AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS AND MARKET INFLUENCE: ANALYZING THE METHODOLOGY BEHIND THE RAIGAM TELE'ES MOST POPULAR PROGRAMME AWARDS IN SRI LANKA'S TELEVISION INDUSTRY

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Abstract

Business demography offers a vital lens to understand how audience structures and preferences influence recognition and market dynamics in Sri Lanka's television industry, as exemplified by the Raigam Tele'es awards. The Raigam Tele'es, organized annually by the Raigam Group of Companies, represents one of the most prestigious award platforms in Sri Lanka's television industry. Distinguished for its commitment to fairness and transparency, it departs from conventional SMS-based voting by employing a statistically rigorous, survey-based methodology. The survey design ensures accuracy and inclusivity through a representative sample of 31,000 respondents, derived from the national population projection with a 95% confidence level and a 1% margin of error. By incorporating demographic factors such as age, gender, district distribution, and urban-rural representation, the methodology guarantees that results authentically reflect diverse viewer preferences. Enhanced by ICT innovations including mobile app-based data collection and secured databases, the process reinforces credibility and efficiency. This paper situates the Raigam Tele'es within the field of business demography, highlighting how demographic structures and consumer preferences shape recognition, market strategies, and industry standards. The Raigam Tele'es thus stands as both a celebration of artistic excellence and a benchmark of methodological integrity, offering the television industry a reliable reflection of audience sentiment while advancing recognition standards in Sri Lanka's media landscape.

Keywords: Raigam Tele'es, Television industry, Survey methodology, Audience preferences, Business demography

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Introduction

Business demography offers a vital lens to understand how audience structures and preferences influence recognition and market dynamics (Gibson, 2024). In Sri Lanka's television industry, this is exemplified by the Raigam Tele'es, a prominent annual awards ceremony organized by the Raigam Group of Companies, which celebrates excellence in programming and performance. What distinguishes the event is its innovative methodology for determining award recipients, particularly in the category of 'Most Popular Programme' through a structured, survey-based approach rather than conventional SMS voting. This shift reflects a deliberate effort to capture the genuine preferences of a demographically diverse audience. By incorporating variables such as age, gender, location, and viewing habits, the Raigam Tele'es ensures representativeness and fairness while also generating valuable insights into consumer behavior and market segmentation. This methodological framework illustrates how business demography can be effectively applied in the media and entertainment sectors to align content strategies with evolving audience profiles and preferences.

Objective

The objective of this paper is to examine the application of business demography and the methodological contribution of a large-scale, survey-based approach in understanding audience preferences and recognition dynamics in Sri Lanka's television industry through the Raigam Tele'es awards

Methodology

The methodology employed in determining the sample size for the Raigam Tele'es survey is pivotal for ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the results, setting it apart from other methods such as SMS-based voting. Through meticulous calculation based on various indicators, including total population size, confidence level, and margin of error, this methodology guarantees robust representation of viewer preferences within the population (Kadam, 2010).

An innovative approach was adopted to determine the best awards by drawing a representative sample to make predictions for the total population. Utilizing data from the Population Projection 2012-2037 (Dissanayake, 2016) , individuals aged 10 years and over were identified as the total viewer population, totaling 18,582,912. The sample size, comprising 31,000 respondents, was meticulously calculated using the total population size, a 95% confidence level, and a 1% margin of error (Fox et al., 2007)).

Acknowledging the variability of viewer perception with age and gender, the survey incorporated the age-sex structure of the projected population to ensure demographic representation within the sample. Additionally, the sample was drawn based on the proportionate distribution of the population across districts, further refined by the urban and rural sectors' proportionate distribution as observed in the latest census data.

Embracing the advancements of the ICT Age, a mobile app was developed to record viewers' perceptions instantly. This facilitated seamless data transfer to the central ICT office, where a specific database with password protection ensured information confidentiality. This modernized data collection process not only enhanced efficiency but also upheld the integrity and security of the survey data.

It is important to note that viewers were enrolled into the survey at the point of contact during in-person engagements at various Raigam product sales outlets across the country. These locations were strategically selected to ensure wide geographic and demographic coverage. Participants were approached and recruited on-site, and data were collected directly through the mobile application. In cases of nonresponse or refusal, immediate replacements were drawn from the same location to maintain the integrity and size of the sample. This replacement strategy ensured that the target sample size of 31,000 was consistently achieved without compromising representativeness. The use of face-to-face enrollment combined with real-time digital data capture significantly minimized nonresponse bias and contributed to the overall robustness and reliability of the findings.

