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A study on the impact of the workplace reality show on the audience in China

Master thesis

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Abstract

The thesis examines the shades of impacts that Chinese workplace reality shows have on audiences drawn from different backgrounds and demographic linings. A typical Chinese workplace reality show entitled, *An Exciting Offer* is privileged as an exemplar in this research while the survey research method is used as an analytical tool. *An Exciting Offer* is specifically chosen because it connects uniquely with the workforce. Interesting questions like, "Should I resign naked at the age of 30?", and "Can unmarried women without children gain a job in the workplace?" which are regular catchers on the show make it an Internet darling for many.

A questionnaire survey was done and after data collection, the SPSS statistical software was deployed to analyze the information utilizing a univariate ANOVA transcript. The findings from questions streaming from demographic variables like gender, age, educational background, employment status, and occupation show that while workplace reality shows are likely to have significant impact on some groups, its impact on others are either minimal, insignificant or null. But it is undeniable that the audience can get some positive energy from the program more or less, Hence, the findings of this study help to enable healthy workplace energy.

Keywords

Abstrakt

Práce zkoumá odstíny dopadů, které mají čínské reality show na pracovištích na publikum pocházející z různých prostředí a demografických vrstev. Typická čínská reality show na pracovišti s názvem *Vzrušující nabídka* je v tomto výzkumu privilegovaná jako příklad, zatímco metoda průzkumu se používá jako analytický nástroj. *Vzrušující nabídka* je speciálně vybrána, protože se jedinečně spojuje s pracovní silou. Zajímavé otázky typu: "Mám dát výpověď nahá ve 30 letech?" a "Mohou neprovdané ženy bez dětí získat práci na pracovišti?", které pořad pravidelně chytá, z něj pro mnohé dělají miláčka internetu.

Bylo provedeno dotazníkové šetření a po sběru dat byl nasazen statistický software SPSS k analýze informací pomocí jednorozměrného přepisu ANOVA. Zjištění z otázek plynoucích z demografických proměnných, jako je pohlaví, věk, vzdělání, postavení v zaměstnání a povolání, ukazují, že zatímco reality show na pracovišti pravděpodobně mají významný dopad na některé skupiny, jejich dopad na jiné je buď minimální, nevýznamný nebo nulový. Je však nepopiratelné, že diváci mohou z programu získat více či méně pozitivní energie, a proto zjištění této studie pomáhají zajistit zdravou energii na pracovišti.
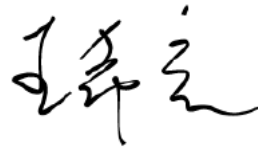
Klíčová slova

Televize reality; Reality show na pracovišti; Průzkum publika; Sociální dopad; Reality show Vlivy čínského pracoviště

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Declaration of Authorship

1. The author hereby declares that he compiled this thesis independently, using only the listed resources and literature.

2. The author hereby declares that all the sources and literature used have been properly cited.

3. The author hereby declares that the thesis has not been used to obtain a different or the same degree.

Prague 2nd January 2023

Wang Xichong

Acknowledgments

There are many key points in my life, and many people and thanks to keep in mind.

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Institute Sociological Studies Master thesis proposal

Diploma Thesis Project

Name and surname of the student: Xichong Wang

Expected title of the thesis: A study on the impact of the workplace reality show on the audience in China

Keywords: Reality television; The workplace reality show; Audience research; Social impact; The Influences of Chinese workplace reality show

Thesis supervisor: PhDr. Irena Reifová, Ph.D.

Topic of work

In the development of reality shows in China in recent years, workplace-related reality shows have become increasingly popular. The content of this type of reality show also has become more affluent; it is no longer a single public job-hunting category, but also the content of exploring the relationship between leaders and employees, and observing the work-life of other industries. In general, workplace programs include four elements: host, employee, boss, and psychologist. The model of this type of reality show has two spaces. One is in the workplace showing the employees' work life, and the other is in a studio where celebrities who are bystanders need to observe employees' work-life and work performance to comment, discuss and guess the final ranking of employees. This type of reality show is documentary, dramatic, gameplay, and participatory. Moreover, most of the professions selected for these shows are closely related to daily life but are unusual, for example: lawyers, celebrity agents, and medical workers.

The development time for this kind of program in China is relatively short. Therefore, there is little related research. My thesis will analyze the impact of workplace reality shows on the audience, such as: if it will make the audience feel anxious, or if the audience can gain knowledge from this kind of show. On one hand, we can trace the audience's influence on the development of workplace variety shows. On the other hand, the industry can discover the shortcomings of such programs, provide new ideas for future growth, and meet the audience's needs.

Assumed research methods

I will use audience research methodology. This will allow me to send questionnaires and conduct in-depth interviews with different age groups, professions, and living areas to research the audience for the workplace reality show. I will apply *An Exciting Offer* and *Workplace Newcomers* as samples, which are popular workplace reality shows in China.

First, I will use the qualitative interview method to determine relevant perspectives and aspects. It is estimated that 20 sample audiences who are more familiar with workplace programs will be selected for interviews. We will discuss

workplace reality shows, for example: which episodes of the show did they like or dislike, and at what time they watched them. In this part, the main research question is why audiences would watch this kind of show.

Afterward, according to the interview results, I would like to make a questionnaire for the questionnaire survey. I will use quota sampling, and build a sample of around 800-1000 respondents. I will set the quotas to reflect the sociodemographic structure of Chinese society in the following parameters: age, gender, education, place of living (city/countryside). Information on the structure of the Chinese population will be retrieved from Chinese statistical office. I attempt to use this method to understand the audience's preferences. Also, I will analyze the data from questionnaires quantitatively to find the audience's habits, preferences, and attitudes. In this part, the key research question is if the audience can really get useful information or knowledge from the workplace reality show.

Ethical context of the considered project
When I send questionnaires and do an in-depth interview, I will use an informed consent form, anonymize the identity of my respondents and use all my data in compliance with the protection of personal data GDPR.

Indicative list of literature

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Contents

Introduction

In recent years, China's workplace reality show has become a popular theme in the variety show market. *An Exciting Offer*, *My Agent and Me* and *Gold Medal Intern* provided people with a window to observe the workplace, broadened the dimension of observing variety shows, and received widespread attention and discussion after the broadcast. As an important part of the entire social ecology, the workplace has always had a large content gap in the production system of Chinese TV programs. Workplace reality shows restore the true ecology of young people's workplaces, which are more down-to-earth and more likely to arouse emotional resonance than idol dramas in the cloak of the workplace. On the other hand, affected by the epidemic, the employment situation is becoming increasingly severe. According to the latest data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (2022), as of April, the youth unemployment rate reached 18.2%. Among them, there are 18 unemployed people for every 100 people. And this does not include the 10.76 million college students who graduated in July this year. Combined with the "Job Market Prosperity Report" released by the China Employment Research Institute in 2022, the number of job seekers in the first quarter of this year increased by 34.64% compared with the end of last year, but the demand for recruitment only increased by 5%. In addition, the number of students graduating from universities is increasing, and the quality of applicants is getting higher and higher. The number of graduates this year reached 10.76 million, an increase of 1.67 million and a record high (the National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). In addition, it is estimated that more than 1 million overseas students will return to China for employment this year, and the pressure on job hunting is increasing. Young people are facing workplace anxiety and psychological confusion. Such programs directly address the anxiety points of the young generation in society. The audience can not only deepen their understanding of careers from different dimensions, but also gain more experience to examine and adjust their employment direction and improve their value in the job market.

Take *An Exciting Offer* as an example. As of the beginning of this study, this reality show has three seasons, showing the current workplace status of lawyers and doctors. According to Tencent, This workplace reality show has 130 million views (Sohu News, 2022). At the same time, this program also triggered a lot of related discussions on social platforms, such as "Should I resign naked at the age of 30?", and "Can unmarried women without children gain a job in the workplace?" This research was originally scheduled for quantitative research and qualitative research, but due to the large volume, it was finally decided to use quantitative research only to explore the audience of workplace reality shows such as *An Exciting Offer*, and whether such programs have a guiding effect on the audience.

Literature Review

1. Reality Show

1.1 Definition of the reality show

Reality shows are very commonly found on television channels. In addition to traditional television reality shows, reality shows created by broadcast exclusively on many media platforms have become increasingly common. Reality shows have become a part of pop culture and can even be said to be an indispensable part of the daily life of many viewers. According to a China-based data survey report (Enlightent, 2021), in 2021, the total reality show audience reached 32.2 billion, the average viewer was 26.1 to 28.3 years old, and approximately 60% of the viewers were women.

The reality show is a genre of television programming that documents unscripted real-life situations and often features individuals who are usually not professional actors. However, celebrities may be involved in some shows. Reality shows are different from documentary television because they usually focus on drama, personal conflict, and entertainment; some shows may also include educational aspects. There is some ambiguity about what type of show can be classified as a reality show. For example, television news, sports, and talk shows would not be classified as reality shows even though they may contain some of the previously mentioned elements.

It was crucial to clarify the definition of a reality show for this study. Kavka (2012) has a very strict and precise definition that stipulates three elementary attributes of television reality shows: everydayness, ordinary people acting in them, and the shows being unscripted. With respect to distinctions and boundaries, Kavka (2012 p.7) considers reality television programming "to be exemplary of a television genre owing to the ease with which it mixes fictional and documentary forms, soap operas and game shows, talk shows, and advertising platforms—all without losing its legibility as 'reality TV.'" Hill (2005 p.2) observed that reality television programming is "a catch-all category that includes a wide range of entertainment. Although they all belong to reality shows, each part exists independently and does not affect each other located on the

boundaries between information and entertainment, documentary and drama." Kavka (2009 p.3) considers the reality show genre to be like a melting pot: many forms can be integrated together, while each individual is fused with the others. Hill considers reality shows to be like vegetables in a salad bowl: they all belong to the reality show genre, but each exists independently and does not affect the others. With respect to the nature of reality shows, Ouellette and Murray believe that reality television programming is "an unabashedly commercial genre united less by aesthetic rules or certainties than by the fusion of popular entertainment with a self-conscious claim to the discourse of the real."

