

Perception Analysis of TV Reality Shows: Perspective of Viewers' and Entertainment Industry Professionals.

Souvik Das*, Dr. Partha Sarkar, Dr.S.M Alfarid Hussain

Department of Mass Communication, Assam University, Silchar, Assam.

***Corresponding Author:** Souvik Das, Department of Mass Communication, Assam University, Silchar, Assam.

Abstract: Television content is predominantly classified into fiction and non-fiction category which further diversifies in various subcategories. Reality shows are propositioned as entertainment content under non-fiction format in contrast to fictionalised events that are acted in. Road to stardom and affluence is made easier through participation in Reality TV Shows. Extensive audience reach through Television Rating Points (TRP) and support over various social media platforms is achieved through the manufacturing of controversies. Channels are making use of viewer's emotions both in positive as well as negative ways. Many viewers are obscure about the intent of the show makers. The authenticity of Reality TV Shows as real or unreal has been under contention. Therefore, in the present study, an attempt has been made to understand how an audience perceives the programming tools used in Reality TV shows and how the TV industry professionals perceive the way Reality TV Shows function and delivers their content to the audiences at large. The study employed mixed-method research.

Keywords: Societal Perception, Reality Shows, TRPs, Celebrities, Audience Research

1. INTRODUCTION

“The world of reality has its limits; the world of imagination is boundless.” – Jean Jacques Rousseau

When the famous 18th-century philosopher and writer Jean Jacques Rousseau quoted the lines he too emphasised on the aspects of what appears as reality may have its limitations while the imaginative world is more boundless in presenting them. The quote finds resonance with the world of Reality TV Shows also in the present world.

The attributional feature of reality TV is plausibly the demeanor in which it is shot.

The concept of Reality TV always had been about how entertainment content is shot in a real setting involving people from real life. Mostly the imagery of Reality TV on-screen has been about the live studio shooting and the audiences at the background or the competitions among participants based on capturing their actions, reactions via surveillance cameras. Every General Entertainment Channel wants to have a Reality TV Show in their bouquet of programming. Viewers are interested to know about the different facets of the participants meanwhile to deliver that participants are also leaving no stones unturned to expose their sentiments alongside talent whenever provided a chance. Reality TV Programming has developed as a sure-shot revenue earner in a couple of years. This has led to cutthroat competition among channels in prime-time especially over the weekend to grab maximum eyeballs for TV Ratings conducted under the Broadcast Audience Research Council, the autonomous body which monitors TV viewership of selected homes.

Reality TV can still be considered in its nascent stage because it is experimenting, evolving, coming up with different concepts, formats. Reality TV as a genre of entertainment has been a sure-shot success formula and has been growing rapidly over the years. Meanwhile, in recent years the contention has been about Reality Shows not standing up to its name of being Reality or being real in nature, true to its content.

It is no less a paradox at times. The aspect of realism seems to be eroding faster and that also without any pretensions.

The format of Reality Shows is twisted in different seasons. The attention is more on presenting the show realistic as much as possible rather than letting the show bring out content spontaneously. Some channels over the years have dedicated themselves completely to Reality TV Shows churning seasons each year and promising their viewers the double entertainment factor. But to meet the expectations the regular norm has been creating scripted drama presented in a very authentic way. Also making sure that the audience is intrigued by the visuals onscreen without any prejudice.

The programming team of the channels always are upfront to deny any sort of scripted interference in a reality show. Shows like Big Boss have maintained that line of defense whenever questioned about its realism factor. While in the way the curiosity of viewers is tested through seasons after seasons churning out consecutively.

The dynamic change in the context of Reality TV Shows is not just limited to its programming and creative side but also how the audiences have evolved and can judge content by its pattern and approach in presenting the show and its participants.

Despite all the hullabaloo that surrounds the authenticity of Reality TV Shows, nothing has deterred the viewers from contributing to its vast viewership. Reality TV Shows are an instant hit among the masses and commissioning season after season with the number of sponsors increasing is a testimony of how it is a perfect recipe for TV channels and Content creators to taste success. Social media upsurge has enabled content creators to hype up their Reality TV shows through social media trends. Despite the narratives of the content being realistic or not, the participants once they occupy the attention of the viewers, it is all about engaging the viewers to go with them through this journey, to support them. Reality TV can't be considered as a broadcasting medium to air some competition between participants. It is not a third person. It plays a proactive role in making the participants reach out to its viewers. In the process, they do analyse the tilt of the audience and they do proceed ahead accordingly.