Moreover, the inclusion of geographical factors, such as district and urban/rural classification, further enhances the sample’s

representativeness. By proportionately allocating sample sizes across districts and urban/rural sectors based on census data, the survey captures nuanced preferences of viewers from diverse geographic and socio-economic backgrounds.

The meticulous methodology employed in determining the sample size for the Raigam Tele'es survey underscores its reliability and significance over other methods. By prioritizing statistical rigor, demographic diversity, and geographical inclusivity, the survey ensures that the resulting awards authentically reflect viewer preferences, reinforcing its credibility within the Sri Lankan television industry.

In the context of the Raigam Tele'es awards, where the methodology aims to accurately gauge viewer preferences in the Sri Lankan television industry, a 1% margin of error ensures the reliability of the final results. This means that even if there is a slight variation in the estimated popularity of programs or actors, the overall conclusions drawn from the survey remain robust. Just as in television ratings where a small margin of error doesn't change the perception of a show's popularity, the 1% margin of error in the Raigam Tele'es survey allows for a reasonable level of uncertainty while still maintaining the integrity of the awards process. This level of precision assures industry professionals that the awards reflect genuine viewer sentiments, providing a solid foundation for decision-making and recognition within the television industry (Hamed, 2017).

For example, imagine you're watching a popular television show, and you want to know how many people are also watching it across the country. Now, if a survey is conducted to estimate the viewership of this show, it's like taking a snapshot of a large group of people to get an idea of what everyone is watching. Let's say the survey estimates that 60% of the population watches this show, with a margin of error of 1%. This means that the actual percentage of people watching the show could be as high as 61% or as low as 59%. However, even if the true percentage is at the extreme end of this range, it wouldn't change the overall conclusion that the show is highly popular. In simpler terms, a 1% margin of error allows for a slight wiggle room in the estimate, but it doesn't change the main picture. So, even if the actual viewership is slightly higher or lower than

what the survey suggests, it won't significantly alter the perception that the show is widely watched.

In the context of the Raigam Tele'es awards, a 1% margin of error ensures that the final results, such as the most popular programs or actors, remain reliable and reflective of the overall preferences of the television audience. This level of accuracy provides confidence to industry professionals that the awards are based on solid data and represent genuine viewer sentiments (Althubaiti, 2022).

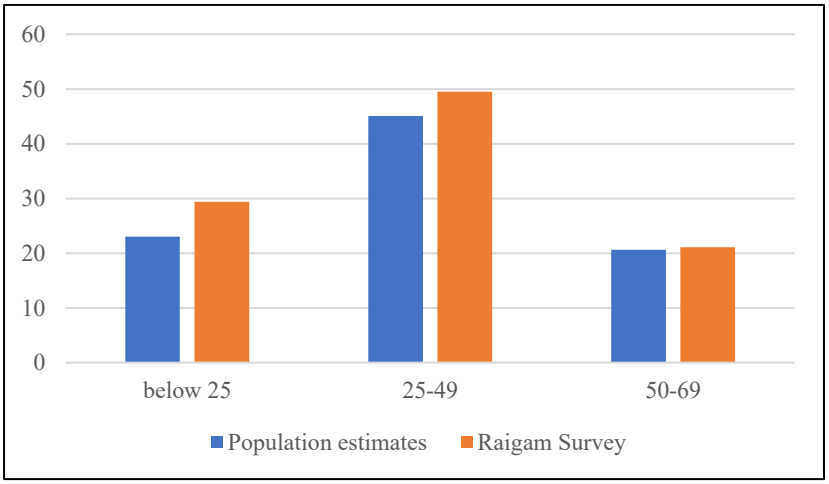
Results and Discussion[4]

Strategic Sampling and Demographic Representation in the Raigam Tele'es Survey: Ensuring Validity and Relevance for Television Program Analysis

As Figure 1 depicts, the sample selection closely mirrors the population estimates with slight overrepresentation in the key demographic groups (below 25 and 25-49), which are crucial for understanding television program popularity. The increased focus on younger and middle-aged groups aligns well with the target audience for many television programs, ensuring that their preferences and opinions are well-represented in the survey results. The slight deviations in representation are justified given the importance of these age groups in media consumption patterns, thus supporting the validity and relevance of the sample selection for the survey.

[4] **Disclaimer on Naming Conventions**:
To maintain neutrality and avoid any unintentional biases, this study has utilized hypothetical names for television channels and programs instead of their actual names. This approach ensures the focus remains on the methodology and findings without being influenced by any preconceived perceptions associated with real entities.

