

Nom del diàleg: Comunicació audiovisual global, diversitat cultural i regulació

Data: 28 Maig

Sessió: Regulació, autoregulació i opinió ciutadana

Ponent: Noa Elefant-Lofler



Absence and Presence in Prime Time: Cultural Diversity in Commercial Television Channels in Israel.

A research conducted by the Second Television and Radio Authority, Israel.

May 2004. Written by Dr. Eli Avraham, Dr. Anat First, and Mrs. Noa Elefant Loffler.

Abstract

The Second Television and Radio Authority focuses on the issue of cultural diversity in its daily work. As part of the effort to foster cultural diversity the authority initiated a large-scale research about the representation of minorities in commercial television.

In this research we've conducted a quantitative content analysis of programs broadcasted on prime time in the two Israeli commercial TV channels during 2003. We have also conducted a qualitative content analysis of drama and satire programs. In addition we've conducted several focus groups in different segments of the Israeli population. The aim of the focus groups was to learn if there's a gap between the results of the content analysis and the perception of the public on its representation.

The content analysis examined three levels of representation. The first is a relatively simple 'head count' – how many characters of each minority group appear in different programs. The second level is the quality of representation – the context, the role of the character, its social status, its behavior etc. The third level is the relations between minority groups and the majority. In that sense we examined the identity of the hosts, presenters, journalists and commentators and their attitudes towards characters from different groups.

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The results show a constant misrepresentation of minority groups. This misrepresentation crosses all minority groups and all genres. The groups that are being most poorly represented are Arabs and Immigrants. These two groups are completely absent from drama, talk shows and game shows. Newscasts and current affairs programs present these groups but with poor quality of representation (compared to other groups) and in poor quantity (compared to their real share in society). Women, religious Jews and oriental Jews are also misrepresented, but less extremely.

There is a dominant presence of the Jewish, white, secular, occidental, non-immigrant male.

Public attitudes, as expressed during the focus groups, combine lack of satisfaction from the representation of minorities on prime time with a general disbelief in the ability to create a social change in that aspect.

Following the results of the research the authority will consider regulatory measures for improving the representation of minorities on commercial TV (e.g. quotas, experts' databases, training programs etc.) as well as promote public discussion on the subject.