

**MOROCCAN YOUTH'S CONSUMPTION OF TV PROGRAMS DURING
RAMADAN AND CHANGES OF THE DIGITAL ERA**

**CONSOMMATION DES JEUNES MAROCAINS DES PROGRAMMES DE
TELEVISION PENDANT LE RAMADAN ET ENJEUX DE L'ERE DU
DIGITAL**

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ABSTRACT

In countries with a Muslim majority, Ramadan is a real opportunity for companies from different industries to promote their products. Similarly, the television industry does not make the exception because this month has its own audience habits. Indeed, new program schedules are proposed by broadcasters, aiming to attract a larger viewership that could put them in a strong position vis-à-vis advertisers. However, with the wide spread of Internet access, the multiplicity of online platforms and the variety of devices, new trends are changing the way people consume television content, more particularly the generations Y and Z being the most affected by these trends. This work will seek to verify the impact of the new trends on the consumption behavior of young Moroccans of the content broadcast during the month of Ramadan by conducting a field study covering a sample of 180 young Moroccans. The objective here is to draw a profile of the young Moroccan viewer in the digital age.

KEY WORDS: Ramadan - Television - Viewership behavior - Youth - Technological change

RESUME

Dans les pays à majorité musulmane, le mois du Ramadan constitue une occasion pour les entreprises de différentes industries afin de promouvoir leurs produits. L'industrie de la télévision n'en fait pas l'exception puisque ce mois a ses propres habitudes d'audience. En effet, de nouvelles grilles de programmes sont proposées par les radiodiffuseurs, en vue d'attirer une audience plus importante susceptible de les mettre en position favorable en face des annonceurs. Cependant, avec la démocratisation de l'accès à l'internet, la multiplicité des plateformes en ligne et la variété des terminaux électroniques, de nouvelles tendances viennent modifier la façon par laquelle les gens consomment le contenu télévisé, plus particulièrement les générations Y et Z étant les plus touchées par ces tendances. Ainsi, ce travail cherchera à vérifier l'impact des nouvelles tendances sur le comportement de consommation des jeunes marocains du contenu diffusé pendant le mois du ramadan à travers une étude terrain couvrant 180 jeunes marocains. L'objectif est de dresser un profil du jeune téléspectateur marocain à l'ère du digital.

MOTS CLES : Ramadan - Télévision - Comportement de visionnage - Jeunes - Changements technologiques

INTRODUCTION

In Morocco, like other Muslim-majority countries, the month of Ramadan is a real opportunity for companies to promote their products, while taking into account the peculiarities of consumption habits during this month. Similarly, the television industry is no exception, according to Bucciante (2016), " Ramadan has its own viewership habits: audiences tend to gather around televisions soon after they break their fast at sunset ("Iftār") ". Bucciante (2016) also sheds light on the new Arab drama productions that shine during what she describes as the "Super Bowl season" of Arab television, the holy month of Ramadan. This season is very competitive and shapes the programming, commissioning and production processes of the industry. In fact, new program grids are suggested by broadcasters, in order to attract a larger audience likely to put them in a favorable position in front of advertisers.

However, with the popularization of internet access, the multiplicity of online platforms (social networks, video on demand, etc.) and the variety of electronic devices (smartphones, tablets, etc.), Crawford (2016) discusses the migration of traditional television viewers to new program providers who are judged to be "customer friendly". These are the new trends that changed the way people consume the content broadcast on traditional TV channels, most practically the Y and Z generations, being the most affected by these trends. For these, television comes as the second choice after PC to watch video programs at home, and as a fourth choice far behind cell phones to watch them outside of home (Nielsen Global Digital Landscape Report 2015). By adding to this the fact that young people make up the largest proportion of the Moroccan population¹, the choice to study the behavior of this category is relevant because of its potential contribution to the increase in audience figures. The latter still show satisfying results for the Moroccan TV broadcasters during the month of Ramadan. These figures push us to study more deeply this viewing behavior to be able to decrypt it among the young population.

In addition, Perticoz and Dessinges (2015) suggest a modeling of the television consumption, based on the transition from the viewer being a spectator to being a creator, around the following axes:

¹ HIGHER PLANNING COMMISSION OF MOROCCO. (2017). "Profil démographie Maroc". Indicateurs RGPH2014. [Online]. <http://rgphentableaux.hcp.ma/Default1/>. [10/12/2017].

