A STUDY OF VIEWER'S PERCEPTION ABOUT MEGA SERIALS

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ABSTRACT

This study emphasizes women viewers perception about mega serials by using the viewers psychology, attitude, behaviour, observation, perspective, emotion and the demographic variables such as age, occupation, education, qualification, family type, annual income of the family, total time spend in watching television and medium of watching mega serials among the women population in Tirupur, Coimbatore and Erode districts. The population for the present analysis is three categories of women such as, house wives, working women and College girls. For this study, data were collected from 600 respondents such as housewives - 200, College girls – 200 and working women – 200). The statistical analysis used for this study is Chi-square and ANOVA techniques.

Key words: Women viewers, Psychological factors and Mega serials.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is the integral part of life. It has existed in various forms since man appeared on Earth. It is the ability to transfer information from one part to other using different methods such as signals, speaking and sounds. The methods, however, consisted of a disorganized set of signs that could have different meanings to each human using them. It wasn't until three million years ago around the year 30,000 B.C.E that communication began to take on a structure.

Mega serials

Mega serials have become part of our life, so much that even meal times depend on the serial timings. All mega serials follow the same pattern, scheming women who betray their "best friend" by stealing her husband. All serials have similar stories, with winding plots. Most astonishing fact is that these serials are so popular that even re-telecast of these serials are profitable. Nowadays Mega serials play a prominent role in private channels to generate revenues. Mega serial directors are framing stories to attract housewives and women. Mega serials are sponsored by the top most brands based on

their Television Rating Point (TRP).

In Tamilnadu the leading satellite channels are telecasting Mega serials as daily episodes. The growth in importance of the mass media of communications is a phenomenon unique to modern society and is the product of the social and cultural conditions created by urbanization, industrialization and modernization. As a result of the inter-action of these processes, of social change, we now have a society which is not only highly dependent upon mass communication, but the media hate has also become an integral part of our total social fabric.

METHODOLOGY

For the present study, questionnaire was used to collect the data. Data can be collected relatively quickly because the researcher need not be present when the questionnaires were completed. The problem with the questionnaire is that respondents may lie due to social desirability. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series for the purpose of gathering information from the respondents. Closed-ended questions are those, which can be answered by a simple "yes", or "no," Open-ended Questionnaire is nothing but respondent can think and answer independently. Closed ended questionnaire were used for the present study and the

Social learning theory and Social cognitive theory were followed.

Social learning theory

Social learning theory is meant for learning social behaviour. The observer gains new behaviour by observing and imitating others. Mega serials are also observed and imitated, so social learning theory was applied to this research by categorizing the questionnaire under the following divisions.

Behaviour, Observation, Attention and Motivation

Social cognitive theory

Social interactions and media used social Cognitive theory in multiple areas like communication, education and psychology by holding individual's knowledge. By applying this theory the questionnaire is categorized based on Personal, Behaviour and Interest.

Limitations of the study

For this research study data were collected from areas such as Coimbatore, Erode and Tirupur Districts and the respondents are from three main categories: housewives,

Students and working women. The study can be extended to other areas and also to more categories *of* respondents.

Scope of the study

The research study has been done among common women in all categories both educated as well as uneducated. Exposure to Television has been playing a crucial role in formation of opinion. Even though the reach of Television is unimaginable, the research study has been confined to one genre of programming i.e. viewing of serials.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Women's opinion on influence of mega serials

The following table describes the women's opinion about mega serials by using percentage analysis, sum, mean and Mean Score Ranking technique.

Table 1: Women's opinion about mega serials - Descriptive statistics

S.No.	Women's Opinion about mega serials	Yes	No	No Idea	Total (N)	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
1	I will watch mega serial after completing my work	410 (68.3)	158 (26.3)	32 (5.3)	600	1578	2.63	10
2	Mega Serial reduces my stress	313 (52.2)	235 (39.2)	52 (8.7)	600	1461	2.44	14
3	I will watch mega serial with more interest	231 (38.5)	345 (57.5)	24 (4.0)	600	1407	2.35	17

