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Chinese Audiences' Preference for, Dependence on, and Gratifications Derived from CCTV 1, Dragon TV and Hunan TV News Programs

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**Chinese audiences' preference for, dependence on, and gratifications derived from CCTV
1, Dragon TV and Hunan TV news programs**

by

Dongfang Nangong

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

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Program of Study Committee:
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Ames, Iowa

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory study sets out to determine the TV news program preference, the gratifications people derive from TV news, the extent to which people are dependent on TV news for information, and the origins of that dependency. The influences of the demographic variables gender, age, income, and education on these three dependent variables were also ascertained. Data were gathered from a convenience sample of adults in the Chinese major cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Changsha who responded to an online survey.

The results showed that Chinese audiences prefer to watch the TV news channel closest to them and that they perceive TV news programs as credible. They mainly watch TV as part of their daily routine and to help them keep up with the world. The findings indicate they depend on TV news for information about current affairs, and that their dependence on TV news mainly has social-environmental origins. The results also suggest that gender had a bearing on channel preferences and that TV news dependency and its origins vary with age. Differences exist in media preference, gratifications sought, TV news dependency and dependency origins according to income and education levels. Moreover, significant differences were found among the three cities in terms of the gratifications audiences sought from TV news, dependence on a particular news channel, and the origins of that dependency.

The results suggest that the uses and gratifications approach and media dependency theory developed in the west can be applied to explain Chinese TV news audiences' viewing preferences and behaviors.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

On May 1, 1958, the first Chinese television station, Beijing TV, went on the air. At that time, the lack of equipment limited the coverage of TV broadcast signals only within the Beijing area, roughly covering a 25-kilometer radius. Few were able to afford television sets (Chinese Television Broadcast Yearbook, 2002). Thereafter, large metropolitan hubs such as Shanghai, Harbin, Nanjing, and Qingdao began establishing their own television stations so that by 1960, the total number of national TV stations and their relay stations had reached 29 (Chinese Television Broadcast Yearbook, 2002).

During the Cultural Revolution, China's television operations ceased, but immediately after that period, provinces across the country began to set up their own TV stations, roughly forming broadcast networks with Beijing as the center. On May 1, 1973, Beijing Television began broadcasting in full color (Chinese Television Broadcast Yearbook, 2002).

On May 1, 1978, Beijing Television became officially known as the Central Committee Television (CCTV), the only one with a nationwide reach. CCTV programs were beamed to various provinces, cities, and autonomous regions through satellite transmission. By the end of 1987, there were 100 million television sets all over the country and about 600 million television viewers (Chinese Television Broadcast Yearbook, 2002). By 1993, 586 TV stations had been officially registered, according to the Chinese Broadcast and Television Department (2002). At that time, the national television penetration was 81.2%, and the number of television viewers had reached 806 million (Chinese Television Broadcast Yearbook, 2002). By the end of 2006, according to the National Satellite Channel Coverage Fraction general survey (2007) conducted

by the CCTV market research arm, 306 million households throughout the country owned television sets, and the total number of television viewers had climbed to 1.07 billion, placing the national television coverage rate at 85.88%.

Another popular medium in the country is the Internet, which has become an integral part of the Chinese media environment since 1999. By July 2010, about 420 million Chinese were regular Internet users, reflecting a penetration rate of 31.8% (CNNIC, 2010). Despite the tremendous popularity of the Internet in China, current studies suggest that television is still the most influential medium. A recent national survey conducted by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences indicates that of its 2,367 respondents, 97% reported they were TV viewers, 86% said they regularly read newspapers; 49% use the Internet on a regular basis, and 38% listen to the radio regularly.

In earlier years, movies and plays comprised the bulk of televised programs. After the 1970s, CCTV assumed the responsibility of supplying national news for various regional TV stations across the country. Its flagship program, *News Broadcast*, shown from 7 to 7:30 every night, always garners 30% to 40% of all national viewers (CCTV, 2010). News gradually became the pillar of all TV programs. CCTV 1, for example, is predominantly a news channel that caters to more than 80% of the nation. The goal of national television back then was to “inform the public and understand the world” (China’s TV Industry, 2009). When it comes to reporting hard news, especially disasters and national issues, the biggest advantages of television are its live telecast, broad audience and its vigorous image-sound presentations, compared with other media, including the Internet.

News broadcasts play an important role in the daily lives of the Chinese people. Since

1993, TV stations have put forth various policies and implemented numerous plans to improve news broadcasting. For example, news programs are always scheduled during the “golden time intervals,” often after dinner. Regional TV stations also offer unique morning news programs, such as *Good Morning, Beijing!* (Beijing TV), *Meeting in the Morning* (Tian Jin), *Shanghai Morning* (Shanghai), and *Dawn in Xiao Xiang* (Hunan TV). Noon programs tend to reflect on national issues, with the objective of strengthening national unity; evening news programs tend to focus on entertainment, with the goal of enhancing family and community cohesion (China’s TV Industry, 2009). TV anchors are encouraged to chat about the news instead of merely reading the news so that audiences are entertained as they gain information. Also encouraged is the creation of “news packages” that combine on-the-spot reports, studio footages, documentaries and interviews (2009).

The Chinese people have been known to rely heavily on TV news broadcasts. When Beijing hosted the Asian Games in 1990, CCTV organized its regional stations to complete 950 hours of sports programming (Chinese Television Broadcast Yearbook, 2002). In 2008, natural calamities and other disasters shook the country—blizzards in the South, a train wreck in Shandong, turmoil in Tibet, and the devastating Sichuan earthquake, among others. Despite the popularity of the Internet, the majority still resorted to TV to get vivid and detailed reports. A growing number also participates in active discussions of issues on television. For example, a popular program called *Topics in Focus* (CCTV 1) exposes political corruption and crime, asking audience members to call to contribute comments, participate in interviews or express their opinion through the Internet.

Despite these trends in the broadcast industry, the development of communication

channels that have allowed the infusion of ideas from many parts of the world has caused the Chinese viewing public to be more skeptical of news reports they receive from domestic sources (Hong & Cuthbert, 1991). Many media practitioners say they are increasingly getting frustrated from hearing only the so-called good news (China's TV Industry, 2009). For example, reporters who work for Dragon TV bemoan that in the media's coverage of the Sichuan earthquake in 2008, unpleasant pictures that showed confrontations between police officers and earthquake victims were deleted. Those who attempted to offset censorship rules said the harder they try, the more they were discouraged from seeing media reforms. Some of their hard-hitting reports seep through, however, gaining the appreciation of a public that was increasingly demanding programs they regard as critical, genuine and innovative (Hong & Cuthbert, 1991).

This study attempts to find out how Chinese audiences evaluate the main TV channels through which they get the news in terms of how much trust and confidence they have in them. Which channels do they prefer? To what extent do they satisfy audience needs? How dependent are they on their TV news programs? What are the roots of such a dependency? In short, this study aims to determine the extent to which the Chinese viewing publics are satisfied with their TV news programs.

This study examines how people evaluate three news channels using data gathered from an online survey. The channels were chosen due to their reported popularity, credibility and uniqueness. They are CCTV 1, Dragon TV, and Hunan TV. The respondents are residents of three major cities—Beijing, Shanghai and Changsha—who are all able to receive broadcast signals and news programs from the three channels.

CCTV is China's national TV station, the main propaganda channel of the central

government and the Communist Party. In 2005, CCTV covered 95.9% of the country, with viewers recorded at close to 1.2 billion. People watch it an average of 154 minutes per day (CCTV, 2010). Audience satisfaction ratings show CCTV in the top 12 of all satellite channels. Of all 20 available CCTV channels, CCTV 1's news program is the unquestionable leader. By law, regional and provincial channels must transmit CCTV 1's *News Broadcast* program (CCTV, 2010).

CCTV, however, has competition. Among them is Dragon TV, a satellite channel operated by the Shanghai Media Group (SMG), which also belongs to the local government. It has the second largest population coverage ratio next to CCTV. Dragon TV programs are also shown in North America, Europe, Japan, Australia and other countries, amassing an estimated 700 million viewers worldwide (Dragon TV, 2009). Compared to other national TV channels, including CCTV, Dragon TV has more administrative resources, and from the very beginning has enjoyed some measure of special treatment from the government. It once was the only provincial satellite TV channel not required to transmit the *News Broadcast*.

Dragon TV airs news programs such as *Oriental News*, *Look at the East*, *The Morning Show*, and *Oriental Noon News*. Unlike those in CCTV 1, these news programs are known to report China and the world from a metropolitan perspective— modern-looking in terms of presentation, economy-oriented, and with an eye toward the developments overseas. Located in the biggest metropolitan city, Shanghai, Dragon TV is rather aggressive in international news reporting. It shuns coverage of local political conferences and provides a sharper focus on social issues.

Another local channel that has challenged CCTV 1's dominance in recent years is Hunan

TV, based in Changsha, Hunan province. Hunan TV makes its name by producing and airing such popular programs as *Super Girl*, the Chinese version of *American Idol*. Influenced by the big success of its entertainment programs, Hunan TV's news program presents a very different look and style, which attracts younger audiences. Going by the slogan "Be happy, be Chinese," Hunan TV news programs combine news, entertainment, fashion and public service. According to the 1999 CCTV census, Hunan TV viewers are very satisfied with this news channel, topping the list of all provincial-level channels in terms of local reporting (Hunan TV, 2010). Its *Nightly News* began airing in 1983 and has since gained the attention and respect of a considerably large audience base. Many attribute this to Hunan TV's proximity and the way it presents the news in an entertaining fashion. However, not everyone agrees with this style. Some think the channel exploits people's sympathy to gain ground in the market, but its news programs are generally seen as shallow. By the end of 2006, Hunan TV covered 60% of the entire country, reaching a population of 760 million (Hunan TV, 2010).

Determining which of these three channels the public trusts is important on several fronts. First, after the 1990s, China has undergone—and continues to undergo—tremendous political, economic and social transformation. The Chinese people, especially the younger generation, have all witnessed and experienced these changes. For one, the authoritarian media system has taken on a new look. The public's demands for a more accountable media system are starting to make a dent on decisions regarding programming and the way news topics are reported.

Second, the Chinese are learning from modern information technologies about how things are done in many parts of the world. Advances on the economic front have fostered some variety in media content, such as the inclusion of entertainment elements in news reports.

However, this seems to be true only for very local issues. When it comes to serious national issues, many say TV news programs are still conservative. This is so, according to some scholars, because indecent news (such as those considered sensational or juicy news and entertainment scandals) does not win loyal audiences.

Third, statistics show that although the Chinese TV news industry is starting to exhibit global influence, many scholars are worried that the popularity of the Internet may be draining TV news audiences. Have the capabilities of the online media altered the audiences' TV news viewing habits and their level of satisfaction with their news channels? Will those changes threaten TV news programs and the entire television industry?

This study contends that while technology and social changes continue to stimulate changes and reforms in the Chinese TV news industry, the audiences' satisfaction with the news media—and how people use them in their daily lives—might be changing as well. The findings of this study are expected to provide insights regarding the likely future directions of the Chinese TV news industry, specifically its popular news programs.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

After the 1990s, China has undergone and continues to undergo tremendous changes in its socio-economic and political life. In no other domain have these changes been more dramatic than in the field of mass communication. The Chinese media system has taken on a radically new look, attributable to the advent of advanced communication technologies, a young and aggressive workforce, more discerning audiences, a more open policy as a consequence of political reforms, and new media content, among others. Faced with these developments, the Chinese audiences' perspectives on and opinion about journalism in general and TV news programs in particular may have also been altered. Before, journalists were regarded as powerful change agents in society and were highly respected; TV news was considered an important educational tool for the mass audience. Today, there are far more reasons why people choose to watch certain news programs.

Kosicki and McLeod (1990) suggest that mass media audiences have personal theories about what is news, how news fits into daily life, and how it should be viewed, among other notions. Most people use these lay theories to “enable them to act consistently and satisfactorily in relation to the media” (p. 69). Considering this new and developing context for Chinese broadcast journalism, the present study asks: Who watches what TV news channel and why? What are the characteristics of these viewers? What are the uses of and the gratifications people get from watching TV news? Why do some people depend on a certain channel for news? To what extent are their needs met by the information they get? Several theoretical frameworks point to some plausible answers.

News Credibility

The Chinese have long seen credibility as “the extent to which the news delivered by the media matches real world facts” (Yang, 2006, pp. 6-7). The basic idea here is that credibility is synonymous with the authenticity and accuracy of news reports judged by how closely these reports reflect the objective reality.

In the field of mass communication, credibility was originally studied as audience attitudes toward and perceptions of sources of information in the mass media (e.g., Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953). Gunther (1992) argues, however, that credibility is a relational variable based on audience response and not an attribute of the message source *per se*. In other words, it is the audience’s perception of the source that matters rather than the source itself. Gunther (1992) also posits that involvement with a topic or issue is a better predictor of perceived credibility, providing evidence that “a person’s involvement in situations, issues, or groups show the greatest explanatory power” in how people assign credibility judgments (p. 152). Bracken (2006) agrees, suggesting that source credibility is “the amount of believability attributed to a source of information (either a medium or an individual) by the receivers” (p. 723).

According to McQuail (2005), the extent to which people find a source credible contributes to news learning effects. “Some trust is essential for a news source to be effective, although there is plenty of evidence that people do habitually pay attention to media sources that they do not trust” (p. 509). Indeed, a number of surveys have shown a clear distinction between a more trusted and a less trusted television station. Gaziano and McGrath (1987), who developed a 12-item news credibility index that includes trustworthiness, bias, accuracy, fairness, and community relations, later found that credibility had more to do with perceived fairness, lack of

bias, and good faith rather than perceived accuracy or reliability of the information itself. “A relevant component was the [audience’s] perception of the medium as having the interest of the public at heart” (as cited in McQuail, 2005, p. 509).

How the public perceives the credibility of specific television programs has long been of interest to communication researchers (e.g., McCroskey & Jenson, 1981; Newhagen & Nass, 1989; Sargent, 1965). The general trend of research results is that audiences rate their primary source of news as credible (e.g., Johnson & Kaye, 1998; Sundar, 1998). Markham (1968), in an experiment, examined the credibility of television news anchors and found several distinct dimensions of credibility. Like Gunther (1992), he observed that source credibility may also “be influenced by audiences’ sensations of ‘presence’ or at least by the level of immersion they experience while viewing the program” (p. 160). Other researchers have argued that viewers find programs with low professional and technical qualities and those that feature too many sensational stories as not credible at all.

In China, other contextual factors may figure prominently in shaping people’s notions of credible news programs. For example, by orders from the central government, regional and provincial channels must transmit CCTV 1’s *News Broadcast* program from 7:00 pm to 7:30 pm daily. Such level of exposure may have increased the audiences’ perception of the credibility of CCTV 1 and its particular news program.

Many scholars contend that perceptions of credibility do change and that these changing perceptions can reflect real differences between and among sources. Based on the foregoing literature, the following research questions are posed:

RQ1: Which TV channel do people who live in the three cities prefer to watch—CCTV1, Dragon TV or Hunan TV? Is there a difference among the three cities in terms of their preferred channel and news program?

RQ2: Do Chinese TV viewers prefer a particular TV news program because they perceive it as more credible?

Uses and Gratifications Theory

According to the uses and gratifications theory, people gravitate toward a particular mass medium or a specific news program because they are motivated by “psychological, social, and cultural influences to accomplish particular needs” (Blumler and Katz, 1974, p. 34). These “needs” include, among others, the need for information, orientation, relaxation, companionship, diversion or escape (McQuail, 2005). In short, the seeking of gratification is a significant indicator of people’s exposure to mass media. Instead of focusing on “what media do to people,” the uses and gratifications approach is more concerned with “what people do to media” (Katz, 1959, p. 2). It places the audience on the driver’s seat—they decide where to go and how to move forward in terms of how they wish to satisfy their information needs. This theory posits that the relationship between gratifications- or expectation-seeking and mass media exposure is important to determine why some people choose certain channels. Empirically, many studies have already found a significant connection between gratifications searching and exposure and attention to mass media (e.g., Perse, 1990; Rubin, 1983; Compesi, 1980; and Lemish, 1985).

Those who have examined exposure to political news and its effects (e.g., Becker, 1979; McLeod & McDonald, 1985), news program choice (e.g., Palmgreen, Wenner & Rayburn, 1980

and 1981; Rayburn, Palmgreen & Acker, 1984), expectation-value formulations (e.g., Rayburn & Palmgreen, 1984), and audience activity (e.g., Levy and Windahl, 1984), among others, have structured various satisfaction or gratification typologies. Although new typologies continue to be fashioned, most satisfaction factors originated from a few gratifications constructs. These include surveillance (knowledge and information), communication utility (social interaction, companionship, or interpersonal utility), filling time (passing time or habit), escape (from boredom or problems), diversion (entertainment or excitement), and advice (decision-making or guidance) (Blumler and Katz, 1974).

The Chinese context, however, may offer new considerations. For example, Hunan TV's news program is known to be more diverse in terms of content and less oriented toward politics. Thus, people may choose it for entertainment or diversion purposes and not necessarily for knowledge and information. Some Shanghai citizens seldom watch any CCTV channel, preferring Dragon TV instead because of its perceived status and reputation as a relatively independent channel. Some say they attend to CCTV 1 to watch an anchor that many find endearing because of his quintessential "Chinese face." Many, especially the elderly, report feeling comfortable just by seeing that familiar face.

