

Motivation and Impact of Viewing Reality Television Programme: An Audience Study

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Abstract

Background/Objectives: Reality Television Program (RTVP) is a more recent genre in India that has been growing steadily over the past few years. This paper identifies the potential audience of RTVP, their motives and the major impacts. **Methods:** This is a descriptive research, based on inquiry through 1040 structured questionnaire administered to television audience of Chennai district during 2014. The data was analyzed using IBM SPSS 20.0 statistical program with percentage analysis, average ranking method and factor analysis. **Findings:** The results revealed that the more number of young housewives prefer to watch RTVP with fun and entertainment element as a major ingredient. Further the major motivation to watch RTVP is the opportunity given to show case talented individuals and it becomes a platform for competition to face big challenges/dreams. The analysis further revealed that the RTVP have definitive impact on the audience in terms of emotional affiliation towards a contestant and planned viewing schedule to gratify their quench for camaraderie.

Keywords: Audience, Impact, India, Motivation, Reality Television Program

1. Introduction

Reality Television Program (RTVP) was made possible by the development of lightweight video recording equipment¹. Television companies have included more such programs because of the least cost in making. Many scholars and researches like Kilborn², Syvertsen³, Wells⁴, Andrejevic⁵, Delisle⁶, Nabi⁷, Hill⁸, Skeggs⁹, Wyatt¹⁰ and Deery¹¹ have defined RTVP in their works. For the present study RTVP can best be defined in a comprehensive way as the program which features 1. Non-actors, 2. Filmed in unscripted situations, 3. Where the contestants are behaving spontaneously, 4. With some level of producer/directors creative involvement in the program and 5. The documentation of the contestant's experience is not limited to particular moment, but it is comprehensive in capturing events. But the criteria for most of

the Indian RTVP are 1. It portrays the day-to-day life of the contestant that includes preparation and learning for the program, 2. It features the emotional as well as the lighter moments of the contestant. More specifically, they show the fear and reactions of the contestant about the competition and their views and opinion about the other contestant. 3. Contestant meetings with people and celebrities, the show's preparations and other backstage activities. 4. Celebrities, as judges, also make these shows more glamorous. More interestingly, judges are to give their opinions; the final decision about the contestant is in the hands of viewers. 5. Participation of viewers through phone voting is another aspect that helps these kinds of program earns a lot of money, popularity, as well as viewership¹².

Dennis McQuail¹³ segment the audience into three categories, they are: 'the structural tradition' of

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measuring audiences; 'the behaviorist tradition' concerned with the effects and uses of television; and 'the cultural studies tradition' focusing on the influence of social and cultural contexts of audience's in the processes of reception. Beyond the economic reasons for RTVP's success, it is important to learn the audience side; referred to variables or factors such as: social background, personal attributes; program-related needs; tastes and preferences; awareness of choices; and also chance as in the possibility of unplanned/unforeseen effects with the program.

2. Research Objective, Method, Sampling and Tools

2.1 Research Objective to Explore and Study the Potential Audience of RTVP

- To understand the factors which motivates the audience to watch RTVP and its impact on them.

2.2 Research Method and Sampling

This is a descriptive research based on survey method conducted during 2014. The present study is confined to Chennai district; the capital of Tamil Nadu, India. Chennai district comprises of 15 zones with a grand total of 200 wards. Out of the 15 zones, 5 zones namely Tiruvotiyur of North Chennai parliamentary constituency, Teynampet of Central Chennai constituency, Sholinganallur of South Chennai constituency, Madhavaram of Tiruvalur constituency and Valasaravakkam of Sriperumuthur Constituency have been selected for the present study. This makes a total of 66 wards representing the important zones of Chennai metropolis covering almost all the major class of people and geographic representations. The sample size of the study is 1040 respondents. From each selected zone, 208 respondents have been selected purposively.

2.3 Tools for Data Analysis

The required data have been collected from the respondents using the well structured questionnaire consist of 45 questions. The questionnaire is divided into 4 sections. After the data collection, the data have been put into tabulation, consolidation and data analysis. Percentage analysis, average ranking method and factor analysis are the statistical tools applied with the help of IBM SPSS 20.0.

