PERCEPTION OF VIEWERS TOWARDS FACTORS OF INFOTAINMENT CHANNELS: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The edutainment and infotainment had received increasing attention through radio, television, comic books and popular music over the few decades (Bouman, 2002). The early form of edutainment and infotainment programmes was to address the health issues and used radio and television as a medium. The edutainment and infotainment strategy at large for the educative programs, proved an especially desirable tool for programmes (Montogomery, 1990). Such programmes over the concerned issues did not only deliver messages about educational issues but did prove effective in changing behaviours directly (Singhal and Rogers, 1999). Edutainment and infotainment are a relatively new concept although combining entertainment with education is not new. Its use in radio, television, comic books and rock music was a matter of the past 25 years at least when designed according to communication and social psychological theories. The first well-known illustration of the education strategy occurred in 1951. For this study a 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 factor analysis.

Keywords: *Edutainment & Infotainment, Credibility & Reliability, Observational Learning.*

INTRODUCTION

In the current scenario there are lots of TV Channels which are available for the viewers that shows content of various genres like news, entertainment, infotainment, music, life style, movies, kids programme, and religious programmes. In 1991, the decision was taken for airing the programmes and this was a positive step to infotainment. A very large number of viewers watch TV to stay up to date of the happenings, events, taking place in their areas, regions, states, countries or in the world over. Although infotainment channels inform and entertain viewers, whereas the news channels are meant solely to inform viewers of the daily happenings. News Channels besides news tend to retain interest of viewers through telecast diversity of news-based programmes, on the other hand infotainment channels telecast to keep viewers engaged through news, soaps operas and others interactive programs. The existence

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of alternatives demands increased based on the unique and diverse needs of viewers, preference and choice of television stations. The decision-making process of people is influenced by both internal and external factors like all consumers of other products that can be measured by the viewer's choice of channels, programs and the number of repeat visits or the level of awareness. By measuring the factors that are responsive to customer's needs and thus wants to gain a competitive advantage influence viewer's preference, television stations can develop marketing strategies.

UPSURGE OF INFOTAINMENT IN INDIAN TELEVISION

A process of globalization has paralleled with the evolution of infotainment. A cultural homogenization has been produced by the globalization process. By a devastating trend, the rise of infotainment has also been accompanied toward media concentration. Throughout the globe the infotainment channels have an opportunity to telecast many programs that have some quality of content and its subject is also relevant to modern society. As the pace of education many viewers like to watch not purely educative programs but also with the blending of entertainment. In the present era, the person has to bear work pressure and they require to reduce their stress by watching such healthy programs and to get rid of stress. These programs have attracted the psychology of viewers and carried out such programs to make a stronger bond with viewers. Viewers from developing world countries for emotional release and catharsis purpose from the problems of daily lives consume such programs. These hybrid programs have created a complex vision.

The large-scale adoption of cable television, the development of satellite and digital delivery systems in terms of technology, infotainment genre has gained significant popularity. The importance of traditional television contents and styles are lowered by the widespread infotainment programs significantly. The introduction of conglomeration has witnessed India's privately-owned electronic media which is adjunct by widespread commercialization. The commercialization in all the channels have led to profit as many advertisements displayed and this would be a very high revenue generating source. The inception of private channels in our society has revolutionized the society. These programs have helped to reduce the stress which exerted from work pressure, so it is better to watch TV and feel entertained. Each have different choices towards programs according to their needs or options. It is also observable that for variety of purposes many individuals prefer to watch infotainment programs such as Animal Planets, Discovery, Net Geo, News, History, Epic and as result these channels have captured reasonable popularity.

A television programme with its strong characterization, appealing content and attention holding sets, situations, costumes and equally entertaining visuals, music, actors, dialogues, epilogues, subtitles and its participatory formats has catered to a huge number of audiences. With element of educational or learning value into it over entertainment or educational content, all these have proved time and again that viewers would prefer television content. For programming, this changing taste and preference of viewers has been popularly known as 'edutainment and infotainment'.

