

Use of Movies in Human Rights and Democracy Teaching

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to determine how cinema movies contribute to students' learning of human rights and democracy in the 2017-2018 Academic Year Fall Semester. The research was modelled according to the pattern of action research from qualitative research methods. Research was conducted for 13 weeks in a public university in Turkey. In the Human Rights and Democracy course, 13 movies about human rights were watched, interpreted and evaluated. Structured interview form was applied to 13 students. Data was analyzed by content analysis. The findings revealed that in general movies can be useful in teaching human rights and democracy issues. In this way, it has been found that both cognitive and affective subjects can be learned permanently. It has been concluded that movies can be used effectively in value teaching and movies based on real events should be used.

Key words: Human Rights, Democracy, Teaching, Cinema

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary world, it is not possible to regard human rights and democracy as separate entities. Any negativity in human rights and freedom directly decreases the standards of democracy. The same is true for other cases. In other words, the negative consequences of democracy cause problems in human rights and freedoms area. Therefore, it is necessary to consider these two concepts in a holistic way (Özensoy and Taşkıran, 2017).

Throughout history, concepts of human rights and democracy have been tried to be guaranteed by laws and declarations. Human rights were created to comply the individuals with institutions. Human rights have been presented in important documents such as Hammurabi Laws, the Magna Carta Libertatum, the United States Constitution, the 1789 Declaration on Human and Citizen Rights, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Hammurabi Laws was the earliest written legal document on human rights which was proclaimed by the Babylonian king Hammurabi (1795-1750 BC). A total of 282 laws were carved onto a massive, finger-shaped black stone stele. Social life, trade, agriculture, animal husbandry and economy were regulated with Hammurabi Laws.

The Magna Carta Libertatum, signed in 1215, had a great influence on the formation of contemporary democracy and our understanding of human rights. An advisory Council consisting of noble class and church representatives was established with Magna Carta. It was decided that the King would take permission from the Advisory Council about the

limitations on collection of taxes. Therefore, the arbitrariness was eliminated. Everyone, even the king, was subject to the law. It was established with Magna Carta a committee that controls fundamental rights and freedoms. With Magna Carta, the powers of the king were limited to a written document for the first time in the history. In England with the Habeas Corpus declaration in 1679 judicial independence and division of powers were provided. In 1689, the parliament was strengthened against the king with the Bill of Rights law. The executive power was taken from the king and passed to the Cabinet. The limitation of the king's absolute power, ensuring the separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary, and the exercise of the executive power to Cabinet were important steps for democracy and human rights.

The adoption of the new US Constitution in 1788 was another step in the area of democracy and human rights. The Philosophy of Enlightenment was influential in the spirit of the Constitution. The legislative power was given to two separate Parliaments, the executive power to the President and the judiciary to the Supreme Court. Assembly members and the president began to be elected by election.

Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights was set by France's National Constituent Assembly in 1789 to assurance the rights and freedoms of citizens after the French Revolution and established a legal base for human rights. It guaranteed the right to property, freedom of thought and expression with The 1789 Declaration on Human and Citizen Rights. It was decided that no one could be arbitrarily arrested or prosecuted.

The most important and widely used document on human rights and freedoms is the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights. The Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10, 1948 to secure human rights and freedoms in common standards for all peoples and all nations. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, there are political rights and freedoms such as living, freedom, freedom of thought and expression, arbitrary arrest, protection from imprisonment and exile, property rights, set up association, meeting and walking. In addition, there are economic, social and cultural rights and freedoms in the declaration. After the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations accepted agreements on women's and children's rights.

In countries where democracy is practiced, it is valid the principle that the state, institution or persons should not interfere with the fundamental rights and freedoms such as the right to life, the right to personal immunity, freedom of religion and conscience and freedom of thought. Therefore, in democratic countries, the individual is legally protected against the state or other persons and institutions in terms of his rights and freedoms. In a democratic state, laws are the protector of one's fundamental rights and freedoms.

In the Social Studies Curriculum (2018), it is pointed out that while applying the program, literary products such as legends, epics, folk songs, fairy tales, poems, novels, stories, travels, memorabilia should be included. Besides, it has been suggested that the appropriate gains should be supported by painting, music, miniature, engraving, calligraphy, sculpture, architecture, theater, and cinema products. In the education process, cinema movies are used in teaching social sciences such as history, sociology, geography, psychology and anthropology as well as gaining value and skills of individuals.

