



## Usefulness of television as an information supporting agency: A study of economically weaker group of women in Karnataka state

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### Abstract

The present work is an effort to know the extent of Usefulness of television as an information supporting agency among economically weaker group of women in Karnataka state. Data was collected on Television programmes watched by economically weaker women and Usefulness of television as information supporting agency. A sample size of 1800 rural women was taken for the study. Mass media like newspaper, radio and television have to focus on creating awareness among the people about the specific problems and potentialities for augmenting the pace of rural development.

**Keywords:** television, women, Karnataka

### 1. Introduction

Television is a powerful media and Television programmes are very useful. Media educates men and women in many ways. Television telecast programmes on various issues including animal husbandry, agriculture, family welfare, health and hygiene programmes for youths and women. Television programmes provide information and educate farmers residing in for away and remote villages, small towns spread all over the country. Besides Doordarshan many paid channels are also telecast viz., ETV Kannada, Zee TV, Kasturi, TV9, Suvarna, Samaya, Public TV, Janasri TV, etc. These channels telecast not only entertainment and news but also useful programmes for women. There are many educating programmes for women.

Hiremath based on a study has observed that Television (TV) is giving a lot of importance to empower women by telecasting good programmes in the areas of social, cultural, economical, educational, legal, decision making, health, technological, equal rights, freedom of expression, gender sensitization, etc <sup>[1]</sup>.

Through a number of studies have reported the viewership trend including usefulness of Television programmes, there is a dearth for such studies to investigate the usefulness of Television as information supporting agency. An attempt is made in this paper to know the usefulness of Television as information supporting agency.

### 2. Review of literature

A report <sup>[6]</sup> examined the potential of mass media in enhancing the access of poor rural households and women to educational opportunities. A study on Radio listening and televiewing behaviour of 200 rural women undertaken by *Malagar* <sup>[7]</sup> in Belgium district of Karnataka state, revealed that majority of

the respondents had listened and viewed only entertainment programmes. Further they strongly agreed that radio and television programmes were in simple language and helpful for adoption of technologies.

The research study conducted by *Hiremath* and *Balasubramanya* <sup>[8]</sup> to know effects of TV programme in empowering rural women in Belgaum, Dharwad, Gadag and Haveri districts of northern part of Karnataka state showed the highest value with educational aspects followed by social aspects, economic aspects, technological aspects and political aspects. *Waris, Singh* and *Chauhan* <sup>[9]</sup> analysed the mass media sources utilized by 120 rural Women of Arid Zone, from four selected villages of Jodhpur district, and found that information seeking through mass media sources was found to be very low, low literacy of women was quoted as unutilization of printed material on Agricultural and livestock activities.

*Prathap* and *Ponnusamy* <sup>[10]</sup> experimentally examined the effectiveness of mass media viz., radio, television, print, and internet in influencing the symbolic adoption behaviour of 144 rural women belonging to self-help groups of Coimbatore district in Tamil Nadu, India. Results indicated that all the four mass media formats were effective enough in convincing the respondents to mentally adopt the technologies.

The review of literature clearly is an indicator of the fact that Television as an information supporting agency needs to be empirically justified through such exploratory studies.

### 3. Scope and Methodology

The scope of the present study is limited to identify the usefulness of television among economically weaker group of women in Karnataka state. For the spatial coverage the selection of sample respondents have been made from thirty

districts of Karnataka State. From each district one taluka (block), from each taluka (block) two villages have been selected for this study. From each village 30 respondents have been selected. Thus Total 60 villages and 1800 respondents

have been chosen for this study. Further it is limited to know whether educational qualification of economically weaker women as any bearing on the usefulness of Television programme.

