

A Study of Goin' Bulilit as a Medium of Social Reality among High School Students of Adamson University, Philippines

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Abstract: Going Bulilit (GB) is primarily a gag show with a cast completely made up of child actors. The main equity of the program is that it is mainly a comedy show with child actors playing adult roles, doing sketches and segments. The study aimed to determine the capacity of GB as a medium of social reality among high school students of Adamson University. Moreover, the perception of adults including their teachers and parents were covered in order to identify whether television can shape or direct viewers' perspectives and behaviors toward others and society. An interview-guided survey was conducted among 30 students, 10 basic educators and 30 parents. Their perceptions of the show were determined by letting them view a short segment of Goin' Bulilit before having the actual interview. Majority of the respondents agreed that the show has helped spread social awareness throughout the years. The high school students find the show very informative though some of the jokes may be inappropriate for children to watch. A lot of the parents interviewed said they like the way the show informs their children on current events yet there must be an adult supervision when watching it. Most of the teachers recommend watching the show but the issues must be explained properly so that children may not misinterpret the jokes. The interviewed mass audience agreed that GB helps the Filipino people of all ages become aware of current events but it should be watched with adult supervision so the children will absorb the lessons accordingly.

Keywords: Goin' Bulilit, medium, social, reality, high school, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Television has become a substitute mother and baby sitter for many young children and a companion for adolescents in many cultures [1]. Children tend to watch more television shows and usually watch as late into the night as adults do. Since the 1960s, communication scholars have examined television's contributions to viewers' perceptions of a wide variety of topics and issues [2]. Unfortunately, little effort has been made to investigate the influence of television on perceptions of social reality among children, particularly in the areas of cultural, political and economic issues.

Going Bulilit (GB) is primarily a gag show with a cast completely made up of child actors. The main equity of the program is that it is mainly a comedy show with child actors playing adult roles, doing sketches and segments [3-4]. Noting that the social and emotional experiences of Filipino children today often heavily involve electronic media, taking a close look at how exposure to screen media affects children's well being and development is indeed critical [5]. Media

influence on children depends more on the type of content that children find attractive than on the sheer amount of time they spend in front of the screen [6]. Indeed, television functions as a society's story-teller, communicating a culture's values and myths and cultivating a set of beliefs in the minds of the audience. These may be dangerous in as much as television frequently presents a distorted, unrealistic view of the world--particularly the world of crime and violence [7-8]. Thus, watching a show like GB which feature children in various comedic situations and tackling sensitive issues can have a direct impact to their fellow children. The end result can be either positive or negative impression about the society. It is therefore essential to evaluate the influence of the show itself to children's perception and behavior. It is also interesting to find out if whether the show can contribute to children's knowledge and awareness on social and political issues. Knowing the perceptions of their guardians and teachers about the show can help us evaluate if the show is beneficial or not to the well-being and holistic growth of children.

The overall goal of this study was to evaluate the influence of GB as a medium of social reality among third year high school students of Adamson University. Specifically, the study assessed the perceptions of GB's mass audience which include not only the students but their teachers and parents as well. The impact to students' behavior, knowledge and level of awareness in certain issues (political, social, etc.) was also covered.

METHOD

Research Design

A qualitative cross-sectional design was used for this study to determine if GB is an effective and good medium of social reality among third year high school students, guardian and faculty members. Personal interviews were carried out in order to determine the respondents' perception and attitude towards the show, as well as their knowledge and level of awareness to social and political issues. Interview questionnaires were utilized to gather information from concerned respondents at a single point in time.

Sampling Design and Sample Size

Thirty high school students and their guardians and 10 faculty members of Basic Education at Adamson University were interviewed to assess their knowledge and level of awareness about social and political issues. Moreover, their responses were used to evaluate the effectiveness of GB as a medium of social reality.

Research Instrument and Measurement

A 10-minute interview and a 5-minute GB segments video were used to gather information from the concerned students, parents, and teachers. Perception and attitudes of students toward the show were assessed to know their opinions and to see how receptive they are in watching the show. Teachers and parents' perception was also asked to see how they view GB differently from the students' perspectives.

