

Why do young people consume TV reality shows? A case study of *Mujeres y Hombres y Viceversa* and the implications for Media Education

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Abstract

From two focus groups and comments on the social network Twitter, an examination of university students' fundamental impressions and attitudes when consuming reality television shows has led us to conclude that a reassessment is required of the parameters on which media education is based. The emergence of new technologies and new communication practices should continue to be emphasised but attention should also be paid to discoveries within neuroscience about how the brain functions when interacting with such technologies, particularly with regard to the complex interaction between reason and emotion.

Keywords

Media education, reality show, reception, emotions, attitude.

Resum

L'anàlisi dels sentiments i les actituds subjacents al consum de programes de telerealtà per part d'estudiants universitaris, detectats a partir de dos grups de discussió i dels comentaris a la xarxa social Twitter, ens porta a la conclusió que cal revisar els paràmetres en què es mou l'educació mediàtica, posant l'accent no només —com es fa ara— en l'aparició de noves tecnologies i noves pràctiques comunicatives, sinó també en els descobriments de la neurociència entorn del funcionament de la ment que interacciona amb aquestes tecnologies, sobretot pel que fa a la complexa interacció entre la raó i l'emoció.

Paraules clau

Educació mediàtica, telerealtà, recepció, emocions, actitud.

1. Introduction

In the academic sphere in general and Media Education in particular, more attention is usually paid to products deemed serious and high culture than those of popular culture and entertainment. On the other hand, more time tends to be devoted to analysing products than reception and, lastly, it's deemed more appropriate to attend to the needs of children rather than young people and adults.

This article arises from the belief that a study of a reality show such as *Mujeres y Hombres y Viceversa* (hereinafter *MYHYV*)

from the point of view of how it's received by young people could be useful in encouraging a review of some of the parameters on which Media Education is based.

When people make comments about or provide justification for the reasons leading them to consume a product, and especially when they criticise this, they're not only talking about the product. They're also giving information about themselves, albeit perhaps unintentionally and unwittingly. In other words, a critical person is criticising themselves, even if they don't realise it. A person who judges is judging themselves. We should take advantage of this critical interplay to allow ourselves to be

criticised also as professionals of Media Education, to question our professional customs and review the parameters we base ourselves on.

In this research we focus on an analysis of the reasons why some young people consume this programme and their opinion on both the programme in general and also its different characters. Our aim is to compare the findings of these analyses with some of the most firmly established parameters of the notion of Media Education, as supposed from various prior studies carried out by the authors (Ferrés, Masanet & Blanco 2014; Ferrés, Figueras-Maz, Masanet & Hafner 2017).

The main aim of this research is therefore to explore the feelings and attitudes underlying the experience of consuming a TV reality show and to draw conclusions regarding the approach that should be taken by Media Education. Our secondary aims focus on exploring the audience's reasons for consuming reality shows and their opinions regarding such products. It's essential to extract information related to these two lines of study to subsequently reflect on media education, as we will explain in more detail below. Different qualitative methodologies have been used to achieve these aims, such as focus groups and an analysis of the social medium, Twitter.

2. Theoretical framework

According to the theory of uses and gratifications (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch 1973), the audience plays an active role in consuming media and selects audiovisual products in line with their desires and needs, which are related to their own particular social and psychological characteristics (Stacks & Salwen 2009). The reasons for consuming a specific audiovisual product vary from one viewer to another but some common elements can be found.

Following Rutten's systematised review of the literature (2015, unpublished), the reasons for consuming TV reality shows are as follows:

1. Habit (Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt 2003; Papacharissi & Mendelson 2007)
2. Entertainment (Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt 2003; Papacharissi & Mendelson 2007)
3. Identification (Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt 2003; Reiss & Wiltz 2004)
4. Schadenfreude (Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt 2003; Papacharissi & Mendelson 2007)
5. Voyeurism (Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt 2003; Nabi, Stitt, Halford & Finnerty, 2006; Papacharissi & Mendelson, 2007)
6. Loneliness (Papacharissi & Mendelson 2007)
7. Interaction (Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt 2003; Papacharissi & Mendelson 2007)
8. Socialisation (Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt 2003; Papacharissi & Mendelson 2007)

The reasons for consuming TV products related to interaction and socialisation have been influenced by the appearance and spread of online communication. Online forums discussing TV programmes create virtual communities of viewers who debate issues related to the TV product. These communities fulfil the function of relating various like-minded viewers (Hagel & Armstrong 1997), creating "affinity spaces" (Gee 2004), discussing plot developments (Baym 1999), sharing fantasies and hypothetical developments of the characters (Jenkins 2006) and even becoming a place for peer-to-peer discussion and learning (Masanet & Buckingham 2015).

