

# IMPACT OF TELEVISION SERIALS AMONG THE HOMEMAKERS OF KERALA

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**Abstract:** Television serials have captured the minds of homemakers of Kerala for several reasons. It has provided a venue for relaxation with family at the end of day's work. This research paper is an attempt to measure the impact of Television serials among the homemakers of Kerala. Serial makers commercialized the inner urge of women to become equal to men in serials. Since the TV serial makers' target group is homemakers, women play the central character in most of the play. As per the study conducted by the researcher, TV serials have both positive and negative impacts among women community. It also can become a rich resource for global understanding and education. Some of the other studies say the emergence of TV serials give an awareness among women to raise their voices against injustice and violation. At the same time, it is said that it has a negative influence on day to day lives.

**Keywords:** TV Serials, Impact, Homemakers, Positive and Negative, Family

## I. INTRODUCTION

Television Serials - also known as *Soap Operas* emerged in the United States of America in 1950s. The famous soap manufactures of that time Procter and Gamble was one of the first major sponsors of this shows. So the Media started to call it *Soap Operas*. ("Soap opera - Wikipedia," n.d.)

In India, TV serials began to be telecasted with the Serial named '*Humlog*' in 1984. Later due to its wide acceptance among Indian audience a good number of serials emerged and some of them became very popular like *Buniyad*, *Khodu*, *Sameer*, etc. These serials came up with exaggerated stories of great sacrifice, stories with great morals etc. which are not so common in real life. (Contributors to Wikimedia projects, 2005; "Soap opera - Wikipedia," n.d.)

Hindi serials and their popularity were the inspiration behind the emergence of Malayalam TV serials. Malayalam serials became so popular mostly because of their visual treat and sound effects, unlike Hindi serials. Emotional Drama and thrilling dialogues were the key attractions of Malayalam films and they became trendsetters after the coming of private Television channels. Famous Malayalam TV Channel *Asianet* started a serial Called *Sthree*, which is considered as the first Malayalam TV serial on a daily basis. Unlike Hindi serial stories, Malayalam Serials portrayed the stories of high-class families and their unethical lifestyles, sexual desires, luxuries life, etc. Multi-storied bungalows, branded luxury cars, expensive dress and ornaments were used in serials which gave a visual treat to the women in middle-class families. Famous director of the serial Mr. Buniyad Ketan Shah says that the curiosity of the people who are interested to know the secrets of their own neighbors are the backbone of the TV serial industry. Studies say that produces of the TV serials are commercializing and exporting the minds of homemakers by giving extra importance to them in stories (Basheer, n.d.).

### 1.1. Chandanamazha

*Chandanamaha* is a very famous TV serial which was telecasted in *Asianet Channel* portraying the story of an illiterate and obedient girl named *Amrutha* and her relative *Varsha*, whose characters were just opposite to each other. The serial presents the story of *Amrutha* who captures the attention of everyone except her husband. She is portrayed as an extremely innocent girl who is not at all aware of anything of this modern world. For instance, once she puts her husband's hard disk in the washing machine due to her ignorance and it is portrayed as an evidence of her innocence. She is being surrounded by a group of people who are trying to bring down her happiness. Another character named *Varsha*, who is also married to the same home, makes plans to bring out the fool in *Amrutha*. At the same time, her sister in law named *Anjali* is trying to take advantage of her innocence to get things done for herself. This story mostly highlighted the exaggerated kitchen politics of a modern family and this serial became a well rated Malayalam serial.

### 1.2. Manjurukum Kaalam

*Manjurukum Kaalam* is another drama series telecasted by famous Malayalam entertainment channel *Mazhavil Manorama*. This serial is based on a novel which was published in a famous weekly. The theme of this serial is about an adopted child named *Janikutty*. A character Named *Manakkal Govindankutty* lost his wife after giving birth to their daughter *Janikutty*. *Govindankutty* was sad about his wife's unexpected death. At that time his relative *Mr. Vijayaraghan* and his wife were sad about not having a child as their own. So *Govindankutty* handed over *Janikutty* to them wishing that they can better take care of his daughter. *Janikutty* was well pampered and treated until her step-parents are blessed with a baby. Later she was ignored by her step-parents especially her stepmother. Here onwards *Janikutty's* life is presented in such a way she gets so much of sympathy from viewers' mind.

Emotional music was played while showing her face on the screen. Later she starts to fight back and she tries to turn out as a powerful personality in the society.

## II. OBJECTIVE:

- To understand what kind of impact do homemakers of Kerala have while watching TV serials like *Chandanamazha*, *Manjurukum Kaalam*.
- To what extent TV Serials affect their family life.
- To what extent TV serial makers commercialize the emotions of homemakers of Kerala.