The fact that cinema movies are a very effective educational tool arises from the forces of art and technology. The deepest, complex and intense information can easily be reached by a wide range of audiences with cinema. In addition to understanding complex concepts, attitudes and behaviors that are more important than these can be transferred and behavior models can be created in the manner to be accepted (Birkok, 2008). Demircioğlu (2007) draws attention to the fact that the past can bring the present to the present through movies in history class. Movies are one of the materials that facilitate the acquisition of cognitive, affective and psychomotor qualities. Through with movies lessons can be taught in a more interesting, simple and understandable way (Demircioğlu, 2007). Marcus, Metzger, Paxton, and Stoddard (2018) state that movies are important in critical thinking in researching controversial issues, developing historical empathy and historical literacy. They also expressed that movies can be used to develop democratic citizenship.

Burkowski Jr and Alvarino (2000) stated that today's students are accustomed to acquire knowledge from television and cinema so that the use of movies improves the learning environment. Briley (2007) and Wineburg (2000) noted that today's youth recognizes the visual representations of the past through cinema, television, computers, tablet computers and smart phones. In the United States, students mentioned that they had learned American's history from Hollywood

movies. It can be said that this is true not only in the United States but also almost in every country in the world.

Movies are unique instructional tools because they have the power to add meaning to the classroom. To provide students to analyze and examine the movies in a critical way will transform them from passive receivers to responsible consumers that are able to interpret the meaning of what they observe. Exposing students to movies in the classroom makes them character citizens by allowing them to analyze and criticize the movies. Additionally, this practice engages students in moral reflection of their values and beliefs to improve their decision making. Having an improved understanding of their values and decision making will allow students to deeply think about what it means to be an effective citizen in such a diverse and ever-changing world. As many movies will show, sometimes the correct moral or civic decision is clouded by a variety of influences, situations, and consequences that individuals interpret differently. Allowing students to consider their thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and beliefs engaging with an interesting film will empower them to rationalize and defend their values, which is a necessary skill for all democratic citizens in the 21st century (Russell III and Waters, 2007).

Movies play an important role in promoting historical, cultural, geographical, social, political issues, perspectives and characteristics of people, society or nations. They show that how students address their multiple senses, help to protect learning, and facilitate learning of history and geography. Moreover, movies make learning enjoyable (Kaya and Çengelci, 2011). According to Kaya and Çengelci, the contribution of movies to social studies takes place in three themes. These; knowledge (history and geography), skills (creative thinking, critical thinking, etc.) and value (friendship, independence, cultural values, national values, cooperation and solidarity, peace, democracy, freedom and sensitivity, etc.). Kurtdede Fidan (2009) also pointed out the importance of movies in teaching value.

Researches have shown that movies affect social skills, the permanence of the information, the pleasure that students receive from the course, and the academic achievement. These studies also provide information on the selection of movies, the production of special subjects and their use in different learning levels (Yakar, 2013: 32). Çayıroğlu (2014) emphasizes that conducting the sociology course with the movies give the students field execution experience. According to Çayıroğlu, movies improve the participation and interest to lesson, develop critical thinking, and ensure that concepts and institutions become permanent.

Öztaş (2015) historical movies and historical series; found that it would provide motivation for the subject to be taught, make the course more enjoyable, interesting, exciting and engaging, facilitate learning of history subjects, provide effective, permanent and long-term learning. According to Jones (2017),

the research and discourse in the fields of psychology, movie, and education suggest that the use of narrative movie in a social studies classroom can contribute to the cognitive development of students, refine their critical

thinking skills, and engage them in the content material on a deeper, more meaningful level. (p. 1)

According to Çoban (2011), movies and series are very useful materials for save the lesson from monotony, to illuminate the past and to guiding the future and making connection the past and future. Russell (2007) puts forward the procedures and steps to be followed when using movies. In this model, many subjects such as movie selection, educational benefits of movie use, legal framework on the subject, and steps to be applied in the course are examined in detail.

Objectives

The aim of this study is to determine how cinema movies contribute to students in the fields of human rights and democracy in the context of the Human Rights and Democracy course given in the 2017-2018 Academic Year Fall Semester in a public university in Turkey.

