

FACTORS INFLUENCING CHOICE OF INFOTAINMENT CHANNEL IN PAY TV SEGMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF VIEWERS: A STUDY

Vishal Kohli*
Prof. (Dr.) Rajendra K Jain**

ABSTRACT

Television has changed the life style of the people have an intense impact on society and culture. The effect television was almost immediate but like print media, which took several years to have its impact on the culture. As a result, Television has occupied a significant place in homes and it is certain to make an effect and impact on the youths, individuals and society. Television when it was first introduced in India was a bizarre thing. The objective of Television was to educate the people and create awareness among the people about the scenario of the present society. However, apart from providing knowledge and creating awareness today Indian television also provides entertainment. It is many ways with its various programs influencing the society. Television also has some negative effect like any other technology or development, but its positive effect cannot be forgotten or overlooked. By providing news and information it helps us to remain connected with the world about the happenings in the society for updating the recent events. Television today, in shaping the society plays a major role. Television has helped in getting new information and has created awareness among the youths and public. It helped in abolishing social evils as well as breaking the social barriers. It is a platform for showcasing and grooming new talents. In totally television has helped to globalizing of various Indian cultures. For this study total 500 viewers were selected and has been attempted to identify the important factors related to infotainment channels in terms of timely information, credibility & reliability, brand value, observational learning, knowledge sharing, analytical approach and retention of information through the application of Independent T-Test and One-Way ANOVA.

KEYWORDS: *Timely Information, Credibility & Reliability, Brand Value, Observational Learning, Knowledge Sharing, Analytical Approach and Retention of Information.*

Introduction

The socialization has declined, and it has also affected the eating habits further led to decreased concentration due to the negative impact of the television. The intention behind the expansion of television and its latest developments was to educate people and make them aware. Through television channels, it was one of the easiest ways to educate even an illiterate. However, in recent years it is seen that this concept is no longer surviving. People are getting stuck to television, to see soaps, fashion and reality shows. They are rarely concerned about the actual news as now mostly youth are keen to play those infotainment channels which are only for no have significance. Even news channels today are more like entertainment channels. They have surely made a deep dent on Indian culture, where people are forgetting their culture and values and are getting washed with the western culture. People have stopped reading books and they believe that they can learn more from television. The

* Research Scholar, Oriental University, Indore, M.P., India.

** Dean Research, Oriental University, Indore, M.P., India.

television has been credited to bringing about the globalization process after because of its extensive international reach of programmes. In this age of multi-channel global television, the world is shrinking, and the geographic barriers are being broken because of the evident flood of international television programs throughout the world.

Definition of Entertainment

From the past heritage to modern world, human mind has always entertained itself to express the desires and talents since the time immemorial. To have fun or creating Entertainment simply is putting a new shelf within one. Every person has own ways for entertainment, some watch movie, some go for shopping, some are fond of reading the fiction, while some play games, watch cartoons. Some indulge in other activities indoor or outdoor, while some involve in adventurous activities. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defined entertainment means indulging in light adventures to amuse oneself so that one can feel relaxed after a long working hour. It is subjective because one has own definitions to engage or divert their minds from one act to another.

Education and Information

The term 'infotainment' is a blend of two terminologies that is education and information. First, it is clear to understand the meaning of education which has been described by many educators, philosophers, bureaucrats and ideologues. Early in the twentieth century in North America the term 'education' means 'vocationism'. John Dewey, Philosopher of education, was against to the professional development, and given the theory of the notion of education in his 'Democracy and Education'. In ancient Greece, Socrates argued that education was about exploring the abilities, skills or competencies from the hidden instincts of students. The word, education comes from the Latin e-ducere meaning 'to lead out.' Education made one capable of interpreting rightly the things perceived and capability to turn things into proper information which may be useful in leading the practical life.

