



PHENOMENAL SURGE IN WEEKLY TV VIEWING MINUTES (6%) AND WEEKLY TIME SPENT PER USER ON SMARTPHONES (6.2%) AMIDST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

BARC India & Nielsen Explain The Impact Of COVID -19 On TV And Digital Media Behaviour Across India

27th March 2020, Mumbai: On March 24, 2020, with the Prime Minister announcing a total lockdown in the country, people are slowly coming to terms with the new normal. It started with many states enforcing the lock-down, partially and fully, and many places of work enforcing work from home (WFH). Faced with the predicament of not being able to move out of their homes, people are creating new ways of spending time productively.

It is a well known fact that Television Viewing is an integral part of the Indian ethos. An average Indian is known to spend a considerable number of hours with 3 hours, 51 minutes every day on TV. So, it is obvious that forced confinement will lead to changes in TV consumption behaviour.

Today if there is one device besides the TV which is an integral part of the Indian consumers' lives, it is the smartphone. People today depend on their smartphones not just for communication and social interactions, but also for entertainment, banking and financial transactions, purchase of daily need goods like groceries, personal care to durables. It is but natural that this period of forced confinement would also engender some change in the way people interact with their smartphones.

BARC is the official currency on Television Measurement in India and Nielsen runs a 12000 strong smartphone panel passively capturing smartphone behaviour.

BARC and Nielsen have jointly put together a report to understand the changes in consumption behaviours of TV and Smartphones, respectively, given the extraordinary situation surrounding the COVID pandemic and its fallout.

Sharing her views on the current surge in smartphone usage, **Dolly Jha, Country Leader Nielsen Global Media, South Asia** said, "We are living through unprecedented times! Physical Social Distancing seems to have led to a phenomenal growth in Virtual Social Togetherness with an almost 20% increase in time spent per user on Chats, Social Media and News in the last one week. And we anticipate this to grow further"

Elaborating on the topic **Sunil Lulla, Chief Executive Officer, BARC India** said, "These are unfortunate and unprecedented times. Working closely with Nielsen, we bring for our customers and stakeholders, this very significant and important update, on change in content and advertising consumption behaviour, with a significant population at home. We will report soon enough, the impact of total lockdown. Our respective brave teams are working (WFH) round the clock to ensure the TV measurement currency, continues uninterrupted."

Some of the Key Highlights of what we have seen are as follows: -

Considerations:



	BARC	Nielsen Smartphone Panel
Coverage	All India (Urban + Rural)	All India (Urban 1 Lakh plus)
TG	ALL NCCS 2+ years	NCCS ABC 15-44 years Android Smartphone Users
Time Period	PRE COVID - 11th Jan 2020- 31st Jan 2020	PRE COVID - 13th Jan 2020 - 2nd Feb 2020
	COVID DISRUPTION - 14th March 2020 to 20th March 2020	COVID DISRUPTION - 16th March 2020 to 22nd March 2020
Week definition	Saturday to Friday	Monday to Sunday

1. Expectedly the COVID Disruption period has seen an increase in television viewership - 6% increase in TV Reach and 8% increase in TV viewing minutes /week. The time spent on TV / viewer has seen a jump by 2%.

The PMs address to the Nation on complete lockdown garnered unprecedented viewership of 197Mn watching it across the country.

2. When we look at smartphone behaviour the time spent on smartphones per user has gone up by 6.2%. The time spent/user/week on VOD apps has also seen an increase of 3%. If we look at the increase in the time spent/user/week over that of the previous week (to take away the impact of Cricket viewing in the PRE COVID period considered), we can see a jump of 5%.
3. Kids' schools being shut down and the stress of exams off their shoulders; this increase in Television viewing is driven by Kids (+20%). With corporate India getting into Work from Home mode, we are seeing NCCS A showing an 11% increase in viewership. Even on smartphone usage, the increase in driven NCCS A (+7.7%) and 35-44 year olds (+10.7%).
4. People staying at home means watching TV throughout the day and hence the growth in TV viewing is coming during Non-Prime Time slots (8am – 5 pm).
5. The need for continuous updates expectedly has led to a huge increase in news consumption on Television (57% increase in Impressions), while spending more time as a family together could be leading to the Movies genre and the Kids genre also showing significant increases.



6. This behaviour is seen in digital consumption as well with News and Gaming showing huge increases. News apps saw 8% more users per week with an increase of 17% in time spent/user/week. This growth was led by non-English News apps (+87%). Gaming apps saw an increase of 2% in users/week and with a 11% increase in time spent/user/week.
7. With a lot of uncertainty around what is happening, people have increased their time spent on Chatting (+23%) and Social Networking (+25%) apps. Almost all social networking apps - Facebook, Instagram and TikTok have seen significant increases not only in time spent /user/week but also in the sessions/ user/ week.
8. Expectedly Shopping Apps, Travel Apps and Food Apps have seen a huge drop in both users/ week and time spent/user/week.
9. It's not just TV viewership that has seen an increase – we can advertising FCT on TV has increased by 13%.

As the situation continues to evolve in the coming weeks, BARC and Nielsen will also continue to track shifts in TV and Smartphone audience behaviour. Future reports will be released on a weekly basis to keep the ecosystem abreast of how audiences in India are adjusting their TV and Smartphones consumption around the new normal.

About BARC India

Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) India is a Joint Industry Company founded by stakeholder bodies that represent Broadcasters, Advertisers, and Advertising and Media Agencies. Built upon a robust and future-ready technology backbone, BARC India owns and manages a transparent, accurate, and inclusive TV audience measurement system. Apart from the currency products to the TV industry, BARC India also provides a suite of Insight products designed for Broadcasters, Advertisers and Agencies. The Big Data and Insights generated by BARC India powers efficient media spends and content decisions in a highly dynamic and growing television sector. Winner of numerous awards for its technology, innovation and Human Resource practices, the company has grown substantially since its inception.