



## Similarities or Differences: The Exposure to Media Messages among Thai-So Women, Kusuman District, Sakon Nakhon Province, Thailand

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### Abstract

The objective of this research was to investigate the types of mass media and media messages exposed to each generation of the Thai-So women across three villages. Purposive sampling technique was used for selecting 30 key informants. The research instrument was semi-structured interview guideline. Data were analyzed by content analysis. The research results could be divided into two parts. Firstly, the exposure to mass media, all three generations did not read a newspaper, but they listened to the radio and watched television. Some Generation X-ers started to use the internet while baby boomers did not. Generation Y-ers were 'digital natives', so it was not surprising that they chose to use the internet to a greater extent than traditional media. Interestingly, the smart phone became the most important device for accessing the internet; Generation X-ers and Generation Y-ers were exposed to content through those platforms – namely Youtube, Joox, Line TV, Facebook and Line. Secondly, regarding the exposure to media messages, the characteristics of media messages exposed to them were similar – that is entertainment, knowledge, and news programs. However, when the researcher considered the details of the media messages, it was found that there were differences. As such, the media messages most popular with the baby boomers were those presented in a Thai series format, while Indian series and Korean series were popular with Generation X-ers and Generation Y-ers respectively. Consequently, the research results concluded that there were both similarities and differences regarding the exposure to mass media, and the media message content, among the three generations.

**Keywords:** Exposure, Mass Media, Media Messages, Thai-So Women of Kusuman District

### Introduction

Mass media is referred to as technologies used as channels for a small group of people to communicate with a large number of people (Merskin, 2019). The technologies in this study were newspapers, radio, television and internet. According to Thai mass media, it was revealed that all types of mass media had journeyed from the west to Thailand; the first newspaper in Thailand emerged in 1844, followed by radio in 1930, television in 1950, and internet in 1987 (Kaithong, 2015; Press Reference, n.d.; Ekachai, 2000). Furthermore, this mass media journeyed into all regions of Thailand. More recently, a media consumption survey pointed out that 88.9 percent of the Thai population watches television every day, while 46.0 percent listen to radio, and only 8.5 percent read the morning newspaper. The survey results further indicated that 82.0 percent of the total population used the internet through these two devices: smart phone by approximately 89.6 percent and computer by approximately 28.3 percent. Considering the activity when using Internet, it was used mostly for social networking (Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, Line, and Instagram) at 94.1 percent. In particular, Facebook users in Thailand are continuing to increase by 4 percent year-on-year. (Broadcasting Policy and Research Bureau, Office of NBTC, n.d.; National Statistical Office (NSO), n.d.). The implication of these surveys pointed out that mass media fully saturates our everyday lives; they now play a very significant role in providing people with news and information, and have become influential in shaping social outlook.

According to the topography of Thailand, the northeast region is located on the Khorat Plateau. It was generally considered as a problem area of Thailand, with low capital income, environmental degradation, and controversial politics. It also includes a multiplicity of ethnic groups of different origins, languages, and habits. The predominant ethnic group comprised the Tai-Lao speaking people, while non-Tai speakers can be classified into eight outstanding groups such as Phu Tai, Yo, Seak, Kha, Kaleung, Kuai, Khmer, and So. Most interestingly, anthropological researchers identified that the Thai-So ways of life – such as culture, traditions, rituals, myths, beliefs, social values, and gender roles – were changed less than those of the other ethnic groups (Schliesinger, 2000; Prince Kromphraya Damrong Official Survey of Monthon Udon and Northeast in 1906 (RE 125), 1995). This was especially the case regarding the existence of a patriarchal society, the patrilineal inheritance system, and the patri-local residence system continued to be predominant among the ethnic Thai-So. Traditionally, land passed down from parents to sons; the patri-local residence practice, where the daughter-in-law moved in after marriage, was common (Thongyou & Phongsiri, 2017; Walker, 1999). Hence, in the Thai-So society, men have absolute power over decision making within the family.