Hence, educational broadcasting began in India. First educational broadcasting was done with higher secondary schools in Delhi with subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, Hindi, current Affairs and Geography covered. This was followed by 'Delhi Agriculture Television Project' (DATV), popularly known as 'Krishi Darshan' and 'Satellite Instructional Television Experiment' (SITE), 'Kheda Communications Project' (KCP), 'Higher Education Television Project' (HETV or CWCR), 'Indira Gandhi National Open University' (IGNOU) programmes to name a few.

MILESTONES IN THE TELEVISION ERA

Television since 1959 has evolved in India and the journey till date continues with so much advancements in number of channels, languages, genres, 24 hours broadcast, relevant content for all groups and segmentation of education level. TV milestones below at a glance:

Year	Milestone
1959	Television programs are launched in India.
1962	Indian television's first soap opera, Teesra Rasta, Enthralls viewers
1976	Television and AIR separate; Doordarshan comes into existence
1978	First television commercials seen
1982	To coincide with Delhi Asian Games, Doordarshan begins colour transmission
1984	Hum Log, Doordarshan's first soap opera in the colour era, is born
1991	First India-targeted satellite channel, Zee TV, starts broadcasting
1992	Government allows private participation in telecom services
1994	Licenses are awarded to six basic service operators.
1995	Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act comes into effect
1997	Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation Bills of India Act 1990) comes into being Government bans DTH; the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is constituted
1999	New telecom policy allows existing service providers to switch to a revenue-sharing regime.
2000	The Cable Act of 1995 is amended by the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Amendment Act, 2000, to give it more effectiveness

Doordarshan was often criticized for low quality of programmes and sometimes even presentation styles. Doordarshan unlike private channels like Sun Network or Zee TV or Sony TV or Star Plus, it is not a profit- and loss-making enterprise so it does not have the requisite push for better programming. However, in favour of monetary gains and political dealings majority of the stakeholders are interested only in cricket matches.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ahluwalia and Singh (2011) stated in their study about the positive effects of Television shows that it is beneficial for viewers as these channels carry information plus entertainment. The Television have succeeded in creating the values and people have given opportunity to follow their role models so that they have direction to follow and shape their life for the betterment of their character. This study was conducted In Punjab among the children who aged across 16 years and these children are taking education belonging to

middle class. The study explained that mostly children prefer animated programmes like cartoon or other comedy shows.

Ravi and Devadas (2012) studied the factors associated with the social network for women who reside in semi urban areas divided into four zones. The study found that Television have improved the social network and they are happy to watch Television those channels which have contents in social terms. The behaviour of women is also changed through the Television shows and they found that they can become socially acceptable in society. The study was conducted on women who aged from 18 to 38 as this age is mature enough to adopt the behaviour and socially engaged in activities.

According to Narayan (2014) the children's channels segment has become more competitive post 2000. The major channels targeting children viewers in the subcontinent are Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, Disney Channel, Pogo, Hungama TV and Animal Planet. Initially though Cartoon Network and Pogo ruled the market, Disney and Hungama entered the market and led to a decline in former two's market share. It was also observed by Narayan that in a bid to gain wider acceptance there was thrust towards local programming. Though animation programmes were sourced globally, distribution and local content was revamped in channels like Nickelodeon. Cartoon Network, popular among Indian children, attempted to expand its popularity by using local programming. The network tried to explore methods of working on Indian themes and using animation produced in India. There was also encouragement for Indian language programming. Foreign presence has been the dominant factor in the realm of children's programming. The niche segment of children's programmes is largely met by transnational broadcasters. Local broadcasters like Zee also air children's channels in arrangements with Disney and Nickelodeon. Even Doordarshan has used this method to fill the children's slots. Though global broadcasters are trying to localize their products, the bulk of the programmes are global.

