

# Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation

in



## India

Project Director:

Dr. Divya C. McMillin  
University of Washington, Tacoma

Analysis and report by:

Dr. Maya Götz, Dr. Ole Hofmann,  
Stefan Dobler MA, Sebastian Scherr BA,  
Dipl.-Soz. Christine Bulla,  
Matthias Schreiner MA

# **Children's Television Worldwide:**

## **Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television**

### **General information about the Children's Television in India**

Television programming for children in India is dominated by the cable television industry with Disney leading the field. State-run Doordarshan lags behind considerably in this category. With the establishment of the The Walt Disney Company (India) office in Mumbai in 2004, India is the largest market outside the US that Disney has invested in for local production. In 2006, Disney Channel acquired the Hindi-language Hungama TV channel and, with Toon Disney and Jetix, commands the children's television environment in the country. In June 2007, Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures (India) collaborated with Yash Raj Studios, a giant in the Bollywood industry, to create animated films tailored to the Indian market. Besides Disney, other major players in the arena are Animax (Sony Corporation), Cartoon Network, Pogo, and Boomerang (Turner), and Nick and Nick Jr. (Viacom International). While these channels carry, for the most part, 24-hour children's programming, more popular among family audiences are the private regional channels such as ETV, Jaya TV, Zee Kannada, and Surya, and private foreign channels such as Star TV and Zee TV, which carry song and film-based programming targeted to both children and adults. Idol-type singing competitions as well as reality dance and talent competitions are extremely robust formats. Doordarshan, with its first telecast in 1959 and metro broadcasts commencing in 1972, has faced stiff competition from private regional and foreign satellite networks ever since the arrival of Star TV in 1992. Various levels of ethnographic fieldwork from 1993 to the present have revealed that urban children and teens prefer the English language foreign channels for daytime programming, but for the most part in the evenings, with their semi urban and rural counterparts, prefer watching vernacular language channels, particularly music and film-based programs (whether fiction or reality) with their families. It should be noted that in this report, the phrase, "children's television in India" is used loosely to refer to programming on the above channels that were noticeably targeted to children 2-11.

### **Sample selection:**

The sample is based on the following foreign television networks: Animax, Australia Network, Cartoon Network, Disney Channel, Nick, Nick Jr., Pogo, Sony, Star One, Star Plus and Zee Kannada; the state-run Doordashan, and the private regional ETV, JAYA TV, Sun TV, and Surya TV networks. Children's programming was recorded on these channels during the agreed upon time frame and subsequently categorised and measured.

Dates of recording: 15.05.2007 – 06.06.2007.

## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

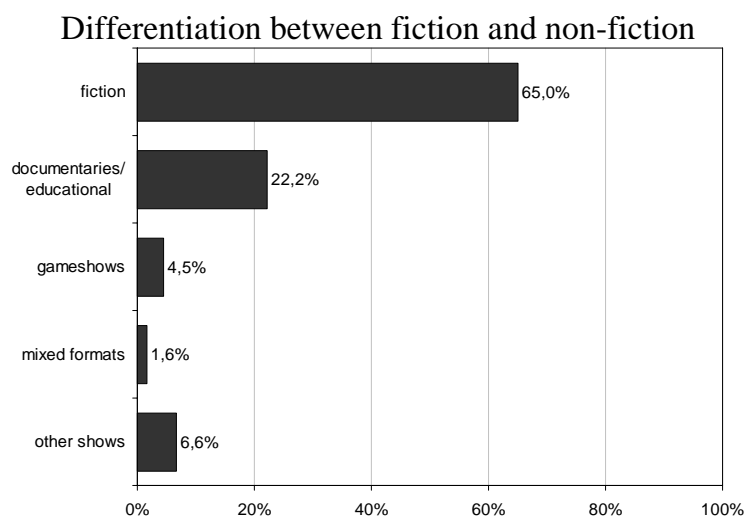
The sample analysed here consists of 102 hours of explicit children's television, 50 hours of fictional shows, 243 programmes (158 fictional shows), 789 characters (fiction) and 437 human characters.

### Programming available to children: More fiction or non-fiction?

We coded every show/piece of program of our sample. Advertisements and trailers were coded in block (e.g. if there were 6 different commercials between two shows they were coded as one block). A show was defined as beginning with the opening and ending with the credits (some shows could consist of two episodes as in *SpongeBob*, for example but it was still coded as one show).

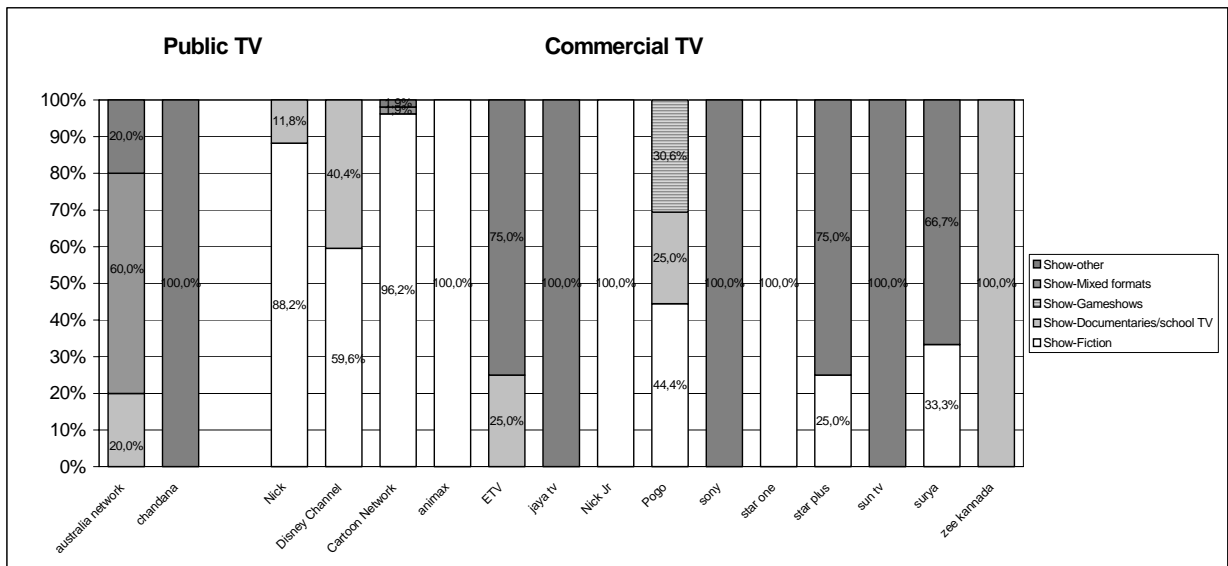
The sample comprised altogether 243 shows that could be categorised into different program types. 158 shows or 65% could be referred to as fiction, 54 shows (22.2%) were documentaries, 11 were game shows (4.5%) and 4 mixed formats (1.6%).

Of interest for the further analysis of the children's programmes were only the 158 fictional shows that were coded. 81.0% of the cases were animated shows and 19.0% of the cases were live action shows (n=30).



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 102 h children's programme

# Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television



There are no fictional shows for Children on the public stations.

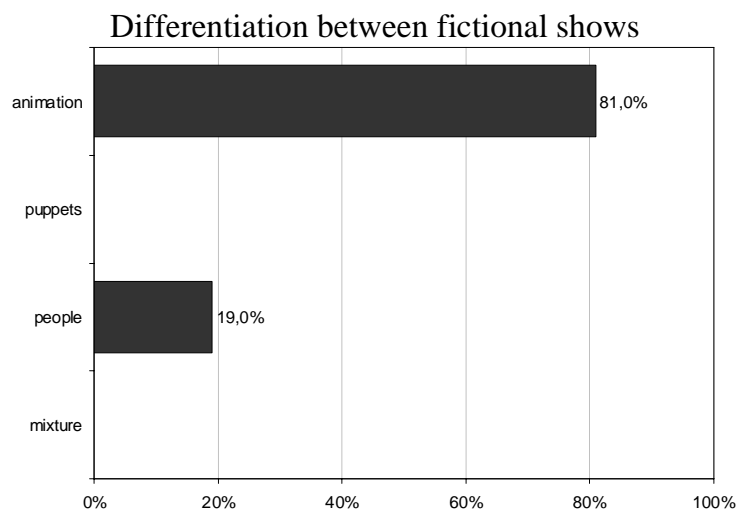
On Indian cable television there is a broader variety of formats. The share of Fiction shows on the commercial stations range from 0% (e.a. ETV), to 25% (star plus), to 44.4% (Pogo) to a 100% (e.g. Nick Jr.).

### What was the most common among fiction shows? Animation!

We coded the general type/genre of show. Is it an animated or puppet show? Or mixed?

Of the 158 recorded fiction shows, 128 (81%) were animated and 30 (19.0%) contained real people as actors/actresses.

There were no mixed shows or shows with puppets.

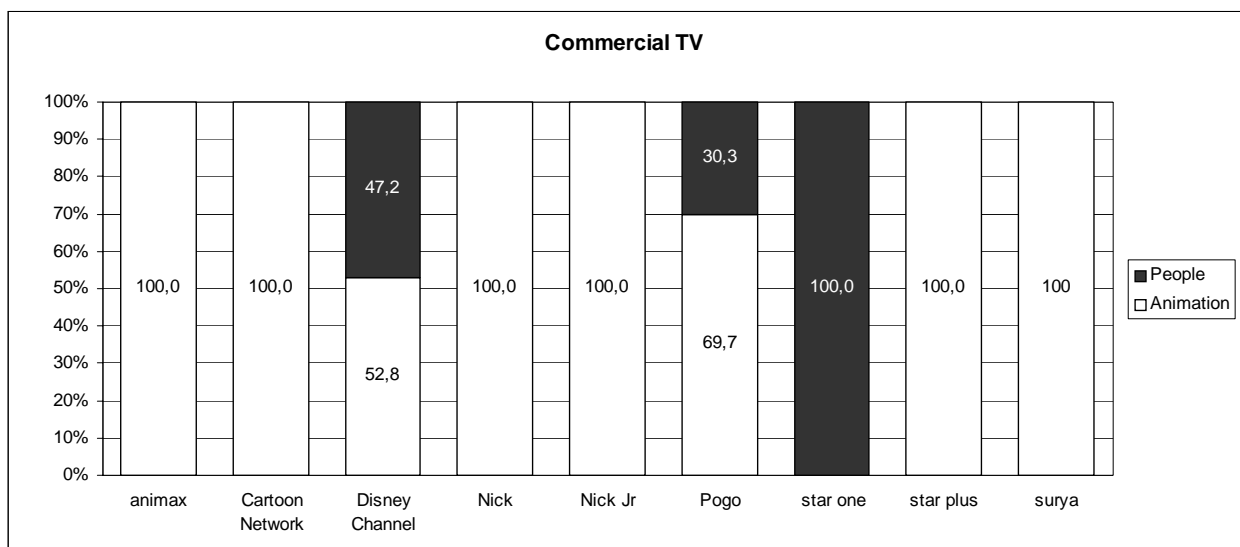


IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme

## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

	Animation	Puppets	People	Mixture	other
Slovenia	96,5%	0,9%	1,9%	0,7%	0,0%
China	96,4%	0,7%	2,9%	0,0%	0,0%
Canada	95,9%	0,7%	0,7%	2,0%	0,7%
Egypt	95,3%	0,0%	2,6%	2,1%	0,0%
Cuba	94,5%	0,3%	2,8%	2,4%	0,0%
Syria	93,5%	0,0%	3,2%	0,0%	3,2%
Kenya	90,6%	0,7%	8,1%	0,7%	0,0%
Netherlands	90,0%	0,8%	9,2%	0,0%	0,0%
Germany	88,8%	1,8%	7,0%	2,4%	0,0%
Austria	88,3%	2,6%	6,4%	2,6%	0,0%
Hong Kong	85,8%	3,6%	8,9%	1,8%	0,0%
Hungary	85,8%	12,1%	0,7%	1,4%	0,0%
South Africa	85,3%	3,9%	8,3%	2,5%	0,0%
USA	84,8%	1,3%	8,5%	5,5%	0,0%
Norway	84,6%	2,6%	10,3%	2,6%	0,0%
Brazil	84,2%	1,1%	12,6%	2,1%	0,0%
<b>India</b>	<b>81,0%</b>	0,0%	19,0%	0,0%	0,0%
New Zealand	80,6%	0,0%	13,9%	5,5%	0,0%
Australia	80,4%	1,1%	11,0%	2,8%	4,6%
Israel	74,7%	0,8%	21,4%	3,1%	0,0%
Malaysia	72,4%	0,0%	13,8%	13,8%	0,0%
Argentina	58,8%	17,6%	17,6%	5,9%	0,0%
UK	55,0%	10,8%	12,3%	20,8%	1,2%
Belgium	54,8%	4,3%	18,7%	21,8%	0,4%
<b>total</b>	<b>83,9%</b>	<b>2,4%</b>	<b>8,9%</b>	<b>4,5%</b>	<b>0,3%</b>

The proportion of animation in the program analysed is 81.0%. On an international scale India lies in the lower third and is slightly below the international average.



