
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Distortion of Narration in Cinematic Representation of The *Mahābhārata*: Text v/s Visual Media

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ABSTRACT

Over the years, the *Mahābhārata* (*Mbh*) continues to fascinate its readers and viewers with its mesmerizing narrative events and magical mythical facets. As a result, various interpretations of the epic have been heaved as surging waves of the time in literature in the form of novels, stories, comics, films, theatre-plays etc. In modern times, text no more stands out as a popular choice among the masses. Cinema, television, and new media are emerging as popular mediums where masses are probing to seek the epic, like *Mbh*, as a more vibrant manner of expression. Besides this, visual media tends to impress viewers by fashioning powerful dialogues, weighty stage-production, costumes, charismatic characters, hi-tech cinematography etc. These experimentations, to charm the audiences, somehow fail to postulate the authentic teachings, completely submerged in its glittering plot. As a result, there is much discrepancy seen between the text and *Mbh* through mass media. The paper analyses the role and impact of mass media/new media by paying attention to the popular TV series and movies in India with the perspective of the first translated version of The Mahabharata by K.M.Ganguly (1883-1896).

KEYWORDS

Mahābhārata; Historical Narratives; Filmization; Myths; Hinduism

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1. Introduction

Rāmāyanā and *Mahābhārata* are the chronicles of Indian history and its cultural heritage. The epic *Mbh* is an oral narrative story of the charioteer bards, expressing the history of mankind, culture and religion. With the passage of the passing eras, unlike the *vedās* (which are the letter-perfect), the epic has undergone abundant versions and additions. The *Mbh* is a composition of lessons on dharma and knowledge on *ītihās* (history), comprising mythological and moralistic constituents, revolving around the heroic narrative of the struggle and feud between the cousin brothers: Pandavas and Kauravas for the domain of Hastinapur. "Myth ceases to be merely primitive and becomes universal. It ceases to be false and becomes true. It depicts the human condition" (Segal 2004: 48). Over the years, with technological advancements, the epic has been exposed to alluring mediums of mass media & new media, so in the present times, the *Mbh* is commonly seen through various media platforms. The narrative effect of a single channel on a multichannel narrative representation is contingent upon its degree of narrativity (Horstmann 2018: 16). The *Mbh* could be watched in the form of TV series, web series, animated movies & posts on Facebook/Instagram pages. No doubt, these media platforms have enhanced the popularity of these epics as well as brought back interest towards ancient Indian history. "In this respect, the notion of camera-eye is inadequate to fully understand the remediation of film form in fiction. In cinematic fiction, the interplay of cinema-derived functions (film monstration and film narration as translated in written narratives) engenders a more complex narrating or 'presenting' instance that normally avoids making comments and pretends to act like the film mega-narrator, thereby re-formalising it" (Bellardi 2018: 8). It seems that when the epic, turned into a fiction, it filched from the authentic chronicle to an artistic footing fascinating the psyche ending in deviating from the true learnings and its functionality. The *Mbh* today, in many

forms and styles, is the result of extensive modifications by the writers, creators & directors. In *Dialogics of Self, the Mahabharata and Culture*, Lakshmi Bandlamudi analyze the cultural-historical texts:

Texts and readers do not exist in isolation; they have their unique histories and operate in an ever-changing world. Consequently, reading a cultural historical text like the Mahabharata is not a simple mechanical interconnection between readers and the text; instead, it is a dynamic interaction between individual and cultural histories. Individuals select certain aspects of their lives and the world around them to write their life stories, and likewise, they select certain aspects of the epic to rewrite the story. The variation among the readers lies in this selective process. The reality of the Mahabharata is refracted through the individual's interpretation of everyday reality. (Bandlamudi 2010: 5)

