

The Impact of Local and Foreign Film Censorship on Young Adult's Behaviour in Malaysia: A Narrative Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

The Malaysian government's Film Censorship Board, known as Lembaga Penapis Filem, has been in charge of film censorship for the past few years (LPF). Therefore, this research aims to examine the impact of local and foreign film censorship on young adult's behaviour in Malaysia. This study is based on qualitative data obtained through a narrative literature review, drawing from fifteen journal articles about the research topic identified using Google Scholar from 2019 to 2023. According to the survey, there is a worrying trend among Malaysian young adults. They are becoming more likely to access sensitive information against the LPF's restrictions, especially in areas like politics, religion, and homosexuality. This conduct not only highlights a violation of censorship standards but also acts as an influence in influencing the opinions, convictions, and cultural awareness of the young adult population. According to the study, these encounters have a big impact on how people understand and adhere to social norms. In essence, this study contributes to a better understanding of how cinema censorship affects the psychological aspects of media consumption among Malaysian young adults. Essentially, this study adds to the growing body of knowledge regarding how Malaysian young adults' psychological media use is affected by cinema censorship. In summary, the study helps policymakers develop a paradigm that takes into account the psychological aspects of media consumption in addition to offering a comprehensive understanding of the effects of local and foreign film censorship on young adult's behaviour in Malaysia.

Keywords: Local and foreign, film censorship, young adults, behaviour, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Film censorship is a common practice in Malaysia. All local and foreign films must be approved by the Malaysian Film Censorship Board (LPF) before they may be screened to the general public. Social networking, on the other hand, allows users to access any form of cinematic content. As a result, the Malaysian Film Censorship Board (LPF) is having difficulty policing public access to sensitive information that breaches the board's rules, such as political, homosexual, and religious content discovered on other online platforms (Islam, 2020; Yin & Ponnann, 2019).

According to Sim (2021) and Livingstone, Stoilova & Nandagiri (2019), as the issues of limiting online access to sensitive information persist, the Malaysian government has developed a film rating system to further guide audiences based on age appropriateness. The Malaysian film rating system uses three basic symbols to identify content depending on its acceptability for different age groups: U, P13, and 18. The "U" classification implies universal suitability for public watching, meaning that the content is appropriate

for audiences of all ages. In contrast, "P13" is intended for children under the age of 13, implying that parental supervision is recommended due to possibly sensitive content. Finally, the "18" rating is intended for audiences 18 and up, indicating that the video may include mature themes or explicit material.

In addition to these age-based classifications, the Ministry works to target and restrict content intended at Malaysia's young adult audience. This two-tiered approach, that involves age related guidance as well as content specific restrictions, serves as a complete structure for informing viewers about the nature of the content and ensuring that it complies with social norms and values. The Malaysian rating system tries to achieve a compromise between freedom of expression and the need to safeguard specific audiences from potentially inappropriate content by including both age appropriateness and content concerns (Rosli, Adnan & Aziz, 2021).

The recent decade's rapid technological innovation has significantly changed the landscape of cinema consumption, posing new issues for censorship and control. The growing number of internet users in Malaysia has sparked worries about unrestricted access to potentially sensitive content. According to Chai (2023), the number of Internet users in Malaysia climbed by 365 thousand between 2021 and 2022, reaching 29.55 million in January 2022. Even though minors are prohibited from using some online services, young adults could nevertheless make an anonymous user account and access any type of movie online, regardless of national boundaries, by using false personal information.

The Film Censorship Board (LPF) plays an important role in implementing rules as part of its purpose, resulting in the prohibition of certain local and foreign films believed to be against sensitive issues in Malaysia. Examples of local film that are against sensitive subjects in Malaysia include Daulat (2020), whose screening was prohibited because it opposed Malay political concerns whereas The Wolf of Wall Street (2013), a foreign film has strong sexual content, excessive language, and representations of heavy drug use, is banned and not allowed to be screened.

Therefore, local and foreign film has a considerable impact on young adults' views and behaviours across a variety of topics (Rosli, Adnan, and Aziz, 2021). This visual medium, through storytelling and cinematic components, has the ability to influence attitudes, values, and understanding. Films are especially influential throughout the formative years of young adulthood, helping to shape social norms, beauty standards, and ethical issues. Recognizing this influence is critical for educators, legislators, and content providers, emphasizing the ethical obligation that comes with changing the worldview of adolescents through film.

