Chapter 6

Conclusion and Suggestions
CHAPTER 6  CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS - TELEVISION VIEWERS

Media preference and television viewing habits

• The data gave a clear indication that one third of total sample population’s responses were in favour of television as the most preferred medium (33.8%) for entertainment. Print medium was second most preferred medium for entertainment with 29.7% responses. Internet had obtained 21.2% responses and radio medium received just 15.3% responses when it came to prefer medium for entertainment.

• The results indicated that news channel was most preferred channel by audience with 29.4% responses. The general entertainment channel occupied second position with 27.7% responses of total sample population. Educational channel was viewed at third position with 22.7% total responses while film channel received least responses (20.2%).

• Nighttime was most preferred time for viewing television by audience as more than half of the sample population (54.4%) chose to view programme during this time. Evening time was second most preferred time slot after nighttime with 24.4% of total responses. Afternoon time received 16.4% responses while morning time received 4.9% responses from audience.

• From majority of the responses (41.6%), it was clear that television was being used primarily for receiving entertainment-oriented content only. Television viewing for edutainment and infotainment oriented content received as many as 34.7% responses. Information driven content received 17% of viewers’ responses while education related content received as low as 6.6% television viewers’ responses.
• However, as many as 39.3% responses favoured that ideally television should be used for edutainment and infotainment programming while 26.4% responses indicated that television should be utilized for accessing entertainment related content on television. Information oriented content was favoured by 21.9% responses and education oriented content was supported by least number of respondents with just 12.4% responses.

• Out of total number of responses, almost 33.7% responses were in favour of television as an ideal medium for imparting educational messages. Print medium considered second best choice by audience with 29.8% responses. Internet, as an ideal medium to impart educational messages received third most responses (22.7%) while radio stood last in the choice of the audience with 13.9% responses when it came to disseminate educational messages.

Preference for edutainment and infotainment programme element

• The data revealed that quiz shows were most preferred format for viewing edutainment and infotainment programme on television with highest number of responses (17.4%). Second most preferred format for edutainment and infotainment programming was talk shows with 13.7% responses. Reality shows were third most popular format by viewers with 12.9% responses while drama held fourth position with 12.3% responses following reality shows genre. Documentary format got fifth position with 10% responses and on sixth position; it was interview format, which people chose with 8.6% responses. News stood on seventh position with 7.6% responses followed by docu-drama with 5.8% responses. This was further followed by fantasy format with 5% responses. Sitcoms and soap opera found least interesting formats among viewers as they received only 3.7% responses and 3% responses respectively.

• Travel and living oriented shows on television found to be of highest interest to viewers as part of most preferred edutainment and infotainment content on television with 21.5% of responses. Science and technology shows got second most responses
(20%) as preferred edutainment and infotainment content on television. This was further followed by animal and natural resource oriented edutainment and infotainment content with 19% responses. History oriented shows occupied fourth position with 17.6% responses, geography subject based edutainment, infotainment programmes received 11.6% responses, and languages oriented content obtained 10.4% responses.

- Visuals found as the most interesting element of the treatment according to audience with 22.4% responses. Anchoring as a preferred element for treatment followed visuals and received 19.1% responses. Interviewing skills of interviewers’ found third most liked element of treatment with 18.1% responses. Acting skill as an element of treatment obtained 14.5% responses. Animation and voice over found secured fifth and sixth positions with 13.2% responses and 12.6% responses respectively.

**QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS - TELEVISION VIEWERS**

**Views on education, entertainment, edutainment and infotainment**

- Education had been considered a broad term by television viewers that covered formal as well as informal education. It was learning of information and its application for achieving professional and personal goals. Education meant new ideas, learning; it meant enhancing existing knowledge level to television viewers.
- For television viewers, entertainment was anything that helped them relax and rejuvenate. ‘Relaxation’ was the most common word being used, when it came to entertainment. However, enjoyment was also a prerequisite in entertainment.
- Television viewers’ opinions about edutainment and infotainment programmes were divided broadly into two kinds of programmes. Programmes on general entertainment channels like ‘Zee Tv’, ‘Star Plus’, ‘NDTV imagine’, ‘Doordarshan’ to name a few and programmes on channels with a focus on edutainment and infotainment programming like ‘Discovery’, ‘National Geographic’, ‘Animal Planet’, ‘Travel and living’, ‘History’ etc. Programmes on general entertainment channels, which were
popular like ‘Angrezi mein kehte hain’ on ‘NDTV imagine’, ‘Kaun Banega Crorepati’ (KBC) and ‘Kya aap panchavi pass se tez hain’ on ‘Star plus’. In addition, ‘Bournvita Quiz contest’ (BQC) on ‘Zee Tv’, were aptly considered edutainment and infotainment programmes. In addition, ‘Panchtantra ki Kahaniya’, ‘Jigyasa’, ‘Bhoomi’ were some highly popular edutainment and infotainment programmes on ‘Doordarshan’ channel. Also, programmes like ‘Shakti Maan’, ‘Discovery of India’, ‘Ramayana’, ‘Mahabharata’, ‘Vikram Vetaal’, ‘Surabhi’ and ‘Hum Log’, ‘Nukkad’ were not only entertaining in nature but also provided a social, educational messages, too.