4	When I watch sentimental scene in mega serial my eyes are filled with tears	109 (18.2)	460 (76.7)	31 (5.2)	600	1278	2.13	21
5	My husband and children will watch mega serial along with me	46 (7.7)	298 (49.7)	256 (42.7)	600	987	1.65	36
6	When I watch mega serial it makes my husband to watch	12 (2.0)	328 (54.7)	260 (43.3)	600	950	1.58	37
7	If I watch mega serial for one week then it makes me to watch continuously	256 (42.7)	304 (50.7)	40 (6.7)	600	1416	2.36	16
8	My relatives' family situation reflects in mega serial story	136 (22.7)	357 (59.5)	107 (17.8)	600	1229	2.05	25
9	For any incident happens in real life like mega serial, I get solution from mega serial incident	68 (11.3)	380 (63.3)	152 (25.3)	600	1116	1.86	35

10	Mega serial characters help in motivation	98 (16.3)	462 (77.0)	40 (6.7)	600	1258	2.10	22
11	Mega serial stories are fiction	596 (99.3)	04 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	600	1796	2.99	1
12	Mega serial won't suit for real life	504 (84.0)	40 (6.7)	56 (9.3)	600	1639	2.73	7
13	While I watch mega serial if my children disturb it makes me angry	200 (33.3)	144 (24.0)	256 (42.7)	600	1136	1.89	33
14	While I watch mega serial if my husband and children interrupts it makes me angry and I fight	200 (33.3)	144 (24.0)	256 (42.7)	600	1136	1.89	33

15	I will ignore to go out in evening as I want to watch mega serial	20 (3.3)	580 (96.7)	0 (0.0)	600	1220	2.03	27
16	If I miss any episode, I will hear the stories from relatives and friends over phone	61 (10.2)	499 (83.2)	40 (6.7)	600	1221	2.04	26

17	As I am involved in watching mega serials, problem arises in guest hospitality	32 (5.3)	560 (93.3)	08 (1.3)	600	1224	2.04	26
18	After watching mega serial, I want that happen in real life	93 (15.5)	499 (83.2)	08 (1.3)	600	1285	2.14	20
19	Costumes in mega serial makes to follow the same	265 (44.2)	295 (49.2)	40 (6.7)	600	1425	2.37	15
20	I will observe costumes used in mega serial	420 (70.0)	180 (30.0)	0 (0.0)	600	1620	2.70	8
21	Some characters make me act like them	177 (29.5)	423 (70.5)	0 (0.0)	600	1377	2.30	18
22	Negative character makes me angry	423 (70.5)	423 (70.5)	40 (6.7)	600	1583	2.64	9
23	Negative character makes me more curious	59 (9.8)	541 (90.2)	0 (0.0)	600	1259	2.10	22
24	For interesting story flow negative role was essential	520 (86.7)	24 (4.0)	56 (9.3)	600	1664	2.77	6

25	In mega serial negative character dominates	351 (58.5)	201 (33.5)	48 (8.0)	600	1503	2.51	12
26	When negative Characters appear in any other program. It makes me see them in a negative aspect.	336 (56.0)	224 (37.3)	40 (6.7)	600	1496	2.49	13
27	I always remember negative characters in serials	93 (15.5)	432 (72.0)	75 (12.5)	600	1218	2.03	27
28	After seeing daughters in law in mega serial, it makes me to see my daughter in law in negative aspect	40 (6.7)	256 (42.7)	304 (50.6)	600	934	1.56	38
29	I always compare my mother in law with serial negative characters.	20 (3.3)	311 (51.8)	269 (44.8)	600	949	1.58	37
30	When something can't happen in real life and if it happens in mega serial it makes me happy	177 (29.5)	285 (47.5)	138 (23.0)	600	1239	2.06	24

31	What I can't do in my family but if it happens in a mega serial it makes me happy.	185 (30.8)	309 (51.5)	106 (17.7)	600	1279	2.13	21
32	I feel so comfortable while watching serials	179 (29.8)	376 (62.7)	45 (7.5)	600	1334	2.22	19
33	Mega serials reflect the incident going in the country and family	84 (14.0)	421 (70.2)	95 (15.8)	600	1189	1.98	31
34	To run the mega serial characters are projected more wild	453 (75.5)	72 (12.0)	75 (12.5)	600	1578	2.63	10
35	Characters shown in mega serial are beyond the limit	542 (90.3)	31 (5.2)	27 (4.5)	600	1715	2.86	4
36	We should not watch mega serial like our real life	567 (94.5)	8 (1.3)	25 (4.2)	600	1742	2.90	2
37	Story flow will not be there without a negative character in the serial.	536 (89.3)	28 (4.7)	36 (6.0)	600	1700	2.83	5

