

A Qualitative Analysis of the Indian Television Cartoon Shows among young parents

A C Balaji

Head of Department – Animation
Manipal Institute of Communication
Tile Factory Road, Manipal – 576104, Karnataka
ORCID ID: 0000-0003-4811-4413

Nandini Lakshmi Kantha

Professor – Department of Corporate Communication
Manipal Institute of Communication
Tile Factory Road, Manipal – 576104, Karnataka
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2304-1388

Abstract:

While there is already a consensus in the scientific community about the deleterious effects of television viewing habits, a qualitative analysis on television cartoon shows is largely unexplored in India, a country that is making significant strides in broadcasting sector, backed by rising consumer demand. This has led to a highly competitive scenario in kid's television market wherein the proportion of imported animated content is more than the In-house content. Notably with the increasing number of satellite cartoon channels in India, the demand for imported animated content is on the rise and this is a rising concern of the parents, because cartoon shows have a significant effect on the social, cognitive and emotional development of children. The study strives to discover the different themes of the cartoon television shows and examine the nature of television viewership, co-viewing habits and viewership effects using the data from semi-structured interviews with young parents. The research findings reveal the expectations of the Parents from kid's television channels & its content, as well as children's interest in various themes of cartoon shows and the main characters.

Keywords: Cartoon Shows, Imported Animated Content, Local Animated Content, Parents, Television viewership, Viewership Effects

INTRODUCTION

Television is the most influential medium, due to its status, it greatly influences the children in shaping their behaviour at a very early age. Cartoon shows occupy a special place in viewing habits of the children, in every family, television has become an integral member of India. Parents use television as a digital babysitter, and so children start to follow cartoon shows at an adolescent age. Today's children get plenty of opportunities to watch more shows as they grow, and fan follows at a very early age. As they watch more programs and channels, they also get to watch content that is not culturally appropriate for them (Shanthipriya, 2017).

Children viewing classic cartoon shows were not concerned to know whether the show is old or new; instead, they were delighted at the opportunity to see their favourite television characters at home. The attractiveness of cartoon shows among youngsters is a result of the numerous satellite channels and programming available 24 hours a day. This situation is causing youngsters to get addicted to the television; in contrast to previous generations, children enjoyed outside sports as their favorite pastimes. However, with television as the primary source of entertainment, youngsters as young as

six months become avid viewers of cartoon programmes. Television is being utilised as a substitute educational medium. Preschoolers benefit from television shows because they teach them about colours, alphabets, animals, and environment. On the other hand, youngsters who watch lengthy hours of television develop an addiction and spend more time in front of the television. Some parents use television to augment their child's feeding time Lehman (2020).

Exclusively at Asia TV Forum & Market 2020, a children-focused digital media firm interviewed 4,482 children aged four to sixteen years and their parents. The participants were chosen from 14 Asian pacific markets and were equally distributed in terms of gender and age. They discovered that children like diversity and interaction. Due to the fact that many children play mobile games and consume television content, having a brand presence in both of these activities is critical for reaching this demographic (Team, 2021).

The children's television viewing pattern in a day, Figure 1 shares the information of their average active time on television over weekday and weekend. The viewership gradually increases from morning till late afternoon, later by evening drops as they lose the control over the remote to their working parents. Primarily the viewership shifts from cartoon channels to general entertainment channels.

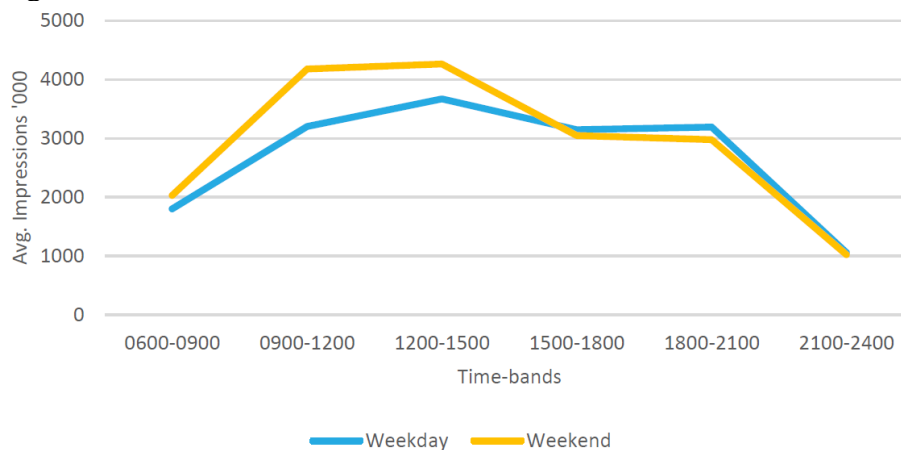


Figure 1. Children active time on television

Source: From "A peek into kid's viewership", by Broadcast Audience Research Council Report 2017 (p.17) (<https://www.barcindia.co.in/newsletter/a-peek-into-kids-viewership.pdf>) In the public domain

Additionally, television is the greatest cultural influence in human history. Television becomes the common media of entertainment for children to watch their favourite animated cartoon characters. There is quite a good number of Kids TV channels that broadcast a variety of cartoon shows for children round the clock. Children start watching the cartoon shows as early as six months, and by the age of two and three, they are an avid audience for the animated shows. Most of them grow up watching their favourite colourful characters that turn into a role model and friend to them (Poepsel, 2018).