These gratifications, however, are not mutually exclusive. For example, an individual who wants to be entertained by a news program very likely is also just killing time and wishing to be entertained.

Based on the foregoing literature, people choose certain TV channels to satisfy specific needs. Some of these needs might be urgent; others are still being shaped. It is therefore pertinent to ask:

RQ3: What are the gratifications Chinese audiences derive from watching specific TV channels for news?

Media Dependency Theory

The uses and gratification theory may be insufficient to explain why some prefer one news source from another. McQuail (2005) comments that the uses and gratifications tradition stresses too much “circumstantial and weak motivations,” and has not provided much successful prediction or causal explanation of media choice and use (p. 424). Ang (2003) criticizes the approach for “taking into account only individual psychological gratifications derived from individual media use” and for ignoring “the social context of media use” (CCMS Infobase, 2003, p. 34). Why people choose a news channel or program over another also may be partly explained by the tenets of the media dependency theory.

Dependency, according to Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976), is “a relationship in which the satisfaction of needs or the attainment of goals by one party is contingent upon the resources of another party” (p. 6). In this case, it specifically refers to the satisfaction of audience needs or the attainment of their goals that is contingent upon the information resources of the mass media.

Although many scholars regard media dependency theory as an extension of uses and gratifications (Blumler and Katz, 1974), there are two key differences between these two theoretical frameworks. The first is that media dependency looks at audience goals as the origin of the dependency, while uses and gratifications emphasizes audiences’ needs, most of which are intangible and unpredictable, as the major motivation. Second, in dependency theory, the interrelationships between audience, media and society are the focal point of analysis.

Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976) put forward three major needs that strengthen people's dependency on the media: "(1) the need to understand the world, (2) the need to act meaningfully and effectively in that world, and (3) the desire to escape from the anxieties and tensions of reality" (p. 6). They suggest that the cognitive, affective and behavioral effects of media exposure will be heightened if the message is more central to people's needs, especially when there is a high degree of social instability due to rapid change and conflict. With limited time to digest large volumes of information, active audiences are likely to be dependent on the media that can supply the central messages.

The axioms of media dependency had been widely employed as independent variables to explain selective exposure to certain media, but they cannot fully explain the determinants or antecedents of those dependencies. To fill this research gap, Ball-Rokeach in 1985 set out to identify the origins of individual media system dependency. She proposed factors that fall under three broad categories: those with historical/structural origins, individual origins, and social/environmental origins.

Historical/structural origins. In modern society, information is regarded as power. Shifts in power usually involve shifts in who controls and enjoys the rights to access and disseminate information. As Kellner (1981) said, information control goes along with political and economic control, and such control plays "a genetic role" in individuals' dependency (Ball-Rokeach, 1985, p. 486). Individuals are born into societies where the media system has a range of communication roles. From this perspective, individuals are prompted to depend on the information supplied by the media system to be oriented to and to navigate their way through modern political-economic systems (Ball-Rokeach, 1985).

Individual origins. Factors that lead to dependency with individual origins refer to personal goals or human motivations brought about by individual ideologies, perspectives, knowledge, personality, and experience. Some elements of Ball-Rokeach's (1985) individual media dependencies do overlap with factors that have structural and/or environmental origins because personal motivations are difficult to detach from an individual's social environment. In short, a person's goals are functional results of historical and social environmental factors. Individual motivations are said to strengthen personal growth and development and are determined by the individual's unique situation. For this reason, individual origins especially point to "self-maintenance" and "self-growth" (p. 495). According to Ball-Rokeach, one significant individual dependency is to "keep in touch with the world" (p. 496).

Social/environmental origins. The social environment can either change or confirm an individual's goals and motivations so that the individual's media dependencies are affected. Within one's social environment are problems that involve conflict and change, all of which share the same basic features—unpredictability and ambiguity (Ball-Rokeach, 1985). Under unpredictable and ambiguous social situations, people are likely to suffer both "cognitive and affective discomfort. The degree of this discomfort should vary with the importance of those environs for individual and collective welfare" (p. 498). To ease this discomfort, people seek information from—and will be highly dependent on—whatever resources are available and useful. Among such resources are the mass media that have assumed accountability for providing information and expert interpretation of events and issues beyond interpersonal interactions.

Conditions of unpredictability and ambiguity characterize Chinese society today as the country continues to undergo rapid social transformation. The appreciation of the RMB, the

national currency, is an example. This phenomenon can be construed as a sign of economic growth as China proclaims itself as a world economic powerhouse. However, some finance experts say that the average citizen does not get any benefit from the monetary appreciation because the increased value is only realized abroad while those in the mainland suffer the consequences of rising commodity prices. Besides, the currency exchange rate between China and the U.S. indicates that China is losing much of its dollar reserves. These not-so-rosy scenarios are seldom seen on TV news although some may learn about them from other media, such as the Internet, and from interpersonal accounts.

Considering the three proposed origins of media system dependencies, this study asks:

RQ4: Do Chinese audiences consider themselves dependent on TV news for their information needs?

RQ5: What do people say as the reason(s) for this dependency? In other words, what are the origins of this dependency (historical/structural, individual, or social/environmental)?

The Influence of Demographic Variables

Media practitioners and communication scholars have long recognized that demographic variables (e.g., age, family income, education, and gender) are still a basic and generally necessary consideration for audience segmentation and targeting. Previous studies also have shown how they profoundly affect people's preference for television programs, their sources of news, and other viewing habits. For example, McCarty & Shrum (1993) found direct relationships between demographic characteristics and TV viewing behavior. Goodman (1990),

studying the relationship between demographics and gratifications sought and obtained from television news, found that people consider newscasts as sources of information vital for personal and social growth. Others see the process of viewing news as an end in itself because of its entertainment value and its ability to reduce feelings of social isolation.

Gender. Scholars have documented the difference between males and females in terms of mass media habits. McCarty & Shrum (1993), for example, note the decreasing proportion of news viewing among males in general. Male audience members also have been found to access the media for self-actualization. Among men, personal gratification was negatively related to the proportion of entertainment, drama, and sports viewing, but was positively related to the viewing of stimulating, adventurous, and sensational stories or programs. The importance of the contentedness factor for male TV viewers was positively related to the amount of total TV news watched.

For females, personal gratifications were positively related to the proportion of entertainment elements viewed. As the importance of self-actualization increased for women, they tend to watch more TV news. Females who value the gratifications they derive from the media report greater exposure to news programs. Those who say they learn more from television pass on such information to others in conversations (McCarty & Shrum, 1993).

Age. A number of surveys have produced findings that age is highly related to TV viewing. Exposure to news and public affairs increase with age regardless of gender (e.g., McCarty & Shrum, 1993). Studying cohorts, Peiser (2000) observed that television viewing increases as adults reach their 50s and decline slightly once they reach their 60s. Different viewing habits also were noted between cohorts. Robinson et al. (2004) suggest that older adults watch more television because they have the time and the opportunity. Young people, on the

other hand, watch TV more for escape and for entertainment. In China, a recent survey of CCTV morning news show viewers found that people watch the morning news mainly for surveillance purposes. These news program watchers are usually 26 to 30 years old (CCTV *Morning News*, 2011).

Income. Income seems to affect TV viewing habits and preferences in rather nuanced ways. McCarty & Shrum (2003) found that women with higher family incomes watch less television in general; specifically, less drama and adventure content. They are, however, more avid consumers of TV news. Such a relationship between income and television was not found among men. The CCTV morning news viewing habits survey (2011) data show that those with medium income constitute the biggest proportion of TV news viewers (around 40.6%); those with lesser income show a marked decline in TV news viewing. Another survey (CMMR National Satellite TV Channel Survey, 2009) found that people who earn far more than the average (called *laobans*) see TV news, especially the evening editions, as their most important information source.

Education. Some scholars suggest that audiences in the low education group encode, store, and retrieve television news information best, but do not perform very well in their processing of newspaper or Web news. For the highly educated, the opposite pattern emerges (Grabe, Kamhawi & Yegiyan, 2009). Other scholars argue that educated media users remember more information because their thought processes and their ability to make connections between related pieces of information are more elaborated (Park and Kosicki, 1995). In China, the data indicate that television news viewing is highest among those with a high school education or higher (CCTV, 2011). Others have found more subtle relationships between education and TV viewing. For example, Ettema and colleagues (1977, 1983) found that among males,

gratifications had no relationship with the proportion of sensational program viewing prior to demographics. When the education factor was taken into consideration, the gratifications showed a negative relationship with the proportion of viewing of sensational TV programs. Thus, the authors conclude that “knowledge gaps exist in part because of differing levels of interest in and use for information” (p. 520). On the contrary, Grabe et al. (2009) posit that knowledge gaps exist independent of perceived understandability, perceived information value, and interest in news stories.

The foregoing review of literature and research questions behoove a distillation of differences in preferred news programs, the uses of and gratifications derived from TV news, and people’s dependency on TV news based on standard demographic variables. As such, this study also asks:

RQ6: Are there differences in the audiences’ preferred TV news programs, the gratifications they derive from TV news, their dependencies on TV news, and the origins of those dependencies based on gender, age, income, and educational status?

Chapter 3

METHOD

As Chinese society undergoes dramatic social changes, this exploratory study aims to determine the factors that influence audiences' choice of TV news programs, the gratifications they derive from these programs, the extent of their dependence on TV news as well as the origins of their dependencies on these news programs.

Study Design

To gather data for this study, a survey of TV news viewers in three major cities—Beijing, Shanghai and Changsha—was conducted. These three geographic audience groups have the choice to watch the banner news programs produced by the country's three major TV channels—CCTV1, Dragon TV and Hunan TV.

An online survey was deemed the most appropriate and flexible way by which respondents can provide individual answers to a self-administered questionnaire without compromising their anonymity. Considering the sensitive nature of some of the questionnaire items, an online survey frees respondents from social conventions that might otherwise hamper their willingness to provide information in a face-to-face situation or in telephone interviews. Considering that the respondents were from Mainland China, the survey questionnaire was administered in Mandarin Chinese.

The questionnaire was pre-tested by emailing it to 12 Chinese individuals residing in the United States. First, they were asked to complete the questionnaire. Then, they were interviewed

to generate ideas for questionnaire design and other suggestions for improvement. The final questionnaire was lodged on a webpage with an explanation of the purpose of the study. The survey website also contained information about confidentiality of responses, informed consent, and incentives for participating in the survey. The potential respondents were directed to the survey's webpage through links in each of the three cities' electronic bulletin board systems (BBS). Links to the study's survey website also were posted on popular web blogs, chat rooms and other online forums.

The Sample

The universe of this study is composed of TV news audiences from three cities—Beijing in the northeast part of the country; Shanghai, which is culturally considered part of southern China; and Changsha in the south central part of the country. Because of the lack of available sampling frames, the respondents for this study were selected using convenience sampling. To recruit respondents, permission from the respective city governments and web administrators were solicited to post a link to the survey website on each of the three cities' BBS, chat rooms and other online forums.

The city BBS, also called a city's virtual community, is an electronic message center where people post ideas and take part in discussions about a wide range of topics. It provides hubs of communication activity (Kuehn, 1993) for a specific geographic area. As Zhang & Woesler (2002) found, although China exercises strict media censorship, most Chinese BBS stations discuss current political and social events, which suggests that Internet use in China is less encumbered by government restrictions. Indeed, the BBS allows not only efficient information transmission but also the ability to communicate with others anytime, anywhere

(Liu, 2005).

The BBS in China became popular in 1995. By 2004, more than 14.9 million of the 79.5 million Internet users in the country reportedly use the BBS frequently (CNNIC, 2003). Young people 18 to 24 years old account for a high proportion of BBS users (35.1%), followed by users who are 25 to 30 years old (19.3%). People 31 to 35 years of age constitute 11.6 % of BBS users, and those 36 to 40 years old account for 7.1%. People 40 to 50 years old comprise 6.8 % of those who use the BBS; only 3.5% were more than 50 years old (CNNIC, 2003). These statistics suggest that Chinese Internet users under the age of 35 constitute the majority of those who access the cities' BBS.

Today, there are thousands of BBS stations nationwide, the most popular of which are Souhu, Maopu, Yahoo, Xici, Xinlang, TOM, Tianya, and Baidu. Undoubtedly, the BBS has become an important channel through which people interact in China. For them, and especially for the younger segments of society, the BBS is both a novel channel to get information, and a revolutionary way to express opinions (Liu, 2005).

Using the BBS, web blogs, chat rooms and other interactive online venues, 500 respondents were recruited from each city.

Demographic Characteristics of the Three Cities

Governed as a municipality under the direct administration of the central government, Beijing borders Hebei province to the north, west, south, a small section in the east, and Tianjin municipality to the southeast (Beijing, 2010). Also known as Peking, this metropolis is the capital of the People's Republic of China, the second largest city after Shanghai, and considered

the first post-industrial city in the mainland. It is divided into 16 urban and suburban districts and two rural counties, and extends 80 km (50 miles). It is recognized as the political, educational, and cultural center of China while Shanghai is known as the country's economic hub (Beijing, 2010).

In February 2010, the total registered population of Beijing (including permanent and non-permanent residents) exceeded 22 million. In addition, there are a large number of migrant workers who live in the city without official residence permits. Recent data show that Beijing's urban area constitutes 84.3% of the total population that continues to grow at a rapid pace (Beijing, 2010).

Most of Beijing's residents belong to the Han race. Other ethnic minorities include the Manchu, Hui, and the Mongol. Native urban Beijing people speak the Beijing dialect, a subdivision of Mandarin. Beijing is home to a large number of colleges and universities, including several of international stature, such as Beijing University and Tsinghua University.

Due to its status as the nation's political and cultural center, Beijing's media system has always performed as the role model for the rest of the country. Besides television, there are a number of radio stations, newspapers and other print media that serve the city and its vicinity. It can be said, therefore, that Beijing citizens have long been immersed in the official Chinese media. The abundance of media outlets also suggests that Beijing citizens can readily receive more current information compared to those who live in other cities. Beijing leads the country in the use of Internet technology. By the end of June 2009, the number of Beijing netizens had reached 10.3 million, about 61% of the total number of citizens who use the web (Qiao, 2009).

Shanghai is the largest city in China and the largest city proper in the world, with a population of over 20 million people in its metropolitan area alone (Shanghai, 2010). It has always been regarded as the finance and trade center of China, administratively equal to a province, and is divided into 17 districts and one county.

Shanghai is known for its long-term migrants from other provinces, many from Anhui, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang. According to the Shanghai Municipal Statistics Bureau, there were 133,340 foreigners in the city in 2007. In addition, there are a large number of people from Taiwan who conduct business in the city (estimates vary from 350,000 to 700,000). The vernacular is Shanghainese, a dialect of Wu Chinese, while the official language is standard Mandarin (Shanghai, 2010). Shanghai is also home to some world-famous educational institutions such as Fudan University and Tongji University.

Shanghai has a major media group (Shanghai Wenguang) and two major TV stations (Shanghai TV and Oriental TV). A media group is composed of a number of TV channels, newspapers, magazines and other media outlets. According to CNNIC (2004), by the end of 2004, the number of Shanghai Internet users was around 4.4 million, accounting for 25.8% of the total number of citizens who use the web. The Internet population of Shanghai ranked No. 2, next to Beijing.

Changsha is the capital city of Hunan, a province in south-central China, located on the lower reaches of the Xiang River, a branch of the Yangtze. Its municipality covers an area of 11,819 sq. km and has a population of a little more than six million; the urban area has around 2.7 million people (Changsha, 2010).

Changsha is one of China's top 20 economically advanced cities. Its GDP has grown at an average of 14% per year from 2001-2005, compared with the national average of 9% (Changsha, 2010). The city has attracted a tremendous amount of foreign investment in high technology, manufacturing, food production and services in recent years. Changsha has become an important creative center for the entertainment arts. Many of its TV stations produce some of the most popular programs in the country, a development that has attracted broadcast talent over the years.

Hunan province's Internet system developed rapidly over the years. In 2004, the number of Changsha netizens was estimated at 120,000, a 51% increase compared to 2003 figures (*Sanxiang Daily*, 2004).

The online survey was conducted from February 16, 2011 to April 16, 2011. To encourage participation, the respondents' names were included in a drawing for a gift card. One winner of the RMB200 gift card was drawn from the list of respondents who returned completed questionnaires.

Variables and Their Measure

RQ1 asks: **Which TV channel do people who live in the three cities prefer to access—CCTV1, Dragon TV or Hunan TV? Is there a difference among the three cities in terms of their preferred channel and its news program?**

TV news channel and news program preference involves two dimensions (1) the preferred TV channel and program that people watch for news, and (2) the intensity of exposure to a particular TV channel and its news program.

To determine *the preferred TV channel and program that Chinese people watch for news*, they were asked: What television news program do you watch most often?

To determine the *intensity of exposure to TV news*, respondents were asked to choose whether they watch TV news programs (1) often, (2) once in a while, and (3) never.

RQ1 was answered using descriptive statistics. Then, a chi-square test was conducted to determine whether the three cities differ in their TV channel choice.