Figure 1: Comparison of Population Projection Estimates and Raigam Sample by Broad Age Groups

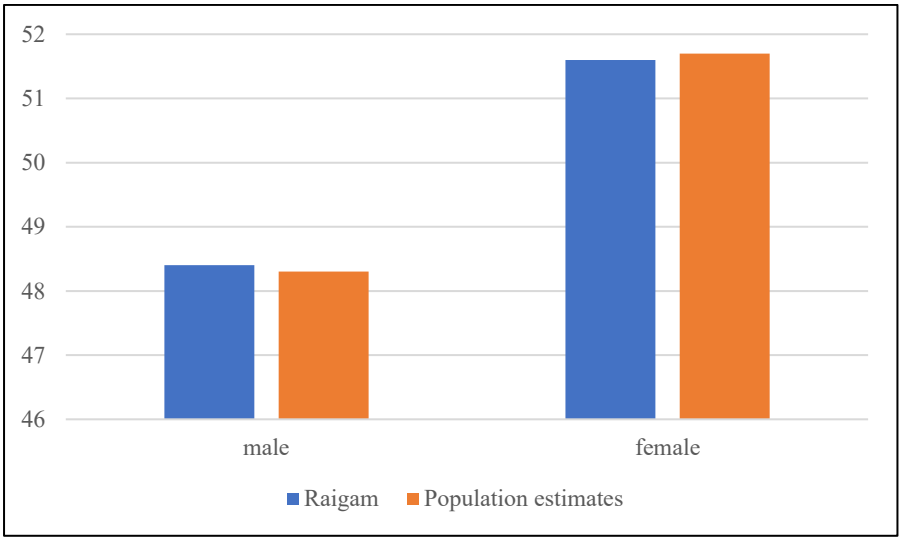


Source: Raigam Tele'es Survey (2023)

The breakdown of age groups in our survey is not only representative of the population but also strategically emphasizes key demographics that are essential for understanding television program popularity. By slightly overrepresenting younger and middle-aged viewers, the survey captures the opinions of those most engaged with contemporary media, while still ensuring that older viewers are well-represented. This balanced and inclusive approach strengthens the overall findings, making them more relevant and actionable for television programming decisions.

The gender distribution in our sampled population closely mirrors the population estimates, with only minimal differences (Figure 2). In the Raigam survey, males make up 48.4% and females 51.6% of the sample, compared to population estimates of 48.3% males and 51.7% females. This alignment indicates that our sample is highly representative of the general population in terms of gender, thereby ensuring that the survey results are reliable and reflective of the broader population's preferences and opinions.

Figure 2: Comparison of Gender Distribution of the Sampled Population and Population Estimates



Source: Raigam Tele'es Survey; (2023)

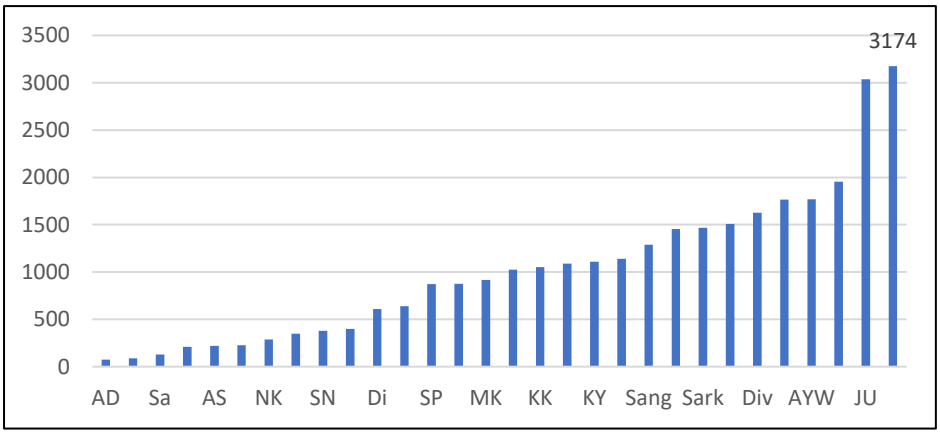
Since the sample accurately reflects the population demographics (e.g., age and gender) with minimal differences, the sample is already representative of the population. This indicates that the sampling method was effective, and the results should naturally generalize well to the population. Small differences between the sample and the population can be considered negligible. Therefore, we did not introduce weights to our survey data analysis, as it would add unnecessary complexity without significantly improving the accuracy of the results.

