

Education via Film: An Approach of Tomorrow

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Abstract: A film production is a path that creates efforts to congregate the leitmotif. It addresses in a limited period and masses its structure in an impressive way. Usage of short films is easy for educational purpose at the time of their production and throughout the process of consumption. This study investigates the education-film relation and the function of film in education on the basis of students and teachers. The sampling group of the study is students along with some teachers of American International University Bangladesh, Department of Mass Communication and Media Arts. Questionnaire was used to set on views of students and teachers, who are the producers and consumers of the documentary film productions.

Key words: Film, documentary, education, multimedia class, student

INTRODUCTION

Human loves to taste everything in the world by his five senses. Who else in this world does not want to see his own eyes? Who else does not want to hear with his own ears? Everyone wants because of the taste because of fulfillment of mental desire. Another, common but interesting human psychology is a tendency of remembering every facet of his past. Scientifically, it is quite impossible to remember everything because of the memory and oblivion. It is a fundamental part of human brain cycle. If you catch up and hold on a new thing in your brain cell, you have to forget something old and as a consequence the brain cells make the required space by deleting the old data.

The studies divulged that students better taught their lectures through multi-media presentations rather than conventional lectures. Considering that the students are able to focus on lecture for 16-20 min at most during the class hour using films gains significant importance in order to attract attention for a long time.

Hartley and Davies (1978) clinched that during verbal-based education, the university students were able to remember 70% of what had been taught in the first 10 min and only 20% of what had been taught within the last 10 min.

Ozcan *et al.* (2008) and Anderson (1992) conducted a study on remembering. Demirel emphasized the memorability rate of the knowledge according to the sense organs and concluded that people remembered 50% of

what they see and hear and 80% of what they see, hear and say Ozcan *et al.* (2008) and Anderson (1992). So, it is obvious that if the process of learning is multi-sensory organ oriented then there will be greater chance to keep the educational materials in to the brain cell long lasted.

Backdrop of study: Though the world education process is changing day-by-day but conventional approaches are still followed by most of the South Asian countries. Very few things have been modified but it is not remarkable. They do have some practical elements alongside with theoretical courses and students do well in those subjects. United Nation published an article named education through Film, showing the relevance of the UN. In that study, researcher, Krasno (2004) has tried to demonstrate the knowledge and concern of people about United Nation. In her article, she mentioned about a large group of people who do not have the real knowledge on how one of the giant organization is actually functioning. Many people are still in doubt about the activities of UN. And, it is seemingly impossible to make each doubter understand in a few words the purpose of an organization. This organization has been working on basically addressing humanitarian needs, deploying peacekeeping troops, pursuing peaceful solution to conflict and many more hurdles. The only way to address these ups and downs in support of the UN is to better educate people on what it does. And no way to do that is through film (Krasno, 2004)

According to researcher, the film "Uncertain Soil" is based on the activities of UN. The film covers the rise,

from the first UN Emergency Force in the Suez to Cyprus, Western Sahara, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sierra Leone and Kosovo and most complex operation and the politics behind the scene. Though research was extensive but the motion production tells the story of those who do the task as peacekeeper by destroying weapons, set the programs for crisis solution, refugee camp, etc. The film also talks about the story of military officers, commanders and even the deskman. This is what people need to see for themselves. The United Nations doing very relevant work around the world (Krasno, 2004).

During fall session 2009, American International University of Bangladesh, department of Mass Communication offered psychology course. From the very beginning of the course, all the students found it so difficult to understand the concept. Many students failed in the class test exam. By trying hard, the course teacher was tired to give the real understanding of psychology. Next week, the tutor came in to the class without any lecture materials. She told the class about her frustration not to make the students understand and the fear of student regarding the course. That day she didn't take the class but run a movie 'Obedience' on the projector. In the same way, students watched and enjoyed different movies like Blackboard Jungle by Richard Brooks Psycho by Alfred Hitchcock, Taare Zameen Par-by Amir Khan, Educating Peter by Gerardine Wurzburg and other few films each class and after watching each movie, teacher used to discuss about the film with students, talked about the term used in the film. Gradually, students develop the sense on many areas of psychology. Then, she entered into the lecture materials. As a consequence, most of the students in her class did fantastic result in the final exam. It was magic. She could think in a different way rather conventional educational method and she was successful. This was the good real example of education through film. Didactic films on learning and behavior modification are also used to help teachers better understand the process of learning and the influence of behavior modification in the classroom (Bedwell, 1999).

Theory of learning: Duckworth (1978) is a professor of education at san diego state university has successfully exhibited the effectiveness of films in education. He mentioned film as a new approach of learning.

He pointed about the effectiveness of printed page or books and multi-media learning or and teaching tools. Since, long time films and movies have had an excellent impact on every society but yet they have not secured a place in the curriculum. But there is a shimmer of hope as

well. In the last few year's film courses and media studies have emerged in numerous institutes and the response from the students and guardians are remarkable.

