

Enhancing the Competency Level of News Literacy among Adolescents in Kanyakumari District

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Abstract

Media Literacy builds students' media literacy step-by-step to make them more knowledgeable and engaged producers and consumers of media. It is important for students to learn how the mass media operate and how to use the media in better ways to achieve their own personal goals. This study attempt to build a strong knowledge structure about media news among adolescents in Kanyakumari district. It deals with the effect of media literacy intervention of the students. For this an experimental study was conducted with hundred school students in Kanyakumari district. Pre and post survey were conducted among 50 control and 50 experimental group students. A delayed post test were conducted a month later. The findings of the study reveal that media literacy intervention help the students to analyse the news using knowledge and skills.

Keywords: Media Literacy, Personal Goal, adolescents, Intervention

1. Introduction

In today's media-saturated environment, it is vital for young people to learn about how and why media content is produced. In 1992, the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy defined media literacy as "the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate messages in a variety of forms" (Aufderheide 1993). Potter (2004) defines media literacy as "the set of perspectives from which we expose ourselves to the media and interpret the meaning of the messages we encounter." This paper focus about news literacy of adolescents.. Becoming a well informed person one requires a habit of exposure to news. News stories are typically commercialized messages designed to attract audience attention. They are not usually

well-balanced, to be well informed, the audience needed to pay attention to messages and think about them and get out of the automatic processing state. To protect themselves from the illusion, they develop higher media literacy with more elaborated knowledge structures, more well-developed skills, and a stronger personal locus that drives us to analyze the content of news. Keep this in mind while watching the news. They can elaborate the existing knowledge structures by using five strategies: (a) analyze the news perspective, (b) search for context, (c) develop alternative sources of information, (d) be skeptical of public opinion, and (e) expose them self to mere news, not less. They should need to be more active and conscious in using more well-developed skills to process news messages.

2. Literature of Review

De Fleur and Dennis (2002) characterize news as "Current or fresh knowledge about an event or subject that is gathered, processed, or disseminated via a medium to a significant number of interested people". According to Stony Brook instructional materials, news literacy is the name of a course and an ability to "use critical thinking skills to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports, whether they come via print, television, or the Internet." News media literacy is knowledge about content, industries and effects includes such information as the values that underlie news and how it is constructed; the impact of news media economics, ownership and control on news content; and the consequences, both positive and negative, of news media exposure. Knowledge of the 'real world' refers to a person's knowledge of reality as compared to news media depictions of reality, which are often incomplete and inaccurate and

contain distorted pictures. Reliance on such distortions can increase a person's risk for negative effects, as Potter points out (2004). Knowledge of the self refers to one's awareness of her motivations for seeking news content and the degree to which she internalizes news media messages. This self-awareness requires knowledge of one's own cognitive, emotional and moral development as well as one's conscious and unconscious personal goals for obtaining information.

In an article Katrina S. Kwan et al., (2008) discussed on "Assessing the News Literacy of Public High School Students" that news literacy is having the ability to understand, evaluate, and make use of the news in different situations. Findings reveal that the respondents were generally aware of what news is. They selected news on their personal interests and perceived importance.

Stephanie Craft et al., (2013) conducted a study on "Measuring News Media Literacy: How Knowledge and Motivations Combine to Create News-Literate Teens" with focus group discussion of Chicago high school students. Based on information from those focus groups, Craft developed a survey to measure participant's news literacy. Craft found that the level of education achieved by teenager's parents has a significant influence on news literacy. She says understanding news literacy is especially important, because new technology complicates the search for information.

Fleming, Jennifer (2012) conducted a case study on 'What Do Facts Have to Do with It?' A Case Study of News Literacy at Stony Brook University. The focus of the study is on the conceptualization and implementation of a news literacy course created by journalism educators at Stony Brook University in New York. the study found that news literacy represents a distinct and highly specialized variant of media literacy, because it focuses exclusively on the analysis of news and restricts its analytic techniques to those informed by journalistic mindsets and methods.

Elia Powers (2014) in his study "How Students Access, Filter And Evaluate Digital News: Choices That Shape What They Consume And The Implication For News Literacy Education," examined how students searched for news on a computer and their process of filtering and evaluating news about a topic of interest, and their awareness of their choices that they consume. participants often did not pay close attention to the process by which they accessed and filtered news

online, as they are in a state of automaticity instead of thinking critically. As a result, student's online news habits often placed them at risk for consuming unreliable news.

3. Research Methodology

Objectives of the study

1. To create critical analysis of news media content.
2. To evaluate the understanding capacity of news media messages among adolescents after attaining media literacy intervention.

