



**MEDIATING EFFECTS OF SATISFACTION IN THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN MOTIVATION FACTORS AND CONTINUOUS VIEWING
INTENTIONS TOWARDS CHINESE DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMS**

By

LI MENGYU

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,
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for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

April 2023

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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April 2023

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Chinese documentary programs are the true reflection and portrayal of the reality of Chinese culture, economy, and society. The Chinese government encouraged television stations and documentary production teams to create more excellent works. Also, the broadcasting platforms of Chinese documentary programs have been effectively guaranteed. Nowadays, however, compared with other programs in the same day-period, the ratings of Chinese documentary programs on television stations are slumping. Although the government, television stations and video websites have invested a lot of energy and services in terms of policies, funds and creative talents to support Chinese documentary programs, the dilemma still cannot be solved. Prior studies have mainly analysed the content and narrative of Chinese documentary programs. However, a very limited number of studies have been conducted from the perspective of audience, such as factors influencing their viewing intentions, satisfaction level and so forth. Furthermore, using the theory of uses and gratification to investigate undergraduate students' viewing intention to Chinese documentary programs is rare as well. Therefore, this research was conducted to examine the factors predicting undergraduates' continuous viewing intentions towards Chinese documentary programs. Uses and gratification theory and agenda-setting theory were applied to identify factors contributing to audiences' continuous viewing intentions. Based on the content of adopted theories, viewers' cognitive needs, affective needs, tension-free needs, and public perception were testified as motivating factors. Mixed methods were performed to achieve research objectives. In the first phase, a quantitative survey was conducted by adopting a self-administered questionnaire. All variables were measured by scales previously used by other scholars. Convergent and discriminant validity of the scale were examined using Confirmatory Factor Analysis. The data analysis was conducted with SEM on 549 undergraduates from Zhengzhou University, mainland China. In the second phase, a qualitative method was performed to identify 15

informants from quantitative data analysis. A thematic analysis was used to interpret the data from a semi-structured interview. Quantitative and qualitative results altogether demonstrated that cognitive needs, affective needs, tension-free needs, and public perceptions could influence audiences' continuous viewing intentions towards Chinese documentary programs. Meanwhile, the factors of gender, age, and the year of study indicated significant effects on continuous viewing intentions among all socio-demographic factors except for subjects. At last, satisfaction as a mediating variable showed a significant effect. This research contributed to provide a new perspective to understand the theory of uses and gratification by introducing the public perceptions from agenda-setting theory as an independent variable and also by solving specific research questions using mixed methods. Moreover, various practical implications for policymakers and media practitioners (such as broadcasters, video websites, documentaries producing teams, etc.) were further discussed.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**HUBUNGAN ANTARA FAKTOR MOTIVASI DAN NIAT TONTONAN
BERTERUSAN TERHADAP PROGRAM DOKUMENTARI CINA
DAN KESAN KEPUASAN SEBAGAI PERANTARA**

Oleh

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Program dokumentari Cina adalah refleksi dan gambaran sebenar realiti budaya, ekonomi, dan masyarakat Cina. Kerajaan China mencipta stesen televisyen dan pasukan penerbitan dokumentari untuk menghasilkan lebih banyak karya cemerlang. Platform penyiaran program dokumentari Cina telah dijamin dengan berkesan. Walau bagaimanapun, pada masa kini, berbanding dengan program lain, penarafan program dokumentari Cina di stesen televisyen merosot. Walaupun kerajaan, stesen televisyen dan video laman web telah melabur banyak tenaga dan perkhidmatan dari segi dasar, dana dan bakat kreatif untuk menyokong program dokumentari Cina, dilema ini masih tidak dapat diselesaikan. Kajian terdahulu terutamanya analisis kandungan dan naratif program dokumentari Cina. Tambahan pula, bilangan kajian yang sangat jarang dilakukan. Oleh itu, kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengkaji faktor-faktor yang meramalkan niat tontonan berterusan mahasiswa terhadap program dokumentari Cina. Teori penggunaan dan kepuasan serta teori penetapan agenda telah digunakan untuk mengenal pasti faktor-faktor yang menyumbang kepada niat tontonan berterusan penonton. Berdasarkan kandungan teori yang digunakan, keperluan kognitif penonton, keperluan afektif, keperluan bebas ketegangan, dan persepsi orang ramai telah dibuktikan sebagai faktor motivasi. Kaedah gabungan telah dilakukan untuk mencapai objektif penyelidikan. Pada fasa pertama, tinjauan kuantitatif dijalankan dengan menggunakan soal selidik yang ditadbir sendiri. Semua pemboleh ubah diukur mengikut skala yang sebelum ini digunakan oleh pongkaji terdahulu. Kesahan konvergen dan kesahan diskriminasi dianalisis dengan menggunakan Pengesahan Analisis Faktor. Analisis data kajian ini menggunakan perisian SEM kepada 549 mahasiswa dari Zhengzhou University, tanah besar China. Pada fasa kedua, kaedah kualitatif dilakukan