METHOD

Research Model

The study is based on to the pattern of action research from qualitative research methods. Action research is an approach that a practitioner directly or together with a researcher collects and analyzes systematic data for understanding and solving an emerging problem (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). Action research is a process of scientific research which is carried out in cyclical or spiral steps, where individuals are focused on providing change and development, data is collected in a systematic manner and reflective interrogations are made, new action plans based on them are prepared (Gürgür, 2017). According to Aksoy (2003), the main purpose of the action research is to improve the practice. In action research, individuals participate in the process directly and voluntarily. Action research focuses on solving authentic problems; it requires the cooperation of individuals.

Research Process

Research was conducted for 13 weeks in the 2017-2018 Academic Year Fall Semester in Human Rights and Democracy course in a public university in Turkey. The first week, they saw *the Kingdom of Heaven* movie. In the following weeks, students watched the movies before the lesson. In the course, a broad summary of each movie was watched. Before the movie, information about the movies was given and the movie was paused at certain points and discussed. The students were divided into groups and each group prepared 13 assignments about the movie.

Data Source

The study group of this research consisted of 40 teacher candidates from the 3rd Grade of Social Studies Department of Faculty of Education which took the course of Human Rights and Democracy in the Fall Semester of 2017-2018 academic year.

The students watched, interpreted, and evaluated 13 movies about human rights were. In the course, long sections of 12 movies and the movie of *Kingdom of Heaven* were watched. Movies and directors are given in Table 1:

The attention was paid to the negative and positive status rights of the movies. In addition, attention was paid to the fact that the movies were subject to basic human rights and freedoms. Therefore, movies reflect housing immunity, freedom of person and privacy, freedom of residence, freedom of expression, freedom of religion and conscience, education and health. At the end of the process, 13 students were interviewed.

Data Collection Tools

In the research, observation, movie examination, interview tools used in qualitative research were used. During the process, observation notes about the students were kept. At the end of the process, structured interview form which was formed by the researcher was applied to 13 students. The structured interview form was finalized by taking the opinions of two social studies experts. The structured interview form consists of the following questions:

1. How did you benefit from cinema in teaching human rights and democracy?
2. What did the movies give you in the course of human rights and democracy?
3. What values can be used in teaching human rights and democracy?
4. What is the connection between movies on human rights and democracy?
5. How can cinema be used in more effective teaching of human rights and democracy? What are your suggestions about this?
6. Has there been a problem in the use of cinema in teaching human rights and democracy? Explain if any.

Analysis of Data

The structured interview form was evaluated by content analysis. Content analysis is defined as a systematic,

Table 1. Movie titles and directors' names

Movie Names	Director(s)
12 Angry Man	Sidney Lumet
Cry Freedom	Richard Attenborough
Dictator	Charles Chaplin
Fahrenheit 9/11	Micheal Moore
Gandhi	Richard Attenborough
Kingdom of Heaven	Ridley Scott
Lion of the Desert	Mustafa Akkad
Mississippi Burning	Alan Parker
Modern Times	Charles Chaplin
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest	Milos Forman
Paths of Glory	Stanley Kubrick
The Ox-Bow Incident	William A. Wellman

repeatable technique in which some words of a text are summarized with smaller content categories based on certain rules-based encodings (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç-Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz and Demirel, 2013). The main purpose in content analysis is to combine data similar to each other within certain concepts and categories and to interpret them in a way that the reader can understand (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In addition, thematic analysis was used for data analysis. For this, the frequencies of the same themes were found. Themes were ranked from small to large according to the frequency number. Thus, qualitative data were converted into quantitative data. Inferences and comments were made on the messages of the students. In addition, direct quotations were made from the students' opinions. The answers given to the interview form were classified as T1, T2, T3, ..., T13 by keeping their personal information confidential.

RESULTS

In this section, results on how cinema movies contribute to students in the fields of human rights and democracy are included. The opinions of the students about how they benefit from cinema in teaching human rights and democracy are given in Table 2 and in direct quotations.

T2 said:

I benefited movies about human rights and democracy.

T5 stated:

Cinema movies were watched in the classroom. At the end of the movies, the main theme was discussed. Topics discussed in the movies were discussed. Based on the main theme and subjects, it was tried to reach the message given in the movies.

T10 expressed:

The importance of human rights and democracy was explained by witnessing situations in which people cannot come across in real life.

T11 said:

In the course of the lecture, the movies, images, and narratives about the subjects enriched the narration and made the things we learned permanent.

Based on opinions and direct quotations, it can be said that visual elements and videos enrich the learning in the classroom. It can be stated that students learn about human rights and democracy permanently from cinema. The opinions of the students about the contributions of the movies followed in the course of human rights and democracy are given in Table 3 and direct quotations.