Moreover, Thongyou and Phongsiri's research (2017) explained the patriarchal society within the Yo ethnic group. It was found that Yo women had encountered obstacles in accessing information via mass media when it was expanded to their village. Similarly, the ethnic Thai-So had still been a patriarchal society. In order to expand on Thongyou and Phongsiri's research of 2017 towards ethnic Thai-So, and to fulfill the state of knowledge of the Northeastern ethnic groups in the dimension of communication development, the Thai-So women's media exposure, under the concept of selective exposure, became the key issue of this research. In relation to this concept, the basic assumption was that the people's use of media reflected their existing interests and preferences and this was consistent with the generational theory. To be clear about the Thai-So women's media exposure, Generational Cohorts studied by Espinoza and Ukleja in 2016 was the important criteria used for dividing the group key informants – that is baby boom (over 48 years old), generation X (33–47 years old) and generation Y (18–32 years old). Generational theory strongly suggests that people who were born in a certain period adopt particular patterns of media exposure. Referring to the previous studies, they attempted to explain the media exposure of each generation in that the Baby Boomer generation's dominant media were newspaper and radio, while at the same time they were in the period of the birth and development of television (Reeves & Oh, 2007). Therefore, radio and television were exposed the most among them. Generation X grew up in a period with more international influence; it was found that television broadcasts were still their biggest source of entertainment. However, they were likely to be getting online via a smartphone rather than a PC/laptop. Generation Y came of age during the rise of the World Wide Web and social networking (Globalwebindex, 2018; Ngamsangchaikit, 2017). The influence of internet has contributed to Generation Y' having a strong preference for online information instead of information through traditional media (Amornvivat, 2014).

Based on the literature review, no prior researches, Western or Thai had ever studied the types of mass media and media messages exposed to each generation of the Thai-So women. Therefore, it was a good opportunity for the researcher to conduct this study.

### **The Objective of the Study**

To investigate the types of mass media and media messages exposed to each generation of the Thai-So women, across three villages.



## Methodology

The qualitative method was used for studying the above objective of this research. Four issues – area of study, key informants, instrument and procedure, and data analysis – were broadly explained here.

### 1. Area of Study

Based on the primary and secondary data, it is claimed that the Kusuman district in Thailand is an area where the Thai-So people could be found in significant numbers (Burasit, 2009). Also, Tourism Authority of Thailand (n.d.) considered Kusuman district as a historical site of the Thai-So ethnic group in Thailand. Moreover, the researcher herself conducted the survey, along with the Kusuman Mayor and government officials. It was found that almost 95.0 percent of three villages in Kusuman district – namely, Photipaisan village, Kokmoung village and Nonghoynoi village – have remained as a part of the Thai-So ethnic group, used ‘So’ language for communicating within their communities and their families, and passed on their culture from generation to generation. Consequently, the three villages were regarded as being representative of, and reflecting, the exposure to the types of mass media and messages of the Thai-So women.

### 2. Key Informants

Purposive sampling was used to seek key informants in answering the objectives of the study. The key informants were approximately 30 persons and all of them were the Thai-So women. Generational theory was the important criteria used for dividing the groups of key informants. This theory pinpointed people who were born and were living during the same time; hence, they will have similar experiences (Mannheim, 1952; Espinoza & Ukleja, 2016). From this theory, the key informants in here were divided into three groups: (1) Baby boom (over 48 years old), Generation X (33–47 years old), and Generation Y (18–32 years old) respectively.

### 3. Instruments and Procedure

The semi-structured interview was chosen as an appropriate data collection method, allowing for flexibility in the interview guide and enabling the researcher to develop an in-depth understanding of the research topic. All interviews took place during September 2018 – December 2018. Key informants were interviewed in person by the primary researcher using a variety of questions. The interviewer was able to adjust the questions according to the interviewees’ response and was able to offer probing and follow-up question in order to stimulate the interviewee’s response. Each key informant could choose the location for conducting the interviews. All interviews were audiotaped, the resulting material was then used to generate transcripts.

### 4. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed through a 3-step process of (1) decontextualization (identifying and coding segments or units of meaning in the data), (2) subsequent recontextualization (categorizing and thematically assembling a segment with other segments that deal with the same topic), and (3) synthesis.

## Results

The research results indicated that there were both the similarities and the differences regarding to the exposure to mass media and media messages across the three generations. In order to be more easily understood, the various generations – such as baby-boomers (over 48 years old), generation X (33–47 years old) and generation Y (18–32 years old) – were explained, item by item as follows:



## **1. Baby Boom Generation (Over 48 years old)**

### **1.1 Newspaper**

Regarding the interview findings, it was shown that no one read a newspaper. As a matter of fact, the government launched a policy 'Public Newspaper in 1989'; its objective was to cultivate the habit of reading. After the village headmen received the policy from the Sub-district Administration Organization (SAO), they announced, via loudspeakers, that those who wished to read a newspaper could read it at the village headmen's house. Practically, the village headmen had to collect a newspaper from the SAO every day. Unfortunately, this proved impossible because they had to work in their paddy field or raise their animals (such as cows and buffalo). Furthermore, the villages were far away from the SAO, a distance of approximately 5–10 kilometers. Not surprisingly, the newspapers were out of date since they would only collect them approximately every 7, 15 or even 30 days (R. Yaibangkaew, personal communication, August 4, 2018).

