

ETV PRIME TIME TELEVISION SERIES: HOMEMAKERS' PERSPECTIVES ON SOAP OPERAS

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Abstract:

The current research, titled "Perspectives of Housewives on ETV Prime Time Serials," was undertaken to gain insights into the viewpoints of Telugu-speaking female viewers regarding Telugu soap operas aired during prime time on ETV channel. The study was conducted in Guttavelli village, located in the Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. Soap operas have gained significant popularity among other television programming due to their status as long-running serials that focus on everyday life. Since the 1980s, there has been a notable surge in the prevalence of soap operas within the Indian television business. The ubiquity of soap products has reached a level that cannot be disregarded. The question regarding the reasons behind the widespread appeal of these activities among women has emerged as a topic of particular attention. The act of watching television can provide both favourable and unfavourable outcomes. The present study employs a quantitative research approach, namely utilising a survey method, to investigate the perspectives of housewives towards prime time serials.

INTRODUCTION

Television is the prime source of entertainment which influenced the socio-cultural mindset of the people in the Indian society. Beyond entertainment Television also provides exposure into other ways of life. Entertainment in the form of serials or soap operas was very popular during 1950s in United States of America. In India it started with Humlog(1984) and after privatisation the genre of soap opera is the dominant form of Television content. To large extent the soap operas are targeted the home makers who will watch Television in the afternoon leisure time. Emotional drama, visual effects and punching dialogues made these serials very popular.

Soap Opera

The etymology of the phrase "soap opera" can be traced back to its initial sponsorship by a soap manufacturer at its inception in the United States of America (Wikipedia, 2018). The term "soap opera" originated from the association with producers of home cleaning goods, as indicated by the word "soap." Additionally, the inclusion of the word "opera" in the term served to highlight the contrasting nature between the everyday domestic storylines depicted in daytime serials and the highly esteemed art form of opera. This study aims to explore the comprehension and viewpoints of female viewers on Telugu television serials.

Television and Serials in India

Television has emerged as a highly influential and pervasive medium in contemporary society. Television plays a significant role in both reflecting and influencing the ideas of our culture due to its inherent nature. Research findings suggest that television has exerted a significant influence on the cognitive framework of individuals, shaping their subjective perception of reality. Television programmes play a significant role in fostering comprehension and facilitating the acquisition of knowledge, hence engendering heightened curiosity among viewers. Communication plays a crucial role in maintaining the social order's continuity, and it can also serve as a significant mechanism for developmental enhancement, when viewed from a more optimistic perspective.

Impact of Television

The media possesses significant influence as a catalyst for societal transformation. The phrase encompasses various forms of media, including television, radio, newspapers, and the internet. Television exerts a significant influence on our society, leading to transformative changes in people's lifestyles and serving as a prominent force shaping our societal and cultural norms. In contrast to the gradual influence of printing over several centuries, the impact of television on culture was nearly immediate. Television has emerged as an integral component of contemporary society.

Measuring the Power of Television

Television was initially introduced in India in 1959, with exclusive control over broadcasting operations vested in the state for a period of thirty years. Regarding the subject matter, the primary attention was predominantly centred on news or economic advancements. The introduction of satellite television in the early 1990s marked a significant milestone in the field.

Changes were brought about by the content and audience. During the period from 2001 to 2006, an estimated 30 million households, comprising approximately 150 million individuals, acquired cable service.

Defining Gender Roles

The presence of patriarchy is readily apparent in nearly all daily soap operas. Gender roles are social constructs that prescribe certain behaviours and expectations based on an individual's gender. Deviating from these established gender roles is often viewed in a negative light by society. In traditional gender roles, men are typically expected to assume the responsibility of providing for the family, while women are often relegated to domestic duties inside the home and family sphere.

Women in Daily Soaps

The proliferation of television networks has led to a surge in viewership, resulting in the emergence of several daily soap operas, commonly referred to as 'serials.' The literary works under consideration encompass several thematic elements, including but not limited to love, family, and marriage. These narratives delve into the challenges faced by women in relation to their families and society at large. The captivating nature of the storylines in these shows has engrossed a wide range of viewers, spanning from teenagers to grandmothers, due to its entertainment value. The act of observing them has become an integral component of our daily routines.

