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The Use of Applications for Relationship Building Dating Apps Among Undergraduate Students

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Abstract

This quantitative study aimed to investigate the usage behavior of dating applications among undergraduate students at the College of Communication Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Nakhon Pathom Campus, and to examine how the use of online dating and social media platforms influences the development of interpersonal relationships. Data were collected from 400 students through an online questionnaire using purposive sampling to ensure participants had prior experience with dating applications.

Findings revealed that most students used dating applications mainly to relieve loneliness and for entertainment rather than to seek serious relationships. However, 77.2% believed these platforms could lead to meaningful relationships, depending more on personal characteristics and compatibility than on technology. While 65.5% felt safe using the apps, 34.5% expressed concerns about privacy and security. Overall, dating applications can foster meaningful connections, but personal factors and safety awareness remain essential for successful use.

Keywords: dating applications, online dating, student behavior, communication patterns, interpersonal relationships

1. Introduction

Dating and building interpersonal relationships have always been essential parts of human life, especially in the digital era where technology plays a major role in transforming how people meet and communicate. Nowadays, dating applications have become one of the main platforms people around the world use to find romantic partners, form new relationships, or connect with others who share similar interests. These applications have gained tremendous popularity among young adults, particularly university students who have grown up in the digital age. For them, such platforms are not only a modern tool for social connection but also a way to explore and develop both social and romantic relationships through technology.

Students from the College of Communication Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Nakhon Pathom Campus, represent a group of young individuals in the stage of learning, developing communication skills, and exploring personal identity. For these students, dating applications are not merely tools for personal relationships, but also spaces for practicing communication, creating self-presentation, and understanding social behavior in themselves and others. However, the use of these applications comes with both advantages and risks –

while they provide opportunities to meet new people easily, they may also involve issues such as deception, unstable relationships, or privacy concerns.

Therefore, studying the behavior of undergraduate students in using dating applications is essential to understanding the factors influencing their usage, their perceptions of benefits and risks, and the impact on their attitudes and relationship values. The findings from this study can contribute to developing educational approaches that promote safe and responsible use of dating applications, as well as provide insights into the evolving patterns of relationship-building among young people in the digital age.

1.1 Research Objective

1. To study the usage behavior of dating applications among students of the College of Communication Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Nakhon Pathom Campus.
2. To examine how the use of online dating and social media platforms influences the development of interpersonal relationships.

1.2 Hypothesis

1. Undergraduate students have a positive attitude toward using dating applications for seeking serious relationships.
2. The use of dating applications contributes to the development of long-term relationships with greater seriousness.

2. Literature review

2.1 Partner Selection Theory

According to Prof. Dr. Kasemsan Veerakul (2016), partner selection in Thai society is influenced not only by personal affection but also by socio-cultural factors such as family relationships, financial status, marriage expenses, and social values. This theory explains how users' partner choices reflect both personal preference and societal expectations.

2.2 Online Identity Theory

Apichai Kasetaset (2018) explains that individuals construct and express their identities online through personal information sharing, profile images, and behaviors they wish others to perceive. Dating applications serve as platforms for online self-presentation, reflecting the identity users wish to communicate.

2.3 Social Information Processing Theory

Joseph Walther (1992) posits that interpersonal relationships can be formed via computer-mediated communication. Although online interactions may involve misinterpretations, dating applications enable fast and convenient communication, but may also lead to misrepresentation affecting future relationships.

2.4 Perception and Attitude Studies

Itsdaporn Phongchantraseat & Parinyaporn Potariya (2022) found that students held positive attitudes toward dating applications, using them to find compatible partners and communicate with foreigners. Awareness and media exposure differed across faculties, but attitudes toward app usage were not significantly affected.

2.5 Online Dating Behavior

Kirana Mungcharoen (2020) studied Thai users aged 24-45 and found that dating platforms are used for friendship, romantic relationships, and casual connections. Introverted users often seek genuine connections. Platforms facilitate accessibility, fit users' schedules, and support ongoing relationship development, aligning with social relationship theories regarding trust, acceptance, and belonging.

Thanakorn Uypanich and Nutcharee Muangtang (2020) conducted a study titled "Development of Mobile Application for Promoting Knowledge of Suan Sunandha Inner Court Royal Dress." The research employed a Research and Development (R&D) methodology to design and evaluate the effectiveness of the application. The findings revealed that the application demonstrated high efficiency in both content and usability, with users expressing a high level of satisfaction. This highlights the importance of user experience (UX) design, and the study serves as a valuable reference for understanding user behavior and attitudes toward mobile applications in the present research.

3. Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach, using an online questionnaire via Google Forms as the primary data collection tool.