RQ2 asks whether TV viewers will select the **TV news program they perceive as more credible. Is there a difference among the three cities in terms of perceived credibility of each TV news channel and its news program?**

Perceived credibility refers to the extent to which audiences find the three TV news programs expert and trustworthy in the news they report. To measure this variable, the respondents were asked the extent to which they agree that each TV news program (1) is fair, (2) is unbiased, (3) tells the whole story, (4) is accurate, (5) is factual, (6) watches out for the people's interests, (7) is concerned about the community's well-being, (8) separates facts from opinions, (9) has well-trained reporters and journalists, (10) has programs with good technical quality, (11) is a government mouthpiece, (12) can be trusted, (13) disseminates useful ideas about the nation and the world, (14) contributes to one's personal development, and (15) causes people no harm. The response items range from 1 to 5 where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree." Items were recoded so that they are scaled in the same direction, with 5 as the highest possible rating and 1 as the lowest. The reliability and internal consistency of this and the other indices developed in this study were determined by computing for Cronbach's

alpha. In mass communication literature, an index that produces a Cronbach's alpha of 0.80 is considered to be acceptable; 0.70 is the minimum (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006).

The index for perceived credibility was created by adding all the 15 credibility items and then taking the average. Descriptive statistics were used to determine perceived credibility. Then, a series of analysis of variance tests (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether the three cities differ in the way they assessed the credibility of each of the three TV channels.

RQ3 asks: **What are the gratifications Chinese audiences derive from watching certain TV news program? Is there a difference among the three cities in terms of the gratifications TV audiences derive from watching news programs?**

According to the uses and gratifications theory (Blumler and Katz, 1974), people's media choices result from psychological, social, and socio-cultural needs satisfied by particular media. *Gratifications sought* refers to what people set out to get or what people set out to satisfy when they watch the news. To measure this variable, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with eight items that aim to tap the dimensions of gratifications sought when watching TV news. These dimensions are (1) habits/behavior guidance, (2) information/learning, (3) avoiding commercials on television, (4) convenience, (5) to pass the time, (6) arousal/excitement, (7) escape/to forget/for relaxation, (8) for social interaction or interpersonal communication, and (9) to avoid other news channels. In this study, the items used to measure each dimension are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Dimensions of potential gratifications sought from watching TV news and the items used to measure each dimension

Gratifications sought	Questionnaire items used to measure gratifications sought
Habits/behavior guidance	1. I watch TV news as part of my daily routine.
Information/learning	1. I watch TV news to help me keep up with the world. 2. I watch TV news because it informs me about what political leaders are doing. 3. I watch only TV news items that are important to me. 4. I watch TV news to be knowledgeable about TV broadcasting. 5. Watching TV news makes me want to learn more important issues. 6. I watch TV news because it helps me to think deeply about some issues.
Avoiding commercial television	1. I watch this particular news program to avoid the commercials or ads in the programs found in other channels.
Convenience	1. I watch TV news because it is on. 2. I watch TV news because it is easy to access.
To pass the time	1. I watch TV news because I have nothing better to do. 2. I watch TV news to kill time, especially when I am bored.
For arousal/excitement	1. I watch TV news to satisfy my curiosity about a number of topics and issues. 2. I watch TV news because I find it entertaining. 3. I watch TV news because it arouses my love of country.
To escape/to forget/for relaxation	1. I watch TV news because it helps me to forget about the pressures of school or work for a while. 2. I watch TV news because it helps to take my mind off of things for a while. 3. I watch TV news because it helps me relax.
For social interaction or interpersonal communication	1. I watch TV news because it enables me to discuss the issues of the day with others.
To avoid other news channels	1. I watch this particular news program because I like the anchor(s). 2. I watch this particular news program because I like its style of presenting the news. 3. I watch this particular news program because I think it is simply better than the others. 4. I watch this particular news program because it is not always advocating a special interest or promoting a special interest group.
Other gratifications	

The respondents were asked the extent to which they agree with each of the items listed above. The response options range from 1 to 5 where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 5 means “strongly agree.” The respondents were asked to identify “other” gratifications they get from watching TV news in an open-ended way.

Descriptive statistics were used to answer the first part of RQ3. Then, a series of ANOVA tests was conducted to determine whether the three cities differ in the gratifications their residents seek from watching TV news.

RQ4 asks: **Do Chinese audiences consider themselves dependent on a particular TV news channel for their information needs? Is there a difference among the three cities in their perceived level of TV news channel dependency?**

TV news channel dependency refers to the extent to which audiences depend on a specific TV channel for news. Three questions aim to measure dependency: (1) When talking to your friends, acquaintances and family members regarding TV news, which channel comes to your mind first? (2) If you had to choose only one TV channel from which you can get national and international news, which one of the following would you pick? (3) Which TV channel do you depend on the most to inform you about issues you consider important? The responses to each of these items are (1) CCTV 1, (2) Dragon TV, (3) Hunan TV, (4) Any channel will do, it doesn't matter, (5) Others (please specify).

The first part of this RQ was addressed using descriptive statistics. Then, a series of chi-square tests was conducted to determine whether the three cities differ in their residents' dependency evaluations.

RQ5 asks: **What do people say as the reason(s) for their dependency on a particular**

TV channel for news? In other words, what are the origins of this dependency (historical/structural, individual, or social/environmental)?

Ball-Rokeach (1985) suggests that media dependency has three major origins: (1) historical/structural, (2) individual, and (3) social-environmental.

Historical/structural origins refer to elements of a person's socio-cultural background that trigger one's dependency on a TV channel and its accompanying TV news program. It was measured by asking the extent to which respondents agree with the following statements: (1) I practically grew up with this channel; (2) My family influenced my choice of the TV channel to watch for news; (3) My job requires me to keep an eye on particular news items or information from this channel.

Individual origins refer to special experiences, education or knowledge that contribute to a person's dependence on a particular news channel. It was measured by asking the extent to which respondents agree with the following statements: (1) My interaction with people with media experience and knowledge influenced my opinion about this channel and its news program; (2) Comments from family and friends influenced my perspectives about this channel and its news program; (3) Some of my personal experiences influenced my perspective toward this channel and its news program.

The dimensions of TV news channel dependency that have *social-environmental origins* refer to the extent to which the general context of changes, ambiguities and uncertainties in today's China influences people's reliance on a particular TV channel. To measure this dimension, respondents were asked the extent to which they agree with the following statements:

(1) This TV channel provides me with the information I need to understand what is going on in my immediate community; (2) This TV channel informs me about developments in Chinese society; (3) I feel I can trust this TV channel to accurately present the most important events going on throughout the world and their impact on Chinese society.

The responses to the items above range from 1 to 5 where 1 is “strongly disagree” and 5 is “strongly agree.” They were summed and averaged to serve as the measure of the origins of dependency on a particular TV news channel. Higher scores indicate greater influence of a particular source of dependency on individual TV news channel preference.

RQ6 asks: Are there differences in the audiences’ preferred TV news programs, the gratifications they derive from TV news, their dependencies on TV news, and the origins of those dependencies based on gender, age, income, and educational status?

Demographic factors constitute this research question’s independent variables—(1) gender, (2) age, (3) income, and (4) educational status. Respondents were asked: What was your age on your last birthday? What is the highest educational level you have attained? The response options here are (a) Elementary graduate; (b) high school graduate; (c) college graduate; and (d) post-college graduate training. What is your gender? What was your income after taxes in 2009?

The dependent variables for this research question are (1) preferred TV news program, (2) gratifications derived from TV news viewing, (3) TV news dependency, and (4) the origins of this dependency, if any.

A series of chi-square tests was conducted to determine whether males and females differ in terms of their preferred TV news program, the gratifications they derive from TV news, and their dependence on TV news. A series of analysis of variance tests was employed to determine

(1) whether people of different age groups obtain unique gratifications and dependencies by watching TV news; (2) whether people of varying income levels differ in terms of the gratifications they derive from watching TV news and their dependencies; (3) whether people of varying educational levels differ in the gratifications they get from viewing TV news, and (4) whether they differ in the extent to which they are dependent on TV news programs for information.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study sought to examine how Chinese audiences in three major cities evaluate the main TV channels through which they get their news in terms of credibility; the satisfaction they derive from TV news viewing; the extent to which they consider themselves dependent on TV news; and how demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education and income affect their channel preferences, the gratifications they obtain from watching TV news, and their perceived dependence on these channels.

The Sample

The survey questionnaire includes both multiple choice and open-ended questions. Respondents were told they may skip certain items to which they feel uncomfortable responding. A total of 1,136 questionnaires were returned. Of these, seven were incomplete and were discarded. A total of 1,129 valid questionnaires were analyzed.

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents, including their age, gender, income and highest education level attained. A total of 732 males and 397 females participated in this survey, with the male respondents accounting for 64.8% of the sample. Most of the respondents were between the ages of 18-25 and 26-35, comprising about 43.0% and 38.6% of the total, respectively. In terms of education level, 713 graduated from college, constituting 63.2% of those who returned valid responses. They were followed by elementary graduates who accounted for 13.9% of the sample. Around 32.5% of the respondents earned income less than RMB 19,999 in 2010, with 28.2% earning RMB 60,000~79,999 per year. The

respondents live in Beijing (328), Shanghai (269), or Changsha (447); only 7.5% live in other cities.

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of respondents (N=1,129)

		Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Gender (mode=male)				
	Male	732	64.8	64.8
	Female	397	35.2	100.0
Age (median=26-35 years)				
	Missing	83	7.4	7.4
	18-25	485	43.0	50.3
	26-35	436	38.6	88.9
	36-45	85	7.5	96.5
	46-55	24	2.1	98.6
	56-65	11	1.0	99.6
	66 or older	5	0.4	100.0
Education (mode=high school)				
	Missing	1	0.1	0.1
	Elementary	157	13.9	14.0
	High school	119	10.5	24.5
	College	713	63.2	87.7
	Post-college	38	3.4	91.1
	Other	101	8.9	100.0
Income (median=40,000~59,999)				
	0~19,999	365	32.5	32.5
	20,000~39,999	75	6.7	39.2
	40,000~59,999	318	28.2	67.4
	60,000~79,999	293	25.9	93.2
	80,000~99,999	57	5.2	98.0
	100,000~131,999	21	2	100.0
City (mode=Changsha)				
	Beijing	328	29.1	29.1
	Shanghai	269	23.8	52.9
	Changsha	447	39.6	92.5
	Other	85	7.5	100.0

TV News Exposure

In general, 363 respondents (32.1%) reported watching TV news programs very often, 608 (53.7%) said they watch TV news once in a while, 21 (1.9 %) indicate they do not watch TV news at all. The average of the responses was close to “once in a while” (mean=1.66; s.d.=0.518).

News Program Preference

RQ1 asks: Which TV channel do people who live in the three cities prefer to access—CCTV1, Dragon TV or Hunan TV? Is there a difference among the three cities in terms of their preferred channel and its news program?

Of those who watch TV news, 535 (47.4%) reported watching CCTV 1’s news program most often, 319 (28.3%) said they watch Dragon TV news the most, and 268 (23.7%) most watched the news program aired over Hunan TV (Table 3). These findings suggest that TV broadcasts are still a dominant source of news for Chinese audiences. CCTV 1’s news show, the flagship domestic TV news program, has the highest audience share. Dragon TV and Hunan TV, however, are proving to be strong competitors, enjoying a substantial audience base and continuously formulating strategies to expand their reach. Nonetheless, the data show that CCTV 1 is the clear leader.

Table 3. Program preference (the program watched the most) (N=1,037)

	Frequency	%
CCTV 1 news	483	46.6
Dragon TV news	291	28.0
Hunan TV news	263	25.4
Others	7	0.7

Is there a difference among the three cities in terms of their preferred channel and its news program? Cross-tabulations were drawn to compare the three cities' preference for a particular TV news channel. A chi-square test was conducted to determine whether the three cities differ in their TV channel choice.

The results, shown in Table 4, suggest that 301 out of 328 respondents (91%) from Beijing reported CCTV 1 as their preferred news channel; 236 out of 443 Changsha respondents (53.3%) preferred Hunan TV; and 209 out of 266 Shanghai residents (78.6%) selected Dragon TV. The chi-square test shows a significant difference among the three cities in terms of their preferred channel and its news program ($\chi^2=816.271$, $p<.000$). The findings indicate a taste for the local. That is, people prefer the TV news program produced closest to them.

Table 4. Cross-tabulation of city x TV channel choice

City		Program			
		CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Total
	Beijing	301	16	11	328
	Changsha	141	66	236	443
	Shanghai	41	209	16	266
Total		483	291	263	1,037
$\chi^2=816.278$ (df=12, $p<.000$)					

TV Channel Preference and Perceived Credibility

RQ 2 asks whether TV viewers will select the TV news program they perceive as more credible. Then, a related question is asked: Is there a difference among the three cities in terms of perceived credibility of each TV news channel and its news program?

The respondents were told they could skip questionnaire items to which they feel uncomfortable responding, perhaps the reason for the unevenness in the responses for the 15 items that were asked to tap the perceived credibility of the TV programs they watch (Table 5). Only four items received enough responses (more than 50%) that merited further analysis. These were “it can be trusted,” “I get useful ideas about our country and the world [from watching this TV program],” “it contributes to my personal development,” and “it causes people no harm.”

A total of 434 respondents (37.5%) agree to strongly agree that they watch TV news to get useful ideas about the country and the world, while 13 (1.2%) disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. A little more than a third of the respondents (37.3 %) agree to strongly agree that they watch a particular TV news program because they see it as contributing to their personal development. Only a few (2.8%) did not agree with the statement. The majority (61%) said their favorite news program “causes people no harm.”

The majority (57.3%) stayed neutral when asked whether the program they watch can be trusted; 32.6 % agreed with the statement, while only 1.1% disagreed with it. Thus, it can be said that in general, Chinese audiences find their TV news programs credible.

The responses suggest that the audiences’ perceived credibility appears to have four strong dimensions. The respondents report they choose a TV program because it can be trusted,

they get useful ideas about the country and the world from watching the show, the program contributes to personal development, and the news program causes people no harm. The responses to these four viable items were recoded so that they follow the same direction. An index of audiences' perceived credibility was created by adding the answers and then getting the average (Cronbach's alpha=0.774). As shown in Table 5.1, 721 respondents scored between 3.00 to 4.00 (agree), while 15 scored between 4.00 to 5.00 (strongly agree), indicating that around 65.2% of the respondents reportedly watch a particular TV news program because of its perceived credibility. Only 62 (5.5%) said that credibility had no bearing on their choice of TV news program. The results suggest that for most Chinese TV viewers, credibility is an important aspect of their news program selection. Thus, Chinese TV news viewers generally watch TV news program they perceive as more credible.

Table 5. Perceived credibility of preferred news program

		Frequency	%	Mean	Std. dev.
1. It can be trusted.				3.07	1.062
	Strongly disagree	2	0.2		
	Disagree	10	0.9		
	Neutral	653	57.8		
	Agree	359	31.8		
	Strongly agree	9	0.8		
	Missing	96	8.5		
2. I get useful ideas about our country and the world [by watching this news program].				3.23	0.946
	Strongly disagree	3	0.3		
	Disagree	10	0.9		
	Neutral	621	55.0		
	Agree	413	36.6		
	Strongly agree	21	1.9		
	Missing	61	5.4		
3. Watching this news program contributes to my personal development.				3.23	0.844
	Strongly disagree	5	0.4		
	Disagree	27	2.4		
	Neutral	633	56.1		
	Agree	416	36.8		
	Strongly agree	6	0.5		
	Missing	42	3.7		
4. This news program causes people no harm.				3.54	0.774
	Strongly disagree	6	0.5		
	Disagree	6	0.5		
	Neutral	389	34.5		
	Agree	689	61.0		
	Strongly agree	12	1.1		
	Missing	27	2.4		

Cronbach's alpha=0.774

Table 5.1. Descriptive statistics on the index of perceived credibility of preferred news program (N=1,129)

Index of perceived credibility	Frequency	%	Mean	Std. dev.
			3.27	.704
Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	34	3.0		
Disagree (1.00~2.00)	28	2.5		
Neutral (2.00~3.00)	331	29.3		
Agree (3.00~4.00)	721	63.9		
Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	15	1.3		

To test whether there is a difference among the three cities in terms of perceived credibility, an ANOVA test was conducted by using the index of perceived credibility as the dependent variable (Cronbach's alpha=0.774). The results indicate a significant difference among the three cities on this regard ($F=19.836$, $df=2$, $p=0.000$). The results of a Bonferroni post hoc test (Table 5.2) suggest that Shanghai significantly differs from Beijing and Changsha in perceived credibility. However, there are no significant differences between Changsha and Beijing. Therefore, for Shanghai citizens, perceived credibility is a more potent factor that leads to TV news viewing.

Table 5.2. Results of an ANOVA test to determine differences among the three cities in terms of perceived credibility of TV news programs

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.	
Between groups	18.690	2	9.345	19.836	.000	
Within groups	490.427	1041	.471			
Total	509.117	1043				
Multiple comparisons: Bonferroni						
(I) City	(J) City	Mean diff (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Beijing	Shanghai	.32963*	.05646	.000	.1942	.4650
	Changsha	.04706	.04990	1.000	-.0726	.1667
Shanghai	Beijing	-.32963*	.05646	.000	-.4650	-.1942
	Changsha	-.28257*	.05296	.000	-.4096	-.1556
Changsha	Beijing	-.04706	.04990	1.000	-.1667	.0726
	Shanghai	.28257*	.05296	.000	.1556	.4096

In addition, the respondents offer the following suggestions and comments to improve the credibility of TV news programs:

TV news programs should tell the truth and report more stories about common people.

Most of the time, TV news programs are too political that it is difficult to decipher whether they are representing reality. This is why I think the Internet does a better job of presenting the news.

TV news should allow for more transparency, participation, and flexibility. It should be trustworthy.

Less propaganda, more truth.