The present study involved quantitative research (experimental method). For the experimental method population of the present study consisted of class IX students of A and B division in SMRV Higher Secondary School Nagercoil. The sample comprised of 100 students from A and B, the divisions of class IX of one school. The students were randomly assigned to two groups, 50 students in experimental group and 50 in control group with 25 boys and 25 girls.. Pre and post survey were conducted, the two groups before and after treatment were compared. The media literacy training was given eight days (45 minutes per day) the training was performed by the researcher herself. The delayed post test was conducted after a month from the Post test.

The achievement scores of the two sample groups were obtained for all tests conducted namely, pre-test, post-test and delayed post test. The gain scores and the retention scores were computed and analysed for all the two sample groups.

Each question was scored using a five-point Likert scale. Secondary data collected from various books, journals, reviews and websites. After the data had been collected, it was processed & tabulated directly in to SPSS 20.0 Software. Cronbach's Alpha reliability was done to find out the reliability of the data. The data reliability score alpha is .666 which is at an acceptable level.

Learning topic : Analysis of News

News values, key elements of news, news literacy, content of news, news categories, money making by news channels, worldwide news agencies, news gathering sources, media sensationalism, evaluation of news coverage, cognitive skill, emotional skill, aesthetic skill, moral skill, media conflict, media trial and becoming media literate with news content.

4. Data Analysis

Analyzing news using skill factors

Factors analysis was done on the 28 factors they are believed to analyze news using skills. These factors were selected after doing extensive literature review related to the studies. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted and the initial results of tests of sampling adequacy showed the following results.

In order to find out the appropriateness of this analysis Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are used and the results are shown in Table 1

Table 1
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.511
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	702.204
	df	496
	Sig.	.000

The test of Kaiser Meyer Olkin shows a measure of .511 and hence shows a sampling adequacy for the application of factor analysis. The results of Principal Component Analysis to extract the number of variables are given in Table:2

Table 2
Total Variance Explained

Components	Extraction Sums of Squared Loading		
	Total	Percentage of Variable	Cumulative Percentage
1	2.513	14.784	14.784
2	1.646	9.682	24.466
3	1.211	7.124	31.590
4	1.320	7.764	39.355
5	1.034	6.082	45.434
6	1.085	6.385	51.823
7	1.196	7.039	58.861
8	1.197	7.043	65.905

Extraction Method: Principal Components Analysis

From the Table it is clear that eight factors can be extracted together which account for 65.905 percent of the total 28 variables. Hence 28 variables are summated to 8 factors.

The table 2 presents the Rotated Component Matrix table by using Varimax Method with 10 iterations, which is used to assign, factors which have higher loadings.

Table 3
Rotated factor matrix-analysing news using skills

Factors	Components							
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8
Monitor ongoing news	.822	-.080	.237	.035	.132	.082	.058	.091
Appreciate balanced news	.818	.080	-.095	.164	.106	.030	-.175	-.096
Automatic processing much information	.733	.469	-.109	-.042	-.079	-.257	.053	.079
Alternative sources for information	.601	.000	-.067	-.103	-.028	.333	.236	.113
Deep into the reports and organization	.563	.314	-.032	-.250	.211	-.411	.203	-.077
Attention to all news categories	.506	.177	.237	.071	.334	-.027	.247	-.188
Feel proud about knowledge on TV news	-.123	.687	.075	.190	.066	-.091	.190	.084
Sensationalism increase viewer ship	.263	.660	-.105	.093	.052	.186	-.011	.284
News is accountable	.117	.643	.233	-.003	.038	-.088	-.254	-.104
Political candidate influence audience opinion	.152	.537	.171	.100	.193	.093	.107	-.082
Media trial won't let any criminals to escape	-.078	.487	.354	-.084	-.207	.423	.081	.232
Understanding of world influenced by TV news	.277	.427	.318	.237	-.102	-.082	.287	.167
TV news and frightening of world	.460	.055	.668	.081	.008	-.181	.276	.235
Emotional appeal is attraction of audience	-.047	.111	.660	.052	-.099	.021	-.163	-.035
Control of emotions	-.206	.220	.579	-.004	.323	-.106	-.011	.011
Violent photograph on metal disturbances	.254	.179	.479	.326	.182	.053	.014	.114
Impact of emotional clips	.105	.063	.170	.888	-.059	.077	.071	.029
Violence and desensitization	.233	.430	-.137	.491	.135	.295	.211	.089
Personal experience and situation of story	.437	.251	-.111	.441	.194	.022	.195	-.053
Music and mood	.075	.135	.047	-.147	.763	-.103	.052	-.097
Believability of live news report	.094	.010	.083	.151	.642	.258	.019	.130
Technologies used in news stories	.109	.063	-.088	.101	.505	-.178	.144	.258
Lighting make people good or bad	.198	-.021	.005	.022	.117	.738	.011	-.188
Understanding of character from costume	.259	-.075	.201	-.038	.272	.589	.080	-.062
Compare and contrast aesthetic elements	.162	.442	.044	-.002	.352	.448	-.070	.061
Human respect	.253	.186	-.027	.186	.109	-.082	.837	.031
News about conflict and prominent	.062	.147	.093	.501	-.178	-.036	.577	-.170
Journalistic ethics	.003	.113	.076	-.002	.182	-.074	.097	.930