Housewives Vs Soap Opera

There is a prevailing belief that being a housewife is advantageous due to the ample amount of time available to engage in activities such as watching soap operas. It has been observed that individuals who fulfil the role of homemakers require greater motivation compared to those who engage in employment outside of the home, primarily due to the absence of financial remuneration for performing household tasks. Many individuals perceive household tasks as a responsibility rather than a task that warrants compensation. Nevertheless, when taking into account the substantial workload that homemakers encounter on a daily basis, it becomes evident that the completion of household chores requires a greater investment of time compared to duties performed within an office setting, as the former necessitates consistent and repetitive effort. The segment of individuals in the workforce who do not consistently engage in productive work are mostly limited in their productivity during the workday as a result of diverting their attention

from their computer tasks to browse social media platforms on their mobile devices or becoming distracted by other means.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In her study on women diaspora, Gamage (2018) shifted her research focus towards examining the manner in which women understand Sri Lankan tele-dramas that present discourses pertaining to their home land. In Australian narratives, there is a depiction of women encountering resistance in their adoption of Western society.

This discussion is to the influence of serials on Pakistani culture. According to Shantharaju and Ashok Kumar (2016), it was found that Pakistani dramas tend to have shorter durations compared to Indian dramas, which sometimes have long-running series that span many years. The Pakistani drama will exhibit a coherent narrative structure, ensuring that the progression of events remains concise and avoids unnecessary prolongation across multiple episodes. Consequently, the entirety of the drama will be concluded within a modest range of 20 to 50 episodes.

In her research, Anitha (2014) discovered that Telugu serials often present a poor portrayal of socio-cultural standards, particularly in the context of family interactions. The findings of a poll indicate that those who watch Telugu soap operas are influenced by the content portrayed in these programmes. Women derive pleasure from the depiction of urban women's lifestyle, which remains financially inaccessible to them in actuality.

A study conducted by the CMS Media Lab in collaboration with Nagulapalli and Padmaja Shaw (2013) from the Department of Communication and Journalism at Osmania University examined the dual effects of violence portrayed in Telugu daily serials and the financial gains generated from advertising for these serials. There are four prominent television channels, notably ETV, ZED Telugu, Gemini, and MAA TV.

Zaheen (2011) conducted a study titled "Portrayal of Women by Star Plus Soap Operas-A Feministic Perspective" to examine the representation of women in Star Plus soap operas from a feminist standpoint. The researchers employed the content analysis methodology to examine the portrayal of women's empowerment in Star Plus soap operas, focusing on the values and

philosophies depicted. Specifically, a feminist perspective was utilised to identify and analyse the prevailing patterns in this regard.

The Impact of Cable Television on the Socioeconomic Empowerment of Women in India According to Robert and Oster (2008), the introduction of cable television has been associated with a decrease in instances of domestic violence. This is attributed to the fact that women now have the opportunity to engage in television viewing as a means of escaping from their domestic issues.

METHODOLOGY

This study has been conducted in Guttavilli village in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh state. The data from the 28 questionnaires were classified and tabulated for the purpose of analysis and interpretation. The tabulated data clearly depicts that the views of the respondents relating to their information and television viewing habits and their perspectives on Eenadu Television (ETV), Telugu Television Channel prime time serials in different dimensions. The data was collected from various people of Guttavilli village.