- Axis of viewing autonomy: does the viewing fit into a program grid or into the one that the viewer has built for himself?
- Axis of connected interfaces: is viewing done using a single screen or multiple interconnected screens (including TV sets)?
- Axis of participation: is viewing the only purpose or does it give rise to forms of sharing that can go as far as sharing feelings through creation?

By analyzing these axes, this work will seek to verify the impact of new trends on young Moroccans' consumption behavior of content broadcast during the month of Ramadan. The aim is to sketch a profile of the young Moroccan viewer in the digital era by answering the following question: Have the technological transformations modified the behavior of audiovisual consumption of Moroccan youth during the month of Ramadan?

Through this work, we will try to answer our research question by conducting a literature review casting the light on the important points of our topic, and by exposing the results of our field study to be able to compare them to those of the previous research works.

1. TELEVISION AND RAMADAN

Every year, in different countries of the MENA region, television channels take advantage of the month of Ramadan to snatch audience shares likely to generate more advertising revenues. In fact, "millions of Moroccans gather around the meal of breaking the fast (Iftar) to consume not only delicious food and drinks, but also significant amounts of entertainment, especially sitcoms and television series "(El Kandoussi, 2017).).

1.1. WHAT MAKES RAMADAN SPECIAL

Originally, Ramadan is a compulsory and collective religious practice. During which Muslims are supposed to abstain from eating, drinking, smoking and having sexual relations from dawn until sunset (Touzani & Hirshman, 2008).

Thus, Khalbous & Louati (2011) summarize the dimensions and peculiarities of the context of Ramadan in this chart:

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Fig. 1: Dimensions and peculiarities of Ramadan context

Dimension	Components	Content and examples
Peculiarities of the religious dimension	Religious dogma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compulsory religious practice (the 4th of the 5 pillars of Islam) ▪ Collective religious event
	Behavioral rituals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fasting and sexual abstinence during the day until sunset
	Rites of beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extra night prayers 'Tarawih' ▪ Quran reading and listening
Peculiarities of the societal dimension	Change in the rhythm of daily life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Changes in working hours ▪ Imposition of meal times ▪ Increase of night vigils ▪ Back to afternoon nap ▪ Nonchalance during the day ▪ Decrease in productivity ▪ More frequent use of television
	Extended family rapprochement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conviviality and mutual visits ▪ Grouping and collective meals ▪ Organized outings ▪ Friendly reunion ▪ Exchanges of pardons
	Social solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mutual aid ▪ Charity
Peculiarities of the cultural dimension	Change of media landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adaptation of the grid and schedules to the rhythm of the month ▪ Specific programming (religious, humorous programs, series ...) ▪ Above average audio-visual production ▪ Significant increase in audiences for national media, especially television, but also newspapers and radios
	Development of collective hobbies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effervescence around cultural events (festivals, theater, exhibitions ...) ▪ Night outings with friends (tea rooms, oriental dance nights, etc.) ▪ Board games, card games, etc.
	Return and reinforcement of traditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Back to identity (frequent use of traditional clothing) ▪ Search for origins (nostalgic stories, traditional songs ...)
Peculiarities of the consumption dimension	General increase of consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Large diversity of consumption ▪ Strong increase in turnover in several industries (food, clothing, leisure, telecoms ...) ▪ Less deductions on expenses (high-end products)
	Collective and traditional food "frenzy"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hearty dinner ▪ Group dinner ▪ Recourse to traditional dishes
	Advertising congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in advertising investments ▪ Increased amount and time slots for advertisements ▪ Increase in media advertising tariffs

From a marketing research point of view, several of the components above seem to be interesting for deepening knowledge about consumer behavior during this period. This brings some usefulness to our topic, especially when it comes to the dimensions of culture and consumption.

On a cultural level, Diouri (1995) and Khalbous & Louati (2011) explain, in the Moroccan case, that there is a return to tradition, it starts with food that: "restores the culinary tradition of taste at the same time as the taste of the tradition of sharing territory and power between men and women. A whole atmosphere, a whole culture follow".

On the consumption level, even if the sacred month has among its purposes "de-consumption" because of fasting, it is experiencing an astonishing increase in consumption in general and food products in particular. It has even become "one of the most commercial periods of the year" (Marticotte & Cherif, 2003). This change in consumption habits and in daily life rhythm is accompanied, according to Gordon (1998), Salamandra (1998), Christmann (2000), Khalbous & Louati (2011), by the strong television audiences that increase the advertising pressure and strengthen the consumer society). It therefore seems that Ramadan took the commercial aspects of Christmas and Hanukkah and that it turns from a religious ritual into a celebration marked by consumption (Sandikci & Omeraki, 2007).

