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realities indicate that income level is not an appropriate variable for learning about the viewing behaviors of Kuwaitis.

In reference to gender, Kuwaiti female viewers were found to be more active viewers than Kuwaiti males. They watch television more often, and they contact Kuwait television stations and Kuwaiti newspapers to comment on what they see on television more frequently than male viewers do.

There is a need for further study to learn more about Kuwaiti viewers and know why they are watching television. Are they watching television to gratify some needs? Are they watching television when they are having their meals? Or is television only on for background noise as the author speculates? A look at the content of the programs that are on television after 9 p.m. is required to find out if the content of those programs inspire viewers to watch television or if viewers are simply available at those times. Tracking selection behavior is one way to learn about the viewers and formulate an accurate representation of them. The picture will only be complete when we learn why these viewers are watching television.

having their breakfasts and dinners because most Kuwaitis have quick breakfasts, while others have their breakfasts at work.

Due to the extreme heat in Kuwait, Kuwaitis tend to go out after sunset because the weather gets a little cooler at night. Thus, this is prime socializing time. They usually come home after 9 p.m. Most of them have their dinners outside. That can explain why very most of them watch television after 9 p.m. and don't watch television while they are having their dinner.

The major predictors of the viewing behaviors of the Kuwaitis are their residential governorates and the viewers gender. The author can speculate, based on his personal knowledge and experience on the reasons for viewing behavior variances across governorates. Some of the affected governorates are closer to the capital, Kuwait City. Those governorates close to Kuwait City, Assemah (capital), Hawali, and Mobarak Alkabeer, have more access to shopping centers and to entertainment centers. Another important difference between these six governorates is that some of these governorates, for example, Al-Farwaniya and Al-Jahra tend to have a larger tribal population which differs in lifestyle due to tribal traditions and customs, as well as different social backgrounds, such as having large families. Additionally, there is a concentration of various tribes in certain areas within these governorates. There are also some differences in the socio-economic status of families within some of those governorates, for example, in terms of education and income levels. Some of the governorates, Al-Jahra, for example, tend to have high literacy rates and low incomes. However, when the author looked at level of income across the six governorates, it was found that Al-Jahra had the second highest income. Kuwait Population Handbook (2001) indicates that Al-Jahra governorate has the largest family size. Forty-two percent of Kuwaiti families in Al-Jahra governorate have more than 15 members. This increases the level of income due to governmental subsidies of 50 KD a month per child. Therefore, a family with 13 children will have a monthly allowance of 650 KD. The study also found that 17% of Kuwaitis have no income due to the fact that they are students, and students are not allowed to work while they are in school. These

Discussion:

The purpose of this study is to identify the television viewing behaviors of Kuwaiti viewers. This study shows that Kuwaiti viewers don't know what they will find on television before they turn on the TV sets, and probably that is why they don't schedule their days based on television programming schedules. Kuwaiti viewers can be defined as passive viewers because they don't actively seek ways to know what will be on television.

One reason they may not know the networks programming schedules is because satellite receivers penetration in Kuwait is very high. The minimum number of channels Kuwaiti viewers can receive is 22 channels with the use of satellite receivers. This causes them to be less aware of what will be showing on those channels. The only way they can learn about what will be showing on those channels is by surfing the channels until they reach the channels that have programming that will satisfy them. The low use of newspapers to learn what will be showing is partially because not all newspapers available in Kuwait list the TV schedule; when they do, they generally only list the four Kuwaiti channels. Also, TV Guide is expensive, and many people think that it isn't worth paying to know what will be showing. Also, TV listings on TV appear only at the beginning and at the end of the broadcast.

Once the TV set is on, Kuwaiti viewers actively surf the channels. When the show they are watching ends or when there are commercials, they actively search through other channels.

Kuwaiti viewers consider watching television a social activity. When they watch television, they usually watch with their families and friends. Kuwaiti viewers don't generally watch television alone. It is possible that they regard watching television as a way to have company and as social interaction. Also, they watch television when they are having lunch. It is highly likely that they don't actually watch television when they are having their lunches. They have their TV sets on and use them for background noise. They don't watch television when they are

female viewers are most likely to search for drama, comedy or family style shows.

Kuwaiti viewers are more likely to watch television with their families but Kuwait male viewers are more likely to watch television with their friends than with their female counterparts. This study finds that the Kuwaitis watch television between 6 p.m. to 12 a.m. This study also finds that watching television is very important to Kuwaiti viewers as evidenced by their behaviors of watching television while they are having lunch and dinner and changing the channels when there are commercials or when the shows they are watching end. But this study also finds that even though watching television is important to Kuwaiti viewers, they never schedule their days based on television programming. This phenomenon is probably due to a lack of knowledge about the programming schedule of the networks. It is possible that Kuwaiti viewers use their TV sets as background noise during their meals, and they are not actually paying attention to them.