3. Research Findings

3.1 General Characteristics of Respondents

General characteristics of respondents are shown in Table 1. The majority of the respondents (i.e. 40.67%) are under the age group of 21 to 30 years and minimum number of respondents (i.e. 2.50%) is in the age group of above 60 years. The majority of the respondents (i.e. 50.67%) are educated up to school level and minimum number of respondents (i.e. 5.68%) are professionals. The majority of the respondents (i.e. 43.46%) are housewives and minimum numbers of respondents (i.e. 15.77%) are doing business.

Table 1. General characteristics of respondents (N = 1040)

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age:		
Upto 20	198	19.04
21-30	423	40.67
31-40	196	18.85
41-50	126	12.11
51-60	71	6.83
Above 60	26	2.5
Total	1040	100
Educational Qualification:		
Uneducated	57	5.48
School level	527	50.67
U.G.level	272	26.15
P.G.level	125	12.02
Professional	59	5.68
Total	1040	100
Occupation:		
Student	233	22.40
Salaried	191	18.37
Business	164	15.77
Housewife	452	43.46
Total	1040	100

3.2 RTVP Ingredients and Characteristics

Average ranking technique has been applied to rank the major ingredients and characteristics of RTVP as summarized in Table 2. Based on the weights, total scores have been calculated. Subsequently, the ranks have been

Table 2. RTVP ingredients and characteristics (N=1040)

Factors	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total	Mean	Rank
Entertainment	192	256	158	154	138	142	1040		
Score	1152	1280	632	462	276	142	3944	3.79	II
Fun	294	272	138	112	118	106	1040		
Score	1764	1360	552	336	236	106	4354	4.19	I
Drama	180	129	138	228	197	168	1040		
Score	1080	645	552	684	394	168	3523	3.39	VI
Suspense	183	194	189	152	158	164	1040		
Score	1098	970	756	456	316	164	3760	3.62	III
Reality	189	188	193	134	174	162	1040		
Score	1134	940	772	402	348	162	3758	3.61	IV
Excitement	184	162	188	168	162	176	1040		
Score	1104	810	752	504	324	176	3670	3.53	V

allotted according to average ranking scores. Fun ingredient of RTVP is ranked first because of its highest total score of 4354 and mean of 4.19, Entertainment with the total score of 3944 and mean of 3.79 being second, third rank is given to suspense as its total score is 3760 and mean is 3.62, Dramatic characteristics are rated with the lowest total score of 3523 and mean of 3.39 and it is ranked as sixth among the given ingredients of RTVP.

3.3 Attributes of Motivation to Watch RTVP

The attributes of motivation are by and large opinioned by the viewers of RTVP on the basis of the implicit variables like. 1. It offers necessary confidence to dream big to face Challenges, 2. It creates trends to accommodate ambitions, 3. It cuts down the artistic barriers, 4. It's a platform to showcase another side of the participants' persona, 5. It provides a platform for talent contestants, 6. It's highly lucrative, 7. It keeps everyone glue towards the program, 8. It has an emotional appeal to it, 9. It's certainly the RTVP, 10. It's highly competitive, 11. It improvises on a talent hunt, 12. It introduces the new popular artiste, 13. It distinguishes among the other programs, 14. It identifies talented people, 15. It creates positive impact on the society, 16. It fetches laurels to the participants and 17. It has always right panel of judges. The aforementioned variables are considered as important. For grouping the variables which were likely to motivate the RTVP, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis has been adopted. The responses of sample on the attributes of motivation towards RTVP are obtained on a five-point scale and the

analysis reveals the following factors and it shown in the Table 3.