In the last few years, discussion forums have given way to other online spaces of interaction. The use of social media such as Twitter have become more important in "live" debates between viewers of TV products (live tweeting), becoming a means of analysing the motivations and perceptions of viewers (Wohn & Na 2011; Ji & Raney 2014; Shirra, Sun & Bentley 2014). Nevertheless, such live tweets and focus groups are complementary tools.

Comments about *MYHYV* published on the social medium Twitter reveal the reasons why it's consumed and also criticise several aspects of the programme. Some of these criticisms coincide with those given by academic studies on the genre of TV reality shows: stereotypes of gender (Cavender, Bond-Maupin & Jurik 1999), race (Bell-Jordan 2008) and class (McMurria 2008; Oliva 2014) and the effect on viewers' body image (Mazzeo, Trace, Mitchell & Walker Gow 2007), among others.

An analysis of these comments should directly impact the review that should be carried out of the parameters that form the basis of the new Media Education. Prior research carried out by those responsible for this study (Ferrés & Masanet 2015; Ferrés, Figueras-Maz, Masanet & Hafner 2017) highlights the fact that, in the last few decades, both internationally and in Spain, there have been substantial changes in how media education is approached (Buckingham 2006; Jenkins 2006; Frau-Meigs 2012; Grizzle, Torras-Calvo 2013). But these changes are almost always related to the emergence of new technologies and new communication practices, ignoring almost all the new knowledge produced by neuroscience with regard to how the brain works when interacting with such technologies.

3. Methodology

First of all, the main research questions concern an exploration of the comments made by followers of the TV reality show *MYHYV*. What dialogues take place based on the *MYHYV* programme? A series of secondary questions are developed based on this initial question. What are the reasons for consuming this kind of programme? How do *MYHYV* followers rate the programme? Are they critical of the content or stereotypes? What attitudes and feelings are aroused by *MYHYV*?

The second phase asks the following question: based on an

analysis of these comments, should the parameters underlying the new media education be reviewed?

To study how the programme is received, two focus groups were set up using university students who claimed to be assiduous followers of the TV programme *MYHYV* and an analysis was made of the comments related to this programme on the social medium *Twitter*.

The aim of the two focus groups was to detect and evaluate the features of *MYHYV* consumption by university students who closely follow the programme. University students were used because it was assumed they would provide a critical understanding of this kind of product.

Two focus groups were set up. The first with 5 people (3 male and 2 female) and the second with 8 people (4 male and 4 female). The participants were university students aged between 18 and 22 studying a range of subjects (law, economics, politics, nursing, child education, pharmacy, etc.) and from different universities (UAB, UB, UPF and URL). They were recruited using a specialist selection company. The condition for them to be selected was to be daily followers of the programme or at least watch it once a week.

The focus groups were held in September 2016 at the Campus Poble Nou facilities of the UPF. The script's design combined open discussion among the participants using questions asked by the moderator with viewings of video extracts and then

guided discussion.

Comments published on the social medium *Twitter* and related to *MYHYV* were also collected. Using the abbreviation that identifies the programme (*MYHYV*), we obtained a sample of tweets published over two days in the months of March, April and May 2016 (30/03, 31/03, 27/04, 28/04, 25/05 and 26/05). We used "MYHYV" as a keyword in the search and not only as a label. On these 6 days a total of 4,361 tweets were extracted. After reading them, 371 tweets were selected. The rest were discounted since they provided no relevant information for the study; they didn't focus on the reasons for consuming the programme or on evaluating and/or commenting on the programme's content.

Tweets mentioning *MYHYV* were extracted from *Twitter* using an IT tool developed *ad hoc* for this project. This tool was used to extract the basic data for subsequent analysis: the person sending the tweet, date, the tweet and retweets. The tweets selected were analysed using the qualitative analysis software *NVivo* to identify analytical categories. The approach was interpretative and an inductive analysis was carried out, attempting to identify key trends in the data. To this end, a descriptive taxonomy was created that was gradually built up, reformulated and perfected via repeated readings and consequent recordings of the data. Finally, the following analytical categories were identified:

Table 1. Categories emerging from an analysis of MYHYV tweets

Analytical categories identified		
1. Object of criticism	1.1. Participants	1.1.1. Lack of culture 1.1.2. Ridicule 1.1.3. Falseness 1.1.4. Superficiality 1.1.5. Gender issues
	1.2. Audience	1.2.1. Lack of culture
	1.3. Programme	1.3.1. Falseness 1.3.2. New version - current 1.3.3. Genre of TV reality shows 1.3.4. Lack of culture 1.3.5. Lack of product quality
2. Reasons for watching	2.1. Humour	
	2.2. By chance	
	2.3. Coordinators and/or participants	
	3.4. Boredom	
	3.5. Watched with others	

Source: authors.