- Many viewers thought Edutainment and infotainment programmes were balancing educational and entertainment content and were useful in not only providing information or educational messages but also were also providing entertainment. Such programmes considered an extension of ‘fun while learn’ concept.

**Role of research**

- Television viewers believed that research for educational programmes required to know audience’s needs and preferences and to identify viewers’ existing level of knowledge about subject.
- Viewers believed that in edutainment and infotainment programmes; detailed research became more significant compared to all other kinds of programmes as edutainment and infotainment programmes had to perform dual functions of to educate, to inform as well as to entertain viewers.

**Suggestions**

- Many viewers believed that there was a definite scope for educational programmes to become entertaining through raising audience participation and research. In addition,
programmes with music, drama and appropriate content and presentation would make educational programme entertaining opined television viewers.

- Viewers welcomed experiments with different programming formats, treatment and content. However, a detailed understanding about subject and its presentation styles was expected from a television producer.

- Some of the television viewers believed that if entertainment programmes would provide content close to reality and disseminate good ethical, moral lessons, without sounding preachy, such way would be effective to disseminate thought provoking, educational content and would be considered edutainment and infotainment programmes.

- Learning from most popular foreign programmes to thorough understanding about audience’s taste, preference, characteristics and their desired level of knowledge, everything was expected to be well research based prior to broadcast of any programme.

- Programmes for niche audience like rural viewers, women viewers, and senior citizens expected to be broadcasted by television channels. In addition, television viewers expected combination of more than one media, for effective dissemination of messages. In addition, television viewers expected other non-government, volunteer organizations’ support for edutainment and infotainment programmes.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS – MEDIA EXPERTS

Media preference and role of television

- Media experts found television and print medium equally significant and believed to have a crucial place in society.

- Radio believed to be effective due to low cost and mobility and considered a local and direct medium. The strongest point in favour of television was the ability to demonstrate with visuals, which considered very effective for viewers with no exposure to situation or event, believed media experts.
• Access to the internet, literacy and cost were some crucial common points being addressed by most of the media experts for internet as a medium.

• Entertainment, information and education were broad objectives for which television had been used for a long-time, agreed most of the media experts. However, most of these media experts agreed that entertainment was main reason for which television had been viewed.

• It was difficult to have consensus among media experts on a specific objective for which television should be ideally used from entertainment, information and education. There was a conscious desire for a programming content, which would not only provide entertainment alone but would also provide a value addition to television viewing and time spent.

Views on education, entertainment, edutainment and infotainment

• Education as a concept had broader meaning for media experts. It was considered a process of gaining information that helped enrich an individual’s thinking, skill and functioning. It helped in making a person capable to face world in times of challenges.

• Entertainment had different meanings to different media experts. However, ability to engage an individual in an interesting manner and value addition to time spent was the echo of the media experts’ views.

• Programmes with educational, informative messages presented in an entertaining manner were categorized edutainment and infotainment programmes. These programmes were ranging from formal, classroom education to social education, vocational education and other areas of non-formal education. Emphasis in such programmes laid down on value addition to an individual’s understanding of about an issue, situation or event in an entertaining manner.

• Print and electronic media found to be effective in different capacities for disseminating educational messages by most of the media experts. However, some media experts also favoured a combination of more than one media.
• According to majority of media experts, electronic media was noticed to be a popular medium for entertainment

• Media experts believed that effectiveness of a medium for any purpose was dependent on target audience and objective of communication. Hence, effectiveness of medium considered a relative issue.

• Media experts believed that proportion of educational message and entertainment varied from major, equal to minor portion in edutainment and infotainment programme as per target audience’s need, taste, preferences, characteristics and existing level of knowledge and type of programme as well as type of message to be disseminated.