untuk mengenal pasti 15 informan daripada analisis data kuantitatif. Analisis tematik digunakan untuk mentafsir data dari temu bual separa berstruktur. Keputusan kuantitatif dan kualitatif sama sekali menunjukkan bahawa keperluan kognitif, keperluan afektif, keperluan bebas ketegangan, dan persepsi orang ramai boleh mempengaruhi niat tontonan berterusan penonton terhadap program dokumentari Cina. Sementara itu, faktor jantina, umur, dan tahun kajian menunjukkan kesan ketara terhadap niat tontonan berterusan di kalangan semua faktor sosio-demografi kecuali subjek. Dapatan akhir, pembolehubah pengantara menunjukkan kesan yang ketara. Penemuan kualitatif secara amnya konsisten dengan keputusan kuantitatif dan menyumbang pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi niat tontonan berterusan penonton terhadap program dokumentari Cina. Sumbangan penyelidikan ini memberi pelbagai implikasi kepada pembuat dasar, pengamal media (seperti penyiar, laman web video, pasukan pengeluar dokumentari, dan lain-lain), serta memperluaskan teori persepsi orang ramai dalam penetapan agenda sebagai pembolehubah bebas untuk menambah penggunaan) teori kepuasan dan penggunaan kaedah campuran untuk menyelesaikan soalan penyelidikan tertentu.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ZZU	Zhengzhou University
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
NVivo	Nudist Vivo
MVA	Missing Value Analysis
UGT	Uses and Gratifications Theory
SNS	Social Networks
CCTV	China Central Television
PRC	The People's Republic of China
UGC	User Generated Content
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
OLS	Ordinary least squares regression
NFI	Not Fit Indices
CMIN	Chi-square Statistics
df	Degree of Freedom
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error
TLI	Tukey-Lewis Index
IFI	Incremental Fit Index
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
C.R.	Critical Ratio
M.I.	Modification Indices
Sig.	Significant
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structure

SE	Standard Error
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
CR	Combined reliability
AVE	Mean Variance Extraction
SD	Standard Deviation
CITC	Corrected Item-Total Correlation



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study Background

Mass communication is the process of imparting and exchanging information through mass media to large segments of the population, and it has created a huge avenue for creating a means of transformation, presentation, and projection of ideology, culture, and economy. With the great development and spread of mass communication, diverse types have emerged, for instance, journalism, advertising, social media, film and television, the internet, etc.

Among different forms of film and television, the documentary program is one of the few television programs that tend to present and project an idea or ideology in the true nature of it, which based on real-life situations. The important point that the documentary program differs from other film and television programs is the embodiment of their social value (Wan, 2018). The heroic movement of Chinese documentary programs on television and the internet is exceptional with the intentional projection of China's rich cultural heritage, population, contemporary lifestyle, and tourism sites across the entire international markets and domestic audience.

The idea of Chinese documentary programs was to present China's story to the whole world in its true nature rather than a make-up story. Zhang Yiqing, a famous Chinese documentary program producer, once pointed out: "documentary programs are the best way to export values". Currently, the major producers of Chinese documentary programs include five categories: television stations, state agencies, private companies, video websites, and independent documentary producers.

In other words, documentary programs display the characteristics of authenticity, and the truth is the essential attribute of documentary programs (Wang & Meng, 2020). Authenticity is the process of two-way sharing. On the one hand, creators are required to shoot from an objective perspective and without subjective factors when recording. On the other hand, the objects shot in the documentary program truly show the state of daily life and cannot be changed by the original life. Nonetheless, it is the aftermath of belief, ideology, and cultural orientation to project it with a style of convincingly getting attention. Television documentaries are most effective through their topic selection, capacity, market, and channels, which makes them effective in presenting China's story more convincingly to the whole world and domestic audiences. Indeed, Pang (2010) indicated

that a documentary is an idea or run-through that “occupies” no secure “territory”. However, it organizes no predictable “inventory” of procedures, reports “no set number of issues”, and accepts no wholly recognized classification of “forms, styles or manners”.

