

Reality tv shows in the arab world



Reality TV: the Reality that is Globalized

Media Research Methods

Arab satellite television stations have recognized themselves now as one of the major sources for information for the Arab world for they are demanding the domination of the American media. Television broadcasting in the Arab world goes back to the mid-1950s when on-governmental air operations were launched in Morocco, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. In almost all Arab countries, television services were subordinated to ministries of information or other government bodies, therefore revolving into executive mouthpieces of regime policies as well as into outlets of public civilizing look. By the end of the 1980s, the Arab world TV domination representation began to practice key cracks with the foundation of more independent television organizations in more than a few of Arab countries and the increase of profitable television service besides government spreading.

One of the significant developments in the Arab television picture in the 1990s has been the disintegrated of a 40-year government domination representation of broadcasting in the Arab world. The model habitually derives from the idea of broadcasting as a device of public growth that is supposed to be positioned below the government control. In service within ministries of information, television organizations for the majority piece were funded completely from nationwide budgetary allocations and their recruits were viewed as element of state-owned establishment. Moreover, the entry of marketable broadcasters with gigantic technological and monetary possessions into the Arab world television prospect has been a central improvement. In September 1991, Arab audiences had their first experience

of confidential satellite television when MBC went on the air from studio services in London with Western-styled indoctrination. More secretive broadcasters followed outfit: Orbit in 1994, ART in 1995, LBC and Future Television in 1995, and Al-Jazeera from Qatar in 1996.

The Arab world Television stations had developed too much by the end of the 90's, for the huge and remarkable development era was during 2002 and 2003. The Arab nation since then had decreased the interest in watching news and documentaries, becoming addicted instead to the new trend known as " Reality TV". Since 2003 and something new was occurring in the Arab world. Millions of families have closed themselves up in their homes, eyes glued to the TV monitor when the shows begin! The Reality TV had changed several characteristics of the TV broadcast image and content since it occurred, for it is an interesting phenomenon to be focused on to know more about it. Reality TV in the Arab world is built on certain basics which affects the traditions and cultures of the Arabian societies in different ways.

1. The History and The Rise of Reality TV

In the past, television programs were built up to be for all family members, however nowadays most of the TV shows and mostly the Reality TV ones are built on the bases of an audience made up of females teenagers and housewives. Reality TV has a historical background that should be focused on in order to know how it arrived to the Arab world countries.

Moreover, the rise of reality TV came at a point when networks were in search of a rapid secure way out to financial troubles within the cultural industries. Enlarged expenses in the fabrication of drama, sitcom and

comedy ensured unscripted, accepted realistic programming became a feasible financial alternative throughout the 1900s (Hill, 2005). Reality TV has its ancestry in scandalous journalism and popular entertainment, but it owes its supreme money owing to documentary television, which has nearly vanished from television screens in the get up of popular realistic programming. Also, there are three major strands to the progress of popular realistic television, and these relate to three areas of different, and so far overlapping, areas of media fabrication: sensationalist journalism, documentary television, and well-liked entertainment (Biressi & Nunn, 2005).

The apprehension about reality TV as putting a finish period to documentary includes the claim that modern television or decision about the world that documentary is seen to have occupied, and therefore lacking hope for the setting up of meaning (Bignell, 2005). The quarrel for an apocalyptic finish of television history is reliant on comparing Reality TV to documentary's past but differentiates Reality TV from that past and makes it look like a split growth. Furthermore, Reality TV seems to drift liberated of the past, obtainable in a nonstop present, and therefore looks to its critics like a reckless television type.

As an observation of the growth of a "live on air" television production in the 60s, it's obvious that programmers started producing traditional dramatic works of Arab and world literature, but they also started looking at Western shows for either motivation or stealing. By the '80s, the main successes were Arabian versions of primarily European and American shows. In the '90s, it became ordinary for the perception of a Western show, its privileges and invention bible, to be bought and locally reproduced for local use.

The rise of Reality TV in the Arab world was in 2003, the program Super Star rapidly became the majority important show of that period. It was broadcasted on Future TV, where by Super Star attempted a clear Pan-Arab explore for the next star singer, by means of casting calls, adjudicators, and live performances, and the audience's right to take part in the ballot.

2. The bases that are built on for the concept of Reality TV

The principle of program scheduling is to arrange television performance time donating programs that will lift up ratings at meticulous periods of the day. In a broadcasting ethnicity with several channels, the plan enables channels to contend with each other for audiences by scheduling their programs considering what their competitors will be presenting. Reality TV programs are merely commercial and flourishing if they keep on giving reasons for their expenses and catch the attention of the audience over a comparatively extended run (Escoffery, 2006). The guarantee that a long-lasting series has on holding onto the viewers for a period of the program's run which offers the vision of a reliable viewers whose demographic demand and a mass may be eye-catching to advertisers and can lift up the broadcasting channel's public profile. Schedulers offer recommendations to commissioning are prepared (Andrejevic, 2004).