The question was always about being ethical. Different prisms lead to different outcomes. Viewers have maintained that they do understand the manipulative nature of Reality TV shows but despite that, they want fair play and not a show at the cost of preferential Judgement by the show makers.

The study explores the various elements in the functioning of reality TV shows in mainstream General Entertainment channels and the perception of the audiences towards it as well as how the TV professionals perceive it from their point of view.

2. REALITY TELEVISION SHOWS: AN OVERVIEW

What we perceive as reality is also influenced by the social norms we live with. A contestant on a Reality TV programme facing racial abuse or body shaming evokes strong reactions. The right and the wrong of the show becomes integral thought processes of a viewer at times. Entertainment programmes on TV are shaping our social and cultural etiquettes. Our sensitivities, relationships, associations, face to face interactions are these days influenced to a bit extent by the content in TV as well as the web.

Globally the inception of Reality television programmes has been since the first broadcast of Candid Camera in the late 1940s. In recent years these types of shows have gained immense traction. The reality-based adventure show Survivor in 2000 has been credited with the beginning of reality programming in the current television landscape. In the context of India, Close up Antakshari spearheaded the advent of an unscripted TV programme for entertainment purposes in the early 1990s. Following it came SaReGaMa, a singing talent show on the same channel Zee TV. Opportunities for content creators opened up and reality television has swamped our television screens and lives to these present times of watching these content on mobile apps.

The shows are made for the attention-grabbing of viewers. In most places, it becomes apparent that the show has been scripted. Endemol B.V a dutch based entertainment production house that is popular for many multiplatform Reality TV shows worldwide is not able to conform to one set of formats at all places. For instance, the Indian Idol, the Indian counterpart of American Idol is very different in its approach. Indian Idol has infused stand-up comedy or even dance performances by celebrity judges in a singing show which is not the case with the original format in America. Such dilutions are heavily criticised by critics, veterans of the entertainment industry. If one channel boasts

of Dance Deewane on Colors TV, then the rival channel Star Plus has got Nach Baliye or Dance India Dance in Zee Tv to hold in its audience value. One of the landmark shows in Reality TV has been Kaun Banega Crorepati which has been able to retain the interest value of audiences since the year 2000. Format, presentation, broadcasting networks have changed over the years though. Channel V popstars, a singing competition reality show made a great impact through the way they conducted auditions in different cities. It became a stepping stone for other reality Tv shows too. The public saw these upstart shows as an opportunity to get name and fame in Mumbai based on talent. MTV's two popular reality shows centered on today's youth, Roadies and Splitsvilla have seen youth hooked on to their idiot boxes.

Cine Stars Ki Khoj on Zee TV and Indian Idol during 2003 started the trend of elimination process via audience voting. It has been later adopted by many reality television and celebrity-based programmes. Later new methods have been undertaken to improvise the voting process to avoid duplication of audience votes. Presently all channel have their system applications and audiences primarily votes there through the app in their smartphones. The craze for Reality TV shows has been expanding. The Kapil Sharma Show on Sony TV is an amalgamation of dramatic stand-up comedy along with talk shows with celebrities and their interaction with the public. It enjoys huge popularity in recent times. Khatron Ke Khiladi, the offshoot of the fear factor has also been hugely popular. Big Boss on Colors TV the Indian version of Big Brother in the UK, is the most popular Reality TV show at present times among all genres of Reality TV. The confrontations among celebrities locked up in a house set up and the way they outrage their expressions in those situations is a content discussed a lot among all shows. It is hosted by Salman Khan is an important factor for its popularity in various seasons.

According to Vijaykumar and Arulchelvan (2015), Reality Television can be analysed with the following characteristics.

1. Use of non professionally trained actors,
2. Programmes being filmed in unscripted situations,
3. Given more prominence in capturing contestants' spontaneity over improvisation.
4. With a very limited level of producer/director's creative involvement in the programme.
5. The recording of the contestants' experience is not limited to a particular moment.

