# QUALITATIVE STUDY REGARDING THE PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS FROM BUCHAREST REGARDING THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF TELEVISION

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**Abstract**

Marketing research has a very important role within any organization and with regard to any of the investigated markets. The present research belongs to the category of qualitative research, being exploratory research, carried out with the aim of allowing a deeper understanding of the specific problems of the television market. The obtained results are qualitative and cannot be extrapolated to the level of the researched population. The problem addressed is a special one of current interest, because the audiovisual in general, and television in particular, determine contradictory and vehement opinions. The current trends of the television market in Romania are quite uncertain in the context of increased digitization. The young respondents appreciate that the public's thirst for information and entertainment is satisfied, rather, by modern communication channels, in particular social networks and the Internet, in general.

**Keywords**: marketing research, qualitative research, semi-structured interview, audiovisual.

**JEL Classification**: M 21, M 31

## 1. Literature review

Marketing research represents the activity through which, with the help of specific investigation methods and techniques, the specification, measurement, collection, analysis and interpretation of marketing information is carried out, necessary for the management of the units to know the environment in which they operate, identify opportunities, evaluate alternatives, marketing actions and their effects. Marketing research has an extremely wide scope [1].

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From the multitude of variants of marketing research, television stations turn, in particular, to quantitative research - through the people meter system. Through qualitative research, perceptions, opinions, attitudes, feelings are recorded, which lead to certain behaviors [2]. For this purpose, I considered it extremely useful to carry out a discussion through semi-structured interviews among young students from Bucharest regarding the role and importance of television within media channels.

Specialists appreciate that the role of marketing research in the decision-making process is very important, because they allow: the identification of favorable opportunities and potential dangers in the environment in which the company operates, the substantiation of the choice of decision-making alternatives, the evaluation of the effectiveness of marketing decisions [3].

Fulfilling this role, marketing research creates the necessary conditions for the practice of proactive [4] management, of continuous adaptation to changes in the economic, social and competitive environment.

## 2. Organizing and conducting a research through a semi-structured interview among students from Bucharest

The problem addressed is a special one and of current interest, because the audiovisual in general, and television in particular, determine contradictory and vehement opinions. The main aspects that cause controversies are those regarding the role of television and the audience, the quality of broadcasts, the assumption of a cultural - educational role, interference with the political sphere, etc., which we have proposed to address through this research.

### 2.1 Methodological aspects regarding the semi-structured interview

The present research falls into the category of qualitative research, being an exploratory research, carried out with the aim of allowing a deeper understanding of the specific problems of the television market. The obtained results are qualitative and cannot be extrapolated to the level of the researched population. For a better understanding of the importance and relevance of this method, we present a series of methodological aspects.

The semi-structured / semi-directed interview is based on the principles of non-directivity, the fact that the investigator's attitude is neutral, and the interview is subject to a content analysis; basically this is a variant of the undirected in-depth interview. The difference between the in-depth interview and the semi-directed interview is that the latter is carried out by means of an interview guide (conversation guide), designed in advance. This guide covers the main topics that should be addressed during the discussion (the interviewer does not have a set of predetermined questions, the interview is not conducted on the basis of a standardized questionnaire or an open-ended questionnaire). No particular order is required; the themes will be discussed depending on the degree of proximity, in relation to the themes

addressed by the subject. The interview has a total duration of 30-60 minutes. The technique involves the use of small samples, whose competence must reflect the structure of the reference community as well as possible [5].

The organization of the interview is very important, because the quality of the information obtained largely depends on it. As far as we are concerned, during the research we staged our activity, taking into account the specific requirements, requirements that take into account: defining the problem and establishing the objectives, creating the sample, recruiting the participants, ensuring the material conditions necessary to conduct the interview, certain procedural manners allowed and the analysis of information is prohibited [6].

● Establishing the objectives has as its starting point the investigated phenomenon.

● The sample, which is small in size, is not representative from a statistical point of view, but it requires a rigorous selection of the people participating in the study.

● The recruitment of participants is usually carried out by using a recruitment questionnaire, which must be designed in such a way that the persons contacted in order to participate in the interview do not know precisely the topic of the study.

