Impact of Internet on Chinese Women's Lives
From a Gender Perspective

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Introduction

- This research focuses on the impact of internet on Chinese women's lives from a gender perspective including perceptions and practices. It addressed various cultural perceptions effecting Chinese women's practices, and discussed reasons why the women have such practices, how do their practices lead to consequences including choosing a boy friend or marriage partner, body image, gender identity and some issues related to their life.

- Findings were discussed and analyzed from gender perspective.

Internet in China

- According to new statistic from CNNIC, the number of Internet users comes to 1.3 hundred million up to June 30, 2006. 41.2% of Internet users are female as 50 million, and 58.8% are male as 72.32 million. Comparing to 2005, female Internet users rapidly increased. Its increase of 21.8% is greater than increase of the number of male Internet users.

Internet popularly used influence on women from the following four aspects:

- Sex neutral (hiding sexual/gender identity)
- Physical difference between man & women become less essential for job
- Sharing information
- Communication

Motivation and reason of using Internet

- To seek information
  - General knowledge for lives such as beauty, diet, health, reproduction, nursing, etc.
  - marketing, merchandise, trade, business, job
  - News, travel
  - Academic paper

- To speculate in the stock market
- To Email
  - Communication
  - The job's demands
- To make friends (use QQ or MSN)
  - General friends
  - Boy or girl friends
  - Yiyeqing (one-nightstand)
  - Marriage

- **Entertainment**
  - ➢ Movies
  - ➢ Games
- **Blog**
  - ➢ Composition
  - ➢ Discussion & expression

Socio-culture constructs forming Internet women users' perceptions and practice

- Not only is Internet a scientific and technological product, but also a social product. It is influenced by social-cultural factors, for instance, social culture, government policy, economy, and other media. These factors interact with each other, and construct relationship of women and Internet.

Gender in China culture

- gender images are replicated and represented via internet. Internet as an information carrier promotes to shape and to intensify sexual stereotypes or gender consciousness. It represents combining gender stereotypes, gender bias, violence against women, and gender equality and strong-minded women. Therefore, Internet influence on its users gender self-identity.

Policy

- Internet makes Chinese people open their eyes, widens their mind, and extends their activities. Internet changes their life gradually and become one part of their life.

- Women' s NGOs use internet to achieve their aims.

For example: www.chinagender.org

www.chinawomen.org.cn

www.chinahunyin.com

www.stopdv.org.cn

Economic development

- More and more Chinese women use the Internet and diversified information is widely available on this medium. Either urban or rural women seek job, do business and invest stock via Internet. They have become independent and have a financial statue. Their living styles are changed because of Internet.

The Advantage of Internet toward women users' perception and practices

- Internet for one person is the absence of boundary

- Women get information freely and conveniently

- Women use internet to help them to meet their goals

The Disadvantage of Internet toward women users' perception and practices

- mendacious information, gender discrimination, and coercion and violence against women, Internet virtual community will make women have unpleasant and unsafe practices.

Conclusion

Internet as a social phenomena and time characteristic

It have dual impact on women:

- It enlarges women's social practice field including much more occupational chances and much wider living space, because of its digitalization, behavior virtualization and freedom.

- It makes women commercialized badly and harmed easily in the conflict between internet virtuality and social reality

Thank you