Most of the cable television channels carry 100% animation. Only the Disney Channel and Pogo are exceptions with 47.2% and 30.3% respectively, live-action shows. Star One exclusively carries live-action programs.

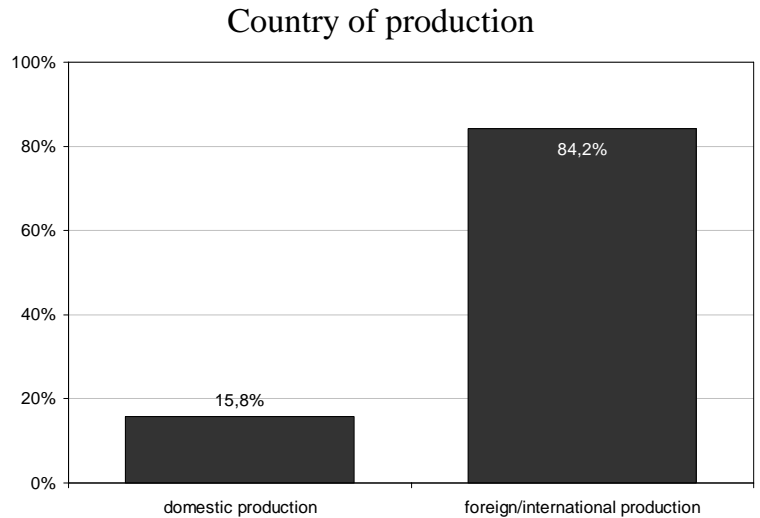
# Children's Television Worldwide:

## Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

### Where are the shows produced?

We coded for whether the show was a foreign or domestic production, or an international co-production.

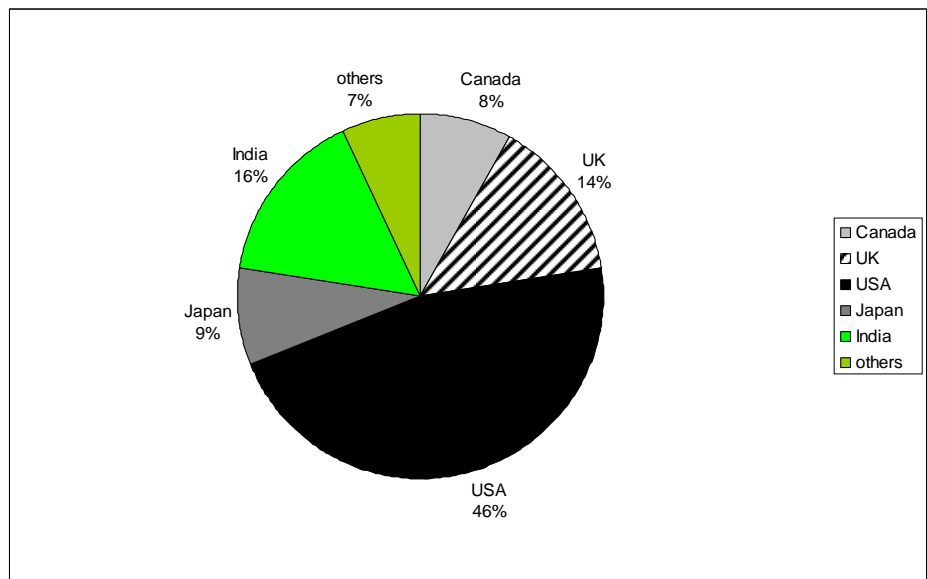
Results showed that 84.2% (n=132) of the programs were foreign productions while 15.8% (n=25) were domestic productions.



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme

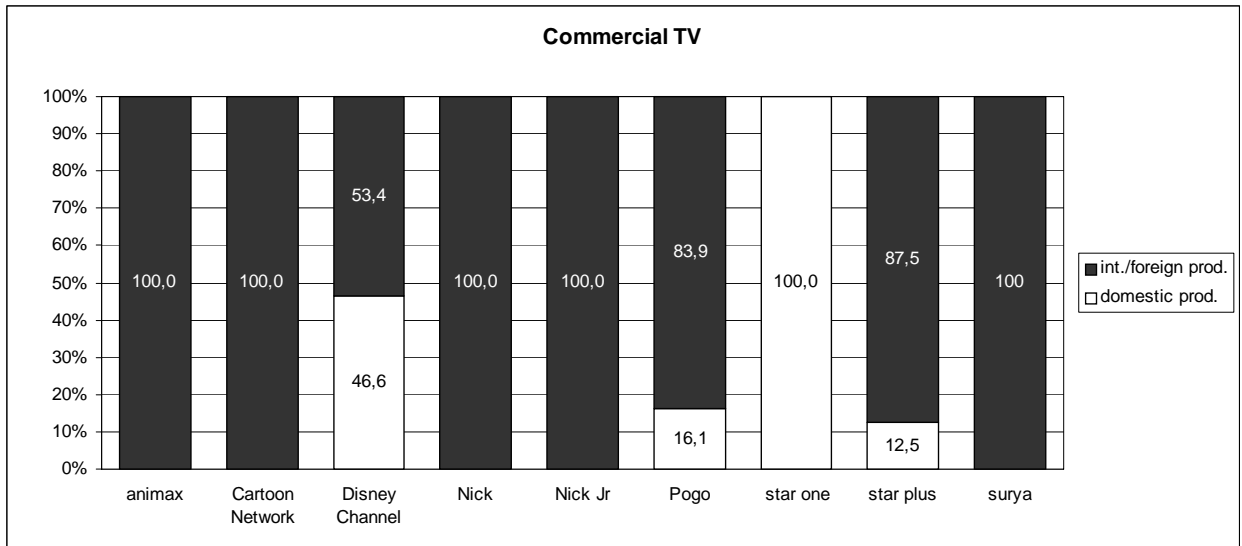
domestic prod.	
Malaysia	93,1%
USA	82,7%
UK	67,7%
China	53,4%
Canada	44,2%
Belgium	39,8%
Germany	17,3%
<b>India</b>	<b>15,8%</b>
Hungary	13,2%
Israel	13,1%
Australia	11,1%
Norway	9,0%
Egypt	8,9%
Netherlands	7,3%
South Africa	6,4%
Brazil	6,3%
Argentina	5,9%
Cuba	5,5%
Syria	3,2%
Slovenia	2,3%
Austria	0,8%
Hong Kong	0,6%
New Zealand	0,5%
Kenya	0,0%
<b>total</b>	<b>22,6%</b>

15.8% of the programs were domestic productions. Although India takes the first place in the second third and is a little below the international average.



## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

46% of all the programs coded were produced in the United States, 16% in India, 14% in the United Kingdom, and 9% in Japan. 7% of the programs were coded as unknown in terms of where they were produced.

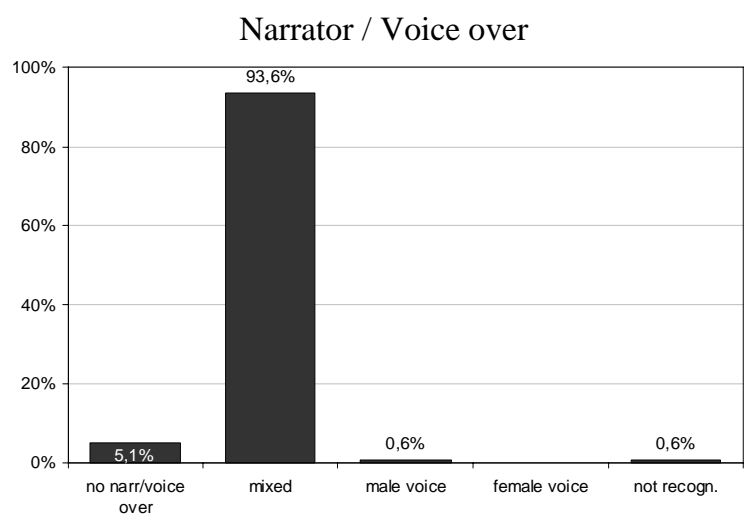


The proportion of domestic productions broadcast on Disney Channel, Pogo and Star Plus ranges from 12.5% to 46.6%. Star One only screens domestic productions.

### Who speaks? Narrator or Voice over?

We coded for the gender of the narrator or voice over (where a voice could be heard but the speaker is not necessarily visible).

In 8 (5.1%) fiction shows there was no narrator, in one show (0.6%) there was a male narrator, and in 147 shows (93.6%) the narrators were mixed.



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme

# Children's Television Worldwide:

## Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

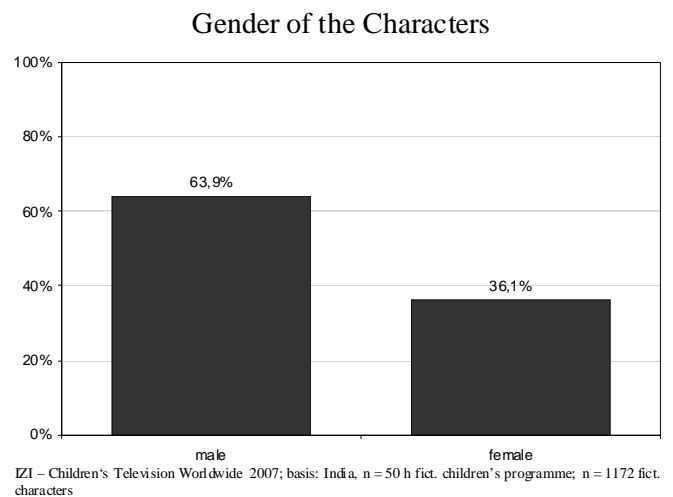
### Who are the main characters? Results at character level<sup>1</sup>

In this study we focused on the main characters of the show, which we defined as the characters that can be seen on screen at least 50% of the duration of the episode. In the first step we analysed the gender, name of character, voice, and easily identifiable gender characteristics.

In terms of characters, in the 158 fiction shows, 789 were identified as main characters.

### Gender perspective

In all, 36.1% of fictional characters was female and 63.9% was male. This puts India above the international average.