Reality TV shows are offering variety in terms of genres, concepts to different viewers according to their preferences. The Reality shows classification is vast and some concepts overlap each other. Sometimes a celebrity-based show like Jhalak Dikhlaja, Nach Baliye is both a celebrity reality show as well as a competition-based show projecting talent of celebrities as well as choreographers. A show like The Kapil Sharma show is a mix of celebrity talk show alongside stand-up comedy presented in a dramatized way. Despite that, some basic classification of them can be summarised as Celebrity-Reality Shows like Jhalak dikhlaja, Bigg Boss, Talent-based Shows include dance, singing shows like Indias's Got Talent, Saregamapa. A documentary-based factual Television Shows like Satyameva Jayate, Game Reality Shows like Kaun Banega Crorepati. Then the Surveillance Camera Shows like Big Boss, Talk Shows including a comedy based or overall topics including social life.

Dating /Matrimonial shows like Splitsvilla, Bachelorette have been there. Then there are Original Life Incidents Shows – Real Life Incidents are captured in the camera or showcased in dramatised form to the viewers. e.g. Crime Patrol, Gumrah, Savdhaan India. The genre of Adventure Shows e.g. Khatron Ke Khiladi, Roadies, Survivor have been quite popular. Makeover shows involving designing the look of the house or wedding events have been the latest addition in the genre of reality TV shows. There also have been Paranormal Shows where participants are placed in frightening situations.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Media Research and various studies, observations about the functioning and world of Reality TV have dealt with the subject on different parameters. From psychological perspectives to attitudinal behaviour analysis to effect-based researches.

In the words of Wei and Tootle (2002) Reality TV is a television program that can simulate real-world, real-life psychologically, emotionally, and mentally challenging situations and draw out the audience

into reward-motivated, self-selected contests. As per Hiebert and Gibbons,(2000), an increase in reality programming is without a doubt related to the increasing number of cable channels, which allows advertisers to reach niche markets. Frank,(2003) points out how most Reality TV is geared to individuals who are below twenty-five years of age. Frank implies that younger viewers are attracted to Reality TV shows because they find characters and situations to be relevant to their everyday lives. Nabi et al. (2003) suggested that regular viewers found Reality TV as entertaining and to peek into another's life as it enhanced their cognisance about themselves. Most casual viewers saw Reality TV as an escape route from boredom, watching another's life as on the other hand, it was a medium to understand oneself better. Nabi et al also talked about how some reality shows were listed as fictional but for some reason, the audience did not perceive the show as realistic.

Nabi et al (2007) thought of using multidimensional scaling to get a grip on the sub-groups of reality TV programming. Viewers thought about reality TV based on two dimensions, romance, and competitiveness. Dating programs were considered as a different genre of Reality TV programming. However, Nabi suggested reality TV researchers do studies on the qualities of the programs rather than the genres.

Meanwhile, Rutenberg (2001) had said of a situation of how some have argued that reality programs should not be honored at all, lest they sully the television industry. Developed by Gerbner (1969), the Cultural Indicators program as part of his work with cultivation effects, assessed the television exposure impact on the viewers. Hill (2005) points out that the surging popularity of the particular genre is reflected in the TRP ratings of these Reality TV shows, which in turn have resulted in higher advertising revenues for the broadcasters. Reality TV programmes are a prime-time genre of entertainment and have unique characteristics. Science has gone beyond a mere spectator to an active participant. Meanwhile, Reiss and Wiltz (2004) also asked some people to rate their experiences on Reiss's 16 basic life motives. How much they viewed reality TV and enjoyed these shows. The outcome of the study indicated that the interest level in reality television programs was dependent on the reality television consumption pattern

Papacharissi and Mendelson's (2007) study focused on the gratifications sought from Reality TV. One of the revelations was that watching reality TV is mainly for leisure or entertainment purposes. But some aspects also talked about how Reality TV often provides the viewers a chance of becoming themselves as an integral part of the entertainment program. Reality TV has become an empowering tool for the audience, enabling it to become a participant and influencer. Meng and Lugalambi (2003) in their study of perceived reality found that respondents did not view reality programs as realistic. Perceived plausibility of the program mediated the dynamics between programs viewed and the perceived utility. Lundy et. al. (2008) in his study, set to explore college students' consumption. Choices towards reality television, their reasons for watching reality shows. Also, other things were the perceptions of the situations portrayed on these shows, and the role of social affiliation in the students' consumption of reality television.