1.2 Global development of the reality show

DeVolld (2011) and numerous other scholars believe that a talent show named *The Original Amateur Hour,* which aired several months before *Candid Camera*, was the first reality show. Miller (2007) argues that reality television began in the late 1940s when *Candid Camera (1948), Queen for a Day (1951)*, and *I'd Like to See (1948)* appeared. Kavka's (2012) opinion is similar to Miller's. In 1948, producer and host Allen Funt created a hidden-camera show called *Candid Camera* in which unsuspecting ordinary people reacted to pranks. In the 1970s, two observational documentaries of "real families" were produced. One was *An American Family,* presented by PBS in 1973 and produced by Alan and Susan Raymond. The other was *The Family,* presented by the BBC in 1974 and produced by Paul Watson. All three of these shows are regarded as key sources for the development of reality television (McCarthy and Clissold, 2004). This period can be said to be a test of hidden cameras, used to test the audience's reactions and the attitude of public discourse. During this period, other genres of reality shows also appeared. Examples include talent search shows such as *Ted Mack's Original Amateur Hour* and *Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts*, which featured amateur competitors and audience voting; game shows that involved contestants in wacky competitions, stunts, and practical jokes; and interview shows,

such as the show *Confession*, in which an interviewer Jack Wyatt questioned criminals from varied backgrounds (Alex, 1996).

Kavka (2012) calls this period from 1989 to 1999 first-generation reality TV. After the 1980s, because of the market economy, social and political institutions shifted, and the main reality television (closed-circuit television and video camcorder) technologies appeared. New "real-life" programming (Goodwin, 1993) emerged during the late 1980s and early 1990s. In the late 1980s, the first genre of reality show, referred to as docusoap, appeared on Fox TV, and rapidly developed into the most common form. Examples of docusoaps were *Cops* and *America's Most Wanted*. Low-gauge reality television for entertainment became popular. In the mid-1990s, the first wave of reality TV reached a peak. It is worth mentioning that the crime-appeal format was successful; many spin-offs based on this subgenre of reality shows appeared. For example, in relation to the Simpson murder case, live network television stations tracked suspect O.J. Simpson for 90 minutes being pursued by police. This could be considered a seminal event in reality television. Because of the strong influence of the characters and the many sensitive topics addressed, crime-related shows dominated public discussion in television for a time (Anolik, 2016). In the second half of the 1990s, a new phase called "post-documentary culture" emerged (Corner, 2000). In this phase, reality television mixed the factual with the fictional. It focused on personalities, storylines, and interpersonal conflicts to entertain viewers but also called attention to social institutions (Biressi and Nunn, 2005 p.63) and relatively mundane lives (Ellis, 2005).

The year 2000 could be considered a watershed year: before 2000, the reality show was just a common denominator; after 2000, reality television was a highly rated component of the primetime period that everyone watched and discussed. In addition, the definition of reality television broadened. The shows *Big Brother*, *Survivor*, and *The Real Word* are typical of this period and could be credited with representing the "start" of this type of reality television. This new format involved "intimate strangers" (Kavka, 2012), i.e., strangers in a house without scripted interaction who lived together under 24/7 surveillance. Television production, distribution, and consumption patterns changed in response to the *Big Brother* show, the success of which impressed

advertisers. Many similar shows appeared on the market (Huff, 2006). Kavka (2012) described the period of 1999 to 2000 as the second generation of reality television.

From 2001 to 2004, reality television flourished; every year, a different type of reality show appeared, such as the relationship-based competition show in 2001, a real-love show in 2002, extreme makeover shows in 2003, and self and family regulation shows in 2004. All of these shows exhibited social benefits and cultural values.

In the third generation of reality television, from 2004 to the present, reality programming became an industry, starting to produce celebrities, and a celebrity economy emerged. According to Turner (2004), reality television is a spectacular revival of the media interest in manufacturing celebrities. Reality television can turn ordinary people into celebrities and produce many derivatives to expand profits. In this third generation of reality television, the reality show was no longer completely real; fact and fiction began to mix, with participants expressing themselves in constructed environments, and discover aspects of themselves through participation in reality shows.

In summary, the history of reality television can be divided into three phases: the predecessor (before 1989), the prototype (1989 to 2002), and the formation of an industry with its own unique influence (2002 to the present). Reality shows have gradually evolved into the reality shows broadcast on television today through continuous absorption, integration, and innovation from the very beginning of "docusoaps" with hidden cameras. As the reality show genre has changed and developed, the value and social influence of reality shows have constantly changed and expanded. Reality shows are no longer a threat to civil liberties or a tool for voyeurism but rather are a means for self-expression and self-legitimation (Kavka, 2012 p.179).

1.3 Development of the reality show in China

Reality television in China started relatively late, well after reality shows had became popular on European and American TV screens—that is, in 2000. The first reality show in China, called Survival Challenge (2000, Guangdong Satellite TV), was modeled on the typical reality show Survivor. The show selected three challengers who

did not know each other and asked them to complete a journey of 38,000 km through border areas in eight provinces with only some simple daily necessities in 6 months. The whole process lasted 195 days. As the first reality show in China, this program had a great impact, and the media coverage was overwhelming. It served as a model for shooting and production practices for subsequent reality shows and was a widely imitated prototype.

Soon, however, this model of imitating Western reality shows entered a low period. A reality show called *Perfect Vacation* (2002, Hunan Satellite TV) caused a great deal of controversy because of the intense conflicts between the participants in the show. The level of conflict was not tolerable to the audience, and the audience reaction led to a downturn in the popularity of reality shows for a while.

In 2003, as the imitation of Western reality shows was hindered, Chinese television producers began to design reality shows in line with local conditions. The content of reality shows followed the CPC political ideology. All TV programs broadcast in China, including reality shows and TV series, were subject to the censorship of the State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT). Programs such as *Happy Heroes* and *Extraordinary 6+1* gradually took shape and experienced upward trends in ratings and advertising returns. In June 2003, Hunan Satellite TV achieved great success with a talent show called *Happy Girl*. This show looks like a singer audition, but it actually builds a virtual occasion for people to break the sense of hierarchy. It provides ordinary people with the opportunity to express themselves and show their individuality, which is a subversion of traditional entertainment programs.

Reality shows enjoyed a period of rapid development until 2006. Because of the popularity of talent shows, a large number of similar shows appeared, and the phenomenon of homogenization of shows was very serious. There was some variety in topics, such as home decoration, marriage, and relationships, but all such shows were suspended due to lack of content and form. Dating shows therefore began to try to transform themselves, addressing current social issues, which led to blind date shows quickly growing in popularity, ratings, and attention.

In 2013, another wave of Chinese reality shows emerged. This wave originated from a program called *Dad, Where Are We Going*, a parent–child relationship show that imitated a show in South Korea. The producer localized the program and combined the advantages and special features of two program types: reality shows and entertainment programs. The show, which combines various entertainment elements, such as performances, games, and sensationalism, quickly became the most popular television show in mainland China in the year that it was released. Since then, the development of reality shows has stabilized as a steadily growing trend. Reality shows with various forms and types of content are constantly emerging.

During this time, the "documentary" nature of Chinese reality shows was improved by means such as the conscious use of documentary techniques to dilute the script rules and scenarios. The parallel story-building method, which combines scripted plot settings and unscripted, unexpected situations, was employed to make the audience feel a strong attraction to breaking away from the script. Starting with the concept of the "realization" of topical stars, Chinese reality shows entered the "All-Star Era," in which all of the participants in the show were popular celebrities.

Around 2015, Chinese reality shows seemed to have exhausted stars' personal resources, and the audience's needs had also developed from the superficial "hunting and watching" to the deeper "real experience" and "thinking resonance." The media platform had also introduced an "amateur" strategy that is close to the positioning of ordinary people, creating a reality show model that combines stars and amateurs and even all amateurs, as in the case of the *An Exciting Offer* premise described in this thesis. This model has resonated with audiences and has encouraged strong interaction, becoming a symbol of a new era of Chinese reality shows and prompting Chinese reality shows to deconstruct, refine, diverge, and gradually transform themselves into new types.

In general, there are three types of Chinese reality shows: "real documentaries," "talent shows," and "game fiction." These three aspects of reality shows—documentary, competition, and gameplay—constitute the three stages of Chinese reality show development. Reality shows in China have mixed joys and sorrows on the development

road in China. Reality shows have gone through stages from germination to development to prosperity to the norm (Xin, 2015). The level of planning and production of domestic reality shows has been greatly improved. Sadly, there is a lack of innovation, blind following of trends, failure to keep pace with the times, weak production efforts, and disregard of industrial operations. These problems still seriously limit the local development of reality shows.

1.4 Genres of reality shows

According to the content and style, there are many genres of reality shows on the market. However, there is some overlap in the content of these programs, so there are differences of opinions about their classification. For example, Hill, Weibull, and Nilsson (2007 p.18) recommend that "reality television could be classified into five genres, which include infotainment, often about crime or emergency services; docusoaps, often about institutions or groups of people; lifestyle, often about making over someone's home or personal appearance; and reality game shows, often about an experiment with a group of people, or situation. We would now add life experiment programs to this group."

In 2011, DeVolld suggested that there should be seven subgenres: documentary or docuseries, reality competition–elimination, makeover or renovation, dating, hidden camera or surveillance or amateur contest, supernatural, travel, and aspirational. Yahr, Chow, and Moore (2015) suggested a finer division of ten subgenres: competing for price, talent competition, dating and love, family, autobiographical, ridiculous people, life improvement, businesses and career, hidden cameras and tricks, and wives.

Roberts (2011) argues that there are four categories: the challenge subgenre, which includes the competitive game show, e.g., *Survivor*; the talent subgenre (e.g., *American Idol*); the makeover (e.g., *The Bachelor*, *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*), and the celebrity show, (e.g., *The Osbournes*).

In China, Catering to the audience's in-depth and real experience, reality shows have gradually formed a model that focuses on daily life experience and emotional

communication, trying to raise the status of "truth" to an unprecedented level, downplaying or even completely abandoning the setting of the script framework, and pursuing "pure documentary" mirror experience. The goals are to be unscripted, fully show the truth of human nature, and explore social relations as the pursuit and selling point. A new pair of categories has emerged: show-style reality shows (including talent shows, talk shows, and other strong scripts) and experiential reality shows (which present the natural living conditions of celebrities and guests "without interference" through documentary means). Some programs also use interviews and documentary methods.