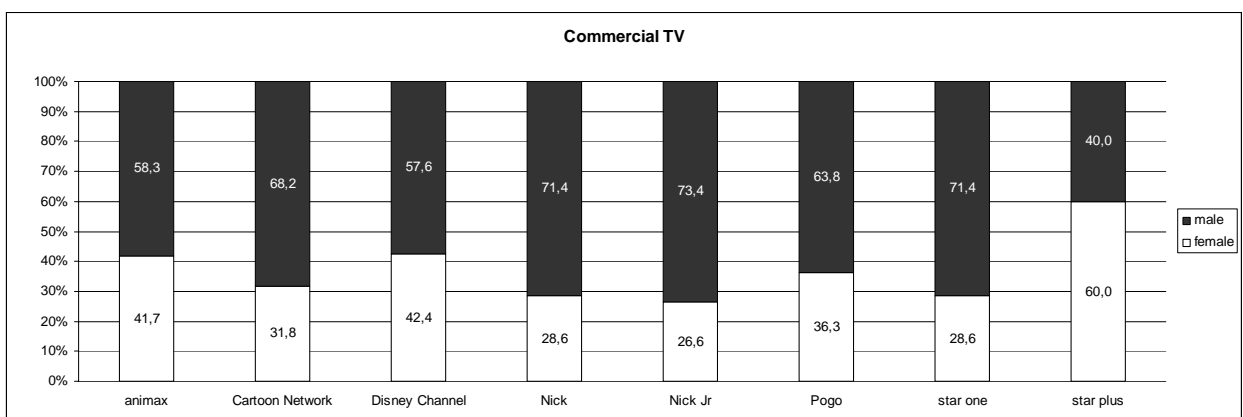
---

<sup>1</sup> Please note: The quantity of cases varies because of a different number of the missing. In the glossary the maximum number of cases is accounted.



## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

female		male	
Norway	41,6%	Argentina	81,5%
Syria	38,9%	Cuba	79,9%
Israel	37,4%	Malaysia	77,2%
UK	37,3%	Egypt	71,4%
<b>India</b>	<b>36,1%</b>	Slovenia	71,2%
New Zealand	35,2%	South Africa	70,3%
Canada	35,1%	Austria	69,4%
Hong Kong	34,9%	China	69,1%
Belgium	34,5%	Germany	69,0%
Kenya	33,2%	Australia	68,5%
USA	33,1%	Brazil	68,5%
Hungary	32,6%	Netherlands	68,4%
Netherlands	31,6%	Hungary	67,4%
Brazil	31,5%	USA	66,9%
Australia	31,5%	Kenya	66,8%
Germany	31,0%	Belgium	65,5%
China	30,9%	Hong Kong	65,1%
Austria	30,6%	Canada	64,9%
South Africa	29,7%	New Zealand	64,8%
Slovenia	28,8%	<b>India</b>	<b>63,9%</b>
Egypt	28,6%	UK	62,7%
Malaysia	22,8%	Israel	62,6%
Cuba	20,1%	Syria	61,1%
Argentina	18,5%	Norway	58,4%
<b>total</b>	<b>32,1%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>67,9%</b>



Male characters accounted for around two-thirds of representation (from 57.6% to 73.4%) on the cable channels coded. Only Star Plus programming for children featured a majority of female characters (60.0%).

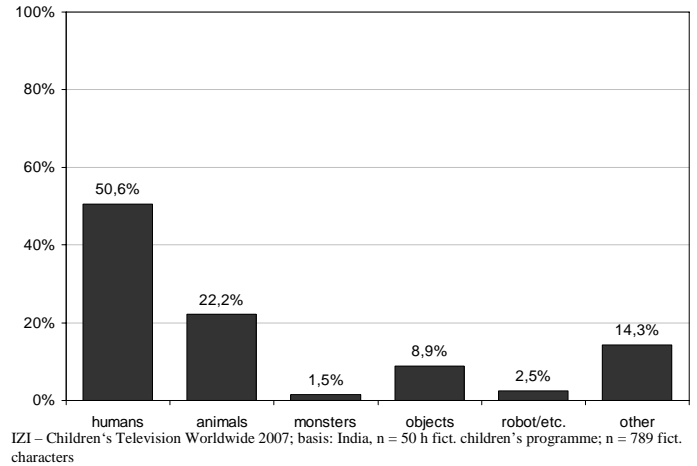
# Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

## Is the main character a human, animal, monster, object, or machine etc.?

We coded generally for whether the character was a human, animal, object or machine?

193 characters of the recorded were animals, which accords to a percentage of 22.2%. Part of this group is, for example, Goliath of *Jojo Circus*. 437 of the characters (50.6%) were humans. 13 characters (1.5%) could be assigned to the monsters and mythic characters, i.e. Genbu of *Ninku*. Furthermore, 77 plants or objects (8.9%), 22 robots or machines (2.5%), and 124 Other characters (14.3%) were recorded.

Type of characters



Of the animals 42 (26.1%) were female and 118 (73.3%) male. For 1 (0.6%) character the gender was not identifiable. Of the humans 196 (45.0%) were female and 240 (55.0%) were male. Among the plants, 7 were female (13.0%) and 47 were male (87.0%). Of the machines and robots, 8 (38.1%) were female, 12 male (57.1%) and one was not identifiable (4.8%).

## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

	Animal	Human	Monster/ etc.	Plant/ Object	Robot/ etc.	other
Kenya	12,8%	77,0%	9,2%	0,3%	0,6%	0,1%
South Africa	12,6%	74,3%	1,5%	0,1%	11,1%	0,5%
Malaysia	6,4%	72,8%	4,6%	16,2%	0,0%	0,0%
Slovenia	17,9%	70,9%	4,9%	0,5%	4,4%	1,4%
Egypt	21,7%	70,0%	3,2%	0,3%	4,3%	0,4%
Israel	26,8%	66,9%	3,1%	1,6%	1,5%	0,1%
Netherlands	19,7%	65,2%	10,4%	3,7%	1,0%	0,0%
New Zealand	23,5%	64,5%	4,1%	4,1%	2,8%	1,1%
Syria	23,1%	62,7%	11,9%	0,0%	0,0%	2,2%
Hong Kong	22,8%	62,0%	8,5%	0,4%	2,0%	4,3%
Canada	26,7%	60,5%	5,8%	0,8%	2,4%	3,8%
Norway	25,8%	60,1%	2,8%	5,5%	2,8%	3,0%
China	32,7%	59,2%	0,4%	1,6%	4,5%	1,6%
Brazil	22,8%	59,0%	6,2%	6,1%	1,0%	4,9%
Australia	26,0%	58,8%	4,1%	5,4%	5,7%	0,0%
Belgium	20,2%	57,8%	8,9%	2,3%	4,8%	6,0%
Hungary	35,2%	54,9%	3,8%	2,2%	2,7%	1,1%
Germany	30,7%	54,8%	4,2%	8,0%	1,2%	1,1%
UK	27,8%	54,3%	0,8%	0,0%	6,0%	11,2%
Austria	31,7%	53,6%	4,7%	7,7%	1,2%	1,1%
<b>India</b>	22,2%	<b>50,6%</b>	1,5%	8,9%	2,5%	14,3%
USA	34,2%	47,3%	6,0%	3,7%	2,2%	6,6%
Argentina	30,0%	45,5%	10,0%	13,6%	0,9%	0,0%
Cuba	55,5%	29,4%	7,3%	2,1%	2,3%	3,5%
<b>total</b>	<b>26,3%</b>	<b>59,1%</b>	<b>5,0%</b>	<b>3,5%</b>	<b>3,1%</b>	<b>3,1%</b>

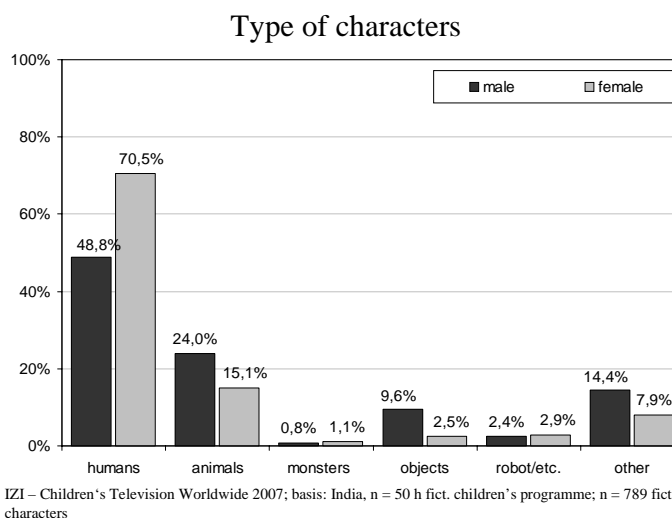
50.6% of all characters in programming for children on television in India were coded as human.

India here ranks fourth to last and is below the international average.

### Gender Perspective: Females are more often humans, and males are more often animals and objects

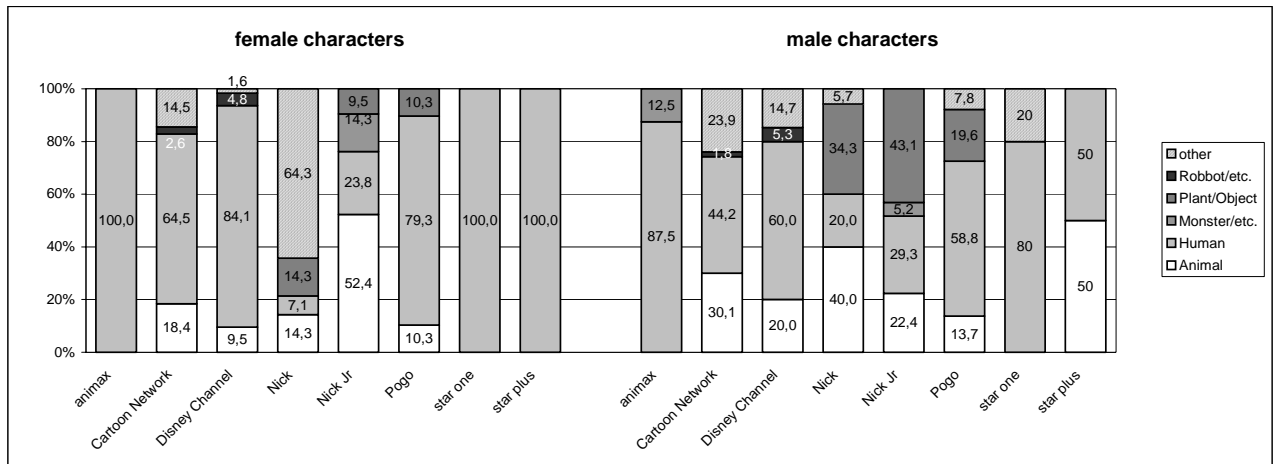
Of the female characters 196 (70.5%) were humans and 3 (1.1%) were monsters or mythical creatures and 42 female characters (15.1%) were animals. 7 (2.5%) were plants and objects while 8 were robots or machines (2.9%).

Of the male characters, 240 (48.8%)



## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

were humans and 118 (24.0%) were animals. Male monsters and mythical creatures accounted for 4 characters (0.8%), while 12 (2.4%) were robots, and 47 (9.6%) were plants or objects. Of the 2 not-identifiable characters, one could be recognized as animal and another one as robot or machine.



A majority of the female characters on the channels were human, the others were coded as either animals, plants or Other.