Table 3. Varimax rotated analytic results of motivation towards RTVP

Attributes	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
It offers necessary opportunities/ confidence to dream big to face challenges	.795				
It creates trends to accommodate ambitions	.765				
It cuts down the artistic barrier	.697				
It's a platform to showcase another side of the participants' persona		.651			
It provides a platform for talent contestant's		.647			
It's highly lucrative			.637		
It keeps everyone glue towards the program			.616		
It has an emotional appeal to it			.614		
It's certainly the RTVP			.603		

It's highly competitive			.596		
It improvises on a talent hunt				.593	
It introduces the new popular artiste				.590	
It distinguishes among the other program's				.588	
It identifies talented people				.586	
It creates positive impact on the society					.584
It fetches laurels to the participants					.572
It has always right panel of judges					.568

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

The factor 1 with the highest total variance explained value has been grouped and interpreted as 'opportunities and confidence' due to its inclusion of scale items identified and adopted from academic literature surroundings regarding the factors of motivation towards RTVP as displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Factors loading for opportunities and confidence

It offers necessary opportunities/ confidence to dream big to face challenges	.795
It creates trends to accommodate ambitions	.765
It cuts down the artistic barrier	.697

The scale items that load on to factor 2 is related to. It's a platform to showcase another side of the participants' persona has been identified as the factor of the present research data with the second highest percentage of the total variance explained. The second factor has been grouped and interpreted as 'Talent – Showcase' and it is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Factors loading for talent – showcase

It's a platform to showcase another side of the participants' persona	.651
It provides a platform for talent contestant's	.647

The scale items that load on to factor 3 is RTVP is 'highly lucrative' and it has been identified as the factor of the present research data with the third highest percentage of the total variance explained. This third factor has been grouped and interpreted as 'Rewarding and competitiveness' and displayed in Table 6.

Table 6. Factors loading for rewarding and competitiveness

It's highly lucrative	.637
It keeps everyone glue towards the programme	.616
It has an emotional appeal to it	.614
It's certainly the RTVP	.603
It's highly competitive	.596

3.4 Impact of RTVP on Audience

The impact of RTVP on audience has been analyzed. The attributes are opinioned by the viewers on the basis of the assumed variables like. 1. I like the competitive spirit of different participants in RTVP, 2. I get emotionally involved with any of the contestant, 3. I often notice and comment on the characters, personalities, dress or appearance of a contestant, 4. I comment on things that happened in RTVP, 5. I feel that the show is not going in a right path as I think or expect, 6. I wish that I could swap places and be a contestant myself, 7. I always feel happy for the contestant and like to play the role of the judges, 8. I get upset when people say negative things about my favorite contestant, 9. I wish or pray for my favorite contestant for a better performance, 10. I get upset when my favorite contestant is eliminated, 11. I have my favorite contestant's performance as my caller tune or message alert, 12. I feel that RTVP distracts me, even for a short time, from my own life reality, 13. I usually plan to watch RTVP episode from beginning to end, 14. I have the habit of viewing the missed episodes through internet source, 15. I have the habit of watching the re-telecast of the same episode which I watched earlier, 16. I feel that the program provides me a sense of companionship and 17. I eagerly wait for particular program's next season. The response of sample on the attributes of impact towards RTVP is obtained on a five-point scale and the analysis reveals the following factors, which are shown in the Table 7.

Table 7. Principal component analysis of impact of RTVP on audience

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction sums of Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.007	41.2176471	41.217647	7.007	41.217647	41.217647	1.116	6.5647	6.56471
2	3.105	18.264706	59.482353	3.105	18.264706	59.482353	1.038	6.10588	12.67058
3	1.57	9.23529412	68.717647	1.57	9.2352941	68.717647	7.896	46.44705	59.11763
4	1.364	8.02352941	76.741177	1.364	8.0235294	76.741177	7.896	13.41764	72.53527
5	1.083	6.37058824	83.111765	1.083	6.3705882	83.111765	1.798	10.57649	83.111765
6	0.518	3.04705882	86.158824						
7	0.494	2.90588235	89.064706						
8	0.472	2.77647059	91.841177						
9	0.394	2.31764706	94.158824						
10	0.305	1.79411765	95.952941						
11	0.219	1.28823529	97.241177						
12	0.182	1.07058824	98.311765						
13	0.173	1.01764706	99.329412						
14	0.075	0.44117647	99.770588						
15	0.024	0.14117647	99.911765						
16	0.008	0.04705882	99.958824						
17	0.007	0.04117647	100						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