The present study explores the narration of translated *Mbh*, a popular *Mahabharat* TV series (2013) & an animated movie of *Mbh* (2013). The text selected for the study is the first translated version of *Mbh* in English as well as the only complete translation available in the public domain (between the years 1883 and 1896) till now. It consists of 5,818 pages, including 18 *parvas* in 18 books. The four selected plots are: *Lakshyagriha*, *Swayamvara*, *Maya Mahal* and *Vastraharan*. The aim of the research is to identify the gaps between the textual version of the *Mbh* and visual media. The gap is identified by comparing the depiction of the plot in the text v/s visual media. The present research aims to sentient the readers towards the extensive distortion of the events and plots done in the story of *Mbh* over the years. The TV series *Mahabharat* (2013) was first telecasted on star plus and stormed the entertainment industry with its extravagant script; charming star casts with exaggerated graphics. The series is also available on Disney+Hotstar. The series constructs an unreal world of fiction which is less relevant from a historical & cultural point of view. The series hits the chart even in Indonesia, reaching 7.6 percent viewership in the year 2014. It is interesting to note that in those days, the series had more viewership than the World Cup Final (which reached only 6.2 percent). "The actor Shaheer Sheikh who played Arjuna, also got popularity through the series" (Aiyar 2014). The animated movie *Mahabharat* was first launched in the year 2013. Animation has added a soul to the entertainment industry and is the best medium to reach out to the minds of the young. *Mahabharata* by Pen Movies has over 24M views on YouTube ("Mahabharat"). The voice of prominent actors and their resemblance to animated characters is alluring. The incidents seemed fleeting and bouncing. The content is abrupt, and dialogues are dominant but chastising.

2. Plots: Text v/s Visual Media

2.1 Plot 1. Lakshyagriha (The House of Lacquer/Wax)

The episode of *Lakshyagriha* takes place in *Adi Parv* in Ganguly's *Mahabharata*. The plot is constructed when jealous Duryodhana plans to annihilate his cousins Pandavas by burning them alive in *Lakshyagriha*. He employs Purochana, the architect, to build a palace of wax in the forest of Varnavata and while Pandavas are asleep, he must set the mansion on fire. "Repairing thither, cause thou to be erected a quadrangular palace in the neighbourhood of the arsenal, rich in the materials and furniture, and guard thou the mansion well (with prying eyes). And use thou (in erecting that house) hemp and resin and all other inflammable materials that are procurable" (Ganguly 1883-1896: 448). In the translated version of *Mbh*, Ganguli reveals that the plot of burning Pandavas alive was known to Yudhishtira. The text further writes that the wise Vidura informs about the danger beforehand to Yudhishtira, and all of them eventually get out of the danger. On the contrary, the TV series portrays Arjun in the limelight and shows that it is Arjuna who gets to know about the mansion being erected on wax. In the series, heroically, Arjun saves Kunti and melodramatically lifts her mother and throws her in the opposite direction amidst surging fire, to be caught by the rest of his brothers on the other side. Arjun is portrayed as a hero; he is illustrated as the brightest to grasp the truth about the House of Wax. The dialogue between Arjuna and Bhima in TV Series shows that Arjun intuitively about the risk of easy fire in *Lakshyagriha*:

Arjun: *Iss bhawan me lac ke sath sukhi ghansh, ghee, rui ka upyog kia gya hai, yadi iss bhawan me aag lagi toh do peher me sab kuch jal jayega. Hame bhawan me zinda jala dalne ki yojana banye gyi hai. is bhawan ko kisi bhi shan aag lagyi ja sakti hai* (This house is built with lac, dry grass, and cotton. It is easy to catch fire to the house. It conspires to make all of us burnt alive and at any moment, this house would be burnt).

Bhim: *Meh samjha ni* (I could not understand).

Arjun: *Bhratashree yeh bhawan lac se banaya gya hai, hum vish kha ke mar jaye uske pashchat iss bhawan ko aag lagaane ki yojna banyi gyi hai, taki sabko aisa lage ki hum ek durghatana me aa gaye* (brother, this house is made of lac, and it is planned to poison us first and then to fire this house so that it will look later that all of us died due to an accident).

Bhim: *Parantu* (But!).

Arjun: *Abhi baatein karne ka samay ni hai bhrata Bhim, swarpratham hame us Purochan ko pakadana hoga aur fir use Hastinapur lekar jayege* (it is not the time to talk brother Bhim, let's first catch Purochan and take him to Hastinapur). ("Kunti learns Duryodhan's plan" 00:00:23-00:05:57)

However, the text elaborates Yudhishtira as “the foremost of all virtuous men”. It displays Vidura as a major support in the Pandavas’ escape. The text says that it is Vidura who sends a miner to dig and construct a tunnel for their escape.