1.2. TELEVISION AUDIENCE DURING RAMADAN

In the Arabic speaking countries, all of which with a Muslim-majority, the observer notes a radical change in the audiovisual landscape, characterized by the establishment of special programming, but also by a remarkable increase in the duration of television consumption.

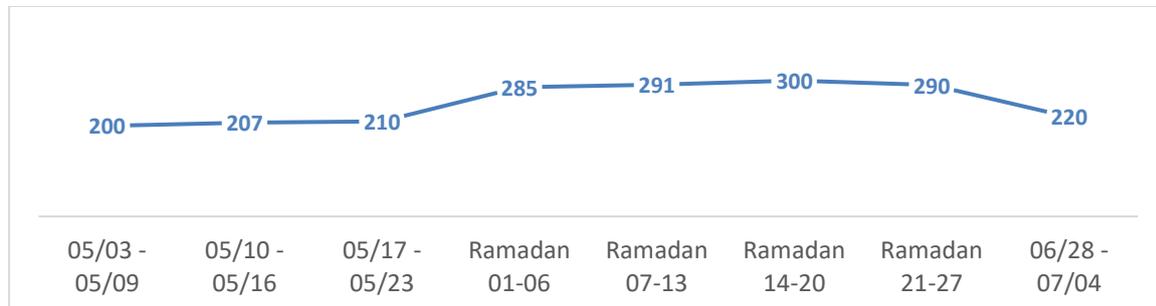
According to Abu-Zahra (1997), in Egypt: "watching television, watching shows and series is an obsession". The same is true for the variety of programming: television programs in Syria, for example, include many religious programs during the day (until the break of fasting) and entertainment programs, such as sitcoms and games after the fast break and until late in the evening (Christman, 2000).

For the Moroccan case, the weekly audience figures show in particular an increase that reaches 90 minutes regarding the duration that the Moroccan individual spends per day in

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front of his television set during the period that we observed between May 3 and July 4, 2017, covering the four weeks of Ramadan.

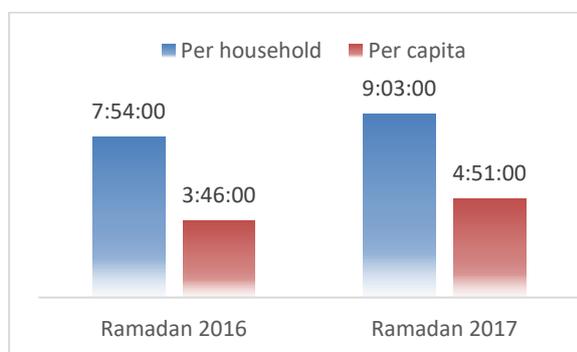
Fig. 2: Viewing duration in minutes



| Source: Ciaumed, TV audience, Ramadan, May and July 2017

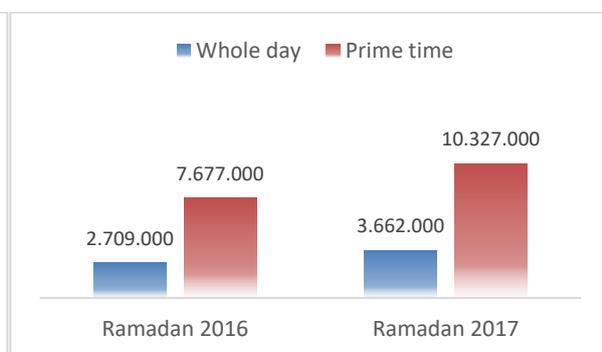
Similarly, we have witnessed an increase in this duration that has exceeded 60 minutes per individual or household between Ramadan 2016 and Ramadan 2017, by comparing the audience reports of Ramadan for the two years. As for the national broadcasters, the prime time attracted more than 10 million viewers for their channels in 2017, with an increase of more than 2.5 million since the previous year.

Fig. 3: Viewing duration in hours



| Source: Ciaumed, TV audience, Ramadan, 2016 and 2017

Fig. 4: Number of viewers of national channels



| Source: Ciaumed, TV audience, Ramadan, 2016 and 2017

The data presented in the foregoing show that Moroccan television consumption is no exception compared to other products. If these data help to get a general idea about this type of consumption, our field study will try to zoom more on a large part of the Moroccan population, namely youth. It will check if Ramadan still arouses interest of the young people of this country to consume the programs broadcast on television.

