

Knowledge and Awareness on Movie and Television Review and Classification Board Advisories among Children in the Philippines

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The mission of movie and television review and classification board as a regulatory board, aims to afford the public exhibitions of movie and television with the purpose of encouraging production of globally competitive movies or exhibitions, which should be both entertaining and artistic, in order to raise the standard of art for the general public. The objective of this study is to determine the level of knowledge and awareness on movie and television review and classification board advisories among children in the Philippines. Using 52 grade four students in the department of Basic Education, University of Perpetual Help System Laguna who were purposively selected, the study utilised descriptive-correlational research method. The results revealed a high level of knowledge and awareness of the respondents on movie and television review and classification board advisories. When grouped according to gender, religion and TV viewing companion, the respondents' level of knowledge and awareness on movie and television review and classification board advisories showed no significant difference. Likewise, it was found that their knowledge and awareness on movie and television review and classification board advisories were not significantly related. The researchers believe that both parents and children must be knowledgeable and aware of the movie and television review and classification board advisories. Children must know and be aware of the TV program and movies that are suited to them.

Keywords: MTRCB, TV viewing companion, TV program, movies, information and entertainment, electronic media.

INTRODUCTION

Television (TV) and movies give us information and entertainment. However, these two electronic media have negative effects on children. Decades of studies have linked childhood hours in front of TV with aggressive behavior to earlier sexual activity, smoking, obesity, and poor school (Anatsui and Adekanye, 2014). Moreover, TV discourages and replaces reading, which requires more thinking and healthy brain development. Kids from families with television spend less time in reading (Vandewater *et al.*, 2005). Electronic media are becoming more pervasive, more intrusive and disturbing in content and it is a common knowledge that children are practicing

violent scenes presented on the TV and movies at home. But television seems to be more threatening than movies, since it is automatically present in the homes (Yuson, 2011). It can be readily available anytime at the touch of a remote. TV viewing lacks safe alternatives, parents know little about the strategies to control TV watching time. In this regard, it is imperative for interventions that aim to regulate, classify and review the TV and movie media.

Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) is the government agency responsible for rating television and movies for the Philippines. The board has legal guidelines, no matter how carefully these may have been crafted, depending on one's liberal preference (Yuson, 2011). According to the Chairman of

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MTRCB, Mary Grace Poe-Llamanzares, the regulatory board is composed of the chairman, vice-chairman and 30 board members. Each one holds office for a term of one year but may be reappointed after expiration of his term. The movie and television industry faced a difficulty not only in reviewing and censoring movies and TV programs but primarily in initiating plans and innovating itself towards the improvement and development of the film and television industry (MTRCB, 2013). MTRCB must be guided by Cultivation Theory as to the content and kind of program that is suited to general audiences especially the children. Cultivation theory is a social theory which examines the long-term effects of television (Bryant and Miron, 2004). The primary proposition of cultivation theory states that the more time people spend "living" in the television world, the more likely they are to believe social reality portrayed on television. Cultivation leaves people with a misperception of what is true in our world. Developed by George Gerbner and Larry Gross of the University of Pennsylvania, cultivation theory derived from several large-scale research projects as part of an overall research project entitled "Cultural Indicators" (Bryant and Miron, 2004). The purpose of the cultural indicators project was to identify and track the "cultivated" effects of television on viewers. They were concerned with the effects of television programming particularly violent programming on the attitudes and behaviours of the American public. Gerbner asserts that the overall concern about the effects of television on audiences stemmed from the unprecedented centrality of television in American culture. The theory clearly posits that the cultivation effect occurs only after long-term cumulative exposure to television. He claimed that because TV contains so much violence, people who spend the most time in front of the tube develop an exaggerated belief in a mean and scary world. He posted that television as a mass medium of communication had formed into a common symbolic environment that bound diverse communities together, socializing people into standardized roles and behaviours (Bryant and Miron, 2004). Today, the TV set is a key member of the household, with virtually unlimited access to every person in the family. He compared the power of television to the power of religion, saying that television was to modern society what religion once was in earlier times. Cultivation analysis is a positivistic theory, meaning it assumes the existence of objective reality and value-neutral research (Bryant and Miron, 2004).

