## Abstract

Today, television is considered to be a major source of entertainment and preference of relaxation. Television programs are arranged with the motive to address the various patterns of taste and preference of the viewers, and some programmes such as the commercials, documentaries are particularly designed to shape up the opinions of people of all ages in different ways. Media environment has been changing significantly in recent past and consequently Media Planning has become more complex task than ever before. Now-a-days, Integrated Marketing Communications Program is not an option, but necessarily became a successful player in competitive market environment. The Media Planner has to rate numerous TV channels on the basis of popularity just to address the target audience. Gross Rating Point (GRP) is the parameter that indicates the popularity of a channel or programme on the basis of the viewing preferences of audiences. The study attempts to understand, ceteris paribus, is GRP able to portray the basic features of the targeted audiences? The study was conducted within the Siliguri Municipal Corporation during November 2014.

### Characteristics Of TV Viewership vis-a-vis GRP: A Study With Special Reference To Siliguri

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1. Introduction

Media environment has been changing significantly and sustainably as a result the Media Planning is becoming more and more complex task than ever before. Now-a-days Integrated Marketing Communications Programs has turned out to be the crucial instrument to become a winning player in such competitive market environment. Therefore the Media Planner must consider the new options as well as recognise the changes that are swapping the conventional. Media planning guides the Media Planner about when, where and how to effectively deliver the advertising message. The primary objective of the Media Plan is to develop a framework that delivers the message to the maximum number of potential target audience in the most efficient and cost effective manner. This can happen when Media Planner selects a right Media Vehicle.

Every firm can reach to their target customer through their products or services. This can be possible through marketing. A series of activities are being performed for selling products and services to customer. This is called marketing. The customer is considered as the main factor in the beginning and end of the marketing process. Promotion is one of the immense functions of marketing. Promotion decisions are taken simultaneously with other decision like finding target group, determine objective of promotion, budgeting for promotion, launching of new products, media selection and so on. Advertising is one of the most important elements of promotion mix. Marketers are concerned with effective utilization of promotion mix to increase sales and market shares. Methods of promotion include advertising, personal selling and packaging. Advertising is a prominent feature of modern business operations. One can encounter advertising message while watching TV, reading magazines, listening radio, surfing the internet, or even simply while walking down the street, as advertisement has a stimulating influence on purchasing behaviour of the customer. This mammoth surge of advertisements from every possible source is basically to fulfil the urge of marketers to reach to a large number of people so that their product can receive optimum exposure. The role of this mass mode of communication in creating brand loyalty, determining entry and consequently increasing sales revenue and profits of the organizations and causing impact on the business cycle has been emphasized various points of time by different studies.

Television as the most effective instrument of media, plays a vital role in the flow of information and deliberately able to influence their beliefs, opinions and preferences. owing to globalization with hurried technological innovation and invention within television industry, Media Planners are facing new challenges. In recent past, Doordarshan was the single national broadcaster in India which obviously left little choice for people for channel zapping. In our time, we have the free will to choose preferred programmes offered by abundant channels making the job of Media Planner more complex. The Media Planner has to rate numerous TV channels on the basis of popularity just to address the target audience. In today’s advertising industry, the role of media planner has increasingly become more important due to continuing proliferations of new media options and the increased complexity of media decisions. A particulars combination of media and media vehicle are important for the media planner to convey the message to the large number of potential and existing customer, successfully and effectively. An appropriate matching between media vehicle and preference of target customer of that vehicle is highly required for this purpose. Any mistake may result in wastage of substantial amount of money. The selection of media vehicle needs a comparative analysis among media vehicle in terms of qualitative and quantitative criteria which can help in achieving advertising objectives.
Gross Rating Point (GRP) is the parameter that indicates the popularity of a channel or programme. Television Ratings provides the preference patterns of viewers from diverse strata of the society. Basically, this is a ranking list of popular television channels and programmes which are released periodically by various rating agencies. The Advertiser and the Corporate Media Planner try to select the right media at the right time to reach the target audience.

This study attempt to measure the popularity of different national entertain and informative television channels and programmes within Siliguri Municipal Corporation in terms of GRP rating and attempt to know whether such calculated GRP is effectively able to portray the characteristics of the targeted audience.

2. Review of Literature

Er. Gurleen Kamual and Dr. Sukhmani (2011) in their study found that there was no difference in T.V. watching habit of male and female viewers. A Negative relationship was found between income of the viewers and their williness to spent time on watched television. Singh et al (2011) has examined the TRP of T.V. channels in Jammu city. The study has found that Colours T.V. channel was number one on all the study days during prime time, as far as concern Hindi serial, Balika Vadhu was the most famous programme in Jammu city. In case of News channel, NDTV was No. 1 English News channel and Aaj Tāk occupied the 1st place as Hindi News channel. The study has also found that timing was the most important factor of TRP determined and the next one was the popularity of the channel on which the programme telecasted. Another study was conducted by Nandita Das found that Star Plus was the most preferred T.V. channel within Delhi. People preferred mostly the entertainment based programmes and KBC was the most preferred programme among viewers in Delhi. Unnikrishna and Bajpai (1996) showed in their study that about 48% of High Income Groups and 62% Medium Income Group watch television for more than two hours on daily basis. Fatima (2000) has examined in her study the long term effect of television on peoples’ thoughts. The study suggested that it is necessary to introduce a positive trend on the television channel for protecting our values. Ahluwalie and Singh (2011) found children mostly preferred children shows or serial followed by cartoon programmes. Page and Crawely (1998) found that middle class Guajarati speaking students preferred news, sport and quiz programmes where as girls favoured mythological and Hindi serials. The study also noticed that some of the girl watched music T.V. channel only for sake of fashion.

