

An Analysis of Japanese Audience Response to TV Drama:
Does the Love Story Work For or Against Entertainment Education?

Momoyo K. Shibuya
Faculty of Economics, Saitama University
shibuya@mail.saitama-u.ac.jp

Abstract

In the era of diversity, the idea of entertainment education (E-E) is worth considering in the context of the promotion of multicultural values such as tolerance for diversity in Japan, and impediments in inculcating these values must be identified and overcome. This study aims to provide a basis for the future development of E-E in Japan by investigating the audience response to a Japanese TV serial. The analysis of messages posted on the online bulletin board of a serial confirmed viewers' selective attention and limited educational experience by excessive entertainment. However, it was also revealed that the younger generation achieved a good combination of entertainment with learning. It suggests that an optimal balance of entertainment and education requires the theme of drama not to be too realistic for a targeted audience; they cannot find entertainment in it when a drama is too realistic. This result contributes as a one case study demonstrating the orientation of responses by a Japanese audience.

Key words: Entertainment-Education (E-E), Japanese TV serial, audience response

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Momoyo K. Shibuya
Faculty of Economics, Saitama University
shibuya@mail.saitama-u.ac.jp

The Japanese as a 'nation' was invented to serve for a foundation of the 'nation-state' Japan. This attempt was successful to the extent that many of the people delude themselves in regarding themselves as only one homogeneous group existing in the society: the imagined group/community came to share the language, values, culture, and history, largely of the mainstream group, the ethnic Japanese. Naturally, their imagined homogeneity has clouded their mind to understand diversity within the society.

However, the truth is, there are and have been many types of diversity in Japan. One relatively visible example would be ethnic diversity. Not to mention Ainu, Okinawans or the old-timer Chinese and Korean immigrants and their descendants, it is also fuelled by international migration arising in the course of recent globalisation. Another example is diversities in working styles, lifestyles and values in contemporary Japanese society. The groups based on these diversities have emerged and become entrenched as social stratification, which brings social issues or concerns.

¹ This working paper is to serve as a discussion basis for the further research design. The author welcomes comments and criticisms. Submitted on November 5, 2012. Biographical note: Momoyo K. Shibuya teaches at the Faculty of Economics, Saitama University. She received her PhD from Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. Her research interests include ethnic relations, media and international conflict, development communication, and ethnic tourism.

Shibuya, M.K

According to social identity theory, once groups - no matter what label is used - are formed and perceived, positive feelings towards one's own group and negative feelings towards the others will grow in people's mind (e.g., Tajfel and Turner, 1986). It means that it costs an effort of the people to make a harmony in diversity; conflict easily develops without it. What Japan ought to do in the era of diversity, then, is to promote a new message based on multiculturalist values, such as tolerance for diversity.

The above demands a big shift in social values and requires a certain time to come into effect, though the values will prove beneficial for the Japanese at the end of the day. Information campaigns are a means of educating the public and changing the social values. Among the campaign strategies, the idea of entertainment education is worth considering in the context of the promotion of multicultural values in Japan, and impediments in inculcating these values, if any, must be identified and overcome. This study aims to provide a basis for the future development of entertainment education in Japan by investigating the audience response to a Japanese TV serial.

The Entertainment Education Strategy

Entertainment education (E-E) is a communication strategy to foster social change by disseminating designed messages through entertainment products, such as TV/radio dramas, songs, and theatre plays (Singhal and Rogers 2001). In other words, the E-E strategy aims to provide people with information on certain issues whilst entertaining them at the same time.

This technique is used widely in fields related to development communication, including family planning, HIV/AIDS prevention, gender equality and empowerment,

or public health. It has been practiced in African, Latin American, and Asian countries, and has been found to be an effective technique for achieving certain results (Rogers et al. 1995; Singhal and Brown 1995).

Through the use of this technique, we can expect to spread knowledge, attempt to bring about a change in the audience's attitude, and promote action. The theoretical underpinning of this technique is the social learning theory (later, social cognitive theory), along with other communication, social-psychological, drama, or contextual theories and models (Sood et al. 2004). The social learning theory claims that people can learn through the social models depicted by the media, the role models of which serve instructive, motivational, social prompting, and social constructive functions (Bandura 2004).

