



**USES AND GRATIFICATION OF ‘GOODBYE, MY LOVER’
REALITY PROGRAM OF CHINESE VIEWERS**



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Abstract

The reality show “Goodbye, My Lover” by Mango T.V. is extremely popular among the the audiences aged 18-50 in China due to the emotional appeal. The show captures the life of participants who are on the verge of divorcing and are given chances to introspect their decisions. The present study aims to investigate the media exposure, usefulness and gratification of Chinese audiences from the show. Additionally, the study aims to investigate gender differences in media exposure, usefulness and gratification of the reality show among a sample of 400 individuals. The results reveal that the reality show has a greater impact on male audiences than on female audiences. Moreover, the results indicate that there is a positive relationship between media exposure and both usefulness and gratification which suggests that increased exposure to the show enhances the emotional growth and the overall satisfaction of the viewers. Understanding the audiences can help the media creators in creating better and more diverse shows that connect with the viewers.

(Total 73 pages)

Keywords: Reality Show, Media Exposure, Uses and Gratification, Chinese Audiences

Student’s Signature..... Thesis Advisor’s Signature

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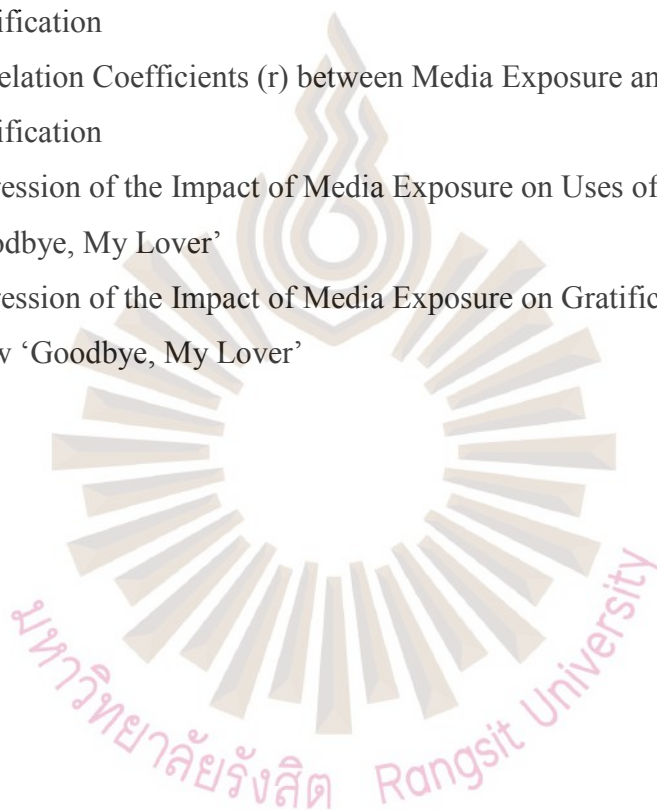
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background and Significance of the Problem

Our thoughts, beliefs, and behaviours are influenced by media in all of its manifestations. Without question, the entertainment and knowledge we consume shape the way we perceive the world (Marton & Booth, 2013). From how we interact with people to the literature we study and the leisure activities we seek out, our minds are built to synthesise an immense amount of information every day. (De, Hamilton, Ponari, & Vigliocco, 2023). These ways help us understand the world, and our understanding of the world affects how we live each day.

TV is an easily accessible source of entertainment for a larger share of world population. Among the different forms of entertainment shows observed on television nowadays, reality TV shows are one of the most watched and influential forms of TV shows which keep the audience engaged and coming back to watch them day after day, season after season (Pahad, Karkare, & Bhatt, 2015). Reality television frequently makes us consider what we would do in the same circumstance, which may be an excellent exercise in exploring our principles. Most reality shows have as a recurring subject the fundamental conflict between self-interest and self-sacrifice (Skeggs & Wood, 2012). Individuals are familiar with these themes of right and wrong behaviour, betrayal, competitiveness, and connection because they make comparable decisions every day without the help of cameras, fictitious situations, or exposure. People are drawn to it because, at their most fundamental level, they enjoy seeing human drama and can identify with difficult choices (Skeggs & Wood, 2012). They want to witness the battle, whether it is for fame, fortune, or notoriety.

A developing trend in reality television is the emergence of love reality

shows, which are now becoming well-liked and being created by large production companies (Deery, 2015). Love reality programs emerged rather late in the reality television realm of China, and therefore, only a few researchers have examined and studied the genre with its content traits, emotional communication, and development over the past few decades (Zhang, 2020). Over the years, love reality TV programs have drawn a lot of criticism from viewers and academics for being a powerful genre of television affecting individuals, especially the youngsters in a negative manner (Mast, 2016). Thus, it can be asserted that love reality TV shows have a significant impact on its viewers.

Love and affection are the fundamental themes of love reality programs, which may touch the emotions of the audience as well as stimulate them. In order to address the requirements of the audience for social interaction and self-realization, this resonance directs the audience to create emotional communication activities (Skeggs & Wood, 2012). Through participating in the conversations about the shows on social media platforms and corresponding discreetly on the bulletin screen, the audience engages in digital social networking on the web. The audience may interact with the online community, share their own insight, and attend to their spiritual needs in the love reality show-based online virtual community. (Malur, Lakshmikantha, & Prashanth, 2014). For the producers of the show, a large part of the program's social and economic advantages is influenced by the audience's emotional communication as well as their needs for continued use of the program. The rational program method, the content of the program, its humanistic care, and its conscience all depend on how well emotional communication activities are conducted (Skeggs & Wood, 2012). According to Kavka (2012), love observation reality shows that involve "gaze" as the primary characteristic, allow the audience to develop a sort of "see" sensation by means of the image-visual narrative.

According to Zhang (2020), reality is created by utilising common human problems to elicit a strong, persuading emotional atmosphere, enhance audience memory, and create an entire array of "simulation" kind "intimate" relationships between show performances. This gives the audience a chance to express their

emotions and finally realises emotional "consumption." Almost all informational transmission in TV shows is accompanied by an emotional response. It is intimately connected to the sharing of emotions, whether it is through a straightforward news program or a reality show that focuses on sentiments.

The analysis of the aforementioned literature reveals that domestic scholars have primarily concentrated on the production and consumption of love in TV programmes. Although there has been a little investigation on reality love, in comparison to practical studies, theoretical research is lacking and insufficient. As a result, this field has a particular significance and value in light of the love and consumption research. Emotional expressiveness is the primary determinant of whether modern reality TV love shows are successful in building a positive reputation. The emotional components of reality shows have been amplified due to the success of reality programs such as 'Goodbye, My Lover' which focuses on the emotional expression of love.

'Goodbye, My Lover' is a reality television program about love and marriage that was first broadcast on Mango TV. The primary focus of the program is on emotional issues, and each episode features three couples who are experiencing marital difficulties, eighteen days of travelling, and reflections on the wonders of love, in tandem with analysis of their marital issues (Morton, 2020). It is accompanied by an appearance by a celebrity guest who acts as an "observer" to help them see things from a different perspective and ultimately provides solutions. The variety program "Goodbye, My Lover" typically has a realistic stance as its starting point, focuses on marital conflict, and develops or reshapes the intimate relationship of husband and wife in an open debate. It also communicates to society the virtues of a happy marriage, which includes numerous emotional manifestations, analyses the entertainment as well as the educational value, and has the potential to elicit greater resonance.

The first season of the show was aired in 2020 and it focused on three different types of marriage samples, inviting three couples facing an emotional crisis

on an 18-day trip out of the routine state of life. The show got a rating of 8.9 on Douban (an online database service in China) which suggests towards the status of the show as a Must Watch. As the ratings come from individuals, preferably audience who watched the show and rated it, they indicate towards the success of the first season of the show. The show was on top of almost all the significant popularity lists of Douban network. The success of first season of the show led the producers and broadcasters to bring a second season in 2021. Both the first and the second seasons had 13 episodes of 105 min each. The cumulative number of views in the two seasons has exceeded 3.5 billion which speaks of its success among the Chinese audience. It has become a thought-provoking "positive energy variety show" that can reflect modern marriage. Since both the seasons illustrate the most intimate relationship one can have in life, i.e., marriage, and also the complex human nature along with fragility of emotions and the intricate web of human thinking, it has captivated its audience and provided them with multiple reasons to feel grateful towards the show. Therefore, both the seasons have been taken up for exploration in this study.

1.2 Research Objectives

The central aim of this research work is to investigate the usefulness and satisfaction of the audience with the program ‘Goodbye, My Lover.’ Concerning this aim, three research objectives have been framed.

1.2.1 To study media exposure, uses, and gratification of the reality show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ of the audiences.

1.2.2 To study the effect of gender on media exposure, uses, and gratification of the reality show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ of the audience.

1.2.3 To study the relationship between media exposure, uses, and gratification of the reality show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ of the audience.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 What are the patterns observed in media exposure, uses, and gratification of the reality show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ for audience?

1.3.2 What is the effect of gender on media exposure, uses, and gratification of the reality show 'Goodbye, My Lover' for audience?

1.3.3 What relationship exists between media exposure, uses, and gratification of the reality show 'Goodbye, My Lover' for audience?

1.4 Definition of Terms

Reality Show

A reality show is a particular kind of TV program that seeks to depict how regular people act in real-world settings or in scenarios that are typically created by the creators of the program with the aim of reflecting normal life.

Goodbye, My Lover

'Goodbye, My Lover' is the first reality show with the theme of divorce in China, which is positioned as a "marriage documentary observation reality show".

Audience

The audience is the recipient of information dissemination, including the readers of newspapers and books, radio listeners, film and television audiences, and Internet users. The target Audience in Relation to 'Goodbye, My Lover, My Lover' includes male and female audience who have partially or fully watched the show.

Media Exposure

The audiences who watch the reality TV show and the effects that the show has is reflected by how much they are exposed to or watch that particular show, or the media exposure.

Uses and Gratification

The uses and gratification of the audience to a show or any media content reflects how well the audience feels fulfilled and satisfied with that content. The usefulness of the show could lie in its emotional value, emotional experiences, and

impact on the audience, while the gratification they feel could be in the field of the fulfillment of cognitive, emotional, and social needs.

1.5 Range of Study

This study uses quantitative research method to analyse the usefulness and gratification of the audience with “Goodbye, My Lover”. For this purpose, an online survey questionnaire with 400 participants (both male and female) will be conducted. Questionnaires will provide an easy and quick form of collecting data along with greater chances of generalizing the findings to the larger population. Through questionnaires, statistically significant information can be obtained about how love-themed variety reality shows, notably "Goodbye, My Lover" is found useful and gratifying by the audience. Once informed consent has been obtained, Zoom sessions will be used to conduct a virtual orientation for the study and the questionnaire will be filled out by the participants in Questionnaire Star. Subsequently, the collected raw data will be statistically analysed using descriptive and inferential analyses. In the inferential analyses, Pearson’s correlation and regression will be used to explore how media exposure to the audience is useful and gratifying/satisfying for them and a t-test will be used to compare the groups.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

In this chapter, the literature available on love reality shows, particularly the “Goodbye, My Lover”, its emotional appeal, media exposure of the audience, and their uses and gratification values is reviewed. For this, the chapter first discusses the important terms and theories related to media communication and then the existing research base on reality shows and these theories are presented. .

