

Understanding of Television Viewership and Revenue Share: A Comparative Study on Kannada News Channels

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Abstract

Past one decade Kannada news and infotainment space have seen a major transformation when Kannada 24X7 news channels entered into the TV scenario and the same phenomena of news channel launch have changed the news scenario and media market strategy in Karnataka. While the state is still witnessing the launch of new news channels almost every year, the truth is that most of them are bleeding in terms of profitability and are trying their best to economize their operations as well as create new ways of revenue generation. Due to the overflow of news channels, the viewership has been unsettling comparatively at every moment. While this paper will elaborate how viewership is been shaped in different channels and at a different period. The paper also will analyze on increasing and decrease of viewership and revenue growth in the duration of two benchmark years of TV i.e. 2015 and 2017.

Key Words: Viewership, Media, Market, News Channels

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Preamble

This research was conducted in order to understand the rapidly changing media market in India. It is a particular attempt at unearthing the various factors at play in contemporary television news scenario of Karnataka. With several new players entering the market every year, the Kannada news channels have transformed from basic news reading to competitive progressive news broadcast stations. While the competitiveness in TV news channels will be equally explored in this research paper. Efforts will also be made to comprehend the viewership patterns across the top Kannada news channels in Karnataka in different years.

Introduction

Television (TV) industry has an inspiring past and has been considered as the greatest and most significant inventions of the 20th century. It also plays an imperative role in disseminating culture, information's and values due to its easy accessibility and availability and brought the world closer together. Television has experienced innovation in technology, consumption, regulatory frameworks and industry structure, both historically and globally. As an industry it has experienced convergence with other media platforms as a media product, television programs have developed from passive viewing to a more interactive experience. From its inception Television has been used as a powerful medium for various purposes such as broadcasting information, entertainment, imparting knowledge, educating and also shaping public relations.

When audiovisual medium entered the media scenario, it transformed the way people processed information. The normal process of reading carefully and listening with care was replaced by the audio being compensated with the visual supporting it and people being able to

take in the information without having to be vigilant. Also, it increased the conviction levels by a larger margin, as people tend to lean towards the facts that they have witnessed. The visuals played the role of evidence in the news that is being broadcasted. When this happened it was easier for people to relate to the news being broadcasted. The mere idea of people being able to watch the events happening all over the world live, was enough to make them intrigued and fascinated, and that is why television took the media scene by a storm the moment it came into existence.

But now, the initial excitement has faded for a long while and people have gotten used to the medium. With the excitement gone from the scene, people have become more selective about which channel they watch on a daily basis. The fact that people are not consistent in their choice of the channel makes it tough for the TV channels to have a good strength of daily viewers. Very fewer viewers are loyal to a single channel when it comes to 'first come first serve' kind of stiff competition going on in the market today. In the race of being well informed in today's fast-growing capitalist society, people prefer watching a news immediately as it happens and it is for this reason viewers skip from one channel to another in order to find the newest and the biggest happening. The whole tradition of switching the remote from one channel to another in search of breaking news has led the news channels to believe that people are more likely to watch a channel that has a big news to broadcast every day. To, have a big news every day is not plausible and hence, in order to pull the audiences news channels today have started to sensationalize each and every piece of news they come across. Sensationalize and exaggeration has today become a better part of many daily news channels and it has led many critics and researchers to point out the fact that the news that is being served to us is not objective.

Past one decade news and infotainment space has seen a major transformation. There have been some changes in the number of channels as the total number of News channels has gone up to 397 and the General Entertainment channel has been reduced to 489 and more are in the process of open according to Information and broadcast ministry.

Today the Television is not just a media but also a major revenue source for Country. The total TV advertising market is estimated to have grown at 14 percent in 2014 to Rs.155 billion. Going forward, TV advertising in India is expected to grow at a CAGR of 19 percent to reach Rs.299 billion by 2019. In 2017 Kannada TV market has drawn to Rs. 600cr total in 2017.

Review of Literature

A lot of research has been carried out to understand the behavioral pattern of TV viewers in India. Most of the research papers were based on particular or target audience like children and family viewership pattern as Indian TV viewership is considered to be a family centered activity. Mira Aghi (1987) she started writing with systematical research on "Television and the Indian Child" the book mainly remained on "family activity" under parental surveillance and shadow. According to the study children prefer to watch television programmes in their mother tongue and sometime in another language taught in the school.

