

# A MODEL OF MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION TO PREVENT THE NEGATIVE EFFECT FROM TELEVISION PROGRAMMES FOR TEENAGERS

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## Abstract

The electronic mass media, the television in particular, has several advantages which differentiates it from other electronic mass media. These excellent points that it has, make television own a strong attractive side in human life, until society, where in this discussion points to teenagers, was felt really needed for tuning in to television as their source of information. Society dependency, the teenagers especially, watching television can affect their behaviour. The purpose of this research is to study the effect of watching television concerning teenager's behaviour. Its selected method is the qualitative method by using primary data taken from in depth interview. The result of this research shows that teenagers take three hours to watch television on a daily basis. They choose afternoon and evening time for watching TV more or less than three hours. They watch it to seek entertainment, information, and knowledge. So far, the media literacy education model for teenager takes place only under parental and teacher advice which very limited in frequency. Therefore, there is an emergency to make a continuous socialization program out of the media literacy for students, teachers and parents. Meanwhile, the constraints for implementing the media literacy education are that there does not exist a program of media literacy education in schools, there are no government policies about this matter, the lack of manpower (teachers) who have the capability to understand the concept of media literacy and the limited time and lack of knowledge, or do not understand the media literacy for the parents.

**Keywords:** *media literacy, teenager behaviour, watching television.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mass media, television in particular has become an inseparable part of Indonesia's society life. Easy accessed with fast spread information within seconds releases its potential power that occupies the mind of most people in here. This research held to teenagers in Jakarta 2009 showed a very high rate of media possessions in their household ranging from 98 % for those who own

television, 90 % who have cellular phone, 80 % who have video players, 74 % who have radios, 62 % who have games players, 59 % who have computers, and the least was 28 % who have internet connections at their homes (HENDRIYANI et al. 2012). From this research it was also found that its high level of availability inside their homes supports the elevation of time consumption for media in their families.

The numbers above represent the television in Indonesia as the most dominant media in our households. It is not a problem that must be avoided because for sure, in essence, the speed of information exchange with its sophisticated technology are an integral part of globalization. It is the fundamental reason behind the increasing rate of television media use as a family media. There are 11 television broadcast stations present in Indonesia (Metro TV, TV One, Trans TV, Trans 7, ANTV, SCTV, RCTI, Global TV, MNC TV, TVRI, and NET TV) which are a concrete proof concerning the fast flourishing television industries in Indonesia.

However, alongside with this progress of society it started to worry us the bad excess of television use concerning the teenagers. This concern is highly reasonable. Our television programmes prone to expose violence, sexuality exploits, horror, mystical content and also a hedonism way of life, which Rahmi explained (2013) that violence and sexuality contents inside television programmes have become a source of inspiration for children and teenagers to use those bad examples in their real life (RAHMI, 2013).

Then, to strengthen the public ability in dealing with bad excess occurring from the media

is one possible way to do. This idea, in reality, is turned into the media literacy concept or *melek media*. A media literacy is an educational concept to empower public ability in the midst of the media attack, so the public can actively interact with the media and use it in a smart way and with critical thinking.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

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This research is using the descriptive qualitative method where the data describe in depth and detail, about the condition and its process together with the relationship between interlink variables. Bogdan and Taylor (MOLEONG, 2012) defined the qualitative research as “research procedures with resulting descriptive data in a form of written or oral words from people and their behaviours that can be observed”.

This research was conducted in East Java, Indonesia by observing respondents of Junior High School students. In depth the interview is selected for data collection technique which was employed to students in 6 different Junior High Schools around Malang Raya (Malang City, Malang Regency and Batu City). These collected data then tested to find their validity using data triangulation or source triangulation. This method leads researchers to use various sources of data before making a universal deduction. In other words, the same or similar data will have higher validity level when dug from many different sources.

For the analysis technique, the researchers use the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman (SUGIYONO, 2013) which consists of data reduction, data interpretation, and data deduction/verification. This type of analysis performs in an interactive form using the data collection process which is seen as a cycle process.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

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### The Consumption Pattern of Watching Television By Teenagers

The pattern of watching television by our teenagers, firstly, can be identified through its watching time which is various and unable to

count in a mathematical way, meaning that teenagers' watching time is considered as time relativity which mainly influenced by their own external factors such as after extra study in their homes or after helping their parents with the daily works.

Watching television as an activity for teenagers is mostly done for one to two hours a day. The time spent for watching television also varies, starting at midday, afternoon and evening hours. For the afternoon time, they watch television after school or after study. Their study hours at home is usually in the afternoon or in the evening, and only few of them spent on Sunday the whole day in front of the television. They also do not watch it before study which usually ends at 7 or 8 p.m.