The second, terminology, 'Information' means recorded, classified, organized, related or interpreted data within a framework so that meaning emerges. It is considered act of informing, communicating knowledge or intelligence in addition, news, advice or knowledge, communicated by others. Information referred to facts and opinions provided and received during daily life as per suggestions given by the encyclopaedia Britannica. Information is basically obtaining the information from media, data, websites, books and other sorts of sources about the phenomena existed in the environment. Hence, the combining meaning of education plus information is known as infotainment.

Communication must be shared, transmitted or perceived for actions or decisions to be taken, shaped or influenced and is considered a critical tool. Moreover, across various age groups television among other vehicles of mass media has been a significant source to disseminate and communicate such information and educate through its content to the viewers. A world fame renowned space scientist Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, had advocated use of Television in India for education, information and development. He stated that television is the dominant source of information to convey to the new masses through a dynamic audio-visual medium.

Table 1: List of Infotainment Channels

Channel Name	Network	Genre	Category
Animal Planet	Discovery Networks Asia Pacific	Infotainment	Wildlife & Nature
Discovery Channel	Discovery Networks Asia Pacific	Infotainment	Documentary
Discovery Science		Infotainment	Science and Technology
Discovery Turbo		Infotainment	Automobile
FYI TV18	Network 18	Lifestyle	People
History TV18		Infotainment	History
National Geographic	Star India	Infotainment	Factual Documentary
Nat Geo Wild		Infotainment	Wildlife & Nature
Sony BBC Earth	Sony Pictures Networks	Infotainment	Wildlife & Nature
TLC	Discovery Networks Asia Pacific	Lifestyle	People and Culture
Fox Life	Star India	Lifestyle	Adventure & Travel

Infotainment channels are combined the education and entertainment to help promote the attainment of specific information, skills. Infotainment is designed in a format that these have the appealing in nature. Infotainment is considered a withering term because it infers a contrast in quality and respectability usually refers to televised news content between this type of content and true news.

Infotainment aims to make learning simpler and easier designed to draw a larger audience, perhaps as the expense of the message. Infotainment where documentaries began to integrate an entertainment element was initially conceived on television, such as background music, visual effects, humour, action or human-interest content. Infotainment who includes entertaining elements in business presentations, videos or demonstrations may also be used by professionals and business workers to make them more fun for the audience.

Table 2: The ratings of top 5 Infotainment Channels as per BARC (Broadcast Audience Research Council India)

Channel Name	Weekly-impressions (000s) Sum Wk.28
History TV 18	2649
Discovery Channel	4373
National Geographic Channel	2130
Nat Geo Wild	2401
Animal Planet	1876

Source: BARC Wk. 28, Saturday, 6th July 2019 to Friday, 12th July 2019

The above table reflects the ratings of the Top 5 Infotainment channels in July 2019 as per BARC, indicates that the highest rating is of Discovery Channel (4373), followed by History TV 18 (2649), Nat Geo Wild (2401), National Geographic Channel (2130) and Animal Plant (1876). The rating indicated that the Discovery Channel and History TV 18 have largest number of viewers. On the other hand, Animal Planet and National Geographic Channel have the lowest number of viewers.

Factors Affecting Viewer’s Choice

There are many factors which affect the viewer’s choice for watching the channels which shows the education and information through programs to keep viewers update. These are as follows:

- **Coverage of News:** As the level of education increases, the viewer wants to know more about the worldly affairs so that they can update themselves in day-to-day business and professional life. They like those programs which cover all the information related to National or International level. This particular channel is specifically for those who require ‘this type of information. They like those channels related to news which have authenticity in information and these channels have its own brands.
- **Need for Entertainment:** Some viewers have their own likings for programs which have means of entertaining. They want healthy entertainment which have any relevancy with education and should be suitable to watch along with family. These programs teach some hidden meanings and make person to lead a happy life with moral values. It is a necessary to take off some moments from the hectic schedule and watch those programs which may fill full energy and positivity.
- **Accuracy and Credibility of Programs:** The infotainment channels should have accuracy and credibility so that large number of viewers prefers these types of channels. Whatever the information displayed that should have some relevancy and create the positive values among the minds of viewers. Today, viewers are educated, and they know what is good or bad.
- **Live Programs:** These are able to pull a large number of audiences because where a person feels face to face interaction and this would be more effective in luring the viewers. Many channels telecast educational programs which sponsored by NCERT for school children in many subjects. These are the programs teach just like classroom and children feel comfortable in learning.
- **Language of the Programs:** Now in every language, the infotainment channels are telecast for viewers. India is a Nation of multi-culture and various languages are spoken so it is considered after surveying population.
- **Quality of Programs:** The content and the presentation of the infotainment channels are highly appreciated, and this would be healthy for the society also. Its only about a dozen of programs are exclusively for children and that too the content is of foreign origin. The ethos, values and visuals which they project are alien to Indian children. While children in India are exposed to cartoon, animation and related programmes, many a times the telecasts ignore the cultural and linguistic sensibilities of Indian children. The worrying trend has been shrinking space for

children's television programmes on public service broadcasting and commercial satellite channels. The exposure of children to violence and sex in transnational television programmes is also a disturbing trend. The programmes meant for adults are also viewed by children.

Review of Literature

S. Vandana and H. Vani (2015) expressed their views on revolution of media is also known as 'media explosion'. The cable and satellite television channel industry in catering to this fundamental need of theirs has been going all out to woo the viewers. In the whole spectrum of media, the genre of news channels is a key player. The present study towards news channels is based on the identification of viewership preference/satisfaction. In the current scenario, the competition in the news channel industry hinges on this very factor. The study concluded that if channels are tailored according to the needs of viewers then they are more satisfied.

Malik, R. (2016) in her study discussed about media for getting and dissemination of the information is now a days a very powerful medium. Media with the virtue of FDI and the internet has made the world small by crossing the limits of national boundaries. In the field of communication, internet has emerged as new medium revolution with real time sharing, online streaming, online news and updates and a lot more. But still mostly non-working group people prefer television watching while at home. This study has attempted to focus on the factors affecting the viewership of the television news channels and preference for their choices. To enhance the brand equity and the value of the news station the broadcasters need to focus all the factors affecting.

Sinha, S. (2016) in his study has highlighted the viewership preference patterns of News channels with reference to Zee News. The study was focused on parameters like-time spent on watching TV with emphasis on news channels, preference of news channels, viewership of Zee news, short coming of Zee news, effect of anchors and change in programming. The study revealed that apart from news channels other programming like-entertainment, sports, comedy also makes an impact. With the outburst of news channels news readers have become news presenters. Zee news to improve on programming, brand identity and re-think on positioning.

Mudassar Hussain Shah, et al (2016) explored the elements of sensationalism, negativism, falsification and code of ethics in the breaking news. The results indicated that breaking news compare to the other formats of the news significantly presented more sensationalism. However, respondents considered breaking news to get information contrast to other selected reasons. In general, breaking news considered as negative and society consider its negative effects depending on the gender's perception. The study concluded that the female students perceive significant cognitive and emotional effects from breaking news when news of crimes and terrorist activities presented on the other hand, male enjoyed in such news which depicted the heinous crimes. The respondents proposed the implementation of code of ethics on breaking news of satellite television channels to reduce the valence effects of breaking news.

Anbarin, F. (2017) witnessed immense development and transformation in infotainment channels in the twenty first century. News agencies as global 24-hours have emerged news outlets. The values and traditions have undergone considerable change making for news and generate revenues a top priority. The visuals and sound for incorporating entertainment, sensationalism, suspense and informality in news were consequential upon using language and other semiotic resources. Through these techniques higher rating figures could be achieved. After the 2002, the broadcast news media industry of Pakistan has developed a lot of reforms in media. In both the style and contents of broadcast news, vast changes have also been observed. In Pakistani broadcast news, this research study has focused on increasing trend of infotainment. This study has documented using the perspectives of linguistic and semiotic analysis to make news interesting, sensational and appealing for viewers. Nowadays information is very much mixed with entertainment techniques to attract the large number of viewers. This reflects that the broadcast journalism to tailor a news discourse which is tinged with subtle infotainment has become profit oriented and therefore all possible resources are exploited.