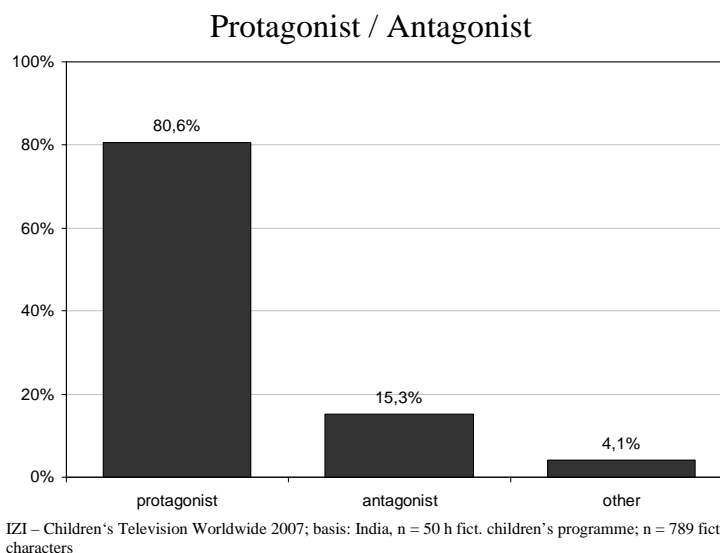
## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

### What is the general role in the story: Protagonist or Antagonist?

We coded for whether the main character was a protagonist or antagonist 706 (80.6%) of the characters were identified as protagonists. On the other hand, there were 134 (15.3%) antagonists 36 characters could be ascribed to neither type (4.1%).

	<b>Antagonist</b>
UK	28,8%
Australia	27,3%
South Africa	23,5%
Cuba	21,4%
China	18,8%
Malaysia	17,9%
Brazil	15,9%
Norway	15,7%
Argentina	15,5%
Netherlands	15,4%
<b>India</b>	<b>15,3%</b>
Egypt	15,0%
Kenya	15,0%
Syria	14,9%
Hungary	13,6%
Slovenia	12,8%
Canada	11,9%
New Zealand	11,7%
USA	10,3%
Austria	9,5%
Germany	8,8%
Hong Kong	6,5%
Belgium	6,4%
Israel	4,5%
<b>total</b>	<b>13,7%</b>

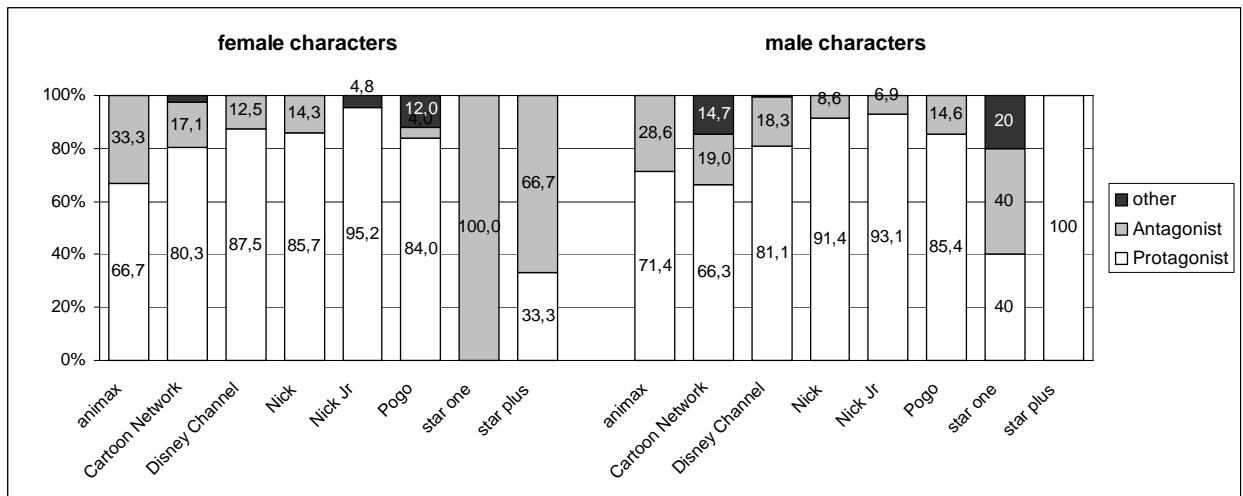
15.3% of all main characters were antagonists. Here India is slightly above the average but generally in the middle field on an international scale.



### **Gender Perspective: Just a few more male antagonists**

Of the protagonists counted, 230 (36.9%) are female and 391 (62.8%) are male. 2 characters (0.3%) could not be identified as either. Among the antagonists there are 38 (31.4%) female characters and 83 (68.6%) male characters. Among the female characters, 230 (83.9%) appeared as protagonists. 38 (13.9%) of the female characters were antagonists. 6 (2.2%) were not identifiable. With regard to boys' or men's characters, there were 391 (78.2%) protagonists. 83 (16.6%) men characters appear as antagonists, while 26 (5.2%) of the total cannot be identified.

## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

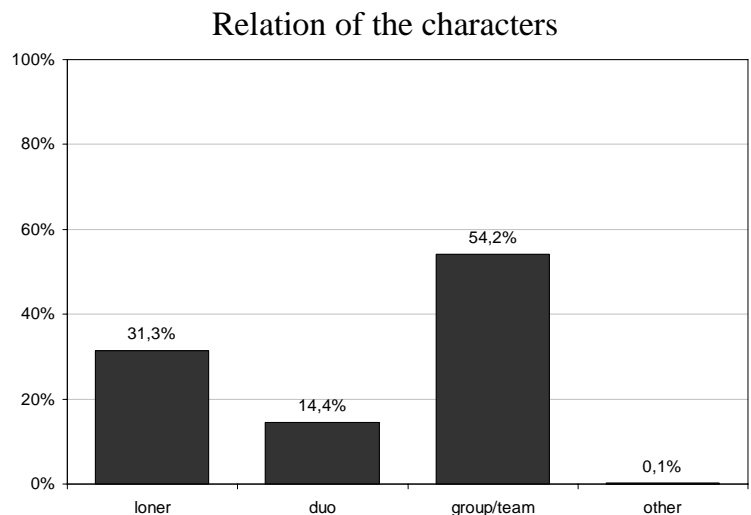


Protagonists, whether male or female, form the majority of characters across channels. The proportion of antagonists was slightly higher among the females than males. On Star Plus 100% of males were protagonists, while on Star One 100% of the females were antagonists.

### In what kind of constellation is the character portrayed?

We coded in what kind of constellation the main character is acting: does he or she work alone, in a group or a duo?

265 of the characters (31.3%) were integrated into the plot as loners. 122 of the coded characters in this category were part of a duo (14.4%). 459 (54.2%) and thus the majority of the characters were part of a group or a team, respectively. 0.1% could not be grouped into any of the categories.



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme; n = 789 fict. characters

## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

	loner	duo	group / team
China	14,3%	10,1%	75,7%
USA	9,4%	14,1%	74,5%
Belgium	7,6%	7,2%	72,8%
Syria	15,7%	14,2%	70,1%
Canada	9,1%	24,8%	65,3%
Malaysia	9,2%	25,4%	64,7%
South Africa	17,5%	20,3%	59,5%
Australia	14,2%	25,6%	58,3%
Egypt	16,8%	24,6%	57,6%
New Zealand	19,0%	20,9%	56,5%
UK	17,9%	22,7%	56,4%
Slovenia	27,5%	16,2%	55,6%
India	31,3%	14,4%	54,2%
Germany	18,7%	26,4%	54,0%
Austria	19,3%	26,4%	53,3%
Kenya	20,8%	26,1%	51,9%
Norway	20,6%	24,2%	50,1%
Cuba	24,8%	26,7%	48,6%
Hong Kong	25,1%	27,1%	46,8%
Hungary	22,4%	32,3%	45,2%
Israel	23,9%	31,4%	44,0%
Argentina	30,0%	29,1%	40,9%
Netherlands	34,8%	27,2%	37,8%
Brazil	67,9%	6,5%	25,0%
<b>total</b>	<b>20,3%</b>	<b>21,1%</b>	<b>56,5%</b>

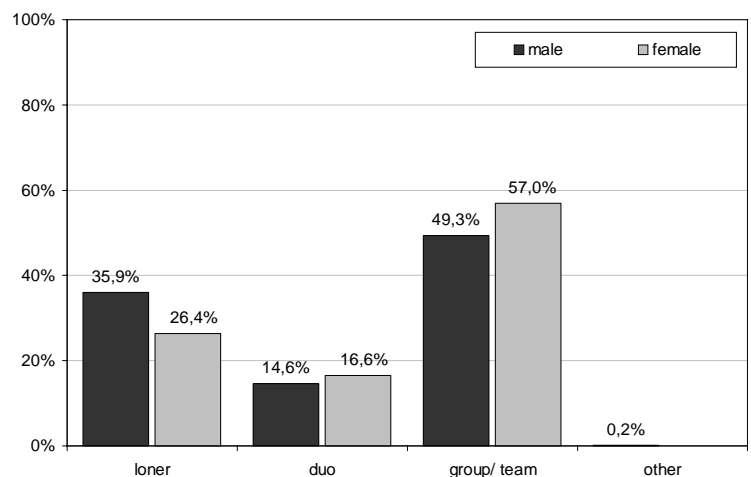
54.2% of the characters acted as part of a group or a team. Here India is in the middle field and only very slightly below the international average.

### Gender Perspective: Loners are mainly male while female characters appear in teams

Of the female characters 73 (26.4%) were loner, 46 (16.6%) were part of a duo and 158 (57.0%) were part of a group.

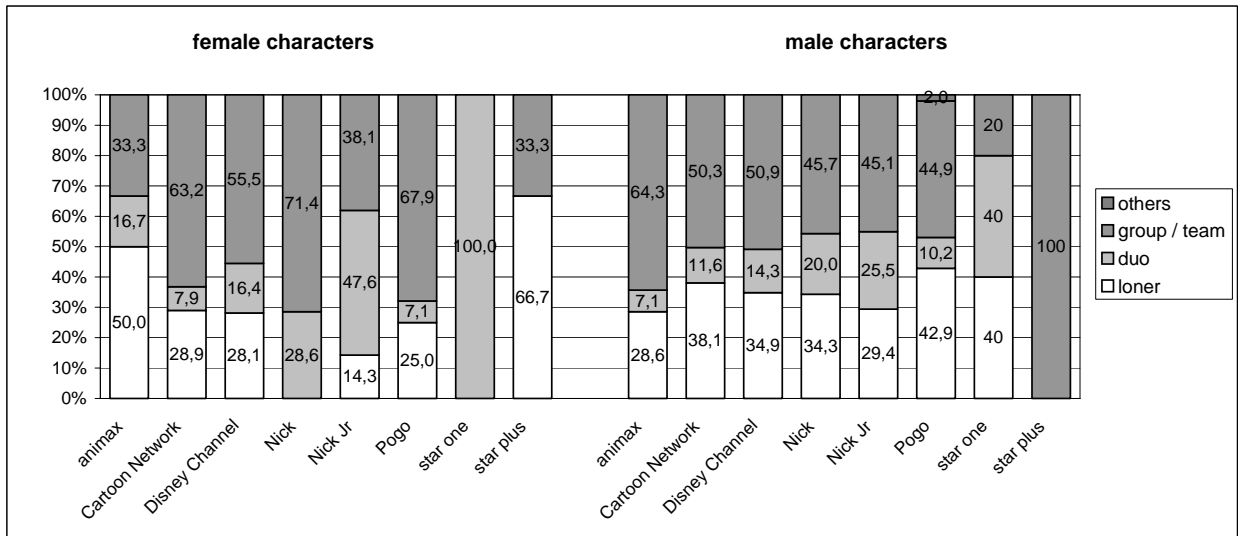
Of the male characters 174 (35.9%) were loners, 71 (14.6%) appeared in a duo and 239 (49.3%) were part of a group.