## III. RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

It is generally said that the number of family issues are increasing day by day in Kerala. In many cases it is said that TV Serials are influencing family lives very negatively. There were serious discussions about this issue in Kerala through Social Media. So many trolls are being made on this issues and it captured the attention of many. Good number of people started filing complaints against these kinds of serials because of the negative story content they have. *Chandahnamazha* is the most criticized TV serial of that kind. So in this situation, researcher is very font of knowing how much TV serials are affecting the lives of ordinary homemakers. Researcher has chosen Idukki district of Kerala for various reasons. Idukki is the second largest district among the fourteen districts of Kerala. More than half of its areas are covered by forests (Idukki district - Wikipedia). The semi-urban areas are densely populated whereas villages are sparsely populated. People depend on agriculture for their livelihood and majority of the women are homemakers here. The only entertainment facility available for most of the women community here is Television. So the researcher is curious to know how much TV serials are influencing women community.

## IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Uses of Gratification Theory proposed by Bulmer Kalz and Gurevitch is used to understand this study better. This theory explains that people use media to gratify their needs. Since Indian society is patriarchal in nature, the inner urge of women to become equal or higher than men is satisfied here. Women are playing a central role in most of the TV serials and men are presented as humble and good for nothing characters which are not so common in real life. So women are emotionally satisfied here and media is used to gratify it.

## V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 5.1. The Impact of Indian Dramas on Language and Dressing of Females

There is a study titled "The impact of Indian Dramas on Language and Dressing of Females" conducted in *Sehowal, Siaklot* district, Pakistan, to understand how Indian dramas are affecting women viewers in their selection of dress. This study was conducted among 100 women aged 16 to 30 years and who are viewing TV serials for a minimum of two years. Their level of viewing, choice of channels, preference of channels, etc. were observed and monitored. The result of this study shows that Indian dramas are trying to implement Indian culture in their society. Young women of this area are knowingly or unknowingly getting attracted to this culture in terms of dress and language which is affecting their society (Ali et al., 2014).

### 5.2. Discriminant analysis of Viewers' Perception towards Prime Time Television Shows with Special Reference to Indore.

This study aims at identifying two groups of television viewers. One group is of high media consumption and other is of low media consumption. In addition to viewers' perception towards several TV shows telecasted in prime time were monitored to differentiate between high and low media consumption. The result of this study shows that the viewers with low media consumption can be reliably differentiated from the viewers with high media consumption by youth shows, or sports shows ("[No title]," n.d.).

### 5.3. Engendering Familial Citizens: Serial - Viewing among Middle Class in Urban India.

This is a research work among TV serial viewing women of middle-class families in two Indian cities. The study was conducted in 2007. This study explores women's engagement with serial narratives that centralizes the traditional Hindu family and places women at the center of the family as the custodian of traditional values. This study rages that the feminization of television in India helps extend the ideal of familial womanhood on the civic space, limiting women's access to alternative forms of civic belonging and citizenship (Mahadevan, n.d.).

## VI. METHODOLOGY

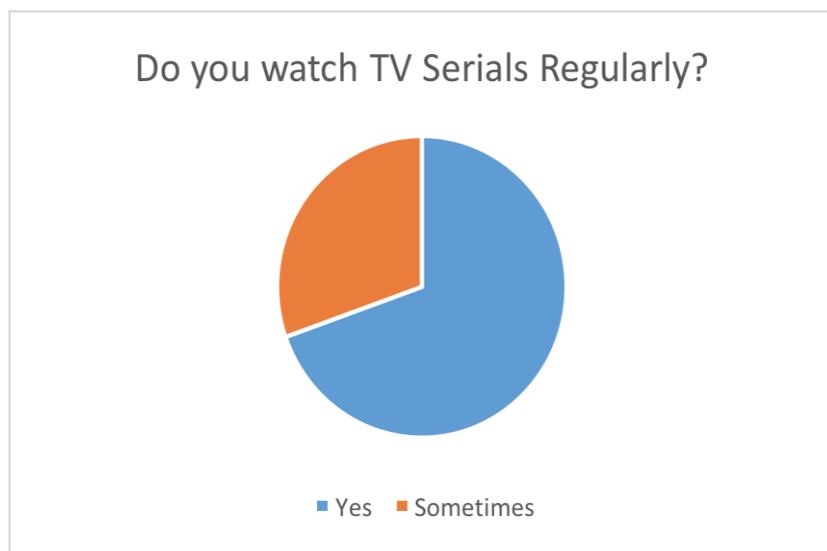
The researcher has chosen a mixed method to collect data. The researcher resorted to survey method analysis to find out how much TV serials influenced the life of a homemaker of Kerala. To further support his research, he conducted an expert interview with an expert in the field of counselling and psychology.

## VII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A Questionnaire was prepared by keeping the objectives in mind and it was divided into two parts. The first part consists of demographic variables such as age, educational qualification, financial background, etc. The second part has questions related to

the main objective of the study. The Survey method was adopted and 125 homemakers are identified as respondents who watch TV serials from the Idukki district of Kerala state.