A friend of Vidura's, well-skilled in mining, coming unto the Pandavas, addressed them in secret, saying, 'I have been sent by Vidura and am a skilful miner. I am to serve the Pandavas. Tell me what I am to do for ye. From the trust he reposes in me, Vidura hath said unto me, 'Go thou unto the Pandavas and accomplish thou their good. What shall I do for you? (Ganguly 1883-1896: 453)



Picture 1. Lakshyagriha Ritu, 2013.



Picture 2. Lakshagriha. Mahabharat, 2014.

The above pictures display the scene of evacuation from burning *Lakshyagriha* but from different perspectives. Picture 1, taken from ritsin.com, illustrates the text and depicts the Pandavas with their mother, escaping through an already-made tunnel by the miner of Vidura. While picture2 is the screenshot from the TV series, demonstrating that Pandavas themselves made the way by digging into the earth to evacuate themselves by hitting the ground and giving it a shape of a tunnel. Their magical blows had made an instantaneous tunnel and eluded. The episode of evacuation and the process of making the tunnel significantly differ in both pictures. The process of the active movement from one concrete text to another produces abstraction, resulting in recreating the concrete. An imaginative act is unbounded by abstraction; rather, it uses this abstraction to explore new territories/ “new concrete”. In the words of Vygotsky, “Abstraction is for it only an intermediary link, only an episode along the path of development, only a turning point in its movement toward the concrete. Imagination, in our perspective, is a transforming, creative activity directed from the concrete toward the new concrete” (Vygotsky 1991: 84).

2.2 Plot 2. *Swayamvara* (Self Choice)

Adi Parva of *Mahabharata* by KM Ganguli describes the grand amphitheatre adorned for the *Swayamvara*. According to the text, *Swayamvara* is planned by King Draupda, keeping Arjuna in mind. The bow has been made very stiff, incapable of being bent, except for Arjuna. On the sixteenth day, the amphitheatre was filled with many suitors. Krishna and Valadeva, along with Yadhavas, had come as spectators. Draupadi enters richly attired and adorned, with a garland of flowers. Dhristadyumna introduces all the suitors to the assembly and opens the competition, “Hear ye assembled kings, this is the bow, that is the mark, and these are the arrows. Shoot the mark through the orifice of the machine with these five sharpened arrows. Truly do I say that, possessed of lineage, the beauty of persons, and strength whoever achieves this great feat shall obtain today this my sister, Krishna for his wife” (Ganguly 1883-1896: 535). Every mighty in the assembly tried but failed. Karna went to the bow, raised it, strung it placed the arrows on the string and resolved to shoot the mark when Draupadi cried out that she would not select Suta for her lord. Karna laughed in vexation and threw aside the bow. Finally, Arjuna, in disguise of *Brahmin*, stepped forward and took-up the five arrows, shot the mark and made it fall, winning Draupadi in *Swayamvara*. King Draupada's desire to marry Draupadi to a Brahmana ignited all kings sensing it to their humiliation, and there arose a chaotic atmosphere. Feats broke out, and Damodar (Krishna), beholding those feats and valour, recognised Jishnu (Arjuna) and his brother and informed Valadeva of their true identity. Krishna, who was a mere spectator in the text, is displayed as a planner in both the TV series and the movie. He was shown sitting, amongst the royal people in the assembly, not as a spectator but as the main planner. Draupadi’s scream for refusal towards Karna was not abrupt in the movie. It gives credit to Krishna for Draupadi’s refusal. Besides this, the video romanticizes the entry of Arjun, and Draupadi shares loving glances with Arjuna in the scene. Contrary to the series and movie, the text describes that Karna takes his seat quietly, with no eye of a fish as a mark but to shoot through the orifice of the machine, a bow and five arrows. The world narrated or represented in the resurgent form “permits the author, in all his various masks and faces, to move freely onto the field of his represented world, a field that in the epic had been absolutely inaccessible and closed.” (Bhaktin 1981: 27). In the movie, Krishna reveals the identity of Arjuna:

Duryodhana: *Aap hamare sagey sambandhi hokar ek paraye brahaman ka paksha le rahe hai* (You are our relative, yet you take the side of an unknown brahmin).

Krishna: *Jiske tum brahaman samajh rhe ho woh brahaman nahi hai* (whom you consider a brahmin, he is not a brahmin).

Duryodhan: *Brahman nahi hai!* (He is not a Brahmin!)