• Some media experts were of the opinion that educational messages should be in majority proportion in edutainment and infotainment programmes. The approach to such programmes and its presentation would be instrumental in disseminating messages effectively.

• Media experts believed that a detailed understanding about medium, its strength and limitation, clarity about objectives of the programme would help in maintaining a balance in edutainment and infotainment programmes.

• Most of the media experts were of opinion that edutainment and infotainment programmes may have an edge over educational genre of programmes but edutainment programmes may not have an edge over entertainment programmes.

**Preference for edutainment and infotainment programme element**

• It was difficult to reach on any consensus among media experts when it came to decide a particular element of programme responsible for making programme interesting from its format, content and treatment.

• Formats with a scope for audience participation like quiz shows, talk shows with an opportunity to disseminate informative and educational values were highly preferred by media experts. In addition, formats based on drama like reality shows, docu-drama and soap opera were also opted formats by media experts.
• From news to programs on wildlife, nature, media experts preferred awareness programmes on health, hygiene, social and family values. Media experts also preferred any kind of content presented keeping in mind audience’s need, preferences and characteristics.

• Each element of production observed to have a significant role in making programme interesting by media experts.

• Most of the media experts opined that pace of programme was dependent on content, type of message to communicate, target audience and their level of media literacy, format and treatment of the programme.

**Role of research**

• To develop a comprehensive and detailed understanding about each aspect pertaining to programme production was research for media experts. However, research could be done by a producer himself, using informal, personal contacts or through professional help.

• Media experts believed that communication research had elements of formative, process and summative research. Formative research facilitated needs assessment and audience profile study while process research guided in getting interim feedback and provided an opportunity to midcourse changes. Summative research focused on studying impact of the programme.

• Media experts believed that some of the programmes on channels Discovery, National Geographic and some programmes produced by ‘Doordarshan’ channel, ‘IGNOU’, ‘ISRO’ etc. were based on research. Some of the quiz shows, talk shows, soap opera with social education messages on general entertainment channels and news believed to have research done. However, majority of programmes on general entertainment channels believed to be lacking a detailed research.

• Media experts considered research an inevitable part of educational programme. Research supported in gathering authenticate information about the subject, helped in identifying existing knowledge level of students, their possible difficulties in the area
and also facilitated process of identifying a subject expert to resolve students queries. Systematic research in educational programmes helped in presenting educational content in an interesting manner, believed some media experts. However, some of the media experts also believed that educational programmes did not require in depth research, as programmes had to be based on textbooks and reference material already available.

- Most of the media experts agreed that both educational and entertainment programmes required a research base. Educational programmes had to be highly authentic as students viewed them. In addition, an entertainment programme had been viewed by masses and had a considerate impact on society. Hence, entertainment programmes were expected to be based on research.

- Research facilitated process of knowing audience’s needs, tastes, preferences, characteristics and their socio, economic, political and cultural background. In addition to this information, research observed supporting process of programme production, its content details, presentation and production techniques. Research also aided process of receiving audience’s feedback and evaluating impact programme had on audience.

- Media experts equally weighted audience and programme research as they believed programme research and audience research complemented effective dissemination of message and hence required to go hand in hand for an efficient process of communication.

- An extensive audience research observed absent by some media experts. Some media experts observed that very few programmes on Indian national television with informative and educational outlook had a research base in addition to programmes on channels like ‘Discovery’, ‘History’ and ‘Animal planet’.

- A detailed content research along with interesting presentation styles was anticipated from edutainment and infotainment programmes in comparison to entertainment and educational programmes, believed media experts.
Suggestions

- Suggestions by media experts covered range of area in the process of programme making from getting a great work done in team to experiment with format, content, treatment and involvement of audience, which proved vital.
- From disseminating social messages to providing authentic content, incorporating suitable production techniques to a serious involvement of audience, many changes were expected by most of the media experts from programmes on Indian television channels.
- Media experts anticipated that producers would develop a desire to learn from foreign producer’s approach towards a detailed research in all possible area.
- Media experts believed that number of messages should be decided upon looking at the content, audience profile and duration of the programme, in addition to the objective of programme. However, a subtle, indirect and personal approach to programme that communicated message effectively, was expected by most of the experts over other approaches.
APPROPRIATENESS OF METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

One of the most important fronts in communication research had dealt with how television programmes had been perceived and viewed by audience across globe. Moreover, a considerable amount of research had gone in understanding how research could facilitate the process of programme viewing for an effective dissemination of messages. It also helped in deciding, what factors should be taken care of while doing research for television programmes. Hence, research in communication area that involved television and audience had been argued by research scholars incomplete without taking into consideration television audience’s views.

