MEDIA AND CULTURAL PREFERENCE: WATCHING ACTIVITY ON PAY TELEVISION

Ahmad MULYANA[1]

[1]PhD, M.Si, Mercu Buana University, Jakarta
Corresponding author: Ahmad Mulyana; e-mail: ahmad.mulyana@mercubuana.ac.id

Abstract

This study describes viewing culture preference on pay television audience. The preference should be qualitatively explored particularly after digital media uses rise. The research purpose provides information on segments, family interaction patterns and cultural preference of pay television consumers. The research method used in this research is the case study with the support of source triangulation. The research result indicates that there is a shift of viewing habit from television to digital media. The shift occurs in the age segment of 25 years or below, i.e. those born in the period of 1995-2003. The segment develops when television remains dominating the most chosen entertainment media. Television philosophy as entertainment media has been deeply known. However, their current choice of viewingpay television is more segmented, such as dramas, news, sports and others. It is based on family interaction pattern and family socioeconomic status. They is a rational audience and they watchtelevision either for entertainment or education purposes.

Keywords: *preference, viewing culture, digital media, pay television.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Information technology,particularly digital media, has been developing in recent years and it has attracted public interests. With the smartphone, they can access various information needs either for entertainment, news or others, such as games. The utilization of digital media changes themedia usage habit, they frequently watch YouTube (CHA & CHAN-OLMSTED, 2012; LAGO-VÁZQUEZ, et. al., 2016).

The condition becomes a tremendous threat for the sustainability of the television industry. It deeply depends on the number of the audience. With the shift of media allocation, it will influence the number of the audience. It means that television audience will decrease. Moreover, it will decrease its rating and consequently, it will influence advertising input. Finally, as the industrial entity, the competition of inter-television broadcasting stations, to get the advertising cake, will be tighter (RASHID et al.,2017).

The competition of inter-television broadcasting stations has close relations to the highest rating achievement. It is important because the main achievement for the television industry is high rating. With the high rating, the television broadcasting stations can get capital and it means profit. Moreover, the shift of television viewing habit from television media to digital media also threatens the pay television industry. The competition has been tightening as each play makes expansion to get its market segment target (BRIANDANA & DWITYAS, 2018).

Instead of competing with competitors, pay television businessmen also encounter an Internet facility that offers various contents. We can mention among others the video on demand shows and it can be accessed via smartphone and computer. Therefore, the pay television companies are required to be more innovative so that their customers do not abandon them. Moreover, if the pay television industry can exist, the various efforts they should do are to understand how the audience from the aspect of preference, as a way of identifying a form of entertainment or information programs, can stimulate the needs of audience to watch their pay television. Concerning this phenomenon, the research aims to analyze the viewing cultural preference on pay television customers and the watchinghabit in the digital media era.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Subscription television or pay television is a television channel broadcasting services carried out particularly for an audience whichwants to pay (subscribe) regularly.The services are usually provided in a kind of analog or digital system through satellite or cable. The existence of digital media technology and its history is similar to that of conventional television.It started from Zenith, that wasstudying the possibility of pay television,once the television was in the phase of research and development. Zenith introduced a pay television system known Phone vision in 1940s. The Phone visionprovided services for customers who wanted film screening through telephone order. The technology started from the cable system before it was found a more sophisticated system, i.e. satellite. Therefore, it was identical to cable television when Pennsylvanians (USA) could not clearly receive television-broadcastingservices because of the hill barrier in 1948. To solve the problem, local people installedan antenna to receive UHF signal used in the broadcasting program, and then they took cable from the antenna and they installedit in their houses. HBO (Home Box Office) was built and it attracted many people in 1972. It made pay television chain stronger. Moreover, when the demand and need for greater entertainment services was higher, it made thesatellite prima donna in the era of 1980s. The technology became the next pay television development called DBS (Direct Broadcast Satellite). Moreover, the application has been used in various countries. The history and development of the pay television in the USA gives opportunity for the development of the commercial option in other regions, such as Europe, Asia and Australia. From the aspect of signal quality, the satellite television is more sophisticated and the picture is clearer (LUNDSTROM, 2006). For the Asian region, Japan introduced the DBS system (Direct Broadcast Satellite) in 1984. Finally it is used in the pay television industry.

