A Critical Analysis of the Media Practices in India for Television Reality Shows: An Audience Driven Approach

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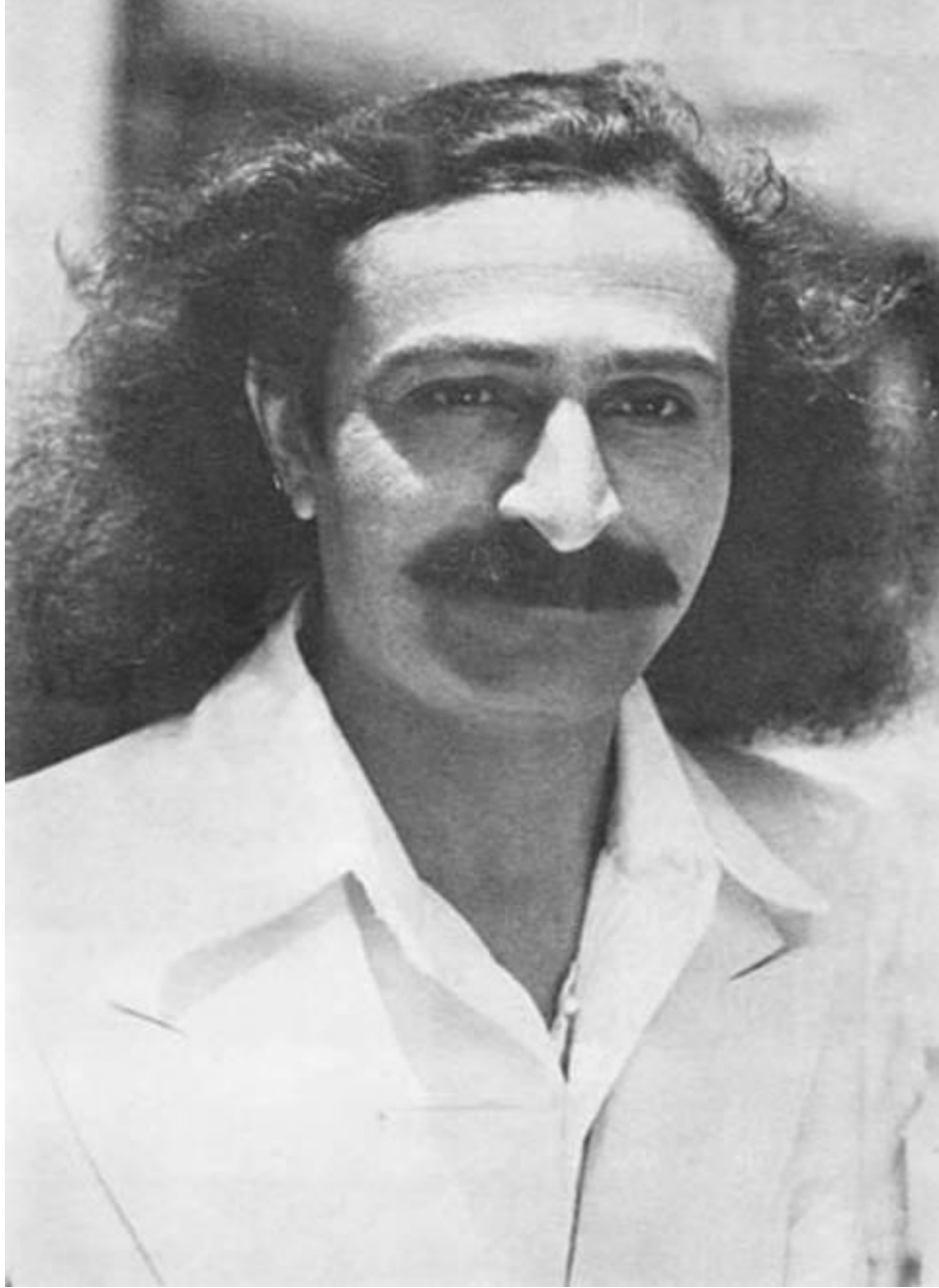
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The film world cannot escape its obligations to the larger world on which it makes so substantial an impression; and these obligations demand that its spiritual potential take precedence over the desire to make money. The script writers, the producers and actors should realize their spiritual potential instead of looking at their art as merely or mainly a business. The more vividly they realize this, the more dignified and satisfactory will the result of their efforts be and their inner account with themselves will be vastly gratifying.

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<u>CERTIFICATE</u>

This is to certify that the thesis entitled **A Critical Analysis of the Media Practices in India for Television Reality Shows: An Audience Driven Approach** and submitted by **MANISHA DIXIT**   ID No **2008PHXF027**G for award of Ph.D. degree of the Institute embodies original work done by her under my supervision.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Etymologically, the word 'media' derives its meaning from the Latin 'medium', which means 'that which is in the middle', [1]. The "media" in media entrepreneurship refers to traditional mass communications systems and content genres as well as other technologies for mediated human speech. This would include traditional publishing (newspapers, periodicals, or books), traditional electronic media (broadcasting, broadband, cable, or satellite), motion pictures, video gaming, recorded music, advertising, and adaptations of the Internet for any of these media [2]. In other words, the key distinction is old media and new media. *Old media* refers to the familiar organs of the mass media age, traditional (analogue and now digital) broad-casting (radio and television) supplemented more recently by satellite and cable, and print (newspapers, magazines, etc.). *New media* refers to the Internet and mobile communications systems of the digital age, which have not only led to digital versions of traditional mass media, but also to what might be thought of as a new form of mass expansion of media [3].With the explosion of digital media has come the extension of social media platforms into the lives of many who are technologically privileged and networked to the new communication environment [4]. In the digital ecology access to wider audience is facilitated and made cheap [5].

The terms media and communication are largely used to refer to main stream journalism and broadcasting. However, media and communication initiatives are dynamic and constantly influencing and borrowing from each other. Media created in one tradition may be transformed or altered by another [6]. In other words, each domain is beginning to acquire each other's functionality and thus becoming difficult to define as distinct entity, a phenomenon Fidler (1997)

described as *mediamorphosis*. For example, broadcast domain is incorporating some features of the interpersonal domain (e.g. personalized news broadcast) and communication in the interpersonal domain is acquiring capabilities typically associated with the broadcast domain (scaling the transmission of live video conference feed to include a large number of message recipients [7]. Increased importance of media industry has grown over the last 15 years [8]. Television (TV) is the primary medium of mass communication. When people speak of media they have in mind corporate bodies or government agencies whose access to modern technologies enables them to disseminate the same uniform content to a geographically dispersed multitude [9]. It is considered a powerful medium which provides sustained exposure to a constant set of images that help shape our perceptions of the world [10]. Television established itself as a mass medium since 1960s. In fact, television changed the entire media system and intensified the competition between the existing media such as daily press, weekly press, radio and film etc [11]. One advantage that visual media/television has over print media is that it is a combination of sights and sound and do not require literacy to reach to the audience of different races, genders, classes and ages and is considered a powerful medium [12]. However, the actual technologies of television have been undergoing a profound upgrade in many countries over the past years, greatly affecting the way it is produced, distributed and experienced [13]. Fundamental technological changes have occurred in the television industry in last decades. Preceded by the introduction of new technologies alternatives to terrestrial TV (e. g. cable and satellite TV), the most recent (and ongoing) technological transformation is the digitization of the content and of the existing television transmission platforms [14]. Television viewing is an activity of all social classes and income levels and TV watching consumes about 40 percent of leisure time [15]. It is a remarkable instrument to disseminate information to every class of

society with its reach even to the illiterate section of the society. In addition, Television plays a role in these social and sense-making activities, offering a reflection of the real world in the form of a mediated reality [16]. However, TV in the new century is more commercialized. In other words, there is more of everything--- more channels, more accompanying services [17]. But, as the impact of Internet grows viewers change their consumption behavior, interactivity starting from the involvement of voting viewers to interactive games, video on demand and enhancements to programming- will characterize the TV business model in future [18]. Alternatively, we can say that the emergence of 'new', interactive media puts the control over media increasingly in the hands of consumers [19]. However, there is a big difference between a computer and a television set. The television can receive only what broadcasters choose to air, but the computer can be used to create content-programs [20]. In other words the Internet does not have large corporate controller of the space and image of nations [21]. One of the most profound changes in international communication in the late twentieth century was globalization of media, especially television broadcasting. Wide use of broadcast satellites and continuing policies of deregulation and privatization facilitated the evolution of the television industry from a state of internationalization in the 1960s and 1970s, to multinationalization in the 1980s, and to globalization in the 1990s. This trend of globalization of television is continuing into the twenty first century. The current stage of 'global' television has transcended the international sale of television programmers between countries or the regional ambitions of multinationals. It has made worldwide audiences available to the world's leading broadcasters by tearing down barriers posed by time, space, and national boundaries [22]. Thus the growth in audience has led to the expansion of television [23]. By 2009 it had become possible to watch TV in a variety of ways; for example, by downloading a series from an alternate media platform, streaming video on a

network's media player and purchasing it on DVD, etc. [24]. Viewers in particular of TV Reality Shows or Reality TV are invited to pursue techniques implemented on the shows by visiting official websites or through the purchase of books and DVDs [25]. With regard to 'television', the media scholars can decide to study the media organization (sender), the technical devices used for production, distribution and reception (medium), the reception of programmes (receiver), specific programmes or the flow of programmes (text), the societal context (macro-context) or the immediate context of use (micro-context). Finally, the relations between the above-mentioned constituents can be studied, for example, the question of how the technical side of the medium affects the producers, the text and its reception [26]. The participatory nature of audience has given birth to Reality Shows, the origin of which could be traced to the emergence of periodicals relying on the contribution from the readers in the late 19th century American and British Popular Journalism [27]. In addition to this, the surge of reality TV programs since 2000 can be traced back to tabloid-style documentaries which first appeared in the late 1980s [28]. Thereafter late 1990s and early 2000 represent a watershed moment for the British television in the United States. Attention from American broadcasters to television formats with British origins facilitated unprecedented access on behalf of British production companies to the lucrative American market [29]. Prior to the advent of reality TV programs, watching television had been one way activity where audience exposed themselves to television programmes for entertainment and obtaining information. With the arrival of reality TV was introduced a new way of experiencing television culture known as interactive television [30]. According to Wikipedia, Reality Television is a genre of TV programming that presents purportedly unscripted dramatic or humorous situations, documents actual events and usually features ordinary people instead of professional actors. The concept of audience participation is visible

not only in media but also in other sectors. The issue of Human Rights and the mushrooming of the Non Government Organizations is a testimony that individuals have become more participatory. Another area where individuals are active and participative is Information Technology where the users partake in the development of Open Source Software. As we observe, Internet has also very carefully catered to the needs of the audience as individuals and as groups in allowing them to be more participative. For instance, audiences as individuals participate by writing their own blogs and as groups participate in the social networking sites and discussion forums. Internet has also given birth to the twitter through which celebrities can communicate with their fan following. Celebrities were never as accessible as they are now to the audience with the help of new technology and fans also could be reached by the celebrities through the new technology.

The present genre of the Reality Shows in the history of Television has greatly popularized the concept of active audience and audience empowerment. The popularity of the Reality Shows can be gauged by the fact that four of the top five prime- time broadcast TV programmers for 2006 were reality-based programmes [31]. In other words, Reality Shows constitute a significant portion of television offerings [32]. Such shows stand in stark contrast to the scripted TV plays as a presentation of non-actors in legitimately natural settings and situations working without a script, Reality TV stakes its claim with viewers to regard its depiction as unadorned and spontaneous, truthful documentation of natural reality [33]. In addition to this, Reality TV is more focused on depiction of the self than critical representation of society, which was often the case for earlier factual genres such as documentaries [34]. The Reality Shows have also given autonomy to the audience to vote for their favourite contestants by various technological tools such as SMS, email and voting. Voting takes place on the show itself for some Reality Shows

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and sometimes audience are encouraged to participate in online voting. In order to retain the interest of the audience in the Reality Shows, the media industry must design shows catering to their interests and needs. The current forms of the Reality Shows have undergone many changes. Reality TV genre has replicated itself so many times that the programmes have in effect become parodies of the form. In doing so, it has failed to empower the populace and relies on formulaic programming [35]. In addition to this networks are addicted to the shows because of huge profits as they are inexpensive to produce. Similarly audiences are also hooked to the product to become famous and win big prize amount by becoming winners. Despite the popularity of such shows they are regularly subjected to criticism [36].

1.1 Literature Survey

Media industry is in a state of flux in the age of globalization [37]. During the last century the change in Television occurred after every decade; for example, the transition from black and white television to color television took ten years and similarly change from VCR to cable television took another decade. However, this century witnessed enormous changes not only in the technology used but also in the perspectives of the audience. Audience has been a unified and coherent body. Rather, it is atomized; made up of numerous independent individuals [38]. Thus as media are constantly changing audiences are changing partly as a result of the changes in media technology and because of the changes in the way they live their lives. In this age of new media where success is unpredictable, changes are rampant and demand so uncertain, audience and technology have become the deciding factors in ensuring the success of the product. During the four eras of mass communication research starting with the industrial revolution the researchers focused their attention on the effect of media on the people and the society. The first

was the era of Mass Society Theory and the researchers along with the established aristocrats felt that the new technology would disrupt the existing social order. The second was the era of scientific perspective theory which was propounded by Paul Lazarsfeld. According to him the effect of media on the society could be measured and hence he conducted field survey to gauge this effect. The third was the era of limited effect theory which supported the belief that people are sheltered from the direct influence of media. Before forming an opinion about anything people, generally discuss things with friends and relatives. The fourth was the era of cultural criticism and according to this theory, media affects society consequently its culture as well. All these theories focused on media doing things to the people without their consent. But towards the later part of the nineteenth century there was a shift in the paradigm. Herta Herzog, Jay Blumler and Denis Mcquail popularized the concept of active audience with '*Uses and Gratification Theory'*. According to this theory "ask not what media do to people ask what people do with media" [39]. According to this theory audience are not just blank sheet of paper on which anything could be written. The audience has prior interests before deciding on the media content. The transition of the audience from passive to active has been gradual. Audience can be active in two ways: they actively create meanings from the material that is made available to them by the media institutions; they select media products and decide how to use them alongside their daily activities. Audience is perceived as active, selective and demanding in its use of the media [40]. However, audience in the twenty first century has gone a step ahead; they have become empowered. The audience in the case of blogs is not only the originator but also the supplier of media messages. The Internet and World Wide Web have developed closer links with consumers. In comparison to traditional media "one- to- many approach", the two medium stated above provide "many to many communications" as well as "one to one interactive

communication" where unique messages are sent to individuals. This has resulted in increased interactivity among people facilitating the exchange of information [41]. In addition there is an exchange of entertainment through various web-based technologies such as U tube, Facebook etc. Television through its genre of Reality Shows, places the audience on the opposite side of entertainment arena, providing all viewers with the possibility of becoming potential entertainers. In addition the audience also decides the fate of the contestants who participate in the shows [42]. Audience empowerment is an offshoot of media growth.

Media management is challenged with the task of catering to the needs of the audience which are not only active but widely scattered [43]. The audiences are increasingly sophisticated having learned about the media by living with it every day [44]. During the 1970s and 1980s media researchers became increasingly focused on media audience. There was a gradual transition from media affecting society and media affecting people to the culmination of active audience theory. The concept of active audience became popular after the *Uses and Gratification Approach* [45]. This approach emphasized the point that audience are not a phenomenon to be witnessed but are a part of the phenomenon [46]. Here comes the task of media managers to measure the activeness of the audience [47].

The audience can be passive, partially active or completely active [48]. For example, a passive audience can sit in front the television set without any intention to watch it. The example of partially active would be a person reading the newspaper as well as watching television. The example of totally active would be when the audience participates in the activity on the television and becomes a part of it. The most apt example of it is the viewers sending SMSs for deciding the fate of the contestants of the Reality Shows. Thus according to Katz 20th century researchers oscillated between theories of active and passive audience as a response to the

historical conditions that shaped audience and audiences research (including World War II, the postwar consumer boom and globalization). Finally in the twenty first century audiences and audiences researches are changing further [49].

Media researchers in the area of TV use a wide variety of techniques to determine audience preferences who watches what and when [50]. Large international media research companies such as AC Nielsen and Arbitron frequently introduced new methods to measure TV ratings. A device known as people meter would be installed on the TV and would indicate the patterns of viewing of the audience. Such devices only help in knowing the rating of the programmes rather than in knowing real interest of the audience. A person who zeros in on one programme after surfing through various channels may not necessarily be interested in the programme. It is the age of the empowered media consumers whose choice is sometimes none of what is being offered [51]. In addition to this there is an inevitable gap between measured audience and actual audience and with the advent of more diverse and fragmented media environment this gap will become more evident [52].

Eastman has sketched the history of audience research as a permanent tug –of-war between the media industry seeking to manage audience behavior, and people seeking to satisfy their needs. By far the greatest quantity of audience research belongs at the control end of the spectrum, since this is what the industry wants and pays for. Few of the industry results appear in the public domain [53]. Now the focus of the researchers has turned towards the audience. The audience now has innumerable varieties of programmes from the same media. Not only this, the audience has wider media choices for anything of their interest. Accounts of audience research have increasingly tended to emphasize the 'rediscovery' of people, and the notion of an active and obstinate audience [54]. Finally the interest has shifted to the specific interpretations of the text

made by the readers, and more widely to the multiplicity of audience, heterogeneous interpretations and varying reading contexts and practices [55].

In the age of new media, Television has to compete with newer forms of technology like the Internet which is many to many mass mediums and gives the potential to the audience to publish any material globally. The Internet has given tremendous autonomy to the audience to air their media content globally unlike Television. Internet technology enables people to achieve fame and notoriety for no reason other than the willingness to allow other people to access to their lives. In a similar way, contestants in Reality TV shows achieve celebrity status and attempt to build successful media careers on the strength of their involvement with the show [56]. However, in contrast to Television, the Internet through its new social networks media such as Facebook offers visibility whereas most people in urban setting will never have visibility in global mass media [57].

The Television by empowering the audience to decide the fate of the contestants coming on Reality Shows has also given autonomy to the audience. For example, one of the main appeals in talent based shows is its participatory nature by allowing the viewers to play a direct role in deciding which contestants will continue and which are eliminated [58]. The various methods employed by the producers of the show to involve the audience include SMS, email and phone calls. Audience can also participate in online voting and voting on the show itself. In a way the passive audience of mass media becomes active with the cross media applications added to formats. Some of the internationally successful television formats of the early 21st century such a *Big Brother* and *Pop Idol* have combined audience participation with cross media platform [59]. In addition, the integration of SMS into broadcast television formats narrows the gap between producers and audiences/consumers/citizens [60]. In a way the passive audience of mass

media become active with the cross media Reality Shows and such shows have also attracted the audience because they have given them a chance to showcase their talents.

The producers of the Reality Shows also earn lot of profit as these shows are relatively less expensive to produce because there are no stars to pay, no high –priced writers and a minimum of sets [61].

In order to sustain the interest of the audience in the TV Reality Shows, the media organizations should design programmes catering to the interests and needs of the audience. In the last century researchers focused on audience centered approach towards encouraging the viewers' participation. In this century there is a shift in the paradigm. The audience is driving the media such as the Internet and has become greatly empowered.

The audience for the Television especially the Reality Shows can drive the shows when the format of the show will cater to their needs. The interest of the audience could be short-lived or may be long-lived. The media are continuously seeking to develop and hold new audiences, and in doing so they anticipate what might otherwise be a spontaneous demand or, identify needs and interests which have not yet surfaced [62].

1.2 Research Gap

Motives that have dominated media research are either media centric or audience centric. The former reflects either the need of the media industry or of those who seek to use media for applied communicative purposes (persuasion, information or control). Industry needs are primarily for expansion or management (product development, planning quality control etc). However, audience centered media research in the early days was mainly related to measuring audience size, preferences and appreciation for particular items of content [63]. Presently there

has been an increased interest expressed by researchers to assess the influence and motives for viewing various television programming [64]. Over the last twenty years there has been a proliferation of genres in which members of the public participate in programs such as talk shows, reality TV and lifestyle programming. Such participatory programming represents a shift in the relationship between media production and consumption, since the public is no longer simply the audience, the end point of a chain of mass communication processes, but instead are a significant part of the production of popular broadcasting [65]. After analyzing the literature critically it is clear that not much literature is available on audience driven approach for the Reality Shows. However, producers of these shows make sure to include people from different ethnic groups, religious backgrounds and national identities as well as both genders and from a variety of social classes and geographic locations [66]. Mainstream communication studies have been predominately interested in the messages of the media, their production, their effects or use and various aspects of the media system [67]. Since the early 2000s, a diverse body of research offering an alternate and less condemnatory view of reality TV audiences has emerged [68]. The reason being such shows have been widely promoted and enthusiastically embraced by a large number of viewers. Nabi, Beily, Morgan and Stitt (2002) have tried to find out the appeal of Reality based TV programming and assessed the premise, held in popular press that viewers watch to satisfy their voyeuristic instincts [69]. Thereafter research has focused on motivations, gratifications and voyeurism for Reality TV enjoyment [70]. In addition, the existing literature indicates that the more people perceive Reality Shows to be influential, the more concerned they are with the show's influence [71]. Thus both instrumental (social interaction, information, and arousal) and ritualized (relaxation, pass time, entertainment, and companionship) viewing motivations positively predicted exposure to reality television [72].

The existing international Research companies like A.C. Nielsen and Arbitron are involved in TV ratings. These companies use an electronic measurement device called People Meter. But ratings are only approximation or estimates of the audience size. They do not measure the quality or opinions about the programs [73]. The researchers have questioned the potential of TV Reality Shows to empower the audience because of the limitations of the existing technology [74]. However, the reality television reveals aspects of production through voice over commentary, hidden camera footage, or behind the scene tours [75]. Nevertheless, industry practice is driven by corporate profits motive and not audience driven as audience as products are sold to advertisers [76].

An **Audience driven Approach** in media practice requires tailoring media outlook to fit the audience requirement and empowering them. The factors of audience that play an important role in driving the media are : educational and cultural background, interests, age, socio-economic factors, experience, interest level, motivation and familiarity, leisure hours, education and values. This research intends to analyze the practices and the role of audience from the perspective of audience driven approach. In that it also focuses its attention to identify and establish that how audience can drive TV Reality Shows or how they may be empowered to do so. Television executives must cater to a new audience that has fragmented into niche communities and one that is not satisfied in merely consuming, but also producing, sharing, and interacting as well [77]. Instead of seeing the audience as the receiver of media products, the audience as product - perspective is asserting that it is the audience itself that is produced by the media industry. The concept that is emerging sees the audience as empowered networks; not a disperse mass of people engaging in the appropriation of media content or being appropriated by the media industry, but rather actively and collaboratively producing and disseminating information with

the help of networked digital media [78]. Events such as live sporting events, news, and contests like *American Idol* create social utility for viewers by giving them a shared experience [79]. The second major transition affecting the measurement and valuation of television audiences involves the notion that the process of measuring and valuing television audiences should extend beyond basic audience exposure to programs, and instead account for how viewers engage with programs - how they feel about the programs (and advertisements) they consume; and how they respond to them [80].

1.3 Hypotheses:

1. Indian TV Reality Shows which are replicated from the western shows are adapted to the needs of the Indian audience.
2. The existing shows which have claimed to give autonomy to the audience to choose winners by voting also satisfy them with favorable content.
3. TV Reality Shows provide greater entertainment value and accountability to the audience.
4. Most watched shows involve: talent, celebrities, attractive sets, drama and exaggeration and common people as participants.
5. Vulgarity in TV Reality Shows is not acceptable to the Indian audience.
6. On the spot voting and SMS voting make the shows popular.
7. Audience votes more for participants of their own region.

1.4 Objectives of the Proposed Research

- To analyze the current state- of- the- art media practices in order to understand the involvement of audience in TV reality shows in the Indian context by taking into consideration their education, age, gender and family type.

- To discuss various audience-centric media theories and apply them to study the transition to audience driven perspective enabling empowerment of the audience in TV Reality Shows.

- To formulate certain suggestions through which TV Reality shows can be improved using an audience driven approach.

1.5 Research Methodology

In order to know the receptivity of the shows from the viewers' perspective a pilot study has been conducted taking into account the most popular shows and the least popular shows. This pilot study has also assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the shows. Subsequently, the features that have distracted the audience from watching the shows have been studied. The pilot study indicates that viewers have expressed dislike towards many popular practices like voting system, unhealthy competition, unreal drama, etc., even for popular shows like *Big Boss*. Thus this study has been instrumental in knowing the real interest of the audience towards TV Reality Shows and in validating the questions that are to be used in the final survey among a larger audience. However, before starting the pilot study a thorough literature review was done. Books, newspaper articles, online journals etc. mainly secondary sources containing articles on TV Reality Shows were referred to. Thereafter the pilot study was conducted. In addition, personal interviews of the people who watch TV Reality Shows were also conducted and based on the

outcome of the discussion a questionnaire for pilot study was prepared. Home makers, professionals and students between the age group 18-50 were interviewed.

Based on the inputs from the pilot study the researcher has conducted an extensive survey in the Hindi speaking belt of our country. The questionnaire was sent across to 1200 people out of whom 503 people responded to the questionnaire. In addition to this 60 families were interviewed to gauge their perception towards such shows. As majority of the respondents who responded to the questionnaire were in the age group of 18-24 a focus group interview was also conducted with the students of Goa to know more about these shows from the perspective of the young people

The collected data has been analyzed and compiled. The major results of the study, mainly the viewers' perceptions have been graphically represented in this study. Thus this study can be an eye opener for the producers of Hindi TV Reality Shows who have so far relied mainly on Target Rating Points (TRPs) to know the viewers' interest. The terms TRPs and ratings have been used interchangeably in this thesis. This study has taken into account the viewers who are conversant with only Hindi and who watch Hindi TV Reality Shows.

The analysis completely banked upon the Audience Driven Approach which empowers the audience to decide the fate of contestants coming on TV Reality Shows. It finally concludes with the view how the interests and concerns of the audience can be exploited to enhance the popularity of the Reality Shows. The thesis is divided into six chapters including this introductory chapter and the concluding chapter. A brief overview of the other four chapters is discussed below:

1.6 Thesis Structure

The second chapter elaborates on the TV Reality Shows. Beginning with the various definitions, it discusses the origin, characteristics and the types of TV Reality Shows and also provides an insight into the popular TV Reality Shows in India.

The third chapter comprises study on audience beginning with origin and definition of the audience. This chapter also points out the various media theories relating to audience and their application on Indian TV Reality Shows. It includes the various classification of the audience, followed by the changes in the Indian media landscape and its effect on the Indian audience. In addition, the characteristics of Indian audience post liberalization and the difference between Indian and western audience have also been enumerated.

The fourth chapter of the thesis includes the current media practices involving audience in TV Reality Shows. The current media practices are participation of ordinary people, voting system, adaptation of foreign shows to suit the Indian audience. The existing media practice to measure audience in terms of Target Rating Point (TRP) is also discussed. In addition this chapter also throws light on the pilot study conducted in Goa to know the response of the audience towards Hindi TV Reality Shows.

The fifth chapter deals with the analysis and discussion on the TV Reality Shows and their liking and disliking among the Indian audience. The final chapter highlights the major findings and the suggestions that the media houses may follow so as to make the Reality shows audience-driven.

This study will help the producers to know the flaws in the existing TV Reality Shows and it may help the academicians in establishing a dialogue with the audience who have been ignored

by the producers banking only on the commercial success of TV Reality Show based on TRPs. In addition, if the suggestions are incorporated in the shows they may provide more satisfaction to the audience and make them more accountable thereby making the shows audience driven. The study is also expected to contribute significantly to the body of media research thereby enabling more and more researchers to take up further study in the area of Reality TV not only in Indian context but also in the Global context.

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CHAPTER - 2

TV REALITY SHOWS: AN OVERVIEW

The exponential growth in the domain of TV Reality Shows over the last two decades has made it difficult to define the genre *TV Reality Shows* as it encompasses features of many TV Shows. Media scholars, journalists and TV producers have defined such shows in various ways. However, one common element which is found in most of the definitions is the participation of ordinary people. Another important fact is that there are no fixed features of the shows.

For example, changes are visible in the formats, prize money, voting system, etc., from one season to another. To illustrate, Indian singing- based TV Reality Show *SA, RE, GA, MA PA* telecasted in the year 2012 allowed the contestants to sing the songs of their choice in contrast to earlier season where the judges asked the contestants to sing a particular song. In addition, the contestants could sing the songs in their own style and not just in the original style in which they have been sung since they were composed. When we consider prize money, it is always on the rise from season to season not only for this show but for all the other shows. Finally the show allowed audience voting for the contestants on the show itself unlike its previous seasons. Besides this particular show, in the Reality TV, many varieties of such shows are emerging. This chapter provides a basic idea on the term *TV Reality Shows*, its types and characteristics and also presents the details pertaining to various popular TV Reality shows in USA, UK and India.

2.1 TV Reality Shows: Definitions

Definition by media scholars

The genre of TV Reality Show is constantly evolving from the existing formats and hence it is difficult to define it in exact term. An attempt to define the term in a fixed way would be a futile exercise as it is in a state of flux. However, academicians, journalists and TV producers have attempted to define the term in various ways. To start with *"format of reality programs is simple and cheap: no scripts, usually no celebrities (and so no exorbitant fees)"* [1]. Oxford University Press defines the term as *"Television shows that use real people (not actors) in real situations presented as entertainment"* [2]. Annette Hill in her book *Reality TV Audiences and Popular Factual Television* states that *"Reality TV is a catch-all category that includes a wide range of entertainment programmes about real people"* [3]. Media researchers have tried to club as many programs as they can in the genre of TV Reality Shows. For example, Denis Mcquail in his book *Mass Communication Theory* points out that the main variants of new forms of Reality Television are talk shows, public discussions and debate programmes with a live and participant studio audience, docudramas and infotainment [4]. Media researchers have also tried to define the term based on the participation of the ordinary people. According to Bradley *"Format of Reality shows is to surreptitiously record ordinary people during extraordinary (staged) circumstances"* [5]. A large majority of media scholars do not seem happy with the content and the motive of the producers for TV Reality Shows and have defined the term in poor light. According to Barbara Kennedy "In current media reality TV Shows characters/people are manipulated and cajoled into a range of confrontational behaviors for the benefit of media profit" [6]. This genre of TV programme has always courted controversies and as a result received considerable attention from scholars, audience and participants. According to Annette Hill, *"This genre invites the viewer to engage in debate, to question, what is authentic, what is staged, to judge the actions of*

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non-professional actors faced with challenging situations. In many ways TV Reality show was easy for participants to discuss in terms of actuality precisely because the genre invited viewers to judge truth claims" [7]. Some scholars find TV Reality Shows lacking in seriousness and it has been compared to junk food which is addictive but devoid of any significant nourishment [8]. As mentioned earlier TV Reality Shows are a combination of many TV Shows and a considerable numbers of media scholars have termed the shows as generic. *In a similar vein Reality shows have been labeled as a hybrid form drawing on (and reworking) as generic codes and conventions derived from a variety of sources such as fly-on-the-wall documentary, investigative and tabloid journalism, camcorder activism, social action drama and docudrama* [9]. A vast majority of scholars have seen TV Reality Shows akin to documentary in its attempt to portray reality. However, they feel that documentaries stand in stark contrast to TV Reality Shows in terms of their motive. They are of the opinion that the TV Reality Shows like documentaries are an attempt to present real situation aiming only to entertain the audience unlike the documentaries whose aim is to inform and educate the audience. However, media scholars are of the opinion that TV Reality Shows have undergone hybridization incorporating elements from many Television genres like soap operas, documentaries and quiz shows to name a few. Despite this media researchers have realized one important element in most of TV Reality Shows in the history of Television and that is the participation of ordinary people. According to them '*Reality TV' and formatted 'documentary' shows like Wife Swap or Big Brother have opened up television to a wider range of people as subjects of programming in terms of class, ethnicity or sexuality* [10]. According to Nabi "*Reality TV Programs film real people as they live out events in their lives contrived or otherwise as they occur*" [11]. However, some scholars dislike the participation of the ordinary people in such shows and are of the opinion that in TV Reality Shows viewers offer their bodies and labour up to the image-making machinery for free [12]. Media scholars

have also used the word surveillance in their attempt to define the genre. According to Andrejevic, Reality TV programmes function as a metaphorical representation of a new kind of customized consumer economy characterized by increasing level of surveillance [13]. Some scholars have defined the show highlighting the competition in the show. For example *"Reality Shows are defined as any show featuring non-actors under constant surveillance, reacting in spontaneous and unscripted ways to their environment, and ultimately seeking to outperform or outlast their opponents in some sort of competition* [14]. In addition to it some scholars have compared TV Reality Shows with soap operas as non-actors work without script.

To sum up, any attempt to define TV Reality show would be a futile exercise as it spans a variety of programmes and do not conform to a single independent genre. For example, house arrest show *Big Brother* is a combination of three types of programmes: documentary as it presents the real situation, soap opera as viewers are engaged in drama and is a game show as contestant vote each other out. Thus it a label for a wide variety of programmes rather than a genre itself. Most of the entertainment programmes are rehearsed depiction of fiction, TV Reality Shows are purposely designed to present to the viewers a perception that the programs are live, unrehearsed and unscripted. Such programs stand out as appearing more spontaneous and unplanned. However, spontaneity of reality-based program much like the spontaneity of news program is to a large extent manufactured with careful planning especially in house arrest show like *Big Brother*. Planning occurs at the pre-production level (through the selection of telegenic participants), production level (through the built in plot construction). An example of this could be *Big Boss s*eason 4 where Shewta Tiwari and Ashmit Patel were asked to steal Dolly Bindra's make up kit within 24 hours and a post production stage (through heavy edition) [15]. The camera is installed for 24 hours and what we get to see is the footage for one hour and hence there is heavy editing. Hence after

analyzing all the above definitions it is difficult to concretize the term *TV Reality Show* as new forms are constantly emerging and even in the existing forms changes take place from one season to another in terms of hosts, formats, built in plot and involvement of the participants.

Definition by the print media

Newspapers too have not come up with any concrete definition of the term. Most of the newspapers have highlighted increasing desire for fame of the ordinary people including children to participate in such shows and have shown concern about the effects of such shows on the public. *Times of India* in its crest edition featured a series of news articles on TV Reality Shows including the cover story chronicling the journey of successful TV Reality Shows stars like Shenjini Sengupta, Naresh Iyer etc., at the same time cautioning the reader that success is short-lived. The above newspaper in its cover story states that "*Reality Television may be a ticket to success, but not everyone who gets his or her 60 seconds of fame makes it big*" [16]. However, the same newspaper in one of its article justified the TV Reality shows for giving an opportunity to ordinary people to make it big on the Television screen at the same emphasizing the hard work for the participants to maintain a steady growth [17]. Most of the newspapers in their volley of arguments have criticized the shows for being outrageous. *The Hindu* newspaper hit hard on the shows to the extent of blaming TV for becoming arbiter of good taste and morality [18]. Supporting this argument *Times of India* states that such shows are not palatable to the Indian audience because of foul language, sex innuendo and abusive talk [19]. On the other hand, some other papers have gone to the extent of labelling it as the most influential, most prolific and most dynamic cultural product. Such shows have been termed as a new way people tell stories in the twenty first century using grainy video, dramatic music, lighting-quick edits and a seemingly endless supply of people willing to play themselves on camera. Despite the attraction of the people towards

participating in TV Reality Shows, they have been criticized for legitimizing a variety of behaviour and lifestyles for better and worse [20]. Supporting the illegitimate behavior and its impact on the audience "*Reality Shows have been termed as abusive, downright disgusting and emotionally dysfunctional*" [21]. In spite this TV Reality Shows have only become more popular cutting through hierarchy of class, culture and caste [22]. In addition to this such shows have become popular in different parts of the country such as Bengal and South India [23, 24]. The reason behind the popularity is attributed to curiosity to watch someone else's life and the capacity to be shocked [25]. Thus after analyzing definitions given by the media print media it is clear that most of the newspapers have raised concern regarding the effect of such shows on the masses and have not attempted to define the genre in a clear cut way.

<u>Definition by TV industry</u>

Annette Hill is of the opinion that television industry is flexible in its categorization of TV Reality Shows. Peter Bazalgette is an independent TV producer and responsible for changing formats of shows such as *Big Brother* or *Fame Academy*. He is of the opinion that it is human interest rather than *'reality'* which defines popular factual programs. Garg Carter, International Director of licensing at Endemol prefers to describe the programme as *Reality Entertainment*. Thus, we find TV industry is flexible in its categorization of Reality Programs [26]. Chuck Barris Reality Game show producer realized that *the future of TV belonged to ordinary people and not to the stars and Reality Shows served the interest of ordinary people* [27]. Aaron Barnhart wrote a series of new features and conducted Television interviews on TV Reality Shows. During the course of the interview Producer Duglass Ross, the producer of *The Real House Wives of Orange County*, Founder and CEO Evolution Media give reasons for his fascination towards TV Reality Shows. He says that he is fascinated by human condition. He also adds that viewers are attracted towards these shows because these shows are real. He further goes to define TV Reality Shows as "*documentary style story telling*"

[28]. Former host of future weapons and now host of *Deadliest Warrior* season 3 Richard Mack Machowicz describes TV Reality Shows as *" opening the world up, making it available for the people"* [29]. Thus in general terms the term TV Reality Shows has been described as merging factual programming with entertainment based TV Programs and highlights hybridization, a common generic feature of most reality based programs. Moreover, 'Reality TV' has been used as an umbrella term for a range of programmes or formats (the term more often used in the industry) many of them are hybrids combining two or more genres/styles. Both style and content have evolved from documentary which focused on reality or people's lives such as fly-on-the-wall documentaries, video diaries and public access programmes. 'Video diaries' says Roger Graef (a documentary maker) 'is the most important development in television probably since the hand-held camera itself' [30].

2.2 Origin and Characteristics

TV Reality programme which proved itself to be one of the most memorable, enduring and popular shows of USA can be traced back to *Candid Camera*. This show which highlighted funny pranks and humorous situations pulled on the unknown masses became an instant hit with audiences and remained on air for years [31]. The participants of *Candid Camera* were caught in embarrassing moments but their privacy and dignity were protected [32]. Allen Funt's *Candid Came*ra became popular after the cold war climate of surveillance (1945-91). It provided relief to the people from the surveillance anxiety that their actions were being monitored. *Candid Camera's* tagline *'Smile! You are on Candid Camera'* signaled the moment of comic revelation when the concealed camera was exposed [33]. Meanwhile people were getting accustomed to the concept of increasing levels of surveillance in the customized consumer economy [34]. Closed Circuit Television cameras are installed in public places like shopping malls, railway stations, banks, office buildings, airport and temples [35, 36]. Added to it is the development of technology like camcorder which

empowered people to record events that they regarded as significant in their lives [37]. However, media's fascination with the "hidden camera" blossomed during the 1980s [38]. Thus the concept of Reality Television is generally thought to have emerged in the late 1980s in America and very quickly established itself with the mainstream popular programming in the mid1990s [39]. In addition, some scholars are of the opinion that the tabloid and talk shows of the 80s and 90s are often considered as the precursor to modern reality shows. [40]. The first *Big Brother* show was broadcasted in Netherlands in the year 1999 on a TV Channel called Veronica. Due to the huge popularity of the concept the idea was then picked up by production companies in countries like Portugal, Germany, UK, USA, Spain, Sweden, Italy and Switzerland. Such shows have undergone many changes and following are the characteristics of the shows:

Characteristics

Media Literacy

Viewers for Reality TV are media literate as they indulge in critical evaluation of this genre [41]. In addition, audiences for TV Reality Shows are far from being passive. In fact, they are more likely to interact with programs and articulate a diverse range of views about attitudes and behavior exhibited on such programs than audiences have traditionally done. Viewers watched it because it enables them to join social groups and conversations debating various issues such as racism, sexism and bullying shown on such shows [42]. For example, official Internet sites offer regular discussion on program like *Big Brother* and provide links to related sites such as those of the fan club, compilation of news paper articles on the program and profiles of each of the participants including speculation on likely winner. Reality TV planet.com has a reality calendar with up-to-the-minute scheduling information on the latest reality programmes on the US television with episode summaries. In other words networks

have unlimited capacity to provide links to information related to the general theme of the program [43].

Humiliation TV

Contestants in some of the TV Reality Shows have been humiliated by the judges to such an extent that some scholars have dubbed this genre of show as Humiliation TV. For example, participants in these types of Reality TV can be made to feel embarrassed and humiliated [44]. Shinjini Sengupta, contestant on Indian TV Reality Show suffered a paralytic attack after being rebuked by a judge on a reality show two years ago. However, Shinjinee has put her past firmly behind and is a successful actress acted in two commercials movies. Similarly Naresh Iyer who received nasty comments from the judges and lost in Reality Show, sang the most celebrated song Rubaro for the movie *Rang De Basanti* [45].

Exploiting Voyeurism

Voyeurism or feeling that one was getting a peek at others lives was associated in the enjoyment of TV Reality programme and tended to distinguish the appeal of reality program from fiction program [46]. Reality based police TV programs (e.g. *Cops, FBI and American Detective*) seem to quench America's voyeuristic thirst for bloodshed, violence and action [47]. A considerable body of literature (popular and academic) has concerned itself with the shock value of these programs criticizing producers for pandering to the lowest common denominator in parading the less pleasant side of contemporary life as voyeuristic [48]. The voyeuristic elements have worked to clear discursive space for the exploration and legitimization of the new definitions of the personal and the familial, especially as older forms of the family and of kinship are replaced by new models, same sex relationships and extended networks based on friendship rather than blood [49]. Therefore such shows promote voyeurism at many different levels. But also, in privileging and constantly highlighting these particular personalities attributes, they may contribute to making these the more common,

defining and socially acceptable features of personalities even if they are inherently unattractive and anti- social [50]. Audiences for Reality TV are frequently portrayed as vacant voyeurs who are drawn to the spectacle of others humiliating themselves [51]. As the contestants have got more and more abusive, emotionally dysfunctional and downright disgusting over the years, the genre has gained ground, despite being panned across the board for making a new low in voyeurism [52].

Generic Hybrid

The term 'Reality Television' is used to describe a variety of programming from crime shows like *America's Most Wanted*, house arrest show like *Big Brother* dating like show *Bachelor* etc. [53]. The list of categories mentioned above is endless with as many as 600 Reality Series aired in the US in the year 2010 [54]. In addition to this TV Reality Shows have also drawn from other formats like talk shows, knowledge shows, etc., and one Reality Show may have elements of multiple TV Programs. For example, house arrest show, *Big Boss* is a combination of documentary as it presents real condition, soap operas as the viewers are engaged in drama and is a game show where contestants vote each other's out [55]. Thus it is a hybrid form drawing on and reworking generic codes and conventions derived from a variety of source like fly on the wall documentary, investigative and tabloid journalism and docudrama. The influences of soap operas, game shows have continued to underpin the genre with the continuing success of the program such as *Big Boss* [56].