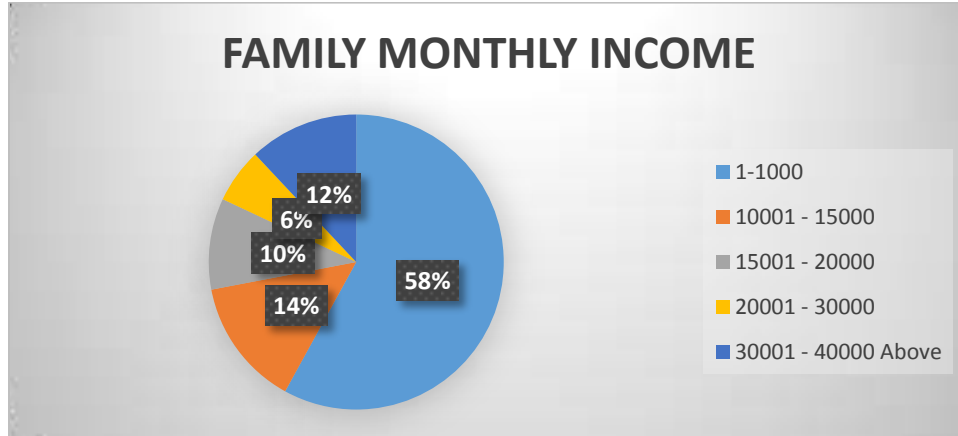
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- The objective of this study is to investigate the television viewing patterns of rural women residing in the Srikakulam area of Andhra Pradesh, India.
- To investigate the television preferences of women residing in rural areas.
- To conduct an analysis on the transformations that have occurred in the lives of women who engage in the activity of viewing television serials.
- The objective of this study is to ascertain the patterns and duration of television serial consumption among women.
- To investigate the attitudes and behaviours of women in relation to soap operas.
- The objective of this study is to examine the viewpoints of women residing in Guttavilli Village, located in the Srikakulam District, regarding serials.

DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents an examination of the data that was collected for the current research study. The following chapter proceeds to present the data analysis conducted for the current study. Specifically, a percentage analysis was employed to examine the characteristics of the respondents.

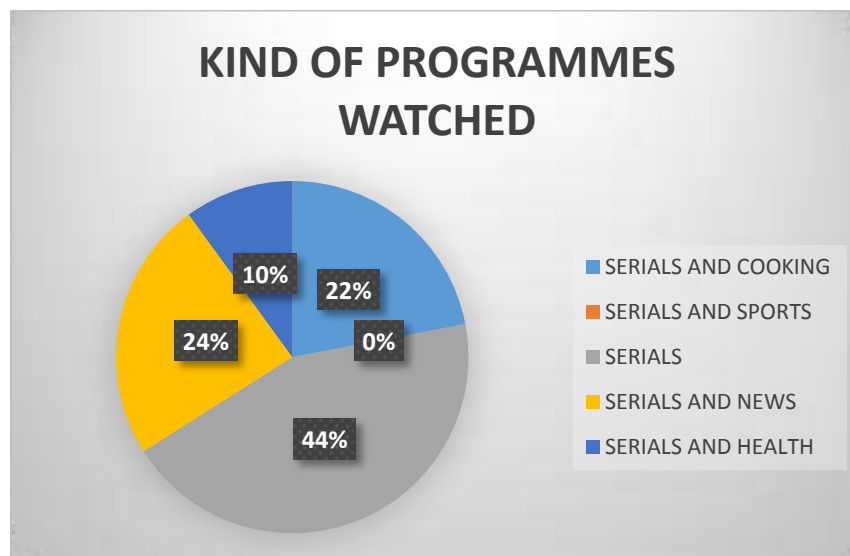
FAMILY MONTHLY INCOME



In this table 58% respondents monthly income is in between 1 – 10000. Remaining respondents are 10001 – 15000 are 14%, 15001 – 20000 are 10%, 20001 – 30000 are 6%, and 30001 – 40000 are 14%.

KIND OF PROGRAMMES WATCHED

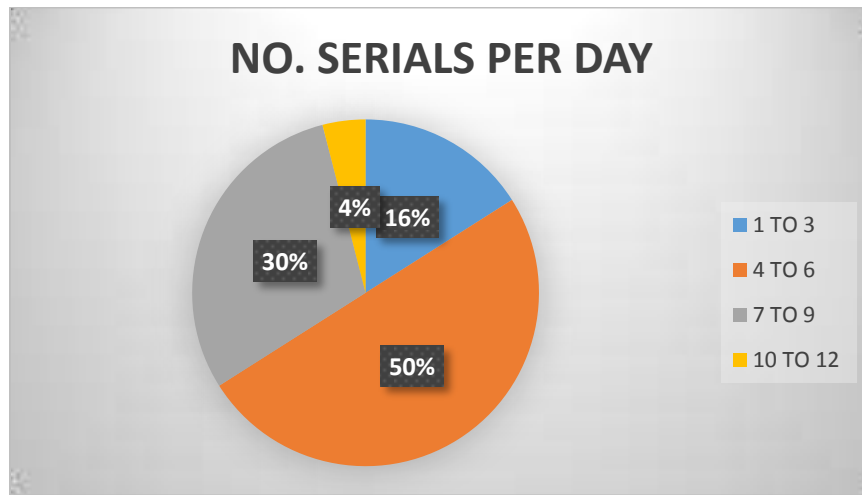
| What kind of programs you watch most? PROGRAMS | NO. OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|--|--------------------|------------|
| SERIALS AND COOKING | 11 | 22% |
| SERIALS AND SPORTS | 0 | 0% |
| SERIALS | 22 | 44% |
| SERIALS AND NEWS | 12 | 24% |
| SERIALS AND HEALTH | 5 | 10% |
| TOTAL | 50 | 100% |