**4. Data Analysis**

**Table 1:** Watching television: Education of women

| Response | Education  |                   |                     |                 |              |
|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|
|          | Illiterate | Primary education | Secondary education | Diploma/ Degree | Total        |
| Yes      | 486 (75.9) | 447 (88.7)        | 471 (95.0)          | 157 (98.1)      | 1561 (86.7)  |
| No       | 154 (24.1) | 57 (11.3)         | 25 (5.0)            | 3 (1.9)         | 239 (13.3)   |
| Total    | 640 (35.6) | 504 (28.0)        | 496 (27.6)          | 160 (8.9)       | 1800 (100.0) |

(Note: Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages)

From table 1, it can be analysed that a large majority of women do watch TV programme particularly 75.9% (N=486) of illiterate women, 95% (N=471) of women who had secondary schooling, 88.7% (N=447) of women with primary schooling and 98.1% (N=157) of diploma/degree holders watch television. It is also found that nearly a quarter of

illiterate women do not watch TV programmes. It is also interesting to note that higher the educational qualification, higher proportion of women watch television as 98.1% (N=157) of women with higher education, 95% (N=471) with secondary schooling and 88.7% (N=447) of women with primary schooling watch television.

**Table 2:** Watching television programmes: Education of women (N=1800)

| Television programmes | Education  |      |                   |      |                     |      |                 |      |            |      |
|-----------------------|------------|------|-------------------|------|---------------------|------|-----------------|------|------------|------|
|                       | Illiterate | Rank | Primary education | Rank | Secondary education | Rank | Diploma/ Degree | Rank | Total      | Rank |
| Social                | 107 (5.9)  | 4    | 120 (6.7)         | 4    | 134 (7.4)           | 4    | 55 (3.1)        | 4    | 416(23.1)  | 4    |
| Entertainment         | 486(27.0)  | 1    | 444 (24.7)        | 1    | 466 (25.9)          | 1    | 153 (8.5)       | 1    | 1549(86.1) | 1    |
| Health                | 168 (9.3)  | 3    | 171 (9.5)         | 3    | 236 (13.1)          | 3    | 88 (4.9)        | 3    | 663 (36.8) | 3    |
| Political             | 40 (2.2)   | 5    | 65 (3.6)          | 5    | 88 (4.9)            | 5    | 43 (2.4)        | 5    | 236 (13.1) | 5    |
| News                  | 208(11.6)  | 2    | 246 (13.7)        | 2    | 316 (17.6)          | 2    | 112 (6.2)       | 2    | 882 (49.0) | 2    |
| Current information   | 29 (1.6)   | 6    | 33 (1.8)          | 6    | 45 (2.5)            | 6    | 35 (1.9)        | 6    | 142(7.9)   | 6    |
| Economic              | 2 (0.1)    | 8    | 6 (0.3)           | 8    | 12 (0.7)            | 7    | 8 (0.4)         | 8    | 28 (1.6)   | 8    |
| Sports                | 4 (0.2)    | 7    | 7 (0.4)           | 7    | 11 (0.6)            | 8    | 10 (0.6)        | 7    | 32 (1.8)   | 7    |

(Note: Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages)

From table 2, it is found that a greater majority of women watch Television programs for entertainment. News were also watched by nearly half of women understudy and more than one third watch health related programmes, social programmes on television were watched by less than a quarter of women and more than one tenth of women also watch political programmes. Thus it can be analysed that women under study watch different programme on TV but

entertainment programmes were the most preferred on. It is also found that Entertainment programmes are ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, news programmes 2<sup>nd</sup> highly watched programme on the television. Health programmes are ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>, societal related programmes are ranked 4<sup>th</sup> and political programmes are ranked 5<sup>th</sup>. Current information is ranked 6<sup>th</sup>, sports and economics programmes are ranked 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> respectively, irrespective of their education.

**Table 3:** Watching women related television programmes: Education of women

| Response | Education  |                   |                     |                 |              |
|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|
|          | Illiterate | Primary education | Secondary education | Diploma/ Degree | Total        |
| Yes      | 281(43.9)  | 324 (64.3)        | 399 (80.4)          | 138(86.2)       | 1142 (63.4)  |
| No       | 359 (56.1) | 180 (35.7)        | 97 (19.6)           | 22 (13.8)       | 658 (36.6)   |
| Total    | 640 (35.6) | 504 (28.0)        | 496 (27.6)          | 160 (8.9)       | 1800 (100.0) |

(Note: Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages)

It is very significant to note from table 3 that nearly two-third of economically weaker women do watch women related programmes. At the same time, it can be observed that more than half of illiterate women do not watch such programmes,

and more than one third of women with primary schooling also do not watch such programmes. Women related programmes are watched by 86.2% of women who holds degree/diploma and 80.4% of women who have completed

their secondary education. Thus it can be interpreted that higher the education level of women more is there

involvement in watching women related programmes.