2. Workplace reality show

2.1 Definition of the workplace reality show

The workplace reality show (job search reality show) is a subgenre of the reality show. This type of program focuses on helping people find satisfying work in different formats.

The development of workplace reality shows in China began relatively late. The first such program was broadcast on Dragon TV in 2005 and was called *Smart Winner*. This program absorbed the elements of the foreign workplace reality show *The Apprentice*. Participants compete in multiple rounds of intense selection and elimination, and the venture capital investment of millions or even tens of millions of yuan provided by related companies is the reward for the winner seeking to realize an entrepreneurial dream. The candidates participating in the show are connoisseurs with rich professional experience. They are different from ordinary job seekers, and they are not newcomers who lack any workplace foundation but rather seek a higher platform from which to display their career ideals and talents.

In 2010, the format and properties of this type of show began to change. The participants in the programs began to be more ordinary job seekers, and the programs became more inclined to social services, which meant career guidance, as represented by *Job Come and Work* and *It is You*. The program design of these two programs was

similar. Both used some elements of the more popular real-love reality shows (such as lighting times and lights out). One job seeker needs to face many potential bosses who are professionals in the workplace who assess whether they will be successful or not.

The next stage of this development trend began in 2012 with the show *Stand Out*. This show introduced the model of the cruel reality of candidates competing for a position in society. A business boss puts each job applicant through layers of tests, at each layer of which a candidate is eliminated, and the final candidate is selected by the boss. Some hidden camera shooting is involved. The interviewees truly show themselves without knowing that they are being filmed, including during their participation in stress tests, business negotiations, and other tests. However, all of the shows are limited to the interview stage.

In 2019, *An Exciting Offer* opened a new chapter of workplace reality shows, mainly focused on the life of an intern after passing an interview, entering the workplace, and being recorded with hidden cameras. This show adopts a combination of forms. A second studio is set up, in addition to the first program scene, to observe the first program situation and evaluate the performance of the interns. This dual form of expression was not common at first, but it has innovated the form of workplace reality shows. In one workplace reality show, eight students are selected who are about to enter the workforce after graduating from major colleges and universities. A law firm in Shanghai is used as an internship site. Under the leadership of elite lawyer tutors, the interns complete the subject test set in the show. The interns are informed of the official transfer quota in the first scene. In the second scene, some celebrities, famous sociologists, and experts analyze the work performance of the eight interns and speculate about which two will finally receive a job offer. The addition of this speculation increases audience interest in the program. The observers analyze the performance of the interns, and the audience members can change their perspectives, adding more visibility to the announcement of the final reasoning results and increasing the audience's viewing expectations The setting of the second studio in this kind of workplace reality show is like a "mirror in a mirror." While watching the performance of the main live guests of the show, the audience appropriately switches to the

comments and commentary of the second scene. In addition, for the audience, the reasoning session, topic discussion, and knowledge popularization in the second scene fill in the knowledge blind spots of non-professional audiences in a timely manner.

This reality show has been serialized for three seasons, and its rating have been very strong. The three seasons' ratings together broke one billion. Since the content discussed in the program pertains to social issues, the degree of discussion has always been high (Yi, 2009). Many similar reality shows have subsequently emerged showcasing jobs in a variety of fields and industries.

The characteristics of such shows are varied. The typical workplace reality show examined in this research has its particular special features as a combination of a makeover and life intervention show. The aspect of the interns' work experiment in the show embodies a makeover, with all of the interns having achieved a huge improvement when the show ends recording. In addition, this reality show provides considerable knowledge and workplace tips to the audience and provides a platform for the audience to obtain more information while being entertained. This genre of workplace reality shows is a hybrid of social service, entertainment, and self-development.

3. "Pseudo-documentary" and "beautification of authenticity" reality shows

The "authenticity" in reality shows is the only way for all types of reality shows to break through in brutal competition, and it also has mixed reviews. The documentary technique that reality shows borrow from documentaries is that of a "pseudo-documentary." Although a reality show is advertised as "100% authentic TV" without a script, "unscripted daily life" is difficult to form consciously without choreography. It will eventually become a "boring account of near-life" due to the lack of an emotional focus that attracts the audience. At the same time, it will expose too many human weaknesses and degenerate cultural appetites (Essany, 2008). For example, in a reality show, the contestants will do whatever they can to achieve victory and even fight each other. The reality show will expose these negative behaviors and amplify them through

the TV medium. This is contrary to the original purpose of the reality show. The reality show's "reality" desired by audience members is similar to their own life; they are likely to feel that the conflict and attraction of the plot of a reality show belong to a higher "reality" than their own life. Under this restriction, reality shows have to control the overall direction of the program and set the basic plot, which leads to the fact that the "documentary nature" of reality shows eventually becomes a "false proposition."

The concept of a "reality show" is very broad, and some scholars describe it as a type of TV program that records the specific activities of participants in a preset situation. Wei and Tootle (2002 p.6) believe that reality television "simulates real-world, real-life psychologically, mentally, or emotionally challenging situations, involving reward-motivated, self-selected contestants from the audience. The contestants act spontaneously, improvise, and showcase their real emotions in meeting the challenges they encounter in a real setting." Pozner (2010) suggested that some reality shows may be scripted and that others may have only a few plots about which the actors improvise their conversations.

In addition, reality shows must be spread through the media. The media's control over the setting and content of reality shows first disintegrates the "reality" of reality shows. The shooting process is actually a "reality reproduction process" that incorporates human factors. It is a relative reality set by a medium in a virtual situation and a real set for the audience to consume. From this point of view, reality shows need to consider the audience's needs and excavate real humanity. The use of documentary narrative techniques to arrange and reconstruct facts is more purposeful, and the framework for a "documentary" is more limited. The "real" processing marks are also more obvious. This is also the reason why reality TV has been criticized by many scholars. Keveney (2007) argued that deceiving reality shows bring viewers further away from reality rather than closer.

Post-production editing also change the original "reality" of the participants, deconstructing and reshaping the documentary plot. The self-expression of the reality show theme also affects the authenticity of the content. Therefore, the documentary method of reality show production is influenced by many factors. The objective reality

state at the time of shooting can only be displayed to a certain extent, so the "reality" of a reality show is constantly approaching the objective reality while maintaining a certain distance.

Chinese reality shows use numerous documentaries to blur actual reality and set the boundaries of reality. Still, there are shortcomings in the display of human nature and the situation set, that is, the phenomenon of "beautification of reality." Recent Chinese reality shows have portrayed "utopian" scenarios and beauty through "filters" and satisfy the public's yearning for a "small and beautiful" existence. Some audiences have responded that this way of life, which does not have universal significance in China, should not be the whole of "daily life" in the discourse of the mass media. The real lifestyles of the common people and the deep excavation of human nature should be the value of the reality show that arouses the audience's deep thinking.

In addition to the fake content and method of reality shows, Kavka (2012) argues that audiences see themselves on screen, or at least imagine seeing themselves there, in a real way. As Turner points out, the era of the reality TV show has seen "the increasing importance of the camera as a means of composing and validating everyday reality (Kavka, 2004 p.62). Sender (2012) disassembles the program content and the production itself, arguing that both empirical and emotional truths are contained in the word "reality."

Many scholars believe that reality shows, especially competition shows, are immoral and humiliate and exploit participants. Such shows need capture participants' every move and interaction. Although crews come to the film set and leave it after shooting, every move of the participants is also exposed to the post-video editing staff and the staff in front of the monitor. Participants are often asked to do inappropriate things for the sake of the show's entertainment. Essany (2008) believes that the realism of reality shows result in people experiencing humiliation. Many critics argue that reality shows are invasions of privacy because the participants expose their lives to hidden cameras (Esch, 2012). Some of the participants' behaviors in the shows are immoral, and reality shows magnify these immoral behaviors and even cause some viewers to follow suit.

Audience members will also have different degrees of acceptance of the morality of the programs (Alasuutari, 1996). Scarborough and McCoy conducted a survey of television consumers in 2014, using questionnaires and 41 semi-structured in-depth interviews, to investigate viewers' negative moral reactions to contemporary reality TV shows. They found that audiences' moral arguments against reality shows and their consumers can be divided into many different types, which can be broadly grouped into two moral points. Endogenous moral orientation focuses on consumption, while exogenous moral orientation focuses on production. Some of the subjects felt that the most common inherent moral problem with watching reality TV was that they were a waste of time and that viewers should have a moral obligation to avoid watching human reality shows because such time could be allocated to more productive activities. Most of these people think that reality shows are for entertainment only and lack information, artistry, or social value. Of course, there is also a part of the population that thinks that the behavior of viewers of a reality show is immoral because this viewing behavior constitutes a voyeuristic perspective, an invasion of privacy. Thus, it is a form of humiliation to evaluate the characters on the show, and it is unethical to do so.

4. The guiding role of the reality show

The reality show has been praised for establishing new bonds between otherwise disconnected people. Gershon (2019) argued that reality television could provide a window into economic, social, and cultural structures within a society. While reality shows expose some immoral aspects, some reality shows can also become models of self-growth and self-improvement. As Hill (2005) said, lifestyle programs have the potential to teach viewers useful skills. Wang et al. (2015) argue that reality shows can contribute to the future of medical science popularization while entertaining the public. For example, *An Exciting Offer-Doctor* provides some common-sense information about first aid and diseases, including some discussions of AIDS and other diseases whose sufferers are often victims of discrimination. Meng (2020) believes that reality shows use celebrity effects and program features to attract many audiences, especially

young people, and that the sportsmanship and positive energy of such shows have beneficial effects, especially on young people, including increases in active participation in sports and improvements in physical fitness.

At the same time, some reality shows want to convey values to the audience. Workplace reality shows have very significant roles in career guidance for fresh graduates in matters including but not limited to the choice of industry, interpersonal relationships, and interview skills. For example, with the broadcast of *We Beginning in the Workplace-Forensic Medicine Season*, the public's perception of forensic medicine has changed, and the number of applicants for the forensic medicine profession has increased. The guiding role of workplace reality shows is significant, in the opinion of Chinese scholars Sun and Cai (2021 p.64), who remarked that "workplace reality shows play a pivotal role in fulfilling social responsibilities and present diverse content through the program. The social status quo reflects the reality of the workplace; it helps to strengthen workplace cognition, establish a correct career outlook, understand the status quo of the workplace, identify the workplace positioning, obtain positive emotional guidance, capture workplace information, and provide employment guidance."