Demographic characteristics of Kuwaiti viewers are not major predictors of viewing behaviors except in relation to the gender of the viewers. Female viewers who live in Jahra and in Farwaniya governorates and female viewers tend to behave differently than male viewers.

This study finds that Kuwaiti female viewers watch television more frequently than male viewers. This leads Kuwaiti female viewers to contact Kuwaiti newspapers and Kuwait television more often than Kuwaiti males. But in general, very few Kuwaiti viewers actually contact newspapers and television to comment on what they watch on television. As a result, viewer commentary is not a major source for learning about Kuwaitis and their viewing behaviors. This is unfortunate for Kuwait television executives who have stated that they depend on the phone calls they receive from the viewers to know their patterns and whether what the aired programs were picked up by the viewers.

The **seventh hypothesis** holds that Kuwaiti female viewers contact television stations more often than Kuwaiti male viewers. This hypothesis was also not supported ($\chi^2 = 0.242$, $df = 2$, $p = .886$). The study reveals that there is no difference between males and females in contacting the Kuwaiti television stations.

The **eight and last hypothesis** predicts that there is a significant relationship between gender and the number of hours Kuwaiti viewers spend watching television. This hypothesis was also not supported ($\chi^2 = 9.064$, $df = 5$, $p = .107$). Kuwaiti female viewers watch more television than their male counterparts but the difference is not statistically significant (see table 10).

Table 10
Number of hours Kuwaiti viewers watch TV set in bedroom

	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 1 hour	28	11%	14	6%	42	8%
1 - 2 hours	67	26%	54	21%	121	23%
2 - 3 hours	62	24%	64	25%	126	24%
3 - 4 hours	45	17%	48	19%	93	18%
4 - 5 hours	27	10%	29	11%	56	11%
More than 5 hours	32	12%	47	18%	79	15%
Total	261	100%	256	100%	517	100%

Conclusion:

This study identifies Kuwaiti viewers behaviors prior to television viewing, during television viewing and after they finish watching. This study finds that most Kuwaiti viewers turn on the TV sets without knowing what is on. After they turn the TV sets on, they surf the channels, going from one channel to another searching for drama, comedy or documentaries. Kuwaiti male viewers are most likely to search for documentary, news or sports type shows while Kuwaiti

Table 8
Arranging daily schedule based on what will be on TV by gender

	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Never	143	63%	133	58%	276	60%
Sometimes	70	31%	79	35%	149	33%
Always	14	6%	17	7%	31	7%
Total	227	100%	229	100%	456	100%

The study support the **sixth hypothesis** which states that Kuwaitis who have television sets in their bedrooms watch television more often than those who dont ($\chi^2 = 17.835$, $df = 5$, $p = .003$) (see table 9). The study finds that 68% of Kuwaiti male viewers have TV sets in their bedrooms while 61% of the female Kuwaiti viewers have TV sets in their bedrooms. The study also finds that 10% of Kuwaitis have TV sets in their kitchens but this doesnt affect their viewing. Television location did affect the number of hours Kuwaiti viewers spent watching television.

Table 9
Number of hours Kuwaiti viewers watch TV set in bedroom

	TV Set in Bedroom					
	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 1 hour	19	6%	23	13%	42	8%
1 - 2 hours	87	26%	34	19%	121	23%
2 - 3 hours	74	22%	52	28%	126	24%
3 - 4 hours	56	17%	37	20%	93	18%
4 - 5 hours	36	11%	20	11%	56	11%
More than 5 hours	61	18%	18	10%	79	15%
Total	333	100%	184	100%	517	100%

Table 7
Arranging daily schedule based on what will be on TV by place of living

		Place of Living													
		(Capital) Al-Assemah		Hawali		Al-Farwaniya		Al-Ahmadi		Al-Jahra		Mobarek Al-Kabeer		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Never		77	60%	89	65%	41	58%	41	57%	11	52%	17	68%	276	60%
Sometimes		41	32%	39	28%	25	35%	28	39%	9	43%	7	28%	149	33%
Always		11	8%	10	7%	5	7%	3	4%	1	5%	1	4%	31	7%
Total		129	100	138	100%	71	100%	72	100%	21	100%	25	100%	456	100%

Table 6
Watching TV while having breakfast by place of living

		Place of Living													
		(Capital) Al-Assemah		Hawali		Al-Farwaniya		Al-Ahmadi		Al-Jahra		Mobarek Al-Kabeer		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Never		79	54%	75	50%	30	39%	38	51%	11	33%	12	46%	245	48%
Sometimes		58	39%	59	40%	35	45%	27	37%	17	52%	13	50%	209	41%
Always		10	7%	15	10%	12	16%	9	12%	5	15%	1	4%	52	10%
Total		147	100	149	100%	77	100	74	100%	33	100%	26	100%	506	100%

Kuwaiti viewers don't contact any Kuwaiti newspaper and 82% also don't contact Kuwait television stations to comment on what they watched on television.