The last day of December 2003 witnessed the labor of the most successful Arab reality show formed in Lebanon: Star Academy. Following " Endemol" the production company format for the French version, Star Academy's group recognized a grouping of talented Arabs and invited them to participate in the Academy, where they lived and skilled to become star singers. A " graduation progression" permitted the instructors at the

academy to suggest two candidates and the public would vote for one of them to stay in the Academy. Joe Khalil, director and executive producer in several Arabian TV stations for more than 12 years, said in Nov. 23, 2009 that Star Academy extended the restrictions of reality television for the reason of its extraordinary fame and because it represented a complete realization of a promotion and marketing prospective. Possibly the show's major effect, nevertheless, remains its reliable audience faithfulness to both the " prime" episodes as well as the 24-hour enthusiastic channel.

For most of the Reality Shows and especially Star Academy, the concept is based on celebrities and primes for which every Friday there is a celebrity that has to attend the prime and sing with the participants. For commercial purposes and for it to be more popular Rola Saad the executive producer of Star Academy intend to get international celebrities in the same prime collaborating with Arabian Celebrities.

For Star Academy rules of participation is to accept living in the same place with people from the opposite sex, and to swim together in the same swimming pool, and to train sports and dancing together, and the most important is to accept to build up love relationships for some participants. For example, Star Academy chose last season Michel Azzi to be in love with Tania Nemer, the crew of Star Academy had discusses this case with Michel whereby he accepted in order to stay till the last prime, and this was what truly happened.

3. The Globalization and the Privacy publicized in the Reality TV

Globalization of communication in the second half of the twentieth century was determined by the commercial benefit of United States corporations. Conservative local cultures are believed to be tattered by dependencies on media products, with their helping ideologies resulting from the United States, with the impact of globalizing customer way of life across regions and populations which turn out to be inhibited to get used to its logics and needs, regardless of the need in some of these regions of possessions to contribute with them (Bignell, 2005). What happens in the communication of globalization is a move from opinions for the homogeneity of media customs to opinions for the homogeneity of political financial system of the media, regardless of provincial and neighborhood differences in the intellectual forms which the media receive.

The programmers formulate public the dramas of the individual and carry the ideologies of privacy exposed into new interaction with the negotiated meanings they gain from their meticulous local and provincial television contexts. The type of program develops new conceptions of the open and secret spheres and also draws on discourses of body and self those have already been in circulation in such spheres as popular magazine journalism, optional medicinal measures, and lifestyle-interview television programs (Bignell, 2005). The cultural nationality that these programs reply to displays a challenging cooperation between the plan of the perfectibility of the identity and the institutions, socio-economic constraints and networks of domestic and social dealings that limit it.

Television programs have been worried with the capability of television to tolerate observation to the varieties of usual people's lives, and its ability to become a medium for the community exposure of confessions and revelations that seem incapable to be shared with a person's close sphere (Biressi & Nunn, 2005). Star Academy is a distinguished case of this style, in which young people are usually paraded on screen and where the issue of how far the contestants will go in their close relations with each other is a big element of their appeal for audiences. Noticeably, the transitional spread of this mixture of the private body and shared moral challenges and tests, is the medium for financial action inasmuch as the television formats occupied are traded supplies, and the appeal of audiences promotes profitable well being for television institutions in a diversity of ways.

4. Audience Perceptions of Reality TV

Audiences most of the times consider Reality TV is there so that viewers can see for themselves, and get an unmediated imminent into some phase of life and manners. Audiences are pessimistic about the reality claims of Reality TV programs, set programs beside a range between reality and fiction, and provide the most admiration to what they distinguish as the most truthful programs. Moreover, the incidence at the present time of huge number of Reality TV programs in the schedules has not enlarged viewing hours, so audiences obviously do not rate Reality TV any more than the programs that they have replaced. If Reality TV had a particular position within the audiences, the viewing of Reality TV would be an addition to other viewing time and entire viewing hours might rise. Even though in the television business Reality TV is seen as the newest important tendency, the

commissioning of such programs might have more to do with contest over audience contribution and the branding of channels and audiences, then with an important move in lifestyle of television viewing (Hill, 2005). In addition, the focal point on younger viewers requires a clarification of the traditions in Television studies that have discussed youth audiences and appreciated their defiant attitudes to programs. The creations of television program bands, personalities and rumor have been essential for an extended era. The vulnerable outcome on recent ways of organizing television is that it would end to consist of must-see programs when crowd audience view the same live broadcast at the same time.