There are five factors, with 'Eigen values' exceeding 1 for the impact of RTVP, which is represented in the above table. The Eigen values of the five factors are 1.116, 1.038, 7.896, 7.896 and 1.798 respectively. The percentage of total variance is used as an index to find out how well the total factor solution accounts for which the variables jointly represent. It is good extraction as number of factors has been reduced from 17 to 5, though 16.888% information content was lost for the factors which make an impact towards RTVP. The percentage of variance elucidates the 5 factors for the impacts of RTVP are 6.56470, 6.10588, 46.44705, 13.41764 and 10.57649 respectively. The Table 8 demonstrates that five factors are obtained and maintained. The communality is 0.667 for variable 1, 0.771 for variable 2 and so on. It means that 83.111765 % of the variance of variable 1 is being captured by the five extracted factors together. The proportion of variance in any one of the original variables, which is being captured by the extracted factor, is known as communality¹⁴.

Each factor needs to be assigned a name or label to characterize it and its interpretation¹⁵. The factor 1 with the highest total variance explained value has been grouped and interpreted as 'emotional involvements and feeling towards RTVP' and the same have been displayed in Table 9.

I usually plan to watch RTVP episode from beginning to end have been identified as the factor of second highest percentage of the total variance. The second factor can be grouped and interpreted as 'consistent plans and habits towards watching RTVP'. The Table 10 depicts the same.

Comments on competitive spirit, appearance, comments and role have been identified as the factor of the present research data with the third highest percentage of the total variance explained. This third factor has been interpreted as 'comments on competitive spirit, concept and role' due to its inclusion of scale items identified and adopted from academic literature surroundings regarding the impact of RTVP as displayed in Table 11.

Table 8. Varimax rotated analytic results of impact of RTVP on audience

Attributes	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
I get emotionally involved with any of the contestant	.799				
I feel that the show is not going in a right path as I think or expect	.787				
I get upset when people say negative things about my favorite contestant	.756				
I get upset when my favorite contestant is eliminated	.745				
I wish or pray for my favorite contestant for a better performance	.732				
I usually plan to watch RTVP episode from beginning to end		.693			
I have the habit of viewing the missed episodes through internet source		.590			
I have the habit of watching the re-telecast of the same episode which I watched earlier		.587			
I have my favorite contestant's performance as my caller tune or message alert		.585			
I like the competitive spirit of different participants in RTVP			.545		
I often notice and comment on the characters, personalities, dress or appearance of a contestant			.532		
I comment on things that happened in RTVP			.529		
I always feel happy for the contestant and like to play the role of the judges				.527	
I feel the program provides me a sense of companionship				.522	
I eagerly wait for particular program next season				.518	
I wish that I could swap places and be a contestant myself					.514
I feel that RTVP distracts me, even for a short time, from my own life reality					.511

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Table 9. Impact factors loading for emotional involvements and feeling towards RTVP

I get emotionally involved with any of the contestant	.799
I feel that the show is not going in a right path as I think or expect	.787
I get upset when people say negative things about my favorite contestant	.756
I get upset when my favorite contestant is eliminated	.745
I wish or pray for my favorite contestant for a better performance	.732

All the grouped impacts of RTVP on audience are further worked and a three factor model has been created and Figure 1 illustrates the major impact of RTVP on audience.

Table 10. Impact factors loading for consistent plans and habits towards watching RTVP

I usually plan to watch RTVP episode from beginning to end	.693
I have the habit of viewing the missed episodes through internet source	.590
I have the habit of watching the re-telecast of the same episode which I watched earlier	.587
I have my favorite contestant's performance as my caller tune or message alert	.585

4. Discussion

With the growing scope, RTVP is mandatory and become a major phenomenon in entertainment television programming in India. For RTVP, the major class of audience (above 40%) is young adults ranging from 21 - 30 years. It is obvious that during their teen age the RTVP

Table 11. Impact factors loading for the comments on competitive spirit, concept and role towards watching RTVP

I like the competitive spirit of different participants in RTVP	.545
I often notice and comment on the characters, personalities, dress or appearance of a contestant	.532
I comment on things that happened in RTVP	.529

migrated from west; typically from UK and USA to India. Channel V's *Popstars* (2002) talent hunt for making of a musical band was the first reality show in India¹⁶. Housewives with basic education have turned out to be the major audience for RTVP.