Krishna: *Haa. Brahman ke bhes me Kshtriya hai. Pandav, Arjun ko jante ho na* (Yes, he is kshtriya in disguise of a Brahmin. I hope you know Arjun, son of pandu).

Duryodhana: *Arjun, parantu woh sab toh paanch varsh pehale hi jalkar maar gye thay* (Arjun! But they were all died in a fire, five years back).

Krishna: *Jiske mrityu ka samay ni ata, usse koi nahi mar sakta, tum bhi nahi. Woh rahe dusre Pandav* (No one can kill anyone before his death time, not even you. Look! They are other Pandav).

Duryodhana: *Aab Pandav rajshinghasan pe fir apna adhikaar jatayegee* (Now, again, Pandavas will claim over throne).

Krishna: *Iss swayamwar meh bhaag lene ko maine hi kaha tha. Arjun avaysh hi jeetega* (I have asked Arjun to participate in the groom choosing ceremony. Arjun will definitely win). ("Mahabharat" 40:32-41:25)

2.3 Plot 3. Maya Mahal (The Palace of Illusions)

Yudhishtira performed Rajasuya and invited Duryodhana with Sakuni. They continued to dwell in the grand assembly house of Pandavas and examined the whole mansion. Duryodhana was fascinated by its celestial designs and grandeur. "And one-day, king Duryodhana in going round that mansion, came upon a crystal surface. . . And sometime after, the king, mistaking a lake of crystal water adorned with lotuses of crystal petals for land, fell into it with all his clothes on" (Ganguly 1883-1896: 745). The text clearly mentions that the spellbound Duryodhana fell into the lake of the palace, and Bhima and Arjuna laughed at him. "Beholding Duryodhana fallen into the lake, the mighty Bhima laughed aloud as also the menials of the palace. And the servants, at the command of the king, soon brought him dry and handsome clothes. Beholding the plight of Duryodhana, the mighty Bhima and Arjuna and both the twins--all laughed aloud" (Ganguly 1883-1896: 745). Over the years, the narration of the scene has outwardly changed. The text does not mention Draupadi's presence in the scene. On the contrary, the series, as well as the movie, emphasize the presence of Draupadi, insulting Duryodhana. In the movie, Draupadi purportedly abuses Duryodhana by calling him "blind."

Draupadi: *Andhe ka beta andha.* (A blind son of a blind father.)

Arjun: *Panchali.* (Panchaali!)

Duryodhana: *Panchali tumne hmaara apmaan kar ke acha nhi kiya. Mai iss apmaan ka badla sabke saamne lunga.* (Panchaali, you made a big mistake by insulting me. I will take revenge for this in public.)

Yudhishtira: *Ye Duryodhan ko kya ho gya?* (What has happened to Duryodhana?)

Arjun: *Draupadi ne Duryodhan ka apmaan kiya aur vo ruth kar chala gya.* (Draupadi has insulted Duryodhan; therefore, he left angrily.)

Draupadi: *Mai agni putri hu, Duryodhan ne mera apmaan kiya tha aur aaj maine us apmaan ka badla le liya. Mere Pratishodh ki aag thandi ho gyi.* (I am the daughter of fire. Duryodhana has insulted me, and so, today, I have taken revenge of my insult. Now I am relieved.)

("Mahabharat" 56:38-57:16)

The new narrative portrays Draupadi as an arrogant woman who takes pride in her birth and satisfies her ego by insulting Duryodhana, forcing one to perceive her as the cause of such a destructive war. Unlike the notion established by visual media, section XLVIII of the *Mbh* mentions the confessional narration of Duryodhana to King Dhritarashtra; the dialogue expresses the agony and afflictions of Duryodhana:

Having beheld Yudhishtira's prosperity, whatever I enjoy brings me no gratification. The prosperity of Kunti's son that is possessed of such splendour maketh me pale. Knowing the affluence of the foe and my own destitution, even though that affluence is not before me, I yet see it before me. Therefore, have I lost colour and become melancholy, pale and emaciated? (Ganguly 1883-1986: 749)

