

# High School Students' Perception of Movie for Educational Purposes: The Case of Dire Dawa Administration and Ethiopian Somali Region

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this study was to check on high school students' perception of movie that whether they had positive or negative feelings, or had experiences of using for educational, or information sources. The researchers conducted on Dire Dawa Administration and Ethiopian Somali regions' students, Ethiopia. The target population of the study was students temporarily came to Dire Dawa University for 2017/18 enrollment STEM program. It was a descriptive research and simple random sampling was used to draw the participants of the study. Seventy samples were selected from the general population (N=70). Questionnaire was used to collect the data. To analyze the data and make descriptions, simple percentage method was used. It was found that more than half (55) of the respondents were found to be (28.5%) regular and (50%) occasional watchers. The participants' perception towards movies' was found to be (35.7 %) positive, (22.8%) negative and 41.42% had neither positive nor negative feelings towards movie. Their causal attribution of movies for education was found to be (21.42%) which was low, for general information source (42.85%), and as a source of enjoyment (35.7%).*

**Keywords:** Movie, perceptions, STEM Program

## 1. Introduction

We live in a world where many types of mass media – both print and broadcast – strive to attract our attention. The consumption of daily and weekly newspapers, radio and television programs, particularly news programs, and the use of contemporary sources of information (the web, teletext, gsm services) are very important for every democratic society, since the media contribute crucially to our perception of the world. [1]

With the immense power of the electronic media, enhanced by the advanced computer and satellite technologies, media have assumed key position in the political, economic and socio-cultural activities of a society, making media indispensable to governments and the public [2],[3].

Media has the potential to generate both positive and negative effects, and many studies have looked at the impact of television on society, particularly on children and adolescents. Not all television programs/movies are bad, but data showing the negative effects of exposure to violence, inappropriate sexuality and offensive language are convincing. [4]

The media especially the movies contain has been linked by some researchers to increased rates of violent crimes in real life. [5] Wessler states "Children of all ages have access to movies that contain violence, sex, profanity, drug and alcohol use, and smoking if their parents subscribe to cable or satellite service. Even network television, available on any television equipped with an old rabbit ear-style antenna, contains questionable material that could potentially be seen as not suitable for minors' viewing"

On the other hand, scholars who argued that children who watch educational programming are more likely have higher

grades, read more books, place greater value on achievement, and show more creativity than children who watch more violent or purely 'entertainment' television [6] Here a variety of media and media contents have been suggested to be used as source of knowledge especially for students.

Movies are truly modern-day storytelling instruments. They have the power to reach massive audiences, which is why they should, and do, matter so much to society. Whether they are stories of afar or just everyday existence, good movies are a way for people, particularly youth, to understand and relate to the world in constructive ways.

To strengthen the above idea, some educational leaders also argued that television viewing enriches students ([7][8]. For instance, television programmes are said to be used to assist children and adolescents in various subject areas and are used along with other teaching materials, to give a well rounded approach to learning materials.

Here it said that the visual and aural stimuli that these television programs can provide often allows for more student engagement and retention. According to Roberge [9] students whose parents encouraged viewing of the kinds of educational programs/movies remembered more details about the contents of these shows and were able to apply out-of-class learning to the classroom situation. [10] Titterington, L., & Drummer noted that parents should encourage the viewing of scientific programming in the home as a supplement to the regular curriculum that their children participate in at school.

[11] Rasmussen also affirmed that documentaries are an incredible source of science information.

Here movies have also been used as a source of knowledge. A number of literatures on movie/film (which is the main concern of this study) have also been suggesting that the movies are the true agent of socialization as it manipulates the social perception. Thus the researchers thought that studying the perception of the society especially the Ethiopian students is worthwhile and would have a manifold importance as most of Ethiopian students are accessible to various media outlets. This, therefore, has instigated the researchers to investigate the students' perception of movies/films so as to use for education purposes.

Now a days it is true that students are exposed to more types of media today than they have ever been before; in this regard, movies are shown to help students visualize lessons or to enrich the literary curriculum. There have been many fine movies made, and some rather significant portions of children's lives are spent learning life's lessons from watching movies. [12] Many studies in different countries in the world indicate that the average number of hours spent by the child (6- 10 years old) in front of television and movies is 12 - 24 hours per week. Those children are the youths of the future, and what is instilled in their minds will appear in future lives.

It is said that movies contribute to learning in other ways and are routinely used to supplement education, or cinema education [13] in schools, colleges and medical schools. Students can benefit from movies to enhance classroom learning, most commonly from history, English and psychology courses [14]. [15] Uys, P found that knowledge is increased in students that receive film-assisted methods of instruction. This shows that if students are in a good position to use films/ movies as a source of academic knowledge, films/movies would have a great impact on their achievements.

With more and more video, and satellite TV service giving homes spreading, young Ethiopians opportunity for access and use of global media particularly popular culture is increasing. Nowadays, electronic materials and satellite equipment are becoming cheaper, affordable, and easily accessible in the country. With the flourishing media landscape especially satellite programs', which are the alternative sources of knowledge, studying the students' trend and perception towards movies would be taken as a great opportunity for the researchers. In studying this, the researchers don't plan to focus on the influences of films/movies on students rather the researchers are more concerned to investigate the perception of films/movies for academic purposes of the high school students.

In searching for any related literatures with the current research topics, the researchers found only one research entitled as 'media preferences and perceptions: on the case of Bahir Dar instructors' conducted by Biset Ayalew. However this study was mainly focused on to evaluate the overall media preferences and perceptions of the instructors which is broad in terms of focus when it is compared with current study. Other available studies found were focusing on media effects. The present research, however, will examine the perceptions of movies for academic uses of

high school students of Dire Dawa Administration and Ethiopian Somali region.