2.1 Concept of Media Exposure

How audiences relate to reality TV shows and what effects those shows can have on them depend in part on the media exposure of the audience as well as the exposure given to the programs. Media exposure has been found to emphasise how reality television may have an impact on the attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, and perceptions of the audience. For instance, Meltzer and Bryant (2010), investigated how reality TV shows shape the attitudes and perceptions of American viewers. In the findings, it was discovered that regular viewers of reality TV tended to exaggerate the prevalence of particular attitudes and behaviours presented in these programs, which could have an impact on how they perceive the world.

Similarly, Stern (2014), delved into how watching reality TV, notably "Keeping Up with the Kardashians," affected the body image and social comparisons of adolescent girls in the U.S. According to the findings of the study, watching the show has been connected with diminished body satisfaction and an increase in appearance-focused comparisons of young girls with others. Thus, it can be asserted that prolonged exposure to reality TV shows can manipulate the perception of reality among audiences.

A key tenet of the theory of media exposure is that exposure of individuals to media material shapes their beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. According to the media exposure theory, the perceptions of reality, views, and behaviors of the audience may all be affected by the themes and content of reality TV programs (Thorson & Wells, 2016). The media exposure of reality shows derives its principles and key ideas from a number of other theoretical backgrounds. One of the key theories is the theory of social learning through imitation and observation. Social learning is an important aspect of the media exposure hypothesis that is particularly pertinent to reality television (Dollard & Miller, 2013). On these shows, viewers see how the participants behave, engage, and relate to one another. They may gain knowledge from these encounters and incorporate comparable attitudes or behaviors into their own life (Thorson & Wells, 2016). For instance, viewers may replicate these behaviors in their own relationships with others if a reality program shows aggressive or hostile behavior as a way of success or popularity.

Another crucial theory is the Cultivation Theory which asserts that in order to draw audiences, reality TV shows frequently depict a skewed picture of reality by putting an emphasis on drama, disputes, and sensationalism. According to this theory, repeated exposure to these images may cause viewers to believe that they accurately reflect reality (Morgan, Shanahan, & Signorielli, 2014). For instance, audiences may begin to think that gossip and dispute are more prevalent and socially desirable than they actually are if reality shows mostly feature individuals engaging in these activities. Additionally, there is a theory of para-social interaction associated with reality TV programs. According to this theory, the audience of reality shows may form one-sided connections with the contestants and feel emotionally attached to them despite having no actual real person contact with them (Dyer, 2010). Participants may be viewed as role models or even friends by audiences, who develop an interest in their lives. Depending on how closely they feel connected to the participants, this parasocial link may have an impact on the attitudes and behaviors of the audience.

In the theory related to the perception of reality, reality TV shows frequently traverse the boundary between real and fictional content. It may not always be

possible for audiences to tell the difference between real, unscripted events and planned or orchestrated scenes (Krongard & Tsay-Vogel, 2020). The faith of the audience in media sources may be impacted by this reality distortion, which may give rise to misleading assumptions about the accuracy of the program and its participants. Lastly, the media exposure theory also takes into account the practice of viewers intentionally choosing media information that supports their prior viewpoints in the theory of selective exposure and setting an agenda. Viewers may choose the content they want to see since reality TV shows appeal to a variety of interests and demographics (Camaj, 2014). Moreover, according to the agenda-setting component of the media exposure theory, reality TV programs can affect how the general public watch certain themes and concerns based on the issues that they emphasise.

Due to its capacity to captivate viewers via drama, disputes, and individual narratives, reality TV shows have become a very popular subgenre of programming on television. The idea of media exposure offers insightful explanations for how these shows may affect audiences. Regular exposure to these programs may cause viewers to form attitudes and views depending on what they see on television (Jahng, 2019). This impact can go beyond simple entertainment and have an impact on the social interactions, self-conceptions, and perceptions of reality of the audience, among other aspects of their life. Reality TV programs are sometimes condemned, though, for emphasising sensation and drama ahead of the truth, which can lead to consumers having illogical and unrealistic expectations (Hill, 2014). Supporters of these shows assert that they provide opportunities for contemplation and might provide a place for social criticism and conversations on a range of topics.

In light of this, it may be argued that the theory of media exposure contends that information obtained from the media and conveyed to people has a substantial impact on their attitudes, mental processes, beliefs, and behaviors. The importance of the media in influencing perceptions and opinions by making news and information accessible to a large audience is highlighted by this concept. It suggests that frequent encounters with media, like through TV shows, movies, or online content, may cause people to internalize behaviors that are compatible with how the media portrays them.

Cultivation theory, agenda-setting, selective exposure, para-social interaction, and social learning are some of the concepts that are included in the notion of media exposure. Since media representations may not always accurately reflect reality, it underlines the significance of critical media comprehension and literacy. People, media producers, and society shall understand how media exposure affects the ideas, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals in order to manoeuvre and make wise decisions.

2.2 Theory of Uses and Gratification

Especially with regard to reality TV shows, the Uses and Gratification Theory provides a theoretical structure that helps explain audience involvement and behaviour with media content. It highlights the link between media uses and the pleasure and fulfilment of audiences. Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973). gave the initial uses and gratifications theory that shifted the emphasis from the alleged impact of media on audiences to their active engagement in selecting and utilizing media to fit their particular needs. This idea, which first surfaced in the 1970s, emphasizes that individuals actively seek out and connect with media information based on their own motivations and goals. It positions the viewers at the centre of the entire process of communication. This idea distinguishes between the pleasures people really experience and the pleasures they pursue from media consumption, such as information, mutual support, or escape. It challenges the conventional view of audiences as passive, multimedia-controlled consumers by portraying media users as active participants. People use media to address a range of social and psychological requirements, from enhancing interpersonal bonds to gratifying wants of enjoyment, pleasure, or self-esteem.

This theory has made a lasting impact on media studies because it offers a more complex understanding of how audiences and media interact. It highlights the fact that consuming media is a conscious and selected activity motivated by personal goals, changing how academics examine the various ways through which media material satisfies psychological and social requirements.

According to Papacharissi and Mendelson (2010), this hypothesis contends that the motivation of viewers to watch reality TV programs is based on their own needs as well as interests. This theory is guided by three fundamental needs including cognitive, emotional, and social needs. While viewing reality TV may provide viewers with insights into a variety of aspects of interpersonal relationships, human behaviour, and social dynamics, it may additionally elicit strong emotional responses like empathy, exhilaration, and occasionally even the sensation of emancipation. According to Papacharissi and Mendelson (2010), watching reality television can cause viewers to experience a wide range of emotions, empathise with the protagonists of the show, or may just find it entertaining. Additionally, reality TV shows can be a subject of discussion and provide audiences with a sense of connection with their fellow community of fans. Conclusively, this theory offers a framework for comprehending why people opt to engage with reality TV shows, along with how they are motivated to continue involvement with them.

Rubin (2009), observed that media and the content presented over them greatly influence individuals who watch them. Moreover, individuals are not passive recipients of the content presented over media; rather, audience selectively watch media messages as per their interests, motivation, backgrounds, and needs. As per Urista, Dong, and Day (2009), the theory of uses and gratification can be utilized to explain how people use social media and online networking sites to connect with others in the modern world of technological advances and social media in an efficient and selective manner and to satisfy their desire for mediated communication with others. Additionally, using social media is a constant means of looking for acceptance and support from others. In a research study similar to Urista et al. (2009). Whiting and Williams (2013) identified ten distinct uses and gratifications of social media in the 21st century. These include social engagement, information searching, expression of opinion, entertainment, leisure, ease of use, passing time, exchange of information, interpersonal relationships, and observation of or knowledge about others. Thus, the uses and gratification theory of media sheds light not only on the uses of traditional media such as TV, radio, or newspapers, but also the concurrent social media forms in the age of technological advancements.

Concerning this, McQuail et al. proposed the 'Theory of Mass Communication' in 1972 and it provides a theoretical framework for understanding the functioning of mass media. According to this theory, mass communication comprises an intricate framework made up of media outlets, messages, target audiences, and a larger social setting. McQuail highlights that media content is crucial in forming public opinion and that how information is presented and framed may have a big impact on how people see the world. The theory also recognizes that media organizations, influenced by political and economic forces, are crucial to the spread of information. Additionally, McQuail acknowledges the participation of listeners in communication. He recognizes that different people receive media messages differently depending on their upbringings, worldviews, and moral principles, emphasizing the significance of how audiences react and engage with media information. The McQuail hypothesis also emphasizes how the sociological and cultural framework that governs mass communication functions has an impact on it. The functioning and material of media entities may be significantly influenced by cultural, political, and social factors.

The theory of mass communication also considers the possible impacts that mass communication has on people and society, acknowledging that media may have both immediate and delayed consequences on the actions, mindsets, and perceptions of individuals. The complex and context-dependent interactions involving media and society are highlighted in this theory. When it comes to understanding how the media works and how it has a significant impact on the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours of individuals, the theory by McQuail et al. is still an essential component of the discipline of media and communication studies.

2.2.1 Process of Theory of Uses and Gratification

The general process of Theory of Uses and Gratification or TUG involves people actively choosing to consume media in order to satisfy their distinctive wants and desires (Rubin, 2009). The process of TUG begins with the identification of the unique social, affective, and cognitive demands of the individuals. After

determining their requirements, people choose the media material they want to connect with consciously. Viewers choose particular reality TV programs they think would meet their specified demands when it comes to these programs. Moreover, personal tastes, content of the program, reference of some program by others, and social factors could all have an impact on this selection process.

After choosing a reality TV program, viewers actively absorb the content of that media program. They focus on the characters, plots, dialogue, and other aspects of the show as they watch it. In this stage, viewers look for gratifications that fit with their specified needs (Hill, 2018). For instance, people can look for connection with others, intellectual stimulation, or emotional gratification from their experience of watching. Depending on the unique interests, values, and expectations of each person, this sense of gratification might differ from one person to the next. Someone looking for emotional involvement, for instance, could find that viewing a reality show causes them to feel a variety of feelings, which is satisfying (Malur et al., 2014). Likewise, someone looking for stimulation intellectually may feel satisfied when they discover knowledge regarding human behaviour and interpersonal dynamics in the society.

Following the consumption of the media material and the associated pleasures, people assess their general level of satisfaction and consider if their needs were met. They can evaluate how well the selected reality TV program matched their expectations, delivered the necessary level of engagement (emotional or intellectual), or promoted social interactions (Foss, 2014). The evaluation process aids people in making the decision as to whether or not they intend to continue consuming the same media or look for choices that better suit their requirements. Depending on the assessment and introspection, viewers may decide to keep watching a particular reality TV program if it regularly satisfies their specified needs (Foss, 2014). To better suit their changing needs and interests, consumers might even change the media they consume by experimenting with various platforms, genres, or shows. The following figure explains the process of Uses and Gratification Theory in a nutshell (Figure 2.1).