News should talk about common people's daily life and present issues that people are most concerned with, such as medical care, insurance, employment, education, corruption, and housing.

News programs should be fair and transparent, especially when discussing conflicts

between the government and citizens.

TV news will look better if anchors show more emotion and personality.

China needs more independent media and media practitioners who can provide people with multiple perspectives.

Gratifications Sought

RQ3 asks: What are the gratifications Chinese audiences derive from watching certain TV news program? Is there a difference among the three cities in terms of the gratifications TV audiences derive from watching these news programs?

The uses and gratifications theory posits that people gravitate toward a particular communication medium or a specific news program because they are motivated by the satisfaction of certain gratifications. The gratifications people seek from watching TV news was measured by asking respondents to indicate their agreement with 23 gratification factors or items derived from previous uses and gratifications studies (Table 6). Such studies have found that people select a communication medium to satisfy their need for “surveillance (knowledge and information), communication utility (social interaction, companionship, or interpersonal utility), the need to fill time (passing time or habit), for escape (from boredom or problems), diversion (entertainment or excitement), and advice (decision-making or guidance)” (Blumler and Katz, 1974, p. 36).

Based on this, the 23 gratification items were grouped into nine indices, each to represent the nine dimensions of uses and gratifications identified from literature review. All items were coded so that they follow the same direction. Then, the average of the responses for each dimension was computed. The nine dimensions were (1) habits/behavior guidance (Cronbach’s

alpha=1.000), (2) information/learning (Cronbach's alpha=0.757), (3) avoiding commercials on television (Cronbach's alpha=1.000), (4) convenience (Cronbach's alpha=0.664), (5) to pass the time (Cronbach's alpha=0.830), (6) arousal/excitement (Cronbach's alpha=0.703), (7) escape/to forget/for relaxation (Cronbach's alpha=0.791), (8) for social interaction or interpersonal communication (Cronbach's alpha=1.000), and (9) to avoid other news channels (Cronbach's alpha=0.790). The overall index for gratifications sought was created by adding the responses to the 23 items and taking the average. The results show that the resulting index has high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha=0.844) (Table 6.1).

As Table 6 outlines, the mean values for all 23 gratifications factors are above 3.00 (neutral), which indicates that each is a valid gratification factor. Among the 23 items, the highest rated was "to keep up with the world" (mean=4.00). This was followed by "TV watching is part of my daily routine," "I can learn more about important issues [through this TV program]," "it helps me think deeply about some issues," and "I like to be knowledgeable about TV news broadcasting."

When the gratifications were combined into the nine dimensions, the results show that Chinese audiences watch a particular TV news program because it is part of their daily habit; to learn new things; for social interaction or interpersonal communication purposes; to avoid other news channels; for excitement; to escape, forget or relax; and because TV news watching is a convenient way to pass the time (Table 6.1).

The overall index for gratification shows that 1,044 respondents (92.5%) earned gratification average scores between 3.00 to 5.00, showing high gratifications obtained from watching TV news (Table 6.1).

Table 6. Gratifications sought from watching TV news (N=1,129)

	Frequency	%	Mean	Std. dev.
1. TV watching is part of my daily routine.			3.74	0.658
Strongly disagree	5	0.4		
Disagree	39	3.5		
Neutral	148	13.1		
Agree	919	81.4		
Strongly agree	5	0.4		
Missing	13	1.2		
2. TV watching helps me keep up with the world.			4.00	0.628
Disagree	6	0.5		
Neutral	127	11.2		
Agree	964	85.4		
Strongly agree	10	0.9		
Missing	18	1.6		
3. I am informed about what political leaders are doing.			3.40	0.744
Strongly disagree	10	0.9		
Disagree	38	3.4		
Neutral	510	45.2		
Agree	547	48.4		
Strongly agree	7	0.6		
Missing	17	1.5		
4. I get information that is important to me.			3.41	0.723
Strongly disagree	7	0.6		
Disagree	34	3.0		
Neutral	526	46.6		
Agree	538	47.7		
Strongly agree	8	0.7		
Missing	16	1.4		
5. I like to be knowledgeable about TV news broadcasting.			3.50	0.722
Strongly disagree	7	0.6		
Disagree	63	5.6		
Neutral	377	33.4		
Agree	668	59.2		
Strongly agree	3	0.3		
Missing	11	1.0		

(Table 6 continued)

6. I can learn more about important issues.				3.70	0.641
	Strongly disagree	2	0.2		
	Disagree	10	0.9		
	Neutral	281	24.9		
	Agree	804	71.2		
	Strongly agree	19	1.7		
	Missing	13	1.2		
7. It helps me think deeply about some issues.				3.53	0.630
	Strongly disagree	1	0.1		
	Disagree	25	2.2		
	Neutral	460	40.7		
	Agree	623	55.2		
	Strongly agree	13	1.2		
	Missing	7	0.6		
8. I want to avoid commercials or ads.				3.40	0.722
	Strongly disagree	6	0.5		
	Disagree	44	3.9		
	Neutral	565	50.0		
	Agree	468	41.5		
	Strongly agree	36	3.2		
	Missing	10	0.9		
9. It is on.				3.30	0.659
	Strongly disagree	3	0.3		
	Disagree	50	4.4		
	Neutral	652	57.8		
	Agree	406	36.0		
	Strongly agree	8	0.7		
	Missing	10	0.9		
10. It is easy to access.				3.32	0.620
	Strongly disagree	2	0.2		
	Disagree	49	4.3		
	Neutral	658	58.3		
	Agree	405	35.9		
	Strongly agree	10	0.9		
	Missing	5	0.4		
11. I have nothing better to do.				3.22	0.638
	Strongly disagree	12	1.1		
	Disagree	71	6.3		
	Neutral	700	62.0		
	Agree	335	29.7		
	Strongly agree	8	0.7		
	Missing	3	0.3		

(Table 6 continued)

12. It helps to kill time.				3.23	0.656
	Strongly disagree	8	0.7		
	Disagree	76	6.7		
	Neutral	678	60.1		
	Agree	354	31.4		
	Strongly agree	7	0.6		
	Missing	6	0.5		
13. It satisfies my curiosity.				3.34	0.756
	Strongly disagree	5	0.4		
	Disagree	0	0		
	Neutral	625	55.4		
	Agree	463	41.0		
	Strongly agree	7	0.6		
	Missing	29	2.6		
14. It entertains me.				3.36	0.666
	Strongly disagree	2	0.2		
	Disagree	22	1.9		
	Neutral	614	54.4		
	Agree	474	42.0		
	Strongly agree	2	0.2		
	Missing	15	1.3		
15. It makes me more nationalistic.				3.38	0.620
	Strongly disagree	5	0.4		
	Disagree	40	3.5		
	Neutral	596	52.8		
	Agree	479	42.4		
	Strongly agree	5	0.4		
	Missing	4	0.4		
16. It helps to forget about the pressures of school or work.				3.34	0.605
	Strongly disagree	2	0.2		
	Disagree	32	2.8		
	Neutral	653	57.8		
	Agree	431	38.2		
	Strongly agree	5	0.4		
	Missing	6	0.5		
17. It helps take my minds off of things for a while.				3.34	0.618
	Strongly disagree	7	0.6		
	Disagree	35	3.1		
	Neutral	639	56.6		
	Agree	440	39.0		
	Strongly agree	3	0.3		
	Missing	5	0.4		

(Table 6 continued)

18. It helps me relax.				3.29	0.656
	Strongly disagree	3	0.3		
	Disagree	56	5.0		
	Neutral	639	56.6		
	Agree	420	37.2		
	Strongly agree	1	0.1		
	Missing	10	0.9		
19. It supplies topics I discuss with others.				3.40	0.597
	Strongly disagree	3	0.3		
	Disagree	22	1.9		
	Neutral	611	54.1		
	Agree	483	42.8		
	Strongly agree	5	0.4		
	Missing	5	0.4		
20. I like the anchors and the reporters.				3.31	0.631
	Strongly disagree	5	0.4		
	Disagree	57	5.0		
	Neutral	627	55.5		
	Agree	434	38.4		
	Strongly agree	1	0.1		
	Missing	5	0.4		
21. I like its style of presenting the news.				3.38	0.642
	Strongly disagree	3	0.3		
	Disagree	53	4.7		
	Neutral	567	50.2		
	Agree	498	44.1		
	Strongly agree	2	0.2		
	Missing	6	0.5		
22. Compared with others, this channel is better in so many ways.				3.45	0.649
	Strongly disagree	4	0.4		
	Disagree	33	2.9		
	Neutral	514	45.5		
	Agree	565	50.0		
	Strongly agree	5	0.4		
	Missing	8	0.7		
23. The channel is not always promoting or advocating some special interest group.				3.41	0.777
	Strongly disagree	7	0.6		
	Disagree	44	3.9		
	Neutral	463	41.0		
	Agree	591	52.3		
	Strongly agree	1	0.1		
	Missing	23	2.0		

Table 6.1. Descriptive statistics for the nine gratification dimensions (N=1,129)

Index	Frequency	%	Mean	Std. dev.
1. Habits/behavior guidance			3.740	0.658
Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	18	1.6		
Disagree (1.00~2.00)	39	3.5		
Neutral (2.00~3.00)	148	13.1		
Agree (3.00~4.00)	919	81.4		
Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	5	0.4		
2. Information/learning			3.558	0.459
Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	5	0.4		
Disagree (1.00~2.00)	11	1.0		
Neutral (2.00~3.00)	108	9.6		
Agree (3.00~4.00)	995	88.1		
Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	10	0.9		
3. Avoiding commercials on television			3.400	0.722
Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	16	1.4		
Disagree (1.00~2.00)	44	3.9		
Neutral (2.00~3.00)	565	50.0		
Agree (3.00~4.00)	468	41.5		
Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	36	3.2		
4. It is convenient			3.307	0.554
Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	3	0.3		
Disagree (1.00~2.00)	37	3.3		
Neutral (2.00~3.00)	618	54.7		
Agree (3.00~4.00)	461	40.8		
Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	10	0.9		
5. To pass the time			3.223	0.598
Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	10	0.9		
Disagree (1.00~2.00)	58	5.1		
Neutral (2.00~3.00)	651	57.7		
Agree (3.00~4.00)	402	35.6		
Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	8	0.7		

(Table 6.1 continued)

6. Arousal/excitement				3.358	0.541
	Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	4	0.4		
	Disagree (1.00~2.00)	27	2.4		
	Neutral (2.00~3.00)	445	39.4		
	Agree (3.00~4.00)	648	57.3		
	Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	5	0.4		
7. Escape/to forget/for relaxation				3.325	0.526
	Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	5	0.4		
	Disagree (1.00~2.00)	24	2.1		
	Neutral (2.00~3.00)	535	47.4		
	Agree (3.00~4.00)	561	49.7		
	Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	4	0.4		
8. Social interaction or interpersonal communication				3.400	0.597
	Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	8	0.7		
	Disagree (1.00~2.00)	22	1.9		
	Neutral (2.00~3.00)	611	54.1		
	Agree (3.00~4.00)	483	42.8		
	Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	5	0.4		
9. To avoid other news channels				3.389	0.530
	Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	3	0.3		
	Disagree (1.00~2.00)	23	2.0		
	Neutral (2.00~3.00)	394	34.9		
	Agree (3.00~4.00)	706	62.5		
	Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	3	0.3		
Overall index				3.416	0.316
	Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	0	0		
	Disagree (1.00~2.00)	7	0.6		
	Neutral (2.00~3.00)	78	6.9		
	Agree (3.00~4.00)	1040	92.1		
	Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	4	0.4		

Table 6.2 lists the rankings of the respondents' mean scores on the nine gratification dimensions proposed by Blumler and Katz (1974). They suggest that people prefer a particular TV news program out of habit or as part of their daily routine. The second important motivation was to acquire information and to learn. Responses that fall under this gratification dimension include: to keep up with the developments in the world, to learn what political leaders are doing, to search for important information in general, or to be knowledgeable about the TV broadcasting industry. The third most cited motivation was to avoid commercials on television. This was followed by the desire to actively participate in social interactions or interpersonal communication. Other gratifications include avoiding other news channels, to get some excitement, to escape/to forget/for relaxation, for convenience, and to pass the time. When specific gratification items are ranked, as shown in Table 6.3, the most commonly sought after gratification was "to keep up with the world."

To find out if there is a difference among the three cities in terms of the gratifications TV audiences derive from watching TV news programs, an ANOVA test was conducted by using the overall gratifications index as the dependent variable (Cronbach's alpha=0.844). As shown in Table 6.4, a significant difference among the three cities was found ($F=19.005$, $df=2$, $p=.000$). A Bonferroni post hoc test reveals significant differences between Beijing and Shanghai, Beijing and Changsha, as well as Shanghai and Changsha in terms of gratifications sought from watching TV news. Specifically, Beijing residents were more likely to watch TV news as part of their daily routine than those who live in Changsha. Shanghai audiences were more strongly motivated to keep up with the world, know what political leaders are doing, search for information about important issues, be knowledgeable about TV news broadcasting, and think deeply about issues compared with Beijing and Changsha audiences. Shanghai residents were

more likely to watch TV news to learn about important topics, stay away from advertisements, because it is more convenient, to pass the time, and to satisfy one's curiosity about a number of topics and issues than those who live in Beijing and Changsha. Compared with Shanghai and Changsha audiences, Beijing residents watch TV news more to forget about the pressures of school or work, to take their minds off of things for a while, or just to relax. Changsha residents were less likely than their counterparts in Shanghai and Beijing to watch a particular TV news program because they favor the program's style of presenting the news.

Table 6.2. Rank order of mean scores on the nine dimensions of gratifications derived from TV news viewing

Rank	Gratifications	Mean	Std. dev.
1	Habits/behavior guidance	3.74	0.020
2	Information/learning	3.56	0.459
3	Avoiding commercials on television	3.40	0.021
4	For social interaction or interpersonal communication	3.40	0.018
5	To avoid other news channels	3.39	0.530
6	Arousal/excitement	3.36	0.541
7	Escape/to forget/for relaxation	3.32	0.526
8	Convenience	3.31	0.554
9	To pass the time	3.22	0.598

Table 6.3. Rank order of mean scores for each of the specific gratification items

Rank	Gratifications sought	Mean	Std. dev.
1	To keep up with world	4.00	0.628
2	As part of daily routine	3.74	0.658
3	To learn important issues	3.70	0.723
4	To think deeply about some issues	3.53	0.630
5	To be knowledgeable about TV news broadcasting	3.50	0.722
6	To avoid bad news programs	3.45	0.649
7	To avoid advocacy groups	3.43	0.777
8	To find relevant information	3.41	0.723
9	To learn about what political leaders are doing	3.40	0.744
10	To avoid commercials	3.40	0.722
11	To participate in discussions	3.40	0.597
12	Because of the presentation style	3.38	0.642
13	To feel more nationalistic	3.38	0.620
14	For entertainment	3.36	0.666
15	To satisfy curiosity	3.34	0.756
16	To forget about school/work	3.34	0.605
17	To take mind off of things	3.34	0.618
18	Because it is easy to access	3.32	0.620
19	Because of the anchors/reporters	3.31	0.631
20	It's on	3.30	0.659
21	For relaxation	3.29	0.656
22	To kill time	3.23	0.656
23	Have nothing better to do	3.22	0.649

Table 6.4. Results of an ANOVA test to determine differences among the three cities in terms of gratifications sought from TV news program watching

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	3.474	2	1.737	19.005	.000
Within groups	95.139	1041	.091		
Total	98.613	1043			

(Table 6.4 continued)

Multiple comparisons: Bonferroni						
(I) City	(J) City	Mean diff (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Beijing	Shanghai	-.05977*	.02487	.049	-.1194	-.0001
	Changsha	.08042*	.02198	.001	.0277	.1331
Shanghai	Beijing	.05977*	.02487	.049	.0001	.1194
	Changsha	.14019*	.02333	.000	.0843	.1961
Changsha	Beijing	-.08042*	.02198	.001	-.1331	-.0277
	Shanghai	-.14019*	.02333	.000	-.1961	-.0843

TV News Channel Dependency

RQ4 asks: Do Chinese audiences consider themselves dependent on a particular TV news channel for their information needs? Is there a difference among the three cities in their perceived level of TV news channel dependency?

Respondents were asked to answer a series of questions to determine their TV news channel dependency. These were as follows: (1) When talking to your friends, acquaintances and family members regarding TV news, which channel comes to your mind first? (2) If you had to choose only one TV channel from which you can get national and international news, which one of the following would you pick? (3) Which TV channel do you depend on the most to inform you about issues you consider important? The response items were (1) CCTV 1, (2) Dragon TV, (3) Hunan TV, (4) any channel will do, it doesn't matter, (5) others (please specify). Table 7 presents the frequency distribution for TV news channel dependency.