Among the various E-E programmes, TV (or radio) drama has been popular as one of the forms, which utilise the social learning theory. Through portrayals of society and human nature, drama can provide its audience with an opportunity of vicariously experiencing certain situations through watching and listening. The audience find role models within characters and learn to identify which behaviour leads to success and which gives rise to problem-solving mistakes. Besides, as compared to news programmes and advertisements, which provide fragmented pieces of information, drama can facilitate the better understanding of an issue by its audience through the compilation of information into a story which shows a chronological development of problems and by describing each character's situation and opinion in detail.

The E-E drama genre, however, faces some challenges on both the production and

consumption sides. The production side is fraught with major difficulties in ensuring the appropriateness, in the socio-cultural context, of the messages sent out and in maintaining a subtle balance of entertainment and education. Designing an appropriate theme message can prove problematic due to the existing social values and norms. A similar problem is encountered in some societies where the method of addressing a certain problem depends on the framework of the existing value system. As Singhal and Brown (1995, p.11) point out, deciding ‘what [message] is right for whom’ becomes more difficult in a multicultural society. Since human beings do not easily accept a new, unfamiliar idea which has no or little compatibility with their existing values, with previously introduced ideas, or with people’s needs (Rogers 1995), a proposed solution should be carefully designed with the social context in mind. There is no fixed optimal point with regard to achieving a balance of education and entertainment in an E-E programme; however, each society has its unique balance in place. Generally, a larger population is attracted to a programme which focuses on entertainment, although the educational aspect is often overlooked in such programmes and they thus fail in conveying the promoted message to the audience. Conversely, the audience rejects programmes which focus too much on education as it finds them boring (Piotrow and de Fossard 2004). The desired level of entertainment would be higher in a society which can choose from a number of entertainment programmes than in one in which not as many rival programmes exist (Sherry 2002; Singhal and Rogers 2004).

On the consumption side, on the other hand, there exist problems related to the manner in which the message is interpreted by the audience (Singhal and Rogers 2004). The first challenge lies in whether or not it receives the message at all. Selective exposure and recognition occur based on existing values, beliefs, and attitudes (Singer 2000) and

often prevent the actual targeted population from accessing the message, whilst those members of the population who already possess enough knowledge—and thus are not targeted—pay more attention. Even when the message reaches the audience, the problem of the plurality of messages, which Fiske (1987) identifies as polysemy, arises. The real message lies in what the audience interprets rather than in what is conveyed. Regardless of the intention of the senders, messages can be interpreted in various ways in accordance with the receiving individuals' backgrounds (McQuail 2000). This fact becomes obvious in the case of popular actors playing villainous roles. The use of popular actors for such roles attracts a larger audience, although a reverse effect (the 'Archie Bunker effect', named after a bigoted character in a sit-com) can be observed when this is done (Singhal and Rogers 2004). Fans of actors playing villainous roles may find the negative role models that these actors are essaying more attractive than they would have otherwise.

Despite the challenges mentioned above, the E-E strategy has the potential to promote social messages in Japan. The Japanese are still highly exposed to televised messages (NHK Broadcasting Centre Research Institute 2006) and easily influenced by them. Clothes, food, or life-styles appearing in drama programmes often give rise to fads. Still, fads are fleeting in nature and do not last long enough to effect real social changes. In fact, there have been many examples of TV dramas which attempted to deliver pro-social messages but could achieve little more than giving rise to fashion fads in society. On the basis of this fact, it is assumed that the audience of Japanese TV dramas is too entertainment-oriented to be expected to receive educational messages.

Methodology

In order to understand the manner in which the Japanese audience watches a TV drama, this study examines the online bulletin board messages posted by viewers in response to the award-winning TV serial *Haken no Hinkaku* (loosely translated as ‘the dignity of temporary staff’), which was broadcast from January to March 2007 (NTV 2007). It was selected for analysis on the basis of the following factors:

- (1) the story had an underlying social message of diversity and harmony;
- (2) it was categorised as an entertainment programme with a taste of romantic comedy; and
- (3) it was one of the most popular programmes according to the viewer rate—the average viewer rate of this programme was around 20 percent whilst that of 151 programmes broadcast over the last three years was 13 percent (Video Research ca 2008).