Accordingly, Murray (2009) postulated that documentary programs play important roles in harmonizing cultural values of minority and major cultures by elucidating the values and importance of the cultures and beliefs towards coexistence. And documentaries are understood to “play a central cultural role in representing minority viewpoints and highlighting the historical or social importance of the cultural values” (Murray, 2009, p.43). Inspired by Grierson, he believed that documentary is a kind of mass media that influences public opinion, it has powerful propaganda and educational functions (He & Han, 2020). A documentary program is a medium to spread culture by recording images. It is its unchanging duty to record the true reality, trace back the social and historical origins, and carry forward the culture of the era (Wan, 2013). With their unique charm, documentary programs have special functions that other art forms do not have in recording the changes in social issues and showing cultural strength. Documentary programs attract many followers with their unique forms of expression and artistic fascination.

Chinese documentary programs were avenues for harmonizing the cultural diversity of Chinese people, their way of life, and the culinary edifies of China. For example, “A Bite of China” highlights the culinary cultures of all the entire cultural settings in China and harmoniously displays how and where the food could be procured, which made the program one of the most popular documentaries in the People’s Republic of China (PRC).

The documentary plays a progressively vital role in social publicity, cultural communication, and traditional promotion, which various studies have examined. For instance, Bell-Metereau (2006), Huang and Chang (2019), Lin (2020), Nisbet and Aufderheide (2009), Tanaka (2015), Tang (2017), and Xu (2018) all claimed that documentary programs had been one of the most useful avenues of projecting the real lifestyle of a society or a state. Moreover, documentary programs are noble because they do not pursue short-term and immediate utilitarian purposes but faithfully record concrete and visible things (Qi, 2002). This kind of “reality” is an objective reflection of the outside world and embodies documentary producers’ thinking, choice, and value orientation.

Undoubtedly, the ontological meaning of the documentary includes these factors: the clear purpose, that is, to enter the social reality, to intervene and participate in the mainstream of social life (Chen, 2003, p.21). It is instrumental and permeates the scientific spirit of discussion and thinking. Therefore, documentary programs are not just photographic records. They

express free will and individual consciousness, which shows independent thinking. Documentary programs have been regarded as effective and creative “social and artistic endeavors” (De Benedictis et al., 2017).

It is a production by a television station or independent producers in line with film linguistic properties that aim to capture attention, educate, inform and influence the audience’s mindset over a given course. Whether the documentary program can arouse the audience’s resonance and then make the audience accept the value concept conveyed by the program is the objective standard to measure the documentary communication effect. Practically, in terms of the role of documentary programs, the goal is to satisfy the audience’s thirst for knowledge, spread values and culture, broaden people’s vision of the world and realize social functions. However, the diversification of modern society and people’s needs determines that documentary programs cannot only focus on one style and perspective (Gao, 2012).

While Nisbet and Aufderheide (2009) and Vaughan (2019) indicated that a documentary program is a “movie about real life”, it is about real life, not real life. However, it is still a great extent, a window, and portrait of real life, which employs real life as the materials for its production through the artistic and crew construction and decision on the storyline or the discourse and for what purpose. Nisbet and Aufderheide (2009) argued that documentaries are not conservatively seen as inactive involvement intentionally unique for casual education or entertainment. It is a huge effort to spring up a debate or shape policies and educate others through the programs on television. Currently, the mass media is gradually moving towards narrow-broadcast, with audiences constantly subdividing and entertainment programs filling the screen. As a result, the audience market is the terminal of documentary programs and the starting point of developing the market value of documentary programs.

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

Generally, the overall idea of Chinese documentary programs was to present the Chinese story to the whole world in its true nature rather than a make-up story. However, documentary programs have been appraised as needing to have the appropriate communication effect expected of a documentary strategy meant to counter elucidation a domestic audience of China story. Wang and Guo (2018) indicated that the general communication outcome is “still insufficient” the reason for this unmatched outcome is a result of a misconception of the outside world’s audience on the image of China, which resulted in mainland undergraduate student’s lack of enthusiasm over the informative documentary programs and termed it “programs made for the aged”.