Research Gap

From the reviewing of previous studies, literatures, it has been examined that infotainment channels have attracted many viewers but in all these studies, the entertainment channels have been discussed with several programmes. This study is having a unique blend of infotainment programmes and examines the impact of these programmes on the attributes of quality, content. The study has filled

the gap through the factors like quality of programs, content, choices of viewers. Previous studies indicate that the impact of Television on viewers' satisfaction but in the present study, it is found that channels provide both aspects education plus entertainment, so it is called infotainment. The researcher revealed that this study is unique in creating the differentiation among the channels which contain education and healthy entertainment.

Glimpses of Research

- **Title:** A study on factors influencing choice of Infotainment channel in pay TV segment
- **Research Design:** Descriptive in nature.
- **Population:** Professionals/ Corporates & Students watching Infotainment channels.
- **Sample size:** 500
 500 television viewers of 18 years and above will be classified as per:
 - Age – 2 categories (18-40 years, 40-60 years).
 - Gender – Male and Female.
 - Occupation – Working Professionals & Students.
 - Survey field work summary as per the considered sample size, age and gender is as below (in %):
 - Working Professionals 47%; Students 53%.
 - Female respondents 56.2%; Male respondents 43.8%.
 - 18-40 years age bracket 44.4%; 40-60 years age bracket 55.6%.
- **Data:** Primary and Secondary both.
- **Data collection method:** Judgmental sampling (Non-probability) technique has been used to collect the data from the targeted respondents.
- **Tools use for data interpretation:** Factor Analysis, has been used to analyse the data in hand.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the perception of respondents towards infotainment channels in terms of program characteristics, quality of program, brand value, recall value & appeal.
- To study the factors influencing choice of specific channel in 18-40- & 40-60-year's age groups.

Hypothesis

H₀₁: Profession wise there will be no significant difference in perception of respondents towards infotainment channels in terms of timely information, credibility & reliability, brand value, observational learning, knowledge sharing, analytical approach and retention of information.

Table 3: Independent T-Test on Profession

Factors	WP (Mean)	S (Mean)	T-Test	Sig.
Timely Information	20.38	21.01	1.098	.273>0.05
Credibility & Reliability	16.56	17.24	1.405	.161>0.05
Brand Value	21.65	21.77	-.248	.804>0.05
Observational Learning	17.54	18.39	2.228	.026<0.05*
Knowledge Sharing	10.01	10.95	3.459	.001<0.05*
Analytical Approach	18.60	18.45	.428	.669>0.05
Retention of Information	7.01	6.58	2.554	.011<0.05*

*significant at 5%.

It can be observed that there is no significant difference in perception of respondents towards infotainment channels in terms of timely information, credibility and reliability, brand value and analytical approach between working professionals and students. In the light of this the null hypothesis is not rejected. For the factors of observational learning, knowledge sharing and retention of information, significant difference is observed between working professionals and students. Hence, in this context null hypothesis is rejected.

H₀₂: Gender wise there will be no significant difference in perception of respondents towards infotainment channels in terms of timely information, credibility & reliability, brand value, observational learning, knowledge sharing, analytical approach and retention of information.