In line with the technology reformation that occurs and spreads in various aspects of the global life, Indonesia also gets the impact of the technology development. The pay television offers the pay-per-view system through cable or DBS. With the PPV system, the customers have to wait the TVprogramsto be broadcasted through cable or DBS. The success of television broadcasting media gets great influence from the management's capability to identify its audience's need. Marketing approach will make audience understandable where there are customers who require information for the program (MORISSAN, 2016). According to (MORLEY, 2003) the market segment is a market made up from several groups where (1) it has a trend to the similar demand; (2) it has the similar trend to a marketing action. The segmentation is required if the media can meet the demand of the audience in a more accurate way, and therefore it can meet the demand and willingness of the intended audience. According to Awaluddin (2016), "*The TV landscape in neighboring Indonesia meanwhile is entering the 11th stage of its evolutionary development, after the government awarded the country's first licences for digital terrestrial TV earlier this year. Pay-tv is already becoming increasingly competitive in Indonesia, with 6-7% GOP growth boosting the size of the middle class, an increasingly large pool of potential pay-tv subscribers*".

Preference

The previous research concerning the preference states that: *there were differences in consumer preference in terms of gender towards the attributes of the genre, sequel and director during watching the movie. There are differences in the age of consumer preference towards the genre attribute, sequel and director. There are differences in consumer preference in watching movies in terms of the work to the attributes of the genre, cast and director. It was also found that there is a difference of preference in terms of gender, age and employment against a variable source of information. The results showed that there were no differences in consumer preferences in terms of gender against the variable technologies, but there are differences in terms of age preference and work against technological variables.*

The research focuses on the viewing culture of pay television customers and it aims at obtaining mapping on the audience beneficial to support the business development. The intended culture relates to behavior patterns, the habit that starts from interaction with actual environment and finally it will establish a culture. The preference or taste is a concept used in social sciences particularly in the economics. It assumes that the reality or imaginary choice between alternatives and a possibility of alternative ranking based on enjoyment, satisfaction, gratification, fulfillment as well as a variety of uses. In broader terms, it can be seen as the source of motivation.

People's choice of a product is called preference. It can be called "taste" as well. People's taste is determined by many factors starting from hobby, social condition, and economic aspectsto circumstances. Customer's preference will be very important for the behavior of the company's decision making because customers'preference finally influences the purchasing choice of a brand. If business activities can develop, a businessman should be able to analyze the preference of the target customers.

Viewing Culture

Culture is a form or way of life that develops and is owned together by a group and inherited from one generation to another. Culture is established through complicated elements including religion and the political system, customs, language, tools, clothes, building and arts (SILVERSTONE, 1994). The viewing culture in the Indonesian society right now has increased its intensity when they watch knowledge channels and films or update news. Culture can replace the reading culture once our intensity to watch is greater than when we use for reading. For example, our viewing culture can be counted 1/3 day (8 hours) or more. What we watch is sometimes not beneficial for others, and ourselves such as entertainment, soap operas, films, reality shows and sport events.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The researchis based on a case study qualitative approach. According to Bogdan & Taylor (1990) the case study is the in-detail testing to one background or subject or place of documents or event. Jankowski & Jensen (2002) restrict the case study approach to an approach with the focusonone case, intensively and in detail. Moreover, Dwityas & Briandana (2017) give technical limitation with the focus on the characteristics. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (1985) explain that in the case study the researchers should test units or individuals in depth. In this research, the data collection should be carried out with triangulation techniques where the primary data should be carried out through focusing group discussion to the television customers and in-depth interviews to the informants of the subscription television customers. Moreover, the data should be supported with the secondary data through the data searching to the related sources. Thisway of thinking, it could be understood that the limits of the case study includes: (1) the target of research can be human, events, background and documents; (2) the targets can be observed and elaborated in depth as a totality in accordance with each context with the intent of obtaining comprehensive understanding in relation to the related elements.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research starts from the general description ofthe reality in field indicating the significant shift from conventional media to digital media. The fast adaptation to digital media gives unlimited access to meet various information demands either for news or entertainment. However, the customers do not watch television again as in the past. It will be shown in Fig. 1.