The story of *Haken no Hinkaku* revolved around a large food company’s highly skilled temporary employee, who worked in the company’s marketing department, and her colleagues. Although no racial/ethnic difference was shown to exist among the characters, other kinds of differentiation and discrimination were depicted. Diversities in the company’s employment patterns (i.e., regular full-timers and temporary employees) and working philosophy (i.e., Japanese traditional company-is-a-family philosophy and westernised job-description-is-all style), which gave rise to conflicts, clashes, and discrimination among its employees both inside and outside the office, were suggestive of the omnipresence of the problem of people’s intolerance to dissimilarity. In particular, the main character, Haruko, was depicted as being uniquely different from the average Japanese girl in that she spent her in-between time with a

gypsy family in Spain and her personality bore some influence of Spanish culture (no reason for this was given to the audience), a factor which alienated her from Japanese society. The characters repelled each other in the beginning but their experience of working together helped them to reach a certain level of harmony. At the end of the story, Haruko's colleagues came to understand (and even love) her personality.

Out of the 6,932 bulletin board messages posted in the period between the screening of the serial's first episode and one week after its last, 1,000 texts were selected for analysis through stratified random sampling. The largest group of posters comprised females in their 30s, followed by those in their 10s and 20s (see Table 1). Each text was coded with keywords, which were extracted through a text-mining analysis, and the frequency of the appearance of these keywords was thereafter examined in order to clarify or isolate the elements in the drama series which the audience reacted to.

Result

Distribution of Message Contents

The extracted keywords were grouped into the following categories: drama content, characters, actors, links with reality, and personal learning experiences (Table 2).

Drama content. This category included responses to the story itself, like evaluative impressions and feedback on storyline and specific scenes, and 57.2% of analytical comments. Evaluative impressions occupied 40.7% of this category. Typically found comments included 'I love the story', 'the serial is really funny', and 'this TV serial is good enough to have a sequel'. At the same time, feedback on the storyline and specific scenes read as follows: 'I hope the story will be settled as per my expectations' or 'this

particular scene was meaningful'. However, the prominent feedback centred on the romantic sub-plots featuring the main characters and comprised 64.9% of the total feedback (or 38.5% of this category). Few viewers claimed that it was necessary for the drama to focus on more important social issues; most were solely interested in the serial's entertainment value. A frequently mentioned scene was one which comically depicted the verbal skirmishes between the main characters. It was a symbolic scene highlighting a social issue of employment discrimination, and therefore repeatedly inserted in each episode. The higher reference rate (21.8%) found for this scene as compared to other scenes seems to be a result of the aforementioned repetition. Unlike the evaluative impression, which was found to be similar for all age groups, the younger generation of posters (viewers in their 10s and 20s) was found to refer more to the romantic angle of the story and to the comical skirmish scene as compared to the older generation (especially viewers in their 30s and 40s) (Figure 1).

Characters. In this category were included the analysed bulletin board texts pertaining to the descriptions of the characters' personalities and behaviour. It was found that 23.1% of the analysed texts frequently mentioned the three main characters—Haruko, Shōji, and Satonaka. Both positive and negative opinions featured among the 170 comments relating to Haruko, although only 11.8% were negative in nature. This character was shown to be rather outspoken and it was this personality trait of hers that gave rise to the negative opinions. A female viewer in their 30s, but not limited to, described her shortcoming referred to above in these words: 'she lacks the communication skills to build a good relationship with her co-workers when Japanese companies consider these skills to be important'. Other viewers admired this outspoken aspect of Haruko's personality, yet recognised that behaving like her in the real world

would prove difficult. The followings are the positive feedbacks that Haruko's character repeatedly received: 'she is cool', 'she is charming', and 'she is great because she possesses so many skills'. In the story, Shōji was a permanent employee whose behaviour conformed to the extremely Japanese outlook that is characterised by a prejudiced view of outsiders; he extended this outlook to the temporary staff in his company. Despite his frequent use of discriminatory language against outsiders, only 16.1% found his behaviour unacceptable. The rest saw him in a positive light, saying 'he is cute', 'he is funny', and 'he is a good guy at heart'. Satonaka was Haruko's manager, and unlike Shōji, he exhibited an understanding attitude towards the temporary employees. Comments on him were mostly positive (86.7%), and talked about his kindness and uprightness as a person. Occasionally, negative comments such as 'he is too naïve' and 'his kindness seems noble but helps no one' were found. Overall, viewers above the age of 30 showed a tendency of reacting negatively to those characters (Figure 2).