Later, Hall A. (2009) investigated whether viewer perceptions of reality programs' authenticity were anyhow associated or linked with involvement, enjoyment, and perceived learning. Four dimensions of perceived authenticity were identified namely cast eccentricity, representativeness, candidness, and producer manipulation.

4. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Reality shows are termed unscripted programmes or non-fictional shows that are centered around footage of real-life situations. These are further presented to audiences as entertainment. Reality shows have always claimed to be non-fictitious where screenplay writer is not hired. Even the work of the Director, Editor is considered minimal in a Reality TV show set up. Celebrities or participants appear and behave on their instincts and situations. They perform or perish at their perils and are not guided by creative of a channel. Meanwhile, there is also an opinion among viewers about the authenticity and consider it as fiction meant for entertainment. There are divergent views by the fraternity among the TV industry professionals too regarding how biased editing is overshadowing the natural output to make the shows spicier in content. Due to such inconclusive viewpoints across a spectrum of TV professionals and TV audiences, there is a need to study the perception about reality shows from both TV industry professionals as well as viewers to arrive at a larger conclusion.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- I. To analyse the perception of reality shows among viewers in Silchar Town.
- II. To analyse the perspective of Entertainment Industry professionals towards Reality Shows,
- III. To analyse the viewers understanding of the tactics employed by Reality TV shows to make the programme appear real and interesting.

6. METHODOLOGY

The researcher conducted the study by using a mixed research method where a survey among a sample of viewers and qualitative analysis of interviews of entertainment industry professionals was conducted to get a wholesome viewpoint of the terrain of Reality TV Shows in general from both the diagonals, the content creator and the Viewers. The data for the survey was collected through a questionnaire among Reality TV viewers of Silchar, Asaam from below 18 yrs to above 55 yrs of age. Most of the fanbase of Reality TV comes from tier ii cities thereby silchar as a city was considered as study area. It is a city which has good fanbase of Reality Content. Moreover two reality show winners hail from Silchar namely Debojit Saha from Saregamapa 2005 and Bir Radha Sherpa from dance plus 3.

While a section of entertainment industry-related professionals in Mumbai were interviewed for the purpose for getting an insider approach

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table1a. Consumption of different genres of TV Shows programming

Time Consumption of TV in percentages				
		Less than 2.5 hrs	Between 2.5 hrs- 3.5 hrs	More than 3.5 hrs
a	News	50.79%	35.53%	13.68%
b	Reality TV shows	53.16%	34.47%	12.37%
c	Drama series	44.21%	40.53%	15.26%
d	Documentaries	86.32%	11.84%	1.84%
e	Sport related programming	44.47%	9.47%	46.05%
f	Music Programming	51.84%	28.16%	20.00%
g	Educational programming	62.63%	33.42%	3.95%
h	Movies	17.89%	76.32%	5.79%
i	Other programmes	78.16%	15.00%	6.84%

TV is filled up with varied options to choose from and watch the content people prefer. There cannot be one specific kind of content or kind of channel preferred. Overall most time was spent by viewers on sport-related content followed by Music, Drama, and then Reality TV shows. TV is filled up with varied options to choose from and watch the content people prefer. There cannot be one specific kind of content or kind of channel preferred. Overall most time was spent by viewers on sport-related content followed by Music, Drama, and then Reality TV shows.

Table1b. Consumption of Reality TV Shows by Viewers

Options	Watch Reality Tv shows	Corresponding Distribution of Frequency	Percentage
a	Always	275	72.37
b	Never	0	0.00
c	Sometimes	105	27.63
Total		380	100

From the table and diagram illustrated above it was found that 77.11% of the respondents watched TV every day. 15% of respondents watched TV depending on weekdays but not regularly. 7.89% of respondents preferred watching TV only on weekends. TV content in today's times can't be run on the Nineties model where weekend shows or an episode a week was the norm. In today's time, daily soaps and some Reality Shows running on weekdays reflect the demand to consume content on regular basis.