Hypotheses:

Hypothesis one states that residential location is a major predictor of frequency with which Kuwaiti viewers watch television while they are having breakfast. **Hypothesis two** states that residential location is a major predictor of frequency with which Kuwaiti viewers watch television while they are having lunch. **Hypothesis three** states that residential location is a major predictor of frequency with which Kuwaiti viewers watch television while they are having dinner. ANOVA test results reveal that these hypotheses were incorrect. Therefore they have been not supported (watching TV while having breakfast $p = 0.165$; watching TV while having lunch $p = 0.330$; and watching TV while having dinner $p = 0.398$). However, this study did find that those who live in Farwaniya and Jahra governorates are more likely to watch television while they are having breakfast, as opposed to those who live in (Capital) Assemah and Hawali governorates who are less likely to watch television while they are having breakfast (see table 6).

Hypothesis four theorized that residential location is a major predictor of whether Kuwaiti viewers arrange their daily schedules based on television programming schedules. This hypothesis was also not supported (ANOVA test reveals $p = 0.940$). Kuwaiti viewers will most likely not arrange their daily schedules based on television programming schedules (see table 7).

The **fifth hypothesis** also holds that there is a significant relationship between gender and daily schedule arrangement based upon television programming schedules. This hypothesis was not supported. However, Kuwaiti female viewers were found to arrange their daily schedule based upon television programming schedules more often than their male counterparts (see table 8). The differences between Kuwaiti male and female viewers were not statistically significant.

Kuwaitis watch television more often with their families (57%) than alone (35%). The study also finds that there were statistically significant differences found between who the Kuwaiti viewers watch television with and gender of the viewers ($\chi^2 = 27.618$, $df = 3$, $p = .000$) (see table 5). Female viewers tend to watch television with the family or alone more than male viewers while male viewers tend to watch television with friends more than female viewers.

Table 5
Who the Kuwaiti viewers watch television with by gender

	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Alone	87	33%	92	36%	179	35%
Family	138	53%	158	62%	296	57%
Friends	34	13%	3	1%	37	7%
Others	2	1%	3	1%	5	1%
Total	261	100%	256	100%	517	100%

This study also finds other television viewing behaviors of Kuwaiti viewers. Most Kuwaiti viewers don't watch television while having breakfast. Only 10% of viewers consistently watch television during breakfast. About 40% of Kuwaiti viewers consistently watch television while they eat lunch, and more than half (52%) consistently watch television while having dinner.

On matters of control of channel selection, about 42% of Kuwaiti viewers said that they always retain control of channel selection. When there are commercials, about 42% of respondents always change the channels. Additionally, when the shows they were watching end, they consistently change the channels (62%).

This study is also concerned with the response behaviors of Kuwaitis after they watch television. Seventy-four percent of the

As for genre preferences, Kuwaiti viewers watch dramatic shows (17%) and comedy shows (16%). Another 14% of Kuwaiti viewers watch documentaries. The study also shows that statistically significant differences were found between type of program the Kuwaiti viewers and gender of the viewers ($\chi^2 = 127.230$, $df = 11$, $p = .000$) (see table 4). Kuwaiti male viewers are most likely to search for documentary, news or sports type shows while Kuwaiti female viewers are most likely to search for drama, comedy or family style shows.

Table 4
Type of program the Kuwaiti viewers watch by gender

	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Drama	26	10%	61	24%	87	17%
Comedy	41	16%	41	16%	82	16%
Documentary	51	20%	20	8%	71	14%
News	49	19%	17	7%	66	13%
Sports	45	17%	2	1%	47	9%
Action	18	7%	21	8%	39	8%
Family	2	1%	35	14%	37	7%
Religion	12	5%	16	6%	28	5%
Music	5	2%	21	8%	26	5%
Cartoons	3	1%	10	4%	13	3%
Others	4	2%	7	3%	11	2%
Educational	4	2%	3	1%	7	1%
Total	260	100%	254	100%	514	100%

