

# Do You Still Watch the News on TV? Examining TV News Viewing among Malaysians Today

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**Abstract:** *Television has long been recognized as a significant source of news for the mass public. Research has shown the rise and fall in the public viewing of news on television due to the advancement of digital technologies. Younger audiences, in particular, have turned to social media to access news and this trend is rapidly growing. The current study sought to ascertain if this was the case for people who may continue to watch television news despite the said technological advances. Interviews with 40 individuals from the East Malaysian state of Sarawak were conducted to gather their views on whether people living in Malaysia still watch television news and the factors contributing to this trend. The findings show that television remains an integral part of the participants' everyday lives and that it continues to be an important medium for disseminating news. While the younger participants reported that they regularly accessed news on social media, they still turned to television as a more reliable and trustworthy news source. The findings revealed several factors that contributed to television news viewing among the participants: the social-familial, the situational-environmental, the personal, and the technological. The findings shed useful insights into the current trend of television news viewing among the mass public as the world is gradually ending the COVID-19 pandemic and transitioning into endemic while experiencing news consumption on digital media.*

**Keywords:** television, news, digital technologies, COVID-19

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## 1. Introduction

Traditional TV watching has become a staple in the lives of many people throughout the world. One of the many reasons for this situation is the drive or need to watch TV news broadcasts to stay regularly updated with the latest news, events, and happenings at local, national, regional, and/or international levels. TV news viewing, and so is traditional TV viewing, experienced and continues to experience a decline among the masses due to the rise of digital media. More and more people, particularly young viewers, are moving away from television and gravitating towards digital media as a source of news and information. This is hardly surprising as the digital environment in which we live has become a key component in how we access and keep up with the latest news and information. The current generation of young people often referred to as the "digital savants" or "digital natives", continue to change the way TV news and other forms of news media are consumed given their ability to master new technology quickly compared to other generations. TV news viewing looked like it was going to become obsolete. However, unpredictable future events may affect the way we consume TV news. The COVID-