The aim of this analysis is not to draw any statistical conclusions regarding the frequency or number of tweets published about *MYHYV*. As has already been mentioned in this section, our approach, both in our analysis of Twitter and also with the focus groups, is qualitative and interpretative.

As can be seen in table 1, we identify two broad analytical categories regarding the sample of tweets and contributions from the focus groups on *MYHYV*. 1. The object of the criticism and 2. Reasons for watching the programme. In the analysis presented below we therefore focus on those contributions expressing criticism of the programme. Some also specify the reason why the person still consumes the programme in spite of criticising it.

4. Findings

4.1. The object of the criticism: the programme

First we have identified the criticism aimed at the programme in general. Some Twitter users and some focus group participants accuse the programme of being false, insofar as it doesn't respect the key feature of its genre, namely reality shows. In spite of such criticism, the people in question don't stop consuming the programme. They justify this by considering it to be a fictional product related to humour, as we will see below. They don't expect to find any realism in the situations created in the programme or emotions that arouse them (*empirical realism* and *emotional realism*, according to Ang 1985). According to these tweets and comments, some viewers enjoy the exaggeration and derision shown by *MYHYV*, without expecting to identify with the contestants:

- Script, script, script and more script #myhyv (user_0180)
- Is this programme for real? #myhyv (user_0166)
- When I see people giving a serious opinion about #myhyv and they believe what's happening on the programme is true. <https://t.co/hpR7XJ31BY> (user_0240)
- From the producers of #myhyv it doesn't have a script... it comes to us like teleporting yourself on a date in 1 second. <https://t.co/i8Msj8Ehg3> #TronoSofia15 (user_0210)
- Actually, you find it funny and get hooked but it's totally unreal. (FG2-W)
- They go from a point of a very *heavy* reality show and then you realise they're acting. And although you realise that, you get hooked (FG1-M)
- If someone's gone to a gig, that's not what's happened. They say, you have to do that, you have to have an argument with the other one (FG2-W)
- I think it's pure theatre but it entertains (FG1-M)

With regard to the debate between truth and falseness, some users of the social medium criticise the programme, complaining about the direction it has taken in the last few seasons. Some of these criticisms come from users who used to enjoy consuming

MYHYV as a TV reality show focusing on couples getting together. During the eight seasons of *MYHYV*, the selection of contestants has gradually changed: from anonymous contestants to participants *recycled* from other reality shows. This fuels the idea of (false) characters "posturing" in detriment of a presumed search for (real) love.

- We want the programme to be like it was before. Thrones with feelings and with people who don't just go on to pose. Away with tri-thrones #myhyv (user_0148)
- @myhyv we must make a noise! The programme's format should come back! Love should come back... We don't want this myhyv... We want the old one! (user_0254)
- Since when did the programme start giving more importance to challenges and dances than dates and finding love? How it's deteriorated. #myhyv (user_0298)
- #myhyv is losing its essence, it's not like it was before. They only look for actions and they don't look for the person who could end up falling in love... (user_0229)
- I think it's funny how they recycle people from other "love" shows, this programme is like an NGO. It's out of control now... #myhyv (user_0284)

In other cases, users express their disagreement with the direction the programme has taken without specifying their reasons.

- Sincerely, I believe this programme isn't what it used to be but at least it's entertaining. #myhyv (user_0046)

4.2. The object of the criticism: the participants

The most often repeated criticisms in the tweets and focus groups are aimed at the programme's participants. We're particularly interested in tweets criticising the contestants in general, in relation to repeated characteristics in the men and women as a social group or exponents of a social group.

In any case, a considerable number of tweets and comments seem to criticise one participant in particular. Whereas some contestants are attractive for certain viewers, others are criticised very explicitly.

- Not Ronaldira or Chonifer. I'm pissing myself. HAHAAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA #myhyv (user_0082)
- #myhyv hahahaha and Maite the drunk came to talk about the values of her daughter hahahaha belching, rude, lazy, capricious little girl, #values (user_0176)
- @myhyv Even though she tries to hide it, you can see what she's really thinking and @anam194 is vulgar, *choni* and anti-erotic, dressed or half naked #myhyv (user_0067)
- In a way, even though I watch it, I admit because it's entertaining, but I believe it's like an insult to human integrity (FG2-W)

The critical comments aimed at participants that were repeated the most in the sample focus on the participants' lack

of refinement or culture. Comments are made regarding the few cultural assets of the contestants, which can be seen in how they act and express themselves.