Table 3
Number of hours Kuwaiti viewers watch television by educational level

	Educational Level											
	Less than HS		High School		Two Years Diploma		In college		College		After college	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 1 hour	3	3%	7	8%	4	4%	11	11%	15	12%	2	11%
1 - 2 hours	16	19%	14	16%	27	4%	26	26%	31	25%	7	39%
2 - 3 hours	16	19%	17	19%	36	28%	17	17%	35	29%	4	22%
3 - 4 hours	16	19%	20	22%	13	37%	19	19%	24	19%	1	6%
4 - 5 hours	16	19%	9	10%	8	13%	10	10%	11	9%	2	11%
More than 5 hours	19	22%	22	25%	10	8%	18	18%	7	6%	2	11%
Total	86	100%	89	100%	98	10%	101	100%	123	100%	18	100%
											515	100%

viewers (60%) learn what will be showing on television by surfing the channels and switching from one channel to another. More than half of the Kuwaitis (60%) never arrange their daily schedule based on television programming schedules. Only 7% of Kuwaitis consistently schedule their day based on television programming schedules.

Regarding Kuwaiti viewers behaviors while they are watching television, about half of the Kuwaiti viewers (48%) watch between one to three hours in a normal day, and about 18% watch television between three to four hours a day (see table 2). The data reveals that statistically significant differences were found between the number of hours Kuwaiti viewers watch television and the educational level of the viewers ($\chi^2 = 53.063$, $df = 25$, $p = .001$) (see table 3). Those viewers who have high school diplomas or less tend to watch television more than those who have higher degrees. More than 72% of Kuwaiti viewers watch television between 6 p.m. and 12 a.m. Forty-seven percent of the Kuwaitis watch television between 9 p.m. and 12 a.m. The study finds that no one watches television between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m.

Table 2
Number of hours Kuwaiti viewers watch TV

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 hour	42	8%
1 - 2 hours	121	24%
2 - 3 hours	126	24%
3 - 4 hours	93	18%
4 - 5 hours	56	11%
More than 5 hours	79	15%
Total	517	100%

Table 1
Population and sample proportions

	Al-Assemah		Hawali		Al-Farwancayah		Al-Ahmadi		Al-Jahra		Mobarek al-Kabeer		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Sample N	68	81	77	77	43	36	36	39	23	12	15	11	262	256
Total N	149		154		79		75		35		26		518	
Sample %	46%	54%	50%	50%	54%	36%	48%	52%	66%	34%	58%	42%	51%	49%
Total %	29%		30%		15%		14%		7%		5%		100%	
Population %	21%		28%		19%		21%		10%		100%		100%	

H. 8 There is a significant relationship between gender and the number of hours Kuwaiti viewers watch television

Methodology:

The purpose of this study is to answer some empirical questions and to test several hypotheses concerning the television viewing behaviors among audience members in Kuwait. A big obstacle facing data collection in Kuwait is that “women are very difficult to interview in that they will refuse to be interviewed by strangers and especially male interviewers” (Zikmund, 1994, p.214). They consider their viewing information personal, and that it should not be revealed. (Al-Mugaseeb, 1998) This makes it difficult for the researcher to conduct face-to-face interviews. In addition, some people feel shy about expressing their opinions or giving details about their viewing behaviors. Due to these obstacles, mail survey was chosen as the preferred method for collecting data for this study, since mail survey gives women an opportunity to participate while maintaining their anonymity. Thus, they are more apt to provide data and opinions about sensitive and personal issues.

This study only looks at the television viewing behaviors of Kuwaitis. Non-Kuwaiti viewers were excluded. The population of Kuwait is 2,243,080. Thirty eight percent of these are Kuwaitis (855,333) (Kuwait Population Handbook, 2001). The researcher obtained a list of a random sample of 1500 Kuwaitis who were above 15 years of age from the Civil Authority Information database. A four-wave mailing technique was applied to provide the highest response rate. The first wave was sent on May 15, 2001. The response rate was 34.5% with a completion rate of 518 responses (see table 1).

Results:

Viewing Behaviors:

Regarding the viewing behaviors of Kuwaitis prior to choosing a television program, this study finds that more than half of the Kuwaiti

several Kuwait television executives who are still in charge of running stations, or who are former broadcasters.

All of the television executives the author interviewed believe some of what newspapers write about audiences and Kuwait television. They claim that these surveys give them some pictures of the audience members, but did not reveal why viewers watch television. However, they admit that even though these newspaper surveys are conducted from time to time, they do not represent the general public, and that there are some limitations to the results. They all blame the Research Department for not conducting research and providing them with some analysis of audiences, especially why Kuwaitis watch television and what their viewing behaviors are. They also expressed a desire for systematic research so they can obtain significant results.