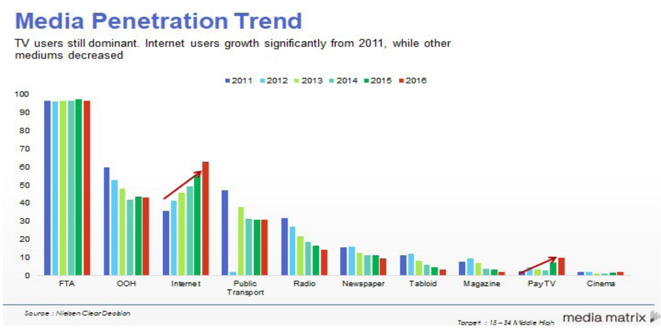

Fig. 1. Media Penetration Trend

From the segmentation of audience, however, the data indicate that the digital media dominantly occurs in the age segment of 25 years or lower as reflected in the Fig.2.

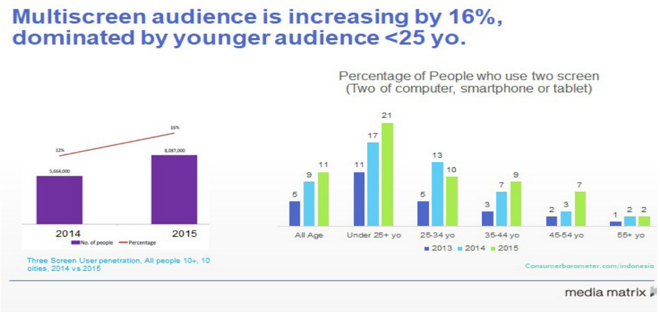

Fig. 2. Multiscreen audience is increasing by 16%, dominated by younger audience <25 yo

Moreover, based on a survey of JAKPAT. NET (2017) concerning *MillenialsWatching TV Habit Survey Report*,it indicates that they do not watch television again as in the past. The frequency of television viewing activities per day is less than one hour (17%), 1-2 hours (24%), 2-3 hours (23%), 3-4 hours (16%) and 4 hours and over (14%). They consider that television is not attractive anymore. They do not have favorite television programs (56%). Moreover, there are some respondents who say that they are very busy (25%) and they do not have television sets (19%). However, for pay television, the reality is different. Most of the audiences like to watch television, and they see that the pay television is more attractive and they have favorite programs. Moreover, the customers can be described as follows: First Media (28%), Indovision (26%), Telkomvision (15%), Indihome (13%), OrangTV (12%) and BigTV (6%). If we look at the gender basis, the data are as follows: (https://blog.jakpat.net/millennials-watching-tv-habit-survey-report/). Based on the above data, it can be described that there are relatively dominant shifts in the habit of media uses from television to digital media (Vazquez: 2016) as shown in the following data. The viewing frequency per day is less than 1 hour (17%), 1-2 hours (24%), 2-3 hours (23%), 3-4 hours (16%), and 4 hours and over (14%). They consider television is not attractive anymore. They do not have favorite/chosen television programs to be watched (56%). From the results of the Forum Group Discussion, it is found that there are some reasons why they choose pay television programs as media to look for news and entertainment, i.e. (1) the variation of television programs that fulfills information and entertainment needs; (2) affordable prices to pay the subscription costs, and it is around IDR270,000 per month; (3) the requirement of education matters that means that they need television programs with educational values; (4) complete sports program; (5) safe television shows for children to watch; (6) more diverse music programs; (7) qualified drama programs; (8) no advertising; (9) unqualified local television programs. The pay television customers can be described as follows: First Media (28%), Indovision (26%), Telkomvision (15%), Indihome (13%), OrangTV (12%) dan BigTV (6%). If we see it by gender, the data can be shown here: (https://blog.jakpat.net/millennials-watching-tv-habit-survey-report/).

