BAD NETIQUETTE OF DIGITAL CITIZEN IN SRI LANKA

RMMD Pemarathna

Sri Lanka Rajarata University

Abstract

This study examined the bad netiquette of digital citizens in Sri Lanka over past few decades. It was used qualitative technique content analysis methodology as the data analysis and newspaper article, published research article, web documents are used as the secondary data. The study is highlighted that from 2010 to 2018 Posting inflammatory or offensive comments online, Sharing personal information, photos, or videos that another person may not want to publish online, Gain unauthorized access to resource of the internet, Troll people in web forums or website comments by repeatedly nagging or annoying them and Posting inappropriate photographs, videos, and movies are most debatable bad netiquette behaviors in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, result had shown that Younger are the parties who are mostly involved to breach internet etiquette and Younger are parties who become victims of this game. In conclusion, it was emphasized that having a good netiquette will solve lot of social and privacy issues among digital citizens and it was recommended to include digital netiquette as the subject to Sri Lankan school syllabus.

Keywords: Digital Citizen, Bad Netiquette, Netiquette

Introduction

As in any public forum or culture, a collection of rules has established over the years that administrate how discussions are carried out on the internet. Although, it is expected trouble-free environment at every time connect to the internet by the digital citizens it couldn't accomplish. Because, condition is changed with unethical behavior of digital citizens make trouble-full environment on behalf of trouble-free. It is resulted to become "netiquette of digital citizens" is most talking topic today. Today, Mobile phones and Personal Computers have become a life essential part of the younger and children. And also their daily life is attached with them for two-way communication media and the internet. The increment of internet usage by the children caused to cyber-bullying in every country (Yabarra & Mitchell, 2004).

The online etiquette called as netiquette and it is suggested as a preventive solution for reducing cyber-bullying (KUMAZAKI, SUZUKI, KATSURA, SAKAMATO, & KASHIBUCHI, 2011). Merging the words network and etiquette is been derived the word Netiquette. Further, netiquette is considered as contract of politeness recognized on UseNet and in mailing list. It is highlighted that new internet global culture attempts are being made to identify mutual standards of netiquette (Scheuermann & Taylor, 1997).

According to the statistics, in Sri Lanka there are 6.1 million internet users (Internet Usage Statistics in Sri Lanka – Updated for 2017, 2017).The Internet community consists of users of computer networks. Internet allows people to interact with each other and communicate in various ways such as instant social networking, messaging, texting, and electronic mail. Therefore, the general standards of the larger community serve as a check against network

interactions. Good manners are always appreciated in effective communication. As a result of that it is required good ethical behavior from the persons who are connecting with the internet.

According to the Pankoke-Babatz and Jeffery in 2002, most users are trying to avoid bad netiquette by themselves and others still do occur. Further, it was highlighted that some of the electronic mediums that reports high amount of undesirable behaviors (Pankoke-Babatz & Jeffrey, 2002).

In recently, Sri Lankan news was highlighted the lot of bad situations on the internet which has occurred because of unethical behaviors of digital citizens. So basically this is occurred with increment of internet users accordingly the theory of Yabarra & Mitchell stated in 2004 (Yabarra & Mitchell, 2004). As well as it was highlighted Madura Thivanka Srilanka young people are continuously addicting social network sites and it leads to ignoring real life, silent behavior, mood adjustment and conflicts. Further, he argued that it is occurred some behavioral problems because of this addiction (Thivanka, 2016) . According to the Sri Lanka National Human Development Report (NHDR) 2014, Sri Lankan youth are more vulnerable to pattern of abuse violence and furthermore it is indicated that the educational and professional institutes should be considered their behaviors and made values within them to create the secure future for them (Programme, 2014)

Accordingly, this study is aimed to review the bad netiquette of the Digital citizens in the Sri Lanka over past few decades.

Literature Review

What is Netiquette?

Matthew Strawbridge highlighted that in his book netiquette as "an informal code of practice regulating the behavior of internet users when using e-mail, bulletin boards, chat rooms, newsgroups etc." Furthermore, it is stated the netiquette means shorten form of network etiquette (Strawbridge, 2006). Accordingly, business dictionary, netiquette is Net Etiquette. It is derived the proper manners that want to use during internet relay chatting. It is further described when chatting via the internet it is necessary to remember there is a person in the end of the connection and off-colored remarks and inconsiderable comments are as offending via a computer screen are not suitable (Netiquette). Netiquette or internet netiquette can be defined as way of behaving as professional through a network communication. And also the concept is closely related to the ethics (Scheuermann & Taylor, 1997). Moreover, the internet etiquette is identified as set of core rules that explains what should and should not be done in regard to online communication to maintain common courtesy (Shea, 2004).

Who is a Digital Citizen?