Relation of the characters



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme; n = 789 fict. characters

## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

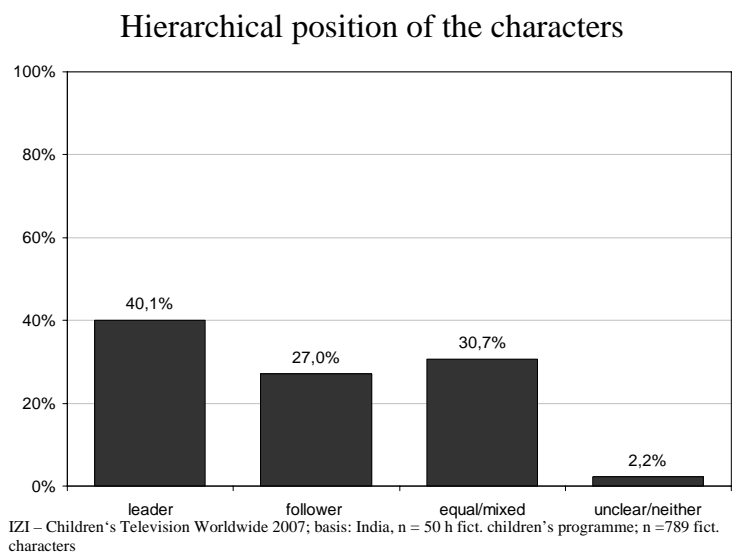


Most female characters in children's TV appeared either as part of a group/team or in duos. Loners took the third place of female characters. Concerning male characters, the proportion of loners was slightly higher.

### Which hierarchical position does the character assume in the show?

We coded the character's role in the social context: who is dominant in the relationship and who solves the problems? Is there a clear leading character?

263 (30.7%) of the characters appeared as equals. 344 (40.1%) were leaders. 231 (27.0%) were part of a following, and for 19 (2.2%) characters the position was not clearly identifiable.





## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

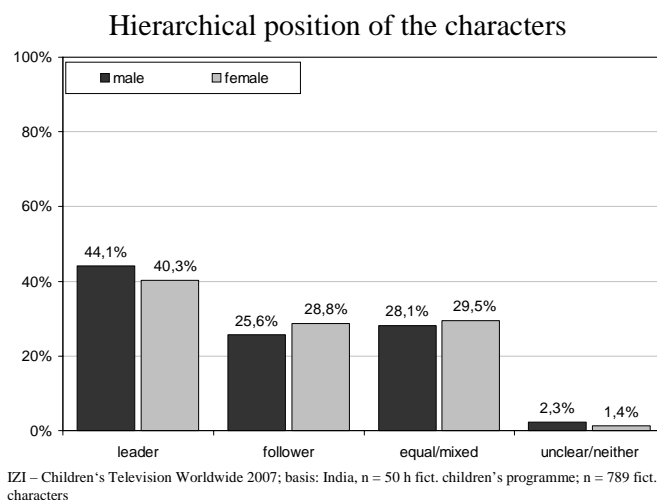
	Leader		Follower		equal or mixed
Argentina	47,3%	Australia	34,6%	Malaysia	67,1%
Cuba	42,1%	New Zealand	32,7%	Belgium	65,9%
India	40,2%	UK	30,1%	Brazil	62,9%
China	30,8%	India	26,9%	Hungary	61,4%
Norway	28,4%	Egypt	20,7%	USA	61,2%
Syria	28,2%	Norway	19,8%	Kenya	56,7%
South Africa	28,2%	South Africa	19,5%	Slovenia	54,8%
Slovenia	27,3%	Syria	16,8%	Hong Kong	53,5%
Australia	27,1%	Hungary	16,6%	Syria	53,4%
Kenya	26,7%	Canada	15,0%	Germany	47,9%
UK	26,1%	Malaysia	14,1%	Austria	47,7%
Germany	24,0%	Germany	14,0%	Cuba	46,1%
Austria	23,8%	Argentina	13,6%	Netherlands	45,9%
Egypt	23,3%	Austria	13,6%	Israel	45,5%
Hungary	18,5%	Kenya	12,1%	China	45,0%
Brazil	13,8%	Israel	10,3%	South Africa	42,9%
Israel	13,5%	Cuba	10,3%	Egypt	40,2%
USA	13,0%	USA	10,2%	Argentina	39,1%
Belgium	11,4%	Netherlands	10,1%	Norway	36,5%
New Zealand	11,0%	Slovenia	9,0%	New Zealand	33,5%
Canada	9,9%	Brazil	8,8%	India	30,7%
Malaysia	8,2%	China	8,6%	Australia	29,4%
Hong Kong	6,7%	Belgium	8,6%	UK	28,3%
Netherlands	6,4%	Hong Kong	6,9%	Canada	26,3%
<b>total</b>	<b>20,5%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>15,5%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>47,7%</b>

40.2% of all characters coded followed the leader of the group. Here India takes the third place on an international scale and is way above the international average. Concerning characters appearing as followers, India takes the fourth place, while the representation of equal or mixed is below the international average.

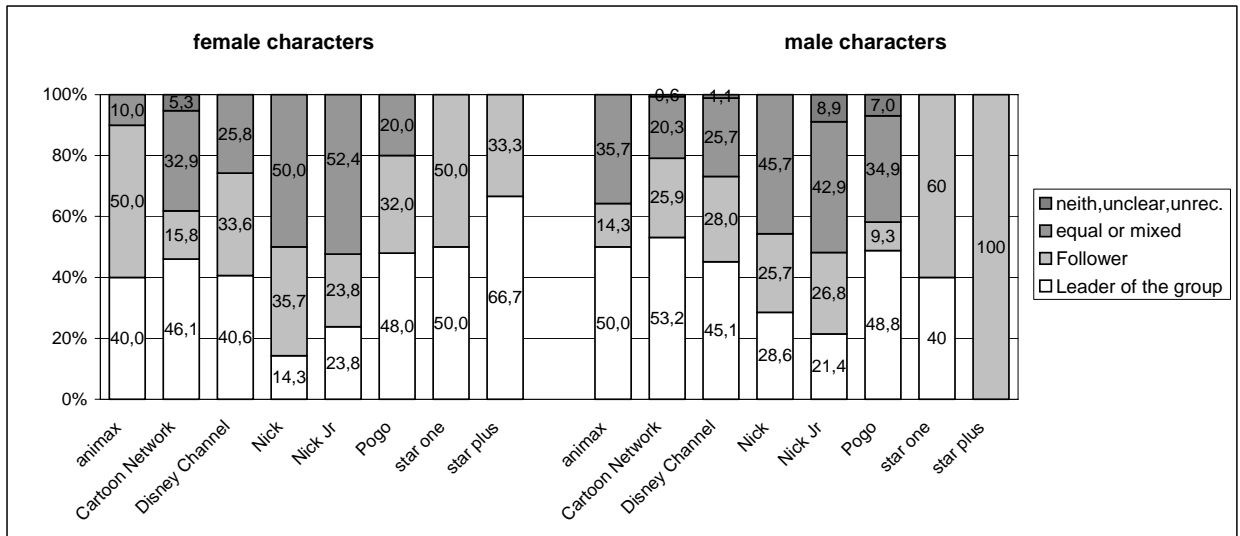
### Gender Perspective: A few more males in leading positions and a few more females as followers and equals

Of the female characters 82 (29.5%) of the cases were equal or mixed. 112 (40.3%) female characters appeared as leaders and 80 (28.8%) as followers. For 4 characters (1.4%) the constellation was not identifiable.

Among the boy and man characters 137 (28.1%) were equal or mixed and in 215 (44.1%) cases they were leaders of a group. 125 (25.6%) were part of the following and for 11 characters (2.3%) the classification was not possible.



## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

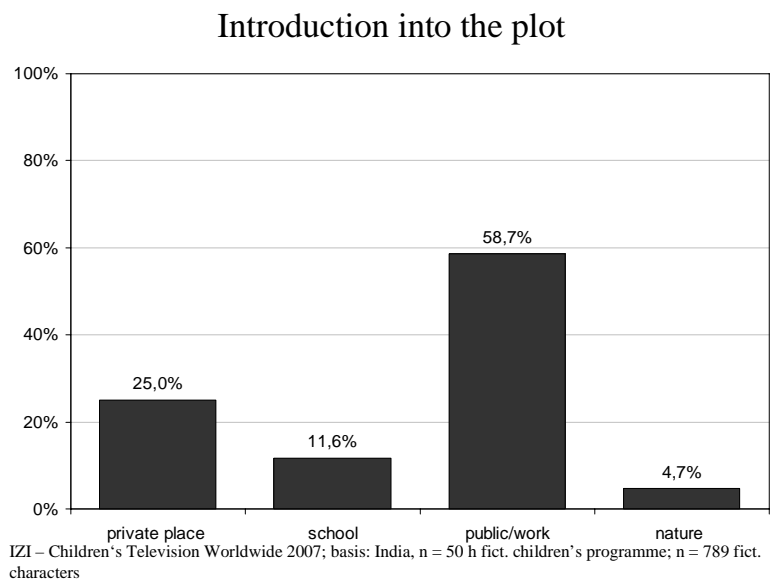


Most of the female characters as well as most of the male characters were either the leader of the group or a follower. Star Plus was the only channel that represented only male followers; 66.7% of characters were female leaders.

### At which location is the character introduced into the plot?

We coded where the character was located in its first appearance in the show (not the opening song).

212 characters (25.0%) appeared for the first time in private places. In public spaces or work 498 characters (58.7%) of the characters were introduced for the first time. 40 characters were in nature in their introduction scene (4.7%) and 98 (11.6%) were at school.

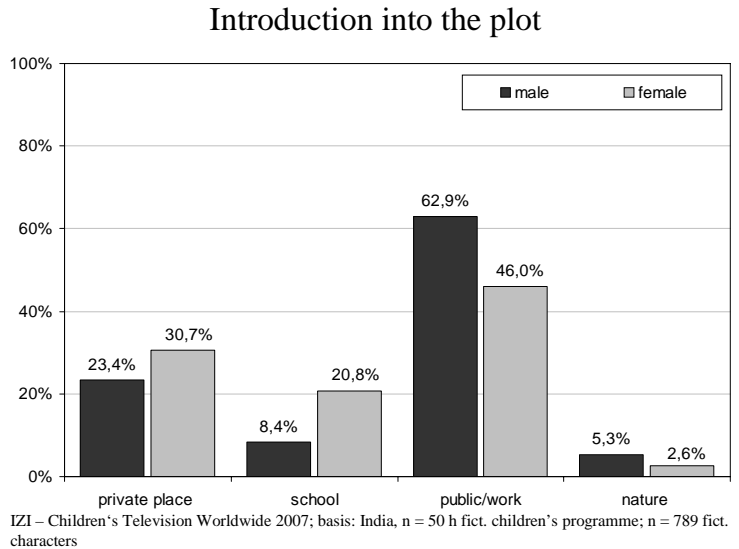


# Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

## Gender Perspective: Males appeared more often in public/work spaces, females more often at private venues and in school

84 (30.7%) of the female characters in the sample were introduced into the plot in private settings. 126 (46.0%) of the characters were introduced in public spaces or at work. 7 (2.6%) characters appeared for the first time in nature. 57 (20.8%) were introduced to the viewer in school.

114 (23.4%) of the male characters were first introduced in private settings. 307 (62.9%) were presented in public or at work. In nature locations 26 characters (5.3%) were introduced and in school 41 characters (8.4%) were introduced.