In this table we can see 44% people are watching serials only. 24% respondents are seeing serials and news. 22% are watching serials and cooking programs, and 10% are watching serials and health related programs. But no one seeing sports programs.

SERIALS WATCHED PER DAY

| NO. OF SERIALS PER DAY | NO. OF RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 TO 3 | 8 | 16% |
| 4 TO 6 | 25 | 50% |
| 7 TO 9 | 15 | 30% |
| 10 TO 12 | 2 | 4% |
| TOTAL | 50 | 100% |

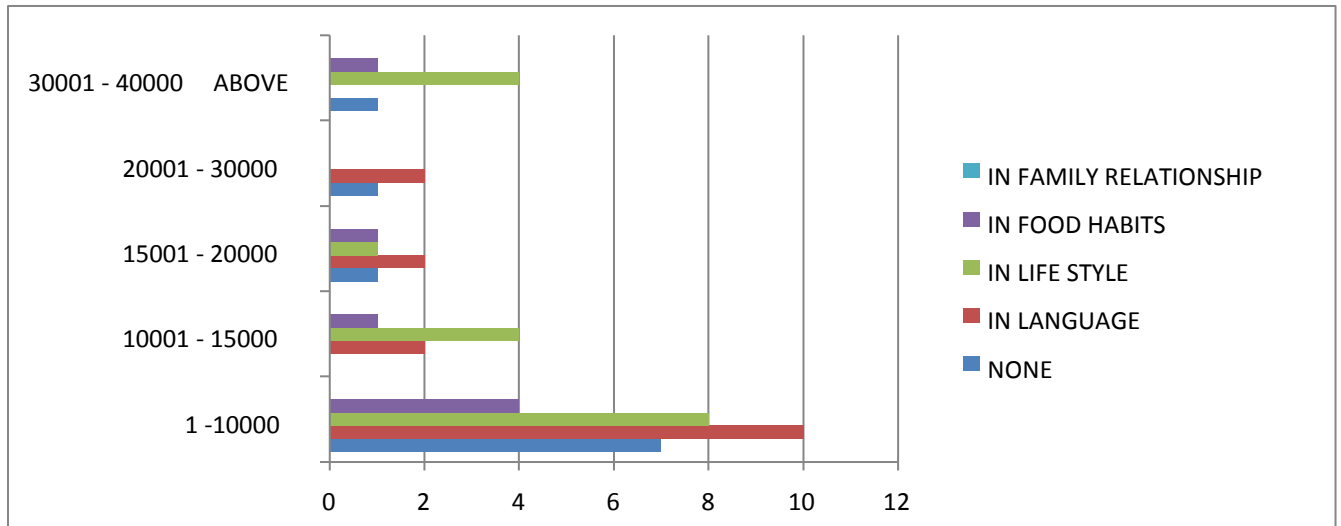


Here most of the people are watching serials fro time pass and relaxation only. From the above results 50% people are watching 4 to 6 serials per day it means nearly 2 to 3 hours only. It is moderate watch. At the same time 30% are watching 7 to 9 serials it means they are spending more time on serials than other programs. 16% respondents are watching 1 to 3 serials per day and most viewed respondents are 10 to 12 serials per day they are only 4%.