Film is a solid state to communicate the people. And it is important to communicate to students the proper knowledge, educate the students in an effective way, no matter how you communicate. As different people have various ways of learning so it is important to follow the redundancy. In that respect film can be a learning tool as well because movies provide a concrete way to present important information. Though there are many theories of learning but the prime objective should always be active and making sure the implementation of knowledge.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was basically conducted to examine using film in education. The qualitative data comprise of total 100 departmental and non-departmental students-teachers of American International University-Bangladesh. The questionnaires were set as marked only option as an answer. The total numbers of the questions were six. The questionnaires were distributed among the audiences after watching the film. Each question got four 'marked' options and those are 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'uncertain' and 'disagree'.

Research design case study: The study uses a descriptive and qualitative case study to detail what and how Mass communication students executed and what they told they had learnt from their project through the semester. The study was based on national culture and heritage, one of the subjects of fall session 2010 in American International University of Bangladesh. The course was basically divided into three distinct parts, initial was formulating a topic and research on it and the second part was to shape the document into celluloid and final phase was to achieve the goal of the study, education through film. Forty departmental students were divided into three groups to collect the data from different areas regarding 'Pottery Industry of Bangladesh and one of them was coordinator. The course tutor was moderator for that study. Each group collected raw data and still pictures for the further phase, filmmaking. When all the data were collected, then the coordinator and moderator did the project summary. After summarizing data and sorting out of still pictures the script was written and the department finalized the film location, budget and shooting schedule.

Production: Due to sufficient preproduction works and research, the production phase was smooth. The University authority supported the logistics. Though there was a skilled cameraman with the team but most of the cases students did camera, sound and light work when shooting by the guidance of director. The film was extensively shot in numerous areas where mostly the pottery industry was located. The film was shot approximately 45 min footage altogether through more than two weeks. In production phase sometimes it was difficult to follow the script. Sometimes improvised questions were asked due to further information.

Postproduction: After huge diligent production activities the director, camerapersons and editor watched the raw footages at editing panel. By doing precision the film came into 21 min. But still the panel members thought it was not précised. Same way after three times of addition and deduction the final output of the film came into 10:49 min. It was difficult to cut the scenes from the very beloved and hard-working footage. Though it was 10 min film more specifically a documentary film but the labor behind that project was immense and immaculate.

After completion of the film, the Department of Mass Communication projected the film in university auditorium where departmental, non-departmental students and teachers were invited not only watch the film but answer few questions.

Feedback: There are numerous positive feedbacks from both students and teachers. Here are some few examples of their valuable comments that evidently indicate what they thought they had learnt.

Student No. 1: “It was really an amusing time to spend alongside such people who are truly artists. I feel proud of it”.

Student No. 2: “We really got bored with our typical in class lecture. But by doing this practical task we are feeling happy and I personally believe I have learnt something different without reading materials throughout the semester”.

Student No. 3: “I profoundly believe every department should use this effective medium for education. Every department should have at least one course like this each semester”.

Teacher No. 1: “This is a fantastic response from the student. They really have done well. The most notable thing is for doing such a project they were so excited. Their spirit of enterprise was eye-catching”.

Teacher No. 2: “We found less student’s attendance in many semesters with full of theoretical classes. But in this semester we have seen maximum attendance. So this indicates the success of newly designed course”.

Teacher No. 3: “This is an example that how education is not a food to guzzling but perceived knowledge. I appreciate the tutor, students and all of them who cooperated to do the film. The students are not only getting inspired by this but they also more concern about a culture of the particular society on who they filmed with”.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The outcome of the study was pretty outstanding. After watching of the film on the projector on the last day of semester in an auditorium with departmental and non-departmental students and teachers, the final part of the study was conducted: students-teachers interview. Depending on few questions, the findings are shown Q 1: Do you support the film as a part of the course?

Findings: About 95% of departmental students, 85% of non-departmental students and 60% of teachers marked item ‘Strongly Agree’ where 3% of departmental, 10% of non-departmental and 20% of teachers marked ‘Agree’. Rest of the students were indecisive. Among the 20% of teachers, 15% were confused and 5% were not convinced Fig. 1. Q 2: Film has had a notable impact on students result grade.

Findings: About 96% of departmental students, 89% of non-departmental students and 47% of teachers marked item ‘Strongly Agree’ where 4% of departmental, 9% of non-departmental and 24% of teachers marked ‘Agree’. Rest of the students were jumbled. Among the 29% of teachers, 19% were confused and 10% were not convinced (Fig. 2). Q 3: The film can be a lecture support of the course.