In resolution, MTRCB must revise its classification ratings for television shows – designed to empower parents to exercise caution and vigilance with the viewing habits of their children (Sicat, 2012). Based on Section 2 of Chapter IV 2014 Implementing Guidelines and Guidelines for Television Classification indicated that applying contemporary Filipino cultural values as standard, the following are the guidelines for television classification: (1) General Patronage (G) – suitable for all

ages. Material for television, which in the judgement of the Board does not contain anything unsuitable for children. (2) Parental Guidance (PG) – parental guidance suggested. May contain some adult material that may be permissible for children to watch but only under the guidance and supervision of a parent or adult. The 'Parental Guidance (PG)' classification advises parents to exercise parental responsibility in their children's viewing of the program (Carballo, 2013). The television program classified as PG must, in the judgment of the Board, meet the following criteria: Language – very mild swears words only shall be allowed. Use of a strong expletive in a sexual context or sexually – based expletives shall not be allowed. Neither shall prolonged and/or successive use of expletives be allowed; Nudity – occasional natural nudity, with no sexual activity, is permissible; Sex – graphic depiction of sexual activity shall not be permitted. Sexual activity may be implied but with no details shown; Violence – there should be no glamorization of weapons and crimes. No detail of fighting or other dangerous techniques. No detail or prolonged showing of violence or suffering. There should be a redeeming social value at the end; Horror – scary sequences must be mild and brief; Drugs – there may only be implied depiction of prohibited drugs and/or substances or their use provided it does not condone, encourage or glamorize drug and/or substance use and it should be necessary to the theme and characterization. (3) Strong Parental Guidance (SPG) – stronger and more vigilant parental guidance is suggested. Programs classified 'SPG' may contain more adult topic and theme, which may not be advisable for children to watch except under the vigilant guidance and presence of a parent or adult (Carballo, 2013). According to Sicat (2012), freedom of expression comes with a responsibility, she noted. "We cannot just invoke freedom at the expense of another person, or in this case, at the expense of the welfare of the children."

According to the Chairman of MTRCB, Mary Grace Poe-Llamanzares - the Board cooperate with the Film Development Council of Philippines (FDCP) and the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) for faster processing of permits for films shown in festivals in the country. She also reported on the memorandum of agreement that the Board signed with the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) and the Optical Media Board (OMB) to ensure that no film with sensitive content are shown in public vehicles (Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2011; MTRCB, 2013). The MTRCB mission and vision states - Mission: The MTRCB, as a regulatory board, aims to afford the public exemplary exhibitions of movie and television with the purpose of encouraging production of globally-competitive movies/exhibitions, which should be both entertaining and artistic, in order to raise the standard of art for the general public. Vision: MTRCB envisions to be of service to the Filipino public as a movie and television regulatory board, not only confined in review and

classification but as a prime catalyst of change by helping the movie and television industry become globally competitive. The agency recognizes TV and movie media as indispensable tools for moral recovery and nation-building (General Appropriations Act, 2015; MTRCB, 2013).

There is dearth of study on MTRCB. The thesis of Policarpio (2013) looked into how the MTRCB SPG TV rating system is followed and enforced by the families living in the national capital region. This is guided by the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991) and McQuail's structural approach by (McQuail, 2010) to audience formation in its application of the information and communications technology (ICT) literacy framework and steps of behavior change. Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches are used in this study. Particularly, self administered survey, participant observations, family group-discussions and focus interviews are employed. The present study focuses on the level of knowledge and awareness on MTRCB Advisories (MTRCBA) among children in the Philippines specifically the fourth graders of the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna (UPHSL). It determined the difference between the level of knowledge and level of awareness of the respondents when they are grouped according to profile variables: gender, religion and TV viewing companion. The study further dealt with the relationship between the respondents' level of knowledge and level of awareness on MTRCBA among children in the Philippines.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive method of research is used in this study. It is a type of research that endeavours to describe systematically, factually, accurately and objectively a situation, problem or phenomenon (Bermudo *et al.*, 2010). It further used the correlational method to find out the relationship between the level of knowledge and awareness on MTRCBA among children in the Philippines specifically the fourth graders of UPHSL. The respondents of this study consist of 52 grade four pupils of the UPHSL in Basic Education Department. Total enumeration was used in this study, which means that the whole population of the respondents was considered.

The researchers used a survey closed-end questionnaire to gather information. They also conducted informal interview to support the data gathered from the questionnaire. The survey questionnaire was divided into three parts: Part I dealt with the demographic profile of the respondents such as gender, religion and TV viewing companion. Part II covered the level of knowledge of the respondents on MTRCBA and Part III dealt with the level of awareness of the respondents on MTRCBA. After the questionnaire was validated by the panel of experts given by the school, the researchers took note of their

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	24	46.2
Female	28	53.8
Total	52	100.0
Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Catholic	46	88.5
Other Religions	6	11.5
Total	52	100.0
TV Viewing Companion	Frequency	Percentage
Immediate Family Members	43	82.7
Others	9	17.3
Total	52	100.0

suggestions and recommendations and included them in the final draft of the questionnaire. Permission was granted to the researchers to conduct the study and distribute the questionnaires by the Dean of College of Arts and Sciences and Principal of the Basic Education both in the UPHSL. The researchers personally distributed and collected the survey questionnaire from the respondents to ensure a 100 % retrieval of the accomplished questionnaires. After data were gathered and collected, they were tabulated statistically treated, analyzed and interpreted.