- That thing of vocalising and talking like a human being in #myhyv are two incompatible things (user_0001)
- How they all express themselves in #myhyv, what vocabulary, what words, it drives you crazy listening to them (user_0009)
- In #myhyv if you can add 1+1 they give you a strange look (user_0260)
- I think it's entertaining but totally anti-cultural. You watch it and you say, my God, look what level of... I don't know, the social and cultural level. I mean, the profile of the participants tends to be very low (FG1-M)
- They also look for people who don't have any moral or ethical values. When you go on a programme like those you go... because they totally degrade the people (FG1-M)

This can be related to the way in which the working class tends to be portrayed in the media in general and in reality shows in particular. We find a large proportion of insults related to the social group represented by the contestants, as interpreted by the person criticising them. Various insults are used related to the social class to which they supposedly belong. Jones (2011), for example, describes the process by which the working class was delegitimised in the United Kingdom by constructing stereotypes which workers didn't identify with. Oliva (2014) analyses this process in Spanish reality shows, paying particular attention to the figure of the "chonis": working class women represented as uncultured and irresponsible.

- You can't half tell the unemployment rate is very high in Cadiz; the whole disease is there, in the programme. You get tired of so many idiots. @myh_tv #MYHYV (user_0098)
- If you tell your kid to study to become someone, they should never watch Tele5. They'll see you can earn more being an uncultured "choni"! #myhyv (user_0217)
- 5 min of #myhyv. Shameful. *Chonism* and *chavism*. By the way, the cycle with the most cosmetic surgery, and she looks like a Labrador... (user_0008)
- #myhyv and Mongols and gypsies and braggarts, and useless people and *NiNis*, and *chavs*, ... (user_0119)
- I think the women on #myhyv make me ashamed, what horrible *chonis* and little girls... (user_0099)
- They're so common the women on myhyv My God (user_0077)
- The definition of "Choni" is a girl with quite rude manners and from a low class neighbourhood that shouts a lot and wants to be the centre of attention, rude... and... well, I don't know how to describe how they dress but it's that. And all the women who go on it are *Chonis* (FG2-M)
- From a low class neighbourhood, common women... (FG1-M)
- It's the way they dress, how they behave, speak (FG2-W)

The *MYHYV* participants are criticised for being ridiculous and for acting in a ridiculous way. In some cases they're cringeworthy for Twitter users and participants in the focus groups who express their criticism. In other cases they find the ridicule amusing. As we will see below, humour is one of the reasons for watching the programme most repeated in the tweet sample.

- #myhyv it really gets me going, it makes me cringe, how embarrassing they are. What a way to look ridiculous in front of the whole of Spain (user_0049)
- Don't the people on #myhyv feel embarrassed..?? My God, they couldn't be more ridiculous @myh_tv (user_0073)
- Don't those on myhyv realise they're ridiculous? Hahahahaha (user_0036)
- One second was enough, it's cringeworthy, MYHYV (user_0052)
- Today has been the first time I've had to turn off the programme because it's cringeworthy #myhyv #TronoSofia24 (user_0287)
- I think they're disgusting #myhyv I don't know how the government doesn't ban these things (user_0019)
- Every day I find myhyv more bloody disgusting (ussuari_0268)
- Doing some zapping. Telecinco. Myhyv. Turn off the TV. Go to the wc and vomit (user_0029)
- I get hooked but I sometimes think its cringeworthy and everything (FG2-W)
- The thing is, sometimes it's cringeworthy. You watch it and you say, really? Are they really doing that in front of everyone? Because it's a programme a lot of people see... Because there's a lot of audience at the time they show it (FG2-W)
- Actually, I see it and think, very often I watch it and I say, if I don't like or don't agree with what they do... but I don't know... you get hooked, to see what happens. And you go on watching it! (FG2-W)
- I think they're really programmes that are highly criticisable (FG1)

Some criticisms of the contestants refer to their falseness, along the lines of what has been mentioned before about the programme. In these cases, the people tweeting criticism assume that *MYHYV* isn't showing reality (in the way you'd expect from the TV genre of reality shows, as noted before) but is a fiction in which the participants act, following a script. These criticisms refer to the fact that the presumed action of the contestants/actors is not believable.

- Aren't there any better actors than the *throne people*? There must be! They might be uglier but they'll be more believable. #myhyv (user_0041)
- That telephone woman is the falsest of all of them put together #myhyv (user_000)

We also find criticism regarding the superficiality of the participants, who prioritise physical appearance in detriment to other personal characteristics. Such types of criticism are general. At this point we find a link to the criticisms of participants due to a lack of culture: according to the stereotype, the “chonis” tend to dress in a particular way, flaunting jewellery and designer dresses and showing off their bodies.