Buckingham (1996) & Livingstone (2002) stated that many parents often see media, particularly for young children, as an important educational tool that can assist children's intellectual development. Television is perceived as a means of passing time, passive pleasure and recreation by adults (Agrawal 1997, Mathiyalagan 1995). E R. Kanwal Gurleen & Dr. Sukhmani (2011) found in their study which highlights the various reasons for Indian youth to

watch television as the generation of knowledge and learning, medium of relaxation and to pass time. The post liberalization era in India has been marked not only by the rise of a qualified form of youth culture in the context of music television broadcasters such as MTV and Channel V but also by a broader shift in television content that journalist Amrita Shah (1997) characterized as a move from “worshiping senility” to “worshiping juvenility.” The globalization of Indian television audiences since the rise of satellite television broadcasting has been marked by the rise of a music television culture that is neither anti-elder in its youth appeal nor anti-national in its global outlook. (Vamsee Juluri, 2002). According to a study done by Vijayalakshmi (2005), young male viewers of television showed a greater degree of preference for western music than young female viewers.

Authenticity, a prime feature of news that is to be upheld by every piece of information to ever be disseminated publicly, ironically, objective reporting synonymous with genuineness is on the losing side in today’s media scenario. Naresh Rao and Dr. B.K Ravi (2015) in their paper Audience Perception of the credibility of local news channels assert that “in the quest for eyeballs and TRPs, the local channels have been feeding viewers with a diet of gossip, crime, sleaze, stings and low-brow humor”. The researchers have questioned the credibility of the Kannada news channels today because of their persistence with the competitiveness and the lack of objective reporting.

One reason for the stiff competition is the Television audience measurement systems such as, TRP ratings, TV News channels in order to have a higher TRP, a result of larger viewership, the channels tend to lean more towards slightly skewed tactics to secure the desired audience attention. Researcher from London School of Economics and Political Science, Agnes Estivals (2000) in her paper a statistical analysis of television audience measurement systems and their implications state that Tam systems have been accused by public lobbyists and intelligentsia in Europe to be responsible for the decrease in quality of the television output.

On the contrary, the rating systems have also led to the increase in the quality of the news content being broadcasted. In her research paper Television in Odisha, Dr. Mrinal Chatterjee (date) support the fact that the rating system has indeed led to increasing in the TV content being produced but the researcher also points out that the quality has come down simultaneously. But keeping the quality issue apart the regional channels do generate a huge revenue for the media industry in their respective states and the country as a whole, D.Gokulnath and Deepa Nair (2016) in their research article TV viewership pattern in Tamil Nadu point out the fact that regional markets are a key revenue driver for the national broadcasters and that there is scope for expansion in terms of variety in the regional channels in South India. While, in the contest of news channel viewership and revenue share research has very few especially in developing and underdeveloped countries.

Methodology

The study has been conducted with the help of secondary sources of data which is taken from Television Audience Measurement (TAM data in 2015) and Broadcasting Audience Research Council (BARC data in 2017). For understanding two year viewership and revenue share of news channels we went through 2015 and 2017 data. Whereby, in each year selected one-month viewership rates and two months revenue of the news channels. While, in 2015 we selected March month viewership data for understanding the opening year viewers and revenue

generated, As well, in 2017 used September and October Months data to comparatively understand the last month changes of viewership and revenue of news channels. The data which we were used for the research that don year wise analyses, program wise analyses and again comparative analyses with two-year programs and revenues or market share of news channels.

Objective

- To understand the rapidly changing Television Viewership in Karnataka.
- To elaborate viewership in different channels and in a different period
- To compare the viewership patterns across the top Kannada news channels in Karnataka.
- To evaluate the viewership as well as revenue changes in TV news Channels.