As a result, this exploratory research took into account views from both the ends, i.e. from professionals occupying responsible positions at top of the hierarchy, professional who produced television programmes, viz. television producers, professional who had written scripts for media production viz. script writers. The research also took into account views from professional who had done research for programme production viz. researchers, professionals who managed media organizations viz. media managers and individuals who nurtured young minds into profession of media viz. media educators. For a thorough understanding about various issues, views of television viewers had also been taken into account.

To facilitate this research process, television viewers’ views had been taken through questionnaires and media experts’ in depth interviews were taken. While questionnaire provided details about what viewers liked on television, why they liked it, media experts provided insights about future of television programme viewing and role of research into it.
OUTLINE OF OVERALL RESEARCH FINDINGS

MEDIA PREFERENCE AND ROLE OF TELEVISION

The preference for television over other media was clearly visible as one third of total sample population (33.8%) favoured television. In addition, as many as 29.4% total responses were for news channel while 27.7% total responses were in favour of general entertainment channel. This was supported by television viewers’ and media experts’ choice for the medium over print, radio and internet medium, indicated qualitative analysis. However, this was reflective of the fact that television had a stronger roots on Indian viewers across all age, gender and occupations not only because of its audio visual appeal but also because of its easy accessibility, easy operations and its capacity to cater to entire family as a common source for information and entertainment.

The data substantiated that entertainment programmes were more popular than any other genre of programmes. However, the choices of most of the respondents from qualitative and quantitative analysis implied that there was an increasing need for television content which could add value to the time spent. That was where need for ‘edutainment and infotainment’ programmes observed with 39.3% responses. Respondents of both categories, i.e., television viewers and media experts favoured programme formats, treatment and content, was informative and educative in nature. Respondents believed television should be ideally used for providing and viewing edutainment and infotainment programming.

VIEWS ON EDUCATION, ENTERTAINMENT, EDUTAINMENT AND INFOTAINMENT

The analysis of the responses testified that infotainment programming was considered a part of broader genre of edutainment programming. This was because most of the respondents in both categories; media experts and television viewers strongly believed
that information was a part of education process. According to many media experts and television viewers, to remain informed was the first requirement towards gaining education. According to these respondents, education had been inferred as formal as well as informal education, as classroom as well as distance education and as individual awareness as well as public consciousness. Information with entertainment outlook would prove to be an instrument to an effective education process, hence, infotainment was considered an integral aspect of edutainment.

**Preference for Edutainment and Infotainment Programme Element**

Quantitative analysis of television viewers’ responses indicated that quiz shows (17.4%), talk shows (13.7%), reality shows (12.9%), drama (12.3%), documentary (10.0%) and interviews (8.6%) were quite popular among all respondents across all age, gender and occupations. This was backed up by media experts’ observation as part of qualitative analysis. Media experts noticed that trend of audience’s television viewing was more in favour of participatory formats and formats, which had some value added content. However, it was for television viewers and media experts to decide about which element of programme was best from its format, content or treatment.

**Role of Research**

From a detailed understanding about programme’s content, production techniques, pace, number of messages to characters’ background, tools and techniques for audience participation, each element of related to programme was demanded and expected to be based on research before producing and airing the programme. Television viewers and media experts observed a lack of detailed research in many of the programmes on Indian television. In depth research about programme and production activities and specially a thorough understanding about audience’s needs, characteristics, preferences, cultural and socio economic, political background was clearly absent from the programmes of most of the channels. It was strongly believed that a detailed research about audience’s
background would assist in making any educational, social, entertainment or edutainment and infotainment programme effective enough to retain and sustain interest.

Hence, it could be reasoned that research was expected to be an inevitable and non-negotiable part of any programme. A systematic, detailed and comprehensive research with well-defined objectives not only had capacity to present any educational or informative programme interestingly but also had a potentiality to provide authentic information or educational messages. Thus, this potential of research had ability to bring change in knowledge, behaviour and attitude at individual and group level in a society.

Hence, overall analysis observed to be in accord with the analysis done through quantitative as well as qualitative methods. Qualitative analysis to an extent not just supported quantitative data but also complemented entire research by providing consistency to the outcomes.

**SUGGESTIONS**

**Know the medium**
For any professional working in media or television producer, it would become very essential to understand medium in addition to subject, context. It would also be important to take into account a medium’s strength and limitations before producing programme.