● Ensuring the necessary material conditions for conducting the interview refers in particular to the fact that it is necessary for the interviewer to have a notebook available to write down certain words or topics addressed by the subject, with the aim of bringing them back into the discussion later for deepening them.

● The conception of how to conduct the interview starts from the premise that the interviewer has an active role during its conduct and must respect the principles of non-directivity; the interviewee having to be helped to express himself so that the investigation carried out is as deep as possible; achieving the proposed objectives largely depends on the investigator's attitude. In this sense, we emphasize that procedural manners, such as: interrupting the interviewed person, are prohibited; making judgments about the answers; approval or disapproval; interpretation of answers; eliciting responses; interventions in a directive manner, in the sense of orienting the discussion, imposing a certain structure, which is not related to the discourse of the investigated subject. We also emphasize that it is allowed: encouraging the subject to deepen certain aspects; intervention in the discussion with the aim of facilitating the discourse and deepening the topics; relaunching the discussion by repeating a word or a phrase; to show the investigated person that he is being listened to carefully, using expressions such as: "yes, I understand!", "aha!"; to show the subject that he is understood without interrupting him or making interpretations of what he said; to make a synthesis of what the subject said, taking over his words and respecting his logic.

● The analysis of the information refers to the aspects regarding the content of the interview, based on a grid developed starting from the problem of the study and taking into account the objectives of the analysis. The text was "cut" into units of analysis, depending on the main themes addressed, the units thus identified being grouped into homogeneous,

exhaustive and exclusive categories; then it was evaluated according to certain rules of the frequency of occurrence of each unit.

## 2.2 The stages followed in carrying out the research through a semi-structured interview

The stages followed in carrying out the research are: establishing the objectives and hypotheses, designing the research, including here the establishment of the sample, the place and period of data collection, methodological aspects regarding the actual interview, the elaboration of the interview guide, the presentation of the research results.

Regarding the objectives, we record the fact that considering the purpose of the research stated previously, we proposed a series of objectives:

● identifying young people's perception of the main problems in the Romanian television market;

● knowing the opinions regarding the current trends specific to the television market in Romania;

● outlining the role and importance of television in the current context of Romanian society and the television market;

● identifying the perception regarding the role and importance of television within media channels;

● identifying opinions regarding the typology of broadcasts;

● values promoted by television versus values that should be promoted;

I established the hypotheses of the research starting from certain public information and, in this context, the hypotheses from which I proceeded in carrying out the research were:

● the main problems at the level of the television market concern the questionable quality of broadcasts, the information provided, which is often distorted, the promotion of common characters, without special merits, of questionable quality, etc.;

● the place, role and importance of television are very obvious through the lens of the values that this institution must promote in the current stage in which Romanian society is, but the general public is not aware of these elements;

● young people's perception of the importance of television within media channels is negative;

The design of the research is a very important stage, because it is more extensive and includes a series of sub-stages such as: establishing the sample, the place and period of conducting the research, methodological aspects regarding the actual interview. That's why we paid special attention to the punctual solution of each problem.

● Regarding the sample, we specify the fact that our intention was to investigate a number that varies between 30 and 50 people who meet the established criteria, but in the end we managed to discuss with 41 subjects.

● Regarding the place and period of data collection, we note that the interviews took place between March 4 and 26, 2024, in Bucharest.

● The methodological aspects of the actual interview received special attention from us, both in terms of the preparation and conduct of the interview, as well as in terms of its phasing.

In preparing and conducting the interview, I took into account the following rules:

- o   careful preparation of the interview guide;
- o   the subjects were asked additional questions if it was necessary to deepen the ideas;
- o   ensuring a pleasant and comfortable interview framework;
- o   when it was the case, specific questions were also asked.