Kannada News Channels

There have been 14 private News channels disseminating the news in Karnataka. In which, Udaya News is the first Kannada news channel was launched in 1994, but it was closed recently due to low TRP. While TV 9 owned by Ravi Prakash of Sneha Television Network in 2006 opened a new chapter in the field of Kannada news channels with its aggressive journalism. Kasturi News 24 owned by Anita Kumaraswamy (wife of former CM H D Kumaraswamy) entered the field in 2007. Suvarna News 24X7 owned by MP and businessman Rajeev Chandrashekar came in 2008 followed by Samaya TV owned by Industries Minister Murugesh Nirani in 2010. Janashree entered the already crowded scene in 2011 and is owned by Gali Janardhana Reddy.

Table-1 Kannada News Channels List with their started date

SI No	News Channels	Started Year	SI No	News Channels	Started Year
1	Udaya News	1994 (Now Closed)	11	Praja TV	2017
2	TV9 Kannada	2006	12	Digvijaya News	2017
3	Kasthuri News 24	2007	13	TV5	2017
4	Suvarna News	2007	14	Suddi T V	2017
5	Samaya TV	2010	15	Focus T V	2018
6	Janashree	2011	16	News one	2018
7	Public TV	2012	17	First News	2018
8	ETV News	2014	18	News X Kannada	2018
9	BTV News	2014	20	tv1 news 24/7	2018
10	Raj Kannada News	2014	21	Swaraj Express Kannada	2018

The next year (2012) the known reporter and former newspaper editor H R Ranganath has started a new news channel in the name of Public TV. In 2014, frequently 3 news channels were launched namely E TV News, Btv News and Raj Kannada News. In 2017 there were 4 news channels have started the working frequency, which was namely Paja TV, TV5, Digvijya, suddi TV and significantly in 2018, current year around seven 24x7 news channels have lunched and start their voice towards Kannada People.

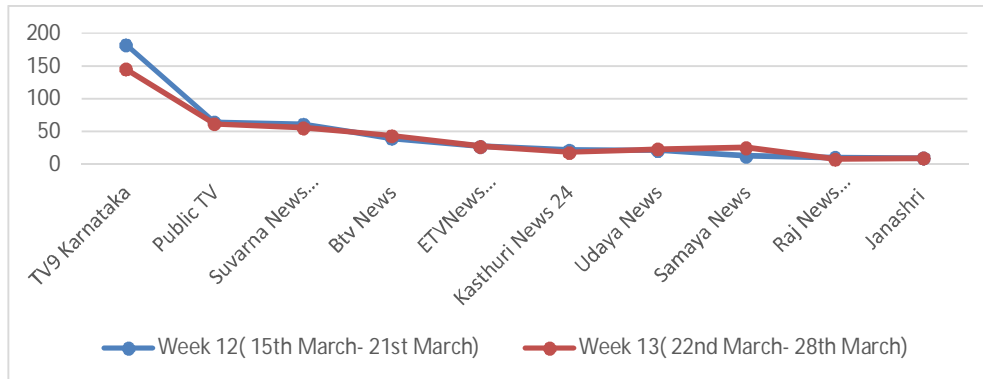
Viewership data analyses

Table-2 Kannada News Channels GRP 2015

Channel Name	Week 12 (15th March- 21st March)	Week 13(22nd March- 28th March)
TV9 Karnataka	182.58	145.15
Public TV	64.28	61.63
Suvarna News 24x7	61.12	55.65
Btv News	39.5	43.5
ETVNews Kannada	26.68	26.74
Kasthuri News 24	21.32	17.72
Udaya News	20.52	22.67
Samaya News	11.99	25.11
Raj News Kannada	9.69	7.46
Janashri	8.74	8.79