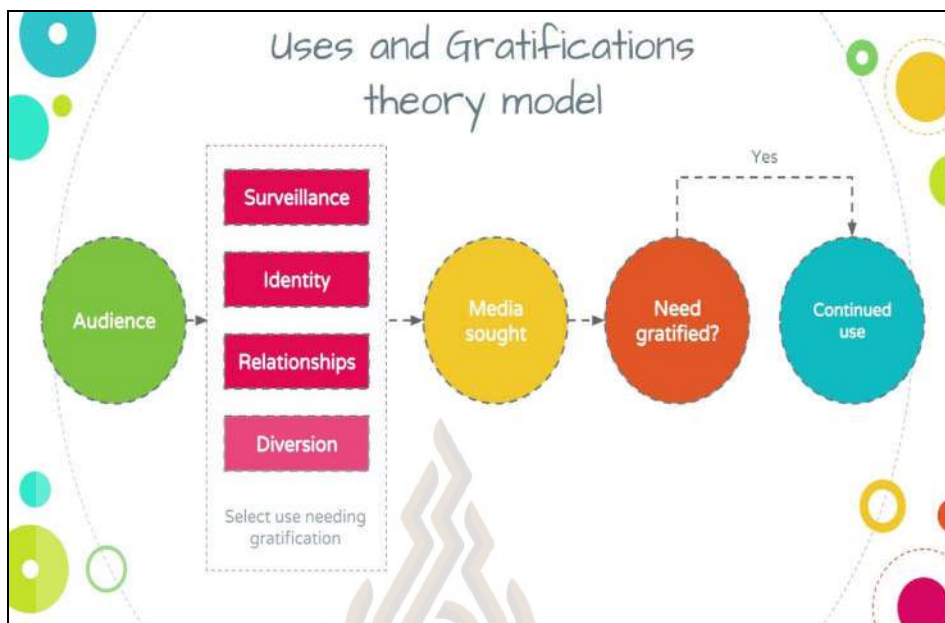


Figure 2.1 A Model of Uses and Gratification Theory

Source: Katz & Blumler, 2017

In general, there are four primary uses for which audience seek media. These include the need for identity, diversion, relationships and surveillance (Dyring, 2017). Individuals may be seeking media to feel connected to certain characters on the shows or to keep themselves updated with the news and keep an eye on what is happening around the globe in various fields, be it politics, sports, or entertainment. Moreover, individuals may connect with shows and media news that appeal to their emotional aspects and can help them feel belonging to a certain category of individuals.

Furthermore, it can help individuals in fostering relationships. People utilise digital platforms to interact with relatives and close friends and to take part in virtual networks that promote a feeling of belonging in the modern era of social media. Thus, media can play a positive role in strengthening social connections, experience sharing, and social network building. Viewers may also look for content that reflects and validates their own values, opinions, and passions. This helps individuals express and define who they are. For example, as a means of reinforcing their ideals and ideas, an individual who is fervently committed to environmentalism can find themselves drawn to films and news articles on climate change.

Media can function in offering distraction to the audience as well. Escapism and entertainment, both are provided by media, such as games, TV series, movies, and music. It provides comfort, happiness, and escape from the tensions and strains of everyday life. Audience may also seek media as a tool for surveillance. People may wish to remain up to date on news, information, and current events by using media as a window into the outside world. It gives people the ability to make educated decisions, take part in public conversation, and feel in control of their surroundings.

Once these needs and uses are satisfied by the media channels sought, the audience will continue to go back to that channel or show. However, if the show does not meet the expectations and needs of the audience, they may discontinue watching and using that media and may explore other options. Looking critically at this model, it is observed that the model suggests an active and intentional role of audience in their choices related to media consumption. It also asserts that media serves a multitude of purposes, including identity construction, distraction, connection building, and monitoring. It gives people the happiness and fulfilment they need to overcome the challenges of contemporary life. This idea emphasises how media consumption is purpose-driven and how it helps people meet a variety of needs.

Thus, the Uses and Gratifications Theory depicts a dynamic and constantly evolving process in which people continually analyse their needs, choose media material, utilise it, and assess their satisfaction with it. It also emphasises the active role that people play in decisions regarding their consumption of media and the multitude of motives and gratifications that are sought by diverse audiences. However, the precise procedures and specifics may change depending on the situation and the circumstances of each individual.

2.3 Concept of Reality TV Show

TV is an easily accessible source of entertainment for a larger share of world population. Among the different forms of entertainment shows observed on television nowadays, reality TV shows are one of the most watched and influential forms of TV

shows which keep the audience engaged and coming back to watch them day after day, season after season (Pahad et al., 2015). Reality television frequently makes us consider what we would do in the same circumstance, which may be an excellent exercise in exploring our principles. Most reality shows have as a recurring subject the fundamental conflict between self-interest and self-sacrifice (Skeggs & Wood, 2012). Individuals are familiar with these themes of right and wrong behaviour, betrayal, competitiveness, and connection because they make comparable decisions every day without the help of cameras, fictitious situations, or exposure. People are drawn to it because, at their most fundamental level, they enjoy seeing human drama and can identify with difficult choices (Skeggs & Wood, 2012). They want to witness the battle, whether it is for fame, fortune, or notoriety.

2.3.1 Popularity of Reality Shows

Reality TV shows are among the most popular genre of television shows across the globe. China is no exception to it, and particularly after 2010, reality TV shows have become a household name in China. While earlier, Chinese channels used to broadcast American and other reality shows, in the past two decades, these channels have launched their own reality shows in almost every genre conceivable. While earlier, audience used to be excited to know about the lives of celebrities through the celebrity reality shows, now they have become more obsolete and audience have become more focussed in learning and experimenting with novel kinds of variety reality shows, one of which is themed around divorce. The de-celebrity trend of reality shows in China has led to an increase in the popularity of those reality shows that focus on lives of ordinary people and their ordinary routines (Cong, Hong, Liu, & Zhang, 2021). This emphasize the high preference of Chinese audience toward reality shows linked/associated highly to their own lives. This shows an increasingly positive development and footprint of reality shows in the Chinese entertainment industry.

2.3.2 Audience Feedback of Reality Shows

According to research by Cheung (2017), reality TV shows significantly impact how viewers perceive social reality. According to Skeggs and Wood (2012), viewers actively participate in the program's content and rely on their own sentiments and experiences to develop an emotional connection. Character identification, emotional outbursts, and responding to how real life is portrayed in the program are common ways in which this emotional involvement is expressed. In China, with increased command of external media, local channels have also grasped the concept of reality shows and made global reality shows more approachable and appealing to viewers in the country by localization, which has also made these shows more acceptable to the common masses. China has emerged as a significant importer of format programs as a result of the increased popularity of global format reality shows on a worldwide scale (Zhang, Hasan, Yaakup, & Fang, 2023). From love reality shows to talent hunts, business, and dare shows, there is no genre where Chinese channels have not experimented and come up with some reality show.

2.3.3 Types of Reality Shows

Numerous formats exist for reality programs, and each one caters to various preferences and interests. With a wide range of genres, Chinese reality TV appeals to a diversified viewership. Aspiring singers are featured in talent contests including "The Voice of China" while humour and excitement are added to survival and adventure programs such as "Keep Running" by celebrity-led physical endeavours and exciting adventures. Celebrity reality shows engage their casts in outdoor activities, like "Back to Field" while "Hurry Up, Brother" blends travelling and challenging hurdles with a stars as cast. With the use of reality television, dating and relationship programs including "Heart Signal" focus on romance. Thus, it can be asserted that with something for every audience and a variety of creative forms, Chinese reality TV remains dynamic, preserving its importance in the field of media and entertainment.

2.3.4 Appeal of Reality Shows

Reality TV is popular among masses for reasons other than pure entertainment. They provide a singular window into human behaviour, giving spectators a chance to observe how people react to difficulties, disputes, and moral quandaries in real life. Because of this relatability, viewers are able to consider their own principles and methods for making decisions. The shows draw on our inherent interest in the human condition by frequently tackling patterns of betrayal, ambition, brotherhood, and trust. Additionally, viewers become emotionally immersed in the lives of the people on such reality programs, whether they are appealing or disputable, cheering for their victories and sympathizing with their failures. Reality TV is a continuing and well-liked genre and will continue to remain so due to its emotional connection, psychological significance, and potential for self-reflection and introspection.

2.4 Information about Goodbye, My Lover

‘Goodbye, My Lover’ is the first reality show with the theme of divorce in China, which is positioned as a "marriage documentary observation reality show". Reality shows should focus on the lighter and more interesting content of life, and the topic of divorce, while striking, is clearly too heavy in style. In order to embed divorce perfectly into the reality show model, the creators need to plan enough accurate narrative logic and program architecture. The establishment of the structure is an important skeleton of establishing the overall program, and the program structure set up by "Goodbye, My Lover" is wholesome (Morton, 2020). The first season of the show was aired in 2020 and it focused on three different types of marriage samples, inviting three couples facing an emotional crisis on an 18-day trip out of the routine state of life. During the journey, the program team arranged a series of emotional experiments and games, and the tasks set a new situation and order. At the end of each day, the guests answered a question "Do you still want to get a divorce?" After the whole trip, they were required to make a final decision.



Figure 2.2 Snippets from ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ 1

Source: IMDb, 2020



Figure 2.3 Snippets from ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ 2

Source: IMDb, 2020



Figure 2.4 Snippets from 'Goodbye, My Lover' 3

Source: IMDb, 2020

The theme of the program was loved by the audience after its broadcast and has always maintained high ratings. In its predecessor South Korean variety "We Divorced" hit 9.0% ratings, capital ratings of 10.2%, and single-episode ratings as high as 14.7%. Inspired by it, Mango TV launched "Goodbye, My Lover," a marriage documentary observation reality show. Although there were many viewers who were not optimistic about this in the early stage, and there were even some voices such as "on the edge of death" and "entertainment to death can be stopped", but the response after the broadcast of the program is good (Ashley, 2020). According to the statistics of all media platforms, it ranked 8th in the popularity list, with a popularity of 55.84, and a high score of 8.9 points on Douban. This program is especially popular among girls and women since the program presents and supports the emotional and feminist viewpoints and promotes equality in a marriage. The success of first season of the show led the producers and broadcasters to bring a second season in 2021. Both the first and the second seasons had 13 episodes of 105 min each. The cumulative number of views in the two seasons has exceeded 3.5 billion which speaks of its success among the Chinese audience. It has become a thought-provoking "positive energy variety show" that can reflect modern marriage. Since both the seasons illustrate the

most intimate relationship one can have in life, i.e., marriage, and also the complex human nature along with fragility of emotions and the intricate web of human thinking, it has captivated its audience and provided them with multiple reasons to feel grateful towards the show. Owing to this success and popularity, a third season of the show as ‘Goodbye, My Lover 3’ is now being aired on Mango TV and it has already released the fifth episode of the show.

2.5 Demographic Audience

Depending on the particular show and its intended audience, the demographics of the audience of reality TV shows vary. The present study targets the audience of “Goodbye, My Lover”; therefore, one demographic feature of the audience for the present study is that they should have watched the show “Goodbye, My Lover”. These viewers have personal experience with and knowledge concerning the program. They are, therefore, qualified to share their perspectives on the communication and emotional value of the show. Also, since the poor may not have access to TV, and the rich may find the show too boring or not up to their standards, the middle socio-economic class individuals have been targeted for the present study.

2.6 Related Research

Research on the perception of the audience regarding their awareness and acceptance of reality shows reveals that audiences are aware of the authenticity of reality TV shows and their characters. A study by Das and colleagues (2021) explored the opinions and perceptions of audiences and media experts in a randomly drawn sample from India regarding reality shows and the truthfulness of the content presented in them. The majority of the audience surveyed and interviewed revealed that although they are aware of the fact that the content presented on the majority of the reality shows is scripted, they still prefer to watch them for their entertainment value.

It was further found that audiences are aware of the manipulation of characters from how they are in real life as per the format and concept of the reality show. However, if the audience finds out that wrong information is being presented to them through such reality shows, they raise their voices on social media and may not watch the show later on (Das, Sarkar, & Hussain, 2021). The findings of the study, thus, illuminate the awareness levels of the audience about reality shows and their acceptance as long as the truth is being telecasted.

In another study, Malur et al. (2014) observed that audiences view reality shows as platforms for celebrity personalities to regain their fame or present an image that can be commercially utilized later by influencing their emotional quotient. Thus, present-day reality shows are not just presenting fabricated concepts, they are also being tailored to the socio-cultural and emotional values of the audience to generate maximum viewership and revenue.