According to statistics from the Ministry of Education of China, the number of fresh graduates in 2022 will reach 10.76 million, a year-on-year increase of 1.67 million compared to 2021. The total and increase over the previous year are both record highs. The impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on employment is still ongoing. The production and operation of some industries and enterprises have not recovered to pre-epidemic levels. The severe employment situation means college students are faced with opportunities and challenges. Workplace reality shows try to stimulate self-regulation in terms of individual responsibility and individual efforts to increase viewers' job market value and change the graduate's attitude toward career choice through exploration and display of different types of occupations, such as teachers, doctors, policemen, and firefighters, instead of focusing on finance, securities, and other lucrative occupations. Graduates are not limited to big cities, offices, and white-collar life but are also ordinary people, small vendors, and blue-collar workers.

Workplace reality shows not only provide guidance for audiences but also magnify some social problems in the workplace, thereby stimulating wider discussions that lead to changes in workplace environment. This is why workplace reality shows came into being. While entertaining the audience, these shows also displayed the common problems in workplaces on the TV screen, arousing the audience's awareness and even stimulating changes in workplace rules.

It is undeniable that the entertainment of reality shows is important to the audience, but it does not mean that there is no possibility for the audience to learn while being entertained. Sender (2005) believes that makeover television shows offer rich opportunities to consider contemporary anxiety about "the self," variously characterized as fragmented, performative, narcissistic, therapeutic, anxious, self-surviving, and governmental. The makeover elements in a workplace reality show have effects similar to makeover television shows, although the effects are not as great as on a special makeover show. The interns change from being overwhelmed when they first enter the workplace to being able to handle work problems with ease, which not only reflects considerable personal improvement of the interns who participate in the show but also provide the audience with numerous ideas about the self. The audience members are inspired to reflect on their work and life based on the performance of the interns on the show. This reflection by the audience members is a form of active learning and acceptance of related knowledge.

Hill (2005) proposed the concept of learning from reality shows and provided evidence that reality shows can provide audiences with both entertainment and information at the same time. The term "information" here refers not only to information itself but also opportunities for learning. Hill (2005 p.91) provides an example: "a 40-year-old female part-time secretary said: 'I watch 999 to, sort of, see what can I do in case of a fire, or, I break a leg, what first aid I could use, or stuff like that.'" Another participant in Hill's research commented about the information in a reality show as follows: "Maybe one day in the future when you fall into a certain situation, you will use the information you learned in the reality show one day before." Hill also notes that reality shows offer more informal "ideas" rather than formal advice

about living. Skeggs and Wood (2012) similarly suggested that viewers can use reality television to interact the world and shape their lives.

Hill (2005) also mentions that the activity of people watching should apply to the concept of learning from reality shows because observation of social behavior can be informative. In the 1960s, Cultural historian Hoggart observed that television is a major source of people watching for comparison and possible emulation, which suggests that television audiences can gain a better understanding of social behavior through watching reality shows, and depending on preexisting knowledge, may be open to the idea of learning from such shows. Gauntlett (2002 p.98) states that "information and ideas from the media do not merely reflect the social world … but contribute to its shape and are central to modern reflexivity." Thus, when audience members watch reality shows, they "can collect information and ideas that may help them to construct and maintain their own self-identities or life biographies (Hill, 2005). In helping the audience, such shows also have a certain degree of positive impact on the governance of society.

Workplace reality shows also have great social influence, triggering extensive discussions and even leading aesthetics. The core of workplace reality shows is to introduce the audience into the public space for observation and discussion through reality shows, that is, to observe and discuss workplace topics and social phenomena derived from the show. As more viewers participate in reviewing and discussing the participants in reality shows, such shows increasingly become transmitters of information in the public space. According to the statistics of the Micro Hot Spot Big Data Research Institute (2021), from January 1 to June 20, 2021, the amount of information on the entire network about workplace observation reality shows reached 8.1354 million. From the information trend chart, the relevant information changes The magnitude is relatively large, resulting in many discussions. On April 24, artist Ren Jialun expressed his views on the topic of "whether you have cried because of work" in the show "*Sparkling You*" on Weibo, which aroused widespread heated discussions and drove the amount of relevant information to rise to 577,500 on that day. "Workplace" has always been a topic of high social concern. As can be seen from the

keyword cloud (the Statistics of the Micro Hot Spot Big Data Research Institute, 2021）, "skills", "ideas", "mentality" and "professionalism" related to internships have also been widely concerned. In addition, emotional keywords such as "life", "stress", "gap" and "tears" were on the list, which shows that many netizens resonated with the program.

Take *An Exciting Offer* as an example. By showing the workplace life of interns, workplace reality programs reveal the problems and challenges that newcomers to the post-95 workplace will also face in reality, such as graduates of ordinary colleges or universities being challenged, moments of collapse of new workplaces, employees being forced to work overtime, office social fear, academic anxiety, etc., all reflecting the current phenomenon of workplace "involution." This phenomenon is a structural problem closely related to the highly integrated competition within society. Anthropologist Xiang (The Paper, 2020) observed that so-called involution is not just a problem of whether competition is fierce but also knowing that the final harvest of competition is nothing and that everyone still has to compete—people do not know a way to live other than with competition. If people withdraw from competition, they will not only be materially poor but will also admit to themselves that they have failed. Therefore, people face huge anxiety in competitive environments that do not allow them to exit and do not allow failure—that is, the psychological anxiety of being likely to face failure in a competition and the moral pressure of admitting to being a loser if exiting the competition. Audience members learn from reality shows based on the information on the supply and demand of talents, the quality requirements and professional assessment standards of the companies for candidates, how to deal with interpersonal relationships and conflicts in the workplace. At the same time, discussion of workplace reality shows provides the audience with a diverse discourse interpretation space.

Methodology

1. Workplace realtiy shows and anthropocentric frictions

1.1 Introduction

This Chapter describes the method and procedures used in this study. The description includes the research design, research questions, sample population, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

In exploring the impacts of Chinese workplace reality shows on audiences with the survey research method, this study takes a representative Chinese workplace reality show entitled, *An Exciting Offe*r as an example. The show, *An Exciting Offer* has important research significance and value. This is the first reality show in China that mainly records the workplace stories of amateurs. It has repeatedly used enthralling discursive captions like, "Should I resign naked at the age of 30?", "Can unmarried women without children gain a job in the workplace?", and other social topics to stimulate extensive discussions on the Internet.

This study addressed two main research questions. Firstly, what kind of audience is more likely to perceive workplace anxiety? In answering the question, this study aims to explore the characteristics of audiences who feel more anxious after watching workplace reality shows. The scenarios of workplace anxiety in this study include job hunting, industry prospects, interpersonal relationships in the workplace, and work pressure. The latter has to do with the balance between work and life. The characteristics of the audience in this study have six aspects namely: gender, age, educational background, employment status, and occupational relevance.

The second research question of this study points to the objective what the relationship between the degree of anxiety of viewers of workplace reality shows is, and the viewers' self-management after watching the program. It also looks at their degree of obtaining useful information from the program.

This study is a quantitative research, which collects data by anonymous questionnaires, and the hypothesis testing is used to analyze the research question by calculating the probability of a given outcome (P-value) occurring under the null hypothesis.

The survey data involved in this study were collected through questionnaires. The respondents read an informed consent form before filling out the questionnaire forms. Before filling out the questionnaire, the participants will read the informed consent form, and they will continue to fill in after agreeing. If they do not agree, they can exit the questionnaire interface.Before the The researcher anonymized all respondents' identities, and used all data in accordance with the Personal Data Protection GDPR.

1.2 Research Design

The research was done utilizing a survey design through the use of a Likert-type survey. Quantitative data were collected from the audience of workplace reality shows via the Internet. The methodology allowed for statistical analysis of the data was adequate and directional. Due to the nature and length of the study, the in-depth interview segment scheduled for 20 people was canceled.

The questionnaire for the final survey (Appendix A) has 23 multiple choices and five parts in total. The first part consists of one question about the intensity of watching. This part is also used to screen whether the participants meet the requirements of the subjects of the questionnaire or not. The respondents answered the first question, "How often do you watch the workplace reality show?" using the following five-point scale: *never, seldom, sometimes, frequently,* and *always*. The second part consists of seven questions which target workplace anxiety. In the second part, there are three subaspects: job hunting, workplace interpersonal relationship and work pressure. The questions are based on some real-life specific questions. The respondents answered the questions in this part using the following a five-point scale: *Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Moderate, Agree, and Strongly Agree.* The third part is about the guiding role of the workplace reality show, which relates to the useful information that the audience can get from the

workplace reality show. It sets up six detailed questions, and the respondents answered them using the following five-point scale: *Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Moderate, Agree, and Strongly Agree.* One of the questions is, "To what extent can the reality show make the audience self-regulating and reduce the stereotypes of some professions and even alleviate some social relations similar to the doctor-patient relationship?"

There are four questions in total in the fourth part which focus on the self-regulation of the audience of the workplace reality show. The respondents use a five-point scale to answer. This is same as before. The fifth part is about demogtaphics, which need to fill in the basic information of the subjects such as age, occupation, gender, educational background and the statue of empolyment. That makes a total of five questions. The principle of respecting and protecting the privacy of the respondents should always be followed in the process of issuing and filling in the questionnaire. Same principle should be followed in filling out the questionnaire after obtaining the informed consent of the subjects. Before all questionnaires start, there is a tip about informed consent: to inform that this questionnaire survey is only for academic research and not for any commercial purposes. In addition, the questionnaire is filled in anonymously to protect the privacy of the respondents. If the respondent do not accept it, they can directly exit the questionnaire system. Expectedly, this should normally minimize harm (benefit). Everyone has an equal opportunity because Chinese is the official language used by the program's audience. Interestingly, Chinese is also the language of use in the area where the questionnaire is distributed.

The reliability analysis of this study adopts the Cronbach α coefficient method. The reliability coefficient α represents the test results. If the reliability coefficient is above 0.8, the reliability of the test is very good. The reliability coefficient is between 0.7 and 0.8, indicating that the reliability of the test is acceptable. If the reliability coefficient is between 0.6 and 0.7, the questionnaire scale then needs to be modified for better outcome. Be that as it may, it should still have a certain test value. If the reliability coefficient is less than 0.6, the questionnaire scale needs to be redesigned as it clearly lacks reliability.