Small Budget

The format of Reality program is simple and cheap: no scripts, usually no celebrities (and so no exorbitant fees) a minimal set is all that is needed for the participants to engage in entertaining acts [57]. In contrast to soap operas, TV Reality Shows are cheaper as there are no script writers and highly paid actors. Mostly ordinary people participate in these shows. Ten years ago there were fewer than 20 reality series. However, this year, more than 560

reality series almost all of them profitable have aired on American TV. The reason being an hour of scripted prime time entertainment on NBC exceeds $ 3 million per hour whereas unscripted show like *The Biggest Loser* costs less than $ 1 million per hour [58]. In addition, it is attractive to networks because of its potential for huge profits as advertising appears in the content of the shows as well as during the scheduled commercial breaks [59]. For example, we find sometimes the title of the show itself containing advertisement like TVS, the brand name followed by the title of the show *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa, Close Up* another brand name followed by the shows' title *Antakshari* etc. Furthermore, we find contestants engaged in advertising for a product on winning the much covetous performer of the day title. People working in Indian TV production houses say the per episode cost for celebrity shows like *Fear Factor* and *Big Boss* on colors or *Dus Ka Dam* on Sony is over Rs 1 crore. However, a non celebrity show like *Dance India Dance* costs about Rs 40 lakh per episode [60]. In other words such shows are cheap in comparison to other TV progammes based on entertainment.

Rules are in a flux

Reality shows do not conform to a single formula. Such shows are constantly evolving. For example, *Kaun Banega Crorepati* (KBC) changed rules from season to season. KBC introduced the concept allowing contestants to choose experts [61] as one of the life liners from season 4 unlike the previous seasons. Similarly *Dance India Dance* this season had mentors in one of the rounds training their rival contestants.

Platform to become famous

TV Reality Shows have given thousands of people a small piece of celebrity status and made millions of others dreaming. The desire to become famous is exemplified by the poll conducted in 2007 in which 51 percent in the age group between 18-25 year olds said that their primary goal is to become famous [62]. Such shows not only provide young people but also kids and teens access to two- minute stardom which they hope to cash in for lasting

success [63]. While TV Reality Shows provide a spot in the limelight, it is up to the participants to work hard and use the platform for steady growth [64]. However, as the TV Reality Shows spawn winners and losers, even if the fame is fleeting the journey is a memorable one. Nevertheless, according to Diano Monteiro, counselling psychologist and director, Hyderabad Academy of Psychology "The five minutes of fame can be devastating" [65].

Global Phenomenon

TV Reality Shows exploded as a global phenomenon around 1990-2000 (Reality TV – Wikipedia) [66]. Initially the formats for TV Reality Shows were produced for local audiences by highlighting aspects of the national culture and identity. However, the successful formula for one TV Reality show became a penchant for success in other countries adapting the show to the needs of other countries [67]. The enduring popularity of Reality based shows such as *Big Brother* is evident from the fact that replica of this show has been broadcasted in the US, Britain, Australia, France and parts of Europe [68]. Thus TV Reality Shows are a global phenomenon because it evoked international fascination [69].

Targetted towards younger audiences

Professor Hill in her book titled *Reality TV* mentioned that one of the main reasons the reality genre has been so powerful in the TV market is that it particularly appeals to the young [70]. Adding to it is the fact that 40% of the younger audiences are likely to be between 18-34 years [71]. Moreover surveys have consistently indicated that young adults are more likely to watch TV Reality programme than their older counterparts [72].

Abusive TV

Violence is a common theme in the media, enjoyed and endorsed by many individuals and TV Reality Shows are no exception to it. However, very few studies have examined the amount of aggression in Reality Television [73]. In addition to violence, a large amount of TV Reality Programs contain competition and interpersonal conflicts. As a result there is a section of the audience that believes that such shows can erode the social fabric with their abusive banter and vulgarity. For example, *Big Boss* last season 4 saw Dolly Bindra resorting to downright abusive behaviour. Earlier in the year 2007 in the UK a great deal of media attention was devoted to racist comments made by a *Big Brother* housemate Jade Goody to a housemate of Indian background, Shilpa Shetty. Consequently, this incident attracted international media attention and generated widespread debate about the nature and acceptability of racial vilification. While critics of programs like *Big Brother* saw the controversy as another black mark against the genre, a more thoughtful analysis suggests that the public debate was an extension of the program as a related media text [74]. For example, parallels are drawn between the incidents happened in TV Reality Shows to refresh the audience's memory of the past incidents and the current events which serve as an extension of the program. To illustrate, small time actor Bindra, who entered *Big Boss* was so loud and crass that it led to her comparison being made with late Jade Goody an iconic figure in the Reality TV. Such debates are not only confined to one country but lead to worldwide debate [75].

Beep TV

Despite being blamed for encouraging controversies on TV Reality shows, media makes an effort to discard the abuses through 'Beeps'. On January 20, 2011 *Lok Sabha* Channel telecasted a show titled "Is Reality TV turning into beep TV". In this debate Abhinav Chaturvedi TV Actor, Sudhish Pachori Media Critic and Sachin Kot Film Maker participated.

Viewers were also asked to participate in the discussion by calling on the phone line number. During the discussion one of the panelists defined beeping as censoring the inappropriate content and an effort to protect the identity of an individual. As the discussion progressed majority of the panelists including the online callers raised concern about the content of TV Reality Shows. Pachori pointed out characters are not able to establish relationships on TV Reality Shows. Showing his disgust for the show he questioned "is it reality or cruelty". Taking the discussion forward Abhinav highlighted the power of TV and suggested someone should take a call regarding the content of TV Reality Shows. He added that there should be sensible programming and beep should be stopped. While reacting to the issue of viewers' choice Sachin stated viewers are 'spoiled choice'. The outcome of the discussion was that the producers should become more accountable and there should be establishment of institutes to analyze the content of the show [76].

Limited power with the audience

TV Reality Shows are defined as allowing participants to define themselves and therefore the producers who create those shows are not imposing stereotypes on them. In addition, audience feel empowered when they are asked to vote for their favourite contestants. However, the creators of TV Reality Shows film hours of material and then edit those hours to create 30-, 60-, 90-, or 120 minute programs. By selecting or rejecting materials for the show the content producer is indeed imposing his/her own definitions or stereotypes on the individuals included in the production. Thus camera work and editing are highly stylized throughout the program. Situations are set up for the camera's benefit and scenes on reality programs are occasionally scripted for dramatic effect [77]. Despite imposing their definitions, producers and editors have to preserve some aura of the real because observing moments of authenticity has proven to be a major attraction for the audiences [78]. Danger from the terrorists has led to the application of surveillance to counter all levels of danger.

The objective for using CCTV has changed especially in the context of TV Reality programs. The key difference between CCTV installed at airport and CCTV at TV Reality show is in the number of receivers. The former has few receivers to monitor the activities of many while the latter has few individuals to be monitored by many. In addition to this the former was used to protect the individuals while the latter is used to mess up the lives of the contestants for entertainment. In other words, TV Reality Programs like *Big Brother* can be defined as "Pre-planned group surveillance within a group frame" for entertainment [79]. Such shows led to the capturing of personal vulnerabilities, emotions, personal flaws in TV Reality Shows. Now the TV Reality contestants actively participate in media surveillance for personal gain [80]. Thus the objective, method and purpose of surveillance has changed for TV Reality Shows.

Coverage of Different Professions or Life- styles

Reality Shows encompass a wide range of professions from dance to singing and from makeover to dating, to name a few. The new entrants in the category of TV Reality Shows are *India's Got Talent* in which people from different walks of life perform on the show. *X Factor* is a singing talent show and *Just dance* as the name suggests is a dance based Reality Show telecasted in the year 2011. Issues such as obesity, plastic surgery have also been picked up by the producers of TV Reality Shows. However, in India producers have not come up with the TV Reality Show on obesity and obesity is not an area of concern as it is in the US and other western countries. Nevertheless, MTV has shown myriads of show on makeovers to satiate the urban Indian audience with high income. Thus TV Reality shows have taken the TV Channels by storm. TV Reality Shows producers are coming up with new concepts for shows almost every week. In the US, 567 Reality series have been aired so far [81].

Competition

A major chunk of TV Reality Shows focuses on competition. The extremely popular quiz shows of the late 1950s are regarded as the forerunners to a variety of present prime time game shows (e.g. *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*). Others shows have individuals competing with each other based on some talents like singing and dancing (e.g. *Indian Idol/ Dance India Dance*). Another category pits the individuals against one other as they strive to win a big monetary prize (e.g. *Big Brother*) [82]. In most of the shows mentioned above the contestants are seen vying with one another for a cash prize. The prize amount varies and mostly keeps on increasing from one season to another. For example, the maximum prize pegged for the winner in *Kaun Bangega Crorepati* season 5 telecast on Colors hosted by Amitabh Bachchan is four crore unlike the last season's prize of one crore.

Licensing

As mentioned earlier, TV Reality Programs are a global phenomenon and the programs have been sold overseas. Two methods have been employed to sell the programs overseas. The first is direct licensing where the programs have been sold outright to foreign broadcaster without any modification and the second is formatting the show to the topical or local needs of the country. Thus the Reality TV has participated in glocalization strategy but the phenomenon itself became global [83]. Now the challenge before the distributers is to create a global format that can be adopted without any connection to national borders and to be sensitive to local markets [84].

Racism

It has been observed that in the beginning of TV Reality Shows people from different castes and colour are put together on TV Reality Shows. However, as the show progresses Black or Asian contestants usually do not make it past the third round. The Latina makes it a bit further [85]. During their participation in such shows the issue of racism crops up in the

media owing to the spats among the contestants terming the shows as promoting regionalism. The most avid example of it is *Big Brother* winner Shilpa Shetty being mocked at by Jade Judy in one of the episodes. It led to sporadic media debates among media circles terming the show as racist. A deeper look into TV Reality Shows proves that all the contestants are commodities and are transformed of their racial identities in the long run. For example, make over show *America's Top Model* capitalizes on the struggle of the contestants to transcend their racialized class. The motive behind this is to make them marketable [86].

Regionalism

Such shows have been labeled as promoting regionalism as we find audience voting for the contestants who hail from their respective region. As a result, it has been observed that regionalism outweighs talents in most of TV Reality Shows. On many occasions judges also express their displeasure over the rejection of talented contestants based on voting promoting regionalism. Judges have been shown getting sentimental over the ouster of potential winner expressing their displeasure and helplessness. However, regionalism was a major force in uniting the North East India. Known for its separatist identity, this region galvanized support for two TV Reality Shows contestants Amit Paul from Shillong and Prashant Tamang from Calcutta. The duo brought the entire north-east region under one umbrella in the year 2007 through TV Reality show *Indian Idol*-Season 3. Even the political parties united to ensure the victory of these two contestants [87].

Inclusion of people from minority stream

Reality TV in India has been dubbed as cutting hierarchy of class and caste. We find daily wagers, middle class, upper middle class and rich joining the bandwagon of TV Reality Shows. As is evident, people from slums are challenging NRIs in talent shows. Not only the poor people participate in such shows but many a times have emerged as winners. For example Faizal Khan, son of an autorikshaw driver won season 2 of dance reality show

Dance India Dance LiL Champs. Adding to it in the foray are the people from marginalized communities like Dalit and Khasis. Reality Shows are also adding to its pool of talent from people with disabilities [88].

<u>Unscripted drama</u>

Reality Program is defined by the viewer as *"show intended primarily for entertainment that features real people whose words and behavior are not presented as predetermined by a script"* [89]. Thus TV Reality shows stand as appearing more spontaneous and unplanned than highly scripted prime time fare [90].

<u>Profits</u>

TV Reality shows make everyone happy --- phone companies, advertisers, networks and media conglomerates by co-opting brand marketing tactics into its programming strategies thereby converting viewers into consumers [91]. As a result, TV Reality Shows which accounted for 20 percent of TVs prime time schedule in the year 2001 now account for 40 percent of the schedule [92]. Such shows got serious boost when documentary filmmakers began shooting for real life transforming all media content into entertainment. In the words of Jonathan Murray co-creator with Mary Ellis of the *Real World* "We took the documentary and commercialized it" [93].

<u>Recycle of contestants in different avatars in different TV Reality Shows</u>

TV Reality shows give visibility to the contestants. Contestants in TV Reality Shows have been able to bag for themselves participation in more TV Reality shows. Winners, runner ups and losers generally manage to appear in more TV Reality Shows in different avatars. For example Rakhi Sawant, inmate in *Big Boss* (Season 1) telecasted on Sony TV hosted her Swayamwar on the TV Reality Show titled *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* on NDTV Imagine and then played a judge in a show *Rakhi Ka Insaaf* on Imagine TV. Similarly Pravesh Rana

inmate in Big Boss season 3 is now hosting a Reality show *Emotional Atyachaar* on UTV Bindass.

<u>Audiences Speculation</u>

Audiences are aware that the settings and situations can be contrived and know that the many of the events presented on the show can be staged or manipulated. Despite this fact, audiences enjoy watching the show as it involves real people rather than actors and unscripted nature of the program and the people on the show have something at stake [94]. Thus Hill sums up the shows as *"unscripted behavior within the contrivances of the show"* [95]. In order to gauge the viewers' response regarding scripted element in TV Reality Shows Times of India conducted a survey and an overwhelming 83.5 percent of the viewers supported the view that TV Reality shows are scripted to keep it spicy [96].

<u>Interactivity</u>

Reality TV programs allow viewers with the Internet access to interact with other viewers by utilizing chat rooms, polls and editorials boards. As a result these programs are capable of connecting shows' audience via the Internet to establish a community in which people interact [97]. In addition, there are other ways of providing participation opportunities to the viewers such as phones for voting, webs, blogs etc. While tracing the history of interactive reality program it is said that *Big Brother,* the first reality TV format to go truly global was a water shed moment in the platform convergence of TV with the Internet and telephony, since this was the show that introduced audience voting as well as, in most countries running live feeds of the *Big Brother* through an official website [98]. The audience participation became a marked moment as their participation became central to the 'plot' [99].

<u>Dupe the viewers</u>

The viewers are encouraged to judge the contestants' performance to take positions and to support their favourites. This gives rise to a feeling of individual responsibility which reinforces viewers' involvement. However, the motive of the channel is just to make profits and to give the viewers the impression that they have some control over the fate of contestants [100].

<u>Conflicts</u>

TV Reality Shows involve two types of conflicts, namely, character conflicts and situational conflicts. Character conflicts arise as a result of interactions of persons with incompatible character traits. An ideal example of this is *MTV's "Real World."* Each season, the creators cast participants who are most likely to result in conflict as a result of differences in their character *traits*. Through these conflicts the audience can relate to the characters and empathize with them. And the second is the competitive environment into which the character is placed. One popular archetype is placing a person into an unfamiliar and perhaps even hostile environment. *"Survivor"* employs this technique by dropping the contestants into the middle of a desert, a tropical island or some other remote location. Because the contestants are not given food, shelter, or other basic necessities, they are placed into conflict with Mother Nature as they attempt to "survive" the dangers they face. Lastly, internal conflicts also emerge among the contestants because of the above two conflicts as they struggle to push themselves to the limit to emerge as the winner [101].

<u>Voice over narration</u>

 In some shows like *Big Boss* the action of the participants are described and explained to the audience before the beginning of each day through voice- over narration. Mostly it is presented in the present tense and it is through the invisible voice that the contestants come to know about their tasks.

2.3 Types

Genre derives from the French word meaning 'type' and can be defined as the sharing of expectations between audience and programme makers about the classification of the programme. Genre television uses the expectations of the viewer and is attractive to television executives because a popular generic programme has a brand identity for example soap operas, game shows etc. In contrast to soap operas TV Reality Shows are constantly evolving as new genres emerge and old ones change [102]. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, such shows are generic hybrid as it has features containing elements from many existing TV Shows like documentary, game show, talk show, lifetstyle television etc. All TV programmes from new to old one have been clubbed together under "Reality TV". For example in the USA, contemporary reality game shows and talent shows are classified as Reality TV, while older formats such as *Cops* are also classified as Reality TV [103]. However, all TV Reality Programs share some common features or themes regardless of particular program. For example, one common characteristic of all TV Reality programs is competition. However, it is difficult to classify Reality on the basis of common features as one program may fall under one or more common characteristics. For example, unlike *Kaun Banega Crorepati, MTV Splitsvilla* is a dating show and the former is a variant of quizshow. Nevertheless both are based on competition. Thus the main unifying theme is competition. Let us now analyze the programs which have strong elements of competition.

Competition-Based Reality Shows

Most of the talent based TV Reality Shows are built around competition. For example *Indian Idol, Dance India Dance, Nach Baliye* and *SA RE GA MA PA* are based on individuals possessing singing and dancing talents. However, shows like *Entertainment Ke Liya Kuch Bhi Karega* and *India's Got Talent* have tried to include many other talents. In addition to the above mentioned categories, Indian audience have been entertained by comedy based Reality

Shows such as *Great Indian laughter challenge* and *Comedy Circus*. Furthermore, competition based TV Reality Shows can also include game shows *Kaun Banwga Crorepati* and *Dus Ka Dam*. Besides the above mentioned talent- driven competition based Reality Programming *Survivor* and *Big Brother* are internationally recognized as two of the most successful non-talent based competition series [104]. For the widely popular talent based shows participants are required to come for the audition which is telecasted on Television and after the screening by a panel of judges they are allowed to perform for talent based reality series. However, participants are also trained by their respective mentors before the live performances. After the performance the host requests panel of judges to give their comments. Lastly, the participants also request audience to send SMS for them. Thus competition based reality program can be defined as a contest in which real person competes involving substantial audience participation [105].

Documentary based TV Reality Shows

Initially some of the discussion on TV Reality Shows focused on comparing and contrasting it with documentaries. *Now Reality TV indicates post documentary culture disregarding concerns for social or public issues* [106]. TV Reality Shows also known as Popular Factual Television is the intersection of popular culture and documentary practice [107]. Also known **as** 'Factual entertainment' TV Reality Shows are a hybrid genre that combines 'hard values' of information and realism characteristic of news and documentary with 'softer' more entertaining topics [108]. However, there is a major difference between TV documentaries which are serious in nature and documentary based TV Reality Show which cannot remove entertainment from the production process. For example, *An American Family* which chronicled an ordinary American family's struggle to cope with divorce, masterfully captured fly-on-the wall method of documentary based reality programming [109]. Basically documentary based TV Reality Shows simply put real people in real situations and put

videotapes through their cars, houses and work offices. The current popular *Real World* and *Laguna Beach* are the two prime examples of shows depicting human behavior. Emotions ranging from sadness, confusion, happiness and anxiousness are captured on camera. In the *Real World* seven strangers live in a house and have their lives filmed competing in physical and mental challenges [110]. Thus Reality TV is like a documentary as it is factual with an ostensible concern to investigate human behavior and relationships using a 'fly- on- the-wall' camera style [111]. Also known as 'mockumentary', documentary based TV Reality Shows made its way into mainstream television production with notable examples like the highly acclaimed BBC Series *The Office* and Comedy Central's *Reno 911* [112]. Shows like *Cops* and *Survivor* address the issue of realism, accuracy and truth prevalent in documentary at the same time relying on entertainment format [113]. The format for *Survivor* is that contestants are stranded and then voted off. The skills required for the shows' contestants are physical endurance, group dynamics and Machiavellian strategy [114]. *Big Boss* is the Indian version of America's *Big Brother* has some characteristics of documentary. Fourteen celebrities live in the same house for three months and have all their movements filmed. The house guests have to perform certain tasks. In addition, house guests are taken into confession room each week to nominate two house guests to evict from the house and then the viewers vote [115]. The contestants are people from different walks of life from TV actors, sports persons, porn star etc. Most of documentary based TV Reality Shows present either ordinary people or celebrities as contestants in contrast to celebrity- based reality shows where only celebrities participate.

Celebrity based Reality TV Shows

Celebrity- based TV Reality Shows are similar to traditional documentary style TV Reality Programs. However such shows follow daily lives of celebrities (e.g. *The Anna Nicole* and *The Osbornes)* [116]. Shows like *Celebrity Mole* and *I am Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here*

feature B list celebrities in Reality Television situation [117]. For celebrity based TV Reality Shows celebrities play themselves, they reside in their own homes and conduct ordinary day-to- day activities [118]. Some shows have celebrities being wooed for dating culminating in marriage.

<u>Romance Reality</u>

Such shows depict dating, romance and wedding To start with, in a dating based Reality Show *Dare to date* telecasted on Channel V viewers are introduced to a young person who goes out on a blind date that has been fixed up for her by the channel. *Splitsvilla* in its fourth season had a bunch of girls arrive in Dubai, all primed to compete for the affections and attention of three boys. All the girls were introduced in little montages where they posed in bikinis and said things like "I make sure I get what I want" / "I have a lot of attitude" / "I am very proud of my curves" [119]. In addition to dating some shows have portrayed romance and the romance has been taken a step forward in the consummation of marriage. For example, the first romance based TV Reality Show *Bachelor* introduced the concept of marriage. *Bachelor* allows one man to choose from a pool of 25 female contestants. He follows a gradual process of elimination as 25 female contestants are narrowed down week by week. Indian audience got a chance to see a similar show *Rahul Dulhaniya Le Janyege* telecast on NDTV Imagine in the year 2010 and in its second season the protagonist Rahul Mahajan got married to Dimpy out of 15 contestants wooing Rahul. However, in shows like Bachelorette roles are reversed with one female being allowed to select her mate. The Indian version of the show was *Rakhi Ka Swayanwar* telecasted on NDTV Imagine in which Rakhi dated 17 contestants including Elesh Parujanwala who became the winner. The viewers kept on speculating whether Rakhi would marry Elesh and towards the end she refused to marry him. Unlike all the above mentioned romance based TV Reality shows like *Emotional Atyachar* telecasted on UTV Bindass provided an opportunity to the people to know their

partners fidelity. In this show one partner's actions are captured through hidden cameras and the other watches it. This show showcases Bollywood celebrities giving advice on managing relations. There are a number of shows which rely on expert advice and some of them are listed below.

Personal Improvement and Makeover Reality

Such shows focus on ordinary people (although occasionally dealing with wayward celebrities). It encompasses everything from homes *(House* Invaders) and pets (*Its me or the dog*) to parental skills (*Supernanny)* and bodies *(How to look Good Naked)*. Contestants are put under the spotlight and transformed with the guidance of life experts under the gaze of the watching public [120]. Also known as lifestyle television, such shows are didactical and give practical advice and inspiration on food, fashion, body, garden and house all of which are phenomena through which we express our identities [121]. Tracing the history of such shows it has been found that it has borrowed ideas from pre-existing programs such as competitive quiz shows, melodramatic soaps and confessional talk shows. Programs within this category differ in terms of content but the structure usually remains the same. In such shows, diverse people are made to live together encouraging them to undertake major personal lifestyle transformations. *The Biggest Loser* telecasted on NBC in the US have males and females from lower middle class desiring to lose weight with personal trainers providing expertise to reshape the bodies of the contestants. The contestants spend three months consisting of introduction, exercise session, meals, weekly weight loss and physical challenges. Thereafter comes the climactic conclusion where the weight is revealed and the problems are solved [122]. In India the first TV Reality based show on makeover was telecasted on Sony TV *Naya Roop Nayi Zindagi.* The show had 13 episodes consisting of participants with scarred faces, acid attack, etc. The participants went through surgery, fitness regime and styling during the telecast of the episodes. Such shows have an element of surprise for the viewers

after the makeover. In addition to this viewers are motivated and inspired from the people who undergo life-changing transformation on the shows. However, the only disadvantage is that such shows have increased the number of people going to plastic surgeons. In addition, it has been criticized for not being able to project the extreme pain people undergo to get a desired look. Despite this *The Biggest Loser* has been lauded for conveying information about the role of diet and the different types of exercise in weight loss [123].

Renovation and Design Reality

Such shows focus on one's house unlike the above mentioned shows focusing on individuals. In *Changing room, House Invaders and Real Homes* homes are selected for treatment in terms of styles. The drama in such shows lies in the clash of ideas provided by design experts and the negative reactions expressed by the participants over the completion of the task. In contrast to the above mentioned shows *House Doctor* and *Property Ladder* take a different approach to the home wherein homes are improved in order to attract a sale [124]. Hosts and real estate gurus instruct their clients not to get attached to the property and to make it as attractive as possible for others. Thus these shows rely heavily on taking advice from experts whereas in aspiration based shows one individual struggles alone to achieve his dream.

Aspiration Reality

As mentioned above aspiration reality chronicles a struggle of an individual to achieve his goal. *Project Greenlight* a joint venture of Miramax, HBO, Sam Adams and Live Planet records real people dabbling at film making. This Reality Show gives an opportunity to an aspiring filmmaker to achieve his/her stint in filmmaking. In contrast to other shows this show does not declare a winner. However, one person who gets a chance to try his hand at filmmaking is shortlisted after many entries for the show.

Professional Reality

Such shows fall into categories concentrating on daily performance of a particular activity and pursuing a career in a particular field of activity. The examples of former category include *The First 48, Cops* and *American Chopper.* However, under the second category *Apprentice* became a popular show with Real Estate Mogul Donald Trump hosting the show on NBS Television network in the US. Similar to other TV Reality Shows in this show also the general objectives of the show are outlined but each episode involves new tasks which have not been ordained in advance [125]. However, the number of contestants varies for most of the TV Reality Shows. *Apprentic*e features eight men and women who work in teams to tackle on the spot business challenges requiring different skills. Thereafter members of the losing team meet Donald and his organization in the board room for the analyses of the defeat in a business project and erring members are fired in a 13- week program leaving one person as the winner. In most of the TV Reality Shows contestants are required to stay in one place and place of stay could be a resort for dating show and a five star hotel for talent based show. However, for some shows like *Survivor* participants stay in a jungle.

Forced Environment Reality

Rather than standing on a stage performing for audience and judges in a talent based reality shows, contestants are placed in environments- various exotic locations as in the case of *Survivor* and perform various stunts [126]. TV Reality Shows like *Real World, Big Brother* and *Road Rules* can come under the domain of Forced environment Reality shows. In some shows like *Temptation Island* eight contestants, four unmarried yet committed couples are housed in an island in different locations and are then tempted by twenty six men and women. Like other TV Reality shows, dating based shows involve couples in testing the strength of their relationships. By the end of the show they choose one person for their final dates.

Fear Based Reality Shows

In most of TV Reality Shows there is a sense of fear among the contestants of losing from the contests. In addition, some TV Reality Shows focus on assigning fear-based challenges to the participants. Assignments for fear based reality shows can be varied (e.g. performing stunts, residing in a haunted house and eating insects). MTV launched *Fear Factor* in the year 2000 and thereafter many Reality series based on fear have been telecasted and keeping in tradition the Indian producers launched *Katron Ke Khiladi,* the Indian version of *Fear factor* in the year 2000 on Sony TV. As mentioned earlier fear based TV Reality Shows specialize on stunts involving fear and mental challenges among the contestants whereas there are TV Reality Shows focusing solely on sports.

Sports Based Reality Shows

Very few TV Reality shows are based on sports. Such shows require the contestants to excel in the sports of their interest involving competition. For example, in *The Contender* season 2, sixteen aspiring boxers are pitted against each other under the tutelage of Sylvester Stallone and Sugar Ray Leonard. The boxers compete with each other in the elimination round until one boxer remains at the end. However, unlike the other TV Reality Shows *The Contender* and *The Next Great Champ* take conflict on a physical form. Nevertheless, such shows display characters and relationships as in any other TV Reality Shows and their internal and situational conflicts.

Under Cover Reality Shows

Many researchers have focused their attention on crime-based TV Reality Shows because of blurring of line between entertainment and fact. Unlike in the above mentioned shows where the contestants are forced to live in a confined environment for months in Under Cover Reality Show camera follows the action of police officers *Cops* brings the viewer into arena of action as actual police officers are called out to apprehend real criminals [127]. *Cops*

allowed viewers to follow police officers as they went about their day-to- day interactions with police officers [128]. The other examples of this show are *Police, Camera and Action* and *America's Most Wanted.*

Social experiment

Under this category *Wife Swap* can be termed as entertaining sociological experiment about the women as the manager of the family [129]. Two families swap their wives for two weeks from the opposite end of social spectrum. For the first week the traded wife must abide by the rules set forth by the household she joins. In the second week the traded wife sets the rule for the household. Indian version of *Wife Swap* was *Maa Exchange* where celebrity mom Pooja Bedi swapped places with middle classs mom Radha Nigam, wife of a comedian Rajiv [130]. Indian Reality Shows are mostly copies of western TV Reality Shows. However, one TV Reality Show named *Mahayatra* telecasted on Star Plus floated the idea of modern day Shravan Kumar. In this show 14 teams comprising three family members embark on a journey to Hindu religious centres-Puri, Rameshwaram, Dwarka and Badrinath.

Talk Shows

Beginning with the talk shows, celebrity talk show has been very popular show in America after the success of *The Tonight Show* telecasted on NBC in the year 1950. Thereafter the confessional talk shows became a huge hit with studio audience interacting with interviewer and interviewee and the instant audience response is shown by clapping, smiling and laughing. In India many TV Reality Talks Shows have been telecasted. *Oye its Friday* was telecasted on NDTV Imagine hosted by Farhan Akhtar.

All the above mentioned types of Reality Shows indicate that they have been consistently drawn the attention of the audience. The latest and the most popular among the talk show is *Satyamev Jayate* presented by Bollywood actor Amir Khan.

2.4 Popular TV Reality Shows in the USA and UK

According to media lens reality TV Shows are inexpensive to produce, yet generate huge amounts of income through constant programming rotations and product placement or promotion [131]. In addition to this such shows have initiated the concept of buying and selling of TV formats for example *Big Brother* and *X Factor* which were developed in one country were sold internationally in different countries. Britain and Netherland (represented by Endemol International Production and Distribution Company) embarked on the format business with considerable success [132]. Some TV Reality Formats have been licensed outright to foreign broadcasters and some have been formatted considering the topical or local needs of the country [133]. With time such shows have evolved methods to use audience in different modes. For example, contestants for the shows like *Who wants to be a millionaire* are basically geared towards achieving their goal of winning and studio audience make their journey easy by answering questions posed by the contestants in one of the lifelines. However, a show like *Big Brother* depends on the contestants' voting as well as audience voting. Nevertheless, talent based shows like *Pop Idol* and *Just Dance* are solely based on audience voting in the final round. Let us have a look at the popular shows which have been arranged chronologically in terms of increased audience participation. The audience have been consistently transformed through these shows.

Candid Camera 1948

 Prank-based TV Reality Show credited to be the first TV Reality Show was produced in America in the year 1948 brought the concept of hidden camera. The surveillance which was for serious purpose during the cold war period 1950s and 1960s changed for the first time into surveillance for entertainment through this show. The audience for the show enjoyed humour based on the pranks and revelation of the pranks towards the end.

<u>Cops 1989</u>

This show became the longest running television programme running in the US on Fox channel. It was produced by John Langley and Malcom Barbour was first telecasted in 1989. Crime based reality TV programming became the staple of prime time viewers in 1990s and continues to be mainstay of prime time viewing [134]. For *Cops* televised police officers are sent on real life calls to interact with the actual criminals [135]. Police are portrayed as defenders of social order and audience identify with police officers. In addition, the audience get a sense of realism through subtitles, narration by the police officers and videos images.

<u>Oprah Winfrey Talk Show 1986</u>

The most popular talk show in the history of Reality Television was telecasted in 1986, hosted by Winfrey Oprah. This show ran over more than two decades was telecasted on NBC Channel, consisting of 25 episodes concluded in May 2011. Winfrey Oprah has been dubbed as the most successful women in the history of Reality Television. With her growing popularity she consistently disclosed more intimate details of her life from childhood memories to incest to relationships with men to her struggles with weight [136]. Talk shows also introduced the concept of studio audience which was extensively used in the quiz show. The host of the show acts as a mediator between the studio audience behind him and the guest.

<u>Changing Room 1996</u>

The lifestyle format that made its surge in UK in the year 1996 was developed by Peter Bazalgatte, Ann Booth Clibborn and Nick Vaughan Barratt and was telecasted on BBC one. The concept of the show was couples swapping houses for renovation. The show made use of drama when there would be clash of ideas. Host for the shows like the talk show would mediate between homeowners and design experts. While the makeover format is primarily associated with the US television culture, industry scholars point to the UK in the 1990s as a

defining moment in the emergence of the format as a major prime time player [137]. Local version of this show has been produced in American and Australia.

<u>Who wants to be millionaire 1998</u>

Caledor production company based in the UK started this show in the year 1998 which was hosted by Chris Tarrant. It was telecasted on Sony TV. The format for the show has been sold in 79 countries [138]. Further, Caledor Production Company is also known for co-producing *Slumdog Millionaire,* a Hollywood movie based on the show. The basic format of the show is more or less like quiz show where contestants are presented with questions and multiple answers. In addition, the contestants are presented with life lines like audience poll, phono friend to save themselves from losing the show. The contestants also have a choice to leave the show after answering a few questions. The studio audience not only helps the contestants as one of the life lines but also motivate the contestants by clapping.

<u>Big Boss 1999</u>

 In contrast to surveillance without the knowledge of the participants for the above mentioned show *Candid Camera*, Big *Boss* introduced surveillance with the knowledge of the participants who are housed together for 105 days. As many as 26 cameras are installed in every corner of the house for monitoring movement of the inhabitants [139]. This show became the most watched show in the world television history was produced by John De Mol. It was first telecasted in Netherland in the year 1999 on Veronica channel. Gradually the show got a viewership of 740 million in the year 2005 with program broadcast in 70 countries [140]. This show introduced the concept of interactive audience as they would vote for their favourite contestants on the show. However, the show also had a concept of contestants voting out their fellow contestants in the elimination round.

Pop Idol 2001

Singing based TV Reality Show was first premiered in the UK in the year 2001. It was produced by Simon Fuller and was telecasted on ITV. This show has a plethora of spinoffs like *American Idol, Australian Idol, Canadian Idol, Indian Idol, Idols West Africa, Latin America Idol, New Zealand, Pinoy Idol* (in the Philippines) and *A star is born* (in Israel), to name a few [141]. This show made extensive use of audience interactivity through mobile phones, SMS or via the official website. This phenomenon stretches to over 32 countries with 3.2 billion viewers from 2001-2005 [142].

Bachelor 2002

This is an American group dating TV Reality show telecast in 2002 on ABC. The concept of the show involves 25 women dating one eligible bachelor. The purpose of this show is to find a soul mate for the eligible bachelor with the possibility of marriage [143]. Similar to other TV Reality Shows in terms of competition and elimination, the show offers the possibility of a marriage. Audience involvement in the show is of a spectator.

Extreme Makeover 2002

This show was first aired on ABC channel in the US in the year 2002 was created by Howard Schultz. Also known as Cosmetic Surgery Reality Television (CSRTV), participants in makeover shows like *Swan* and *Extreme Makeover* participants are removed from their daily lives during which they undergo multiple cosmetic surgeries. The contestants are also introduced to the audience as pathetic with their un-made states. In addition to this viewers are encouraged to feel sorry for them and support them in their quests to improve their lives through cosmetic surgery. During the participation in the show the participants submit to brutal grooming, diet and exercise regimes supervised by an army of experts from makeup artists to fitness experts. Each episode climaxes with dramatic revelation ceremony where newly created bodies are revealed to friends, families and the world. The two shows

mentioned above under CSRTV are different in terms of dramatic reveal ceremony and competition. Firstly, the participants on *The Swan* are revealed to themselves and at the same time to the world. Secondly, on *Extreme Makeover* the participants are pitted against each other to know who has made the most dramatic transformation. Thereafter the two finalists compete in a pageant [144]. Although European broadcasters have imported lifestyle based formats like *What Not To Wear, Extreme Make Home Edition,* surgical makeover formats have received resistance because surgery has less social acceptance in Europe than in America. Despite this Extreme Makeover has been the most popular format that has been imported and adapted by Dutch, British and Flemish channels catering to young and predominately female audience [145].

Bachelorette 2003

It is spinoff of American dating show putting woman on the drivers' seat unlike *Bachelor* where a man chooses girls. The first season was broadcasted in the year 2003 on ABC channel. This show has attempted to counteract gender stereotypes [146].

America's Next Top Model 2003

The show was first premiered on UPN (United Paramount Network) in the year 2003 and was created by Tyra Banks. The show stars 10-14 contestants competing to become a model. Viewers are reminded that winner will receive one-hundred thousand dollar modeling contract from a Cover Girl cosmetics and a spread in *Elle* Magazine. This show drew over five million viewers for the premiere of its sixth cycle and attracted African and American audiences [147].

Wife Swap 2003

This show was first broadcasted in the UK in the year 2003 on Channel 4. It was created by Stephen Lombert. The concept of the show involves experimentation of a single mother

having six children getting swapped with a working mother of two or the mother of white British family getting swapped with a mother of black British family [148]. l

The Biggest Loser 2004

From its humble origin *The Biggest Loser* broadcasted on NBC in the year 2004 has grown into world's most successful TV formats. Two dozen local versions aired in countries from Southeast Asia to Caribbean in 2010 [149]. The show picked up the issue of obesity which caught the attention of the people with 72 million meeting the definition of obesity [150]. The program's basic premise is : two teams, each with a handful of extremely overweight and obese contestants compete to see who can lose the most weight for the chance to win $100,000 and be crowned "The Biggest Loser" [151].

Apprentice 2004

This show was created by Mark Burnett and hosted by Donald Trump, an American business magnate. It was telecasted in the year 2004 on NBC channel. Dubbed as "The Ultimate Job Interview" the show features sixteen to eighteen business people participating in an elimination style competition for a one year, $250,000 salary to run one of Trump's companies. Each season starts with a group of candidates from different backgrounds placed in two teams and each week they are asked to perform a task after choosing the project manager. The elimination process takes place in two stages. In the first stage the project manger fixes the responsibility on the members of the teams for the loss. Then the boardroom meeting in which the rest of the team is dismissed [152] with Donald's catch phrase "You are fired". On December 15, 2005, 27.6 million watched the show in the finale of season four [153]. This show has sold its international versions to 18 countries.

Dancing with the star 2005

This show is the international series based on the format of British show *Strictly Come Dancing* was first aired on ABC channel in the year 2005. It was distributed worldwide by

BBC World wide to 30 countries. The show pairs celebrities with professional dancers competing in different dance forms. Viewers are asked to vote for their favourite dancers. Then the fate of the contestant is decided by the votes of the judges and votes of the audience.

To sum up, the phenomena of TV Reality Shows has grown exponentially not only across the world but also in India. Indian Television industry started witnessing change in the mid 1980s when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi introduced colour Television. At that time 80 percent of the population did not have access to Television and state controlled Doordarshan was the only viewing option [154]. After the breakup of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s India faced severe exchange crisis and as a result Prime Minister Narsimha Rao was forced to make policy changes and which expanded investment in the Indian market. Since reforms were implemented media economy also changed considerably. The outcome of this was before 1991 Indian viewers who received only two channels started receiving more than 50 channels. With the increase in channels the numbers of viewers shot up to 425 million in the year 2010 from 210 million in the year 1990s [155]. Before the influx of western programs into India in the year 1991, the newly established ZEE introduced film music based shows like *Antakshari, SA RE GA MA* and *Philips Top ten*. Thereafter Sony TV, a close competitor of ZEE launched talented based TV Reality Show- *Indian Idol* in the year 2004. *India Idol* is a copy of *Pop Idol* telecasted in the UK in the year 2001. Meanwhile Star Plus launched *Kaun Banega* Crorepati, the Indian version of *Who wants to be a millionaire* in the year 2000. Thus most of the popular Indian TV Reality Shows are replica of the western shows. The original shows have been sold overseas by two methods. As mentioned earlier some shows have been licensed outright to foreign broadcasters and some have been formatted considering the topical or local needs of the country. Thus Reality TV has participated in the glocalization [156].Despite the choice for formatting the shows according to the local needs most of the shows have been presented as it is; for example, if one looks at *Who wants to be*

millionaire in UK *and* compares it with *Kaun Banega Crorepati* (KBC) one can find both the shows are similar. *KBC* set the stage for talent based show *Indian Idol* which is also a very popular show. The list of the popular shows in India running till date is long. In addition to this some shows like *MTV Roadie*s have completed as many as nine seasons. The list of popular shows starting from the first show to the latest show is given below in chronological order:

2.5 Popular TV Reality Shows in India

Boggie Woggie (1995)

This show can be labeled as the precursor to dance based TV Reality shows in India. Telecasted on Sony Entertainment Channel in the year 1995 it was produced by Naved Zaffri and Ravi Behl with Javed Zafferi as the permanent celebrity judge.

 MTV Bakra (1996)

Telecasted on MTV in the year 1996 this show was hosted by Cyrus Broacha. This show was similar to Allen Funt's *Candid Camera*. The highlight of the show was that it recorded pranks played on the people consisting of ordinary to celebrity without their knowledge thereby bringing in humour.

Kaun Banega Crorepati (2000)

KBC season 1 was first telecasted on Star Plus in the year 2000 with megastar Amitabh Bachchan as the host. *KBC* season 1 opened with a TRP of 11.6 which shot up to 22 [136]. This show has telecasted five seasons including the current season hosted by Amitabh Bachchan telecast on Sony TV. *KBC* is said to be variant of quiz show. Before the actual show telecast of the show on Television the viewers are asked questions and are required to answer the questions. Thereafter the selected candidates from the initial screening come on the show and are required to participate in fastest finger round after their introduction by the

host. Subsequently the first person who arranges the answer to the question in the fasted time is invited on the hot seat. While sitting on the hot seat the contestant is required to answer multiple choice questions with increasingly difficult questions as the number of questions increases. The contestant can make use of life lines if they are undecided about the questions.

MTV Roadies (2003)

It was first aired on MTV India on August 15, 2003. Auditions for the show are held in major cities like Delhi, Kolkata, Pune, Chandigarh, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Jaipur, and Ahmedabad. People who come for the auditions are made to participate in group discussion in Hindi thereafter they are made to participate in personal interviews. After the initial auditioning the short-listed contestants are required to perform individual and team tasks eliminating each other by anonymous vote till one person remains who becomes the winner. This show has completed eight seasons and is very popular among youth.

Indian Idol (2004)

First aired in the year 2004, this show was broadcasted on Sony Television. It could be traced back to film –music themed TV programmes Antakshari and *SA, RE, GA, MA* in particular. It is an adaptation of *Pop Idol* format. The first season was judged by Anu Malik, music director and Farah Khan, choreographer and film director. The format of the show consists of the audition round for the contestants between the age group of 15-30 from different cities of India. Thereafter 40 contestants are selected for the semi-final who perform individually and in teams before the judges. In the third round contestants perform in duets. Fourth round is the toughest round as the contestants perform before the judges on live music without preparation. In the fifth round audience voting is introduced along with the judges' verdict which influences the outcome of the 16 contestants. Finally in the last round audience voting decide the result of the final winner for the remaining 13 contestants.

The Great Indian Laughter Channel (2005)

It is the first standup comedy show in India. It was first telecasted in the year 2005 on Star One. All the four seasons were conceived by Pankaj Saraswat. The show was mostly judged by Shekhar Suman, TV Personality and Navjot Singh Siddhu, former cricketer.

Big Boss (2006)

It is the first house arrest show on Indian Television was telecasted in Nov 2006 on Sony TV. In this show contestants who are celebrities stay together for three months with no connection from the outside world. Each week each of the contestants is called into the confession room and asked to nominate two other fellow contestants for eviction. The audience are also allowed to vote. The show has been mostly hosted by Bollywood actors.

Khatron Re Khiladi (2006)

This show is an adapted version of *Fear Factor*. It was first telecasted in the year 2006 on Sony television. Thirteen teams compete with each other in a series of *stunts and the team which performs the best stunts gets safety band for the next stunts.* In other words that team gets immunity to perform the next stunt. However, the team which performs the worst stunt gets eliminated.

