INFORMATION BEHAVIORS PROMOTING FOR THAI ARMY OFFICERS: GUIDELINES FOR STRATEGY FORMULATION

SIRPORN POOLSUWAN

Ph.D. candidate, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand
E-mail: siriporn.po@ssru.ac.th

Abstract - This mixed method research aims to study information behaviors of Thai army officers: non-commissioned officers and commission officers, in regard to information needs, seeking, searching and using, to study factors affecting information behaviors of Thai army officers, and to compare information behaviors of Thai non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers. The questionnaire was developed to collect data for quantitative method from the 400 officers in 10 Military Circle of The 2th Army Area and an in-depth interview and focus group were utilized for the data collection for qualitative method from 9 high-ranking commanders in The 2th Army Area. A Multi-stage sampling was conducted to obtain proper sample groups from 20 non-commissioned officers and 20 commission officers in each 10 Military Circle of The 2th Army Area. The findings, however, revealed that there were a tight connection of information behaviors were information needs, information seeking, information accessing, and information utilization. In the matter of information needs, the findings shown that most respondents 3 mainly needs: social needs, physiological needs, and spiritual needs. In information seeking, it was for working responsibility, accessing tools, information accessing techniques, and information source, respectively. In the major reasons of information utilization were occupation, livelihood, study and research, and learning. Factors affecting information behaviors of Thai non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers consisted of information needed situation, information accessing method, information usage method. A comparison of information behaviors of the both officers were not different.

Index Terms - Information Behavior, Strategy Formulation

I. INTRODUCTION

The world is currently in the information age; the society of information, knowledge or limitless communication utilizes several forms of information in study, research, working, living, making a decision and formation of knowledge for personal and public benefits, national development, social, economic, political and cultural development. Furthermore, with a large amount of information being created, developed and constantly changed, this leads us to qualitative information in align with our needs and contemporarily. If neglect of information seeking, obsolescence will be fallen upon; moreover, if neglect of information utilization, it will cause time wasting, lose opportunity and cause unwise spending. In the information age, information technology has been technology or data communication as a tool for managing technology, storing, seeking information, retrieving information and using information.

Information is data, news and facts, all of which are processed and kept in various forms as printed and unprinted matter and electronic media to be used; therefore, it is relevant and related to human. The information required by humanity is essential to individual, society, public and private agencies and nation. [1] With a need of humanity to improve themselves by acquiring news and information properly and appropriately, people in a current society constantly desire to learn in order to keep in pace with large amount of news; thus, the current society is a constant learning society and it is necessary for human to use information all the times; however, for the aspect and level of details of the information, they depend on responsibility and tasks of the agencies or individuals. [2]

UNESCO has stipulated that the world has 3 vital resources i.e. natural resource, human resource and information resource. [3] Development of Thai human resource is considered to be a challenging one in order to drive the national development. It is for making technology personnel and personnel in various fields operating in agriculture, industry and service, as well as general people in public and private sectors to possess intelligence, information literacy and keep in pace with the changes around the globe. In this matter, the government has elected National Digital Economy and Society Commission to give a developmental direction for public and private agencies and stipulated the supportive policies creating incentive and innovation to strengthen Thai economy and improve people to possess knowledge and ability [4]. Given that, humans are considered as one of the vital mechanisms for driving global society with mission or responsibility. With works, tasks and responsibility in occupations for living in a society, this leads to an introduction of information to apply in several purposes i.e. living, occupation, study and research and learning, as well as to communicate with each other. From such introduction to be used in any purpose, it results in the needs of information as such needs are a curiosity instinct of humans in regard to

information. It can be a content contained a topic or many topics to be used or respond to many aspects i.e. knowledge and understanding, education, making a decision, solving problems, occupation, reputation and fame or other purposes. In order to do that, seeking and searching for information are required to identify information source and to be able to access information and to obtain it to meet the needs.

A Thai Army is a military force mainly operating on land to defend and engage in a ground combat. Army was the very first military force in history. Main units in the army consists of 17 corps. Infantry corps which engage in combat with individual weapon in close quarter with its main duties to protect sovereignty since the birth of the nation, protect foreign intervention intending to occupy and to protect peace within its nation [5]. Thus, establishing strong foundation to the army must emphasize development of its personnel in every aspect in both physical and quality aspects in order to make the personnel be smart physically and mentally leading to a professional army solider. The personnel should have information literacy and keep in pace with the social changes around the world and capable to apply information to self-develop, improve society and occupation. In this matter, study on a promotion to army personnel to gain literacy in seeking information, searching and accessing information, and using information should be performed in order to utilize the findings as data to formulate and determine a direction in occupation development and welfare development in army personnel henceforth.

II. REVIEWED LITERATURE

A. Information behavior and related behavior

Wilson [6] defined the Definitions of Information behavior and related behavior are as belows:
Information Behavior is the totality of human behavior in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information seeking, and information use. Thus, it includes face to-face communication with others, as well as the passive reception of information as in, for example, watching TV advertisements, without any intention to act on the information given.

