

Modernism as a Function of TV Viewing, Gender, and Cultural Setting

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The influence of television viewing, gender, and cultural setting on modernism among school going adolescents was measured on a sample of 160 adolescents (80 TV viewers, 80 non-TV viewers) with gender equivalence from four rural and urban based secondary schools. Modernism Scale (Singh, Tripathi, & Lal, 1987) was administered. Findings revealed that non-TV viewers were significantly higher as compared to TV viewers on Socioreligious modernism. TV viewers were found to be significantly higher as compared to non-TV viewers on Educational modernism. Female TV viewers scored significantly higher as compared to male TV viewers on Position of Women and Educational modernism. Rural-cultured TV viewers scored significantly higher than urban-cultured TV viewers on Marriage and Educational modernism.

Keywords: modernism, TV viewing, gender, cultural setting, entertainment

Modernism is primarily a state of mind. It creates and grasps such elements of human consciousness which enable the individual being to adjust his inner being to rapidly changing conditions of modern complex societies. Cormack (1961) investigated the views of Indian students about modernity and as per Indian students, modernity refers to (a) new ways of doing things, (b) scientific ideas, (c) the secular ways of life, (d) making one's destiny, and (e) the western ways of life. Inkeles (1966) has pointed out that a modern man believes that man can learn, in substantial degree, to dominate his environment in order to advance his own purposes and goals rather than being dominated entirely by the environment. Further, he has more awareness of the diversity of attitude and opinion around him rather than closing himself off in the belief that everyone thinks alike

and, indeed, just like him, i.e., the modern man is democratic by nature rather than dogmatic.

In this era, television (TV) is considered as the most potent and easiest entertainment means to affect the lives of human beings. Today the lives minus TV viewing are the most unthinkable point. Taj and Masthan (1998) stated that TV is the most effective modern device which has conquered the imagination of any person of any perspective. It is a fact that despite there is several rudimentary and modern techniques of mass communication responsible for several modern perspectives; TV has gained an edge over all of them and has risen beyond in the imagination of knowledge. Chopra (1988) observed a positive relationship between the frequency of students watching movies and their modernization scores. The modernization score for the groups watching movies four times or more a week was the highest. They were followed by those who viewed movies thrice a week, twice a week, and once a week or less.

TV, the wonder child of mass media, is often blamed by the parents for children's poor academic performance (Anuradha & Bharathi, 2001). Singh and Kaur (2000) found that those parents who punish their children physically and express dissatisfaction with their children's accomplishments and characteristics are responsible for their children's preference to watch more and more TV. Since their relations with parents are unsatisfied they spend more time watching TV. Limiting and modifying children's TV viewing appears to be an appropriate concern for many parents (Exon, 1982). Several authors opined that in order to reduce negative effects of television viewing on children, parents should control their children's excessive TV watching (Prawd, 1995; Rajani, 1987; Singer, 1989).

Dorr and Rubin (1995) studied that those children who spend several hours or more a day watching television, no matter what the content being telecasted, are less social. There were fairly good evidences that greater amount of viewing were associated with less satisfactory social relationship, fewer interpersonal interactions, lower reading skills, lower school achievement, and fatter bodies. So, in order to reduce the extent of TV viewing by the children and also to improve their academic performance, parents have to exercise certain disciplinary practices. TV is a powerful medium if properly integrated within classroom teaching, can definitely make the teaching-learning process more dynamic, effective, meaningful, and interesting and helps in improving the quality of education which is the ultimate goal today (Taj & Masthan, 1998). Singh and Kaur

(1997) studied the impact of TV programmes on the sociopsychological behaviours of urban primary school children as perceived by their mothers. The results revealed a positive impact of TV on the psychosocial behaviours of the primary school children and also indicated positive effect of TV viewing on certain biographical data like health, education, age, income, time-duration, etc. due to heavy TV viewing.

Kaur (1998) stated that television is a potent medium of information, education and entertainment. It is one of the most significant technological developments for the uplift of the society. The viewing of TV has influenced the social life of both urban and rural adults. The researchers studied the TV viewing behaviour of adults (Joshi & Laharia, 1992; Narayanan, 1987; Rao, 1992; Thomas & Tiwari, 1986; Tiwari, Singh, & Rath, 1997); impact of TV viewing on their knowledge, attitude and awareness (Chopra, 1990); as well as on different aspects of life (Chopra, 1990; Narayanan, 1987; Rao, 1992). Leifer, Gordon, and Graves (1974) have pointed out that TV is not only entertainment for children, but it is also an important socializing agent for them. TV characters present models for different life roles, for sex-appropriate behaviour, and for career. This has given children insight into what the social group expects of them. Cultural setting or differences is also responsible for bringing about modernity in the society. The basic assumption is that culture determines behaviour of people through their social spaces in a characteristic way.