Source: TAM

Figure-1 Kannada News Channels GRP 2015

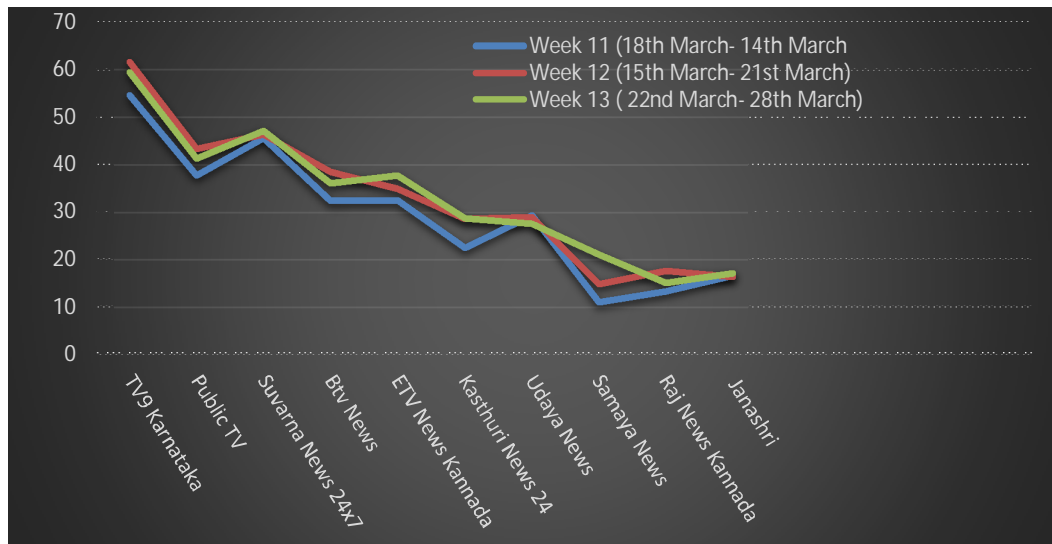


The above figure showed that Tv9 Karnataka was the leading news channel in terms of television rating points, channel GRP is the summation of half an hour TVRs for an entire week. Having a GRP in week 12th 182.55 and in week 13th GRP was 145, both the weeks Tv9 led the regional news market in 2015, followed by Public TV and Suvarna News, both with GRPs of above 50 in both weeks followed by 64.28, 61.63 and 61.12, 55.65. As like BTV news, Kasturi News, Udaya News, Samaya News, Raj News Kannada and Janashri got low GRP according to TAM analysis in Week of 12 and 13 on 2015.

Table-3 Kannada News Channel Audience Reach in 2015 %

Sl.No	Channel Name	Week 11 (18th March-14th March)	Week 12 (15th March- 21st March)	Week 13 (22nd March- 28th March)
01	TV9 Karnataka	54.59	61.6	59.42
02	Public TV	37.81	43.32	41.35
03	Suvarna News 24x7	45.69	46.46	47.15
04	Btv News	32.53	38.51	36.15
05	ETV News Kannada	32.58	35.06	37.85
06	Kasthuri News 24	22.54	28.73	28.79
07	Udaya News	29.47	29.07	27.68
08	Samaya News	11.18	15.05	21.2
09	Raj News Kannada	13.54	17.72	15.23
10	Janashri	16.78	16.51	17.33

Source: TAM

Figure-3 Kannada News Channel Audience Reach in 2015 %

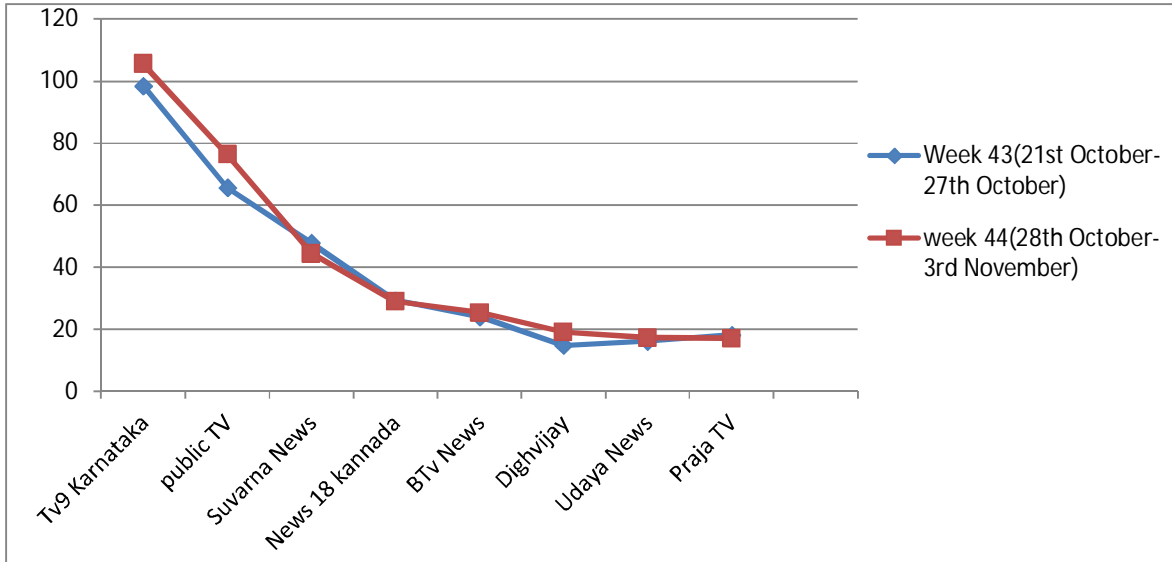
While percentage analysis, Tv9 having a reach of above 50 percent throughout 3 weeks from week 11 to 13 of 2015, Suvarna news having an audience reach of above 40 percent and Public TV maintaining their audiences reach constantly above 40 percent, these same channels with higher GRPs are also channels with a higher reach in the regional market. The rest of the channel has placed in below the 40 percent and Janashri has placed at the last level.