The Objective:

1. To examine the impact the impact of local and foreign film censorship on young adults' behaviour in Malaysia.

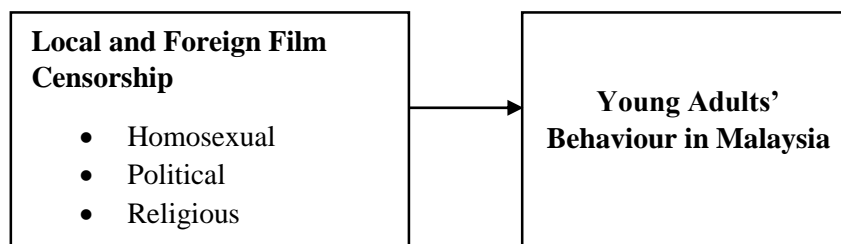


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role and Responsibility of Malaysian Film Censorship Board

The board's duties include watching all unedited movies and television shows and determining whether or not the material is suitable for Malaysian viewers to view in public. Every local and international film that has been watched, filtered, and censored is deemed appropriate for public showing by LPF, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs. At the same time, a censorship certificate will be granted for the film within three weeks. Any movie that wants to be screened in Malaysia has to be approved by the Film Censorship Board; if it violates any Act rules, it cannot be seen (Yin et al., 2019). The filmmaker may have to remove parts of the film that the Board requires throughout the film approval procedure (Chai, 2023; Yin et al., 2019).

Impact of Film Censorship on Young Adults Behaviour

The effect of film censorship on young adults' conduct has been widely debated, causing scholars to investigate many aspects of this complex relationship. Ybarra et al., (2022) study found a link between exposure to violent media, such as films, and aggressive conduct among young adults. This research underlines the possible function of cinema censorship in moderating aggressive tendencies among this demographic, underlining the importance of controlling content containing violent themes.

Furthermore, Willis et al., (2020) evaluated the cognitive and emotional effects of sexually explicit content in films on young people. Their findings underline the importance of cinema censorship in addressing potentially hazardous content that may affect young people's emotional and cognitive development. This shows that censorship policies should take into account not only explicit violence, but also sexually explicit material, given the possible impact on young people's conduct.

Parental supervision appears as a crucial moderator of cinema content's effects on young people. According to Jayne (2021) stated that the necessity of excellent communication between parents and children as a basis for mitigating the influence of censorship on young adult behavior. This indicates that censoring measures should be coordinated with attempts to improve communication and guidance within families.

Film Censored on Homosexual Ground

In Malaysia, situations or content that endorse aspects of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) lifestyle would be subject to stringent government censorship being considerate of religious issues. The censorship's primary worry is that it targets the homosexual community because of Muslims. According to Barker et al. (2021), the religious department of LPF is centralised and has the authority to decide cases involving "blasphemy" or "insults to religion." They can also refer cases requiring religious content verification to the government ministry of the Islamic Development Department of Malaysia (JAKIM).

In order to guarantee that Islamic culture is idealistically preserved or promoted, Jakim is entitled to offer comments, advice, or editorializations regarding the content in certain situations (Barker et al., 2021). The gender-themed local homosexual film "Miss Andy" was directed by Teddy Chin and produced by Singapore's MM2 Entertainment. On January 8, 2021, this movie was released. According to Isa et al. (2022), it is also the first Malaysian film to feature a mak nyah, or transgender woman, as the protagonist. In this gender-neutral movie, Evon, a middle-aged transwoman who was once Andy, a guy, loses her career and her family as a result of her gender transition (Isa et al., 2022).

However, because the LGBTQ community still fights for equality, this movie is probably going to be outlawed in Malaysia, a country with a large Muslim population (Asia Gay, 2021). In order to preserve Islamic culture, the government is therefore urged and Malaysian viewers are urged to use caution when watching movies that include homosexual themes or content.

Film Censored on Political Ground

The government's approach to film censorship will give careful consideration to any scenes or content that touch on Malaysian political issues because such content may be deemed offensive by viewers (Alhamzah, 2021). In Malaysia, there are less issues with political film censorship than there are with religious and homosexual grounds. "Daulat," a fictional Malay political thriller film, was directed by Imran Sheik and released on April 6, 2020 (Ee, 2020).