CROSS TABULATION BETWEEN MONTHLY ONCOME OF THE FAMILY AND CHANGE IN THEIR LIFE BECAUSE OF THE SERIALS?

| INCOME OF THE FAMILY | WHAT CHANGE IS THERE IN THE LIFE BECAUSE OF SERIALS? | | | | | TOTAL |
|----------------------|--|-------------|---------------|----------------|------------------------|-------|
| | NONE | IN LANGUAGE | IN LIFE STYLE | IN FOOD HABITS | IN FAMILY RELATIONSHIP | |
| 1 – 10000 | 7 | 10 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 29 |
| 10001 – | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 7 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 15000 | | | | | | |
| 15001 – 20000 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| 20001 -30000 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| 30001– 40000 ABOVE | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| TOTAL | 10 | 16 | 17 | 1 | 0 | 50 |

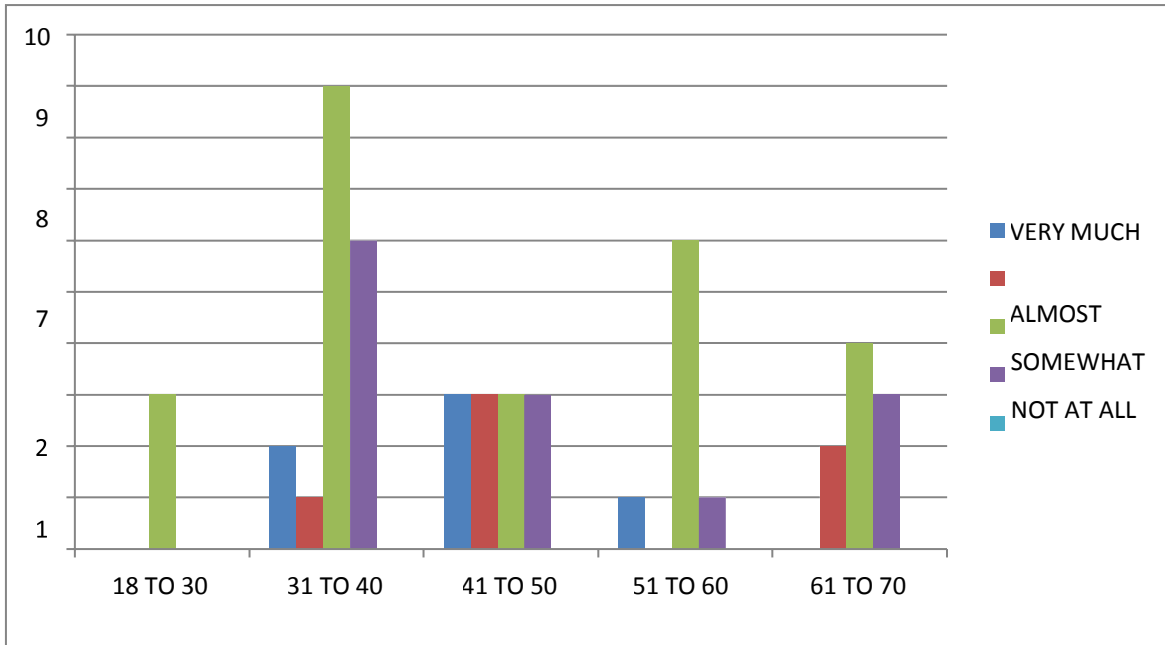


Income in between 1 to 10000 people life is changed more than others. 10 illiterate people are change their language because of the serials. and 8 illiterate people changing their life style also.

CROSS TABULATION BETWEEN AGE AND DID THEY DISAPPOINT WHEN THEY MISS ANY SERIALS?

| AGE | DID YOU DISAPPOINT WHEN YOU MISS ANY SERIAL? | | | | | TOTAL |
|---------|--|--------|----------|------------|------------|-------|
| | VERY MUCH | ALMOST | SOMEWHAT | NOT AT ALL | NOT SURURE | |
| 18 - 30 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| 31 – 40 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 0 | 18 |
| 41 – 50 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 12 |
| 51 – 60 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 8 |