The main reason these three channels i.e., Tv9, Suvarna and Public TV have higher ratings because of the content in their shows, people relate to stories that are connected to the realities they believe in and these channels did cover all major and minor issues in the state.

Table-4 GRPs of Kannada News Channels for week 43 and 44 2017

Sl.No	Name of Channel	Week 43 GRP in (21st October-27 th October)	Week 44 GRP in (28 th October-3rd November)
01	Tv9 Karnataka	98.52	105.56
02	public TV	65.67	76.27
03	Suvarna News	47.77	44.34
04	News 18 Kannada	29.2	28.99
05	BTV News	24	25.34
06	Dighvijay	14.79	19.06
07	Udaya News	16.04	17.2
08	Praja TV	18.23	17.04

Source: BARC

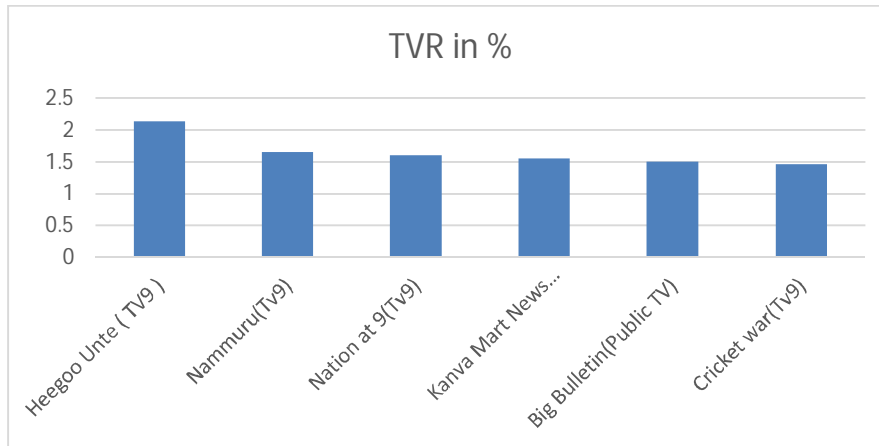
Figure- 4, GRPs of Kannada News Channels for week 43 and 44 2017

The above figure shows that Tv9 Karnataka was the leading news channel in 2017, in terms of television rating points, channel GRP was the summation of the week. Having a GRP in the week of 43 was 98.52 and in the week of 44 was 105.56, both the weeks Tv9 led the regional news market in the same year, followed by Public TV GRPs of above 60 in both weeks followed by 65.67, 76.27 but Suvarna News GRP has declined to 44.77 and 44.34 in the week of 43 and 44 compare to 2015. As like BTV news, Dighvijaya, Udaya News and Praja tv witnessed low GRP according to BARC analysis in Week of 43 and 44 in the year of 2017.