Graham Kill (2015) corrects the indication that the growth rate will rise significantly and it will reach 9% in 2020 with total pay television customers of 3.8 million. The population in Indonesia is considered very potential with 245 million people, GDP per capita of US$4,300 and the television ownership of 35 million.

Pay Television

Instead of free-of-charge television, some audience inJakarta also starts watching television programs through pay television network. One of 10 respondents admits to subscribe to pay television becausethey can watch the programsafter they have a decoder and a small parabolic antenna or a cable network. The benefits of the pay television concernthe customer'scomfortability when they watch television. The audience can watch the intended program whenever they want for 24 hours because the programs are always repeated again. The channel choice is large and varied. The received television picture is brighter and it differs from the free-of-charge television channel where the television picture is sometimes blurred, and it also depends on the position of the receiving antenna and television signal power broadcasted. The customers of pay television channels have to provide more particularly to get a variation of enjoyment. Based on the survey results of LitbangKompas, the pay television customers in average in Greater Jakarta allocate a total budget of IDR270,000 per month. Therefore, it is the time for television broadcasting stations in this country to revitalize themselves, so they can provide better broadcasting services, make the soul and mind healthier and to beenjoyable to watch (DwiErianto, LITBANG KOMPAS).

The research results also indicate that there is significant change of habit when customers use media from the conventional media to digital media, and it is a natural consequence of the technological development. Particularly for those in the age segment of 25 years or lower, they have high addiction level to digital media technology that develops very fast. Television is not considered attractiveanymore as media to get entertainment or other information from (NOTEN et.al., 2012) and also for the best choice to get information, news and entertainment. It is emphasizedwith the data of Nelsen when there are 4,668,000 pay television customers. The biggest spread remains in Greater Jakarta Province with the total number of 3,480,000 customers. However, the biggest growth occurs out of Greater Jakarta Province. Last year the customers in Bandung grew 2.1%, Makassar 3.9%, and Denpasar 2.3% while Greater Jakarta Province just grew 0.1%.

At least there are 9 (nine) reasons for why the age segment of 25 years and over considers pay television as media to get entertainment and news from, i.e. (1) variety oftelevision programs that meet their information and entertainment needs; (2) affordable price to pay the subscription costs, i.e. around IDR270,000 per month; (3) the requirement of education matters, i.e. those who need the broadcasting programs related to educational values; (4) the complete sport program; (5) safe for children; (6) more varied music programs; (7) more qualified drama programs; (8) no advertising; (9) low qualified local television programs. The research findings from Nielsen Research Institution show interesting facts concerning the behavior of pay television customers. Despite the fact that they have paid the subscription costs, they still watch free-of-charge channels (TV terestrial canal). They can watch them freely. The managing Director of Nielsen Indonesia, Irawati Pratingnyosaid that 64% of pay television customers watch FTA canals. The second biggest percentage of 24% watch international channels. It indicates that the local content still becomes the most favorite program. They still watch local broadcasting programs because these are close to them psychologically. Their favorite programs remain the local content. "*When we discuss about pay television, the market is great. However, it has great challenges as well. It has to change the customers' habit from free-to-air channels to pay ones*.» The demand of television media remains to local programs, and it puts forward the value of middle-and-high social status standards with the high attention to educational values for their families.

The development of digital technology has occurred and spread to various segments of society. In the aspect of technology, the pay television has been left far behind from the digital media. To perpetuate potential pay television business, the management has to create synergic breakthroughwith digital media. It can be carried out through consumer insight to those with the segments born in the computer field. Therefore, it can be identified more accurately when and how their information demand relates to pay television media.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The cannibalization of digital media on traditional media has occurred naturally. The age segment of 25 years or below dominantly uses digital media. It grows with the whole of computer facilities, and therefore, their digital media interaction is a must.

For pay television in Indonesia, it remains interesting particularly for the audience with the age segment of 25 years or above. Those come from the middle-and-high class. It has the segmented information need, such as news, cartoons, sport, dramas and religious programs.

Their viewing cultural preference of pay television bases on time efficiencies, better technology and multiple and specific choice, such as family education and gender-based choice.

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