With so many channels airing similar programmes, does quality suffer? And is there still anything missing?

"I think there are too many channels," says 19-year-old Riaz Ahmed, a student of North South University. "There is not enough substance and the content becomes diluted."

Samiul Haq thinks the number of channels is fine, but their content could be better. "The talk shows are good," he says. "I always stop while flicking through channels if there is a talk show on and watch it. The open discussions there are good. But the overall quality of the channels could improve. If it does, then there's no harm in there being many channels. But we don't want quantity at the price of quality."



Political talk show "Onnyo Drishti" on ATN Bangla.

Twenty-five-year-old Arman Khan thinks the channels lack creativity. "They're all copycats," complains Arman. "In the case of the cooking shows, our channels have copied from Indian television. As for the talk shows, there were one or two good ones, and the rest just copied them."

"Sometimes programmes become repetitive," admits Mustafa Kamal Sayed of ntv. "Regarding the elections, for example, different angles must be explored, not the same one over and over again on every programme on every channel."

His channel is careful not to repeat itself, says Sayed. "It all really depends on the presentation," he says. "At the end of the day, the issues, the programmes, are similar. It's how they are presented, in a new style, new angle, that makes all the difference."

On the other hand, some people think there are things still missing on the television screen.

"There aren't as many programmes for young people," opines Arman Khan.

Kha Ma Harun of Rtv thinks programmes on classical music are being sorely missed. "Rtv has started a classical music show in the mornings with this in mind," he says. "It may not be a big hit, but for many it will be a relief to turn on the television in the morning and be able to listen to classical music."



People eagerly watch private channels for the latest news updates.

The Bangladeshi television industry is growing rapidly, with new channels going on the air every few months. There are currently 10 private channels in operation and a few on test transmission, with 69 more reportedly awaiting government permission to launch. Frequencies are even being advertised in newspapers, making them seem like any other commodity on sale.