The general objective of the study was to examine the high school students' perceptions of movies for academic uses: the case of Dire Dawa City and Ethiopian Somali region. Therefore, this study tried to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the students' overall orientation regarding movies?
- 2) Do students have positive or negative feeling towards movies?
- 3) What are the causes for the students' perception on movies?

## 2. Material and Methods

The study adopted a survey method with the use of questionnaire as research instrument. The questionnaire was designed putting into consideration the focus of the study as well as the research questions. The study focused on Dire Dawa Administration and Ethiopian Somali Region where all ethnic groups in the country are adequately represented next to Addis Ababa, the capital city of the country, and most importantly, the most notorious, the commercial nerve centre of the country and where all forms of "modernization or civilization" are rooted. Thus, in order to find out the Perception of movies for educational purposes among high school students who represent both regions, researchers took the samples from students who admitted in 2017/18 at Dire Dawa University STEM program- the program which brought together high school students from Dire Dawa and Ethiopian Somali regions' different schools are selected to attend Science, Technology, and Engineering and Mathematics fields. Students coming from various schools of Dire Dawa and Ethiopian Somali regions are recruited based on their class achievements. Consequently, from the available 250 school teenagers admitted for the program, 70 secondary school students within the age bracket of 13-18 were selected using random sampling. To assure proportional representation of the samples 31 female and 39 males were considered for the study.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### Results

#### 1.1. Overall Students' Orientation

Student-participants were offered different questions, diverse in dimension but similar in content, to identify whether they gave a certain period of time to watch movies or not first, and consequently to know their perception of the movies. Based on this, the following result was obtained. As shown, in table 1 from the total participants (N = 70), twenty of them said that they watch movies regularly, 35 watch occasionally and 15 are rarely watchers. Putting in other words, 28.5% of the participants reported they watch movies regularly. Fifty per cent of them also say they watch occasionally. The rest 21.5% of the students were rarely watchers.

**Table 1:** Students magnitude of watching movies

		<i>Number of participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Magnitude	Regular Watchers	20	28.50%
	Occasional Watchers	35	50%
	Rarely watchers	15	21.50%
	Total	70	100%

Here too, twenty- five (35.7%) of the participants reported they had positive feeling towards movies. While sixteen (22.8%) of the students stated that they have negative feeling towards movies. On the other hand, twenty- nine (41.42%) of the respondents said they had neither positive feeling nor negative feeling of movies. In other words, these students couldn't decide over the feeling they could have over movies.

**Table 2:** Understanding whether they have positive or negative feeling towards movies

		<i>Number of participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Magnitude	Positive Feeling	25	35.70%
	Negative Feeling	16	22.80%
	Neither negative nor positive	29	41.42%
	Total	70	100%

As can be seen in the table 3 below, when students are asked about their causes for their perception of movies, twenty-five (35.7%) of students stated that entertainment was their cause for their perception where as fifteen (21.42%) of the students said education purposes were their main cause for their perception of movies. Almost half of students, thirty (42.85%) of them said that informational needs are a reason for their perception of movies/movies.

**Table 3:** Explaining the causes for their perception on movies

<i>Causes</i>	<i>Number of participants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Entertainment	25	35.70%
Educational	15	21.42%
Informational	30	42.85%
Total	70	100%

#### 4. Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to examine movie perception of high school students of Dire Dawa Administration and Ethiopian Somali region. Therefore it was generally intended to examine the respondents' perception of movie/ film play for education purposes. 3 questions for each objective totally nine statements to which they could indicate their agreement on 3 point scale were provided.

The instrument used to measure students' movie orientation contain 3 statements whereby respondents' responses were regarded as regular, occasional, and rarely watchers. In so doing, as shown, in table 1 from the total participants (N = 70), twenty of them said that they watch movies regularly, 35 of them watch occasionally and 15 of them watch rarely. Here more than half of the students are regular and occasional watchers. Regarding the second research question which asked students' positive or negative feeling towards

movie/film, 3 statements were used for respondents which were regarded as positive, negative feeling, and neither positive nor negative feeling towards movie. In this regard, (35.7%) of the participants reported they had positive feeling towards movies while (22.8%) of the students stated that they have negative feeling towards movies. On the other hand, (41.42%) of the respondents said they had neither positive feeling nor negative feeling of movies. Here one can conclude that most of the students couldn't decide over the feeling they have over movies. The last research question which asked the causes of the students' perception was again treated with 3 statements and it was regarded as entertainment, educational, and informational. As this question was intended to see whether students use movie for educational purpose or not, the result was different that most of the students watch movie for the source of general information and for the purpose of enjoyment. This accounts 78% of the respondents. As Okeoma [16] states "Today, movie is a primary source of information, and entertainment for countless youths, shaping their attitudes, opinions, their values and pattern of behavior." Thus, assumption seems quite supportive of this research finding.

In addition, the research result is found to be contrary to what [17] stated "movies are shown to help students visualize lessons or to enrich the literary curriculum.....some rather significant portions of children's lives are spent learning life's lessons from watching movies." It could be said that students understanding of movie/ film use for academic purpose is not satisfactory.

#### 5. Concluding Remarks

The data obtained through questionnaire were analyzed, interpreted and concluded as follows: In studying the perception of movie by high school students of both Dire Dawa and Ethiopian Somali regions, most of them found to be regular and occasional watchers. On the other hand, most of the students had neither positive nor negative feeling towards movie. In addition to that respondents' perception towards movie's role for education was found to be low, and they use movie as source of general information and enjoyment.

#### 6. Competing Interests

The author has declared that there is no conflict of interests

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