

THE INTERACTIVE NATURE OF REALITY TELEVISION - AN AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

by

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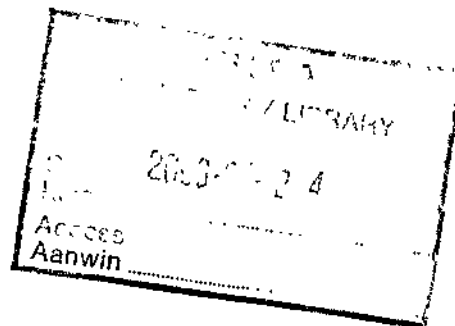


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SUMMARY

This research study explores the motivating factors for viewer participation in the reality television programme, *Project Fame*. It looks at the genre of reality television and its interactive component, arguing that viewers are active in their media consumption. The theoretical foundation of this study is based on the uses and gratifications theory as well as the cultural studies approach to reception theory.

On a methodological level, this study applies qualitative research methods in order to determine what factors motivate viewers to participate interactively in the television programme. Supported by the categories of need gratifications, this study investigates the different gratifications sought and gratifications obtained through interactive participation. In addition, reception theory is used to further explain viewers' active participation and interpretation of media messages in a social and cultural context.

The study concludes that cognitive, affective and personal integrative needs motivate viewers to utilise the interactive opportunities presented by the programme and that viewers expect gratifications from participating interactively. The participants in this study perceived these gratifications as being met through different interactive mediums. Finally, the study indicates that social and cultural aspects influenced the participants' perceptions of the contestants and indirectly affected interactive participation.