



# Mode of selection of winners in some reality shows in Ghana: perspective of people in Asante Mampong Municipality, Ghana

Selorm Divine Ndah<sup>1\*</sup>, Jessica Amoah<sup>2</sup>, Bright Essel<sup>3</sup>, Sophia Mayona<sup>4</sup>, Alison Kujo Akotia<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Creative Arts, Seventh Day Adventist College of Education, Koforidua, Ghana

<sup>2</sup>Department of Creative Arts, St. Monica's College of Education, Ashanti, Mampong, Ghana

<sup>3</sup>Department of Social Science, Komenda College of Education, Komenda, Ghana

<sup>4</sup>Lamplighter College of Education, Bia, Ghana

<sup>5</sup>Department of Social Science, Mawuko Senior High School, HO, Ghana

Correspondence Author: Selorm Divine Ndah

Received 27 Feb 2023; Accepted 3 Apr 2023; Published 12 Apr 2023

## Abstract

The focus of the study was to identify some of the reality shows that trend on the Ghanaian media space; hence discuss their impact on society. In addition, to discuss the views of the general public on the issue of voting to select winners in the reality shows. The study being qualitative type adopted the case study approach to conduct the study. Some of the research tools used were questionnaire, interview and observation. The population for the study consisted of the youth within the age range of 18 – 50. The study identified some of the reality shows in Ghana currently as *Ghana Most Beautiful*, *Talented Kids*, *Mentor*, *Date Rush*. *Others are Eba Kids*, *Date Rush*, *Nsroma*, *Celebration*, *Pulpit*, *Di asa*, *Cues and Lyrics*. It was revealed that, these reality shows help to educate, inform and entertain society. In addition, the study revealed that, majority of the general public are not happy about the system of voting to select the winners in the show. The paper therefore recommended that, the organizers should find a way of raising funds for the programme without involvement of voting (money) in the selection process.

**Keywords:** reality show, winners, selection, voting

## Introduction

Reality shows seem to attract the attention of both young and old in Ghana in recent times. These performances or shows mirror the happenings in Ghanaian society. As a result of that, the youth especially fall in love with these shows.

In the media landscape in Ghana, one is likely to experience one or two reality shows in the area of music, dance, drama, verbal and visual arts. Because these performances mimic things that go on in Ghanaian societies, they are seen as relevant to the very existence of the members in Ghanaian societies. As a result, performers try to pull audience to support or cheer them up during performance. Others equally patronize these shows because of their cultural and moral lessons in them. Apart from these shows showcasing the culture Ghanaian and also helping to unearth talents among the youth, they are performed on competitive basis with the winner rewarded. Because of the wide patronage by the Ghanaian, many sponsors associate themselves with these shows hence take advantage in advertising their products and also donate some to the participants in the show.

In many instances, all the performers are giving equal opportunities to perform, then elimination is done until a winner and two runner-ups are finally declared as eventual winners. Performance is not one day event. Performance goes on for at least three weeks and above. During individual performances, judges are allowed to comment on the performances and give advice appropriately on the strength and

weaknesses of the contestants.

Reality shows in Ghana are seen as communal events as members rally round performers from within their communities. The performances help contestants to showcase their talents and even choose a career for themselves. It equally helps to master the culture and traditions of their societies since their performances are centered mostly on the culture and philosophy of society.

## Statement of Problem

Culture and philosophies of society could be showcased in many forms. Ghanaian way of life could be also exposed through the reality shows in the areas of Visual, Performing and Verbal arts. Reality shows are well rooted among Ghanaian culture.

Observation has shown that, Ghanaian youth especially have embraced these reality shows and they are taking part fully in them. However, much empirical studies have not been done to explore how winners are declared in these shows and aftermath of declaration of winners in these shows.

It is as a result of this that this study is done to outline some of the reality shows that have become part and parcel of Ghanaian society and discuss their influence on members in society. In addition, to discuss the negative effects of monetization of these shows. Besides, to discuss the importance of these shows without involving of money in the selection of winners.

### Objectives of the study

1. To outline some popular reality shows in Ghana and discuss their influence among Ghanaian.
2. To discuss the views of the general public on monetization of selection of winners in reality shows in Ghana.