Audience Preferences for TV Dramas: A Hierarchical Analysis

Figure 3 displays the frequency of viewers' preferences for various TV dramas based on a survey. The data reveals a clear hierarchy of popularity among the listed shows. "IKE" is the most preferred drama with 3,174 viewers, followed closely by "JU" with 3,038 viewers. Other highly favored dramas include "RWA" (1,953 viewers), "AYW" (1,769 viewers), and "DIN" (1,766 viewers). Mid-range popularity shows such as "Di" (1,627 viewers) and "KDAT" (1,509 viewers) also garnered significant

attention. In contrast, dramas like "AD" (74 viewers) and "SR" (88 viewers) were less popular among the audience. This distribution indicates a significant concentration of viewership towards a few top dramas, with a steep drop in popularity as we move towards the lower end of the list.

Figure 3 : Number of preferences on TV drama

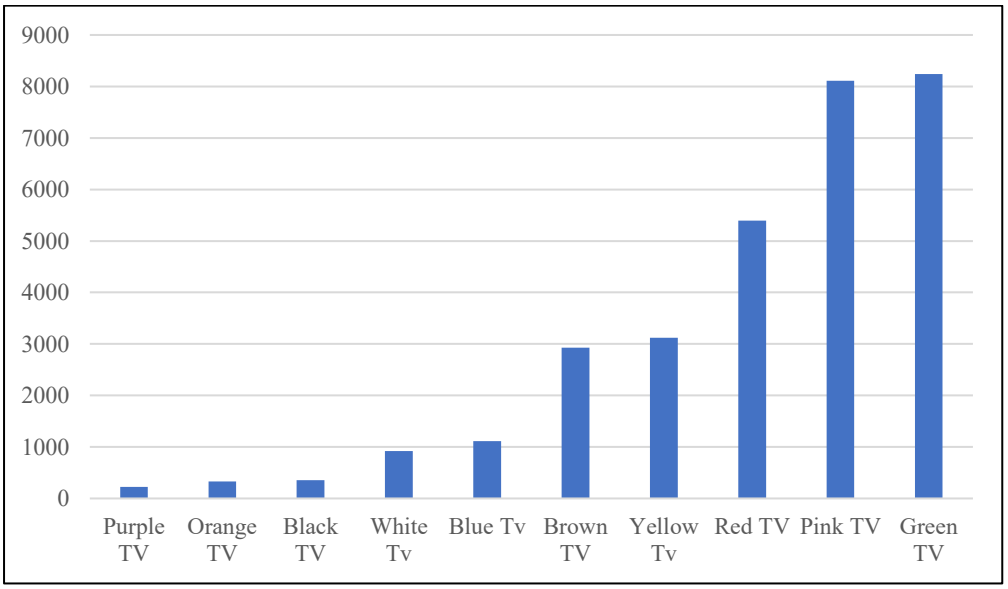


Source: Raigam Tele'es Survey (2023)

Distribution of Viewership Across TV Channels

The distribution of audience preferences for TV channels shows a distinct variation in viewership (Figure 4). "Green TV" leads as the most-watched channel with 8,240 viewers, followed by "Pink TV" with 8,109 viewers, and "Red TV" with 5,393 viewers. "Yellow" and "Brown" also have significant viewership with 3,121 and 2,930 viewers, respectively. In contrast, channels like "Purple TV" (222 viewers), "Orange TV" (331 viewers), and "Black" (355 viewers) have relatively smaller audiences. Channels such as "White" and "Blue TV" attract moderate viewership, with 921 and 1,112 viewers respectively. This distribution highlights a significant preference for a few leading channels while others have comparatively lower engagement.