Even when a newspaper was available to the village, it was not read. Interestingly, the villagers had the little capability to read, write or even communicate in Thai language. This had resulted from their ways of life – that is their occupations, having their own language, and the environment surrounding them. Moreover, they did not have time to read because they might have to prepare food, take care of a grandchild or old person, and work in the paddy field. Hence, it would be fair to say that illiteracy and their ways of life (such as occupation and the use of Thai–So language) were the driving forces that prevented them from being exposed to media messages via a newspaper (T. Hadkadee, personal communication, October 2, 2018; B. Ruwannom, personal communication, November 12, 2018).

### **1.2 Radio**

It was found that some had their own radio whereas others listened along with their husband. The interviewees stated that they would listen with their husband because there was only one radio receiver in their household. If the husband possessed a radio, when he went to raise his cows and buffalo, he would take it with him. Therefore, the majority of the Thai–So women spend time listening to radio along with their husband. The findings further revealed that they listened to every station. However, if there was interference to the signal, or poor audio quality, they would change to other stations, such as the radio Broadcast Station 909 of Sakon Nakhon, the stations of Napho radio 88.25 MHz, FM 95 MHz Look Tung Maha Nakorn, FM 103.25 Dhamma by Ta Bua, Community Radio Broadcasting of Public Relations Department 103.75 MHz., Agricultural Radio Broadcasting, Community Radio Broadcast of the Thai–So People and other stations in the neighboring district. They were exposed to varied program content such as Thai country music, talk shows, agriculture news, breaking news, health information, weather forecast, Buddhist talks, etc. Additionally, there was news and information relating to the Thai–So communities – perhaps regarding a wedding ceremony in a neighboring village, a religious ceremony in a nearby temple, or a funeral ceremony (S. Yaibangkaew, personal communication, August 4, 2018; S. Voragun, personal communication, October 5, 2018). Consequently, portability, uncomplicated usage, and the information within their community became the significant key that maintained their listening to a radio.

### **1.3 Digital Television**

The finding revealed that television was the most exposed Thai mass media because it did not require complicated skills. In other words, the viewers just turned on, watched, listened and enjoyed the television programs. After digital television arrived in the Thai–So villages, they had access to more than 100 channels. The interviewees further revealed that they still watched channel 1, channel 33, channel 35, channel 3 and Channel



30; all of which were original channels from analog television – that is channel 5, channel 3, channel 7, TPBS and MCOT. Moreover, channel 23 (Workpoint), channel 27, channel 31 and channel 32 (Thai Rath), were new channels that had become favorites among the Thai-So women (S. Somphamuang, personal communication, November 14, 2018).

As for the television programs, there were a slight difference among the three villages. News, Thai series and Indian series were the favorite programs in Photipaisan village and in Kokmoung village. However, a singing contest was the most popular program in Kokmoung, followed by Thai series, Indian series and news respectively. Although the Indian series on Channel 27 – such as Siya Ke Ramm, Hanuman, and Mahathepiyara continued to be popular, a Thai series was still the favorite. Singing contests, the Golden Microphone (known as Mic Thongkham) and Suek Wan Duan Phang were programs featuring performances in Thai country music contests on channel 23 and Channel 31; these programs were the popular programs in Kokmoung village. Moreover, they were still interested in the current news, which was mostly national news more than local. Furthermore, some were interested in agricultural programs. They stated that, at that moment, they could watch agricultural programs via various channels, but they mostly watched through channel 30 (MCOT). The program's name was “*Agriculture for Building the Nation*”, it was on air in every Monday-Friday, 5.30–6.00 AM. (B. Ruwannom, personal communication, November 12, 2018). To sum up, number of channels, content, and ease of use were the main reasons that made them use this media.