Social change is a universal feature of every society. The process of modernisation is frequently equated with economic development and indeed a certain level of technological and economic organization is required. In present context, modernism at the individual level is the subject of discussion which includes such characteristic as an openness of mind, latitude for choice and innovation, freedom of thought and action, achievement orientation, secularism and a flexible personality (Damle, 1970). Inkeles (1966) has identified nine themes to characterize a modern man as: (i) One who shows readiness for new experience and exhibits openness to innovation and change; (ii) has the capacity to hold opinion about various issues and problems; (iii) has more democratic orientation to opinion realm; (iv) oriented to present and future, rather than to the past; (v) believes in planning and organizing activities as a way of dealing with life; (vi) is convinced that environment can be controlled to advance his own goals and purposes; (vii) is confident that his world is calculable; (viii) has respect for dignity of other

people; (ix) has more faith in science and technology; and (x) lastly, believes in distributive justice.

Dua (1980) found that TV viewing has direct influence on its viewers; due to it TV watchers are being influenced by western culture at a large extent. Singh and Kaur (1997) opined that TV presents not only life experiences but also presents them more effectively than any other communication media. It educates, informs and entertains. Children are its special audience. There are divergent views about the impact of TV on the behaviour of teenagers. According to Dorr (1986), TV is the most harmful. He calls it an idiot box, the seducer. However, it is beyond doubt to say that TV if used judiciously and selectively acts as a catalytic agent for increasing knowledge.

Adolescence is an impressionable age. It is the period when value system of an individual is crystallized and become guiding force for future life. Joshi and Gautam (2002) emphasized that most of the parents do not trust the child's judgment and it has been observed that at this age children rely more on their friends and media rather than their parents for information. Most parents perceived the power of television to harm or to promote mediocrity among their children. They recognized that television contents dispense misinformation, twisted values, and promote dangerous ideas which are completely devoid of reality. Hence, it was felt that the study of TV viewing pattern of adolescents would give us an insight into the impact of TV on them and may break some existing myths and replace them by some positive facts.

The research studies mentioned above reveal that TV viewing has varying effects on teenagers. Although, the above research findings are conflicting and contradictory, yet they are enlightening. The present study is an attempt to explore the impact of TV viewing on modernism of school-going adolescents in relation to their gender and cultural differences.

Method

Research Design

The objective of the study was to examine the effect of TV viewing, gender, and cultural setting (place of residence) on modernism. For this very purpose, a 2x2x2 factorial Expost-facto nonexperimental design was employed. The sample was classified

into eight groups according to the three specific characteristics of the population i.e., TV viewing behaviour, gender, and cultural setting. All the three independent variables were varied at two levels each. Gender and cultural setting were naturally dichotomous variables, whereas, intensity of the TV viewing behaviour was classified into two groups (TV viewers and non-TV viewers). The extreme grouping of TV viewers and non-TV viewers was determined by using the formula $M \pm SD$.

Operational Definitions

TV Viewing. In this study, those who watched TV for less than 8 hrs. in a week, were labeled as non-TV viewers, while TV viewers were those who were watching television more than 8 hrs. in a week.

Cultural Setting. Cultural setting denotes a marked difference in the rural and urban population of India. They (rural and urban) differ in their customs, beliefs, religious orientations, mode of living, communication, transportation, and housing, and material possession, etc. This difference was termed as cultural setting having two levels--rural and urban.

Sample

To meet the requirements of 2x2x2 factorial design, the stratified random sampling technique was used. Respondents were secondary school-going adolescents in the age range of 13 to 19 years and belonged to the families of middle socioeconomic status. 240 elements were chosen for the sample in the first instance, the final sample of 160 adolescents as per the requirement of the 2x2x2 cells (20 in each cell of the paradigm) was chosen taking in perspective two levels of TV viewing, gender, and cultural setting from four schools randomly selected (2 schools from rural¹ and 2 schools from urban² settings).