Table 1

Overall Instrument Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Total	0.902	17

The reliability of the survey was then tested to determine how each subscale was effectively grouped. The alpha coefficient is 0.902 signifying the necessity for a strong reliability within the 17-question instrument (Vaden-Kiernan, 2002, p. 3)(See Table 1).

Table 2

Overall Subscale Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Anxiety	0.948	7
Guiding role	0.847	6
Self-regulation	0.830	4

The reliability results of the scale part of this questionnaire are shown in table 2. Generally, the α-value is 0.902, and the α-value of each dimension is higher than 0.8. Questions that are based on the same scale are internally consistent.

Validity measures whether the comprehensive evaluation system can accurately reflect the evaluation purpose and requirements or not. It also refers to the degree to which a measurement tool can measure the correctness of the feature it is intended to measure. The higher the validity, the better the measurement results' ability to show the characteristics that need to be measured. This is vice versa – the lower the validity. The methods commonly used in questionnaire validity analysis are mainly content validity and construct validity.

The design of the relevant questionnaires in many pieces of literature was studied before determining the final questionnaire in the content validity. The typical five-point Likert scale method was used in the whole questionnaire except for the personal information part. Before the questionnaire was officially sent out, there were two

rounds of pre-test and revision. Two small-scale tests were carried out before the formal questionnaire was formed. The first small-scale test had a total of six testers whose identities were: a male undergraduate student in the Department of Law, a female graduate student in the Department of Medicine, a female undergraduate student in Communication Studies, a 28 year old female lawyer, a 32 year old male doctor, and a 24 year old male doctor. One 30-year-old financial industry practitioners were also involved.

In this test, they raised two questions on the questionnaire. The questions bordered on the ambiguity of the expressions therein and the messy order of the question set. After making the questions error-free, the second small-scale test was carried out. The subjects in the test were different from the first one, but their identity characteristics were similar to the first. The subjects had no objection to the expressions of the questionnaire's questions.

For construct validity, consider the correlation between many variables in this study. In order to facilitate in-depth analysis and explore the internal relationship between variables, it is necessary to reduce data dimension. It is also important to condense and classify related variables – a practice that is popularly called factor analysis. In addition, considering the fact that all the questions on the scale are set up around three dimensions, the validity test in this study uses confirmatory factor analysis by AMOS.

Now, while doing factor analysis, it is necessary to check whether the analysis meets the conditions of factor analysis or not. This suggests that there must be a certain correlation between the variables. In this study, KMO's Statistic Test and Bartlett's Sphericity Test were used to test the correlation and independence between variables respectively. The test results obtained after importing the relevant variables are as follows (Table 3):

Table 3

KMO's Statistic Test and Bartlett's Sphericity Test

	KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Sig.)
Anxiety	0.927	<0.001
Guiding role	0.935	<0.001
Self-regulation	0.724	<0.001
Total	0.956	<0.001

It can be seen from the above table that the KMO of the whole scale is >0.9, p < .001, and the KMO of each factor is >0.7 $p < .001$ (see Table 3). So, it is suitable for factor analysis. Since the division of each dimension was pre-specified in this scale, AMOS was used for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

Table 4

Model Fit Metrics

	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	GFI	AGFI	NFI
Standard	<3and>1	<0.10	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
Value	1.43	0.022	0.997	0.996	0.981	0.974	0.989

According to table 4, the fit is ideal in RMSEA=0.022 < .001 and χ^2/df = 1.43 < 3 and >1. The values of GFI, AGFI, TLI and CFI in other indicators were all > 0.9, and the model was considered to have good fit and validity.

Table 5

Factor Loading Table

Factor	Variable	Std. Estimate	AVE	CR
anxiety	Anxiety_1	1		
	Anxiety_2	0.825		
	Anxiety_3	0.825		
	Anxiety_4	0.813	0.722	0.948
	Anxiety_5	0.822		
	Anxiety_6	0.823		
	Anxiety_7	0.824		
guiding role	guide role 1	0.842		
	guide role 2	0.838		
	guide role 3	0.835	0.701	0.934
	guide role 4	0.845		
	guide role 5	0.834		
	guide role 6	0.830		
self-regulation	self-regulation 1	0.787		
	self-regulation 2	0.779	0.619	0.830
	self-regulation 3	0.795		
	Self-regulation 4	0.789		

The factor loading >0.7 (see Table 5) indicates that the items in the scale part of this questionnaire can effectively reflect the measured model variables. The CR > 0.8 indicates that the items highlight the characteristics of dimensional constructs and have internal consistency. In addition, the AVE of each research variable in the convergent validity is >0.5 indicating that the scale part of the scale is well convergent and sterilized. The fact that the scale met the requirements, and the inherent quality of the preset model was ideal.

1.3 Data Collection

The questionnaire survey was done between June 10, 2022 and June 26, 2022. Due to the restrictions on IP addresses and the use of the same computer or mobile phone client, every user can only fill in the questionnaire once. The action cannot be repeated. After data collection, the SPSS statistical software is deployed to analyze the information utilizing a Univariate ANOVA transcript. Although there were many subjects who filled in the questionnaires blindly, in total, there were 946 questionnaires received in 16 days. In the first question for example, the subjects choose the option which suggests that they have never watched any Workplace Reality Show. However, they completed the whole questionnaire stating which kind of questionnaire is invalid and which needs to be culled. After excluding invalid questionnaires, there were 921 valid questionnaires, and the effective questionnaire recovery rate was 95.6%.

1.4 Analysis and Presentation of the Data

Data were collected from the Internet, and received 921 valid questionnaires. The data were analyzed by hypothesis testing, using SPSS software (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The two main research questions were examined by descriptive statistics which included mean and standard deviation. The mean provides the central tendency for each study area, while the standard deviation provides a usable definition accounting for the underlying variation in each distribution. The scale part of this questionnaire uses the Likert scale. The scale part of the sample data is directly tested with T-test, and the non-scale part is tested and analyzed with ANOVA.

1.5 Demographic Data

The basic information section of the survey is already generating specific demographic data about the audience for workplace reality shows. Questions coming from the demographic data include those on gender, age, educational background, employment status, and occupation. Table 6 to Table 10 show the results.

Table 6

Participants' Gender

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Female	463	50.3%
Male	458	49.7%

Note. N=921

In this survey, the gender distribution was relatively even, with male subjects accounting for 49.7% and female subjects accounting for 50.3% (See Table 6).

Table 7

Participants' Age

Valid	Frequency	Percent
0-18	136	14.8%
19-28	305	33.1%
29-38	175	19.0%
39-48	147	16.0%
49-58	125	13.6%
59 +	33	3.6%

Note. N=921

In the distribution of age groups, the participants aged 19-28 accounted for the largest proportion with 305 subjects (33.1%). Most of the people in this age group are college students, graduate students or newcomers to the workplace. This is followed by 175 subjects aged 29-38, which accounted for 19% of the proportion. The subjects aged 39-48 accounted for 16% of the proportion. Those at the level of 0-18 have 136 participants, representing 14.8% of the proportion. The 125 participants aged 49-58 represented 13.6% of the proportion. Of the audience in this survey, the group aged over 58 accounted for the smallest proportion with 33 subjects going for 3.6% (see Table 7).

Table 8

Participants' Educational Background

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Ph.D.	11	1.2%
Master's	28	3.0%
Bachelor's	510	55.4%
College (without diploma)	191	20.7%
Junior School	59	6.4%
Technical Secondary School	111	12.1%
Others	11	1.2%

Note. N=921

Regarding the distribution of educational backgrounds (see Table 8) among the subjects, the proportion with bachelor's degree is the largest at 510 accounting for more than half of the total (55.4%). This is followed by 191 subjects with college degrees (without diploma), and they account for 20.7% of the proportion. The proportion of subjects with higher education such as Ph.D. and master's degree is relatively fewer (11 PhDs, and 28 master's degree holders – 1.2%, and 3.0% respectively).

Table 9

Participants' Employment Status

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Students in school	264	28.7%
Graduated without job	111	12.1%
Employed	546	59.3%

Note. N=921

Most of these audiences (546 objectives) are employees accounting for 59.3% of the proportion. There are 264 students making 28.7% of the proportion, and 111 students who have graduated but are unemployed making 12.1% of the proportion (see Table 9). Among the subjects who are already employees, their occupations are

diversified. The number distribution was relatively even and the proportion was similar. Of the subjects, the education industry had the largest number with 8.3%. This is followed by the economic and financial industry with 8.0%. Doctors and lawyers occupied 5.0% and 5.5% respectively (See Table 10).

Table 10

Participants' Occupation

Valid	Frequency	Percent
Internet	57	6.2%
Finance and economy	74	8.0%
FMCG	69	7.5%
Lawyer	51	5.5%
Doctor	46	5.0%
PR	29	3.1%
Official worker	59	6.4%
Entertainment	58	6.3%
Education	76	8.3%
Other	27	2.9%

Note. N=546

Research Objective 1 – The Characteristics of Audiences Who Feel More Anxious after Watching Workplace Reality Shows

In this section, there are five subscales – gender, age, educational background, employee status, and occupations. The Null Hypothesis is used to test each subscale.

Hypothesis 1: The Relationship between Gender and Workplace Anxiety from the Workplace Reality Show

H_0= There is no relationship between gender and workplace anxiety.

H_1= There is a relationship between gender and workplace anxiety.

Table 11

Gender Differences

	Female (n=463)	Male (n=458)	df	F	p
Anxiety _1	2.44±1.15	2.43±1.11	1	0.020	0.888
Anxiety_2	2.46±1.24	2.50±1.16	1	0.283	0.595
Anxiety _3	2.49±1.20	2.48±1.13	1	0.010	0.920
Anxiety_ 4	2.48±1.18	2.48±1.18	1	0.002	0.969
Anxiety_ 5	2.46±1.21	2.49±1.17	1	0.137	0.711
Anxiety_6	2.46±1.18	2.48±1.16	1	0.032	0.858
Anxiety_7	2.52±1.20	2.42±1.18	1	1.393	0.238
Anxiety	2.47±1.05	2.47±1.00	1	0.002	0.961

* $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

An alpha level of 0.05 for all statistical tests in this research. It can be seen from table 1. The results indicated that $F(1, 919) = 0.048$, $p = 0.961$. H_0 should be *accepted*. There is no relationship between gender and workplace anxiety. Gender as an imperative does not affect the audience's anxiety about the workplace after watching workplace reality shows.