Based on the nature and content of reality TV shows and the vision of their makers, the participation of the audience in the shows varies. Hermans, Wonneberger, and Noort (2017), have identified four kinds of participation of audiences in reality TV shows on the basis of a survey conducted with audiences. These are- social participation (e.g., going to fan gatherings), creative participation (e.g., making fan art), reactive participation (e.g., conversing about the program with others), and active participation (e.g., voting for the participant of their choice or the one with the greatest emotional appeal).

An important aspect of reality shows is that they appeal to the emotional aspects of the audience by incorporating emotional elements such as love, friendships, fights, and more, thereby ensuring continued viewership. Through these emotional elements and others, reality TV shows also ensure the active participation of the audience in the show (Hill, 2018). One way to do so is by incorporating the element of voting in the show (Bockstael, Vermeulen, & Dens, 2014). In other ways, by creating fan clubs or starting fan pages and sharing information about reality shows on social media, the audience actively participates and engages with the reality shows

(Kopfman & Aaker, 2012). However, the key to the successful participation of the audience lies in the positive perception of the audience regarding the show (Hill, 2018). Based on this research evidence, it can be concluded that the audience actively and creatively interacts with reality TV shows with which they feel emotionally connected and perceive them to be authentic or close to reality.

The continued viewership of reality TV shows by audience season after season indicates a certain sense of relatability and satisfaction that the audience feels with the program. Godlewski and Perse (2010), in a limited sample of randomly drawn individuals from the U.S., examined the satisfaction of audiences with reality TV shows in relation to their activity post watching the episodes of the show. The study discovered that reality TV shows viewers were more inclined to participate in online activities associated with the shows if they strongly identified with the protagonists or concepts of the shows. These activities included interacting with others about the show on social media, taking part in fan clubs or online forums, and looking up more details about the program or the participants. According to the study, viewers who participated in online activities were more satisfied with the viewing experience of the show than those who did not participate in online activities. Moreover, the audience reported that it was easier for them to enjoy and feel fulfilled when watching reality TV because of the feeling of belonging and interaction that came with online participation.

By contrasting the anticipated gratifications with the gratifications received, Zhao (2014), investigated the reasons why viewers watch reality TV shows, with specific reference to 'The Voice of China' and their satisfaction with these shows. To gather data, a quantitative survey was used. The study had 231 participants selected through the convenience sampling method. The paired sample t-test was used to tabulate and analyse the standard deviation and mean. The research findings reveal that social connection, entertainment, and relaxation, rather than vicarious participation of the audience or the perceived realism of the show, are the factors that determine the satisfaction of the audience with reality shows. Moreover, the audience reported high satisfaction with the content of the program. This research

finding suggests that the higher the degree of entertainment value and social interactivity in a reality TV show, the more satisfied its audience will feel.

With their new, varied, and interesting concepts, and depiction of the contemporary economic, political, and social changes in society, reality TV shows attract the attention of a large section of the TV audience. Regarding this, Tirasawasdichai, Obrenovic, and Alsharif (2022), observed that reality TV shows targeting the promotion of cross-cultural knowledge based on gratification theory positively influence the perception of the audience towards the targeted culture and country.

However, studies focusing on the positive influence of reality shows are few, but those reflecting negative influences are in abundance. Muneer and Munir (2020) found a link between viewing television reality shows and perceived materialism. They found that substantial exposure to reality TV shows can significantly affect the perceptions of materialism among the young audience. It is so because, in a maximum of these shows, the participants are shown to endorse big brands in the field of apparel, accessories, footwear, electronic gadgets, and other necessary or luxury consumables.

Similarly, Jahng (2019), argued that watching reality TV shows that feature wealthy and well-known people shape the beliefs and perceptions of the audience about name, fame, and wealth. It implies that repeatedly watching these shows may cause viewers to exaggerate the prevalence of glamour and wealth in real life, which might add to the cultivation effect. The long-term influence of a TV show on the attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of reality of the audiences is known as its "cultivation effect" (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1986). As per this effect, extended and repetitive exposure to specific television depictions of reality can affect the perception of the audience of those shows about the real world. Thus, it can be inferred that though reality TV shows can sometimes influence the audience in a positive manner also, by and large, their influences are negatively skewed.

Fiske (2010), proposed that the communication experience and information experience provided by the media for the audience directly created the media economy. With the development of consumer culture, the meaning of cultural and economic circulation gradually tends to be symbolic, and the shared experience and culture also develop into the shared symbolic meaning. This kind of observation is often used by love variety shows as a way of labelling guests. The construction of the personality of the protagonist enables the audience to find their own main position, so as to obtain a kind of imaginative satisfaction.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

The aim of the present study is to investigate the uses and gratifications of the audience of China with the show “Goodbye, My Lover”. For the fulfilment of the objectives of this research, a conceptual framework has been proposed (Figure 2.1)



Figure 2.5 Conceptual Framework

Based on this conceptual framework, the media exposure of the audience to the love reality show “Goodbye, My Lover” will be analysed first. Then, the uses and gratification of the audience with the show in enhancing their communicative and emotional values will be analysed with the help of online survey questionnaires. Moreover, a quantitative comparison of the differences in these values of male and female audiences will also be undertaken.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The primary purpose of the research methodology chapter is to identify the techniques and methods used to conduct the entire study. It will identify the data collection and data analysis methods for the study. The chapter aimed to provide a clear understanding of the population, sampling, instrument, data collection methods, and data analysis of the entire study. It ensures that the entire research process is transparent and accurate by describing the research methodology. This increases the credibility and validity of the study. In the end, a brief overview of the entire chapter will be given.

The current study aims to provide quantitative data to assist researchers in comprehending the relationship between media exposure of the audience to the program ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ and their feelings about its usefulness and gratification. This program was aired on and continues to be telecasted on Mango TV at 12:00 pm on Wednesdays. Each of the episodes is 105 minutes long and specifically highlights the theme emotional needs of individuals and the intricacies of relationships between married couples. This along with its very interesting theme of divorce and how couples perceive each other and search for solutions to emotional hurdles made it an appealing choice for this study.

Given the aims and objectives of the present study, the exploratory research design is the most appropriate out of the descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory research designs. This design produces results that are statistically conclusive, thereby, offering the chance to thoroughly study a research issue (Salkind, 2010). It will be chosen for the current study because it will make it easier to investigate its primary goal, which is to determine how watching the love reality show "Goodbye, My Lover"

affects the use and gratifications of the audience towards the show. In order to better grasp the findings and the research subject, it is crucial to take into account a suitable research approach. According to the goals of the current study, the deductive approach is the most appropriate since it uses the theory of use and gratification already in existence to evaluate the data and offer novel perspectives on how exposure to various shows such as love reality shows may influence the audience (Teherani, Martimianakis, Stenfors-Hayes, Wadhwa, & Varpio, 2015). Thus, the present study will use an exploratory research design with deductive approach.

Furthermore, this study has adopted a quantitative research design for collecting numerical data and guiding data analysis. The entire research is conducted through quantitative research design to analyse the usefulness and gratification of the audience towards the love reality show, 'Goodbye, My Lover.' The quantitative research design will allow for the collection and systematic analysis of data, offering the researcher an objective and systematic way to measure the usefulness and gratification of the show, "Goodbye, My Lover" and enabling a more precise understanding of the research phenomena (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020).

Data gathered through quantitative tools such as survey questionnaires will be evaluated numerically in a quantitative research method through statistical tools (Apuke, 2017). In the present research, statistical calculations are used to investigate the link between media exposure of the audience in terms of how frequently they have watched the "Goodbye, My Lover" show and their sense of usefulness and gratification towards it. The findings arrived in the study would produce a clear conclusion that could be extended to a broader population of audience of reality shows (Bryman, 2012). Thus, given the nature of the study, its objectives, and its intended outcomes, a quantitative method will be most suitable to collect and analyse data.

3.2 Population and Samples

3.2.1 Population of the Study

The targeted population for this study is the TV reality show viewers who have or have not watched the show "Goodbye, My Lover." These viewers can provide first-hand knowledge and experiences regarding the show, making them the ideal candidates for offering insight into the uses of the program, particularly regarding its emotional values and the gratification they feel with the program. It is essential to understand the characteristics such as age, gender, and media exposure of the targeted population to ensure the accuracy and generalisation of the findings of the study (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Both males and females from middle-class backgrounds are selected as the targeted population in this research.

"Goodbye, My Lover." a marriage documentary observation reality show was launched on Mango TV. There may be some YouTube channels who may be telecasting recorded episodes of the show, but the producers have launched it exclusively on Mango TV. According to the statistics of all media platforms, it ranked 8th in the popularity list, with a popularity of 55.84, and a high score of 8.9 points on Douban. The success of first season of the show led the producers and broadcasters to bring a second season in 2021. Both the first and the second seasons had 13 episodes of 105 min each. The cumulative number of views in the two seasons has exceeded 3.5 billion which speaks of its success among the Chinese audience.

It is critical to estimate the suitable size of the target population as it involves all the viewers who have/have not watched the entire show through the online streaming platform. It will be helpful to understand the targeted population size for determining the adequate sample size of the study (Riley et al., 2022). The viewership data of the show can be generated from the rating agencies of the television. Such as Nielsen IMDB or online streaming platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime; this provides a rough and tough estimate of the population size (Wayne, 2022). It is essential to consider the actual size of the targeted population, which might be more

significant than this estimate due to various factors such as illegal streaming, downloading, or sharing the experience of viewers.

The researcher should also focus on the distribution of viewers across different geographical locations and time zones to understand and address the overall size of the targeted population (Anwyl, 2021). This information will help identify the differences among the viewers from the perspective of the region, as well as their patterns and preferences which will help generate appropriate findings in the research with generalization. However, it may not always be possible to access the exact or estimated target population size. In such circumstances, all the individuals who have fully or partially watched the show can be considered the target population, and the sample size can be derived using the G power formula. For the present study, the target population involves all male and female viewers who have watched all or a few episodes of the love reality show, “Goodbye, My Lover”.

3.2.2 Sample of the Study

This research study will use a non-probable sampling technique, convenient sampling for participants in the online survey questionnaire. This technique is cost-effective and time-efficient to collect the data and can reach the targeted audience (Nelson, Loux, Arnold, Siddiqui, & Schootman, 2019). Convenient sampling refers to selected individuals who are convenient available and excited to participate. Hence, it can be said that a convenient sampling technique is the most suitable approach to conduct the survey. The sample size can be determined based on the desired level of accuracy, the margin of error, and the level of assurance of the objective of the study utilizing the G power formula. The formula for calculating sample size using G-power employs the effect size of the study, its power, and its significance level. Keeping the effect size and power to be higher, i.e., 0.8 for both metrics and the significance level to be 0.05, the minimum sample size for the study shall be 70. Since the show is telecasted on a Chinese channel, Mango TV, the sample comprise of male and female individuals from China. Moreover, given the large population base of China, particularly in the age group of 18-50 years, sample size of 70 may not be adequate

enough to make substantial findings. Therefore, to make the findings of the study more applicable and acceptable to a broader demographic, I have used a significantly bigger sample size taking inspiration from Zhao (2014) who used a sample of 231 in his survey-based study. The final sample size of the study will be 400 (both males and females) in the age range of 18 to 50 years which also comprise the major demographic for this show. To make the study more interesting and widely applicable, the audience will be categorised into two groups- group one audience who have watched all the episodes of the show, and group two audiences who have watched one or more but not all the episodes.

