

The role of filipino television series in the occupational aspirations of student...



The media as generally defined as the means of mass communication have become a part of every facet of society. Every area from the economy and politics to culture and everyday social relations is increasingly saturated by media. Most mass communication theories share the idea that media can shape and influence parts of human experience such as values, beliefs, and even decision-making. One specific influential channel of mass media is television. Television serves as a window to the adult world showing a range of people, places, activities, and relationships that adolescents do not encounter every day. Television is the culture's mode of knowing about itself, therefore, how television stages the world becomes the model for how the world is properly to be staged (Postman 92).

Studies reveal that television plays a crucial role in shaping beliefs, viewpoints, and values of young people. Adolescents watch television for entertainment but acquire a significant amount of information from what they watch (Huston et. al). Adolescents turn to television because of the desire to escape everyday life. It appeals to the youth because it gives them the chance to go behind the scenes and learn more about life, the world and the people (Himmelweit et. al, 15). Schramm et. al likewise conclude that there is information which the youth also get from television, usually without seeking. The girls, for instance, learn about how to wear their hair, how to walk and speak, how to choose garments for a tall or a short or a plump girl by observing the well-groomed people on television. This information recurs from program to program and eventually links with the adolescents' immediate needs and interests.

In particular, media studies have observed that television serves as a highly popular source during an adolescent's search for different careers. As teenagers see representations of real work through television, adolescent viewers compile information they will reference as they make decisions about future career choices. Television provides occupational information for teenagers and introduces them to unfamiliar careers or careers they may not previously like (Hoffner et. al). Jobs portrayed by television characters in programs may help in the development of their job aspirations.

Some studies have demonstrated the relationship between exposure to television series and the qualities the viewers attribute to the careers depicted on television. The characteristics they perceive from the careers portrayed contributed to their decisions and goals. Manchester University, for instance, had a surge in applications for its physics course driven by the television series *Stargazing Live* and *Wonders of the Universe* in the study conducted by Paton.

Moreover, James Bond movies and books pushed many people to apply for the British Secret Intelligent Services hopeful of finding a career of adventure and fame (Dunphy). The release of the television series *Crime Scene Investigation (CSI)* also has affected the increase of the enrolment of US degree programs in forensic science in 2000. The forensic and investigative sciences program at West Virginia University also has grown from 4 graduates in 2000 to more than 500 students in 2006 (Houck). Michigan State University's forensic science graduate program has seen the number of applicants more than doubling, going from 60 applicants in its inaugural year (1994) to 147 less than ten years later (Smallwood).

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In September 2003, stories appeared in the Flemish press about a documentary soap depicting male and female midwives that had been aired in the previous year. The media and the head of one nursing college were quick to point this documentary soap as the reason for the sudden increase in the number of nursing students opting for midwifery (den Bulck and Beullens).

Additional studies from other countries suggest that many students were inspired to pursue a forensic-related degree in college because of watching forensic science television programs. Dowling also wrote that in the UK, the number of degree programs in forensic science has increased rapidly from just 2 in 1990 to 285 in 2009 (Dowling). Likewise, there may be a link between the increase in applications received by US law schools in the late 1980s and the great success of *L. A. Law*, a TV series that featured the legal profession and aired between 1986 and 1994 (Torry)

The current study adds to the above literature by examining the relationship between the teenagers' occupational aspirations and television series in a local or more particular setting. Since there has been no study in the Philippines about this yet, this paper is necessary to better understand television's effects on human behavior and particularly understanding the role of Filipino Television series in Filipino junior high school students' career aspirations. Television can generate both good and bad effects on the adolescent viewers and be able to realize its role in the career goals of the Filipino students can help parents to talk and advise their children with their decisions.

The objective of this study is to pay closer attention to what ideas adolescents construct as they interpret portrayals of careers in the television. It aims to explore whether messages about occupational prestige and the personalities of workers that resound through television programs are perceived as truth by teenagers and how do these messages affect their career choice in the future.