Actors. This category related to the comments directed towards the actors as individuals as well as those evaluating their performance. Almost half of the posters (50.8%) in this category clearly stated that they were fans of one or more of the actors appearing in this drama. Of these, more than one-third admitted that they had started watching the serial because it involved their favourite actors. This type of comment was more obvious among the younger generation. Meanwhile, evaluations of the actors' performances were found in 22.9% of the comments in this category. It was also observed that the comments posted by the older generation of viewers pertained not to the actors themselves but to their performances (Figure 3).

Links with Reality. Of the analysed texts, 21.9% drew connections between the life of the characters in the story and real life. Those who themselves were temporary employees or worked with them were the main contributors to this category and therefore, few members of the younger generation were found here (Table 3; Figure 4). One section of this category claimed that what was depicted in the drama was unrealistic as real life was much harder, whilst the members of the other section felt that the drama was a true reflection of real life as many of them had undergone similar experiences themselves. Often, many comments from the members of both the sections started with a comparison between the situations depicted in the drama and reality but went on to discuss more about real social problems than the storyline itself. Some viewers reached the conclusion that harmony within diversity was important—‘society consists of various people with various values. Let us stop blaming each other and create a society where people respect each other’ (opinion of a male viewer in his 30s).

Personal Learning Experiences. The impact of this drama on individuals was referred in 26.1% of the analysed texts, with a relatively lower rate (16.2%) of teenagers’ falling into this category. Here, impact comprised intellectual impact (the gain of knowledge), psychological impact (the release of stress and derivation of inspiration), and behavioural impact (taking of some form of action). In this category, 29.9% declared that they had gained knowledge by watching the TV serial, particularly as regards temporary employees and the discrimination which they face in real life. Comments claiming to have derived inspiration from the serial (34.1%), including statements like ‘this drama pushed me to try and improve myself’, were found to have come from viewers belonging to the younger generation, although such comments were few in number. Those who had experienced stress in reality seemed to find that watching the

serial, especially Haruko's dialogues, helped them to de-stress on a daily basis, and the comments of such viewers made up 16.5% of this category. Finally, 19.5% of the analysed posters mentioned that the TV serial had inspired them to take some action, such as registering as an temporary employee, taking up academic study in order to earn some qualifications, or rethinking their own working style, and it was found that these comments could usually be traced to the younger generation (Figure 5).

Changes in Messages

Now let us shift the focus on the changes in the audience's reactions as the story of the analysed TV serial progressed. Table 4 represents the main story and the frequently mentioned keywords for each episode. There are two aspects to be considered.

First, the romantic sub-plots interfered with the realistic plot and hampered the audience's personal learning experiences. In the beginning, the audience's attention was focused on the situation of temporary employees, which for the most part was steeped in reality, and on the actors. However, once the romantic relationships among the main characters made an appearance at the end of Episode 2, their attention dramatically shifted to this aspect and audience comments discussing about reality decreased. This shift occurred across all age groups, although audience members in their 30s exhibited a weaker response. Thereafter, attention to the realistic aspect spiked only in Episode 5, in which the issue of lay-offs was dealt with, and Episode 7, in which a temporary employee's contract was about to be cancelled for an irrational reason. Conversely, the comments on the romantic relationships saw a drop then. The comments on personal learning experiences shifted synchronically to those relating the serial to reality whilst the comments focusing on the romantic sub-plots in the story did not pertain to personal

learning experiences (Figure 6).

Second, the comments show that the audience's understanding of the characters improved as the story developed (Figure 7). The audience learnt about new facets of the characters' personalities and got more background information on them in each episode, which led to a decrease in the number of negative comments stemming from the audience's superficial impressions of the characters. Rather, the comments demonstrated an attempt to understand the characters. To give an instance of the audience comments received towards the end of the serial, one female viewer in her 10s left the following comment: 'Although Haruko seemed cold at the beginning, now I know she actually is a good person who helps others'. The actors themselves also seemed to play a role in improving the image of the characters they were playing, as comments like the following were not rare: 'In real life, persons like Shōji are awful due to their discriminatory attitude. However, he looks charming in the drama' (as commented by a female in her 20s).

Discussion

The above results are suggestive of some critical points. One is the influence of selective attention as claimed in media and E-E studies. If one were to take into account the points to which the audience paid particular attention, it would be found that the working people tended to particularly notice the angle of workplace diversity and the problems surrounding it—aspects which bore a close connection with their real life—whilst the younger generation paid more attention to the personal relationships and funny scenes. Selective attention is an unavoidable psychological phenomenon governing human beings, although (or because of it) this result reaffirms how E-E

programmes should go about overcoming this particular problem; here, an effort is being made to ascertain how the story should be designed in order to invoke the interest of the youth in social issues.