Figure 4: Distribution of Viewership Across TV Channels

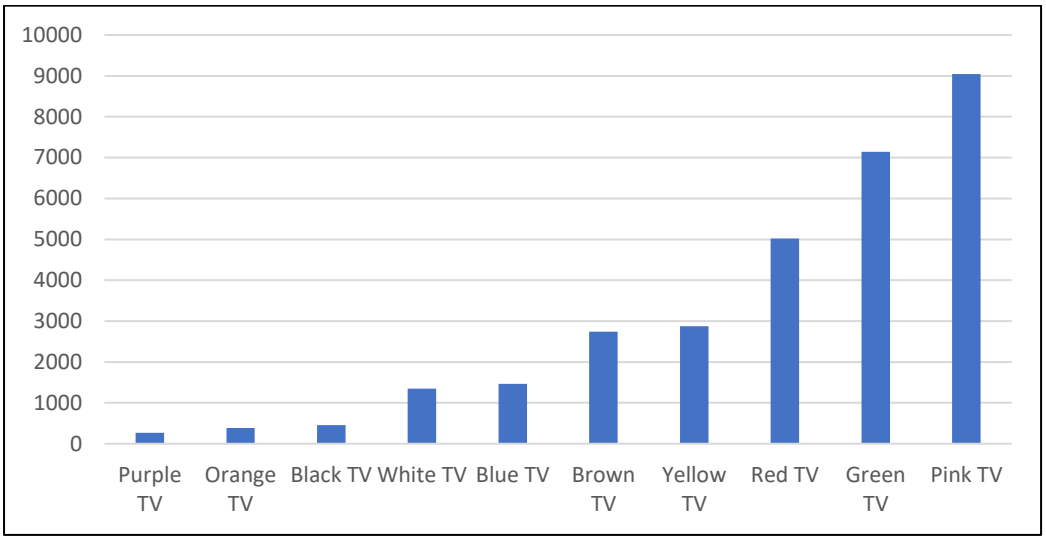


Source: Raigam Tele'es Survey (2023)

Viewership Distribution of News Bulletins Across Channels

The distribution of viewership for news bulletins indicates a clear preference for certain channels. "Pink TV" has the highest viewership with 9,041 viewers, followed by "Green TV" with 7,145 viewers, and "Red TV" with 5,016 viewers. "Yellow" and "Brown" also attract a significant number of viewers, with 2,872 and 2,742 respectively. In contrast, channels like "Purple TV" (271 viewers), "Orange TV" (381 viewers), and "Black TV" (456 viewers) have much smaller audiences. Moderate viewership is seen for "White TV" (1,348 viewers) and "Blue TV" (1,462 viewers). This distribution highlights a strong concentration of viewership towards the top three channels, with a notable drop for the remaining channels.

Figure 5: Viewership Distribution of News Bulletins Across Channels

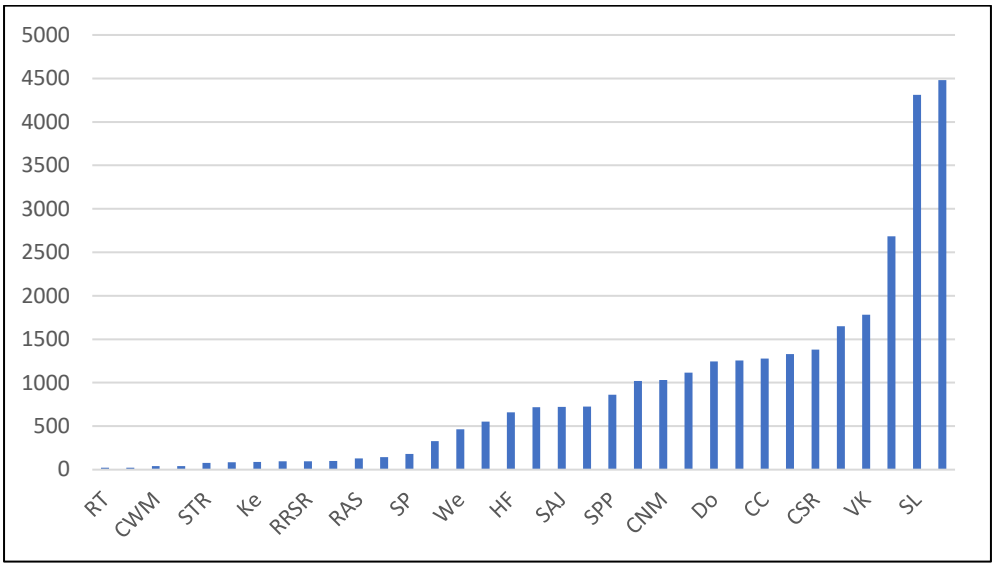


Source: Raigam Tele'es Survey (2023)

Viewership Preferences: Unveiling the Variety Show Landscape in Sri Lanka

Figure 05 presents the viewership preferences for various variety shows telecasted by TV channels in Sri Lanka. "HS" leads with the highest viewership at 4,481, followed closely by "SL" with 4,311 viewers. Other popular shows include "DS" (2,684 viewers), "VK" (1,783 viewers), and "FMD" (1,651 viewers). Shows like "CSR" (1,379 viewers), "At" (1,328 viewers), and "CC" (1,277 viewers) also have significant audiences. In contrast, programs such as "RT" (22 viewers) and "ISL" (23 viewers) have much smaller audiences. This distribution highlights a strong preference for a few highly popular shows, with a substantial drop in viewership for the majority of other programs.