Table2. Preferred Platform to watch Reality TV Shows.

Options	Platform preferred to watch Reality Television	Corresponding Distribution of Frequency	Percentage
a	Television	268	70.53
b	Mobile apps	55	14.47
c	Personal computer	4	1.05
d	Both TV & Mobile/ipads	53	13.95
Total		380	100

With the illustrated table and figure depicted above, it was found that among 70.53% of respondents Television was the most preferred medium to watch Reality Shows. 14.47% of respondents opted for mobile applications. 13.95% of respondents chose both TV & Internet mediums like Mobile, ipads to watch Reality TV Shows. Only 1.05% of respondents used a computer to watch Reality TV Shows. Most people preferring TV indicates that despite updated technology, traditional mediums are more preferred. TV content is more of a family viewing experience.

Table3. Preferred Broadcasting Channel for Reality TV Content.

Options	Most preferred Channel to watch Reality Television	Corresponding Distribution of Frequency	Percentage
a	Zee TV	27	7.11
b	Star Plus	10	2.63
c	Sony TV	156	41.05
d	Colors TV	162	42.63
e	Zoom	12	3.16
f	MTV	13	3.42
g	Sab TV	0	0
h	&TV	0	0
i	Star Bharat	0	0
j	Epic	0	0
Total		380	100

Respondents were asked to rank the General Entertainment Channel they adhered to most for watching Reality TV Shows. The data revealed that Colors TV was the most adhered channel for watching reality TV content with 42.63% of respondents preferring it. Close in competition is Sony TV with 41.05% of respondents choosing it as the second-best broadcaster for Reality TV content. 7.11 % of respondents chose Zee TV as the broadcaster best suited for Reality TV Shows. 3.42 % of respondents chose MTV as most suited for Reality TV Shows. 3.16 % of respondents chose Zoom TV while Star Plus has 2.63 % of respondents. Sab TV, Star Bharat, &TV were not ranked first by any respondent. Complete detail of the scoring has been presented in the table above for clear understanding. Colors being the most adhered channels among viewers finds their relevance also when colors presented Reality Shows like India's Got Talent, Bigg Boss, and Khatron Ke Khiladi are the leaders in TV ratings among other reality shows. They have scored consistently even in BARC ratings during their airtime.

Table4. Reality TV shows present people as they appear in real life.

Options	Reality TV shows presents people as they appear in real life	Corresponding Distribution of Frequency	Percentage
a	Strongly Agree	29	7.63
b	Agree	87	22.89
c	Neither	103	27.11
d	Disagree	116	30.53
e	Strongly Disagree	45	11.84
Total		380	100

From the above table, we get an understanding of how most of the viewers disagreed with the fact that Reality TV Showcases people as they appear in real life. Viewers are not naive in this digital age. They don't have faith in the programming of being authentic regarding realism. They perceive that there is a sheer chance of manipulated presentation of participants in Reality TV Shows as per the format of the show.

Table5. *Reality TV shows being fake or real doesn't influence viewing pattern.*

Options	Reality TV shows being fake or real doesn't influence viewing pattern	Corresponding Distribution of Frequency	Percentage
a	Strongly Agree	0	0.00
b	Agree	22	5.79
c	Neither	19	5.00
d	Disagree	281	73.95
e	Strongly Disagree	58	15.26
	Total	380	100

Most of the viewers disagreed with the statement that they are not bothered about the authentic presentation of Reality TV Shows. It concerns them about what is being served to them in the name of entertainment. If the viewers are aware of Reality TV Shows being orchestrated they don't behave least bothered about its authenticity. The viewers do feel it does influence their viewing pattern. If they come across an episode of any reality show which they find its elements to be fake the viewers do express it these days on social media. Sometimes they stop watching the subsequent seasons

Table6. *Reality TV Judges getting into dispute among themselves to dramatize the episode*