Mohana Krishnan P.C (2014) focussed on most television viewers across Kerala who watch youth programmes, career oriented programs and talk shows for updated information. Among all these programmes, news occupies primary place as mostly viewers are professionals and they would like to watch news just to keep informed. Nowadays, viewers choose the news channels while simultaneously listening to the news as it provide with the advantage of viewing visual. In Kerala almost all the segment of population is eager to watch news updates from children to grown-ups. The local channels are one of the important options for them.

Malik, R. (2016) in her study discussed about media for getting and dissemination of the information is now a day 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

Based on literatures, it has been found that infotainment channels have involved many viewers. But it can't specify which factors attract customer the most. The study is an attempt to find out the factors influencing choice of Infotainment channels.

GLIMPSES OF RESEARCH

- **Title:** A study on factors influencing choice of Infotainment channel in pay TV segment

- **Research Design:** Descriptive in nature.

- **Population:** Professionals/ Corporate & 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 identify important factors influencing choice of specific channel.

HYPOTHESIS

H_{01}:   There is no correlation among the studied variables.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.947	35

The questionnaire has 35 items related with the infotainment channels which included the basic attributes why the consumers are in habit to watch channels. The factors are timely information, quality, brand recall value, analytical approach, knowledge sharing, and observational learning. Hence, the reliability of these 35 statements is 0.947 means that 94.7 per cent statements are reliable based on the customers' response. Further these 35 items divided into seven factors.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.930
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	12545.770
	Df	595
	Sig.	.000

The generated score of KMO was 0.930, reasonably supporting the appropriateness of using factor analysis. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was highly significant (0.000), rejecting the null hypothesis that the thirty-five variables are uncorrelated in the population. Using Principal components with varimax rotation only attributes with factor loadings of 0.5 or

greater on a factor were regarded as significant. The factor analysis generated ten factors explaining 69% of the variability in the original data.

From the table on communalities, it depicts that out of 35 variables, three variables no. 31, 33 and 34 were eliminated from the study as these have less than .5 value and rest 32 variables were included for further study.

Total Variance Explained:

Compo nent	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	13.886	39.675	39.675	13.886	39.675	39.675	5.142	14.693	14.693
2	2.418	6.908	46.583	2.418	6.908	46.583	4.322	12.348	27.041
3	2.222	6.349	52.932	2.222	6.349	52.932	4.291	12.261	39.302
4	2.047	5.850	58.782	2.047	5.850	58.782	3.495	9.986	49.288
5	1.357	3.876	62.658	1.357	3.876	62.658	2.773	7.923	57.211
6	1.187	3.393	66.051	1.187	3.393	66.051	2.212	6.319	63.530
7	1.047	2.991	69.042	1.047	2.991	69.042	1.929	5.511	69.042

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

From the table on total variance, it is explained that out of 32 variables, seven factors were explored which depicted the attributes of infotainment channels. The first factor shows the Eigen value (5.142) with variance of 14.69%, the second factor shows the Eigen value (4.322) with variance of 12,38%, the third factor shows the Eigen value (4.291) with variance of 12.26%, the fourth factor shows the Eigen value (3.49) with variance of 9.98%, the fifth factor shows the Eigen value (2.773) with variance of 7.92%, the sixth factor shows the Eigen value (2.212) with variance of 6.3% and the last factor shows the Eigen value (1.929) with variance of 5.5%.

FACTORS DISCUSSION

- **Timely Information**: Timely Information is defined as information which has been given to viewers on time. It is measured by six statements: receive timely information through infotainment channels, these channels have a good coverage of the information, the information that I have collected has accuracy, quality of Programs is appealing, and the presentation of programs is highly satisfactory. Analysis displays that variable 2 is the strongest and explains 14.69% variance has total factor load of 0.798.

- **Credibility & Reliability**: It is measured by five statements: high reliability in terms of actual information, information has credibility in all aspects, TRP, influenced by our family members in watching the channels and programs are suitable. Analysis displays that variable 2 is the strongest and explains 27.04% variance has total factor load of 0.798.