The statistical tools used in this study to interpret the data were the following: percentage to describe the respondents' profile, weighted mean to determine the respondents' (a) level of knowledge and (b) level of awareness on MTRCB. The following measures were used: 4 (3.51 - 4.00) for highly knowledgeable / aware (showing that the respondents' knowledge or awareness about an issue is very high), 3 (2.51 - 3.50) for knowledgeable / aware, 2 (1.51 - 2.50) for not knowledgeable / aware to certain degree and 1 (1.00 - 1.50) for 'not knowledgeable / aware' to a large degree. T-test and U-test were used to determine the significant difference between the respondents' level of knowledge and level of awareness on MTRCBA when grouped according to gender, religion and TV viewing companion. Pearson r was used to determine the relationship between the respondents' level of knowledge and level of awareness on MTRCB.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 presents the respondents' profile. In terms of gender; there were 28 females which amounts to 53.8% while male were 24 (46.2%). In terms of religion; all are Christians with 46 (88.5%) as Catholic while 6 (11.5%)

Table 2: Respondents' Level of Knowledge on MTRCBA.

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Movie and Television Review and Classification Board is a branch of government that supervises television shows.	2.81	Knowledgeable	9
2. Rated General Patronage (G) is allowed to all audience.	3.90	Highly Knowledgeable	1
3. Children watching Rated Parental Guidance (PG) programs need parental guidance.	3.79	Highly Knowledgeable	3
4. Children watching Rated Strictly Parental Guidance (SPG) programs need strict parental guidance.	3.33	Knowledgeable	6
5. Rated Parental Guidance (PG) is allowed to audience aged 13 and above, while audience aged 12 and below requires parental guidance.	2.98	Knowledgeable	8
6. Rated Strictly Parental Guidance (SPG) programs have themes not suited for regular audience.	3.31	Knowledgeable	7
7. Color green represents Rated General Patronage (GP).	3.87	Highly Knowledgeable	2
8. Color blue represents Rated Parental Guidance (PG).	3.77	Highly Knowledgeable	4
9. Color red represents Rated Strictly Parental Guidance (SPG).	3.75	Highly Knowledgeable	5
10. Rated General Patronage (G) programs does not contain themes not suited for very young audience.	2.58	Knowledgeable	10
Average Weighted Mean	3.46	Knowledgeable	

represents other Christian religions. In terms of TV viewing companion; those who watched TV with their immediate family members had a frequency of 43 (82.7%), while with others had a frequency of 9 (17.3%). This meant that majority of the respondents were female, catholic, and watched TV with their immediate family members.

As shown in the Table 2, indicator 2 "Rated General Patronage (G) is allowed" ranked first with a weighted mean of 3.90 (verbally interpreted as highly knowledgeable) whereas indicator 10 "Rated General Patronage (G) programs do not contain themes not suited for very young audience" ranked last with a weighted mean of 2.58 and was verbally interpreted as knowledgeable. To sum up, the average weighted mean of 3.46 revealed that the respondents' have knowledge of MTRCBA. This was supported by the study of Policarpio (2013) which stated that parents see their family communication as engaging and open to discussions while the children see the parents as authoritative and controlling. Children, however, are more knowledgeable of the SPG rating system. Watching SPG programs with the family as well as asking why a program is SPG rated are their forms of enforcement; thereby, depicting co-viewing and active TV mediation styles.

As shown in Table 3, indicator 6 "Programs that tackles drugs or drug use are always rated SPG ranked first with a weighted mean of 3.73 (verbally interpreted as highly aware) while indicator 9 "Even programs that show

violence, crime and use of fire-arms have social value" ranked last with a weighted mean of 2.69 (verbally interpreted as aware). To sum up, the average weighted mean of 3.24 (interpreted as aware) revealed that the respondents' have awareness on MTRCBA. This was supported by the study of Dorey *et al.* (2010), which indicated that parents described TV as playing a dominant role in their family's lives, and highlighted several barriers to reducing children's TV viewing, such as parents not willing to reduce their own TV watching, a lack of safe alternatives to TV and the need to use TV as a babysitting tool.

As shown in Table 4, when the respondents are grouped according to gender, religion and TV viewing companion, p values of 0.434, 0.516 and 0.306, respectively were obtained which were higher than the 0.05 level of significance. This showed that there was no significant difference in the respondents' level of knowledge on MTRCBA when the respondents were grouped according to gender, religion and TV viewing companion. This meant that the respondents have the same level of knowledge on MTRCBA regardless of their gender, religion and TV viewing companion. In the study by Policarpio (2013), results show that there are differences between parents' and children's perceptions. Parents see their family communication as engaging and open to discussions while the children see the parents as authoritative and controlling. Children, however, are more knowledgeable of the SPG rating system. The families

Table 3: Respondents' Level of Awareness on MTRCBA.