The interview was structured in four phases, with a total duration that varied from 30 to 60 minutes, as shown in the table below.

| Research phase | Approximate duration | Key elements of the phase |
|---|---|---|
| The introduction phase | 5-10 minutes | It had as its objective the creation of a state of confidence of the subject in the topic addressed, but also the gathering of information about the position of the subject and his activity; |
| The phase of focusing on the researched problem | 10-20 minutes | had as its objective the evaluation of the television market in Romania, emphasizing the main problems that can be identified at its level and theextent of opinions regarding the current perceptions and trends specific to the television market in Romania; |
| Deepening phase | 15 – 20 minutes | with the main objective establishing the role of television in the current context, outlining opinions regarding the typology of broadcasts; identifying the values promoted by television versus values that should be promoted by it; outlining some ideas about the place and importance of television within the set of communication channels; canalelor de comunicare; |
| Conclusion phase | 10 minutes | with the objective of drawing some conclusions regarding the perceptions of young people in relation to |

| | | television, as well as other comments that the respondents would like to make about the discussed topic and which were not previously captured. |
|---|---|---|

**Table no: 1 Structure of the interview**

● Regarding the rules that we had in mind as operators, we should mention: observing a waiting interval of 10-15 seconds when switching from one theme to another; leaving it up to the subject to approach the provided topics; avoiding interrupting the subject; the resumption of unaddressed or partially addressed topics; avoiding comments on the answers and expressing surprise at the subject's remarks; relaunching some discussions in case the subject finished one idea and did not restart another, when previous aspects remained unclear or to reconfirm some important clarifications made by the subject.

The interview guide that was developed by us in order to carry out the respective research included the main questions that were addressed to the interviewed subjects, following the phases considered and the corresponding theme, previously established.

| Research phase | Main questions formulated and addressed |
|---|---|
| The introduction phase | ~ I would like you to talk to me about your concerns.<br>~ Helping questions:<br>♦ Have you previously participated in other studies/market research?<br>♦ How do you spend your free time?<br>♦ Do you find out about aspects of everyday life? |
| The phase of focusing on the researched problem | ~ How do you rate Romanian television?<br>~ Helping questions:<br>♦ What are the main problems in the Romanian television market?<br>♦ What is your perception of television in Romania, in general? |
| Deepening phase | ~ In your opinion, what is the place of television within the media channels in Romania?<br>~ Helping questions:<br>♦ What is your perception of media channels in general?<br>♦ What are the values that television should promote?<br>~ What should be the models promoted by the televisions?<br>~ Helping questions:<br>♦ Who are the people you followed/follow on TV channels?<br>♦ How would you sketch the portrait of a TV star?<br>~ What are your favorite shows? What are your reasons for watching them? |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ~ What would ideal television look like in Romania? |
| Conclusion phase | ~ What advice would you have for televisions in general? <br> ~ In conclusion, how do you briefly characterize television? <br> ~ Do you have any other comments to make? |

**Table no: 2 The main questions formulated and addressed during the interview**

**Research results**

Regarding certain aspects regarding the activity carried out by the interviewed persons, we must specify the fact that we are talking about students (35 persons) and master's students (6 persons) of the Romanian-American University.

Regarding the opinions resulting from the questions formulated and the topics addressed in the introduction phase, they are presented according to the table below.

| Opinions/Perceptions of respondents collected in the introduction phase | Frequency of occurrence |
|---|---|
| "your concerns": <br> - Going out with friends <br> - Watching movies with friends (Netflix, especially) <br> -       The music <br> -       The read <br> - The faculty <br> - Finding (changing) a job | 41 <br> 32 <br><br> 27 <br> 16 <br> 28 <br> 18 |
| "previous participation in other studies/market research" <br> - Yes (especially those regarding the evaluation of university teachers) <br> -       Not | 31 <br><br> 10 |
| "spending free time" <br> -       the sport <br> - social networks <br> - outings with friends (at the Mall, especially) <br> -       on TV | 27 <br> 36 <br> 38 <br> 18 |

| | |
|---|---|
| "information on aspects of everyday life" | |
| - Yes, from the net | 11 |
| - Yes, (also) from TV | 8 |
| -      Not really | 26 |
| -      Not | 5 |

**Table no: 3 Respondents' perceptions collected in the research introduction phase**

Regarding the opinions resulting from the questions formulated and the topics addressed in the phase of focusing on the researched problem, they are presented according to the table below.

