

ANALYSIS OF CHINESE GENERATION Y'S VIEWING GRATIFICATION OF  
WEB SERIES



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#### ABSTRACT

With the advent of information technology, Chinese generation Y started to watch TV programs through video websites with their web TV, tablet computer or smart phone. Some talented content providers began to create a new kind of culture product, web series. Web series has its special style, very different from TV drama, gradually become popular in Generation Y. Web series impact on traditional TV series industry hugely, and become a new phenomenon of Chinese cultural industry which builds considerable profit. This research uses survey approach, to explore what kind of Generation Y like to watch web series and what factors will influence their gratification of watching web series. Research found that younger Generation Y tends to spend more time on web series. Besides, the more negative stereotype Generation Y has on TV drama, the more they obtain gratification from watching web series. The result of this research can help web series content providers and people who working in cultural industry to promote China's entertainment business in the future.

*Keywords: Chinese, Generation Y, TV Drama, Web Series*

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **1.1 Rationale and Problem Statement**

With the developing of information technology, mass communication platforms not only limit in newspaper, radio and TV, information start to transmit in variety ways, new portable platforms like laptop, smart phone and tablet computer become indispensable equipments in modern people, especially Generation Y 's life.

Chinese children who born after 2000 have deep emotional linkage with laptop, smart phone and tablet computer than television, some even cannot live without WIFI and their smart phone. With the advent of web TV, even people so called "TV generation" who born during 1980 to 1990 start to watch TV programs through video websites with their digital media platform as well.

Chinese video websites grow rapidly under this background. Video websites not only provide normal TV programs, but also provide their own copyright programs which only broadcast on their websites. Video websites have similar functions as traditional TV stations, but different in many ways as well. Compare with traditional TV stations, Video websites have much more close relationship with their content providers. The unique free circumstance of Internet also reduces the risk that the content may be censored and/or banned. Aforementioned advantages attract many

content providers, which are SMEs run by newly graduates or young people who working in culture industry.

Early video websites content providers just mimicked TV series' model to produce web series. As time goes on, they found some problems like the vehicles people use to connect video websites are quite different from TV, which too easily to run out of electric battery. Besides, the majority of audiences of video websites are young people who working in Chinese metropolis and living a busy life that do not willing to spend too much spare time on long TV series. Hence, web series have growing out a special style in both length and content today. The length of each episode is usually within 20-30 minutes (no more than 30 minutes), each season normally contains 20 episodes or less. Unlike the traditional TV series 2 or 3 episodes per night, the period between each episode normally is one week, in other words, an episode per week, which set apart enough time for production team to communicate with audiences.

Another external strength lies on the vague censorship. Because of web series cannot be played on TV, the censorship is much looser than other TV series, which provides a free circumstance for content providers to create numbers of web series with gender equality, self-mockery and sarcastic contents. Conversely, in order to pass the censorship, the content of China's TV series is mostly related to Anti-Japanese War or other preaches stories, which comprise unreasonable plot, exaggerate performance and idolatry. Compare with China's TV series, web series obviously has

variety themes. The way to portray story is also not limited by the strict censorship.

According to People's Daily, a total number of 273 web series had been released at the end of August, 2015 in China, with a total viewing figure for over 11 billion (Liu, 2015).

Current famous web series content provider is UniMedia. The most famous series of UniMedia are *Surprise*, *Report to the Boss*, *Di Renjie – The famous detective* and *To be a Better Man*. Besides, some famous video websites also start to produce their own web series. For instance, *Dior's Man* on Sohu.com, *The Ferry Man* on Iqiyi.com, both of them were spark a viewing trend. Recently, a new web series called *Go Princess Go* on Letv.com achieve great success, after released on December 13, 2015, only 48 hours the click rate already reach 100 million.

The new trend now is many web series are remade to films. For instance, according to the plot of web series *Dior's Man*, the director made *Jian Bing Man* (or *Pancake Man*) movie. *Pancake Man* grossed \$69 million in 3-day opening, second-best ever for a Chinese film (Cain, 2015). The latest example is the movie *Surprise* (aka *Surprise You'll Never Think Of: Journey To The West*, or *Surprise: Journey To The West*) which base on the originally web series was just released on Dec 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015. As it started preview on Dec 12<sup>th</sup>, in the first two days it already amassed \$17.5 million (Frater, 2015). The viewers are mostly fans of the *Surprise* web series.

## **1.2 Objectives of Study**

As a new type of cultural product, web series was born of audiences' new taste. This study aims to find out who are the audience of web series in Generation Y, and analyze the reasons why some of Generation Y prefers to watch web series than TV series. The objectives of this study are:

- a) To analyze who are the viewers of web series in Generation Y and the reason for their viewing.
- b) To figure what makes Chinese Generation Y obtain gratifications from viewing web series.

## **1.3 Scope of Study**

This research focuses on Chinese Generation Y who knows and watches China's web series only. The web series and TV series (or TV drama) in this study refer to are all China original works, in other words, not include foreign web series or TV series. For this quantitative study, questionnaire survey is employed to analyze the reasons why some Generation Y prefers to view web series and their gratifications. There are 200 respondents participate in this research.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

China's web series portray gender, love and individualism in a very different way from traditional TV series. Its stories also represent normal Chinese Generation Y's



value. Web series' creative content is an important reason for its success. The significance of this study is:

- a) Help producers to decide the target group. Examine who in Generation Y likes viewing web series more than TV series can help both web series and TV series producers gain more knowledge of audience's structure.
- b) Understand viewers' needs and the reason why some Generation Y shift from TV series to web series, in order to help the producers create TV dramas and web series that can fit viewer's needs in the future.
- c) Existing researches are mostly focus on content analysis, but seldom hear audiences' voice, which is a research gap. The result of this research can fill the blank of utilize of Chinese web series, provide a uses and gratification view to explain audience behavior.

### **1.5 Definition of Terms**

Web series: Not broadcast on TV, only broadcast on video websites. Length and content are very different from TV series. Since it is a very new thing, there isn't an academic explanation for web series. After read numerous related articles and referred Wikipedia's explanation, I decided to use the word "web series" in this study. Some Chinese articles and researches adopt the word "network drama" or "network homemade drama".

Digital media platform: Web TV, tablet computer, smart phone and laptop, and so

on.

Weibo: A Chinese famous internet social network owned by Sina, similar as Face Book.

Wechat: A Chinese famous text and voice message communication application owned by Tencent, similar as Line.

UniMedia: Also called *Wan He Tian Yi*, which is a Chinese new media company founded on 2012. The founders are all young actors and opinion leaders in China. Company is good at producing comedy programs, micro-films and web series (Lyu, 2015).

*Surprise*: One of UniMedia's web series. Because there isn't an official English name, this study adopts the movie's official English name, as the movie has the same Chinese name with the web series. Other English names are: *Unexpectedness*, *Never Expected* etc.

*Report to the Boss*: One of UniMedia's web series. Because there isn't an official English name, this study adopts the name from the article *Unfinished Tales* (Lyu, 2015).

*Di Renjie - The Famous Detective*: One of UniMedia's web series. Because there isn't an official English name, this study adopts the name on Baidu Baike (Baidu Encyclopedia, similar as Wikipedia).

Sohu: A famous comprehensive website of China, famous for online game and original web series.

Iqiyi: A famous video website of China, belongs to Baidu, famous for its high quality programs and exclusive web series.

Letv: Also known as Leshi, one of the largest online video companies in China. Letv famous for its “Letv eco-lifestyle”, which combines the e-commerce and eco-agriculture, successively produce and sell its Internet TV, electric cars and so forth.

Generation Y: People who born during the 1980s to early 1990s.

Uses and Gratifications theory (UGT): It is a theory which concentrates on audience study, started on 1940s.

Stereotype: A fixed general image of particular type of person or phenomena that lots of people hold.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **2.1 Related Theory**

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) is an audience-centered media study approach. It intends to seek the reason why viewers use different kinds of media. Rubin (2002) suggested the keys in UGT research are people's "social and psychological needs and motives to communicate, their communication behavior, and the consequences of such behavior" (as cited in Huang, 2011, p.19).

##### **2.1.1 Origins of Uses and Gratifications Theory**

Strahler (2014) pointed out that the research of Cantril and Allport (1935) can be considered as the earliest study worked on audiences' motives in using particular media. Wimmer and Dominick (1994) claimed that the studies of uses and gratification theory (UGT) began in 1940s (as cited in Ruggiero, 2000). While some people agree that UGT study started from Schramm's (1949) paper *The Nature of News* (Dozier & Rice, 1984; Huang, 2011). UGT was stem from the "limited effect" thinking which established by Joseph Klapper in 1948 (Pedersen, Laucella, Miloch & Fielding, 2007). Before the "limited effect" era, the "magic bullet theory", also known as the "hypodermic needle model" was rule the media academia during World War I. As contradictory of the "magic bullet theory", this theory focus more on audience,

explain why they sought specific types of content and avoided other types of content (Pedersen et al., 2007). The uses and gratification theory concentrates on the relationship between the media and the audience, claims that the question is not “What do the media do to people”, but more close to “What do people do with the media" (Katz, 1959).

Lazarsfeld (1940) launched a study aims at find out the answer that why people use radio or print media. After that, Lazarsfeld and Dinerman (1949) made further development in who use radio channel to access information. Since Lazarsfeld, there were different studies in different media channels. Berelson (1949) focused on newspaper reading, Wolfe and Fiske (1949) paid attention to comics reading, and Herzog (1944) chose radio listening as the research objective. Rubin (2002) concluded the studies in the 1950s and early 1960s of viewers enjoyed watching quiz programs. UGT researches in 1950s to 1960s further develop into discover the different result of people used variety of media, proved that the viewers are more active than passive (Klapper, 1963). For instance, Katz and Foulkes (1962) unfolded that audience access to mass media to escape; Mendelsohn (1964) found that audiences use radio for companionship, changing mood, get rid of boring, etc.