#### 1.4 Internet

Based on the synthesis among three villages, the findings displayed that the majority used a smart phone in order to access the Internet. Unfortunately, the Thai-So women in the baby boomer group still used the old-style keypad mobile phone; they did not know what the internet was either. There is a good example reflecting upon Internet inaccessibility as Mrs. Samai Yaibangkaew, the grocery store owner in the community, stated:

*“My mobile phone was not similar to the teacher’s mobile telephone (The interviewer’s smart phone). My mobile phone has a keypad, and my relatives use the keypad mobile phone. When I contact the wholesale store, I used it to order products.”*

(S. Yaibangkaew, personal communication, August 3, 2018)

However, it was found that a few people did use a smart phone. They stated that their relatives, who worked in an Industrial Estate and in Bangkok, had bought it for them. They used it for receiving phone calls from their relatives. As for the small picture on the smart phone (it was an application on the smart phone), they did not know how to use it nor used it because “*it was difficult*” (K. Voragun, personal communication, October 1, 2018). It would be fair to say that there were a few villagers accessing new technology, such as a smart phone, but they could not use any of the applications on it. This was because smart phone usage was more complicated for them.

## 2. Generation X (33–47 years old)

### 2.1 Newspaper

The findings across the three villages could be categorized into two groups. Firstly, those who had at some points read a newspaper, but were not doing so at the time of the interview. There were various reasons why they did not read newspapers: 1) they did not understand some meanings of the words in a newspaper; 2) a newspaper was not available to them in the village; 3) they had never read a newspaper; 4) a newspaper did not fit in with their agricultural occupations; 5) they did not have enough time to read; and 6) the newspaper available





from the head of village was not up to date. Secondly, some still read a newspaper, but only once every 7–8 months or a year. Most of them had migrated to work in Bangkok or at an Industrial Estate and some had graduated from secondary school. Although they reported reading the newspaper, they only partly read it as they just scanned particular headlines. The reason they gave for reading a newspaper was that it was easy to read (M. Kusuwan, personal communication, December 9, 2018; W. Yaibangkaew, personal communication, August 11, 2018).

The information above implies that the experience of labor migration was the driving force that made some Generation X–ers read a newspaper. Very few of them read a newspaper when they returned to work in their hometown. Therefore, the different environments, a workplace in Bangkok, an Industrial Estate, and the village had an influence on their reading a newspaper.

## 2.2 Radio

The interview findings pointed out that the Thai–So women, who listened to radio, could be divided into two groups.

In the first group were those who still listen to the radio. It was also found that their behavior, in terms of radio exposure, were similar to the baby boomers' behavior – that is they would be listening along with their husband or the elders in their family. Nonetheless, there was a slight difference between Generation X–ers and the baby boomers as Generation X–ers had a greater knowledge of the stations and program content than did the baby boomers. Although there were many radio stations, they listened mostly to two radio stations – they were Napho Radio 88.25 MHz and the community radio broadcast of the Thai–So people. Moreover, they were exposed to program content that included: Good morning from Kusuman, Breaking News, Discussion News by Kamphu and Ratchanee, Healthy Talk with Samrit, Inside ASEAN, Sports, Healthy, Agriculture, Thai country songs (Yan Wai Plone Jai Kab Wan Wan is the name of a program of Thai country songs), Drama and Buddhist talk. However, the most popular program content remained Thai country songs, followed by agriculture, and breaking news respectively (P. Photisandee, personal communication, December 7, 2018; S. Mungsan, personal communication, December 13, 2018).

In the second group, the findings showed that Thai–So women, who had labour migration experience, turned to use a smart phone instead of the radio. In the other words, they changed from listening to Thai country music on the radio to the available platforms on the smart phone such as Youtube and music streaming. However, Youtube became the main platform that they used to listen to music. Interestingly, it was found that N. Yaibangkaew (personal communication, August 12, 2018) listened to music through the music streaming by using the Joox Application as she reported:

*“I listen to Thai country music through YouTube and Joox. My sons do it for me. I just open applications on my smart phone. I can listen to favorite songs without advertisements. Listening to Thai country music through an application on a smart phone is better than listening through radio broadcasting.”*

In short, labor migration may not be the driving force that is making the Thai–So women access the internet on a smart phone; on the contrary, their relatives became the significant key that made them open their minds and turn to use it.