From this work, it is understood that the audience get exposed to RTVP to get amused and to have fun and entertainment. The same have been endorsed by Oh¹⁷ as “people who are highly motivated by entertainment elements are more likely to expose themselves to media

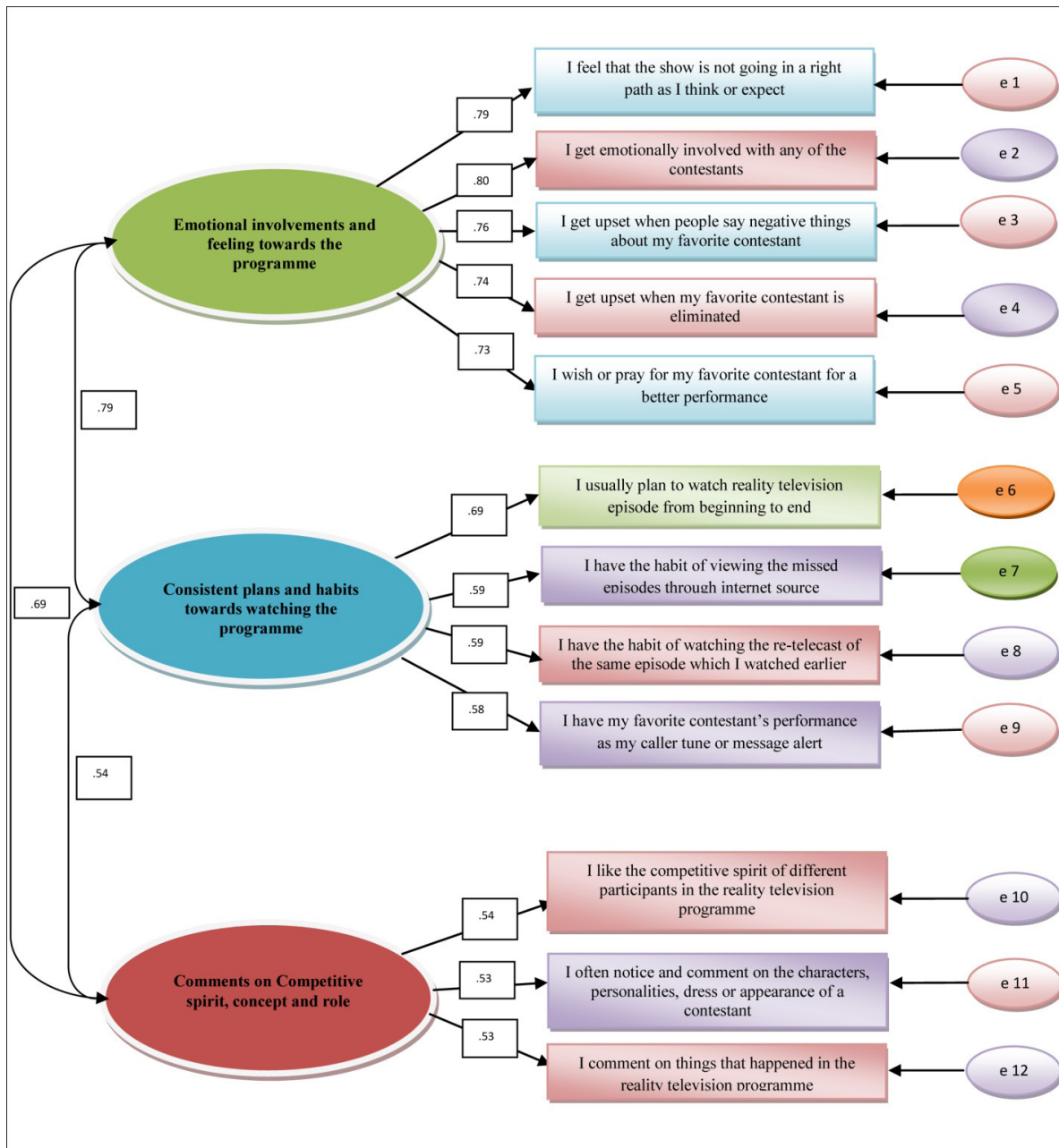


Figure 1. Three factor model depicting the major factors of impact on RTVP audience.

contents". The fun element of RTVP has been ranked as first and major ingredient with highest score of 4354 and mean of 4.19. As Nabi⁷ says that people watch reality programs because they enjoy watching real people instead of actors. So it can be interpreted as the house wives are probably making a paradigmatic shift from viewing soap operas to non-fiction programming like RTVP.

The study result indicates that the RTVP has been a platform to show case talented individuals, an opportunity to dream big; much like sports, which give the audience higher impression and interest¹⁸ and further it rewards and create competitiveness among talent. Unlike the concept of RTVP of western countries focusing more on endurance of a competitor rather than showcasing their talents. The top attributes of motivation to watch RTVP are the necessary opportunity and confidence given to a competitor to face big challenges, to accommodate higher ambition and to break the barriers to excel. Comparatively the lucrative benefits have been rated less when it is compared to the opportunity received by the contestant to perform his/her skill. The above attributes gratifies the audience in one way or another. Barton¹⁹ indicated that the content of RTVP influenced the gratifications obtained. This study identifies that RTVP audience get glued with the content of the program. i.e the contestant's performance, comments and elimination makes a great impact on them. This referred as attitude that establishes the feelings towards a particular person²⁰. Here the emotional involvement is evident. This results in prayers and good wish for their favorite contestant's performance and the foremost impact is the elimination of their favorite contestant channelized to negative moods. Further viewers see a character/contestant that they believe they can relate to, thus they create an "engagement" to "new desire" corresponding to "quasi-friendship" which exists in the internal depth²¹ of the audience; in turn creates the parasocial relationship that attaches them to the program and creates successful programming²².