- That's the youth of today, so subnormal, thinking their physique is everything #myhyv (user_0202)
- #TronoSofia15 I would rather be dim than ugly. Definition of myhyv (user_0223)
- It's a very definite prototype. I always think, if you're not like that, you wouldn't ever get on it. If you're not someone with a great body, you wouldn't ever get on it... The guys with their muscles, tall, strong... (FG2-W)
- All the girls have had operations... it's not at all natural (FG2-W)
- (They like you) to have a good physique. To have good boobies, good abdominals, a neatly trimmed beard and not much else (FG2-M)
- The guys are “big-headed” (FG2-M)
- And the girls a little submissive, a little dragged up... the word isn't very nice but... (FG2-W)

4.2.1 Gender differences

In the criticism, gender differences appear related to sexism, demonstrated by the male participants, although this accusation is not always aimed exclusively at the men. Most of the criticism was published during one day of the sample analysed, resulting from sexist and homophobic comments made by a contestant, although similar criticism also occurred in the focus groups.

- #MyHyV Ideal programme to see how women are humiliated and young men express dangerous sexism (user_0032)
- Labrador is sexist to an extent that girls can't go to the cinema with boys, what an embarrassment of a man #myhyv (user_0156)
- This debate is disgusting. We women are the first to demonstrate sexist attitudes. #myhyv #tronochicos (user_0164)
- I'm amazed at the incredible sexism in #Myhyv (user_0172)
- Every time I watch myhyv I think it's more possessive, stupid and sexist. Thanks @feminismo (uUsuari_0174)
- The behaviour is a bit sexist at times, especially the men. And the girls too, eh? There's the odd woman who seems to be the most sexist (FG2-M)
- The men's attitude with women, and a lot of music the programme plays as well... if you look at the words... (FG2-M)

Criticism related to issues of gender aimed at female participants is much more in evidence than that aimed at men. This criticism refers to the lack of dignity shown by the

contestants. In some cases they are accused of being/seeming to be prostitutes. At this point it should be remembered that some of the criticism attributing a lack of culture to the participants is aimed at women, especially when Twitter users and focus group participants used the insult “chonis”.

- And then we complain about sexism: a woman kneeling down in front of a man and the man sitting with his legs crossed and shouting. #myhyv (user_0034)
- The female contestants on #MYHYV, why do they have so little dignity? I don't know (user_0204)
- Summary of the programme #myhyv: the men are all pimps and the women are the whores of the pimps. And that's it (user_0219)
- They play music and all the women move their breasts... yes, that's the level #myhyv (user_0061)
- #MYhyv girls about to be classified as a prostitute in their neighbourhood and “brave males” imitating their idol Mario Vaquerizo (user_0295)
- The MYHYV programme is a whorehouse in disguise (user_0311)
- I think the sexism is very clear, in most programmes. Normally, on the throne, it's always the men (...) with a sexist attitude of *I'm the little male and come to me* (FG1-M)
- I think the women are also quite permissive because they take it on board. No-one forces you to be there, I mean... if you go on *mujeres*, you know what you're getting yourself into (FG1-M)
- The man is like, with a lot of girls and is a success, but if it's the opposite, well... (FG1-M)
- I see it (sexism) in the woman shouting and he's like *I don't give a damn* what you say. They won't agree, each one their own version (FG1-W)
- It's a very dominant attitude, very possessive. I don't know... you'll do what I tell you and such, it's just, I don't know, things like that (FG2-M)
- The male or female contestants have to do what the person on the throne wants. If you do something they don't like, it's like very controlled... (FG2-W)

4.3. The object of the criticism: the audience

Unlike criticism aimed at the programme and its contestants, criticism of its audience is normally made “from the outside”, by those people who don't usually watch the programme. This criticism assumes a type of viewing related to identification with the contestants. It doesn't refer to the type of viewer who enjoys the show while laughing at it because they find it ridiculous.

This kind of criticism refers to the TV viewers of *MYHYV*, but, by projection, is often aimed at more general groups such as “Spain”, “young people” or “society”.