| Opinions/Perceptions of the respondents collected in the phase of focusing on the researched problem | Frequency of occurrence |
|---|---|
| "appreciations/perceptions regarding Romanian television" | |
| - "too many TV channels" | 28 |
| - "uninteresting" | 34 |
| - "few shows for young people" | 31 |
| - "presents only negative aspects: scandals, crimes, etc." | 29 |
| "problems at the level of the Romanian television market" | |
| - "too much politics on TV" | 26 |
| - "posts copy each other" | 33 |
| - "lots of weird people on TV" | 38 |
| - "bad series" | 35 |
| - "unprepared people/moderators" | 32 |

**Table no: 4 Perceptions of the respondents collected in the phase of focusing on the researched problem**

Regarding the opinions resulting from the questions formulated and the topics addressed in the in-depth phase, they are presented according to the table below.

| Opinions/Perceptions of the respondents collected in the deepening phase | Frequency of occurrence |
|---|---|
| | |

| | |
|---|---|
| "the place of television within the media channels in Romania" | |
| - relatively important | 21 |
| - TV makes the biggest audience | 26 |
| - "will be smaller and smaller" | 37 |
| "the people you followed/are following on TV channels" | |
| - Selly | |
| - Smily + Pavel Bartos | 8 |
| | 10 |
| "favorite TV shows" | |
| - Do I know you | 20 |
| - Romanians have talent | 29 |
| - Survivor | 32 |
| - Movies on Pro TV | 19 |
| "reasons that make you watch them" | |
| It's fun | 24 |
| It is interesting | 21 |
| She is funny | 27 |
| "Ideal TV": | |
| It has nice/interesting/funny shows | 27 |
| Streams new movies | 22 |
| Debate topics for young people | 16 |
| It has interactive shows | 33 |

**Table no: 5 Perceptions of the respondents collected in the deepening phase of the research**

Regarding the opinions resulting from the questions formulated and the topics addressed in the conclusion phase, they are presented according to the table below.

| Opinions/Perceptions of the respondents collected in the conclusion phase on the researched problem | Frequency of occurrence |
|---|---|
| "television tips" | |
| - To be more dynamic | 12 |
| - To attract young people through interesting topics | 7 |

| "characterization of Romanian television in one word" | |
|---|---|
| - Old | 26 |
| - Uninteresting | 13 |
| - Fake | 8 |
| | |

**Table no: 6 Respondents' perceptions collected in the conclusion phase on the researched problem**

## 3. Conclusions

Analyzing the problems identified at the level of the Romanian television market, following the discussions, a series of more important aspects were outlined.

The unanimous opinion is that at this moment, the television market is suffocating for the public because of the too large number of televisions, but even so, in the conditions where there are many investors, the big TV channels are concentrated in the sphere of a few "moguls" of the media. The highest frequency was the problem regarding the quality of the broadcasts, which is obviously in a direct dependence relationship with the personnel policy of the TV stations and with their possibility and availability to invest in serious projects of interest to the young audience.

The current trends of the television market in Romania are quite uncertain, even gloomy in the context of increased digitization. The young respondents appreciate that the public's thirst for information and entertainment is satisfied, rather, by modern communication channels, in particular social networks and the Internet, in general.

The place, role and importance of television have changed in recent years, including the fact that television is the cheapest means of entertainment for the poor and middle class. Today, the Internet is the easiest means of diversion.

The audience of TV stations is an important issue in the context in which this means of communication is no longer so relevant for the young population. Regarding the possibilities of improving the television audience, the respondents' opinions focused on the improvement of the shows, their attractiveness for the young audience, the elimination of fake stars and non-values and on the observance of journalistic principles aimed at equidistance, editorial independence, the elimination of political interference, etc.

Also, the idea emerged that, although an ideal public television is impossible to achieve, even more so in the context of diversity and digitization, there are still some elements that could direct television towards this desired, among which we specify: the broadcasting of interesting shows , interactive, new formats, the presentation of authentic national, European and international models, etc.

The deepening, but especially the detailing and understanding of the investigated phenomenon, can be achieved through further research, especially through those of a quantitative nature in order to be able to have the representativeness of the ideas. Also, in

the future, research can be carried out among specialists to capture other nuances of the researched phenomenon.

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