Hypothesis 2: The Relationship between Age and Workplace Anxiety from the Workplace Reality Show

H_0= There is no relationship between age and workplace anxiety.

H_1= There is a relationship between age and workplace anxiety.

Table 12

Age Differences

	0-18 (n=136)	19-28 (n=305)	29-38 (n=175)	39-48 (n=147)	49-58 (n=125)	59+ (n=33)	df	F	p
Anxiety_1	2.36±1.03	2.68±1.21	2.29±1.11	2.29±1.07	2.28±1.00	2.39±1.17	5	4.748	<0.001
Anxiety_2	2.34±1.20	2.71±1.29	2.41±1.13	2.25±1.13	2.45±1.10	2.42±1.12	5	3.979	0.001
Anxiety_3	2.51±1.05	2.72±1.24	2.32±1.17	2.35±1.11	2.32±1.07	2.36±1.29	5	4.144	0.001
Anxiety_4	2.53±1.19	2.67±1.21	2.33±1.17	2.32±1.10	2.32±1.10	2.70±1.31	5	3.377	0.005
Anxiety_5	2.40±1.16	2.66±1.21	2.37±1.21	2.31±1.13	2.45±1.12	2.39±1.34	5	2.450	0.032
Anxiety_6	2.40±1.14	2.73±1.22	2.32±1.13	2.39±1.16	2.23±1.05	2.45±1.25	5	4.882	<0.001
Anxiety_7	2.32±1.11	2.71±1.23	2.35±1.17	2.40±1.16	2.26±1.14	2.58±1.30	5	4.262	0.001
Anxiety	2.41±0.95	2.69±1.10	2.34±1.00	2.33±0.97	2.33±0.92	2.47±1.85	5	4.735	<0.001

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

ANOVA is used to examine the differences between the age of the audience and the anxiety of the audience on job hunting (Anxiety_1-Anxiety_3), workplace interpersonal relationships (Anxiety_4 &Anxiety_5), and work pressure(Anxiety_6 & Anxiety_7). In total, $F(5, 915) = 4.735$, $p < .001$. H_0 should be *rejected* and H_1, *accepted.* There is a relationship between age and workplace anxiety. At the same time, it can be seen that the audience's age has a significant impact on the three aspects of job hunting – anxiety (p<0.01), workplace interpersonal relationship (p <0.01), and work pressure (p<0.01). Workplace Reality Shows have the most obvious impact on Workplace Anxiety among the viewers aged 19-28 ($N = 305$, $M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.10$).

Hypothesis 3: The Relationship between Educational Background and Workplace Anxiety from the Workplace Reality Show

H_0= There is no relationship between educational background and workplace anxiety.

H_1= There is a relationship between educational background and workplace anxiety.

Table 13

Educational Background Difference

	1 (n=11) M±SD	2 (n=28) M±SD	3 (n=510) M±SD	4 (n=191) M±SD	5 (n=59) M±SD	6 (n=111) M±SD	7 (n=11) M±SD	df	F	P
Anxiety_1	1.91±0.83	2.89±1.13	2.39±1.12	2.54±1.15	2.32±1.07	2.41±1.15	2.64±1.29	6	1.792	0.098
Anxiety_2	2.00±1.18	3.00±1.25	2.44±1.17	2.60±1.21	2.37±1.24	2.42±1.25	2.64±1.29	6	1.715	0.114
Anxiety_3	2.27±1.01	2.71±1.30	2.47±1.17	2.53±1.15	2.29±1.11	2.53±1.21	2.55±1.29	6	0.603	0.728
Anxiety_4	2.00±0.89	2.64±1.19	2.47±1.16	2.59±1.22	2.29±1.07	2.42±1.27	2.64±1.36	6	1.014	0.414
Anxiety_5	2.09±0.94	2.93±1.15	2.39±1.17	2.63±1.21	2.34±1.09	2.57±1.27	2.45±1.21	6	2.123	0.048*
Anxiety_6	2.27±1.19	3.00±1.31	2.43±1.18	2.55±1.12	2.32±1.12	2.50±1.21	2.45±1.21	6	1.441	0.196
Anxiety_7	1.82±0.87	2.75±1.29	2.45±1.16	2.55±1.12	2.32±1.15	2.53±1.28	2.73±1.35	6	1.132	0.342
Anxiety	2.05±0.84	2.85±1.05	2.44±1.01	2.56±1.04	2.32±0.96	2.48±1.08	2.58±1.12	6	1.534	0.164

* $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

(Note: 1=Ph.D., 2= master's, 3= bachelor's, 4= college (without diploma), 5= high school, 6= between high school and middle school, 7= others)

From table 13, $F(6, 914) = 1.534$, $p= 0.164$. So, H_0 should be *accepted.* There is no relationship between educational background and workplace anxiety.

Hypothesis 4: The Relationship between Employment Status and Workplace Anxiety from the Workplace Reality Show

H_0= There is no relationship between employment status and workplace anxiety.

H_1= There is a relationship between employment status and workplace anxiety.

Table 14

Employment Status Difference

	1 (n=264) M±SD	2 (n=111) M±SD	3 (n=546) M±SD	df.	F	P
Anxiety_1	2.70±1.14	2.49±1.21	2.29±1.08	2	11.951	<0.001
Anxiety_2	2.72±1.27	2.51±1.30	2.36±1.13	2	8.194	<0.001
Anxiety_3	2.76±1.14	2.57±1.22	2.34±1.15	2	12.337	<0.001
Anxiety_4	2.75±1.17	2.52±1.29	2.34±1.14	2	10.913	<0.001
Anxiety_5	2.67±1.18	2.51±1.24	2.37±1.17	2	6.107	0.002
Anxiety_6	2.74±1.19	2.56±1.26	2.32±1.12	2	11.729	<0.001
Anxiety_7	2.68±1.19	2.56±1.26	2.35±1.16	2	7.360	0.001
Anxiety	2.72±1.03	2.53±1.12	2.35±0.98	2	12.685	<0.001

(Note 1=student, 2=graduated but unemployed, 3=employed)

From table 14, $F(2, 918)$, $p <.001$. So, H_0 should be *rejected*, and H_1, *accepted*. Statistically, there is a significant difference in the anxiety factor of reality shows among different employment statuses. The student group has higher anxiety after watching the workplace reality show, followed by graduated but unemployed group.

Hypothesis 5: The Relationship between Occupation and Workplace Anxiety from the Workplace Reality Show

H_0= There is no relationship between occupation and workplace anxiety.

H_1= There is a relationship between occupation and workplace anxiety.

Table 15

Occupational Differences

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	df.	F	P
	(n=57)	(n=74)	(n=69)	(n=51)	(n=46)	(n=29)	(n=59)	(n=58)	(n=76)	(n=27)			
	M±SD	M±SD	M±SD	M±SD	M±SD	M±SD	M±SD	M±SD	M±SD	M±SD			
Anxiety_1	2.30±1.16	2.32±1.09	1.99±1.02	2.08±0.91	2.54±1.15	2.03±0.94	2.32±0.99	2.29±1.08	2.39±1.19	2.85±1.03	10	4.000	<0.001
Anxiety_2	2.44±1.20	2.43±1.09	2.16±1.15	1.96±0.96	2.74±1.29	1.97±0.98	2.42±1.05	2.22±1.03	2.51±1.19	2.74±1.13	10	3.541	<0.001
Anxiety_3	2.47±1.23	2.34±1.16	2.07±1.05	2.24±1.12	2.52±1.28	2.07±1.07	2.53±1.02	2.24±1.14	2.39±1.27	2.52±0.98	10	3.287	<0.001
Anxiety_4	2.21±1.19	2.45±1.15	2.10±1.07	2.25±1.09	2.54±1.36	2.17±1.14	2.12±0.89	2.43±1.08	2.55±1.27	2.67±0.92	10	3.251	<0.001
Anxiety_5	2.23±1.23	2.41±1.08	2.07±1.15	2.20±1.11	2.80±1.28	2.31±1.00	2.49±1.09	2.36±1.12	2.41±1.30	2.56±1.19	10	2.489	0.006
Anxiety_6	2.39±1.08	2.43±1.14	2.03±1.01	2.06±0.97	2.59±1.26	2.17±0.97	2.31±1.04	2.34±1.25	2.41±1.22	2.63±1.11	10	3.481	<0.001
Anxiety_7	2.33±1.12	2.34±1.13	2.12±1.04	2.12±1.13	2.43±1.26	2.38±1.08	2.17±1.10	2.48±1.27	2.61±1.27	2.67±1.07	10	2.650	0.003
Anxiety	2.34±1.03	2.39±0.97	2.08±0.92	2.13±0.85	2.60±1.12	2.16±0.83	2.34±0.88	2.34±1.00	2.47±1.10	2.66±0.87	10	3.778	<0.001

(1=Internet, 2=Finance and economy, 3=FMCG, 4=Lawyer, 5=Doctor, 6=PR, 7=Official worker, 8=Entertainment, 9=Education, 10=Others)

From table 15, $F(10, 910) = 3.778$, $p < .001$. H_0 should be *rejected*, and H_1, *accepted*. Statistically, there are significant differences among the occupations in the factors of anxiety. Post hoc analyses using the LSD post hoc criterion for significance indicated that the average number of errors was significantly lower in the occupation related lawyer condition *(M = 2.13, SD = 0.85)* than in the occupation as doctors*(M = 2.60, SD = 1.12)*, $F(10, 910) = 3.778$, $p < .001$.

In summary, the workplace anxiety that Workplace Reality Shows bring to the audience is related to the age, employment status, and occupation of the audience. Among the audiences, the workplace anxiety of those aged 19-28 is most likely to be affected by reality shows. The workplace anxiety of audiences engaged in the medical profession is most likely to be affected by Workplace Reality Shows. It should be mentioned that the data in this questionnaire did not show that the *An Exciting Offer* would make the audience in the legal industry feel anxious. A period of time has passed, and there will be certain deviations due to the influence of the audience's memory deviation. Students without jobs constitute the group who are most perceived to be likely affected by Workplace Anxiety from Workplace Reality Shows. It is significant to point out that the workplace anxiety of the different audiences has nothing to do with gender and educational background.