2. FROM SPECTAOR TO CREATOR

Today, television is changing on several levels: it is transitioning from analogue to digital, from scheduled broadcasts to on-demand TV on the internet, from lean back (passive) to lean-forward (active) media, from straight watching to consumption of content connected to additional services, from the solitary TV viewer to the viewer who is part of social networks and communities related to TV content, from single-screening to multi-screening, etcetera. (Medina, Herrero, Guerrero, 2015).

To highlight these changes, Perticoz & Dessinges (2015) suggest three conceptual axes to formalize the questions related to the current modes of audio-visual consumption. These axes are viewing autonomy, connected interfaces and participation. They evoke the example of the consumption of television series which 1) can be included in the program schedule of a channel or not, 2) can be viewed on a television set or on several screens and 3) can be limited to "spectatorship" or give rise to different forms of sharing (which may include the creation of new content). These axes and this example bring us closer to the purpose of this work related to young Moroccans' viewing habits of television programs in Ramadan.

2.1. AXIS OF VIEWING AUTONOMY

If we want to talk about an original way of watching television, we can suggest "Appointment viewing" as explained by Hecht (2016), when viewers schedule time – or make appointments – to watch their favorite shows. Shows could only be watched on a television set at the time when the network or cable company choose to broadcast them, and unless one used a VCR to record the episode there was little-to-no opportunity to watch the episode at a later time (later, that technology switched to DVR). Having only one chance and one way to watch a TV show made the broadcast time very important. In fact, having a single chance to watch a program attracts advertisers to acquire advertising space and target audiences that match their customer segments.

As for the video recorder, its arrival in the mid-1970s was a first step to extend the range of viewing autonomy. However, Beuscart et al. (2012) note that viewers remained reliant on the timing of the first broadcast. Thus, Perticoz and Dessinges (2015) consider that autonomy becomes possible only after the time "t0" of the first broadcasting.

With the advent of satellite television during the 1990s, the liberalization of the media as it happened in some Middle Eastern countries led to a spectacular surge in pan-Arab television

empires, reaching 1,300 channels in 2014 (Arab States Broadcasting Union). This has given Arabic-speaking viewers, including Moroccans, a wide range of program choices, but also of viewing times with channels that broadcast their programs 24 hours a day, with more time for rebroadcasting out of prime time.

The 2000s were marked by the emergence of social networks including You Tube for sharing video content, but also video-on-demand platforms such as Netflix that came with content available online at any time. This has freed the viewer from the authority of viewing appointments and thus allowed him to combine the consumption of imposed programs that obliged him to be in front of his television and programs that were more suitable in terms of broadcasting schedules, which reaches the form that Perticoz and Dessinges (2015) describe as self-programming. By this term, they mean "a way of consumption that is desynchronized vis-à-vis the program grid, potentially fragmented on different media according to different times and spaces. In any case, it is a programming that adjusts to the time, the media and the desires of consumers"

In response, broadcasters like MBC and Rotana set up their own Video On Demand (VOD) services, while the paid OSN network started offering premium subscriptions for series (Buccianti, 2016). In the same way, the telecommunication companies took the opportunity to set foot on the video-on-demand market by offering subscriptions to the video-on-demand platforms, which was the case in Morocco for Maroc Telecom with STARZ Play and Inwi with iflix.

On the other hand, should we draw attention to hacking practices that are spreading through illegal downloads and streaming websites. Piracy has adapted to new possibilities provided by digital platforms as well as audiences' recent behaviors. This includes social interaction around content and binge watching of entire seasons of television programs. (Buccianti, 2016). Binge watching can be defined as "The experience of watching multiple episodes of a program in one sitting" (Pittman & Sheehan, 2015). In addition to buying video compact discs (VCDs) and digital video discs (DVDs), audiences now have access to downloads through social media and forums that redirect them to cyberlocker websites, file sharing programs, Bit Torrents and illegal streaming of pirated content on video sharing platforms such as YouTube, Daily motion and others (Buccianti, 2016).

