

# DETERMINANTS OF VIEWERS' CHOICE ON PRIVATE NEWS CHANNELS

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## Abstract

Viewers' choice for the news channels is a physiological phenomenon, varies for each viewer. The future of any economic entity is determined by the customers' choice. Private news channels use various strategies to attract viewers to face the high competition of the news channels industry in Sri Lanka. The main objective of the study is to identify viewer characteristics and factors affected to the viewers' choice on private news channels. Primary data was mainly used by the study through a questionnaire. 25 academic staff members and 25 nonacademic staff members, 25 students in Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka and 25 villages in Pabahinna Grama Niladhari division were selected by the study by using a convenience sampling method. Chi square test statistic was used to identify the determinants. Study found that viewers' political party, residential sector, age of the viewer, choice of family members, time that the news telecasted, coverage and reliability of the broadcasted news are the very important factors that the viewers' consider before choosing a news channel. The most significant fact revealed by the study is that gender, level of education and working status of the person are not the basic reasons for selection of a news channel. Most of viewers are rural resident and 100% of urban resident watching private news channels. Females are watch news than males. Approximately more than 70% of the subjects watch Hiru TV news and therefore according to this study famous private news channel is Hiru TV.

**Keywords:** *Determinants, News channel, Viewer choice*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

News is the statement which report the incident as it is. There are several ways to catch the news in today world. Those methods are newspapers, radios, televisions and internet. Among these methods most popular method is television. Because newspaper they report yesterday news today and also watching news from internet is not popular method in Sri Lanka. In television

news they will give new update as soon as possible with visually.

Television news is very image-based, showing video of many of the events that are reported. Television channels may provide news bulletins as part of a regularly scheduled news program. Less often, television shows may be interrupted or replaced by breaking news ("news flashes")