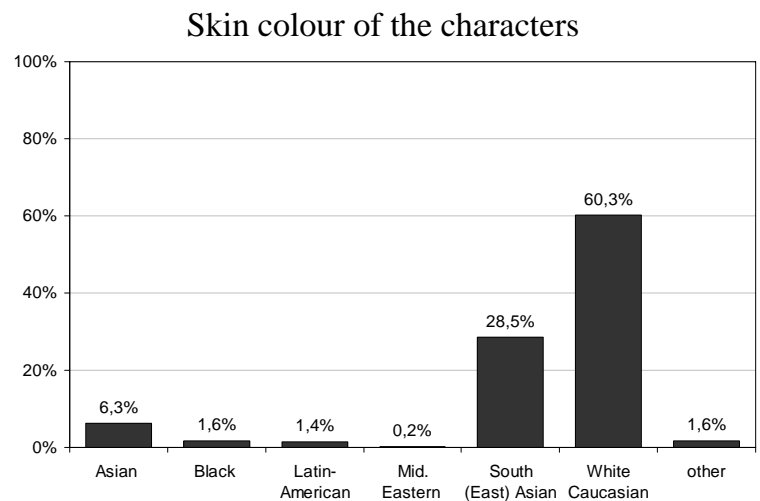


## The analysis of the human characters

The characters which were coded as humans were furthermore coded according to their skin colour, hair colour, their age, and their physique as well as disability.

### What skin colour or general ethnic affiliation can we see?

We coded as far as possible the skin colour or ethnicity of the main human characters. The problems with identifying ethnicity are considerable. Stereotypical traits such as shape of eyes and skin colour, for example, were relied on, with the recognition that these very representations should be critiqued. 27 (6.3%) of the human characters have shown Asian physical traits. Here, the category of Asian



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme; n = 437 fict. human characters

## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

was used to refer to characters from Far East and South (East) Asia. Black characters were found in 7 (1.6%) characters of the sample. 6 (1.4%) were classified as Latin-American and one (0.2%) as from the Middle East. The majority, with 260 characters (60.3%), were Caucasian. 122 (28.5%) were South (East) Asian. South (East) Asian refers to characters from the Indian subcontinent.

Asian		Black		Latin American		White Caucasian		South (East) Asian	
Hong Kong	65,0%	UK	15,1%	Australia	10,6	Cuba	91,5%	Malaysia	37,3%
China	64,4%	USA	12,2%	USA	7,1%	Argentina	90,0%	India	28,5%
Egypt	41,5%	New Zealand	10,6%	Israel	4,6%	Belgium	86,7%	Syria	3,6%
Syria	26,2%	Germany	9,0%	Brazil	4,4%	Slovenia	86,5%	Argentina	2,0%
Hungary	18,6%	Austria	8,8%	Hong Kong	4,0%	South Africa	80,8%	Slovenia	1,4%
Kenya	11,0%	South Africa	8,7%	Syria	3,6%	Canada	80,0%	Brazil	1,2%
USA	10,2%	Syria	8,3%	Kenya	3,5%	Netherlands	78,5%	Belgium	1,0%
Germany	9,2%	Brazil	7,9%	Canada	3,4%	Brazil	78,3%	Germany	0,8%
Austria	9,0%	Kenya	7,0%	Netherlands	3,1%	Hungary	78,2%	Austria	0,8%
Israel	7,5%	Belgium	6,6%	New Zealand	2,9%	Germany	77,5%	Australia	0,6%
Netherlands	6,4%	Canada	6,6%	South Africa	2,7%	Austria	77,5%	Netherlands	0,4%
New Zealand	6,3%	Argentina	6,0%	UK	1,9%	Norway	76,7%	New Zealand	0,4%
India	6,3%	Israel	5,1%	Cuba	1,7%	Israel	76,4%	South Africa	0,4%
Brazil	5,9%	Australia	4,2%	Egypt	1,4%	Australia	74,9%	Hong Kong	0,4%
South Africa	5,7%	Netherlands	4,2%	Austria	1,4%	UK	72,8%	Canada	0,3%
Canada	4,8%	Norway	3,7%	India	1,4%	New Zealand	72,6%	USA	0,3%
Belgium	4,3%	Slovenia	3,0%	Germany	1,4%	Kenya	68,9%	Israel	0,1%
Slovenia	4,2%	Egypt	2,6%	Norway	0,9%	USA	67,8%	UK	0,0%
Norway	4,2%	China	2,0%	Belgium	0,9%	India	60,3%	Norway	0,0%
Australia	3,2%	Cuba	1,7%	Hungary	0,9%	Syria	52,4%	Kenya	0,0%
UK	1,9%	India	1,6%	China	0,2%	Egypt	45,4%	Hungary	0,0%
Cuba	0,9%	Hungary	1,5%	Slovenia	0,1%	Hong Kong	30,3%	Egypt	0,0%
Argentina	0,0%	Hong Kong	0,4%	Argentina	0,0%	China	14,8%	Cuba	0,0%
Malaysia	0,0%	Malaysia	0,0%	Malaysia	0,0%	Malaysia	12,7%	China	0,0%
<b>total</b>	<b>11,7%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>6,4%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>2,6%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>72,2%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>1,7%</b>

Most characters in children's programming in India were white Caucasian, but with a proportion of 60.3% India is below the international average. With a proportion of 28.5% of South (East) Asian characters, India takes the second place on an international scale and is way above the average. Far behind on the third place are Asians with a proportion of 6.3%.

# Children's Television Worldwide:

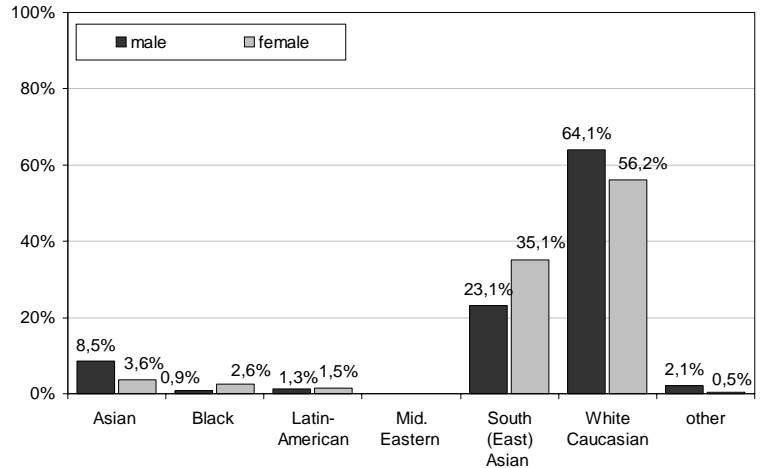
## Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

### Gender Perspective: More male Asians but more female South (East) Asians

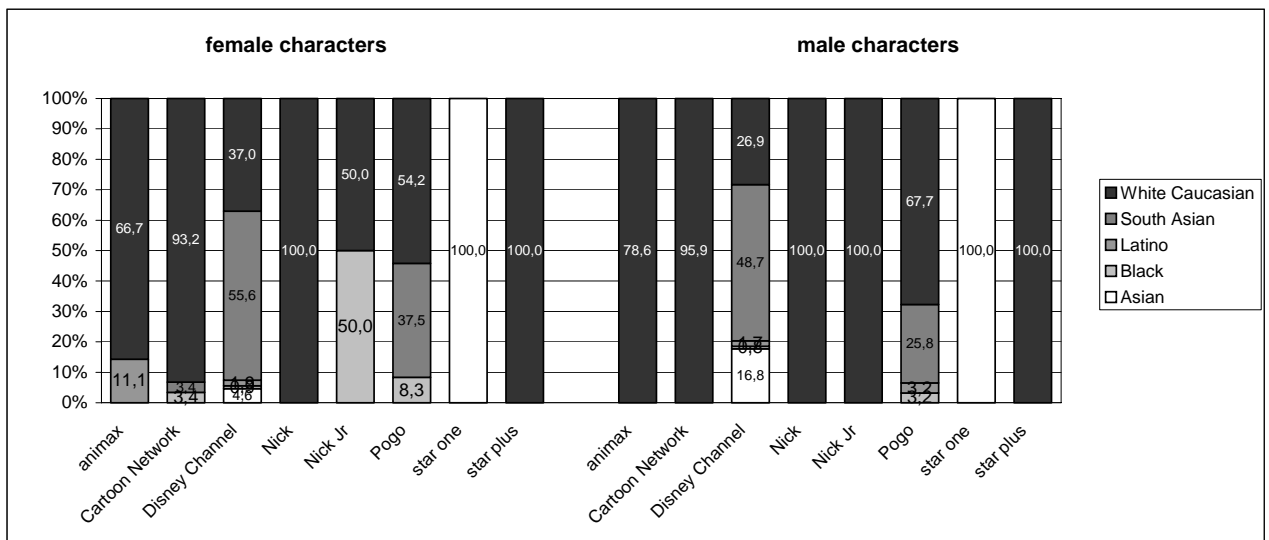
Out of the female characters 109 (56.2%) were white Caucasian, 7 (3.6%) were Asian, 5 (2.6%) were Black, 3 (1.5%) Latin-American and 68 (35.1%) were coded as South (East) Asian.

Of the male characters, 150 (64.1%) were white Caucasian, 20 (8.5%) were Asian, 2 (0.9%) were Black, 3 (1.3%) were Latin-American and 54 (23.1%) were South (East) Asian.

Skin colour of the characters



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme; n = 437 fict. human characters



Star One presented Asian characters only. On the other hand, Star Plus presented White characters only.

# Children's Television Worldwide:

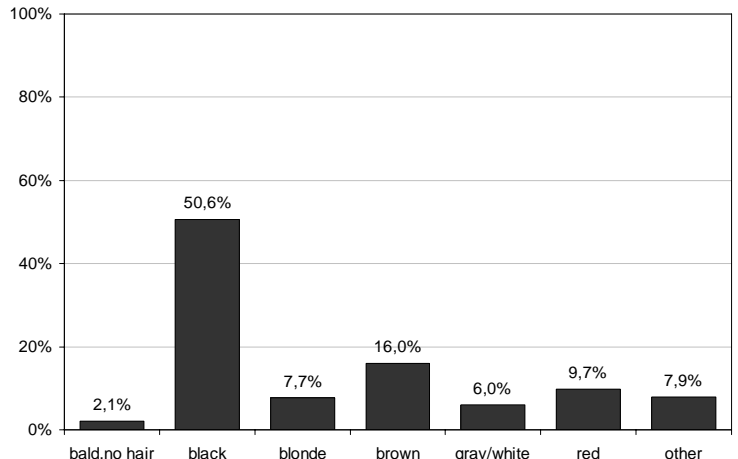
## Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

### Hair colour of protagonists

The hair colour of the protagonists was coded.

9 (2.1%) characters did not have any hair, 218 (50.6%) characters had black hair and 69 (16.0%) characters had brown hair. 33 (7.7%), characters were blonde 26 (6.0%) had grey or white hair and 42 (9.7%) had red hair. 34 (7.9%) people were categorized as Other.

Hair colour of the characters



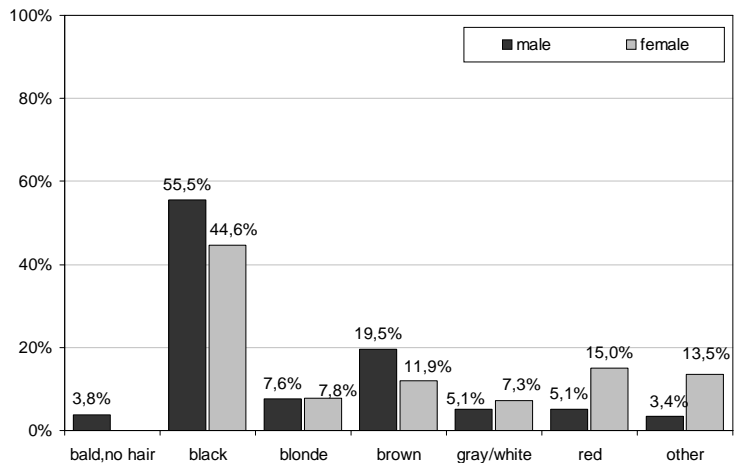
IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme; n = 437 fict. human characters

### **Gender Perspective: 3 times more often red-haired females**

Out of the female characters 86 (44.6%) had black hair, 15 (7.8%) had blonde hair, 23 (11.9%) had brown hair, 14 (7.3%) had gray or white hair and 29 (15.0%) had red hair.