## 2.3 Digital Television

The interview results indicated that the Thai–So women were exposed to media messages via digital television and smart phone. Nonetheless, they were exposed to digital television mostly. Their favorite channels



and programs were quite similar to those of the baby boomers. The television programs were mostly Thai series, followed by Indian series, game shows, agricultural programming, and news respectively. However, it was revealed that there were some programs that differed from the baby boomer group (over 48 years old). Most focused on Thai series, Indian series and Chuvit's new TV show: "Hitting Right in the Face". Particularly, Indian series were popular among them (V. Rasangphram, personal communication, October 14, 2018; P. Photisansee, personal communication, October 12, 2018)

The findings further displayed that, between 2014 and 2016, digital television was the media that Thai-So women, across the three villages, were mostly exposed to. However, there was a turning point among Thai-So women aged between 33 and 37 years old. Approximately in 2017, a few of them started to use smart phones to watch TV programs through platforms such as Youtube and Line TV. S. Yaibangkaew (personal communication, August 10, 2018) told that "I like it because I can watch the TV programs without interruptions of advertising." Furthermore, it was found that there were many things that would cause them to use a smart phone which included that the smart phone price was not too expensive and that they were able to access the internet via mobile internet. They suggested that they used a smart phone after finishing work or in their free time. At this time, it would be fair to say that the smart phone is going to play a significant role in their ways of life.

#### **2.4 Internet**

Referring to the interview findings, it was pinpointed that the Thai-So women, who used internet, could be divided into two groups.

Firstly, regarding those who had previously migrated to work in Bangkok or on an Industrial Estate, most of them were 38–47 years old. They returned to their hometown before internet media had started to play a significant role. However, they accepted and provided the financial support to their relatives so they could use the internet on a smart phone. Although they had not previously used the internet, they knew what the internet was. They revealed that the internet was modern, and it could also be used for toll free calls and to play games online. Secondly, for those who had previously migrated to work in Bangkok or an Industrial Estate, they were between 33 and 37 years old. They revealed that they had been exposed to media messages via digital television to a greater extent than via the internet on a smart phone. They were regarded as internet users at a general level and were found, in particular, in Photipaisan village and Kokmoung village. However, there was no internet user in Nonghoynoi village during the data collection. After migrating to work for around 5–10 years, these villagers returned to their hometown. Although the ways of life in the rural areas enveloped them, they still used the internet via Line and Facebook on a smart phone to contact friends and relatives. The findings further reported that they watched Thai series through Line TV and watched music videos and gained agricultural knowledge through YouTube. If someone's house was near to a house that had high-speed internet installed, they could use free internet all the time. Conversely, if their house was not near a house with high-speed internet, they would have to buy a mobile 'top-up' package a few times per week (S. Yaibangkaew, personal communication, August 10, 2018; N. Yaibangkaew, personal communication, August 12, 2018; M. Kusuwan, personal communication, December 9, 2018).

The above information implied that the Generation X-ers, who were 33–37 years old, were transforming to usage of digital media on a smart phone. Also, the researcher predicts that, in the future, their relatives, especially Generation Z will be an important key in getting them to use the internet via a smart phone.



### **3. Generation Y (18–32 years old)**

#### **3.1 Newspaper**

Based on the interview of Generation Y (18–32 years old) across three villages, the findings revealed that a newspaper was not available in Photipaisan village and Kok Mounng village, while it was available in the Nonghoynoi village. The findings further showed that the interviewees could be divided into three groups. The first group referred to those that had never been exposed to media messages via a newspaper but had been exposed through other media such as radio and television. The second group were those that had been exposed to media messages through a newspaper while they studied in secondary school. At the time of interview, they had changed to be exposed to media messages from social media. The third group were sometimes exposed to media messages, in particular to the column of Gossip Stars via a newspaper when they went to a 7-Eleven store or to Kusuman district. Although they were hardly ever exposed to media messages via a newspaper, they were exposed through other mass media such as a radio, digital television, and social media (K. Yaibangkaew, personal communication, August 26, 2018; M. Bunpan, personal communication, October 22, 2018). Interestingly, social media became the significant channel for Thai-So women of Generation Y as they could access news information quicker and more easily.

#### **3.2 Radio**

With regard to the interviewees, the findings showed that the majority of Thai-So women in Photipaisan village and Kokmounng village graduated at bachelor degree level, vocational school, or at Grade 12. The majority of them did not listen to music via radio, but they did listen to it on the available platforms in a smart phone – that is Youtube and music streaming (applications such as Joox and Spotify). They explained that they turned to listening to music through the available platforms because they did not have advertisements and news. They were also able to listen to their favorite music as many times if they wished. Nevertheless, very few of them listened to both radio and the available music platforms through a smart phone. They further explained that if they wanted to listen to the local news, they would do so via a radio. If they wanted to listen only to music, they would listen via the available platforms of the smart phone. In their selection of kinds of music, they listened to many popular music genres such as Rock, Pop and R & B, but they were fond of Thai country music – that is Luke Toong and Mor Lam. Furthermore, it was very interesting that in Nonghoynoi village. Thai-So women, who were between 18 and 32 years old, graduated at Grade 6 and Grade 9. They had migrated to work outside the village. They did not listen to radio, but they were exposed to various programs, including music, through digital television. Very few people listened to music through the available platforms in a smart phone (S. Pladinn, personal communication, December 22, 2018; K. Yaibangkaew, personal communication, August 26, 2018). Therefore, regarding listening to radio, across the three villages, had hardly changed.