T1 said:

It was easier to understand because of presenting the events that happened in the past visually.

T4 expressed:

The movies I watched gave me different perspectives. In the future, I learned things I can apply in my professional life.

T6 stated:

With the movie, we can teach democracy and human rights equal to everyone, empathy, and how to fight against injustice and values.

Table 2. Answers to the question of benefiting from cinema in teaching human rights and democracy

Opinions	Frequency
Human rights	8
Democracy	6
Permanence	3
Power	3
Real	2
Message	2
Image	3
Active	1

Table 3. Answers of the question about the contributions of the movies in human rights and democracy course

Opinions	Frequency
Human rights	7
Perspective	7
Life	6
Democracy	5
Society	4
Justice	4
Struggle	3
Educational	3
Intelligibility	3
Freedom	2
Values	2
Empathy	2

T9 explained:

I have a clearer understanding of human rights and democracy in the movies I have followed. I have become more respectful of people's rights and freedoms. I have become more conscious about racism, dictatorship, democracy and human rights.

Based on opinions and direct quotations, it can be said that movies contribute to students in the cognitive and affective field. The concepts of justice, freedom, empathy, human rights, democracy in society can be given with films. The opinions of the students about the use of cinema in the teaching of which values are given in Table 4 and direct quotations.

T3 said:

Movies in the fields of justice, freedom, equality and respect can be used.

T4 explained:

Freedom, peace, respect, responsibility, empathy

T12 expressed:

No value can be mentioned where tolerance is over. The most important value is tolerance. Then like, respect, justice.

Based on the opinions and direct quotations, it can be stated that the movies can be used in the teaching of values such as equality, freedom, peace, justice, respect, love, tolerance, responsibility, democratic attitude, helpfulness,

prejudice and empathy. The opinions of the students about the connection between the movies with human rights and democracy are given in Table 5 and with direct quotations.

T1 expressed:

Due to capitalism, there is a relationship between people working too much in factories, exploitation of workers' rights, lack of rights and freedoms of black people and struggle for freedom of people.

T5 explained:

Almost all of them had messages. These messages were unifying for human history. For example, nobody has any superiority over anyone. Everyone is equal in terms of rights.

T13 said:

People protect their rights better when they are free. The nations under the colony of someone else cannot protect their rights, and they are subjugated.

Based on opinions and direct quotations, it can be stated that the movies followed with human rights and democracy are linked. It can be stated that the messages given by the movies are related to human rights and freedoms. The opinions of the students on how to benefit from cinema in effective teaching of human rights and democracy are listed in Table 6 and with direct quotations.

T2 stated:

It can be benefited from cinema in teaching human rights and democracy issues. Because visuality is very important. Subjects can be taught with cinema in a permanent way.

T4 said:

The more different sensory organs are addressed in education and training, the more permanent learning becomes.

T6 expressed:

I think that the movie should be defending human rights and democracy. Movies should be movies without language, religion, race or gender. It should be mentioned in the movies that we shouldn't approach to prejudice another person who speaks another language, who is another religion and who belongs to another race.

T7 explained:

It can be used as an auxiliary material in the subject. It provides ease and fluency to the subject in the context of voice, picture and video supported diversity and expression.

T10 said:

Certain scenes of movies can be interpreted on human behavior.

T11 said:

Movies taken from actual events can be used. The importance of human rights and democracy can be explained with the movies.

Based on opinions and direct quotations, it can be said that courses on human rights and democracy need to be used more effectively in order to ensure effective learning. It can be stated that movies describing real events will be more effective in learning. The opinions of the students about the problems of cinema use in teaching human rights and democracy are given in Table 7 and direct quotations.

Table 4. Answers to the question of which values can be used in the teaching of human rights and democracy

Opinions	Frequency
Equality	6
Freedom	6
Peace	5
Justice	5
Respect	5
Sevgi	4
Tolerance	4
Responsibility	3
Democratic attitude	3
Helpfulness	3
Not being prejudiced	2
Empathy	2

Table 5. Responses to the question to the connection between the movies with human rights and democracy

Opinions	Frequency
Human rights	10
Democracy	10
Freedom	7
Sovereignty	6
Independence	5
Life	5
Society	5
Past	5
Future	3
Capitalism	3

Table 6. Answers to the question of how to benefit from cinema in more effective teaching of human rights and democracy issues

Opinions	Frequency
Right	8
Democracy	7
Human rights	6
Education	6
Permanence	6
Teaching	5
Cinema	5
Human	5
Observation	3

T1 expaled:

The occasional buzz in the classroom watching the movies caused some dialogues not to be understood. If silence is ensured, the movie will be better understood.