Information Seeking Behavior is the purposive seeking for information as a consequence of a need tosatisfy some goal. In the course of seeking, the individualmay interact with manual information systems (such as a newspaper or a library), or with computer-based systems (such as the World Wide Web). Information Searching Behavior is the 'micro-level' of behavior employed by the searcher in interacting with information systems of all kinds. It consists of all the interactions with the system, whether at the level of human computer interaction (for example, use of the mouse and clicks on links) or at the intellectual level (for example, adopting a Boolean search strategy or determining the criteria for deciding which of two books selected from adjacent places on a library shelf is most useful), which will also involve mental acts, such as judging the relevance of data or information retrieved.

Information Use Behavior consists of the physical and mental acts involved in incorporating the information found into the person's existing knowledge base. It may involve, therefore, physical acts such as marking sections in a text to note their importance or significance, as well as mental acts that involve, for example, comparison of new information with existing knowledge.

B. Information behavior

An information behavior is a human behavior expressing to react to a desire of facts, data, news, as well as information to be used in working, entertainment, instruction or routine life, etc. Moreover, it has a broad meaning and relates to human behaviors connected to information. Elements of information behaviors [7] consists of needs of information, information seeking, information searching, information accessing, and utilization. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs presented that human has 5 stages of needs [8], [9], i.e. (1) Physiological needs which is a basic need for survival i.e. food, water, air, clothing, dwelling (2) Safety needs in both physical and mental aspects i.e. environment affecting living, heath and security in career (3) Social needs which is needs of love, goodwill, amicability, belonging, friendship, as well as recognition as a part of group (4) Esteem needs i.e. fame, position, high salary, challenging job, respect from other people, as well as participation in making a decision of work and career path (5) Self-actualization needs which are highest needs for fulfilling their potentials i.e. a desire to be capable to work and make decision, to progress in career and to gain highest achievement as desired. As for information needs which is a human curiosity instinct in regard to information which may contain a topic or many topics to be used or respond to various aspects [10], [11], [12] i.e. (1) Spiritual needs: needs for achievement and desire of power (2) Physiological needs: a necessarily basic needs or (3) Social needs to utilize information in working, learning, knowledge, recognition and career path. It might be hard to meet all human needs of information in the same degree as each person identity is individually varied; thus, the information needs is a starting point to seek and search for information. The point consists of the following elements [13], [14] i.e. 1. Tasks 2. Information source 3. Accessing tools 4. Accessing technique. In case of

not fulfilling the needs or inability to utilize as required, seeking and searching can be re-done until the needs are fulfilled.

III. METHODOLOGY

This research aims to study information behaviors of Thai army officers: non-commissioned officers and commission officers, in regard to information needs, seeking,searching and using, to study factors affecting information behaviors of Thai army officers, and to compare information behaviors of Thai non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers regarding information needs, seeking and utilization. This study used mix method in collecting data. The quantitative method used Multi-stage sampling and questionnaire as a tool for collecting data from a sample group: 400 Thai army officers which were stationed in 10 Military Circles of The 2th Army Area (40 persons form each circles). The questionnaire was developed, comprising factors operationalized from the reviews of related theories and models including the theories of human needs, information behavior model, information seeking behavior model, information searching, information using. Three experts reviewed the designed questionnaire in order to evaluate the content validity, structure, technique, content and methodology. A questionnaire was divided into 5 sections: section 1: Respondent's personal characteristic, family condition, occupation and society consisted of gender, age, education degree, accommodation, family status, working position, responsibility and income ; question type was checklist; section 2: Questions asking information needs; question type was rating scale; section 3: Asking information seeking and searching; question type was rating scale; section 4: asking information utilization and difficulty; question type was also rating scale and section 5: other suggestion; open-ended question was applied. The index of item objective congruence or 1.00 for each item in the questionnaire was acceptable. The improved questionnaire was used for a pilot study with 30 samples who were Army officers in The 1st Army Area, in order to test reliability of the questionnaire using the Alpha Coefficient value according to the Cronbach method [15]. After that, it was used with 400 samples. As for qualitative research, in-a depth interview was applied in order to collect data from 9 high-ranking commanders who station in The 2th Army Area; the sampling applied snowball sampling technique in collecting the data. Structured interview was applied with contents related to information need: information seeking, information searching and information using, difficulty, Include policy, plan, strategy adopted in promoting information behaviors of The 2th Army Area for both officer groups. Percentage, mean and standard deviation and path analysis were applied. The conceptual Framework shown as below:

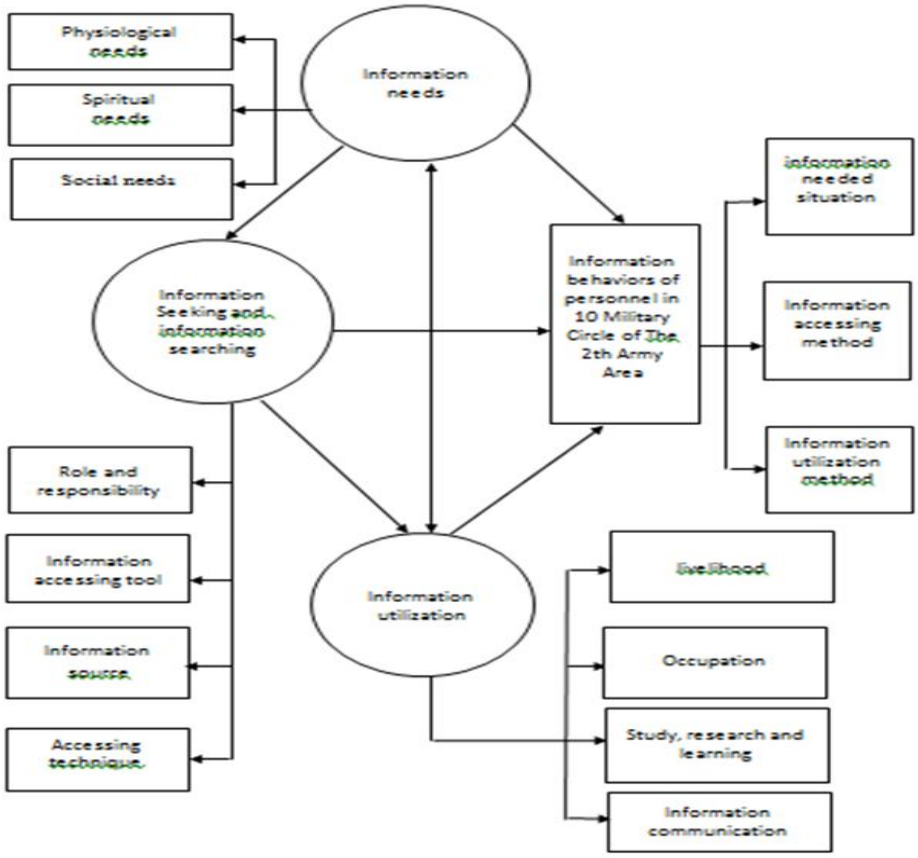


Fig.1 The Conceptual Framework

IV. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

The results of this study revealed

A. Information behaviors

It was found that most respondents 3 mainly needs; social needs, physiological needs and spiritual needs. In the matter of information seeking, it was found that Role and working responsibility were the major aspect for seeking information, secondarily information accessing tools, information accessing techniques, and information source, respectively. In aspect to information utilization, respective occupation, livelihood, learning and information communication to other were the most used ones.

B. Factors affecting information behaviors of non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers Factors affecting information behaviors of non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers from 10 Military Circles of The 2th Army Area were events on which information is needed, information accessing behaviors, and information usage behaviors.

C. The comparison of information behaviors of non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers from 10 Military Circles of The 2th Army Area. The comparison of information behaviors of non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers from 10 Military Circles of The 2th Army Area concerning information needs, seeking, utilization were not different.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to thank Graduate School, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand for their Support and also would like to thank Dr. Chantarat Manvichien for proof reading this research paper.

REFERENCES

[1] M. Chavalit . Textbook of basic information science Unit 1-7. Nonthaburi: Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, 1992.
[2] K. Malaiwong. Information technology. Bangkok: National Electronics and Computer Technology, 1992.
[3] C. Sajjanan. Science and Technology information. Bangkok: Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, 1987.
[4] Ministry of Information and Communication Technology. Thailand digital economy and society development plan. Bangkok: Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, 2016.
[5] How many soldier corps are there?. Retrieved June 1, 2018, from https://lifestyle.campus-star.com/knowledge/95395.html
[6] T.D. Wilson. "Human information behavior," Informing science : Speial issue for information Science Research. Vol. 3,no.2, 2000.
[7] M. Kabmala. David Ellis' information-seeking behavioral model, Retrieved September 20th, 2017, from https://home.kku.ac.th/hslib/malee/412731/Theory/ David_Ellis.doc
[8] H. Maslow. "A Theory of human motivation," Psychological Review. vol.50, no.4, pp. 370-396, June 1943.
[9] S. McLeod. Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Retrieved May 12, 2018, from https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html
[10] T. D. Wilson. "On user studies and information needs," Journal of Documentation. Vol.37, no.1, pp. 3-15, 1981.
[11] S. Leuang-Aram. Human needs. Bangkok: fine print, 1982.
[12] [10] N. Kantasewi. Human relations for social development. Bangkok: Odeon Store, 1985.
[13] D. Ellis, Cox, D. & Hall, K. "A comparison of the information seeking patterns of researchers in the Physical and Social Sciences," Journal of Documentation. Vol. 49, no. 4, pp. 356 – 369, April 1993.
[14] G. J. Leckie, K. E Pettigrew, and C. Sylvain. "Modeling the information seeking of professionals: A general model derived from research on Engineers, Health care professionals, and Lawyers," Library Quarterly. vol.66, no.2, pp. 161-193, April 1996.
[15] L.J. Cronbach. Essentials of psychological testing (3rd ed.). NewYork: Harper and Row, 1974.

★★★