Park Inkon summarized the researches of uses and gratification theory in 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. According to Park (2004), in the 1940s, much of the UGT researches focused on the reasons why people used certain media content. From the 1950s to 1960s, UGT researches focus more on media's personal influence and its

societal functions (p.26). Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974) explained four common features of early UGT researches within 1940s to 1960s. First of all is respondent normally describes media functions in an open-ended way. Next is about the method, qualitative approach is common used to classify the gratifications. The third one is researchers did not try to explore the relations between viewers gratifications and psychological, also they were not dig in the social origins of viewer's needs. The last feature is researcher can not testify the interrelationships among different media functions, and the underlying structure of media gratifications, either qualitative or conceptual (cited as in Sen Gupta, 2007, p.6). Base on Rubin (2002), early researches were mostly unsystematic and lack of details in forming the picture of gratifications. It hardly can be seen as a theoretical model as it only depicted motives.

### **2.1.2 Development of Uses and Gratifications Theory in 1970s**

In 1970s, UGT step into advancing theoretically period, which focus on examine viewer's motivations. Rosengren (1974) mentioned that people will discuss with each other for understand mass problems and solutions of basic needs, personal characteristics and social environment. The answers contribute to the reasons of audiences' motives and gratification seeking behavior in using media (Ruggiero, 2000). In the study of Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch (1973-1974) stated the three fundamental assumptions of UGT clearly. The first is UGT suggests the audiences are active and goal driven when they use mass media, which means they see mass media

as a tool that can fulfill their specific needs. The next assumption totally denies the “magic bullet” theory, insist that media can neither influence nor change people’s behavior, that is to say, mass media do nothing to their audiences. Because people have rights and power to make decision in use which media. Once audiences feel unsatisfied with one, they will turn to another media or programs immediately. The last one talks about competition. Study claims that media actually compete with the other ways people may choose to fulfill their own needs. If people want to escape from their work, they can either watch a movie or go swimming. Therefore in this period, UGT thinks media is not as important as other things in human’s daily life.

Katz, Gurevitch & Hass (1973) launched a study in order to find out why Israeli adults use mass media. Their main gratifications are cognitive, affective, personal integrative, social integrative and escapist. Greenberg (1974) tended to figure out the gratifications of British school children in watching television, which include learning, habit, arousal, companionship, relaxation and to forget the real world. Although TV and radio as the new things snatched bunch of users from newspaper in 1970s, but newspaper was still a mainstream media. The British adults were pointed out that the reasons to use newspaper and TV were for surveillance, diversion, curiosity and their personal identity (Blumler, 1979).

McQuail (2010) summarized 4 points of the studies of UGT in the 1960s to 1970s as below:

- a) Media and content choice is generally rational and directed towards certain

specific goals and satisfactions (thus the audience is active and audience formation can be logically explained).

- b) Audience members are conscious of the media-related needs which arise in personal and social (shared) circumstances and can voice these in terms of motivation.
- c) Cultural and aesthetic features of content play much less part in attracting audiences than the satisfaction of various personal and social needs (e.g., for relaxation, shared experience, passing time, etc.)
- d) All or most of the relevant factors for audience formation (motives, perceived or obtained satisfactions, media choices, background variables) can, in principle, be measured. (p. 424)

Researchers started to separate the audiences group and types of media more specifically in 1980s. The topics of studies in this period mainly related to television, cable television, motion pictures, VCR and soap operas (Rubin, 1981; Shaver, 1983; Austin, 1986; Rubin & Bantz, 1987; Babrow, 1989). Compare with 1970s, people can receive information from more channels, thus, they choose their favorite channel to fulfill their specific needs, especially in entertainment field. McQuail (1987) concluded four broad kinds of gratifications, which were 1) entertainment; 2) get information; 3) reflect, reinforce or contrast their personal information; 4) help maintain personal relationships and increase social interaction. Others broaden from these four basic type of gratification are family viewing, critical viewing, escape, and



mood management (Shaver, 1983; Rubin & Bantz, 1987; Abelman, 1988, Finn & Gorr, 1988). All in all, UGT in 1980s was become more precisely. Different media or even program had been categorized into different gratification subsets.

### **2.1.3 Contemporary Researches of Uses and Gratifications Theory**

The researches of UGT in 1990s and 21<sup>st</sup> century laid stress on TV, internet, and new media platforms such as Smart phone or other portable devices. The typologies of mass media and viewers gratifications also turn into more deliberate.

Walker & Bellamy (1990) started the research about undergraduate students' uses and gratifications of remote control devices (RCDs) of TV, concluded that people use RCDs mostly for avoiding commercials, avoiding others and get more information from TV such as music videos and TV news. They continued this RCDs research with Traudt in 1993 but this time more focus on adults. The result revealed that except "control family viewing", the other gratifications are same with undergraduate students who make use of RCDs (Walker, Bellamy & Traudt, 1993). However for television, different viewers have obvious different reason in using it. Conway & Rubin (1991) investigated both student and adult viewers, which found that they use TV most for entertainment (like kill time, escape or relax), information and status enhancement. Whereas Lin (1993) narrowed the age scale of viewers, only chose the age 13-17 years old teenagers, wanted to seek their gratifications toward TV. Study discovered that teenagers use TV mostly because of their communicate needs

(including interpersonal communication and social interaction) and eager for diversion. As TV became one of the significant mainstream media, viewer's gratifications were changing as well. In the study of Lee & Lee (1996), people started to admit that they watch TV as a ritual. Besides, they watch TV to improve mood, getting information and social surveillance.

With the rapid development of technology, computer (internet) appeared to challenge TV's status in the middle of 1990s. At first, internet only popularize in the circle of young educated students. Thereby, the informants of early internet UGT researches were mostly undergraduate students. Some scholars argue that internet and new media UGT studies still can absorb the knowledge from traditional framework (December, 1996; Morris & Ogan, 1996). In the research of Charney (1996), early internet users expressed that except the traditional needs like entertainment and information, they attracted by internet's peer identity characteristics and coolness. Some access internet because of their career requirement. Yoo (1996) discovered the new needs like transaction and sociability building and maintain. As time goes by, internet popularize in mass community gradually. People started to use it as a normal mass media without some particular needs (Kaye, 1998). Users began to see internet as a working tool (use internet for economic motivations) and a convenience channel than TV and newspaper to get information (Korgaonkar & Wolin, 1999; Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000).

As 21<sup>st</sup> century is an information era, variety of internet products such as instant

messenger (IM), blog, social network sites (SNS) and microblog became indispensable part in people's daily life. Leung (2002) suggested that college students who use ICQ are basically motivated by affection and sociability. Recchiuti (2003) made a comparison among IM, email and online chatting room, found that students prefer IM more because of its unique companion and anonymity function. Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) claimed that the motives of people read and post blog are social benefits, which means they want to share their opinions and join social discussion in a convenient way. Besides, entertainment, get and share information, self-presentation, maintain relationship, keep up with trends are also the motives of people use blog (Lee, Im & Taylor, 2008). Raacke & Bonds-Raacke (2008) launched a study to figure out the motives of US university students who use myspace and facebook, which reveals to maintain relationship, share photos and information, feeling connected and dating. Cheung, Chiu & Lee (2011) proposed a new notion – “we-intention”. Research pointed out that people use SNS to get together more than being individually. Chen (2011) found out that the most significant gratification of twitter user is to connect with others. Due to new media is just emerging, the UGT research of new media still needed.

#### **2.1.4 UGT Research on Video Websites and Related Field**

As web series broadcast platform, video websites are the important channel which should be discussed separately when doing the web series research. Li (2013)

elaborate and compare audience's behavior on watching TV shows on conventional TV and internet TV. Study pointed out that audiences like to use variety of portable devices to access video websites such as Hulu, Netflix and some official websites of TV networks. Nielsenwire (2011) demonstrated that "almost 72% U.S. homes pay for both cable-plus TV subscription (cable, satellite or Telco) and broadband Internet. According to Jenks (2010) also reported that 33% of U.S. adult Internet users viewed full-length TV shows online in 2010. The result of this study showed that people who prefer to watch TV programs on internet TV are more concern about the process of watching, whereas others who prefer conventional TV are more care for the program content (Li, 2013). Study revealed that numbers of audiences have the habit of using portable devices to access internet websites and care about the watching process, which are two significant conditions that can midwife web series.

Hagerty (2008) had employed television's uses and gratifications approach, conducted a study of YouTube. Study compared respondent's uses and gratifications in using TV and YouTube. TV factors mainly identified as Rubin's five factors proposed in 1983, which were pass time/habit, inform, entertain, companion, and escape. Besides, a new factor – control/choice – had been unfolded. While YouTube mainly identified as four factors, which were mediated interaction, control/choice, pass time, and social interaction. Hagerty explained the difficulties of today's new media research, which lack of a standard to measure. He defined this study as an exploratory study and use TV uses and gratifications as a basic model to testify

YouTube. The result of comparison of YouTube and traditional TV had both similar and different points. The similar factors are people use TV and YouTube both for pass time, social interaction and the control. However, the differences between TV and YouTube are audience use TV is more for information seeking, but use YouTube for entertainment, escape and mediated interaction. TV is a media that much mature than stable than YouTube, but YouTube can provide more choose for audiences and satisfy their variety needs.

The obvious characteristic of web series is its short time. People who live in this busy commerce society has less and less time to rest. Thereby, the short or little information might attract people's attention because it will not cost too much strength or time to watch and share, such as Twitter, web series or viral video advertisement. Husted (2012) pointed out that "A viral video is a type of video that becomes popular through internet sharing" (p.1). The spreading of web series is similar as viral video, besides, both of them relying on video streaming websites. Which different is the content of viral video often related to commercial advertisement, the objective of viral video is marketing, but web series is much like mini drama. Research use focus group method to collect the data, and found out 1) viewers share the viral video just for only few gratifications; 2) humor and amusement were the only reason that focus group's volunteers share the video; 3) the gratifications of volunteers basically come from social interaction cluster (Husted, 2012). The result showed that humor is a significant element to attract young people to share it.