Hypothesis and Research Questions:

- R.1 What are the television viewing behaviors of Kuwaitis?
- H.1 Residential location is a major predictor of frequency with which Kuwaiti viewers watch television while they are having breakfast.
- H. 2 Residential location is a major predictor of frequency with which Kuwaiti viewers watch television while they are having lunch.
- H.3 Residential location is a major predictor of frequency with which Kuwaiti viewers watch television while they are having dinner.
- H. 4 Residential location is a major predictor of whether Kuwaiti viewers arrange their daily schedules based on television programming schedules.
- H. 5 There is a significant relationship between gender and daily schedule arrangement based upon television programming schedules.
- H. 6 Kuwaitis who have television sets in their bedrooms watch television more often than those who dont.
- H. 7 Kuwaiti female viewers contact television stations more often than their male counterparts.

become more selective in terms of program type preference (Youn, 1994). That is, as viewers are provided with more program options, they will have a better chance to choose programs closer to their own preferences. Therefore, it is proposed that, in a multichannel situation, television viewers program choices will coincide with program type preference more than they would in a broadcast-channel-only situation.

None of the television executives the author met with gave any indication or reference about the audiences demographic characteristics, such as age, income, marital status, and specifically the governorate where viewers live. However, some of the television executives mentioned that there is a difference between Kuwaiti men and women and also there is a difference in educational level of the viewers. The author assumes that there will be some relationships between some of the demographic characteristics, especially the governorate where viewers live in and viewing motivation because some governorates have a low income and the educational level is very low which might also lead to less program choices and perhaps more viewing.

Kuwaiti Audiences:

Previous audience research conducted in Kuwait in recent years has been limited in scope and purpose. Additionally, the majority of the research is conducted by newspapers. Probably, because Kuwait press felt that they were obliged to provide the Kuwait television with some information about the audiences. Those research conducted by newspapers, have used questionable methodologies. Industry experts and insiders indicate that research does not provide the information broadcasters and programmers really need.

From these surveys, there is no clear picture of the Kuwaiti audiences, or how they behave or why they watch. To understand more about these phenomena, the author of the present study met with

nants of the programs viewers choose. The structure of program options are “structural factors that seem to predict choice” (p. 434), while program type preference was considered a probable cause for specific program preferences. Finally, Webster and Wakshlag considered viewer availability to be most responsible for the absence of content-based patterns of viewing.

Webster and Wakshlags findings concur with Comstocks (1980) contention that the decision of whether to watch is largely passive, while the decision of what to watch appears more active. In other words, once the commitment is made to watch television, viewers actively choose from the options before them. It has been widely argued that this two-step decision process highlights the weakness of using program preference as the only predictor of viewership (Heeter, 1985).

Webster & Wakshlags (1983) model is premised upon two important assumptions that merit reconsideration. First, the model assumes that the structure of available program options is fixed. What is the power of structural variables when the structure itself changes, specifically in the direction of more television channels and new forms of media? This may reduce the “binding” nature of structural determinants and make the decision of whether to watch television more active.

Second, the model assumes that programs are “good” in that available programs have an equal cost to viewers. Today, more than 60 percent of U.S. households pay for their programming through subscription to a local cable service. Nearly half of these households pay additional money for one or more “premium” pay cable channels (Nielson, 1995). Moreover, a significant number of people pay for video rentals, direct broadcast satellite content and internet services, among others. Thus, the choice process is becoming much more complex than simply choosing among television channels.

It is expected that as program choices increase, some viewers will

pronounced when the composition of the decision-making group varies overtime (Webster & Wakshlag, 1982).

Another significant audience factor is awareness, or knowledge of the media offerings available to the viewers. Much theorizing about the audience presupposes a perfect awareness on the part of audience members; program selection is assumed to occur with a full knowledge of programming options. Although that assumption may work on a very abstract level or in very simple media environments, it does not seem to work well in the media-rich environments that confront most audience members (Heeter, 1988; Heeter & Greenberg, 1985).

If, as is sometimes the case, people select media offerings without a full understanding of their options, the interpretation of choices as an expression of preference is complicated. How many times has a person missed a favorite TV show because he or she did not know it was there? How often has a person discovered a favorite program or song after it first aired? As more and more media compete for the attention of the audience, these sorts of breakdowns between preference and choice are likely to be increasingly common.

The role that audience preferences play in determining audience behavior, then, is far less tidy than one might wish. If an item attracts a small audience, it may indicate that people found it unappealing. But it could also be that the desired audience was unavailable, or perhaps people just did not know the item was there for taking. Furthermore, audience factors are only half of the picture; the structure of the media has a powerful impact on patterns of exposure.