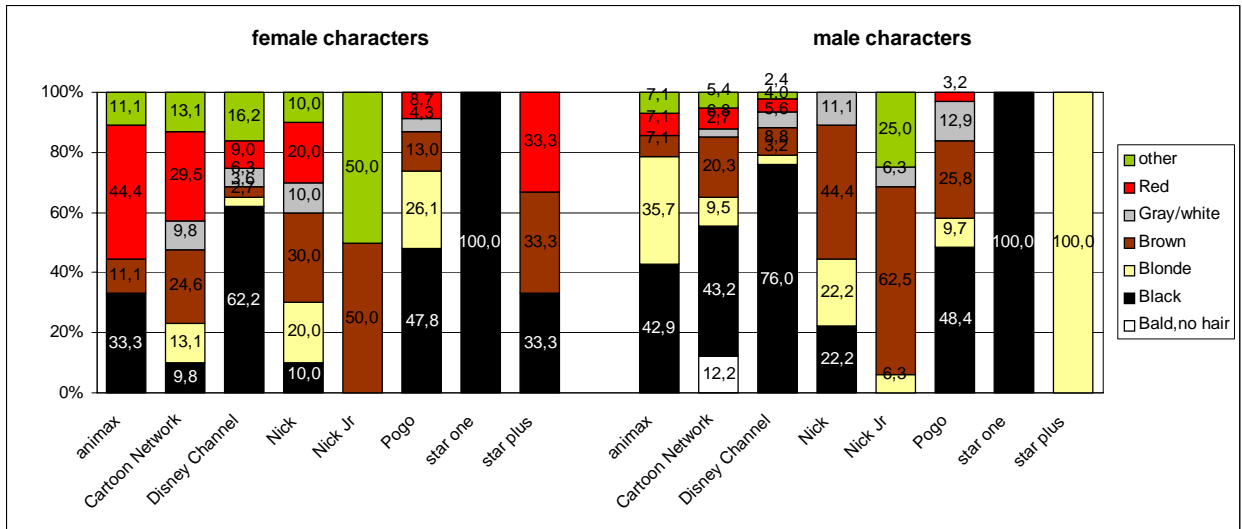
Of the male characters 9 (3.8%) did not have any hair, 131 (55.5%) had black hair, 18 (7.6%) had blonde hair, 46 (19.5%) had brown hair, 12 (5.1%) had gray or white hair and 12 (5.1%) had red hair.

Hair colour of the characters



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme; n = 437 fict. human characters

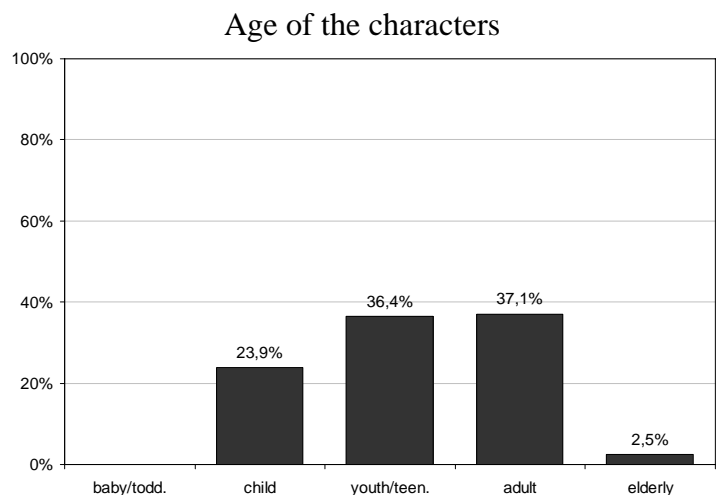
## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television



Star one, showing exclusively Asian characters, had exclusively black-haired characters. While the female white Caucasian characters on Star Plus were black or red-haired, the white Caucasian males on this channel were all blonde. Apart from that, blonde characters were more unusual in children's programs in India than those with black, brown or red hair.

### What age are the protagonists?

We coded the age as far as visible or clear from the content. Characters were coded as adult if they had recognisable characteristics such as acquisition of earnings, played role of mother/father, etc. or were elderly 105 of the characters (23.9%) were coded as children and 163 (37.1%) as adults. 159 (36.4%) were teenagers, and 11 (2.5%) were seniors.



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme; n = 437 fict. human characters

## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

Baby/ Toddler		Child		Youth/ Teenager		Adult		Elderly	
Egypt	8,7%	Malaysia	64,3%	Hungary	58,1%	Argentina	62,0%	Argentina	12,0%
Kenya	6,7%	China	52,5%	Netherlands	42,9%	Brazil	54,9%	Norway	9,3%
Netherlands	6,1%	New Zealand	49,2%	Israel	41,6%	Cuba	48,6%	Brazil	8,8%
Cuba	4,1%	Germany	44,5%	Australia	40,3%	Egypt	47,7%	Canada	7,1%
UK	3,0%	Austria	44,1%	USA	37,8%	UK	46,7%	Syria	6,0%
China	1,8%	Hong Kong	43,7%	South Africa	36,7%	Belgium	42,9%	Kenya	5,7%
Israel	1,6%	Kenya	40,4%	India	36,4%	Canada	42,8%	Slovenia	5,4%
Germany	1,1%	Syria	36,1%	Slovenia	35,1%	India	37,1%	Egypt	5,0%
Austria	1,1%	Slovenia	34,1%	Hong Kong	31,8%	Norway	34,0%	Germany	4,9%
Canada	1,0%	Netherlands	32,2%	Norway	27,9%	Kenya	32,2%	Austria	4,9%
New Zealand	0,5%	USA	31,2%	Syria	26,5%	Syria	31,3%	South Africa	4,5%
South Africa	0,5%	Canada	29,8%	Belgium	24,9%	Australia	30,4%	China	4,2%
Norway	0,5%	UK	29,5%	Germany	24,7%	Malaysia	30,2%	Belgium	4,2%
USA	0,3%	South Africa	29,5%	Austria	24,6%	South Africa	28,7%	Cuba	3,7%
Brazil	0,2%	Norway	27,0%	New Zealand	24,0%	USA	28,4%	Hungary	3,4%
Belgium	0,1%	Israel	26,8%	China	22,1%	Israel	25,9%	Malaysia	3,2%
Slovenia	0,1%	Belgium	26,6%	Brazil	19,6%	New Zealand	25,9%	Australia	3,1%
Argentina	0,0%	Australia	26,0%	Canada	19,2%	Slovenia	25,3%	Netherlands	3,1%
Australia	0,0%	Egypt	25,5%	Cuba	18,9%	Austria	24,6%	Israel	2,8%
Hong Kong	0,0%	Cuba	24,7%	UK	18,5%	Germany	24,1%	India	2,5%
Hungary	0,0%	India	23,9%	Argentina	18,0%	Hungary	23,1%	UK	2,3%
India	0,0%	Brazil	15,9%	Kenya	15,0%	Hong Kong	22,7%	Hong Kong	1,8%
Malaysia	0,0%	Hungary	15,2%	Egypt	13,2%	China	19,3%	USA	1,8%
Syria	0,0%	Argentina	8,0%	Malaysia	2,4%	Netherlands	15,6%	New Zealand	0,4%
<b>total</b>	<b>1,6%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>33,9%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>29,3%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>30,6%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>4,1%</b>

The most frequently represented age group was Adults at 37.1%. Here India is in the first third on an international scale. The country is closely followed by youths/teenagers at 36.4%. Whereas the representation of the latter is above the average, 23.9% of children are already below it.



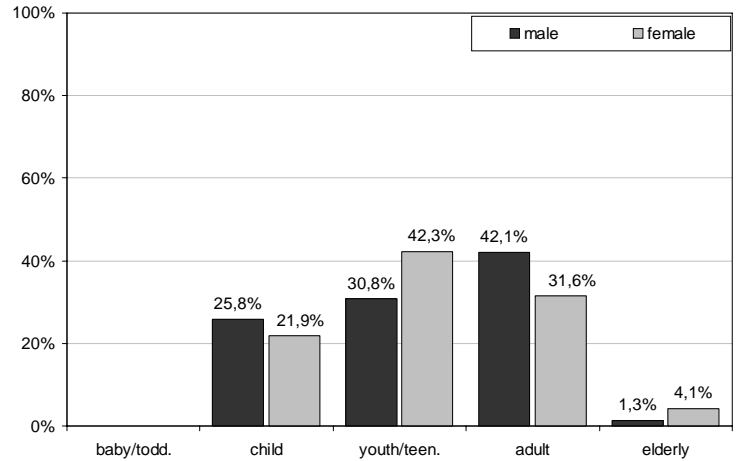
# Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

## Gender Perspective: Elderly are mostly female

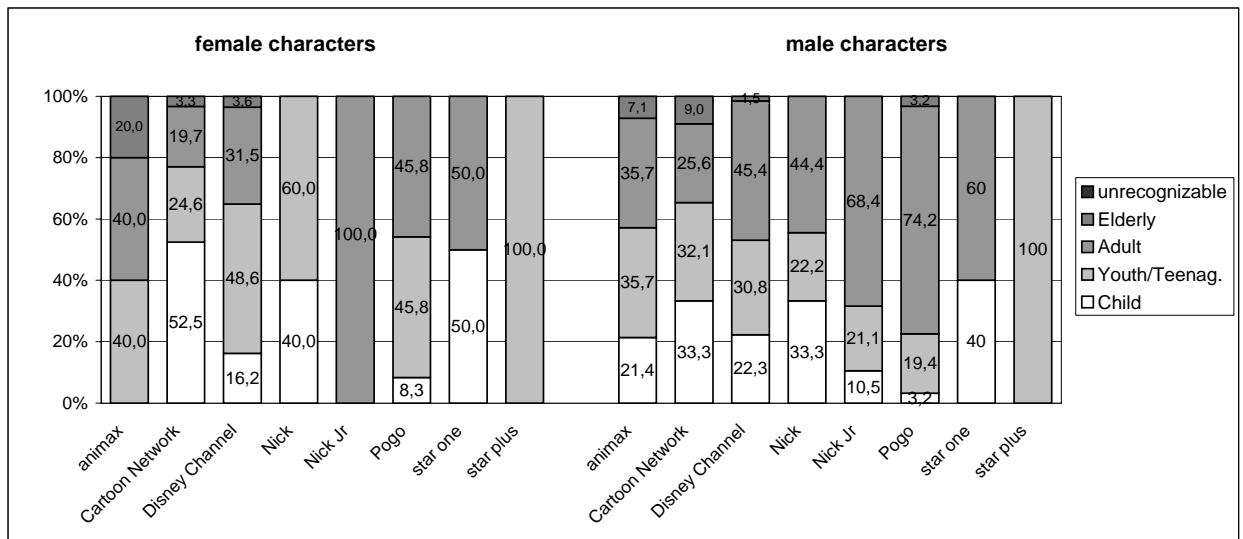
Out of the female characters 43 (21.9%) were children, 83 (42.3%) were teens, 62 (31.6%) were adults and 8 (4.1%) were seniors.

62 male characters (25.8%) were children, 74 (30.8%) were teens, 101 (42.1%) were adults and 3 (1.3%) were seniors.