In conclusion, with the audience-centric era coming, UGT as an audience-centric theory will act a more practical theory in analyzing mass communication phenomena.

## 2.2 Related Literature and Previous Studies of Web Series

As a very new thing, web series doesn't have a precise academic definition. Therefore, this study can only employ the definition of web series on Wikipedia, "A web series is a series of scripted videos, generally in episodic form, released on the Internet or also by mobile or cellular phone, and part of the newly emerging medium called web television. A single instance of a web series program can be called an episode or webisode, however the latter term is rarely used" (Wikipedia, 2016). In America, web series started to catch people's attention on 2013's Emmy Award. Three of Netflix web series got totally 14 Emmy nominations, which are *House of Cards*, *Arrested Development* and *Hemlock Grove* (Stelter, 2013). Web series' own award in America, "Streamy Awards", started in 2009, now already has hold 5 times. According to its official website, "The Streamy Awards honor the best in online video and the creators behind it". American web series are more close to conventional TV drama style, including the length and the content, the difference from conventional one just created by video stream websites and only broadcasted on it. While Chinese web series is much shorter than conventional TV series, and the content also huge different from old style, but the broadcast platforms are same with America, on local mainstream video websites.

Wang (2015) analyzed the marketing strategy of Chinese web series *Surprise*, conclude the reasons why the series obtain huge success, even later episodes obviously contain many products placement. The results comes to three points, 1) the content of *Surprise* sufficiently catering target audience's (video websites users) needs, such as the needs to relax and abreact; 2) Creative products placement, introduce products in a fun and humor way; 3) multi-platform propagandize, cooperate with some marketing group recommend the series on Wechat, Weibo, and other social network sites. Zhong (2013) investigated who are the audiences of network homemade program and audience attitude towards web series and other web homemade programs. Research showed that the number of female viewers is more than male. Over 70% viewers are young people in age 18-29, which education background is college or university. 94.59% participants thought that good content is the most attracted part. 58% audiences suggested that the length of program should restrict with 10-30 minutes. 53.6% audience's salary rage in 1000-3500 yuan. An interesting result is from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m., every period all have people watch network programs, which reveals people use their fragment time to watch. Tong (2015) used comparative and case study approach to seek the creative model of Chinese web series, including the output model, create model, propagation model and profit model. Study introduce the characteristics of Chinese web series in different developing period, from scattered self-made program to today's professionalization, some even surpass TV series. Study also pointed out some shortcomings of web series, such as

the low threshold allows inferior products, lack of original work, the theme of web series is quite simple and too much product placement. In the end, study appeal to complete institutions, the administrative department should encourage the developing of web series industry. Shi (2015) analyze *Surprise* from a different angle – pragmatics. Study considered that the unique catchword that web series create is a significant part that helps the web series success. The producers should take the lines more seriously, so that it can become a net catchword or net phenomenon, further help the series more popular.

There are not too many researches talk about web series only. Most of them discuss all kind of web programs such as web variety programs. However, this research wants to focus on web series for a precise and separated result, thus choose the researches which most related to web series as the literature review.

### **2.3 Research Hypotheses**

H1a: The younger the Generation Y is, the more time they will spend in watching web series;

H1b: Generation Y who like to use Smart phone (or other portable devices) to access the internet will spend more time in watching web series;

H2: Generation Y who live in urban will watch web series more frequent than viewers who live in rural;

H3a: The more time Generation Y spends on viewing web series, the more they



obtain gratification from watching web series;

H3b: The more frequent Generation Y viewing web series, the more they obtain gratification from watching web series;

H4: The more negative stereotype that viewers have on TV drama, the more they obtain gratification from watching web series.

## 2.4 Conceptual Framework

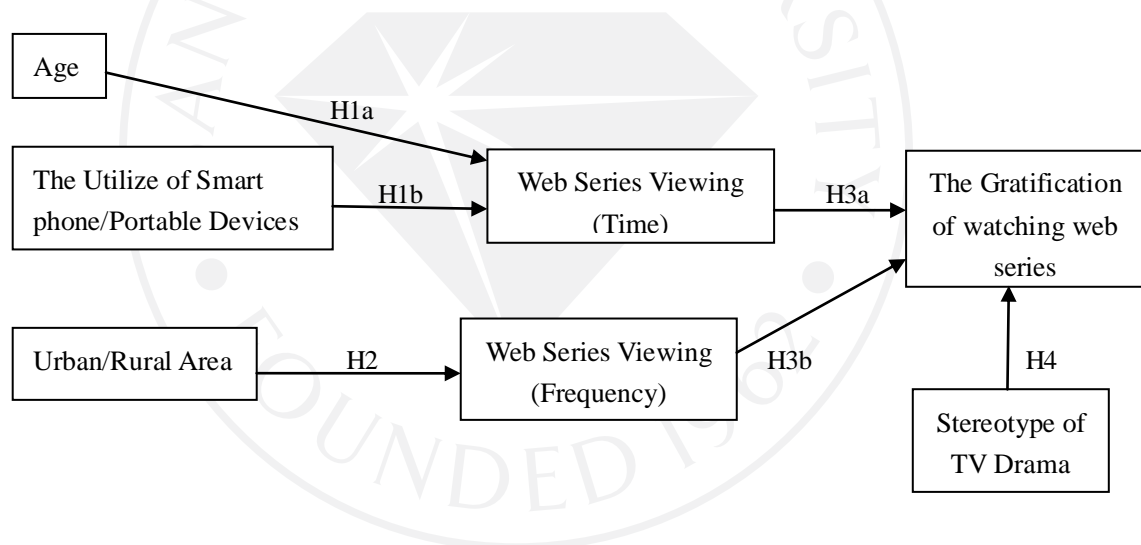


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This quantitative research uses survey approach as the research method.

According to Babbie (2013), the topics suits for quantitative research (survey research) are:

- a) Research with descriptive, explanatory and exploratory purposes is suitable for using survey research;
- b) Survey can help social researchers who need to collecting original data for describing a population too large to observe directly;
- c) Study which aims at measuring attitudes, behavior and orientations in a large population can adopt survey method.

This study is focusing on audiences' uses and gratifications on China's web series. Base on the aforementioned disciplines, the quantitative questionnaire survey method suits for this topic, because this exploratory topic needs to describing large population's attitude and behavior.

#### **3.2 Population and Sample Selection**

There are 200 respondents take part in the survey. In consider of the feasibility, the respondents are choosing by using convenience sampling method. Respondents

are chosen from people who leave comments on the mainstream video websites which broadcast web series randomly. The other way is to ask peoples (my friends, classmates, family, etc.) who have watched web series directly as the respondents. Because of this research is focus on Generation Y viewers, the age of informants should amid 18 to 35. The reason why to choose people among age 18 to 35 is because they are the main audiences, users and consumers of internet and new media. Their responds are extraordinary powerful and highly influential.

### **3.3 Research Instrument**

Questionnaire survey approach is employed in this study.

Before the questionnaire, there are two questions to confirm people who fill out this questionnaire are Generation Y and have watched web series. Questionnaire is separated for 4 parts. The first part is general information part (include age, gender, occupation, and if they like to use Smart phone to access internet etc.), which can solve H1a and H1b, as well as the research question “who likes to watch web series”. The next is the “web series viewing habit” part (include measure respondents time and frequency of viewing web series), this part is built to figure out H2, H3a and H3b. The third part is “gratification of watching web series” part. The last part is the “stereotype of conventional TV drama” part (measure viewer’s stereotype thinking of TV series). Likert scale is employed in these two parts to resolve the research question “why Generation Y likes to watch web series”. These two parts aim to unfold

if there is a relationship between “negative stereotypes of TV series” and “gratification of web series”. Thereby questions in these two parts are constructed to resolve H4.

The language of this questionnaire is containing both English and Simplify Chinese. Research will offered 200 yuan (approximately 30.5 dollars) as a reward for people who earnest finish this questionnaire, each people will obtain 1 yuan.

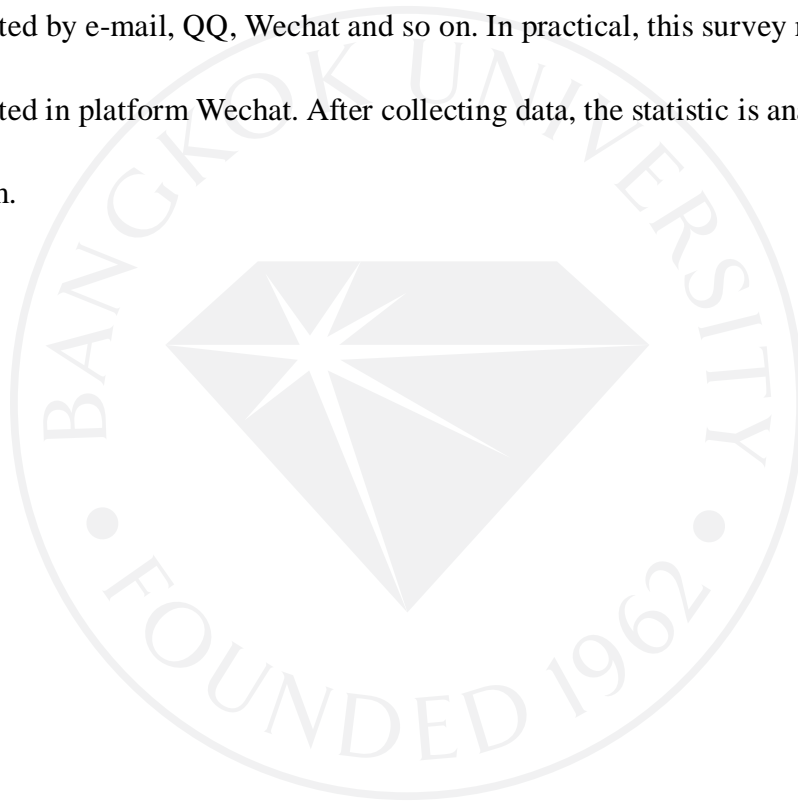
### **3.4 Instrument Pretest**

The questionnaire is pretest by emailing or give directly to 10 Chinese Generation Y who reside in Bangkok, Thailand. Firstly, I ask those respondents to complete the questionnaire. After finish, I listen and record their generate ideas for questionnaire design and other comments and suggestions for improvement. The final version of questionnaire is uploaded on Sojump platform with the explanation of the intention of this study. According to the survey website, respondents' answering information is confidential and protected. When everything is done, the survey website is come out a web link for me to distribute. The link is distributed accordingly by respondents' convenience.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedure**

The duration of data collection is conducted as about 2 weeks, from April 15<sup>st</sup>, 2016 to April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The respondents for this study are selected by using

convenience sampling. Informants are select from the commenter on video websites which broadcast web series and some of my personal relations (family or friends). In order to convenient for Chinese participate, survey of this study is built on Sojump (www.sojump.com) survey platform, which is a Chinese famous survey website, so that respondents can open the questionnaire easily. The links of this survey are distributed by e-mail, QQ, Wechat and so on. In practical, this survey mostly distributed in platform Wechat. After collecting data, the statistic is analyzed by SPSS program.



## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

##### 4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics

There are total 217 respondents in this survey, but 17 are invalid respondents (15 respondents never watched web series, 2 respondents' age are not among 18 to 35).

Therefore, there are total 200 valid respondents.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	64	32.0
	Female	136	68.0
Age	18-23 years old	69	34.5
	24-29 years old	116	58.0
	30-35 years old	15	7.5
Occupation	Full time student	83	41.5
	Civil servant	4	2.0
	Public institution staff	23	11.5

(Continued)

Table 4.1(Continued): Demographic Characteristics

Occupation	Clerk of state-owned enterprise	18	9.0
	Clerk of private enterprise	34	17.0
	Freelance	20	10.0
	Others	18	9.0
	Urban city	160	80.0
Place of Residence	County	22	11.0
	Township	18	9.0
	Immobile device	23	11.5
Device to Connect the Internet	Mobile device	177	88.5

The above table reveals that female is the major respondents which accounts for 68%, while male only accounts for 32%. For the age part, most of respondents are 24-29 years old, accounts for 58%. Ranking second is 18-23 years old, accounts for 34.5%. In the matter of occupation, 83 respondents are full time students, accounts for 41.5%; 34 people are clerk of private enterprise, accounts for 17%. Follow by is Public institution staff, which is ranking third, accounts for 11.5%. Surprisingly, there are 20 freelancers took part in this survey and ranking fourth for 10%. With regard to place of residence, although most of respondents (80%) live in urban city, there are still 11% and 9% respondents live in county and township. As for use what kind of

device to connect the internet, 177 respondents prefer to use mobile devices, accounts for 88.5%, while 23 respondents like immobile devices, accounts for 11.5%.

#### 4.1.2 Web Series Watching Habits

Table 4.2: The Timeframe of Generation Y Watching Web Series

When do you watch web series?	Frequency	Percentage
6:00-8:00	1	0.4
8:00-12:00	14	5.2
12:00-14:00	36	13.3
14:00-18:00	25	9.3
18:00-0:00	167	61.9
0:00-6:00	27	10.0

For the question “When do you watch web series”, survey allows respondents to choose more than one answer, which means respondents can choose the time they watch web series more precisely. So this question should be listed separately. There are 167 respondents watch web series at 18:00-0:00, which is the golden rest time of a day, accounts for 61.9%. 36 people watch web series at 12:00-14:00, which arrange on second, accounts for 13.3%. Unexpectedly, 27 people prefer to watch web series at 0:00-6:00 and 25 people prefer 14:00-18:00, accounts for 10% and 9.3%.



Table 4.3: Time and Frequency of Watching Web Series

Demographic Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
How long do you spend on watching web series per week on average?	Less than 20 minutes (less than 1 episode)	33	16.5
	More than 20 minutes to 1 hour (1-3 episodes)	74	37.0
	More than 1 hour to 2 hours (4-6 episodes)	51	25.5
	More than 2 hours to 4 hours (7-12 episodes)	29	14.5
	More than 4 hours (more than 12 episodes)	13	6.5
	How often do you watch web series on average?	Every day	32
3 times per week		50	25.0
1 time per week		56	28.0
2 times per month		31	15.5
1 time per month		31	15.5

(1) How long do you spend on watching web series per week on average?

37% of the total respondents spend more than 20 minutes to 1 hour per week on average. 51 respondents watch 4-6 episodes per week on average, accounts for 25.5%.

16.5% of respondents spend less than 20 minutes on watching web series on average per week. Similarly, 14.5% of respondents spend more than 2 hours to 4 hours watch web series. Only 13 people watch more than 12 episodes web series on average per week.

(2) How often do you watch web series on average?

Respondents who watch web series 1 time per week and 3 times per week accounts for 28% and 25%, which amount to half of all respondents. 32 people watch web series every day, which shows they are addicted viewers. There are totally 62 people who watch web series 2 times per month and 1 time per month, the proportion between which is half and half.

#### 4.1.3 Gratification of Watching Web Series

There are totally 11 statements in this part. Since there are two negatively worded questions in this part (which are line 5 and line 6), the items should be reverse coded before doing the Cronbach's alpha.

After recoded, the Cronbach's Alpha reveals as 0.836, which is exceeding the preferable score of 0.7. It means that the measurement scale of the construct is stable and consistent in measuring the constructs (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran, 2001).

Table 4.4: Reliability Statistics of the Gratification of Watching Web Series

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.836	11

Next, before doing factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test should be employed to ensure if the survey is appropriate to do the factor analysis.

The test result is as below:

Table 4.5: KMO and Bartlett's Test of the Gratification of Watching Web Series

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.788
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1135.529
	df	55
	Sig.	.000

The above table shows that KMO=.788 and the Bartlett's test  $P=.000 < 0.05$ , which means the factor analysis is applicable.

Principal component analysis and variance rotation method are introduced to do the factor analysis. The absolute values of all the items are exceeding 0.5 in their own factor, which means all the items are valid in their own factor. There are three factors in total after undergoing the factor analysis. Base on their characteristics, these factors will be named respectively as "Information Seeking and Entertainment Factor", "Personal Identity and Social Interaction Factor", and "Negatively Worded Factor (content & quality)". The explanations of naming each factor are as below:

(1) Information Seeking and Entertainment Factor

The first factor is *Information Seeking and Entertainment*, which represents that the gratification Chinese Generation Y obtains from web series, that is to say, the gratification of information seeking and entertainment. This factor contains six items,

which are “satisfy the entertainment requires”, “inspire me with creative content”, “convenient to watch on portable devices”, “various novel themes”, “relax me with funny content” and “help me temporary out of stress of real life”.

(2) Personal Identity and Social Interaction Factor

The second factor is *Personal Identity and Social Interaction*, which means Chinese Generation Y confirms their personal identity and fulfills their social interaction needs by watching web series. There are three items compose this factor, which are “it is a new fashion”, “help me acquire better self-cognition and self-affirmation” and “interact with other viewers”.

(3) Negatively Worded Factor (content & quality)

The third factor is *Negatively Worded (content & quality)*, which is built to test if the respondents answer the questions seriously. Those two items mention about the content and quality of web series in a critical way, which are “full of vulgar content” and “bad quality”.

Table 4.6: Factor Analysis of the Gratification of Watching Web Series

	Components		
Information Seeking and Entertainment Factor	Personal Identity and Social Interaction Factor		Negatively Worded Factor

(Continued)

Table 4.6 (Continued): Factor Analysis of the Gratification of Watching Web Series

Satisfy the entertainment requires	.889		
Inspire me with creative content	.845		
Convenient to watch on portable devices	.842		
Various novel themes	.814		
Relax me with funny content	.800		
Help me temporary out of stress of real life	.521		
It is a new fashion		.866	
Help me acquire better self-cognition and self-affirmation		.855	
Interact with other viewers		.756	
Full of vulgar content			.871
Bad quality			.715

(Continued)

Table 4.6 (Continued): Factor Analysis of the Gratification of Watching Web Series

% of Variance	36.718	22.604	11.887
Cumulative %	36.718	59.322	71.209

#### 4.1.4 The Stereotype of Chinese TV Drama

There are totally 7 statements consist of this part. Also, this part has 2 negatively worded statements, which are line 3 and line 4; those items should be reverse coded before doing the Cronbach's alpha.

After recoded, the Cronbach's Alpha reveals as 0.710, also exceeds the preferable score 0.7, which means the measurement scale is also stable and consistent in measuring the constructs.

Table 4.7: Reliability Statistics of the Stereotype of Chinese TV Drama

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.710	7

The same as former part, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test are employed to ensure if the survey is appropriate to do the factor analysis. The test result is as follows:

Table 4.8: KMO and Bartlett's Test of the Stereotype of Chinese TV Drama

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.638	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	379.044

(Continued)

Table 4.8 (Continued): KMO and Bartlett's Test of the Stereotype of Chinese

TV Drama		
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	21
	Sig.	.000

The above table reveals the information that  $KMO=.638$  and the Bartlett's test  $P=.000 < 0.05$ , which means this measurement scale is suitable for doing factor analysis.

Factor analysis of this part executes principal component analysis and variance rotation method as well. The absolute values of all the items are exceeding 0.5 in their own factor, which means all the items are valid in their own factor. There are two factors in total after undergoing the factor analysis. Base on their characteristics, these factors will be named respectively as "Negative Stereotype Factor" and "Negatively Worded Factor (personal identity & relaxing)". The explanations of naming each factor are listed as below:

(1) Negative Stereotype Factor

The first factor is *Negative Stereotype*, which represent the negative feeling toward Chinese TV drama, to check why Chinese Generation Y seldom watch Chinese TV drama in nowadays. There are six items in this factor, which are "lack of creativity", "annoying advertisements and product placement", "full of negative content", "watching Chinese TV drama is outdated" and "the content makes me feel the society is dangerous".