#### **3.3 Digital Television**

The interview results among three villages showed that they watched television programs through digital television and smart phone. As for the television channels, it was revealed that they watched channel 1, channel 23 (Workpoint), channel 31, channel 33 and channel 35. The television programs related to Thai series, Korean series, game shows and hot news. They spent their time watching television in the morning between 6.30 and 10.00 and in the evening between 17.00 and 20.00. However, it was found that they turned on to watch television programs through available platforms on smart phones. Line TV and YouTube – application on the smart phone – became the significant channels that they were exposed to mostly. Content presented via such





applications varied. However, Thai series, Korean series and game shows were popular (S. Pairatsung, personal communication, August 27, 2018). They further explained that there were many reasons causing them turn to the use of smart phones. Firstly, the majority of houses in the Thai-So village have one TV while there were many family members. Of course, individual preferences for TV programs would differ. Not surprising, a smart phone became the alternative device when selecting a TV program. Secondly, they were used to the smart phone; it had become the fifth necessity of life. Thirdly, it was portable so could go anywhere. Fourthly, there were not too many advertisements. Finally, they could select the time for watching their favorite program as one informant said:

*“If mother is watching television, I cannot watch a favorite program, because my house has one TV. I open my mobile phone and choose the contents applications on the smart phone.”*

(K. Yaibangkaew, personal communication, August 26, 2018)

### 3.4 Internet

According to the behaviors of the platform usage on a smart phone and the content exposure across three villages, these were similar in all three villages. The findings pinpointed that YouTube, Line TV, Facebook, Line and Web browser were the popular platforms across the three villages. As for their content exposure, they watched music video, video clips, game shows and Thai series on YouTube. They listened to music on YouTube also. They watched Thai series, Korean series, game shows, and music videos online. They used Line for phone calling and sending messages; as it was free of charge. Mostly, they use it for calling their family members and friends. They kept in touch with friends and followed the news on social media via the platform of Facebook. They searched for information that they were interested in via Web browser. Google Chrome and the web browser were most popular among them (V. Voragun, personal communication, October 24, 2018).

Nonetheless, there was a small difference in devices for accessing the internet, across the three villages. In the Photipaisan village and the Kokmoung village, it was pointed out that one of the social values in the village was to support their relatives to study for higher education. As a consequence, Generation Y-ers had been educated to bachelor degree level, High Vocational Certificate, Vocational Certificate, Polytechnic school, and secondary school. It was found that they used both notebook and smart phone, but the smart phone was used the most. In Nonghoynoi village, the majority of the Thai-So women graduated at Grade 6 and Grade 9. They were famers; they cultivated rice and chili. It was found that their household income came from selling chili while the rice was cultivated for home consumption. However, any surplus rice would be put on sale. The findings indicated that very few of them used the internet; hence, it was not surprising that the smart phone had not proliferated (P. Nawanuch, personal communication, October 21, 2018; K. Yaibangkaew, personal communication, August 26, 2018).

As for internet access, they could access the internet through a mobile phone package. They bought a mobile phone package for as little as 22 baht per a day for buffet Net with 512 Kbps, 19 baht per a day for 500MB of 3G, 79 baht per week for 1.5 GB of 3G, and 299 baht per month for 300 MB/ day of Non-stop 3 G. A new SIM would cost approximately 240 baht. It was quite worthwhile because they could use unlimited 3G/4G, SMS and voice call for 3 months. Moreover, it was found that they could access the internet more and more after Net Pracharat came to be the head of the village (M. Bunpan, personal communication, October 22, 2018; P. Huyphitak, personal communication, December 21, 2018).