Table 7. TV news channel dependency (N=1,129)

Items	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
1. When talking to people regarding TV news, which channel comes to your mind first?			
a. CCTV 1	505	44.7	44.7
b. Dragon TV	244	21.6	66.3
c. Hunan TV	245	21.7	88.0
d. Any channel will do; it doesn't matter	83	7.4	95.4
e. Others	52	4.6	100.0
2. If you had to choose only one channel for national and international news, which one would you pick?			
a. CCTV 1 news	397	35.2	35.2
b. Dragon TV news	200	17.7	52.9
c. Hunan TV news	219	19.4	72.3
d. Any channel will do; it doesn't matter	16	1.4	73.7
e. Others	297	26.3	100.0
3. Which TV news channel do you rely on for news, especially involving issues that you consider important?			
a. CCTV 1	618	54.7	54.7
b. Dragon TV	163	14.4	69.1
c. Hunan TV	245	21.7	90.7
d. Any channel will do; it doesn't matter	59	5.2	96.1
e. Others	44	3.9	100.0

When asked about the specific channel that comes to their mind first, the majority (994 or 95.4 %) selected one of the three major channels (CCTV 1, Dragon TV or Hunan TV) first, although some (4.6%) reported watching other TV channels regularly. Among the respondents who reported regularly watching the three major channels, 505 said they consider CCTV 1 first, 244 said they first think about Dragon TV, and 245 said Hunan TV comes to mind first. Around 7.4% said any of the three channels suits their needs. A small percentage (4.6%) had other first choices. The same ranking of the three channels emerged when respondents were asked to

choose only one channel for national and international news (Table 7).

When asked which TV channel they depend on the most to inform them about issues they consider important, 618 said they rely on CCTV 1 most, 245 relied the most on Hunan TV, and 163 depended on Dragon TV the most. Another 59 respondents said they rely on any one of the three major channels (Table 7).

Overall, CCTV 1 was the most preferred channel (35.2%), followed by Hunan TV (19.4%), and Dragon TV (17.7%), in that order.

Table 7.1 presents the results of a series of chi-square tests conducted to determine whether the three cities differ in their residents' dependency evaluations. The results show significant differences among the three cities in their perceived level of TV news channel dependency ($df=2$, $p < .000$). Specifically, when asked which TV news channel comes to mind first when talking to friends, acquaintances and family members about TV news, 300 (91.4%) of the respondents in the Beijing area reportedly prefer CCTV 1, eight (2.4%) thought about Dragon TV first, while nine (2.7%) chose Hunan TV. However, in the Changsha area, 130 (29.1%) reported watching CCTV 1, 36 (8.1%) resorted to Dragon TV regularly, and 232 said they watch Hunan TV (51.9%). Of those who live in Shanghai, 30 (11.1%) preferred CCTV 1, 187 (69.5%) considered Dragon TV first.

The respondents were asked to choose only one TV channel from which they prefer to get national and international news. A total of 296 out of 328 (82.0%) Beijing residents selected CCTV 1, while 212 out of 447 (47.4%) Changsha residents picked Hunan TV, and around 33.6% of Changsha respondents chose a channel different from CCTV 1, Hunan or Dragon TV. About

181 out of 269 (67.3%) Shanghai residents said they watch only Dragon TV to get national and international news.

Which TV channel do people most rely on for news, especially about issues they consider important? In Beijing, a great majority (303 out of 328 or 92.4%) reportedly rely on CCTV 1 the most; 233 or 52.1% of the Changsha residents picked Hunan TV, while 136 (30.4%) picked CCTV 1. Of those who live in Shanghai, 133 (49.4%) said they rely on CCTV 1 most; 110 (40.9%) reported they most depend on Dragon TV.

The results clearly show that CCTV 1 is the TV news channel people depend on for national and international news. This finding strengthens CCTV's claim that it is the most influential and authoritative TV station throughout the nation. In southern China where there is a thriving media industry, people have more options and have more diverse TV channel preferences for national and international news.

Table 7.1 City x dependency cross-tabulation

City		When talking to friends, acquaintances and family members regarding TV news, which channel comes to your mind first?					Total
		CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any one of the three	Others	
	Beijing	300	8	9	7	4	328
	Changsha	130	36	232	42	7	447
	Shanghai	30	187	0	12	40	269
Total		460	231	241	61	51	1,044
$\chi^2=1086.429$ (df=16, p<. 000)							
City		If you had to choose only one TV channel from which you can get national and international news, which one would you pick?					Total
		CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any one of the three	Others	
	Beijing	296	8	7	7	10	328
	Changsha	69	11	212	5	150	447
	Shanghai	30	181	0	4	54	269
Total		395	200	219	16	214	1,044
$\chi^2=1440.305$ (df=16, p<. 000)							
City		Which TV channel do you most rely on for news, especially about issues you consider important?					Total
		CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any one of the three	Others	
	Beijing	303	4	8	7	6	328
	Changsha	136	35	233	33	10	447
	Shanghai	133	110	0	5	21	269
Total		572	149	241	45	37	1,044
$\chi^2=693.921$ (df=16, p<. 000)							

Origins of TV Channel Dependency

RQ5 asks: What do people say as the origins of this dependency on TV news?

According to Ball-Rokeach (1985), media dependency has three major origins: (1)

historical/structural, (2) individual, and (3) social-environmental. To determine whether people's TV news dependency originated from these three sources, the respondents were asked the extent to which they agree with the following statements: (1) I practically grew up with this channel; (2) My family influenced my choice of the TV channel to watch for news; (3) My job requires me to keep an eye on particular news items or information from this channel; (4) My interaction with people with media experience and knowledge influenced my opinion about this channel and its news program; (5) Comments from family and friends influenced my perspectives about this news program; (6) Some of my personal experiences influenced my perspective toward this channel and its news program; (7) This TV channel provides me with the information I need to understand what is going on in my immediate community; (8) This TV channel informs me about developments in Chinese society; and (9) I feel I can trust this TV channel to accurately present the most important issues of the day.

The results, shown in Table 8, indicate that the reported origins of dependency were family influence, interaction with people with media experience and knowledge, friends and family, personal experience, the need for information about the immediate community, how the news was presented, and the trustworthiness of the news program. In particular, the statement "people can trust a particular TV channel to accurately present the most important events going on throughout the world and their impact on Chinese society" is the strongest reason why Chinese TV audiences watch a particular news program. The way the channel presents the news and interactions with people with experience and knowledge about the media were two other important origins of media dependency.

Based on Ball-Rokeach's dependency origin dimensions, three indices were computed

by combining specific items that demonstrate the historical/structural dimension (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.917$), the individual dimension (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.680$), and the social-environmental dimension (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.774$). The indices were created by taking the average of the responses for each dimension. The index for overall dependency origins (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.827$) was determined by taking the average of the responses to all nine items. The results are shown in Table 8.1.

As Table 8.1 shows, the social-environmental dimension was the most important origin of people's dependency on TV news programs. This finding suggests that rapid changes, accompanied by ambiguities and uncertainties in today's China, greatly influenced people's reliance on a particular TV channel. The second strongest origin of dependency is individual factors, such as special life experiences, education or knowledge. Those who said so may have heard good comments about a particular TV channel from friends and acquaintances. Historical origins came in third. About 69.6% of the respondents reported that their dependence on a particular TV news channel might have resulted from the three identified dependency origins.

Table 8. Origins of TV news channel dependency (N=1,129)

Dependency items		Frequency	%	Mean	Std. dev.
1. I grew up with this channel.				2.93	0.717
	Strongly disagree	8	0.7		
	Disagree	83	7.4		
	Neutral	88	7.8		
	Agree	704	62.4		
	Strongly agree	13	1.2		
	Missing	233	20.6		
2. My family influenced my TV news channel choice.				3.29	1.100
	Strongly disagree	127	11.2		
	Disagree	110	9.7		
	Neutral	178	15.8		
	Agree	688	60.9		
	Strongly agree	16	1.4		
	Missing	10	0.9		
3. My job requires me to keep an eye on some particular news items or information from it.				2.78	1.573
	Strongly disagree	2	0.2		
	Disagree	50	4.4		
	Neutral	284	25.2		
	Agree	541	47.9		
	Strongly agree	4	0.4		
	Missing	248	22.0		
4. Interacting with people with media experience and knowledge influenced my opinion about this news program.				3.35	0.786
	Strongly disagree	16	1.4		
	Disagree	98	8.7		
	Neutral	455	40.3		
	Agree	541	47.9		
	Strongly agree	8	0.7		
	Missing	11	1.0		
5. Comments from friends and families influenced my perspectives about this news program.				3.31	0.759
	Strongly disagree	8	0.7		
	Disagree	77	6.8		
	Neutral	541	47.9		
	Agree	480	42.5		
	Strongly agree	7	0.6		
	Missing	16	1.4		

(Table 8 continued)

6. Some of my personal experiences influenced my opinion and assessments.				3.25	0.732
	Strongly disagree	8	0.7		
	Disagree	86	7.6		
	Neutral	600	53.1		
	Agree	418	37.0		
	Strongly agree	3	0.3		
	Missing	14	1.2		
7. News aired through this program supplies me with information I need to understand what is going on in my immediate community.				3.23	0.738
	Strongly disagree	7	0.6		
	Disagree	97	8.6		
	Neutral	598	53.0		
	Agree	408	36.1		
	Strongly agree	4	0.4		
	Missing	14	1.2		
8. The way this TV channel presents the news informs me about developments in Chinese society.				3.38	0.712
	Strongly disagree	5	0.4		
	Disagree	57	5.0		
	Neutral	522	46.2		
	Agree	529	46.9		
	Strongly agree	3	0.3		
	Missing	13	1.2		
9. I feel I can trust this TV channel to accurately present the most important events going on throughout the world and their impact on China.				3.49	0.667
	Strongly disagree	2	0.2		
	Disagree	41	3.6		
	Neutral	449	39.8		
	Agree	622	55.1		
	Strongly agree	3	0.3		
	Missing	12	1.1		

Table 8.1. Descriptive statistics on the three origins of TV channel dependency and the overall dependency index

Index	Frequency	%	Mean	Std. dev.
1. Historical/structural			3.003	1.343
Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	197	17.4		
Disagree (1.00~2.00)	80	7.1		
Neutral (2.00~3.00)	145	12.8		
Agree (3.00~4.00)	696	61.6		
Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	11	1.0		
2. Individual			3.303	0.593
Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	5	0.4		
Disagree (1.00~2.00)	68	6.0		
Neutral (2.00~3.00)	336	29.8		
Agree (3.00~4.00)	713	63.2		
Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	7	0.6		
3. Social-environmental			3.370	0.582
Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	5	0.5		
Disagree (1.00~2.00)	47	4.2		
Neutral (2.00~3.00)	384	34.0		
Agree (3.00~4.00)	685	60.8		
Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	5	0.5		
Overall index of TV channel dependency			3.230	0.663
Strongly disagree (.00~1.00)	4	0.4		
Disagree (1.00~2.00)	78	6.9		
Neutral (2.00~3.00)	260	23.1		
Agree (3.00~4.00)	777	69.1		
Strongly agree (4.00~5.00)	6	0.5		

Table 8 details the responses regarding the origins of TV news channel dependency.

Table 8.1 also lists the computed index for each of the three dependency origin dimensions. The results show that dependency on TV news programs has social-environmental, individual, and historical origins, in that order. Table 8.2 presents the rank order of the mean scores for the three origins of TV news program dependency.

A more detailed analysis of specific dependency items (Table 8.3) indicates that Chinese audiences rely on a particular channel and program because they see it as trustworthy (mean=3.49); because they view the channel as presenting news that inform people about developments in Chinese society (mean=3.38); and because somehow, interacting with people with media knowledge and experiences influenced their opinions (mean=3.35). Besides, comments from friends and family, family influences, personal experiences, and the need for information about the immediate community were found to contribute to dependency. Growing up with a particular channel and job requirements were not cited as strong reasons for people's dependence on a particular TV channel.

Table 8.2. Rank order of mean scores on the three origins of TV news program dependency

Rank	Origins	Mean	Std. dev.
1	Social/environmental	3.37	0.582
2	Individual	3.30	0.593
3	Historical/structural	3.00	1.343

Table 8.3 Rank order of mean scores on specific items that tap TV news program dependency

Rank	Reasons	Mean	Std. dev.
1	Because it is trustworthy	3.49	0.667
2	Because of the way it presents the news	3.38	0.712
3	Because of my interaction with people who have media experiences and knowledge	3.35	0.786
4	Because of comments from friends and family	3.31	0.759
5	Because of family influences	3.29	1.100
6	Because of personal experiences	3.25	0.732
7	Because TV news provides information about my immediate community	3.23	0.738
8	Because I grew up with this channel	2.94	1.621
9	Because of job requirements	2.78	1.573

To determine whether there are differences among the three cities in terms of the origins of their dependence on TV news, an ANOVA test was conducted using the overall index of dependency as the dependent variable (Cronbach's alpha=0.827). The results, shown in Table 8.4, indicate significant differences among Beijing, Shanghai and Changsha residents in terms of audiences' dependency origins (F= 66.073, df=2, p=.000).

Table 8.4. Results of an ANOVA test to determine differences among the three cities in terms of origins of TV news dependency

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.	
Between groups	43.805	2	21.902	66.073	.000	
Within groups	343.755	1037	.331			
Total	387.560	1039				
Multiple comparisons: Bonferroni						
(I) City	(J) City	Mean diff (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Beijing	Shanghai	.07776	.04736	.303	-.0358	.1913
	Changsha	.44582	.04194	.000	.3453	.5464
Shanghai	Beijing	-.07776	.04736	.303	-.1913	.0358
	Changsha	.36806*	.04450	.000	.2613	.4748
Changsha	Beijing	-.44582*	.04194	.000	-.5464	-.3453
	Shanghai	-.36806*	.04450	.000	-.4748	-.2613

The results of a Bonferroni post hoc test conducted to determine the specific differences among cities reveal that growing up with a particular channel, family influence, and job requirements were stronger origins of dependency for Beijing and Shanghai than for Changsha audiences (Table 8.4). In other words, historical origins show up more among Beijing and Shanghai TV viewers than Changsha audiences. Interacting with people who have media

knowledge and the influence of friends and family were stronger origins of TV dependency among Shanghai residents. In short, individual origins were detected more among the people of Shanghai. For those who reside in Beijing, the need for more information about the immediate community, the way news is presented, and whether the news can be trusted to accurately present the most important events going on throughout the world, were more likely to lead to TV news dependency. Thus, social-environmental origins were more pronounced for Beijing TV news audiences.

Demographic Influences

RQ6 asks: Are there differences in the audiences' preferred TV news programs, the gratifications they derive from TV news, their dependence on TV news, and the origins of those dependencies based on gender, age, income, and educational status?

A. Gender

To determine whether males and females differ in their preferred TV news program, a cross-tabulation was drawn (Table 9). The results of a chi-square test indicate a significant difference in the preferred TV news program of males and females ($\chi^2=8.249$, $df=3$, $p=.000$). Around 45.2% (331) of the male respondents selected CCTV 1, 30.0% (220) preferred Dragon TV, and 23.8% (174) preferred Hunan TV. On the other hand, of the female respondents, 204 out of 397 (51.4%) preferred CCTV 1. Only 24.9% (99) and 23.7% (94) picked Dragon TV and Hunan TV, respectively. The findings suggest that females have a stronger preference for CCTV 1 than males, while males have a stronger preference for Dragon TV.

Table 9. Cross-tabulation of gender x TV channel preference and origins of TV news channel dependency

Gender		TV channel				Total		
		CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Others			
	Male	331	220	174	7	732		
	Female	204	99	94	0	397		
Total		535	319	268	7	1,129		
$\chi^2=8.249$ (df=3, p=. 041)								
Gender		Origins of TV news channel dependency						Total
		.00~ 1.00	1.00~ 2.00	2.00~ 3.00	3.00~ 4.00	4.00~ 5.00	5.00~ 6.00	
	Male	2	45	150	518	16	0	731
	Female	2	16	81	288	7	0	394
Total		4	61	231	806	23	0	1,125
$\chi^2=33.779$ (df=32, p=. 382)								

To determine whether males and females differ in terms of the gratifications they derive from watching TV news, an independent samples t-test was conducted using the gratifications index. The results of this test show no significant difference between males and females in terms of gratifications sought from TV news program viewing.

Table 9.1. Independent samples t-test results comparing males and females on gratifications derived from viewing TV news

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Gratification	Male	732	3.4152	.30742	.01136
	Female	397	3.4163	.33272	.01670

Dependent variable		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% Confidence interval	
							Lower	Upper
Gratifications index	Equal variances assumed	-.055	1127	.956	-.00109	.01973	-.03980	0.3762
	Equal variances not assumed	-.054	759.388	.957	-.00109	.02020	-.04074	0.3856

The results of an independent samples t-test also show no significant difference between gender in terms of their responses to the three questions that sought to ascertain perceived dependency on TV news (Table 9.1). Thus, males do not differ from females in terms of their dependency on TV news programs.

To determine whether males and females differ in terms of the origins of their TV news dependency, a cross-tabulation of gender by origins of TV news channel dependency was drawn (Table 9). The results of a chi-square test show no significant difference ($\chi^2=33.779$, $df=32$, $p=.382$) in origins of dependency between males and females.

In summary, gender is a significant indicator only of TV news program preferences. It had no bearing on gratifications sought, perceived dependency, and the origins of dependencies on a particular TV news channel.

B. Age

To determine whether people of varying age groups differ in their preferred TV news program, an ANOVA test was conducted. The results, shown in Table 10, indicate no difference in program preference among different age groups ($F=1.276$, $df=5$, $p=.272$).

Table 10. Results of an ANOVA test to determine differences in preferred TV program by age groups

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	4.427	5	.885	1.276	.272
Within groups	721.603	1040	.694		
Total	726.031	1045			

To find out whether age groups differ in terms of gratifications they derive from watching TV news, a series of ANOVA tests was conducted by using the overall gratification index (Table 10.1). The results suggest that people from particular age groups do not differ in the gratifications they seek from TV news ($F=0.487$, $df=5$, $p=.786$). In other words, TV programs appear to satisfy the same gratifications or motivations for watching regardless of audience members' age.