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Words used in television have its limitation. Use of swearing and explicit words is strictly prohibited.	3.46	High	4
2. Green or double-meaning jokes are not allowed from morning until afternoon.	2.81	High	8
3. Not all cartoon shows are rated General Patronage (G).	3.60	Very High	2
4. Programs that are rated Parental Guidance (PG) tend to be rated Strictly Parental Guidance (SPG) depending on the scenes to be shown.	2.81	High	8
5. All religious programs are rated General Patronage (G).	3.12	High	7
6. Programs that tackle drugs or drug use are always rated Strictly Parental Guidance (SPG).	3.73	Very High	1
7. News programs are always rated Parental Guidance (PG).	3.58	Very High	3
8. Movie and Television Review and Classification Board advisories are always shown at the beginning and in the middle of a program depending on the scenes to be shown.	3.21	High	6
9. Even programs that show violence, crime and use of firearms have social value.	2.69	High	10
10. In rated G, "G" means "General Patronage".	3.38	High	5
Average Weighted Mean	3.24	High	

Table 4: Difference in the Respondents' Level of Knowledge on MTRCBA When Grouped According to Profile Variables.

Profile Variables	Statistical Test	p value	Interpretation
Gender	t-test X ₁ (Male) = 3.40 X ₂ (Female) = 3.51	0.434	Not Significant
Religion	Mann-Whitney U Test U = 115.50 Z=0.649	0.516	Not Significant
TV Viewing Companion	Mann-Whitney U Test U = 151.50 Z = 1.023	0.306	Not Significant

Note: 0.05 level of significance.

also have different ways of implementing it. Watching SPG programs with the family as well as asking why a program is SPG rated are their forms of enforcement; thereby, depicting co-viewing and active TV mediation styles. However, even if the families know that there are scenes unsuited for children, watching such programs are difficult to avoid because they wanted to wait for that SPG rated scene and to know why it is SPG rated. The study further reveals that it is quite impossible for the parents' attention to be solely put on children's TV viewing.

As shown in Table 5, when the respondents are grouped according to gender, religion and TV viewing companion, p values of 0.725, 0.288 and 0.552, respectively, were obtained which were higher than the 0.05 level of significance. This showed that there was no

significant difference in the respondents' level of awareness on MTRCBA when the respondents are grouped according to gender, religion and TV viewing companion. This meant that the respondents have the same level of awareness on MTRCBA regardless of their gender, religion and TV viewing companion. Cantor (2009) stated that in spite of increased public pressure on the entertainment industry to become more responsible, television and movies are not likely to change enough that parents would not have to be concerned about their effects on their children. Parent education on these issues is becoming increasingly important, and any organization that is interested in helping parents should include media education for parents and media literacy for children among its important themes.

As shown in Table 6, a p value of 0.000 was obtained

Table 5: Difference in the Respondents' Level of Awareness on MTRCBA When Grouped According to Profile Variables.

Profile Variables	Statistical Test	p value	Interpretation
Gender	t-test X ₁ (Male) = 3.27 X ₂ (Female) = 3.22	0.725	Not Significant
Religion	Mann-Whitney U Test U = 101.00 Z = 1.063	0.288	Not Significant
TV Viewing Companion	Mann-Whitney U Test U = 169.00 Z = 0.594	0.552	Not Significant

Note: 0.05 level of significance.

Table 6: Relationship between the Respondents' Level of Knowledge and Awareness on MTRCBA.

Variables	Pearson r	p-value	Interpretation
Level of Knowledge and Awareness on Movie and Television Review and Classification Board Advisories	0.607	0.000	Significant

Note: 0.01 level of significance.

which was lower than the 0.01 level of significance. This showed that there was significant relationship between the respondents' level of knowledge and awareness on MTRCBA. This meant that the higher the level of knowledge, the higher is the level of awareness on MTRCBA of the respondents. This was supported by the study of Cantor (2009) which stated that in spite of increase public pressure on the entertainment industry to become more responsible, television and movies are not likely to change enough that parents would not have to be concerned about their effects on their children.

Conclusion

Filipino children as represented by the respondents are knowledgeable and aware of MTRCBA. They have the same level of knowledge and awareness on MTRCBA regardless of their gender, religion and TV viewing companion. By this, it can be deduced that the higher the level of knowledge of the Filipino children on MTRCBA, the higher is their level of awareness of MTRCBA.

Recommendations

Parents should guide their children in choosing the right television program with regards MTRCBA. They should learn the proper ways of guiding their children in watching television. Children on the other hand, should know their limitations on what to watch by being guided by their parent or guardian or elder siblings. The MTRCB should integrate MTRCBA in any subject appropriate for learning. Future researches could look at the effect of children non-compliance to the MTRCBA on the society.

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