

Acceptance of Online Chinese TV Series towards Malaysian Teenager Viewers

Wang Jing^{1, 2, a, *}, Balamuralithara Balakrishnan^{2, b}

¹*Xi'An Peihua University, Shannxi, 710125, China*

²*Faculty of Art, Computing and Creative Industry, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia*

^a*150269@peihua.edu.cn, ^bbalab@fskik.upsi.edu.my*

**Corresponding author*

Keywords: Chinese TV series, Acceptance, Malaysian teenager viewers

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to examine the acceptance and influence of online Chinese TV dramas on Malaysian teenage viewers, which is used to measure the trend and characteristics of Chinese TV dramas in Malaysia through new media platforms in the context of Internet development. Based on quantitative research methods, this study examines the acceptance of online Chinese TV dramas in Malaysia from the perspective of cross-cultural communication. This study takes online Chinese TV dramas as the entry point and selects Malaysian teenage viewers as the research subjects. As a result of this study, it is hoped that these findings will be useful for the television and new media industries in Malaysia as well as for cultural promotion strategies in China.

1. Introduction

TV series is not only a commodity with cultural attributes, but it is also a mainstream mass communication medium, an important channel, and one of the most important artistic carriers for transmitting emotions and spreading cultures, as well as a vital component of intercultural communication. There is no doubt that TV series are a valuable cultural vehicle that delivers rich and vivid content, and its essence is a spiritual culture capable of communicating across cultures. TV series research has a natural and close relationship to mass communication research. Since TV series are products of multiple cultures and science and technology, they are more capable than other art forms of absorbing and integrating the essence of various cultures. Online Chinese TV series display the unique cultural landscape and national characteristics of Chinese culture via their visual presentation. Moreover, this contributes to the important role that Chinese dramas play in cross-cultural communication and is conducive to generating acceptance and influence on viewers' perceptions of Chinese culture. Therefore, assessing the acceptance and influence of online Chinese TV series overseas can provide insight into the relationship between overseas viewers' viewing of Chinese TV series and their perceptions of Chinese culture.

With the rapid development of the online video business, websites have become the preferred channel for Malaysian viewers to watch Chinese TV series. A significant role has been played by the popularity of Chinese television series on the Internet in Malaysia in spreading Chinese culture.

As a result of Chinese TV series, Malaysian viewers have the opportunity to “enter China”, learn about China, and experience the charm of Chinese culture. Malaysia has seen an increase in the number and variety of Chinese TV series, and therefore, the influence of Chinese culture has become more and more evident on Malaysian culture.

This thesis deals with the acceptance of online Chinese TV series by Malaysia teenager viewers and aims to summarize the characteristics of Malaysia teenager viewers who watch online Chinese TV series at this stage; to examine why Malaysia teenager viewers have been attracted to Chinese TV series for a long time; how their way of watching online Chinese TV series has changed since entering the 21st century; and explore the online Chinese TV series in the new media era.

2. Research Methodology

In this study, a pragmatic research paradigm was employed. It was determined that a quantitative approach would be most appropriate for the purposes of the study. We used questionnaires in order to collect data regarding Malaysian teenager viewers' viewing habits of online Chinese TV series, their evaluation of the artistic qualities of online Chinese TV series, and their acceptance of the values conveyed by online Chinese TV series.

3. Target Population

Firstly, this dissertation primarily focuses on a new means of disseminating Chinese TV series in Malaysia: the Internet. Web-based film and television is a new way to present film and television art, which has been developed along with the digital technology of the Internet (JIN X.K, 2020). It is created in response to the development trend of the Internet era and exhibits distinctive characteristics of that era. Despite the new communication tool of the Internet to disseminate information, the research focus remains on television dramas. In this thesis, the distribution channels utilized to transmit Chinese TV series are the Internet, including computer networks and cell phone networks.

Furthermore, respondents chosen for inclusion in the sample must be representative of the target population at large. In terms of the research subject, this thesis investigates the young Malaysian online audience between the ages of 18 and 25. Communications methods will inevitably affect the age group and will change dramatically. There are specific requirements for the audience to use computer networks or cell phone networks skillfully. The youth group between 18 and 25 years of age is the most significant demographic that constitutes the online audience since it is the group that uses the most computers and cell phones to access the Internet and has the most access to online videos. The target population for this study was Malaysian teenagers aged 18-25 who live in the Klang Valley (including Kuala Lumpur and Selangor) because the distribution of the questionnaire was problematic. Participants will be recruited through Facebook posts and the questionnaire will be distributed via Whatsapp, Facebook, and other social media channels.

4. Demographic Information

In order to conduct the survey, questionnaires were distributed and collected through social media channels such as Whatsapp and Facebook. In this study, 850 questionnaires were distributed from February to November 2021, and 812 questionnaires were collected, with a return rate of 95.53%. Following an analysis of the questionnaires and the removal of those with many missing answers and those containing repeated responses, 789 valid questionnaires were obtained, resulting in an effective rate of 92.82%.