Options	Judges getting into dispute among themselves to dramatize the episode	Corresponding Distribution of Frequency	Percentage
a	Strongly Agree	328	86.32
b	Agree	30	7.89
c	Neither	9	2.37
d	Disagree	11	2.89
e	Strongly Disagree	2	0.53
	Total	380	100

Most of the respondents strongly affirmed and agreed about how judges get into arguments in a Reality TV Show with the intention to sensationalise the episode. Judges getting into argument is considered an extension of the fights one observes in daily soap operas in the telly world. The fights between judges been authentic or a dramatizing factor for the show makers has been a question for many, The viewers across all age groups however view the judges of the reality shows fighting out each other with their opinions are doing it to sensationalise the episode for wider viewership.

Table7. *Reality TV Shows edited in a way to influence viewers thinking pattern.*

Options	Reality TV Shows are edited in way to influence viewers thinking pattern	Corresponding Distribution of Frequency	Percentage
a	Strongly Agree	341	89.74
b	Agree	15	3.95
c	Neither	19	5.00
d	Disagree	5	1.32
e	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00
	Total	380	100

Most of the viewers opined how they strongly felt about Reality TV shows being edited with an agenda in the minds of the show makers. Respondents across all age groups believe that editing is compromised to serve the audiences the perception the makers want to build up for the audiences.

Table8. *Reality TV encourages controversy for publicity*

Options	Reality TV encourages controversy for publicity	Corresponding Distribution of Frequency	Percentage
a	Strongly Agree	49	12.89
b	Agree	313	82.37
c	Neither	4	1.05
d	Disagree	14	3.68
e	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00
	Total	380	100

Most of the viewers believe that controversies in Reality TV Shows are encouraged by the show makers for more publicity and wider outreach. All the viewers of different age groups consider that

controversies that are seen in Reality TV shows for instance any kind of outrageous statement uttered by Participants or judges is also because it is encouraged by the channel to do so to make the show more spicy and entertaining.

7.1. Perspective of Entertainment Industry Professionals

1. **Mahendra Sharma** (TV serial Editor) says that Reality TV is actually created in editing studios where the right emotions, reactions are captured. It is like replenishing the footage for better entertainment consumption of the viewers. But there has to be something real even for the post-production team to put up a fantastic episode for the viewers to watch and rejoice.

2. **Vinta Nanda** (Scriptwriter) believes that reality shows are a work of fiction for entertainment. It has become a platform for Parents to showcase their kids' talents. The extent is such that today's reality shows can have youth who are ready to strip or have sex just to gain popularity.

3. **Rajiv Laxman** (Reality Show Judge) thinks that there are a lot of fraud people who extract money from people by telling them that they will get them into the final round of a show or will get them selected since he has witnessed such issues in Roadies, Splitsvilla, Masterchef. As per him no TV Show will take money or ask people to pay for an audition or getting a direct entry.

4. **Dale Bhagwagar** (PR consultant, Film Journalist) who had been managing celebrities like Shilpa Shetty in Big Brother UK or the various contestants for Bigg Boss on colors is of the view that Reality Shows have adopted the dictum from the 90s of Bollywood where anything nonsensical could be presented to audiences as entertainment. Public doesn't bother about the authenticity of reality shows. It is all about perception and the perception is market-driven. Whether it being ethical or unethical is a different zone all together but it is not the TV industry that decides the functioning of Reality Shows. It is all about what audiences are enjoying at the moment. No matter even if it's a staged reality if it is the flavour of the season so be it. The Reality TV Show producers are just catering to the audience. Its audience-driven and not an impulse to showcase the life of participants as realistically as possible.

Referring to Bigg Boss specifically he also added that instances like that of Dolly Bindra's disrespectful behaviour and language in Bigg Boss earlier did paint Reality TV shows in a bad light. Children also watched her abusive behaviour on national television. She created ruckus as she knew the format of the show. Sometimes Production people do brief the participants before they enter the Bigg Boss house. Its unspoken understanding, you do drama you last, you don't do drama you don't last. 16 hours of footage is captured and 45 minutes of the episode has to be Thereby Reality TV is all about delivering fully packaged entertainment content to its viewers irrespective of how it is analysed by the public in general. In the case of Bigg Boss, Colors TV prohibiting other youtube content creators from using episodes or footages and asking people to follow the official voot channel has also done more harm to the reach of people. Rigid copyright policies aren't contributing.