Besides television, teenagers also consume social media as found from the research field where it shows that teenagers also spent lots of time using social media. The teenagers who were born in this modern era are powerless not to join in consuming social media like *Instagram*, *Facebook*, *Line*, *BBM* and *Whatsapp* that in average is used for communication with their friends about homework, assignment or sharing information about school activities.

The existence of social media among teenagers could become another factor which makes some of them not too interested in watching television and only watch it for certain time intervals. This way, the researchers can categorize or identify types of teenagers who watch television: *first*, those teenagers who watch television every day or nearly every day. To consume television media every day or almost each day is done by teenagers who in their houses have more than one television sets. With television sets available in almost every room inside the house in one family, then it will be possible for teenagers to watch television every day, or if they want to, any time. However, this condition is not the only basic reason to equalize whether the number of televisions or its availability inside their rooms can trigger the high level of attractiveness for teenagers in watching this kind of media, because there are other factors which are uncountable by mathematic formula.

One other factor that can not be presented in this research is the low level reading interest of teenagers. The television with three dimensional

contents becomes more attractive to them that eliminates the boredom state when consuming its programmes. This sensation is so different from other experiences while consuming other media such as newspaper, book or radio.

Almost half of Indonesia's families use the newspaper and the radio as their alternative media of information and only a few families who subscribe to magazines. Although there are some newspapers, teenagers choose not to read them, unlike their foremost intention to watch television. Reading newspapers or books has still not become an activity held in massive and consistent way. Only small numbers of teenagers who admit that they like to read books because this activity gives benefit and positive values. This reason for books has become a later alternative they only pick when there are no interesting television programmes on air.

The most dominant reason why teenagers in particular dislike reading newspapers is due to its own object which they think as uninteresting and dull while reading it. Whenever it occurs, when the reading interest is so low and followed by over sensitivity to a certain object the likelihood of someone to find a scapegoat to another object is big. Therefore, by looking at the fact that the low level of the reading interest of our teenagers recently is terrible news and very devastating for us.

This low level can be observed from research findings that showed that most consumed media are television, social media, then books with the main type is novel. The average of teenagers enjoy to read teen literature or horror novels. Their level of interest in reading a novel is higher than reading a newspaper, magazines and listening to a radio and only few of them who said they read newspapers particularly for their sport section.

Secondly, teenagers watching television in certain time intervals such as when they get bored of something, have no activity, dealing with family problems at home, or just want to watch their favourites programmes. Teenagers love to watch comedy programmes like *Oke Jek* and *Ini Talk Show* from NET TV because these shows are entertaining for them. Besides that, teenagers like to watch cartoon movies such as *Upin Ipin*, *Sopo Jarwo* and *Naruto*. On the one

hand, they are not allowed to watch cartoon movies because of its bad impact on their psychological state of mind but on the other hand, teenagers who already possess his or her fond of cartoon think these movies also bring positive motivation and useful values such as courage, devotion to parents, and mutual help. These facts are added by teenagers who like to watch sport programmes on TV such as *Moto GP*, *Sepak Bola*, *Dunia Otomotif*, and other types of TV programmes such as *Laptop si Unyil*, *Petualangan*, *Berita Islami Masa Kini* and few of them who watch cinema electronic such as *Jodoh Wasiat Bapak* and other titles of family serial TV.

*Jodoh Wasiat Bapak* for example, this cinema story is assumed to be able to give an understanding about how to have respect for your parents and not to be ashamed of having poor parents. However, the teenagers who decide to watch this story are so little in percentage because most of teenagers admit that they do not like to watch cinema electronic (*sinetron*) either from our local production or abroad. This happens because these stories are considered to be over exaggerating when representing a situation about what has really happened in the real world therefore teenagers assume that no benefit can gain from it.

Television programmes these days are over exaggerating our social reality where it was done to depict scenes with a maximum dramatization meaning. These kinds of reality show that influenced by television, had led teenagers to taking part into the consumerism society which then will be part of the persuasion culture (*kebudayaan bujuk rayu*). In a consumerism society, every energy, activity, and human needs fulfillment are not based on a system of meaning and messages, but they will be based on a system of persuasion that prides on falsity, illusion, and appearances rather than the content of meaning. This is a persuasion culture. This culture has started from persuasion which now happens in our television programmes. Furthermore, Baudrillard said that persuasion will operate through draining signs of message and their contents until what is left is only the outer appearance (PILIANG, 2011).