### Research Questions

1. What are some of the reality shows that are so influential among Ghanaian in current times?
2. To what extent is involvement of money (voting) in selection of winners in the reality shows among the public accepted or un accepted?

### Review of related literature

#### Concept of reality shows

Reality shows in recent times have gained popularity among Ghanaian. These shows always get people glued to their seats anytime they are shown in the media.

According to Adjei *et al* (2019) <sup>[1]</sup> the reality shows are performances that represent the thoughts of a society; shown to the general public. They clarify that, such shows are meant to educate, inform and entertained.

Mireku and Adomina (2016) as well share that, all the performances that are showcased in Ghanaian context have their themes grounded in Ghanaian culture and philosophies. They also opine that, such performances help to entertain society as well as help to nurture talents. They further share that, such performances give the participants public confidence and also help to shape their communication skills.

According to Acquah *et al* (2015) <sup>[2]</sup>, reality shows manifest in a form of music, dance and drama. They opine as well that, such performances normally address certain concern from society. They cite example that, the messages that the performances communicate are meant to educate members in society.

Views of Albert (2018) <sup>[3]</sup> have it that, reality shows are conduit through which Ghanaian culture or ways of doing things are show cased. He opines that, the beauty of Ghana is exhibited through various cultural expressions that are display through the reality shows. He therefore cautions that, society should be extra vigilant not to dilute Ghanaian rich culture with foreign ones.

#### Components of performing arts in Ghana

Performing arts encompasses many aspects. Ndah (2022) <sup>[8]</sup> states that Performing arts manifest in a form of Music, Dance and Drama. He opines that, these componets in the performing arts represent the culture of society. He shares further that, in all life cycle events among Ghanaian, performing arts play significant roles.

According to Adum Atta, Dodzro, Otchere and Asare (2019) <sup>[4]</sup>, music, dance and drama constitute the performing arts that are vital in human societies. They discuss that, performing arts are integral part of Ghanaian society. They clarify that, societies get informed, entertained and educated through the performing arts. They therefore advise society to uphold these arts in highest esteem so as to keep representing the ideals of society.

#### Roles of performing arts in Ghanaian Society

Every aspect of Ghanaian life is engulfed with performing arts.

According to Kokro *et al* (2021) <sup>[9]</sup>, performing arts are used during installation of chiefs in Ghana. They cite an example that in the Asante culture, during installation and procession or durbar of chiefs, there are specific music types that are performed to accompany them. They add that performing arts help in communication as well. They substantiate that the communication is seen in a form of verbal though the text of the songs as well as the non-verbal that shows in the dance movements and the gestures involved during the performances. The equally explain that performing arts serves as an entertainment medium in the Ghanaian society.

Ndah (2014) <sup>[7]</sup> also share with various scholars that performing arts help to showcase the culture of Ghana society. In addition he added that, the use of the Ghanaian language during the performing arts because of the proverbs and the idiomatic expressions that are found in the performances.

He collaborates also that the performing arts also serves as a ground for exploration of talents. He backs his assertion that; many young people in Ghanaian society use the performing arts as a platform to harness their talents hence spring into greatness, using performing arts as a career.

According to Ampomah (2000) <sup>[5]</sup> performing arts are involved during funeral rites in Ghana. He gives example that among the Akan in Ghana, it is mandatory for funeral to be organized for a deceased. And during such funerals, dirges are performed to bid farewell to the deceased.

In support of the earlier scholars, Lodonu (2009) <sup>[10]</sup> explains that performing arts such as music and dance are used during marriage ceremonies among the people of Gbi in the Hohoe municipality in the Volta Region of Ghana. It could be summarized from the assertion above that, performing arts in Ghana helps in communication, life cycle events, installation of durbar of chiefs, career, and showcase of culture and for socialization.

#### Selection of winners in reality shows in Ghana

Albert (2018) <sup>[3]</sup> states that, winners are selected in the reality shows based on judges and votes from the audience. He states that, the one with lowest votes is eliminated. He cites an example of Ghana Most beautiful to support his assertion as:

Both live audience and viewers

Contributed to the judgement by

Votting for their preferred candidate

Through SMS

He states that, the shortlisting of the contestants begin after counting of the votes; and the contestant with the lowest votes is evicted.