Dance India Dance (2009)

It is an Indian dance competition first premiered on Zee TV in the year 2009. The concept was created by Mithun Chakravorti, film actor. The precursor to this show could be *Boggie Woggie*. The auditions are divided into two sections namely open audition and mega. In the former anyone between the age group of 18-30 years can take part. In the mega audition 18 contestants are chosen and who are put under different choreographers. Each group consisting of six dancers under one choreographer compete in solo, duets and groups dance. The winner is declared based on the public voting along with the inputs from the judges.

Rakhi Ka Swayamwar (2009)

The show was first telecasted in June 2009. The word 'Swayamvara' is derived from the Sanskrit word. Swayamwar means self and Vara means groom. In 'Swayamvar' the bride is allowed to choose her husband. However, the show is adapted version of *Bachelorette.* In the first season 16 grooms from different cities tried to woo Rakhi Sawant for the marriage.

Master Chef India (2010)

It is an Indian competitive cooking based show adapted from the original British show *Master Chef*. The first season was aired on October 16, 2010. Like other TV Reality Shows with celebrity judges, film actor Akshay Kumar is one of the judges along with Kunal Kapoor and Ajay Chopra professional chefs working in Gurgaon and Goa respectively. The format of the show consists of auditioning for initial rounds from contestants all over India above 18 years of age. The top 50 contestants are further narrowed down to 12 main contestants who compete with each other in individual and team challenges in the elimination rounds.

Survivor India (2012)

It is an Indian version of *Survivor* aired in January 2012. The show starts with 22 contestants 11 celebrities and 11 non- celebrities marooned on a secluded island for 45 days with no civic amenities where they have to build their homes.

Satya Mev Jayate (2012)

It is an Indian talk show discussing social issues telecast in May 2012. It is also the first Indian show to have telecasted on Star Network (private channel) and Doordarshan (National channel) together. It is the television debut of Bollywood actor and film maker, Aamir Khan and is dubbed in many other languages such as Tamil, Bengali, Marathi, Telegu and Malyalam.

Thus popular TV Reality Shows are constantly evolving from one season to another. There is an increase in the prize money, changes in the format of the show, auditions in more cities, etc. For example *KBC* last season (season 6) had a prize of five crore for the winner unlike its first season with a prize of one crore. In addition in the *Ghar Baithe Jeeto Jackpot* round viewers got a chance to win one crore rupees by answering a question raised by the host. Moreover, newer forms of TV Reality Shows are also emerging. This phenomenon has become more intriguing in India as such shows are getting telecasted in many Indian languages. As the audience play a crucial role in establishing and sustaining the popularity of TV Reality Shows, it is important to discuss the multifarious factors related to the categories of audience and hence the following chapter aims at elaborating on such factors.

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CHAPTER 3

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INDIAN AUDIENCE AND THEIR RECEPTIVITY TOWARDS TV REALITY SHOWS

The concept of audience is not new; it has been in vogue in the theatrical and public performances as well as in the games of ancient times. Earliest notions of audience are of a physical gathering in a certain place. The audience as a set of spectators for public events was thus institutionalized more than 2000 years ago. It was an urban phenomenon often with a commercial basis [1]. Similarly the audience in India used to be the spectators of the performing arts like dance and music in the royal courts. However, by the end of the 18th century the British stopped the patronage to the performing artists. Subsequently in the 20th century it was left to the masses to patronize the arts and the performance area also shifted from the royal courts to the large halls [2]. The question that is often raised is why is the study on audience is required per se and more so for the audience of TV Reality Shows. The most apparent answer is that such shows provide interactive strategies to the viewers to see how their actions make a difference in the show and in the lives of the participants [3]. As audience is the most significant component of TV Reality Shows, this chapter attempts to provide a substantial background on the definitions, theories, types, changes in the Indian media landscape and its resulting effect on audience post liberalization, characteristics of the Indian audience, difference between Indian and western audience etc.

3.1 Definitions

Television stations air thousands of programs each year. They may be designed to entertain, inform or educate. They may attract audiences numbering a few hundred to thousands.

Media scholars have tried to define *audience* in various ways. Some perceive the term as abstract while some others have tried to define the term in concrete ways. According to Denis Mcquail "The word audience is the collective term for the 'receivers' in the simple sequential model of the mass communication process (source, channel, message, receiver, effect) that was deployed by pioneers in the field of media research." Audiences have also been defined as raison d'etre (reason for existence). In other words audience cannot exist in vacuum. For example, people who make programmes want to know that they are talking to someone; they want positive feedback; they want the approval of their audience and of their peers [4]. In other words "people who consume media products are referred as the audience" [5]. Audiences have also been defined as people seeking as out stations for its programs. In addition to it, audiences have been termed as abstractions. They are ideas about groups of people. Audiences are also constructed. For example, an audience is created when certain categories are chosen over other categories to describe a group of people [6]. Thus audiences are ephemeral and relational concept. They are defined in relation to texts (films, news bulletins, soap operas) or objects (such as books, radio or TV sets [7]. In fact, the audience as such does not exist except as an idealization. The chief executive officer of a television network may claim that he or she is simply supplying the audience with what it wants, even though only a fraction of the potential population is watching. The Gallup poll claims, on the basis of an extraordinary small sample, to know what the audience is watching; but pollsters cannot know what is actually taking place in front of the television set [8]. Media scholars have also mentioned that the audiences have changed over a period of time. Audiences do not accept or assimilate every message that comes their way. They sift through messages and choose which ones they will hear and read. During the last four decades, audiences have been affected by changing lifestyles, an increasingly diverse population and new technologies. New technologies have given audiences greater access to information and entertainment [9].

Furthermore, even the earlier researchers were of the view that media did not have a uniform effect on their audiences [10].

Early audience research into TV was undertaken within the empirical framework, which conceptualized the audience as a large mass composed of isolated and unknown individuals. This normative paradigm is often referred to as 'hypodermic model' and has been subject of considerable criticism. Firstly, the model concentrates on short –term behaviour rather than considering the meaning the audiences construct and deploy. Secondly, it fails to differentiate between social groups and the meaning they bring to the television consumption [11]. Audiences have also been defined as an undifferentiated mass that was vulnerable to media. This view had its roots in the theories of social change and mass society that were popular at that time. In keeping with the tradition of theatrical performances, audiences have also been defined as a group of persons paying attention to performances or a series of related performances. Audiences are thus subsets of the public [12]. However, within the television industry, audiences are conceived in straightforward numerical terms (audience ratings or shares).This is because audiences are not seen as a category to be understood, but as a commodity to be sold to advertisers [13].Whether one takes a commercial/marketplace model or a public service/ social responsibility model for television, those who make it want to reach some kind of audience. Media research on audience has highlighted two main concepts. First, the "*audience as recipients'*-perspective" conceptualizes the audience as the sum of receivers of media content. The second, "the *audience as product*- perspective" that it is audience itself that is produced by the media industry [14]. However, interdependence of audience, text and television has also been emphasized. Now the audiences have become the product themselves. With the introduction of TV Reality Shows and the interactive practices such as messaging, calling and chatting, etc., the audiences have become *prosumers* who produce by consuming. In other words, with the result of the interactive practices producers

get template for their shows based on reactions of the audience. To sum up, Denis Mc quail in his book *Audience Analysis* refers to 'the mystery of audience'. The problem of definition is that a 'single and simple word is being applied to an increasingly diverse and complex reality, open to alternative and competing theoretical formulations'[15]. Hence let us understand the phenomenon of the growth of the audience along with the growth of technology and the changing perspectives of the researchers towards the audience.

There is a dramatic change in the distribution of media [16]. In addition, rapid technological changes and digitalization have impacted culture industries. Sonia Livingstone advocates replacing the term "audience" with the more explicitly interactive term "user" [17]. Digitalization facilitates new opportunities to audiences to engage in the construction of texts in the multiplatform media production in the form of voting for the contests and their participation as contestants. However, the degrees to which the audiences can affect the production processes are limited [18].Thus in this new multimedia environment, audiences' media-use behaviours are becoming more complicated. Audiences spend more time with media by combining their media use (e.g.TV viewing) with other activities (e.g. eating) which is referred to as multitasking. Multitasking with media poses a threat to media researchers because these behaviours make it much more difficult to assess media use and exposure [19]. Consequently, immense media fragmentation has divided audience attention across multiple content options [20]. Over the last decade, media have proliferated at a much higher rate than the rate at which empirical knowledge has been developed on the nature of audience structure [21]. As today's media simultaneously converge and diverge, fusing and hybridizing across digital services and platforms, some researchers argue that "audiences are dead—long live the user!" For others, it is the complex interweaving of continuities and changes that demands attention. It is argued that audiences are now everywhere and nowhere [22]. Nevertheless, media text opens to various interpretations and remains a deciding factor

in the kinds of readings and appropriations that viewers can make [23]. Thus media audiences are a constant concern for media themselves [24].Research on TV viewing has always struggled with the question to which degree viewers are active or passive. On the one hand, mass-media communication is regarded as a one-way process with the medium as the predominant determinant of recipients' behaviour. This structural approach focuses on the regularities of aggregated audience behaviour. The opposite perspective has its origin in the uses-and-gratifications approach to media use. This approach assumes that viewers act more or less rationally, guided by individual needs and motives, by gratifications sought and obtained [25]. Media producers have been pushed to modify their products in response to the demands of the consumers [26].

Before moving on to know the types of audience let us understand the various important media theories that came into existence in the nineteenth century and their application to the audience for TV Reality Shows.

3.2 Media Theories

Social Cognitive Theory

To start with the Social Cognitive Theory, it was developed out of stimulus-response psychology. According to this theory we learn behaviour by observing others performing those behaviours and subsequently imitating them. This process happens when the media actors becomes the source of observational learning. There are four sub-functions for observational learning from media. Firstly, someone must be exposed to media example and attend to it. Secondly, he or she must be capable of symbolically encoding and remembering the observed events, including both constructing the representation and cognitively and en actively rehearsing it. Thirdly, the person must be able to translate the symbolic conceptions into appropriate action. Finally, motivations must somehow develop through internal and

external reinforcement in order to energize performing the behaviour [27].This theory is truly applicable to the aspiring contestants for TV Reality Shows. Before participating in TV Reality Shows they have been avid watchers of TV Reality Shows [28].

Cultivation Theory

The next theory which can be applied to the audience in relation to TV Reality Shows is Cultivation Theory. This theory was developed by George Gerbner highlighting mainstreaming whereby television creates a confluence, a coming together of attitudes [29]. This is true to one aspect of TV Reality Shows where we find people shedding inhibitions to come on such shows. Normal and ordinary families have executed *thumkas* and *jhatkas* in the show called *Rock N Roll*. In this show, three generations of family danced together including *dadajis* and *papajis* [30]. This theory emphasizes on the cumulative effect of many repeated images, some images may be far more influential than others. For example, repeated hosting of Amitabh Bachchan for *Kaun Banega Crorepati* has taken the show to great heights. Out of the six seasons Amitabh Bachchan hosted all six seasons except the third one which was hosted by Bollywood Star Shahrukh Khan. Amitabh's down-to-earth attitude and ability to connect with the contestants, as well as the audiences effectively are the qualities that helped him become the star on the small screen too. His popularity motivated the producers to hire him again and again [31].

Uses and Gratification Theory

The most popular and the most cited theory with regard to the study of audience is Uses and Gratification Theory. This theory assumes audience to be active and goal- oriented. This is true for the audience of TV Reality Shows. For example, some viewers watch the shows to come on the shows, some want to vote for their favourite contestants and some others want to make money by involving in betting for the contestants on TV Reality Shows [32]. To

illustrate the Indian version of *Dancing with Stars, Jhalak Diklaja* was involved in the betting to the tune of 200 crores on one of the contestants Meiyang Chang who became the winner of season four [33].

Reception Theory

The next theory rooted in the audience perspective is the reception theory propounded by Stuart Hall. A central feature of this approach is to focus on how various types of audience members make sense of the specific forms of content. According to Hall, most texts can be read in several ways but there is generally a preferred or dominant meaning that the producers of the message intend when they create a message. According to Hall:

> *Most popular media content will have a preferred reading that reinforces the status quo. But in addition to this dominant reading, it is possible for audience members to make alternative interpretations. They might disagree with or misinterpret some aspects of a message and come up with an alternative or negotiated meaning that differs from the preferred meaning in important ways. And in some cases audiences might develop interpretations that are in direct opposition to a dominant reading. In this case they are said to engage in oppositional decoding.*

This theory can be applicable to the unfolding of the drama in TV Reality Shows. Producers feel that this is the high point of TV Reality Shows. Most of the producers try to en-cash on the unreal drama not realizing that this at times it is not liked by most of the audience.

Agenda Setting Theory

This theory was propounded by McCombs and Shaw states that the news media have an agenda. In other words, news media tells audiences what "news" to consider as important [34]. The basic tenet of this theory is media do not necessarily tell us what to think, but rather what to think about. For example TV Reality Shows shows have their hidden agenda

projected by repeatedly playing the footage of the controversial issues. For example, differences of opinion among the judges in talent based show like *Indian Idol* are always shown before the actual telecast of the event. Thus we find producers telling the audience to wait for the surprise -element before the commercial break for each of the series.

To conclude, all the above mentioned definitions have oscillated between the audience and the text. As mentioned earlier, audiences today have become fully empowered by driving the media like the Internet and enjoying partial empowerment by participating in TV Reality Shows by using technological tools like sending SMS, email, phone calls etc. There are various classification of the audience based on various factors. The first could be on the availability of various media. Throughout the day people will be either consciously or unconsciously exposed to different media products-becoming part of many different types of audience [35].

Audiences as created by the media are often brought into being by some new technology. The media are continuously seeking to develop and hold new audiences [36]. According to Marsen audience research looks at the role of audience in interpreting the message transmitted by the media [37]. Throughout the history of audience research, audiences have carried different definitions and have been classified in various ways. Some classifications are given below:

- A group of people (e.g. young males)

- A locality or community (metropolitan resident)

- Type of medium (TV Viewers)

- A genre or style (e.g. science fiction fans)

- Time (prime time audiences)

3.3 Types of Audience

Denis Mcquail has identified four different types of audience:

<u>The audience as group</u>

This type of audience exists prior to its identification as an audience. The most common example of a media audience which is also in some sense a social group is probably the readership of a local newspaper or the listener of a community radio station. However, with the passage of time and increased commercialization of big media, formation of audience as social group has been thwarted. Nevertheless, the new media like the Internet and World Wide Web are promoting new kinds of groups-like audiences.

<u>The gratification set of audience</u>

The term gratification set of audience refers to the multiple possibilities of audiences to form and re-form on the basis of media-related interest, need or preference. The term set refers to the aggregates of dispersed individuals without mutual ties. For example, on TV Reality Shows diverse audience without mutual ties may come together to see their favourite contestants win the show by casting votes for them. This category of the audience in terms of number may not remain consistent with every season of the show. Sometimes, the audiences are drawn to the show due to contestants, sometimes they get attracted to the show due to celebrities as judges and sometimes because of celebrities acting as hosts.

<u>The medium audience</u>

Each medium – newspaper, magazine, cinema, radio, and television has to establish a new set of consumers and the process continues with the diffusion of new media such as the Internet or multimedia. The reference is usually to those whose behaviour is regular. In other words, audiences get attracted to a particular medium because of self-perception. However, such

audiences mostly overlap. For example, audience for TV Reality Shows may watch the shows and thereafter visit the Internet sites based on the show and participate in the blogs. Nevertheless research has shown some media are substitutable for each other for certain purpose, while others have distinctive use. For example some messages are best delivered in domestic setting and this belief is held true for audience for television. On the other hand the Internet is useful for delivering messages in individual setting. In addition to this audience for television has little or no control over the content whereas the audience for the Internet can create their content by creating websites, writing blogs etc.

Audience as defined by channel or content

The measurement of the audience by the industry in concrete manner like the ratings or the numbers is central to media business. It provides the main criteria of success for any shows. Based on the TRPs (Target Rating Points) producers of the show get advertisers for their products. Producers of TV Reality Shows rely on ratings for their shows before coming up with the new season. The first narrows down to audience as numbers whereas audience as defined by content cannot be clearly measured. It refers to the obsession of the audience for fans.

Audiences have also been segmented on the basis of geographical, demographic and psycho graphical variables. Segmentation is a process of categorizing a group of people. For the technique to be useful, the members of each sub-group or segment need to have some similarities in the ways in which they think or behave and differences between themselves and members of other groups. Let us understand the different segmentation in detail [38].

Geographic Audience

This category of audience refers to those people from region ranging from neighbourhoods to continents. People from one region, one country may be different from people from another region, another country in terms of religion, race, ethnicity etc. As a result, their preference for TV programs also varies. Hence the producers before telecasting any new program copied from international format consider the socio-cultural background of the native audience. The word format means any program locally adapted for broadcast in at least one market other than the market of origin for which a license fee is payable [39]. The adaptation involves local production labour and can for regulatory and other political purpose called as content. As part of TV Format remaking, the program is usually modified in such a way so as to seem local or national in origin [40]. UK based production company Celdaor, and the producer of *Who Wants to be Millionaire* put in great deal of collaborative activity by sending three staff members from London office to train the local production team and four Indian went to the UK for further training.

Demographic Audience

Under this category age is a major variable. It aims to know whether children, teenagers, adults, middle-aged person, old persons watch TV Reality Shows. Age is generally further classified into five brackets.

Less than 18; 18-24; 25-44; 45-54; or above 55

It is assumed that TV Reality Shows are popular among young people. Under demographic classification, gender, family type, income, education and occupation are also included.

<u>Psychographic</u>

These sub-groups are based on inner qualities of persons. For example, personalities life styles, values, interests and opinions. It aims to know whether a person watches TV Reality Shows over other shows like soap operas, news debates, movies etc and the reasons for doing so. The audience for TV Reality Shows may be drawn to the shows because of the hosts, celebrities as judges, exotic locations, sets, participation of the ordinary people. In addition, the audience may have got distracted from the shows because of long duration, humiliation by the judges, vulgarism, abusive language, unreal drama etc.

Audiences for TV Reality Shows are variegated. In addition to this, audiences have become fragmented because of changing technology, availability to technology and changing Government policies. In view of this let us see how the changes in the Indian media landscape have taken place which in turn has affected the audience.

3.4 Changes in the Indian Media landscape

Although television was introduced to India in September 1959, for many years transmission services were restricted to areas in and around the nation's capital, Delhi. It was not until 1972 when transmission was extended to Bombay in the west, and in 1973 when the network was further extended to northern cities Amritsar and Srinagar that the television set became more of a mass commodity in India. Some would argue that television did not capture the public imagination in the nation until 1975 when the government of India, with the help of the United States, launched the countrywide Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) to broadcast developmental programmes to 2400 villages in six dispersed states [41]. In stark contrast to print media electronic media has been state- guided. The changes in the Indian electronic media landscape have always been introduced by the Government before some mega events. For example, the use of coloured television was introduced by Mrs. Indira

Gandhi in the mid 1980s before Asiad [42]. Similarly after the breakup of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s Government faced a severe foreign exchange crisis as Mr. Narsimha Rao was forced to make policy changes that relaxed restrictions on multinational which expanded and invested in the Indian market [43].

Since these reforms were implemented the media economy has changed considerably. The media and entertainment industry became one of the fastest growing sectors in the Indian economy [44]. In broadcasting satellite programming from foreign sources, such as BBC world, and development of domestic channels such as ZEE TV and SUN TV suddenly and explosively increased the demand for cable [45].The growth of home grown media companies was spurred by international event like Gulf war [46]. Major changes in electronic media landscape which took place after liberalization have given a variety of choices to the consumers. To illustrate the numbers of channels available increased from 120 to 550 currently [47]. Thus as liberalization has affected media industries it has also affected the audience. The changing nature of the Indian population after liberalization is discussed below:

The major fallout of liberalization is the increased mobility and the mobility of the Indian population can be categorized in two ways:

<u>From urban to overseas</u>

The acronym NRI (Non-Resident Indian) is the most common term in India used to describe people of Indian origin living overseas. The population of the Indian Diaspora is estimated to be about twenty million. They live in different countries, speak different languages, and are engaged in different vocations. What gives them their common identity is their Indian origin, their consciousness of their cultural heritage and their deep attachment to India [48].Post liberalization Indians especially from the States of Kerela and Andhra Pradesh migrated to the countries of west Asia and Gulf following the oil boom as semi-skilled and unskilled

labour force. Thereafter the migration of software engineers and technicians occurred over the past decade which is termed as IT wave. Unlike the earlier waves of migration the software engineers moved to multiple destinations. Now a few hours of air travel, compared to the month-long ship journeys of the colonial era, has facilitated the new emigrants to maintain close ties with their places of origin. There is a revival of the 'local' at the global context, with the shrinking of space and time [49]. It is evident from the fact that many NRIs come to participate in Indian TV Reality Shows as contestants and participants [50].

From rural to urban

As there is shifting of population from urban India to overseas there is also shifting of population from rural areas to urban areas that entailed people shifting in different capacities. For example, people who were not educated have shifted as unskilled labourers and the educated people have shifted for better job opportunities. In addition to this students shifted for better higher education opportunities. If the representation of the entire Indian population i.e., rural, semi-urban and urban India on Television is concerned we find that apart from rural Indian we find considerable number of people from urban and semi-urban areas coming as participants on TV Reality Shows. However, during the broadcast of Doordarshan before the launch of satellite television *Krishi Darshan* was the programme solely based on farmers. As far as participation of people from small towns on TV Reality Shows is concerned we find them in different capacities as contestants, audience and winners. The most avid example of contestant from small town becoming winner is concerned *Kaun Benega Crorepati* in its season four produced a winner from a small town. Sushil Kumar from Motihari, a small village in Bihar won five crores in November 2011[51].His winning saga has remained unfazed as the viewer found him as contestant in a dance based TV Reality Show *Jhalak Diklaja* season five. In season five he was trained to dance and after his performance he received immense adulation from the judges for his dancing skill. When the judges got up

from their seats to show their appreciation towards him for his dance he pointed out that he mistook their appreciation for inconvenience to the judges and explained that as he was dancing in the water he felt that his dancing moves splashed water on the judges. His innocent remarks brought an uproarious laughter among the judges for his raw thinking. Then he stated he was feeling cold as the AC was on. The entire sequence brought in immense humour which concluded with a remark from one of the judges to maintain his naturalness even after winning 15 crores from the contest. The above example goes on to explain that not only the participants of the small towns participate in such shows but also get accepted by maintaining naturalness and depicting raw emotions. Despite the inclusion of people from small towns and villages many people during the course of the interview felt that audition for TV Reality Shows must take place in villages as many villagers have immense talent but are unable to come for the auditions as they are too poor to travel to participate in the auditions conducted in big cities.

Disintegration of Joint family system

Another fall out of increased mobility is the break-up of the traditional joint family system. The break-up in the traditional structure is more evident in urban India. However, media and entertainment greatly benefitted with the breakup of the joint family system as it increased their sale of television sets. Now India's media and entertainment industry is one of the fastest developing industries driven by changing consumption patterns, increasing middle income households and the propensity of consumers to spend on leisure and entertainment. In addition, increasing per capita consumption helped by a growing middle class and working population are also generating huge demands for goods and services including leisure and entertainment [52]. With a highly educated population of 1.1 billion India has the fourth largest purchasing power in the world [53].

<u>Third largest viewing market in the world</u>

As mentioned earlier, the large purchasing power has led 138 million households in India to have television sets and with this figure the country has become the third largest TV market in the world next only to China and the United States [54]. India is also the third largest viewing market in the world with over 300 million middle class. Furthermore, economic reforms have made India as the fourth largest economy in the world [55]. Emergence of strong middle class is also evident in current Indian media and culture. The Indian middle class has been highly affected by the changes. As a result, middle class is much larger and wealthier than before; the average purchasing power has skyrocketed; there is access to a brand new market of goods and technologies that were previously unavailable. With the deregulation of Indian broadcasting, corporate giants have placed advertisements in all facets of Indian media, influencing the values and desires of a growing middle class. Economic reforms have given rise to a large middle class of consumers [56]. As a result Indian middle class are able to enjoy foreign entertainment which was previously inaccessible to them. The Indian cable television market today stands as the third largest market in the world [57].

<u>Greater selection of regional and national programme</u>

Even though people like the cosmopolitan appeal of European and American television, movies and music they tend to choose media from their own culture or one very similar [58]. Television Consumption in India is dominated by Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns, (description of tier 2 and tier 3 is given in the sections that follow) which account for 73% of India's urban consumption. Advertisers are shifting spends to these regional towns to capitalize on increasing consumer spending amid growing saturation in the major metros (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad)[59]. In addition, satellite news channels have found that regionalization has become necessary to improve rating and revenue [60].

Growing acceptance of globalization

The impact of globalization has been far from uniform. Indian society remains in a dynamic state of flux as it continues to experience mixed value systems ranging from traditional cooperation and sharing to emerging individualist consumerism, self-assertion, and competition [61]. Indian men and women are more confident of their identities than their parents and embrace both global trends but, at the same time, do not want to lose their traditions or culture [62]. For example, the Indian youth between the ages of 20 and 35 years, who form the greatest section of the country, are, also, the greatest spenders, prefer the "outward trappings of western culture," but are still very traditional. A typical Indian youth may wear Nike shoes and a Lacoste T-shirt, but he/she will still remove those shoes before entering a place of worship, will live with his/her family and show signs of respect to parents. [63]. In fact, westernization is almost taken for granted in urban young Indians these days, despite ongoing debate on its merits.

Young nation

India is considered to have the largest youth population in the world [64]. Around 70 percent of the country's population is below 35 years of age [65]. Out of this about 17% of the Indian population is between 15 and 24 years old [66]. As India gets closely knit within the world economy, the forces of globalization – especially global media – are getting more intricately involved in the everyday life of Indians. For the youth, this is a far more intense and deep-rooted equation as they typically lead the most 'media-rich' lifestyles in which the boundaries of geography and nation-states dissolve in the ubiquitous presence of global media. Over a decade has passed since the process of economic liberalization in India, and the current generation of young people is possibly the first generation in India to experience a globally mediated life, and has grown up with an increasingly hybrid identity which fuses together

influences from all over the world [67]. Despite these rapid changes Indian youth are not rebels or outliers. While there may be generation gap with the parents, the Indian youth are still conformist and maintain a strong family orientation. Yet, they combine this with an equally strong desire to try new things, be adventurous and push the envelope [68]. An excerpt from Ingene, which promotes itself as the "first-ever Indian youth trend research blog," reflects this commercial aspect, and highlights the fore mentioned heterogeneity among young people in India:

> *With the first ever non-socialistic generation's thriving aspiration & new found money Power combined with steadily growing GDP, bubbling IT industry and increasing list of confident young entrepreneurs, the scenario appears very lucrative for the Global and Local retailers to target the "Youngisthan" (young-India). But, the secret remains in the understanding of the finer AIOs (All in One) of this generation. The Indian youth segment roughly estimates close to 250 million (between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five) and can be broadly divided into three categories: the Bharatiyas, the Indians & the Inglodians(copyright Kaustav SG 2008). The Bharatiyas estimating 67% of the young population lives in the rural … areas with least influence of globalization, high traditional values. They are least economically privileged, most family- oriented Bollywood influenced generation. The Indians constitute 31.5% . . . and have moderate global influence. They are well aware of the global trends but rooted to the Indian family values, customs and ethos. The Inglodians are basically the creamy layers . . . and marginal (1.5% or roughly three million) in number though they are strongly growing (70% growth rate). Inglodians are affluent and consume most of the trendy & luxury items. They are Internet savvy and the believers of global-village (a place where there is no difference between east and west, developing and developed countries etc.), highly influenced by the western music, food, fashion & culture yet Indian at heart* [69].

Geographic Diversity

Not only is the heterogeneity of the Indian audience is age- specific but is also spatial. Let us find out how Indians differ in rural and urban population. The four broad geographic categories of the Indian population are mentioned below:

Urban India

The book, *Million Cities of India* edited by R.P. Misra (2008) is the most comprehensive publication on urbanization in India. The Mega Cities mentioned in the book are Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad. Coincidently such cities also figure in Mckinsey Global Institute with one more addition of Pune in its list of tier 1 cities [70]. Cities were chosen on the basis of economic and demographic importance. These cities have the maximum influence of globalization. As mentioned earlier the youth in these countries are influenced by westernization. Hence we find a large number of young people hooked to shows TV Reality Shows like *MTV Roadies and Splitz villa.*

Semi-Urban India

Mckinsey Global Institute has included 26 cities among its list of top 66 cities. I have mentioned the top seven cities which have Hindi speaking people. The cities include Surat, Kanpur, Nagpur, Lucknow, Jaipur, Vadora and Indore and are known as tier 2 cities. As we find existence of joint family system in these parts of our country we find that young as well middle aged people have strong reservation to dating based TV Reality Shows. During the course of interview many young male interviewees expressed dislike for abuses hurled by the female contestants on such shows.

Small Towns Urban India

Mckinsey Global Institute has included 32 cities among its list of top 66 cities as tier 3 cities. I have mentioned the top seven cities which have Hindi speaking population. Some of these cities are Goa, Allahabad, Raipur, Aligarh, Kota, Faridabad, Ghaziabad etc. In addition some of tier 2 cities also find mention in the book *Urbanization* edited by H.N. Misra and he has termed those cites as *Mega cities in making*. Thus the future of urbanization lies in small and intermediate cities as they are likely to serve as strong links between big cities and rural areas [71]. We find coexistence of westernization and tradition in tier 2 and tier 3 cities of India. The interviewees during the family interview both males as well as females between the age group of 30-40 suggested that ancient Indian values in Indian Reality Shows can be presented in different ways without disturbing the Indian culture.

Rural India

Small towns and villages include this section of the Indian population with agriculture as the predominant occupation. Majority of India's population resides in rural areas with low income [72].Television is the prime source of entertainment for villagers. People infrequently visit movie halls, due to the distance and their own hectic work lives. Despite television being the main source of entertainment not all village households own televisions, mobile phones and CD players. Consequently, owners share some of these resources, especially television, with friends. In fact, watching television shows together is a social occasion for people.

To sum up , along with spatial differences there exists a complex social system with different castes, classes, creeds and tribes in our country with the inadequacy of mass media to reach almost 70% of the people who reside in villages, puts over 3.5 millions of people under illiterate category who suspect anything in terms of modernity [73]. Moreover, towns such as Chandigarh, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Lucknow, Indore and Pune have three-quarters or more of

the affluence levels of Mumbai. On growth potential they do even better. That small-town urban India is attractive in terms of purchasing power, time spent on media, and product consumption comes across clearly.

Suman Srivastava, CEO of Euro RSCG India says, "The Indian middle class does not follow the norms that most mature markets do." "The probable reason is that the core of the market has shifted from being middle aged and urban to young and Tier II. Many rules of the game are being challenged, the primary one being the quintessential 'trickle-down theory.' Attitudes and behavioural trends that got formed in the Tier I markets would trickle down into the small towns and rural markets. What sold in Tier I would also percolate down and sell in Tier II cities."

According to a study this year by the Future Group, an Indian retailer, and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), the ratio of spending to earning is higher in Tier II towns such as Nagpur, Jaipur, Surat and Coimbatore than it is in the metros [74].

All the above mentioned trends indicate that the producers of TV Reality Shows have to rethink about the strategies to allure the consumers based in tier 1 and tier 2 cities and towns of urban India along with rural India. For example, contrary to the belief that the young people are zealous of applying westernization many young people from tier I and tier II cities cling to their traditions and have strong dislike towards issues like openness in relationships, abuses, etc., on TV Reality Shows. However, the younger generation makes fun of their mothers who get hooked to soap operas. Besides the complexity mentioned above we also find multi-lingual diversity in India

Multi –Lingual diversity

India is one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world. Most languages in India belong to one of the four language families: Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burmese and Austro-Asiatic. According to the 2001 Indian Census, there are a total of 122 languages and language is a crucial divider of media products [75, 76].On the basis of languages Indian electronic media can be divided into three broad categories mentioned below:

Hindi

As the Hindi speakers consist of over 500 million speakers Hindi [77]. Hindi channels not only operate in Hindi speaking regions of the country but are very popular among non- Hindi speakers. For example, Hindi TV channels like Zee TV, Sony and Star Plus pose considerable competition for Punjabi channels

English

More Indians speak English than any other language, with the sole exception of Hindi. What's more, English speakers in India outnumber those in all of Western Europe, not counting the United Kingdom [78]. Hence there is a chunk of young urban audience who like to watch imported English Western shows like *Friends*

Regional

In the South India, local audience is serviced by local media produced by local companies like Sun TV, Manoramma etc. These characteristics of Indian media market distinguish it from rest of the world [79]. Another intriguing feature of Indian audience is the lifestyle which varies from one region to another.

<u>Lifestyle Diversity</u>

Life-style refers to how people live, how they spend their money, and how they allocate their time [80]. India is a diversified country. Indian geography has diverse features and a range of climates that are not normally seen in the same country, encompassing mountains, plains, deserts, rivers, delta, and islands. In addition to the geographical diversity there is diversity in religion, culture, tastes and preferences in food. For instance, a large segment of West Bengal's population prefers meat, eggs, and fish, whereas a major portion of Uttar Pradesh prefers cereals and pulses. However in India, inter-state migration has grown by over 100% from 1991 to 2001, showing much higher growth rates than inter-district or intra-district migration. As per the census of the year 1991, nearly 20 million people migrated to other states seeking livelihood [81]. As a result migrated people learnt the culture of the state to where they migrated and similarly local people also learnt the culture from migrated people. Thus India has become home to many lifestyles. The three major characteristics of the Indians based on the difference in lifestyle are mentioned below:

<u>Ultra-Modern</u>

The visibility of people having ultra modern lifestyle is mostly found in metros and IT hubs like Bangalore, Hyderabad, and Chandigarh etc. The young who are highly influenced by westernization lead this life in metros. There is prevalence of live- in relations, existence of gay and lesbians etc.

<u>Modern</u>

Relationships between castes have become more relaxed today. There is more food sharing between castes and a lot more eating done at local restaurants where caste distinctions are less likely to be made. The Indians do not mind love marriages at the same time if given a choice would choose a person from their caste [82].

The people who are very traditional and strict believers in caste system are found in villages. In rural India there is strict demarcation of castes and class. Thus the Indian population is witnessing major transition in terms of mobility, values, lifestyle and this change is also reflected in the consumption of the media. Before venturing to study the difference between Indian and Western audience it is essential to study the basic characteristics of the Indian audience which have emerged post liberalization or which have not changed even after liberalization. In fact, majority of the Indian population is represented by these characteristics.

3.5 Characteristics of Indian Audience

Collectivism

As mentioned earlier watching Television is still a collective activity in rural India to the extent of becoming a social event. The reason being many households do not have television and as a result depend on other people having Television. In addition to this collective or interdependent nature of Asian society is Asians' broad, contextual view of the world and their belief that events are highly complex and determined by many factors, including human and terrestrial. However, the individualistic or independent nature of the Western society seems consistent with the Western world focused on particular objects in isolation from their context and with Westerners' belief that they can know the rules governing objects and therefore can control the objects' behaviour [83].Thus we in keeping with the collective and interdependent nature of the Indian society many interviewees including males and females expressed strong dislike for the highly competitive nature of TV Reality Shows.

Pluralism

People belonging to several faiths, namely, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Islam, Sikhism and Christianity have coexisted for centuries in a shared space. Diversity in India is not merely confined to racial, religious and linguistic distinctions but also permeates deep into patterns of living, life styles, land tenure systems, occupational pursuits, inheritance and succession law, together with local practices, rites and rituals related to social norms and values. It is in this sense a synthesis which made India a unique mosaic of cultures. A plural and multi-ethnic society like India would have an overlapping of ethnic, caste and class groupings [84].In addition, twenty three Indian languages are listed in the constitution and more than 544 dialects are spoken in India [85]. Each of the larger languages supports its own film industry Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Kannada, Tamil, Telegu and Malayalam [86]. Further, many States in India through their indigenous channels telecast TV Reality Shows. Thus language plays a significant role in identity formation.

Heterogeneity

Studying Bollywood films (Hindi films made in Mumbai in India) requires understanding of varied and highly diverse transnational audience. Similarly audience for Hindi TV Reality Shows is far from being homogenous. Movement from one state to another brings about changes in the standard of living, opinions etc. For example, the State of Punjab with the highest per capita income with farming as the main occupation can boast of higher standard of living in comparison to States like UP and Bihar. Despite this factor, in the State of Punjab where Punjabi is spoken Hindi TV Channels are more popular in contrast to South Indian where States have come up with regional channels in different languages like Sun TV, Eenadu etc. In addition, diversity in India is not merely confined to racial, religious and linguistic distinctions but also permeates deep into patterns of living, life styles, land tenure

systems, occupational pursuits, inheritance and succession law, together with local practices, rites and rituals related to social norms and values [87].

Family orientation

Generally there is an existence of nuclear families only in metros or in areas surrounding metros. Otherwise the structure of the Indian family system in tier 2 and tier 3 cities is predominantly joint ranging from small to big families. For example in tier 1 and tier 2 cities sometimes only the grandparents reside with the children and sometimes two to three families together comprising married couples reside with the parents. Considering the structure of the family, there exists a cultural conflict with the paradox between what is 'socially desirable' and what is 'individually desired' [88]. During the course of the interview many people expressed their concern over the display of undesirable content in TV Reality admitting that it is not possible to see such shows with other members of the family.

Harmony

Although TV Reality Shows have been dubbed as trash TV because of conflicts, abuses, etc., by the Western scholars Indians dislike some features of the show like tough competition. According to 38 year old working professional, "tough competition brings negativity in the society in the long run". Many people feel even losers should get something after leaving from the shows. Moreover, many people dislike the shows for being highly competitive and feel that they feel sad when losers leave after having reached so far. During the course of interview, interviewees advocated usage of proper language and removal of stress from the shows. Interviewees highlighted the fact that the contestants can be inspired to remain patient. Interviewees further pointed out development of sense of security among contestants and polishing of unique qualities latent in every person as part of the show. Many viewers were also of the view that people are taught how to kill their inner self through such shows.

In addition, many people dislike human beings eating animals as part of the contest. According to 39 year old lady "devilish thing like eating insects in shows like *Fear factor* must be stopped." To sum up, *most* of the people dislike competition in which the harmony among contestants is sacrificed for contest. Furthermore, many people dislike competition that encourages contestants to hate each other.

Religious

India is a country of many diverse religions. With the help of TV Reality Shows the audience have got a chance to view two Indian weddings from different religious groups. The first was dating based TV Reality Show *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* followed by a similar show of the series *Ratan Ka Rishta.* These two TV Reality Shows courted lots of controversies as Bollywood actress, Rakhi Sawant refused to marry Elesh Parujanwala and Ratan, Abhinav Shrama, TV actress did the same. However, before the wedding the Indian audience got a chance to witness many Hindu ceremonies as part of the pre- wedding episode. To cite another example of a wedding from different religions was the Muslim wedding of Sara and Ali Merchant. This episode on *Big Boss* also received immense media attention as the duo was already married. Despite all the controversies Indian viewers watched the spectacle of Muslim wedding filled with rituals and customs. Nevertheless, a large segment of the Indian viewers are against the idea of marriages taking place on camera. If we set aside the controversies we find that the judges on TV Reality Shows encourage viewers to respect other religions. To illustrate Mithun Chakravarti, Bollywood actor not only appreciated Faizal, a Muslim guy for giving impeccable performance on the dance form *Tandav* (Lord Shiva's dance form*)* in dance based TV Reality Show *Dance India Dance* but also pointed out that it is possible to respect other religions. The comments from grandmaster as he is popularly known on dance based TV Reality Show *DID Lil Champs* telecasted on July 8 2012 depict the sentiment *unity in diversity*.

3.6 Difference between Indian and Western audience

Racism

Race is considered as a social cultural construction not a biological fact [89]. Despite this view, scholars (e.g., Andrejevic & Colby, 2006) have criticized the ways in which reality TV has reinforced existing racialized mass-mediated caricatures. In fact, some scholars like Orbe, argued that the inclusion of reality-based programming has strengthened such stereotypical portrayals given that such images are more ''real'' than others. Some scholars, like Kraszewski (2004), suggest that the reality TV relegates racism in problematic ways- namely located in individuals (like rural conservatives).Other works have drawn attention to the representations of African American males on MTV's The *Real World*, specifically to how its programming format contributes to the hegemonic power of racial images and reinforces societal fears of Black men [90].

Western scholars have cited many examples of racism in Western TV Reality Shows in the content of the show and in the behaviour of the participants**.** The most talked about incident was episode of Jade Goody, the British reality television star who rose to fame from a very disadvantaged social background, and ⸺suffered when she was accused of racism while appearing on the reality show *Celebrity Big Brother* (CBB) in 2007 [91]. Sometimes the producers of the show deliberately put people with different skills, background, and race to bring about drama in the show. For example, on the *Real World* one can find racial conflict across several seasons. One white Southerner/rural dweller /exurbanite is usually included in the cast to be the foil for a Black/urban cast member and at some point racial slurs or other such eruptions happen so that the race fight can take place, pitting the different Whites (liberal, the gay, the intellectual, the slut etc) against each other and or the often lone Black cast members [92]. Thus on TV Reality shows people of colour under surveillance have

added burden of speaking for their race [93]. In contrast to western shows, TV Reality Shows in Indian do not have existence of racism. For example, Veena Mallik, a Pakistani TV actor in the Big Boss season 4 was never shown disdain by fellow participants for her racial and regional background. On the other hand, people from different countries have been instrumental in raising the TRPs of Indian TV Reality show. For instance, Pamela Anderson the Canadian actress in *Big Boss* season 4 and Sunny Leone Canadian porn star in *Big Boss* season 5 were instrumental in increasing TRPs of the show without any racial dispute.

Accessibility to technology

Developing countries face serious challenge in connecting villages to the Internet though polices are being implemented to address this concern [94]. As Murdock (2004) argued, access to the Internet through personal computers remains highly stratified by income, age and education with substantial numbers of poorer household, elderly people and educational drop outs facing the prospect of permanent exclusion [95]. In this context if we take the example of TV Reality Shows we find that this genre which relies heavily on the Internet to maintain interactivity with the viewers is a complete wash out as in rural India a large segment of the illiterate population has no Internet facility.

Gender

In India, gender inequality is significantly worse in rural than in urban areas [96]. However, there has been a growing trend on television towards portraying women as liberated yet traditional, as persons who still bear the responsibility of nurturing and caring for others—in other words, there is an indigenously developed sense of modernity with corresponding notions of the 'New Indian Women' [97].

In India, initially very few female participants would emerge as winners on TV Reality Shows. This trend changed with the house arrest show *Big Boss* where two female contestants Shewta Tiwari season 4 and Juhi Parmar season 5 emerged as winners for the two consecutive seasons. Similarly TV Reality Show *Survivor* in its very first season got Raj Rani, female as the winner. Another example of female winner for TV Reality Show *Kaun Bangega Crorepati* in its last season was Sanmeet Kaur Sawhney. However, *MTV Roadies* has more male winners in its eight seasons. In addition, we find certain stereotypes in terms of portrayal of women. For example, the cat fight between Dolly Bindra and Shewta Tiwari had hit the headlines in most of the newspapers. This was followed even in the season 5 with fight episodes leading by Pooja Mishra who tried to follow Dolly Bindra's style. Amidst all the controversies abuses from the female contestants is the most disliked feature of TV Reality Shows. In addition, Hindus females are worshipped and many interviews have expressed strong dislike towards women resorting to abuses suggesting change in the time slot while many interviews suggested absence of abuses even in the late night slots. In Asia, one's identity relates to one's position in the group and sexuality plays a relatively insignificant role in its cultural construction. In nearly all Asian countries sexuality tends to be a private matter [98]. Thus there is a contrast between Western and Indian TV Reality Shows. For example first TV Reality Show to portray the life of a homosexual on national television was MTV's "*The Real World*" in the year 1992 in the Western world. Now today there are around 22 television shows on major stations with a homosexual cast member as the main character of the show [99].