**Table 4:** Television programmes watched by economically weaker women: Education of women (N=1800)

| Channels  | Women programmes       | Education  |      |                   |      |                     |      |                |      |            |      |
|-----------|------------------------|------------|------|-------------------|------|---------------------|------|----------------|------|------------|------|
|           |                        | Illiterate | Rank | Primary education | Rank | Secondary education | Rank | Diploma/Degree | Rank | Total      | Rank |
| DD        | Stree                  | 43 (2.4)   | 7    | 46 (2.6)          | 8    | 90 (5.0)            | 6    | 33 (1.8)       | 6    | 212 (11.8) | 6    |
| Chandana  | Hello sakhi            | 29 (1.6)   | 9    | 55 (3.1)          | 6    | 71 (3.9)            | 8    | 24 (1.3)       | 8    | 179 (9.9)  | 8    |
| Chandana  | Grameena bharath       | 50 (2.8)   | 6    | 54 (3.0)          | 7    | 73 (4.1)            | 7    | 24 (1.3)       | 8    | 201 (11.2) | 7    |
| Chandana  | Women's programme      | 1 (0.1)    | 13   | 2 (0.1)           | 13   | 8 (0.4)             | 14   | 3 (0.2)        | 14   | 14 (0.8)   | 15   |
| Kiran     | Ladies choice          | 1 (0.1)    | 13   | 0 (0)             | -    | 11 (0.6)            | 11   | 3 (0.2)        | 14   | 15 (0.8)   | 14   |
| Jaya TV   | Ladies special         | 1 (0.1)    | 13   | 2 (0.1)           | 13   | 9 (0.5)             | 13   | 4 (0.2)        | 13   | 16 (0.9)   | 13   |
| TV9       | Ladies club            | 106 (5.9)  | 5    | 153 (8.5)         | 2    | 230 (12.8)          | 2    | 84 (4.7)       | 2    | 573 (31.8) | 3    |
| Sony      | Ladies special         | 8 (0.4)    | 12   | 5 (0.3)           | 11   | 11 (0.6)            | 11   | 11 (0.6)       | 12   | 35 (1.9)   | 11   |
| Suvarna   | Ayurdhama              | 20 (1.1)   | 10   | 35 (1.9)          | 10   | 47 (2.6)            | 10   | 20 (1.1)       | 10   | 122 (6.8)  | 10   |
| Suvarna   | Idu kate alla jeevana  | 162 (9.0)  | 1    | 194 (10.7)        | 1    | 253 (14.1)          | 1    | 92 (5.1)       | 1    | 701 (38.9) | 1    |
| Kasturi   | Rani maharani          | 107 (5.9)  | 4    | 140 (7.8)         | 3    | 189 (10.5)          | 4    | 65 (3.6)       | 4    | 501 (27.8) | 4    |
| Kasturi   | Idu yaru bareda kateyo | 117 (6.5)  | 3    | 135 (7.5)         | 5    | 176 (9.8)           | 5    | 52 (2.9)       | 5    | 480 (26.7) | 5    |
| Z Kannada | Baduku jataka bandi    | 155 (8.6)  | 2    | 137 (7.6)         | 4    | 225 (12.5)          | 3    | 81 (4.5)       | 3    | 598 (33.2) | 2    |
| Z Kannada | Ayurvedha              | 36 (2.0)   | 8    | 45 (2.5)          | 9    | 63 (3.5)            | 9    | 28 (1.6)       | 7    | 172 (9.6)  | 9    |
| Star Plus | Apki kacheri           | 9 (0.5)    | 11   | 4 (0.2)           | 12   | 8 (0.4)             | 14   | 12 (0.7)       | 11   | 33 (1.8)   | 12   |

(Note: Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages)

Women under study (Table 4) were asked to rank specific programmes that they watch on television. It can be observed that economically weaker women who have completed diploma/degree and also those who have completed secondary education watch 'Idu kate alla jeevana' telecast on 'Suvarna' channel and is the top ranked programme. 'Ladies club' telecast on 'TV9' is ranked second among all programmes. 'Baduku jataka bandi' telecast on 'Z Kannada' channel is ranked third. 'Rani Maharani' telecast on 'Kasturi' is ranked fourth. 'Idu yaru bareda kateyo' telecast on 'Kasturi' is fifth highly watched programme, among who have done their diploma/degree and secondary education.

