



RESEARCH ARTICLE

OPINION OF TELEVIEWERS ABOUT NEWS PROGRAMMES TELECAST THROUGH DIFFERENT CHANNELS OF ASSAM

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ABSTRACT

The investigation was conducted to study the "Opinion of Televiewers about News programmes telecast through different channels of Assam" with the objectives (i) to analyze the viewing behaviour of the respondents, (ii) to draw opinion of the viewers about News programmes telecast through different channels, (iii) to elicit suggestion from the viewers in the prospect of improving the News programmes. The study was conducted in Jorhat district of Assam. A purposive multi stage sampling method was adopted for selecting the representative sample of the study. Two urban and two rural areas were selected for the present study. Total sample was 180. The study revealed that Majority (68.33 %) of the respondents had high level of viewing behaviour. Men (91.67%) and (86.67%) women both had high viewing behaviour than youth (26.67%). Respondents had favorable opinion towards the News programmes of the selected channels: Doordarshan- 88.89 per cent, News live: 55 per cent, DY365: 49.44 per cent respectively. Large majority of the respondents had suggested that repetition of news should be avoid (91.67%) and news having negative impact must be avoided (91.11%).

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INTRODUCTION

Television, sometimes known as TV or Tele is a telecommunication medium used for transmitting moving images and sound. Television became commercially available in a crude experimental form in the late 1920s. After World War II an improved form was popularized in the United States and Britain, and television sets became commonplace in homes, businesses, and institutions. During the 1950s, television became the primary medium for moulding public opinion. Doordarshan is the channel that brought television first in India, established in 1959 and a part of All India Radio till 1976. In 1992 there were sixty-three high-power television transmitters, 369 medium-power transmitters, seventy-six low-power transmitters, and twenty-three transposes. Regular satellite transmissions began in 1982 (the same year colour transmission began). The world of today is changing fast. India is no exception. India is wide diversity, offers a fascinating scope to study the host of changes, which developmental activities have brought about in its social and economic fabric.

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Television in India is a huge industry which has thousands of programmes in many languages. Like in all other states of the country, it was Doordarshan which brought television to Assam. Doordarshan Kendra Guwahati started functioning with the launch of Evening Regional News Bulletin – "Oxomia Batori" on March 24, 1985. Doordarshan had given high priority for the development of TV services in the North East. The hilly terrain in this part of the country made it necessary to have a very large number of transmitters. There are 132 transmitters in the North East. Assam is well known place for natural beauty and its culture. Numerous people of diverse culture and community inhabit Assam. All these factors make the state a favourite with the media. No wonder the Assam Media with all its forms is working to serve the people with information, education and entertainment. In 1975, Rothenberg's Special Communication in *JAMA*, "Effect of Television Violence on Children and Youth," first alerted the medical community to the deforming effects the viewing of television violence has on normal child development, increasing levels of physical aggressiveness and violence. According to National Crime Record Bureau's latest report, Crime in India 2012, the highest rate of violent crimes was reported from Assam (54.2 per cent) compared to other states of the country. The negative effect of television might be the

cause of these crimes. The study carried out by Bleakley A. and a policy research scientist (2013) found that children mimic their parents' viewing habits based on how much TV parents consume, and that has even more of an effect than where a television is located or what viewing rules parents (try to) enforce. On average, parents watched about four hours of TV, while children watched three hours. Out of the total number of child participants, 46 per cent had a TV in their bedroom. Dr. Tomar (2013) study revealed that the duration of TV viewing does not affect the adjustment of TV viewing children if they are allowed to watch wisely selected programmes under parents' supervision. Jacobs T. (2013) research on "Reality TV May Warp Viewers' Perception of Actual Reality" found that reality television programs that purport to show celebrities' everyday lives impact viewers' beliefs about human relationships. It found heavy viewers of a specific sub-genre—programs such as "Keeping up with the Kardashians", which purportedly reveal the reality of celebrities' day-to-day lives—are more likely to believe that the heightened theatrics of such shows reflect real-world behaviour. Sher Juni *et al.* (2014) findings showed that story, music, set design, songs, violence, romance, comedy, dialogue, and suspense used in PTV prime time dramas significantly attract the viewers. Moreover viewers are of the view that modern dresses used in PTV prime time dramas largely affect the native rural culture. On the other hand, viewers significantly prefer to adopt new cultural trends presented in PTV prime time dramas respectively. The findings reveal that PTV prime time dramas also influence the language, dresses, life style, festivals, music, food habits and traditional games of the native cultural trends. Priyabrot Bordoloi (2006) did research on "Effectiveness of Agriculture Programme Telecasted through Doordarshan Kendra, Guwahati" and he found that majority of the farmers viewed television for infotainment purpose. Higher proportion of respondents was not benefited by the television programme so far duration and suitability of the time of telecasting it.

Now a day through TV we quickly get the recent news and also get lots of new information. So, we cannot say which impact is more or which less. A feedback from viewers drawn systematically through a research study will be contributing a great to the channels so that the various channels will look into the public views and opinion and design/changed accordingly. Keeping this in view, this study is particularly designed to know the "Opinion of Viewers about News programmes telecast through different channels of Assam." with following objectives:

- To analyze the viewing behaviour of the respondents.
- To draw opinion of the viewers about News programmes telecast through different channels.
- To elicit suggestion from the viewers in the prospect of improving the News programmes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was carried out in the district Jorhat of Assam. A purposive multi stage sampling method was adopted for selecting the representative sample of the study. Two urban and two rural areas were selected for the present study. 45

respondents were selected from each area to carry out the present study and thus the total sample was 180. The respondents for the study were women, men and youth. A structured interview schedule was prepared for collection of data from the respondents. Personal interview method was used both individually as well as in group for collection of data. One and only government channel Doordarshan and two private channels established before 2009: New live and DY365 were selected for the study.

