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Mood Management through Television Viewing: A Study on Rural Women in Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

Television ownership in Indian households have gone up and time spend viewing television has also increased. Now rural India has more number of TV homes than urban India. This study attempts to find out if rural women in Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu use television viewing to manage their moods.This study is based on the findings of anUGC-UPE funded project. A survey method was adopted for this study. Findings reveal that rural women use television viewing to manage their moods in their daily life.

Key Words : Mood management, Television viewing, Rural women, Villupuram, Tamil Nadu

INTRODUCTION

Television has become our culture's dominant form of leisure and a powerful means of mass communication. Television is a popular medium. Television provides the audience with a combination of entertainment and information oriented programs. Television is used for companionship as well as social utility and helps in coping up with everyday stress. This study attempts to find out if rural women in Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu use television viewing to alter or manage their moods. This study is based on the findings of an UGC- UPE funded project.

TV Ownership in India and Tamil Nadu:

The Indian Readership Survey (IRS) after a gap of four years, has in 2017 reported on the growth of the media industry in India. According to the study, there has been an overall 14 per cent increase in TV ownership in Indian households. When compared to the 2011 census, TV ownership in Indian households stood at 47 per cent but the IRS study in 2017 found it to be 61 per cent.

It is interesting to note that Tamil Nadu has the highest TV penetration with 93%, followed by Kerala at 90 per cent, both Punjab and Delhi stand at 88 per cent. The census numbers of the state were Tamil Nadu (87 %), Kerala (77 %), Punjab (83 %) and Delhi (88 %). Therefore in Tamil Nadu, TV ownership has increased from 87 per cent in 2011 to 93 per cent in 2017 (IRS).

The TAM Media Research, is an organization that initially set the base for using media measurement in TV audience research in India. According to the TAM Media Research's Annual Universe Update - 2015, India has now over 167 million households (out of 234 million) with television sets, of which over 161 million have access to Cable TV or Satellite TV, including 84 million households which are DTH subscribers (TAM).

TV Viewership in Rural India:

The television rating agency, Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) reported its survey results in March 2017. The report was based on the results of Broadcast India (BI) Survey -2016. The fieldwork for the survey was carried out from November 2015 to February 2016, and covered 3,00,000 homes across 590 districts, comprising about 4,300 towns and villages. According to Broadcast India (BI) Survey -2016, which was undertaken to ascertain viewing habits in India, the

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number of TV homes in the country has gone up by 19 per cent to 183 million from 154 million (BARC). This shows the tremendous growth of TV homes in the country, thereby increasing the television viewership.

When comparing the television homes in urban and rural India, it was found that, while the urban-rural split of TV homes earlier was 50:50, as of now rural India has 17 per cent more of TV homes than urban India. Currently urban India has 84 million TV households, while TV-owning homes in rural India stand at 99 million. The survey also shows an 18 per cent jump in TV penetration — from 54 per cent previously to 64 per cent. The total TV viewing universe in terms of viewers also saw a 16 per cent jump. On the whole in India there are 780 million TV- viewing individuals. This will still grow in the coming years.

TV Viewership in Tamil Nadu:

To understand the trends in the state of Tamil Nadu, Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) reported interesting aspects from the state of Tamil Nadu. They report that another genre that has seen a robust increase in viewership is South Indian channel genre. The report explains that "While every state has seen a tremendous growth in TV penetration since the last IRS 2013 (Indian Readership Survey), Kerala and Tamil Nadu had already reached TV penetration saturation and though the growth when compared to other states may look smaller, but it is significant keeping in mind the TV penetration situation in the two states," (BARC).

Mood Management:

Zillmann (1988) explains that entertainment functions to help manage mood. According to this theory, individuals seek to maintain good moods and relieve bad moods by seeking suitable stimuli in the entertainment media that are available to them. This theory reports that individuals in aversive states will seek stimulation to adjust their mood and that people in states of gratification will seek the least engaging stimulation so as to perpetuate their current state. Time spend with particular content is motivated by an effort to alter or manage emotions and moods (Zillmann, 1988).

Mills (1993) argues that experiencing the entire spectrum of emotions, good or bad, as a part of dramatic experience is pleasant because it is humane. It is as if our "emotional muscles" are exercised in the safety of fiction. The dramatic experience, independent of the genre and content, gives an opportunity for people to take on the role of observer instead of being observed. Undeniably, it would seem that a key purpose of dramatic experience is to get the audience to consider events, situations, and lives outside of their own. Thus, dramatic experience should serve as a magnet for our awareness. The more effective the dramatic experience, the more the audience should become gripped by it and forget about their own private concerns, thereby escaping their selves.

Finn and Gorr (1988) found that television viewing was reportedly used for mood management. People stated turning on the television to cheer themselves up and, as such, it was positively correlated with increases in positive self-feelings. Other researches, have found that distraction using pleasant activities to lighten moods is considered to be one of the most advanced and effective ways of mood regulation (Salovey *et al.*, 1999).

METHODOLOGY

This study attempts to find out if rural women in Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu use television viewing to alter or manage their moods. The participants of the study were 514 rural women from Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu. These rural women were selected from the villages in Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu.

Instrument:

A survey instrument was used to collect data. The questionnaire included a 5 point Likert –type scale from 'Very Often' to 'Never' and was used to measure if rural women use television viewing to manage their moods. Higher scores indicated lower mood management.