Digital citizen is a person who develops the skills and knowledge to effectively use the Internet and other digitaltechnology, especially in order to participate responsibly in social and civic activities (Digital Citizen). Further, Jason B. Ohler indicated that digital citizen is persons "those who use internet regularly and effectively" (Ohler, 2010) . The Digital citizen often use information technology extensively , creating blogs, commenting on the blogs, using social media such as Facebook, twitter, linked in, and participating online journalism (Are you a digital citizen?, 2005). Although, it has considered those as digital citizens actually digital

citizenship initiated when child , teenager or adult sign up for an email address, posts pictures online, uses electronic commerce website to transactions, or any electronic function caused to become a digital citizen.

Recommended code of Rules for netiquette

Essentially, there are no any officially acceptable netiquette rules or guidelines and general idea is respect to others online (Christensson, 2017).

Mostly lot of technical article focused on netiquette in communications. It was highlighted that communication should be clear and effective although it is in verbal format or written format. (Kozika & Slivova, 2014).

Tapscott highlighted that today mostly society has started to use digital technology in their communication activities it caused to build new culture in communication from the beginning of 21st century. As well as it was highlighted that this net generation communication play a crucial role to achieve higher economic performance (Tapscott, 2007) .

It was highlighted several codes of rules by the practitioners which want to be followed when working with the internet communication. Larry Scheumerman and Gray Taylor stated that online user should be thought twice when writing upper and lower case, abbreviations in the writing communication via the online because it is shown as loud to other party. Moreover, it was indicated that be concise, avoid smiley, don't flame, don't take offense easily and know the audience (Scheuermann & Taylor, 1997).

As well as network working group published a netiquette guideline for their organization employee and it is mainly focused on the one-to-one communication and one to many

communications. It is one by one described how to write email, how to communicate via internet and how to communicate via net news in ethical manner. It was given manners for the administrative staff as well as non-administrative staff (Hambridge, 1995).

In 2004, Kallos extends basic rule of netiquette in email such as prompt response, subject field, Addressing, level of formality, attachment, using previous emails for new correspondence, how to work with spam etc. (Kallos, 2004).

Kat Consador stated that netiquette should be used during email, social networking sites, and even instant messaging and chat rooms ((Consador).

As well as the Tech Term defined that good netiquette is an internet etiquette which can be followed as digital citizen. Such as "Avoid posting inflammatory or offensive comments online, Respect others' privacy by not sharing personal information, photos, or videos that another person may not want published online, Never spam others by sending large amounts of unsolicited email, Show good sportsmanship when playing online games, whether you win or lose, Don't troll people in web forums or website comments by repeatedly nagging or annoying them, Stick to the topic when posting in online forums or when commenting on photos or videos, such as YouTube or Facebook comments, Don't swear or use offensive language, Avoid replying to negative comments with more negative comments. Instead, break the cycle with a positive post, if someone asks a question and you know the answer, offer to help and thank others who help you online" (Christensson, 2017).

Furthermore, the Cyber Smile Foundation highlighted that bad netiquette which never follow the person as a digital citizen such as not proofreading, Inappropriate Jokes, Ignoring people who need help, spamming others, catfishing, not allowing others to express themselves, using capital

letters all the time, not respecting people's privacy and arguing with people (Example of Bad Netiquette, 2018).

Moreover, the Keele University netiquette guideline was emphasized that list of netiquette which want to be considered by the digital citizens. It included six categories of netiquette such as general netiquette, discussion board specific netiquette, replying / forwarding message netiquette, E-mail Specific netiquette, sending the right message and the phenomenon of flaming (Smale, 2012).

Methodology

In order to identify bad netiquette behaviors in Sri Lanka, observation method were applied to collecting qualitative data. It was observed newspaper articles, research article, and online web publications in well-known sources from 2010 to 2018 which was related to bad netiquette scenarios in Sri Lanka. The result was analysis using content analysis methodology and identified common bad netiquette behaviors among the digital citizen in the Sri Lanka.

Results

The observation result of secondary data, it was identified five basic bad behaviors of digital citizens in their internet activities which was hugely impact to society values, persons' privacy and image of the Sri Lanka over past few years.

Posting inflammatory or offensive comments online

Posting an offensive reviews, images and text is the worst behavior that is denoted by internet user during their online activities. It can be directed towards an unavoidable problem and can be harm to the peace of the individual person, family and the society. In the Sri Lankan context

generally, the persons used social media to spread this type of posting among digital citizen. As an instance Tom Mckay reported that "Sri Lanka Blocked Facebook this week for allegedly spreading hate speech and violence". Further, it has described that Sri Lankan government has ordered to block Facebook and its subsidiaries such as WhatsApp and Instagram and as well separate messaging service Viber, because spreading hate speeches against minorities. As well as, the government ordered the restrictions as part of nationwide emergency measures implemented following a breakout of violence in Kandy (McKay, 2018). Because of these offensive comments dozens of Muslim Business, houses and one mosque were attacked (Vindu Goel, 2018).