The deeper level of impact found in this study is RTVP viewers schedule their time to watch complete episode of a program from start to end. As Altheide²³ point out, we often schedule our lives around the television, making a point to be home at certain times on certain evenings to watch our favorite programs. Additionally, it was found that the audience creates the habit of viewing missed episodes through internet source. In modern society, ICT and many technologies have converged the television content easier and accessible. Watching the re-telecast

of the same episode of RTVP which was watched earlier and making a favorite contestant's performance as caller tune or message alerts have to be looked into a serious affiliation of an audience towards entertainment television content. These kinds of impact are some time known as a base for aggression, risky characteristics of depression. According to Andrejevic⁵, RTVP promotes the idea that audience's can go beyond the role of a spectator to become participant and in some occasions the main character itself.

5. Evaluation

This study is significantly meaningful in identifying and providing provision of baseline data inspiring and appropriate to learn the viewing habits of RTVP's in India. Moreover the current study is important in illuminating the characteristics of RTVP audience and the effects on them.

From this study it is understood that RTVP, gives ample opportunities and harvest's real talent, which makes the audience to become a loyal viewer; who schedule there routine accordingly and to be available to watch their favorite contestant's performance on television and through online without fail. This study further address the Indian television audience are slowly shifting from dragging series narrative of soap operas to the non fictional programming like RTVP with fun and entertainment has a major ingredient. The significant impact reported in this study, is that the recurring exposure to RTVP which makes the audience to become a fan of a particular contestant and assign their performance as caller tune or message alert on their mobile phones.

6. Conclusion

The main purpose of the study is to understand the motivational factors to watch RTVP has been successfully identified and further the impacts on the audience in viewing RTVP is also found. Through this study it was evident that RTVP audience gets gratified and lots of affirmative outcomes have been reported.

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