According to Ofori- Birikorang (2021) as well, there is always public uproar after declaration of results because some section of the public feel that the right persons are denied the crown. She continues that, such aggrieved persons resort to social media to register their displeasure. She also gives an example of Ghana Most Beautiful reality show 2017 and 2018 to make her assertion. She further collaborates that, people allege corruption and bribery on the part of the judges and contestants. She discusses that, another allegation was that, influential persons in society used money to push their candidates' through to winning the ultimate even without putting up any good performance.

She therefore appeals to the organizers of such shows to maintain the educative aspect of the shows but not to put money

first so as to lose track of the good intention of the programme. Azuah *et al* (2021) [6] also supports that, in the reality shows, winners are selected through judges as well as votes from the general public. They recommended to the organizers to keep reviewing the shows to reflect the dynamics of society.

## Methodology

### Research design

The study adopted the qualitative paradigm as well as the descriptive technique to discuss the issues arising.

### Population of the study

All the youth within the age of 18-50 within the study area were targeted. This was because observation has shown that these groups form the active population with youthful exuberant in such reality shows in media; also because of their incline towards the use of technology and social media.

### Accessible population

A total of 110 respondents within the target group were sampled for the study using simple random, this was because all the respondents were deemed fit and possessing similar characteristics so far as the focus of the study was concern. Purposive sampling technique was also used to select from those who have being into reality shows before. This was also because of their rich experience they had. The researchers therefore thought they could be of help in contributing to the success of the study.

### Research tools

Questionnaire, interview and Observation (Mixed Method) were used to collect data for the study.

### Data analysis procedure

Data was analyzed using content thematic approach where items were responded to as stated on the interview guide or the questionnaire. The main issues for determination were

- Identification of reality shows and their influence on the people in the study area.
- Whether the voting system (monetization) in selection of the winners in the reality shows should be encouraged.

Questionnaire was used to solicit response on whether voting system in reality shows should be encouraged or not. The respondents were to choose *YES OR NO* thus whether in support of the voting system or not.

The views on other item that has to do with the reality show and their influence in society was sought using an interview. Under the interview system, 10 respondents who were directly or indirectly associated with any reality shows were interviewed.

### Analysis of Data

The total population for the study was 110 consisting of the youth between the ages of 18-50.

100 respondents of the population responded to an item on a questionnaire whilst 10 of them were as well interviewed. The researchers also being performing arts educators made observation in relation to the focus of the study and bring their judgment on board.

## The analysis of the responses is herein discussed: (interview)

On the knowledge of reality shows in the media space, all of them thus 100% unanimously agreed that, they are performances from music, dance, drama, history, Art that showcased before an audience on stage. They added that, these performances mirror the happenings in society.

They were able to identify varied reality shows in the Ghanaian media landscape as Ghana most beautiful, Talented Kids, Celebration. Others are Pulpit, *Nsroma*, Cues and Lyrics, *Di asa* and Eba Kids.

For the influence these shows have on society, 8 of them representing 80 % discussed that, these shows help to market the rich culture of Ghanaian to outside well. In addition, they stated that, the shows help to educate society on culture, customs and philosophies of society which are often embedded in such shows. They equally opined that, the shows help in manifestation of creativity among the youth and participant.

Twenty (20) % however disagreed that, the purpose of the show has deviated towing the line Western orientation during performances, so for them, the shows are longer relevant to Ghanaian society.

On the issue of voting (using money) to select the winners, 80 % shared that, they disagreed with the phenomena of voting because some performers might have the skills and talents to perform but if they don't have the money to push them through the voting, they would be then evicted. For the respondents, that selection system is not fair to all the performers. They added that, the voting system could lead to bribery and corruption.

The other 2 respondents (20 %) however made a case that; they would support the voting phenomenon because the organizers need to raise some money to mount the show.