In contrast to Western TV Reality Shows there is no representation of gay or lesbian on the Indian TV Reality shows except for one transgender character named Laxmi Tripathi in *Big Boss* season 5.

<u>Competition</u>

Most of the TV Reality Shows have competition as one of the main elements. As most of Hindi TV Reality Shows are copies of Western shows we find the existence of competition in them. The competition has been associated with such shows to a great extent that a show named *Mahayatra* telecasted on Star Plus in the year 2010 based on the Indian concept of children taking parents on a pilgrimage also had a strong element of competition. However, many interviewees disliked competition in TV Reality Shows. Despite this fact, some people pointed out that without competition how can the winners be declared. A large number of people were of the view that there should be no competition in the shows having children as contestants because it breeds fear among children. One of the interviewees aged 29 stated that when the children are not selected their confidence goes down. Thus it can be summed up that many Indian viewers do not like competition. However, competition that encourages contestants to strive for excellence is not just accepted but encouraged, yet competition that pushes them to target one another in order to win is found disturbing [100].

<u>Collectivism</u>

The most widely analyzed dimensions of cultural values are individualism and collectivism. According to Hofstede (1980) individualism –collectivism is a cultural factor that describes the extent to which members of a culture have an independent versus interdependent construal of the self. Individualistic cultures are defined by detachment from personal relationships and community. The individual views himself or herself as relatively independent from others. In contrast, collectivist cultures emphasize the importance of relationships, roles and status within the social system. According to several cross cultural studies of individualism and collectivism generally western cultures (e.g. United States and Germany) are individualistically value oriented and East Asian cultures (e.g. India and Japan)

tend to be predominantly collectivisitically value-oriented. This means that those who live in India will rely on opinion of families and friends. If we study TV Reality Shows in the light of above mentioned distinction we find most of the Indian shows also rely on competition. However, while answering questions during the interview many people affirmed that competition is the main attraction of the show but it should be restricted to talent based shows.

Fascination for Bollywood

During the 1990s the newly established channels discovered the appeal of the film- based programming with viewers. Hence, music-based shows such as *Antakshari, SA RE GA MA PA* and *Philips Top Ten* were Hindi-film based shows [101]. What sets most of the Indian versions of successful foreign shows apart are the fascination with celebrities and an overdose of drama. The contestants in *Big Brother* are mostly non-celebrities, while *Big Boss* cashes in on semi-celebrities. Similarly, *Zor Ka Jhatka* boasts of a list of semi-celebrities such as TV actor Karishma Tanna and Vindu Dara Singh, Reality TV star Dimpy Mahajan, actor Payal Rohtagi and boxer Manoj Kumar. Indian viewers love to watch Indians they know as celebrities. "That's why celebrity-based shows do so well," says Ashvini Yardi, programming head, Colors. However, this celebrity-craze, at times, works against the shows. *Master Chef* Australia has enjoyed worldwide popularity for focusing on food while *Master Chef* India got thumbs down for giving too much importance to star host Akshay Kumar and immense drama [102].

Fascination for makeover shows in America

Lifestyle is a TV genre that exists predominantly on the screens of Northern Europe and Anglophone countries such as the UK, the USA and Australia. Hence, lifestyle formats are

not traded globally but rather trans-nationally within a distinct geo-linguistic region. Nonetheless, lifestyle programming is still produced very differently within this region according to the media systemic conditions of the specific national TV markets and the specific broadcasters and channels in question [103]. Lifestyle programming has been the makeover format that advocates a transformation of home, garden, manner, clothes, and facial/bodily features [104]. The makeover transforms 'ordinary' women who think they are ugly and worthless into attractive and seemingly self-conscious women [105].The Indian Television industry started makeover in the year 2008 with the show titled *Naya Roop Nayi Zindagi* aired on SONY TV. This show was an Indian version of the American show *Extreme Makeover.* It was anchored by Mona Singh, TV actor popularly known as Jassi. Unlike the other TV Reality Shows, this show did not occupy much space in the newspapers albeit one story on CNN IBN news channel. Thereafter no other channel ventured to make a similar show. However, MTV has a couple of shows on makeover of people wanting different looks. In addition to this NDTV Good Times has a show named *Band Baaja Barat* where they would be brides get make over from the different people who have expertise in fashion, hair styling etc.

Veneration for elders

STAR TV, a foreign media company, directs the kind of images to be shown to its Indian audience. Today, it intends to reaffirm the old, traditional values of Indian culture. It attempts to localize itself among the local audience and depict the home-based values unlike during 1990s when it was charged with responsibility for misleading the Indian youth with its foreign serials (*Baywatch* and *Dallas* to name a few). Today, it has become STAR India and attempts to create a place in the hearts of a changing India showcasing everything that is 'traditional' with an act of 'inventing tradition' in India [106].We find contestants on TV Reality Shows touching the feet of the judges to show their respect for elders. Embracing

members of the opposite sex is unacceptable in Indian culture. However, members of the same sex may embrace or hold hands if meeting after a long time or on special occasion [107]. However, on TV especially on Reality Shows we also find contestants and judges of different genders embracing each other. Another example of showing respect to elders is taking them on a pilgrimage to holy places and one TV Reality Show named *Mahayatra* took the initiate where young people took their parents on a pilgrimage to the four different places of worship.

Depiction of weddings

As mentioned earlier Indian TV Reality Shows have depicted multicultural weddings. If we compare Indian TV Reality Shows with Western shows we find that America in spite of being a multicultural nation has shown only Christian wedding. As television programs do present religious themes Allen's assertion suggests the dominance of Christianity in such programming, which presents a view of the United States as being a mostly Christian nation, with the recurrent message that most of the people on TV who do practice or profess a religion are Christians, marginalizing or ignoring other forms of worship. According to Engstrom the typical wedding portrayed in *A Wedding Story,* a Reality TV programme reaffirmed the traditional white wedding, replete with gender-based preparations (e.g., brides getting their hair and makeup done, while grooms played football), artifacts (white wedding gown), rituals (exchanging of rings and repeated vows), and monetary expense (wedding cake and reception) as most commonly depicted in other mass media [108]. However, Indian TV Reality Shows have shown Hindu and Muslim weddings. As far as weddings in India are concerned customs differ from one region to another even in Hindu weddings. In the makeover TV Reality Show *Band Baaja Bride* the brides are given bridal fashion experts to design their clothes and the weddings take place in palaces full of colours.

<u>Lots of details about the contestants</u>

In comparison to the Western audience Indian audience are highly emotional and many TV Reality shows en cash on overplaying the emotions of the contestants and the audience. Indian TV Reality host was quoted in Indian Express saying "Indianised versions of a lot of shows tend to have a more personal and emotional touch as we talk about the contestant's family and background. There is no other aspect that needs to be changed as far as game shows are concerned". Many viewers are also of the opinion that poor background of the contestants should not be highlighted in the beginning as it affects the result. As a result many voters give sympathy votes rather than voting for the talent. Background can be highlighted after the declaration of the result in order to keep the competition fair.

All the above mentioned characteristics of the Indian audience must be taken care of by the global producers trying to tap fast-growing middle class and India's potential growth in the decades to come. Presently Indian entertainment and media industry is worth 29 billion dollars, with a double-digit annual growth rate. According to industry estimates, by 2015 television is expected to account for almost half of the Indian media and entertainment industry revenues [109]. However, the model on which this media system is based is crassly commercial focused on advertisements and ratings. [110]. In other words the interests of the varied Indian audience are not taken into account. Even the Indian producers who are telecasting such shows after adaptation must address the concerns of the Indian audience. They need to address the issues of the Indian audience because unlike the homogenous nature of the western, the Indian society is heterogeneous. In other words as mentioned earlier there is a marked differentiation in terms of religion, language, social class, gender issue etc. [111]. Thus such shows must take into account the interest of the variegated Indian audience.

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CHAPTER 4

CURRENT MEDIA PRACTICES AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As already mentioned, this study aims at analyzing the existing media practices with special focus on the TV Reality Shows in India. Every TV channel that presents a Reality Show has its own practices in auditions, selecting judges, arranging the Sets, deciding the prize money and voting process, etc. These practices play an important role in the success of the shows. In order to achieve the objectives of this study, these practices are studied and discussed in some detail. The survey questions are based on these practices. As a part of the research methodology, a pilot study was conducted to validate the questions and the data was collected before conducting the survey on a large scale. Based on the research methodology some modifications were incorporated in the questionnaire and also in the aspects of media practices that were initially proposed for analysis. In fact, the research methodology itself brought to light some interesting facts about the audience's perception on the Reality TV. Hence the researcher felt the need for presenting the highlights of this research methodology. Keeping this need in mind, this chapter begins with an overview of the media practices in India and then moves on to discuss the research methodology adopted for the study and finally presents the highlights of the pilot study conducted by the researcher.

The term media encompasses both print and broadcast media. It includes newspapers, periodicals, magazines, radio and television stations, and even the Internet [1]. The media industries in 2008 were nothing like the media industries in the mid-1970s. This means that the study of media management is evolving and changing [2]. It has been defined as a very personalized kind of management where one serves individual human beings (audience or readers) things (ones media product) that really matters to them (news, information,

entertainment) and in the process make life more fulfilling [3]. In contrast to other non media products, most media industries function in a dual product market (i.e. media companies rely on dual sources of revenue from consumers and advertisers [4]. The first market is the good that is produced for consumers, which may be purchased or be free for receivers. The second market involves the selling of advertisement to advertisers who seek access to audiences consuming that media product [5].Thus this dual market influences content. However, with the arrival of new media the old business model is being undermined because media consumption is fragmented and spread across media platforms giving rise to new patterns of behavior among the media audience. Hence, the media practitioners have started addressing such issues in a systematic way [6]. In other words media managers must respond to the needs of their customers, recognizing that their audience has many choices for entertainment and information content [7]. Added to it is the technological development which has always affected media and communication [8].Thus managers' task has become all the more intricate in today's scenario because trends that used to take years to develop now take just weeks or months. For example, shift from black and white to coloured TV took ten years and shift from VCR to cable took another ten years [9]. Presently the most recent (and ongoing) technological transformation is the digitization of the content and of the existing television transmission platforms. The advantages of the digital TV (DTV) are high capacity of data transmission, new TV channels and higher quality image and interactive services which potentially would enable new actors participating in the television industry [10]. However, if we look at today's scenario we realize that the digitalization has given abundance of channels to the audience but has reduced the time spent on viewing television [11]. In addition, media industry is in the advanced stage of globalization and transnational media corporations are achieving shares in global market [12]. Whatever has been the technological development or foreign expansion the goal of all forms of electronic media is to create audiences. As a result

media practitioners have employed various media practices to maintain and generate audiences. This process of creating and holding audience has been carried out by the producers of TV Reality Shows through proper planning. In other words, such strategies involve responding to changes in the environment. Thus a strategy is not primarily about planning but about preparing the organization so that it has a chance of a successful future [13]. The old strategies may not work. Hence in today's environment media management has to be much more flexible, nimble and proactive [14]. The primary goal of traditional planning has generally been to identify and deliver the greatest number of advertising message at the lowest financial cost. Now as mentioned earlier as audience have splintered and fragmented marketers and their agencies are interested in learning in what way consumers are actually consuming various media forms [15]. However, as far as television industry is concerned managers as well as advertisers still rely on Target Rating Points given by the media agencies. Nevertheless, media critics have argued that in TV entertainment market rating mindset leads to homogenization of content and lower quality. Thus media planning should be replaced by an entirely different mindset reflecting the way consumers use media [16]. However, managers spent time on several projects simultaneously and only occasionally find time for reflection. In addition, out of the three major roles, namely, decision making, interpersonal and informational roles of managers, the informational role dominated the lives of most managers [17]. As a result, managers have only relied on ratings and box office which are considered powerful instruments in discerning viewer preferences, thereby minimizing risks and ensuring profits for investors [18]. Nevertheless, managers with the new products will have to revise their methods as well as goals and tasks of the organization as a whole. Media industries will have to understand consumer satisfaction which constitutes an important step in developing media products and plan program and consumers strategies. The task ahead before the managers is far from easy as monitoring TV output demands significant

amount of time owing to the dynamic nature of the medium and the sheer volume of the programmes [19]. Finally, in industry- based measures dependent on ratings, affect is a missing ingredient in *satisfaction* factor [20]. Thus this synopsis has tried to unearth the various elements which would bring about greater satisfaction to the audience in consuming TV Reality Shows.

4.1 Overview of Current Media Practices

Let us analyze various media practices which the media firms have adopted during the period of market-driven media economic reforms from 1980s to early 1990s [21]. This study also aims to suggest an audience driven approach to suggest improvement in TV Reality Shows. Let us begin with the study of media market in the US as it is the first country to have telecast the genre of TV Reality Shows with the show *Candid Camera* in the year 1948 and it also happens to be the world's largest TV market and by far the most eminent exporter of audiovisual fare, responsible for more than 75% of international program sale [22]. In addition to this, popular culture is America's biggest export [23]. Changes in the US media market place were brought about with the Telecommunication Act of 1996 which opened markets for competition by removing unnecessary regulatory barriers to entry [24].This paved the way for Media Corporation to obtain multiple holdings in both large and small markets through deregulations [25].The last two decades after the end of end of cold war has been marked by significant development of globalization processes. As a result media industry also witnessed important progression [26]. For example, the use of satellite has promoted a vast growth of sales of TV sets. The changes have affected all the nations of the world including Asian counties. As a result Asia has become the fastest growing commercial media market. Among South Asian countries Singapore aspires to become Asia's media hub and many US originated cable networks have established their Asian regional head

headquarters in Singapore [27]. Hong Kong and Taiwan have liberalized their media within the context of global capitalism while Singapore and the People's Republic of China stand as leading examples of self-conscious state policy aimed at controlled development of national institutions [28]. However, network programmes have been widely accepted in Singapore where English is spoken and where people embrace western pop culture than in Japan or Taiwan. In contrast to the reliance on the western program Taiwanese children are very familiar with Japanese culture and when watching Japanese animation they do not face much difficulty as they often feel when they watch US and western animation. This shows that Japan and Taiwan share similar cultural values to some extent.[29]. Similarly TV in India began with a strong development mandate. In other words India focused its technological and programming innovation almost exclusively to rural educational programme and nation building. The changes in the Indian media landscape were visible when Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister of India. He was forced to make policy changes that relaxed restrictions on multinational media companies which expanded and invested in the Indian market [30]. Subsequently, Indian media landscape changed with liberalization under Rajiv Gandhi. Since the launch of Star TV in 1991 followed by other domestic and international channels, the State run Doordarshan became conscious of losing urban viewership to the ever-increasing international and later local competition [31]. Star TV was the first regional Satellite TV in Asia established by Hong Kong based business tycoon Li-Ka-Shing. Its initial strategy was to target the top five per cent of Asian elite who spoke English and had buying power. However, the purchase of Star TV by the chairman of News Corp Rupert Mudroch was disliked by many countries such as India, Malaysia and Singapore. This move was to transform regional broadcasters into global players [32]. Star TV was conceived as a conduit for pre-packaged US American programmes and global advertising for famous brands. The opposition from the governments of Asian nations and the subsequent lack of audiences caused Star TV to refine

its programming policies and develop a concept of 'cultural sensitivity' [33]. Despite this move, American media culture has been decreasing in East Asia with the development of local media culture production which tends to be more receptive [34]. Although the global players like the Star TV and the BBC have tried to Asianize their services, a major chunk of rural and semi-urban regions in different parts of Asia have poor receptivity for International programs. In India many foreign based channels tried to regionalize their programmes to attract the Indian audience. To order to combat this state owned Doordarshan in India launched a whole series of national and regional programmes in order to draw back the audience lost to Star TV. Thus Asia became a testing ground for multicultural TV programming [35]. The global giants have tried to Asianize the programme focusing mainly on the language. For example, Reality TV programmes in Indian have been telecast in different languages but the content and format of the programme are mostly foreign. However, even if they have tried to regionalize the programme the global media players in India have only tried to play with the emotions of the people. Contestants, their relatives, judges and audience have been found displaying lots of emotions by crying during the eviction. The researcher during the course of the interview has found out that the many young urban viewers do not like participants, their family members, judges, celebrities as guests and audience getting overtly emotional during the eviction. One of the interviewee opined, "Foreign based shows do not have this kind of emotional drama staged in Reality Shows". When asked to compare Indian TV Reality Shows with foreign based shows Canadian Indian immigrant Paul Liboiron stated "display of emotion is considered phony by the foreign based Reality Show audience". Besides emotional drama another feature that stands in contrast to foreign based TV Reality Shows is platform for publicity. In comparison to the western shows, Indian Shows have been optimized by every strata of the society. For example, most of the definitions indicate participation of ordinary people as the main attraction in such

shows. Despite this fact, in India we find such shows becoming a platform for celebrities to promote their films. Most of the commercial films before release get promoted by the actors and the directors on TV Reality Shows. In order to match the product with consumer preferences and purchasing power in a potential market only language and display of emotions have been taken into consideration. Thus in order know the receptivity of the shows, other cultural aspects such as religion, social norms and values, education and aesthetics and lifestyle must also be considered.

Looking into other aspects becomes more important as Asia is the fastest media market as pay TV in the region has gone up to $ 15 billion in the year 2003 [36]. The Asian market has proven to offer tremendous challenge to global corporations [37]. As a result global TV broadcasters have tried to adjust their programming strategies in some form of local programming to suit each market's tastes which is termed as glocalization or localization. However, critics believe that increasing commercialization has led to the propaganda of Western values. Hence global players whose main motive is to make profits are introspecting two media practices. On the one hand MTV executives managers believe that local products will lead to higher revenues considering the loss of sales that may result from not adapting to local tastes and on the other hand other network executives are of the opinion that producing a program that can be shared with all the regions of the world would be more cost efficient than producing a program at a local level. In fact many programmes currently offered by the US originated cable networks in Asia are neither completely standardized nor completely adapted but a hybrid of both types. This hybridization is considered necessary for them to attract local viewers while maintaining their global brand image and attaining cost savings [38]. Irrespective of the media practices being adopted by the media, the power of the audience cannot be ignored. Media research has also emphasized the importance of the audience. Some of the existing media theories can be applied to the media research. This

synopsis has explored the existing media practices involving audience and has suggested audience driven approach to make such shows more interesting.

Let us examine the existing media practices being adopted to popularize TV Reality Shows in India:

4.1.1 Participation of ordinary people

4.1.2 Voting System

4.1.3 Adapting foreign based shows to suit the Indian audience

4.1.4 Intersection of television, internet and mobile industries

4.1.1 Participation of ordinary people

T V Reality Shows have thrived on the concept of the participation of ordinary people and with every season the aspiring participants for the popular shows have only increased. The growing popularity of the popular shows like *KBC* can be gauged by the fact that a large number of audience wanted to see themselves as contestants on TV Reality Shows. For example, Anil Kumar Sinha and Sushil Kumar winner of 1 crore and 5 crore respectively on *KBC* season 5 had tried to come on the show since 2000 [39]. However, the duo could come on the show only in 2011. Participation of ordinary people in such shows has increased for almost all the categories of TV Reality Shows.

4.1.2 Voting System

Most of the talent based shows like singing and dancing rely on audience voting. In the singing based Reality Show only the votes of the judges count in the preliminary round and thereafter only the votes of the audience count in the subsequent round when the field gets narrowed to the top 24 contestants. Since there is a difference between the perceptions of the

judges and the viewers this practice sometimes leads to controversy. In addition, regionalism also works in India where people vote for the contestants who belong to their city or state.

4.1.3. Adapting foreign based shows to the Indian audience

There are two methods by which a program produced in one country is telecasted in another country. Under the first method the imported program is played in another country by dubbing or subtitling whereas the second method allows the program to be adapted in such a way that it seems local or indigenous in origin [40]. As a result, such shows have become a global phenomenon and have been sold overseas and catching up with the trend. The private networks in India have adopted the second method mentioned above. As mentioned in the first chapter most of TV Reality Shows telecasted in India have been adapted from foreign shows. However audiences for TV Reality Shows find some disconcerting elements in such shows.

4.1.4 Intersection of Television, Internet and Mobile Industries

Over the last three decades, two overlapping and intersecting industries, telecommunications and the media, have been dramatically transformed by deregulations, technological change, and a wave of mergers and acquisitions [41]. As far as intersecting industries are concerned we find that after the TV Reality shows are telecasted on television, the viewers participate in the outcome of the show by voting for their favorite contestants on the mobile phones and they can also see the telecast of the show on the internet. Thus we find intersection or convergence of television, mobile and the internet. However convergence definitions vary, but in most incantations it is the blending of old media, (e.g., traditional media such as magazines, newspapers, television, cable, and radio) with new media (computers and the Internet) to deliver content [42]. Besides intersection of industries the 1990s saw waves of mergers and acquisition, one of the largest in the industrial history, which declined with the

new millennium but became resurgent again in the mid-years of the new decade [43]. Mergers and acquisition have taken place in two ways:

Horizontal mergers, which group together firms that produce identical or similar products, gives the new firm the possibility of charging more than the marginal cost.

Vertical mergers may also be interpreted as a means to exclude rival firms from the market by reducing their supply of raw materials or their outlets [44]. Along with mergers, a large number of TV channels have also proliferated in the market and the degree of audience fragmentation is expected to increase [45]. More channels means marketers can no longer control media environment they must learn to participate in the consumer world [46].

In the light of the above facts let us consider the various media practices adopted by the media industries to hook the audience with regard to Indian TV Reality Shows. As depicted in the Fig 4.1, the first step in this regard is buying formats from the country of origin. The second step is encouraging participation of ordinary people in such shows While the third step is introducing interactive practices within the culture of television (e.g.: encouraging audience through different media tools like email, SMS, phone call to vote for their favourite contestants.)
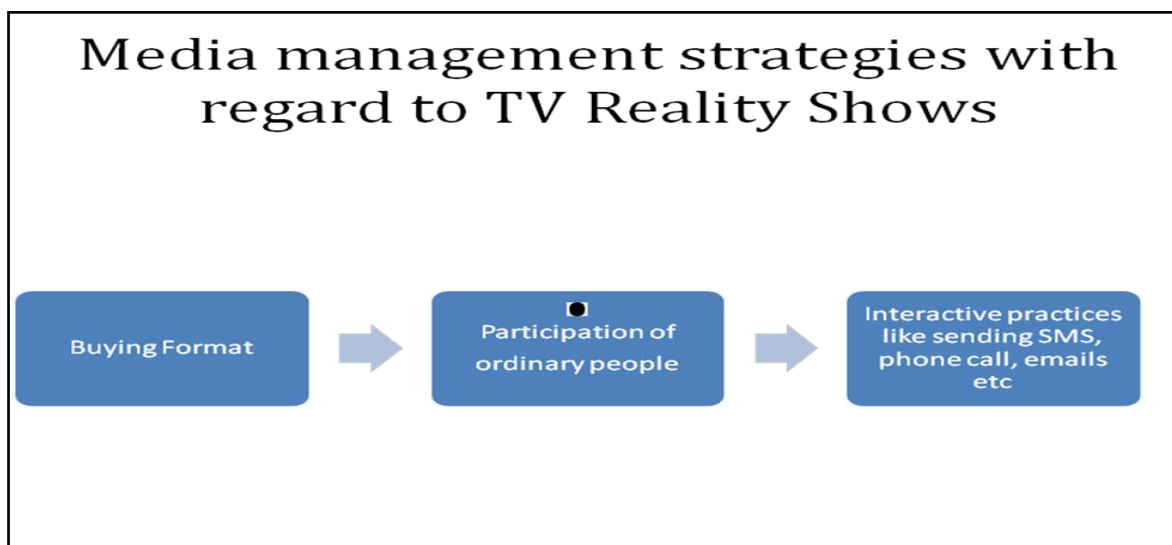
Fig. 4.1 Existing Media practices with regard to TV Reality Shows

Magder (2004) identified three unique business strategies of Reality TV: the increased use of product placement, the expansion of the tie-ins and finally the extension of the programmes outside the confines of TV set itself through the use of new interactive technology [47].

The Indian Television Industry has adopted all the above mentioned strategies except the mergers. As mentioned earlier with the introduction of the genre of TV Reality Shows there is a diffusion of internet and telecommunication industries as during the telecast of TV Reality Shows viewers vote online as well through mobile. Nevertheless it needs to be noted that a majority of the rural population do not have access to the Internet and a large segment of the population is too poor to afford mobile phones. In order to ensure success in terms of making profits production of TV Reality Shows follows a basic rule: capitalism to reduce the production costs while expanding the consumer market [48]. However, in India only the State owned Doordarshan has 92% coverage of the country [49]. Doordarshan does not produce popular TV Reality Shows. In contrast to this most of the private channels produce TV Reality Shows for urban and semi-urban audience. No other genre can be produced as cheaply as reality [50]. As such shows that do not employ writers or actors and work with smaller crews can drastically cut their costs. [51]. According to Ribitizy (2010) , half an hour of TV Reality show costs 80% less than an hour of scripted television [52]. Format buyers from around the world believe in the transnational potential of proven success [53]. In the words of Albert Moran,"TV formats are more than program prototypes. They are complex, comprehensive bodies of industrial and cultural knowledge that have developed in a particular context. When they are transferred to another television setting they add up to a valuable resource to be exploited on the part of the importing culture and industry". According to Bodycombe "The product is a recipe for reproducing a successful television program in another territory, as a local program". Moran has also defined format, as selling and purchasing licenses for TV formats between an exporting licensor and an importing

licensee. The licensee is thus granted the opportunity to adapt the format to the needs of the domestic TV market. However, the format owners have an upper hand in the negotiation deal. This is exemplified by the fact that each new adaptation bears a close resemblance to the original [54]. Thus if we take the example of Indian television industry, UK based production company Celador put a great deal of training local production personnel in the style and format it wanted in *Kaun Banega Crorepati, (KBC)* the Indian version of the format *Who wants to be a millionaire* [55].

KBC has always maintained high Target Rating Point (TRPs). TRPs give the producers a chance to measure the success of their programmes. TRP is a tool provided to judge which programmes are viewed the most. This gives us an index of the choice of the people and also the popularity of a particular channel. For calculation purpose, a device is attached to the TV set in a few thousand viewers' houses for judging purpose. These numbers are treated as sample from the overall TV owners in different geographical and demographic sectors. The device is called as *people's meter*. It records the time and the programme that a viewer watches on a particular day. Then, the average is taken for a 30-day period which gives the viewership status for a particular channel [56]. Since the early 1990s, most television markets have been measured electronically using *people meter* [57].

Thus Television ratings provide information about the viewers' TV watching habits and the socio-economic background of the audience. Currently, INTAM (Indian Television Audience Measurement), also called TAM, is the accepted electronic rating agency in India. AMAP (Audience Map, or Audience Measurement and Analytics) is another agency involved with measuring TRPs [58]. However, the method employed by the measuring agency is often questioned by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry and criticized in debates on TV channels. For example, criticisms were raised on the very small sample size with no

representation of rural India and some states like North East, Jammu and Bihar etc. Prasar Bharti has stated, "62 million of 112 million TV homes were outside the ambit of television audience measurement ratings as they were in rural areas". [59]. Nevertheless, it is considered as the most viable option to measure the success of the programme as three entities benefit by them: TV channels, which explore their ranking with the data; media planning agencies, which use them to market the popularity of TV channels and influence advertisers' choice for putting their money on channels; clients, i.e. advertisers, who use the ratings to choose their publicity vehicle. However, time and again, Information and Broadcasting Ministry has questioned the irregularities in determining TRPs and the present Information and Broadcasting Minister Manish Tewari was suggested by the broadcasting foundation, an umbrella body of broadcasters to come out with a broader viewership data by March 2014. However, the ministry has also asked the telecom regulatory authority of India (TRAI) to recommend comprehensive guidelines for TRP rating agencies [60].

However, TAM (Television Audience Measurement) records audience activity through their 'people monitor' in just 4,500 homes. Mehta observes, 'The sample size is too miniscule for a country as diverse as India'. Despite being the largest measurement system in the world, it is still fairly inadequate as a barometer for a heterogeneous country with over a billion people, six major religions, 18 official languages – with an additional 96 documented ones – and hundreds of dialects. Secondly, the TAM sample measures only the urban areas. 'India's entire rural population, consisting of an estimated 145 million households, is totally ignored'. Moreover, even in these urban areas, only towns with a population of more than 100,000 are taken into account. Finally, while the cable-viewing homes are spread across all 25 Indian states and seven union territories, until 2007 TAM excluded 10 Indian states from its survey [61]. In spite of faulty mechanism to measure TRP the growing popularity of *Kaun Benega Crorepati* Season four is evident from the fact that Twenty –seven million viewers tuned in to

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the last episode watching Motihari's Sushil Kumar winning five crore in November 2011 [62].Despite this fact, some shows which have fairly good TRPs have not touched the Indian audience. For example, the most controversial show *Big Boss* is not liked by many Indian audiences because the show has not been fully adapted to the cultural sensibilities of the Indian audience. Thus producers of the show must rethink of the strategies in terms of format adaptation for the shows. As mentioned earlier the producers only rely on TRPs which is a poor indicator of measuring the interest of the audience, more so with the fact that a very small sample size is taken with no representation of rural India where 75% of the population resides. The second step towards popularizing the show is the participation of ordinary people as contestants. By July 2000 more than 200,000 people across India were calling each day for a chance to participate in the show *KBC* [63]. As far as audition of the show is concerned people who were interviewed indicated that it should be held in smaller towns as many people are too poor to travel to the place of audition. Arranging for audition in small towns can bring about greater participation of ordinary people which is one of the important strategies adopted by the producers of TV Reality Show to popularize TV Reality Shows. In addition to this many viewers doubt the interactive practices like accepting votes from the people by SMS, online voting etc. Moreover many poor people in our country have neither access to the internet nor own mobile phones to participate in the voting system. Thus the producers of the show must devise more credible strategies like voting on the show itself etc to make shows more authentic for the audience and remove the chances of ignoring the votes of the majority of the people who are from economically marginalized section of the society. By doing this the new trend in commercial TV practice embodied in the Reality Show can justify adherence to the dynamics of contemporary business strategies that call for increased empowerment of consumers through the co-creation of value. In addition to this TV companies which will follow this trend will abandon the rigid one-sided control of their

production processes in favor of shared responsibilities with the consumers for programming success [64]. All the above mentioned strategies will bring profits for media organization as the executives view themselves as business owners who focus on profits, regardless of content [65]. Adding to this is the fact that in terms of the average return on invested capital media industry together with pharmaceuticals, household and personal products and computer software and services represent the most profitable global industry [66].

Another issue related to profits is digitalization which means more consumer choices. The media and entertainment companies can no longer financially prosper by simply charging for content because media markets with market competition and rating mindset have turned to homogenization of content to lower quality rather than diversity and better quality [67]. Thus any research that can uncover real consumer /user preferences or get ahead of trends that are not already known will put companies in the driver's seat [68] more so with the fact that it is the consumer and not the marketer that determines which media forms will be accessed and used. As a result media planning has become less about picking among media alternatives and more about establishing patterns of interaction with the consumers [69]. Media companies have to adapt or change their core product portfolio and reorganize the way they operate their business in order to achieve their commercial success [70]. One of the main consequences of commercialization is that the media address the audience as consumers and not as citizens and that they tend to produce more advertising-friendly and less critical content [71]. As a result of commercialization of broadcasting focus has shifted programme making to producing material that 'gives their audience what they want' without understanding the real interest of the audience. Notions of educating people are increasingly marginalized as 'ratings 'drive the commissioning process [72]. All the above mentioned practices are to be kept in mind while designing strategies for bringing about greater audience participation in TV Reality Shows in India. In addition, more studies in the current English

language literature on media economics and business, economic studies of Asian media, and the like must be undertaken. To conclude the economic workings of Asian media markets are far less studied and by comparison are more poorly understood than are their US and European counterparts. This is a deficiency that should be remedied [73]. The existing practices and strategies can be improvised by proper study of Indian television industry post liberalization and with proper interaction with the audience.

Besides considering the audience perspective in TV Reality Shows this thesis has tried to analyze the transition from audience centered approach to audience driven approach. Audience research has moved through different paradigms [74]. The way communicators (i.e., media, businesses, museums, and so on) conceptualize their audiences evolved significantly during the second half of the twentieth century and the beginning of twenty first century. Initially, the communication process was viewed as a one-way transmission of a set message from a producer to a passive audience. Nowadays, this view has changed and the communication process is thought to encompass the transmission of multiple signs, which can be reconstructed as meaningful messages only by an active and diverse audience. Among the prominent theoretical propositions, the *Uses and Gratification* approach has been most frequently applied to the study of media choice. According to this theory audience choose to consume the kinds of media or the types of content that best satisfy their social and psychological needs. However, most gratification studies focused on the use of particular type of medium for certain unique gratification. For example, newspapers were found for instrumental purpose such as seeking information while TV was for mainly for escapism and entertainment [75]. However, TV in India as mentioned earlier started with development mandate. In other words, viewers' interest was not considered even during the Doordarshan days as the body was fully controlled by the Government. The vision of Doordarshan got blurred with increasing competition from other private channels which captured the urban

middle class. However, even now we find the existence of the same scenario as the private players find it hard to ignore TRPs and as a result viewers' interest is still not taken care of.

4.2 Research Methodology

After carefully examining the relevant literature and understanding the issues pertaining to the TV Reality shows across the globe and more specifically to Indian context, the study focused on understanding the various types and characteristics of audience. It was decided to conduct a questionnaire-survey to study the viewers' perception of the Indian Reality TV.

In order to authenticate the questions and to know the interest of the audience a survey was conducted taking into account the most popular shows and the least popular shows. Then an attempt was made to identify the interesting and uninteresting elements of the shows. Subsequently, the features that tend to distract the audience from watching the shows were recognized. People who were the audience for many TV Reality Shows were the respondents for the

In fact, the research methodology paved way for useful suggestions to make such shows more attractive from audiences' perspective. The chart given below gives a comprehensive view of the topics covered by the questions used in the survey:
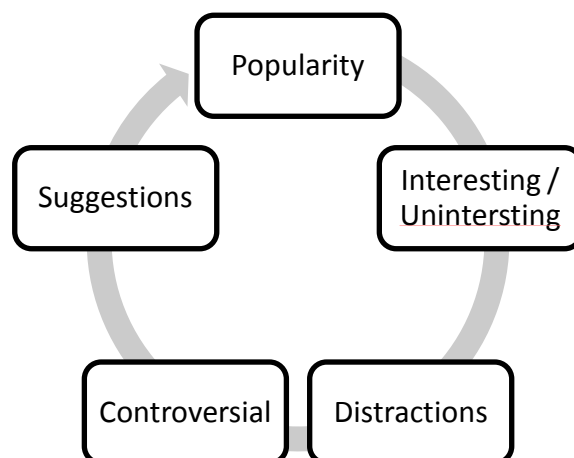
Topics covered in the questionnaire:

Before starting the researchers tried to know the strengths and weaknesses of TV Reality Shows from the viewers' perspective by personally interviewing people who watch TV Reality Shows and based on the outcome of the discussion a questionnaire was prepared. Home makers, professionals and students who were interviewed belonged to the age group 18-50. It is generally assumed that homemakers multi task while watching television and prefer soap operas to TV Reality Shows while the professionals had a lot of criticism for these shows and finally it is proven that young people watch a lot of TV Reality Shows. During the course of interview similar trend was seen as far as viewership of the audience for TV Reality Shows is concerned. Goa was chosen or this pilot study as it is a tourist place has a cosmopolitan culture and most of the people in the State watch Hindi TV Reality Shows. Moreover, when the questionnaire was floated there were no TV Reality Shows in Konkani, the native language of the state. However, in the neighbouring State Maharashtra TV Reality Shows are made in the regional language like Marathi. The study was conducted on Indian Hindi TV Reality Shows considering all the above mentioned factors in mind. The questionnaire was sent across to 900 people (males and females) out of which about 162 people responded. 74 percent male and 25 percent female responded to the questionnaire. 78 percent of the people were between the age group of 18-24 and a majority of them i.e. 45 percent were graduates.

Majority of the people, (about 80 percent) had income less than one lakh; about 56 percent watch television at night followed by 29 percent who watch in the evening. The survey included six programmes on TV Reality Shows: Talent based shows like *Indian Idol, Dance India Dance*; adventure based show *MTV Roadies*; comedy show like *The Great Indian Laughter challenge*; Knowledge-based Show *Kaun Banega Crorepat*i *(KBC);* house arrest

show *Big Boss;* dating based show *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar.* One more talent show *Just dance* was also included later as this was the latest show running in the country when the questionnaire was floated with Hrithik Roshan, movie star as one of the judges. Shows like *Indian Idol* and *Dance India Dance* were chosen as these were the two most popular talent - based Reality Shows with celebrity as judges. *MTV Roadies* was selected because of its popularity among youth while *Great Indian Laughter Challenge* was selected to have the viewer's opinion on comedy genre. *Kaun Banega Crorepati* was chosen as this show has grabbed the attention of the audience because of mega star Amitabh Bachchan who makes different elements of the show more relatable for Indian viewers. *Big Boss* was chosen as this show has been dubbed as the most controversial show for including varied people as contestants from TV personalities, sportsperson, former dacoit, swami, porn star etc. and their ensuing conflicts. Lastly *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* was chosen as this show has courted many controversies in terms of its very theme. Firstly the viewers *disliked* the idea of people getting married through TV Reality Show. In the very first season Rakhi, the bride refused to marry Elesh Parunjanwal, one the finalists thus defeating the very purpose of the show. Most of the above mentioned shows have claimed to have high TRPs and some of the shows made newspaper headlines for the controversies. Presented below are the major observations and findings of the pilot study carried out through the questionnaire (details of the pilot study are presented in Appendix B).

4.3 Major findings of the Pilot study

- *KBC, The Great Indian Laughter Challenge and MTV Roadies* were the top three *most liked* shows

- *Rakhi Ka swayamwar, Big Boss and MTV Roadies* were the top three *most disliked* shows

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- *MTV Roadies* invited *strong dislike* more than *strong like*

- Viewers were interested to see *celebrities as participants* in the Reality Shows

- *Contestants* are very important aspect of TV Reality Shows

- *Voting system* is the most uninteresting feature of TV Reality Shows among the viewers

- The feature of the show '*people who do not have expertise in singing, dancing etc. judge the participants through voting system*' was not liked by viewers

- *Participants getting intimate on the shows* was also found to be uninteresting among the viewers

- *Unreal drama, long duration, humiliation by the judges, vulgarism, abusive language, unhealthy competition and inclusion of news about TV Real Shows* were considered to be the distracting features of TV Reality Shows.

- *Regionalism and exaggeration* were considered to be the two most important controversial issues as far as TV Reality Shows are concerned.

- Participants with disabilities receive sympathy votes

- The boldness displayed or the exhibitionistic nature of the participants was not liked by many viewers.

- *Sending children to participate in TV Reality Shows* was not liked by most viewers as they felt that such participation hampered their studies. However, the fact that *children gain knowledge through such participation* was agreed upon by many viewers.

Thus we find more number of people expressing strong dislike rather than strong like towards *MTV Roadies*. As a result, it shatters the myth that *MTV Roadies* by inviting young people as contestants can become popular among the youth as 78 percent of the people were between

the age group of people 18-24. As far as *Big Boss* is concerned, even the voyeur peeking into the lives of contestants could not remain the main attraction for the show like *Big boss.* This show also had more strong dislikes than likes. Lastly the dating based Show *Rakhi Ka Swayamw*ar is the least liked show. MTV Roadies is the first Indian TV Reality Show to have completed maximum10 seasons. This show remains in controversy for usage of foul language and existence of objectionable tasks which the contestants are made to perform. In the year 2011 Popular MTV VJ, Raghu Ram was attacked (face blackened with black ink) by Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) activists for promoting 'obscene on screen behavior. He was in the city along with Roadies co-anchor Ranvijay Singh. However, ABVP spokesperson, Shailendra Dalvi justified their action by stating "We sharply protest the foul language used by Raghu on his show MTV Roadies. He is a bad influence on the youth. He is trying to attract the young people, but the youth of this country will only face degradation if they follow people like him. Small children too cannot be stopped from watching objectionable shows," Mr. Dalvi said. "Cuss words interject his every sentence. He makes the youth do senseless 'stunts' like kissing strangers. What will happen to the culture of India if this continues?" he said. [76]. As far as usage of foul language is concerned many ardent Roadies watchers do not like it but express their helplessness to curb it. When asked about the existence unreal drama in TV Reality Shows, 84 per cent of the total viewers found it to be the most distracting feature of the show. Different Shows have different phases wherein unreal drama is portrayed. For example many respondents are of the opinion that fights episodes in adventure based show like *Big Boss* are scripted and contestants performing despite illness are scripted. As far as totally unreal shows are concerned dating based show like *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* has been found to be least disliked because the viewers were led to a belief of real traditional Indian Swayamwar but it turned out be any other Indian make-believe commercial movie resulting in failures of other shows of similar nature such as *Ratan*

Ka Rishta. This show and the host were criticized by the media for misleading the viewers. The newspaper story published in India Today has termed the item girl Rakhi as a hoax selector of a groom whom she never married [77]. However, *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* fetched stupendous TRP for the channel NDTV because the producers of the show used Rakhi, the protagonist, a classic example of bête noire of the Indian middle class that stars can be born out of nothing [78].

4.4 Suggestions based on Pilot study

Based on the reactions of the people towards TV Reality Shows, the respondents were asked to give their suggestions towards improving TV Reality Shows. The life span of the shows, certain sensitive topics handled in the shows, inviting professionals as judges, disclosing the geographic regions of participants, participation of children, voting rights, etc., were the issues on which questions were asked.

The first suggestion that emerged was that the life span of TV Reality Shows should be for 1-2 months. As per the survey result respondents have found unreal drama as the most distracting feature of TV Reality Shows. However producers and editors generally try to have real moments in the show as waiting for the mask to drop is a popular viewing practice when watching shows like *Big Brother* [79]. The most traditional term for reality television is factual entertainment [80]. In other words, *factual entertainment is a hybrid genre that combines 'hard' values of information and realism characteristics of news and documentary 'with softer' more entertaining topics* [81]. Thus the producers who have claimed to sell real entertainment in the name of Reality Television must not overplay events desiring to produce entertainment. This act of producers creates suspicion in the minds of the audience as 87 per cent of the total respondents agreed with the statement that the situation is exaggerated. In addition, The Times of India in its survey identified that 83.5 per cent of the people felt that shows are scripted. Moreover, 79 per cent stated they should be more genuine

[82]. Thus audiences are aware that the settings and situations can be contrived to know that the people and stories feature on the shows are carefully selected and suspected that many of the events presented on the show are staged or manipulated by producers [83]. Nevertheless, the producers must make an attempt to gain the lost credibility of the show.

Another section of the survey which focused on Reality shows for children has raised more questions than those answered earlier. The interview with the parents reflected their concerns regarding the participation of children in such shows. As mentioned above, many respondents in the questionnaire raised concern over participation of the children in such shows. However, many respondents like to watch small children sing, dance etc. Many parents during the interview stated that children could be tested for other skills such as trekking, knowledge etc. The suggestion that has come forth after the survey analysis regarding participation of children with least disturbance to their studies is that the audition for such shows should take place during vacation with83 % of the people agreeing with the statement.