## Discussion

In this section, not only are the research results discussed, the concept of selective exposure is explained. All discussions are explained and concluded via 4 tables as follows:

As seen in Table 1, the results show that the radio and television were exposed to every generation while the newspaper and the internet were opposite. Considering each generation, the baby boomers were exposed to the radio and the television, whereas they not exposed to newspaper and the internet. However, the baby boomers in urban areas had been willing to embrace the internet (Hilt & Lipschultz, 2005; Reeves & Oh, 2007). The results further indicate that Generation X-ers and Generation Y-ers were exposed to all mass media; however, the frequency of media exposure was different. Generation X-ers were exposed to television regularly and some turned to using the internet through a smartphone often. This result was consistent with the Global Web Index's study in 2019; Generation X-ers are highly likely to interact in the online space. Interestingly, this researcher found that Generation X-ers, aged between 32 and 37 years old, turned to using the internet while the rest of them, who were 38 to 47 years old, did not use it. As for Generation Y-ers, they used the internet to a greater extent than they did other mass media, which is similar to the survey of the Electronic Transaction Development Agency (ETDA) in 2019. The ETDA's results showed that Generation Y was the group spending the most time online, at 10.22 hours.

**Table 1** Comparison of the Exposure to Mass Media in Each Generation

Group Classified	Types of Mass Media			
	Newspaper	Radio	Television	Internet
Baby Boom	✗	✓	✓	✗
Generation X	✗✓	✗✓	✓	✗✓
Generation Y	✗✓	✗✓	✗✓	✓

**Note:** ✗ = No Exposure; ✗✓ = Sometime Exposure; ✓ = Regular Exposure

When comparing the exposure to newspaper columns, radio stations, television channels, and internet platforms in each generation, it was revealed that there were slight differences (see Table 2). The detail differences of each mass media across the three generations are explained as follows:

Firstly, there were no favorite columns in the newspapers among the three generations. This implied that the newspaper was not the mass media that they were exposed to. Based on the interviews, baby boomers did not read a newspaper because of their illiteracy and their ways of life forming barriers. On the other hand, Generation X-ers and Generation Y-ers were rarely exposed to it. This indicated that the newspaper was not the mass media giving them access to news and information. They merely took and read it to kill time while they were running some errands.

Secondly, all generations listened to the radio; their favorite station was the station of Napho radio 88.25 (known as Napho Station). Baby boomers and Generation X-ers listened to Napho station because the radio wave was strong and there were more music programs than other programs. As for generation Y, they listened to Napho station because of the news relating to their community. In sum, the radio still existed among the three generations, but there were the different objectives in using it, including having the individual preference of radio stations (see in Table 2).



Thirdly, Thai television's channel 35 and channel 33 had the favorite channels among the three generations. Nevertheless, it was revealed that the new channels – such as channel 23 (Workpoint) and channel 27 (ช่อง 8) – were popular with Generation X; conversely, channel 23 (Workpoint), channel 31 (One) and channel 25 (GMM 25) became the favorite channels for Generation Y. This result reflected that baby-boomers had brand loyalty, in particular to channel 7 and channel 3 (today, known as channel 35 and channel 33 on digital televisions); conversely, Generation X-ers and Generation Y-ers were open-minded in viewing new information from the new channels.

Fourthly, the results displayed that there were two generations who use the internet – Generation X and Generation Y. The favorite platforms on the internet for Generation X were YouTube and Joox while YouTube, Joox, Line T.V., Facebook, Line and Web Browser were popular with Generation Y. The details of the content of the platforms are explained in table 4.

**Table 2** Comparison of Exposure to Favorite Channels in Each Generation

Group Classified	Types of Media Messages			
	Newspaper	Radio	Television	Internet
Baby Boom	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The radio broadcast station 909 of Sakon Nakhon</li> <li>- The station of Napho radio 88.25</li> <li>- FM 103.25 Dhamma by Ta Bua</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chanel 35</li> <li>- Chanel 33</li> </ul>	N/A
Generation X	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The station of Napho radio 88.25</li> <li>- FM 92.5 MHz</li> <li>- Community Radio broadcast of Thai-So people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chanel 35</li> <li>- Chanel 33</li> <li>- Chanel 23</li> <li>- Chanel 27</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Youtube</li> <li>- Joox</li> </ul>
Generation Y	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The station of Napho radio 88.25</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chanel 23</li> <li>- Chanel 31</li> <li>- Chanel 33</li> <li>- Chanel 35</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Youtube</li> <li>- Joox</li> <li>- Line T.V.</li> <li>- Facebook</li> <li>- Line</li> <li>- Web Browser</li> </ul>

Based on the research results, the exposure to media messages are discussed in table 3. Every generation did not read media messages through the newspaper, while all generations listened to the radio and watched television. The results further indicate that both baby boomers' and Generation X-ers' were quite similar when listening to media messages. Namely, they liked to listen to Thai country song, news, agriculture and the weather forecast. On the other hand, Generation Y-ers listened particular to the news in the Thai-So community. Furthermore, the Generation X-ers' and Generation Y-ers' viewing of media messages were alike. As for Generation Y, it was found that Korean series and game shows were the most popular among them. These results point out that all of the generations are exposed to various programs – that is entertainment (Thai country song, Thai series, Indian series, Korean series, game show), knowledge (agriculture and weather forecast) and news (breaking news, national news, and analysis). However, it was found that the entertainment programs remained the most popular among them.