2.4 Plot 4. Vastraharan (Disrobing of Draupadi)

Disrobing of Draupadi is a popular episode of the *Mbh*. The episode is mentioned in section XLVIII of book 2, *Sabha Parva: Sisupalabadha Parva* in Ganguly's *The Mahabharata*. Sakuni proposed to Duryodhana to invite Yudhishtira for the game of dice, and Yudhishtira lost everything, including their common wife, Draupadi. Duryodhana asks, Pratikamin to bring Draupadi, and when Pratikamin fails, he sends Dussasana. Dussasana disgraces Draupadi. The narration of the plot fills the reader with immense pain towards the plight of Draupadi. A narrative theorist positions the *Narrative* as a kind of organisational tool as a point of

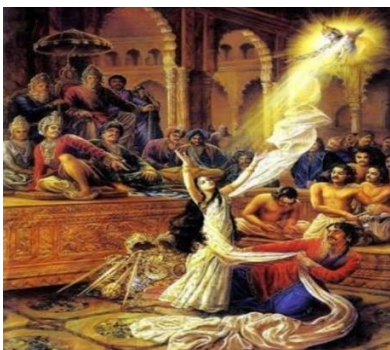
departure. The narrative is therefore viewed as a tool, or set of tools, for organising codes, conventions, and elements of fiction in ways which enable the interlocutor to make sense of, derive meaning from, or find pleasure in work and which 'evoke stories to the mind [in ways] that distinguish narrative discourse from other text types (Ryan 2006: 7) Dussasana seizes Draupadi by her locks and drags her to the assembly, unconcerned of the menstrual pain, in one attire and discrediting and dishonouring the honour of a woman. She was undergoing immense agony in the great Sabha of learned and wise dignitaries of the court of Hastinapura. Dussasana humiliates her, "Whether thy season hath come or not, whether thou art attired in one piece of cloth or entirely naked, when thou hast been won at dice and made our slave, thou art to live amongst our serving-women as thou pleases" (Ganguly 1883-1986: 788). Disgraced, Draupadi keeps weeping piteously and finally screams for help from Krishna. Deeply moved, Krishna answers the prayers and arrives in the assembly on foot out of compassion for protection, unseen to all, covering her with clothes of many hues. The attempt at disrobing turns into a failure. Draupadi, heartbroken, falls down on the ground and weeps in the Kuru's assembly.

Alas, only once before, on the occasion of the Swayamvara, I was beheld by the assembled kings in the amphitheatre and never even once beheld afterwards. I am to-day brought before this assembly. She, whom even the winds and the sun had seen never before in her palace, is to-day before this assembly and exposed to the gaze of the crowd. ...is to-day suffered by the Pandavas to be seized and dragged by this wretch. Alas, these Kauravas also suffer their daughter-in-law, so unworthy of such treatment, to be thus afflicted before them. (Ganguly 1883-1986: 794)

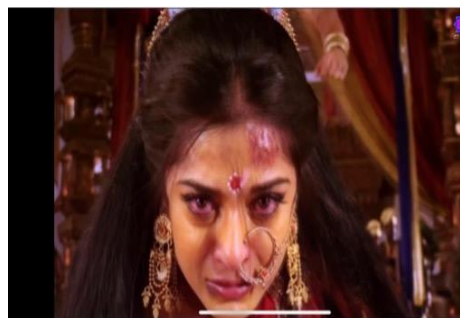
Sally J. Sutherland observes the representational and defining problem connected with Draupadi and states, "the character of Draupadi has a special appeal for coupled with her actual victimization is a strong realization of her victimization. It is the same aggressive behaviour and outspokenness of Draupadi-coupled with the inability of her husbands to protect her-that prevents her from being idealised" (Sally 1989: 72-73). The televised version of *Mbh* exaggerates the plot. In the telecasted episode, Draupadi fights, questions and raises her voice against the wrong. When Dussasana enters her room, she draws a sword at him, pushes him and leaves the room. She does not cry for mercy in her television avatar. Contrary to the text, Bhima is shown enraged, smashing his hands. Draupadi outrageously stares at Pandavas and raises questions to the assembly for the humiliation. In contrast to the text, she is about to leave the assembly and is dramatically stopped by King Dhritarashtra. Dhritarashtra calls her a slave of Duryodhana. The scene has been dramatized extensively in the television version. "The exteriorization of violence facilitated by televised renditions of the *Mahabharata* exemplifies the function of the media as a consolidator of social functions of communication and representation, leading to a network of signs and messages, and in turn changing the context of social messages in general" (Sengupta 2017: 153). Duryodhana comes in assembly and humiliates Draupadi, "*ao mere sath sambandh bano. . . ao dasi Draupadi meri jangha pe baitho ao.*" (Come Draupadi! Make relation with me and sit on my lap.) ("Draupadi's honour attacked" 12:42 – 13:35).