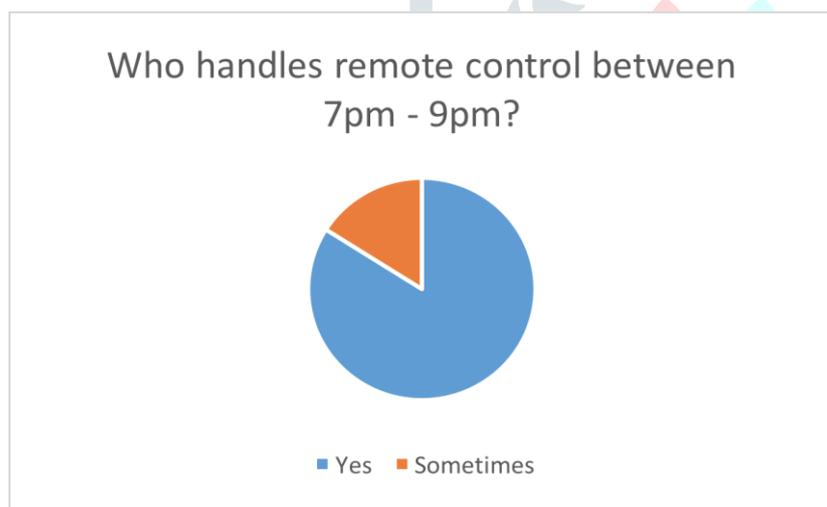
The expert interview was conducted by the researcher to understand various perspectives around Psychologists.



69.6% respondents said they watch Malayalam TV serials and 30.4% watch sometimes.

This response itself shows influence of TV serial watching habits of homemakers of Kerala. Not even a single participant responded 'No'. Therefore, researcher found there is a scope for even further research.

Out of 125 respondents, 62% of people prefer to watch television between 7-9 in the evening when most of the serials are telecasted.

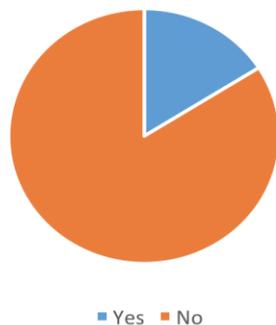


84% of the respondents said that they handle remote control of the TV while the family watch TV between 7-9. This society is a patriarchal society. Still homemakers are controlling the TV watching habits of family. That itself shows the amount of influence of TV serials among homemakers.

69.6% of the participants watching TV serials without any specific reasons. It is just for relaxation. 21.6% of the viewers enjoy discussing TV serials with people they know whereas 78.4% do not. 62% of the respondents like watching how people actually react and cope up with challenges and the rest of them do not.

44% of the viewers agreed that TV serials are presenting some wrong models in their stories. 90.4% of the respondents do not think that TV serials have made some positive impact on your life.

Do you recommend your favourite TV serials to your family members to watch?



84% of the participants said they will not recommend their favorite TV serials to their family members to watch. From this question researcher concluded that homemakers are aware of the negative impact of the stories which is been portrayed in TV serials.

### Expert Interview Analysis

In Expert, Interview researcher asked a good number of questions to the expert to gather information out of his professional experience. His answers could be summarized like this:

#### The advantages of watching TV serials are:

- It is an entertainment media for many. It becomes a cheap source of entertainment.
- If the program telecasted has a good familial and cultural values, it can help the young generations to adapt those good values
- It can become a rich resource for education and global understanding.
- Some TV serial can become a medium of motivation. There are good family serials that are telecasted.
- It can make some people less lonely.

#### The Disadvantages of watching TV Serials are:

- It can kill time. It can make us antisocial, taking a good time with family, studies and other personal responsibilities.
- It can bring immoral contents and misinformation to families. Sex, crime and violence are frequently depicted on TV serials. Kids who watch these kinds of unhealthy shows can adapt to unhealthy behavioral patterns.
- Most of the time it becomes a media of consumerism.
- Excessive watching can even cause health concerns like obesity, loss of sight, sleep difficulties.
- It can become a source of addiction to some people. Just like alcohol, and drugs, television can create addiction.

### Limitations

The Researcher could not interview any experts from the Television industry. Due to time constrain researcher could watch only a few episodes of both serials.

### Scope:

A detailed study could be conducted based on the impact of TV serials on family life.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

Television and TV serials have become an inseparable part of the lives of homemakers in Kerala. Since the majority of the homemakers are spending their time in a day, working inside the home without any option for entertainment, the only available option for their entertainment is to watch TV between 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm. Most of the popular channels telecast serials during the above mentioned time because their targeted audiences are homemakers. Homemakers are attracted to TV serials due to various reasons. Results of the research shows that homemakers of Kerala are very fond of these serials and they deliberately arrange their timetable according to make sure that they are available during the telecasting of their favorite TV serials. Since women are portrayed as powerful and dominated in serials, that gives an immense pleasure to homemakers. Even though famous TV Serials like *Chandanamazha* and *Manjrum Kaalam* are not dealing with ethical subjects, they could satisfy the innermost urge of women to become equal to men in a wide manner. Its influence in Kerala society is highly visible in Kerala both positively and negatively. Interview with expert underlines this argument. According to his opinion TV serials play an important role in creating family issues. In many cases both spouses are not ready to compromise each other's TV watching habits. At the same time women community became very much aware of their rights and they have started raising voices against all the violations of it courageously, which can be considered as the positive impact of TV serials. The result of the research shows that, even though there are few positive elements in watching TV serials, it has more negative influences among the homemakers of Kerala and in their families.

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