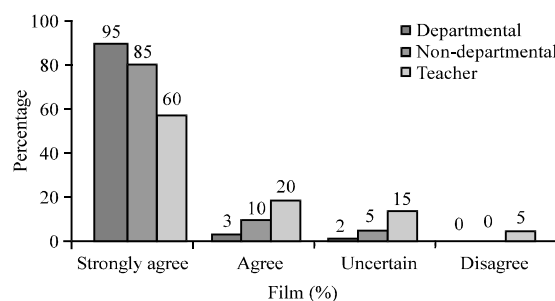


Fig. 1: Respondents vs opinions on film

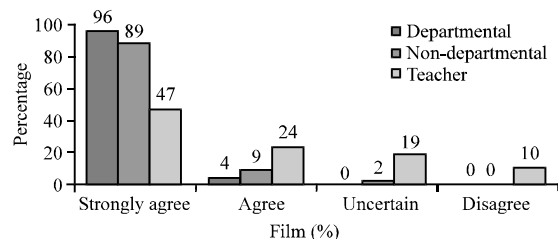


Fig. 2: Impact on student's results

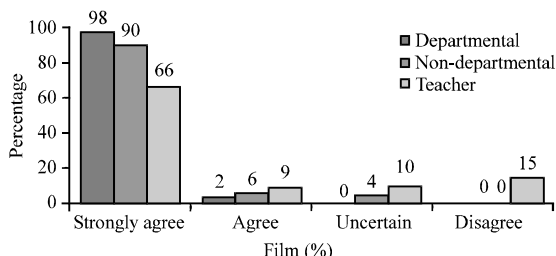


Fig. 3: lecture support of the course

Finding: About 98% of departmental students, 90% of non-departmental students and 66% of teachers marked item 'Strongly Agree' where 2% of departmental, 6% of non-departmental and 9% of teachers marked 'Agree'. Rest of the students were indecisive. Among the 25% of teachers, 10% were confused and 15% were not convinced (Fig. 3). Q. 4: Making and watching film increase better understanding on the relative course content

Findings: About 87% of departmental students, 79% of non-departmental students and 51% of teachers marked item 'Strongly Agree' where 5% of departmental, 2% of non-departmental and 8% of teachers marked 'Agree'. Rest of the students were indecisive. Among the 41% of teachers, 23% were confused and 18% were not convinced (Fig. 4). Q 5: Film is an effective medium that motivates the student on education

Findings: About 93% of departmental students, 86% of non-departmental students and 68% of teachers marked item 'Strongly Agree' where 4% of departmental, 11% of non-departmental and 18% of teachers marked 'Agree'. Rest of the students were indecisive. Among the 14% of teachers, 11% were confused and 3% were not convinced (Fig. 5). Q 6: Film should be merged with course curriculum for effectual education.

Findings: About 99% of departmental students, 90% of non-departmental students and 50% of teachers marked

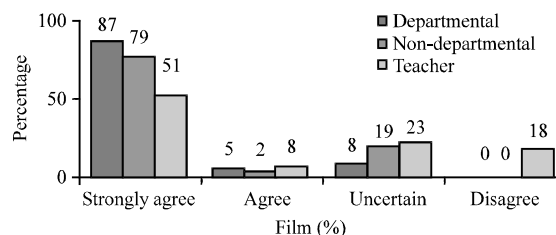


Fig. 4: Impact of understanding of course on watching film

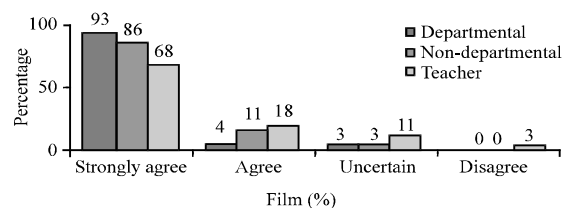


Fig. 5: Motivation of student on education

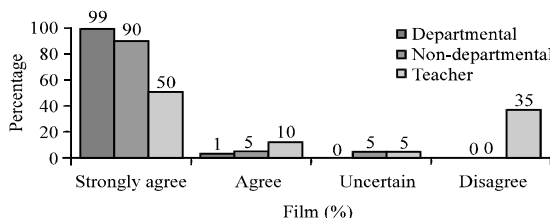


Fig. 6: Course curriculum for effectual education

item 'Strongly Agree' where 1% of departmental, 5% of non-departmental and 10% of teachers marked 'Agree'. Rest of the students were indecisive. Among the 40% of teachers, 5% were confused and 35% were disagreeing (Fig. 6).

CONCLUSION

It is really not sufficient to define film or education in such few words. Both film and education are vast in respect of knowledge and power on society. Film has a massive range of people all over the world. It can rapidly convey the message to the people what it aims to. The film is an attempt to reach out to students and the general public with what we hope is a compelling story (Krasno, 2004).

The result says sometimes bit different story. The survey after projecting the film indicates the positive motivation of students and teachers. Though few teachers were uncertain and did not even convince but it would not affect the goal of new generation

learning approach. Duckworth (1978) concluded whether we educators like it or not, the influence of the media on society and education establishment to recognize this fact and take steps to assure that students are prepared to understand and think critically about the media and their influence on society.

So, it is clear that there are so many ways to pursue education but most of them require years to comprehend. In the era of automation everything is short and simple. People all-over the world is found of browsing to get the data rather than going through the textbook. People want to get information sitting anywhere in the world by using devices. They want to learn but not with pressure and it is film by which people enjoy it and learn from it impulsively. So, why not having the education via film loom?

LIMITATIONS

Though the study was so successful but in term of audio-visuals aspect, it also faced some hindrances. During data collection, the respondents couldn't give the sufficient time for interview. As most of them are potter by profession, so they were too busy to answer all the questions.

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