There is a practical problem in this issue, documentary program has developed in mainland China (Zhang, 2001), but it also faced numerous challenges (Yang & Jiang, 2011). Although the relevant research of Chinese documentary programs has been conducted for many years, there is still a confounding result of the audience analysis area. In fact, Chinese government, TV stations and video websites have invested a large amount of money to support the creation, production, distribution and broadcast of Chinese documentary programs, and they have also gained a certain share in the market, but the big dilemma at present is the lack of audience towards Chinese documentary programs (Huang et al., 2018; Xu, 2021; Yang & Liu, 2022). Specifically, the current situation of documentary programs in mainland China is that although they are arranged in prime time according to the policy requirements, due to low audience rating, many programs have been switched to other time or even stopped broadcasting (Zhang et al., 2010). Worse still, on the Internet platform, although the click-through rate of documentary programs is high, the website is still in a state of economic loss, so has to reduce the supply of them (He & Lei, 2015). Besides, Zhang (2018) highlighted that considering the minute number of its viewers, “the availability of its representative works” to the people and its small “impact on domestic audiences” has caused a dwindling audience enthusiasm for documentary programs, which affects the production, reproduction, and investment related to the production of documentary programs. Nevertheless, Chen (2016) and Wang and Guo (2018) indicated that Chinese documentary programs have not performed well or achieved the premeditated perceptual intention of the documentary strategy. However, being inexperienced with the “content” of the China story and diverse cultural dissimilarities requires integrating and creating an understanding of cultural dissimilarities acceptance all over China and has promoted a lack of enthusiasm among the audience in mainland China.

Irrespective of the rapid cultural quality improvement propagated by numerous documentary production in China, the worrisome factor in documentary production is an expansion of the audience or viewership, which tends to sustain the documentary production and increase patronage in both advert placement and other transaction-related activities. However, despite the ever-changing approach and cultural quality improvement, the pressing issue is expanding the audience of documentary programs, which has hindered the expected development of documentary programs in China. Expansion of the audience goes with a critical analysis of the audience value orientation and interest orientation of the common audience and builds a feedback mechanism to ascertain their documentary viewing desire (Wang, 2022). Ideally, Kunze (2018) and Lu et al. (2018) indicated that the strategy aims to educate the entire populace of China about its rich cultural heritage, culinary and tourist sites, and contemporary lifestyle. In addition, documentaries are significant because of their social and political impact on the well-being of Chinese audiences and on the education of audiences by raising awareness and desire for cultural integration. Despite the far-reaching studies on China,

story documentaries with particular reference to “A Bite of China”. In addition, how China’s perspective has been projected to counter the prejudice or misconception of the international audience and explicate to the domestic audience on China’s various rich cultural heritage. Yet, more needs to be written on the factors influencing audience satisfaction with Chinese documentaries.

Furthermore, there is a pressing issue of it. In fact, an important function of documentary program is education (He & Han, 2018; Liu, 2012; Nie, 2017; Wang & Ni, 2015). Chinese TV stations and the public universities shoulder the mission of transmitting Chinese culture and patriotic education (Jia, 2020; Kang & Huang, 2013; Xu, 2013). But as many undergraduate students in mainland China choose to be active on social media platforms such as Weibo/Douyin/WeChat (Hu, 2016; Li, 2021; Li et al., 2018; Lin, 2019; Lv et al., 2022; Su & Chen, 2020; Wang, 2013), few pay attention to TV programs (Chen & Wang, 2021; Pang & Di, 2012; Yang & Jiang, 2017), let alone Chinese documentary programs (Su, 2017; Zhang & Chen, 2020). Worse still, more pressing issue is that now some Chinese undergraduate students are less concerned about Chinese culture, politics and society (Li, 2020; Qin, 2019; Sheng, 2017; Zhao, 2013). Education departments and propaganda departments are actively trying to arouse and mobilize undergraduate students’ patriotic passion and sense of belonging to the country through policies and lecturing in the classes (Gu & Yang, 2021; Lin, 2020; Shi, 2008; Xu, 2017), but preaching and propaganda have little effect (Pang, 2010; Wan, 2018; Yang, 2014; Zhou, 2015), and Chinese documentary programs can be regarded as a good choice (Bian, 2019; Jiang & Ouyang, 2022; Kuang, 2017; Ma & Leng, 2020; Zhang, 2018). Therefore, the universities, TV stations, publicity departments, producers need to know what knowledge and content this group of young audiences need to get when they watch Chinese documentary programs.