This political drama centers on a long-serving political party in Malaysia that is planning to go to any lengths to win the next election (GE15) and is plotting to retake power. After the teaser trailer for the movie Daulat was released, the audience became interested in it because it shows the media industry through the lens of professional ladder-climbing stories, and it suggests that women may be able to break down political glass ceilings (Zurairi, 2020). But because of a graphic sequence, the Malaysian film censorship board declined to allow the movie's general release (Ee, 2020).

Film Censored on Religious Ground

In Malaysia, Films with religious elements will be scrutinized and given attention. According to the journal of Bangladeshi and Malaysian film censorship laws, the film's religious material is deemed sensitive in Malaysia in order to avoid igniting public controversy (Islam, 2019; Kingston, 2019). The Islamic faith is the most delicate religion that Malaysia values. Aside from that, the article declared that any film's plot is expressly prohibited from including any lesson against God and religion or any critique of religious misinterpretation of Jahid (Islam, 2019). In addition, it is strictly forbidden for any film content to include any remarks that are critical of Islam or raise doubts about the religion's holiness (Islam, 2019).

Rumah Itu Duniaku (Home Sweet Home), 1965, is one of the movies that the Malaysia Film Censorship Board has prohibited due to religious objections. This movie, which was made in black and white, was an adaptation of Hamzah Hussin's 1951 Jawi novel. The scene that resulted in the film's banning shows the children sobbing and mourning close to their father's corpse, a deceased guy. Weeping and crying near a dead body was believed to bring the departed immense suffering, according to Islamic law, but this behavior is strictly prohibited in any film.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on qualitative data obtained through a Narrative Literature Review, drawing from fifteen journal articles about the research topic identified using Google Scholar from 2019 to 2023. A narrative literature review is a type of article that provides a comprehensive summary and synthesis of existing literature on a certain topic, typically within a specific field of study (Hakala et.al, 2020). Keywords used in the literature search included "film," AND "local and foreign film," AND "film censorship," AND "homosexual" AND "political" AND "religious" AND "young adults," AND "young adult's behaviour" AND "Malaysia;" and other pertinent topics. The keyword search covered articles in both English and Malay, with a focus on journal submissions.

In a first step, items found by the database search were chosen based on whether their titles corresponded with the desired topic. In a second step, additional records were found by searching the references of the chosen records, meta-analyses, and reviews on the subject. The third step involved going over the abstracts of the chosen records and eliminating any that didn't fit the requirements for inclusion. Lastly, the eligibility of the full-text articles was evaluated. Only fifteen articles that met the subsequent selection criteria were considered for inclusion in the review:

- a) The study evaluated the local and foreign film censorship on young adult's behaviour in Malaysia
- b) All articles are related to the understanding of the impact of local and foreign film censorship on young adult's behaviour in Malaysia.

- c) The study had an experimental, a statistics and research finding.
- d) The study was published in a peer-reviewed journal.

The article inclusion diagram of the present study is shown in Figure 2 below:

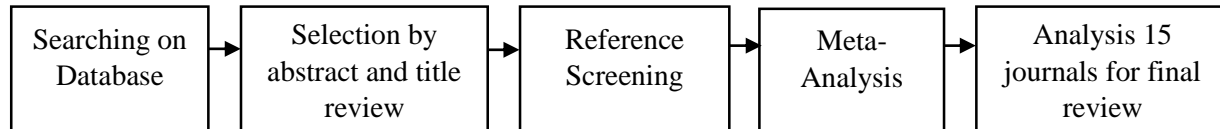


Figure 2: Article Inclusion Diagram

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Only fifteen journals from various experts were chosen from the 20 examined for their dependability and relevance to the subject area. The findings from fifteen journals are on discovering the impact of local and foreign film censorship on young adult's behaviours in Malaysia. The findings are as stated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Findings based on past year studies

