

Television and its political affordances

In India

What's so special about TV?

- System of broadcasting
- Armand Mattelart: *“A series of amorphous concepts such as consumer society, mass society, affluent society, public opinion, etc. in all of which support of social domination are concealed. In other words, this language acts as a screen an alibi, for the apparatus of domination, as a formula permitting its dissolution in a euphoric world of consumption, modernity and advertising”.*
- Rajagopal mentions: Television is thus active in the material and symbolic reproduction of capitalist relations.
- Has become an integral part of society

Continued

- How it impacts people:
 - Enables dissemination of information over large areas, across different regions
 - Since it does not require literacy, being an audio visual medium
 - Source of infotainment for the masses
 - The processing of this information inducts the consciousness of the viewer and inculcates habits in them
 - Power of the experience of autonomy

Rajagopal mentions in his book, politics to a great extent exists through the means of communication and electronic media has transformed the boundaries of the political sphere.

How was it brought to India:

First phase: Development

- 1956 in India because of UNESCO's pilot project
- By the 70s it became full fledged
- In the govt's view, meant to be a developmental medium, with a developmental educational and social function, not primarily for entertainment.
- Sarabhai's speech in 1969 (and Rajadhyaksha's analysis of it):
 - 'Leapfrogging' to catch up with the developing world
 - Does away with the problem of illiteracy in India because of its audio-visual presentation and its profound impact.
 - Overcomes the problem of geographic distance and linguistic diversity with its credibility and rare persuasiveness

The 70's and the Emergency

- In 1965- daily service in Delhi
- 1972- Bombay
- 1973- Srinagar, Calcutta and Madras
- By 1975: Direct State effort to sponsor mass communication:
- VCRs being smuggled into the State
- Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) was instituted:
 - An effort to induct the rural community into the national mainstream
 - Reached out to about 2500 villages in six states
 - Explicitly instructional/educational programmes
- 1976: Film Finance corporation was also instructing filmmakers on what kind of films to make, specific themes, which formed the predecessor to the modes adopted by TV production after 1984.

The 80's: Second Phase:

The National Public and Consumerism

- As videotape technology grew, the government launched INSAT around the same time (1983)
- 1982 Asian games telecast
- In 1984, the first developmental soap opera - Hum Log
- 1987- RAMAYAN
- Started drawing sponsors
- National public became a consuming public as well, masses were unified by the content
- More people started watching, although TV had a high entry level threshold, this was resolved by public forums.
- As the national public became inseparable from the consuming public, TV was no longer simply a developmental model of communication

The Political Mobilisation Phase:

- Rajagopal and the Ram Janmabhumi movement in the early 90's
- Ramayan- Hindu epic serialized on the State run television- was aired from January 1987 to September 1990.
- By this time, political opportunism had brought religious programming onto state controlled television and created what did emerge as a distinctive Indian programming genre, namely, mythological soap operas, the successor to the government's failed experiment in developmental soap operas
- Did not initiate Hindu Nationalist sentiment, but drew on myths and devotionism that appealed to diverse social groups under the banner of Hindu assertion.
- He calls it the 'astuteness' of the BJP to utilize this environment created by the show and perceive this as an opportunity to gain support.
- "Split public"
- The arrival of satellite television and the dismantling of state controls, however, brought market forces and the power of television together by 1992.