The artificial appearance with empty meaning inside many cinema story scenes can be seen when teenagers really hate those scenes because

the depictions are about violence, hatred, and some inappropriate elements (which has become the main reason) of romance scenes, the type of scene that they objected to because it was not decent to watch. Due to these reasons then they choose programmes that are able to 'answer' or fulfill their passionate interest inside their mind. It means that every teenager has his or her own thirst of a certain program which can only be satisfied by watching that kind of program.

Derived from Blumer and Katz in their theory about *uses and gratification*, Imran (2012) explained that society has its own choices in consuming texts where those selections are different from one individual to another. Each of them has his own social range and different psychological condition. As a result, when they are selecting or choosing media, Blumer and Katz (URISTA et al., 2009) further said that society will adjust their expectation and impulses in seeking for experiencing pleasure. These individuals will seek suitable media that is able to fulfill their needs and lead them into their highest satisfaction (LARISCY et al., 2011).

### Media Literacy Educational Model

In watching television, teenagers are rarely accompanied by their parents. Besides the fact that they are too busy working, some of teenagers feel uneasy when their parents are watching television with them. This is considered as 'concentration disturbance' and is reducing their interest while watching. There is so limited frequency of parents time for accompanying their children while watching television which made it possible to seldom let teenagers get supervision and advice about the good and appropriate television programmes to be consumed by them.

The term "rarely or seldom" does not have the meaning that parents never accompany or give advice and suggestions. In several occasions, however small (in their frequency), parents gave advice to teenagers when accidentally they were watching the same television program together. That advice mainly lead to artificial advice about how teenagers can choose a good program which gives them benefits.

As an example, some parents forbid teenagers to watch cinema electronic (*sinetron*)

for the reason of bad effects such as violence, hatred, and inappropriate romance inside that program. However, the fact is that parents seldom grant surveillance to their teenagers by accompanying them while watching some programmes that is not an act of ignorance from their parents. The parents believe that their children who are in Junior High School can classify and select kinds of programmes that are appropriate to be consumed and programmes that must be avoided.

Some findings are illustrating facts that only few parents control the activity of watching television of their children and it is limited to physical or artificial matters. It was shown that parents act to only give supervision or advice for not watching television in sleeping position, close range, and give limitation (time) when watching television shows. These suggestions are not bad but hardly touch substantial matters which have deeper effects than any other physical things that can be reached because of their visibility (easy to see). In other words, physical supervision only affected the teenager's physical state, but it will not give significant effect to their cognitive changes. This kind of supervision can not give urgent understanding for teenagers about the type of shows, type of useful programme and type of programme that should be avoided. Providing supervision and advice by parents for their teenagers would be wise and smart when consuming television programmes that are integral part of media literacy education.

The process of media literacy education in the family and its surroundings, in reality, is not too different the activity which takes places in school surroundings. At school, teachers give media literacy education by briefing, advising and suggesting to watch a good and beneficial television program.

The teacher is a person whose act is considered as a good example and should be imitated. In practice, in the classroom, she or he is not only delivering course material, but also has certain duties and obligations such as to tell the good and the bad things that happen elsewhere, which are not inside his or her student's textbook. Giving advice to watch good and appropriate television programmes which are able to give positive values to teenagers is one part of

teachers' duty inside his or her teaching content. Unfortunately, the fact is showing that any education related to television has not become important material touched upon by teachers, whether from their own initiatives or being formulated systematically by school functionals or its related institution that has higher authority above the teachers.

Besides the reason why television is not included or is not becoming part of course materials, teachers sometimes forget or neglect their obligation to give advice in the classroom particularly about the choice or selectivity in consuming any television contents for teenagers. It resulted in low frequency of teacher's advice in giving media literacy education. So far, teachers give advice during the breaks and during noisy courses. These conditions can be interpreted, by so far, there is no basic pattern or a concrete education model for giving media literacy (with television mass media as its focus).

Media literacy education becomes very important for teenagers for sharpening their 'analysis knife' in watching television programmes. By giving this method to them, they will not act as audiences but they will also be able to check using critical thinking to analyze messages that are conveyed inside the media which is able to influence their attitude and behaviour (BERGSMA & CARNEY, 2008). As a study example, the result from the meta-analysis of media literacy by Jeong et.al (2012) has shown that media literacy results in an influence on what they call as media relevance and behaviour relevance (JEONG et al., 2012). Media relevance talks about the media knowledge and or advertisement, understanding about the persuasive element inside advertisement meaning, skepticism about message inside the media and similar to it. While behaviour relevance talks about normative perception of behavioural references from social groups, attitude to do a particular behaviour, and self efficiency to do with the related behaviour, such as refuse to smoke or choose to delay premarital sex.