No	Authors (Year)	Journals	Method	Causes	Findings
1.	Yin & Ponnann, (2019)	Challenges and Innovations in Management Practices of Censurable Film Content in the Electronic Media Industry	Qualitative Method	a) Film Censorship b) Media	The research recommends reinforcing the guidelines of the LPF, reorganizing less efficient procedures, and improving the efficacy of LPF representatives stationed at self-censorship broadcasting outlets.
2.	Chai (2023)	The Impact of Film Censorship and its Relevance to Young Adults in Malaysia Today	Quantitative Method	a) Film Censorship b) Young Adults	There is a significant relationship that the behavior and perspective of Malaysian young adults will be cultivated after watching homosexual, political, and religious films.
3.	Isa et al (2022).	Measurement and Prediction on Malaysian Audiences' Perceptions on Netflix Content Censorship Using	Quantitative Method	a) Film Censorship b) Broadcasting	The results of this study are able to give a clear view to policymakers in Malaysia in order to take the necessary steps in developing a new regulatory framework towards over-the-top (OTT) media players by considering

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		Regression Analysis			the sentiments of Malaysian audiences in relation to the unwanted elements that are not appropriate for public viewing and which are contrary to culture, religion and values in Malaysia
4.	Islam (2020)	Film Censorship Regulators in Malaysia and Bangladesh	Qualitative Method	a) Film Censorship b) Regulator	Laws governing film censorship are vital in shielding the public from harmful influences and serving as a safeguard for society.
5.	Sim (2021)	Censorship of Film Violence: Its Perceived Effect on Anti-social Youth Behaviour	Quantitative method	a) Film Censorship b) Youth	Correlation and regression analyses show that variables such as family viewing habits, socioeconomic level, education, peer pressure, parental censorship, and LPF censorship all had minimal to moderate influence on the dependent variable, violent behavior intentions.
6.	Kaspar & Müller (2021).	Information seeking behavior on Facebook: The role of censorship endorsement and personality	Cross-sectional survey	a) Censorship b) Behaviour	Study discovered a positive and consistent relationship between censorship endorsement and various types of information searching, except for social browsing. Individuals who support censorship may utilize Facebook as a source of information, as it allows for self-censorship through self-selected friends, groups, and "likes". Censorship is often viewed as a safeguard for maintaining a healthy communication and information environment.

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7.	Wood, Saw & Ayavoo (2022).	Film Censorship in Malaysia: Key Issues and Challenges on the System	Qualitative Method	a) Film Censorship b) Media	Addressing significant difficulties in Malaysia's film censorship system is crucial for improving artistic standards and financial success in the industry.
8.	Chukwu-Okoronkwo, Omeonu, and Onwuka (2020)	Television and Video Films and the Rhythm of Violence: Assessing the Negative Effect of Youths' Exposure to Violent Television and Video Film Content	Qualitative Method	a) Film b) Media	The fact that a lot of other social, economic, cultural and psychological variables also interact with the media, television and video films in particular, to impact negatively on viewers, especially the youths. What this means is that the media remain only part of the many catalytic factors in the generation of youths' violence and as such contribute to violence in combination with other social and psychological factors.
9.	Mei, Yousof, and Deenerwan (2022)	<i>Manga</i> Translation and Censorship Issues in Malaysia	Qualitative Method	a) Censorship b) Self-Censorship	The study found that the censored images and written representations in the corpus constitute sensitive body parts including lingerie, the act of kissing, cigarettes and cigars, abusive, vulgar and obscene language, names of alcoholic beverages, and words related to religion.
10.	Mei, Yousof, & Deenerwan, (2022).	Censorship of Malaysian Drama in English: The Case of Chin San Sooi's Refugee: Images (1980)	Qualitative Method	a) Censorship b) Freedom of Expression	According to research, some components in the plays could be interpreted as political action aimed at effecting societal change by questioning, if not opposing, some of Malaysia's constitutional pillars.