Source: Primary Data

From the table it clearly shows that in the first column the variables namely, 'Monitor ongoing news',

‘Appreciate balanced news’, ‘Automatic processing much information’, ‘Alternative sources for information’, ‘Deep into the reports and organization’ and ‘Attention to all news categories’ have higher loadings of 0.822, 0.818, 0.733, 0.601, 0.563 and 0.506 respectively and it can be suggested that factor one is the combination of these six factors and have the variance of 14.784 per cent and it can be named as ‘Gaining knowledge’.

From the second column it can be seen that the variables of ‘Feel proud about knowledge on TV news’ .687, ‘Sensationalism increase viewership’ 0.660, ‘News is accountable’ 0.643, ‘Political candidate influence audience opinions’ 0.537, have higher loadings with a variance of 9.682 and it can be combined and called as ‘Target audience and viewer ship’.

The third column shows that the factors ‘TV news and frightening of world Emotional’ 0.668, ‘Emotional appeal is attraction of audience’ 0.124 and are summated and named as ‘Control over emotions’.

The fourth factor namely ‘Impact of emotional clips’ 0.888, to be called as ‘Emotional influences’.

From the fifth column it can be seen that the variables of ‘Music and mood’ 0.763, ‘Believability of live news report’ 0.642 and ‘Technologies used in news stories’ 0.505 have higher loadings with a variance of 6.082 and it can be combined and called as ‘Aesthetic knowledge’.

The sixth column shows that the factors ‘Lighting make people good or bad’ 0.738, Understanding of character from costume’ 0.589 have high loadings are included with variance of and are summated and named as ‘Aesthetic elements’.

In the seventh column only two variables such as ‘Human respect’ 0.837, ‘News about conflict and prominent’ 0.577 have higher loading included with variance of 7.039 and named as ‘Moral values’.

In the last column has only one variable ‘Journalist ethics’ 0.930 with variance of 7.043. Thus 28 factors are reduced into eight variables and are given different names by using factor analysis. ‘Gaining knowledge’, ‘Target audience and viewership’, ‘Control over emotions’, ‘Emotional influences’, ‘Aesthetic knowledge’, ‘Aesthetic elements’, moral values and Journalist ethics’. It has been identified and played a good role in analyzing news using the skill factors.

The pre-test and post test analysis of control group

Table 4
Analysis of news using skills

Analysis of news		Mean	SD	N	Mean Difference	t	p
Gaining Knowledge	Post	2.36	.680	50	.093	.93	.43
	Pre	2.27	.693				
Target Audiences and Viewership	Post	2.08	.784	50	.080	.77	.77
	Pre	2.00	.769				
Cognitive Skill	Post	2.22	.732	50	.086	.08	.60
	pre	2.13	.731				
Emotional Influences	Post	2.56	.907	50	.040	.70	.48
	Pre	2.52	.788				
Control Over Emotions	Post	2.10	.633	50	.160	1.45	.15
	pre	1.94	.742				
Emotional Skill	Post	2.33	.770	50	.100	1.0	.32
	pre	2.23	.765				
Artistic Skill	Post	1.85	.722	50	.110	1.1	.27
	Pre	1.74	.700				
Aesthetic Elements	Post	1.89	.732	50	.080	.74	.52
	Pre	1.82	.786				
Aesthetic Skill	Post	1.87	.727	50	.095	.92	.79
	Pre	1.76	.743				
Moral Value	Post	2.05	.730	50	.093	.94	.39
	Pre	1.96	.803				
Journalist Ethics	Post	1.93	.729	50	.094	.93	.39
	Pre	1.83	.764				
Moral Skill	Post	1.99	.729	.93	.938	.39	50
	Pre	1.89	.783				

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the pre test and post test performance of the control group related to the two components of “Gaining knowledge, Target audience and Viewership” Paired T-test was conducted for overall pre test of control group. (M=2.13, SD = .73136) and post test (M = 2.22, SD = .7323) scores overall MD = .0865, t = 0.085, p = 0.601. The ‘P’ value is greater than .05. This shows that there is no significant difference between post test and pre test of control group. The result shows that there is no significant difference among adolescents in analyzing news using cognitive skills.

While analyzing news using emotional skills the above table also shows the pre and post test performances of control group related to two components of “control over emotions and emotional influences” A paired T-test was conducted to overall post test of control group (M =

2.23, SD = .7704) and pre test (M = 0.23, SD = .76584) scores over all (MD = .1000) $t = 1.07$ and $P = .320$. The 'P' value is greater than .05. These shows there are no significant differences between post test and pre test. The result suggests that there is no significant difference among adolescents in analyzing news using emotional skill.