Further, when looking at the responses of the audience at large, it appears that their interest in the love stories depicted in the analysed serial and their attention to its realistic or informative aspects do not co-exist but rather shift in contrast. This finding leads one to infer that entertainment and education are irreconcilable. In the analysed drama, even if the romantic relations had been developed on the basis of an educational theme like a tolerance for diversity, not many viewers would have been likely to link these two aspects; rather, they would have just focused exclusively on the romantic aspect and derived enjoyment from it.

A close examination, however, shows that the younger generation viewers (particularly those in their 20s) preferred to watch the romantic sub-plots for enjoyment whilst they were undergoing psychological and behavioural changes in real life. For audience members in their 30s, the drama content was too close to their real life and they thus felt that it posed a social problem. That is why they were critical of the unnecessary romantic sub-plots or caricatures of reality which were inserted into the storyline. By contrast, the twenty-something viewers stood a little farther away from reality than the viewers in their 30s did—a fact which allowed them to derive enjoyment from the funny scenes and love stories even whilst these viewers were more capable of recognising the social problem depicted and learning from the message conveyed through the TV serial as compared to teenagers. That is to say, the drama theme seemed suitable for the working generation even though it actually worked more on the younger

generation in educational terms. Thus, an optimal balance of entertainment and education could be set at a point where the targeted audience stood neither too close nor too far from the drama's intended message.

As for the audience's understanding of the intended message regarding diversity and harmony, after an initial backlash, it appeared to deepen as the story unfolded. At first, the audience regarded the main character Haruko's non-Japanese-like behaviour, which was characterised by values that were at variance with the ones deemed desirable in Japanese society, as odd. However, with the building-up of her character, the uncertainty surrounding her reduced. This factor, coupled with the charm of the actor playing Haruko, made the audience feel familiar to her, change their perception of her and accept her uniqueness. Simultaneously, it became clear that the audience's judgement regarding Haruko's personality was based on their belief in the traditional Japanese collectivistic value which prioritises harmony within a group (the don't-make-waves mentality) (e.g., Hamaguchi 1982). Even after gaining a deepened understanding about her character, they accepted her not because they respected diversity but because they could find a facet in her personality which conformed to the tradition.

Those who thought that Shōji's discriminatory attitude was inexcusable in the beginning also changed their perspective regarding his personality later. In this case, however, the actor's charm rather than the character's unveiled personality worked to improve the latter's image. In other words, a variation of Archie Bunker effect seemed to have come into effect.

However, it cannot be ignored that the audience's view of the characters shifted from a

group-oriented to an individual-oriented one and conferred upon them the new perspective that every group comprises various people with various values. The fact that some viewers have found the importance of harmony within diversity for future Japan is evidence of the educational impact that this E-E programme could offer.

Conclusion

This study examined the Japanese audience's interest in a TV drama on the basis of the messages they had posted on the bulletin board of a TV serial and clarified that viewers could display selective attention and memory even with respect to the events depicted in one episode. Another finding of this study was that excessive entertainment could cast a shadow on educational experiences. However, it also revealed that the audience could depart from their stereotypical judgement and show a deepened understanding of the characters and the drama itself, and that the younger generation, particularly viewers in their 20s, could combine entertainment with learning. The fact that not all members of the audience made bulletin board posts, and that those who did post were fairly pro-active, did not interfere with the findings of the study. Whilst further research is required to determine the optimal point of E-E programming design in Japan—a point at which entertainment and education can be perfectly balanced towards bringing about real social change—this study contributes as a one case study demonstrating the orientation of responses by a Japanese audience.

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<Tables>

Table 1. Number of Samples

	Samples						
	10s	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	total
male	37	36	42	26	4	11	156
female	253	231	257	94	9	0	844
total	290	267	299	120	13	11	1000