Table-5 Top rated Programmes of Kannada News channels in the 13th week of 2015

Sl.No	Name of show and channel	TVR in %
01	Heegoo Unte (TV9)	2.13
02	Nammuru(Tv9)	1.65
03	Nation at 9(Tv9)	1.6
04	Kanva Mart News 90(Tv9)	1.55
05	Big Bulletin(Public TV)	1.51
06	Cricket war(Tv9)	1.46

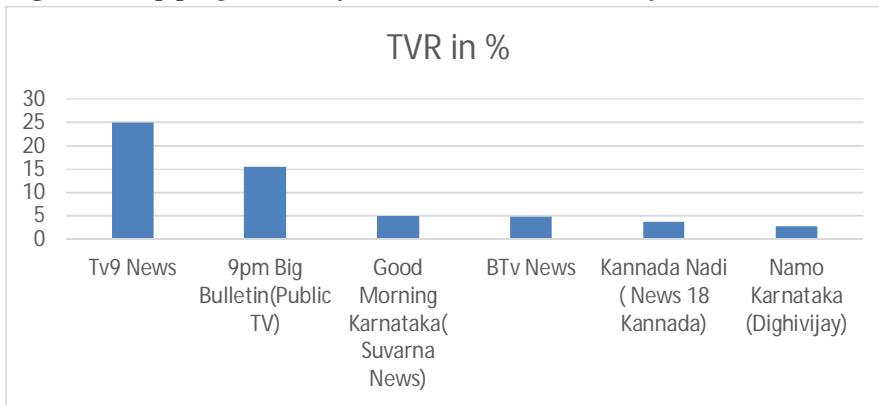
Source: TAM

Figure- 4 Top rated Programmes of Kannada News channels in the 13th week of 2015**Table-6 Top programmes of Kannada News Channels from 28th October to 3rd November 2017**

Name of show and channel	TVR in %
Tv9 News	25.05
9pm Big Bulletin(Public TV)	15.53
Good Morning Karnataka(Suvarna News)	4.92
BTv News	4.82
Kannada Nadi (News 18 Kannada)	3.77
Namo Karnataka (Dighivijay)	2.69

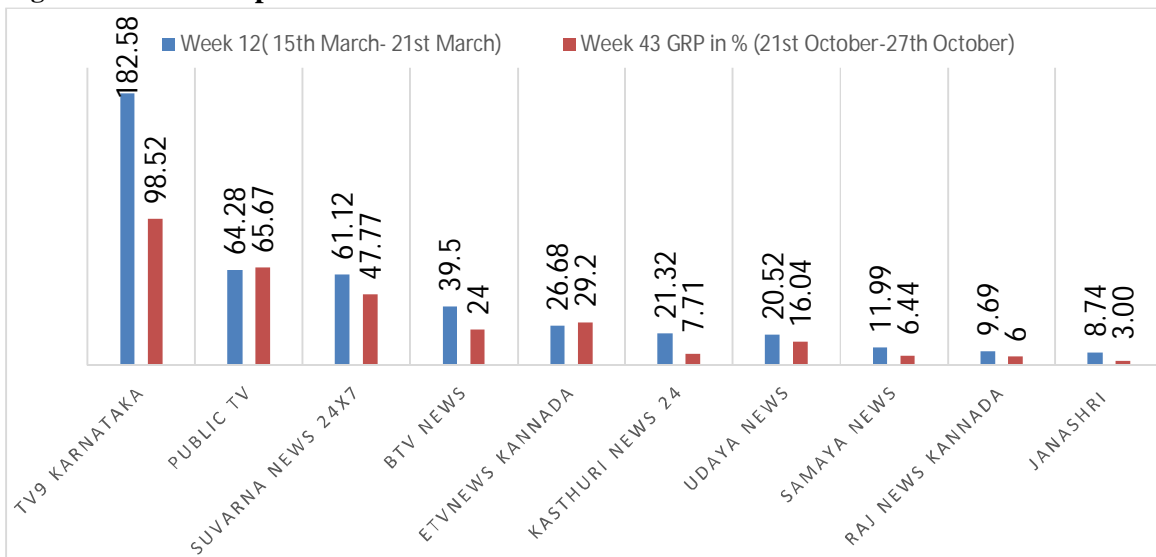
Source: BARC

Figure- 5, Top programmes of Kannada News Channels from 28th October to 3rd November 2017



The figure which mentioned above is elaborating the top six programs in various Kannada news channels and where the evidence of the same fact. In 2015 the top five programmes had four of Tv9 shows such as Heegoo Unte, Nammuru, and the nation at 9 but when you look at the 2017 week 44 top programmes there is a vast difference. The top five programmes in the week of October 28th to November 3rd doesn't have a single channel with one show in it and the top programmes do not necessarily have top-rated channels either. This further proves the point of how people have become more selective. Tv9 is still the leading news channel in Karnataka according to the most recent BARC report. But it has lost their program viewership and other channels have attracted.