Similarly, YouTube has launched two dedicated platforms to be hubs for Arab film and drama productions in collaboration with rights-holding producers. The first was "YouTube Aflam", created in 2015, including about 1,500 high-quality Arab films, some dating back to the 1930s (Bucciati, 2016). The second was "YouTube Mosalsalat", created in 2016, with more than 500 of the most iconic Arab series dating back to 1962 (Think Marketing Magazine). Similarly, the massive advertising during peak periods has also caused dissatisfaction and migration of some viewers to the web to watch their favorite programs. Audience in Egypt, for example, launched a Twitter hashtag, "#LessAds", during Ramadan 2015 to complain about the length and frequency of ad breaks on television. As a result, demand for content on YouTube increased. It is no longer uncommon to find episodes of soap operas on YouTube minutes after they have been broadcast on television, or even before the broadcast (Bucciati, 2016). To cope with this, producers and broadcasters increasingly tend to agree to redirect viewers to legal distribution platforms.

These changes in the audiovisual environment that affected the programming identify imposed programming and self-programming as the two extremes of this axis of viewing autonomy.

2.2. AXIS OF CONNECTED INTERFACES

Television has always had to deal with developments driven by the rise of new technologies. Since the beginning of the 20th century, television operators have always shown great adaptability to technological developments, even taking advantage of them to develop their offer and remain at the forefront of the media landscape.

The variety of media platforms has allowed both broadcasters and viewers to use other platforms to broadcast or consume content. This is a situation with media convergence as a main feature, according to Jenkins (2006). He defines the concept as the flow of content through multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries and the migratory behavior of media audiences who, in their quest for experiences and entertainment that they like, would go and search everywhere.

Thus, we consider it useful to link the media convergence to the concepts of "cross-media", "trans-media" and "multi-screens", explained by Gaultier and Fonnet (2015) as follows:

- Cross-media promotes synergies between the media. This improves the impact of the message;

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- Trans-media offers a fragmented narration of programs on different media in a sequential use;
- Multi-screen refers to the development of the simultaneous use of television screens and those of PCs, tablets and smartphones.

In the same way, the commoditization of access to Internet and the variety of devices favoring a wider broadcast of audio-visual contents allowed the emergence of new ways of consumption that complicated the historical figure of TV spectator. Thanks to the modalities of access to the contents (television, downloading, streaming, etc.), which have succeeded each other since the beginning of the 2000s but also to the multiplication of the means to watch them (television sets, computer screens, tablets, smartphones, etc.), the viewer has had a vast array of choices (Perticoz, Dessinges, 2015).

In figures, the Nielsen Global Digital Landscape Survey of the third quarter of 2014 highlights the percentages of use of devices to watch video programs by age category and location:

Fig. 5: Device usage by generations

	In-home				Out-of-home			
	TV	PC	TEL	TAB	TV	PC	TEL	TAB
Generation Z (15-20)	53%	65%	38%	20%	13%	26%	59%	13%
Generation Y (21-34)	55%	60%	42%	24%	16%	24%	59%	17%
Generation X (35-49)	69%	53%	30%	24%	17%	23%	57%	18%
Baby-boomers (50-64)	79%	52%	18%	16%	20%	24%	58%	14%
Silent generation (65+)	90%	34%	6%	15%	39%	22%	42%	11%

TV: Television set - PC: Computer - TEL: Telephone - TAB: Tablet

| Source: Nielsen Global Digital Landscape Survey Q3 2014

According to data from this international survey, using television to watch video programs is of interest to older generations as compared to younger people who use more computers and phones outside.

The changes that media consumption habits can undergo through the different stages of life provoke a debate. To this end, the Nielsen Total Audience Report of the fourth quarter of 2015, analyzes this aspect more deeply for young Americans aged 18 to 34 (generation Y or millennials) by segmenting them into three distinct groups: "dependent adults" (living in

someone else's home, especially in their parents' home); "Alone" (living in their own house without children); And "Starting a family" (living in their own house with children). For example, with respect to the possession of devices, dependent adults (living in someone else's house) come with the highest PC penetration rate. As for those living alone, they have the greatest possession of multimedia devices and video-on-demand (VOD) subscriptions.

Taken together, these data encourage an extension of the viewing process to other devices and the emergence of the concept of a "second screen" that could be an opportunity for broadcasters to enrich the experience of audiovisual consumption to be an "interactive TV".

For the same purpose, Abreu, Almeida, Silva and Oliveira (2015) highlight researches on the use of complementary mobile devices that were made even before the recent widespread release of smartphones and tablets. From proposals on the use of mobile devices as TV remotes (Enns & Mackenzie 1998, De Vet & Buil, 1999) to the work of Cruickshank, et al. that suggested in 2007 the inclusion of a second screen in the ecosystem of television providing a set of features including an EPG, many have discussed the role that these devices may have in the ecosystem of television. Moreover, Hecht (2016) explains that a "second screen" is any mobile device used to access supplementary content or facilitate discussion with other viewers, and is used while the user is watching television. By providing content for a second screen that is only accessible during the live broadcast of a show, show runners and networks encourage viewers to tune in. For example, hashtags on Twitter and Facebook are often launched to accompany the broadcasting of certain programs, thus constituting a platform for exchange and discussion between viewers. Which leads us to interactive television, which we will discuss more in depth in the next axis.

