

Abstract

In the recent decade, Chinese woman's social status, valuation, and life attitude have been undergoing tremendous transition. Possible causes have been proposed and researched. This study is designed to investigate the influence of one of the most well-received TV series lately- *Desperate Housewives* in relation to the change of Chinese woman's attitudes towards relationship. Eighty-six Chinese college year-one female students, participate in the experiment, followed by an in-depth interview aimed to provide a qualitative account to the media effect. The result shows that the participants exposed to the series, compared with those who watched something irrelevant to the purpose of the study, viewed relationship as less trustworthy, became more negative towards marriage and childbearing, and more open towards premarital sex and casual sex. But meanwhile, their attitudes towards independence, late marriage and extra-marital affairs were not significantly changed. A more comprehensive explanation is offered in the interview which examines participants' reaction towards this kind of TV series in a broader social and cultural context. The participants' deeply entrenched traditional Chinese values could possibly be accountable for their intention of getting married and childbearing, and continuous condemnation upon cheating and extra-marital affairs, as well as a reserved attitude towards sex related behaviors. It is also noticed that although they deemed what they watched in the series as an honest reflection of the reality, they suspected if the same thing will happen in a typical Chinese community.