Table 10.1. Results of an ANOVA test to determine differences in gratifications derived from watching TV news by age groups

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	.239	5	.048	.487	.786
Within groups	102.115	1040			
Total	102.394	1045			

However, when examining this question using specific gratification items, differences appear in terms of the motivation to relax ($F=2.384$, $df=5$, $p=.037$). The results of a post hoc test show that the motivation to relax was mentioned more often by respondents who were 36 to 45 years old perhaps because those in this age bracket, overwhelmed by career and family obligations, take refuge and find a convenient way to relax by watching TV news.

Table 10.2. Results of an ANOVA test to determine differences in specific gratifications derived from watching TV news by age groups

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	5.006	6	1.001	2.384	.037
Within groups	436.712	1040	.420		
Total	441.718	1045			

(Table 10.2 continued)

Multiple comparisons: Bonferroni

(I) age	(J) age	Mean diff (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
18-25	26-35	.030	.043	1.000	-.10	.16
	36-45	-.144	.076	.887	-.37	.08
	46-55	.178	.136	1.000	-.22	.58
	56-65	.394	.198	.696	-.19	.98
	>66	-.297	.291	1.000	-1.15	.56
26-35	18-25	-.030	.043	1.000	-.16	.10
	36-45	-.174	.077	.355	-.40	.05
	46-55	.148	.136	1.000	-.25	.55
	56-65	.364	.198	.993	-.22	.95
	>66	-.327	.291	1.000	-1.18	.53
36-45	18-25	.144	.076	.887	-.08	.37
	26-35	.174	.077	.355	-.05	.40
	46-55	.322	.150	.477	-.12	.761
	56-65	.538	.208	.146	-.07	1.15
	>66	-.153	.298	1.000	-1.03	.72
46-55	18-25	-.178	.136	1.000	-.58	.22
	26-35	-.148	.136	1.000	-.55	.25
	36-45	-.322	.150	.477	-.76	.12
	56-65	.216	.236	1.000	-.48	.91
	>66	-.475	.319	1.000	-1.141	.46
56-65	18-25	-.394	.198	.696	-.98	.19
	26-35	-.364	.198	.993	-.95	.22
	36-45	-.538	.208	.146	-1.15	.07
	46-55	-.216	.236	1.000	-.91	.48
	>66	-.691	.350	.725	-1.72	.34
>66	18-25	.297	.291	1.000	-.56	1.15
	26-35	3.27	.291	1.000	-.53	1.18
	36-45	1.53	.298	1.000	-.72	1.03
	46-55	.475	.319	1.000	-.46	1.41
	56-65	.691	.350	.725	-.34	1.72

To examine the difference among age groups in terms of people's perceived dependency on a particular channel, a series of chi-square tests was conducted (Table 10.3). The results show that the percentage of people who say CCTV 1 comes to mind first when talking about TV news increases with age. Relatively younger audiences, those between 18 to 25 years old, frequently

think about Hunan TV first, while audiences between 26 to 35 years old find themselves thinking first about Dragon TV. The data suggest that older audiences see CCTV 1 as the best news channel; younger audiences prefer Hunan TV or Dragon TV.

When respondents were asked to pick only one channel they turn to for national and international events, those who are above 46 years old preferred other channels outside of the three major TV news channels, while majority of those under 46 years picked CCTV 1 as their only source for news. Young people (18-25) tended to prefer Hunan TV to Dragon TV, while older people were more likely to pick Dragon TV instead of Hunan TV.

When asked which TV channel they rely on for news, respondents over 65 years old overwhelmingly selected CCTV 1. Younger audiences were more likely to rely on Dragon TV or Hunan TV.

Table 10.3. Cross-tabulation of age x the three items that measure TV news channel dependency

Age	When talking to friends, acquaintances and family members regarding TV news, which channel comes to mind first?					Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any one of the three	Others	
18-25	212	99	118	19	37	485
26-35	191	110	88	13	34	436
36-45	44	12	23	2	4	85
46-55	12	4	3	3	6	24
56-65	3	6	0	2	0	11
66 or older	5	0	0	0	0	5
Total	467	231	232	38	78	1,046
$\chi^2=42.949$ (df=20, p=. 014)						
	If you had to choose only one TV channel for national and international news, which one would you pick?					Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any one of the three	Others	
18-25	183	81	114	8	99	485
26-35	167	102	85	8	74	436
36-45	37	13	19	0	16	85
46-55	7	3	1	0	13	24
56-65	1	1	0	0	9	11
66 or older	2	0	0	0	3	5
Total	397	200	219	16	214	1046
$\chi^2=62.944$ (df=20, p=. 000)						
	Which TV channel do you most rely on for news, especially about issues you consider important?					Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any one of the three	Others	
18-25	258	68	120	23	16	485
26-35	244	68	86	16	22	436
36-45	50	7	23	4	1	85
46-55	16	2	3	1	2	24
56-65	4	5	0	1	1	11
66 or older	4	0	0	0	1	5
Total	576	150	232	45	43	1,046
$\chi^2=31.724$ (df=20, p=. 046)						

Age groups also vary in terms of their reported origin of TV news program dependency. Specifically, people from different age groups differ in terms of the extent to which they think that (1) growing up with the channel, (2) the family environment, (3) job requirement, and (4) the way the TV news program presents the news are reasons why they come to depend on a particular TV news program (Table 10.4). The results of a post hoc test reveal that for those who are 26 to 35 years old, growing up with a particular channel is a stronger origin of media dependency. This age bracket represents people who grew up with CCTV in the 1980s. Family influence is a more potent origin of dependency for people aged 18-45, while for those who are 26 to 45, it is job requirements. The way the TV news program presents the news matters more to those in the 36 to 45 age group.

In summary, age is an indicator of media dependency and the origins of that dependency.

Table 10.4. ANOVA test results showing differences among age groups in terms of gratifications sought

Gratifications sought	df	F	Sig.
Daily routine	5	.163	.976
Keeping up with the world	5	.500	.776
Keeping up with politics	5	.519	.762
Search for relevant information	5	.251	.939
To know more about TV broadcasting	5	.915	.470
To learn about issues important to me	5	.451	.813
To facilitate deep thinking of issues	5	.410	.842
To avoiding ads	5	.570	.723
Because it is on	5	1.034	.396
It is easy to access	5	.495	.780
Nothing better to do	5	1.095	.362
To kill time	5	.905	.477
To satisfy curiosity	5	.408	.843
For entertainment	5	.751	.586
To enhance sense of nationalism	5	1.123	.347
To forget school/work	5	1.605	.156
Take minds off of things	5	1.526	.179
To relax	5	2.384	.037
To be able to discuss issues with others	5	1.571	.166
I like the anchors/reporters	5	1.945	.084
I like the presentation style	5	1.329	.250
It is better than others	5	1.894	.930
Not advocating for any interest group	5	1.708	.130
Total	5	.487	.786
Origins of dependency			
Grew up with the channel	5	11.781	.000
Family influence	5	7.660	.000
Job requirement	5	10.180	.000
Interaction	5	1.995	.077
Comments	5	1.187	.313
Personal experiences	5	1.458	.201
News contents	5	.890	.487
Broadcasting way	5	2.452	.032
Trustworthy	5	.971	.434
Total	5	7.749	.000

C. Income

To determine whether people with varying income levels differ in their preferred TV news program, a cross-tabulation was drawn (Table 11). Chi-square test results indicate that as income increases, the number of CCTV 1 viewers decreases, while the those who prefer Hunan TV increases. There is no obvious trend among audiences who prefer Dragon TV.

Table 11. Cross-tabulation of income x TV channel preference

Income	TV channel				Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Others	
0~19,999	187	105	56	2	350
20,000~39,999	36	21	18	0	75
40,000~59,999	140	83	92	3	318
60,000~79,999	134	92	77	1	304
80,000 or more	36	16	22	0	74
Total	533	317	265	6	1121
$\chi^2=71.366$ (df=21, p=.000)					

To determine whether income groups differ in terms of gratifications sought from watching TV news, a series of ANOVA tests was conducted by using the nine indices based on the identified gratification dimensions and the overall gratifications index (Cronbach's alpha=0.844) (Table 11.1).

The ANOVA test results for the gratification index indicate that gratifications vary according to income groups ($F=5.089$, $df=7$, $p<.000$). When examined in terms of the nine gratification dimensions, the findings show that income groups differ in terms of gratifications based on habits/behavior guidance, information/learning, and the need to pass time. Specifically,

those who earned less than RMB 20,000 and more than RMB 40,000 per year were more likely to watch TV news as part of their daily routine. Those who earn more than RMB 40,000 per year said they watch TV news to keep up with current events. Those who make less than RMB 20,000 per year were least likely to watch TV news to pass the time.

Table 11.1. ANOVA test results showing differences among income groups in terms of gratification dimensions and dependency origins

Gratifications sought	df	F	Sig.
1. Habits/behavior guidance	7	11.174	.000
2. Information/learning	7	4.251	.000
3. Avoiding commercials on television	7	2.050	.064
4. Convenience	7	.878	.523
5. To pass the time	7	5.975	.000
6. Arousal/excitement	7	.892	.512
7. Escape/to forget/for relaxation	7	.811	.578
8. Social interaction or interpersonal communication	7	.776	.608
9. To avoid other news channels	7	8.131	.000
Index for total	7	5.089	.000

To determine whether income influences TV news viewing dependency, a series of chi-square tests was conducted. Based on the results shown in Table 11.2, there are significant differences in perceived level of TV news channel dependency according to income.

When people were asked which TV news channel comes to mind first when talking to friends, acquaintances and family members, those who earned more than RMB 20,000 but less than 80,000 per year reported Dragon TV or Hunan TV more often than people with yearly incomes that are above RMB 80,000 ($\chi^2=203.152$, $df=28$, $p=0.000$).

When respondents were asked to pick only one TV news channel for information, those who earned less than RMB 20,000 per year tended to pick TV stations beyond the three major channels for information. The majority of those who made more than RMB 20,000 per year preferred CCTV 1 ($\chi^2=1569.298$, $df=28$, $p=.000$).

When respondents were asked to report the channel they most depend on, those who earned more than RMB 20,000 but less than 80,000 per year selected Dragon TV or Hunan TV more often, while people with yearly incomes that are above RMB 80,000 still preferred CCTV 1 ($\chi^2=183.438$, $df=28$, $p=0.000$).

Table 11.2. Income x dependency cross-tabulation

Income	When talking to friends, acquaintances and family members regarding TV news, which channel comes to mind first?					Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any of the three	Others	
0~19,999	168	52	51	28	51	350
20,000~39,999	34	16	15	7	3	75
40,000~59,999	133	79	88	4	14	318
60,000~79,999	133	85	72	2	12	304
80,000 or more	35	12	9	2	8	74
Total	503	244	242	44	88	1,121
$\chi^2=203.152$ (df=28, p=. 000)						
	If you had to choose only one TV channel for national and international news, which would you pick?					Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any of the three	Others	
0~19,999	64	10	24	4	248	350
20,000~39,999	33	15	19	4	4	75
40,000~59,999	131	79	88	4	16	318
60,000~79,999	133	83	69	1	18	304
80,000 or more	34	13	16	3	8	74
Total	395	200	216	16	297	1,121
$\chi^2=569.298$ (df=28, p=. 000)						
	Which TV channel do you most rely on for news, especially about issues you consider important?					Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any of the three	Others	
0~19,999	183.52	50.15	51.15	46	20	350
20,000~39,999	39.52	11.15	16.21	4	5	75
40,000~59,999	160.50	57.18	88.28	6	7	318
60,000~79,999	194.64	39.13	70.23	1	0	304
80,000 or more	40.54	6.08	17.23	2	9	74
Total	616	163	242	59	41	1,121
$\chi^2=183.438$ (df=28, p=. 000)						

Income groups also vary in terms of their reported origin of TV news program dependency (Table 11.3). The results of an ANOVA test show that as income increases, people were more likely to report that their dependencies originated from growing up with the channel, family influence, and job requirement. In contrast, individual and social-environmental origins were more commonly cited by people who earned more than RMB 40,000 per year. For those who make more than RMB 60,000, historical origins were stronger sources of dependency.

Table 11.3. ANOVA test results showing differences among income groups in terms of origins of dependency

Origins of dependency	df	F	Sig.
Grow up	7	210.742	.000
Family influence	7	88.918	.000
Job requirement	7	166.011	.000
Interaction	7	9.347	.000
Comments	7	3.498	.001
Personal experiences	7	8.782	.000
News contents	7	13.199	.000
Broadcasting way	7	7.722	.000
Trustworthy	7	8.978	.000
Index for total	7	115.643	.000

Thus, income is an indicator of TV news preferences and gratifications sought from watching TV news. In general, as yearly income increases, the percentage of audiences who prefer CCTV 1 decreases, but the percentage of those who prefer Hunan TV increases. People of different income levels obtain different gratifications when they watch TV news. Those making RMB 20,000 to 40,000 per year were less likely to watch TV as part of their daily routine; people who earn more than RMB 40,000 per year watch TV mainly to acquire knowledge.

Those from different income brackets also vary in terms of their reported origins of TV news dependency. As income increases, historical origins show up as the more likely origin.

Individual origins contribute to the TV dependency of those earning more than RMB 40,000 per year. Chinese viewers with a yearly income between RMB 40,000~80,000 were influenced more by social-environmental roots of dependency.

D. Education level

To determine whether people with varying education levels differ in their preferred TV news program, a cross-tabulation was drawn (Table 12). Chi-square test results indicate a significant difference in the preferred TV news programs according to education groups ($\chi^2=33.086$, $df=12$, $p=.001$). The results suggest that audiences who prefer to watch CCTV 1 have college and post-college degrees. Those who received vocational training tended to watch Hunan TV.

Table 12. Cross-tabulation of education x TV channel preference

Education	TV channel				Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Others	
Elementary	80	55	21	1	157
High school	59	34	26	0	119
College	333	199	177	4	713
Post-college	23	10	4	1	38
Other training	40	20	40	1	101
Total	535	318	268	7	1,121
$\chi^2=33.086$ ($df=12$, $p=.001$)					

A series of ANOVA tests was conducted to determine whether education groups differ in terms of the gratifications they get from watching TV news. As shown in Table 12.1, the results for the gratification index indicate that education is a significant indicator of gratifications gained from watching TV news ($F=12.886$, $df=4$, $p=.000$). Specifically, those with college degrees and

vocational training watch TV as part of their daily routine and to keep abreast with developments locally and abroad. Those who watch TV to avoid commercials are most likely to have post-college experience and vocational training. College graduates were more likely to say they watch the news because it is on or because it is easy to access, to forget about the pressures of work, to take their minds off of things, and for relaxation. Most of the respondents with post-college degrees watch TV news because they want to discuss the issues of the day with others, to satisfy their curiosity, to be entertained, or to arouse their love of country.

Table 12.1. ANOVA test results showing differences among education groups in terms of the nine gratification dimensions

Gratifications sought	df	F	Sig.
1. Habits/behavior guidance	4	10.860	.000
2. Information/learning	4	3.795	.005
3. Avoiding commercials on television	4	5.747	.000
4. Convenience	4	3.335	.010
5. To pass the time	4	13.868	.000
6. Arousal/excitement	4	2.267	.060
7. Escape/to forget/for relaxation	4	5.507	.000
8. Social interaction or interpersonal communication	4	3.901	.004
9. To avoid other news channels	4	14.695	.000
Index for total	4	12.886	.000

To determine whether education influences TV news viewing dependency, a series of chi-square tests was conducted. The results, shown in Table 12.2, indicate significant differences among education groups in their perceived level of TV news channel dependency ($\chi^2=117.420$, $df=16$, $p=.000$).

When respondents were asked to choose only one TV channel for national and

international news, those with vocational training selected both Hunan TV and CCTV 1. Those in other educational categories mostly picked CCTV 1 for national and international news ($\chi^2=144.717$, $df=16$, $p=.000$). When asked which TV channel they most rely on for issues they consider important, those who received post-college training mostly chose CCTV 1 (63%), followed by those with college degrees (57.6%). People with vocational training went with Hunan TV (38%) ($\chi^2=725.405$, $df=16$, $p=.000$). Which TV channel do they rely on for news, especially about important issues? An overwhelming majority of those with college degrees and above preferred CCTV 1 ($\chi^2=117.420$, $df=16$, $p=.000$).

Table 12.2. Education x dependency cross-tabulation

Education level	When talking to friends, acquaintances and family members regarding TV news, which channel comes to your mind first?					Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any one of the three	Others	
Elementary	74	28	22	9	24	157
High school	51	20	23	11	14	119
College	321	174	157	19	42	713
Post-college	20	5	3	4	6	38
Other training	39	17	40	1	4	101
Total	505	244	245	44	90	1,128
$\chi^2=144.717$ (df=16, p=. 000)						
	If you had to choose only one TV for national and international news, which would you pick?					Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any one of the three	Others	
Elementary	1	0	0	0	156	157
High School	17	6	17	0	79	119
College	318	173	158	12	52	713
Post-college	21	5	4	1	7	38
Other training	40	16	40	3	2	101
Total	397	200	219	16	296	1,128
$\chi^2=725.405$ (df=16, p=. 000)						
	Which TV channel do you most rely on for news, especially about issues you consider important?					Total
	CCTV 1	Dragon TV	Hunan TV	Any one of the three	Others	
Elementary	78	27	20	24	8	157
High school	56	15	25	18	5	119
College	411	105	158	14	25	713
Post-college	24	4	3	1	6	38
Other training	48	12	39	2	0	101
Total	617	163	245	59	44	1,128
$\chi^2=117.420$ (df=16, p=. 000)						

The results also show that the reported origins of TV news program dependency vary by educational level (Table 12.3). Specifically, people with college degrees or vocational training saw their dependency on TV news as originating from the fact that they grew up with the channel, due to family influence, and because of their job requirements. Thus, for those with college degrees and those who had vocational training, historical origins were the most likely sources of dependency. Social-environmental origins show up more frequently from people with college, vocational training, and post-college degrees.

