Cyberspace, a Facilitator of Development Process in Cambodia

Veng Sotheara*
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After the second industrial revolution, when electricity was discovered, came the third industrial revolution or digital revolution in the 1980s, which was the phase where advanced technologies, such as personal computers, and then the internet and cyberspace - referring to the connections between computers forming a virtual environment - were invented. In the present time, marked as the fourth industrial revolution, those technologies have been further developed, creating faster cyber connectivity. This development can be considered as a facilitator of Cambodia's development process in education, economic and political sectors.

Cyberspace can be an enhancement tool for Cambodia's educational development. The ability to access to a wide variety of information on the Internet allows students to build their motivation and develop learner autonomy. Education does not only take place in the classroom but also after class when students are able to discover updated information and research regarding the subjects that they have learned in class, which is known as "Discovery teaching method". This method can play an important role in motivating students to learn by building up students' curiosity towards the subjects taught in class, and the knowledge is earned rather than being fed by the teachers, which gives students a sense of achievement, and encourages them to participate more in the classroom (Grow, 1991). This tool can also be a supporting system for the improvement of teaching ability through virtual conference, where teaching professionals are able to share their experiences, solutions and effective techniques with other people from different countries without physically meeting each other. According to a finding by Anderson (1996), a virtual conference can enable teachers to learn new ways of teaching and learning, feel a sense of community, learn some of the best practices in the classroom without the difficulties of geographical distance, time and cost. Moreover, cyberspace can provide more access to education. Since cyberspace can be used to create virtual classrooms, this enables more students to attend class without geographical barriers or imbalances of education quality. A new project created by Kagnarith Chea, funded by Fulbright and Undergraduate State Alumni Association of Cambodia (FUSAAC) called "Edemy" or "English Academy" is set up in a house where students can learn English taught by teachers from different geographic areas via laptops provided with the help of the facilitators (Malarewicz, 2015). This provides opportunities for students in the rural areas to have the access to affordable online English class and to receive the same level of quality of education from the capital city.

Cambodia's economic development can also be benefited by cyberspace. This technology helps expedite the business processes and increase productivity. Communication has been tremendously improved thanks to the invention of information and communication technology, which creates faster means of communication at low costs for businesses and better information flows. This also leads to the reduction of transaction cost and the competitiveness

***Veng Sotheara** is a lecturer at the Institute of Foreign Languages, Royal University of Phnom Penh. Currently, he is teaching Core English, Literature Studies and Critical Thinking for the undergraduate program at the university.

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in the market, which can be beneficial to the consumers with the firm's attempt to provide high quality products and services. Moreover, the technology fosters innovation at the firm level (Consultrans, 2008). Tourism can also be promoted and developed by cyberspace, in which Cambodian historical and important tourist sites to be shown to the world and travelers to learn their travel destination beforehand. According to Mamaghani (2009), 95 per cent of Internet users learned about information related to tourism via the Internet. Additionally, online transactions, including hotel bookings, payments, and maps can be some of the features that attract both local and foreign tourists, who can also leave their feedbacks on the virtual space, which encourages firms and government to continue improving the tourism sector.

Cyberspace can also aid the political development of the country. Initially, it can increase the participation of Cambodian citizens in the political sphere. A report by Rainie et al. (2012) shows that in the United States, 38 per cent of the social networking site users share politically related information on the site, and 35 per cent of the users encourage people to vote. This can be an important tool to increase the political engagement of Cambodian citizens. Moreover, it can establish a check-and-balance system between the government and citizens. Due to the availability of information in the cyberspace, people can be well-informed regarding any political information or government's announcement and make their voices heard towards the government and the people of the country concerning any particular issues (Kalathil & Boas, 2003). For example, Facebook has been used as a platform for Cambodian citizens to raise their concerns and opinions regarding laws and regulations or any aspects that do not appear to represent their interests. In this way, it can raise the confidence of the people towards the government as they learn that their opinions are taken into accounts by the administration.

To sum up, cyberspace can act as the facilitator of Cambodia's educational, economic and political development process. Motivation, new practices and better access to education can be provided by the technology, which can also contribute to the acceleration of business processes, the increase of productivity and tourism. It also increases the citizen's participation in the country's politics and creates a mutual monitoring system. Additionally, it is important to have an effective control system to avoid any misuse of the technology in order to take a full advantage of the technology to benefit the whole development process.

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Building E, University of Puthisastra, #55, Street 180-184, Sangkat Boeung Raing, Khan Daun Penh

info@cd-center.com | ☎ (+855) 16 616 951

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