Table 2. Categories and Keywords

Categories	Sub-categories	Keywords
Contents	Impression (233)	Good/ Diverting/ Laughable/ Humorous/ Derisive
	Storyline (45)	Theme/ Storyline/ Sub-plot
	Skirmish (74)	Wisecracks/ Verbal skirmish
(572)	Love story (220)	Love/ Romantic relation/ Marriage/ Dating/ Going out
Actors	Trigger (52)	(w/- actor's name) Started watching/ Trigger
	Fan (81)	(w/- actor's name) Fan/ Lovable/ Likable
	Performance (60)	(w/- actor's name) Performance/ Acting
(262)	Image (69)	(w/- actor's name) Good/ Cute/ Charming/ Beautiful/ Cool
Characters	Positive-Haruko (150)	(w/-Haruko's name) Charming/ Strong/ Skillful/ Iconic
	- Shōji (26)	(w/-Shōji's name) Charming/ Funny/ Humane
	-Satonaka (26)	(w/-Satonaka's name)Kind/ Gentle/ Considerate
	Negative-Haruko (20)	(w/-Haruko's name)Cold/ Merciless/ Tough/ Selfish/ Ugly
	-Shōji (5)	(w/-Shōji's name)Discriminative/ Prejudiced/ Bad
	-Satonaka (4)	(w/-Satonaka's name)Naïve/ Weak/ Pushover
(280)	Others (49)	(Any comments w/- other character's name)
Links w/- Reality	Unreal (48)	Unrealistic/ Surreal
	Harder reality (21)	(the drama is) too optimistic/ Harsh reality
	Social issues (90)	Real life/ Japanese situation/ social system/ employment
(219)	Own experience (60)	(Any comments refer to own experiences)
Learning	Knowledge (78)	Learn/ Recognise/ Aware/ Understand/
	Inspired (89)	Motivated/ Inspired/ Encouraged
	De-stress (43)	De-stressing/ Feel-good/ Refreshed
(261)	Action (51)	Registered/ Get qualifications

NB: the figures in brackets indicate the number of text included in the categories/ sub-categories.

Table 3. Message Contents by Age

Categories	10s	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s
Contents	Impression	25.17	26.97	20.07	23.33	53.85
	Storyline	2.76	3.00	7.02	6.67	0.00
$\chi^2=60.16$	Skirmish	9.66	7.49	7.36	3.33	0.00
$p<.001$	Love story	27.24	27.72	16.39	12.50	7.68
Actors	Trigger	6.55	6.74	4.68	0.00	7.69
	Fan	12.41	8.61	5.02	5.83	7.69
$\chi^2=42.78$	Performance	6.55	5.99	5.02	10.00	7.69
$p<.005$	Image	5.17	6.74	6.69	6.67	7.69
Characters	Positive-Haruko	21.72	13.48	12.04	18.33	7.69
	- Shōji	3.10	5.99	1.34	1.67	0.00
	-Satonaka	1.72	3.75	4.35	2.50	0.00
	Negative-Haruko	2.07	2.25	2.68	3.33	7.69

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$\chi^2=48.50$ $p=.06[ns]$		-Shōji	0.34	0.00	1.00	0.83	0.00	0.00
		-Satonaka	0.34	0.00	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.00
		Others	2.76	1.50	6.02	5.83	0.00	0.00
Links w/- Reality	Unreal	1.38	4.12	8.03	7.50	0.00	0.00	
	Harder reality	0.34	3.75	2.68	1.67	0.00	0.00	
$\chi^2=120.24$ $p<.001$	Social issues	3.10	10.11	12.71	11.67	15.38	63.64	
	Own experience	1.03	5.99	11.04	6.67	0.00	0.00	
	Knowledge	5.86	6.37	11.37	11.67	15.38	18.18	
Learning	Inspired	7.24	12.73	11.37	12.50	0.00	18.18	
	De-stress	0.00	3.37	4.01	3.33	15.38	0.00	
	Action	3.10	6.37	3.68	2.50	0.00	18.18	