Age of the characters



IZI - Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme; n = 437 fict. human characters



Star Plus presented exclusively youth/teenagers of both sexes, while Nick.Jr presented only female adults, but three different age groups, children, teenager and adults, among the male characters.

# Children's Television Worldwide:

## Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

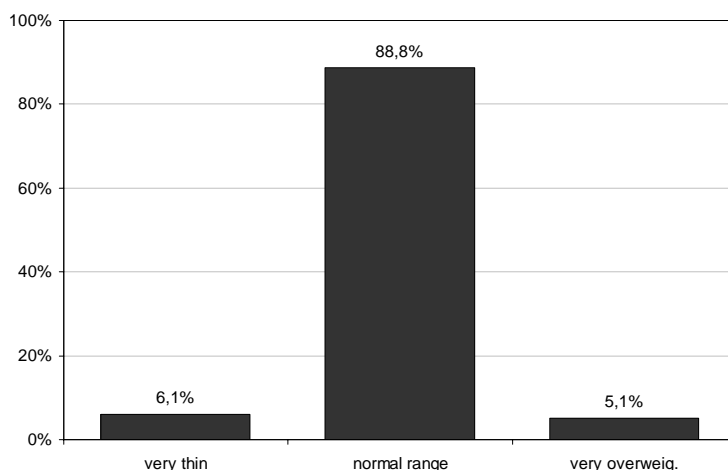
### Physique of characters

#### What weight or shape does the main character have?

We coded whether the characters were of average weight, thin or overweight.

380 (88.8%) characters of the sample were of average weight. 26 (6.1%) of the characters were very thin, and 22 (5.1%) very overweight.

Physique of the characters



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme; n = 437 fict. human characters

very thin		normal range		very overweight	
Australia	27,5%	Israel	97,7%	Argentina	14,0%
UK	27,4%	Hong Kong	97,1%	Kenya	12,7%
Norway	18,6%	Hungary	94,2%	Germany	11,1%
New Zealand	18,1%	South Africa	92,7%	Belgium	10,9%
Syria	17,9%	Netherlands	92,6%	Austria	10,9%
Germany	14,0%	Brazil	91,2%	Canada	10,7%
Austria	13,9%	USA	91,1%	UK	8,9%
Egypt	11,7%	Malaysia	90,5%	China	7,9%
Slovenia	11,3%	Cuba	88,9%	Norway	7,4%
Kenya	10,2%	<b>India</b>	<b>88,8%</b>	Malaysia	7,1%
China	8,1%	Slovenia	88,2%	USA	7,1%
<b>India</b>	<b>6,1%</b>	Canada	86,5%	Egypt	7,1%
Cuba	4,9%	Belgium	86,3%	New Zealand	6,5%
Brazil	4,2%	China	84,1%	Cuba	6,2%
Argentina	4,0%	Argentina	82,0%	Netherlands	5,9%
Canada	2,8%	Egypt	81,2%	South Africa	5,4%
Belgium	2,7%	Syria	78,6%	<b>India</b>	<b>5,1%</b>
Malaysia	2,4%	Kenya	77,1%	Brazil	4,7%
Hungary	2,4%	New Zealand	75,4%	Australia	3,7%
South Africa	2,0%	Austria	75,2%	Syria	3,6%
USA	1,9%	Germany	75,0%	Hungary	3,4%
Netherlands	1,5%	Norway	74,0%	Hong Kong	2,5%
Israel	0,6%	Australia	68,8%	Israel	1,7%
Hong Kong	0,4%	UK	63,7%	Slovenia	0,5%
<b>total</b>	<b>9,1%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>84,1%</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>6,8%</b>

88.8% of all characters represented on Indian children's TV, were of a normal body size. India ranks in the middle field of the international comparison and is only slightly above the average. 6.1% of the characters were very thin and 5.1% were overweight.

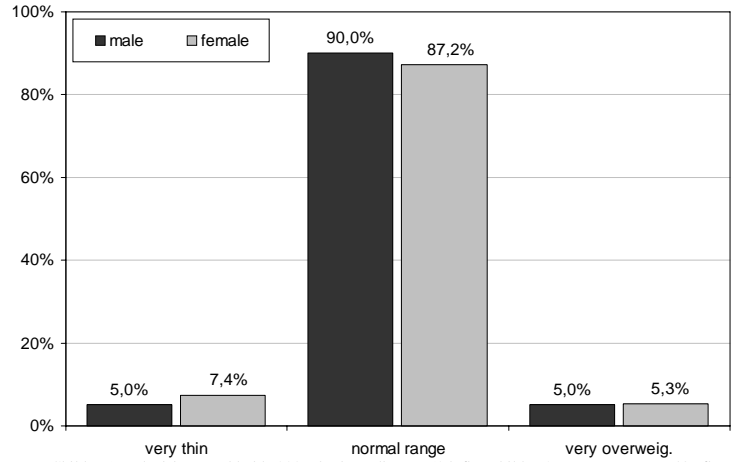
# Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

## Gender Perspective: Females are more often thin, males more often overweight

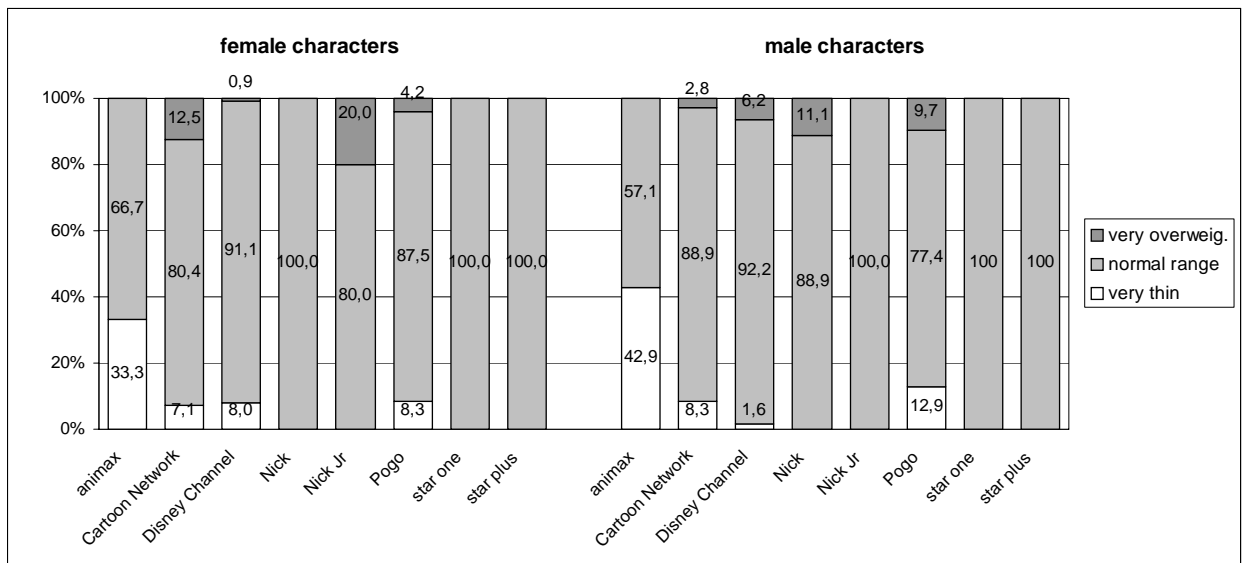
Out of the female characters 164 (87.2%) were in the normal range, 14 (7.4%) were very thin and 10 (5.3%) were very overweight.

216 male characters (90.0%) were in the normal range, 12 (5.0%) were very thin and 12 (5.0%) were very overweight.

Physique of the characters



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: India, n = 50 h fict. children's programme; n = 437 fict. human characters



On Star Plus and Star One all characters, whether male or female, were of average weight. On Nick.Jr. all of the males were of average weight, while on Nick all females were of average weight.

### Characters with disabilities: absent

We coded if the character had a clearly identifiable disability or chronic illness (such as HIV/AIDS, cancer, diabetes etc.) which was an important component of the story or character construction. None of the characters had a disability

# Children's Television Worldwide:

## Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television

### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The sample we analysed here consists of 102 hours of explicit children's television, 50 hours of fictional shows, 1366 programmes (158 fictional shows), 789 characters (fiction) and 437 human characters.

In international comparison a lot of tendencies in children's programming in India are close to the average of the other 23 analysed countries. At some points the Indian children's television was outstanding in international comparison; hence we want to highlight some of the results to promote quality.

- With 80.9% animated programs, India is below the international average with only animated and live action programs and no shows with puppets or mixed formats.
- 15.8% of programming is domestically produced, which is below the international average (22.6%)
- 36.1% of the main characters were female, which puts India above the international average.
- There were fewer humans in children's programming in India than the international average (50.6% vs. 59.1%), and **three times more plants than the international average**; Females were more often humans, and males were more often animals and objects.
- 15.3% of all main characters were antagonists. Here India is slightly above the average but generally in the middle field on an international scale, with just a few more male antagonists.
- There were twice **as many leaders as in the international comparison**; there were a few more males in leading positions and a few more female as followers and equals
- Males appeared more often in the public/work sphere, while females appeared more often at private venues and in school
- **Asian, Black, White and Latin American characters were underrepresented, South Asian characters were represented way above the international average (28.5% vs. 1.7% international average)**; there were more Asian males but more South Asian females.
- Hair colour: Only males were bald, and red-haired females were three times more represented than those with any other hair colour.
- There was no representation of babies, and children in general were **underrepresented** (23.9% vs. 33.9%); there were more teens and more adults than the international average
- **There were fewer thin and overweight characters than the international average.** Females were more often thin, and males were more often overweight

### Final notes and recommendations:

In a comparison of programming from other countries from Asia and including Australia, the following was observed and recommended: The central problematic issue in television programming for youth across Hong Kong, China, India, Fiji, and Australia is that modernity or

## **Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Indian Children's Television**

the modern lifestyle is privileged. This results in the promotion of several ideological "truths" such as consumption is good, gender identity may best be expressed through commodities, urban life is a goal and measure of happiness, Anglo American features signify mobility, ethnic and religious minorities are of peripheral significance to a story, and lower caste and class majorities are supporting characters, even though they may constitute a majority in the local population. Progressive and realistic programming would include representation of diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, body type, ability, religion, class, caste, and locale. Diversity in situations where, for example, a fantasy or fairytale can unravel in a rural environment, will be a step in the right direction. An expansion in the way gender is portrayed where, for example, a boy may be shown in a vulnerable role or a girl in a leadership role, would contribute to a positive shift in youth and children's programming. Ultimately, greater regulation of commercials in such programs is required.

We would like to point out the following issues to be considered with respect to the coding:

First, we recommend following up this analysis with a thorough examination of the quality of children's TV character representations, as well as the stories and scenarios within which they appear, as these relate to gender and diversity issues.

Second, we recommend we recommend problemmatizing all of the labels/categories given to human (and even non-human) characters. These involve debatable and often ambiguous issues of identification/categorization that have to do with gender, skin colour, nation, region, language, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, socioeconomics, etc. How these aspects of identity inter-relate and sometimes conflict was not taken into account by the coding strategies of this project.

Third, we recognized and evaluated the symbolic features of these aspects of identification/characterization was culturally/contextually specific and not necessarily straightforward. These "messy" interpretive processes have to be acknowledged by the coding guidelines or analyses.

Fourth, we have to ask how we can critique -- diplomatically and productively -- this circumstance of labels being applied to and interpreted in content analyses of children's television, as well as audience research that is conducted with children by marketers who rely on these labels/categories.

Finally, we urge scholars working with any content analysis of media to think carefully about the ideological environment that produces certain labels so that we are cautious about how they are used, and propose new ways to categorize that open up discourse rather than perpetuate hierarchies.