Thus analysis of the survey indicates that apart from liking participation of the ordinary people in such shows, the respondents have reservations with almost all the practices adopted by the producers and editors for the popularity of TV Reality Shows. As a result, the television industry which has claimed to have made the consumer as *prosumer* who produce by consuming have to rethink about the methods calling forth the attention of the viewers in such programs [84]. The practice of voting right has been disliked by the respondents. Thus the producers can bring novelty in the system by devising new methods like taking the average of the judge's decision and choosing common man but trained persons as judges for the show. Inclusion of common man as judges will rekindle their interest in the show as it would give them a chance to identify with common person as the judge. The next step would be to give viewers more moments of authenticity as this has been the main attraction of TV Reality Shows. Indian viewers take the issues of marriages seriously and the hollowness of

the contestants in not taking the issue of dating forward to the next level of marriage is disliked by many viewers.

To sum up there is nothing real about reality shows because real viewers do not want to make money by coming in shows *like Kaun Banega Crorepati, Dance India Dance, Indian Idol,* etc. which offer huge prize amount to the winners. Neither do they want to seek publicity by participating in dating based show like *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* where male contestants compete not for prize money but to get publicity as is evident by the fact that Elesh Parujanwala, an NRI did not marry Rakhi Sawant. Secondly, we find that participants act before the camera some even try to imitate the contestants of the last season. For example Dolly Bindra *Big Boss* contestant season 4 set the yardstick for contestants of season 5 [85]. Dolly Bindra was so loud and crass that it led to her comparisons being made to late Jade Goody Jade Goody's treatment of Shilpa Shetty in *Big Brother* house which led to worldwide debate about racism [86].Thirdly, the reaction of the studio audience is far from being real as the audience that carries placards, hoots, claps and cries for their favorite contestants in TV Reality Shows is paid and gets a free meal [87]. In spite of all this the viewers watch these shows. For example *Big Boss* managed TRPs of 2.5 which were the highest for any show in the late-night show [88]. In addition to this such shows also encourage young viewers betting money on the contestants. One college student earned Rs 30,000 after winning the bet on the grand finale of *Big Boss 5* [89]. When everyone seems to be interested in making money or becoming famous through such shows the need to improvise the show does not appear to exist. This need is felt for the viewers who watch the shows not always but occasionally but at the same time are not involved in money making practices associated with such shows. The need to improve the show also arises for the viewers who watch the shows for entertainment, escapism, voyeurism and for learning without desiring to come as contestants to win prize money or to achieve fame. The results of research methodology

indicate that 65 per cent of the viewers do not even aspire to come as contestants on the shows. Thus it is essential to improve the show for genuine viewers who like the genre of TV Reality Shows but are unhappy with many existing features of the show discussed above. The research methodology was to a large extent was helpful in revising the questions and also in reconsidering the parameters that were to be included in the final survey. In addition, research methodology also enabled the researcher to understand the perceptions of viewers on the media practices being adopted in various popular TV Reality shows. After moderating the questions and understanding the perceptions of a small section of viewers through the research methodology a critical survey was conducted among viewers of TV Reality shows in order to accomplish the objectives of the research. The details and results of this critical survey have been discussed in the chapter that follows.

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CHAPTER - 5

INDIAN TV REALITY SHOWS: CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE

MEDIA PRACTICES

It's not an exaggeration to say that Reality TV has amused, surprised and mortified millions of viewers over the past several years and the changing content of these shows reflect the changing times and changing audiences. Even the details that the viewers wish to know about the participants and the particulars that the participants are allowed to reveal to their audiences have changed over the years. For instance, in one of the popular Reality shows, namely *KBC*, the information disclosed in the videos used to introduce the participants has altered over the last few years. In some Reality shows, participants share even the most personal information with the viewers. We may say that competitiveness and materialism have become the watchwords of Reality TV. Of course, it is unquestionably the audience who drive the Reality shows because the participants are aware of the fact that it is their viewers who could make them celebrities. However, there are many reasons as to why the TV reality shows are driven by their viewers. This study, as already discussed, aims at identifying the views of the audiences pertaining to the various aspects of TV Reality shows in order to gauge the role of viewers in making a show popular or otherwise.

Based on the outcome of the pilot study the questionnaire was finalized after redefining the parameters and the survey which was proposed for a larger audience was conducted. The study focused attention only on the Hindi speaking belt of our country and the questionnaire was sent

to 1200 people out of which 503 responded. People who responded to the questionnaire were between the groups of 18-60 but the majority i.e. 57 percent was between the age group of 18-24 and 42 percent were females. The academic qualification ranged from high school to doctorates with 33 percent being graduates. Majority of the respondents liked watching Reality TV at least for one hour every day.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to know the interest of the audience towards such shows. Under qualitative method, 60 families were interviewed. The size of the family ranged from four to six people including children, teenagers, adults, and senior citizens. Majority of family members showed concerned over the display of intimacy among participants, abuses, intense competition, etc. On the one hand, families like the idea of participation of common people in such shows while on the other hand many family members feel that such shows in still wrong values among young people. Families also showed concern over the participation of children in such shows. As majority of the respondents were between 18-24 years one focus group interview was also conducted among the engineering graduates to know their response towards such shows. Ten students majority of them were in the age group of 18-21 years participated in the focus group interview which lasted for 45 minutes.

5.1 Survey Sample

The researcher chose Hindi speaking belt of our country for getting responses for the questionnaire in India as Hindi is our National language and most of the popular TV Reality Shows are first produced in Hindi and thereafter after the success of Hindi shows such shows are made in other Indian languages. In other words based on the popularity of Hindi TV Reality Shows such shows are also made in other regional languages such as Marathi, Bengali, and

Tamil, etc. In addition, most of the popular Hindi TV Reality Shows have seen participation of the people from different parts of India and TV Reality Shows produced in regional languages have participation of people conversant in that language. The two cities that were chosen for the study were Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh and Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh. The former comes under National Capital Region (NCR) with a population of 1,636,068 as per 2011 census [1]. The region has rising working population and students [2]. The other city was Jabalpur which has a population of 1,054,336 according to 2011 census [3]. Both the cities have Hindi as the main language. This research work has tried to analyze the popularity of TV Reality Shows among people of different age groups, gender, family types, and occupation and hence cluster sampling was used. In this method selection of the samples is made in groups or categories. Two Hindi speaking States such as Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh were chosen and among these States, two cities mentioned above were chosen.

Target Group

After the analysis of the pilot study and the existing literature the need was felt to study receptivity of the show among people of various age groups both males and females, education qualification, family types etc. The questionnaire was answered by students, homemakers, working professionals and retired people. The different brackets for education qualification, age and family types are mentioned below.

Education

As the questionnaire was administered to the people below 18 and above 55, the level of education was classified into the following categories:

High School; Higher Secondary; Graduate; Post Graduate and Doctorate

<u>Age</u>

Most of the literature review indicated that such shows are popular among young people. In order to test this and to confirm whether middle age and old people also like such shows different age brackets were used.

Under 18; 18-24; 25-34; 34-44; 45-54; Above 55

<u>Gender</u>

Both males and females participated in the survey. The available literature indicates popularity of soap operas among female and to test this gender was also taken as one of the variables.

<u>Family Type</u>

As most of TV Reality Shows in India are adapted from western shows where there is a predominance of nuclear families whereas in India there is existence of joint family system. Thus for this study it was felt necessary to know the acceptance of such shows in joint families. The word single indicated people who are students, working professionals and divorced. This was classified into following three heads.

Single; Nuclear and Joint.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of information about favourite TV programs. It focused on interesting and uninteresting features and distractions pertaining to TV Reality shows. The second section consisted of opinion about TV Reality Shows for children while the

third section includeed suggestions for improvement. Finally the last section sought personal information. All the questions were coded and mean was calculated.

5.2 Research Questions

TV Reality Shows have registered a phenomenal growth. Such shows have led to greater audience participation not only in the form of contestants but also in the form of viewers. All this is supported by the fact that producers of popular TV Reality Shows have received greater TRPs from one season to another for popular shows. Moreover, the producer of one popular show is compared with the producer of another popular show in terms of TRPs through newspaper articles, magazines, etc. For instance, the newspaper story published in India Today displays the competitiveness among the producers of various shows to beat their own record and to defeat the other competitive shows in terms of TRPs. The following news story from India Today illustrates this view:

Amitabh Bachchan has once again emerged as the winner in Bollywood's small screen race. Season 6 of *Kaun Banega Crorepati (KBC),* which kicked off on Friday, saw a bumper rating of 6.1 TVR (Television Viewer Ratings) in its opening episode.

The rating of *KBC* 6 is way higher than that of Aamir Khan's *Satyamev Jayate*, which opened with 3 TVR in June. The audience response to the first week of the show has been positive. Television Audience Measurement (TAM) data shows that *KBC 6* was watched by over 29 million viewers across the country in its opening week.

The Target Rating Point (TRP) for the opening episode of *KBC* 5 last year was 5.2 TVR and the show had managed to touch 8 TVR in the episode that saw Sushil Kumar win the jackpot prize

of Rs 5 crore. According to TAM data, the opening TRP of 6.1 makes *KBC* the biggest launch for an Indian television show this year [4].

5.3 Analysis

The most commonly used scale in mass media research is Likert scale. In this method a number of statements are developed with respect to the topic. Respondents can *strongly agree, agree, be neutral, disagree or strongly disagree* with the statements. Each option to the question is coded as 5,4,3,2,1 respectively. Each response option is weighed and each subject's responses are added to produce a single score [5]. The higher the mean average, the more the respondents agree with the statements [6]. The options to measure unappealing and controversial issues were coded differently. The reason being this study tried to measure the negative response towards such shows. Hence *like a lot, like somewhat, don't like or dislike, dislike somewhat and dislike a lot* were coded as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 respectively.

The starting point in questionnaire analysis after knowing the top three best shows was to know popularity of the show among different learned people, age, gender and family type.

The question that needs to be addressed is whether such shows have only become a rat race for TRPs with utter disregard for viewers' interest. In other words, whether viewers really like TV Reality Shows and whether the producers have truly incorporated the Indian elements in such shows as most of these shows are adapted from foreign based shows. To narrow down further we need to identify the likeable and unlikeable elements in such shows considering the cultural sensibilities of the Indian audience. The next thing that needs to be addressed is that most of the existing media theories focus on the audience centred approach. However, the audiences today are not only media- driven. In fact, they are rather media- drivers. Recent studies indicate that

over half of the Internet using teens is "content creators" who create websites or blogs [7]. But it is argued that there is a big difference between computer and TV set as the former can be used to create content programs whereas the latter only receives what broadcaster choose to air [8]. Despite this the fact remains that producers of the TV Reality Shows uphold the fact that through such audience have become empowered as it has given them the voting rights for the contestants. Researchers can study audience from different perspectives and follow different research traditions. Jensen and Rosengren (1990) argued that there were five traditions in search of audience: effects research, uses and gratifications (U&G) research, literacy criticism, cultural studies, and reception analysis. McQuail combined the five into two (behavioral and cultural) approaches and added one (structural approach, which is widely used by media industries, such as Neilson's rating research and Arbitron [9]. The largest cluster is labeled active audience models and spans a period of 1944 to 1985 [10]. However, in today's scenario media audiences are changing. The dynamics of how audiences consume (and, now, even produce) media are changing, thereby giving audiences increased control and increased choice over when, where, and how they consume media. At the same time, new technologies for monitoring audience behavior are revealing aspects of how and why audiences consume media that were previously unknown. These technological changes are compelling media organizations to think differently about their audiences, undermining traditional conceptual and analytical approaches while opening up new approaches to conceptualizing audiences [11]. Nevertheless, in keeping with the media research tradition the researcher has also applied some media theories to the genre of TV Reality Shows and has proposed a new model, audience driven model for the fragmented and autonomous television audience. The reason being one medium finds its extension in another. For example television today is also watched on the Internet by many young people. In addition

to this media services are converging [12]. There is integration of SMS, emails, phone calls into the genre of TV Reality Shows. Hence convergence requires more theorization and there is a need for audience driven model in TV Reality Shows. WSDM or Web Site Design Model which is used for designing websites [13] can be applied to TV Reality Shows as for WSDM the starting point is considering the viewers' interest. Similarly as mentioned earlier there is a dire need to shift from audience centric model to audience driven model as the audience today who are also media- drivers would like to see their suggestions incorporated in TV Reality Shows.

WSDM gives consideration to the fact that the target audiences of a web site may be composed of different "kinds" of visitors/users. Different kind of visitors may have different requirements. Therefore the target audiences are classified into *audience classes*. Each audience class will be targeted in an appropriate way by the site. In audience-driven approach modelling the information requirements of the different audience classes is done. For each audience class a conceptual schema is developed expressing the information and needs of the members of that class. These are called conceptual schemes for *Audience Object Models*. However, all the existing media theories including the audience centric theories such as Uses and Gratification theory do not consider the views/interests of the audience in terms of assimilating their interest, needs, opinions and concerns in TV Reality Shows. Thus in keeping with the audience driven model the respondents were first asked to list their favourite TV Shows. The programs listed in the questionnaire were reality shows, soap operas, movies, news debates, sports and news. The top three most liked TV programs were movies with 73% likes, news with 57% likes and sports with 54% likes.

TABLE 1 Top most liked TV Programs

Top Most Liked TV Program	Like	Dislike	Neutral
Movies	73	5	22
News	57	8	36
Sports	54	12	34

TABLE II Top most disked TV Programs

Top most disliked TV Program	Dislike	Like	Neutral
Soap Operas	37	19	44
News Debates	17	44	39
Reality Shows	13	50	37

As the majority of the respondents were young they liked movies as the most liked program and soaps as the most disliked program. However, Reality Shows finds a third place among the most disliked TV programs. It is also liked by many people with 50% likes. In addition to this it was revealed during the focus group interview that many a times people watch such shows despite disliking them. As per the survey results, the top three most liked TV Reality Shows are *KBC,*

DID and *Indian Idol* and the top three most disked TV Reality Shows are *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar,*

Big Boss and *Survivor.*

5.3.1 Popularity

KBC secured the highest mean of 4.26**.** Majority of the people, i.e., 73 per cent of the respondents liked *KBC.* (24 per cent stated they like *KBC* somewhat and 49 per cent expressed strong liking for the show). In terms of total percentage *Dance India Dance* was rated as the second most popular show with 3.91 mean and 71 per cent of total respondents liking the show.(40 per cent stated that they liked the show a lot and 31 per cent liked it somewhat).The third most liked show was *Indian Idol* with a mean of 3.56 with 61 per cent exhibiting total liking (20 per cent stated that they like the show a lot and 41 per cent stated they liked it somewhat) as depicted in Fig.5.1 below.
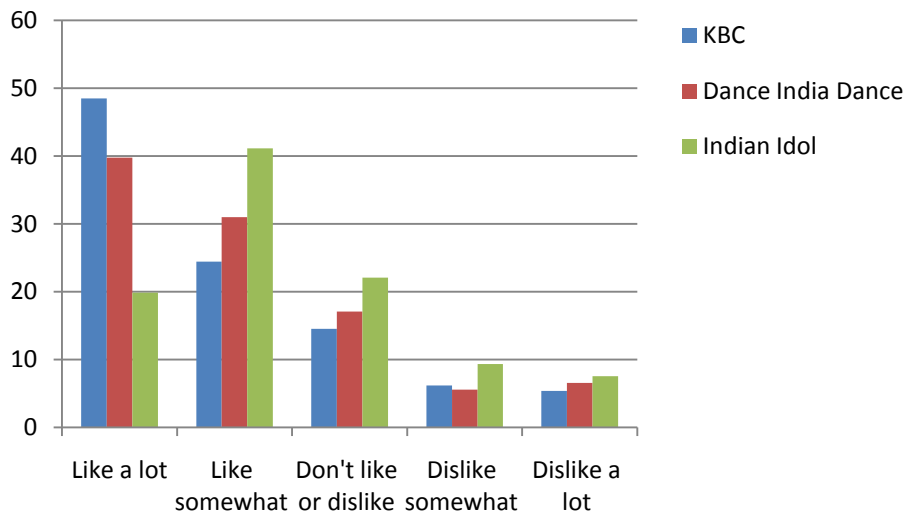
Fig 5.1 Top three most liked TV Reality Shows

As per the demographic characteristics discussed above, the popularity of TV Reality Shows was analysed. It was found that 68 per cent of the total expressed dislike for ***Rakhi Ka Swayamwar***

184

(52% strong dislike and 16 % dislike somewhat) with the lowest mean of 1.8. The second show in terms of dislike was *Big Boss* with 47 per cent of the total expressing dislike for the show. (25 per cent expressed strong dislike and 22 per cent stated dislike somewhat) with a mean of 2.67. The third show in terms of dislike was *Survivor* with 37 per cent of the total disliking the show. (22 per cent expressed strong dislike for the show and 15 percent stated dislike somewhat) with a mean of 2.78. (Please see Fig. 5.2 below). Despite being listed among the most popular and the least popular show categories, this show did not figure in either of the two categories during the main analysis. Similarly *Big Boss* is the second most disliked show as was confirmed during the main analysis but a large number of young people watch the show despite disliking it. The reasons are discussed in the next chapter.
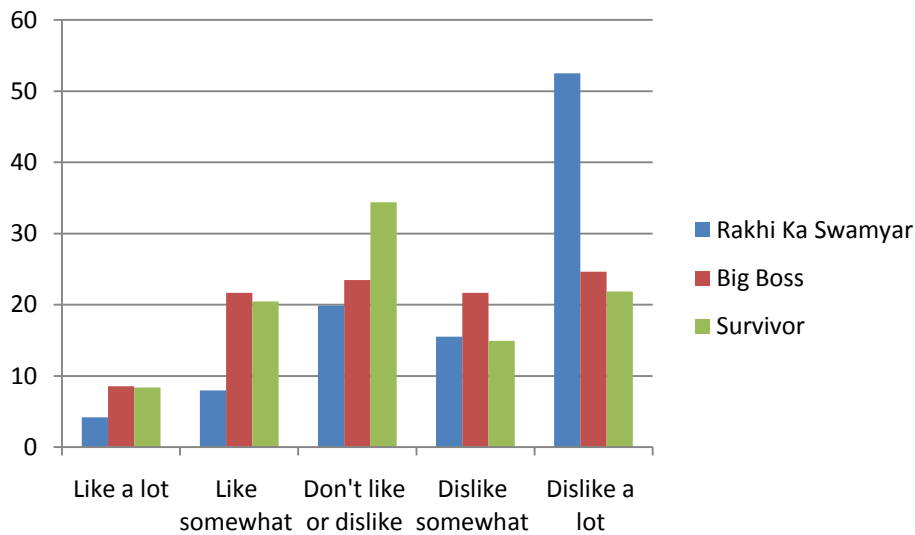
Fig. 5.2 Top three most disliked shows

Popularity among the educated classes

As per the demographic characteristics discussed above the popularity of TV Reality Shows was analysed. Fig. 5.3 overleaf depictes the most liking and least liking of the most liked shows among various educated classes.
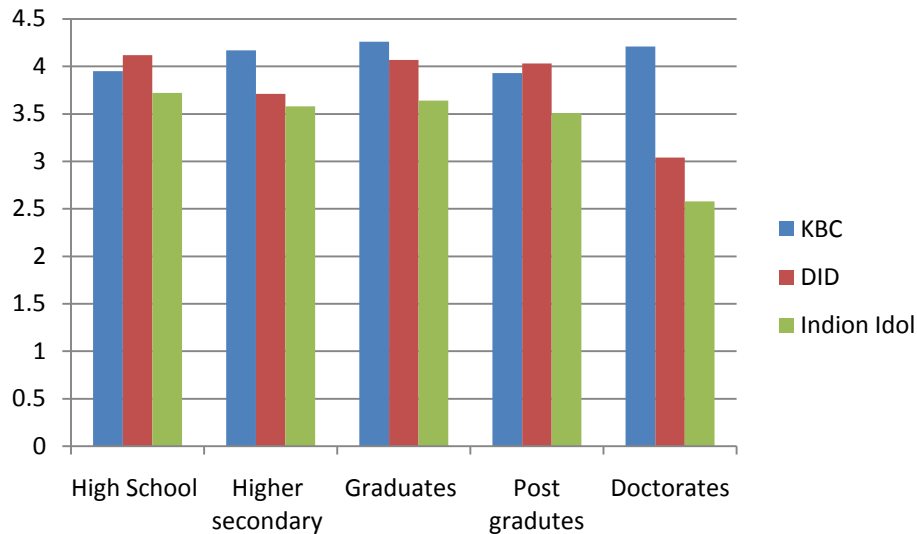
Fig 5.3 Most liking and least liking for the most liked Shows among educated classes

Top three most liked shows among educated classes

KBC

KBC has been rated as the first most popular show and this show is popular among all educational classes. However, the mean of 4.26 indicates that the show is most popular among graduates. 79 per cent of the total have expressed liking towards the show (53 per cent expressed liking a lot and 26 per cent expressed like somewhat) and lowest mean of 3.9 indicate the show has lesser popularity among the post graduates 63 per cent of the total have expressed liking towards the show (52 per cent liking a lot and 11 per cent like somewhat). The highest liking for *KBC* is among graduates and most of the winners above one crore have been either graduates or

under graduates. The reason being graduates are very young who like to take risk and identify with others who have been trying hard to come on the show. On the other hand post graduates simply like the show.

DID

The next show in terms of popularity was *DID*. With a mean of 4.1, this show is most popular among High School children and Graduates with a mean of 4.1 for both the categories(48 per cent and 30 per cent of the high school children *like the show a lot* and *like the show somewhat* respectively) and (42 per cent and 33 per cent of the graduates *like the show a lot* and *like the show somewhat* respectively). On the other hand, the mean of 3 indicates that doctorates are *neutral* towards the show. This finding proves that talent based shows have wider viewership among High School children and a large number of them participate on *Dance ke super kids*, a talent based TV Reality Show telecasted on Zee TV.

Indian Idol

This show is third most popular show and the highest mean of 3.7 indicates the popularity of the show among high school children (23 per cent like a lot and 48 per cent like somewhat). However, the lowest mean of 2.7 indicate that doctorates do not like the show (25 per cent dislike a lot and 29 per cent dislike somewhat)

Top three most disliked shows among educated classes

As mentioned earlier the options to measure least popular shows were coded differently the reason being the researcher tried to measure the negative response towards such shows. Hence

like a lot, like somewhat, don't like or dislike, dislike somewhat and dislike a lot were coded as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 respectively. Fig 5.4 overleaf displays receptivity of the least popular shows among various educated classes.
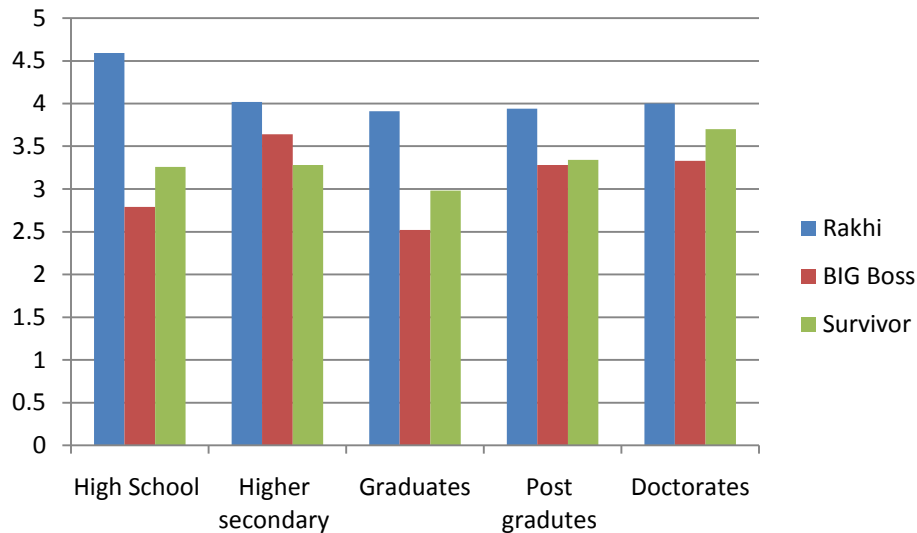
Fig 5.4 Least liking and most liking for least popular Shows among educated classes

Top three most disliked shows among educated classes

Rakhi Ka Swayamwar

The above figure indicates that this show is disliked by all educated classes. However, the mean of 4.6 indicate that this show is most disliked by the High School children (72 per cent of the high school children dislike the show a lot and 15 per cent of them dislike somewhat) the reason being they are too young to start liking dating based shows. However, the lowest mean of 3.9 for the graduates and post graduates indicate that the show is disked even by the people who are in the dating age. (48 per cent of the graduates dislike the show a lot and 18 per cent dislike

somewhat while 46 per cent of the post graduates dislike the show a lot and 17 per cent dislike the show somewhat).

Big Boss

Big Boss, like *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* has courted most controversies from inviting porn star, transgender, etc. In addition, Information and Broadcasting Minister also asked the producers to change the time slot. The highest mean of 3.6 indicates that higher secondary school children dislike the show most (26 per cent dislike the show a lot and 32 dislike somewhat). Contrary to this finding, the mean of 2.6 indicates that graduates like the show the most. (29 per cent like the show a lot and 26 per cent like somewhat). Most of the graduates pointed out that despite disliking the show they watched this show the most.

Survivor

The highest mean of 3.7 indicates that the doctorates dislike the show a lot (29 per cent dislike the show a lot and 17 per cent dislike the show somewhat). On the other hand, graduates who like talent based show and house arrest show are neutral towards *Survivor* with a mean of 3.

Gender wise and Age wise liking for Most Popular Shows

Liking for most popular shows vary among males and females of different age groups as depicted in Fig 5.5 overleaf. Some shows are liked by people of all age groups whereas some shows are only popular among specific age categories.
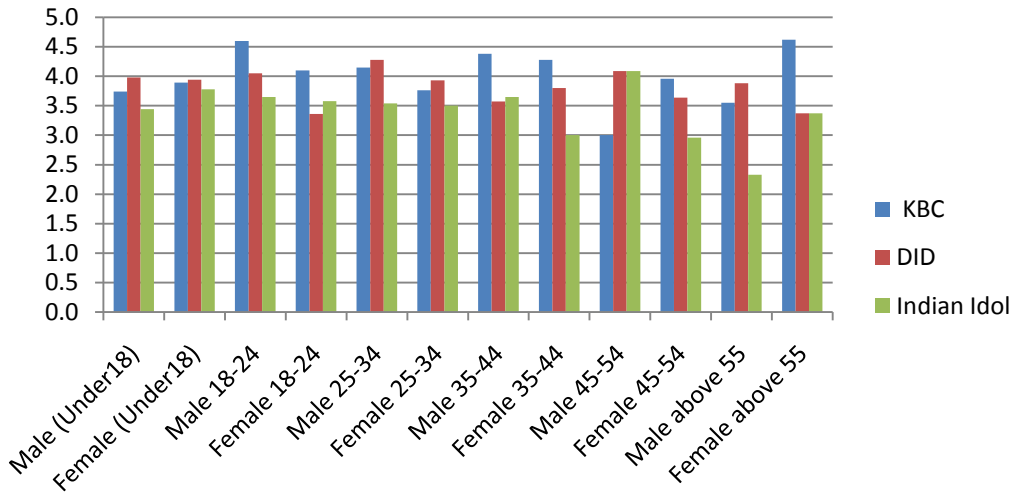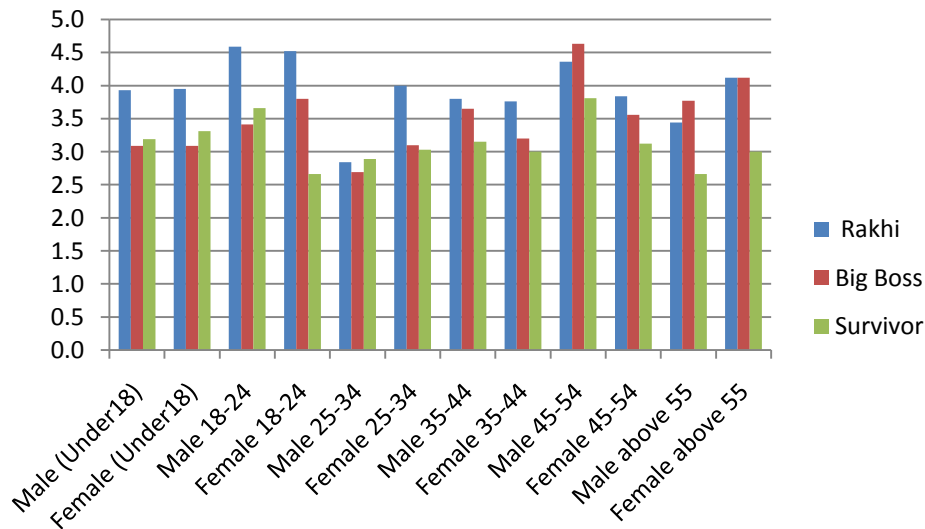
Fig 5.5 Liking towards most popular shows among males and females of different age groups

Age-wise liking for *KBC* (Females)

The highest and the lowest mean of 4. 6 and 3.8 indicate the show is most popular among all age groups of females. However, it is most popular among females above 55 and less popular among the females in the age group of 25-34. In terms of percentage, 75 per cent of the females above 55 like the show a lot and 13 per cent like the show somewhat. On the other hand 47 per cent of the females in the age group of 25-34 females like the show a lot and 17 per cent of the females like the show somewhat.

Age-wise liking for *KBC* (Males)

The highest mean of 4.6 was recorded for the people in the age group of 18-25. (49 per cent like the show a lot and 44 per cent like the show somewhat) while the lowest mean of 3 went for males in the age group of 45-54 (36 per cent like the show a lot and 19 per cent like the show somewhat).

Age wise liking for *DID* (Females)

The fact that males and females have different liking for TV Reality Shows holds true for *DID*. The highest mean of 3.9 was recorded for females under18 and in the age group of 25-34. 43 three percent and 28 per cent of the females under 18 *liked the show a lot* and *liked the show somewhat* respectively. Under 24-34 age group of females 40 per cent of the females *liked the show a lot* and 23 per cent of the females *liked the show somewhat.* The lowest mean of 3.4 was recorded for the females in the age group of 18-24 and above 55. Under the former category of females 34 per cent of the females *liked the show a lot* and 16 per cent *liked the show somewhat*. Under the latter category of females 25 per cent of the females *liked the show a lot* and 38 per cent *liked the show somewhat.*

Age wise liking for *DID* (Males)

The highest mean of 4.3 was recorded for males in the age group of 25-34 with 42 per cent and 51 per cent of the people *liking the show a lot* and *liking the show somehow* respectively. The lowest mean of 3.6 was recorded for the males in the age group of 35-44 with 31 and 39 per cent of the people *liking the show a lot* and *liking the show somewhat* respectively.

Age wise liking for *Indian Idol* (Females)

This show got the highest mean of 3.8 for the people in the under-18 age group. 23 per cent *liked the show a lot* and 49 per cent *liked the show somewhat*. However, people in the age group of 35-44 showed least liking for the show with a mean of 3. In other words, people in this age group were neutral towards the show.

Age wise liking for *Indian Idol* (Males)

The highest mean of 4.1 was registered for the males in the age group category of 45-54. In terms of percentage, 54 per cent of the males *liked the show a lot* and 18 per cent of them *liked the show somewhat.* However the lowest mean of 2.33 was recorded for the males above 55 with only 22 per cent of the people *liking the show somewhat* and nil response from the people who *liked the show a lot.*

Gender wise and Age wise disliking for Least Popular Shows

The existing literature indicates the popularity of TV Reality Shows among young people. However, the survey analysis indicates that some shows are disliked even by young people both males and females of different age categories. Fig 5.6 below depicts disliking towards the least popular Shows among males and females of different age groups as depicted in Fig 5.6 below

Fig 5.6 Disliking towards least popular shows among males and females of different age groups

Age wise liking for *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* (Females)

Females in the age group of 18-25 dislike the show the most with a mean of 4.5. 68 per cent of the females dislike the show a lot and 20per cent dislike the show somewhat. Respondents in the age group of 35-54 also dislike the show but to a lesser extent with a mean of 3.8. In terms of percentage 40 per cent of the people in the age group of 35-54 *dislike the show a lot* and 12 per cent *dislike the show somewhat*.

Age wise liking for *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* (Males)

Highest mean of 4.6 was recorded for the people between the age group of 18-24. In terms of percentage, 73 per cent of the males *disliked the show* and 16 per cent of the people *disliked the show somewhat.* Lowest mean of 2.8 was registered for the people in the age group of 25-34. Percentagewise 20 per cent of the males *liked the show a lot* and 32per cent *liked the show somewhat.* It means males in the age group of 25-35 like the show.

Observation

People in the age group of 18 -24 both males and females dislike the show the most whereas males in the age group of 25-34 like the show.

Age wise liking for *Big Boss* (Females)

The highest mean of 4.1 indicates that the show is most disliked by the females above 55. However, the females under 18 are neutral towards the show. Similarly females between the age group of 25-34 are also neutral towards the show as the mean of 3.1 indicates. 14 per cent of the females under 18 dislike the show a lot and 22 per cent of the females dislike the show

somewhat. 20 per cent of the females between the age group of 25-43 dislike the show a lot and 23 per cent dislike the show somewhat. Invariably all the females in the different age categories starting from 18 -54 are neutral towards the show as the mean of 3 indicates.

Age wise liking for *Big Boss* (Males)

The highest mean of 4.6 indicates that the show is most unpopular among the males between the age group of 45-54. 73 per cent of the males dislike the show a lot and 19 per cent dislike the show somewhat. However the lowest mean of 2.7 indicate that the show is most liked by the males in the age group of 25-34. 32 two per cent of the males like the show a lot and 17 per cent of the males dislike the show somewhat.

Observation

This show has maximum liking among the males in the age group of 25-34 whereas females in that age group are neutral towards the show. Even the different age categories of males are neutral towards the show.

Age wise liking for *Survivo*r (Females)

The highest mean of 3.3 indicates that people in the age group of under 18 are neutral towards the show. In terms of percentage 27 per cent of the females in this age group *dislike the show a lot* and 12 per cent *dislike the show somewhat.* However, the next level upwards in terms of age i.e. people in the age group of 18-24 like the show with a mean of 2.7 indicates. 20 per cent of the females *like the show a lot* and 32 two per cent *like the show somewhat*.

The highest mean of 3.8 indicates that the show is most disliked by the people in the age group of 45-54. The show has registered 28 per cent dislikes for both options *like the show a lot* and *like the show somewhat*. The mean of 2.7 indicate that the show is liked by the people above 55 with 11 per cent of the males *liking the show a lot* and 33 per cent *liking the show somewhat*

5.3.2 Receptivity among various Family Types

The next and the most important factor in the Indian context is the receptivity of the shows among the different family structures i.e. single, nuclear and joint. More than 3 mean for all the categories of the families indicate that most of the families like the three most popular shows stated above as depicted in Fig 5.7
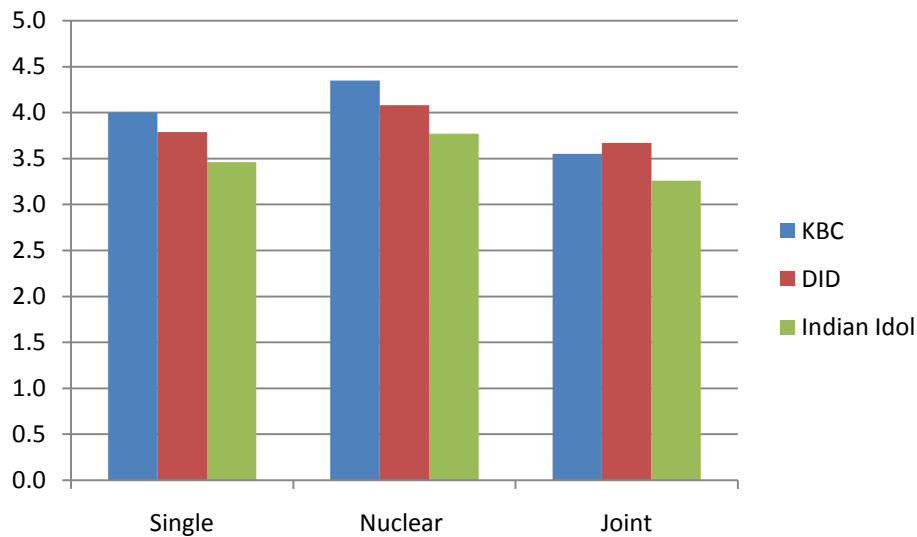
Fig 5.7 Liking for most popular Shows among different families

The figure above indicates that nuclear families like *KBC*, *DID* and *Indian Idol* with the highest mean of 4.35, 4.08, and 3.77 respectively. 55 per cent of nuclear families *like KBC a lot* and 30 per cent *like the show somewhat*. 42 per cent of the nuclear families *like DID a lot* and thirty

eight per cent *like the show somewhat*. Finally 20 per cent of the nuclear families *like Indian Idol a lot* and forty eight per cent of the nuclear families *like the show somewhat*.

On the one hand different family types have liked the three popular shows while on the other hand more than 3 mean for all the categories of families indicate that three most disliked shows have poor receptivity among all the categories of the families except one category which is single for the show *Big Boss* as depicted in Fig 5.8
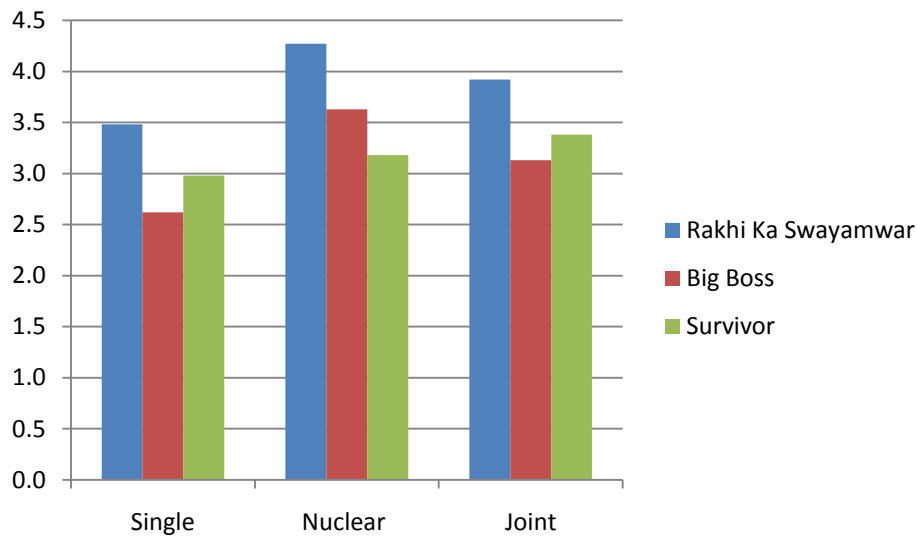
Fig 5.8 Liking for least popular shows among different families

In terms of highest mean for the three most popular shows nuclear families have received the highest mean. Similarly in terms of highest mean for least popular shows nuclear families have received the highest mean for the all the shows except *Survivor*. It is to be remembered that the codes were reversed for the options for the least popular shows and a mean of above three indicate most of the families including joint dislike the shows.

Nuclear families displayed the highest mean of 4.27 and 3.63 for the shows **Rakhi Ka Swayamwar** and *Big Boss* respectively. In terms of percentage, 58 per cent of the nuclear families disliked Rakhi Ka Swayamwar show a lot and 16 per cent of the nuclear families

disliked the show somewhat. As far as *Big Boss* is concerned 30 per cent of the nuclear families disliked the show a lot and 25 per cent of the nuclear families disliked the somewhat. However among the least popular shows the two shows *Big Boss* and *Survivor* have been liked by the single people with a mean of 2.6 and 3 respectively. In other words single people have liked *Big Boss* more and have been neutral towards *Survivor.* In terms of percentage, 27 percent of the singles like *Big Boss a lot* and 32 per cent of them *like the show somewhat*. 42 per cent of the single viewers for *Survivor* are neutral towards the show

5.3.3 Most appealing and unappealing features of TV Reality Shows

Most Appealing Features

The respondents were asked to list the most interesting features of TV Reality Shows from the existing features such as voting system, participants getting intimate on the show, presenter, sets, celebrities as judges, celebrities as participants and contestants as was done during the pilot study. Out of this the respondents listed contestants, celebrities as participants and sets to be the most interesting features of TV Reality Shows with a mean of 3.46, 3.41 and 3.38 respectively as displayed in Fig 5.9 over leaf. During the main analysis the researcher also tried to find liking for the top three features of TV Reality Shows among the males and females of various age groups.
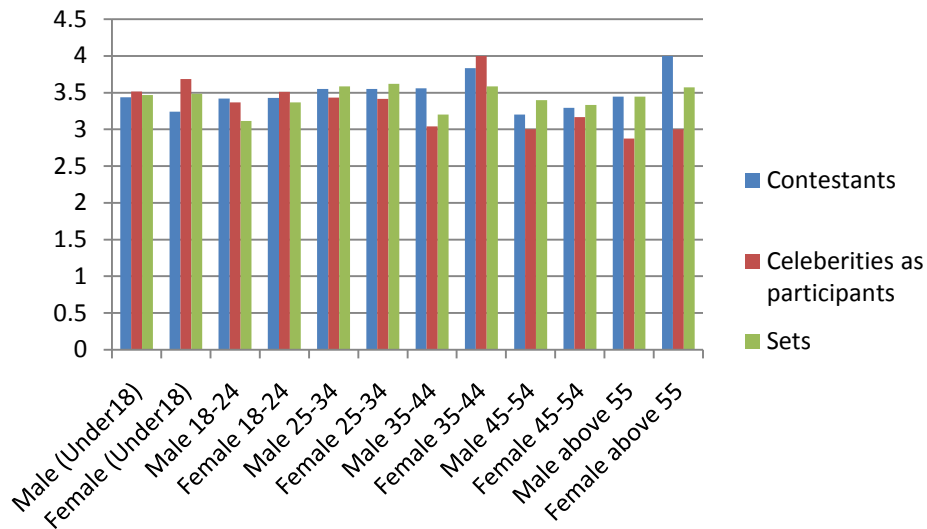
Fig 5.9 Top three most interesting features of TV Reality Shows

Liking for contestants (Males and Females)

Majority of both females and males between the age group of 25-44 find contestants very interesting as the mean of 4 indicates. The reason is that majority of contestants for the knowledge based show like *KBC* and other talent based who participate in the show are in this age group. Despite the fact that many young people *like contestants* on TV Reality shows another category of females above 55 also finds contestants very interesting with a mean of 4. Nevertheless the male respondents above 55 like contestants to a lesser extent with a mean of 3.4.

In terms of percentage 14 and 34 per cent of the females in the age group of 25-34 and 25 per cent and 46 per cent of the females in the age group of 35-44 find contestants *very interesting* and *interesting* respectively. In addition, females above 55 find contestants *very interesting* and *interesting* with 43 per cent and 14 per cent of the total percentage while the remaining

categories of females are neutral towards this feature of the show with a mean of 3. However, liking for contestants among the males indicates that majority of the males *like* contestants more than the females do with a mean of above 3.

Celebrities as participants were rated as the second most liked feature of TV Reality show.

