Title: Digitally Enabled Community Empowerment

Speaker: Ms Leong Mei Ling
Date/Time: 10 March 2015, Tuesday, 03:30 PM to 05:00 PM
Venue: Executive Classroom, COM2-04-02
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Abstract:

This thesis aims to examine the emerging use of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) in addressing complex social issues. It has been acknowledged that ICT is an important catalyst for social transformation. However, extant IS studies focus predominantly on IS use from a top-down perspective, thereby undermining the role of community in resolving their own problems. By adopting an empowerment perspective, we focus on understanding how ICT empowers the disadvantaged community for community development. Three qualitative case studies of the Thailand Flooding 2011, China Taobao E-commerce Villages, and Malaysia Anti-Rare Earth Plant Environmental Movement will be presented. Using an interpretive approach, this study put forth the concept of digitally enabled community empowerment to explicate three contributions: 1) explores the emerging social consequences of ICT by illustrating the roles of ICT for social purposes; 2) challenges the dominant position of existing studies and practices by providing empirical evidences where the disadvantaged community drives its own social change using ICT; and 3) addresses the literature gap in empowerment by elucidating the actualization process of empowerment enabled by ICT as a mediating structure. This presentation will be concluded with suggestions on potential areas for future research.