Table 4: Independent T-Test on Gender

Factors	Male (Mean)	Female (Mean)	T-Test	Sig.
Timely Information	20.32	21.02	1.197	.232>0.05
Credibility & Reliability	16.56	17.20	1.301	.194>0.05
Brand Value	21.67	21.75	-.161	.873>0.05
Observational Learning	17.65	18.26	1.601	.110>0.05
Knowledge Sharing	10.07	10.85	2.829	.005<0.05*
Analytical Approach	18.58	18.48	.321	.748>0.05
Retention of Information	7.08	6.55	3.127	.002<0.05*

*significant at 5%.

It can be observed that there is no significant difference in perception of respondents towards infotainment channels in terms of timely information, credibility and reliability, brand value and analytical approach between male and female. In the light of this the null hypothesis is not rejected. For the factors of observational learning, knowledge sharing and retention of information, significant difference is observed between male and female. Hence, in this context null hypothesis is rejected.

H₀₃: There will be no significant difference in factors influencing choice of specific channel in 18-40- & 41-60-year's age groups.

Table 5: Independent T-Test on Age

Factors	18-40 Yrs. (Mean)	41-60 Yrs. (Mean)	T-Test	Sig.
Timely Information	20.40	21.96	-.958	.338>0.05
Credibility & Reliability	16.62	17.16	1.096	.274>0.05
Brand Value	21.72	21.71	-.017	.986>0.05
Observational Learning	17.70	18.23	1.365	.173>0.05
Knowledge Sharing	10.11	10.83	2.639	.009<0.05*
Analytical Approach	18.59	18.47	.354	.723>0.05
Retention of Information	7.09	6.53	3.251	.001<0.05*

*significant at 5%.

It can be observed that there is no significant difference in perception of respondents towards infotainment channels in terms of timely information, credibility & reliability, brand value, observational learning and analytical approach between 18-40 & 41-60 years. In the light of this the null hypothesis is not rejected. For the factors of knowledge sharing and retention of information, significant difference was observed found between 18-40 & 41-60 years. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusion

The study has overriding purpose in describing the infotainment channels in terms of programs' quality, characteristics, brand value, recall value and appealing of the programs. The infotainment channels are a blend of education and entertainment which have positive impact on the perception of viewers towards the programs. The viewers are increasing day by day as it is a need to entertain themselves as society is now become a nuclear and those old people or retired they do spend their time to watch programs. The impact of programs is exerted on the minds of viewers positively. The study has also examined the effect of age on the viewer's towards recall the programs, appealing programs, quality of the programs etc. The study has measured the factors of the channel like-content line up, presentation, brand perception, innovation, time slots, high resolution availability, language convenience, programming guide, time spent, brand loyalty, educative, informative, knowledgeable, consistence of the channel, awareness about the infotainment channels, trust etc.

The study has focused on and suggested - viewer's preference towards infotainment channels, factors influencing them in selecting that channel and how can further develop or improve the program viewership. Factors like-does advertisement influence in selecting /choosing a channel, anchors influence, brand image influence, clarity and reception of channel, accuracy of news, channel availability are all discussed in the present study. This study is also able to motivate the viewers towards the cultural values and ethos.

Suggestions

Based on findings and result on hypotheses, this study has given some suggestions they are as follows:

- Many viewers believed that there was a definite scope for educational programmes to become entertaining through rising audience participation and research. In addition, programmes having blend of music, drama, appropriate content with decent presentation would make educational programme more entertaining opined television viewers.
- Some of the television viewers believed that if entertainment programmes would provide content close to reality and disseminate good ethical, moral lessons, without sounding preachy, such a way would be effective to disseminate thought provoking educational content and would be considered as edutainment and infotainment programmes both.
- Media experts believe that proportion of educational message and entertainment varied from major, equal to minor portion in edutainment and infotainment programme as per target audience's need, taste, preferences, characteristics and existing level of knowledge and type of programme as well as type of message to be disseminated.
- Educational programmes could be broadcasted at the convenient time to the core viewers keeping in mind channel/medium that should be accessible to all with further benefit to even the illiterate viewers.
- Producers should be able to translate such programmes with ease into regional or multiple languages too.

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