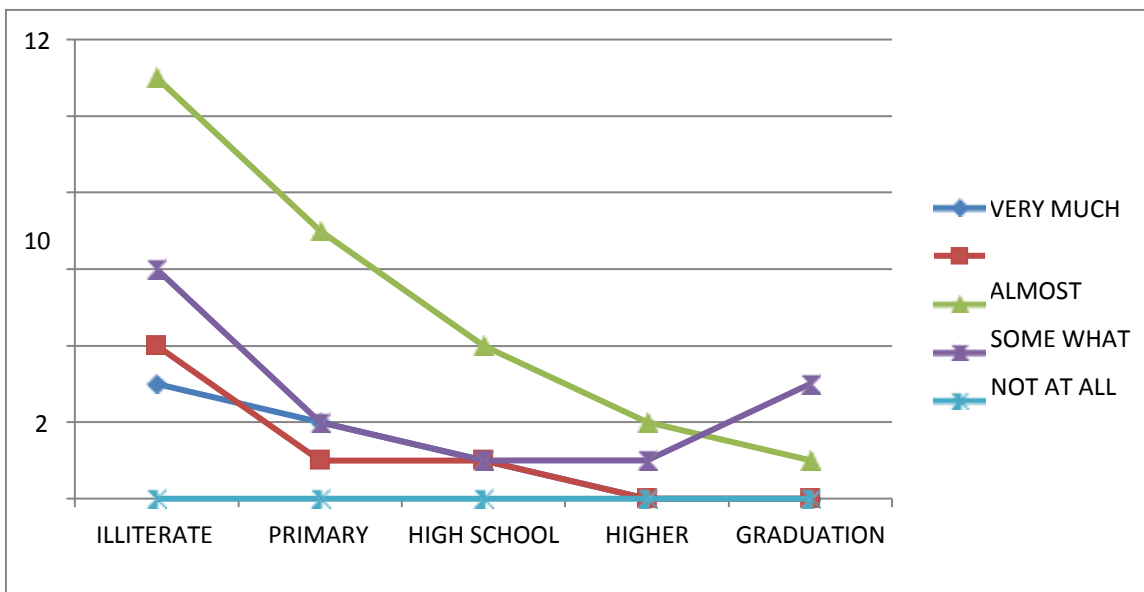
| | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|----|----|---|----|
| 61 – 70 ABOVE | 0 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 9 |
| TOTAL | 6 | 6 | 25 | 13 | 0 | 50 |



Ages in between 31 to 40 respondents are minimum they are feeling bad if they are missed any serials. 9 respondents are somewhat disappointed if they missed any of their favourite serial. 41 to 50 age group people disappoint very much mostly if they miss any of their favourite serial.

CROSS TABULATION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND DID THEY DISAPPOINTWHEN THEY MISS ANY SERIAL?

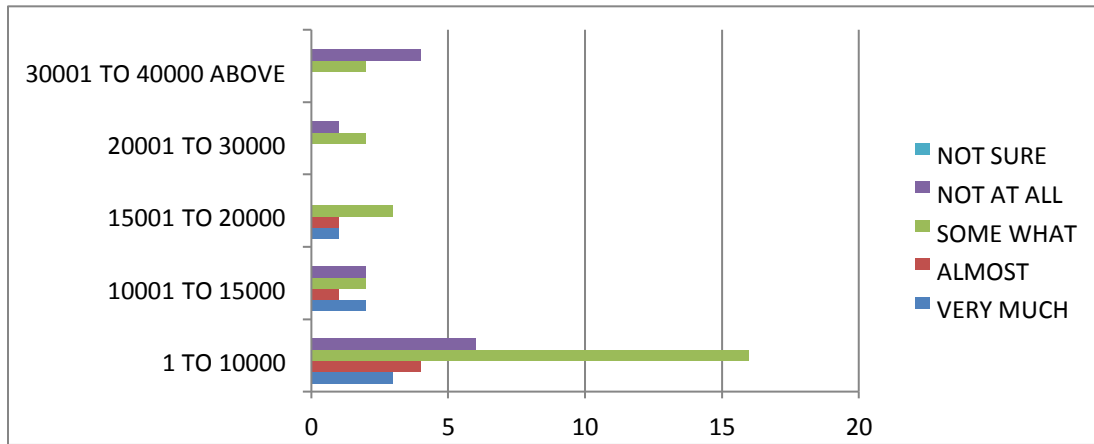
| EDUCATION | DID YOU DISAPPOINT WHEN YOU MISS ANY SERIAL? | | | | | TOTAL |
|-------------------|--|--------|----------|------------|----------|-------|
| | VERY MUCH | ALMOST | SOMEWHAT | NOT AT ALL | NOT SURE | |
| ILLITERATE | 3 | 4 | 11 | 6 | 0 | 24 |
| PRIMARY EDUCATION | 2 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 12 |
| HIGH SCHOOL | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| HIGHER SECONDARY | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| GRADUATION | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| TOTAL | 6 | 6 | 25 | 13 | 0 | 50 |



From the above data illiterate people disappointing more and somewhat level if they miss any of their favourite serial. 11 illiterate people disappointed somewhat when they miss any serial. Other respondents disappoint less compared to illiterates. Graduates feeling didn't and they are didn't disappoint when they miss any serial.