38	Negative character holds the serials stronger than positive characters	448 (74.7)	85 (14.2)	67 (11.2)	600	1581	2.64	9
39	Most of the serials are watched for negative characters	302 (50.3)	258 (43.0)	40 (6.7)	600	1462	2.44	14
40	Audience character resembles in mega serial characters	255 (42.5)	222 (37.0)	123 (20.5)	600	1332	2.22	19
41	Mega serials reflect our negative character	17 (2.8)	488 (81.3)	95 (15.8)	600	1122	1.87	34
42	If some problem going in our family, I want to watch the serial on time	17 (2.8)	571 (95.2)	12 (2.0)	600	1205	2.01	28

43	I cannot see other good programs during serial time	377 (62.8)	219 (36.5)	4 (0.7)	600	1573	2.62	11

44	When I watch a mega serial I feel excited that it happens in my neighbors house.	97 (16.2)	400 (66.7)	103 (17.2)	600	1194	1.99	30
45	I always compare my own family problems with mega serials	121 (20.2)	403 (67.2)	76 (12.7)	600	1245	2.08	23
46	If any incident happens in mega Serial related to my relatives' house I feel so happy	4 (0.7)	560 (93.3)	36 (6.0)	600	1168	1.95	32
47	Most of the real life happenings are like serial stories	64 (10.7)	532 (88.7)	4 (0.7)	600	1260	2.10	22
48	Serials make me to fight with my neighbors.	0 (0.0)	600 (100)	0 (0.0)	600	1200	2.00	29
49	Like serials nothing will happen in our real life.	547 (91.2)	40 (6.7)	13 (2.2)	600	1734	2.89	3
50	Mega serials affect normal family life	97 (16.2)	400 (66.7)	103 (17.2)	600	1194	1.99	30

Figures in Parentheses represent Percentages

Table 1 clearly shows that 68.3 % of the women respondents watch mega serial 'after completing my work', 52.2 % respondents feel 'mega serial reduces their stress', 57.5 % respondents 'do not watch mega serial with more interest', 76.7 % respondents 'do not watch sentimental scene in mega serial, my eyes filled with tears', 54.7 % respondents say 'watching serials do make my husband to watch', 50.7 % respondents say 'watching mega serial for one week do not make it to watch continuously', 59.5 % respondents say 'relatives' family situation does not reflect in mega serial story', 63.3 % respondents say 'they do not get solution from mega serial for real life situations', 77.0 % respondents say 'mega serial characters do not help in motivation', 99.3 % respondents say 'mega serial stories are fiction, 84.0 % respondents say' mega serial won't suit for real life', 42.7 % respondents say 'they have no idea on getting angry when their children disturbs them while watching mega serial', 96.7 % respondents say 'they will not ignore to go out in evening as they want to watch mega serial', 83.2 % respondents say 'they will not hear the stories from relatives and friends over phone if they miss any episode', 93.3 % respondents say 'no problem arises in guest hospitality due to serial watching', 83.2 % respondents say 'after watching mega serial they do not want that to happen in real life', 49.2 % 'respondents say costumes in mega serial do not make to follow the same', 70.0 % respondents say 'they observe costumes used in mega serial', 70.5 % respondents say 'characters in serial do not make me to act like them', 70.5 % respondents say 'negative character makes them angry', 90.2 % respondents say 'negative character do not make them more curious', 86.7 % respondents say 'for interesting story flow negative role was essential', 58.5 % respondents say 'negative character dominates in mega serial', 56 % respondents say 'negative character appears in any other program makes to see them in negative aspect', 72.0 % respondents say 'they do not always remember negative characters in serials', 50.6 % respondents say 'they have no idea on seeing daughter in laws in mega serial it makes them to see their daughter in law in negative aspect', 51.8 % respondents say 'they do not always compare their mother in law with serial negative character', 47.5 % respondents say 'they do not feel happy when something can't happen in real life happens in mega serial', 51.5 % respondents say 'they do not feel happy when they can't do something in their family but it happens in mega serial', 62.7 % respondents say 'they do not feel so comfortable while watching serials', 70.2 % respondents say 'mega serials do not reflect the incident going in the country and family', 75.5 % respondents say 'characters are projected more wild to run the mega serial', 90.3 % respondents say 'characters shown in mega serial are beyond the limit', 94.5 % respondents say 'we should not watch mega serial like our real life', 89.3 %