- The thing is, these people are performing in minor discos. These are the idols of young Spaniards. The end of the world is nigh, friend. #myhyv (user_0197)

- NOOOI AND THEY TAKE OFF MYHYV BECAUSE OF THE SHIT ATTACK IN BELGIUM the future of Spain, people (user_0130)
- A society that ignores the danger hidden by the initials #TTIP and understands perfectly #MYHYV_ vice versa deserve (and will have) disdain (user_0143)
- shitty #myhyv continuing on the channel, that programmes like this go on is understandable in a country full of ignorant and uncultured people (user_0193)
- There are times when I wonder why they still put on junk TV like #myhyv After I realise this is Spain (user_0192)
- It says a lot about a country's society... a programme with such a big audience, and it's this kind of programme... and I include myself. (...) I say, how can it be that such uncultured people, who haven't done anything in their lives, are earning 3000 euros a month and people... professors... are unemployed. We create that by watching it, right? But you say, my God, how can it be? " (FG1-M)
- I remember there was a moment when they were killing people in Nice and on Twitter they said, <come on, they should put on MHYV, they're stupid with this shit> ... And you say, wait a minute... people are dying and you're putting that on. So there are moments and moments. MHYV is 200 days a year and that is one specific day. But they have so much influence, kids of 15 or 16 are like obsessed with watching that (FG2-W)

4.4 Reasons for watching

Regarding the reasons given by Twitter users to justify consuming *MYHYV*, we find a range of responses. Although some of our categories could be covered by the reasons for consuming reality shows presented in previous studies, we have introduced some new categories.

Some TV viewers justify consuming the programme because they watch it together with other people (members of their family or friends, with whom they can comment about what they like from the programme). This shared viewing does not necessarily mean they're all in front of the same screen but includes experiences of live tweeting with other Twitter users. This category includes those of interaction and socialisation presented by Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt (2003) and Papacharissi & Mendelson (2007).

- Mumpare and me watching myhyv we're pissing ourselves laughing :D (user_0039)
- My vice is watching MyHyV while commenting on it with @MariPazSR. Ooooggh (user_0037)
- Watching myhyv with my grandmother is the best there is (user_0283)
- I watch it alone or with my mother because my father says "I don't watch that kind of thing" but my mother and I are really hooked and it's like you're watching it with your girlfriends because we comment on everything (FG2-W)

- I believe it's very much for socialising as well. Because, a lot of times, I'm at university and I haven't seen it. And they start to talk <ay that, I don't know, and such and such> and I look at them and say <Oh, shut up, I haven't seen it>, because I haven't seen it that afternoon... it's a way of... afterwards you end up commenting on it (FG1-M)

Another reason stated by Twitter users and focus group participants is related to not having anything else to do. For these TV viewers, feeling bored justifies the consumption of the programme even when they don't enjoy it. In these cases they don't say that watching the programmes results in satisfaction: it's not necessarily entertaining or fun. This kind of consumption could be included under habit, as described by Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt (2003) and Papacharissi & Mendelson (2007), but we cannot be certain.

- With so many channels and nothing good on, only the pantomime of #myhyv the truth is, if they put on something better, that would collapse (user_0090)
- Imagine my level of boredom, that I'm watching #myhyv (user_0155)
- And I watch myhyv because I've got nothing better to do:_____ (user_0189)
- It's fun how they speak, what they do, how they act, in general (FG1-M)
- It passes the time. You watch it, you pass the two hours and then you forget about it (FG2-M)
- At that time it's the only thing on. There isn't much (FG2-M)
- As there's nothing else on, for young people, well, that's what they like best, at least in my case, it's that programme (FG2-M)

Some users feel bored when consuming the programme. This kind of criticism tends to come from TV viewers who enjoyed *MYHYV* in the past and who, although it bores them, continue to consume the programme out of habit, in spite of the complaints.

- How boring #myhyv and I liked it so much before (user_0205)
- They should put new people on the throne, it's boring now... #myhyv (user_0267)

We find a significant number of tweets and comments that point to humour as a major reason for watching the programme. Although they criticise it, mainly because they find it ridiculous or because they think it's cringeworthy, these TV viewers consume it for fun. These tweets could be related to "malicious pleasure" or "Schadenfreude" as a reason for consuming reality shows, from the categorisation offered by Rutten (2015), based on Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt (2003) and Papacharissi & Mendelson (2007). In these cases, viewers consume the programme to enjoy the suffering and humiliation of the contestants. This is related to the criticisms made of the

participants as an object, especially because of their alleged lack of culture and dignity (especially with regard to the women) and because they act in a ridiculous manner. This perception of reality show participants as inferior is the other extreme of the identification between viewers and contestants, which is one of the characteristics typically aimed at by reality show products (Nabi, Biely, Morgan & Stitt 2003; Reiss & Wiltz 2004).

- I'm bored so I think I'll watch #myhyv and see whether they're still doing the same thing and I can laugh at them a while (user_0259)
- #myhyv it makes me cringe and at the same time it livens me up. I can't laugh any more with this circus (user_0002)
- I watch it to laugh at the people on it, because they're normally a bit characters (FG2-M)
- For me it's entertainment but totally anti-cultural. You watch it and you say, my God, look what level of... I don't know, the social and cultural level. I mean, the profile of the participants tends to be very low (FG1-M)

The tweets included in this category tend to provide arguments with an ironic tone. In these cases we cannot determine whether the person making these comments is actually a viewer of *MYHYV* or is only mentioning it to make his/her followers on social media laugh.