¹ Rural Schools: (a). Govt. Senior Secondary School, Mokhra, Rohtak; and (b). Govt. Girls Senior Secondary School, Madina, Rohtak.

² Urban School: (a). Govt. Senior Secondary School, Gandhi Camp, Rohtak; and (b). Govt. Girls Senior Secondary School, Gandhi Camp, Rohtak.

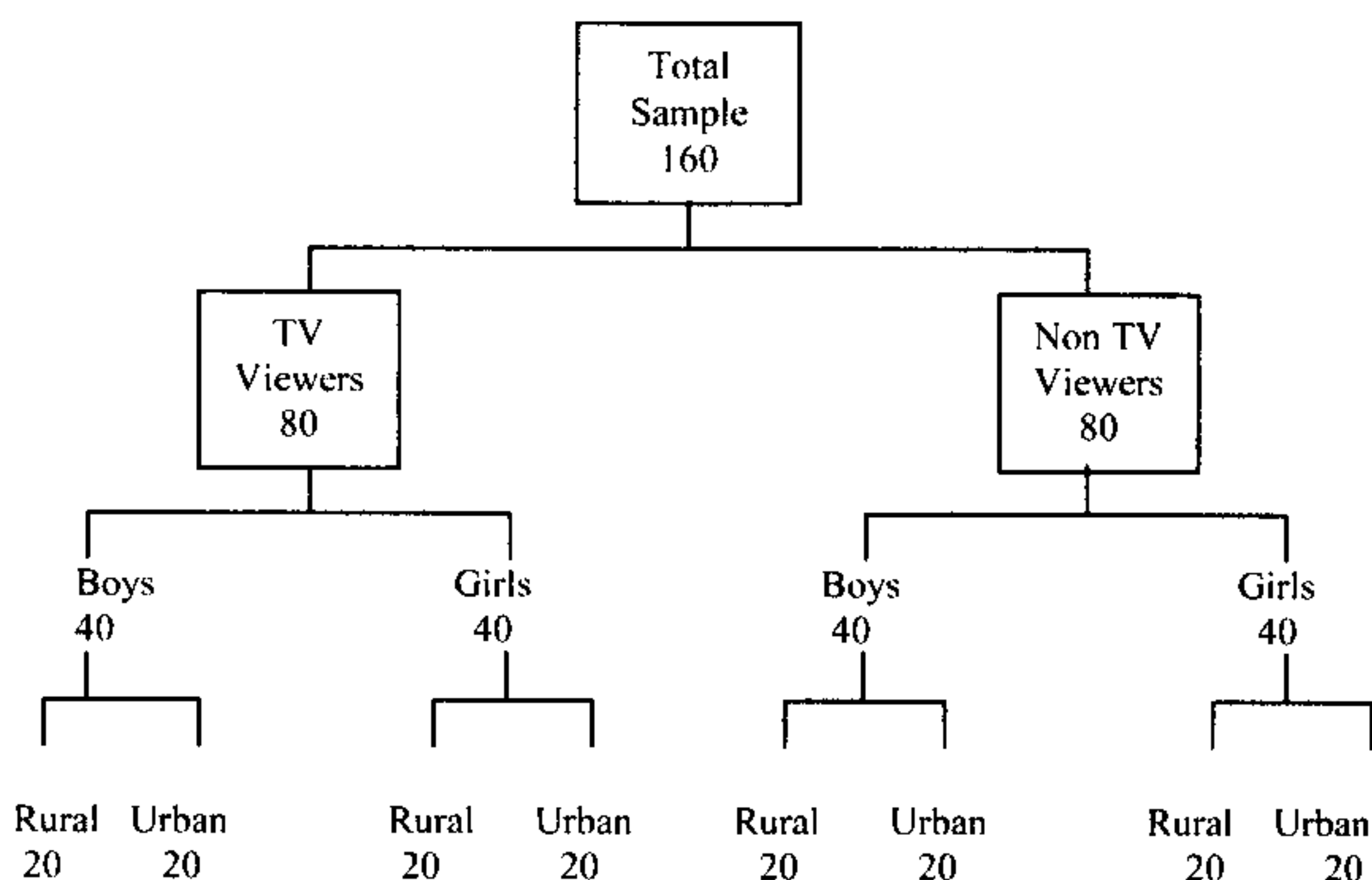


Figure 1. Hierarchy of sample selection.