3. Objective of the Study

GRP is effectively able to indicate the popularity of channels as well as various types of broadcasted TV programmes on the basis of the viewing preferences of audiences, the question arises that whether GRP is also able to identify the changing preference pattern of viewership of different regions, states, nations and even of different times. For example, it may not be so surprising, or it may be obvious, that one founds higher GRPs for Sport Channels than the most popular Indian TV entertainment channels broadcasting latest Hindi Cinemas at the same time schedule during the final match of the Football World Cup. But such changes are for the time being. Ceteris paribus, is GRP able to portray the basic features of audiences?

The present study is designed basically to identify the television channels which are most popular among households within Siliguri town and also to assess the preference pattern of viewers towards different types of TV programmes like TV soap serials, news (English and Hindi) and talk-shows,
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cartoon programmes etc. The study has also examined the time spent on watching television by the viewers, the age group distribution of viewers, the occupational pattern of the households etc. within Siliguri town.

Considering the goal, the following objectives were put together for the study:

I. To measure Reach, Frequency and GRP of different programmes broadcasted by various channels during different time schedule within a specific period;

II. To identify categorically the most preferred TV Channels and TV Programmes within the sample and selected time frame on the basis of the GRP;

III. To understand whether GRP can portray the basic features / characteristics of the sample audience.

4. Research Methodology

The data was collected from various areas of Siliguri Municipal Corporation. A survey was conducted on the month of November 2014 for four weeks (five days each week) covering twenty days. The data were classified by gender, age-group, education, medium of education, occupational pattern etc. and analysed separately. It is typical to use surveys to explore audiences’ needs, interests and favourite TV Programmes, but also their opinions and benefits derived from the Programmes. A typical survey helps to collect information from people through a “structured questionnaire” containing questions or items related to the topic of interest. However this manner is useful as long as they confine the knowledge of people to the percent of viewers, the titles of audience’s favourite Programmes and things like that, or as long as they want to measure people’s benefits derived by the survey method.

The participants were asked to fill in a structured questionnaire and responses were collected on a “4 pointer scale”. For example, to know ‘how long they watch television in a day’, the responses were collected on a 4 pointer scale of “More than 5 Hours”, “3 to 5 Hours”, “1 to 3 Hours”, “Less than 1 Hour” with the weightages of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

Every possible effort had been made to select the respondents evenly. The survey was carried out on 150 households (respondents). However, 29 Questionnaires were found to be incorrect, 09 questionnaires were not returned by the respondents so a total of 50 questionnaires were deliberately rejected. Hence the study sample was reduced to 100 households (respondents). The data was collected personally in the months of November 2014.

For the study purpose the following national level Hindi entertainment television channels and their entertainment serials broadcasted during 9PM to 10PM was selected with intent, Sony, Colors, Star Plus, Life Ok, Zee T.V., Sahara One, Star Utsav, Sub T.V. and Bindass. Whereas, for cartoon channels, Hungama, Cartoon Network, Disney channel, Nick, Pogo and Sonic were chosen purposely. As far as Hindi News Channels are concerned, Zee News, Aaj TAk, ABP News, India T.V., News 24, Live India, NDTV India and DD News were purposely opted in the questionnaire. For the purpose of measuring the popularity of English News Channels NDTV 24 X 7, Headlines Today, CNN-IBN, ZEE News, ET Now, Times Now were selected.

5. Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 GRP and most preferred TV Channels and Programmes

The study calculates the GRPs on the basis of the following formula:

\[ \text{GRP} = \text{Reach} \times \text{Frequency} \]
‘Reach’ is one of the most basic terms in media planning. Reach is the number of different household or persons exposed at least once to a media vehicle or advertising schedules over a specific period of time.

And Frequency is the number of times that the average household or person is exposed to the schedule among those persons reached in the specific period time. Because it is an average frequency dispersion of frequency of exposure will differ between specific schedules and day part mixes.

