

YOUNG PEOPLE AND CREATIVE VIDEO PRODUCTION : A CASE OF INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses a study in which groups of young peoples. The paper describes how this project gave young people an opportunity to enhance their media literacy skills through a video production experience. In this digital media age, it is essential for the young people to develop a sense of media awareness and activism to facilitate social learning in relation to the surrounding world. In building a productive learning culture among young people, media literacy is a necessary intervention in developing critical understandings, creative abilities, and active participations. This paper presents the summary of findings related to production theme and narrative analysis. This study has demonstrated that digital video production can be a powerful vehicle for enhancing media literacy skills among young people in India.

Keywords: *New Media literacy, Video making, Creative visual, Critical inquiry.*

INTRODUCTION

India in the past few decades has experienced a flooding of various forms of new media. An authoritative media control and ownership of content is slowly eroding; the growth of new media and the Internet in India today has opened new alternative spaces for discussion, entertainment and social interaction especially among the young people but not much has been studied on the capacities of young people to analyse, interpret, evaluate and produce media works. The media are, without any doubt, a highly significant part of contemporary young people lives in India. Therefore, there is a clear case for exploring the status of media literacy among young people in India, as at present there is

no formal learning of media education in school settings. The complexities surrounding media texts, media audiences and media institutions demand critical media literacy skills among young people in India. Therefore, there is a great need for introducing media literacy projects that can develop young media literacy skills of young people to meet the challenges in the present days and to enable young people to participate in decision-making process.

This paper reports the outcome that has aimed to inspire ordinary young people to develop their media literacy skills through critical media analysis and media creation work. Young people plan, design and upload short video productions online on the issues related to them such as stress

and friendship. The project provides young people a means of expression and allows them to communicate to far broader audiences than they might reach in their classrooms.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND DIGITAL VIDEO PRODUCTION

The process of video production almost cannot help but contribute to the participants' media literacy. In making them 'writers' as well as 'readers' of the visual media (Buckingham, 1993, p.297), they come to understand the implications of how the mass media can represent any bits of the world in different ways, highlight them or leave them out(Gauntlett, 1997). The process of making a video project produces relationships with others and also importantly provides space for public sphere where young people can get together and freely discuss about their common issues and problems (Tyner, 2003). Niestyto et.al (2003) report that media production helps in learning about young people's views about a particular issue. Further, they argue "To learn about young people's views and perspectives, we should give them opportunities to express themselves through their own media productions, as well as share their creations with other young people (p. 463)." In order to make the young people voices heard and to counter the dominant representations created by the adults in their productions, young people should be taught video production skills to produce alternative representations of young people in narrative productions (Fleetwood, 2005). The increased access to media making tools among young people world over can develop transnational cultures among young people with their own distinctive practices, bodies of knowledge, conventions and lifestyles (Featherstone, 1995). Media educators should encourage media production activity that helps young people to learn about themselves and others. As reported by Tyner (2003), studies on student's creation of multimedia have pointed out that when digital tools are used for hands on production young people are able to apply skills like critical analysis,

critical thinking, synthesizing, evaluating knowledge and attitudes. Through media literacy production experience learners construct their own understanding through hands-on experiences that encourage the development of critical thinking skills and use authentic tasks of inquiry, reasoning and problem solving that reflects real world issues (SAGEE Project Report, 1992). Buckingham (2002) pointed out that it would develop the young peoples' creativity and it enables their voices to be heard and thereby providing the basis for more democratic and inclusive forms of media production in the future. In a study conducted by Niestyto et.al (2003) the participants report that adults cannot communicate with teens as effectively as young people themselves. They are argue that young people who live in other regions and speak different languages are more effective at communicating with them, compared to the adults in their own country and even their own homes. In that sense, media production when uploaded in the web provides young people an opportunity to express more effectively their ideas and beliefs globally.

Burton (2005) stresses that media literacy training programmes should include teaching of elements of media language like elements of production, production conventions like fade in and out, low and high angles technical codes like training and composition, sound -track, media genres, formats, computer software types, games, educational and so on. Further, he argues that that teachers can help children develop media literacy from an early age by discussing still images and their meanings; photographs, street signs, logos, and the impact of color, body language and gesture. Similarly, Chen (2007) adds that as the power of multimedia is coming to the children it is necessary to teach them what screen direction is , what perspective is , what colors is, what a diagonal line means and so on. Burton (2008, p. 68) expresses that young people by doing media production "become more critically aware of the process of media, learn the language of media through practice rather than theory, and discover the relationship between media and the audience." Niestyto et.al

(2003) argues that the quality and style of student media productions or videos depended on the particular contexts in which they were produced and of the individuals or groups involved. In addition, they argued that the film language employed by the students in their media productions will depend on their social and cultural backgrounds and the form of cultural capital that is available to them. In terms of quality of the videos, the student videos will circulate as 'video low' (little technical expertise, considered more authentic) as defined by Fiske (1990) rather than as 'video high' (highly produced, mass distributed). In other words, the realness of the production and the authenticity of experience represented in young people videos will attract the viewer's attention. In terms of modes of narrative or narrative style of the productions, young people seem to like the 'open' productions to 'closed' ones (Niestyto et.al, 2003). That is, if the message is bold and simple and did not leave enough space for self made meanings, young people often expressed disapproval. To sum up, in teaching media literacy if the concepts are thought through hands on production, the learning outcomes will be much higher in comparison to providing information through lectures.

ABOUT THE STUDY

The study has aimed to give voice to young people to explore through the visual media the issues concerning them such as stress and friendship. It is dedicated to the nurturing of young people as critical and creative video makers who will use video as a medium to express their ideas on issues concerning them. Aiming to develop critical media analysis and media creation skills among young people in India, this study besides teaching media literacy concepts, also includes a video production in the study.

Finally, the young people used all the various types of shots and camera movements, ranging widely from close-ups, to panning and tilting. Although not all of them know the dramatic implications of using those shot angles or shooting

techniques, what can be said is that the young people have the knowledge that using multiple types of shots can make their videos much more pleasing to the viewers eyes and that of course it is part of the necessity in making a good production.

CONCLUSION

The main objective was addressed in this study, which is to develop creative learning cultures through media production among young people in India. For the vast majority of young people, who participated in this activity, the project has been a meaningful learning experience. The sense of empowerment and accomplishment that the young people felt upon completing their media projects and exhibiting it to their friends and relatives was satisfying. The key benefits of the experience are the learning of media creation and thinking skills, the enhanced understanding and appreciation of the visual media and an increased awareness towards issues surrounding them. The production process has enlightened them that all media texts are consciously manufactured. In addition, the project clearly shows that it is possible for young people with the help of qualified media advisors/facilitators to produce meaningful videos within a few days. It has been demonstrated in the production phase of the study that the media production work enables young people to voice their ideas, concerns and possible solutions they have about the issues concerning them. There are many frameworks available for developing media literacy among young people; in this paper we have presented one such possibility in developing media literacy skills.

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