Instruments

Modernisation Scale (MS). This scale was developed by Singh, Tripathi, and Lal (1987). It consisted of 32 items and measured four areas of modernization, namely: Socioreligious, Marriage, Position of Women, and Educational modernisation. The scale measured attitudes towards love vs. arranged marriage, single vs. joint family, caste system, working women, free interaction of opposite sexes, logical and scientific reasoning, fate and destination, co-education, women participation in politics, and equal pay to both sexes for equal work. Responses were scored on 6-point rating scale ranging from *extremely agree* to *extremely disagree*. The order of the scoring was reversed for negative items 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 31 and 32. The possible range of scores was 32-192. High scores were indicative of high modernity, while low scores indicated conservatism.

In this scale, the mean age of the sample was 19.4. Split-half reliability (odd-even method) was calculated and Spearman-Brown's correction was found to be $r = .78$ for the total scale demonstrating a high reliability of the scale. Content validity was demonstrated by 100% agreement among the five judges (all psychologists) regarding the relevance of the items content to the attitude being measured by the scale. To ascertain construct validity, the scores from each

subscale were correlated with the scores on the total scale. The value of the correlation ranges from .64 to .97. These high correlations demonstrate that subscales have high validity.

Student Information Blank. It was used to get demographic information of the students like age, class level, cultural setting, last years academic achievement, location of schools, education and profession of parents, parental income level and its sources, family system i.e., joint or nuclear family, TV viewing (hours per week), and cable TV facility at home, etc.

Procedure

The student information blank and scale for the measurement of modernism were administered in classroom group setting under proper supervision and strictly adhering to the standardized directions and administration procedures. In order to ensure that subjects did not give socially desirable answers, a brief orientation was given on the set objectives of the study and participants were assured about the complete confidentiality of the information provided by them. The subjects were properly instructed to read, judge and endorse each item of the modernization scale on six point rating scale. The doubts of subjects regarding items were clarified in lucid and relevant style. The scoring was done as per the instructions given in the respective manual. The raw scores were treated for statistical analysis by calculating mean, standard deviations and ANOVA.

Results

The analysis aimed at comparing TV viewers and non-TV viewers, male and female adolescents, and rural-cultured and urban-cultured adolescents on modernism. The raw data were analysed by following mean, standard deviation and Three Way ANOVA (2x2x2 factorial design).

The results (Table 1) on modernism of participants in relation to their TV viewing pattern show that TV viewers and non-TV viewers significantly differ in the area of Socioreligious ($F = 6.42$, $p < .5$) and Educational modernism ($F = 4.78$, $p < .05$). The mean scores indicate that TV viewers are high as compared to non-TV viewers in Educational modernism, while, mean scores of non-TV viewers are found to be high as compared to TV viewers on

Socioreligious. Nonsignificant difference is observed between TV viewers and non-TV viewers on Marriage and Position of Women modernism.

Table 1

Mean, Standard Deviations and F-ratios of TV and Non-TV viewers on Subscales of Modernism (N = 160)

Subscales of modernism	TV viewers (n = 80)		TV viewers (n = 80)		F
	M	SD	M	SD	
Socioreligious	26.06	6.77	28.94	7.29	6.42*
Marriage	30.44	6.66	29.63	6.48	0.66
Position of Women	33.93	7.40	35.44	8.62	1.58
Educational	26.83	8.46	24.45	6.44	4.78*

df=1,152. *p < .05.

On second independent variable, gender, boys and girls significantly differed in the areas of Position of Women ($F = 21.86$, $p < .01$) and Educational ($F = 10.69$, $p < .01$). The mean scores show that girls are found to be higher as compared to boys. Nonsignificant difference was observed between boys and girls on Socioreligious and Marriage modernism (Table 2).

Table 2

Mean, Standard Deviations and F-ratios of Boys and Girls on Subscales of Modernism (N = 160)

Subscales of modernism	Boys (n = 80)		Girls (n = 80)		F
	M	SD	M	SD	
Socioreligious	27.26	7.89	27.74	6.38	0.18
Marriage	30.36	7.02	29.70	6.09	0.44
Position of Women	31.88	7.31	37.49	7.81	21.86**
Educational	23.86	7.23	27.41	7.57	10.69**

df = 1,152. **p < .01.

On third variable cultural setting, rural and urban-adolescents significantly differ in Marriage ($F = 13.45$, $p < .01$) and Educational ($F = 10.39$, $p < .01$). The mean scores indicate that rural-cultured adolescents are higher as compared to urban-cultured adolescents.