A psychiatrist from the Psychology Department of Adamson University attested the interview questionnaire which was adapted from different journals. The questionnaire mainly talks about the influence of television to children. Some modifications however were done to narrow down the investigation to just three categories of perception, attitude, and knowledge on certain issues to fit the Philippine setting. Obtaining suggestions from qualified people ensured content validity. Further modifications were done during the interview according to the suggestions.

The final questionnaire was divided into four sections. Corresponding sections were used to obtain the demographics of the students, parents and teachers, get the information about their perception and attitude towards watching the show and identify their

knowledge and level of awareness on social and political issues.

Data Collection

A letter of request was forwarded to the principal of the school to seek her permission to conduct an interview. After getting the principal's approval, coordination with the Academic Head was made in order to allow the researchers to conduct an interview for faculty members and students. Both teachers and students were given five minutes to watch the GB segments. Personal interviews followed for both of them after watching the segments. A letter was provided to the students to ask for their guardians' permission to undergo the same process.

Data analysis

Analysis of the data was carried out using Microsoft Excel 2007. The information gathered from the respondents was presented using frequency counts, tables, and percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Student Interviews

Majority of the students (67%) seldom watch television. They reasoned out that they would rather read books or spend time with their siblings. If they do watch television then it is to watch movies. Half of the students answered that they watch approximately three to four hours of television per day. The respondents said that they watch television when they are bored and have nothing to do. Moreover, majority of the students (83%) who watched television, answered they watch with their siblings because their parents are busy with work. Half of them watch with their older siblings while the other half watches with their younger siblings or nanny.

Students have a varied response when it comes to the influence of watching television. Half of the students believe that watching television has been very positive for them. It is because they learn a lot from it and that it promotes social awareness. The other half stated that it depends on the show if it influences them positively or not.

Majority of the students (90%) answered that they often watch local television shows. It is because they often encounter it every day especially the afternoon shows like Eat Bulaga and Showtime. All the students answered that they are familiar with the gag show Goin' Bulilit. They said that they first watched the show when they were around six to nine years old.

Table-1 shows the perception of students on watching GB. Majority of the students (97%) answered that GB can widen their understanding about social and political issues. It has helped them become conscious of what is happening around them. They also answered that GB is okay in developing the knowledge of the youth today. However, 60% of the students said that

sometimes it is not appropriate when the child actors bash politicians or celebrities by making fun of them. On the other hand, 80% of the students believed that the show is effective in tackling current events in a candid manner, making it less stressful to watch. Based

from their responses, students have a positive perception on the show and GB itself can strongly influence students' knowledge, behavior and awareness.

Table-1: Students' perception on watching Goin' Bulilit (n=30)

Statements	Mean Score
1. GB can widen my understanding about social and political issues	4.83
2. GB can give inspiration for my future	4.50
3. GB can give sensible information needed for my education	4.70
4. I could feel connection to my world because of GB	3.47
5. GB shows are effective in tackling current events in a candid manner	4.00
6. GB can show me new ways of cracking jokes that I can use for my friends	4.47
7. There's nothing wrong if kids imitate adults' image	3.40
8. It is okay for child actors to bash celebrities and politicians by making fun of them	3.03
9. GB can make me think and act like an adult	3.67
10. I believe in all the stories I watch in GB	3.83
Average:	4.01
Interpretation:	Agree

Mean Score: Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5

Teacher Interviews

Table-2 shows the perception of teachers on watching GB. A lot of them were familiar with the show and even some of them have watched the show with their children or younger siblings. Majority of the teachers (92%) answered that GB is appropriate for children to watch, if we speak of improving their knowledge and awareness of the society. They produce and impersonate facts of life but in a smooth and comedic way that both children and adult can comprehend. On the other hand, majority of the teachers (98%) also agreed that the show must be watched with a parent or a guardian. There may be conflict in the name changes that could result in confusing the children. There are also some jokes that may not be appropriate for young ones such as the episode that have shown rivalry between the old and present cast members of the show. One of the interviewed teachers commented that it may open the eyes of the children to start a fight.

64% of the interviewees have recommended watching GB to their students for the reason that it contains a lot of current social issues. The other 36% was unsure and said that it depends on the age bracket of the children and that they are worried if GB episodes allow children to control their learning environment. One of the teachers said that high school students should be aware of the social issues because they are also affected by it. Another teacher commented that the wondering age is the right stage to wake up the kids to the reality of life.