Criteria of selecting the sample

Following criteria were considered while selecting the sample of the sample of the study.

1. 50 per cent respondents from rural area and 50 per cent respondents from urban area.
2. Respondents having dish TV connection at home.
3. Respondents who watched all the selected channels.

All the respondents were interviewed by the investigator herself at the residence of the respondents. During the interview, all efforts were made to clarify the questions to the selected respondents so as to elicit the most specific and relevant information from them. Methods and analysis was adopted according to the objectives of the present study. The following statistical techniques and tests were used for analyzing the data.

- Frequency and percentage
- Mean
- Standard deviation

RESULTS

The present investigation on 'Opinion of Viewers about News programmes telecast through different channels of Assam.' was undertaken on 180 respondents of Jorhat District. The findings have been categorized under the following sub-heads:

Personal and Demographic characteristics

Table 1. Distribution of the respondents according to their personal and demographic characteristics

S. No.	Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Sex	Male	87	48.33
		Female	93	51.67
2	Type of family	Nuclear	113	62.78
		Joint	59	32.78
		Extended	8	4.44
3	Size of family	2-4	90	50
		5-7	75	41.67
		8 and above	15	8.33
4	Type of respondents	Service holder	56	31.11
		Businessmen	38	21.11
		Farmer	6	3.33
		Housewife	38	21.11
		Student	42	23.33
5	Educational qualification	Below HSLC	10	5.55
		HSLC passed	28	15.55
		H.S Passed	74	41.11
		Graduate	56	31.11
		Post Graduate	13	7.22

Viewing behaviour of the respondents

Respondents watched programme in different channels on daily basis were News live (32.78 percent), DY365 (21.67 percent) and Doordarshan (6.11 per cent). Among all the channels under study News live channel was watched by more respondents and Doordarshan by least respondents. A small percentage of the respondents (11.67 per cent) watched TV programmes alone daily followed by 56.67 per cent often watched with their family. Overall percentage of respondents watched TV alone was higher than with family and friends. The 52.22 per cent respondents watched TV at night daily followed by 91.11 per cent sometimes at evening hours. As regards to TV viewing hours the entire respondent watched for 1 to 2 hours per day. Cent per cent of the respondents often watched TV to update knowledge but vary less percentage (25 percent) of the respondents discussed the programme with others only at sometimes.

Table 2. Distribution of the respondents according to their levels of viewing behaviour of different channels

S.No.	Viewing Behaviour	Total N=180 f (%)	Men N=60 f (%)	Women N=60 f (%)	Youth N=60 f (%)
1.	High(>37.5)	123(68.33)	55(91.67)	52(86.67)	16(26.67)
2.	Medium (30.5-37.5)	57(31.67)	5(8.33)	8(13.33)	44(73.33)

Mean= 34, SD =3.53

Opinion of the viewers about News programmes telecast through different channels

A sizable to majority percentage of the respondents had favorable opinion towards the News programmes of News live (55 per cent), DY365 (49.44 per cent) and Doordarshan (88.89 per cent); whereas small percentage of the respondents (News live: 28.33 per cent and DY365: 31.67 per cent) had unfavorable opinion towards the News programmes.

Suggestion from the viewers in the prospect of improving the News programmes

Large majority of the respondents had suggested improving News programmes like "repetition of news should be avoided" (91.67 per cent), "news having negative impact must be avoided" (91.11 per cent) and "all type of issues should be covered in News programmes" (87.78 per cent). 53.89 per cent of the respondents also suggested that advertisements which are uncomfortable to watch with family members should not be telecast in the channels.

DISCUSSION

From the findings, it can be concluded that a large percentage of the respondents had high level of viewing behavior. Men and women both had high viewing behavior than youth. Youth had medium level of viewing behavior. It may be due to the fact that today's youth seems to be engaged more with mobile and internet rather than watching Television. Brian Stelter (2012) article on "Youths are watching, but less often on TV" also said that Young people are still watching the same shows, but they are streaming them on computers and phones to a

greater degree than their parents or grandparents do. Most of respondents watched News live followed by DY365 daily where as the respondent watched Doordarshan daily was less. This can be interpreted that News live being an older private channel in Assam could attract more viewers due to its high quality sound, picture and other technical advancement over government channels. But a sizable percentage of the respondents (News live: 28.33 per cent and DY365: 31.67 per cent) had unfavorable opinion towards the News programmes. It may be due to the reason that news is repeated unnecessarily and lack of experience journalist. Sarmah (2015) wrote an article "Breaking news" on Assam Tribune; he wrote that it is a general feeling of many people that today TV journalism is not what it used to be earlier. Except for the good old news "Doordarshan", every other news show is just cacophony, not news. Pasoni (2014) letters to editor of Dainik Janambhumi wrote that some scenes which can create negative impact shows more on Assamese news now a days. He wrote about the incident showed on DY 365 about one innocent boy gave punishment by the school teacher. The channel showed the boy but who beat him, they did not show that. It is evident from the results that some positive opinion thrown by the respondents as per as programmes of News is concern like "Covers recent and exclusive news" and "Full telecast of live news" etc. As we all know mass media is the fourth pillar of democracy and it plays a pivotal role in up keeping the socio-political system of a country sound and healthy. In this context, it becomes imperative to use the print and broadcast media effectively in order not only to communicate messages of relevance and importance but also to motivate rural people. For the improvement of the channels it can be recommended from the study that News should cover all types of issues, News should not be repeated unnecessarily resulting in negativities towards news and Advertisements that lead to difficulties/discomfort to view with family members must be avoided.

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