Nonsignificant difference is observed on Socioreligious and Position of Women (Table 3).

Table 3

Mean, Standard Deviations and F-ratios of Rural and Urban Students on Subscales of Modernism (N = 160)

Subscales of modernism	Rural (n = 80)		Urban (n = 80)		F
	M	SD	M	SD	
Socioreligious	27.56	7.42	27.44	6.62	0.01
Marriage	31.86	7.16	28.20	5.36	13.45**
Position of Women	34.28	7.53	35.09	8.56	0.46
Educational	27.39	8.23	23.89	6.49	10.39**

df = 1,152. **p < .01.

On the interaction AxB (Table 4), significant differences are found in all the areas of modernism except Marriage. On the interaction BxC, very high significant differences are found in all the areas of modernism except Socioreligious. On the interaction AxC, significant differences are found in all the areas of modernism except Position of Women. On AxBxC interaction, significant differences are found on each component of modernism.

Table 4

Interaction Effect of TV Viewing (A), Gender (B), and Cultural Setting (C) on Subscales of Modernism (N = 160)

Subscales of modernism	AxB	BxC	AxC	AxBxC
Socioreligious	7.91**	0.34	6.67*	8.35**
Marriage	3.79	14.73**	16.26**	22.09**
Position of Women	23.56**	26.69**	2.15	28.71**
Educational	28.03**	21.27**	18.74**	44.71**

df = 1,152. *p < .05. **p < .01.

Discussion

The primary purpose of the present study was to compare TV viewers' and non-TV viewers' modernism. The result of the study showed that TV viewers as compared to non-TV viewers were high

on Educational modernism (Table 1). This leads to a conclusion that TV viewers are fond of studying in co-educational system and believe in equal educational rights for men and women. It may be because of the imitation of mini-screen heroes and heroines in their college/school life style, personal liking and romantic expressions as also supported by Page and Crawley (2001). On the other hand, non-TV viewers were found to be scoring high as compared to TV viewers on Socioreligious modernism (Table 1). It concludes that non-TV viewers are usually found to believe in eradication of caste system, no belief in superstitions and no hate with SC and ST (backward people of India), may be because of healthy social interaction which is away from the televised life style of people.

Studies have shown that excessive TV viewing has various kinds of negative impacts on social response of viewers (Murray, 1993; National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 1982; Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee, 1972). While, on two other areas of modernism nonsignificant difference exists, but only mean scores of TV viewing on Marriage and Position of Women modernism was found to be high as compared to non-TV viewers. It can be concluded that Marriage modernism and Position of Women are not being significantly affected by TV viewing due to deeply rooted Indian cultural setup from childhood period. That is why, even excessive TV viewing can not change the accepted and normative value-system and traditional and rigid life style of people.

Another prominent purpose of the present study was to compare boys and girls on their modernism. The obtained results showed that girls as compared to boys scored significantly high on Position of Women and Educational modernism (Table 2). The finding purports that female adolescents believe in equal social status among men and women, right to take part in politics and right to vote in election. Along this, they also believe in co-curricular activities to be in schools, job-oriented education and no rigid discipline for female adolescents in schools. Nonsignificant difference was found in the areas of Socioreligious and Marriage modernism among boys and girls. The mean scores of girls as compared to boys exceed in all areas of modernism except Marriage modernism. The reason is apparent that boys are not dependent in approach as girls like to seek support and advice from others, to follow others and get easily discouraged (Chadha, 1984). That's why, men can take step for love Marriage easily as compare to women. Gender like an indicator is also twinkling and shows that gender affects almost all the areas of modernism.

The exposure to the cultural setting portrays significant differences that exist in Marriage and Educational modernism. Rural-cultured adolescents were found to be high as compared to urban-cultured adolescents on Marriage and Educational modernism (Table 3). It is in accordance with day to day perception in this society that rural beings believe in simple arrangement at the time of marriage ceremony due to low socio-economic status, and on Educational modernism, they believe in job-oriented education to be imparted in school and co-curricular activities to be introduced in schools along with prescribed syllabus. Today, due to rapid increase in population, land holding among farmers is decreasing day by day. So, the rural-cultural adolescents now want to get job-oriented education. On Socioreligious and Position of Women, nonsignificant difference was observed (Table 3).

