

Supply vs. Demand

Why People Watch State-Media Broadcasts in China

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State-Media Audience

Fact 1: Large group

Xinwen Lianbo_{weekday} >
(ABC + CBC + NBC)_{weekend}

Fact 2: Understudied (exc. Stockmann 2010, 2015)

1. New media emergence
2. People can identify political indoctrination

Puzzle: Who and Why?

1. Who are watching state-media broadcast, e.g., Xinwen Lianbo(XWLB)
2. What drives them to watch?

What Drives People to Watch: Supply?

Media inequality

Environments can restrict individuals' media pool and their choices, e.g, urban-rural difference.

Historical inertia

Being indisposed to change the habit from the age of media scarcity.

Family bundling

"Dad said he wanna watch Xinwen Lianbo..."

H_{Supply}:

1. Rural residents are more likely to watch XWLB than urban residents. (Rural)
2. People who have historical inertia are more likely to watch XWLB more than those who do not. (Age, Changing premiere time, Cancelling forecast)
3. People watch XWLB more when it is a family habit (w. family).

Demand?

Information: Authentic information from the government

Gratification: People choose television as the medium on purpose (Tang 2014); signals of stability, security, and development comfort people psychologically.

H_{Demand}:

1. People who are interested in information of which the government is the authentic source are more likely to watch XWLB.
(Policies, Political trend, Foreign affairs; **Placebo**: social issues, local economy)
2. People who are interested in positive news are more likely to watch XWLB. (Direct: Watching for stability, Watching for positive news; **Indirect**: social stratum)

DGP Strategy

The mostly unlikely case: internet users who still watch XWLB

1. Rapidly growing group (800 million, 4% increase/yr)
2. Holding alternative ways to collect information

⇒ Survey of Information Collection
Preferences of Chinese Citizens (SICP 2017)

1. Crowd-sourcing
2. Nationwide

Potential data/specification biases?

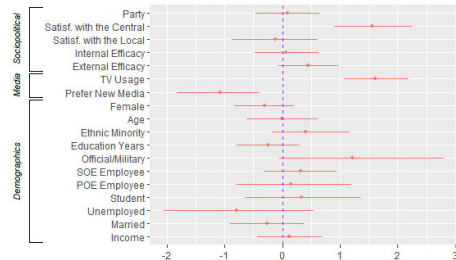
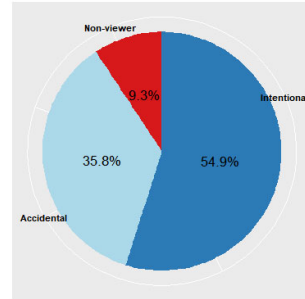
Solution: Coarsened exact matching (CEM)

Social desirability?

Solution: List-experiment based adjustment

Result: Who Are the Audience

1. Large proportion of intentional audience (watched more than occasionally)
2. Audience characteristics:
 - Pro-government
 - Interested in politics
 - Less new-media dependence
 - No difference in **partisanship, political efficacy, age, education, job, etc.**



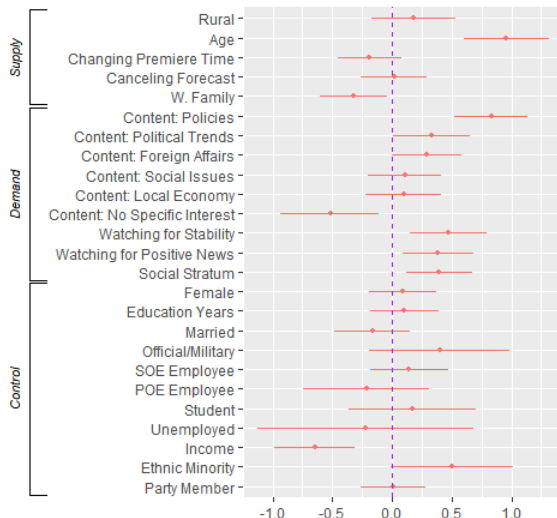
Result: Why Do They Watch

Supply:

- **Media inequality:** No
- **Historical inertia:** No, exc. age
- **Family bundling:** Negative

Demand:

- **Information:** Yes
- **Gratification:** Yes



Take-Home Points

- Motivation: Demand > Supply
- Family bundling: Negative effects

⇒ State-media audience is still there---and stably---despite the rise of new media.

Thank you!



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