Liking for celebrities as contestants (Females)

The highest mean of 3.9 for the age category of 35-44 indicates that females in this age group like celebrities as contestants. 17 per cent of the females under the above mentioned category find celebrities as contestants *very interesting* and seventy one find them *interesting*. The mean of 3 was registered for all the categories of females in different age groups except the female who are above 55. The lowest mean of 2.8 was registered for the females above 55. Only 13 per cent of the females find contestants interesting and very interesting.

Liking for celebrities as contestants (Males)

In contrast to the young females, male teenagers and middle aged males *like celebrities as contestants* with a highest mean of 4. However, the remaining categories of males are neutral towards *celebrities as contestants* with a lowest mean of 3.

29 and 23 per cent of the males under 18 find *celebrities as contestants very interesting* and *interesting* respectively with the highest mean of 4. Similarly males between the age group of 45-54 also registered a mean of 4 with 30 per cent of the males finding *celebrities as contestants interesting* and no males find them very interesting.

The third most liked feature of TV Reality Shows was *sets*. The mean of above 3 clearly reflects the fact that people of all age groups both males and females like *sets* on TV Reality Shows.

The above figure indicates that maximum liking for *sets* in TV Reality Shows is between the females in the age group of 25-34 with a mean of 3.6. In terms of percentage, 21 percent and 31 per cent of the females in the above mentioned category find sets very interesting and interesting respectively. However, females between the age group of 35-54 like the *sets* slightly less as the lowest mean of 3.3 indicates. Only 8 per cent of the females in the age group of 35-54 find *sets very interesting* and 44 and 24 four per cent of the females in the age group of 35-44 and 45-54 find *sets interesting* respectively.

Most of the males in the different categories like *sets*. However, the highest mean of 3.6 for the age group of 25-34 indicates that this group likes *sets the most* among all the different age groups. In terms of percentage, 15 and 39 per cent of the males find *sets very interesting* and *interesting* respectively. The mean of 2.9 for the males in the age group of 45-54 points out that this age group is *neutral* towards the show with none of the males finding *sets very interesting* and 46 percent of the males finding *sets interesting*.

Unappealing features

Voting system and participants getting intimate on the show was found to be the most unappealing feature of the show as the both the features received a mean of 2.9. Out of this 15 percent find voting very uninteresting and 20 percent find it uninteresting and 16 percent find intimacy among participants very uninteresting and 19 percent find it uninteresting.

5.3.4 Distracting Features

Out of the various uninteresting features mentioned in the questionnaire such as unreal drama, unhealthy competition, long duration, humiliation by judges, vulgarity, inclusion of news about Reality TV shows in news programs, abusive language, etc., respondents have found unreal drama to be the most distracting feature as depicted in Fig 5.10
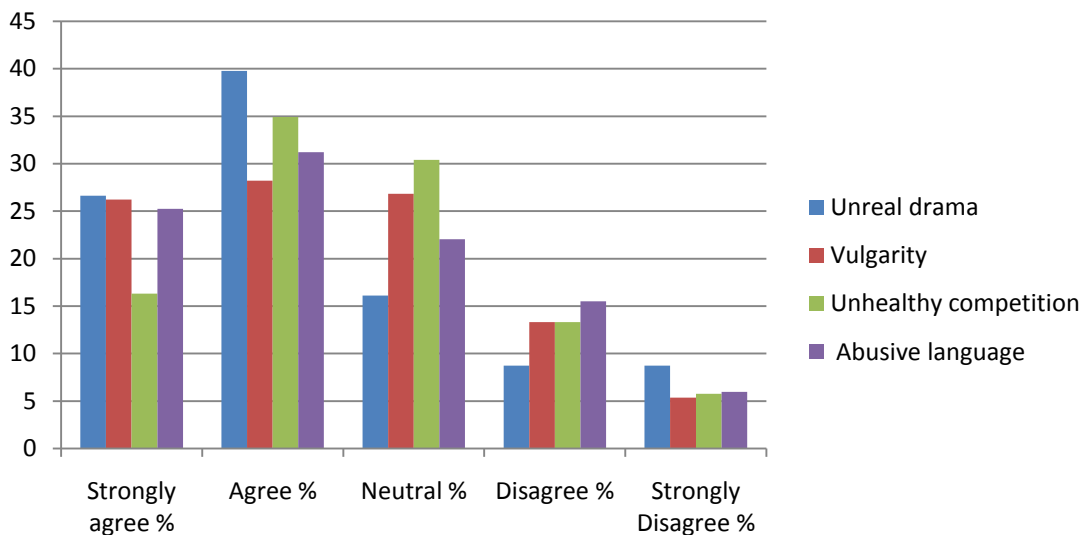
Fig 5.10 Most distracting features of TV Reality Shows

The lowest mean of 2.3 indicates that there is existence of unreal drama in TV Reality Shows. Even during the family interviews this fact was highlighted by many respondents. 27 per cent and 40 per cent of the respondents agreed with the statement that viewers feel that there is unreal drama in such shows. Here, we find the application of reception theory propounded by Stuart Hall. According to Hall, most texts can be read in several ways but there is generally a preferred or dominant meaning that the producers of the message intend when they create a message. This theory can be applicable to the unfolding of the drama in TV Reality Shows. Producers feel that

this is the high point of TV Reality Shows and most of them try to en cash on the unreal drama without realizing that this at times it is not liked by most of the audience.

We also find the application of Agenda Setting theory towards this issue of TV Reality Shows. Propounders of this theory McCombs and Shaw pointed out that media has its hidden agenda. The underlying assumption of this theory is that audiences tend to see as important those issues that the mass media see as important [14]. We find its existence in TV Reality Shows. For example, the footage of the difference of opinion among judges is telecasted many times before the actual telecast of the incident on the show. Sometimes over playing of the footage makes the audiences realize that such shows have unreal drama. Thus the active audiences interpret the media message in their own way as per the Uses and Gratification approach. However, the audience for TV Reality Shows have gone a step ahead and is empowered who selects his/her favourite contestants as winners by voting and in a way drive the show. During the family group interview many interviewees pointed out that such show have unreal drama in them. The responses of the some of the interviewees are given below:

In the words of a 27 year old working professional when asked about the most attractive things in such shows, "Reality. But these shows are not real". This fact was also emphasized by a 36 year old teacher: "I do not like exaggeration of issues in such shows." A 40 year old school teacher while speaking about unreal drama stated, "Ismail Durbar who was one of the judges in talent based show stated that everything is pre- planned in such shows even the scripts are given to them in advance". A 17 year old student stated, "Such shows are faked." According to a 36 year working professional "Truth hurts and so such shows must be presented in good manner instead of bringing unreal drama". A 39 year old, school teacher, stated "Such shows should

present uncensored reality, it should not be contrived and be more realistic." During the course of focus group interview, a 21year old engineering student said "Labeling such shows as Reality is not fair." He also added, ''The way people are eliminated and saved is all fake".

The second most distracting feature of TV Reality Shows is vulgarity. The second highest mean of 2.4 indicates that viewers dislike vulgarity in such shows (26 per cent of the people strongly agreed and 28 percent of the people agreed with the statement over the existence of vulgarity in such shows (as displayed in Fig 5.10 above)

As far as vulgarity is concerned, producers may feel that it could be the high point of such shows based on TRPs. For example, in spite of the presence of vulgarity in shows like *Boss Boss* and *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar,* such shows have maintained good TRPs. However, *Big Boss* season 6 did not have much vulgarity. We find the existence of reception theory in this element of TV Reality Shows. According to this theory, various types of audiences make sense of specific forms of content. Though the producers may feel that a section of the audience may like vulgarity, interviews with families and focus groups revealed that majority of the people had expressed concern over the existence of vulgarity in such shows. A woman in the first family interview expressed her concern and helplessness over the vulgarity in TV Reality Shows. A 30-yr old home maker pointed out, ''Most uninteresting thing in such shows is that contestants behave like husband and wives and the woman who come on the shows are scantily clothed." She added, "People like that only". Even teenagers have found *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* vulgar. A 17 year old school-going student and a 40-year old school teacher highlighted the fact that there is vulgarity in the show. One middle aged couple found such shows to be extremely vulgar. They emphasized the fact that there should be some distance in relationships. Citing the example of

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Big Boss the couple opined that people should be inspired through such shows instead of bringing porn star on the show. Their siblings–18 and 19 year old college students, stated, ''Vulgarity" is the main reason behind the popularity of such shows".

After *vulgarity* the distracting feature that registered the lowest mean of 2.5 were *unhealthy competition and abusive language* as depicted earlier in Fig 5.10 above. (Please see p.201). TV Reality shows promote unhealthy competition is established by the fact with 16 percent of the people strongly agreeing and 35 percent of the respondents agreeing with the statement that such shows breed unhealthy competition. During the family interview this fact was highlighted by many people. "Tough competition produces negative impact on the society in the long run". Said a 38 year old college professor. However, many respondents felt that competition should be restricted only in talent based shows while a few of them felt that competition should be eliminated in Reality Shows for children. In the words of a 28 year old student   "Competition breeds fear among children". This fact was also voiced by 36 year old working professional. He remarked "People on the shows resort to doing anything for a few minutes of fame". Some people do not like competition in such shows and have found it to be the most unattractive feature of the show. "I do not like the contestants losing after reaching so far" said a 55 year old working woman. However, a 38 year old professor stated, "Competition is the main attraction of these shows; people who lose may also get popularity," he said. Nevertheless, many young people during the focus group interview also expressed dislike towards competition in TV Reality Shows. "Shows like *Scavanger Hunt, Amazing Race* have no competition," said a 21 year old engineering student.

The next feature which the people dislike in such shows is the prevalence of abusive language. With the lowest mean of 2.5 recorded from the interviews as depicted in Fig 5.10 above (Please

see p 206), this feature was proved by the statistics of twenty five percent *strongly agreeing* and thirty one per cent *agreeing* with the statement. Furthermore, many interviewees also showed concern over the use of abusive language in such shows. A 50 year old school teacher disliked vulgarity in the language of the contestants. A 33 year old home maker also raised concern over the usage of bad language in such shows. A couple in the late thirties also highlighted the usage of abusive language in many Reality Shows. Another young couple in their early thirties stated that the most unattractive thing in such were abuses in *Big Boss*. Time and again we also find debates on TV Channels on TV Reality Shows. One debate specifically on the issue of abuses was telecast on Lok Sabha Channel on 1st January 2011. The title of the debate was "Is Reality TV turning into beep TV?"Abhinav Chaturvedi, TV actor, Sudhish Pachori, media critic and Sachin Khot, film maker participated in the discussion. While raising concern over the abuses, Abhinav Chaturvedi pointed out that such shows provide platform to the people but beep should be stopped. "Characters do not establish relationship and resort to cruelty through abuses." said Sudesh Pachori.

Regionalism and Exaggeration

The section of the survey that focused on the controversial issues in TV Reality Shows reveals that these issues have become the topic of discussion in media and public domain. The two issues that have become the bone of contention among media scholars with regard to TV Reality Shows are regionalism and exaggeration. The mean of 3 for the first category indicates that viewers are *neutral* towards this issue. However, during the family interviews and focus group interview respondents raised concern about both these issues. In fact, a debate aired on Delhi Doordarshan, (June 7, 2008) discussed whether regionalism defeats the purpose of Talent based TV Reality Shows as viewers vote for the contestants belonging to their region/ state.

Fig 5.11displays viewers' acceptance of regionalism in such shows. 59.24 per cent of the total respondents established the fact that audience vote for contestants belonging to their State (21 percent *strongly agreed* and 38 per cent *agreed* to the above statement).
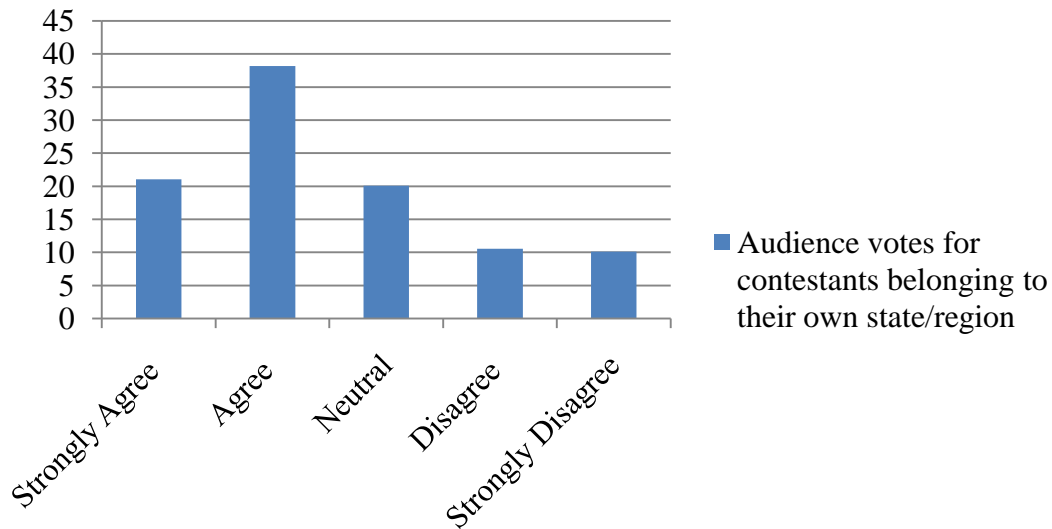
Fig 5.11 Existence of regionalism in TV Reality Shows

Voting System

Closely related to the regionalism is the voting system which many people felt is flawed. In fact, as depicted in Fig 5.12, many people *disagreed* with the statement that voting is a good way to decide the fate of contestants in talent based shows and house arrest shows. Although the respondents felt that voting gives them a sense of empowerment still they consider its nature as dubious. "The viewers feel that they control the show which is an illusion," said a 21 year old college student during the focus group interview the reason being 'one person can vote many times for their favourite contestants'. "The parents of the contestants buy cell phones and give it to their relatives with sim cards to make their child victorious," said a 41 year old working lady.

However, some shows have only the judges voting. *SA, RE, GA, MA, PA* a singing based TV Reality Show started without audience voting and "did very well for many years without audience voting," said a 21 year old college student during the focus group interview. However, the third most popular TV Reality Show, *Indian Idol* does not have judges voting when the field gets narrowed to the top 12 contestants. Despite all the above mentioned flaws in the existing voting system many people feel voting is a good way to decide the fate of the contestants as the survey results indicate with 50 percent of the respondents *agreeing* with the statement that *voting is a good way to decide the fate of contestants.* Hence the existing voting methods could be improved to make the voting system more attractive and fair for the audience.
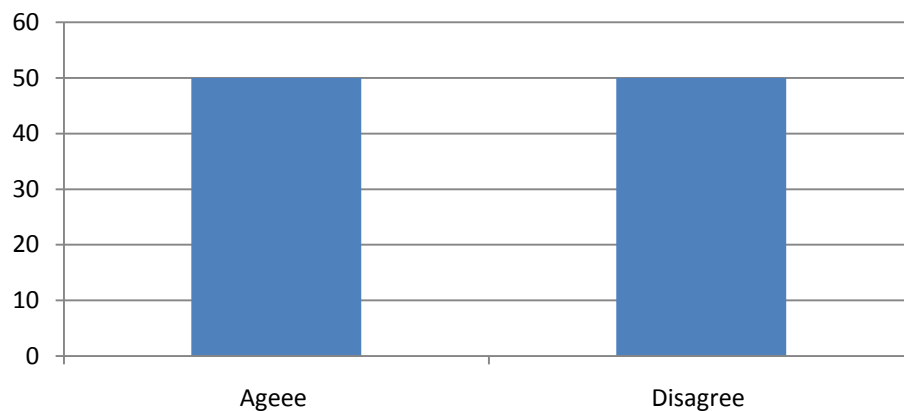
Fig 5.12 Viewers' response to the statement *is voting a good way to decide the fate of contestants?*

The second controversial issue which often figures up in the newspaper is *whether situation is exaggerated in TV Reality Shows.* Fig 5.13 shows that people feel that there is an exaggeration of situation in TV Reality Shows. A mean of 2.27 was recorded for *over exaggeration of situation*

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in such shows. In all, 62 percent of the respondents *agreed* with the statement (25 *strongly agreed* and 37 *agreed*).
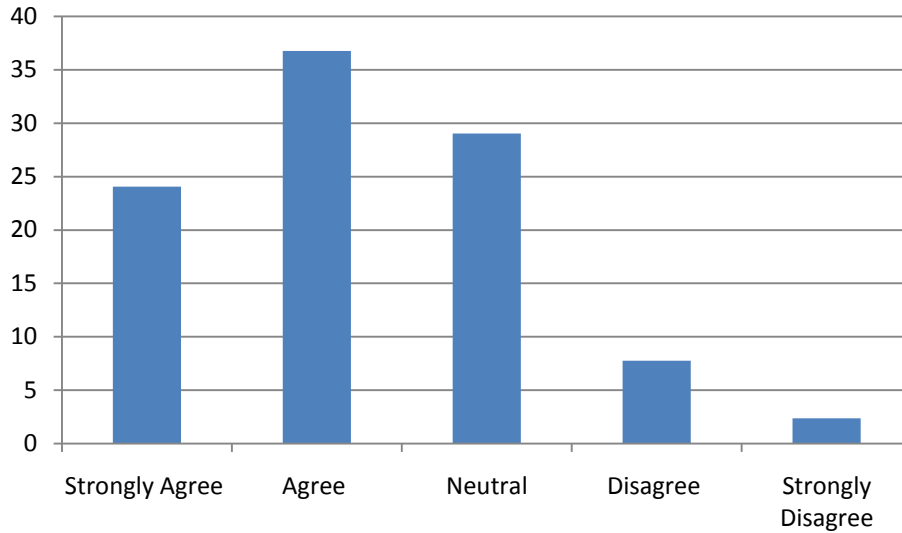
Fig 5.13 Viewers' reaction to the statement *whether situation is exaggerated in TV Reality Shows*

5.3.5 Reality Shows for children

The questions pertaining to participation of children in such shows were asked. Many parents do not like participation of small children in such shows. The reasons cited were *hampering of studies, no gain of real knowledge* and *tough completion* as depicted in Fig 5.14. The mean of below 3 for all the variables indicates that the respondents agreed with all the statements. However, the lowest mean of 2.6 was recorded for the second question *Do such shows hamper the studies of the children*. In terms of percentage 33 per cent strongly agreed and 18 per cent agreed with the statement that such shows hamper the studies of the people. In addition, many respondents did not like the competitive element of the show for the children. Despite the fact that respondents have found participation of small children to be the main attraction of the show

many disliked the competition for the children. A 55 year old working lady opined, "Participation of the small children is the main attraction of these shows". This was emphasized by a 35 year old working professional but he also remarked, "There should be more audition for the small children because if they are not selected their confidence goes down". A 35 year old working professional stated that there is a lot of load on small children to perform. Referring to the competition, another 29 year old working professional said, "It should be eliminated specially in Reality Shows for children". Four family members in their late twenties, early thirties and fifties also voiced their concern over the participation of children in such shows saying that it spoils their innocence. Showing anger over the participation of children in such shows a 21 year old college student said "8-9 year old are made to dance like puppets".
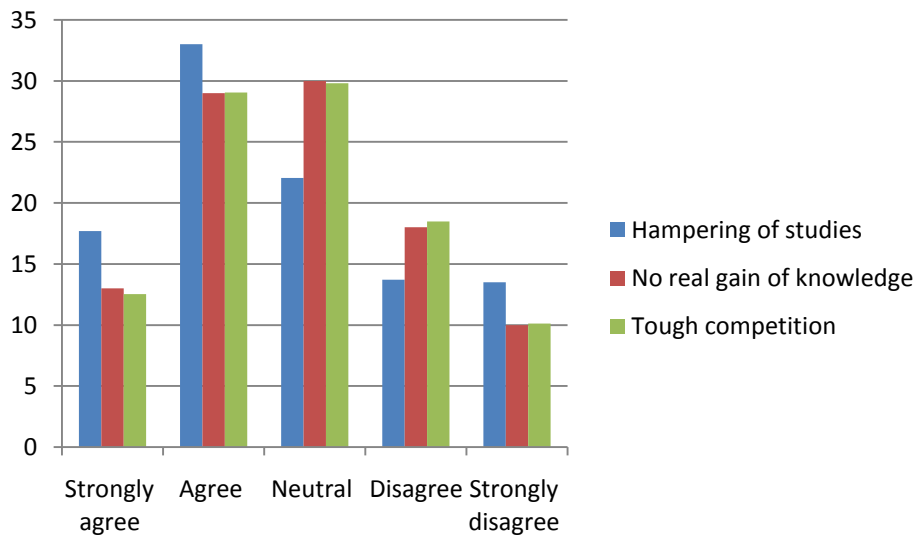
Fig 5.14 Viewers' reaction towards participation of children in TV Reality Shows

5.3.6 Strategies for various shows

Duration of the show

To start with the duration of the show 42 per cent of the people felt that the duration of the show should be between 1-2 months as shown in Fig 5.15 below
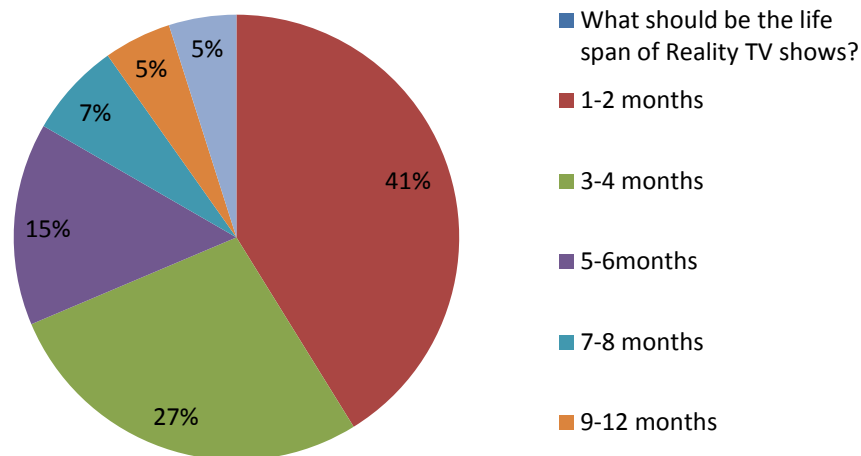
Fig 5.15 Viewers' reaction towards duration of TV Reality Shows

Audition

During the family interviews, many respondents felt that the audition for TV Reality Shows should take place in smaller towns. In the words of a 55 year old home maker, "the audition for TV Reality Shows should happen in smaller cities."

Region-based voting

During the survey analysis many respondents agreed with the statement that they vote for contestants who belong to their State as depicted earlier in Fig 5.11. In other words they agreed with the view that regionalism does exist in such shows. The suggestion that has come forth after the analysis of the questionnaire and during focus group interview is that place of residence of the contestants should be hidden to remove region based voting.

Knowledge based shows

Hosts and *Sets* are the main attraction of the knowledge-based shows. In addition, viewers like to see some flashes of entertainment and a host with an impressive personality can certainly bring about more entertainment for the audience. However, bringing a film star to host the show is no guarantee for its success. For example, *KBC* season 3 with Shahrukh as the host opened with TRP of 6 and gradually started falling to 1.75 [15]. Nevertheless, one cannot deny the fact that celebrities can do wonders to the show as has been proved by Amitabh Bachchan as the host for *KBC* from one season to another and Salman Khan as the host for *Big Boss* for different seasons. The need for having a powerful host was also highlighted during the focus group interview. "A large part of popularity of the show is based on having powerful host," said a 21 year old engineering student. He also drew a contrast between Shahrukh and Amitabh and pointed out the success of the show when hosted by the latter. Another example that he picked up for discussion was of Akshay Kumar hosting *Master Chef*. Describing the personality of Amitabh Bachchan on the show, Poonam Saxena, editor of Brunch magazine, in an article published in Hindustan Times on September 8, 2012 stated , " Bachchan's warm banter with the contestants, the slow coiling of tension as the game moves into higher prize money zones-the maximum being Rs 5

crore-but most of all, the emotional connect with contestants from all over India, through their personal videos, shot in their hometown, and through Bachchan's gentle probing" [16].

The contestants and the viewers also get drawn to the show because of the *Sets*. As mentioned earlier people in the age group of 25-34 among all the other age categories of the people like *Sets* the most. During the focus group interview many people highlighted the importance of *Sets* and survey analysis also indicated *Sets* to be the most interesting feature of the show. Sometimes the curiosity of the contestants to know about the *Sets* surpasses even the host. "One guy who came on *KBC* wanted just to know whether the *Set* is made of glass not" informed a 21 year old engineering student during the focus group interview.

Talent based shows

TV Reality Shows for children which most of the people have found to be the most attractive feature of the show has certain flaws. However, the audiences have many reservations with many issues with regard to talent shows for children starting with the audition to the participation of children in such shows. Many people felt that the audition for such shows should take place during vacation as depicted in Fig 5.16 overleaf.
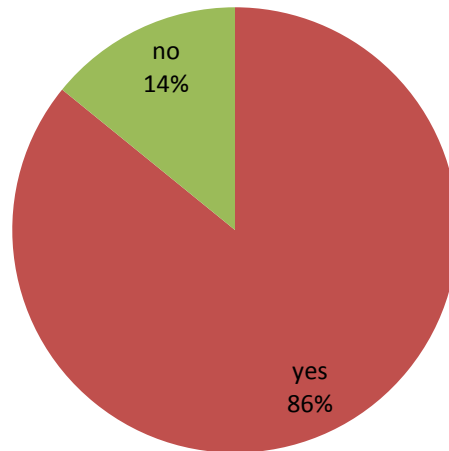
Some people felt that the number of auditions for children should be increased. "When they are not selected in the very first round their confidence goes down," said 35 year old working professional during family interview. Some families were of the opinion that small mistake of small children is highlighted. "The elimination of children in these shows breeds fear among them," said a working professional during family interview.

When asked about the most attractive feature of the show, many interviewees mentioned about *ordinary people showcasing their talents.* As discussed earlier under *the various attractive features* interviewees have found *contestants* to be the main attraction of the show.

The next aspect of talent based shows which may consider some suggestions is *voting* which gets influenced by the poor background of people, reaction of the contestants and family members during danger zone and elimination and at times, regionalism. As far as former is concerned a 21

year old engineering student during family interview pointed out, "Such shows should be more objective and contestants' personal life should not be depicted in the beginning as it affects the voting". To make the show more objective, an engineering student opined in a focus group interview "Family background should be revealed only in the gala round".

The next suggestion with regard to *impartial voting* is allowing only one vote from one person as was suggested by a college student during the focus group interview. Some others suggested voting only for semi-finals and finals including the judges' voting in the final. In other words, a combination of audience voting and judges voting during semi-finals and finals was suggested. As far as various channels of voting such SMS, email, phone call, voting on the show, etc, are concerned, majority of the respondents, i.e., forty one per cent felt voting on the show is more reliable as depicted in Fig 5.17.
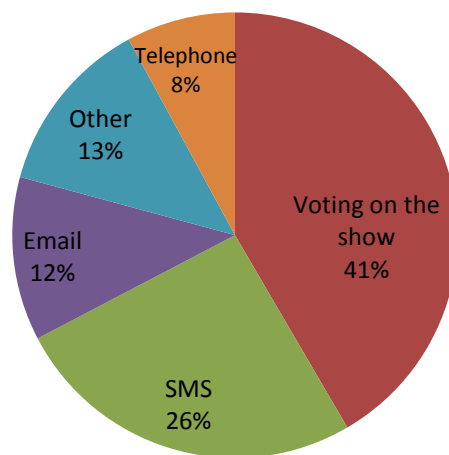
Fig 5.17 The best way to judge people coming on TV Reality Shows

Most of the media practices pertaining to audience-involvement in TV Reality Shows are industry driven and their main aim is to make profits by encouraging audience to send votes through SMS, phone call, etc., during the entire season. However, the above discussion exemplifies that producers can make the shows audience driven by conducting voting on the show itself as such a process would prove to be authentic according to the views of most of the respondents. In addition, many interviewees during the focus group interview pointed out that voting should take place during finals and semi-finals and the judges' voting should also be taken during the finals. It is to be remembered that in some of the talent based shows such as *American Idol,* the judges' who are experts in evaluating singing efforts, have no voting power when the field gets narrowed to the top 24 contestants [17]. Similar is the practice in Indian Show *Indian Idol* as most of the Indian Shows are replicas of western shows.

Indian TV Reality Shows have banked on excessive display of emotions by the contestants and their family members unlike the western shows. Many young respondents during the focus group interview *disliked* the portrayal of excessive emotions. However, many viewers are *neutral* towards excessive display of emotion as indicated by the respondents who answered the questions in this regard. The figure 5.18 overleaf indicates that 52 percent *agreed* with the statement and 48 per cent *disagreed.*
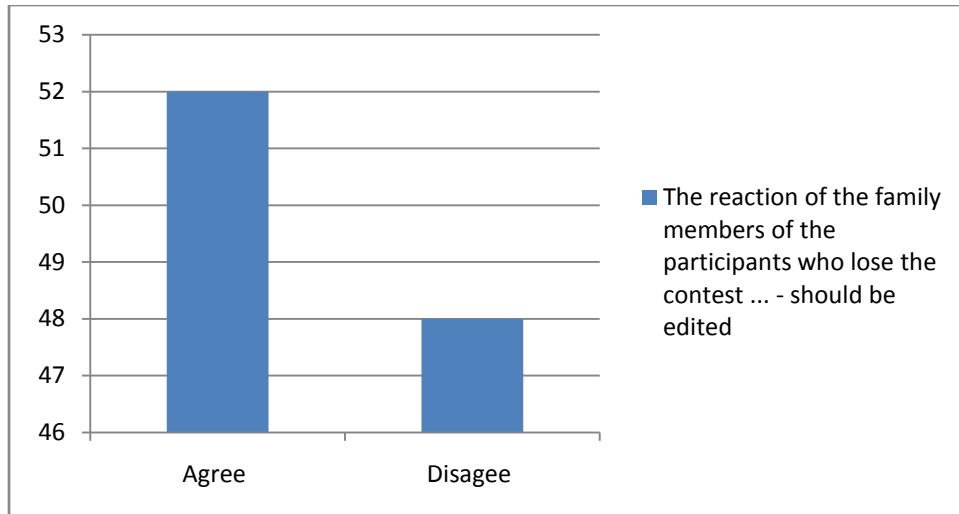
Fig 5.18 Viewers' response towards editing excessive display of emotions in TV Reality Shows

Regarding *regionalism* many respondents felt it does affect the outcome of the show. However, one interviewee felt that regionalism works more in smaller cities than in big cities as in big cities people are busy with their lives. Whatsoever may be the case regionalism defeats the very purpose of the show by making it more biased? Many respondents are of the opinion that hiding the place of the contestant would help in removing regionalism.

House arrest shows

The most cited show during the family interviews and focus group interview was *Big Boss*. However, the above show was labeled as vulgar by most of the people because of abuses, proximity in relations, controversial issues like bringing porn star, etc. Even during focus group many interviewees cited the example of *Big Boss* as the most watched show on the campus despite the fact that it cannot be watched with parents because of its vulgar content.At the same time, many people liked the show for getting a chance to know how celebrities behave in real situations. Mostly males between the age group of 25-34 like *Big Boss*. During the focus group

interview a 21 year old engineering student pointed out that through such shows we get to know celebrities on a personal level. "It provides an opportunity to know our stars at more intimate level", he added. During the family interview some family members stated, "Through *Big Boss* we get to know the psychology of the people, we identify ourselves with the characters and differentiate between real and unreal". Other age categories of both males and females are more or less neutral towards the show. In addition to this even nuclear families do not like the show. Removal of abuses and vulgarity can bring forth more viewership for the show. If the producers of the show want to reach out to the different age categories of both male and females and different families then they will have to remove the vulgar content and abuses from the show. In this show mostly celebrities participate. However, as per the survey result there should be combination of ordinary people and celebrities in *Big Boss* to make it more appealing as depicted in Fig 5.19. Thus we find the application of audience driven approach towards this aspect of the show. In chapter 1 it is mentioned that to drive the show certain factors such as interest, age etc., are taken into account and if the show *Big Boss* also has ordinary people along with celebrities as participants then we will find audience not only as satisfied consumers but also as producers of the product itself.
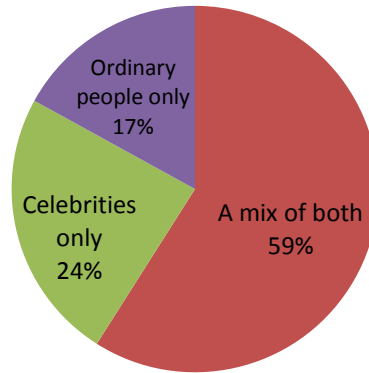
Dating based shows

As far as dating *shows* are concerned, viewers dislike issues such as dating and selecting partners for marriage, etc., being portrayed on TV Reality Shows. Viewers' dislike towards such shows is depicted in Fig 5.20. So, the media houses can think as to whether such shows are to be continued or not.
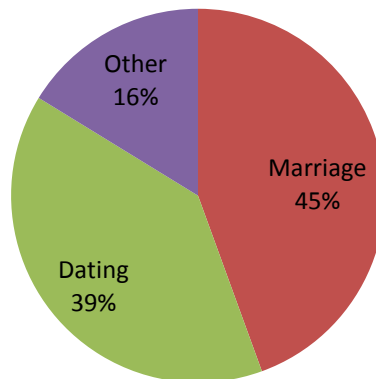
Fig 5.20 Viewers' response towards dating and marriage issues on TV Reality Shows

Strategy for adventure based shows

Most liked by the females in the age group of 18-24 and males above 55. These shows are the first type of TV Reality Shows in which males above 55 have shown interest. One of the respondents during the family group interview expressed interest in the show *Survivor* terming it as a good example of adventure based show. However, he also mentioned that the risk should be lessened. On the one hand respondents above the age of 55 have liked the Indian adventure based show *Survivor* with reduced risk and on the other hand many young Indians during the focus group interview expressed liking towards foreign based adventure shows:"Foreign shows like *Scavenger Hunt, Amazing Race* have no melodrama and competition," said a 21 year old engineering student.

Summary of the strategies

- Duration of the TV Reality Shows can be one to two months

- Audition for the shows can be conducted in smaller cities

- Attractive *Sets* are necessary for talent-based shows and knowledge based shows

- Host with an impressive personality and ability to connect with masses are required for knowledge based shows.

- Viewers should be allowed only once to vote for their favourite contestants

- Hiding the place of residence of the contestants to stop regionalism.

- Revealing the family background of the contestants only in the gala round to encourage fair voting in talent based shows.

- Voting on the *Sets* in the initial round

- Combination of judges and audience voting in the final round.

- Elimination of competition in Reality Shows for children.

- Removal of tough competition, high risks and melodrama in adventure based shows.

The preceding discussion throws light upon the most popular and least popular shows along with most appealing and unappealing features of the show. *KBC* and *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* occupy the top most positions under the most popular and least popular categories with the contestants as the most appealing feature of TV Reality shows. There are certain distracting features such as unreal drama, vulgarity, unhealthy competition and abusive language. In addition, the two most controversial issues that are prevalent in TV Reality Shows are regionalism and exaggeration. As discussed in the first chapter, the researcher has questioned the potential of TV Reality Shows to empower the audience because of the limitation in technology. In other words, Television, unlike the Internet, does not allow the audience to prepare the content of the show. For instance, the Internet has allowed the audience to make videos and given them the right to upload it. However, with the help of TV Reality Shows the audiences have tasted a sense of partial empowerment by voting and participation. In addition, there are many media practices encouraging involvement of the audience in such shows which are mentioned above. Nevertheless, many media practices are not liked by the audience and the time has come for the media houses to do some introspection and refine shows by including inputs from the audience to make the shows audience driven. The concluding chapter that follows presents the highlights of the analysis and suggestions for media houses in order to improve upon the TV Reality Shows. It also provides some directions in which further research can be taken up on TV Reality Shows keeping the viewers' interest in mind.

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CHAPTER- 6

CONCLUSIONS

Reality Shows have a history that spans over 60 years. However, in recent years such shows have become the most popular form of entertainment and have undergone many changes [1]. Starting from the non-competitive show like *Candid Camera* to the competitive show like *Big Brother* such shows have experimented with many aspects including formats, voting system, content, etc. In other words, such shows have changed the concept of television entertainment by voting system, messaging, surveillance, and other such features. Communication applications such as messaging, chatting, or voting during certain programs (quizzes, contest) have strengthened viewers' loyalty to the specific program [2]. Despite this fact, such shows have engulfed in controversies not only in the country of origin but also in India where shows are mostly the replicas of the original shows. The producers of the shows have mostly relied on TRPs which is not a true reflection of viewers' interest. Hence the aim of this study was to know the viewers' interest in some of the popular shows thereby making the shows audience-driven. This is required as the audience is scattered and autonomous. In order to know the interest of the audience a questionnaire was prepared and each question was coded. After knowing the most popular and least popular shows the receptivity of the shows among people of different education qualification, age, gender and family type were also studied. In addition, some appealing and unappealing features of the show were analyzed. The survey result indicated following shows as the most popular shows.

Most popular shows

KBC, DID and *Indian Idol*

Least Popular Shows

Rakhi Ka Swayamwar, *Big Boss* and *Survivor*

6.1 Highlights of the Survey

The knowledge based show *KBC*, and the talent based shows *DID* and *Indian Idol* have been liked by most of the people whereas the dating based show *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar,* house arrest show *Big Boss* and adventure based show *Survivor* have been found to be *least liked.* The reason for the *most liking* for the three most popular shows is that they have the maximum participation of ordinary people and no vulgarity. Besides this reason, *KBC* is also liked by people because of the exquisite Set and its host Amitabh Bachchan. The survey analysis discussed in the previous chapter also indicates that the participation of ordinary people and the Sets are the first and third most interesting features of such shows respectively. The other reason for the huge popularity of *KBC* is that most of the viewers feel that dating based shows like *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* are not conducive for family viewing. In addition, house arrest show as *Big Boss* despite getting huge TRPs has remained in controversies for all the wrong reasons already discussed in the previous chapter. Finally, the adventure based show *Survivor* is not liked by many young urban Indians who mostly prefer foreign based shows like *Amazing Race, Scavanger Hunt etc.*

Let us now see the important results pertaining to the receptivity of the various shows starting with the most popular show *KBC* as depicted in Table I

TABLE 1 Representation of Liking towards Reality Shows among people from various demographics

Reality Shows	Age And Gender Males(M) Females (F)						Educational Qualification				Family Type Single (S) Nuclear (N) Joint (J)		
	< 18	18-24	24-34	35-44	45-54	> 55	High School	Higher Secondary	Grad	Doctorate	S	N	J
KBC		M				F			G			N	
DID	F			F			HS		G			N	
Indian Idol	F				M		HS			D		N	
Rakhi Ka Swayamwar		M &F	M			F	HS					N	
Big Boss			M	M				HSS	G		S	N	
Survivor		F			M	M			G	D			J

Color Code: Blue: Maximum liking for different categories; Red Maximum disliking for different categories

KBC is most popular among graduates and liked by nuclear families. *KBC* is liked by people from all age groups but is mostly *liked* by male teenagers, young males and old females. Even the people who are above 55 *liked KBC*.

DID is mostly *liked* by graduates and high school children and nuclear families. In addition, females under 18 and females in category of 34-44 *like DID* most.

Indian Idol is *liked* by high school children and nuclear families. *Indian Idol* is *most liked* by females under 18 and males in the category of 45-54.

Rakhi Ka Swayamwar did not register any maximum liking from the educated classes. In other words all the educated classes *dislike Rakhi Ka Swayamwar*. However, males in the age group of 25-34 like the show a lot.

Big Boss is *most liked* by graduates and single people**.** It is *most liked* by males in the age group of 24-34.

Survivor is most *liked* by females under the category of 18-25 and males above 55.

The above table shatters the myth that such shows are only popular among young people as the two shows i.e. *KBC* and *Survivor* are *liked* by both females and males above 55 respectively. Moreover, the existing literature also indicates that more women watch soap operas. The liking for Reality Shows among males and females may vary as per the survey analysis as females like certain types of Reality Shows more than males. Both the talent based shows i.e. *DID* and *Indian Idol* are *most liked* by females under 18. In addition, females in the age category of 34-44 and males in the age group of 45-54 also *like DID* and *Indian Idol* most. The reason for the latter two categories *liking* the talent show is that they would like to see their children participating in such shows. However, *DID Lil Champs* has seen maximum females in their early thirties staying with their children who participate in the shows. The reason why teenagers like such shows is that many teenagers aspire to come as contestants on such shows. Another striking result that has emerged after the analysis is that females' *liking* is not confined to talent based shows only as females in the age group of 18-34 also *like* adventure based *Survivor*. Despite this finding, it is the males in the age group of 25-34 who *most like* dating based show like *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* and house arrest show like *Big Boss.* Table I indicates that the dating based show *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* is *disliked a lot* even by young people who are in the dating age. Both males and females who are in the age of 18-24 years *dislike* the show. This goes on to prove that the show is *disliked* by the people who are in the dating age. In addition, females who are above 55 *dislike the show a lot*. However, the same age group of females *liked KBC a lot*. Despite being rated as the least popular show, *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* is *most liked* by males in the age group of 25-34. Moreover, another controversial show *Big Boss* is also *most liked* by males in the age group of 25-34. Thus many young viewers watch Indian Reality Show *Big Boss* despite *disliking* it. To conclude it is clear that popular TV Reality shows can be equally popular among young

and old viewers. However, the existing literature indicates that such shows are most popular among young people [3].

6.1.2 Education-wise comparison

We find that on the one hand high school children *like* talent based shows like *DID* and *Indian Idol* while on the other hand high school children *most dislike* dating based shows like *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar,* the reason being many of them aspire to come as contestants on talent based shows and are too young to like dating based show. The higher secondary children did not show special liking for popular shows. However, most of them *disliked Big Boss* the most in contrast to graduates who *most like* and watch the show despite disliking it as was confirmed during focus group interview discussed in the previous chapter. Graduates have shown *maximum liking* for *KBC* the reason being many of them desire to come on the show as contestants and many who participate on the show are mostly graduates. However, doctorates have expressed *most dislike* for the third most popular show *Indian Idol* and *most dislike* for the third least popular show *Survivor.*

6.1.3 Family wise comparison

As far as families are concerned it is nuclear families that have shown *maximum liking* and *maximum disliking* for the most popular and least popular shows mentioned above except for one show *Survivor* which is *most disliked* by Joint families. In addition, among the second least popular show *Big Boss* it is only singles who have expressed *maximum liking* towards the show. This goes on to prove that nuclear families like to see new things on television and have liked knowledge based and talent based Reality Shows. This view was supported by 35 year old working professional during the family interview. She said, ''I like to see such shows as I get to see numerous dance forms which I may not see anywhere''. At the same time nuclear families do not like to watch the dating based show like *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar*

and house arrest show like *Big Boss* with their children. Expressing concern over the obscenity in such shows a 32 year old home maker said "I really find it difficult to watch proximity in relationship portrayed through such shows". Similarly, the young adults find it difficult to watch *Big Boss* with their parents. A 21 year old, engineering student mentioned this fact during the focus group interview: "How many of us can watch *Big Boss* with our parents?"

6.1.4 Miscellaneous observation and Interpretation

Such shows have received many criticisms and many weaknesses have been discussed in the previous chapters. Many have questioned the very word Reality for these kinds of shows. In the words of a 21 year old, student "I object calling it Reality". In a similar vein, another 21 year old student objected to the very label 'Reality'. "How can a talent based like *DID* be called a Reality"? In other words "Labelling such shows as Reality is not fair as semi-professionals participate", said another 21 year old engineering student. A similar view was supported by another participant in a focus group interview who stated, "Through such shows TV is turning into yellow journalism." Thus forming the definition of Reality Shows is much more difficult than defining other genres as it contains elements of game shows, documentaries, etc. [4]. However, a large number of interviewees could not rule out the existence of cheap entertainment in such shows. Nevertheless, some shows like *KBC* and *DID* were appreciated by people from different age groups.