**Teamwork**
Educational producers were expected to seek support of subject expert, researcher and scriptwriter as well support of advanced technology while producing a programme. A good team of professionals not only facilitated an effective programme but also made the entire process enriching. The teamwork would provide many opportunities to learn from one another as professional and as individual.

**Know the target audience**
A producer was required to have clear idea about who the target audience would be and with which objective a programme would be produced. A producer and his/her team was also needed to find out what were likings, need, preferences of audience. Details about socio economic, political, cultural background of target viewers of audience were very significant to know. In addition, understanding about existing level of knowledge of audience and take off point would facilitate programming as well as production activities.

A producer was expected to find out what entertained the audience and accordingly, believed to produce programme in as much interesting manner as possible or else television viewers would switch over the channels. Hence, variety in programmes with the right pace, keeping in mind audience’s profile was a prerequisite for effective communication.

**Audience involvement**

Cent percent educational programmes tend to become dry and at times boring. Programmes expected to be interesting, lively and participatory in nature. An equally important aspect of an effective programme was how these programmes had been presented. Channels like Discovery, National Geographic and some of the reality shows had become very popular among audience due to their interesting presentation. Association with character and a scope to relate to the character would work in such a case. However, participation of audience secured most significant place for an effective communication.

**Experiment**

A producer expected to experiment with various programme and production elements, techniques after a detailed research of audience’s taste, preferences and content. After knowing needs of audience, a producer was required to experiment with different format, content as well as treatment, e.g. celebrities had helped in promoting social education messages like ‘pulse polio campaign’, ‘HIV prevention campaign’ etc. It had worked in many parts of the world. Even at times, a producer was allowed to fail to educate, inform but was not allowed to fail to entertain.
In addition, experiments with various programming format, content and treatment helped in attracting and retaining eyeballs. E.g., good ethical, moral lessons at the end of programme through epilogue by veteran actor ‘Ashok Kumar’ proved very effective in the programme ‘Hum Log’.

Do not preach
Right mix of subject information with few messages could be communicated through a programme. Educational programmes could increase 'critical thinking' among viewers than just providing knowledge, information. Many social education programmes used this formula to raise audience interest and participation.

Niche audience
News channels and general entertainment channels were telecasting talk shows, interviews etc. However, some of the news channels could take up responsibility of giving messages to specific audience like senior citizens, women viewers etc. At least twenty percent content of any news programme could be educational in nature. The time slot could eventually be increased into an hour or more, which could address issues dealing with societal values in more detail manner.

In addition, some educational programmes could be specially produced to cater to rural audience that did not have access to traditional sources of education.

Mass viewing
Educational programmes could be broadcasted at the time convenient to viewers, on channel accessible to all and could benefit to even viewers who were not literate. Producers should be able to translate such programmes easily into other languages, too.

More than one medium
Educational programmes could be broadcasted through not only national channels but also on private channels as well as through radio stations and through internet in order to
increase the reach of such programmes. Hence, educational programme could be broadcasted through more than one media with the repeat broadcast.

**New programmes**

Educational, informative, edutainment and infotainment programmes could avoid extensive repetition of programmes in a comparatively shorter time. If channels did not have new programmes, it could assign producers to produce more such programmes. The repeat broadcast of programmes could follow a reasonable intermission. Hence, there would be no point in repeating content and showing it to students, audience repeatedly, who would not have any other option. Hence, more programmes required to be generated or such programmes would not have many viewers. More programmes required to be produced keeping in mind audience’s preference.

**Research**

Communication did not mean what one said to other person but what the other person had understood of what was being said. Similarly, teaching would not be what one had taught but what other person understood and learned out of it. The same condition applied in case of television viewing. Therefore, every kind of television programme required research that was open for mass viewing. In fact, any piece of communication, which was being communicated by mass media vehicles like television, radio, print, and internet or any other, required a research base for entertainment, information, edutainment or infotainment purpose.

An overall understanding about audience, objectives of programme, content, programming and production techniques and strength as well as weaknesses of the medium required to assist in producing an effective programme. In addition, detailed research of any educational, entertainment, edutainment or infotainment programme expected to be done before it was broadcasted, during its broadcast and after completion of broadcast to communicate effectively.
Researcher could conduct pre-test of programme. A pre-test helped in knowing acceptance rate of programme and could provide necessary suggestions about content and its overall treatment. Likewise, process research assisted in taking necessary steps for midterm correction while summative research helped in studying impact of the programme.

Programme of other national channels or of foreign channels could be considered vital for detail study of programme format, content and treatment and could be evaluated on the basis of social-cultural, political and economic environment of audience rather than just a reproduction.