The study period was 5 days of week in Nov 2014. According to GRP rating Star Plus (GRP 1119.996 – as hindi entertainment channel) and Star Gold (GRP 1903.968 – as hindi movie channel) were most preferred channels in entertaining segment, whereas Aaj Tak (GRP 1680) and NDTV 24X7 (GRP 979.98) were most popular news television channels within Siliguri town. On the other hand Pogo (GRP 1288) was the first choice of children and Sinchan was the most popular cartoon programme among them. As far as Hindi soap serials, broadcasted during 9:00 pm to 9.30 pm, are concerned, Pavitra Rishta (GRP 1419.978) was found to have the first preference of viewers and Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai (GRP 1400) had the first preference among the programmes broadcasted during 9.30 to 10:00 pm. The study revealed that viewers in Siliguri town usually spend, on an average, more than three hours on watching television on daily basis. An association was also found between the medium of education and the preference of cartoon programmes and cartoon channel among the children.

On the basis of calculated Gross Rating Points (GRPs), the study reveals that the following TV Channels and TV programmes are mostly viewed or we may say mostly preferred by the sample viewers:

i. The top three most viewed Hindi entertainment channels broadcasting TV soap serials etc. are STAR PLUS, ZEE TV and SONY.
ii. The top three most viewed Hindi serial programmes are Pavitra Rishta, Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai and Na Bole Tum Na Maine Kuch Kaha.
iii. The top three most preferred Hindi Movie Channels are Star Gold, Set Max and UTV Movies.
iv. The top three most preferred Cartoon Channels are POGO, Hungama and Cartoon Network.
v. The top three most preferred cartoon programmes are Sinchan, Doremon, Tom & Jerry and Ninja, Kid Vs Kat, Lucky Man.
vi. The top three most viewed English News Channels are NDTV 24X7, IBN-CNN & BBC WORLD.

vii. The top three most viewed Hindi news channels are AAJ TAK, NEWS 24 and INDIA TV.

5.2 GRP and viewership characteristics

After getting an idea about the viewership preferences, the study likes to examine whether GRP can portray the basic features / characteristics of the sample audience. For this we try to understand the following cases to get better insight.

Case I: Association among the medium of education of children within the age group of 06-10 years and the preferred cartoon programmes.

Null-Hypothesis (H0) - There is no association between educational level and preference for TV entertainment programmes.

ANALYSIS – The calculated value of Pearson’s Chi-Square is 3.046. The table value of chi-square at 5% level of significance with 10 degree of freedom (DF) is 18.31.
6. Conclusion

Null-hypothesis accepted there is no significant association between medium of education and preference of Cartoon programmes within the age group of 06-10 years.

Case II: Association among occupational pattern and the preference of most viewed TV programmes.

Null Hypothesis (H₀) – There is no association between occupation pattern and preference for TV entertainment programmes.

Analysis: p value: < 0.001; t statistic: 1.754; Degrees of Freedom (df): 99

Conclusion: as p is small, i.e., less than 0.01, or 0.001, we can assume the result is statistically significant i.e. there is a difference between the two groups. Null-hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant association between occupational pattern and preference of TV entertainment channel.

Case III: Difference between preferences of entertainment TV Channels among male and female.

Null-Hypothesis (H₀) - there exists significant difference in frequency of watching Star Plus (most preferred Hindi TV entertainment channel) between Males and Females.

Analysis: p value: 0.966; t statistic: 0.043; Degrees of Freedom (df): 99

Conclusion: as p > 0.01 or 0.001 we can assume the result is statistically insignificant i.e. there is no significant difference between the two groups, i.e., among male and female with respect to mean value of watching Star Plus (most preferred Hindi TV entertainment channel).

Null- Hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there exist no significant difference in frequency of watching Star Plus (identified as the most preferred Hindi TV entertainment channel) between male and female viewers.

Case IV: Difference between preferences of English Hindi TV Channels among male and female.

Null-Hypothesis (H₀) - there exists no significant difference in frequency of watching ABP News (most preferred Hindi TV News channel) between Males and Females.

Analysis: p value: < 0.001; t statistic: -66.754; Degrees of Freedom (df): 99

Conclusion: as p is small, i.e., less than 0.01, or 0.001, we can assume the result is statistically significant i.e. there is a difference between the two groups.

Null- Hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there exist significant difference in frequency of watching ABP News (identified as the most preferred Hindi TV News channel) between male and female viewers.

7. Inference

Although the study was within a relatively small geographical area, the study suggests though it is possible to identify the most preferred TV Programmes and/or TV Channels by calculating the GRPs through intense survey and analysis but GRP, thus calculated, is not necessarily an effective and efficient reflector of the preference pattern of the society as a whole. The study suggests that the identified most preferred Channels and/or TV programmes are not effectively able to define or to suggest or to estimate the nature of the audience, i.e., the age-group, the gender, the medium of education, the occupational pattern etc. Moreover, by the calculated GRPs the Media Buyer may be misinformed about the target viewers. Using GRP can underestimate or overestimate a campaign to a smaller or larger target audience. We can say that GRPs are not assured one, but rather an estimation of the audience that could be reached and thus it is not the best gauge for what media channels are the most effective for promotion of goods and services.
We may say, on the basis of the study, that GRP is about number and it is not the measure the size and cannot identify effectively the characteristics of the audience reached.

References