On the interaction AxB (Table 4), significant differences were found in all the areas of modernism except Marriage. It is found that gender (B) independently has no significant contribution in the development of Socioreligious modernism (Table 2). Interaction between TV viewing (A) and gender (B) on Socioreligious modernism has been found significant at $p < .01$ level. The significant contribution of gender in combination with TV viewing may be due to different intensity of TV viewing in boys and girls, significant F -ratio of TV viewing may also be one reason of significant interaction effect. On the other hand, TV viewing does not affect Position of Women (Table 1), while gender does affect (Table 2).

Interaction between TV viewing and gender on Position of Women modernism was found to be significant at $p < .01$ level. The significant contribution of TV viewing in combination with gender may be due to difference in upbringing between boys and girls with different TV viewing behaviour. Very high F -ratio of gender effect may also be one reason of significant interaction effect. In this series, interaction between TV viewing and gender on Educational modernism has been found to be significant at $p < .01$ level. It shows that TV viewing plays a significant role at the two levels of gender and/or gender variation plays a significantly different role at the two levels of TV viewing intensity. High F -ratio of TV viewing effect (Table 1) and very high F -ratio of gender effect (Table 2) may also be one reason of significant effect on Educational modernism.

On the interaction BxC (Table 4), very high significant differences were found in all the areas of modernism except

Socioreligious. It is found that gender (B) independently has no significant contribution in the development of Marriage modernism (Table 2). But interaction between gender and cultural setting (C) on Marriage modernism has been found to be significant at $p < .01$ level. The significant contribution of gender in combination with cultural setting (rural and urban) may be due to different cultural customs, beliefs and mode of liking in boys and girls. Significant F -ratio of cultural setting may also be one reason of significant interaction effect. On the other hand, cultural setting does not affect Position of Women modernism independently (Table 3), while gender does affect (Table 2).

Interaction between cultural setting and gender on Position of Women modernism was found to be significant at $p < .01$ level. The significant contribution of cultural setting in combination with gender may be due to different roles of development in boys and girls in different cultural setting. In this series, interaction between gender and cultural setting on Educational modernism has been found to be significant at $p < .01$ level. It denotes that cultural setting plays a significant role at the two levels of gender and/or gender variation also plays a significantly different role at the two levels of cultural setting. Very high F -ratio of gender and cultural effect may also be one prominent reason of significant effect on Educational modernism.

On the interaction AxC (Table 4), significant differences were found to be in all the areas of modernism except Position of Women. It is found that cultural setting independently has nonsignificant contribution in the development of Socioreligious modernism. Interaction between cultural setting (C) and TV viewing (A) on Socioreligious modernism came to be significant at $p < .05$ level. The significant contribution of cultural setting in combination with TV viewing may be due to different intensity of TV viewing behaviour prevailing in different rural and urban-cultured areas. Significant F -ratio of TV viewing may also be one reason of significant interaction effect (Table 1). On the other hand, it is found that TV viewing independently has nonsignificant contribution in the development of Marriage modernism.

Interaction between TV viewing and cultural setting on Marriage modernism came to be significant at $p < .01$ level. The significant contribution of TV viewing in combination with cultural setting may be due to different mode of thinking, custom and cultural behaviour prevailing in different level of TV viewing behaviour. Very high F -ratio of cultural setting may also be one

reason of significant interaction effect (Table 3). In this series, interaction between TV viewers and cultural setting on Educational modernism has been found to be significant at $p < .01$ level. It denotes that TV viewing plays a significant role at the two levels of cultural setting and/or cultural setting variation plays a significantly different role at the two levels of TV viewing. High F -ratios of TV viewing and very high ratio of cultural setting effect may also be one reason of significant interaction effect on Educational modernism. The findings of the present study are in tune with the views of Hartman and Husband (1971) that the effect of television telecast is gradually to alter the cultural climate and to introduce new values in a slow and diffused way.

On $A \times B \times C$ interaction (Table 4), significant differences were found on each component of modernism. The interaction among TV viewing, gender and cultural setting on Socioreligious, Marriage, Position of Women and Educational modernism was found to be highly significant at $p < .01$ level, which indicates that these variables influence the each component of modernism simultaneously.

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings, it is concluded that all the variables TV viewing, gender and cultural setting effect modernism partially, while, this effect increases with the interaction among the variables. This shows that these variables produce more impact on modernism in combination, while effect only partially when operate independent of each other.

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