continued

11.	Isa, Mahmud, Hassan, and Abas (2021)	An Analysis of Contravening Religious & Cultural Content in the Netflix Original First Season 'Behind Her Eyes' in Malaysia	Qualitative Method	a) Religious b) Cultural c) Moral Values	The results show that Behind Her Eyes contains many elements that are contrary to religion and culture in Malaysia.
12.	Chua, Phang, Tan, Tang, and Yap (2023)	Social Media Influence and Sexual Content: A Perception Study on Sexual Behaviour Among Generation Z	Quantitative Method	a) Media b) Behaviours	The study found that Generation Z struggles to discriminate between sexual behaviors and misconduct. Despite being exposed to sexual content, Generation Z is unlikely to engage in sexual behaviors.
13.	Isa, Mahmud, Sulaiman, and Pitchan (2019)	Netflix and Dilemma of Content Regulation in Malaysia	Qualitative Method	a) Content Regulation b) Media	The findings of this study revealed the experiences and views of adults on Netflix's subscription motives, the relationship between the Internet and Netflix's programmes as well as discovered audiences understanding on the regulatory and censorship concepts in Malaysia.
14.	Lin (2021)	The Politics of Film Censorship: Ideology and film censorship, with a focus on the Chinese case	Qualitative Method	a) Censorship b) Media	In countries like the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy, and Authoritarian South Korea, cinema production and distribution are heavily censored due to strong ideological beliefs.
15.	Al-Qudah (2022).	Censorship as enabling: importing, distributing and translating foreign films in the Arab Middle East	Qualitative Method	a) Censorship b) Film Cultural	Censorship in AME foreign film exhibitions extend beyond formal channels. Agents involved in creation, production, dissemination, and translation frequently engage in self-imposed manipulations. Censorship, while not always obstructive,

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					sometimes be beneficial, particularly in the Arab world, where state censorship has become laxer. Yet, diverse agents continue to employ it to ensure commercial success.
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The findings show a strong association between exposure to political, religious, and homosexual films and the development of specific attitudes and behaviors among young adults in Malaysia, highlight the powerful role of media, particularly television, in influencing perceptions and ideologies. Mulder (2019) claim that young adults' perspectives change after watching such films implies that ideological ideas given through media have a significant impact on how people understand the world and form their opinions.

As previously study indicated, a concerning tendency among Malaysian young adults is their growing propensity to circumvent the LPF's prohibitions in order to obtain sensitive information in areas such as politics, religion, and homosexuality (Sim, 2021). This tendency is alarming because it suggests that media content consumption may deviate from accepted standards or laws. It is emphasized how the media shapes attitudes and actions and how important it is to be conscious of this and carefully monitor the content young adults are exposed to, especially in politically, religiously, and socially sensitive areas (Bar et, al., 2020).

In order to solve this issue, it is essential to comprehend how the media affects young adults as well as to assess and perhaps enhance regulatory mechanisms that guarantee ethical and responsible media usage. It may be required to navigate this complicated terrain and reduce the potentially harmful repercussions of accessing sensitive material in violation of set limits through public awareness efforts, media literacy initiatives, and talks with relevant stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Local and foreign cinema censorship has a complicated and evolving impact on Malaysian young people, and it is inextricably linked to the country's sociocultural and political context. The Film Censorship Board (Lembaga Penapis Filem, or LPF) has historically played an important role in molding the narratives available to Malaysian audiences. The LPF's focus on delicate themes such as homosexuality, politics, and religion are intended to protect societal norms and values.

In addition, religious content is particularly sensitive in Malaysia. This cautious approach is intended to avoid potential public problems caused by the presentation of religious aspects in films. The legal limits on same-sex marriage and homosexuality, as demonstrate Malaysia's conservative societal and legal structures.

Besides that, the conventional job of film censorship faces new challenges as technology advances and social networking grows in popularity. Despite the Film Censorship Board's efforts to protect young adults from sensitive content, the proliferation of online platforms has enabled them to view films that may violate Malaysian censorship restrictions. This raises concerns about the efficacy of present censorship policies in the digital age.

The finding shows that the Film Censorship Board continues to play an important role in influencing Malaysia's media landscape. It acts as a safeguard against content that may be considered offensive or opposed to societal norms. However, the rising challenge posed by online platforms necessitates a reevaluation of current policies. The request for future study to investigate young adults' understanding of the Board's goal and perceived value in Malaysia highlights the

need to understand how these regulations are perceived by the same group they are intended to protect.

In summary, the conclusion recognizes the continued importance of film censorship in Malaysia while also emphasizing the necessity for adaptability in the face of changing technology environments. The delicate balance between protecting societal norms and adapting to young adults' evolving media consumption habits highlights the issue's complexity and the significance of continued research and discussion.

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