Star Academy unpredictably became an essential part of many people's discussions, and viewers' contribution was not only with the program and the website but also with the remarks on the program with other viewers and in the media. Rumor was a significant enjoyment for viewers of Star Academy, and it became a convenient subject for discussion about people who viewers felt they knew. The production of viewer chat is expectant and mirrored by talk in Reality TV programs themselves. Television programs are conquered much more than cinema, for example, by people chatting and interacting in common situations, just as life for viewers at home is often centered on these actions. Star Academy consists largely of sequences of discussion among the participants, representing familiar contact and chat which could be then talked about the viewers. The common use of close-up shots of faces in Star Academy reinforces this wisdom of closeness between the viewer and what is publicized on television, and contributes to an awareness of correspondence between the audience's regular world and the constructed

worlds of the plan. This technique of using and experiencing television gives the fantasy of bodily intimacy, and invokes policies of communal contact which require awareness and generate social closeness.

5. Reality TV effect on the Arabian Societies

Most of the participants' aim in Reality Shows is to become famous, which had become a new phenomenon. Contestants have been constructed as exemplifying a fame culture in which ethos of "famous to be famous" has triumphed over the concepts of talent and hard work, and they are seen as diminishing victim to the controlling powers of a cruel fame-making mechanism (Escoffery, 2006). Reality TV shows in the Arab World are based on the aspect of emotional recognition among the observer and the protagonists. The Arab channels won't vacillate to split social and ethical borders in order to enlarge earnings. It's obvious to see how the participants symbolize an exceedingly tolerant social cultures and unusual for Arab society. They hug and kiss on live TV. Although most of the viewers agree on the undesirability of such actions, they can't split their eyes away from the screen. The Reality shows get such high ratings that one wonders about present priorities in the Arab world. Some people see it as an Israeli-American conspiracy, created in order to distract the Arabs from important issues like Iraq and Palestine.

Star Academy had made many changes in the concept of Arabian traditions and cultures in which viewers are being inspired by the participants' activities. Several conservative families had to remove the LBC channel from their satellite not to let their children to keep on watching Star Academy

because they started imitating the participants in the way they dress, communicate with the other sex, and have fun during the breaks time.

Moreover, Big Brother Arabia was a 2004 Reality TV show based on the worldwide program Big Brother, in which contestants live in a unique house while competing to win in the end. The show was filmed in Bahrain, aired on MBC 2, and was planned to follow the success of Star Academy, but failed to do so, and instead the show was only aired for 11 days and then got major controversy in the countries it aired in. Big Brother Arabia producers decided to cancel the show, as there were many complaints from viewers. Joe Khalil, a member in the production crew of the program, said in Nov. 23, 2009 that the program had to be canceled because it brought new traditions to the gulf area which is none as a conservative area in the Arab World, because the audience didn't accept the fact that it featured six men and six women living together in one area, despite staying in separate parts of the house. Star Academy and Big Brother showed the women in the Arab World so close to the western Women in the way they dress, dance, and communicate with men. This is what not all of the viewers accept or welcome.

Conclusion

Reality TV, in the recent years, has become a very famous phenomenon that has influenced the life of viewers in the Arab world. Reality TV shows were based on some theories and techniques in the work process in which these shows were able to change certain thoughts and traditions in the Arab countries. The audience plays an important role in relation with their perception concerning the Reality TV shows. The audiences consider much reality programming to be entertaining rather than informative. These

audiences draw on their own personal experience of social interaction to judge the authenticity of the way ordinary people and their behavior on TV. Reality shows works on collapsing the distance that separates those on either side of the screen by enlightening the hope that it really could be you up there on that screen. The democratized adaptation of the star-making machinery goes further than representing its ability to convert real people into celebrities apparently at will. The power that the airbrush once exerted over the image is transposed into the record of reality in the form of the power the blade exerts on soft tissue. Television is like religion, is basically a type of social power. Without both people would really begin to consider for themselves and the social communications would break down.

Reality TV had been much popular to reach the Arab World, with certain basics built on it had affected the Arabian societies in different ways. Reality TV had arrived to the Arab World after passing by different stages and experiences. All in all, Reality TV had been a main reason for losing privacy in front of the public audience. Lastly, producing reality shows involves a variety of executive, artistic and technological aspects. Reality shows are mostly approved formats that programmers buy for a certain area, such the case of the Arab World. Reality Shows by nature have a huge number of influences, as well as an important profitable section.

References:

Andrejevic, M. (2004). Reality TV: The Work of Being Watched. (pp. 1-23). United States of America: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Bignell, J. (2005). *Big Brother: Reality TV in the Twenty-First Century*. (pp. 34-47, 65-72, 150-160). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Biressi, A. & Nunn, H. (2005). *Reality TV: Realism and Revelation*. (pp. 118-144). London & New York: Wallflower Press.

Escoffery, D. (2006). *Essays on Representation and Truth: How Real is Reality TV?* (pp. 7-26, 61-78, & 115-133, & 247- 259). North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.

Hill, A. (2005). *Reality TV: Audiences and Popular Factual Television*. (pp. 39, 55, & 78, & 106). London & New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.