Draupadi: *Maharaj, aapke putra iss prakar maryada bhang kar rhe hai, usse apke mukh peh lanchna lag raha hai. Aap inhe rokne kyu nahi?* (King Dhritarashtra, your sons have crossed all limits, which maligns your name. Why don't you stop them?)

Dhritarashtra: *Ek dasi ko apne swami ka aadesh mana hi padta hai. Drupad kanya. Apne swami ka aadesh mano.* (A slave has to obey the orders of her master. O Girl of Draupadi! Obey the orders your master.) ("Draupadi's honour attacked" 02:27 – 02:51).



Pic 1. Disrobing of Draupadi.
Srimad Mahabharata. 2018.



Pic 2. Disrobing of Draupadi.
Mahabharat, 2014.

Out of the two pictures, Picture 1 is an illustration from a blogspot, *Srimad Mahabharata*, and picture2 is from an episode of the TV series. The first picture explicitly expresses her gesture of surrendering to lord Krishna. Here, Pandavas look more helpless than Draupadi. The confident gesture of open hands towards Krishna displays her belief in him as a devotee and not as a victim. Whereas the second picture from the video displays Draupadi’s anger and helplessness. The actress’s power pact performance has pained the audience. Her irresistible, strong, self-conceited image lures everyone, and for that moment, the audience forgets the real poised, humble Draupadi of Vyasa. In the series, Draupadi is portrayed as a goddess of vengeance, and violence, cries her heart out, cursing everyone in the assembly. She takes vows not to tie her hair until she washes it with blood. However, the text does not mention her cursing anyone verbally.

The authors of myth to fiction problematize the narratives by adding to them various contemporary contexts, including political, social, economic and cultural. They turn the stereotypes upside down and reveal the hidden darkness of ‘white’ characters and the hidden brightness of ‘black’ characters. They attempt to find the rationale behind the miracles and seek to go deeper to reveal the hidden layers of the incidents and situations. (Abhyankar 2018: 799-800)

“Dialogism not only operates within speech exchanges, but within the word itself, which is born anew in every new usage, and exists in a malleable state in relation to shifting linguistic or social contexts” (Bhaktin 1981: 276). It seems that the plots in the *Mbh*, through a visual platform, hardly allow the unitary exercise of the texts. “The word, directed towards its object, enters a dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgements and accents, weaves in and out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet the third group and all this may crucially shape discourse, may leave a trace in all its semantic layers, may complicate its expression and influence its entire stylistic profile” (Bhaktin 1981: 276).

2.5 Survey on Mahābhārata

At the present outset, a survey was conducted in March 2021 on the *Mahābhārata*. The aim of the researchers is to explore the understanding of the epic among the masses and to find out the popular preferred mediums. 595 people participated from the age group of 15 to 70 years. The following pie charts and bar graphs display the responses based on the survey.

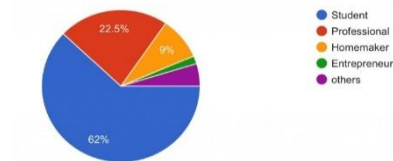


Figure 1

Figure 1 shows the participants from all walks of life. The largest portion is occupied by young minds.

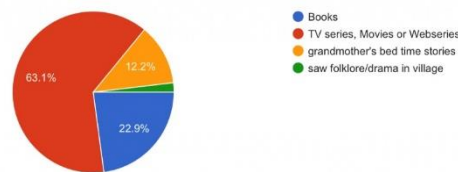


Figure 2

The pie chart (figure 2) denotes participants’ preference of medium to know the *Mahābhārata*. It clearly states that the greatest preference is given to visual mediums (TV Series, Movies & web series) and lesser interest is shown to the text.