In today's context



BIG NUMBERS AND THE IMPACT OF WHAT WE DO_

300Mn Minutes

TV Video Content Monitored

600+

TV Channels MONITORED

836Mn

TV Viewing Individuals

762Mn

Individuals Watch TV Every Week

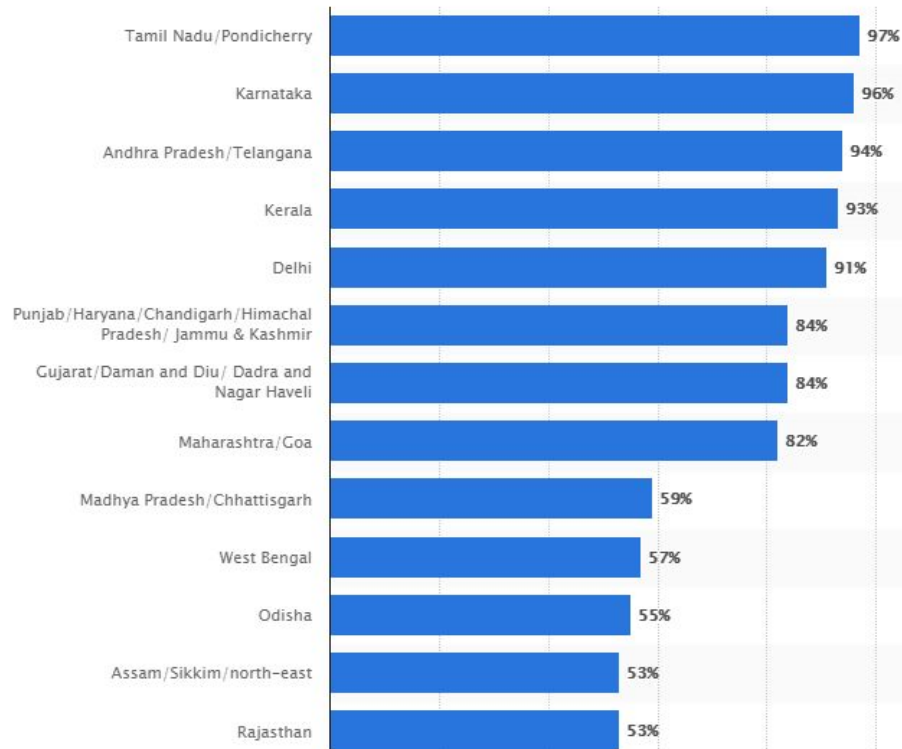
10PB

Of Data Is Processed Annually-
Larger Than "Aadhar Card" Data



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TV penetration in India in 2018, by state



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XLS



PNG



PPT



Sources

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Release date

March 2019

Region

India

Survey time period

2018

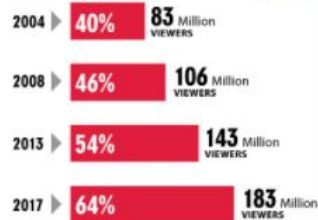
Age group

2+

MEDIA PENETRATION IN INDIA

MEDIA
OWNERSHIP
MONITOR
INDIA

Growth in TV Penetration



24%

Increase of TV viewers in the last 13 years with 100 Million users.

Number of Internet Users in Rural and Urban India



RURAL 2018



187 MILLION
21%

URBAN 2018



291 MILLION
66%

INDIA



TOTAL POPULATION:
1.3 BILLION



Source: BARC Report, The Changing Face of TV in India, FCCI Frames, 2018, IBEF Media and Entertainment Report, July 2018 & ULTRAXART, India

For more information: indiaomn-rd.org



INDIANS PREFER TO WATCH NEWS ON TV THAN ONLINE

MEDIA
OWNERSHIP
MONITOR
INDIA

TELEVISION



NEWS/NEWS-BASED PROGRAMMES

56%

HINDI FEATURE FILMS

38%

FAMILY DRAMA AND SERIALS

37%

COMEDY SERIALS

34%

REALITY SHOWS

28%

ONLINE PLATFORMS



COMEDY CLIPS

32%

USER-GENERATED CONTENT (UGC)

32%

FULL LENGTH FILMS

14%

MUSIC VIDEOS/CONCERTS

14%

ENTERTAINMENT/CELEBRITY NEWS

14%



Top 5 categories of video content Indians prefer to watch on TV vis-a-vis online platforms in 2017.

Source: Media ecosystems- The walls fall down - KPMG in India's M&E report 2018

For more information: indiaomn-rd.org





Currency Data

TV +00H

TOP CHANNELS ▾

ACROSS GENRES ▾

ALL PLATFORM ▾

TOP 10 CHANNELS ▾

TOP 10 Channels *Across Genre : All India (U+R) : 2+ Individuals

VIEW AS



RANK

CHANNELS

WEEKLY IMPRESSIONS (IN 1000'S)

1	STAR Sports 1 Hindi	1234177
2	STAR Utsav	1161117
3	STAR Plus	963383
4	Sun TV	944506
5	STAR Maa	851452
6	STAR Vijay	632883

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Media and politics today

- TV plays a vital role in politics today
- As Rajagopal mentions the variants of nationalism that emerged in the 80s that propelled BJP's success mainly through television, the same trend can be witnessed today.
- The 2014 election, BJP's success is heavily credited to the role media played in the campaign.
- In the 2018 election, BJP was the highest spender on TV ads as per BARC reports, surpassing Netflix, Colgate, Amazon, Unilever, etc.
- Since 2014, a whopping 4342.36 crores was spent on advertising and in the last year alone 317.5 crores on TV.

Continued

- The intersection of ownership and/or concentration also comes into play here
- Channels and their affiliations, particularly news channels
- Arnab Goswami's arrest this week.
- Shift in criticism of media houses with changing governments.

To conclude, TV has and will always provide significant, inseparable political affordances in India and are vital to the functioning of democracy.

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The end.