Figure 6: Viewership Preferences: Unveiling the Variety Show Landscape

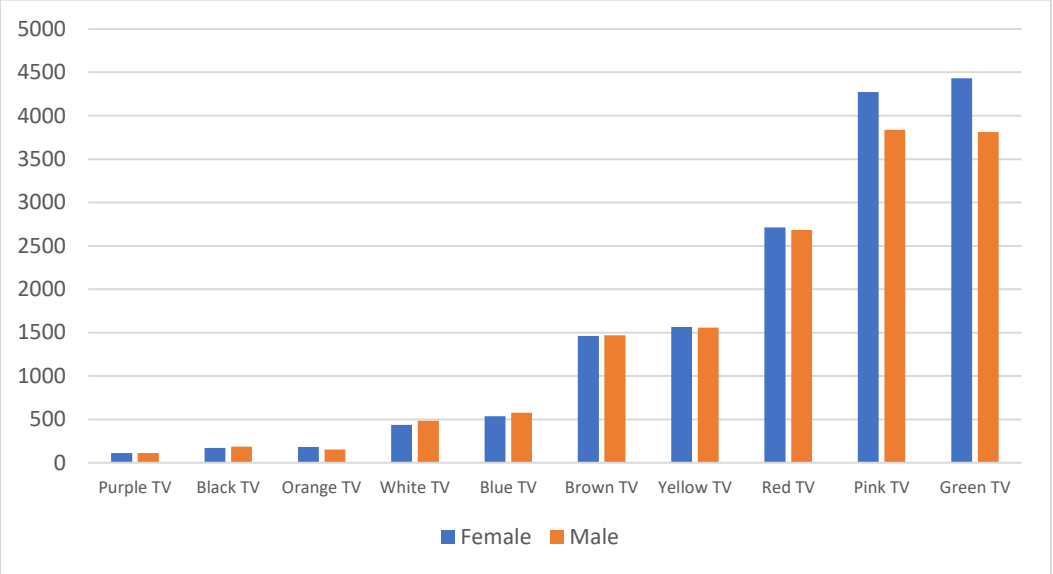


Source: Raigam Tele'es Survey (2023)

Unveiling Gender Dynamics: A Dive into TV Channel Viewership in Sri Lanka

The viewership data for prominent TV channels provides intriguing insights into gender-based preferences in Sri Lanka's television landscape. While there's a consistent trend of higher female viewership across all channels, the degree of difference varies slightly. Channels like Green TV and Pink TV stand out as frontrunners in terms of overall viewership, attracting significant attention from both male and female audiences. Despite the minor fluctuations in gender-based viewership numbers, these channels maintain a broad appeal, suggesting that their content resonates well across diverse demographic segments. This nuanced understanding of viewership patterns can inform content strategies and advertising decisions, enabling broadcasters to effectively engage with their target audiences.

Figure 7: Unveiling Gender Dynamics: A Dive into TV Channel Viewership

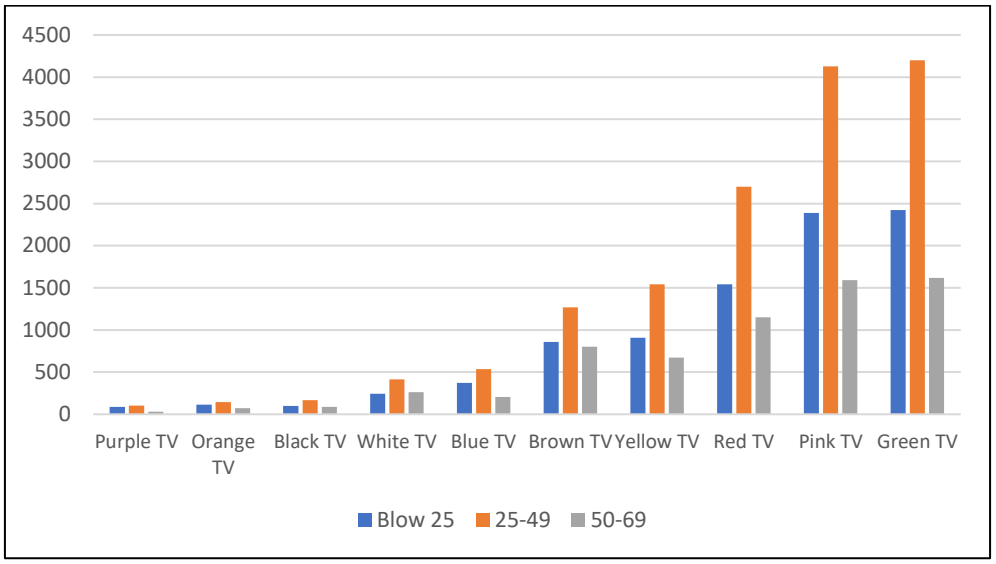


Source: Raigam Tele'es Survey (2023)