respondents say 'story flow will not be there without a negative character in serial', 74.7 % respondents say 'negative character holds the serials stronger than positive characters', 50.3 % respondents say 'most of the serials are watched for negative characters', 42.5 % respondents say 'audience character resembles in mega serial characters', 81.3 % respondents say 'mega serials do not reflect our negative character', 95.2 % respondents say 'If some problem going in their family they do not want to watch the serial on time', 62.8 % respondents say 'they cannot see other good programs during serial time', 66.7 % respondents say 'when they watch mega serial they do not feel excited that it happens in their neighbors house', 67.2 % respondents say 'they do not compare their own family problems with mega serials', 93.3 % respondents say 'if any incident happens in mega Serial related to their relatives' house they do not feel so happy', 88.7 % respondents say 'most of the real life happenings are not like serial stories, all the 100 % respondents say serials do not make them to fight with their neighbors', 91.2 % respondents say 'like serials nothing will happen in our real life' and 66.7 % respondents say 'mega serials do not affect normal family life'.

FINDINGS

The mega serial plays an indispensable role in changing the behavior of women's lives. In this research the following factors were taken to check the influence of mega serials on women.

Influence on behaviour changes

Among behaviour factors, 'As portrayed in serials nothing will happen in our real life' identified as the most influential and important factor with the highest mean score and ranked first, 'I will watch Mega Serial after completing my work' identified as the second most influential and important factor and ranked second, 'When negative character appears in any other program it makes me to see them in negative aspect' identified as the third most influential and important factor and ranked third. Besides, 'For any incident happens in real life like Mega Serial, I get solution from Mega Serial incident' identified as the least influential and important factor with the lowest mean score and ranked twelfth, 'While I watch Mega Serial if my husband and children interrupts it makes me angry and I fight' identified as the second least influential and important factor with eleventh rank and 'Mega serials affect normal family life' identified as the third least influential and important factor with tenth rank. Even though mega serials are found in fiction among the women it constitutes the behavioral change by affecting their usual life and activities.

Relationship between Socio - economic factors and behavioral factors influence of mega serials

Based on the Behavioral factors of the respondent socio economic factors (Age, Educational qualification, occupation, Area of Residence, Family income, Family type, Type of residence, Television viewing hours, Serial watching hours and medium used for watching) play an important role in affecting the behavior of the viewers.

Influence on emotional changes

Among emotional factors, 'Mega Serial won't suit for real life' is identified as the most influential and important factor with the highest mean score and ranked first, 'Negative *character* makes me angry" identified as the second most influential and important factor and ranked second, 'I cannot see other good programs during serial time' identified as the third most influential and important factor and ranked third. Besides, 'While I watch Mega Serial if my children disturbs it makes me angry' identified as the least influential and important factor with the lowest mean score and ranked eleventh, 'When I watch Mega Serial I feel excited that it happens in my neighbors house' identified as the second least influential and important factor with tenth rank and 'When something can't happen in real life and if it happens in Mega Serial it makes me happy' identified as the third least influential and important factor with tenth rank. Mega serials influenced women more because of the emotional release and to fill in gaps in the viewer's own lives or compensate for families.

Relationship between Socio - economic factors and emotional factors influence of mega serials

Based on the emotional factors of the respondent socio - economic factors (Age, Educational qualification, occupation, Area of Residence, Family income, Family type, Type of residence, Television viewing hours, Serial watching hours and medium used for watching) play an important role in affecting the Emotion of the viewers.