The generalization of the finding can be increased with the help of large sample size; however, it requires more time and resources for data collection and analysis in the extensive data. A pilot study was used to test the feasibility of data collection methods and adjust the sample size to focus on the potential limitation of the convenience of the sampling methods. Potential issues such as low response rates and challenges in reaching specific demographic groups can be identified with the help of this preliminary investigation (Lakens, 2022). This allowed the researcher to refine their approach before collecting the primary debates. There were inclusion and exclusion criteria for selecting the participants for the survey. The criterion ensured that data collected to conduct the research accurately reflects the experience of the target population. The inclusion criteria are selecting individuals who have watched the TV reality show "Goodbye, My Lover." On the other hand, the exclusion criteria reject individuals who do not watch the reality show "Goodbye, My Lover."

Ethical considerations are maintained while conducting the entire sampling process. Ethical considerations have ensured that the integrity of the study is well maintained and protect the rights of participants (Brittain et al., 2020). Underrepresentation of specific demographic groups and overemphasizing the opinion of the most available participants are potential biases that may arise in the sampling technique. The researcher must ensure that this bias is not affecting the sampling process. The respect for the privacy and confidentiality of the participant must be followed in the ethical guidelines. The researcher must consider that their

communication is transparent and unbiased with the participant to minimise the external potential force in the sampling process. It is essential to declare potential risks and benefits associated with the survey to the participant (Newman, Guta, & Black, 2021). The query of the participant regarding the study also needs to be solved by the researcher with accurate information so that they can decide their desire.

The researcher and participant should be aware of the potential risks related to online data collection in the digital age. A secure online platform should be used for data collection to avoid potential risks and ensure the protection or security of sensitive data (Atlam & Wills, 2020). The participant will be informed of the steps the researcher takes to ensure their privacy and confidentiality. The researcher applied various measures to protect the privacy of the participant and ensure that no personally identifiable data is collected or shared. All the data was stored securely with limited access permission of authorized persons. Unique-specific codes were used to protect the identities of the participants in the data analysis reporting. All the collected data was anonymised to avoid the identification risk. The researcher will be aware of the potential bias related to the sampling process and take action to minimise its impact on the research finding. There is a risk of self-selection bias, where different individuals have different characteristics and opinions among those who have participated as volunteers than those who do not. Target recruiting using social media or online forums can help to minimise the bias in the research sampling process (Rubenstein & Furnier, 2021). The research team should also be transparent regarding the limitation of the entire sampling technique and identify the potential bias in the research findings. Moreover, the study maintained high credibility by maintaining ethical guidelines and addressing the potential bias in the sampling process.

3.3 Research Instruments

One of the most important considerations in all aspects of research is undoubtedly deciding on the suitable research methodology or data-collecting method that will be used to gather raw data. It may be due to the essence of selecting the right approach as it is the foundation for the research findings, how they were interpreted,

and how they will affect policy planning and execution in the future. As the research design is exploratory and the method of data collection is quantitative, quantitative research techniques and tools will be utilised to collect data that can be statistically computed, and its findings be generalised for the target population. The research instrument plays a significant role in allocating and analysing the required data (Sheng, Amankwah-Amoah, Khan, & Wang, 2021). To analyse the use and gratifications of the love variety reality show "Goodbye, My Lover", this section will provide an in-depth analysis of the research instrument used in the study, an online survey questionnaire. This method will confirm a clear and deeper understanding of the study topic. Questionnaires will be used to capture the quantitative data that represent the experiences and perceptions of the audience regarding the show.

A self-constructed online survey questionnaire served as the main research and data collection tool for this study. According to Nayak and Narayan (2019), when a researcher has to function under time, energy, and financial restrictions, the survey approach is the best option. Moreover, surveys offer a practical way to get data quickly and affordably on an extensive sample. Furthermore, statistical approaches make it simple to interpret survey data, allowing for the easy generalisation of conclusions to broader populations. Considering these advantages of the survey method, it is only appropriate that this tool be used to collect data for the present study limited by both time and resources.

A detailed questionnaire development process has been adopted to develop the questionnaire. The reasons why this questionnaire is self-constructed was because no such questionnaire exists that can fulfil the objectives of the present study and is standardised over the target population of this study. Considering the research objectives and existing literature in the field, affirmative sentences that can reflect the uses and gratification of the audience with the show "Goodbye, My Lover" were pooled together to form the first draft of the questionnaire. This draft was shared with peers and subject experts and equipped with their opinions the draft was refined.

The validity of this refined draft was computed using ICVI and SCVI values. Items that have ICVI (Item content validity index) values less than 0.80 were rejected from the draft. SCVI is the scale content validity index which is computed by averaging the ICVIs of individual items. A scale is considered valid if it has an SCVI value above 0.70. The remaining items formed the second draft of the scale which was piloted with 50 individuals of the target population. The reliability of the scale was calculated using Cronbach's alpha with the test-retest method. The scale was considered highly reliable if it has a reliability coefficient value of 0.80 or more. After pilot testing, items with insignificant t-values at 0.05 significance level were rejected, and the remaining items formed the final draft of the "Uses and Gratification Scale" that was used in the study.

3.3.1 Part 1 Demographic Information

Part one has comprise demographic information about the audience such as their name, age and gender, and their watching preferences and exposure to the show. The frequency with which "Goodbye, My Lover" has been watched by the audience was described by watching preferences and exposure to the show.

3.3.2 Part 2 Questionnaire Statements

In the second part of the survey questionnaire, there were twenty-four statements, divided under three categories: media exposure (07 statements), uses (08 statements), and gratifications of the audience (09 statements) with the program. These statements were Likert scale items measured between one to five with one signifying never and five signifying always. the following part reflects the value of each score on the Likert scale.

- 1) Never
- 2) Rarely
- 3) Sometimes
- 4) Often
- 5) Always

All the items were positively scored, implying that the maximum score possible on this scale was 120 and the minimum score was 24. In the questionnaire, statements linked to the emotional experience of the audience representing the use or gratification of the program while viewing the show was presented, and they were asked to score their agreement with it. One example of such an item could be:

I felt a deep emotional connection to the characters in the show.

(1) Never (2) Rarely (3) Sometimes (4) Often (5) Always

Thus, the exploratory analysis of the program will provide insightful information on love and other forms of relationships and how they could help the audience understand, evaluate, and manage their emotions.

Several measures including pilot testing, member checking, and peer review have been used to confirm the trustworthiness and validity of research instruments. The pilot was conducted with a small group of participants on the online questionnaire. This helped identify the potential issue and bias and refine the research instrument before the data collection on a full scale. The triangulation helps make comparisons and cross-verify the findings with the help of different data sources. The researcher focussed on peer review throughout the data collection and analysis. The peer review helped to avoid the mistakes and errors in the findings. There are multiple stages to complete the peer review effectively and efficiently. The peer review session involves discussions of emerging themes, methodology decisions, and potential biases. This ensures the trustworthiness of the findings by fostering reflectivity. The member checking helps identify the accuracy of the data used to conduct the research. The participant in the survey were provided with some opportunity to review and provide feedback on the findings. The process helps in identifying the interpretation of the research as well as its potential bias.

This questionnaire was prepared on the platform ‘Questionnaire Star’ or ‘Wenjuanxing’ which is a Chinese platform that helps researchers create and publish online survey questionnaires and other tools with ease. On Wenjuanxing, users may

design their own questionnaires, incorporating fill-in-the-blanks, multiple-choice, matrix, and other types of questions. Users may subsequently distribute these questionnaires to participants to get their views and thoughts. Wenjuanxing has numerous significant features. By modifying question forms, alternatives, arrangements, and more using Wenjuanxing's online editing tools, users may construct their own survey questions. Users may opt to send participants survey URLs by social media, email, and website-embed codes, or they may employ the mobile application of Wenjuanxing to identify QR codes. Users may examine and evaluate survey feedback from respondents in real-time using its tools for data analysis, which also let users create graphs and reports to help them better understand the findings of their surveys. Data may be exported by users in formats like CSV or MS Excel for additional analysis or interaction with other programs. Wenjuanxing provides a variety of price ranges that let consumers pick certain features and degree of customization in accordance with their requirements. Wenjuanxing is often employed in a number of disciplines, including market research, education, and surveys of consumer and staff satisfaction. Thus, it can be ascertained that Wenjuanxing offers customers an easy and effective approach to gather and evaluate data to help with research.

Although the research instrument chosen for the study is the most suitable and appropriate, there are some limitations in the research instruments. The limitations relate to convenience sampling, self-report data, and lack of depth in the findings. The incorporation of convenience sampling in the study might have some potential bias and limits from the perspective of generalization finding in the research. However, given the challenge of reaching the targeted population and the demand for a cost-effective, timely data collection process, the convenience channels remain the practical choice. Questionnaires depend on the criteria of the self-reported experience and perception of the participants. Social disability and memory errors are subjected to bias in the research work. The researcher needs to boost the confidentiality of the study to mitigate this bias; the researcher needs to motivate the participants to be honest and accurate with their responses. Moreover, while surveys are good for making generalisations, in-depth information may not be obtained from questionnaires. To mitigate this issue, a mixed-methods study can be carried out that

utilises both quantitative and qualitative instruments to collect, collate and interpret data.

In conclusion, it can be said that the instrument that has been selected to conduct the research and work includes an online survey questionnaire, which will help in facilitating the comprehensive analysis of the use and gratification of the audience represented through the reality show from the perspective of romance and relationships. The reality show "Goodbye, My Lover" is selected to analyse the impact of shows on human behavior and attitude. Rigorous data collection and analysis methods have been used to conduct the research. Additionally, it addresses all the potential biases and limitations of the research. This study will contribute to many valuable insights into media exposure and emotional value of the show as well as the impact of the love reality show on the viewer's perspective on love and romantic relations.

3.4 Data Collection

The main aim of the data collection procedure of the study is to explore the use and gratification of the audience with the show "Goodbye, My Lover." Quantitative data collection techniques will be used to conduct the study. This section outlines the data collection process, including participant recruitment, the administration of the online questionnaire, and the ethical conditions associated with the data collection methods. The participant requirement is the targeted individual who has watched the reality show "Goodbye, My Lover" through broadcasting or virtual platforms. Sample was selected using multiple ways. Participants were recruited using online platforms and social media channels. Social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, WeChat, fan forums, and hashtags related to the show were used to select the candidates for participation (Villeda et al., 2019). The link of the questionnaire and consent form along with brief overview of its purpose, use, and instructions on how to complete it was shared on these social media platforms and the student groups of Rangsit University. Interested individuals could directly click on the link and fill out the questionnaire.

Choosing the target population was the first step in the course of research. To protect the participants from any possible threat, the anonymity and safety of their identities was guaranteed. The first four hundred male and female respondents who show their voluntary interest in participating in the survey were recruited. These individuals were required to sign written consent prior to filling out the questionnaire to make sure they freely chose to take part in the research and were not under any duress. Once the forms have been submitted, the participants received an automated email thanking them for participating in the study.

Ethical guidelines and principles were followed in the entire data collection process. Ethical guidelines ensured the credibility of the research (Hasan, Rana, Chowdhury, Dola, & Rony, 2021). Informed content, privacy, and confidentiality are the key ethical considerations for data collection. The informed consent explains that all the participants will be provided with a consent statement outlining the study objective, the volunteer nature of participation, and the confidentiality of the responses. The participant must be aware of and agree to all the consent before proceeding. On the other hand, privacy and confidentiality define that all the data of the candidates will be sorted securely and separately to ensure the data privacy of the candidates. The data of the candidates were saved anonymously in the questionnaires. The researcher followed the data management and storage protocols.