5. **Avinash Vankar** (Assistant Director, Optimystic Entertainment) thought that Reality TV is not everything real. A lot of hard work goes behind it. But this genre of entertainment will perish one day. Reality TV Shows are becoming monotonous.

6. **Sumant Mhatre** (Post-production manager) stated that one of the major changes surrounding Reality TV shows was about the web medium establishing it as the primary platform for consumption of such shows and content. Many YouTube channels were putting videos of Bigg Boss which provided access to various viewers to watch them anytime but subsequently, the channel axed all such attempts and decided to shift all its online viewers into its Voot app which is the official channel. This has led to a reduction in online viewership because all are not subscribers of the app. Moreover, the show is primarily preferred on new digital modes because it provides them the luxury to watch it anytime. In addition, there has been content that is not pro-family and is viewed in living spaces with the entire family as there is a lot of abusive behaviour.

7. **B.Krishna** (Video Editor, SOL Productions) believes that Reality TV shows have to take into account what the audience demands. The channel needs to keep a grip on that. Manipulation of content can be detrimental to the overall health of the show. The Show must be the bigger agenda, not the Host. The Show must not revolve around the stardom of celebrity hosts or guests only. The quality of content should matter.

8. **Manoj Gupta** (Editor, Frames productions) believes that Reality TV Shows are working harder as they have the pressure to make it more authentic and yet it should have all the ingredients that ticks of entertainment criteria. There is certainly an element of inserted influence of the makers about how the show should look but creative inputs cant meddle with the authentic requirement of the show. If a participant sang well in a music-based reality show it will be applauded and if someone gave a performance that was not up to the mark, the performance can't be edited to suit the participant as the judges would have already given their verdict.

It varies from one programme to another and the requirements of the show and of that particular channel.

9. **Rimi Sen** (Actor, Ex contestant Bigg Boss 9) has previously spoken about her condescension for the reality show Bigg Boss during her stint years back. Although the highest-paid contestant in Bigg Boss 9, she was in limelight that season and for her apparent lack of interest on the show. According to her, it was like a paid holiday. She also realised the way they play with one's psychology which isn't shown to anyone. All that one can see are tasks and people bad-mouthing each other. She added that she doesn't involve in catfights because that isn't a solution for her. She complained how participants are made to feel frustrated with the tasks at 3 am in the night, with food restrictions, the bad side of anyone will get unleashed. She also revealed that she was paid around 2.25 crore for 49 days and nobody can earn this much money in such a short time.

9. **Kavita Kaushik** (TV Actor, Ex Contestant Bigg Boss 14) had also stated in her media interactions that she highly disagrees with the notion that what one sees on a reality show is the truth. According to her those who can project themselves perfectly will be the winners and rebels will fail. Other media reports also suggested how contestants in Roadies had to sign a contract that forbade them to reveal any secrets of the show. And at all, if anyone revealed any backstage secrets they would have to pay Rs 10 Lakhs as a penalty. Palak Johal, an ex-contestant of Roadies revealed that the entire show is scripted.