The table shows the analysis of news using aesthetic skills include two components "Artistic skills and aesthetic skills". A paired sample T-test was conducted to over all post test (M = 1.87, SD = .7271) and pre test (M = 1.76, SD = .7435). Scores over all (MD = .095, $t = .9297$ and $P = .742$. The 'P' value is greater than .05. There is no significant difference between post test and pre test. The result suggests that there is no significant difference among adolescents in analyzing news using aesthetic skills.

The analysis of news using Moral skills include two components "Moral values and Journalist ethics" A pair sample T-test was conducted to overall post test (N = 1.09, SD = .7295) and pre test (M = 1.89, SD = .7838) scores over all (MD = .0935, $t = .9381$, and $P = .394$. The 'P' value is greater than .05. There is no significant difference between post test and pre test of control group. The result suggests that there are no significant differences among adolescents in analyzing news using Moral skill.

The t-test results of two groups' post- test and pre-test scores related to Media News

Media content	Tests	Experimental ^a		Control ^b		Mean Difference	t	Sig (2-tailed)
		M	SD	M	SD			
News	Post	4.79	.13	2.00	.21	2.71	20.10	.00
	pre	2.15	.23	2.07	.11	0.15	1.22	.26

$P \leq .05$ ^an = 50, ^bn = 50, M = Mean, SD= Standard Deviation

The above table indicates the mean score value of pre and post test of two group in analyzing media content news using skills. The pre-test mean score of experimental and control group of news are M=2.15 and M= 2.07 mean difference = 0.150 ($P > 0.05$) 'P' value is greater than 0.05 this shows that no significant difference between two groups. In post test the mean score experimental and control group are M = 4.79 and M = 2.0. The mean difference is M = 2.71 ($P < 0.05$) 'P' value is less than 0.05. This depicts the fact that there is a significant difference between the groups.

Difference among the retention scores with regard to media news

Media content		Mean	SD	N	Mean Difference	t	Sig (2-tailed)
News	Ret	4.97	.0150	50	.180	2.60	.040
	expt	4.79	.1372				

The above table shows the retention scores of experimental groups in overall knowledge and skills in analyzing news. In the analysis of mean score of the post and retention test of experimental group regarding news are M = 4.79 and M =4.97. The average mean score value M =0 .18 and 'P' value is less than 0.05. This shows that there is a significant difference between two tests and the media literacy training help the students to analyze news using knowledge and skills. There is improvement in the retention test on the analysis of news.

5. Findings

The knowledge about news

1. The knowledge about media outlet in India increases after attaining media literacy training.
2. The knowledge about the factors that influence news content increases considerably after attaining media literacy training.
3. There is a vast increase in knowledge about the owner of the NDTV after attaining media literacy training.
4. The knowledge about news gathering sources increases after attaining media literacy training.
5. The knowledge about news categories improves after attaining media literacy training.
6. There is a vast increase in knowledge about current news after attaining media literacy training.

Post test of control group and experimental group

There is significant difference in the critical analysis of television of news content among the control group and experimental group.

Pre test – post test control group

There is no significant difference between mean source of pre and post test of control group in analyzing media news.

Pre test – post test experimental group

There is significant difference between pre and post test of experimental group in analyzing news.

Post test of experimental group and delayed post test

There is no significant difference between mean source of post test of experimental group and delayed post test in analyzing media news.

In this study two homogeneous groups namely control group (no treatment), experimental group (treated by media literacy training) were made equivalent in terms of the quarterly marks obtained. These shows the two groups were homogeneous. The two groups scored same in the pre test and only the experimental group scored more in the post test than the control group. This shows that experimental group students attain more knowledge and skills in analyzing news due to media literacy training. The same result was found in the reviewed studies of Huei Lan Wang (2008) and another study by Paul Mihailidis (2008).

6. Conclusion

The primary aim of the study in outline is to provide literacy and educate the adolescents through media literacy training. This study focuses on how to view media messages using critical thinking skills. In this study the media literacy training is more effective among the treatment group of the students. They gain knowledge and skills to critically analyze the media news. The students were given training to the analysis of media messages using cognitive, emotional, aesthetic and moral skills and can access, analyze and evaluate the media messages, and can able to identify the intention of media messages, on who send the message and target audience. The media literate person were updated with current events, different sources for information and advocated to give equal importance to all categories of news and media messages. The media literacy training helps the students to get out of automatic processing

stage and built strong knowledge structure and skills to analyze media messages.

From this study media literacy training helps children to deal with information overload and to find ways to steer them away from less desirable content and uses of media. Media literacy education courses help children to become media literate. The practice can succeed them in life to have bright future. It is confident that it may be adopted and followed in curriculum and might spark numerous innovative studies on media literacy in the days ahead.

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