Table 12.3. ANOVA test results showing differences among education groups in terms of origins of dependency

Origins of dependency	df	F	Sig.
Grew up with the channel	4	693.358	.000
Family influence	4	182.180	.000
Job requirement	4	559.189	.000
Interaction with those in the media	4	14.833	.000
Comments from friends and family	4	9.690	.000
Personal experience	4	20.291	.000
News content	4	27.338	.000
Broadcasting style	4	30.185	.000
Trustworthiness	4	26.115	.000
Index for total	4	316.824	.000

In summary, education is a significant predictor of TV news preferences, gratifications sought, dependency, and origins of dependency. In general, college and post-college graduates prefer CCTV 1, while people with vocational training prefer Hunan TV news. Those with college and vocational training watch TV news as part of their daily routine, to learn about the world, to avoid commercials, for relaxation, and because they like the news anchor or the program's technical style. They also watch the news because they find the program devoid of the influence of special interest groups. As a whole, the respondents selected CCTV 1 as their news

program, but people with vocational training were more likely to choose Hunan TV. More educated people say their dependence on TV news has historical origins.

Summary of Findings

In summary, Beijing citizens showed a preference for CCTV 1, most Shanghai citizens selected Dragon TV, while Changsha residents preferred Hunan TV as their main news source. Although CCTV 1 remains the most influential, the results suggest that Hunan TV is starting to win more loyal audiences, especially among those who live farther from Beijing. Dragon TV does not appear competitive, and shows only a local appeal. This may be because, as media observers suggest, Dragon TV has lost a number of unique features, evolving into another version of CCTV in recent years.

The residents of the three cities assigned different credibility ratings to their favorite TV channels. In general, however, the findings show that the perceived credibility of the news channel is a significant predictor of TV news program choice.

Significant differences were found among the three cities in terms of the gratifications audiences sought from TV news channels. The residents of the three cities also differed in the extent to which they consider themselves dependent on a particular news channel and the origins of their dependency.

The results also show differences in program preference by gender. Significant differences among age groups were found regarding media dependency origins, but not in terms of gratifications sought from TV news viewing. Specifically, people from different age groups reported differences in their assessment that (1) growing up with this channel contributed to their

dependency, (2) their family influenced their dependency, (3) their job requirements lead to media dependency, and (4) the way the TV news program presents the news enhances dependency. In general, younger audiences tended to demonstrate greater agreement with the origins of their TV news dependency compared with older respondents.

Gratifications sought and media dependencies also differed according to income and educational status. Chinese TV news audiences of varying income levels differed in their evaluations that they derive gratification from watching the news because (1) it is part of their daily routine, (2) to help them keep up with the world, (3) to be knowledgeable about TV news broadcasting, (4) to learn about important issues, (5) to avoid commercials, (6) because it is on, (7) because they have nothing better to do, (8) to kill time, (9) to be entertained, (10) because they favor specific anchors and reporters, (11) because they like the style with which the TV channel present the news, (12) because the TV news program is better than others in many aspects, and (13) because the TV channel does not speak for any special interest group. People of varying educational levels also differ in their estimations of the extent to which they watch TV news to (1) to satisfy their curiosity, (2) to forget school/work, (3) for discussion, (4) to feel nationalistic, and (5) to be relaxed.

In addition, Chinese TV news viewers who went for vocational training tended to favor Hunan TV, CCTV 1, and Dragon TV, in that order. Those with college degrees and post-college training tended to rely on CCTV.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS

This study sought to determine Chinese audiences' preferred TV news channels, how they evaluate their credibility; the satisfaction they obtain from TV news viewing; the extent to which they consider themselves dependent on the TV channels and their news programs; and the perceived origins of this TV news dependency. As an additional analysis, this study examined if the demographic variables age, gender, education and income affect people's channel preferences, the gratifications they obtain from watching TV news, their perceived dependence on these channels, and the origins of that dependency.

To answer the research questions, an online survey of adult TV viewers was conducted in three major cities where the three major news channels are located.

The Findings and Their Implications

The findings pertaining to TV exposure suggest that despite the growing popularity of the Internet, television remains a dominant medium for news in China. It can be surmised that the online assault has challenged TV news to upgrade its performance. Thus, when people get home from work or school, TV news is seen as a regular companion.

The findings show that people prefer the news program of the television channel closest to them. That is, Beijing audiences preferred CCTV 1, Shanghai residents chose Dragon TV, and Hunan viewers picked Hunan TV as their news program of choice. Across cities, however, CCTV 1 remained the most preferred channel.

These findings suggest that China's television industry has undergone drastic changes as the market economy has expanded and the role of the media within it has strengthened. Along with CCTV, regional channels such as Dragon TV and Hunan TV have been established and are continuously strengthening their audience base. Some regional stations produce more than one news program, which translates to more choices for news and other information concerning people's immediate communities. In response to the growing competition, CCTV has adopted a "performance-based system," which rewards the production of high-quality programs (Li, 2002). To win audiences, understanding what they need is fundamental.

To determine whether the perceived credibility of a news program has a bearing on their choice, 15 questions were asked based on Gaziano and McGrath's (1987) 12-item news credibility index. The distribution of responses indicated only four viable items that can be analyzed to ascertain the extent to which the respondents see their TV news program as credible in the sense that it demonstrates trustworthiness and expertise in the subject matters on which it is reporting. These are: (1) it can be trusted, (2) it disseminates useful ideas about the nation and the world, (3) it contributes to one's personal development, and (4) it causes people no harm.

The results show that indeed, Chinese news viewers tend to select news programs they perceive as credible, a finding that is consistent with those of other scholars who have examined credibility and audience effects (e.g., McCroskey & Jenson, 1981; Newhagen & Nass, 1989; Sargent, 1965; Johnson & Kaye, 1998; Sundar, 1998).

What gratifications do people derive from watching TV news? The respondents indicate they watch TV news mostly out of habit or as part of their daily routine and to keep up with the world. These gratifications lend support to a growing body of research that attempts to explain

the role of gratifications-seeking in the choice of communication channels and the media content to which people are exposed (e.g., Perse, 1990; Rubin, 1983; Compesi, 1980; Lemish, 1985; Blumler and Katz, 1974). Specifically, the gratifications Chinese audiences reportedly seek fell under the dimensions of habits/behavior guidance, information/learning, avoiding commercials on television, convenience, to pass the time, arousal/excitement, escape/to forget/for relaxation, for social interaction or interpersonal communication, and to avoid other news channels. These broad categories of gratifications are consistent with the most popular dimensions of motivations for media use identified by studies that employ the uses and gratifications theoretical framework: surveillance (knowledge and information), communication utility (social interaction, companionship, or interpersonal utility), filling time (passing time or habit), escape (from boredom or problems), diversion (entertainment or excitement), and advice (decision-making or guidance) (e.g., Blumler and Katz, 1974).

Specific gratification factors seem to be pronounced in each city. For example, Beijing residents were more likely to watch TV news as part of their daily routine and to relieve the pressures of school or work. Shanghai audiences were more strongly motivated by information seeking and learning. Changsha viewers were less motivated by a program's style of presenting the news.

China's size, diversity and pace of development are seemingly reflected in the gratifications the respondents reportedly sought from, and the origins of their dependency on a particular TV news channel. The majority watch TV news to keep up with the world and to feed the need for more information. This is understandable considering that people have heightened their interest about the outside world, the reason why many study abroad or work in other

countries. New communication technologies serve the growing need to acquire knowledge about the world and to be able to adapt to rapidly evolving social and cultural environments.

Do people consider themselves dependent on TV news and if so, what are the origins of this TV news dependency? The results indicate high dependence on TV news programs although the residents of the three cities differed in the channel they rely on for news. In general, CCTV 1 was the main channel people think about when they want to watch the news, suggesting that CCTV 1 remains the most authoritative TV news channel in the country, especially in rural areas and cities closest to Beijing. In Southern China, more diverse TV news channel preferences were reported.

What were the origins of this dependency? Theorists proposed three broad sources: historical/structural origins, individual origins, and social-environmental origins (Ball-Rokeach, 1985; Kellner, 1981). An examination of the factors that comprise each of these major dimensions of dependency origins reveal that the roots of Chinese audiences' TV news dependency mainly have social-environmental origins.

The study also explores whether the demographic variables gender, age, income and education influence TV news program preference, the gratifications people derive from TV news, their dependence on TV news, and the origins of that dependence. Previous studies have posited a tentative direct relationship between demographic variables and TV viewing behavior (e.g., McCarty and Shrum, 1993; Goodman, 1990; Peiser, 2000; Park and Kosicki, 1995; Robinson et al., 2004; Grabe, Kamhawi & Yegiyani, 2009). This study found that (1) gender had a bearing on channel preferences, (2) TV news dependency varies with age and dependency origins, (3) there were differences in media preference, gratifications sought, TV news

dependency and dependency origins according to income levels, and (4) education affects TV news preferences, gratifications sought, dependency, and the origins of that dependency. Age did not seem to have a bearing on gratifications derived from watching TV news, but the motivation to relax was mentioned more often by respondents who were 36 to 45 years old.

An analysis of the impact of demographic variables reveal that women have a stronger preference for CCTV 1, while men prefer Dragon TV more. This may be because, as the flagship TV station of the Communist Party, CCTV 1 has a tendency to report news that aims for national stability delivered by news anchors who carry the mantle of respectability, gentility and professionalism, characteristics that generally appeal to women audiences.

Another finding is that as income increases, the percentage of those who prefer CCTV 1 decreases, while those who prefer Hunan TV increases. This may be an offshoot of the open door and reform policies introduced in the late 1970s that have elevated people's socio-economic status and goaded them to be entrepreneurs. Economic, business and finance issues are generally seen as a relatively weak beat for CCTV 1. These issues, however, are the forte of Dragon TV, which is located in the country's economic center, Shanghai.

Those with college or post-college degrees generally prefer CCTV 1, perhaps because their career goals involve public service or government jobs. As such, they are more attuned to the government-oriented perspectives of CCTV 1. Those with vocational training understandably prefer Hunan TV, which focuses on the development of working skills.

The results of this study suggest that the uses and gratifications approach developed in the west can be applied to the Chinese cultural and political conditions. The results also point to

the applicability of media dependency theory in explaining channel preference and program choice across cultures.

In general, the findings indicate that the Chinese TV news industry must steer a middle course between political directives and audience needs to succeed in a multi-media environment. This is the only way to survive in a society that is both economically competitive and politically directed.

Limitations of the Study

The results of this exploratory study have limited generalizability because of the use of a convenience sample. Because the study made use of an online survey, the responses were confined to people who have access to computers and the Internet. For example, people over 60 years old seldom use the Internet, but they constitute a large segment of the TV viewing public. The sample includes only those who reside in three major cities whose views may not be representative of a national sample. Therefore, generalizations beyond the survey respondents should be made with caution.

Most of the variables of interest in this study were ascertained through self-reports. Self-reports, however, are based on personal memory that can be problematic. As such, data distortions may be present.

Although the respondents were supplied with two versions of the survey questionnaire, Chinese Mandarin and English, the majority of respondents used the Chinese version. Due to language barriers, some cultural meanings might have been lost in translation.

Recommendations for Future Study

As China undergoes rapid social transition, the role of TV news in creating an informed citizenry will become even more important. It is therefore pertinent to investigate further the uses and gratifications factors as well as the media dependence factors that may be unique to the Chinese context.

Many claim that continuous market reforms over the past decades have eroded the dominant position of the traditional media. It is necessary to provide empirical evidence to support this contention. It is equally important to document whether TV news and other traditional media channels have become increasingly open and responsive to public demand. Corollary to this, it is pertinent to monitor the public's perception of the credibility of the media system to which it is constantly exposed to serve as a measure for changes or improvements in media performance. Such data will inform not just media managers but also those who plan for social and economic reforms.

In general, the study detected moderate impacts of demographic variables on Chinese audiences' TV viewing preferences and behaviors. Data gathered from a random sample will be able to strengthen these observations.

While the Chinese government practices strict control of the TV news industry, the Internet enjoys a relatively loose environment. How the growing use of the online media affects TV news is a subject that merits further examination.

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Appendix A

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (IN CHINESE)

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

知情同意书

中国新闻频道收视调查

感谢您参加这次关于电视新闻观众的调查。本研究探讨为什么中国观众都选择某些电视新闻频道来满足他们的信息需求以及这些电视新闻节目满足了哪些需求。我们请您自愿参与本次研究。请您花一些时间完成之后网上的问卷。您如果不愿意回答其中的某些问题或项目，您随时可以省略或跳过。

您必须年满18岁或以上才能自主参与这次研究。如果您未满18岁或以上，您需要在家长或看护人的陪同下回答问卷，或者您可通过关闭浏览器窗口退出此调查。

过程描述

请您花10分钟完成此项调查问卷。它囊括了提供个人基本信息与关于个人电视新闻收视爱好和习惯的项目。

好处

如果您决定参与这项研究，有可能对您没有直接的好处。但是研究结果可望加强研究人员和学者对当代中国新闻文化的了解，特别是电视新闻收视行为的前因。

危害

参加这项调查没有任何可预见性危害。

费用及补偿

您不用承担参与本次研究的任何费用。当您完成问卷并递交，您最后提供的email地址将会参与随机抽取100元至200元人民币现金奖。如果你被选中，您将被再次被要求提供您的email地址，并签署一份研究参与者来自爱荷华州立大学回执表。

参与者权利

您在这次研究项目的参与是完全自愿的。您可以随时拒绝参加或离开本次调查，不会受到任何处罚或不良后果。

保密原则

您的答案会被保密。没有评论都会被归入您或任何此次研究的答辩人。然而，我们也要求您提供您的姓名和电子邮件地址，以便我们可以监视我们的反应速度，并尽快告知抽奖结果。

为确保保密，在法律允许的范围内，将采取以下措施，以确保通过本研究收集的数据：一旦数据被收集，这些材料将在一个安全的服务器中。当数据收集和抽奖完成时，您的姓名和电子邮件地址将被删除。如果结果公布，您的身份将严格保密。

联系信息

如果您需要对此进一步研究的资料，请与美国爱荷华州立大学格林利新闻传播学院研究生南宫东昉联系，电话：001-515-708-0692; 电子邮件：dnangong@iastate.edu。露露罗德里格斯，美国爱荷华州立大学格林利新闻传播学院研究导师，电话：001-515-294-0484，电子邮件：lulurod@iastate.edu。如果您对研究对象的权利或对研究有关的伤害有任何疑问，请联系爱荷华州立大学的机构审查委员会（IRB）管理员，电话：001-515-294-4566； 电子邮件：IRB@iastate.edu，或研究保证办公室处长，电话：001-515-294-

3115，地址：1138皮尔逊大厅，艾姆斯，美国爱和华州，邮编：50011。请随时打印或保存这个知情同意您的记录副本。

诚挚地感谢您的协助！

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (IN CHINESE)

电视新闻收视习惯调查

I. 电视新闻收视习惯

1. 您多长时间看些电视新闻节目？
 - a. 经常看
 - b. 偶尔看
 - c. 根本不看
2. 哪个频道的新闻节目您基本看得最多？
 - a. 中央电视台一套新闻节目
 - b. 东方卫视新闻节目
 - c. 湖南卫视新闻节目
 - d. 其它（请注明节目名称）_____

II. 对电视新闻节目的信任度

下面是一些人们对于电视新闻节目特点的陈述。联系到你自已收看最多的电视新闻节目，在何等程度上你同意这些陈述？对于下面的每个项目，请只选择一个答案。

我选择收看此电视新闻节目是因为它	1	2	3	4	5
	强烈不同意	不同意	中立	同意	强烈同意
1. 报道公平。					
2. 报道客观。					
3. 报道全面完整。					
4. 报道精确。					
5. 反映现实。					
6. 照顾公众的利益。					
7. 关心集体利益。					

8. 事实与评论分开。					
9. 有一组训练良好的记者和媒体工作者。					
10. 新闻节目质量高。					
11. 为政府说话。					
12. 可以信赖的。					
13. 能从中获得关于国家和世界有用的消息。					
14. 对我个人的发展有帮助。					
15. 正义的，对人无害。					

III. 关于满足的需求

下面是一些人们关于为什么收看电视新闻节目的陈述。在何等程度上你同意这些陈述？对于下面的每个项目，请只选择一个答案。

我选择收看此电视新闻是因为	1	2	3	4	5
	强烈不同意	不同意	中立	同意	强烈同意
1. 收看电视新闻是我日常生活一部分					
2. 有助于我了解最新的世界。					
3. 有助于我了解国家领导人在做什么。					
4. 我能找到对我有用的消息					
5. 我想知道关于电视新闻媒体这一行业的知识。					
6. 就想了解发生了哪些重要的事件。					
7. 有助于我深度考虑新闻反映出的一些问题。					
8. 逃避广告。					
9. 电视机里在播放，就随着看了。					
10. 比较容易收看的到。					
11. 没其它的事情好做					
12. 消磨时间，尤其是当我无聊的时候。					
13. 满足我对一些事情的好奇心。					
14. 能给我带来一些乐趣。					