8. CONCLUSION

The overall perception of the viewers regarding the authenticity of the Reality TV Show has been sceptical. The manipulation of reality does bother them but not to an extent that it hampers the regular viewing pattern of their choicest Reality TV Shows. Moreover, they believe in enjoying the content being served not caring much about the debate surrounding the legitimacy of TV Reality Shows. Monotony is a problem with the shows alongside unreal content though for the viewers. However, these shows aim at providing opportunities to the hidden talents residing in the far-flung interiors of the country. They unleash true potential which paves way for subsequent careers. The viewers are of the firm opinion that the tactics employed by producers are quite evident in front of the viewers. They can identify that the dramatics being involved alongside the competition is just to spice up the entertainment quotient. Most of the expressions of the participants or judges for instance be it happy or unhappy are aimed at making Reality on screen look more appealing and emotional for the audiences to get swayed away. The thinking pattern of a viewer is heavily influenced by the display of various tactics by the producers and the Channel. It is consuming a lot of space in a reality-based TV show which overshadows the talent at times. While The industry professionals presented a plethora of prisms to look at Reality TV Shows. The present study does reveal that makers of Reality TV shows try to project that reality show results are the judgment of the viewers while it may not be entirely the case so. Professionals in the TV industry are of the opinion that the kind of Reality TV Shows we witness and the concept we see including all kinds of things happening are a result of what the audience's taste prefers to choose. If Reality TV Shows are devoid of spunk, controversies, drama no one will watch them. Even a simple singing Reality TV Show needs to be amplified with a lot of additional content set up to make it more engaging and not just a boring singing-based show. Many professionals' observations are quite alike to what the viewers on the ground perceive. Editing does take a very important place in presenting Reality Show. It is jam-packed with all kinds of emotions. Also, the influx of OTT and viewing of the Reality Show episodes mostly over the internet have added a new dimension. Competition is severe and the show makers are always uptight to stay relevant with times even if it comes to tweaking reality content. A lot of hard work goes behind these Reality TV Shows but since it's part of showbiz the stakes are high and the content creators have to indulge in adding their bits into it if the reality coming on screen doesn't appeal to audiences.

Yet the buck stops with the channel and production houses about how much creative liberty or the ratio between reality vs manufactured reality they have to maintain to run the show successfully.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] Agarwal, Vir Vala & V.S Gupta (2002), *Handbook of Journalism and Mass Communication*, New Delhi, Concept Publishing Company.
- [2] Andrejevic, M., (2004). *Reality TV: The work of being watched*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- [3] Caudle, M. (2011), *The Reality of Reality TV: Reality Show Business Plans, Create Space*.
- [4] Howells. C. A. (2006), *The Cambridge Companion to Margaret Atwood*, Cambridge University Press.
- [5] Hill, A. (2005). *Reality TV: Audiences and Popular Factual Television*, Routledge.
- [6] Mahabir Narwal, Geeta Arora (2012), *Societal Perception of Reality Shows*, International Journal of Marketing and Business Communication.
- [7] Malur, P.G. and Lakshmikantha, D.,(2014), Reeling the Reality: A study on contemporary Reality Shows and their Influence on other Entertainment Program Genres. International Research Journal of Social Sciences, 3(8), pp.1-3
- [8] Papacharissi, Z. and Mendelson, A.L., (2007). *An exploratory study of reality appeal: Uses and gratifications of reality TV shows*. Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media.
- [9] Vijaykumar, V. and Arulchelvan, S, (2015), *Motivation and impact of viewing reality television programme: An audience study*. Indian Journal of Science and Technology, [ejournal] 8(27), <http://dx.doi.org/10.17485/ijst%2F2015%2Fv8i27%2F7>
- [10] Criticism of Reality Television Retrieved from http://realityshows.com/articles/criticism_of_reality_television.html.Cr
- [11] Rimi Sen says she thought Bigg Boss was 'a useless show', did it for money | Hindustan Times Retrieved from <https://www.hindustantimes.com/entertainment/tv>
- [12] EXCLUSIVE! Kavita Kaushik: Reality shows have done more harm to my career than good - Times of India (indiatimes.com) Retrieved from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/tv/news/hindi/exclusive-kavita-kaushik-reality-shows-have-done-more-harm-to-my-career-than-good/articleshow/81895890.cms>
- [13] Roadies: From Raghu, Rajiv Suddenly Leaving To Ayushmann Khurrana's Sperm Donation Way Before Vicky Donor, 5 Surprising Secrets Of The Show! (koimoi.com) Retrieved from <https://www.koimoi.com/television/roadies-from-raghu-rajiv-suddenly-leaving-to-ayushmann-khurrana-s-sperm-donation-way-before-vicky-donor-5-surprising-secrets-of-the-show/>

Citation: Souvik Das, et.al. "Perception Analysis of TV Reality Shows: Perspective of Viewers' and Entertainment Industry Professionals.". *International Journal of Media, Journalism and Mass Communications (IJMJMC)*, vol 7, no. 2, 2021, pp. 22-31 doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20431/2454-9479.0702003>.

Copyright: © 2021 Authors. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.