Furthermore, there is also a theoretical issue in terms of uses and gratification theory because it has been applied in previous studies related to television programs and gratifications such as television dramas or children programs (Bakar & Bolong, 2017; Choi, 2019; Coker, 2012; Jere & Davis, 2011; McPaul, 2010). Therefore, there is a theoretical gap the study intends to fill in terms of applying the theory in audience satisfaction with Chinese documentary programs. In addition, public perceptions factor was employed in order to fill in the theoretical gap in the main theory because previous studies have proven this element as factor can influence audience satisfaction and continuous viewing intentions towards programs or social media (Lin &, Lagoe, 2013; Mbamalu, 2020; Steuter & Wills, 2010; Xu, 2021). Early in the history of media and mass communication research, an approach was developed to study gratifications that hold users and public to the types of content and media that psychosocial and social their needs, and these uses include documentary program uses (Junco et al., 2011). Thus, the agenda-setting theory was equally applied for this study

to complement uses and gratification theory (UGT) as the main theory via integrating viewing motivation factors and continuous viewing intentions. In addition, an extensive review of the literature showed that most studies in the field of Chinese documentary programs often used descriptive analysis to explain the audience research and viewing patterns (He & Lei, 2015; Jiang & Ouyang, 2022; Qiang, 2018), while only a limited number of studies explored the more inferential statistical technique. For example, the study examined the demographic factors of audiences played a role of audience satisfaction in viewing Chinese documentary programs (Chen, 2022; Lv et al, 2022; Wang, 2021). Some articles also mentioned that demographic factors (gender, age, the year of study, education level and so on) have a significant impact on the intention of continuous usage of social media (Chen, 2020; Pinto & Poornananda, 2017; Orchard, 2019). However, there was still a few studies on the influencing of demographic factors on continuous viewing intentions, taking demographic factors as the control variables (Florenthal, 2018; Lin et al., 2019; Nie, 2017). These research findings have definitely exposed limitations, and it is impossible to estimate and test a network between the relationship between demographic factors and continuous viewing intentions. Therefore, it is necessary to use a mixed study method to identify the issue of demographic factors as control variables to examine the impact on continuous viewing intentions.

Moreover, the researches on Chinese documentary programs have a very rich output. Most of the current literatures use quantitative or qualitative research method (Hong, 2018; Shi, 2008; Sun, 2019), and rarely use mixed method. In qualitative research, most of the case studies are often conducted (Lei, 2015; Liu, 2012). The relationships among viewers' (specifically undergraduate students in this research) motivating factors, satisfaction, and continuous viewing intentions needed to be further and thoroughly examined. Overall, this study would apply mixed method research with a quantitative online questionnaire and qualitative semi-structured interview to achieve research objectives. According to Schoonenboom et al. (2018), the fundamental aim of mixed methods is the investigator's desire to increase the possibility, power, and quality of their study by going after more than one method or elements of research in a single topic, which may enable answering the research questions through the utilization of questionnaire and interview. This method requires an independent analysis of the components of the methods used in data collection.

Additionally, based on the studies by Kunze (2018) and Wang and Guo (2018), it was demonstrated that most documentary programs lack clarity on market position, projection, and direction, which could be the reason causing their popularization. In addition, most documentaries needed help understanding how to integrate cultural values to project the aesthetic taste of China's story. Although some researchers analyze from the audience rating or audience viewing patterns of Chinese documentary programs, the shift of study on audience approach and the factors of