Despite the weaknesses listed above and stated in the previous chapter such shows have been appreciated by many people as they have given opportunity to common people to become famous. The phenomenon of common people being famous is more exciting for people living in smaller towns than in metros. The view was also echoed by a 21 year old engineering student who stated, "People in metro hardly bother who lives in the neighbour so this

phenomenon of Reality Shows can become more popular in smaller towns". Hence the producers of the shows can hook more and more people from smaller towns by conducting audition in smaller towns. This fact was highlighted by a 39 year old working professional who opined, "In smaller towns people do not have many opportunities in comparison to bigger towns and if the audition for talent based shows takes place in smaller towns, such people will gain visibility in the mainstream media". In urban cities people already enjoy immense visibility if not on television then on the Internet through various social networking sites. Moreover, many people in urban Indian watch TV Reality Shows by downloading the series from the Internet. Thus cross- platform audiences are growing faster than the audience for separate platforms [5]. In addition, use of the Internet for watching television is not widely practiced in rural or semi urban India as there is still an existence of Joint family system and watching Television is considered a social activity. *KBC* has already included many people from small towns and the winners from small towns have inspired more contestants from smaller towns to participate in such shows. For example, 28 year old Sushil Kumar, winner of five crores in *KBC season 5* from Motihari, a small town in Bihar during an interview stated "I hope my victory will inspire people living in small towns in Bihar." [6]. Besides having the participation of common people as participants *KBC* show has a very popular host, Amitabh Bachchan, beautiful *Set* and a huge prize money. Though it did not have any female winner of the highest prize, the winner of the maximum prize (five crores) was a female Sunmmet Kumar Sawhney in *KBC season 6.*

 Like *KBC, DID* and *Indian Idol* can work on its strengths. The main highlight of the show is the participation of ordinary people in the show. *DID* and *Indian Idol* can reach out to more people by conducting auditions in small towns. As a result, the middle class and poor people living in smaller cities will get an opportunity to participate in such shows. In addition, as mentioned in the previous chapter, earlier excessive drama attached with the show on

elimination of the contestants in talent based shows like *DID* and *Indian Idol* can be removed. Also, during the course of family interviews many people felt that judges of talent-based show should have expertise in their respective fields. *Indian Idol* season 1 started off with Farah Khan as the judge who is a film director and choreographer.

As far as the least popular show *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* is concerned Indian TV audience dislike the presentation of marriage related issues on television especially when after several weeks of courtship the protagonists of the show refuse to marry the most suitable contestants chosen by them. (e.g.) Rakhi in *Rakhi Ka Swayamwar* and Ratan in *Ratan Ka Rishta*). The next finding which is worth to be noted is that some shows in spite of their controversial nature are liked by people of different age groups as indicated in Table I (Please see p.225). Maximum number of respondents, i.e., 43 percent stated that they watch *Big Boss* show as they find it enjoyable to ridicule the participants and make fun of them. However, during the focus group interview among young students, a 21-year old engineering student stated "We are pseudo intellectuals who love to criticize." The last least popular show *Survivor* is popular among female teenagers and males above 55. Urban young males mostly like foreign adventure based TV Reality Shows. In the words of a 21 year old, engineering student, "There can be really good TV Shows. One of the most compelling shows I have come across is *The Deadliest Catch* on discovery channel- its raw emotions, unscripted and non competitive format, etc., are very interesting and I get to see crab fishermen in North Atlantic". On being asked about the entertainment value in above mentioned show, another 21 year old engineering student cited *Amazing Race,* telecasted on discovery channel. He elaborated by saying "Contestants go on a worldwide scavenger hunt and perform tasks unique to that country". Thus many young people who have access to the Internet want more reality in adventure- based shows and watch their favourite TV Reality Channels on YouTube. They tend to draw comparisons between Indian and foreign shows terming the

latter as more real. Besides knowing the receptivity of the show among people of various age groups it was also attempted to know the appealing and unappealing features of the show already discussed at length in the previous chapter. This research work has identified that from *situation to voting*, many Indians have found such shows as unreal.

Thus we find that *removal of unreal drama, abuses and making the shows more suitable for family viewing* can make such shows popular with the Indian audience. However, producers of the show are governed mainly by the TRPs. As mentioned earlier though ratings are very important for the commercial success of the programmes, producers relying mostly on TRPs have been criticized on various media platforms especially the Television. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the producers cannot ignore TRPs. Delhi Doordarshan organized a live debate on Television ratings in its programme titled Friday Fever on 17th March, 2008. While broadcasters felt that TRP ratings were more a commercial need than a consumer need, other participants comprising journalists, social activists, filmmakers and the general public were of the view that ratings had a bad impact on the content of television. The participants agreed that the solution to the problem lay in developing an alternative system that represents the major chunk of the population. "Content should not be guided by TRPs", they said, adding, "Consumers should be approached individually to understand their needs".

6.2 Suggestions for Media Houses

The Audience Driven Approach empowers the audience to decide the fate of the contestants coming on the Shows. This study highlights the fact that since audience play a major role in popularizing a particular Reality Show, the media houses and the producers of these shows should intelligently exploit their likes and dislikes, needs and concerns, interests and curiosity. If the producers and the media houses study carefully the above mentioned aspects of the audience, it will be very easy to telecast such shows which will maximize receptivity

and acceptance. It is indeed in their own interest that they need to see audience as the empowered beings rather than just mute spectators of events or programmes generating more money for their programmes. Hence, it may be inferred that the audience- driven approach leads to a win-win situation for the audience as well as for the producers and the media houses. Fig 6.1 below depicts the audience driven model which would make Reality Shows more popular among the viewers.
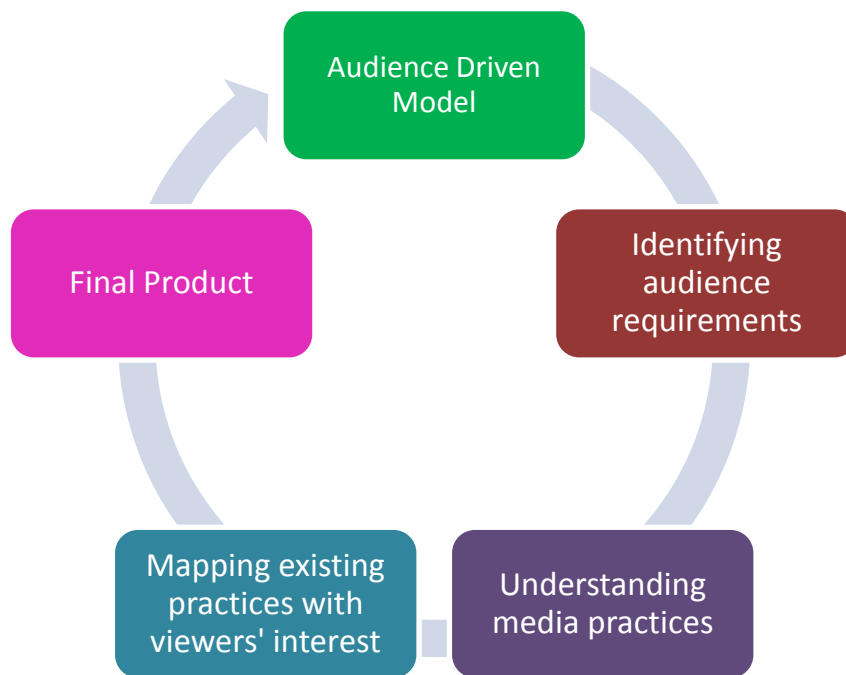
Fig 6.1 An Audience Driven Model

The Media Houses can take up the most successful shows may be controversial (e.g. *Big Boss)* and after discussion with audience who had watched various seasons can come up with more valid suggestions for future producers. Thus a dialogue with the audience would also help in refreshing the memory of the producers who may have forgotten the mistakes of previous seasons with the advancement of various seasons. In addition, a format can be made for the various features of the shows ranging from audition, host , sets, celebrities as judges, duration, etc., and then viewers can be asked to rate their preferences for the various elements of the different shows. The lowest rated element needs to be paid more attention and the

suggested changes can be incorporated by the producers of the show making the show more audience driven. Thus the alternative system to TRP rating could be talking to the people about the shows and incorporating those changes in the shows before getting ratings as that would also enable producers to get more reliable results about the programmes. In other words, the shows can be turned into audience- driven shows by including the views of the people rather than merely going by TRPs which a particular show may have managed to get without testing the pulse of the audience. For example, producers of the show must have thought that dating and marriage related issues would get them good TRPs for the show. Hence they started off with shows like *Rakhi ka Swayamwar* which managed to get TRP in the first season not because of its content but because of the host Rakhi Sawant. However, when the producers tried the same experiments with another dating based show *Ratan Ka Rishta* it failed as the content was not up to the expectation of the Indian audience. Thus rather than speculating the viewers' interest, benchmarking viewers' interest and placating their requirements would solve the problem. *KBC* which started off with season 1 with one crore prize for the winner has now captured more eyeballs with *KBC* season 6 than its previous seasons, the reason being the prize amount of five crores for the winner. In other words, the response of the audience to the various additions and deletions in the format of the shows and incorporating those suggestions for the future seasons will go a long way in making the shows audience driven. Finally media houses should assess the strengths and weaknesses of the popular and unpopular shows for different seasons. If the producers fail to tap the viewers' interest then viewers can stop watching such shows as has happened with daily soaps. "If they snooze, they lose," pointed out an engineering student during the focus group interview.

If the aforesaid suggestions are incorporated in different TV Reality Shows then it would provide better longevity to the shows. In addition, more viewers would be genuinely

interested in such shows. The dynamic nature of the media industry and its fluid nature also deem it necessary for the media industry to constantly assess viewers' interest.

6.3 Major contribution of the thesis

- As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter TV Reality Shows have a history of more than 60 years in the western world. However, the Indian TV Reality Shows started involving audience as contestants and voters only in the year 2000 with the shows like *KBC* and *Indian Idol* respectively. Hence a detailed study on Indian Reality Shows would definitely help various stakeholders in the realm of media studies. Media research has been either media centric or audience centric. The former has been dominated by profits for the media industry while the latter has tried to measure audience and has tried to understand their interests. So far, research has been undertaken in the areas of music albums, films, etc., on the basis of various critical literary theories and media theories. This study has attempted to understand and employ audience driven approach to Reality Shows. As mentioned earlier Media houses mainly rely on ratings to measure the success of the programs and the researchers have mainly tried to measure the various motives drawing the audience towards Reality Shows. In addition, the earlier research whether it is on music videos or soap operas has not considered audience as empowered beings whereas this study has considered audiences' interests in order to make them empowered. In fact, audiences of TV Reality Shows have only enjoyed partial empowerment as contestants and as voters and do not have any control in the content of the programme.

- Research in the domain of TV Reality Shows involving audience has come up with a novel way towards involving audience in the shows. This study has suggested the audience driven approach which is very popular and successful in designing websites.

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This approach has turned out to be very effective in the domain of social networking sites as well. The present study has attempted to use the same approach for empowering audience to drive the Reality Shows in place of being driven by what the producers wish to sell.

- If the views of the audience according to audience driven approach are incorporated in the format of the shows, their suggestions are considered in the voting system and their opinions regarding the content of the show are respected, it would make the audience empowered. In other words audience will not be dictated by the choice of the producers who are mainly interested in drawing a successful formula for the show guided by their commercial interests. If the audience driven approach is applied it would be beneficial for both the audience we well as the media houses. The former will be benefitted as it would give them a greater sense of involvement and belongingness to the show and the latter would be benefitted as more viewers would be hooked to the shows.

- This study has also depicted that following TRP system blindly can prove disastrous as people covered in the survey have clearly registered their contempt for some shows which had received high ratings.

6.4 Directions for future research

This study has provided a basis for audience driven approach to TV Reality Shows. As new shows are constantly added to this genre, future researchers can study the receptivity of the Indian audience towards such shows. Based on the findings of the study, it is felt that future research can be taken up on the following:

- Study of various seasons of one show with a view to analyze the receptivity of the audience to the changes that were introduced in the format, content, contestants, prize money, voting system during different seasons.

- This study concentrated on Reality Shows with the audience-driven approach in the backdrop. It has analyzed only the Hindi Reality Shows which are replicas of the Western Reality Shows. Since there are several regional Reality Shows which have sprung in other languages such as Marathi, Tamil, Bengali, Malayalam, etc., a comparative study of these shows with the Hindi Shows can be conducted. Most of the regional Reality Shows have been adapted from the Hindi Reality Shows. How far these shows have been successful and what regional flavours have been added need to be explored.

- There is a scope for understanding the receptivity of such shows in rural India where majority of our population resides.

- Such shows are also popular among Indian Diaspora. A survey can be conducted to know the response of the people living abroad and their reactions to certain features of the show which are *liked / disliked* by the native Indians.

- Media houses have mostly relied on TRPs and while taking samples there is no representation of rural Indian and there is no representation of some States like Jammu and Kashmir and Bihar. The existing literature indicates that there is a need for bigger sample size to arrive at correct TRP ratings.

Thus TV Reality Shows which are considered by many as a passing whim has wielded greater influence on Television at the global, regional and national level. This phenomenon does not promote status quo and hence the producers may have to rethink on the current practices calling forth the attention of the audience towards the shows [7]. In fact, it is inappropriate for the producers to rely mainly on TRPs as an estimate to know the interest of

the audience. Audience ratings only tell how many viewers were exposed to specific programme content on particular TV channels in certain time slots [8]. Thus it doesn't take into account the real interest of the audience. This study indicates that viewers have expressed dislike towards many popular practices like voting system, unhealthy competition, unreal drama, etc., even for popular shows like *MTV Roadies*. Many viewers tune into the show without having any interest in the show. Most of the producers might not have tried to analyze the real interest of the audience. In addition, physical enumeration of the audience for broadcast media is impossible as audiences who consume media products in cars, on public places and elsewhere are invincible to the producers. Thus measurement must depend on estimation, but to be credible it has to be more reliable than mere guess work. Hence broadcasters wanting audience data must rely entirely on estimates produced by sampling [9]. As this study has attempted to know the interest of the various categories of audience and to seek their views on the existing media practices for the various features of Hindi Reality Shows, it would enable the producers to rethink over the strategies towards involving the audience in the shows. In addition, it would also make the audience feel empowered as their interests and suggestions can be incorporated in the shows. Thus Hindi Reality Shows can be improvised for the genuine viewers and dispel the scepticism about Reality Television.

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Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

I. Information on TV programs

1. List your top 3 favorite TV programs:

    I.   _____
    II.   _____
    III.   _____

2. Choose the TV programs that you like/dislike:

	Like	Neutral	Dislike
Reality shows	○	○	○
Soap operas	○	○	○
Movies	○	○	○
News debates	○	○	○
Sports	○	○	○
News	○	○	○

3. Do you like the following reality shows?

	Dislike a lot	Dislike some what	Don't dislike or like	like somewhat	like a lot
Indian Idol - Sony TV	○	○	○	○	○
Dance India Dance - Zee TV	○	○	○	○	○
MTV Roadies - MTV	○	○	○	○	○
The Great Indian Laughter Challenge - Star One	○	○	○	○	○
Kaun Banega Crorepati - Star Plus	○	○	○	○	○
Rakhi ka Swayamwar - NDTV Imagine	○	○	○	○	○
Big Boss - Colors	○	○	○	○	○
Survivor - Star Plus	○	○	○	○	○

4. Choose the TV programs that you watch inspite of disliking them.

- ☐ Rakhi ka Swayamvar
- ☐ MTV Roadies
- ☐ Bigg Boss

5. Why is it, do you think, that people watch the above mentioned shows inspite of disliking them.

- ○ Destress from daily routine
- ○ They find it enjoyable to ridicule the participants and laugh on the same.
- ○ Developing a sense of superiority from watching people who struggle to compete in such shows.
- ○ Other: _____

6. Do you watch Reality TV shows?

- ○ Always
- ○ Usually
- ○ Sometimes
- ○ Never

7. Indicate how interesting/uninteresting you find the following things about Reality TV shows.

	Very uninteresting	Uninteresting	Neutral	Interesting	Very interesting
Presenters	○	○	○	○	○
Contestants	○	○	○	○	○
Sets	○	○	○	○	○
Celebrities as judges	○	○	○	○	○
Celebrities as participants	○	○	○	○	○
Participants getting intimate on the shows	○	○	○	○	○
Voting system	○	○	○	○	○

8. What has distracted you from watching Reality TV shows?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongle agree
Unreal drama	○	○	○	○	○
Long duration	○	○	○	○	○
Humilation by judges	○	○	○	○	○
Vulgarism	○	○	○	○	○
Abusive language	○	○	○	○	○
Unhealthy competition	○	○	○	○	○
Inclusion of news about Reality TV shows in news programs	○	○	○	○	○

9. I watch Reality TV shows because ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
My friends watch them	○	○	○	○	○
My family members watch them	○	○	○	○	○
I hear about them on regular news programmes	○	○	○	○	○
I am able to make money by betting on the conetstants	○	○	○	○	○

10. Do you think that...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Audience votes for contestants belonging to their own state/religion	○	○	○	○	○
Looks dominate over real talent in Reality TV shows	○	○	○	○	○
The prize the contestants receive is less compared to the risk they take.	○	○	○	○	○
The boldness displayed by the contestants in making new relationships is justified	○	○	○	○	○
The situation is exaggerated in Reality TV shows	○	○	○	○	○
Reality TV shows have helped ordinary people in shedding their inhibitions	○	○	○	○	○

11. The reaction of the family members of the participants who lose the contest ...

	Agree	Disagree
is natural	○	○
should be edited	○	○

12. Do you agree/disagree with the following statements?

	Agree	Disagree
I feel great when ordinary people sizzle on the stage.	○	○
When participants lose in Reality TV shows, their reactions move the viewers	○	○
I dislike the idea that viewers without expertise in singing or dancing judge the people coming on Reality TV shows	○	○
Voting is a good way for deciding the fate of the contestants	○	○

13. What is your stand on the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Reality TV shows have changed the lives of the contestant	○	○	○	○	○
Reality TV shows are popular because of the instant success experienced by the contestants	○	○	○	○	○
I really want to be a contestant on Reality TV show	○	○	○	○	○

II. Opinions on Reality TV shows for children

1. Do you like the idea of sending children for Reality TV shows?

○ Yes
○ No

2. Should there be Reality TV shows for children, testing them for other skills like trekking apart from talent-based skills like dancing and singing *

○ Yes
○ No

3. Children shouldn't be sent for Reality TV shows due to...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Straongly agree
Hampering of studies	○	○	○	○	○
Tough competition	○	○	○	○	○
Np real gain of knowledge	○	○	○	○	○

4. Do you feel that the auditions for Reality TV shows for children should take place during vacations?

○ Yes
○ No

5. Which of the following according to you can increase the popularity of Reality TV shows?

    ○ Extravagant stage setting

    ○ Abusive Language

    ○ Naked reality

    ○ Unreal drama

    ○ Other: _____

III. Suggestions for Improvement of Reality TV shows

1. Should there be separate Reality TV shows for participants with disabilities?

    ○ Yes

    ○ No

2. Should there be different Reality TV shows for different professionals?

    ○ Yes

    ○ No

3. Do you think that foreign-based Reality TV shows are not adapted to the needs of the Indian audience?

    ○ Yes

    ○ No

4. What should be the life span of Reality TV shows? *

    ☐ 1-2 months

    ☐ 3-4 months

    ☐ 5-6 months

    ☐ 7-8 months

    ☐ 9-12 months

    ☐ More than 1 year

5. The participants for shows like Big Boss should be...

    ○ Celebrities only

    ○ Ordinary people only

    ○ A mix of both

6. Do you think Reality Show like Big Boss try to change the attitude of the general public towards notorious individuals ?

   ○ Yes

   ○ No

7. Do you think that Reality TV shows will be more successful when the situation is not exaggerated? *

   ○ Yes

   ○ No

8. Should TV channels specialize in one genre of Reality TV shows?

   ○ Yes

   ○ No

9. The issues that should never be used for Reality TV shows are...

   ☐ Dating

   ☐ Marriage

   ☐ Other: _____

10. In your opinion, what is the best way to judge the people coming on Reality TV shows? *

   ○ SMS

   ○ Email

   ○ Voting on the show itself

   ○ Telephone

   ○ Other: _____

11. To achieve fairness in talent-based Reality TV shows, they should..

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Accept votes from trained people only	○	○	○	○	○
Invite only professionals as judges	○	○	○	○	○
Invite ordinary but trained people as judges for voting	○	○	○	○	○
Hide the place of residence of the contestants	○	○	○	○	○

12. What are the different skills that can be tested through Reality TV shows?

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. According to you, are there any better ways to judge the contestants apart from the existing ones?

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. What do you want in Reality TV shows?

_____

_____

_____

_____

IV. Personal Information

1. Age
  - ☐ Under 18
  - ☐ 18-24
  - ☐ 25-34
  - ☐ 35-44
  - ☐ 45-54
  - ☐ Above 55

2. Gender
  - ○ Male
  - ○ Female

3. Family
  - ○ Nuclear
  - ○ Joint
  - ○ Single

4. Highest level of education
  - ○ High school
  - ○ Higher secondary
  - ○ Graduate
  - ○ Post-graduate
  - ○ Doctorate

5. Occupation

☐ Self-emplyoyed

☐ Homemaker

☐ Retired

6. Annual Income

☐ Under 1 lakh

☐ 1-2 lakhs

☐ 3-4 lakhs

☐ 5-6 lakhs

☐ 6-7 lakhs

☐ Above 7

7. Approximately how many hours of TV do you watch per day?

☐ 1 hour

☐ 2 hours

☐ 3 hours

☐ Over 3 hours

8. When do you usually watch TV?

☐ Morning

☐ Afternoon

☐ Evening

☐ Night

9. On which days do you usually watch TV in a week?

○ Every day

○ Weekdays only

○ Weekends alone

○ Other: _____

Appendix B: Research Paper on Pilot study

* Enhancing the Impact of TV Reality Shows by Understanding the Viewers' Interest

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Reality Shows on Television (TV) have maintained a steady growth with some shows even surpassing the previous seasons' Target Rating Points (TRPs). In spite of mired in controversies such shows have attracted the attention of millions of   viewers, the   main reason being the opportunities provided by such shows to the ordinary   people to become popular by contesting in these shows. On the one   hand   such shows have given autonomy to the   audience to choose their favourite contestants   by sending SMS,   phone   calls, emails, etc., thus   influencing the outcome of the shows while   on   the other hand viewers express   strong dislike for some of the elements of the show such as abusive language, voting system, regionalism, etc. Producers of TV Reality Shows have never tried to unearth the interest of the audience in terms of various features of the show, involvement of the audience, controversial issues, changing the format of the show, etc. Thus such shows which are meant for the audience have not considered the real interest of the audience. If in keeping with the tradition of TV Reality Shows, the interests of the audience are also taken into account in the above mentioned issues then it would give them greater sense of involvement in the show and it would also benefit the producers in increasing TRPs for the show.

Key words: TV, reality shows, Target Rating Point, contestants, regionalism, controversial issues, format change, audience involvement

Introduction

With the massive sprout of TV Reality Shows in India and its continuing fascination among the viewers, researchers have tried to analyze the various factors that have contributed to its growth. In sharp contrast to their original shows, the Indian TV Reality   Shows are mostly replica of the western shows. However Indian shows have been   adapted to the needs of the Indian audience. For example, a judge getting emotional on the shows like Indian Idol, Dance India   Dance, etc., is   truly an Indian phenomenon conspicuous by its absence in *American Idol*. In spite of   courting controversies, public criticism, media criticism   and Government

regulations, Indian TV Reality Shows have immensely attracted the attention of the Indian audience. The most remarkable example of it is the growing popularity of *Kaun Benega Crorepati* Season four with Twenty –seven million viewers tuning in to the last episode watching Motihari's Sushil Kumar winning five crore rupees in November 2011. [Saxena, 2011, p.1] In the history of Television the phenomenon of common man becoming uncommon by participating in such TV shows has never been as exciting as it is with the TV Reality Shows. In addition, the interactive television allows audience to cast their votes for their favourite contestants in talent based shows like *Indian Idol, Dance India Dance,* etc., by SMS, phone calls emails, online polls etc. Similarly, in quiz-format shows like *Kaun Banega Crorepati* viewers participate as studio audience and help the contestants in one of life lines by providing correct answer to the question and may also claim prize outside the studio by giving correct answer to the question posted by the host in the Jack pot round. In spite of claiming to present the truth, some of the shows and issues have failed to register in the minds of Indian viewers despite their high TRPs. In this paper we have tried to study those features of Indian TV Reality Shows which have made the audience like or dislike the shows through a survey. This study can be an eye opener for the producers who might have forgotten to keep the interest of the audience in mind in the race for TRPs. It is important to note no matter how sophisticated the measurement techniques are. TV consumption can never be domesticated in the classificatory grid of ratings research. This is because TV consumption is dynamic rather than static. (Evala Eunice, 2007, p.28). Despite heralding audience empowerment in the democratic set up through interactive forms of TV Reality Show is fraught with doubt. This can be understood by the fact that producers control the situation, the environment and the ground rules. (Godlewski & Perse, 2010, p 166). This fact is proven by the response of the audience who participated in the survey conducted by Times of India with 83.5 per cent of the audience agreeing with the statement that

Reality Shows are scripted. (Olivera, 2010, p8) Nevertheless producers and editors try to preserve some aura of the real because observing moments of authenticity has proven to be a major attraction for audiences. (Deery, 2009, p. 5).Thus if the likes of the audience are considered then it would surely herald more empowerment to the audience who are presently enjoying only partial empowerment by casting their votes for their favourite contestants in talent based show at the same time sometimes donning the role of contestants in shows like *KBC, Indian Idol, Just dance* etc.

Origin of TV Reality Shows

Reality TV programme, which proved itself to be one of the most memorable, enduring and popular shows of US can be traced back to *Candid Camera*.(1940) (Clissold, 2004 p.33) *This show which highlighted funny pranks and humorous situations pulled on the unknown masses became an instant hit with audiences and remained on air for years.* (History of Reality TV, n.d.) *The participants of Candid Camera were caught in embarrassing moments but their privacy and dignity were protected*. (History of Reality TV,n.d.). This show was the first show in the history of   Television which introduced the concept of hidden camera which is one of the most important characteristic of Reality Television. The Indian audience enjoyed a similar show called *MTV Bakra* hosted by Cyrus Broacha. Allen Funt's *Candid Came*ra became popular after the cold war climate of surveillance (1945-91). It provided relief to the people from the surveillance anxiety that their actions were being monitored. *Candid camera's tagline* 'Smile! You are on *Candid Camera'* signalled the moment of comic revelation when the concealed camera was exposed. (Bradely, 2004, p33) Meanwhile people were getting accustomed to the concept of increasing levels of surveillance in the customised consumer economy. (Tolson, 2006 p168). Closed Circuit Television cameras are installed in public places like shopping malls, railway stations, airport and temples. (Lev,

2007, p. 180) Adding to it is the development of technology like camcorder which empowered people to record events that they regard as significant in their lives. (Ciaran, 2002 p. 105).However media's fascination with the "hidden camera" blossomed during the 1980s. (Robinson, 1995, p. 198) Thereafter TV Reality Shows have consistently attracted the attention of producers, viewers and contestants. The growing interest of the producers can be understood from the fact that in 2001 reality shows accounted for 20 percent of TV's prime –time schedule today they account for 40 percent.(Barhhart,2010,p 31) The viewership of the audience for the popular shows snowballed with every season. In spite of having mired in controversies the *desi* version of *Big Brother* Indian TV Reality Show *Big Boss* has mostly claimed to have maintained higher TRPs with every season. For example *Big Boss* first season in 2006 had TRPs of 1.96 while its second season in its very first week have claimed TRP of 3.6. (Singh, 2010, p 13). Another interesting feature of the show is that most of the contestants for TV Reality Shows have been viewers themselves. For example, including Sushil Kumar, winner of KBC Season five, another contestant from the same show Anil Kumar Sinha winner of one crore have confirmed that they had been trying to get on to the show way back in 2000. Thus TV Reality shows are the masters not only of spectacle but also audience interaction. (Johnson & Graves, 2011, p. 215)

Reality Television presents the audience with the tension over an impossibly knowable 'what will happen next', making us part of the unravelling of the 'real' before us eyes. [Skeggs, Wood, 2008, p. 559]. The above definition does not include many features of TV Reality Shows. For example, many media scholars have defined the genre as cheap in terms of production but some shows like *Survivor*: *Exile Island* is one of the most expensively produced shows on air. [Tressler, 2006, p. 21]. However most of the scholars have highlighted the fact that *such shows film real people as they live out their lives, contrived or otherwise as they occur*. (Robin, 2007, p 371). Scholars have tried to study the show on the

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basis of media theories, textual analysis, individual shows, and effect of globalization and in some cases on the reactions of the contestants. To illustrate Kriston M Barton studied competition based reality shows with different thematic content influencing gratification received by viewers. (Barton, 2009, p. 461) In this way Uses and Gratification approach has been employed to study the interest of the viewers. The Uses and Gratification approach conceptualizes the audience as active and goal –oriented when consuming media , and offers an understanding of how audience motivations, individual characteristics and preferences link to media behaviour (Cooper & Tang,2009,p. 401). Similarly Reiss and Wiltz examined the association of 16 basic motives with TV Reality shows viewing concluding that the motivation to feel self- important as the most strongly associated with TV Reality consumption. (Nabi, Stitt , Halfort & Finnerty, 2009, p. 423).Newspaper critics who act inspectors for genre quality (Rose,2010,p. 3) have referred to TV Reality Shows as abusive, disgusting and dysfunctional(Singh,2010, p 13 year) promising a spot under the arch light (Manjesh, 2010,p. 1) The second basis of study i.e. textual analysis can be understood by the fact that programmes offer practical advice on finding romantic partner, organizing your finances, disciplining your children, remodelling your home, losing weight, dressing fashionably, defending yourself against burglars, retailing your car etc.(Hasinoff , 2010,p.61). In addition to the above mentioned textual analysis the format of the shows encourage interactivity. Mark Andrejevic locates this interactivity through various forms such as (voting, chatting, and messaging) (Bratich, 2006, p. 66). As many as 63.4 million casted votes for the spring finale of *American Idol*. (Godlewski, 2004, p.167). As far as individual shows are concerned *Big Brother* among the earlier shows for its documentary and post documentary elements and lifestyle shows among the recent shows have been the most cited shows for the study on individual shows. Globalization has intensified interactivity among Television industries worldwide and as a result media companies are able to do business

worldwide by selling the same idea and audiences seem to be watching national variation of the same shows. For example, *Who wants to be a millionaire* has been sold to 79 countries including India (Waisboard, 2004, p 359). However *Big Bother* became the first show to have been sold globally in the last decade after being first telecasted in Holland in the year 1999. *Big Brother* on British Television in the year 2000 garnered over 6 million viewers. (Clissold, 2004, p.254). This show became a penchant for success in many countries including India. It has been compared with documentaries and post documentaries genre. In his influential essay about British reality series *Big Brothe*r, Corner argues that television has entered post documentary phase in which the legacy of documentary is still at work and visible in some techniques (lack of scripted dialogue etc), but the function has changed serving mostly to provide factual entertainment (Schaub 2010,p.130) .Thus according to Hight (2001), most assumptions about the psychology of RT viewership are derived from textual   analyses   of   reality-based   programs,   rather   than   research   involving audiences.(Lundy,Ruth & Park,2008,p. 209). The aim of this study is to know the various features that have made such shows very popular among the genuine viewers who watch the shows for different reasons without the sole desire to become famous. In addition to this study critically examines the positive and the negative elements in the shows from the viewers' perspective that have influenced the audience towards liking or disliking the shows.

Methodology

In order to know the interest of the audience a pilot study was conducted taking   into account the most popular shows and the least popular shows. Then an attempt was made to identify the interesting and uninteresting elements of the shows. Subsequently, the features that tend to distract the audience from watching the shows were recognized. About ---- people who were the audience for many TV Reality Shows were the respondents for the pilot study. In

fact, the pilot study paved way for useful suggestions to make such shows more attractive from   audiences' perspective. The chart given below gives a comprehensive view of the topics covered by the questions used in the survey:

TV Reality Shows

Pilot Survey Questions
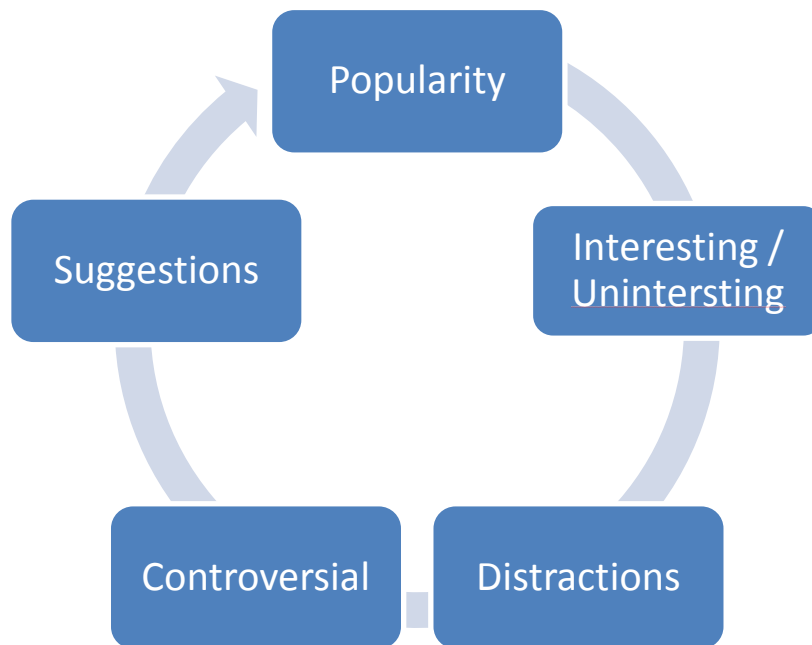
Results

Before starting pilot study we tried to know the strengths and weaknesses of TV Reality Shows from the viewers' perspective by personally interviewing people who watch TV Reality Shows and based on the outcome of the discussion   we prepared a questionnaire. Home makers, professionals and students who were interviewed   belonged to the age group 18-50. It is generally assumed that homemakers multi task while watching television and prefer soap operas to TV Reality Shows while the   professionals had lots of criticism for

these shows and finally it is proven that young people watch a lot of TV Reality Shows. During the course of interview we saw similar trend as far as viewership of the audience for TV Reality Shows is concerned. We chose Goa for this study as it is a tourist place, has a cosmopolitan culture and most of the people in the State watch Hindi TV Reality Shows as there are no TV Reality Shows in Konkani, the native language of the state. However, in the neighbouring State Maharashtra TV Reality Shows are made in the regional language like Marathi. The study was conducted on Indian Hindi TV Reality Shows considering all the above mentioned factors in mind. The questionnaire was sent across to 900 people (males and females) out of which about 162 people responded. 74 percent male and 25 percent female responded to the questionnaire. 78 percent of the people were between the age group of 18-24 and a majority of them i.e. 45 percent were graduates.

Majority of the people, about 80 percent had income less than one lakh and about 56 percent watch television at night followed by 29 percent who watch in the evening. The survey included six programmes on TV Reality Shows: Talent based shows like *Indian Idol, Dance India Dance*; adventure based show *MTV Roadies*; comedy show like *The Great Indian Laughter channel*; Quiz Based Show *Kaun Banega Crorepat*i (KBC); house arrest show *Big Boss;* dating based show *Rakhi Ka Swamwar.* One more talent show *Just dance* was also included later as this was the latest show running in the country when the questionnaire was floated with Hrithik Roshan, movie star as one of the judges. Shows like *Indian Idol* and *Dance India Dance* were chosen as these were the two most popular talent - based Reality Shows with celebrity as judges. MTV Roadies was selected because of its popularity among youth while *Great Indian Laughter Channel* was selected to have the viewer's opinion on comedy genre. *Kaun Banega Crorepati* was chosen as this show has grabbed the attention of the audience because of mega star Amitabh Bachhan who makes different elements of the show more relatable for Indian viewers. *Big Boss* was chosen as this show has been dubbed

as the most controversial show for including varied people as contestants from TV personalities, sportsperson, former dacoit, swami, porn star etc. and their ensuing conflicts. Lastly *Rakhi Ka Swamwar* was chosen as this show has courted many controversies in terms of its very theme. Firstly the viewers disliked the idea of people getting married through TV Reality Show. In the very first season Rakhi, the bride refused to marry Elesh Parunjanwal, one the finalists thus defeating the very purpose of the show. Most of the above mentioned shows have claimed to have high TRPs and some of the shows made newspaper headlines for the controversies.

Popularity based on like or dislike

Majority of the people, i.e., 79 per cent of the respondents liked *KBC*. (43 per cent stated they like KBC somewhat and 36 per cent expressed strong liking for the show). In terms of total percentage *The Great Indian Laughter Channel* was rated as the second most popular show with 51 per cent   of the respondents   total liking the show. The third most liked show was *MTV Roadies* with 47 per cent exhibiting total liking. (as depicted in Fig. 1 below :)

Fig .1 Top three most popular Reality Shows
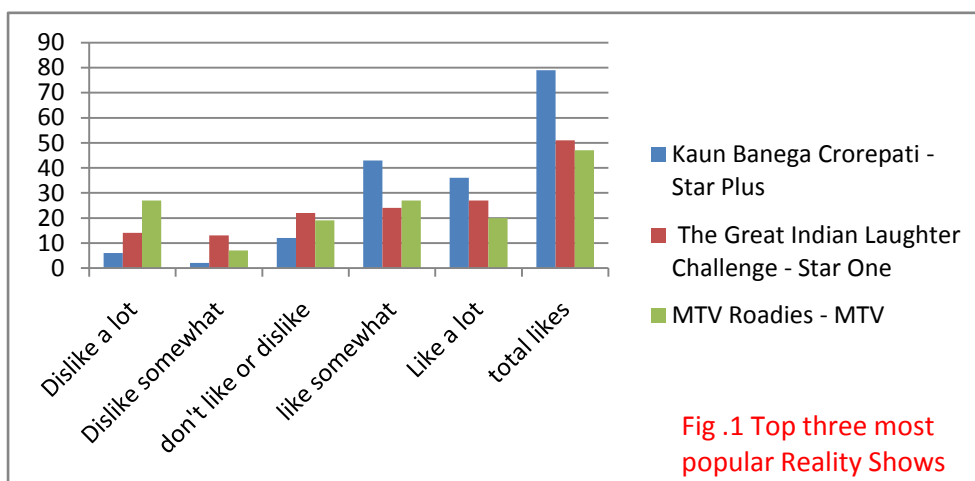
On the other hand, majority of the people, i.e., 87 per cent of the total expressed dislike (76% strong dislike and 11 % dislike somewhat) for *Rakhi Ka Swamwar.*   The second next

show in terms of dislike was *Big Boss* with 54 per cent of the total expressing dislike for the show. (40 per cent expressed strong dislike and 14 per cent stated dislike somewhat). The third next show in terms of dislike was *MTV Roadies* with 34 per cent of the total disliking the show. (27 per cent expressed strong dislike for the show and 7   percent stated dislike somewhat) (Please see Fig. 2 below)
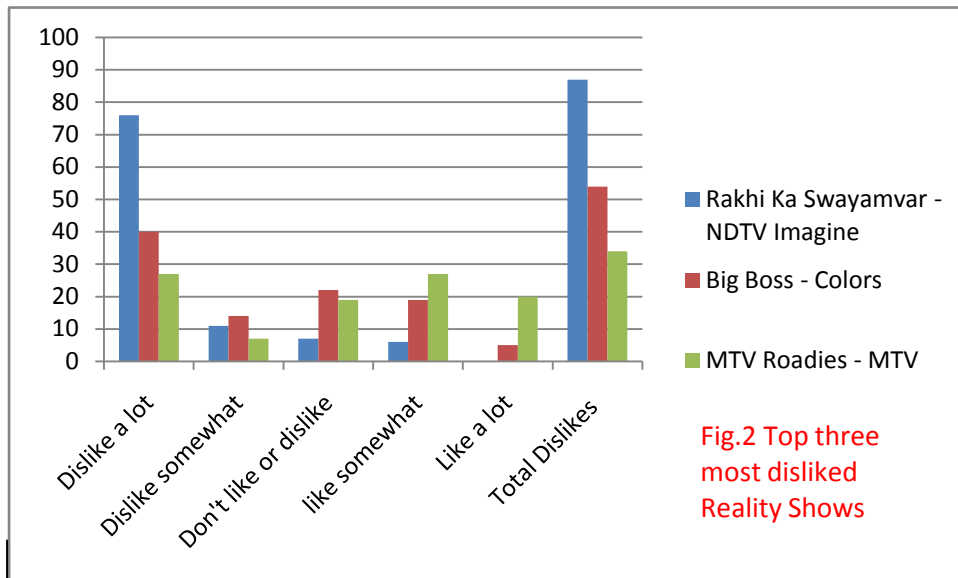

Fig.2 Top three most disliked Reality Shows

Thus we find more number of people expressing strong dislike rather than strong like towards *MTV Roadies*. As a result, it shatters the myth that *MTV Roadies* by inviting young people as contestants can become popular among the youth as 78 percent of the people were between the age group of people 18-24. As far as *Big Boss* is concerned, even the voyeur peeking into the lives of contestants could not remain the   main attraction for the show like *Big boss.* This show had more strong dislikes than likes.

Interesting and Uninteresting features

The next category of questions deals with the interesting and uninteresting features such as presenters, contestants, sets, celebrities as judges, celebrities as participants, participants getting intimate on the show and the voting system. Highest per cent of the total i.e.

60 agreed with the statement 'contestants are very important aspect of TV Reality Shows'. On being asked about about the 'contestants' (10 per cent stated that very interesting and 50 per cent found it interesting). When it came to the aspect of 'celebrities as participants', (19 per cent found it very interesting and 39 per cent found it interesting.)