Influence on observational changes

Among observation factors, 'Mega Serial stories are fiction' identified as the most influential and important factor with the highest mean score and ranked first,' Characters shown in Mega Serial are beyond the limit' identified as the second most influential and important factor and ranked second, 'Story flow will not be there without a negative character in serial' identified as the third most influential and important factor and ranked third. Besides, 'Mega serials reflect the incident going in the country and family' identified as the least influential and important factor with the lowest mean score and ranked thirteenth, 'As I am involved in watching Mega Serials, problem

arises in guest hospitality' identified as the second least influential and important factor with twelfth rank and 'My relatives' family situation reflects in Mega Serial story' identified as the third least influential and important factor with eleventh rank. Mega serial viewers observed that negative characters are intended only for the story flow and it has less influence in their family life.

Relationship between Socio - economic factors and observation factors influence of mega serials

Based on the observation factors of the respondent socio - economic factors (Age, Educational qualification, occupation, Area of Residence, Family income, Family type, Type of residence, Television viewing hours, Serial watching hours) play an important in affecting the observation of the viewers and the Medium used for watching serial does not play any significant role.

Influence on attitude changes

Among attitude factors, 'We should not watch mega serial like our real life' identified as the most influential and important factor with the highest mean score and ranked first, 'Mega serial reduces my stress' identified as the second most influential and important factor and ranked second, 'I always remember negative characters in serials' identified as the third most influential and important factor and ranked third. Besides, 'After seeing daughters in law in Mega Serial, it makes me to see my daughter in law in negative aspect' identified as the least influential and important factor with the lowest mean score and ranked eighth, 'When I watch Mega Serial it makes my husband to watch' and 'I always compare my mother in law with serial negative character' identified as the second least influential and important factor with seventh rank and 'My husband and children will watch Mega Serial along with me' identified as the third least influential and important factor with sixth rank. Most of the women are not watching the serials like their real life and the viewers preferring serials only to while away the time.

Relationship between Socio - economic factors and attitude factors influence of mega serials

Based on the attitude factors of the respondent socio - economic factors (age, educational qualification, occupation, area of residence, family income, family type, type of residence, television viewing hours, serial watching hours and medium used for watching) play an important role in affecting the attitude of the viewers.

Influence on interest changes

Among interest factors, 'For interesting story flow negative role was essential'

Identified as the most influential and important factor with the highest mean score and ranked first and 'Negative character makes me more curious' identified as the second most influential and important factor and ranked second. Besides, 'I will ignore to go out in evening as I want to watch Mega Serial' identified as the least influential and important factor with the lowest mean score and ranked fourth and 'If I miss any episode, I will hear the stories from relatives and friends over phone' identified as the third least influential and important factor with third rank. It is observed that Negative characters constitute the stories and make the mega serials interesting and popular among the viewers.

Relationship between Socio - economic factors and interest factors influence of mega serials

Based on the Interest factors of the respondent socio - economic factors (age, educational qualification, occupation, area of residence, family income, type of residence, television viewing hours, serial watching hours) play an important in affecting the Interest of the viewers and the family type in socio - economic factors does not play any significant role.

CONCLUSION

Media is a powerful and effective medium in distributing information and knowledge. Television brings tremendous change in social and cultural behaviour and it transforms the world in new ways among every aspect of life. Television proposes a wide range of potential role models, both positively and negatively. Both men and women on television are portrayed largely traditional and stereotypical. Many people replicate these models in their real life. It makes a change in women's behaviour and influences women's empowerment as well.

Mega serials have changed over the years and made rapid development in content, production and presentation. Mega serials portraying interpersonal problems, crisis in the family, balance between career and home, which are attaining greater response from the viewers particularly from housewives. Mega series reflect the viewer's life. It helps the women to deal with their own problems and it motivates them to do the impossible and to achieve it. Most of the respondents especially housewives watch mega serials to evade their time but unknowingly the characters portrayed influenced them. It is evident that viewers often use the behavior of a character in order to justify their behavior in a similar situation. Watching mega serials make women interpret the real life incidents and characters with the characters portrayed in serials and try to find solutions for the problems with the help of serials. Even though there is high influence among the

viewers they were well aware that the characters framed and portrayed are completely fictional and the portrayal will support the story. The negative roles in serials are attracting the viewers more and they are unknowingly trying to imitate the same among their family, friends, relatives and neighbors.

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