The incident caused to damage to the humans' lives and properties. In that context, the Sri Lankan Government asked help from the soldiers bid to stop the brutality spreading via social networking sites (Vindu Goel, 2018). This incident is clearly publicized bad netiquette of the digital citizens direct to large disruption within the society.

Sharing personal information, photos, or videos that another person may not want to publish online

The protection of personal data has the highest value and it is not only but also protects others' personal data (Alessandro Acquisti, 2013). Furthermore, it was highlighted that self-disclosure occurs in a number of different context in online such as web blogs; submission to web forms (Paine, 2007). Moreover, (Alyson L. Young, 2009) it was highlighted that via social network sites most of the personal information are disclosed. When considering the Sri Lankan context in 2014, daily mirror highlighted that a 16 years old female student of Kurunegale is alleged to have committed suicide and the reason was girl's boyfriend had published her photos on

Facebook and college principal make an inquiry about it in the presence of her parent. Further it has described the girl committed to suicide because of the mental distress that has occurred (Teenage Sucide over photo on FB, 2014).

Gain unauthorized access to resource of the internet

The Internet Activity Board introduced Gain unauthorized access to resource of the internet as a bad ethic that is followed by the internet users (Kallos, 2004). In general, life gain access to other property is an unethical behavior. That is not accepted by the society. As well as, the internet society exhibit their dissatisfaction digital citizens who are gain access to the other websites, web forums, social media networks, emails or any resources in internet without permission of the owner. If anyone gain access in unauthorized way it will caused variety of problems in the society. Not only that it can be damaged person image, lost the property, or it can be damaged the person's life.

As instance, in 2016 Richard Hartley-Parkinson (Hartley-Parkinson, 2016)reported that Sri Lankan teenager gain unauthorized access to the presidents' website to delay the Advanced Level examination. According to the BBC (Sri Lankan teenager held over hacking of president's website, 2016)report there were two attacks happened. The first attack took place on the 25th of August which was on Thursday. It was a request message posted on home page which asked reconsiders about the decision to hold in April rather than in August. Further, it has described if it is ignored this message prepare for cyber war. The second attack which took place in second day made to take the site offline for a much longer period.

Actually, this was caused to damage the image of President Mr. Maithreepala Sirisena and the person who was responsible with this incident was arrested by the Sri Lankan police.

Troll people in web forums or website comments by repeatedly nagging or annoying them

In the online environment of prompt outbursts of micro-messages, the damage is done the instant something is tweeted or posted online. What is posted online can also be reposted and continue to live long after the original message has been deleted. Further, it was highlighted that those attacked have a greater need to minimize harm to their reputation, and to do so quickly. The form of the harm can be much more complicated too. People can incorrectly take a comment make out of context and they can share hurtful opinions or expose a truth that is less than flattering to person (Angelotti, 2013).

The Sri Lankan context always highlighted incident which was happened because of troll people within web forum. In 2017, it was mostly discussed and accused "remarriage of Famous Musician" through social media, blogs, and forums (Victor Ratnayake Speaks About Second Marriage, 2017).

Posting inappropriate photographs, videos, movies etc

Today, posting photograph or selfies through online media is become trend among online community (Moreau, 2017). Recently, it was most discussed incident was a semi-naked photo at Pidurangala which is captured by group of young people. Adaderana.lk emphasized that a group of young men had taken 'semi-naked' pictures of themselves while on the top of the Pidurangala Rock and had later published on Facebook. After arresting offenders they have stated that this was done to "increase the response in their Facebook accounts" (Three youths under police custody for taking 'semi-naked' photos at Pidurangala, 2018).

Accordingly, above analysis it was mostly highlighted that young generation in the Sri Lankan society are mostly done bad activities within the internet and it became a major problem within the society.

Recommendation

Essentially there are no any list of rules and regulations regarding the bad netiquettes. Some netiquettes are covered thorough acts imposed in the Sri Lankan Government. But it is very difficult to identify who are the criminals and who are the victims of this game. Because through the internet it can't be identified any identity details and it is difficult to prove the persons who are suspect for the offence. Therefore giving recommendations for this type of bad behavior is very difficult. However, it is suggested that Sri Lankan government introduce a new framework for school education system to improve the digital citizenship behavior with good netiquette. Because today it can be identified there are lot of students who are become an offenders as a digital citizens and most of the teenagers are using internet technology for their day today activities. It is recommended to Department of Education should be revised the syllabi with the new course module called "Netiquette" to create knowledgeable digital citizen with good netiquette.

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