Research Objective 2 – The Relationship among Workplace Anxiety Audiences, the Degree of Useful Information from Workplace Reality Shows, and Viewers' Self-Regulation After Each Show:

Table 16

Correlations

	Anxiety	Guiding Role	Self-Regulation
Anxiety	--		
Guiding-role	.886**	--	
Self-regulation	-.290**	-.093**	--
Total	.926**	.964**	0.033

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From table 16 and the correlation data, it is evident that the correlation between the three dimensions is significant. The correlation coefficient between the anxiety felt by the audience from the program and the perception of the guiding-role of the program is higher than 0.8. That is a strong correlation. There is a significant positive correlation between Anxiety and Guiding role, $r(919) = 0.886$, $p < 0.01$. However, the correlation coefficients between self-regulation and anxiety, and the guiding-role are all lower than 0.4. Hence, the correlation is very weak. It shows that the anxiety that Workplace Reality Shows brings to the audience has a great impact on the degree of knowledge or skills that the audience gain from the show. Hence, the more anxiety the audience feel, the more knowledge or skills they acquire. The data results of this study show that there is a statistically significant but weak correlation between the guiding role of the program and the self-regulation of the audience. That means that no matter how much the instructive content of the Workplace Reality Show presents, it has a weak impact on the audience's self-regulation. Invariably, it will take a long time to subtly affect the audience.

Table 17

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	3.492	0.099		35.21	<.001		
anxiety	-0.956	0.063	-0.964	-15.26	<.001	0.216	4.637
guiding role	0.902	0.075	0.761	12.04	<.001	0.216	4.637
R Square				0.209			
F				121.392			
D-W				1.910			
a Dependent Variable: self-regulation							

It is equally evident from table 17 that there is no multicollinearity between the two independent variables. Moreover, the VIFs are all less than 5. The regression equation is significant $F(2,918)=121.392$, $p<0.001$. That means that at least one of the two independent variables can significantly affect the dependent variable, self-regulation. The result shows that *Anxiety* negatively affects self-regulation ($b = -0.956$, $t(916) = -15.3$, $p < .001$). The guiding role of Workplace Reality Shows equally affects self-regulation positively ($b=0.902$, $t(916) = 12.04$, $p < .001$).

Findings and Discussion

1. Audience members aged 19-28 ($N = 305$, $M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.10$) and students ($N = 264$, $M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.03$) have the strongest sense of workplace anxiety from workplace reality shows.

As mentioned in the data in the previous chapter, taking the *An Exciting Offer* as an example, among its audience, those aged between 19 and 28 are more likely to receive anxiety from reality shows, which mainly include anxiety about the ability to work,

such as the need to undertake work beyond one's ability ($N = 305$, $M = 2.72$, $SD = 1.24$), and anxiety about being forced to work overtime endlessly ($N = 305$, $M = 2.73$, $SD = 1.22$), and anxiety in job hunting ($N = 305$, $M = 2.71$, $SD = 1.29$). Students are more likely to perceive workplace anxiety, especially in terms of their own work ability ($N = 264$, $M = 2.76$, $SD = 1.14$) and workplace interpersonal relationship ($N = 264$, $M = 2.75$, $SD = 1.17$).

China's current economic development capacity does not provide enough employment opportunities to meet the increased population brought about by urbanization. This has resulted in a serious oversupply of labor, resulting in the capital dominating economically at the expense of other regions and cities, workers competing with each other in a high-pressure environment, and workers' rights and interests being ignored or not effectively protected. The expansion of university enrollment has improved the overall quality and educational level of the people. However, from an economic point of view, large-scale higher education and an oversupply of high-quality talents needs to be adequately reflected in corresponding job markets and employment opportunities. Evidently, the current economic and industrial structures in China cannot provide sufficient high-end jobs for the number of college students, resulting in severe involution in graduate employment. The industrial planning, strategy and layout of national economic development has overemphasized economically powerful cities and urban clusters, and emerging employment opportunities in such areas have been channeled into these cities and clusters. Moreover, due to the pandemic, the number of jobs that businesses can provide has also heavily decreased. The BtyeDance college recruitment drive, for example, only selected about 3,000 employees (Zhai, 2022), which is about 5,000 fewer than last year.

The 19-28 audience group consists primarily of college students and new professionals who have recently completed their studies. This group of people, especially graduates who have graduated from colleges and universities and returned from overseas study, have higher requirements for their future professional environment, such as clear promotion channels, higher salary standards relative to non-graduate competitors, harmonious corporate culture, and high social status. There are

few such job opportunities, but there are more and more applicants, and the pressure of job competition has therefore increased.

Newcomers and students with no work experience can learn about the workplace through workplace reality shows. Such shows can enable a better understanding of work content, working environment and atmosphere. However, such shows typically exaggerate workplace competition and workplace pressure due to ratings and other considerations. Moreover, workplace reality shows allow the student audience to imagine themselves in a larger workplace environment than their own, leading to a widening gap between reality and hope and increasing anxiety.

2. The data shows that the gender of the audience does not affect anxiety levels.

As mentioned in the previous section, the data in this study indicated $F(1, 919) = 0.048$, $p = 0.961$. Gender differences do not affect viewers' perception of workplace anxiety from workplace reality shows.

The workplace reality show *An Exciting Offer* aims primarily to show the daily life of interns. First two seasons focu on the legal industry, mainly showing the daily working life of trainee lawyers. The third season of the show focuses on the work of medical interns, highlighting the tension between doctors and patients. Overall, this show explores the life of interns who have just entered the workplace and learned and accumulated experience on the job, and no noticeable gender difference in such experiences was found. The main content of *An Exciting Offer* does not involve the aspects of women's workplace anxiety in real life.

In reality, work-family balance is still the primary source of workplace anxiety for women in the workplace. According to a survey and interviews conducted by Worry-Free Future (NASDAQ: JOB, 2022) on working women in 13 major industries, 55.2% of unmarried women surveyed believe that "marriage or childbearing will affect their career advancement," compared with 41.4% of married women. 41.9% of the women surveyed said that it is "more difficult to communicate and get along with female

leaders than male superiors," and 49.5% of the women surveyed believed that after 2020, "promotion is slow or there is no hope of promotion." More than half of the women surveyed reported that they had been asked about marriage or childbirth during the application process. Unmarried female job seekers were most often asked "whether they are considering marriage in the next 1-3 years", and married female job seekers were asked, "whether they have plans to have children in the next few years." In front-line positions, women do not feel a "gender disadvantage" in job search and employment (11.7%). Nonetheless, in terms of application for, and promotion to, management positions, because enterprises are not allowed to lay off employees, reduce wages, or suspend social insurance payments during maternity leave, the proportion of women who report experiencing gender injustice is as high as 56.7% (NASDAQ: JOBS, 2022). From the content of the show, women's disadvantages in the workplace and real sources of anxiety are not reflected in *An Exciting Offer*.

3. The workplace anxiety that the audience feels from the workplace reality show relates to the audience's professional situation.

In this study, taking *An Exciting Offer* as an example, by the time the questionnaire was distributed, the program had already entered the third season, showing the internship experience of two industry interns, respectively. Internships and medical students practice in hospitals. The results of this questionnaire showed that there are significant differences among the occupations in the factors of anxiety, $F(10, 910) = 3.778$, $p < .001$. The audience engaged in the medical industry ($N = 46$, $M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.12$) is more likely to perceive workplace anxiety.

The audience data of this research shows that viewers who are engaged in medical and medical-related occupations are more likely to perceive workplace anxiety in the program. Such people will empathize more closely with the participants in the program when watching the show and then generate empathy. Workplace anxiety results when audience members realize that they are similar with the characters in the show. The

scenes in the reality show, which show long hours of work, much repetitive training, communication with patients' families, and helplessness in the face of unique workplace pressures, such as death and promotion, are highly consistent with the professional life of doctors in real life, which makes doctors or their colleagues feel greater workplace anxiety. In addition, the example involved in this show, *An Exciting Offer*, also shows the work of lawyers, but the data does not indicate that audiences engaged in the legal industry feel workplace anxiety after watching the show. This may be because, during the period of questionnaire distribution, the intense third season of the show was dominated by medical student internships, and the chapter on the legal profession had been concluded, which likely affected the participants' answers to this question to a certain extent.

4. Anxiety and Guiding role directly proportional

The data in this study indicated that there is a significant positive correlation between Anxiety and Guiding role, $r(919) = 0.886$, $p < 0.01$. Anxiety is a motivational factor. In other words, individuals are more able to escape bad situations if they feel anxiety, as it is channeled into their individual will, leading them to take a proactive approach to improving the unfavorable situation. For example, in 2018, a survey conducted by the China Youth Daily Social Survey Center and the Questionnaire Network among 2,003 respondents showed that 61.2% of the respondents believed that their anxiety was due to the need to use too much knowledge in work and study. , caused by insufficient reserves. 86.0% of the respondents said that they usually take the initiative to learn knowledge and self-improvement (Shan, 2018). The communication and exchange between people has been very modern. People can know the various conditions of the people around them almost at any time. Seeing the achievements of the outstanding people around them will cause pressure. At the same time, compare yourself with yourself and discover your own anxiety and anxiety.The reality show *An Exciting Offer* shows the internship experiences of highly educated and capable interns and gives the audience a standard against which to judge their quality as prospective

employees. This is based on the assumption that top-level companies will select the best talents in the program, namely those who graduated from prestigious schools, and already have rich internship experience and high emotional intelligence. Viewers feel anxious when they find that their abilities and backgrounds are vastly different from those of the participants in the show, and they begin to wonder how to escape their predicament. At this time, the reality show follows the trend and throws out some positive guidance, and the audience will take the initiative to learn.

The reality show creates anxiety while giving some tips and industry information relevant to solving key problems. Such information includes methods of relieving tension during interviews and methods of effective communication with leaders. Given the provision of such information, the audience will likely remember some useful practical information. In an interview with Guangming Daily in 2022, an interviewee named Jin Zhao, Master of Laws, Beijing Normal University，said "At the beginning, because the academic background and practical experience of my classmates in workplace reality shows made me anxious, I refused to watch such programs. But then I found that I overcame my psychological anxiety After the gap, this kind of program really took me out of the first step in the workplace" (Niu, 2022 p.1). In fact, an excellent workplace program is like a unique career guidance class.