## (2) Negatively Worded Factor (personal identity &amp; relaxing)

The second factor is *Negatively Worded (personal identity & relaxing)*. Similar as former part, this factor is built to test if the respondents answer the questions seriously. Two statements constitute the factor, describe the viewers feeling of personal identity and relaxing towards Chinese TV drama in a positive way. Two statements are extracted, they are “help me acquire better self-cognition and self-affirmation” and “help me temporary out of the stress of real life”.

Table 4.9: Factor Analysis of the Preference of the Stereotype of Chinese TV Drama

	Components	
	Negative Stereotype Factor	Negatively Worded Factor
Lack of creativity	.830	
Annoying advertisements and product placement	.757	
Full of negative content	.674	
Watching Chinese TV drama is outdated	.549	
The content makes me feel the society is dangerous	.510	

(Continued)



Table 4.9 (Continued): Factor Analysis of the Preference of the Stereotype of Chinese

TV Drama		
Help me acquire better self-cognition and self-affirmation		.855
Help me temporary out of the stress of real life		.817
% of Variance	32.994	27.366
Cumulative %	32.994	60.359

## 4.2 Hypotheses Testing

### 4.2.1 Age, Utilize of Smart Phone and Time Spend on Web Series

The first hypothesis is related to two independent variables, age and utilize of smart phone, and one dependent variable, time spend on web series. Before seeking the simple linear regression formula, the correlations test between age and time spend on web series, utilize of smart phone and time spend on web series are needed. Below is the correlation test result of age and time spending on web series:

Table 4.10: The Correlations of Age and Time Spend on Web Series

Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
-.189	.007**

\*\*P<0.01

The table convey the information that  $P=.007 < 0.01$ , which means age and time spend on web series are correlated. And the Pearson Correlation is  $-.189$ , which means they are negatively correlated.

After implement the correlation test, the hypothesis needs the simple linear regression formula to check if the age and time spend on web series is causality.

Table 4.11: One-way ANOVA of Age and Time Spend on Web Series

F	Sig.
7.340	.007**

\*\* $P < 0.01$

Table 4.12: Coefficient of Age and Time Spend on Web Series

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Time spend on web series	3.197	.242		13.185	.000
Age	-.359	.133	-.189	-2.709	.007**

\*\* $P < 0.01$

The one-way ANOVA shows that  $P=.007 < 0.01$ , which means age had significant influence time spend on web series. From the coefficient table, the simple linear regression formula reveals as a negative relativity. Therefore, H1a is acceptable

Next, the correlations' result of utilize of smart phone and time spends on web

series is listed as below:

Table 4.13: The Correlations of Utilize of Smart Phone and Time Spend on Web

Series	
Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
.031	.662

The result of the correlations table shows that  $P=.662 > 0.05$ , which means utilize of smart phone and time spends on web series are uncorrelated. Therefore, the simple linear regression formula is no needed, H1b is unaccepted.

#### 4.2.2 Place of Residence and Watching Frequency

The second hypothesis is refer to one independent variables, place of residence, and one dependent variable, frequency of watching web series. Before seeking the simple linear regression formula, the correlations test between place of residence and frequency of watching web series are needed. Below is the correlation test result of place of residence and frequency of watching web series:

Table 4.14: The Correlations of Place of Residence and Watching Frequency

Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
-.187	.008*

\*\* $P < 0.01$

From the table we can see that  $P=.008 < 0.01$ , which means place of residence and frequency of watching web series are correlated. Meanwhile, the Pearson Correlation

is -.187, which means they are negatively correlated.

Same as the former hypothesis, after implement the correlation test, this hypothesis needs the simple linear regression formula to check if the place of residence and frequency of watching web series have causal relationship.

Table 4.15: One-way ANOVA of Place of Residence and Watching Frequency

F	Sig.
7.190	.008**

\*\*P<0.01

Table 4.16: Coefficient of Place of Residence and Watching Frequency

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Watching frequency	3.395	.207		16.406	.000
Place of residence	-.388	.145	-.187	-2.681	.008**

\*\*P<0.01

The one-way ANOVA shows that  $P=.008 < 0.01$ , which means place of residence had significant influence frequency of watching web series. From the coefficient table, the simple linear regression formula should be:  $\text{watching frequency} = 3.395 - .388 * \text{place of residence}$ , which means they are negatively related. Therefore, H2 is

untenable.

#### 4.2.3 Time, Frequency and the Gratification of Watching Web Series

The third hypothesis needs two independent variables, time and frequency, and one dependent variable, the gratification of watching web series. Since the factor analysis of the gratification of watching web series had already been done in 4.1.3, the correlations and simple linear regression formula will be constructed among time, frequency and the three factors (information seeking and entertainment, personal identity and social interaction and negatively worded (content & quality)) of the gratification of watching web series. Below is the correlation and one-way ANOVA test result of time and the three factors of the gratification of watching web series:

Table 4.17: Correlation and One-way ANOVA of Time and the Gratification of Watching Web Series

	Correlations		ANOVA	
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (1-tailed)	F	Sig.
Time & information seeking and entertainment	-.032	.329	.198	.657

(Continued)

Table 4.17 (Continued): Correlation and One-way ANOVA of Time and the  
Gratification of Watching Web Series

Time & personal identity and social interaction	-.029	.343	.163	.687
Time & negatively worded (content & quality)	.112	.056	2.537	.113

All P value in both correlations and one-way ANOVA are exceed 0.05, which testify that time is neither correlate nor significant influent respondents gratification of watching web series. Thus, H3a is unacceptable.

Next is to test the correlation between frequency and the three factors of the gratification of watching web series, below is the correlation result:

Table 4.18: Correlations of Frequency and the Gratification of Watching Web Series

	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (1-tailed)
Frequency & information seeking and entertainment	.082	.124
Frequency & personal identity and social interaction	.188	.004**

(Continued)

Table 4.18 (Continued): Correlations of Frequency and the Gratification of Watching

Web Series		
Frequency & negatively worded (content & quality)	-.147	.019*

\*\*P&lt;0.01, \*P&lt;0.05

Table 4.19: ANOVA and Coefficient of Frequency and the Gratification of Watching

Web Series			
	F	Sig.	B
Frequency & information seeking and entertainment	1.340	.248	-.184(Constant) .064
Frequency & personal identity and social interaction	7.267	.008**	-.422(Constant) .146
Frequency & negatively worded (content & quality)	4.349	.038*	.329(Constant) -.114

\*\*P&lt;0.01, \*P&lt;0.05

The correlation table shows that, frequency is not correlated to the first factor, information seeking and entertainment. However, frequency is highly correlated with the second factor (P=.004), which is personal identity and social interaction, and correlate with the third factor (P=.019), negatively worded (content & quality).

Meanwhile, the ANOVA and coefficient table also shows the similar result, frequency

is highly significant influence the second factor ( $P=.008$ ), and significant influence the third factor ( $P=.038$ ). Besides, the unstandardized coefficient  $B$  presents that frequency and the factor “personal identity and social interaction” are positively related, while frequency and the factor “negatively worded (content & quality)” are negatively related. Thus, H3b is partially supported.

#### 4.2.4 Stereotype of Chinese TV Drama and the Gratification of Watching Web Series

Both two variables of last hypothesis are measured by Likert Scale, and the factor analysis had already been done in the former part. So, this hypothesis will be tested by implementing correlation test and simple linear regression among the factors extracted from factor analysis. The factors are “negative stereotype” and “negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing)” from stereotype of Chinese TV drama and “information seeking and entertainment”, “personal identity and social interaction” and “negatively worded (content & quality)” from gratification of watching web series. Below is the correlation result of negative stereotype and the three factors of the gratification of watching web series:

Table 4.20: Correlations of Negative Stereotype and the Gratification of Watching

Web Series		
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (1-tailed)

(Continued)



Table 4.20 (Continued): Correlations of Negative Stereotype and the Gratification of  
Watching Web Series

Negative stereotype & information seeking and entertainment	.440	.000**
Negative stereotype & personal identity and social interaction	.191	.003**
Negative stereotype & negatively worded (content & quality)	.236	.000**

\*\*P<0.01

Table 4.21: ANOVA and Coefficient of Negative Stereotype and the Gratification of  
Watching Web Series

	F	Sig.	B
Negative stereotype & information seeking and entertainment	47.664	.000**	-3.769E-17(Constant) .440

(Continued)

Table 4.21 (Continued): ANOVA and Coefficient of Negative Stereotype and the  
Gratification of Watching Web Series

Negative stereotype & personal identity and social interaction	7.469	.007**	6.610E-17(Constant) .191
Negative stereotype & negatively worded (content & quality)	11.668	.001**	-1.909E-16(Constant) .236

\*\*P<0.01

Both correlation and ANOVA table reveals that all the P values are under 0.01, which means the negative stereotype factor either highly correlated with the three factors or very significant influent the three factors of gratification of watching web series. Furthermore, the unstandardized coefficient B tells that the negative stereotype is positively related to the three factors of gratification of watching web series.