Only 60% of the teachers were satisfied with watching the GB episodes. They pointed out that the jokes are too heavy for children and they are likely to misinterpret them. One of the interviewed teacher commented that twelve years old children lack the comprehension to understand social issues. On top of this, they are not in favor of the style of the program in which the show uses child actors to tackle serious political issues. There is a tendency that children will misinterpret it and may not get the social issue. On the other hand, the remaining teachers said that GB style is okay as long as the kids are guided.

The teachers answered that you need to explain to the children the issues and purpose of the GB program. The guardian must explain the purpose of why they watch the show. On the other side, high school students are fit to watch the show. Sometimes the teenagers make fun of social issues in the social media they are using it as a joke because they understand it. But for kids who are twelve years old and below, it is not applicable for them to watch it alone.

All of the interviewed teachers agreed that the children watch local gag shows as a basis to learn more about the social issues of the country. The young ones can relate easily if it is local because it is easier for them to understand and explain. It is unlike the international shows, which they do not have any idea what are the social issues of the country.

Table-2: Teachers' perception on watching Goin' Bulilit (n=10)

Statements	Mean Score
1. GB is good for knowledge sharing	4.70
2. GB can be used as a medium for classroom discussion about social and political issues	4.80
3. GB provides useful and relevant content that are appropriate for children	4.60
4. I recommend my students to watch GB only when watching with a parent or guardian	4.90
5. I am satisfied with watching GB episodes	3.00
6. GB meets my students' needs and interests	4.30
7. GB is a current way how children develop social and political awareness	4.50
8. GB episodes allow children to control their learning environment	3.20
9. GB does not affect my ability to be an information provider to my students	4.90
10. GB episodes do not demonstrate social and political violence	3.60
Average:	4.25
Interpretation:	Agree

Mean Score: Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5

Parent interviews

The majority of the parents (80%) answered that they guide the television viewing of their children by being aware of the television rating. They also watch the shows with them so they can explain the parts that are hard to understand. To add, most of the respondents (77%) answered that they let their children watch three to four hours of television a day. They all agreed that there should be a limitation because most of the time must be spent studying, socializing with family and friends, or sleeping.

A lot of the parents responded that they let their children watch the educational channel, National Geography. It is because it is very informative and helps them become broad-minded. All of the parents are familiar with the show Goin' Bulilit. Some have watched the show itself while others have seen the trailer.

Table-3 shows the perception of parents on watching GB. All of the parents agreed that the children should be aware of the social and political issues of the country. They believed that children should know what is happening in the country at an early age and the important people who help shaped the current events. Most of the respondents (73%) answered that they let their children watch GB. It is because they convey the social issues of our country in a comedic way that the children would understand.

Majority of the parents (80%) answered that they let their children watch both local and foreign shows. It is for them to know the importance of our own culture and learn more about the culture of other countries. The rest answered that they prefer their children to watch foreign shows because it has less negative news there. They said that the problem with GB episodes was that other children might interpret the issue in a different way and might influence them either positively or negatively.

Table-3: Parents' perception on watching Goin' Bulilit (n=30)

Statements	Mean Score
1. GB is good for knowledge sharing	4.40
2. GB can be used as a medium for family discussion about social and political issues	4.27
3. GB provides useful and relevant content that are appropriate for children	4.07
4. I recommend my children to watch GB only when I'm present	4.77
5. I am satisfied with watching GB episodes	3.77
6. GB meets my children's needs and interests	3.70
7. GB is a current way how children develop social and political awareness	4.33
8. GB episodes allow children to control their learning environment	3.43
9. GB does not affect my ability to be an information provider to my students	4.60
10. GB episodes do not demonstrate social and political violence	3.20
Average:	4.05
Interpretation:	Agree

Mean Score: Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5

CONCLUSIONS

The majority of Goin' Bulilit mass audience which was composed of students, parents, and teachers has agreed that the show has helped spread social awareness throughout the years. The high school students find the show very informative though some of the jokes may not be appropriate for children to watch. A lot of the parents interviewed said they like the way the show informs their children on current events yet there must be adult supervision when watching it. Most of the teachers recommend watching the show but the issues must be explained properly so that children may not misinterpret the jokes. The interviewed mass audience agreed that GB helps the Filipino people of all ages become aware of current events but it should be watched by children with adult supervision so the lessons will be absorbed accordingly.

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