Those 80 % who were not in support of the voting suggested that, organizers of the show could sought for sponsorship prior to the start of the programme or all the performers are asked to pay one time appearance fee and after that, performance should solely base on merit. They gave an example of National Science and Mathematics quiz, a competition that is equally organized on Television for the Senior High Schools in Ghana; for which winners are selected solely based on merit; yet there are organizations that sponsor the programme. They therefore advised organizers of the reality shows to emulate how the National Science and Mathematics Quiz is organized so that performers shall be given equal level ground to win.

For the 100 respondents who responded to the questionnaire and were to identify some reality shows in Ghana and state whether they support the voting system or not, their responses are tabulated below on table 1.

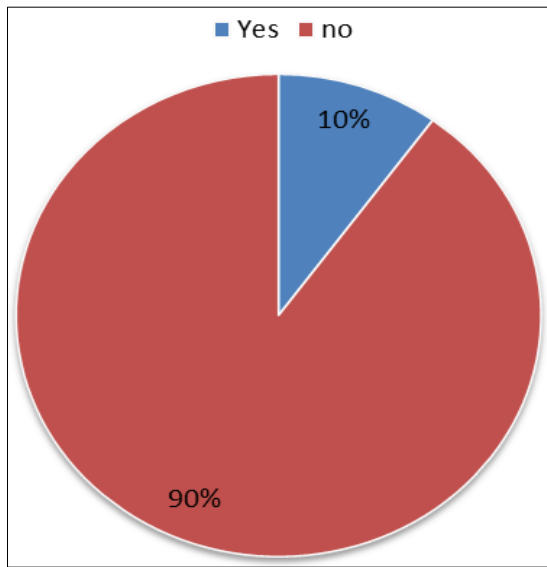
**Table 1:** Reality shows in Ghana as identified by respondents

Number of respondents	Name of reality show	Percentage
55	Ghana most beautiful, Di asa	55 %
	Talented kids, Show bizz 360	
30	Pulpit, Celebration, Nsroma, Hit	30 %
	Bizz, Cues and Lyrics	
15	Mentor, Date Rush, Miss Ghana, Eba kids	15 %

Total=100

As to the influence these shows have on society, they gave varied points such as the shows educate, inform and entertain society. Also they added the shows sharpen the communication of the participants. They stated as well that, the reality shows help to portray Ghanaian culture. Furthermore, the shows help to nurture talents. They also said that, the shows help to foster harmonious living.

On whether they agree to the voting system in selection of the winners in the reality shows, 90 % of them responded to NO, meaning they disagree to the voting (money) forming part of the winner selection process. 10 % however agreed that the voting system should be allowed to form part of the process. The data above is further represented on a pie chart below:



Credit: Researchers field note (2023)

**Fig 1:** Result of whether voting should be included in the reality shows in Ghana

### Observation from the researchers

The researchers being performing arts educators observe series of the reality shows on Television and noticed that, anytime a winner is declared, some section of the public are not in support and begin to register their displeasure. This assertion by the researchers confirms the stance of Ofori-Birikorang (2021) and Azuah *et al* (2021) [6].

It was also observed in the Ghanaian Media landscape (peacefmonline.com) that, a reggae musician recently returned awards he had won to the organizers stating that, the voting system employed in selecting of the winners was not fair. He therefore, advised that, performers should be rather judged based on merit but not audience buying the awards in the name of voting using money.

### Discussion of findings

Drawing inferences from the data analyzed, the study sought to identify some reality show in Ghana and discuss their influence on society. In addition, to confirm whether society agree with the voting phenomena in selection of winners in the reality shows or not.

The study therefore revealed some of the reality shows that are currently in the Ghanaian media landscape as Ghana *Most beautiful*, *Di asa* (dance), *Talented Kids* and *Nsroma*. The rest

are *Pulpit*, *Celebration*, *Hit 360*, *Hit Bizz*, *Mentor*, *Date Rush* and *Miss Ghana*. Others are *Cues* and *Lyrics* and *Eba Kids*.

It was clear that, these shows have to do with performances on stage.

It was revealed also that, the reality shows help to educate, informed and entertain society. In addition, the culture, tradition and philosophy of Ghanaian society are showcased during the performance of these shows.