Next is to check if the second factor, negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing), is correlated and significant influent the three factors of gratification of watching web series. Result is as below:

Table 4.22: Correlations of Negatively Worded (personal identity & relaxing) and the  
Gratification of Watching Web Series

	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (1-tailed)
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(Continued)

Table 4.22 (Continued): Correlations of Negatively Worded (personal identity & relaxing) and the Gratification of Watching Web Series

Negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing) & information seeking and entertainment	-.110	.060
Negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing) & personal identity and social interaction	.511	.000**
Negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing) & negatively worded (content & quality)	.105	.069

\*\*P<0.01

Table 4.23: ANOVA and Coefficient of Negatively Worded (personal identity & relaxing) and the Gratification of Watching Web Series

	F	Sig.	B
Negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing) & information seeking and entertainment	2.445	.119	4.918E-17(Constant) -.110

(Continued)

Table 4.23 (Continued): ANOVA and Coefficient of Negatively Worded (personal identity & relaxing) and the Gratification of Watching Web Series

Negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing) & personal identity and social interaction	70.029	.000**	2.055E-17(Constant) .511
Negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing) & negatively worded (content & quality)	2.218	.138	-1.689E-16(Constant) .105

\*\*P<0.01

From the correlation tables we can see that, the second factor of stereotype of Chinese TV drama, which is “negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing)”, is high correlated with the second factor of gratification of watching web series, which is “personal identity and social interaction” (P=.000). The one-way ANOVA and coefficient table also shows that negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing) is very significant influent personal identity and social interaction (P=.000). The unstandardized coefficient B shows that they are positively related. In conclusion, H4 is partially supported.

So far, all the hypotheses had been tested. Although there are just few hypotheses completely supported, but each testing process can explain how and why the hypotheses are being supported or rejected. In next chapter, I will unscramble the

meaning of all the hypotheses testing results.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Conclusion

##### 5.1.1 Demographic Characteristics and Viewing Habit

The demographic characteristics in this survey include gender, age, occupation, district of living and device normally use to connect the internet. Female respondents are more than male respondents, accounts for 68%. Meanwhile, the young participants in the age among 18-23 and 24-29 are more than age among 30-35, the largest number of respondents drop in 24-29. Full time students, clerk of private enterprise and public institution staff are three major occupations in this questionnaire, full time student accounts for 41.5%. Participants living in urban city are way more than living in county and town, accounts for 80%. In total 200 respondents, there are 177 people are used to connect the internet through their mobile devices (e.g. laptop, smart phone or tablet computer), accounts for 88.5%, which is a strong evidence to prove that people in nowadays are very rely on mobile devices.

We can get the conclusion from the aforementioned statistics that people interested in and participate in this research are basically 24-29 years old female, who are full time students in college or university, or just graduate from college or university and work on private enterprise. They live in urban city for study or work, and addicted to use mobile devices. The figures of demographic characteristics are as

below (created by SPSS):