Table 4. Episodes and Frequently Mentioned Contents

Main plot		Comment Contents			
1	Haruko started working at a food company, and a conflict arose over her unique working style and personality.	Cont/ Impression (19.6)	Chara/ H/Pos (17.4)	Reality/ Social issue (16.3)	Lean/ Knowledge (14.1)
2	A discriminative attitude of full-timers developed into a showdown between temps and regular staff.	Cont/ Impression (23.3)	Actor/ Fan (20.5)	Cont/ Love story (19.2)	Chara/ H/Pos (17.8)
3	Shōji made a huge mistake on the job but eventually Haruko saved him from distress, and he jumped to the conclusion that she liked him.	Cont/ Love story (22.4)	Chara/ H/Pos (17.2)	Cont/ Impression (15.5)	Actor/ Image (12.1)
4	A co-worker sought for a better-paid job against a contract. Meanwhile, Haruko helped Shōji to close a difficult deal with a Russian company.	Cont/ Love story (30.8)	Chara/ H/Pos (21.5)	Cont/ Impression (20.0)	Actor/ Fan (13.8)
5	An elder member of the staff was about to get laid off, but with Haruko's help, he eventually saved the company from alleged tax evasion, and could stay.	Cont/ Impression (20.6)	Cont/ Love story (17.6)	Chara/ H/Pos (17.6)	Reality/ Social issue (13.2)
6	The event on St. Valentine's Day was failed due to a conflict between temporary staff and Shōji.	Cont/ Love story (24.1)	Chara/ H/Pos (21.8)	Cont/ Impression (19.5)	Reality/ Social issue (10.3)
7	A temp submitted her proposal to the in-house competition, the company announced termination of her contract.	Chara/ H/Pos (18.2)	Cont/ Love story (14.8)	Reality/ Social issue (14.8)	Chara/ Other (14.8)
8	Shōji proposed to Haruko before he left the company, but she turned down due to his discriminatory attitude to temps.	Cont/ Love story (39.5)	Chara/ Sh/Pos (11.6)	Chara/ H/Pos (9.3)	Reality/ Social issue (9.3)
9	Shōji disappeared. Meanwhile, the marketing department was busy with a new project.	Cont/ Love story (27.1)	Cont/ Impression (20.3)	Learn/ experience (10.5)	Actor/ Fan (9.0)
10	Haruko and other temps ended their contract and left the company, and started a new life.	Cont/ Impression (39.6)	Cont/ Love story (23.2)	Chara/ H/Pos (12.4)	Cont/ Skirmish (12.4)