**Table 3** Comparison of the Exposure to Favorite Media Messages in Particular Newspaper, Radio and Television, in Each Generation

Group Classified	Media Messages		
	Newspaper	Radio	Television
Baby Boom	N/A	- Thai Country Song (Luke Tong and Mor Lum)	- Thai Series
		- News in the Thai-So community	- Indian Series
		- Agriculture	- National News
		- Weather forecast	- Agriculture
Generation X	N/A	- Thai Country Song (Luke Tong and Mor Lum)	- Thai Series
		- Breaking News	- Indian Series
		- News in the Thai-So community	- National News
		- Agriculture	- Game Show
Generation Y	N/A	- Weather forecast	- News Analysis
			- Agriculture
			- Thai Series
		- News in the Thai-So community	- Korean Series
			- Game Show
			- Breaking News

Besides, it was found that the internet was used in groups of Generation X and Generation Y. Generation X-ers used the platforms of YouTube and Joox for listening to music; Line T.V. for watching Thai series; Line for calling and sending messages; and Facebook for following their Facebook friends. On the other hand, Generation Y-ers used the platform of Youtube and Line T.V. for watching music videos, video clips, game shows, and Thai series. As for Korean series, they watched via only Line T.V. They used the platform provided by Joox for listening to music, Line for calling and sending messages, and Facebook for following their Facebook friends and posting their own stories; and Web browser when searching for general information. Therefore, it would be fair to say that Generation X and Generation Y had differences in using the content of each platform (see in Table 4).

**Table 4** Comparison of the Internet use of other Platforms and the Exposure to Content of Each Platform in Particular for Generation X and Generation Y

Group Classified	Internet Use					
	Youtube	Joox	Line TV	Facebook	Line	Web browser
Generation X	Music	Music	Thai-Series	Keep in touch with friends	Calling and Sending Messages	N/A
Generation Y	Music Video		Thai Series			
	Clip Video	Music	Korean Series	- Keep in touch with friends	Calling and	N/A
	Game Show		Game Show	- Post their personal story	Sending	
	Thai Series		Music Video		Messages	

It is fair to conclude that the above discussion of the Thai-So women's behavior, in regard to media exposure, could be explained through the concept of selective exposure. The concept's basic assumption was of the people's use of media reflecting their interests and preferences, which was consistent with the research results. The indication was that each generation selected their exposure to mass media and the media messages that they were interested in and preferred. Moreover, the results clearly showed the characteristics of the audience; the Thai-So women were an active audience, not passive.



## Conclusions

In conclusion, it is pointed out that the exposure to mass media and media messages among the three generations shows an overlap. In other words, there were both similarities and differences in using mass media and exposure to media messages among the generations. In order to be concise, the researcher concludes via two issues as mentioned below:

1. In the first issue of mass media, it was found that all three generations did not read newspapers, but they did listen to radio and watched the television. As for the internet, baby boomers were the only generation that did not use the internet while the rest used it.

2. In the second issue of media messages, the characteristics of media message exposure among the three generations were alike – that is entertainment (Thai country songs, Thai series, Indian series, Korean series, game shows), knowledge (agriculture and weather forecast) and news (breaking news, national news, news analysis). When the researcher considered the details of media messages, it was found that there were differences. For example, the favorite media message for baby boomers was Thai series, while Indian series and Korean series were popular in Generation X-ers and Generation Y-ers, respectively.

## Recommendations

Referring to the research results, it was found that the Thai-So women, across three generations, could select the content/programs of mass media. However, most of the content did not generate empowerment for these women. Therefore, the researcher proposed a short-term policy to Kusuman district as follows.

1. Kusuman district officials should send news, information and knowledge through these channels – that is the radio community, Line Business and Facebook Fan Page. Baby boomers access the radio community while Generation X-ers and Generation Y-ers access Line for Business/Line Ads and Facebook Fan Page.

2. Kusuman district officials should design content that is concise and include a contact name and telephone number. Moreover, the content should be relevant to the Thai-So way of life, such as agricultural market prices, weather forecast, government policies, and other Thai-So community information.

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