CROSS TABULATION BETWEEN INCOME OF THE FAMILY AND DID THEY DISAAPPOINT WHEN THEY MISS ANY SERIAL?

| MONTHLY INCOME OF THE FAMILY | DID YOU DISAPPOINT WHEN YOU MISS ANY SERIAL? | | | | | TOTAL |
|------------------------------|--|--------|-----------|------------|----------|-------|
| | VERY MUCH | ALMOST | SOME WHAT | NOT AT ALL | NOT SURE | |
| 1 – 10000 | 3 | 4 | 16 | 6 | 0 | 29 |
| 10001 – 15000 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| 15001 – 20000 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| 20001 – 30000 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| 30001 – 40000 ABOVE | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 6 |
| TOTAL | 6 | 6 | 25 | 13 | 0 | 50 |



Here also we seen that less income feeling are more watching serials and also less income people are disappoint when they miss of their favourite serial. Those who are high income they are didn't feeling bad if they miss any serial, some persons are watching repeat telecast or watching online.

CONCLUSION

- Based on the analysis of the obtained data, it can be concluded that television has emerged as a significant form of entertainment for women residing in rural areas.
- Television serials serve as a means of education, entertainment, and leisure for women residing in rural areas. The soap opera is a television programme designed to provide relaxation and entertainment to a wide audience. Soap operas are a genre of television programming wherein the directors craft characters who assume either good or negative roles. The televised soap operas exhibited a sophisticated composition and were replete with themes centred around familial dynamics, social concerns, and romantic entanglements, among other narrative elements. One notable aspect is that the show gains popularity and viewers begin to incorporate certain themes into their personal life. Soap operas provide a valuable purpose within society by effectively conveying societal content, hence serving as a commendable means of imparting ethics and values to the younger generation. Television programmes are commonly perceived as a means of fostering and promoting camaraderie and companionship among individuals.
- The regular viewership of soap operas was found to include those who identify as homemakers, regardless of their age demographic.

- Soap operas are predominantly consumed by viewers as a means of relaxation, amusement, and as a way to pass time when no other engaging activities are available after family members have departed for their respective job obligations.
- Similarly, they exhibit a consistent viewership of soap operas and demonstrate a strong aversion to missing any episodes.
- In the event of an unforeseen circumstance preventing individuals from viewing a particular episode, they rely on their social circles to obtain a summary of the narrative and thereafter make a concerted effort to watch a replay of the episode on the following day.
- The majority of women demonstrate their interest in daily serials that revolve around familial relationships.
- However, there is a significantly low proportion of women who engage in watching sports channels.
- Numerous ladies have disclosed that they typically schedule their work hours according to the airing time of their preferred television series.
- A significant number of women have acknowledged that their engagement with television serials has resulted in notable personal and societal transformations. Additionally, these serials have exerted a direct influence on their sartorial choices, dietary preferences, and conversational patterns.
- The majority of participants in the study are habitual consumers of television serials, expressing a preference for viewing these programmes during the evening hours, commonly referred to as prime time. Due to their current level of productivity, they have accomplished the majority of their tasks.
- Soap operas have a substantial viewership throughout various study domains. Soap opera enthusiasts exhibit a strong inclination to maintain their habitual engagement with soap operas, hence expressing a desire to augment their daily routine by incorporating additional soap operas into their viewing repertoire.
- Among the four serials chosen for the study, it was observed that Yamaleelaataruvatha received the highest level of audience appreciation due to its effective presentation and substance, which encompassed social, cultural, and economic aspects. This preference was noted in comparison to the other three soap operas.

- This finding suggests that viewers tend to watch all television series, regardless of their quality, but they tend to appreciate and remember positive series more than negative ones. Additionally, it is observed that a majority of viewers prefer positive characters over negative ones.

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