Finally, Perticoz & Dessinges (2015) consider that unimodal viewing and multimodal viewing are located at both ends of the axis of connected interfaces.

2.3. AXIS OF PARTICIPATION

As a social object, television programs have always attracted comments, discussions and opinions about them. However, the media convergence has imposed an order characterized by a participation not only in real time, but also asynchronously. The latter can be closely linked to the trans-media storytelling which Scolari (2009) describes as a particular narrative structure that extends through different languages (verbal, iconic, etc.) and media (cinema, comics, television, video games, etc.). For him, Trans-media Storytelling is not just an

adaptation of one media to another. In our context, Jost (2015) and Honore (2016) talk about the possibility for television products to use other media technologies, both in their production processes and by broadcasting on other platforms.

As we have already discussed in this paper, screens multiplication and mobility create new possibilities the 3A (Any device, Anytime, Anywhere). As Patino, Gaultier and Fonnet (2015) believe, each time one of these elements changes, the service must adapt. This is a new way to satisfy and retain audiences by enabling them to find the universe of their programs regardless of devices, location and time. Moreover, Lafrance (2009) and Cloutier-Breault (2011) argue that for several years and especially since the widespread of Internet, bidirectional and even multidirectional interactive television, wishing to transform the viewer into an actor, seems to replace the unidirectional model of traditional television.

Accordingly, Medina, Herrero and Guerrero (2015) find that broadcasters are trying to develop sophisticated tools for integrating connected television. Their aim is to drive viewer integration, engagement and loyalty in order to increase popularity, online audiences and advertising revenues. In addition, television applications and multi-screen solutions provide new ways of use. These applications allow users to :

- See what their friends are watching and invite them to watch simultaneously;
- Talk, share and tweet about TV programs;
- Receive additional information on the content broadcast on screen;
- Instantly buy products and download content (songs, series, books, games);
- Interact with ads to participate in competitions, votes, surveys, etc.

Statistically speaking, figures from Social Bakers' first quarter of 2017 report Media Insights and Benchmarks Global show a strong presence of mainstream groups in television industry with four of them among the top 5 Facebook pages of media brands regarding the number of fans, including MTV in the lead, bringing together a community of more than 49 million fans. However, as far as engagement rate is concerned, none of the four pages is in the top five, while the pages of "Esporte Interativo" and "Fox News" are present respectively with 165 million and 134 million of interactions. This raises questions about the importance and effectiveness of engagement policies in communication strategies on social media for both cases.

In Africa, Social Bakers' first quarter of 2017 Media Insights and Benchmarks Africa report shows that MBC group's dedicated Egyptian channel "MBC Masr" gathers the largest Facebook fan community in the category of media industry pages with more than 19 million fans. Moroccan internet broadcasting channel "Chouf TV" is in the fifth position with more than 11 million fans. The latter is the second of the media pages regarding users' engagement and its page is the only one of its kind among the top 5 African media pages on Facebook, with more than 62 million interactions.

Considering the data discussed in this axis of participation, we return once again to Perticoz and Dessinges (2015) who consider that "spectature" and creation are thus positioned at both ends of the axis.

3. FIELD STUDY

To be able to answer our research question, we chose to conduct a field study likely to help us verify the following hypotheses:

H1: Young Moroccans are still interested in Ramadan programs on television channels.

H2: Viewing autonomy affects young Moroccans' consumption of TV programs during Ramadan

H3: Availability of connected interfaces affects young Moroccans' consumption of TV programs during Ramadan

H4: Possibilities of participation affect young Moroccans' consumption of TV programs during Ramadan.

3.1. METHODS

In order to identify the television consumption behavior of Moroccan youth during Ramadan, we opted for a quantitative study casting light on their preferences and viewing habits.

Covering a sample of 180 young Moroccans from different socio-professional categories, our study was conducted during the month of Ramadan in the summer of 2017 and had the following objectives:

- Measuring their interest vis-à-vis Ramadan TV programs;
- Analyzing impacts of IT on their TV consumption behavior;

- If appropriate, identifying factors explaining this impact of IT on this consumption behavior.

