

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive quantitative research methodology was used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe “what exists” with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. The methods involved range from the survey which describes the status quo, the correlation study which investigates the relationship between variables, to developmental studies which seek to determine changes over time. It is also called statistical research; the main goal of this to describe the data and characteristics about what is being studied. The idea behind this type of research is to study frequencies, averages and other statistical calculations.

The reason for using descriptive research in this study is to help to describe and measure the factors influencing OSNs use intention with regard to travel planning and travel information sharing by college students. The survey involves college students in Bangkok who are experienced using OSNs. The participants had to answer several personal questions and fill up the remaining part of the five-point-Likert scale questionnaire.

Respondents and Sampling Procedures

Respondents are people who provide answers to written questions in a self-administered survey. Sampling procedures is the process by which samples are collected from respondents. The following section will explain how the respondents were chosen and the sampling was processed.

1. Target Population

The target population of this study comprised some students at Bangkok University, Assumption University, and University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce

who are the members of OSNs and traveled in the previous twelve months.

These universities were chosen in this study because of their reputations of being the leading universities in Thailand and their popularities among Thai and international students. Moreover, all these universities have a high probability of their students using OSNs and having traveled in the previous twelve months. In addition, the researcher is trying to catch up different types of college students in order to better understand their perceptions when using OSNs and intention to use them with regard to travel.

2. Sample Size

Based on the statistics available on the three universities' website, sample size is the number of observations that constitute it. Based on the statistics available on the three universities' website, Bangkok University has 26,288 students, Assumption University 20,000 and University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce 21,182. The estimated total enrollment is more than 67,470 undergraduate and graduate students for the first term of 2012 academic year. Therefore, according to the formula of Yamane (1997, p.258) and confidence level of 95% and a +/-5% margin of error, the appropriate size of this research is 397.64. The process of calculating would be shown as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Note: n = Sample Size

N = Population Size

E = the Error of Sampling (sampling error = 0.05)

Based on the formula above the calculation is as follows:

$$n = \frac{67,470}{1 + 67,470 (0.05)^2}$$

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$n = 397.64$

The questionnaires were distributed in the form of a self-administered questionnaire that the respondent him/ herself completed. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to the college students at the three universities.

3. Research Instrument and Questionnaire

The instrument used for this research was a self-administered questionnaire, which was designed to examine the difference between respondents' demographic and perception of the use of OSN, as well as the relationship between perception of the use of OSNs with regard to travel decision making and the intention to use them with regard to travel decision making. The three part questionnaire consisted of:

Part I: General profile

This part aimed to identify responders' OSNs usage information and demographic characteristics. It includes five (5) questions such as which SNSs are you using most, and how often do you use SNSs, nationality, gender, and age.

Part II: Perception of the use of OSNs with regard to travel decision making

In this part, thirteen (13) questions were divided into two elements to investigate perceived benefit and perceived incentives when using OSNs. It might influence college students' intentions to use. Respondents are rated on a 5-Point-Likert scale (5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree) in order to obtain the level of agreement.

Part III: Intentions to use OSNs

This part consists of three (3) questions and also used a 5-Point-Likert scale in order to obtain the level of agreement on the behavioral intention to use OSNs with regard to traveling.

4. Primary Data Collection

Primary data refers to the data observed or collected directly from first-hand experience. In this empirical study, the researcher collected the primary data in the form of self-administered questionnaire distributed to 400 respondents who are OSNs members and have traveled for vacations in the previous 12 months.

5. Secondary Data Collection

Published data and data collected in the past are called secondary data. To support this study, the research collected secondary data from multiple channels such as e-news, journals, textbooks, and newspaper articles. The statistics used in this study was from web Analytics Company of Compete.com.

Data Processing and Analysis

During the process of analyzing the data in this research, quantitative methods were adopted. In addition, the data will be processed by a statistical computer program to summarize information from many variables in the conceptual model. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize and describe data.