<Figures>

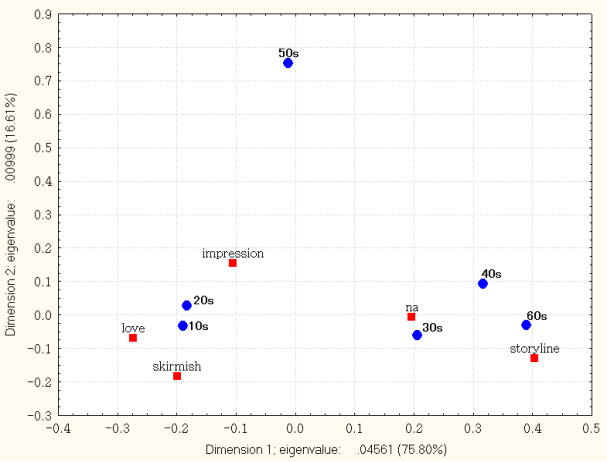


Figure 1. Comments (Drama Content) and Age Groups

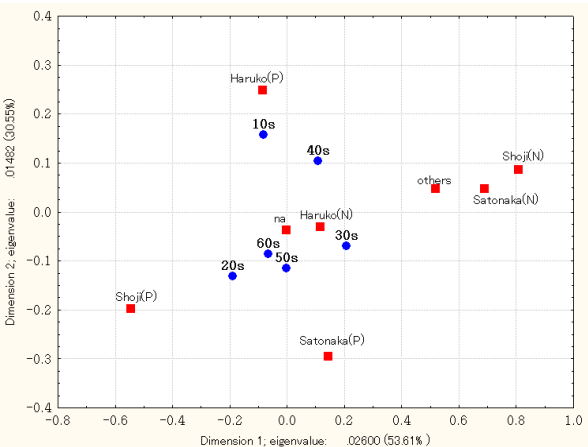


Figure 2. Comments (Characters) and Age Groups

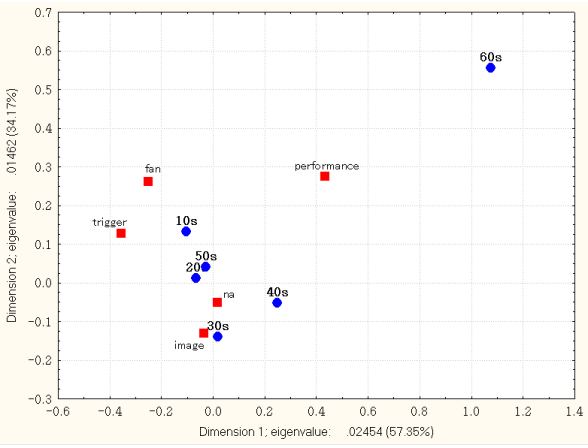


Figure 3. Comments (Actor) and Age Groups

Analysis of Japanese Audience Response to TV Drama

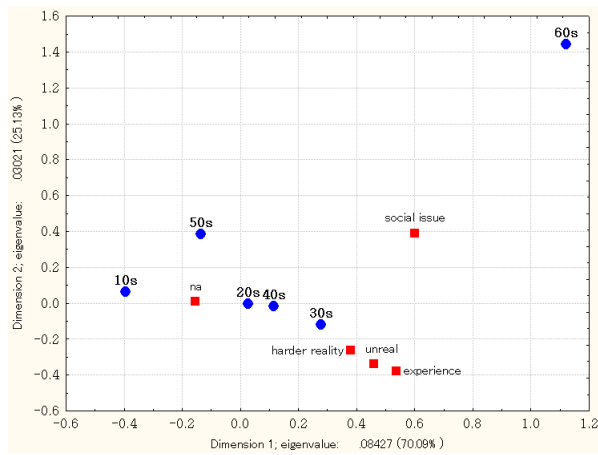


Figure 4. Comments (Reality) and Age Groups

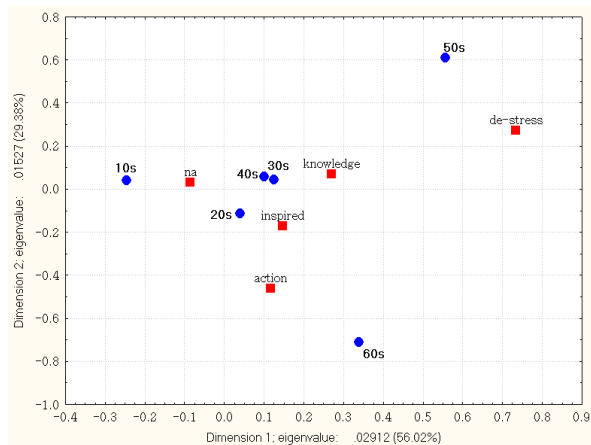


Figure 5. Comments (Experience) and Age Groups

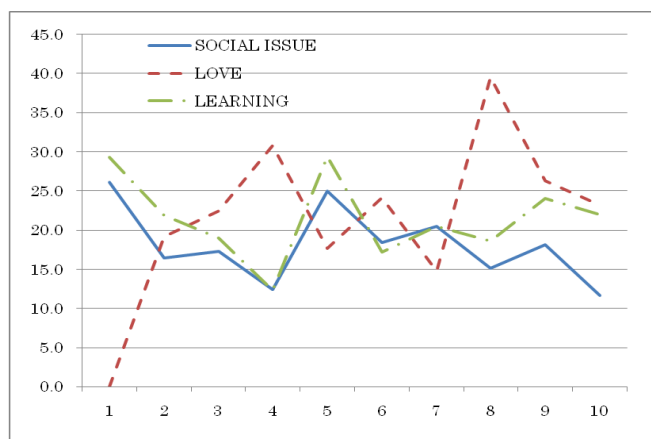


Figure 6. Changes in Comments by category

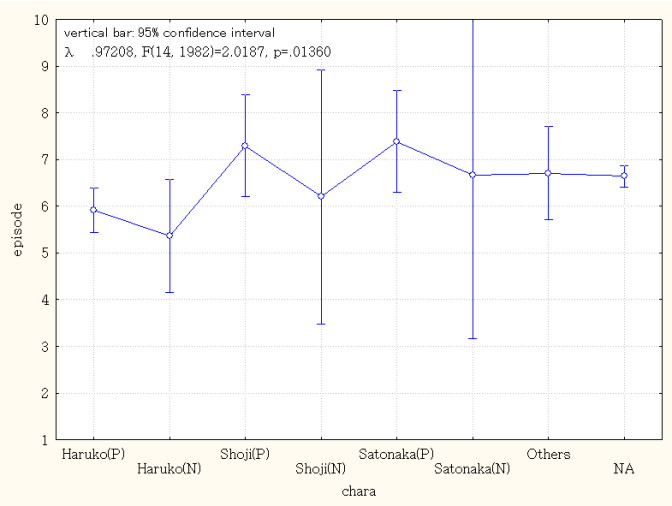


Figure 7. Comments (Characters) and Episode