15. 让我产生一种民族感。					
16. 让我暂时忘记学习，工作中的压力。					
17. 让我暂时忘记其它牵动心思的事情。					
18. 有助于休息。					
19. 能够发现和其他人聊天的话题。					
20. 我喜欢那个主持或者记者。					
21. 我喜欢那个新闻节目的风格。					
22. 和其他的相比，那个新闻节目好一些。					
23. 比较看不出它在拥护特定集体或者自身利益。					
24. 其他原因（请简单介绍）					

IV. 电视新闻频道依赖性

1. 当你跟朋友，熟人或者家人聊起一些从电视里得知的新闻和消息的时候，您比较会先想起哪个电视频道？

- a. 中央电视台1套
- b. 东方卫视
- c. 湖南卫视
- d. 无所谓，哪个频道都可以
- f. 其他的频道（请注明频道名称）

2. 如果您只能选择一个电视频道收看新闻节目，您会选择哪一个？

- a. 中央电视台一套
- b. 东方卫视
- c. 湖南卫视

d. 无所谓，哪个频道都可以

e. 其它频道（请注明名称）

3. 您比较依赖以下哪个频道作为电视新闻的来源，尤其是当发生了您比较关注的事件的时候？

a. 中央电视台一套

b. 东方卫视

c. 湖南卫视

d. 无所谓，哪个频道都可以

e. 其它频道（请注明名称）

下面是一些人们关于电视频道和它的新闻节目的陈述。在何等程度上你同意这些陈述？对于下面的每个项目，请只选择一个答案。

我选择前面提到的新闻频道是因为	1	2	3	4	5
	强烈不同意	不同意	中立	同意	强烈同意
1. 我从小就看那个频道的新闻节目					
2. 受我家人的影响。					
3. 我的工作要求我必须了解那个频道播出的一些新闻消息或者那个频道的消息。					
4. 我跟有媒体经验或有媒体知识的资深人士的交流影响了我的对那个频道以及它的新闻节目的观点。					
5. 我的朋友，家人或其他人的评论影响了我对那个频道以及它的新闻节目的观点。					
6. 我的个人经历和成长影响了我对那个频道以及它的新闻节目的观点和评估。					
7. 那个频道播出的新闻能满足我对自己就					

近环境的消息搜集的需求。					
8. 那个频道播出的新闻提供给我有关中国社会发展的最新消息。					
9. 我认为这个新闻频道能很好的报道国内外最新发生的重要事件，以及这些事件对中国的影响。					
10. 其它原因 (请写出)					

V. 个人基本资料

1. 您是哪年生人? _____

2. 您的性别?

a. 男

b. 女

3. 您所接受的最高教育水平是?

a. 小学

b. 中学

c. 本科

d. 研究生或博士

e. 专科学校，职业培训，独立学校或者其它

4. 您2010年税后收入大约是多少?

5. 您目前的居住在（请提供目前的省份和城市） _____

6. 对于中国电视新闻节目，您有什么意见或建议？请提供您的宝贵意见。

7. 请您提供一个邮箱地址（此问题用来抽奖）_____

8. 请提供您的姓名（此问题用来抽奖）_____

诚挚地感谢您的参与！

Appendix B**SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (IN ENGLISH)****INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT****Chinese TV News Channel Viewership Survey**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey of TV news viewers. This study examines why Chinese audiences choose certain TV news channels for their information needs. We seek your voluntary participation in this study. Would you please take the time to complete the online questionnaire that follows? You may skip questions or items to which you may feel uncomfortable responding.

You must be 18 years or older to participate in this study. If you are not 18 or over, please exit the survey by closing your browser window.

Description of Procedures

Please take 10 minutes to complete this survey questionnaire. It includes items that seek general demographic information and your TV news viewing preferences and habits.

Benefits

If you decide to participate in this study, there may be no direct benefits to you. The findings are expected to enhance scholars' understanding of contemporary Chinese news culture, specifically the antecedents of TV news viewing behaviors.

Risks

There are no foreseeable risks from participating in this study.

Costs and Compensation

You will incur no cost from participating in this study. The email addresses of those who return their completed questionnaires will be entered into a drawing for a gift card worth RMB200. If you are selected, you will be required to provide your email address and sign a Research Participant Receipt Form from Iowa State University.

Participants' Rights

Your participation in this study should be completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or leave the survey at any time without penalty or negative consequences.

Confidentiality

Your responses will be kept confidential. No comments will be attributed to you or any respondent in any reports produced by the study. However, we do ask that you provide your name and email addresses so we can monitor our response rate and inform you of the results of the lottery drawing.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken to secure data gathered through this study: Once the data are collected, the materials will be stored in a secure server. Your email address will be erased when data collection and the drawing for the prize are finished. If the results are published, your identity will remain confidential. Besides, your personal information will be collected by using a separate “survey” at

the end to separate your contact information from your survey responses. Your electronic identifiers (e.g., IP addresses) will not be collected.

Contact Information

If you need further information about this study, please contact Dongfang Nangong, graduate student, Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication, Iowa State University; Tel: 001-515-708-0692; email: dnangong@iastate.edu. Lulu Rodriguez, professor and research supervisor, Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication, Iowa State University; Tel: (515) 294-0484; email: lulurod@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or about research-related injury, please contact the Iowa State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Administrator, (515) 294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or the Director, Office of Research Assurances, (515) 294-3115, 1138 Pearson Hall, Ames, IA 50011. Please feel free to print or save a copy of this informed consent for your records.

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Chinese TV News Program Viewership Survey

I. TV News Viewing Habits

1. How often do you watch TV news?
 - a. Often
 - b. Once in a while
 - c. Not at all

2. Which TV news program do you watch most often?
 - a. CCTV1 news
 - b. Dragon TV news
 - c. Hunan TV news
 - d. Others (please specify) _____

II. Perceived Credibility of TV News Programs

The following are statements people have made about the characteristics of TV news programs.

Considering the TV news program you watch the most, to what extent do you agree with each of these statements? For each of the following items, please choose only one answer.

I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. It is fair.					
2. It is unbiased.					
3. It tells the whole story.					
4. It is accurate.					
5. It reflects reality.					

6. It watches out for the public's interests.					
7. It is concerned with the community's well being.					
8. It separates facts from opinions.					
9. It has well-trained reporters and journalists.					
10. It has good technical quality.					
11. It is the mouthpiece of the government.					
12. It can be trusted.					
13. I get useful ideas about our country and the world.					
14. It contributes to my personal development.					
15. It causes people no harm.					

III. Gratifications sought

The following are statements people have made about the reasons why they watch TV news programs. To what extent do you agree with each of these statements? For each of the following items, please choose only one answer.

I watch this TV news program because	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I generally watch TV news as part of my daily routine.					
2. It helps me keep up with the world.					
3. It informs me about what our political leaders are doing.					
4. I can find information that is important to me.					
5. I like to be knowledgeable about TV news broadcasting.					
6. I want to learn more about important issues.					
7. It helps me to think deeply about some issues.					

8. I want to avoid the commercials or ads in the news programs in other channels.					
9. It is on.					
10. It is easy to access.					
11. I have nothing better to do.					
12. It helps me kill time, especially when I am bored.					
13. It satisfies my curiosity about a number of issues.					
14. It entertains me.					
15. It makes me more nationalistic.					
16. It helps me forget about the pressures of school and/or work for a while.					
17. It helps to take my mind off of things for a while.					
18. It helps me relax.					
19. It supplies some topics I can discuss with others.					
20. I like the anchors and the reporters.					
21. I like its style of presenting the news.					
22. Compared to other news programs, this one is better in so many ways.					
23. It is not always promoting or advocating for some special interest group.					
24. Other reasons (please specify)					

IV. TV News Channel Dependency

1. When talking to your friends, acquaintances and family members regarding news received from TV, which TV news channel comes to your mind first?

- a. CCTV1
- b. Dragon TV
- c. Hunan TV
- d. Any channel will do; it doesn't matter.
- e. Other channels (please specify)

2. If you had to choose only one TV channel from which you can get national and international news, which one of the following would you pick?

- a. CCTV1
- b. Dragon TV
- c. Hunan TV
- d. Any channel will do; it does not matter.
- e. Other TV channels (please specify)

3. Which TV channel do you most rely on for news, especially about issues you consider important?

- a. CCTV1
- b. Dragon TV
- c. Hunan TV
- d. Any channel will do; it does not matter.
- e. Other channels (Please specify)

The following are statements people sometimes make about a TV channel and its news program.

To what extent do you agree with each of these statements? For each of the following items, please choose only one answer.

I have chosen the channel I specified in the previous question because	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

1. I practically grew up with this channel.					
2. My family influenced my TV news channel choice.					
3. My job requires me to keep an eye on some particular news items or information from this channel.					
4. My interaction with people with media experiences and knowledge influenced my opinion about the channel and its news program.					
5. Comments from friends and family influenced my perspectives about the channel and its news program.					
6. Some of my personal experiences influenced my opinion and assessments of this channel and its news program.					
7. News aired through this TV channel supplies me with the information I need to understand what is going on in my immediate community.					
8. The way this TV channel presents the news informs me about developments in Chinese society.					
9. I feel I can trust this TV channel to accurately present the most important events going on throughout the world and their impact on Chinese society.					
10. Other reasons (Please specify)					

V. Demographic information

1. What was your age on your last birthday? _____ Years

2. What is your gender?

a. Male

b. Female

3. What is the highest educational level you have attained?
 - a. Elementary graduate
 - b. High school graduate
 - c. College graduate
 - d. Post-college graduate training
 - e. Vocational training, stand-alone school or others
4. What was your income after taxes in 2010?
5. In what city do you currently reside? Please name the city and province where you currently reside. _____
6. Do you have any suggestion for how to improve China's TV news programs? What are they?
7. What is your email address? (Optional) _____ (This information will be used to determine the winner of the drawing for cash incentives.)
8. What is your name? (Optional) _____ (This information will be used to determine the winner of the drawing for cash incentives.)

Thanks so much for your participating!

Appendix C

STUDY CODE BOOK: Chinese TV News Channel Viewership Survey

No	Variable	Description	Coding
1	Frequency	How often do you watch TV news?	1= Often 2=Once in a while 3=Not at all
2	Program	Which TV news program do you watch most often?	1= CCTV1 news 2= Dragon TV news 3=Hunan TV news 4=Others
3	Fair	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it is fair.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
4	Unbiased	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it is unbiased.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
5	Whole	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it tells the whole story.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
6	Accurate	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it is accurate.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
7	Reality	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it reflects reality.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
8	Public	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it watches out for the public's interests.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
9	Community	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it is concerned with the community's well	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral

		being.	4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
10	Factopinion	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it separates facts from opinions.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
11	Reporter	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it has well-trained reporters and journalists.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
12	Quality	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it has good technical quality.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
13	Mouth	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it is the mouthpiece of the government.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
14	Trusted	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it can be trusted.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
15	Useful	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because I get useful ideas about our country and the world.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
16	Personal	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it contributes to my personal development.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
17	Noharm	I watch the CCTV1/Hunan TV/ Dragon TV news program because it causes people no harm.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
18	Routine	I generally watch TV news as part of my daily routine.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree

			5=Strongly agree
19	Keepup	It helps me keep up with the world.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
20	Leader	It informs me about what our political leaders are doing.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
21	Important	I can find information that is important to me.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
22	Tvnews	I like to be knowledgeable about TV news broadcasting.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
23	Issues	I want to learn more about important issues.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
24	Deep	It helps me to think deeply about some issues.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
25	Ads	I want to avoid the commercials or ads in the news programs in other channels.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
26	On	It is on.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
27	Easyget	It is easy to access.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

28	Nobetter	I have nothing better to do.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
29	Killtime	It helps me kill time, especially when I am bored.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
30	Curiosity	It satisfies my curiosity about a number of issues.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
31	Entertain	It entertains me.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
32	Nationalistic	It makes me more nationalistic.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
33	Escape	It helps me forget about the pressures of school and/or work for a while.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
34	Mindsoff	It helps to take my mind off of things for a while.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
35	Relax	It helps me relax.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
36	Chat	It supplies some topics I can discuss with others.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
37	Anchor	I like the anchors and the reporters.	1=Strongly disagree

			2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
38	Style	I like its style of presenting the news.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
39	Best	Compared to other news programs, this one is better in so many ways.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
40	Advocate	It is not always promoting or advocating for some special interest group.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
41	Channel	When talking to your friends, acquaintances and family members regarding news received from TV, which TV news channel comes to your mind first?	1= CCTV1 2= Dragon TV 3= Hunan TV 4= Any channel will do; it does not matter. 5= Other TV channels (please specify)
42	Channel1	If you had to choose only one TV channel from which you can get national and international news, which one of the following would you pick?	1= CCTV1 2= Dragon TV 3= Hunan TV 4= Any channel will do; it does not matter. 5= Other TV channels (please specify)
43	Channel2	Which TV channel do you most rely on for news, especially about issues you consider important?	1= CCTV1 2= Dragon TV 3= Hunan TV 4= Any channel will do; it does not matter. 5= Other TV channels (please specify)
44	Growup	I practically grew up with this channel.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

45	Influence	My family influenced my TV news channel choice.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
46	Job	My job requires me to keep an eye on some particular news items or information from this channel.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
47	Interaction	My interaction with people with media experiences and knowledge influenced my opinion about the channel and its news program.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
48	Comments	Comments from friends and family influenced my perspectives about the channel and its news program.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
49	Experience	Some of my personal experiences influenced my opinion and assessments of this channel and its news program.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
50	News	News aired through this TV channel supplies me with the information I need to understand what is going on in my immediate community.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
51	Way	The way this TV channel presents the news informs me about developments in Chinese society.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
52	Trustworthy	I feel I can trust this TV channel to accurately present the most important events going on throughout the world and their impact on Chinese society.	1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree
53	Age	What was your age on your last birthday?	1=18-25 2=26-35 3=36-45 4=46-55 5=56-65 6=66 or older

54	Gender	What is your gender?	1=Male 2=Female
55	Education	What is the highest educational level you have attained?	1=Elementary graduate 2=High school graduate 3=College graduate 4=Post-college graduate training 5= Vocational training, stand-alone school or others
56	Income	What was your income after taxes in 2010?	1=0~19,999 2=20,000~39,999 3=40,000~59,999 4=60,000~79,999 5=80,000 or more
57	City	What city do you currently reside in?	1=Beijing 2=Shanghai 3=Changsha 4=Other cities (please specify)
58	Credibility	Index of credibility	(Trusted+ Useful+ Personal+Noharm)/4
59	Gratification	Index of gratification	(Routine+ Keepup+ Leader+ Important+ Tvnews+ Issues+ Deep+ Ads+ On+ Easyget+ Nobetter+ Killtime+ Curiosity+ Entertain+ Nationalistic+ Escape+ Mindsoff+ Relax+ Chat+ Anchor+ Style+ Best+ Advocate)/23
60	Dependency	Index of origins of dependency	(Growup+ Influence+ Job+ Interaction+ Comments+ Experience+ News+ Way+ Trustworthy)/9
61	Inform	Index for gratification dimension of informing/learning dimension	(Keepup+ Leader+ Important+ Tvnews+ Issues+ Deep)/6
62	Convenience	Index for gratification dimension of convenience	(On+ Easyget)/2
63	Pass	Index for gratification dimension of passing time	(Nobetter+ Killtime)/2
64	Arousal	Index for gratification dimension of arousal/excitement	(Curiosity+ Entertain+ Nationalistic)/3

65	Efr	Index for gratification dimension of escape/to forget/ relaxation	(Escape+ Mindsoff+ Relax)/3
66	Avother	Index for gratification dimension of avoiding other news channels	(Anchor+ Style+ Best+ Advocate)/4
67	Historical	Index of historical origins	(Growup+ Influence+ Job)/3
68	Individual	Index of individual origins	(Interaction+ Comments+ Experience)/3
69	Social	Index of social-environmental origins	(News+ Way+ Trustworthy)/3

Appendix D

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office for Responsible Research
Vice President for Research
1138 Pearson Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011-2207
515.294-4566
FAX 515.294-4267

Date: 2/16/2011

To: Dongfang Nangong
164 University Village, Unit D
Ames, IA 50010

CC: Dr. Lulu Rodriguez
214 Hamilton Hall

From: Office for Responsible Research

Title: Chinese Audiences' Preference for, Dependence on, and Gratifications Derived from CCTV 1, Dragon TV and Hunan TV News Programs

IRB Num: 10-540

Submission Type: New **Exemption Date:** 2/11/2011

The project referenced above has undergone review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and has been declared exempt from the requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.101(b). The IRB determination of exemption means that:

- **You do not need to submit an application for annual continuing review.**
- **You must carry out the research as proposed in the IRB application**, including obtaining and documenting informed consent if you have stated in your application that you will do so or if required by the IRB.
- **Any modification of this research should be submitted to the IRB on a Continuing Review and/or Modification form, prior to making any changes**, to determine if the project still meets the federal criteria for exemption. If it is determined that exemption is no longer warranted, then an IRB proposal will need to be submitted and approved before proceeding with data collection.

Please be sure to use **only the approved study materials** in your research, including the **recruitment materials and informed consent documents that have the IRB approval stamp**.

Please note that you must submit all research involving human participants for review by the IRB. **Only the IRB may make the determination of exemption**, even if you conduct a study in the future that is exactly like this study.

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