- I'm going to culturise myself by watching a bit of myhyv (user_0106)
- As I'm on my own, I think I'll watch all MYHYV in slow motion (user_0135)
- A little so as not to think, as well. Because you get back from the university, from talking about things like very dense subjects and you get back and you put it on and distract yourself (FG2-M)
- It's very easy. You sit down, watch it and that's that (FG2-W)

In some cases, they admit more or less explicitly the morbid reasons behind this kind of consumption.

- Like it or not, gossip attracts all of us, doesn't it? (FG1-M)
- I think what they watch are the arguments (FG1-M)
- But it also depends on who's having a fight (...). Some are characters who always have a fight. It's not <ay, look, she's quiet and today she's having a fight>. I want to see them fight (FG1-M)
- *Mujeres y Hombres* is about looking for love and all that, right?... I'm not interested in that, I'm interested when they have a fight or argument (FG1-M)
- That's it, snooping and getting information from the others. That's what I'm interested in (FG1-M)
- Everyone likes gossip (FG2-M)
- Before it was the patios, the neighbours, right? Well now it's Tele 5 (FG2-M)
- The most odious ones are the ones you follow the most, you know? (...) Rafa Mora, for example, is an idiot with

zero respect but you say, my God, what will happen next with that guy? The ones causing the most controversy are the ones you follow the most (FG1-M)

- Sometimes I also feel good because I think, I'm not like that, you know? Just as well. And sometimes I'm with my parents and my father's complaining <if you don't tidy your room> and I say <look, Dad, look what others do and look at me... so... if you had a daughter who did what they do... I don't know, myself... (FG2-W)

Whereas some justify the consumption of *MYHYV* positively (because they find it fun or because they share it with other people), other Twitter users attribute consumption to chance. In these cases irony tends to be used to describe the experience of watching, which is always presented as sporadic or brief.

- I've seen two minutes of #myhyv. After the embarrassment and humiliation, you can block all of them for me. It's been a pleasure (user_0120)
- After seeing 5 minutes of MYHYV I think that changing its name to *Objects and Men and Bicepsversa* would capture much better the essence of the programme (user_0306)
- I've seen 10 minutes of #myhyv and... Where do I have to sign to unsubscribe from the human race? How can people be so backward? (user_0178)
- You see? That's what happens when you watch Tele5 at night, darling. I turn on the TV in the morning and I stumble upon Myhyv without being ready (user_0147)

Some users who claim to have consumed *MYHYV* by chance blame other people for choosing the programme, although they don't watch it with them.

- I come home my mother's watching myhyv and after listening to them talk 10 seconds with their shit tone of voice I felt like dying (user_0026)
- @Blogserhumano they make me watch myhyv and I've had enough, life ebbs away from me (user_0209)
- I'm ashamed that my sister comes home and turns over from the morning programme on Cuatro and puts on myhyv... (user_0110)
- They put it on MyHyV at the gym and it's the first time I've seen it. I confess I'm not familiar with it at all (user_0275)
- My sister's turned on myhyv help (user_0284)
- I come home and my sister watching myhyv... I think I'll go back to school (user_0170)

Some tweets and focus group comments justifying their consumption of *MYHYV* by stating that the consumers themselves don't understand why they consume it. These viewers criticise, in their tweets, the participants and/or the programme but at the same time admit they watch *MYHYV* without knowing why. The fact that they watch the programme but have an attitude against it is contradictory.

- What am I doing watching myhyv being able to watch a thousand series I still have to watch, I don't understand

myself (user_0038)

- I have such a low opinion of all of them, I don't know why I watch it #MyHyV (user_0051)
- #MYHYV I don't know what I'm doing watching this crap (user_0047)
- I don't know what I'm doing watching Myhyv... I'm really cringing with the red envelope (user_0281)
- What dramas they create on myhyv. It makes me cringe but I still watch it, I haven't a clue why (user_0282)
- In truth, I watch it and I think, many times I watch it and I say, if I don't like it or if I don't agree with what they're doing... but, I don't know... you get hooked, to see what happens. And you go on watching it! (FG2-W)

5. Conclusions and applications of the analysis

We can identify three large groups among the Twitter users and focus group participants that criticise *MYHYV*:

1. Those who don't consume it.
2. Those who consume it out of habit, although they don't know why, due to boredom and/or because they feel disappointed with the current version of the programme.
3. Those who consume it for enjoyment, although they believe it's ridiculous, embarrassing or uncultured.