Webster and Wakshlag (1983) integrated the disparate theoretical perspectives of uses and gratifications and “models of choice.” Their model captured the likely interaction among programming structures, content preferences, and viewing conditions in the program choice process. In doing so, the model elevated the theoretical importance of structural determinants. According to Webster and Wakshlag (1983), program scheduling and viewer availability are important determi-

others in the home since there is more domestic mobility; consequently, there may be less conflict and friction since competing personal agendas and television program preferences may be resolved by moving to another part of the house. People with a small amount of space, however, must use the room they have for many purposes—a multifunctional space that is coordinated according to the demands of time and domestic priorities. These situations require ongoing interpersonal negotiation and constant rearranging of furniture, scheduling of daily tasks, and adjustments of the mental orientations of family members. Thus, viewing television under these circumstances is necessarily social most of the time.

Most research and theory on the relationship between preference and choice focuses on the individual and assumes that personal preferences can be freely exercised in the selection of the media content. Much of media use, however, is done not in isolation, but in the company of others (Webster & Phalen, 1997); this is especially true of television viewing and movie going. Even with the advent of multi-television households and VCRs, group viewing is a common phenomenon. (Bower, 1985).

What little research there is about the dynamics of group viewing suggests that negotiation among competing preferences is quite usual (Bogart, 1972; Lull, 1982; Morely, 1986). Different members of the family seem to exercise more or less influence at different times of the day; for example, programmers make much of the fact that children are often in control of television sets in the late afternoon when they return from school (Eastman, 1993). Exposure to television programming, then, results not only from who is available and what they like, but also from who actually makes the program selections. People get their first choice some of the time, but can be outvoted at other times. If they are overruled, however, they will often stay with the viewing groups. Like availability, this has the effect of making program choices seem more random with respect to content. That randomness is most

As with audience factors, media factors can be categorized as structural or individual. The structural attributes of the media complement the structural features of the mass audience (McQuail, 1996). They include market conditions, modes of distribution, and the organization of available content. Individual level media factors vary in tandem with individual audience attributes, defining differences in the media environment from household

Kline (1971) suggested that people turn the set on out of behavior without much of advance thought about what they will watch. After the set is on, they simply choose the least objectionable program from available offerings. In effect, what Kline suggested was that audience behavior is a two-stage process in which a decision to use the media precedes the selection of specific content. The tendency of people to turn on a set without regard to programming is often taken as evidence of a passive audience—although that label seems needlessly value-laden. The conceptual alternative, a thoroughly active audience, seems unrealistic. Such an audience would turn on a set whenever favorite programs were aired, and turn off a set when they were not.

The key question of how television viewers decide which program to watch is a complex one. The uses and gratifications approach contends that individual viewers watch specific programs because they satisfy certain needs (e.g. Rosengren, Wenner & Palmgreen, 1985; Bryant & Zillmann, 1985). Those working within this approach assume the choice of a program centers upon the active expression of a preference for programs or program types. However, structural factors, described earlier as program scheduling characteristics that might produce certain viewing behaviors, have traditionally been considered important mediators of the programs viewers choose, and thus complicate the relationship between viewing preference and viewing behavior.

The space in which people live has cultural significance that differs from country to country and from family to family. Space refers to the amount of room, the way it is divided, what is placed where, and how things are used accordingly. For people with a lot of space and more televisions like the situation in Kuwait, viewing need not distract

While this strategy has been useful in predicting exposure in laboratory environments or in explaining the consequences of exposure once it has occurred, it has not been particularly useful in unraveling the mass behavior of greater concern to the industry.

The second perspective on audience behavior, according to Webster and Lichty (1991), eschews individual traits and concentrates on cross and cumulative measures of audience size. While individual-level variables are sometimes used to create aggregate audience measurements (such as men and women, and old and young), theoretical interest is more apt to focus on the power of structural variables, such as total audience availability or the scheduling characteristics of the program, to explain audience behavior. Such “structuralist” approaches have had some success in predicting program ratings, patterns of audience flow, and channel loyalty (e.g., Goodhardt et al., 1987; Webster, 1989; Webster & Newton, 1988).

The distinction between these perspectives is not always clear, nor is one more “right” than the other. Nonetheless, Webster and Lichty (1991) have argued for an approach in which structural determinants are given priority in explaining mass audience behavior, while individual level factors receive secondary attention.

Another view on this issue involves a study by Webster and Phalen (1997), who argue that the behavior of the mass audience can be determined at the interface between individual audience members and media. To explain how that interface takes shape and changes over time, they consider two broad categories of factors: audience factors and media factors. Each has a substantial effect on patterns of exposure.