- **Brand Value**: It is measured by six statements: watching the infotainment channels enable me to accomplish tasks more quickly, watching the infotainment channels increase my productivity, provide any value addition, channels useful in job, Infotainment channels bring about cultural understanding among the viewers and

interaction with the surrounding systems would be clearer & systematic. Analysis displays that variable 15 is the strongest and explains 39.30% variance has total factor load of 0.784.

- **Observational Learning**: It is measured by five statements: Infotainment channels enable the viewers to adjust their knowledge to fit into new environment, Infotainment channels enable the viewers to group thoughts and behaviors into a higher order system, Infotainment channels enable the viewers to resolve the conflict and reach equilibrium of thoughts and Infotainment channels enable the viewers to gain the benefit of observational learning.Analysis displays that variable 26 is the strongest and explains 49.28% variance has total factor load of .793.

- **Knowledge Sharing**: It is measured by three statements: Infotainment channels enable the viewers to incorporate new information into existing knowledge, Infotainment channels improves your confidence in the public forum and Infotainment channels facilitate knowledge sharing sessions during discussions. Analysis displays that variable 21 is the strongest and explains 57.21% variance has total factor load of .754.

- **Analytical Approach:** It is measured by two statements: Infotainment channels enable the viewers to apply analytical approach towards solution and Infotainment channels enable the viewers to develop sense of responsibility. Analysis displays that variable 31 is the strongest and explains 63.53% variance has total factor load of .785.

- **Retention of Information**: It is measured by two statements: Infotainment channels facilitate better retention of information over a period among viewers and Infotainment channels increase the viewer's information beyond their immediate environment. Analysis displays that variable 22 is the strongest and explains 69.04% variance has total factor load of .629.

The null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is a significant correlation among variables towards the factors of infotainment channels.

CONCLUSION

However, today's television has not just limited its scope by providing a career-oriented lesson or classroom teaching from reference material, textbooks but to teach society in adopting a normal behaviour. Television in all possible manners has paved the way to inform or educate a viewer which have been beyond one's imagination and understanding. There have been many examples when television on various subjects played a major role in providing educational content, information to a group of students, general viewers. Television has proved the only source of informative learning apart from the classroom teaching.

Based on the above analysis here researcher could conclude that Indian Television dominated by the Infotainment genre with maximum viewership and profit with maximum foreign ownership and programs. Each viewer is different, behaves differently, and having his own preferences, likes and dislikes. News stations carry the responsibility to provide, clear, pure, updated, accurate, timely information to the viewers. The study brings various important facts in light about the preference. To enhance the brand equity and the value of the news station the broadcasters need to focus all the factors affecting. A further research can be

done by taking same variables on different populations or with different variables with the same populations to find out that the variables will affect the same way or differently.

SUGGESTIONS

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

- Viewers welcomed experiments with different programming formats, treatment and content. However, a detailed understanding about subject and its presentation styles was expected from a television producer.

- Learning from popular foreign programmes to thorough the understanding about audience's taste, preference, characteristics and their desired level of knowledge, every such content is expected to be researched well prior to broadcast.

- Programmes for niche audience like rural viewers, women viewers, and senior citizens expected to be broadcasted by television channels. In addition, television viewers expect combination of more than one medium, for effective dissemination of messages. In addition, television viewers expect non-government & volunteer organization's support for edutainment and infotainment programmes.

- Media experts believe that proportion of educational message and entertainment varied form 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.

- Some media experts believe educational messages should be in most of the edutainment and infotainment programmes. The approach to such programmes and its presentation would be instrumental in disseminating messages effectively.

- Educational, informative, edutainment and infotainment programmes could avoid extensive repetition of programmes in a comparatively shorter time and maintain adequate frequency. If channels did not have new programmes, it could assign production houses to produce more such programmes.

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