Figure- 6 GRP Comparison of 2015 and 2017



The above figure has described that the 2015 and 2017 viewership sharing in different news channels with an example of one week GRP in each year. In both 2015 and 2017 TV9 Kannada has maintained first place but it has loosed their more viewership in 2017. While, Public TV has maintained the same viewers with no loss and no gain. As well as, Suvarna News lost their audience in 2017.

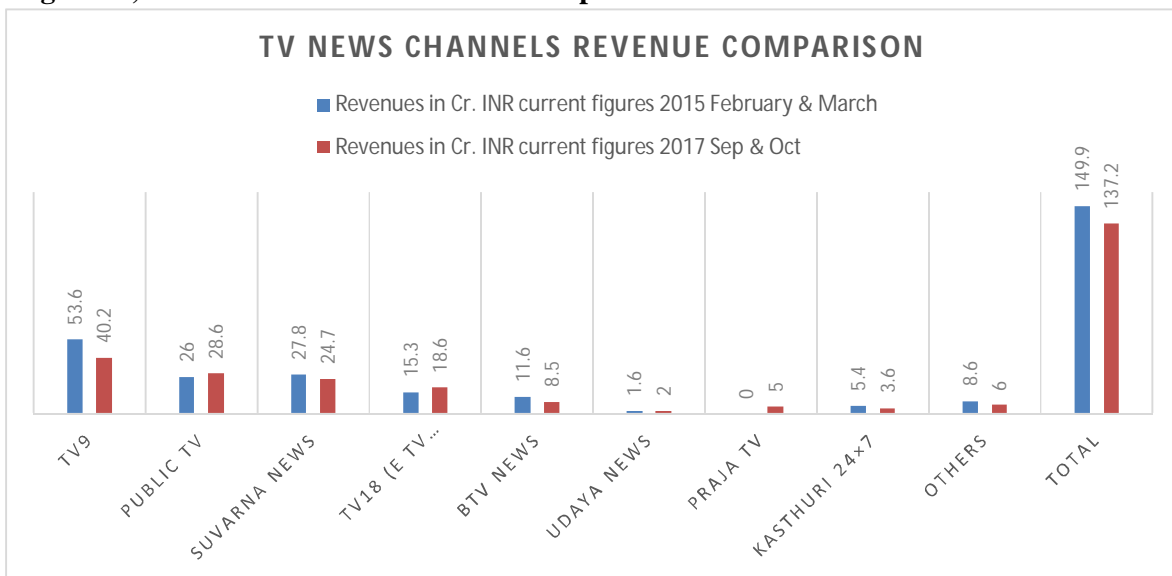
Table-7 Revenues in Cr. INR in September & October 2017

Revenues in Cr. INR current figures						
Channel	Avg 8 weeks GRP's	Corp rev& DAVP	Retail /SME /Gov rev	Slot	Others	Total
TV9	111	24	8.4	1.8	6	40.2
Public TV	69	17.4	6.6	3.6	1	28.6
Suvarna news	42	15.4	4.8	3	1.5	24.7
News18 Kannada	31	10	4.8	1.8	2	18.6
BTV news	26	2	3.6	2.4	0.5	8.5
Udaya news	18	1.1	0.4	0.5	0	2
Praja TV	14	1	1.8	1.8	0.4	5
Kasthuri 24x7	10	0.5	1.2	1.7	0.2	3.6
Others	41	1	2	2.5	0.5	6
Total	362	71.4	33.6	19.1	12.1	137.2

Source: GV Krishnamurthy Media Analystist BARC

Kannada news draws between Rs. 130cr -140cr, which was 22% of total revenues in Kannada TV market in the duration of 8 weeks of 2017. The corporate sector contributes 70 cr while the retail, SME, and government add up to 35cr, slots and others like teleshopping, health was 30 crores.