In broadcasting, audience size varies by day of the week. Nationwide, prime-time television audiences are higher on Monday through Thursday and Sunday, and lower on Fridays and Saturdays. The late-night audience (e.g., midnight) on Friday and Saturday, however, is larger than it is during the rest of the week (Webster and Phalen, 1997). Again, this reflects a change in peoples social activities on the weekends. The most dramatic shifts in audience availability, however, occur on an hourly basis.

examined to better understand patterns in how the viewing experience is constructed? It is necessary to take a behavioral rather than cognitive perspective to describe what viewers do, and how their behavior group into styles. Hawkins, Reynolds and Pingree (1991) grouped behaviors into three classes:

Overall viewing activity. This is a behavior that occupies time and is traded off against other behaviors. One behavior might be the number of viewing episodes, where additional episodes implies more selection, particularly when watching is the activity. Another behavior is the length of continuous viewing, often taken to indicate degree of involvement as well as awareness. Within an episode of continuous viewing, some viewers may change the channel frequently while others may not, which provides an indicator of degree of content selection within the overall activity of television viewing.

Content decisions. The aspect of the content selection behavior pertains to loyalty to individual series. Both Goodhardt, Ehrenberg & Collins (1987) and Webster and Wakshlag (1982) phrase this choice primarily in terms of either passively staying with a channel despite a change in genre or actively changing channels to pursue the same genre. But at a half-hour point of continuing viewing, two other choices are possible. One may continue to watch the same channel as a new program of the same genre is presented, and thus ones degree of intent is ambiguous. Or, one may change channels to watch a program of a different genre.

Program stability. Based on the findings of Heeter et al. (1988), an important aspect of viewing style is whether or how often viewers change channels during a program. Doing so might reflect lessened involvement with a program, or might be another manifestation of an overall high level of change-seeking or selection activity.

Webster and Lichty (1991) have identified two broad perspectives that are most often used to explain audience behavior. The first emphasizes the importance of individual viewer traits in determining program choice. Under this approach, theoretical interest tends to focus on viewer needs, preferences, and other mental states (e.g., Rosengren, Wenner & Palmgreen, 1985; Zillmann & Bryant, 1985).

the easier it is for them to decide on what to show and how to show it in order to generate the desired process message(s) from the show. Thus, producers and directors do extensive research before they start recording. They want to know the demographic characteristics of the viewers who the program is designed to target, and who will be watching (Zettl, 1998).

Although television is an integral part of modern life, there is still no satisfactory way to evaluate the success or failure of these efforts. What do viewers make of the channel and program choices available to them? How much satisfaction do they derive from television? What needs or wants, however defined, remain unfulfilled? Do advertisements really sell? Do they make us buy things we do not want? How great is television's influence on the audience and on society in general? Is that influence advantageous or detrimental? Can preponderance of violent programs really warp some minds?

The answers to these and other questions matter not only to those working in television and advertising, but also to those responsible for the medium, and to the public as viewers and consumers. But the question can hardly begin to be answered until one knows how the media are used and how the audience actually behaves.

Audience Behavior:

Many researchers have developed mathematical equations or models that permit the prediction of audience behavior. Some have even gone so far as to posit laws of viewing behavior. These laws, of course, do not bind each person to a code of conduct; rather, they are statements that, in the aggregate, behavior is so predictable as to exhibit law-like tendencies.

In choosing a starting point for studying audience behavior, researchers believe behaviors at the hour and half-hour would be studied first. Despite continuing changes to viewer options, the structure in which viewing behaviors occur is still primarily defined in 30-minute (or multiples of 30) program units (Heeter, 1988; Heeter, D'Allesio, Greenberg & McVoy, 1988).

Taking programs as the primary unit, what behaviors should be

Grossberg and Wartella (1996) write that audiences are members of families, households, communities, and nations; that they are gendered, aged, and members of social classes; that they are skilled and unskilled, educated and uneducated; and, that they watch television while doing other activities and in competition with other things, at times and in places, alone and with other people, in ways that mark their activity as powerfully mediated by the social, economic, political, and technological systems and structures of everyday life.

How viewers watch a particular program is just as important for television producers and directors as it is for programmers. Producers and directors include a description of the characteristics of the programs target audience in their pre-production planning material and use their knowledge of the target audience to guide their decisions at each step of the production process. Even though broadcast television is often thought of as a form of mass communication, successful television producers realize that communication takes place between the message and an individual in the audience (Compesi & Sherriffs, 1997). Even though someone may be part of a very large audience, the individuals response to a program is always important. For a message or program to be effective, it must communicate individually to each person in the audience. This is no easy task, given the variations that may exist among different audience members.

According to Chilton and Butler (1994), detailed information about audience size and structure, and about audience use of and attitudes towards the media and their offerings, is required by four main groups of people:

- * program and film makers, broadcast schedulers, newspaper and magazine editors;
- * media owners selling to opportunities to communicate with an audience to potential advertisers;
- * buyers of such opportunities (the advertisers); and,
- * advertising agencies, media consultants and market research agencies.

