Experience	172
Figure 6.10 Percentage of Academic Staff Frequency of Internet Service Use	173
Figure 6.11 Percentage of Places for Internet Access of Academic Staff	174
Figure 6.12 Percentage of Places of Internet Use Distributed by IT Group Schools	175
Figure 6.13 Percentage of Places of Internet Use Distributed by Vision Group Schools	175
Figure 6.14 Percentage of Places of Internet Use Distributed by Program Names	176
Figure 6.15 Percentage of Internet Use Activities of Academic Staff	179
Figure 6.16 Percentage of Internet Use Activities of Academic Staff Distributed by Age	180
Figure 6.17 Percentage of Internet Use Activities of Academic Staff Distributed by Knowledge and Skill Groups	181
Figure 6.18 Percentage of Internet Use Activities of Academic Staff Distributed by Internet Experience Groups	181
Figure 6.19 The Proportion of Subject Courses in each Course Category	185

	Pages	
Figure 6.20	Percentage of Internet Use as a Tool in Teaching and Learning Process	187
Figure 6.21	Percentage of Internet Use as a Tool in Teaching and Learning Process Distributed by Course Categories	188
Figure 6.22	Percentage of Internet Access Interrupted by System Error (Comparison Among IT Group Schools)	190
Figure 6.23	Percentage of University Support for Dial in Access to the Internet from Home (Comparison Among IT Group Schools)	191
Figure 6.24	Percentage of Internet Access Interrupted by System Errors (Comparison Between Program Name Group Schools)	192
Figure 6.25	Percentage of University Support for Dial in Access to the Internet from Home (Comparison Between Program Name Group Schools)	193
Figure 6.26	Percentage of Internet Training Service Support from the Universities (Comparison Between Program Name Group Schools)	193
Figure 6.27	Internet Use Problems – Academic Staff	194
Figure 6.28	Ranking of Internet Use of Academic staff (Comparison Among the Age Groups)	196
Figure 6.29	The Score of Internet use Problems of Academic Staff (Comparison Among Internet Use Experience Groups)	197
 Chapter 7		
Figure 7.1	Average Percentage of IT Credits and Courses in Library and Information Science Curricula	205
Figure 7.2	Average Percentage of Internet Courses and Credits in Library and Information Science Curricula	209

		Pages
Figure 7.3	Average Percentage of Internet Courses and Credits in the Program Curricula (Comparison between before and Since 1997 and Graduate Programs)	210
Figure 7.4	Percentage of Courses in each Internet Course Type	211
Figure 7.5	Percentage of Internet Courses Distributed by Subject Course Categories	212
Figure 7.6	Percentage of Internet Course Type in Each Course Category Groups	212
Figure 7.7	Percentage of Internet Content Taught in Library and Information Science Courses	217
Figure 7.8	Percentage Teaching Internet Content Distributed by Course Category groups	217
Figure 7.9	Average of Teaching Methods and Activities Used by Academic Staff (by Period of Time)	222
Figure 7.10	Average Teaching Methods and Activities Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Knowledge and Skills in Using WWW)	223
Figure 7.11	Average Teaching Methods and Activities Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Between Vision Group Schools)	225
Figure 7.12	Average of Knowledge and Skills Used by Academic Staff (Comparison by Period of Time)	227
Figure 7.13	Average of Knowledge and Skills Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Among Knowledge and Skills in Using Computer Groups)	229
Figure 7.14	Average of Knowledge and Skills Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Among IT Group Schools)	231
Figure 7.15	Average of Communication of Academic Staff (Comparison Between Periods of Time)	232

	Pages	
Figure 7.16	Average of Communication of Academic Staff (Comparison Among Computer Use Experience Groups)	233
Figure 7.17	Average of Communication of Academic Staff (Comparison Among Internet Use Experience Groups)	234
Figure 7.18	Average of Communication Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Among Computer Knowledge and Skill Groups)	235
Figure 7.19	Average of Communication Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Among E-mail Knowledge and Skill Internet Groups)	235
Figure 7.20	Average of Communication Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Among IT Group Schools)	236
Figure 7.21	Average of Information Seeking Patterns for Research Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Between Periods of Time)	237
Figure 7.22	Average of Information Seeking Patterns for research Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Among Computer Use Experience Groups)	238
Figure 7.23	Average of Information Seeking Patterns for Research Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Among Internet Use Experience Groups)	238
Figure 7.24	Average of Information Seeking Patterns for Research Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Among Computer Knowledge and Skill Groups)	239
Figure 7.25	Average of Information Seeking Patterns for Research Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Among E-mail Knowledge and Skill Groups)	239
Figure 7.26	Average of Information Seeking Patterns for Research Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Among IT group Schools)	241