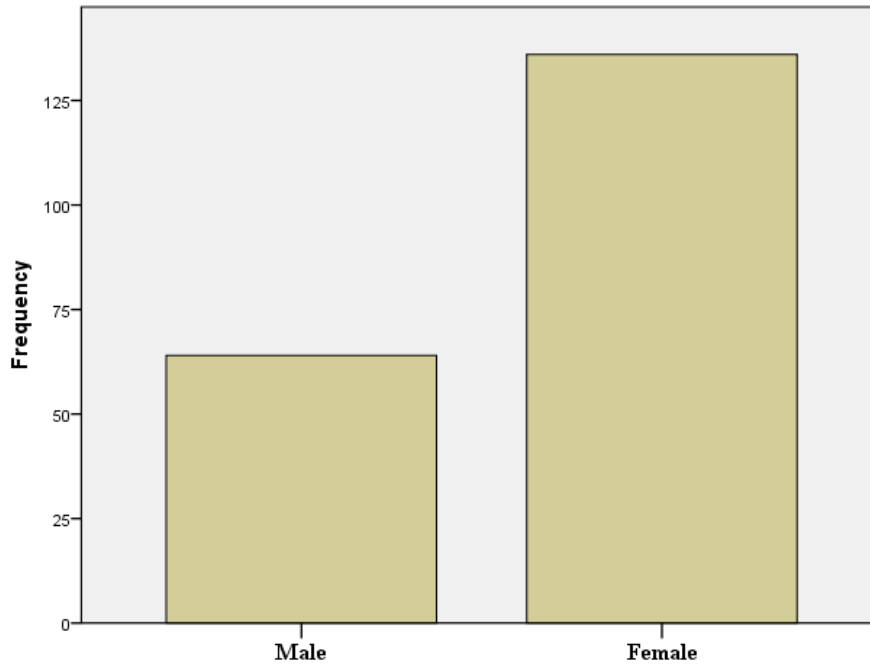


Figure 5.1: Frequency of Gender

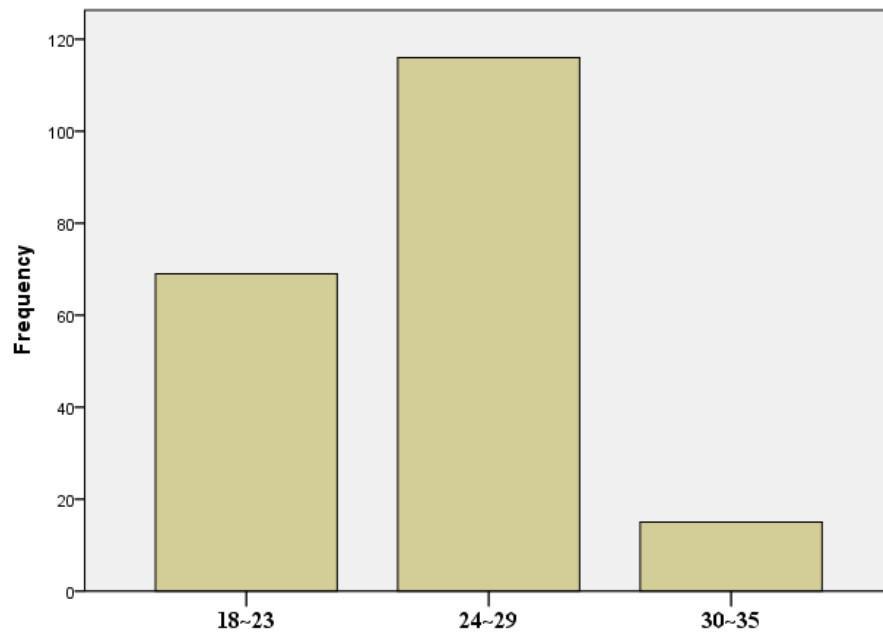


Figure 5.2: Frequency of Age

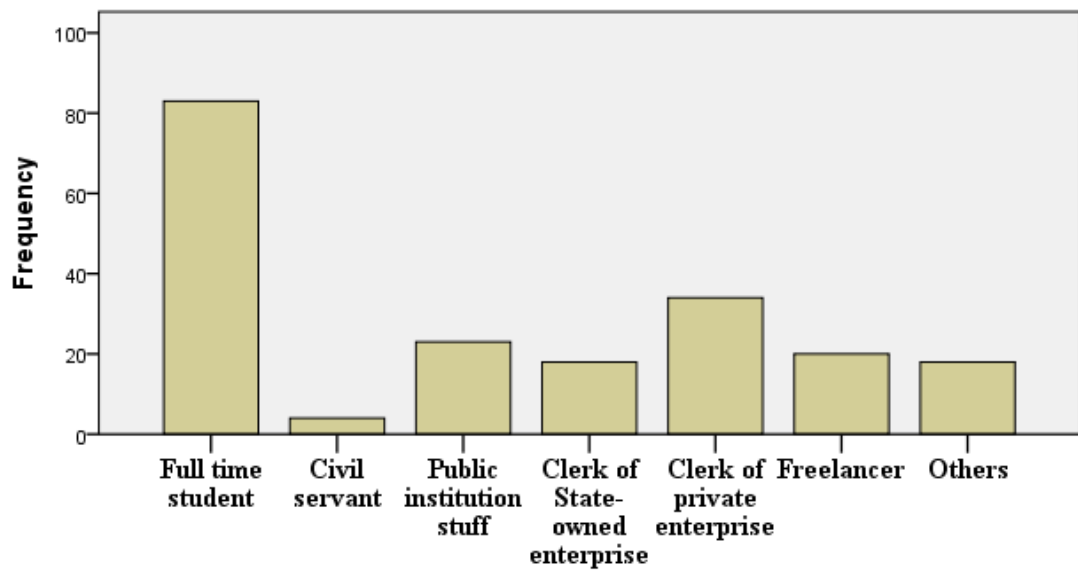


Figure 5.3: Frequency of Occupation

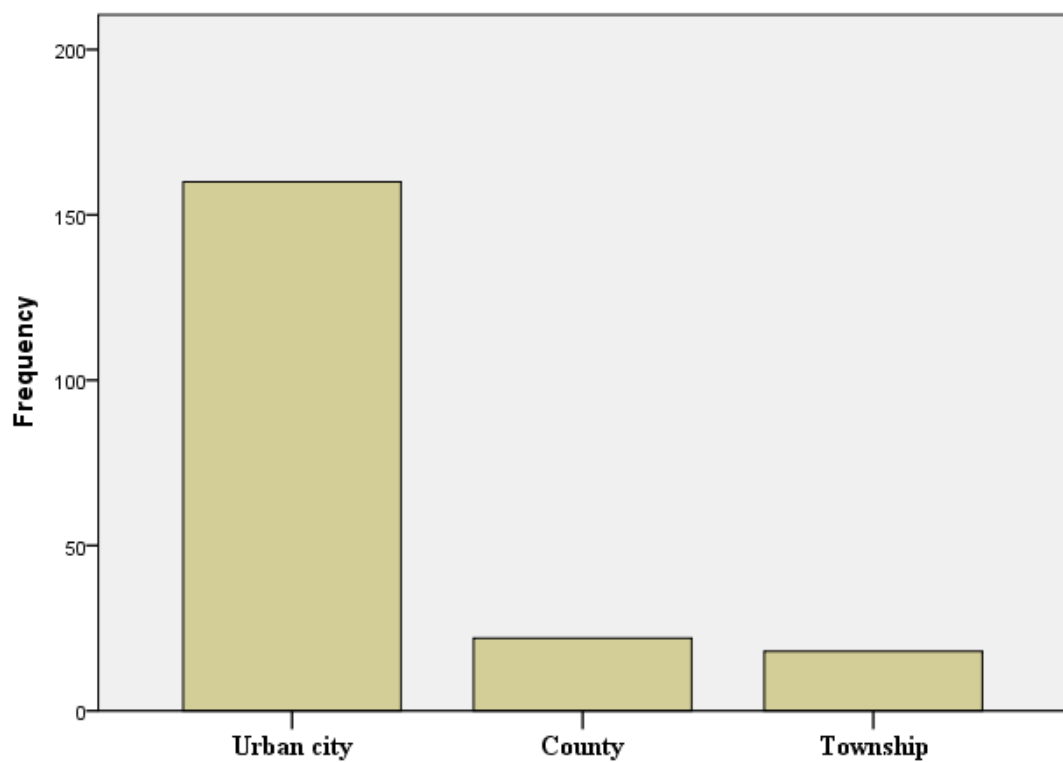


Figure 5.4: Frequency of Living District



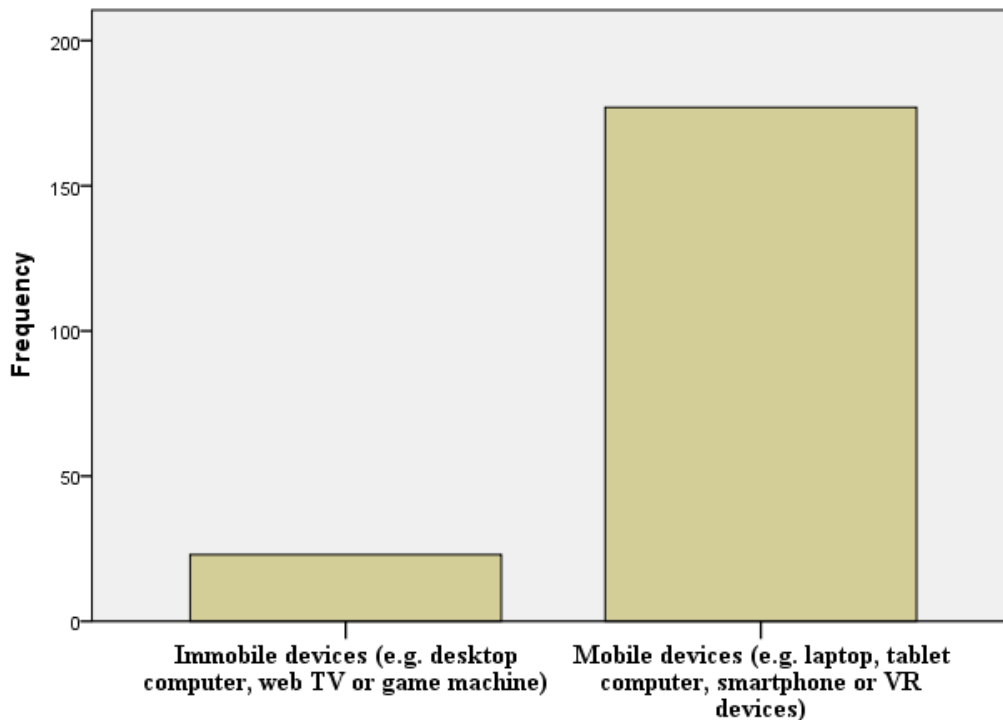


Figure 5.5: Frequency of the Devices Used to Connect Internet

The viewing habit contains the questions that ask people when, how much time, and the frequency spend on web series. Except for the traditional golden time (18:00-0:00), the short afternoon break (12:00-14:00) and wee hours before sleep are also popular choices. Maybe because the length of web series is mostly less than 20 minutes, people can watch it in a shout time. Respondents prefer to spend more than 20 minutes to 1 hour (1-3 episodes) or more than 1 hour to 2 hours (4-6 episodes) on watching web series on average per week. And the figure of watching frequency shows that respondents mostly watch web series 1 time per week or 3 times per week.

Base on time and frequency spend on web series, it is easy to infer that, respondents like to watch 1 or 2 episodes per time. Watch web series is more flexible

than watch TV drama. The figure of web series' viewing is as below (figure 5.5 is created by excel, the other two figures are created by SPSS):