Television Viewing was defined as the number of hours rural women spend viewing television in a day. Higher scores indicated higher television viewing. The number of hours of watching television daily, a numeric variable was collapsed into a categorical variable called TV viewing, by dividing it into three groups. Heavy Viewers (those who watch more than three hours TV), Moderate Viewers (those who watch more than one hour but less than three hours of TV), and Light Viewers (those who do not watch TV at all or watched less than one hour of TV).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A cross tabulation was done between the compound variable, TV exposure and the following variable:

For the statement 'I feel unhappy if I do not watch

the television program' 47% of light viewers answered rarely followed by 24% of light viewers answered never, 43% of heavy viewers answered often followed by 32% of heavy viewers answered very often and 33% of moderate viewers answered often followed by 21% of moderate viewers answered very often (Table 1).

Table 1 :

Variable : I feel unhappy if I do not watch the television programmes	Light Viewers	Moderate Viewers	Heavy Viewers
Very Often	5%	21%	32%
Often	9%	33%	43%
Sometimes	15%	16%	8%
Rarely	47%	20%	12%
Never	24%	10%	5%

A one –way analysis of variance was performed with the compound variable, television viewing, as the independent variable on the following dependent variables:

I watch television, because it entertains me on TV viewing F (2,498) = 5.732, p=.003. A post hoc Tukey test was done to see if any category was significantly different from the other. The test revealed that rural women who are heavy viewers (M=2.899) said that they watch TV because it entertains them significantly more than rural women who are light or no viewers (M=2.178) (Table 2).

I watch television, because it allows me to unwind on TV viewing F (2,498) = 3.964, p=.002. A post hoc Tukey test was done to see if any category was significantly different from the other. The test revealed that rural women who are heavy viewers (M=2.579) said that they watch TV because it allows them to unwind significantly more than rural women who are light or no viewers (M=1.985).

I watch television, because I think it's pleasanton TV viewing F (2,498) = 7.159, p=.000. A post hoc Tukey test was done to see if any category was significantly different from the other. The test revealed that rural women who are heavy viewers (M=2.823) said that they watch TV because it is pleasant significantly more than rural women who are light or no viewers (M=1.712).

I watch television because it's enjoyable on TV viewing F (2,498) = 5.381, p=.002. A post hoc Tukey test was done to see if any category was significantly different from the other. The test revealed that rural women who are heavy viewers (M=2.574) said that they watch TV, because it's enjoyable significantly more than rural women who are light or no viewers (M=1.963).

I watch television, because it amuses me on TV viewing F (2,498) = 8.126, p=.004. A post hoc Tukey test was done to see if any category was significantly different from the other. The test revealed that rural women who are heavy viewers (M=2.864) said that they watch TV, because it amuses them significantly more than rural women who are light or no viewers (M=2.395).

I watch television because it's exciting on TV viewing F (2,498) = 6.725, p=.002. A post hoc Tukey test was done to see if any category was significantly different from the other. The test revealed that rural women who are heavy viewers (M=2.945) said that they watch TV because it's exciting significantly more than rural women who are light or no viewers (M=2.154).

I watch television because it's thrilling on TV viewing F (2,498) = 3.868, p=.004. A post hoc Tukey test was done to see if any category was significantly different from the other. The test revealed that rural women who are heavy viewers (M=2.993) said that they watch TV because it's thrilling significantly more than rural women who are light or no viewers (M=2.448).

Table 2 :

Sr. No.	Dependent Variables	Degrees of Freedom		F	P
		Within	Error		
1.	I watch television, because it entertains me	2	498	5.732	.003
2.	I watch television, because it allows me to unwind	2	498	3.964	.002
3.	I watch television, because I think it's pleasant	2	498	7.159	.000
4.	I watch television because it's enjoyable	2	498	5.381	.002
5.	I watch television because it amuses me	2	498	8.126	.004
6.	I watch television because it's exciting	2	498	6.725	.002
7.	I watch television because it's thrilling	2	498	3.868	.004
8.	I watch television because it cheers me up	2	498	9.714	.000

I watch television because it cheers me up on TV viewing F (2,498) = 9.714, p=.000. A post hoc Tukey test was done to see if any category was significantly different from the other. The test revealed that rural women who are heavy viewers (M=2.764) said that they watch TV because it cheers me up significantly more than rural women who are light or no viewers (M=1.273).

From the study it is implied that, heavy television viewers are the ones who state that they feel unhappy if they do not watch television programmes. The heavy television viewers watch television because it entertains them, and helps them to unwind. They find television viewing enjoyable and pleasant. Television viewing excites, amuses and thrills them. They watch television to cheer themselves up. On the whole television viewing helps them to manage their moods.

Conclusion:

Television is an entity than is present in every home. Television ownership has increased, so has television viewing time. Television viewing offers to help alter mood and manage them. This is the reason why rural women rely on television for mood management. The rural women have few choices for entertainment, therefore they rely on television for relieving bad moods and to alter their moods. Viewing television in their everyday life lightens their moods and help to maintain good moods. Since rural women rely on television to alter and manage their moods, programmes should be produced bearing this in mind and should provide them a wholesome experience.

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