

An Analysis of the Factors Affecting the Ratings of TV Series

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ABSTRACT. *The ratings of TV series are influenced by three dynamic factors: politics, economy, and technology. These three forces restrain and influence each other, which creates a complex social background for the growth of TV series and the development of TV series ratings in China. Affected by the development of technology and the industrialization of TV series, the production of TV series is also developing in a diversified direction. The marketization and industrialization of the TV drama industry chain, and the increasing entertainment and commercialization of the TV series, these backgrounds have provided a strong impetus for the ratings of TV series.*

KEYWORD: *The ratings of TV series, political ideology, economic benefit, technological power*

1. Factors Influencing the Ratings of TV Series

1.1 Political ideology

The TV series has long been described as “dancers with shackles” in China, because it bears the responsibility of political propaganda. However, with the promotion of marketization, TV series have changed from early propaganda politics to be the products of mass culture communication. The marketization of TV series is a developing trend, but mainstream TV series still bear the important responsibility of guiding people’s spiritual culture. Therefore, political ideology still has a strong guiding role in the development and trend of TV series. With the development of the times, the ratings of TV series have become a hard indicator of TV production and dissemination, that is to say, only the TV series which TV viewers are willing to watch can have an impact on society. In this way, TV series can achieve their “education and education” concept. Therefore, the TV industry operating under market rules should not only obtain the economic benefits of TV series ratings, but also undertake the task of political ideology. Under the influence of these factors, people have commercialized the transformation of TV series. Making it take into account the majority of the audience, help the audience vent and resolve their stresses toward the real society, is more conducive to maintain social stability and harmony. Based on this situation, many TV series with political theme become popular. For instance, *Ren Min Jian Cha Guan* (2016 anti-corruption and anti-corruption drama), *Ren Min De Ming Yi* (2017 anti-corruption and anti-corruption drama) have been popular on TV, these TV series not only advocate the mainstream ideology of the country, but also play a role in easing the reality. The effect is therefore to obtain good ratings.

1.2 Economic Benefits

The pursuit of ratings shows the inevitable development trend of TV series marketization. TV series production, production, and distribution have become important parts of consumer culture. The ratings have become a hard indicator of the survival of a TV series, so the role of the TV audience has changed dramatically. The development of technology has made TV viewers have already got rid of the previous passive acceptance role. Instead, the remote control in the hands of TV viewers has become the judge of the life or death of a TV series. TV viewers have already become “consumers”, so the viewers’ preferences directly affect the TV series from the initial creation and production to the market circulation. The production of TV series is largely dependent on pleasing the audience, which has also caused the success of a type of TV series, which will trigger a series of similar TV series. This explains why certain TV series have been popular and favored by the audience for a period of time. For example, the success of *Zhen Huan Zhuan* (2011 ancient Chinese TV series) has not only become a successful case of high ratings in China, but also has been welcomed abroad by Southeast Asian countries. Later, the TV series titled *Yan Xi Gong Lue* (2018 ancient Chinese TV series), and *Rong Yi Zhuan* (2018 ancient Chinese TV series) are similar types of TV series, which also received good ratings. It reflects to a

certain extent the profound impact of consumer trends on the TV series industry.

1.3 Technological power

With the advancement of technology, TV series has ushered in a new era. On the one hand, with the improvement of material level, people's pursuit of spiritual culture has also increased. TV viewers have higher demands and pursuits for the content, quantity, and quality of TV programs; on the other hand, the production and broadcasting of TV series have changed to be digitalization and networking with low-cost, high-efficiency, and high-quality products. This is a great opportunity for TV series ratings. The advancement of technology has spawned a steady stream of new media: mobile TV, mobile TV and Internet TV. The diversification of TV series broadcast platforms makes TV audiences no longer limited to the original viewing platform and space. The previous viewing mode was usually sitting at home in front of the TV to watch the shows, but now it is replaced by a bus to work, a subway after work, or a taxi on the street where people can watch TV series. Because it is more convenient for viewers to watch TV series, and due to the development of new media, many online TV series have become popular and have created a ratings frenzy. For example, the Youku video company made *Day and Night* (2017 suspense TV drama) not only captured the high domestic ratings, but in November of the same year, the play was also sold by the American video company Netflix to sell copyright to nearly 200 countries and regions around the world. Another recently popular online TV series *Joy of Life* was produced by Tencent, iQiyi and other platforms. It was widely praised and brought good revenue. The high ratings of these online TV series are not coincidental, but they reflect the transformation of the production mode of TV series production. The content and form of online TV series conform to the consumption habits of young generation in the new era. The development of the Internet has also provided viewers with a completely different viewing mode. Internet TV series usually have a comment mode. During the viewing process, the viewer can also choose to close or open the barrage. This form provides an interactive communication mode for the audience to talk about these online TV series, which stimulates the enthusiasm of the public for immersive experience and second-degree creative communication. And these feedbacks from the audience also provide ideas and inspiration for the producers of online TV series.

In addition to the above factors, the factors behind the ratings are also related to the cultural industry policies, the limitation of TV content, and the fusion of Chinese and Western cultures in China. These forces play against each other and jointly promote the development of Chinese TV series. In the future, there will be more excellent TV series that are thought-provoking or entertainment. In this increasingly commercial society, TV ratings still play a role that cannot be ignored, which also provides us an important topic that we are still exploring ways to balance the relationship between the economic benefits affected by the ratings of TV series and the value of cultural communication for Chinese TV series.

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