Various quality control measures were used in the data collection process to maintain the quality and credibility of the data. Training and collaboration, pilot testing, and regular monitoring are the three monitoring measures that were used in this research study. Calibration and training are the first steps in the quality control process. At this step, the members of the research team received training on how to conduct an online questionnaire. According to Sridharan, Tai, and Boud (2019), the training guaranteed accuracy and uniformity in work among the team members. This made sure that every piece of information needed for the study methodology is gathered and preserved safely. Pilot testing of the questionnaire serves as an additional quality indicator. According to Abd Gani, Rathakrishnan, and Krishnasamy (2020), pilot testing will aid in identifying any potential problems and biases in the survey

questions. To find any potential problems or inconsistencies in the survey questions carried out in groups, pilot testing shall be performed with a limited sample of participants. Daily monitoring was the third quality control indicator. As they addressed any potential problems that may develop during the data analysis process, monitoring and observing aided in improving the quality of the data. The researcher was in charge of overseeing daily data-gathering observation.

The researcher used strategies to mitigate the challenges of the data collection procedure. Participant attrition, technological issues, and Rich and diverse data are the three strategies that were used to overcome the challenges of the data collection procedure. The first strategy is participation attrition. Participation attrition refers to maintaining open communication with the participant, offering regular updates and flexible schedules to the participant (Sim & Waterfield, 2019). This helped in minimizing the attrition of the participant. The second strategy is that the researcher resolved the technical issue in the data collection process by familiarising with the tools and techniques in the data collection process. Familiarising with virtual tools and technology helped the team members resolve the problem quickly (Jamshidi & Milanovic, 2022). The research team had explicit knowledge regarding the survey questionnaire and video conferencing.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis plays a crucial role in transforming the raw data into meaningful findings that contribute to understanding the media exposure, uses and gratification values for audience, as represented through the reality show "Goodbye, My Lover." This section defines the entire data analysis process of the online survey questionnaire. Data will be prepared at the beginning of the first stage of data analysis. The data preparation involves checking the potential error in the data that occurs during the data collection process (Brownlee, 2020). This helped in making the data more appropriate and accurate for the research. The collected data was organised and cleaned in the beginning. Organising the data in the proper way helped in ensuring the accuracy and

consistency of the collected data. The data preparation process helps in confirming the validity and reliability of the data.

3.5.1 Descriptive Statistics

After completing the data preparation descriptive statistics was used. Descriptive statistics helps in summarising the collected data by highlighting the main features of the data through computation of mean, median, standard deviation, and percentages. (Mishra, 2019). This helped in understanding the trends and patterns of the data, which ultimately made the data analysis process easier to carry out. Descriptive statistics helps in providing valuable insight regarding the data and helps in subsequent inferential analysis.

3.5.2 Inferential Statistics

The inferential statistics were used after successfully completing the descriptive analysis. Inferential statistics helped in understanding the relationship between the different variables of the data (Saefi, 2020). The hypothesis related to media exposure, uses and gratification of “Goodbye, My Lover” was identified in this stage. The entire procedure was done based on the specific questions that have been asked in the online questionnaire and the data that have been gathered from survey questionnaires with the participants. Correlation analysis, t-test, and regression analysis are some methods that have been used in this study in order to employ inferential statistics.

Pearson’s correlation was used in the study to understand the variables and identify the strength and direction of the relationship between the variable that has been found in the data (Seeram, 2019). The correlation coefficient helped identify the degree to which the variables are related to each other. The relationship between variables such as media exposure and use and gratification was identified through the correlation.

t-test was used to compare the means of group samples and helped in identifying the presence of differences in the demographic factors of group samples (Baker, 2019). The difference in the experience and perception of the viewer was identified independently in this stage, for both male and female viewers. It helped in acknowledging the potential future target audience regarding love reality shows.

Regression analysis was used for data analysis after the t-test of the sample. The regression analysis helped in identifying the predictive relationship between the variables of the data (Ghosal, 2019). Various regression models were used to identify the extent to which the specific factors can impact the perception of viewers regarding the show and its impact on the emotions of the viewers. This analysis was helpful in acknowledging the key elements that contribute towards the success of the “Goodbye, My Lover” reality show.

Reliability and validity assessment was carried out in the data analysis process. The reliability and validity assessment helped in identifying the consistency stability and construct of the instrument of the measurement (Hulteen et al, 2021). The consistency and stability of the measurement was acknowledged by the reliability assessment. On the other hand, the accurate measurement of the research instrument was identified by the validity assessment. For credibility and trustworthiness, both reliability and validity assessment play a crucial role in credibility and trustworthiness.

Various forms of validity were considered for the research instrument to evaluate the validity assessment. Content validity, construct validity, and criterion validity are the forms of validity that were used to ensure the validity of the research instruments (Shrotryia & Dhanda, 2019). The content validity ensured consultation with experts, and in the literature review, on the other hand, the constructed validity was employed using various factor analyses and other statistical techniques to ensure the hypothesised structure of the construct. The criteria validity examined the relationship between the external criteria and the measure of the study. Moreover, content validity, construct validity and criteria validity were used to ensure the credibility of the research.

Interpretation and presentation were carried out based on the completion of the data analysis. The interpretation and presentation of the data analysis helped in ensuring the quality of the data (Lemon & Hayes, 2020). The interpretation and presentation of the data was carried out by following the guidelines provided by Creswell. The organisation of the result will depend on the hypothesis and question of the research, along with addressing the primary objective of the research in interpretation and perception. After the data analysis process, the interpretation and presentation were carried out clearly and concisely. The primary objective of the result is that it will be related to media exposure and uses and gratification. The study placed an emphasis on the result of the data analysis. Existing literature and unexpected results will be explained in the findings.

The result and relation were discussed to ensure the contextualization of the findings. The discussion ensured that the finding is contextualised with a wide range of scope in the literature (Sundler, Lindberg, Nilsson, & Palmér, 2019). A discussion of the result was carried out concerning the previous study and identify the unexpected results that emerge during the data analysis process. The team was in a position to assess the overall importance and implication of the study with the help of comparison and construction of the findings.

Tables, graphs and various visual representations were used in the presentation. The table and graph facilitated a clear and easy understanding of critical statistical relationships (Chusni, Saputro, & Rahardjo, 2022). This helped in enhancing the quality of the presentation by offering clear, informative, and easy interpretations of the data. The practical implication of the findings were also be carried out in the research. Providing recommendations for future research and development of the love variety reality show that efficiently interacts with the emotions of viewers were used as the practical implication of the findings. These recommendations will guide the outcome of the study, and it will also identify the large body of scholarship regarding the media exposure and uses and gratification of the audience with “Goodbye, My Lover”. Moreover, the potential limitation of the research were also identified. To help the reader better grasp the reliability of the

research outcomes, the team demonstrated transparency and an ethical equilibrium in their research.

Conclusively, it can be asserted that the process of analysing data covered in this section contributes to a rich, insightful comprehension of the uses and gratification values of the show "Goodbye, My Lover" for the audience. This will be achieved using statistics tools (both descriptive and inferential), and the interpretation and presentation of the outcomes of the analysed data in a precise, transparent, and thorough manner. The study of the data analysis process played a crucial role in acknowledging the love and romantic genre reality shows and its impact on the perspective and experience of the viewers.

3.6 Conclusion

It can be concluded that the research approach employed in this study provides a detailed analysis of the uses and gratification of the love reality show "Goodbye, My Lover" signifying its emotional value. The quantitative data collection technique helps allocate a rich, meaningful and generalizable insights into the data. Ethical guidance is followed up to acknowledge the potential bias and confirm the valuable insights of the study while conducting the population and sampling process. Valuable insights are provided through data on media exposure, uses and gratification of the audience with the "Goodbye, My Lover" reality show. Quantitative tools, including descriptive and analytical statistical tools have been used in the data analysis. This helps offer reliable, valid, and widely generalizable findings while inclusively presenting them. The study plays a significant role in explaining the romantic genre of reality shows and its impact on viewers by consciously focusing on each aspect of the research methodology.

Chapter 4

Research findings and Results

The present study aimed to analyse the uses and gratification of audience of the Chinese love reality show, 'Goodbye, My Lover' in relation to their media exposure to the show. For this, quantitative data was collected on a self-constructed twenty-four item questionnaire 'Uses and Gratification Scale' with three dimensions was developed and filled out on questionnaire star. Socioeconomic demographic information about the participants (who were 18-50 years old male and female audiences of the show from China) was also gathered from the same questionnaire. Information collected pertained to their age, education level, gender, occupation, and whether they watched season 1, season 2, or both the seasons of the show 'Goodbye, My Lover.' The raw data collected from the questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean and SD and inferential statistics including t-tests, correlation, and regression analyses. In this chapter, a detailed description of these statistics in the form of results will be resented. The results of this chapter are presented in five parts:

Part One: This section details the descriptive analyses of the socioeconomic as well as the predictor and criterion variables of the research.

Part Two: The second section elaborates on the gender-wise comparisons of media exposure, uses, and gratification of the audience with the show.

Part Three: In this part, correlation analyses conducted to examine the relationship between media exposure and uses and gratification of the show are presented.

Part Four: In this part, regression analyses conducted to examine the effect of media exposure on uses and gratification of the show are elaborated.

Part Five: In the last section of the chapter, the broader findings of this research are summarised.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

4.1.1 Frequency Distribution for Socioeconomic Variables

To understand the trends and patterns in the sociodemographic aspects of the participants, frequency distribution of the various sociodemographic variables was done (Table 4.1)

Table 4.1 Frequency Distribution for the various Socioeconomic Variable

Demographic Factors	N	%
Age		
18-21 years (1)	31	7.8
22-25 years (2)	125	31.3
25-30 years (3)	108	27.0
31-35 years (4)	112	28.0
36+ years (5)	24	6.0
Gender		
Male (1)	162	40.5
Female (2)	238	59.5
Watched Season		
Season 1 (1)	89	22.3
Season 2 (2)	249	62.3
Both Seasons (3)	62	15.5
Education Level		
Undergraduate (1)	44	11.0
Graduate (2)	272	68.0
Postgraduate (3)	32	8.0
Uneducated (4)	52	13.0
Occupation		
Students (1)	54	13.5
Workers (2)	159	39.8

Table 4.1 Frequency Distribution for the various Socioeconomic Variable (continued).

Demographic Factors	N	%
Freelance (3)	99	24.8
Full-Time At Home (4)	88	22.0

Frequency-wise, the maximum number of the participants are in the age range of 22-25 years ($n = 125$), followed by 31-35 years ($n = 112$) and then 25-30 years ($n = 108$). Moreover, females accounted for 59.5% of the sample, i.e., 238 of the 400 participants, while males were 40.5% of the total sample size, i.e., 162 out of 400 participants. Frequency distribution of seasons revealed that maximum of the sample ($n = 249$) had watched 2 while 89 participants watched season 1 and 62 had watched both the seasons. For education level, it was observed that nearly $2/3^{\text{rd}}$ or 68% of the sample, i.e., 272 participants out of a total of 400 reported being educated, and nearly 11% of the sample or 44 participants that watched the show reported being uneducated. Occupation-wise, a large section of the sample, i.e., 64.6% or 258 participants were employed and working either as permanent workers ($n = 159$) or as freelancers ($n = 99$). From the remaining, 54 participants in the study were students and the rest 88 were full-time at home, primarily housewives. Thus, this sample distribution asserts that majority of the audience of the show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ are female employed individuals in the age range of 22-35 years, and who are at least graduates.