The study data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire distributed to youth on the internet. It consisted mainly of closed questions (single choice and multiple choice) and scales. As for the content of the questions, it consisted of five sections: equipment possessed by young Moroccan viewers, their viewing preferences, their viewing habits, discussion, sharing and creation and finally respondent's identity. All of the interviewees were asked questions about the equipment. However, the viewing preferences was the section where whether respondents expressed interest in Ramadan programs and then answered questions about their viewing habits of these programs; or expressed their lack of interest and then were asked to give the main causes and the means of entertainment which came in substitution.

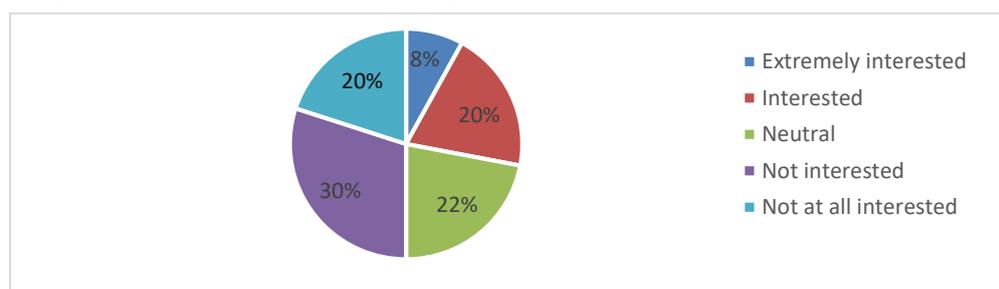
The methods we have chosen for the results' analysis were flat sorting where we analyzed each variable according to the answers of the respondents and crossed sorting which allowed us to have an idea about the level of correlation between two variables.

3.2. FINDINGS

Our sample is made of young people under 41: 53% women and 47% men, with different socio-professional categories that are represented by 33.3% executives, 31.2% students, 22.2% employees, 5.6% professionals and the rest are unemployed. We also mention that 52% of the population live with their parents, 24.6% already started a family, 19% live alone and 4.5% live with roommates.

More than half of the studied population have television sets and computers. Similarly, almost all of them possess smartphones. As for the internet connection, the vast majority is connected via ADSL and more than a half via the 4G mobile network.

Fig. 6: Interest in Ramadan TV programs



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The results show that only 50% of the surveyed population have a sort of interest toward Ramadan TV programs. On the other hand, the other 50% don't express any interest.

For those who are not interested in Ramadan programs, content is the main reason for more than two-thirds. For entertainment, 54% spend time on social media, whilst 50% download and watch long-form videos (series, films, etc.).

For consumers of Ramadan programs, sitcoms interest more than half of respondents, followed by soap operas and prank shows. Nearly a third of them watch them alone, while the others still watch them with family.

To watch the Ramadan programs, it is true that the majority do it in the first broadcast on television, but more than a third of respondents use the internet for the same purpose.

For those respondents who use the Internet, the main reason is that television broadcasting schedules are not appropriate (91%). The large amount of ads comes second to about half of them. They are 85% to use YouTube and almost half to use video-on-demand platforms.

As for the use of devices, television sets come first, but just for a bit less than two-thirds. Smartphones and computers manage to attract one third and one quarter respectively. The most interesting is that almost half of the viewers always or often use a second device simultaneously with the viewing process. This use is for a few respondents related to the content viewed on the main screen.

Nearly 45% of viewers sometimes discuss the content of Ramadan programs and nearly 30% do so often or always. They mostly discuss with friends or relatives face-to-face (84%) and less on social media (26%). Their interactions are mostly about criticisms (72%), and less about recommendations, encouragements or admiration (~ 25%).

With regard to the crossing of the different variables of the study with the variables of sex, age, occupation, household, or even equipment and internet connection, the results show a weak correlation between these elements in the Moroccan context of Ramadan. As a result, demographic variables do not imply the consumption behavior of Moroccan youth on television.

3.3. RESULTS DISCUSSION

In general, the results obtained during the survey suggest that television no longer dominates entertainment during Ramadan. If we compare young people who watch Ramadan programs on television to the entire surveyed population, they would barely make one third. Based on our analysis, we were able to draw different conclusions regarding the following points:

- Interest in Ramadan television programs

Traditional television has no longer the same strong hold during Ramadan in the second decade of the 21st century not only because of technological change, but also because of content quality, being a major component of the television offer, and then the customer value proposition as part of broadcasters' business model.