motivation address a critical dimension about the audience of Chinese documentary programs. On the one hand, many relevant researches in the past focused on content analysis or artistic creation of Chinese documentary programs (Chen, 2022; Courage, 2017; Kunze, 2014; Peng, 2013; Tang, 2017), while less studies pay attention to audiences' satisfaction and continuous viewing intentions towards Chinese documentary programs. Although some researchers analyze from the audience rating or audience viewing patterns of Chinese documentary programs (Chen & Wang, 2021; Lei, 2015; Su, 2017; Wang, 2014), the shift of study on audience approach and the factors of motivation address a critical dimension about the audience of Chinese documentary programs. On the other hand, audience analysis of television programs has some relevant achievements in the similar field (Bury & Li, 2015; Chang et al., 2016; Conlin et al., 2016; Rubenking et al., 2018; Ukka, 2019), but many of them are put forward by scholars in developing countries. Therefore, audience research from such a non-western perspective is very urgent, especially for the test of the model combining with uses and gratification theory and agenda setting theory in the Chinese context. This is of certain positive significance to Chinese communication research and even the whole field of mass communication.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the viewing patterns of Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students?
2. What is the relationship between motivation factors (cognitive needs, affective needs, tension-free needs and public perceptions) and the audiences' continuous viewing intentions towards Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students?
3. What is the relationship between the demographic characteristics and the audiences' continuous viewing intentions towards Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students?
4. What is the mediating role of satisfaction between relationships of motivation viewing factors influencing the audiences' continuous viewing intentions towards Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students?
5. What are the subjective views of respondents on motivation viewing factors, satisfaction and demographic characteristics towards continuous viewing intentions of Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students?

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 General Objectives

The general objectives of the current research are to examine the effects of motivating factors on the continuous viewing towards Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students. Besides, it is also aimed to examine the proposed mediation of satisfaction on the relationship between motivating factors and continuous viewing intentions towards Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1. To investigate the viewing patterns of Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students.
2. To examine the relationship between motivation factors (cognitive needs, affective needs, tension-free needs and public perceptions) and audiences' continuous viewing intentions towards Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students.
3. To identify the relationship between demographic characteristics and audiences' continuous viewing intentions towards Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students.
4. To determine the mediation of satisfaction between the relationships of motivation viewing factors influencing audiences' continuous viewing intentions towards Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students.
5. To explore the subjective views of respondents on motivation viewing factors, satisfaction and demographic characteristics towards continuous viewing intentions of Chinese documentary programs among undergraduate students.

1.5 Significance of Research

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, the study would integrate uses and gratification theory and agenda setting theory to examine the relationship among three variables (cognitive needs, affective needs, and tension-free needs) from uses and gratification theory, and one variable (public perceptions) from the agenda setting theory.

The combination of these variables from both frameworks would develop and extend the existing theories and extend the application of these theories to the fields of communication. Moreover, this would strengthen both theories and provide how these theories can be merged and executed in future studies.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

From the practical perspective, the findings of this research would provide opportunities and insights regarding major factors influencing audience continuous viewing. Additionally, how they could effectively harness those factors to prefer and experience certain media content.

The documentary programs also require effective communication strategies. This can be achieved by ensuring that the documentary programs are enriched and consistent with the strategic purposes of national cultural sustainability. The study would also highlight basic factors that motivate audiences towards watching Chinese documentary programs and how it could be part of policy-making to ensure national cultural acknowledgement and harmony among the masses.

1.5.3 General Significance

Overall, this study would contribute to the body of knowledge by using the mixed-method approach. Using the relative approach helped to highlight the perceptions of young audiences about the Chinese documentary programs. Besides, proposing and further examining the mediation of satisfaction will highlight additional factor as working effectively with certain needs.

Notably, the purpose of the Chinese documentary is to change the perception of the international world and elucidate the local audience on the importance of Chinese culture and history (Adis et al., 2017).

1.6 Study Scope

The scope of this study is, but not limited to, Chinese undergraduate students having a consistent exposure to watching documentary. This study examined motivation factors influencing the audience's continuous viewing of Chinese documentary programs among Chinese undergraduate students, and the mediating role of satisfaction with Chinese documentary programs was testified as well. Indeed, documentary programs are not conservatively seen as inactive involvement intentionally unique for casual education or entertainment (Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009). These programs are important to spring up a debate or shape policies and educate others through the programs on television. The relevant phenomenon can be questionable when addressing the exposure of Chinese documentary programs among the graduate or higher-level students. The study primarily revolves around the undergraduate students of Zhengzhou University (ZZU), yet the scope can be further extended by investigating the factors behind Chinese documentary programs watching among students at other levels. However, still this study weighs significance and provides empirical background for the future investigations.

1.7 Definitions of the Key-terms

Different variables and concepts were used in the study and to generate a thorough and better understanding of the research, a clarification of these constructs is instrumental and necessary. Hence, concepts and explanations of key-terms used in the study are demonstrated as follows.