4.1.2 Mean and S.D. for Predictor and Criterion variables

Mean and Standard deviation (S.D.) were calculated for the participants to understand the patterns in the media exposure (predictor variable/ independent variable) and uses and gratification (criterion variables/ dependent variables) of the audience of ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Media Exposure, Uses, and Gratification

Measures	Mean	Std. Deviation	n
Media Exposure	24.49	5.35	400
Uses	28.71	5.25	400
Gratification	32.15	6.25	400

The Table 4.2 describes the mean and standard deviation of the independent variable i.e., media exposure, and the two dependent variables, i.e., uses and gratification. n represents the number of participants and the final data points that were analysed to obtain results. Individual details of these values and what they mean are presented in the subsequent sections on media exposure (Section 1), uses (Section 2), and gratification (Section 3)

Section 1 Media Exposure, the items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging between 1 and 5; therefore, the minimum value possible for an individual is 7 (since there are seven items in this dimension of the scale) and the maximum value possible is 35. These scores are divided three levels of low (below average), average and high (above average) on the basis of quartiles. Thus, scores in quartile 1 (raw score less than 8.75) fall in the low media exposure level, scores in quartile 2 and 3 (raw scores between 8.75 and 26.25) fall in the average media exposure level, and scores in quartile 4 (raw scores above 26.25) lie in the high media exposure level. The mean value of media exposure for the sample, therefore, falls in the average level, since $M = 24.49$, $S.D. = 5.35$. Thus, it can be asserted that on an average, audience are moderately excited to wait for the new episodes of the show and know about it, recommend it to friends or connect with other fans of the show.

Section 2 Uses, the items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging between 1 and 5; therefore, the minimum value possible for an individual is 8 (since there are eight items in this dimension of the scale) and the maximum value possible is 40. These scores are divided three levels of low (below average), average and high (above average) based on quartiles. Thus, scores in quartile 1 (raw score less than 10) fall in the low uses level, scores in quartile 2 and 3 (raw scores between 10 and 30) fall

in the average uses level, and scores in quartile 4 (raw scores above 30) lie in the high uses level. The mean value of uses for the sample, therefore, falls in the average level, since $M = 28.71$, $S.D. = 5.25$. Since the mean value is closer to 30, it can be predicted that ‘uses’ values of a larger sample size are concentrated towards 30. Thus, it can be asserted that audience found the show moderately useful in strengthening their relationships, gaining new perspectives about love and relationships, and helping them become better at managing relationship issues with family and other loved ones.

Section 3 Gratification, the items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging between 1 and 5; therefore, the minimum value possible for an individual is 9 (since there are nine items in this dimension of the scale) and the maximum value possible is 45. These scores are divided in three levels of low (below average), average and high (above average) based on quartiles. Thus, scores in quartile 1 (raw score less than 11.25) fall in the low gratification level, scores in quartile 2 and 3 (raw scores between 11.25 and 33.75) fall in the average gratification level, and scores in quartile 4 (raw scores above 33.75) lie in the high gratification level. The mean value of gratification for the sample, therefore, falls in the average level, since $M = 32.15$, $S.D. = 6.25$. Since the mean value is closer to 33.75, it can be predicted that ‘gratification’ values of a larger sample size are concentrated towards the higher gratification level. Thus, it can be asserted that audience felt moderately satisfied and grateful towards the show owing to its engaging them, emotionally supporting them, and improving their emotional and overall well-being.

4.2 t-tests for Gender-wise Comparisons of Media Exposure, Uses and Gratification

Descriptive statistics provided an idea of the trends concerning the levels of the predictor and criterion variables in the sample, but it did not tell anything about any variations that may have arisen due to gender, which is a crucial variable affecting the emotional well-being of individuals. To account for it, gender-wise comparisons were made to ascertain if both male and female audience felt the same degree of media exposure, uses, and gratification towards the show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Gender-wise Comparisons of Media Exposure, Uses, and Gratification

	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	p-value
Media Exposure	Male	162	26.20	3.35	5.47*	.000
	Female	238	23.32	6.10		
Uses	Male	162	30.02	3.64	4.18*	.000
	Female	238	27.82	5.96		
Gratification	Male	162	33.88	4.23	4.68*	.000
	Female	238	30.97	7.09		

Note * $p < .01$

From the table 4.3, it is clear that for all the three variables, the mean values are higher for male audiences than the female audience. To compare these mean values statistically, t-tests are carried out and the significance is checked at .05 level of significance. For media exposure, the t-value between male and females comes out to be statistically significant, $t(398) = 5.47$, $p < .001$. It means that males report significantly being more exposed to and excited about the show 'Goodbye, My Lover' than the females despite female audience being more in number. For uses, the t-value between male and females comes out to be statistically significant, $t(398) = 4.18$, $p < .001$. This implies that males find the show 'Goodbye, My Lover' to be statistically significantly more useful than females in strengthening their relationships, gaining new perspectives about love and relationships, and helping them become better at managing relationship issues with family and other loved ones. Similarly, for gratification, the calculated t-value is statistically significant, $t(398) = 4.68$, $p < .001$. This suggests that male audience feel statistically significantly more satisfied by the show 'Goodbye, My Lover' than females due to its role in engaging them, emotionally supporting them, fulfilling their emotional needs, and improving their emotional and overall well-being. Overall, it can be asserted that male audience are found to be more affected by the show 'Goodbye, My Lover' than the female audience.

4.3 Correlation Analyses between Media Exposure, Uses and Gratification

To analyse the presence, nature, and strength of relationship between the predictor variable, i.e., media exposure, and the criterion variables, i.e., uses and gratification, correlation analyses was done by computing Pearson's correlation coefficient (Table 4.4)

Table 4.4 Correlation Coefficients (r) between Media Exposure and Uses and Gratification

	D.V	r	p-value
Media Exposure	Uses	.76*	.000
	Gratification	.81*	.000

Note * $p < .01$

Media exposure was found to statistically significantly correlated with uses of the show 'Goodbye, My Lover,' $r(398) = .76, p < .001$. The value of correlation coefficient indicates towards a strong positive correlation between the two variables, which suggests that with increase in media exposure, the audience will find the show to be more useful for them, and vice versa. The positive sign suggests that greater the media exposure, greater is the perceived usefulness. Contrarily, if the media exposure of audience is reduced, the perceived uses of the show will also decrease. In addition to uses, media exposure was also found to be statistically significantly correlated with gratification of the show 'Goodbye, My Lover,' $r(398) = .81, p < .001$. This value of correlation coefficient also indicates towards a strong positive correlation between media exposure and gratification, suggesting that an increase in media exposure is accompanied by a subsequent increase in their sense of gratification and satisfaction with the show. The positive sign suggests that greater the media exposure, greater is the perceived gratification of the audience with the show, primarily on account of their emotional needs being met. Contrarily, if the media exposure of audience is reduced, the perceived satisfaction with the show will also likely decrease. Thus, it can be

concluded that media exposure of a show has a significant impact on its perceived usefulness and gratification for the audience.

4.4 Regression Analyses for Impact of Media Exposure on Uses and Gratification

Linear regression analysis was carried out to substantiate the correlation analysis and ascertain the extent to which media exposure could predict the two criterion variables, i.e., uses and gratification. Two separate regression models were developed for this purpose. The first regression model analysed the impact of media exposure on uses of the show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ (Table 4.5)

Table 4.5 Regression of the Impact of Media Exposure on Uses of the Show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’

	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	R ²	F	p
(Constant)	10.36	.80		12.98	.000	.58	554.12	.000
Media Exposure	.75	.03	.76	23.54	.000			

Note * $p < .01$

The regression coefficient, represented by the Beta value was significant for media exposure and uses, $r(398) = .76$, $p < .001$. The F-value for this model is statistically significant, $F(1, 398) = 554.12$, $p < .001$. This significant value implies that the regression model holds overall predictive capability for uses of the show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ for the audience. Moreover, the R^2 value of this model of media exposure and uses comes out to be .58 which indicated that media exposure accounts for 58 percent variability in the uses of the show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ for the audience. Thus, it can be asserted that media exposure is a significant predictor of uses of the show for the selected sample in the present research.

Table 4.6 Regression of the Impact of Media Exposure on Gratification of the Show
'Goodbye, My Lover'

	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	R ²	F	p
(Constant)	8.92	.86		10.39	.000	.67	766.88	.000
Media Exposure	.95	.03	.81	27.69	.000			

Note * $p < .01$

The regression coefficient, represented by the Beta value was significant for media exposure and gratification, $r(398) = .81$, $p < .001$. The F-value for this model is statistically significant, $F(1, 398) = 766.88$, $p < .01$. This significant value implies that the regression model holds overall predictive capability for gratification of the audience with the show 'Goodbye, My Lover.' Moreover, the R^2 value of this model of media exposure and uses comes out to be .67 which indicates that media exposure accounts for 67% variability in the gratification of audience with the show 'Goodbye, My Lover.' Therefore, it can be concluded that media exposure is a significant predictor of gratification of the selected sample audience with the show 'Goodbye, My Lover' in the present research.

4.5 Summary

The aim of this study was to examine the uses and gratification of the audience of Chinese love reality show 'Goodbye, My Lover' considering their media exposure. The study yielded intriguing findings on the interaction and reaction of the audience to the love reality show 'Goodbye, My Lover.' The primary results of this research pertaining to the demographic variables revealed that most of the audience consisted of employed women in the age range of 22-35, who had at least a graduate degree and had partially or fully watched Season 2 of the show. Surprisingly, the study discovered that, despite their fewer numbers, male viewers expressed greater levels of interest and engagement with the television programme than did female viewers. This comprised greater media exposure and greater perceived sense of uses and gratification with the show. The study also found a significant positive relationship among exposure to the media and opinions of the audience of the show with its uses and gratification. This

implies that the audience thought the show to be more helpful in providing renewed relationship perspectives and emotional support depending on how engaged they were with it. Moreover, media coverage was a strong predictor of the perception of the audience with the usefulness and gratification of the show, suggesting that the engagement as well as reach of the show were significant variables in shaping the perspectives of the audience.

The results of the study in general highlight the influence of media exposure on engagement and satisfaction of the audience, especially when considering a reality programme that explores emotional and interpersonal issues. It also highlights the differences in the levels of uses and gratification of male and female audiences with media, with the former demonstrating surprisingly greater levels of usefulness towards the show and satisfaction with it.



Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

The present study aimed to explore in-depth the impact of reality shows on the exposure and value system of the audience. For this, a love reality show, ‘Goodbye, My Lover’, which has a strong emotional appeal and with which the audience feels connected, was selected, and its media exposure, usefulness and gratification of the audience were explored. Furthermore, the impact of media exposure on this show was analysed in terms of the usefulness and gratification of the audience. The target population of this research was the Chinese audience (both male and female) of the show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ in the age range of 18-50 years. Since the nature of the research is quantitative, a large sample was deemed more fit for the study. Therefore, a sample of 400 Chinese participants, both male and female, was selected following a convenient sampling method.

The independent variable of this study was media exposure, and the dependent variables were usefulness and gratification. For measuring the three variables, a collective tool was self-constructed on Questionnaire Star and comprised of two parts. The first part had demographic information on the audience, such as their age, gender, education level, occupation level, and the number of seasons of ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ they had watched. The second part had three dimensions, each one individually relating to media exposure, usefulness and gratification. The data was collected from the sample audience by sharing with them the link to the survey questionnaire through social media and class groups. The data obtained in this manner was then analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean, S.D., and percentage, as well as inferential statistics such as t-test, correlation, and regression analysis.