The tv9 Kannada has grabbed 40 crore revenue among the Kannada news channel market share. Followed by Public TV has second highest which taken Rs.28.6cr, Suvarna News Rs.24.7cr. Bothe Pubic TV and Suvarna News have got more revenue in slot ads than the tv9 Kannada. While, E TV News share was Rs.18.6 cr, in which more revenue from corporate commercials ads. Followed by Btv 8.5cr, Udaya News 2 cr, Praja TV 5 cr, Kasturi 24X7 3.6 cr and others have 6 cr.

Figure- 7, TV News Channels Revenue Comparison in Between 2015-17

Kannada news channels draw between Rs.149.9 Cr in 2015 and Rs. 137 in 2015 and 2017,

which is 25 to 22% of total revenues in total Kannada TV market. As well Tv9 has highest revenue share for two years but in 2017 which was decline significantly. The table describing that the Tv9 Kannada news channel has grabbed around 53 crores in two-week revenue share in 2015 and it has kept their place in top one also in 2017. But, in 2017 which revenue has declined from 53 to 40 crore concededly and tv9 lost 13 crores comparatively. Following, the public TV and Suvarna news have also fallen their revenue but the ratio is less. While Etv news had a positive growth in their revenue which rose of 18.6 from 15.3 crores. Accordingly, other news channels like Btv news, Udaya News, Kasturi 24X7 and others were lost their marketing share from 2015 to 2017. Overall in 2017 news channels have loosed around 12 crores their revenue compares to 2015.

Hereby the table summarizing that rest of Etv news the other news channels have significantly lost their revenue share. Due to viewership distraction the revenue of the news channels has been declined.

Findings

- In terms of viewership, Tv9 has been rated as number one by the television audience measurement system in both years.
- But data has shown that from 2015 to 2017 Tv9 has seen the decrease and lost their audience significantly and GRP has gone down form three digit to two digits and it is happened in also revenue generation. also from 2015 to 2017 Tv9 has seen quite a decrease in the GRPs, shows that were among top 5 in 2015 are no longer on the list.
- Also, Suvarna News, Btv, Kasturi News, Udaya News Raj News Kannada and Janashree news have been lost their audience as well as their Revenue collection.
- But Public TV and Etv News have similarly kept their viewers and revenue as like before year.
- The data described that the Kannada news channels have significantly lost their audience as well as their revenue comparatively. The growing competition and the increasing number of news channels in the Kannada News market have led to over cogitative ness many channels actually lose their viewership. Many channels such as Praja TV, could be seen in top 10 during the last week of October and the first week of November 2017, this channel was far from top 10 in 2015. It is the result of the same competition that has led many channels loses their positions as top channels. The way a news channel handles the competition is very crucial to how the channel is going to fare in the growing market of news channels.
- The viewers have been taken another diversion from news scenario, even during the existing and lancing new news channels.

Conclusion and Suggestions

From 2015 to 2017 we have observed that many channels who were among the top rated channels have lost their positions to other channels which are actually many fresh entrants than them. Also after studying the data on top rated News shows in 2015 to top rated shows in 2017, we can come to a clear conclusion that several shows have lost their credibility and have failed to keep the audience interested. It can also be understood that the audience has become very

discriminatory in terms of news shows because of the variety and the fact that many shows do not have relevant issues to broadcast. The mere fact that in the 2017 top shows there is no single channel which has two of their shows in the list demonstrates that people today have become extremely skeptical of the news shows and hence, become non-consistent in terms of channel preference and show choices.

The study suggested that the news channels must remain consistent in their quality in order to maintain a good viewership and to increase the viewership or survive the competitive market innovative changes in the news delivery, content generation, and proper audience feedback system is required. An audience poll or feedback on the shows can help the channels understand the target audience better and create more audience-friendly shows in the future. Also, the TV news channels might be understood importance and value of news while disseminating to common people.

The study raises some question which why the viewership have been distracted and people are ignoring the news content on television even during lunching of news channels. According to information and broadcasting minister, day by day the total number of tv sets and viewership have been rising comparatively. But, Kannada news channels have lost their audience. Hence, the study has to make root to conduct another study with the audience to know the reason that why could people are starting ignore news channels.

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