3.1 Scope of the Study

3.1.1 Content Scope

The research focused on students' behaviors in using dating applications at the College of Communication Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Nakhon Pathom Campus. The study explored students' attitudes, beliefs, and reasons for using apps such as Tinder, Tantan, Omi, and Facebook Dating, as well as the impact of these applications on long-term relationships and serious partner-seeking.

3.1.2 Population Scope

The sample included students from all years of study, aged 18-23, who had experience using dating applications.

3.1.3 Geographical Scope

Data collection was conducted at the College of Communication Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Nakhon Pathom Campus, Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand.

3.1.4 Time Scope

Data were collected over March 6-11, 2025, focusing on students who had used dating applications within a one-week period.

3.2 Research Instruments

This study employed an online questionnaire via Google Forms as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

Section 1: Demographic information of respondents, including age, gender, and faculty/major

Section 2: Respondents' behaviors in using dating applications

Section 3: Respondents' attitudes toward dating applications

3.3 Data Analysis

The data collected from the online questionnaire were analyzed using statistical methods to summarize findings and address the research objectives. The analysis primarily employed descriptive statistics, including percentage, mean, and standard deviation, to describe the general characteristics of the sample and the dating application usage behaviors of the students.

The results were presented in charts and diagrams to clearly illustrate trends, accompanied by explanations and interpretations that link the findings to the research objectives and key insights derived from the study.

4. Results

The survey on dating application usage via Google Forms among 115 students from the College of Communication Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Nakhon Pathom Campus revealed that respondents were aged 19-23 years, with 20-year-olds being the largest group (40 students). The majority were female (57), followed by male (51) and other genders (7).

Approximately 79.6% of respondents had experience using dating applications, with Tinder being the most popular app (43.8%), followed by Omi (19%) and Tantan (13.3%). The main reasons for using dating apps were entertainment (32.7%), alleviating loneliness (30.8%), and making friends (19.6%). In terms of usage frequency, 50.5% used the apps occasionally, 27.8% used them weekly, and 15.5% used them daily.

Regarding beliefs and attitudes, 77.2% of respondents believed that dating applications could facilitate serious relationships, while 65.5% felt safe using them and 34.5% expressed safety concerns. Attitudes toward dating apps were mostly neutral (62.5%), followed by positive (30.4%) and negative (7.1%).

Concerning the impact on long-term relationships, 78.3% of respondents believed that dating applications could help establish serious relationships. Respondents noted that relationship outcomes depended on personal and situational factors such as loneliness or geographical distance. However, some participants believed that dating applications alone could not sustain a long-term relationship without genuine commitment.

5. Conclusion

The research findings indicate that dating applications play a significant role in the lives of the sample students, helping them explore a wider range of relationships, particularly in connecting with others online. Dating Application Usage and Student Attitudes: The majority of the sample participants used dating applications for the purpose of relieving loneliness and having fun, rather than seeking a serious relationship. This reflects a neutral attitude toward dating applications. 77.2% of the sample believed that dating applications could help establish a serious relationship. This suggests that dating applications can meet the needs of some sample groups. However, these beliefs may depend on both individual and contextual factors, rather than solely on trust in the technology. This result is consistent with the work of Thanakorn Uiphanit and Nuchjaree Muangtaeng (2020), who developed a mobile application to promote knowledge about royal attire at Suan Sunandha Palace. They found that "user experience" and "user satisfaction" were key factors influencing user engagement and confidence in the application. This suggests that the use of dating applications is based on the same foundation: users prioritize reliability, security, and a good user experience. If the app can build trust and meet these needs, it will lead to positive attitudes toward use and feelings of safety. The test found that 65.5% felt safe, but 34.5% of the sample still felt unsafe, indicating concerns about data security and encountering potentially dishonest or untrustworthy people using dating apps.

According to hypothesis 1, students have a positive attitude towards using dating applications to find a serious partner. The results from the questionnaire test showed that most students believe that dating applications can lead to serious relationships. However, when considering overall attitudes, it was found that the group with a positive attitude towards using dating applications accounted for only 30.4%, which is not significantly larger than the group with a neutral attitude. Therefore, the analysis results cannot clearly conclude that most students have a positive attitude towards using dating applications to find a serious partner, as hypothesized.

Based on hypothesis 2, that using dating apps helps develop long-term, serious relationships, the results concluded that loneliness and distance remained significant factors motivating people to use dating apps. However, there were also opinions that the impact on long-term relationships depended more on individual intentions than on application dependency. Although dating apps were believed to help develop serious relationships, success was not guaranteed, as individual personality traits and commitment played a significant role in relationship development. This research demonstrated that dating apps played a significant role in connecting and finding relationships among the sample student population. Despite their confidence in dating apps for building serious relationships, the impact depended on multiple factors, both personal and situational. Furthermore, the perceived safety of the app should be considered when using dating apps.

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