T2 stated:

Sometimes the Internet slowed down, time did not allow us to watch the entire movie, and sound system is a problem

Table 7. Responses to the problems about benefit from cinema in education human rights and democracy

Opinions	Frequency
Time	12
Image	5
Sound	5
Noise	5
Visual	4
Environment	4
Aridity	2

T5 said:

We encountered technical problems. Time should be adjusted.

T8 said:

Time was not enough. The movie DVD came hard to reach us. I'm bored watching the old making movies.

T13 said:

Some movies reflect local issues rather than universal issues. Sometimes facts were distorted.

Based on opinions and direct quotations, it can be said that time is considered to be an important problem. In addition, technical issues such as image, sound can be expressed as a problem. It can also be said that some old movies are boring and unrealistic.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In the context of Human Rights and Democracy course given in the Fall of 2017-2018 Academic Year, the following conclusions have been reached in the research which shows how cinema movies contribute to students in the fields of human rights and democracy. The visual elements and videos in the classroom enrich the learning and enable students to learn about human rights and democracy permanently. According to the second sub-problem, it can be stated that movies contribute to the cognitive and affective areas of the students, and that the concepts of justice, freedom, empathy, human rights and democracy should be given with movies. According to the third sub-problem, it can be stated that the movies can be used for teaching equality, freedom, peace, justice, respect, love, tolerance, responsibility, democratic attitude, helpfulness, prejudice and empathy values.

According to the fourth sub-problem, it can be said that the movies watched with the subjects of human rights and democracy are linked. According to the fifth sub-problem, it can be said that movies should be used in lessons to ensure that human rights and democracy issues are learned more effectively. It can be stated that movies describing real events will be more effective in learning. These results are shown parallelism with the following studies.

According to Çayiroğlu (2014), students can better understand the concepts from the complex and the abstract by taking visual and audio support. Savaş and Arslan (2014) found that students have positive views on the learning process when historical movies are used. Students had not only developed historical empathy but also experienced the difficulties in that period (Savaş and Arslan, 2014).

In his study, Öztaş (2008) found that the use of movies in history teaching significantly increased the student achievement. Bektaş-Öztaşkın (2013) found that the use of documentary movies in social studies lesson significantly increased both academic achievement and conscious awareness levels. Öztaş (2015) stated that the historical movies are effective in transferring the values to the students, providing students with high-level thinking skills, keeping their attention constantly, improving the sense of research, and eliminating the preconceived ideas about history. In addition, she found that the socio-economic life and cultural structure of the period in which the events took place enabled them to understand the history so the historical empathy could easily be constituted in them.

The sixth sub-problem is considered an important problem that includes the inadequacy of time and environment conditions, the poor quality of the image and the sound while watching a movie. Additionally, the issues such as problems in viewpoints and being prejudiced are mentioned. The results related to the sixth sub-problem are parallel to the results of the following studies.

Çayiroğlu (2014) stated the disadvantages such as the length of the movies, the time and effort to choose the appropriate movie, and the difficulty of accessing the movies due to copyright. Besides, she occasionally drew attention to problems going out of discussion. Kaya and Çengelci (2011) have expressed withdrawing of movies according to a one-sided perspective and western sources, creating prejudices against differences, containing elements of violence, giving false information, and adversely affecting the children of surreal heroes as problems.

In this study, it has been revealed that movies should be used in teaching human rights and democracy issues in general. In this way, it has been found that both cognitive and affective subjects can be learned permanently. It has been concluded that movies can be used effectively in value teaching such as equality, freedom, peace, justice, respect, love, tolerance, responsibility, democratic attitude, benevolence and empathy. Finally, it is concluded that movies based on real events should be used in the social studies course. According to the results of the research, the following may be suggested:

- Using movies can be beneficial in human rights and democracy courses.
- movieIn value teaching and cognitive teaching students should be exposed to relevant movies.
- The physical conditions of classes must be favorable.
- The picture and sound quality of movies should be good.
- Sufficient time should be spent on watching movies.
- Movies should be selected by experts.
- Teachers, students and experts should be able to have access to the movies.

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