It came out that, the reality shows help to build confidence and communication among the performers; because they have to face audience and answer questions with performances.

The reality shows help to showcase the rich culture of Ghanaian to the outside community. This is because most performances focus on culture and tradition of the people.

The reality shows help to socialize members in society. Because the performers bring people together; thereby help to foster harmonious living.

The show equally help to nurture talents hence help those who want to enter into performing arts as a career.

The history of the Ghanaian is as well seen during performances of these shows.

The findings above have confirmed the assertions of Adum – Atta *et al* (2019) [4], Kokro *et al* (2021) [9] and Ndah (2022) [8].

The study equally revealed that, people are not in agreement with the voting (money for votes) system in selection of winners in the reality shows. It was justified that, the voting system leads to anger among the audience, breeds corruption and bribery hence winners are not selected on performance or merit. This assertion confirmed the stance of the Ghanaian reggae star that had been reported by peacefmonline, com for returning all the awards he won through voting system stating that, such selection system do not produce winners on merit.

### Conclusion

Reality shows are mirror in which society is presented to the outside world. There are many of such shows in Ghana namely, Ghana *Most Beautiful*, *Date Rush*, *Talented Kids*, *Eba Kids*, *Nsroma*, *Di asa* etc.

These shows help to educate society as the culture and tradition of Ghana are presented in the show. They also help to showcase Ghana to the outside world.

However, majority of people are not happy on how voting is used to select the winners of the programmes. It is believed that, people must be allowed to perform and win on merit without the audience voting for their favorite.

### Recommendations

1. Organizers of the reality shows should sought for funds ahead of the performance so that the voting system is abolished; and when the winner is selected, the audience would be happy.
2. Participants should be made to pay registration fees upon entering the race so that there is no need for voting from the audience.
3. Neutral judges who are specialist in the Ghanaian arts and culture should be tasked to be judges; so that audience would not cast doubt on their judgement.
4. Organizers should see the shows as platforms for educating society and not for profit making.

**References**

1. Adjei M, Hansorn K. Intersection of Sports, Physical Activity, Music and Dance. Winneba: College of Distance and e- Learning, 2019.
2. Acquah OE, Andoh SK, Annan FJ. Use of indigenous Musical Games and Songs in Developing the Total Well Being of the Child. *International Journal of Reaearch in Humanities and Social Studies*. 2015;2(12):112-123.
3. Albert D. Promoting Ghana's traditional cultural aesthetics in Ghana's most beautiful reality television show. *Legon Journal of the Humanities*. 2018;29:2
4. Adum-Atta K, Otchere-Debrah E, Dordzro J, Asare A. *Performing Arts and Society*. University of Cape Coast: College of Distance Education, 2019.
5. Ampomah K. The changing Role of traditional Ghanaian Music: Implications for primary music education in Ghana. *The African music educator*, 2000, 10. Retrieved from [http://www.scientific\\_africa.org](http://www.scientific_africa.org).
6. Azuah SW, Aheto SK, Asubonteng K. Dynamism of Beauty Pageantry: The Conceptual Frame of Ghana's Most Beautiful Pageant. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*. 2021;11:16.
7. Ndah S. Roles of Traditional Musical ensembles in Logba Traditional area in Ghana. Mphil Thesis submitted to the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, 2014.
8. Ndah DS. *Reference Book for Music Directors and Instrumentalists*. New Edition. Kumasi: Tafgod Printing, 2022.
9. Kokro FK, Walden P, Ndah DS, Amoah J, Adom FM. Ndwomkro Musical Type as Cultural Preservation Medium among the Akan in Ghana. *Quest Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*. 2021;9(6):05-11.
10. Lodonu J. The artistic aspect of indigenous marriage among the Gbi of Ghana. Mphil thesis presented to the school of graduate studies KNUST, 2009. Retrieved from [wwwhttp://dspace.knust.edu.gh](http://dspace.knust.edu.gh).
11. Ofori B. Beauty Pageants, Controverted Decisions and Emotional Outpour: An Analysis of Social Media Posts on Ghana's most beautiful. *New Media and Mass Communication*, 2021, 97.