10.7% (N=194) Women under study who have completed primary education watch 'Idu kate alla jeevana' telecast on 'Suvarna' channel is the first ranked programme. 'Ladies club' telecast on 'TV9' with a viewership of 8.5% (N=153) is

second highly watched programme. 'Rani Maharani' telecast on 'Kasturi' with a viewership 7.8% (N=140) is ranked third. 'Baduku jataka bandi' (7.6%, N=137) telecast on 'Z Kannada' channel is ranked fourth. 'Idu yaru bareda kateyo' telecast on 'Kasturi' with a viewership of 7.5% (N=135) is fifth highly watched programme.

9% (N=162) of illiterate women prefer to watch 'Idu kate alla jeevana' telecast on 'Suvarna' channel and is the first ranked programme. 'Baduku jataka bandi' (8.6%, N=155) telecast on 'Z Kannada' and 'Idu yaru bareda kateyo' telecast on 'Kasturi' with a viewership of 6.5% (N=117) are second and third highly watched programmes. 'Rani Maharani' telecast on 'Kasturi' with the viewership 5.9% (N=107) is ranked fourth. 'Ladies club' telecast on 'TV9' with a viewership of 5.9% (N=106) is ranked fifth watched programme.

**Table 5:** Television as an information supporting agency: Education of women

| Response | Education  |                   |                     |                 |              |
|----------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|
|          | Illiterate | Primary education | Secondary education | Diploma/ Degree | Total        |
| Yes      | 447 (69.8) | 437 (86.7)        | 464 (93.5)          | 154 (96.3)      | 1502 (83.4)  |
| No       | 193 (30.2) | 67 (13.3)         | 32 (6.5)            | 6 (3.7)         | 298 (16.6)   |
| Total    | 640 (35.6) | 504 (28.0)        | 496 (27.6)          | 160 (8.9)       | 1800 (100.0) |

(Note: Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages)

It can be analysed from table 5 that a greater majority of economically women consider television as information supporting agency and particularly 93.5% (N=464) of women who have completed secondary education consider television as an information supporting agency. 86.7% (N=437) of women with primary schooling also feel that television supports their information requirements. 69.8% (N=447) of Illiterate women consider television as an agency that support their information requirements. 96.3% of graduates/diploma holders also feel that television supports their information requirements. Again the analysis indicates the fact that higher

the level of educates better is their feeling towards TV as information supporting agency.

## 5. Conclusion

The role of TV in the development process has been recognized significantly, over a period of time and particularly after regional language channels started their operations ever since the beginning of planned development in the country. Over a period of time and particularly after regional language channels started their operations. TV is an important component for disseminating information. It contributes to the

lives of the local community by creating content relevant to the people of that community. Lack of leisure time for economically weaker women is an important problem for not watching.

Since the emergence of cable TVs and round the clock satellite channels, the Doordarshan which had a monopoly, had paved way for satellite channels to dominate and viewing to all television programmes regularly as mentioned by large majority of rural women. They preferred simple programmes in local language, programmes to give timely information and they wanted detailed information on income generating activities. Local media like newspaper, radio and doordarshan have to focus on creating awareness among the people about the specific problems and potentialities for augmenting the pace of rural development. The schedule of the programmes of radio and television on different issues may be brought to the notice of the common people of the locality.

Separate channels have been established for different objectives- entertainment, 24 x 7 news, sports, music, religion, travel, history, science, animations, food, fashion, agriculture trade etc., The regional language channels basically started entertainment and news related programmes. The results indicate the fact that TV is watched basically for entertainment purpose. The economically weaker women watch all those programmes, which are nearer to her and her environment. She does not consider the informational role of TV programmes because such programmes are too advanced and beyond her reach to act.

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