The first group criticises the programme for its low quality and believe it's symptomatic of the low cultural level of young people, society and/or the country. This group doesn't consume the programme, criticises those who consume it and believe there is a single way of consuming it.

The group of viewers who criticise *MYHYV* in its current version feel disappointed with its betrayal of the traditional characteristics of the reality show genre. In these they don't enjoy the characters looking ridiculous: it doesn't cause laughter but indignation. It could be said that these viewers would like to identify with the participants of the reality show instead of laughing at them.

The third group highlights a way of consuming the programme related to ironic, morbid viewing. There is no identification with the characters (they don't emotionally take on board their viewpoint) but a projection of their own feelings towards them. They consume the programme to relish the ridiculousness of the contestants. They laugh at the humiliation they're submitted to. They don't care if it's fictional or real.

This type of viewing is interesting for our research, and for its subsequent use as part of Media Education, since it reveals a contradiction between an attitude towards a TV product and the reasons for watching it. In other words, although these viewers believe the programme is bad, they decide to consume it and feel pleasure in doing so.

The fact that enjoyment of *MYHYV* co-exists with criticism of its contestants because they are "chonis" warrants particular attention. Viewers feel pleasure in seeing contestants made to

look ridiculous, shown as stereotypes from a social group that is strongly delegitimised in the media, as we have seen in other cases of reality shows.

As we suggested at the beginning, we can draw some conclusions from the analysis of the results that should lead to the revision of some of the parameters on which Media Education is based. These are organised around two broad aspects: a revision of the strictly cognitive approach of Media Education and the reductionism of critical sense. We shall develop each of these contributions.

Several studies carried out previously by the authors have highlighted an approach for Media Education focusing on strictly cognitive components (Ferrés, Masanet & Blanco 2014; Ferrés, Figueras-Maz, Masanet & Hafner 2017). The major institutional documents that have promoted Media Education over the past 50 years (from UNESCO, the European Parliament, European Commission, etc.) as well as the teaching plans for Media Education courses given in Spanish universities stress the cognitive dimension as a priority or exclusively.

One of the most significant examples is related to the critical sense. The words that accompany the adjective "critical" in the major institutional documents and university teaching plans are almost always cognitive and rational in nature: critical comprehension, critical thought, critical analysis, critical interpretation, critical assessment, critical judgement... They very rarely talk about a critical attitude or critical commitment.

Today we know, from neuroscience, that only emotions lead to action, whereas thoughts only lead us to produce conclusions (Donald Calne, quoted by Roberts 2005). It would therefore appear that, in Media Education, we don't want to transform people completely but are satisfied if they reach conclusions.

We've been able to confirm this in our research. The people who've taken part in Twitter talking about *MYHYV* and those forming part of the focus groups are often extremely critical of the programme. It could be said that they excel in critical thought, in critical comprehension, in critical interpretation. But, nevertheless, they are regular viewers of the programme; they contribute, as a regular audience, to the existence and continuation of this kind of programme.

Critical comprehension and thought are therefore vital but not enough on their own. "Reason without emotion is impotent" (Lehrer 2010: 26). Critical thought and comprehension can only be a step towards a critical attitude. Attitude and emotion are defined precisely by being a predisposition towards action, whereas our aim with Education in general and Media Education in particular is action, change, transformation.

Another reductionism lies in how critical sense is conceived. An analysis of the major institutional documents on Media Education and of the Media Education teaching plans at Spanish universities highlights another deficiency. Almost always when we talk of critical sense we are talking about an external criticism: criticising the media, the products, the messages... Almost never does the subject that criticises become the object of criticism.

Years ago Pau Casals complained that we teach children that two plus two is four and that Paris is the capital of France but we don't teach them what they are as well. We can apply this to Media Education. We teach what the media and programmes are like but don't take advantage of the opportunity to use media experiences so our students might also learn about themselves.

In our study of the reception of a "junk" TV programme like *MYHYV* we've found that, when talking about the programme, people talked indirectly about themselves, about their feelings, their tastes, their ideology, their aspirations, their contradictions... And we have also seen that all these comments were an opportunity to raise awareness of the unaware. Often they were not aware of the reasons and needs and tendencies underlying their statements: the feeling of superiority they might develop on comparing themselves with the characters in the reality show, the pleasure of *voyeurism* in being able to infiltrate situations of metaphorical striptease, the sadistic pleasure of seeing characters humiliated or simply the sensorial pleasure of seeing bodies that have been chosen to be enjoyed visually.

If getting to know yourself is one of the main aims of maturing as a teenager and young adult, media experiences offer a great opportunity to achieve this, so that hetero-critical Media Education should be accompanied by self-criticism.

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