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**Title**

**Program Source, Program Genre, and Audience Preference:  
A Cross-Cultural Perspective of Television Fiction Audience**

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## Abstract

This paper examines the consumption and appropriation of transnational television programming among young audiences under the current global milieu of media deregulation and increasing cross-border television flow. Seeing television audiences as “active and creative consumers” who are eligible of choosing the media they consume and making sense of the texts they watch, it juxtaposes three sets of research interest in contemporary communication studies: transnational television flow, cross-cultural audience, and media consumption among youth.

Focusing on a popular program type, television fiction, this study explores audience consumption of an array of similar program types imported from multiple sources to a single country. Given the soft and entertaining characteristics of television fiction, it inherits high universal appeal to heterogeneous audiences around the world. On the other hand, the dramatic, story-telling, and serial formats of such program type also warrant open and versatile readings by different individuals. The viewing experiences of transnational television fictions are, therefore, uniquely connected with the specific cultural backgrounds and social positions of their audiences in the receiving countries.

Drawing from qualitative in-depth interview data, this paper aims to uncover the meanings that underpin young audiences’ viewing routines, feelings, and experiences. Different typologies are developed to illuminate how Taiwanese young people choose, evaluate, and make sense of imported television fictions that represent different degrees of cultural affinity and geo-linguistic proximity. The sources of imported television fictions include the United States, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Mainland China and Hong

Kong. The study found that the nexus between audience preference and transnational television programming not only reflects the search of cultural relevance in young people's media use, but also highly related to program type. Overall, this paper addresses the issue of the relationship between viewing preference, program source, and program genre. It also discusses the various mechanisms that young audiences operate to manage the embedded geographic and cultural distances they encounter when watching imported television fictions.