Age Dynamics: Unveiling Viewership Trends Across TV Channels in Broad Age Group

The distribution of most viewed TV channels across broad age groups provides valuable insights into viewership preferences among different segments of the population. Unsurprisingly, there's a consistent trend of higher viewership among the 25-49 age group, indicating the significance of this demographic in television consumption. Channels like Green TV and Pink TV emerge as frontrunners across all age groups, reflecting their broad appeal and popularity among viewers of varying ages. Additionally, channels like Brown TV and Yellow TV also garner considerable viewership across age categories, suggesting a diverse audience base. However, it's noteworthy that certain channels, such as Red TV and Blue TV, demonstrate a more pronounced dominance among younger viewers compared to older demographics. This nuanced understanding of age-based viewership patterns can inform content strategies and advertising decisions, enabling broadcasters to effectively engage with their target audiences across different age groups.

Figure 8: TV Viewership by Age Group

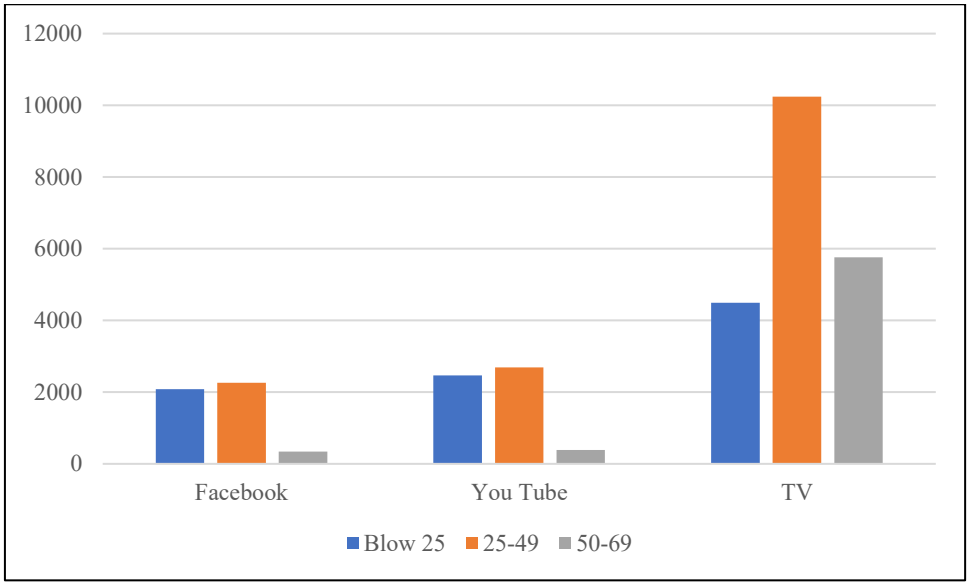


Source: Raigam Tele'es Survey (2023)

Age-Based Viewing Preferences: Comparing TV, YouTube, and Facebook Engagement

The distribution of viewing modes across different age groups reveals distinct preferences among the audiences. For individuals under 25, TV remains the most popular mode with 4,491 viewers, significantly outpacing YouTube (2,464 viewers) and Facebook (2,084 viewers). Among the 25-49 age group, TV still dominates with 10,245 viewers, followed by YouTube with 2,694 viewers and Facebook with 2,265 viewers. For the 50-69 age group, TV continues to lead with 5,761 viewers, while YouTube and Facebook have considerably lower viewership at 390 and 340 viewers, respectively. This distribution highlights a clear trend where traditional TV is the preferred viewing mode across all age groups, especially among older viewers, while younger audiences show more interest in digital platforms like YouTube and Facebook, although these still lag behind TV in popularity.