In all these situations, teenagers consider that television content (like cinema electronic etc.) can influence their attitude and their communication patterns with their friends or

other teenagers. However, there also some teenagers who felt that media content that they watched on television had no influence at all on every aspect inside them. Taken from the last testimony, it describes that the teenagers were not aware that every information or matter that they gained from television would enter and be absorbed by the brain, where at this stage, this is one condition where the cognitive aspect of someone will gradually change. This is the impact, which then considered as effect of television, shows. It will have influence on their audiences who consume it, starting from influencing their way of life, way of dressing up to, the way to speak. Teenagers herd to adjust their look and their way of style to the image that is presented in the show which actually was not more than false tales that were presented in such adorable package that it led the teenagers to an artificial life full of hollow dreams, memories and magical reality which is far away from the actual life.

In the one hand, the television has a significant role in elevating knowledge development of school teenagers. Those who possess adequate or good selectivity in filtering the contents of media that they watch will be able to seek positive values from the television programmes. Nevertheless, it will be quite dangerous if teenagers 'swallow' everything that they watch. Therefore, they need to identify any influence that is caused by television programmes. Such identification can be started by sensing to any change inside themselves (about information reception, mood or attitude changing and behavioural change) or which then is more familiar known as behavioural, affective and cognitive changes.

From the cognitive perspective, the impact can be identified by several changes which were experienced by the teenagers such as what information they have known, understood and being perceived by media content. This impact can not be avoided, that the information received by teenagers gives many explanations from blurred matters then will make up the knowledge/information structure from teenagers starting to change, and they begin to understand many things that they have experienced. Concerning this aspect, teenagers admit that

television shows can give them much information and knowledge so that they can anticipate some bad events which are likely to happen in the real world. While the affective impact is related to emotional changes which are experienced by teenagers, such as feeling angry, happy, sad and hate, therefore, no surprisingly that teenagers will experience these conditions when watching a television programme and after some time these conditions will take place inside their mind. This process aligns with their cognitive condition, while their behavioral aspect refers to the real behaviour that can be observed from these teenagers such as attitude patterns, activities, or their attitude habit (RAKHMAT, 2011).

From the educational map of media literacy above we can formulate a model of media literacy education which will work in optimum force. In time, especially at school, there has been a school programme about literacy in form of a book reading campaign before the class started in the morning for about 15 to 30 minutes, then, the students had to make a summary of that book. However, these literacy program is still limited to reading literacy context to enhance teenager interest in reading. While, media literacy campaign, in this context talks about consumption television media where until today there has no active or significant and concrete movement.

Therefore, it is likely to maximise any media literacy campaign as an effort to avoid the bad impact of television programmes for teenagers. A fact that shows television as the media that attracts the highest attention of our society can be one of strong reasons to encourage media literacy campaign, whether held in school or in family surroundings.

A media literacy existence meant as training our society to be skilled when consuming any media. These abilities must be trained as an effort to help teenagers possess this type of ability and as controller for any expectation when understanding the content, to be able to give care or give attention, and able to filter the *noise* that exists within media. Besides that, media literacy education can give understanding to society about the power of media content and give strength to divide the emotional reaction and the logical reaction when responding the media

content and choose to act within, in correct manners. (BARAN, 2010). Through the development of media literacy study, the society is expected to distinguish between useful media content and useless content which brings negative values or *mudharat* (a loss) for their lives (JULISWARA, 2017).

A literacy media education model must be formulated by our government through related institutions such as *Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia* (Indonesia's Broadcasters Committee), *Kementrian Komunikasi dan Informasi* (The Ministry of Information and Communication), literacy experts, and schools. Such forums or campaigns in making a media literacy program must be held in massive numbers so teenagers in the future will get smarter while using media (NOVIANTI & FATONAH, 2016). The term 'smart' in this discussion is meant as the ability, knowledge, awareness and skill as a speciality of society who acts as reader of printed media, surfer of internet, audience of television, or listener of radio broadcasters (KURNIAWATI & BAROROH, 2016).

From various findings in the research field it was found an appropriate literacy education model that is able to be applied for teenagers with a term of media socialization. By looking at the reality in the field, then the media literacy education model, which held in a form of socialization, can be applied through three main concepts.