5. Workplace reality shows strengthen the self-regulation.

The industry categories involved in the program are narrow, and it is not enough for potential participants to stick to a specific industry. At present, many young people are active online, and work on Internet platforms. To attract such an audience, it would be necessary to expand the program to new industries, beyond finance, security, law, all of which are occupations with unusually high social status . To expand the audience, professionals working as as traffic police, accountants and architects should be included. Moreover, the remit of the show should go beyond elites, large cities, offices, and white-collar life, instead seeking to represent ordinary people, such as the self-employed, therefore showing blue-collar life more broadly.

On July 22, 2015, the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television issued the "Notice on Strengthening the Management of Reality Shows," which clearly requires the regulation of reality shows and resolutely resists the excessive focus on entertainment and, more broadly, the vulgarization of reality shows. "Industrial society can use various media and public opinion tools, including movies, TV, advertisements and other media to hint and interfere with people's psychology, and eventually lose the inner freedom of individuals" (Wei, 2020 p.113). At present, many online reality shows are produced by private enterprises. Most of the content is provided by radio and television stations and Internet companies at all levels. As these stations are primarily responsible for production, it is necessary to strengthen their self-discipline and self-awareness, strictly control the proportion of "entertainment elements," ensure that presenters and crew grasp the subject matter and significance of the content, and more generally, adhere to the principle of moderation. At the same time, the professionals starring in the program should reinforce social morality, reduce exaggerated performances in the job-hunting process, convey appropriate values associated with the job-hunting experience, and avoid an exaggerated focus on entertainment. If this can be achieved, it will effectively unify service and entertainment and strengthen self-discipline and supervision within the industry. In other words, such programs should uphold the purpose of serving society, achieve innovative development of the program format, and present an appropriately diversified cast. This will enable industry practitioners to focus on the production of high-quality programs and thereby achieve healthy and sustainable development

The reason workplace reality shows attract attention is that they authentically show life in the workplace, but in order to attract audiences and increase ratings, some programs excessively "aestheticize" the program: the office environment is carefully decorated, the guests of the show are carefully selected, and their various tasks are carefully designed. As a result, the audience watches a group of unrealistically handsome men and beautiful women in fashionable clothes "performing workplace life." However, life in an actual workplace is not like this and such workplace fairy tales, which create "castles in the sky," do not truly reflect the realities of the workplace.

"Whatever society the mass media are committed to, they have a responsibility to society, and each media is responsible to the public, to the groups that depend on them for information. Whether privately owned or government-owned. Whether there is news or not, control exists, and regardless of whether this control comes from the news organization itself or from external forces, the responsibility still exists ." (Elliot,1986 p.32) For example, in some workplace variety shows, the educational experience of several "interns" strongly appeals to the audience. Most of them are graduates of well-known universities, and most of them have already specialized and reached a high level in their own fields. Although such prospective employees are perfect, except for the student group, in the eyes of experts or experienced professionals, they are not grounded and they do not represent or reflect ordinary life. Many workplace reality shows aim to provide instructive content to more ordinary professionals through the program, and represent certain values in the workplace, but such "educational significance" often violates the original intention of providing content to a large audience. After all, in reality, most graduates enter ordinary companies after graduation and experience frustration and joy in ordinary jobs. Therefore, workplace reality shows should strive to represent reality accurately and avoid distortion caused by an exaggerated aesthetic.

Additionally, workplace reality shows should keep pace with social and cultural developments and provide employment platforms for prospective employees. To create a socially responsible show, the creative term should prioritize social value over production value, thereby helping society to solve substantive problems. Therefore, it is necessary for those involved in the production of such shows to receive training, study carefully, and consult experts according to the professional needs of the program. The participation of authoritative and influential enterprises will help to improve the professionalism, authenticity and quality of the program.

There are two shortcomings in this study which should be noted. Firstly, the relationship between the number of programs watched by the audience and anxiety factors and self-regulation factors has not been studied. Secondly, the specific reason

the audience self-regulated after watching the workplace reality show was not determined.

Conclusion

Through quantitative research, this paper explores the audience situation of workplace reality shows such as the *An Exciting Offer*, and whether such programs have a guiding effect on the audience. It is found that the audience of this kind of reality show is mainly concentrated in the level of 19-28 years old ($N = 305$, $M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.10$), students ($N = 264$, $M = 2.72$, $SD = 1.03$) and unemployed graduates ($N = 111$, $M = 2.53$, $SD = 1.12$). At the same time, it proves that workplace reality shows have a certain role in employment guidance. The audience improve their competitiveness in the job market through the show. In addition, it was also found that the instructive effect of the workplace reality show on the audience is directly proportional to the workplace anxiety the audience gets from the program. Appropriately exaggerating some workplace anxiety in the program is conducive to awakening the audience's desire to learn, so as to learn valuable information and suggestions in the program, and improve their ability and value.

This research is mainly in the form of the questionnaire survey, and a total of 921 valid questionnaires were recovered. After data collection, SPSS statistical software was deployed to analyze the information using hypothesis testing and univariate ANOVA records. A survey of questions from demographic variables such as gender, age, educational background, employment status, and occupation. The survey result shows that the workplace anxiety that Workplace Reality Shows bring to the audience is related to the age, employment status, and occupation of the audience. Among the audiences, the workplace anxiety of those aged 19-28 ($N = 305$, $M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.10$) is most likely to be affected by reality shows. The workplace anxiety of audiences engaged in the medical profession is most likely to be affected by Workplace Reality Shows. Students ($N = 264$, $M = 2.72$, $SD = 1.03$) and the group of graduated but unemployed ($N = 111$, $M = 2.53$, $SD = 1.12$) constitute the group who are most perceived to be likely affected by Workplace Anxiety from Workplace Reality Shows. It is significant to point out that the workplace anxiety of the different audiences has nothing to do with gender and educational background. In addition, the result of the

research shows that the more anxiety the audience feels, the more knowledge or skills they acquire.

The core of the workplace reality show is "people". If the participants have excellent personal abilities and good moral cultivation, the correct value orientation that the show hopes to convey will be more deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. For example, the interns in *An Exciting Offer* have distinctive personalities , with a diverse educational background, although not perfect, they are all hardworking, motivated, humble, and kind. The workplace reality show presents real and wonderful workplace group portraits by selecting typical characters to achieve the purpose of constructing a positive value orientation of the program.

The audience deeply loves workplace reality shows because they show the real workplace life to the audience and provide practical advice on the workplace. At the same time, they have the entertainment and relaxation of the reality show. Sex and freshness, and the guests themselves are topical, and the quality of the program production is high. At the same time, workplace reality shows really serve the audience, instead of simply pursuing entertainment and high ratings like some reality shows. As a highly influential media in the modern information society, it plays a pivotal role in fulfilling social responsibilities. The workplace reality show presents the diverse social status quo and reflects the reality of the workplace through the program's content; helps the audience strengthen workplace cognition and establish a correct career outlook; Provides employment guidance especially in terms of employment.

This study also has certain limitations, and we should continue to conduct in-depth research on the specific factors that affect audience self-regulation. Is the degree of audience self-regulation related to the number of workplace reality shows watched? As well as investigating the occupation and industry status that the audience most wants to know, it will help the audience to broaden the sources of information in the workplace more directly and effectively.

In addition, from this study, it can be seen that the student group is most affected by workplace reality shows. In the future, we can also focus on the specific impact of workplace reality shows on students and how to guide graduates' outlook on career

choice through workplace reality shows, improve the employment rate of grassroots positions, and ease the employment pressure in developed cities.

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List of appendices

Appendix A: Audience survey of workplace reality shows—the survey questionnaire takes *An Exciting Offer* as an example

(Tips：All are single-choice, this questionnaire is filled in anonymously and is only used for academic research)

1. How often do you watch career-related reality shows?

   A. Never   B. Seldom   C. Sometimes   D. Frequently   E. Always

To what extent would you feel anxious about the following situations?

2. When I see the interns on the show with excellent educational background, I feel anxious about the prospect of finding a job

   A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

3. When I saw that the interns in the program had excellent internship experience, I felt anxious about the prospect of finding a job.

   A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

4. When I saw that the interns in the program could perfectly solve the problems, I felt anxious about my work ability.

   A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

5. When I saw that the interns in the show did not know how to get along with the leaders, I felt anxious about my future work life.

   A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

6. I feel anxious when I see interns on the show who don't know how to get along with their peers.

   A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

7. When I see interns working late into the night for a project, I feel anxious about my future workplace environment.

   A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

8. I feel anxious about job stress when I see interns working far beyond their capabilities.

   A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

9. When I watch workplace reality shows, I get some interview tips.

    A.Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

10. When I watch workplace reality shows, I can learn some communication skills.

    A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

11. When I watch a workplace reality show, I can have a rough judgment on my own

    level.

    A.Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

12. When I watch workplace reality shows, I can learn some specific knowledge, such

    as: first aid, basic regulations, etc.

    A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

13. Through the workplace reality show, I can get some tips to relieve negative

    emotions.

    A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

14. Through workplace reality shows, I can get some information about other

    industries. For example: industry environment, job content, etc.

    A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

15. Workplace reality shows can reduce some industry prejudices and stereotypes.

    A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

16. Workplace reality shows can ease some social relationships, such as the

    relationship between doctors and patients.

    A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

17. Through workplace variety shows, I can learn some good workplace etiquette.

    A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

18. I will abide by some of the work ethic standards set forth in workplace reality

    shows.

    A. Strongly Disagree B. Disagree C. Moderate D. Agree E. Strongly Agree

19. What is your gender?

    A. Female B. Male

20. What is your age?

A. 0-18 B.19-28 C. 29-38 D. 39-48 E.49-58 F.59+

21. What is your educational background?

A. Ph.D. B.Master C.Bachelor D. college (without diploma) E. High school F.

Between high school and middle school G. Others)

22. Currently, your employment status?

A. Student in school B. Graduated without job C. Employed

23. Your occupation?

A.Internet B.Finance and economy C.FMCG D.Lawyer E.Doctor F.PR G.Official

worker H.Entertainment I.Education J.Others