Producers need to know as much as possible about the target audience. The more they know about the audiences they are targeting,

of the mass communication process (source, channel, message, receiver, effect) developed by pioneers in the field” (p. 283). There is an established discourse in which “audience” simply refers to readers, viewers or listeners of one or another media channel of a given type of content or performance. The audience is made up of individuals who demand something from the communication to which they are exposed, and who select those communications that are likely to be useful to them. In other words, they must get something from the manipulator if the manipulator is to get something from them.

Webster and Phalen (1997) argue that whenever large numbers of people watch television or read a newspaper, there is a beginning of an audience. As McQuail (1997) notes, “It is a term that is understood by media practitioners and theories... and it has entered into everyday usage, recognized by media users as an unambiguous description of themselves” (p. 1). The audience is seen as a large collection of people scattered across time and space who act autonomously and have little or more immediate knowledge of one another (Webster, 1998). They are defined as an entity by their common exposure to media.

McQuail (1994) presents some main terms regarding the audience:

The **potential audience**-meaning all those who are able to be reached, depending on several factors, but especially having the receiving or play-back equipment location (residing in the zone of distribution, or market), and some social-demographic factors such as income, level of education, age and gender, depending on how the medium is defined;

The **paying audience**-this takes several different forms, but generally regards the purchasers of newspapers, books, records, video recordings, etc.; those who pay admission to the cinema; and subscribers to particular media services like cable or satellite channels

The **audience reached**-this varies from medium to medium, but for print media it means the number that actually reads each newspaper, magazine, etc., while for television or radio it measures the number tuned in to a particular channel or program; it is usually expressed as the “ratings.”

Audiences are not simply watchers or listeners or readers: Hay,

with a comprehensive study which examines the identities of television audience members, as well as all aspects of the audiences exposure to television.

While there were initially no comprehensive field studies, Kuwaiti television executives relied on what local newspapers and magazines published, or personal contacts with viewers (Al-Feeli, 1998; Al-Mudaf, 1998; Al-Mugaseeb, 1998; Al-Nassrallah, 1998; Al-Sabah, 1995; Ebraheim, 2001; Salem, 1998). Gradually, this practice opened a wide door for unobjective personal opinions by academic and professional people, and many criticisms and suggestions in recent years have been taken seriously by some broadcasting executives. Other executives believe that these practices are insufficient tools of evaluation because individual practices do not necessarily represent a genuine viewer's reaction. For this reason, Kuwait television executives have indicated a need for audience research conducted in the academic field.

It is important to conduct such audience research because broadcasters need to know their audiences. The high penetration rate of television sets, satellite television dishes, and the increase in the number of channels in Kuwait has exacerbated the situation, making the "audience" even less predictable. Kuwaiti viewers claim that these new channels are giving them what they want, when they want it. So, the question for Kuwait television executives is: how do the Kuwaiti viewers watch television?

This study is a social-scientific survey of the audience in Kuwait, and looks at viewing behaviors of the Kuwaiti television audiences. Completing this study will enable Kuwait television to better identify its audiences, perform better, and design the messages and their programs according to the characteristics of the audiences. The author also hopes this study will encourage further research into Kuwaiti television programming.

Media Audience

"Audience" has been a familiar term since the earliest days of communication research. McQuail (1994) defines the audience as "the collective word to denote the receivers in the simple sequential model



Kuwaiti Viewers' Behaviors: "Field Study"

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Abstract:

It is well-known that television stations around the world spend tremendous amounts of money and time on their programs, personnel, and equipment in order to communicate with the audience. It is essential for television executives to evaluate any success or failure in achieving their major objectives. Such evaluations can be obtained with a comprehensive study, which examines the identities of television audience members, as well as all aspects of the audiences exposure to television.

This study is a social-scientific survey of the audience in Kuwait. It looks at viewing behaviors of the Kuwaiti television audiences. It defines the behaviors of the Kuwaiti viewers before they turn their TV sets on, the behaviors when they are watching, and their behaviors after finish watching.

This study shows that Kuwaiti viewers can be defined as passive viewers because they don't actively seek ways to know what will be on television. Kuwaiti viewers consider watching television a social activity. When they watch television, they usually watch with their families and friends. The major predictors of the viewing behaviors of the Kuwaitis are their residential and viewers' gender.

I - Introduction:

It is well-known that television stations around the world spend tremendous amounts of money and time on their programs, personnel, and equipment in order to communicate with the audience. It is essential for television executives to evaluate any success or failure in achieving their major objectives. Such evaluations can be obtained

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