Fig.3 Top two intereting things in TV Reality Shows
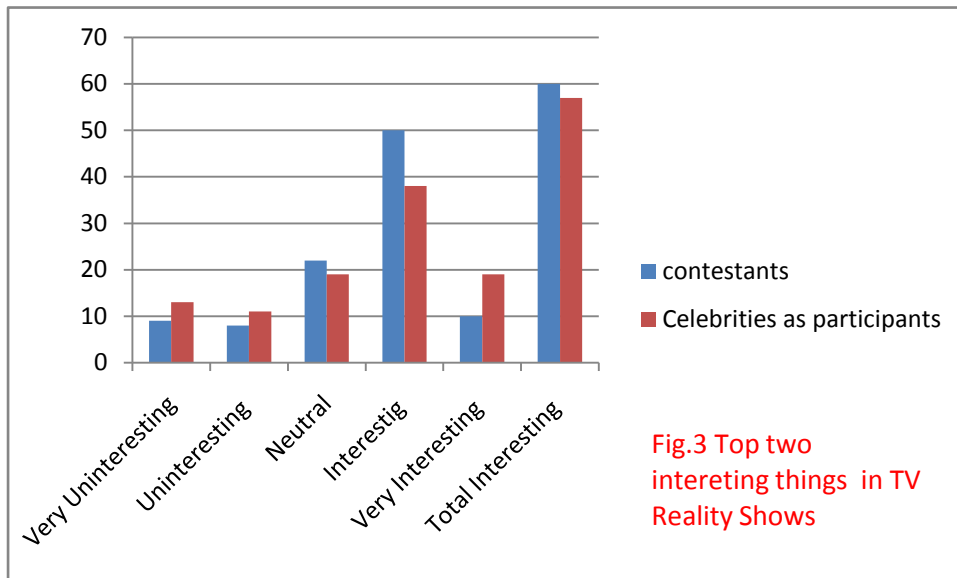
However, voting system was found to be the most uninteresting feature of TV Reality Show. 53 percent of the respondents found voting as uninteresting. (A majority of. 29% found it very uninteresting and 24 % found it uninteresting). As far as the factor' participants getting intimate on the show 47 percent of the respondents found it uninteresting with (22 percent finding it very uninteresting and 25 percent finding it uninteresting.)
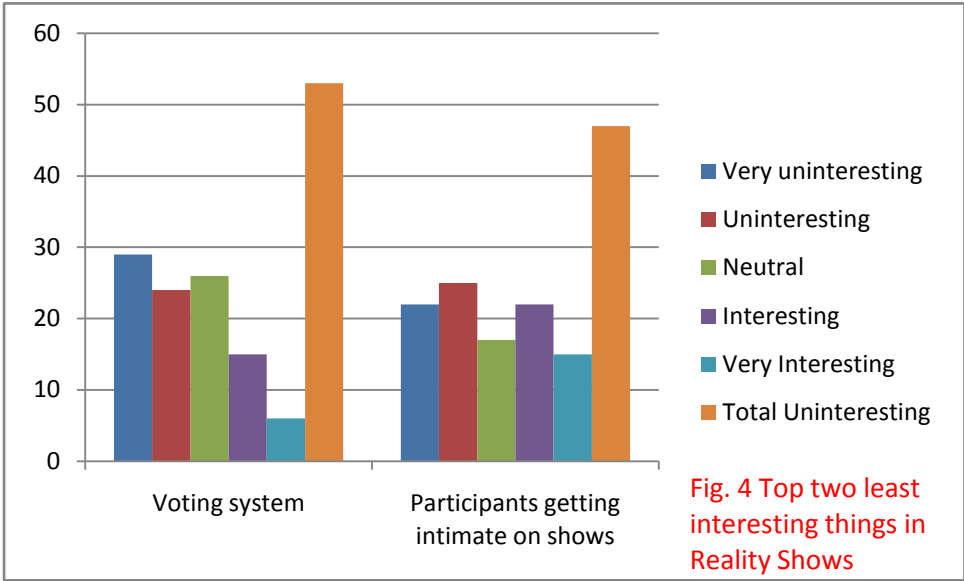
Distracting Features

Another section of the survey highlighted the distractions and respondents agreed with the fact that unreal drama, long duration, humiliation by the judges, vulgarism, abusive language, unhealthy competition and inclusion of news about TV Real Shows have distracted them from watching such shows. There is a small percentage of difference in the various variables mentioned above except two variables. When asked about the existence unreal drama in TV Reality Shows (49 percent of the respondents strongly agreed and; 34 percent agreed). The 84 per cent total is the highest among all the distractions. Followed by this was unhealthy competition as the second next distraction. 63 per cent total found the unhealthy competition in the shows. (24 percent strongly agreed and 39 percent agreed to the statement that there is unhealthy competition). The percentage for the remaining variables have been pegged at 59 total per cent for long duration, 56 per cent for humiliation by the judges, 54 percent for vulgarism and inclusion of news about Reality Shows in news programs and 52 percent for abusive language.

TABLE I: Watching Reality TV Shows: Distracting Features

What has distracted you from watching Reality TV shows?	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	total
Unreal drama	2	7	7	35	49	84
Unhealthy competition	7	9	21	39	24	63
Long duration	6	9	28	34	25	59
Humiliation by judges	7	17	20	30	26	56
Vulgarity	10	19	17	27	27	54
Inclusion of news about Reality TV shows in news programs	7	15	24	26	28	54
Abusive language	10	20	17	28	24	52

Controversial Issues

The section of the survey that focus on the controversial issues in TV Reality Shows reveals that these issues have become the topic of discussion in media and public domain. The two issues that have become the bone of contention among media scholars with regard to TV Reality Shows are regionalism and exaggeration. 87 per cent total for both the variables is the highest among other variables. In fact, a debate aired on Delhi Doordarshan, (June 7 2008) discussed whether regionalism defeats the purpose of Talent based TV Reality Show as viewers vote for the contestants belonging to their region/ state. The 87 per cent total respondents established the fact that audience vote for contestants belonging to their

State. The break up for the total percentage is (42 percent strongly agreed and 45 per cent agreed to the above statement). The second controversial issue which often figures up in the newspaper is whether situation is exaggerated in TV Reality Shows. 87 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement that the situation is exaggerated (The break up is 57 strongly agreed and 30 agreed) with the statement. The interviews conducted regarding the flaws in TV Reality Shows reflect that looks dominate over talent in TV Reality Shows. 78 percent of the respondents agreed with the above mentioned fact with (34 per cent strongly agreed and 44 percent agreed) with the above statement. Regarding the issue' whether participants with disabilities get more sympathy votes', as many as 70 per cent of the total agreed with the statement with (32 per cent strongly agreed and 38 per cent agreed with the statement.) (Table II).

TABLE II: Controversial Issues on TV Reality Shows

| Controversial issues in TV Reality shows	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	total
Audience votes for contestants belonging to their own state/region	2	1	9	45	42	87
The situation is exaggerated in Reality TV shows	3	4	6	30	57	87
Looks dominate over real talent in Reality TV shows	2	4	16	44	34	78

The next section of the questionnaire dealt with agree / disagree questions

79 percentage of the people disagreed with the statement that voting is the good way for deciding the fate of the contestants. This is followed by 78 per cent of the people who agreed with the statement that they dislike the idea that viewers without expertise in singing or dancing judge the people coming on TV Reality Shows. The third highest per cent was for viewers who dislike the idea of sending children for Reality Shows. (Please see Fig 5 below)


Fig. 5 Statements Agree/Disagee
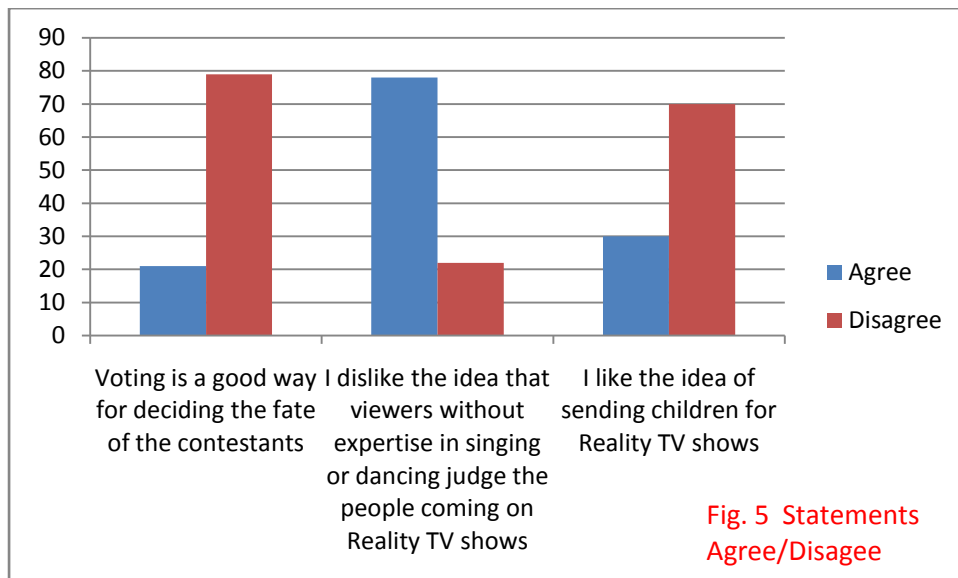
Children-related Issues

The next section of the questionnaire was developed after interviewing peers who have reservations about TV Reality Shows for children. 83 per cent of the respondents agreed with the statement that audition for Reality Shows for children should take place during vacation. (Please see Fig 6 below)

Fig.6 Do you feel that the auditions for Reality TV shows for children should take place during vacations?

Fig. 6 Opinion on RL Shows for children
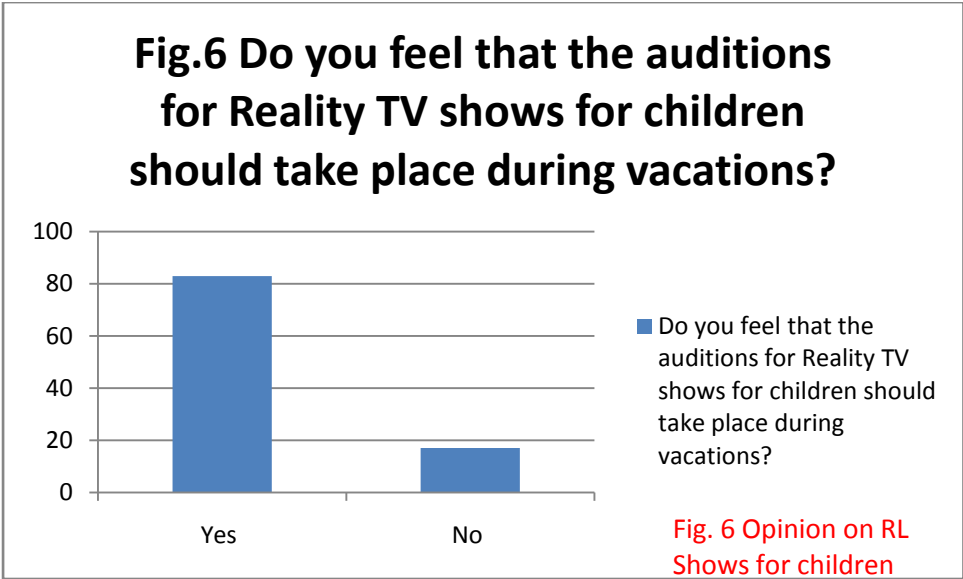
Highest percent of the respondents, i.e., 54 agreed with the statement that children should not be sent to participate in such shows as it hampers their studies(20 percent strongly agreed and 34 agreed) On being asked whether children gain real knowledge by participating in such shows , 44 percent agreed with the statement (20 percent strongly agreed and 24 agreed). (Please see Fig 7 below)

Fig. 7 Opinion on Reality Shows for children

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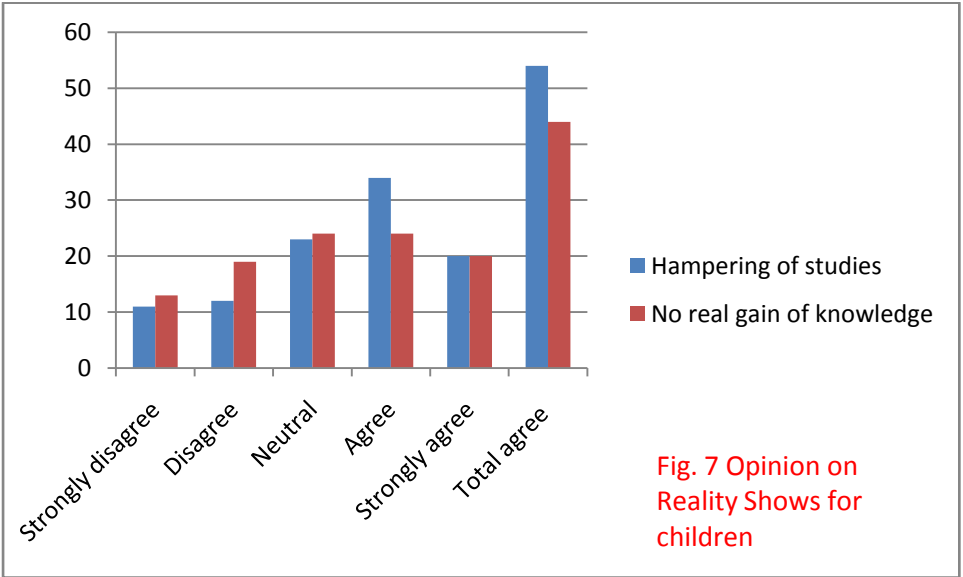
Suggestions for Improvement

Based on the reactions of the people towards TV Reality Shows, the respondents were asked to give their suggestions towards improving TV Reality Shows. The life span of the shows, certain sensitive topics handled in the shows, inviting professionals as judges, disclosing the geographic regions of participants, voting rights, etc., were the issues on which questions were asked.

The first thing that is of importance is the life span of TV Reality Shows for which highest per cent of the respondents i.e. 63 percent felt that it should be for 1-2 months. (Please see Fig 8 below)


Fig.8 Life span of RL Shows
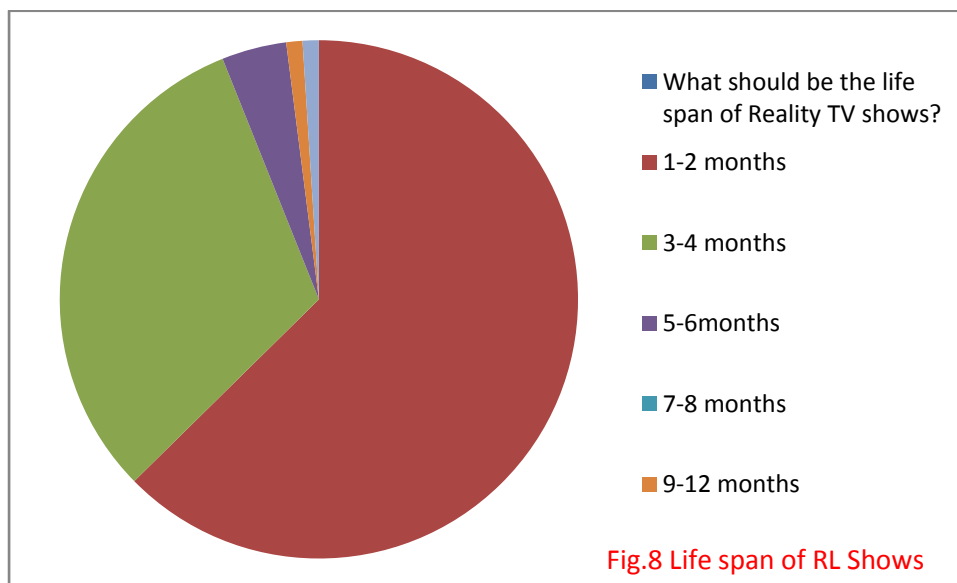
The next important suggestion with regard to marriages taking place as part of the competition on TV Reality Shows highest percent of the respondents. i.e. 89 felt that it should never be used as an issue in TV Reality Shows. (Please see Fig 9 below)

Fig.9 Issues that should never be used for RL Shows
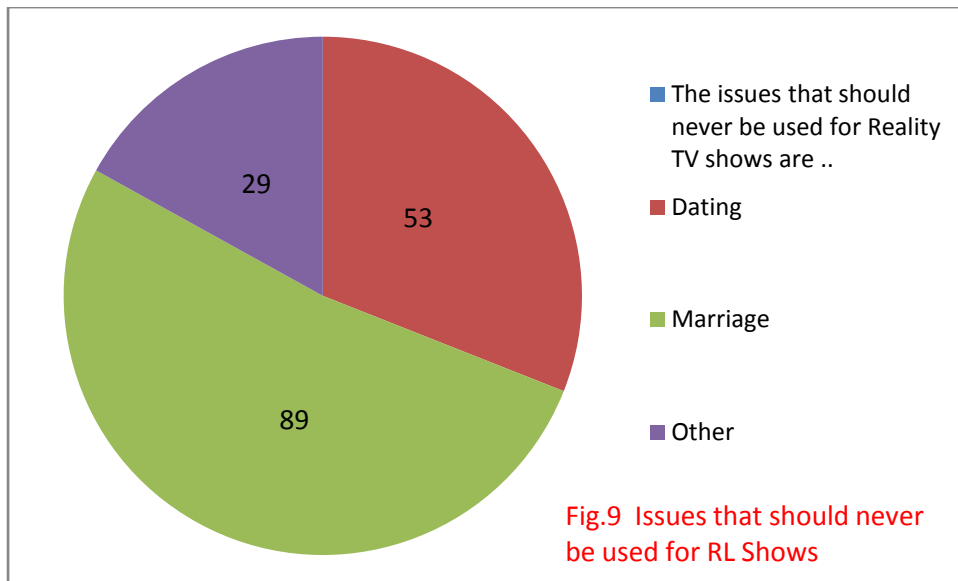
As far as existing methodologies are concerned to involve audience in TV Reality Shows 87 percent of the total (46 per cent strongly agreed and 41 per cent agreed) which is highest among the other suggestions agreed with the statement that to achieve fairness in talent based shows only professionals as judges should be invited. (Please see Fig 10 below)

Fig. 10 Invite only professionals as judges
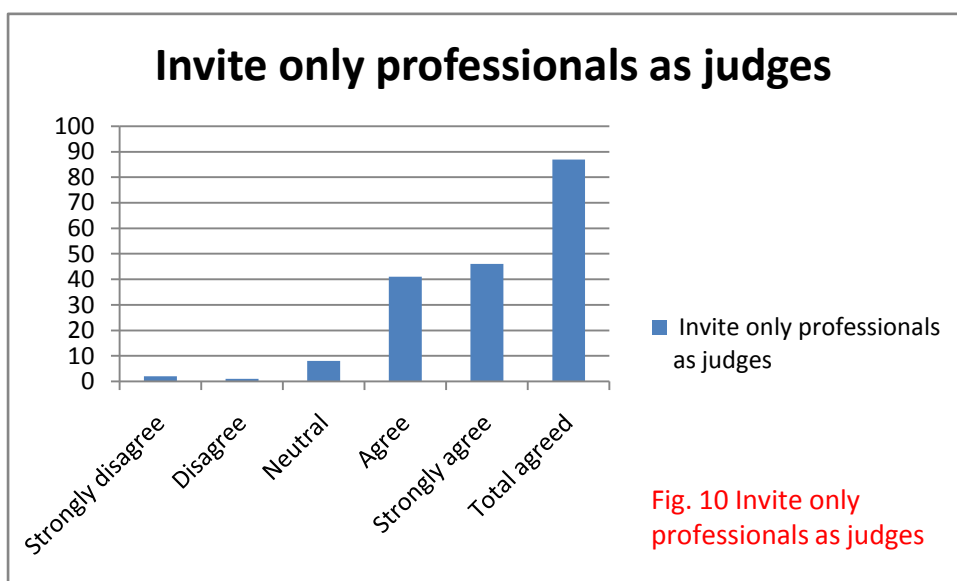
The next highest per cent of the total i.e. 64 (30% strongly agreed and 34% agreed) agreed with the statement that in order to achieve fairness contestant's place of residence should be hidden. Please see Fig 11 below)

Fig. 11 Hide the place of residence of contestants
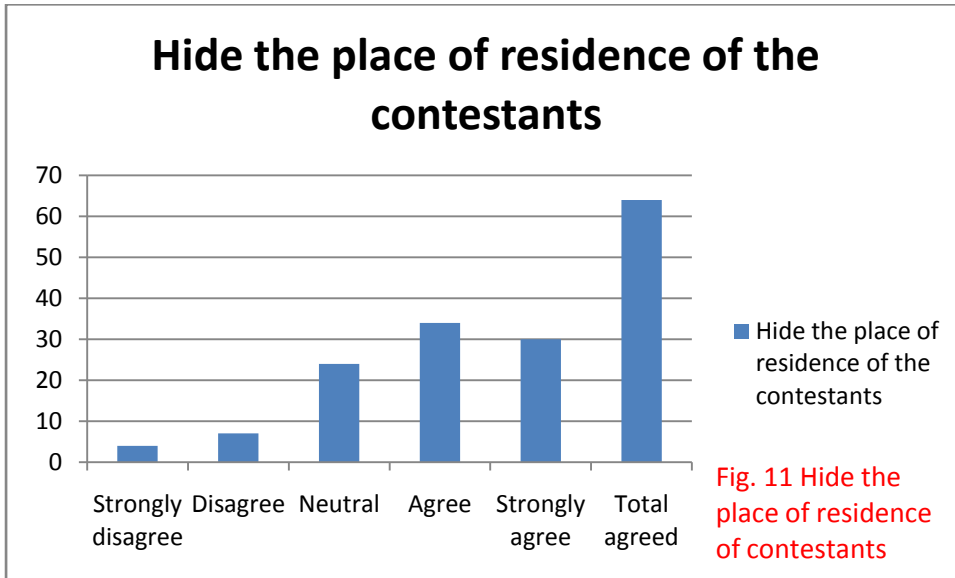
Lastly, 54 per cent of the total agreed (14% strongly agreed and 40% agreed) with the statement that ordinary but trained people should come as judges. (Please see Fig 12 below)

Fig. 12 Ordinary but trained people as judges for voting
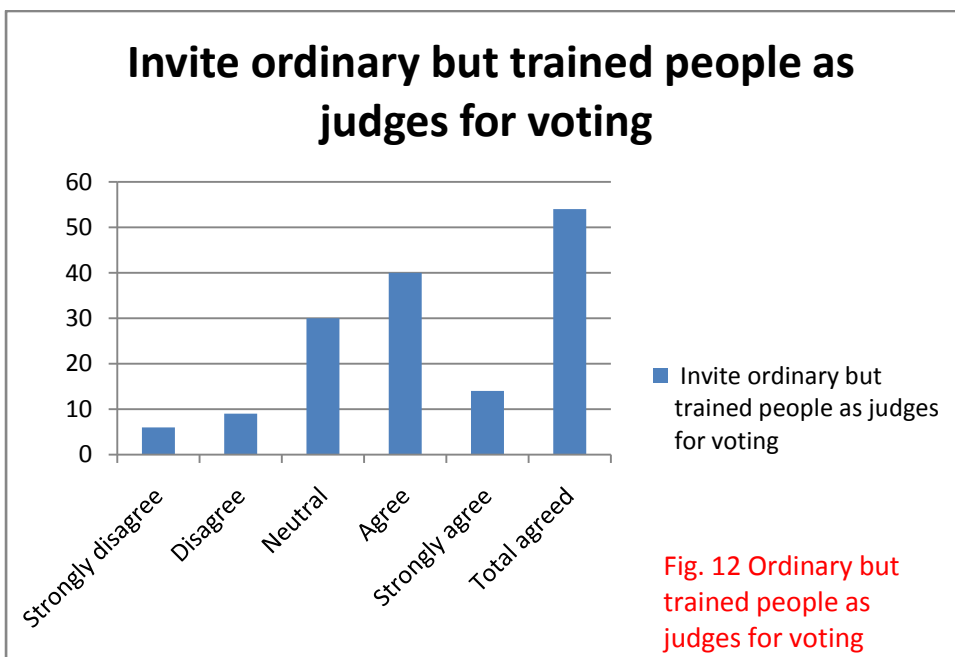
Thus system of voting needs to be improvised   as done in shows like *American Idol* where the judges who have expertise in singing do not have the power to vote when the field is narrow to top   25 contestants. A fall out of this could be that shows like *Indian Idol/ American Idol* which are talent based shows sometimes run the risk of becoming a popularity contest. (Astu, 2009, p .267). The second interesting factor which has emerged from the survey is that respondents dislike the voyeuristic nature of the show. Several studies suggest that viewers perceive reality programmes to be   voyeuristic and are drawn to this voyeuristic component of reality programs. Voyeur in the viewers looks for safe gaze in the exhibitioner as participants. (Baruh, 2009, p.195) Despite being drawn to the show for the voyeuristic element 47 per cent of the total dislike it. (25 per cent find it uninteresting and 22 per cent find it very uninteresting). Next question was related to the exhibitionistic nature of the participants. To a statement whether boldness displayed by the contestants in making new relations is justified maximum 39 per cent of the total disagreed with the statement with (28 per cent disagreed and 11 per cent strongly disagreed) (Please see Fig 13 below)

Fig. 13 Opinion on boldness of contestants
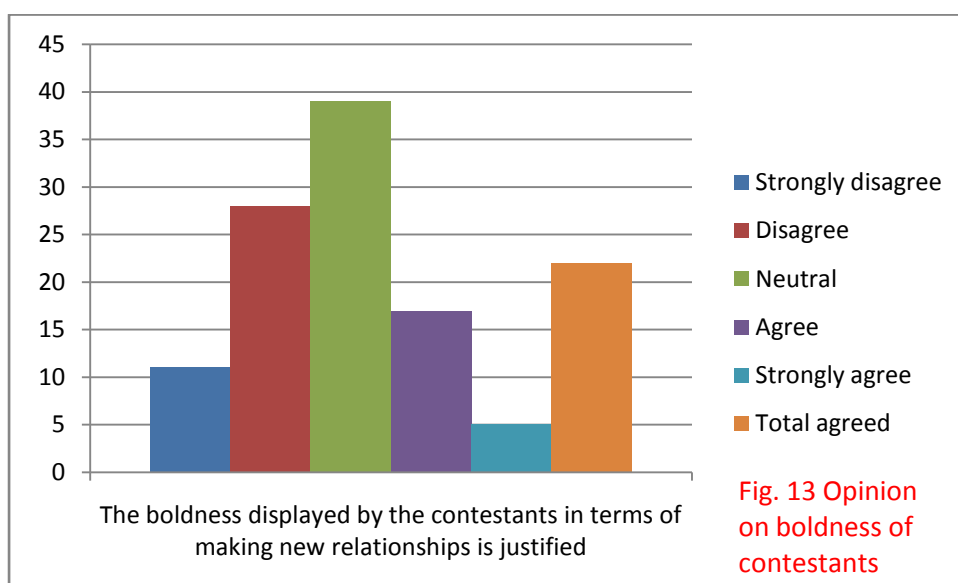
As per the survey result respondents have found unreal drama as the most distracting thing about TV Reality Shows.   However producers and editors generally try to have real moments in the show as waiting for the mask to drop is a popular viewing practice when watching shows like *Big Brother*. (June, 2010, p.5). The most traditional term for reality television is factual entertainment (Hill, 2005, p2). In other words, *factual entertainment is a hybrid genre that combines 'hard' values of information and realism characteristics of news and documentary 'with softer' more entertaining topics.* (Foster, 2009, p. 64).Thus the producers who have claimed to sell real entertainment in the name of Reality Television must not overplay events desiring to produce entertainment. This act of producers creates suspicion in the minds of the audience as 87 per cent of the total respondents agreed with the statement that the situation is exaggerated. Out of this 57 per cent which is again the highest per cent of the total strongly agreed and 30 per cent agreed. In addition, The Times of India in its survey identified that 83.5 per cent of the people felt that shows are scripted. Moreover, 79 per cent stated they should be more genuine (Olivera, 2010,p. 8) Thus audiences are aware that the settings and situations can be contrived to know that the people and stories feature on the shows are carefully selected and suspected that many of the events presented on the show are staged or manipulated by producers. [Hall, 2009, p516]. Nevertheless, the producers must make an attempt to gain the lost credibility of the show.

One important distraction for the respondents is the long duration of the show. 59 percent of the total agreed (34% agreed and 25% strongly agreed) with the fact that such shows have long duration. (Please see Fig.14 below)

Fig. 14 Duration of RL Shows
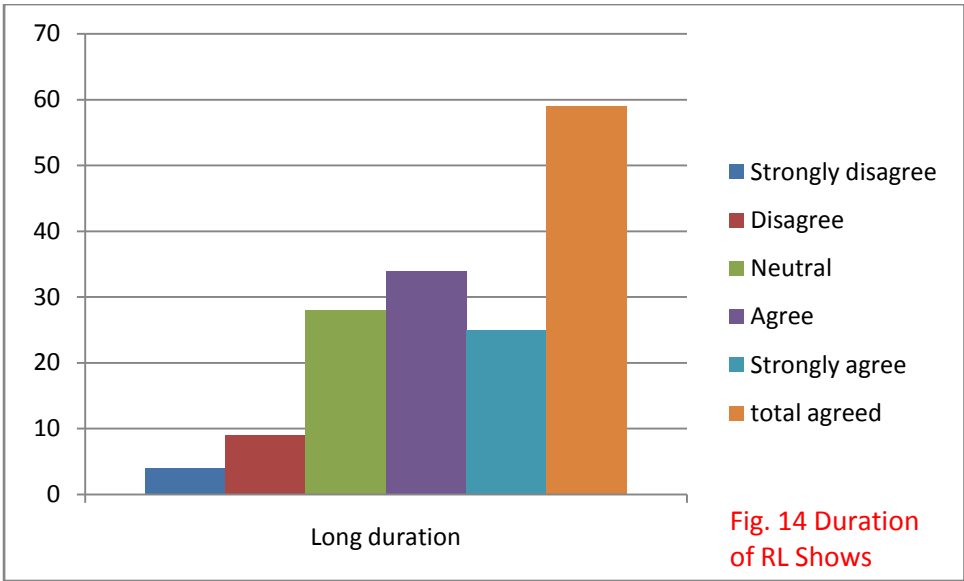
One factor that sets apart the TV Reality Shows from the others is that it has helped ordinary people in shedding their inhibitions. 48 per cent of the total agreed with the statement (38 % t agreed and 10% strongly agreed) (Please see Fig. 15 below)

Fig. 15 RL Shows helped in shedding inhibitions
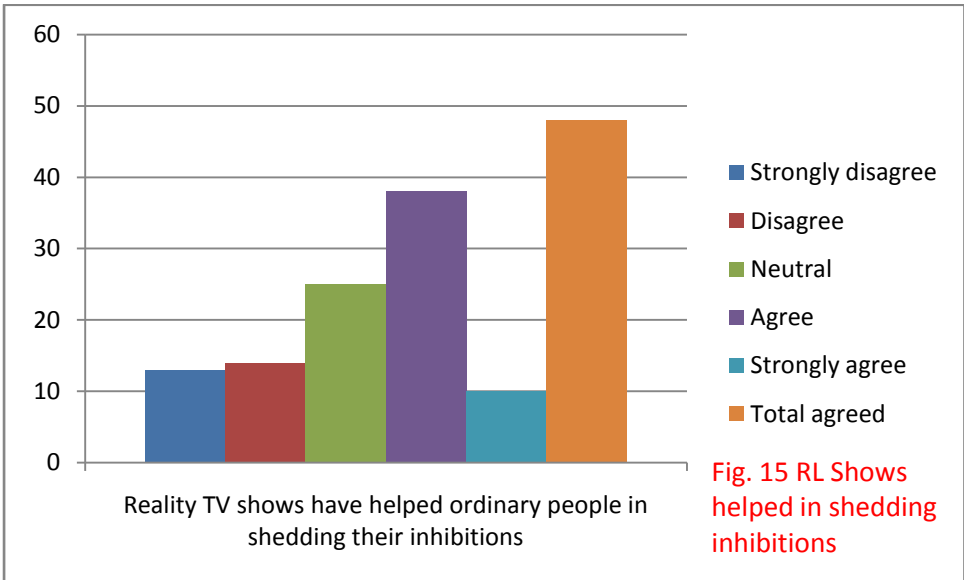
Saxena (2011, n.d. para2) reiterates this view by saying "Normal and ordinary families have executed *thumkas* and *jhatkas* in the show called *Rock N Roll*. In this show three generations of family danced together including dadajis and papajis. India has shed all its

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inhibitions and is ready to go where no Indian family has gone before".

Another section of the survey which focused on Reality shows for children has raised more questions than those answered earlier. The interview with the parents reflected their concerns regarding   the participation of children in such shows. Many students also raised concern over participation of the children in such shows. 70 per cent of the total disagreed with the idea of children participating in TV Reality Shows. (Please see Fig 16 below)

Fig. 16 Opinion on sending children for RL Shows
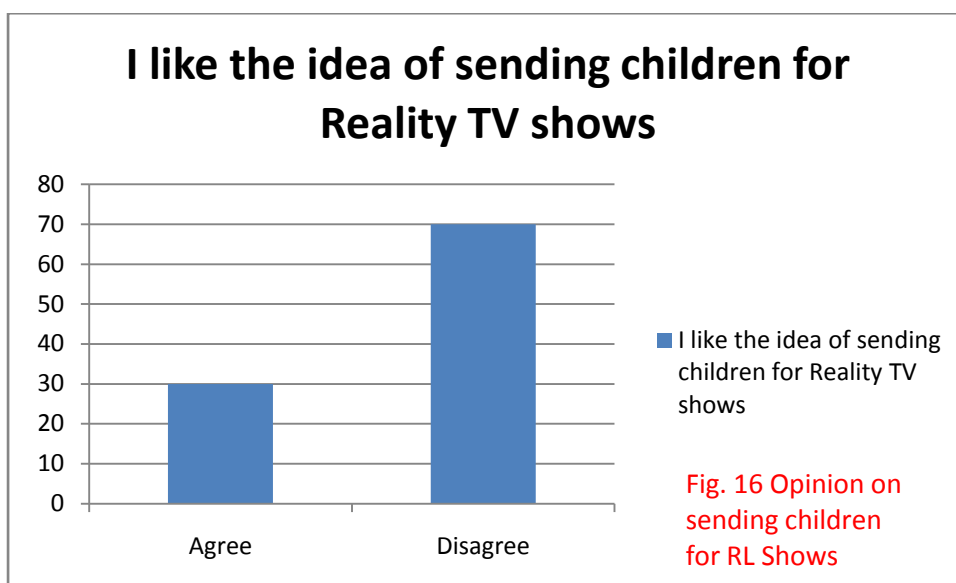
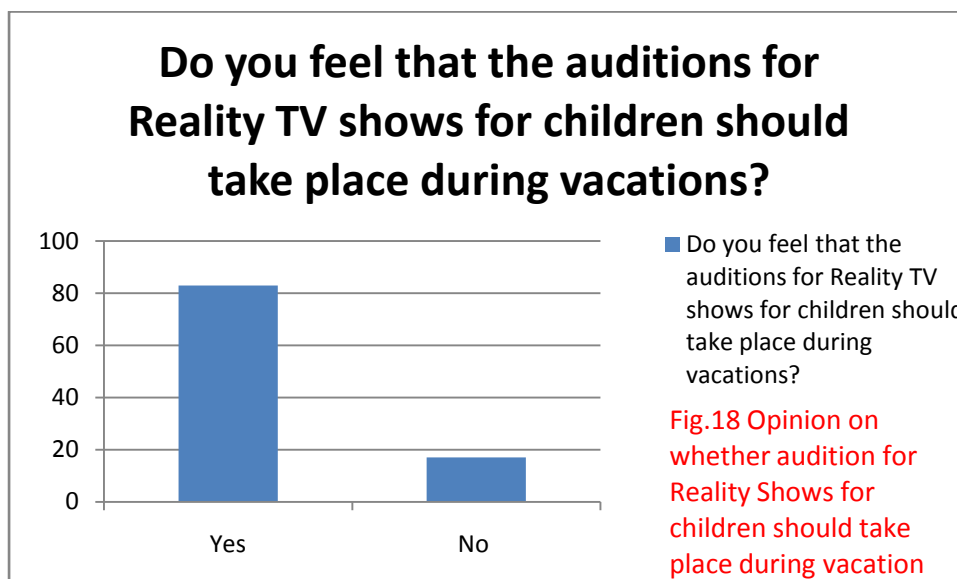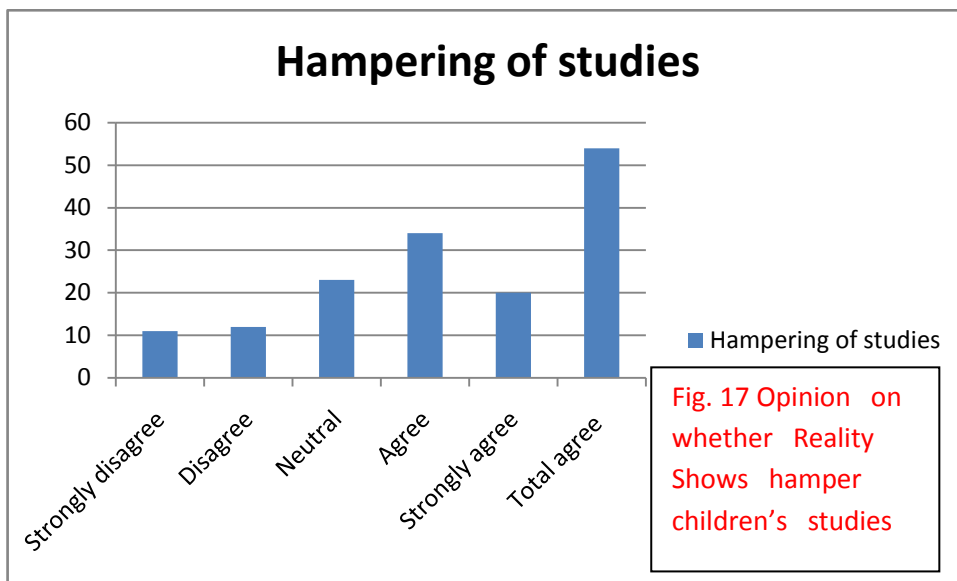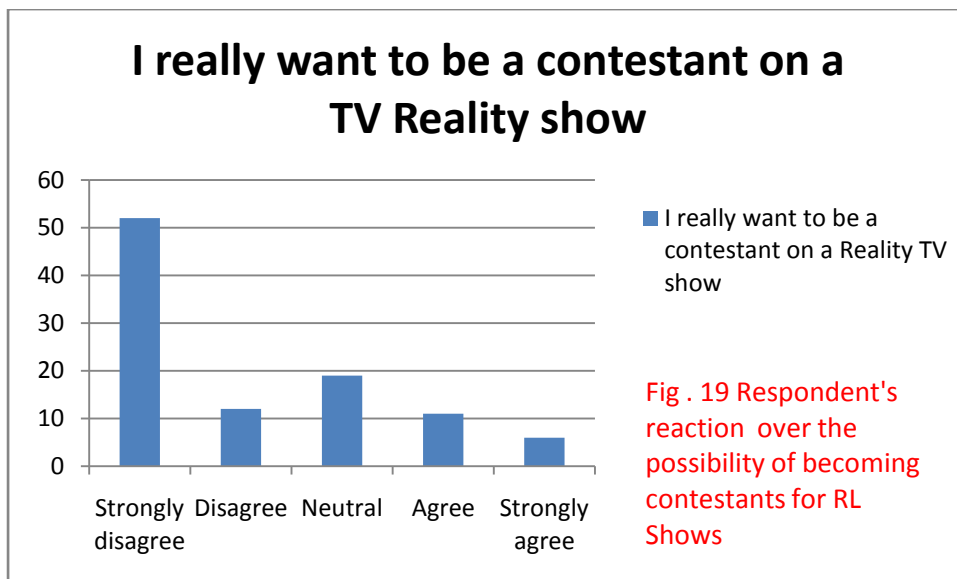 54 percent of the respondents totally agreed (34%   agreed and 20 % strongly agreed) that the TV Reality Shows hamper the children's studies. However, 83 % agreed with the view that the audition for such shows should take place during vacation. (Please see Fig. 17 and 18 below)

Hampering of studies

A bar chart titled "Hampering of studies" with the vertical axis ranging from 0 to 60. The categories on the horizontal axis are: Strongly disagree (≈11), Disagree (≈12), Neutral (≈23), Agree (≈34), Strongly agree (≈20), Total agree (≈54). Legend: Hampering of studies.

Fig. 17 Opinion on whether Reality Shows hamper children's studies

Do you feel that the auditions for Reality TV shows for children should take place during vacations?

A bar chart with vertical axis ranging from 0 to 100. Yes (≈83), No (≈17). Legend: Do you feel that the auditions for Reality TV shows for children should take place during vacations?

Fig.18 Opinion on whether audition for Reality Shows for children should take place during vacation

Discussion

Thus analysis of the survey indicate the apart from liking participation of the ordinary people in such shows, the respondents have reservations with almost all the practices adopted by the producers and editors for the popularity of TV Reality Shows. As a result, the television industry which has claimed to have made the consumer as prosumer who produce by consuming have to rethink about the methods calling forth the attention of the viewers in such programs.[Marie and Parmenter 2010 p 93] The practice of voting right has been

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disliked by the respondents. Thus the producers can bring novelty in the system by devising new methods like taking the average of the judge's decision and choosing common man but trained persons as judges for the show. Inclusion of common man as judges will rekindle their interest in the show as it would give them a chance to identify with common person as the judge. The next step would be to give viewers more moments of authenticity as this has been the main attraction of TV Reality Shows. To sum up there is nothing real about reality shows. Firstly we find that participants act before the camera some even try to imitate the contestants of the last season. For example Dolly Bindra *Big Boss* contestant season 4 set the yardstick for contestants of season 5. (Srivastava, 2011, p. 20). Dolly Bindra was so loud and crass that it led to her comparisons being made to late Jade Goody. (Singh 2010, p.13) Jade Goody's treatment of Shilpa Shetty in *Big Brother* house 7 led to worldwide debate about racism. (Singh, 2010, p 13). Secondly the reaction of the studio audience is far from being real as the audience that carries placards, hoots, claps and cries for their favourite contestants in TV Reality Shows is paid and gets a free meal. (Pal, 2010, p.9) In spite of all this the viewers watch these shows. For example *Big Boss* managed TRPs of 2.5 which were the highest for any show in the late-night show. ((Srivastava, 2011, p 20). In addition to this such shows also encourage young viewers betting money on the contestants. One college-goer earned Rs 30, 000 after winning the bet on the grand finale of *Big Boss 5*. (Wadhwa, 2010, p. 12) When everyone seems to making money what is the need to improvise the show. This need is felt for the viewers who watch the shows if not always but usually and sometimes and who do not want to be contestant on the shows. 65 per cent of the total disagreed with the statement that they want to be contestant on TV Reality Shows. (53 per cent strongly disagreed and 12 per cent disagreed.). (Fig 19)

I really want to be a contestant on a TV Reality show

Fig . 19 Respondent's reaction over the possibility of becoming contestants for RL Shows

Conclusions

Thus TV Reality Shows which many thought to be a passing whim has wielded greater influence on Television at the global, regional and national level. This phenomenon does not promote status quo [Kjus, 2009, p388] and hence the producers may have to rethink of the current practices calling forth the attention of the audience towards the shows. In fact, it is inappropriate for the   producers to rely only on TRPs as an estimate to know the interest of the audience. Audience ratings only tell how many viewers were exposed to specific programme content on particular TV channels in certain time slots. [Evala, 2008,   p27]. Thus it never takes into account the real interest of the audience. This study indicates that viewers have expressed dislike towards many popular practices like voting system, unhealthy competition, unreal drama, etc., even for popular shows like *MTV Roadies*. Many viewers tune into the show without having any interest in the show. Most of the producers might not have   tried to analyse the real interest of the audience. In addition, physical enumeration of the audience for broadcast media is impossible as audience are invincible to the producers who consume media products in cars, on public place and elsewhere. Thus measurement must depend on estimation but to be credible this has to be more reliable than mere guess

work. Hence broadcasters wanting audience must rely on estimates produced by sampling. [Starkly, 2004, p 16]. As this study has attempted to know the interest of the audience and to seek their views on various features of Hindi TV Reality Shows, it would enable the producers to rethink over the strategies towards involving the audience in the shows. In addition, it would also make the audience feel empowered   as their interests and suggestions can be incorporated in the shows.   Thus Hindi TV Reality shows can be improvised for the genuine viewers   and dispel the scepticism about Reality Television.

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