### **3.1. Media Literacy Education For Teenagers/ Students**

A media socialization which gives the students that content of how schools, as authorized institutions, have the obligation to provide media literacy education to their students. This activity is the effort to give the skill to students to be selective in choosing media content by using the analytic framework in consuming the related media. As a result, teenagers are not acting as viewers, but also as watchers. When they position themselves only as viewers, then it will be no surprise if the born generations, are the young generations who have a consumption characteristic and follow a hedonistic life. It is not prejudice opinion without any solid reason to our teenagers. The fact has shown that there

has been a while since Indonesia created a consumption generation in which our youth just acted as audiences outside the field and there were only few who were brave enough to take part as players inside it. Ironically, teens and most society accept this condition without burden.

By literacy media campaign which will exist, it is expected to give skill or ability to teenagers in understanding and appreciating any programme that they watch, so they be able to select the media content from what they will consume. Besides that, teenagers also are expected to be a strong generation who will not easily fall as victim of the bad programmes on television, able to take good sides from those programmes, also as the main reason, will not depend too heavily on television. By giving this education, the bad impact from media can be suppressed so this pressure can give solid contribution to the emerging form of good behaviour of teenagers or students.

### 3.2. Media Literacy Education For Teacher

Media literacy education must not be mastered or understood by one person inside one group, but it has to be understood by every individual in the school environment and inside a social group. At school, teachers can make direct moves to interact with their students, and with various abilities or skills that the teacher possesses, these skills will make them easier to mingle with their students. From this foundation, teachers must understand and then comprehend the media literacy education, so that every teacher could give this type of education to the students in more strategic and continuous ways. The teacher should tell, integrate, and insert media literacy education materials inside the existent course studies, so delivering a message about being smart in consuming media not only giving in certain cases, moments just like what we have done so far. Media literacy has become a new topic and for some groups has really become an unfamiliar matter. Therefore, Armando (2011) said that the teachers must be creative and open hearted with various teaching methods for giving this literacy media education to their students (ARMANDO, 2011).

### 3.3. Media Literacy Education For Parents

Parents are the most important party in helping the development of teenager's life. However, parents' role is often distorted by so many business activities that they have outside their homes. This reason is not so surprisingly because in our society there exist certain families who own special classes, middle to upper social classes and middle to lower social classes. In the middle to upper social classes, parents usually busy with their work outside so they can not give control and entirely supervise to their children. Meanwhile, for middle to lower social classes, their parents have more free time for interacting with their children at home.

For these two types of families, media literacy education is a significant matter to be understood. On the one hand, for parents who have a profession as civitas-academica, media literacy maybe something familiar to them but in practice, these parents do not have enough time to interact with their children at home. The knowledge about media literacy is one complex science which needs on going socialization, not only once at a time but it has to be conducted periodically and continuously.

This way, it needs to be reconsidered to give literacy education for the society, especially parents at home through socialization held by schools or other institutions which are aware of human-social development.

Armando (2011) mentioned about the first matter that should be considered in media literacy activity aimed for parents is to give comprehensive and full awareness about the importance of giving 'real attention' to their children while watching television. It is a crucial thing to do for preventing the emerged bad impact that can bring a great loss. In Latifah (2014) the research said that parents can assist (*pendampingan*) their children when watching television by two kinds of activities, *first*, put a limit for watching hours and selection of the TV programmes and *secondly*, having a discussion and change of opinions with the children, before, during or after watching television (LATIFAH, 2014).

A work on media socialization must be conducted as a form of effort to encourage media literacy. Nowadays Indonesia's society of literacy condition is still very poor, so schools must make

an active movement to give literacy education for our society, for the students and their parents. Otherwise, society will blend / diffuse with media culture where its product has become a commodity. According to Kellner (2010) media culture gives the satisfaction of media culture to their media consumer that leads society into commercial satisfaction (KELLNER, 2010). This perspective is in contradiction with Bungin (2012) who assumes that mass media has a role as institution to enlighten society and acts as educational, information and entertainment media. This is the reason why it was stated in Article 36 Act No.32 year 2002 that any broadcast should be used to create the intellectuality, character, ethic, advancement, strength of the nation, preserve unity and uniformity, applying spiritual or religious values and Indonesia's cultural value (BUNGIN, 2012).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

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The result of this research shows that teenagers watch television almost every day during afternoon and in the evening for about one to three hours. Teenagers watch television for seeking entertainment, information and insight. The most consumed media are television media, social media, book or novel, magazines and radio.

In the present, the media literacy education model for teenagers as a form for reducing the bad impact of television includes only parental and teacher advice given in very low frequency. There is no media literacy educational model that has been established in massive movement such as a campaign of media socialization or other kinds of programmes acted in more concrete and solid ways. Therefore, media literacy education needs socialization which must be implemented through three lines, *first*, media literacy education for teenagers/students, *secondly*, media literacy education for the teachers, and *thirdly*, media literacy education for the parents.

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