Table 1 Demographic Description Of the Official Sample Respondents

Demographic Scalar	Category	Numbers	Percentage
Gender	Male	331	41.95%
	Female	458	58.05%
Age	18	89	11.28%
	19	56	7.09%
	20	110	13.94%
	21	84	10.64%
	22	107	13.56%
	23	122	15.46%
	24	103	13.05%
	25	118	14.95%
Education	Diploma / STPM / Matriculation/ Pre-University	431	54.63%
	Bachelor's degree	242	30.67%
	High School / SPM	113	14.32%
Religious Belief	Islam	295	37.38%
	Buddhism	206	26.09%
	Christianity	252	31.93%
	Hinduism	36	4.56%
Marital status	Married	0	0
	Single	789	100%
Residence	Kuala Lumpur	442	56.02%
	Selangor-Klang Valley	347	43.98%

5. Respondents' Viewing of Online Chinese TV Series

Following the research data, Table 1 illustrates the gender distribution of respondents to this questionnaire survey. Most respondents are female, representing 58% of the total audience, and male, representing 42% of the whole audience. Malaysia teenager viewers audiences comprise 54.63% of those who hold a Diploma, STPM, or Matriculation/Pre-University, 30.67% with a Bachelor's degree, and 14.32% with a High School diploma. Approximately 14.32% of the population falls into this category. Education levels are relatively similar among the two groups. In this survey, 37.38% of the respondents identify as Muslims, 26.09% as Buddhists, 31.93% as Christians, and 4.56% as Hindus. The Malaysian teenager respondents were all single and unmarried, and all of them had watched Chinese-language television series. Respondents in Kuala Lumpur accounted for 56.02% of the total, and those in Selangor-Klang Valley accounted for 43.98% of the total.

5.1 Way to Know

Table 2 illustrates the channels that respondents preferred to watch online Chinese TV series using the questionnaire data. Accordingly, 51.83% of Malaysian teenager viewers view Chinese TV series online, indicating that the Internet platform can effectively and rapidly promote Chinese dramas in Malaysia. Another 12.04% of the audience discovered online Chinese TV series through recommendations from their friends or family members. The study indicates that 19.89% of Malaysian teenager viewers learned about online Chinese TV series through new media platforms such as Facebook. Social media platforms are essential platforms for promoting online Chinese TV series in Malaysia. On the whole, 9.25% of respondents learned about Chinese TV series online through participating in the online community. Compared with traditional media such as newspapers and television, only 4.05% and 3.01% of the respondents learned online Chinese TV series through conventional media.

Table 2 Way to Know Online Chinese TV Series

Question	Option	Numbers	Percentage
How did you know about online Chinese TV series?	Internet Websites	409	51.83%
	New Media (eg. Facebook)	157	19.89%
	Online Community	73	9.25%
	Recommended by friends	95	12.04%
	TV	23	3.01%
	News Papers	32	4.05%

Table 3 indicates that 10% of respondents began watching online Chinese TV series within the past month, 13.05% began watching 1-6 months ago, 37% began watching 6-12 months ago, and 10% began watching 1-2 years ago. It is clear from these figures that there is still a substantial audience for online Chinese TV series, and it is these potential audiences that require nurturing. There are 18.12% of respondents who have watched online Chinese TV series for three to four years, and 9.98% of respondents who have watched online Chinese TV series for five years or more.

Table 3 Watching History

Question	Option	Numbers	Percentage
When did you start watching Chinese TV series?	Less than 1 month	94	11.91%
	1-6 months	103	13.05%
	6-12 months	292	37%
	1-2 years	79	10.01%
	3-4 years	143	18.12%
	More than 5 years	78	9.98%

5.2 Watching Frequency

According to the research data, 40.68% of Malaysian teenager viewers watch online Chinese TV series via smartphones every day, 2.92% watch once a week, 24.41% watch 2-3 times a week, and 31.39% watch 4-5 times a week. The percentage of Malaysian teenager viewers who watch the show once a month is 2.92%, 24.41% watch it 2-3 times a week, and 31.39% watch it 4-5 times a week. Malaysian teenager viewers who watch at least once a month comprise 2.02% of viewers.

Table 4 the Frequency of Watch Chinese TV Series on Smartphone

Question	Option	Numbers	Percentage
How often do you watch online Chinese TV series on your smartphone?	Everyday	321	40.68%
	1time / week	31	2.92%
	2-3 times / week	169	24.41%
	4-5 times / week	252	31.93%
	1 time / month	16	2.02%

Table 5 the Frequency of Watch Chinese TV Series on Computer

Question	Option	Numbers	Percentage
How often do you watch online Chinese TV series on your computer?	Everyday	17	2.15%
	1time / week	181	22.94%
	2-3 times / week	78	9.88%
	4-5 times / week	87	11.02%
	1time / month	426	53.99%

6. Conclusion

With close geopolitical and cultural ties to China, Malaysia is ideally positioned to conduct cross-cultural research on Chinese TV series aired online. In order to understand the cultural dissemination of online Chinese TV series in the exporting countries or to understand the cultural acceptance of online Chinese TV series in the importing countries, it is essential to take into account the subjectivity of audiences in cross-cultural diffusion. Researchers interested in promoting the international dissemination of online Chinese TV series should pay attention to the behavioral characteristics and habits of audiences watching online Chinese TV series through the Internet and mobile devices in the new media communication environment, in addition to the content of online Chinese TV series.

References

- [1] Y. Li. *A study of the current state of television development in Malaysia*, *International Journal of Production Research*, vol.11, pp. 78-82, 2019.
- [2] Y. Y. Liang. *Chinese Television Medias and Programs in Malaysia: Market Competition and Social Integration*, *Southeast Asian Studies*, vol.04, pp. 93-99, 2014.
- [3] C. S. Wang. *The Cultural Identity of Chinese-language Drama Narrative in Malaysia*, *Contemporary Cinema*, vol.06, pp. 75-79, 2018.
- [4] J. R. Wang. *An analysis of the development and popularity of Malaysian TV dramas*, *Journal of Shijiazhuang University*, vol. 21, pp. 143-148, 2019.
- [5] F. Lai, F. B. Li. *A study of Chinese TV series' ratings in Malaysia*, *Contemporary Communication*, vol. 04, pp. 75-76, 2015.