

### Effects of Television Drama

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The type of television I chose is Television drama. TV drama is a type of fictional narrative that is intended by the producers to allude more seriousness than comedy. There are several subgenres of this type of Television drama such a police drama, legal drama, comedy drama or even domestic/family drama. TV drama generally is depicted in series and not individual movies. Such a long narrative causes a detailed description of the characters. This description often causes an emotional connection between the viewer and the characters in the TV drama series. In this paper, I shall make a detailed analysis of the relationship between the viewers of television drama and the type of genre itself.

It was discovered that, in order for any type of mass media to affect someone in a certain way, the person needed to already have the proclivities or dispositions that the form of mass media presents. For example, it was thought that aggressive media forms resulted in aggression in young children. Later on, however, it was discovered that it was not a one-way street as it was thought of at the time. For a child, or any person in that regard, to be affected by violence from violent media, several conditions have to be fulfilled. For starters, the environment of the child has to be such that it permits or even encourages violence. Secondly, the person has to have the disposition for violence. A fact that could stem from a genetic trait. With these factors in check, the person consumes aggressive media out of gratification. They only seek to gratify those proclivities that they already have. It is this that is termed as the theory of gratification.

The same hypothesis has to apply to television drama. Those who watch television drama are simply satisfying their proclivities. According to a research by Grant Noble conducted on children in a boarding school between the ages of 13 and 17, the boys that were most interested in watching television drama were what he termed to as “problem boys”. These were boys who

were affected by an identity crisis. They had a little sense of self-identity that arose from problematic families. These boys tended to be generally isolated from their peers. Their external environment had a great impact on the types of programmes that these boys viewed and the emotional gratification that these types of boys sought from their choice programmes. Problem boys preferred to watch media that contained television drama. This was usually in the form of series as well. They preferred television with a regular appearance of the same cast because they found that they could identify with this cast much easier and, thus, could easily form an emotional connection with these characters. Noble hypothesized that these boys relied on television to practice interactions in a setting that was predictable as well as routinized (Kelly 2001).

Research has moved from simply analyzing the motivations behind watching a certain type of television and the emotions that arise as a result to analyzing the socio-psychological factors that mitigate a certain audience to view a certain type of media. For television drama series, the type of audience attracted to this media are people in general who might have very little self-identity and are simply looking to interact with the world within certain settings via characters that they can easily identify with.

Binge watching is a trend that is currently on the rise in several countries and entire continents at large. According to an article by CSI Magazine, at least 40 million adults engage in binge-watching. 47% of television viewers in the United Kingdom watch television using their mobile devices in such places as pubs and on public transport (Jenner 2017). The top shows watched by binge watchers are television dramas. The statistics, therefore, portray a true picture of what is happening in society. More people are losing their self-identity because the number of people growing up in dysfunctional families is on the rise. People are becoming more aloof and

in an effort to experience life they turn to television drama where they can experience life through the experiences of a major character in the series.

The gratification of emotional desires also has an effect on the people watching these series. To begin with, there is the globalization of western cultures with people from other cultures who binge watch these television dramas produced in western countries. According to a research by Science Direct, mass media has had a huge effect on how people across all cultures perceive the world. Mass media has generally led to the globalization of cultures (Che Su & Ilias 2014). In Malaysia, for example, globalization has led the television dramas produced and viewed in Malaysia, to take on a more western appearance. They resemble western dramas in both lifestyle and appearance. Watching these drama series has led the Malaysian youth- the majority of people with an identity crisis- to adopt western cultures. These cultures include consumerism as well as individualism. Therefore, the gratification theory should really be two-pronged, gratification and adaptation. The people watch the television dramas initially to gratify their emotional drama. Then, if the television drama fits their individual predispositions, they adopt the lifestyle portrayed by the television drama in question.

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