	Pages	
Figure 7.27	Average of Information Seeking Patterns for Research Used by Academic Staff (Comparison Between Program Name group Schools)	241
Figure 7.28	Average of Opinions of Academic Staff Toward Internet Impact: Positive Impact	244
Figure 7.29	Average of Opinions of Academic Staff Toward Internet Impact: Negative Impact	244
Figure 7.30	Average of Opinions of Academic Staff Toward the Impact of Internet (Comparison Among Computer Knowledge and Skill Groups)	246
Figure 7. 30.1	Average of Opinions of Academic Staff Toward the Impact of Internet (Comparison Among Computer Experience Groups)	246
Figure 7.31	Average of Opinions of Academic Staff Toward the Impact of Internet (Comparison Among Knowledge and Skill in Using WWW Groups)	248
Figure 7.32	Average of Opinions of Academic Staff Toward the Impact of Internet (Comparison Among Vision Group Schools)	248
Figure 7.33	Average of Opinions of Academic Staff Toward the Impact of Internet (Comparison Between the program Name Group Schools)	249
Figure 7.34	Frequency of Academic Staff Opinions of Aims of Library and Information Science Education	252
Figure 7.35	Average on Knowledge and Skills Should be taught as Core Content in LIS Curricula	253
Figure 7.36	Average of knowledge and Skills Taught in LIS Curricula	254

	Pages	
Figure 7.37	Average of Academic Staff opinions about Facilities and Technology Infrastructure Support for Teaching and Learning in the Field	255
 Chapter 8		
Figure 8.1	Frequency of Answers – Changes in the Library and Information profession in Perspective of Information Professionals	266
Figure 8.2	Frequency of Answers for Strength of Information Professionals	268
Figure 8.3	Frequency of Answers for Weakness of Information Professionals	270
Figure 8.4	Frequency of Competencies of New Generation of Information Professionals	272
Figure 8.5	Frequency of Answers for Technology Competencies Requirement	274
Figure 8.6	Frequency of Answers for Personal Competencies Requirement	275
Figure 8.7	The Interrelation of Information Professional Competencies	278
Figure 8.8	Frequency of the Answers for the Aims of Library and Information Science Education	280
Figure 8.9	Percentage of Opinions Toward Knowledge and Skills for Core Content in Library and Information Science Curricula	282
Figure 8.10	Percentage of Internet knowledge and Skills for Core Content in the Library and Information Science Curricula	283

	Pages
Chapter 9	
Figure 9.1	306.1
The Correlation of Characteristics of the Schools and Human Factors, and Internet Use	
Figure 9.2	306.2
The Correlation of Characteristics of the Schools and Human factors and Impact of the Internet on the Schools	
Chapter 10	
Figure 10.1	328
Proposed New Model of Library and Information Science Education in Thailand	

Lists of Tables

		Pages
Chapter 4		
Table 4.1	Number of Population and Samples in the Study	123
Chapter 5		
Table 5.1	Staff Numbers, Educational Level and Majors	137
Table 5.2	Admission Numbers of Students in Library and Information Science Programs	137
Table 5.3	Information Technology Provision in the Schools of Library and Information Science	143
Table 5.4	Internet Provision in the Schools of Library and Information Science	145
Table 5.5	Purposes of Websites in the Schools	146
Table 5.6	Utilisation of the Internet in the Schools of Library and Information Science	146
Table 5.7	Internet Problems in the Schools	146
Table 5.8	Current State of Information Technology or Internet Projects and Staff Development Projects	149
Table 5.9	Project Management and Budget Support Distributed by Group Size of the Schools	150
Table 5.10	Difficulty of Project Management, Success of Information Technology or Internet Project Distributed by Group Size of the Schools	151
Table 5.11	Management Support for Information Technology or Internet Projects in the Schools	152
Table 5.12	Information Technology Infrastructure and Support for Technology and Internet Use in the Schools	154

		Pages
Table 5.13	Number of Schools in Each Visions or Goals Group Distributed by IT Infrastructure Groups	156
 Chapter 7		
Table 7.1	Curricula Names by Period of Development and Revision	201
Table 7.2	Aims of the Undergraduate Curricula Developed or Revised Since 1997 Distributed by Program Names	203
Table 7.3	Number of Credits and Courses (Total Courses and Credits, Core Courses and Technology Courses) Found in Curricula Distributed by Name of Programs and Period of Program Development or Revision.	205
Table 7.4	Aims of Graduate Education in Library and Information Science	207
Table 7.5	Internet Integrated in the Curricula Developed and Revised Before 1997	214
Table 7.6	Internet Integrated in the Curricula Developed and Revised Since 1997	215
Table 7.7	Total Credits/Courses/ Internet Credits/Courses - Graduate Programs	216