Figure 9 : Aged-based Viewing Preferences: Comparing TV, YouTube, and Facebook Engagement

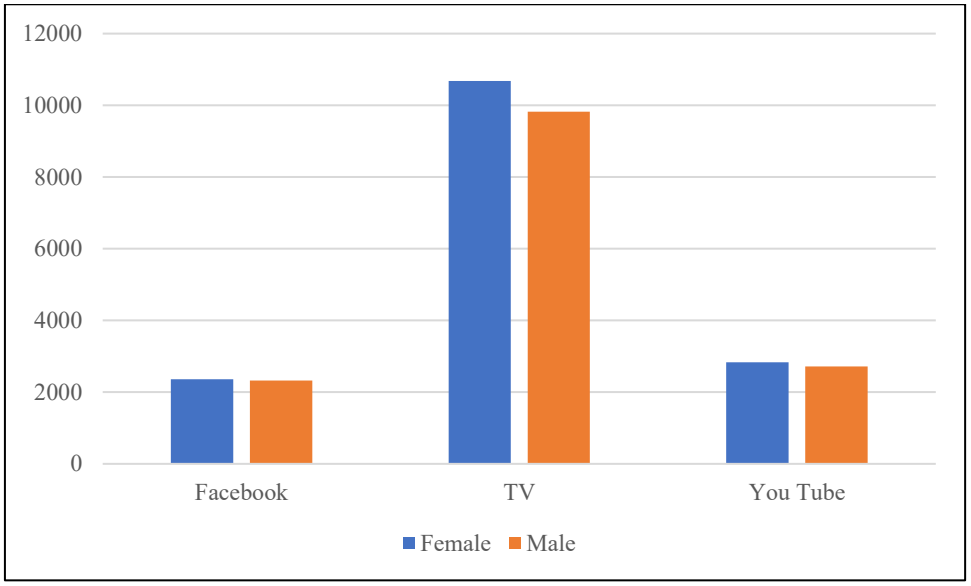


Source: Raigam Tele'es Survey (2023)

Gender-Based Viewing Preferences Across TV, YouTube, and Facebook

The distribution of viewers by gender and mode reveals distinct patterns in media consumption. TV is the dominant medium for both females and males, with 10,679 female viewers and 9,818 male viewers, indicating a strong preference across genders. YouTube is the second most popular platform, with 2,829 female viewers and 2,719 male viewers, showing a relatively balanced viewership between genders. Facebook has the lowest viewership among the three modes, but still maintains a significant presence with 2,364 female viewers and 2,325 male viewers. Overall, while TV remains the most preferred mode of viewership, both YouTube and Facebook show considerable engagement, with minimal gender disparity in their audiences.

Figure 10: Gender-Based Viewing Preferences Across TV, YouTube, and Facebook



Source: Raigam Tele'es Survey (2023)

Conclusion

The Raigam Tele'es Awards, spearheaded by the renowned Raigam Group of Companies, have emerged as a hallmark of distinction and celebration in Sri Lanka's television sector. This prestigious annual event not only honours outstanding television productions and performers but also pioneers a refined and methodologically sound approach to award selection. Departing from traditional SMS-based voting mechanisms, the Raigam Tele'es adopts a carefully structured survey designed to capture viewer preferences with a high degree of precision and inclusivity.

At the core of the Raigam Tele'es approach lies a scientifically grounded methodology that reinforces the validity and dependability of its outcomes. The survey's sample size is rigorously calculated using statistical parameters such as the total viewer population, desired confidence level, and allowable margin of error ensuring a representative cross-section of the audience is captured. Further enhancing its robustness, the methodology integrates key demographic factors,

including age, sex, and geographic distribution, to produce findings that are both comprehensive and reflective of Sri Lanka's diverse population.

By integrating innovative tools and data collection techniques, the Raigam Tele'es survey sets a new benchmark in transparency and methodological excellence. The deployment of a dedicated mobile application for real-time data entry, coupled with secure, password-protected databases, safeguards data integrity while enabling efficient and accurate collection across the island.

The insights derived from this rigorous process offer a nuanced understanding of audience behaviour and preferences across a spectrum of programming from teledramas and entertainment shows to news segments. The inclusion of gender-disaggregated analysis further reveals the reach and resonance of different channels among varied viewer demographics, offering valuable guidance for content creators and advertisers alike.

In essence, the Raigam Tele'es Awards do more than celebrate artistic merit; they exemplify a steadfast commitment to innovation, accountability, and methodological rigor. Through its transparent and evidence-based selection process, the Raigam Tele'es continues to redefine standards of excellence in Sri Lanka's television industry, while offering credible and actionable insights into audience engagement.

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