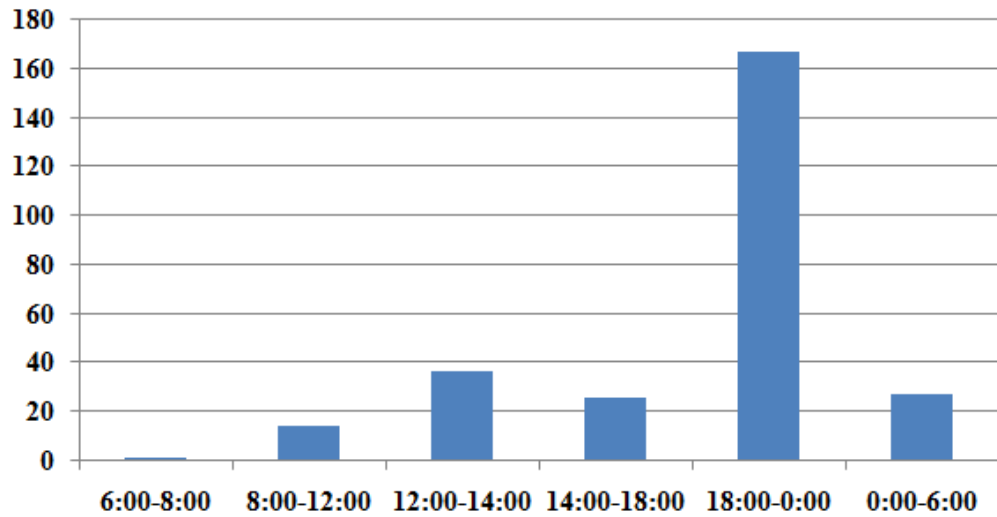


Figure 5.6: Frequency of When Do People Watch Web Series

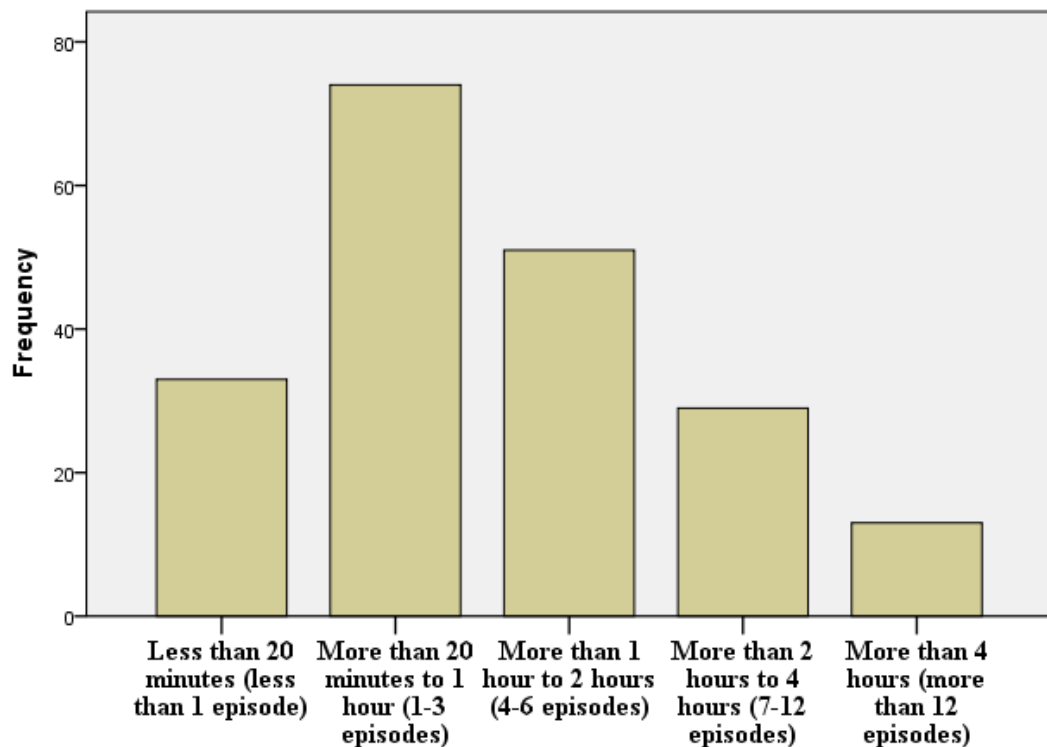


Figure 5.7: Frequency of Time Spend on Web Series on Average per Week

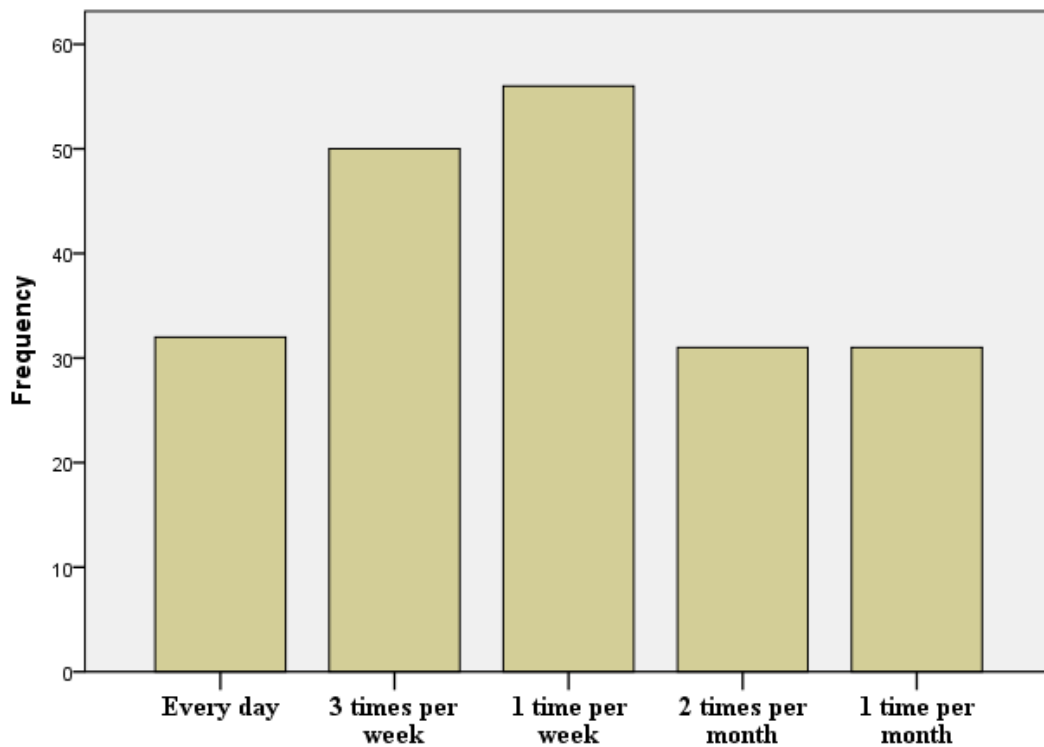


Figure 5.8: Frequency of Web Series' Watching Frequency

### 5.1.2 Hypotheses Summary

#### (1) Age, Utilize of Smart Phone and Time Spend on Web Series

This hypothesis separated as two, which are H1a age and time spend on web series and H1b utilize of smart phone and time spend on web series. H1a assumed that younger viewers will spend more time on web series. According to the statistic analysis in 4.2.1, the two variables of H1a are negative related, which means that younger viewers will spend more time on watching web series. Therefore, H1a is tenable. H1b assumed that people who like to use mobile devices to connect internet will spend more time on web series. However, the two variables of H1b are proved to be unrelated. The reason may be because people use mobile devices to connect

internet is become a mainstream, most of the respondents (88.5%) chose the mobile devices, which can leads to the unrelated result.

## (2) Place of Residence and Watching Frequency

H2 talks about the relation between the place where respondents lives in and the frequency of watching web series. Hypothesis assumed that people who live in big city will watch web series more frequent than people who live in county and town. Base on the analysis result, although the two variables are highly related, but it shows as negatively related. Thus, H2 is not acceptable as well. Here are two thoughts for the reason why that the result reverses from the assumption:

- a. People who live in urban city are too busy so that they don't have time for watching web series;
- b. People who live in urban city prefer other ways to relax themselves.

The second thought is more close to reality, because people live in big city can choose variety of recreations like concert, museum, sports match and fancy amusement park and so on. While at small place, people don't have many choices but to watch TV drama or web series for relaxing after work.

## (3) Time, Frequency and the Gratification of Watching Web Series

This hypothesis also separated as two, H3a time and gratification of watching web series, and H3b frequency and gratification of watching web series. H3a assumed that people spend more time on web series will obtain more gratification from watching web series. Analysis result shows that there are no relation between time and

gratification of watching web series. Frequency is correlated and significant influent to two factors, which are identity and social interaction factor and negatively worded (content & quality) factor, but the second one reveals as negatively related. Therefore, H3a is unacceptable and H3b is partial support. The reason why that time and frequency is not related to the gratification of watching web series, maybe is because the people who watch less web series don't have too much feelings towards web series. While people who watch more web series tend to have variety of feelings towards web series, since the quality of web series is not steady. Some web series with a bad quality or vulgar content will make the viewers uncomfortable.

#### (4) Stereotype of Chinese TV Drama and the Gratification of Watching Web Series

This hypothesis is an important one. It measures if the negative stereotypes of TV drama will influent the gratification of watching web series. Base on the result of factor analysis, stereotype of Chinese TV drama separated into 2 factors, negative stereotype and negatively worded (personal identity & relaxing). Gratification of watching web series separated into 3 factors, information seeking and entertainment, personal identity and social interaction and negatively worded (content & quality). Negative stereotype factor and the 3 factors of gratification of watching web series are all correlated and positively related, while the negatively worded (content & quality) factor is only correlated and positively related to personal identity and social interaction factor. Thus, H4 is partially supported. The conclusion of this hypothesis is,

people who hold the negative stereotype of the Chinese TV drama can obtain more gratification from watching web series in some area, especially in personal identity and social interaction. Maybe web series can offer some interesting topics so that respondents can chat with their friends, or can get the self-affirmation from web series.

## **5.2 Discussion**

As an emerging industry, web series is famous for flexible. People can watch it in almost any time anywhere. Besides, the content is more interesting and meaningful than Chinese TV drama. Thus, web series gathers large numbers of fan in a short time, most of them are Generation Y. Web series already becomes a powerful rival of Chinese TV drama. This research comes out of for a healthy develops for both TV drama and web series in the future. To figure who and why Generation Y viewers' obtain gratification from watching web series, can help the producers of web series know their viewers more precisely.

Research found that the viewers who have positive attitude towards web series are almost students, who study at colleges or universities, and have negative stereotype towards TV drama. The conclusion illustrates that if TV drama wants some new break, to attract young people's attention, the producers of TV drama must rethink about themselves, such as why Generation Y has such strong negative stereotype on TV drama, and then try to make TV drama more interesting and close to

Generation Y's daily life. While if web series wants to gather more viewers, the producers should consider to keep web series' quality and content in a stabilize standard, so that it can become more attractive.

### **5.3 Recommendation for Further Research**

In the end, research will listed some limitations of this research and recommendations for further researches.

Firstly, this research doesn't discuss about the viewer's watching motivation, only talk about the gratification. Further research can talk about both so that research can be more systematically.

Secondly, due to time constraints, the questionnaire only separated the options of some questions like the age, time spend on web series, devices usually use to connect the internet and so forth, in a roughly way. Further research can collect more specific number to do research, which will lead more precise result.

Last but not least, this research lacks of attention on the broadcast platform of web series, which is the video websites. Video website is an important factor that influents the developing of web series. Further research can combine the web series and video websites, make some brilliant analyses.

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## APPENDIX

## **Survey for uses and gratifications study of the viewers of China's web series**

Dear respondents, thanks for your time to fill out this survey. I am a graduate student of the graduate school of Bangkok University. Now I am conducting an independent study named "Uses and Gratifications study of the viewers of China's web series.

In this study, China's web series means China original work. The web series only broadcasted on video websites, such as Youku, Tudou, Iqiyi, Letv and so on. The length of each episode of the web series normally within 20 minutes, each season contains no more than 20 episodes. The famous web series are *Surprise*, *Dior's Man*, *The Ferry Man*, *Go Princess Go* and so forth.

In this study, the TV drama all means China original TV series.

This survey will be only used for private study, not for commercial purpose. You will be surveyed anonymous. All the data you offer is absolutely confidential. Please answer the questions base on your real situation and subjective feeling, there is no standard answer for the questions.

Respondent who completes this survey can all get 1 yuan as reward. Thanks again for your support and cooperation!

**1.** Have you ever watched web series?

- Yes
- No ([End of the questionnaire](#))

**2.** Are you between 18-35 years old?

- Yes
- No ([End of the questionnaire](#))

### **I. General Information**

**3.** What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

**4. How old are you?**

- 18~23
- 24~29
- 30~35

**5. What is your occupation?**

- Full time student
- Civil servant
- Public institution stuff
- Clerk of State-owned enterprise
- Clerk of private enterprise
- Freelancer
- Others

**6. What district are you live in**

- Urban city
- County
- Township

**7. Which device you normally use to access the Internet?**

- Immobile devices (e.g. desktop computer, web TV or game machine)
- Mobile devices (e.g. laptop, tablet computer, smart phone or VR devices)

**II. Web Series Viewing****8. When do you watch web series?**

- 6:00-8:00
- 8:00-12:00
- 12:00-14:00
- 14:00-18:00
- 18:00-0:00
- 0:00-6:00

**9. How long do you spend on watching web series per week on average?**

- Less than 20 minutes (less than 1 episode)
- 20 minutes to 1 hour (1-3 episodes)
- 1 hour to 2 hours (4-6 episodes)
- 2 hours to 4 hours (7-12 episodes)
- More than 4 hours (more than 12 episodes)

**10.** How often do you watch web series on average?

- Every day
- 3 times per week
- 1 time per week
- 2 times per month
- 1 time per month

### **III. The Gratification of Watching Web Series**

**11.** Please choose the proper item according to your subjective feeling towards the descriptions below (Assessment scale: 1. Strongly agree 2. agree 3. Neutral 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree)

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Watch web series can help me temporary out of the stress and and annoyance of real life</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>When I watch web series, I can interact with other viewers momentarily, which makes me feel not lonely</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I think watch web series is a new fashion</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Watch web series can help me acquire better self-cognition and self-affirmation</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I think most of web series' quality are so bad because lack of censorship</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>I think lots of web series are full of vulgar content</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I think most of the web series have a funny content, which can relax me</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I think web series have variety of novel themes, close to my daily life</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I think web series can inspire me with its creative content and innovative advertisements</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I think web series can satisfy my entertainment requires in my limited rest time</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I think the length of each episode of web series is suitable for my portable devices, neither cost too much electric nor data, which is convenient to watch anytime and anywhere</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### **IV. The Stereotype of Chinese TV Drama**

**12.** Please choose the proper item according to your subjective feeling towards the descriptions below(Assessment scale: 1. Strongly agree 2. agree 3. Neutral 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree)

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>I think the Chinese TV drama are full of negative content, such as conflict and violence</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>The content of Chinese TV drama makes me feel the society is dangerous</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Watch Chinese TV drama can help me temporary out of the stress and annoyance of real life</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Watch Chinese TV drama can help me acquire better self-cognition and self-affirmation</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I think the themes of Chinese TV drama are lack of creativity</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I think watch Chinese TV drama is outdated</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>I think too many boring advertisements and product placement in Chinese TV drama is pretty annoying</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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