This leads us to question our first hypothesis: Young Moroccans are still interested in Ramadan programs on television channels.

- Viewing autonomy

Many young Moroccans are now using streaming and video-on-demand services to watch their favorite programs in a way that better matches their schedule during their Ramadan day. Therefore, we can confirm our second hypothesis: The autonomy of viewing affects young Moroccans' consumption of television programs during Ramadan.

- Connected interfaces

In addition to television sets, other devices are gaining more ground as means of audiovisual consumption for young people during Ramadan. Similarly, second screens are now ubiquitous in this consumption process, but the exploitation by broadcasters still does not give results in terms of expansion of the television offer because, mostly, the content viewed on second screens has nothing to do with the content broadcast on the main screens.

Brought together, these elements encourage us anyway to confirm our third hypothesis: The availability of connected interfaces affects young Moroccans' consumption of television programs during Ramadan.

- Participation

Young Moroccans do participate in discussions about television programs, but this discussion remains more focused on face-to-face and less on social media. As a result, we see a more or less weak role of IT as tools for discussion and therefore as a vector of transformation toward an interactive television. Therefore, and taking into account the IT context of our research, we can say that our study was not completely successful in proving that the possibilities of participation affect young Moroccans' consumption of television programs during Ramadan.

Half of the respondents express no interest in Ramadan programs on Moroccan and Arab channels, 22% express a neutral attitude, while only 28% clearly express their interest. Based on this result, our sample is divided into two subpopulations: the first includes those who have no interest in viewing these programs, and the second one of those who are neutral or interested in viewing them. In what follows, we will try to analyze the reasons of reluctance of the first ones towards the television, and the behavior of viewing of the second ones.

CONCLUSION

The variety of electronic devices and online platforms has given young people many possibilities for the consumption of audiovisual content. By choosing the case of the month of Ramadan with all its features affecting Moroccans' way of living, we have tried through this work to analyze the effects of information technologies on audiovisual consumption during this special time of the year. These effects were highlighted in this paper by means of a literature review and a field study.

Thus, we have tried to measure the attachment of generations Y and Z, considered as "digital natives", to television during Ramadan. In the same way, we have theoretically detailed and practically investigated in a Moroccan context the three axes of the Perticoz and Dessingé's vision sketching a profile of the television viewer becoming a television actor in the digital era. The evidence of his work suggests that young Moroccans fit more into this approach as far as autonomy of viewing and connected interfaces are concerned and less regarding the participation component.

In addition to this, we have witnessed a low impact of demographic variables (age, gender, occupation, etc.) on audiovisual consumption behavior of young Moroccans in Ramadan.

On a scientific level, this work made a contribution in opening a new research track in the MENA region, allying researches related to Ramadan in its socioeconomic and behavioral aspects to those related to media industry, regarding strategic and technological aspects.

Practically speaking, our work seeks a further understanding of viewership behavior during Ramadan beyond the viewership rates that give broadcasters in Morocco general information about the issue and only help making comparisons between TV channels. The results of our study have stressed the importance for broadcasters to be interested in rethinking their broadcast content, considering its key role in building audience loyalty, away from any complacency caused by high audience figures.

Similarly, we have tried to shed light on the technological changes in terms of elements threatening the strong position of Moroccan broadcasters during the month of Ramadan, but also in terms of opportunities that would be offered to them if they find their way to adaptation. For this, we cannot deny the importance of engagement on social media to better engage viewers in the online conversation or to make use of the possibilities of second screens to keep the attention of the consumer during the viewing process.

As any scientific research work remains incomplete, carrying out this work should have taken account of the following elements to increase its scientific value:

- Enlarging the sample to reach more Generation Z youth and thus be able to see the differences between the two current young generations Y and Z;
- Introducing more variables such as the living area (urban / rural) or the level of education that can serve to make more crossings that could be significant;
- Using a more detailed questioning of young people who are not interested in Ramadan television programs and whether they are interested in TV during ordinary periods. This would help us understand more deeply the brakes and disruptive elements related to this consumption.

Finally, this study has gone some way towards enhancing our understanding of modern television consumption behavior, which is a topic that remains one of the best choices for a researcher combining marketing with media studies in his works. In addition, media industries, especially television industry, are still evolving and introduce us to future research perspectives, by deepening studies, expanding samples and introducing other variables that discuss topics such as content, convergence, or second screens.

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