(1) Chinese Documentary Program

Generally, a documentary program is a television or a film, which shows real events or provides information about a particular subject (Corner, 2002). As an expressive form of art, the development of Chinese documentary programs has a long history. In China, documentary programs are not conservatively seen as inactive involvement, rather they are considered as unique for cultural and historical education, entertainment, and education (Nisbet & Aufderheide, 2009).

(2) Audience

The audience is considered a reflective term indicating individuals that consume media content. These individuals or audience members are actively selecting and watching the preferred media content to meet their

needs (Zamith, 2018). Usually, documentary programs are targeted toward specific demographics, such as children or adults, women or men, etc. Documentary productions normally identify their targeted audience before the beginning of their projects (Marich, 2005).

(3) Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate students refer to students at university or college who have not yet earned a bachelor's or equivalent degree. In this study, the group of undergraduate students is not a fixed group concept but a mobile group, and based on the broadcasting time and duration of "A Bite of China", students at the different semesters of university/college would have different perceptions toward the same documentary program (Q. Yi, 2018).

(4) Satisfaction

Generally, customer satisfaction is defined as the fulfillment of overall needs (Hashim et al., 2021). Satisfaction is the fundamental drive offered to be fulfilled by a certain documentary program as it meets the audience's "expectations". It is after viewing the state of the audience's mind, which reflects the gratification and dis-gratification experienced from the media content (Meesala & Paul, 2018).

(5) Motivation

Motivation is a factor due to which humans begin, continue, and even terminate an action under the given circumstances (Kim & Assaker, 2014). Motivation is generally considered as forcing phenomenon that move one's intention towards goal-oriented behavior (Chan et al., 2015). The ultimate purpose of influencing the audience's choice behavior is to make the audience produce the usage behavior, which becomes the motivation when the needs are recognized and become the driving force to maintain the occurrence and completion of the behavior (Zhang, 2014). Uses and gratification theory is often used in mass communication research to examine the psychological and behavioral effects of mass communication by analyzing audiences' motivations for accessing media and their motivations for satisfaction through access to media (Fan & Hasan, 2022).

(6) Continuous Viewing Intentions

The individual's behavioral intention is considered a conscious plan to carry out a specific act (Ajzen, 1985). The audience intention is a resolution procedure by which the audience may decide the use or discontinue usage of the media content. Continuous viewing intentions refers to the audience's desire to be unhindered in the viewing of the media content or selection regularly (Dehghani, 2018).

(7) Cognitive Needs

Generally, cognitive needs refer to acquiring or strengthening information, knowledge, and understanding of one's environment, or satisfying one's curiosity or exploratory desires (Gant & Hadley, 2014). Cognitive needs as the attainment of knowledge and information that is internally processed, decoded, and understood by the person. Specifically, in the context of viewing documentary programs, the cognitive needs of viewers could be defined as the viewers' knowledge and information needs fulfilled by the relevant documentary programs (Salubi & Muchaonyerwa, 2018).

(8) Affective Needs

Affective needs are concepts related to emotions, pleasures, feelings, or aesthetic experiences (Gant & Hadley, 2014). More specifically, affective needs could be defined as audiences' emotional connections to the media content in which an individual relates the media content to real-life events and uses it to gratify deeper affective needs (Dee, 2016).

(9) Tension-free Needs

Based on the content of uses and gratification theory, tension-free needs mean that people sometimes use the media as a source of escapism from the real world and to relieve tension and stress. As the media have the power to grab the audience's mind by making the audience feel connected with the situation and characters emotionally, "tension-free needs" is a crucial factor (Mir, 2020). In this regard, entertainment could be deeply-rooted in the exceptional features of documentary programs since audiences watch them escape from reality (DellaVigna & La Ferrara, 2015).

(10) Public Perceptions

Numerous investigations have indicated that media concern with objects in the news is a key determinant of their perceived salience in public opinion (Kioussis & Wu, 2008). Public perceptions of certain issues have always affected by the salience of the issue in news content (Golan & Wanta, 2001). Substantial literature (e.g., Brewer & Ley, 2010; Nisbet & Goidel, 2007, etc.) has displayed that watching a particular television program tends shaping viewers' perceptions, which is also operationalized in the current research in-terms of Chinese documentary programs and audience continuous intentions to watching them.

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