5.1 Summary of Findings

5.1.1 Description of Media exposure, uses, and gratification of the reality show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ of the audiences

From the demographic information, it was revealed that the majority of the participants who took part in the research and are the primary audience of the show are in the age range of 22-35 years and are predominantly women (59.5%). Moreover, the majority of the participants are graduates and have watched season 2 more than season 1 or both seasons.

5.1.2 Effect of Gender on Media exposure, uses, and gratification

An interesting finding in the study is that despite more female working participants watching the show, males are found to demonstrate much higher degrees of all three variables in the study, i.e., media exposure and their perceived sense of usefulness of the show as well as gratification. This finding is opposed to the conventional thinking and gendered observation of consumption of media, where it is predicted that more females are interested and engaged in watching and connecting with reality shows based on relationships and love (Deery, 2015). This is suggestive of some unique experiences and values that male viewers may be getting from love reality shows about which the popular media and contemporary researchers probably need to be made aware. One potential reason for such observations could lie in the changing trends of consumption of media by the younger generations. This is marked by flexibility in conventional gender roles where the more predictable gender roles assigned to one gender are being performed by the other gender and vice versa. Therefore, further studies explicitly focusing on gender roles can be taken up to explore this area in detail.

5.1.3 Relationship between Media exposure, uses, and gratification

Another crucial finding is the presence of a statistically significant correlation between media exposure and both the usefulness as well as gratification of the audience with the show. This correlation is positive, which implies that with an increase in the exposure of the audience to the show, their usefulness and gratification with the show also increases and vice versa. It means that more the exposure of the audience with the show ‘Goodbye, My Lover,’ more is their potential to find the show increasingly helpful in advancing emotional support and gaining novel perspectives on interpersonal relationships. As identified by Pahad et al. (2015), such relationships form the basis for understanding the complex processes through which media exposure in its diverse forms bring changes in the thought processes of perceptions, behaviors and emotional reaction of diverse audience. Along with it, the regression analysis has also supplemented the findings of correlational analysis, which shows that exposure to media can have statistical predictions for both usefulness and gratification. In other words, media exposure can significantly predict, to a certain extent how usefulness and gratification can be affected by it.

This study has also attempted to provide insights into how audiences may get engaged with particular media and content available on it. The way usefulness and gratification are impacted by media exposure suggests that some social, emotional or psychological need of the audience is being fulfilled by the show ‘Goodbye, My Lover’ because of which they are actively engaging with the show and finding it helpful. This finding can be substantiated by the theory of uses and gratification, which asserts that audiences actively choose specific media to fulfil one of the three fundamental needs, which are social, emotional, and cognitive needs (Papacharissi & Mendelson, 2010). These needs may include the need to obtain some information through news, enhance their communication and social interaction, entertainment through drama and reality TV shows and align with and develop their identity.

5.2 Conclusion

In this research, the role that media exposure can play in the gratification of Chinese audience with a specific love reality show, which is ‘Goodbye, My Lover,’ is highlighted. Findings have reflected that the audience are particularly moved to such emotional content that deals with individuals or their interpersonal connections specifically with their loved ones, such as their spouses. Additionally, the responses of audience have also revealed that shows having emotional themes like those which show real- life stories or emotional bonds between partners, such shows can profoundly affect the emotional aspects of their audience. As noted by Pahad et al. (2015), the personal aspects or the individualized aspects of such shows and their emotional appeal can have significant effect on the way audience perceive their emotions, their interpersonal relations, and the way in which they can modify the dynamics of their relationships with their partners and other loved ones. Thus, it can be inferred that media or reality shows with their emotional themes can affect the relationships of the audience who are watching such shows, and therefore, the media creators should take due care while designing such shows.

Thus it can be summarized that this research has proposed crucial insights into comprehending how the diverse audience from different educational backgrounds, occupational status and different age groups have engaged with this show ‘Goodbye, My Lover.’ The findings have additionally found that audience perceive the show to be useful and gratifying for their interpersonal relationships. Moreover, the findings of the study have challenged the traditional stereotype of females being more emotional and have suggested that males, too, prefer emotional content, mainly related to love and relationships, and perceive it to be valuable and gratifying in their interpersonal relationships. Additionally, the study has identified a significant role of exposure to media in moulding the perceptions of the audience.

5.3 Suggestions

The outcomes of present research have suggestions for the creators of shows, their marketers and advertisers, and academic researchers in the field of media research.

5.3.1 For Creators of Reality Shows:

Media creators can use innovative, creative methods, as well as diversify the content of their shows to address the different emotional and cognitive needs of their audience who come from diverse backgrounds. For example, while traditional shows have reflected emotional aspects to be a forte of women, the findings of this research shed light on the emotional aspects and needs of male audiences as well. This may help the creators to design shows and content targeting emotional aspects of male audiences in the future, thus broadening the audience base of their shows.

Moreover, as this study has taken into background the Chinese context with a Chinese show and Chinese celebrities as the key participants of the show, a culturally sensitive approach needs to be adopted to ensure the themes identified are culturally derived and not universal. Thus, while searching for universality in themes, their distinct cultural aspects shall also be realised and acted upon to ensure that the content does not disrespect any culture and feels relatable to all.

5.3.2 For advertisers of media:

The present research can be helpful in designing specific marketing strategies and advertisement campaigns that can utilise present-day digital platforms such as social media. Building on the finding of male audience interest and greater exposure and usefulness for the show, such marketing strategies can be utilised that focus on the male demography of the show equally, thus resonating equally with both male and female audiences. For this, such advertisements can be designed to show male characters engaging emotionally with the female characters or amongst themselves in

such a manner that makes it appear normal for the males to act emotionally. Such advertisements can appeal to a broader male audience demographic, thereby increasing the reach of the shows.

One way to increase the reach of the shows can be by disseminating information about the shows and their advertisements over digital platforms and social media, which are amongst the most used technological tools in contemporary times. To make them more effective, interactive sessions such as Instagram Live or YouTube Live, and other forms of social media campaigns can be arranged to engage the targeted audience more personally by targeting their genre preferences, their viewing habits, and their interests.

5.3.3 For researchers in the field of media research:

The findings present unique opportunities to explore the role of gender in the viewing habits and preferences of the audience, particularly with the aim to expand on the emotional aspects and preferences of male audiences. Gaining insights into gendered perceptions of media consumption of love reality shows and their perceived usefulness can be crucial from the point of view of understanding cultural differences for the same.

Researchers can carry out similar studies in diverse cultural environments and see if the gendered differences are similar or alike, influenced by the specific culture. For this, cross-cultural comparisons can also be carried out to understand how individuals from different cultures engage with specific media content, which can help in generating patterns that may be universal or specific across different cultures.

Thus, it can be concluded that the study has diverse implications for diverse stakeholders, which can lead to better understanding, promotion, consumption, and reception of diverse media forms, particularly love reality shows in the contemporary landscape.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

While the present study has been attempted with utmost caution and ways to ensure ethical standards, there are a few recommendations for future researchers.

The outcomes of the study in this case are applicable to the cultural context of China only. Therefore, studies in future should carry out cross-cultural comparisons to see how audiences from different cultures, perceive similar media content.

Future researchers shall carry out longitudinal studies to account for changes in perceptions, interests, and reception of the show by the audience over time. Moreover, if possible, both online and offline modes shall be used to collect data on survey questionnaires.

Along with it, analysis of perceptions of audience from different demographic backgrounds such as age, socioeconomic status, educational status, and vocational fields can be included in the study to make the research more comprehensive.

To make the sample more representative of the target population, with everyone from the population having equal chances of selection, probability sampling techniques such as simple random sampling shall be adopted by future researchers. Such a representation will help improve the generalisation of results to a broader population.

Standardised assessments shall be used by future researchers to overcome the drawbacks of self-constructed measures. If there is no appropriate standardised measure available, then the researchers shall first validate their self-constructed tool and then use it in the research. Such validated tools will provide more reliable and accurate data on audience perception of media and other aspects being studied.

Future studies shall integrate quantitative measures of data collection with qualitative measures such as interviews or ethnographic studies to increase the depth and richness of collected data and provide a holistic view of audience perception and engagement with media.

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The image features a large, faint watermark of the Rangsit University logo in the background. The logo is a circular emblem with a stylized flame or sunburst at the top, radiating lines forming a circle, and the university's name in Thai and English at the bottom.

Appendix

Survey Questionnaire: ‘Uses and Gratification Scale’

Part 1 Demographic Information

1. Gender:

☐ Male

☐ Female

2. Age:

☐ 18-21 years

☐ 22-25 years

☐ 25-30 years

☐ 31-35 years

☐ 36+ years

3. Education Level

☐ Undergraduate

☐ Graduate

☐ Postgraduate

☐ Uneducated

4. Occupation:

☐ Students

☐ Workers

☐ Freelance

☐ Full-time at home

5. Watched “Goodbye, My Lover”

☐ Season 1

☐ Season 2

☐ Both Seasons

Part 2 Questionnaire Statements

This section contains twenty-four affirmative sentences pertaining to uses and gratification you may have experienced while and after watching the reality show “Goodbye, My Lover”. These questions are divided under three categories: media exposure (07 statements), uses (08 statements), and gratifications of the audience (09 statements) with the program. There are five options against each sentence which reflects your degree of agreement with that sentence varying from ‘one’ meaning ‘never’ and ‘five’ meaning ‘always’. Feel free to respond in a way that reflects what you exactly feel about those sentences. Your responses will be kept safely and will be used only for the purpose of research work.

No.	Statement	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Category 1: Media Exposure						
1	I would eagerly wait for new episodes to go air.					
2	I talked with my friends and family to discuss the show.					
3	I have recommended the show to my friends since I feel they will enjoy it.					
4	I actively connect with other fans online, in search of additional information and fresh perspectives about the show.					
5	To stay up-to-date I watch repeat telecasts of "Goodbye, My Lover" episodes that I missed.					
6	I keep up with the most recent news and developments on the "Goodbye, My Lover" participants.					
7	For news and inside information, I keep up with the official "Goodbye, My Lover" social media pages.					
Category 2: Uses of 'Goodbye, My Lover'						
8	"Goodbye, My Lover" provided me with new perspectives on relationships and love.					
9	I was able to reflect on the complexities of my personal relationships after watching "Goodbye, My Lover."					

No.	Statement	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
10	I felt emotionally equipped to maintain healthy relationships after watching the show.					
11	The show has impacted how I perceive and control my own feelings in romantic relationships.					
12	I have used the insights from the program to strengthen my personal relationships.					
13	My interpersonal connections and communications with family and friends have improved after watching the show.					
14	I have become better adept at handling issues with my loved ones and partner.					
15	My understanding of the difficulties associated with the dynamics of marriage and the factors leading to divorce has changed as a result of the show.					
Category 3: Gratification of 'Goodbye, My Lover'						
16	I felt emotionally moved while I watched "Goodbye, My Lover."					
17	I developed an intense emotional connection with every character in "Goodbye, My Lover."					
18	I found great emotional support in "Goodbye, My Lover".					
19	During the show, I experienced pleasure and engagement.					

No.	Statement	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
20	I was sympathetic to the circumstances of the characters in the show.					
21	My emotional and general well-being were improved by the show.					
22	My emotional requirements were met by "Goodbye, My Lover".					
23	I experienced happiness and contentment whenever I watched the show.					
24	I find myself belonging to the fan base of the show.					

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