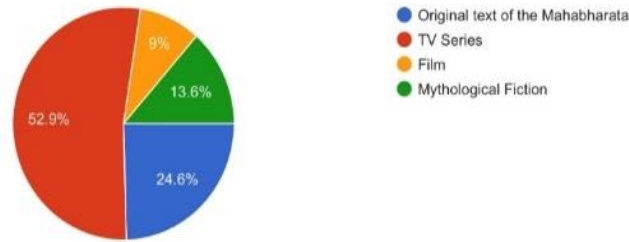


Figure 3

Figure 3 clearly displays that the highest number of the participants have watched the *Mahābhārata* through TV series. The impact of TV series would be naturally larger as compared to the other mediums. We cannot hold back the truth that the Televised series of the mythological epic is most favoured. One learns the tradition, culture, and history through these epics, yet such a Televised series has become more of a fascination for the majority.

The following bar graph highlights the acceptance of the epic through multimedia.

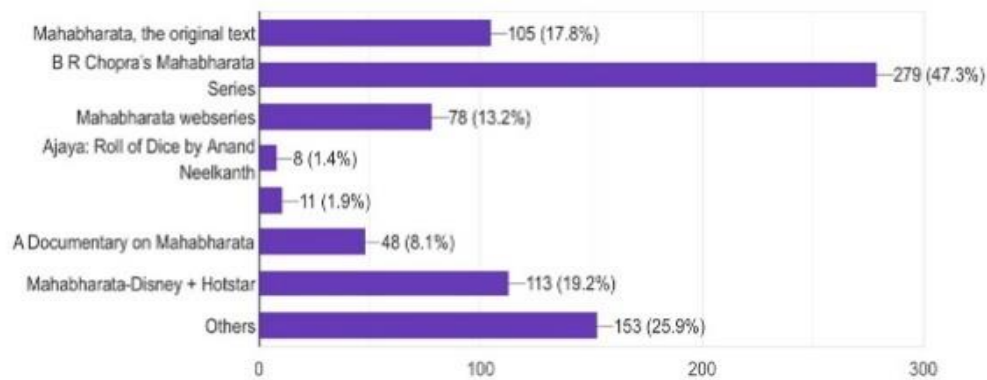


Figure 4

3. Conclusion

The *Mbh* is a poetical expression of the history of mankind, preserving the very essence of the ancient Indian culture, but the highly exaggerated plot and characters are deteriorating the value and culture with the use of different components of seasonings which are put together to grab the attention of its viewers formulating the plot of the *Mbh*, being perceived as they envisage. However, the resurging of the *Mbh* through popular media is a good initiative, but the imputation of narration cannot be denied. Taking under consideration a few resurgences of the epic telecasted, in the paper, the paper has brought forth some deterring concepts of the epic and the impact of swanky than the precision of the truth leading the naïve mass into the world of artistic conceptualization of the plot with an overall outer layer. The present study concludes that the content of the *Mbh* is being altered just for the sake of entertainment. Displaying envy, revenge, conspiracy, hatred, and hostility through characters seems appealing to the senses in accordance with the scene and the society we live. But the manipulation for the sake of entertainment is no justice to this historical epic. With its modified plot narration, it is often driving the innocent and ignorant public astray. As the study underwent cinematic representation of the epic, it was found that many scenes depicted in the improvised versions are so overstated and distorted to evoke either the feeling of sympathy, animosity and bitterness or conjure the heart with the utmost violence, jealousy, hatred and bloodshed. The study observed that this distortion is deviating the masses from the main motive, and hence the mass is getting overwhelmed with sentiments and is exceedingly entranced, failing to see the definite purpose. What attracted them were larger-than-life characters, cinematography, and hyperbolic plot. This finding also suggests that youngsters are prone to approach visual media to know about the *Mbh* as reading would not be to their taste. Undoubtedly visuals leave an everlasting impression on its viewer, but how much reliability is expected of such revivals through these mediums cannot be assumed. Hence, it is much more likely that they will not be able to acquire the real purpose of the epic, i.e. to value *dharma*, and neither will they know what is written by Vyasa in his *Mbh* through such distorted narrations. Notwithstanding the fact that

the world is being embraced in the fictional world of the fictional epic, the study tries to preserve and treasure the essence of the authentic text without getting swayed away by the fiction. The modern reader is judicious and takes pride in their logic and rationality, so this quality should be used in finding the worth of the epic in its authentic text. Focusing on the distortion will help the reader/viewers in knowing that what they are assuming to be authentic is not authentic to a greater extent and make them inquisitive to know the epic and its teachings in real terms. The research will continue finding the alterations in such representations so as to keep the readers intact with the authenticity of the text and preserve the values and teaching which the epic is gradually losing at present.

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