On the other hand, Studies reveal that infants hold a short time interest watching cartoons on television; however, as they grow, they become active viewers with the capacity of imitating characters that turn out to be their role models of the children. Children as they watch the television show, learn and apprehend the visuals and information shared in the show. The television shows are chosen as an easy entertaining tool by the parents so that they can do their household works. Psychologist emphasize that prolonged hours of watching television cartoon shows that are not supervised by their parents tend to develop negative side of behaviour over time as the children at early

years learn about explosions, gunshots, weapons and aggressive actions from cartoons and use in real life Jean M. Twenge (2018); American Psychological Association (2013). Animation content is experiencing a bigger transformation in India. Over the last decade, the Indian animation industry has moved up their production services from an outsourcing model to creating its intellectual animation property, which enable the animation producers to generate higher revenues and profitability from an end to the endpoint by selling new local content to television networks in India. Broadcasting channels are increasing their content mix for more local made content than the imported content (Refer to Figure 2 & 3). Year on year, there is a larger intake of local content by the kids' entertainment channels including some of the regional broadcasting channels. (KPMG, 2016)

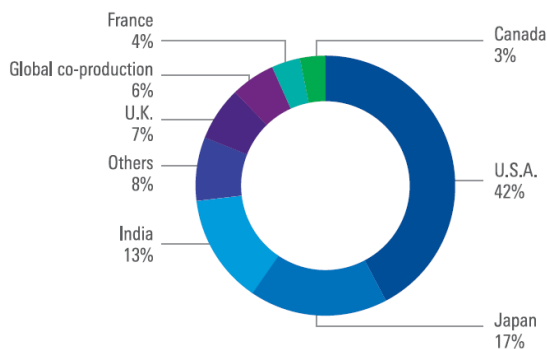


Figure 2. Countrywise Animated Shows on Indian TV 2014

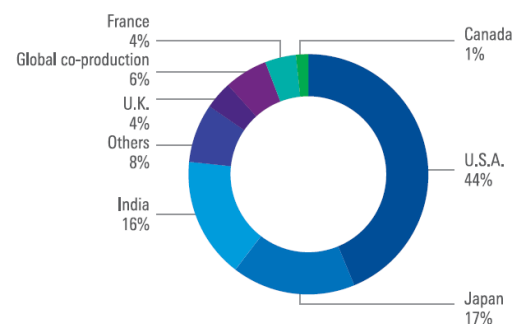


Figure 3. Countrywise Animated Shows on Indian TV 2015

Source: "The Future: Now Streaming - Indian Media and Entertainment" FICCI Report 2016 (p.173) (<https://aibmda.in/FICCI-KPMG-M&E-Report-2016.pdf>) In the public domain

This trend has enabled the animation industry to create more Original and Local content for kids' television channels. Studios now create local characters, stories, and themes that have a longer shelf life and can be monetized through various channels. Creating a business model around the popular character like licensing & merchandising and theme parks around animated properties, has worked very well with overseas studios such as Disney, Pixar and Universal studios theme park; on a similar model, few Indian Animation Studios have also created more of local characters, stories and have seen success with 'Chhota Bheem', 'Motu Patlu', 'Pakdam Pakdai'. With the success and demand of this diverse local ethnic characters' kids, television channels continue to invest with the new characters and shows (KPMG, 2017).

Eggleston (2018) Animated Television shows have become an exceptional teaching and entertainment tool. Pre-schoolers learn alphabets and colours by watching television shows. Animated shows play a vital role among 2-4 year children; they are not just the viewers; they perceive a lot of information from the shows. Animated character 'Popeye, the sailor man', promotes eating vegetables, especially spinach. Children look at the character's attitude and behaviour, for example in Dexter's Laboratory Dexter – the main character uses the left hand for much of the activities and the children try to use the left hand to some of their activities, even though they are right handed. They are very closely attached and inspired by the character's personalities and designs. These animated characters reflect people, civilisation, morality and kindness in them.

Gargi (2017) pointed that merchandise of cartoon characters has its distinctive band of customers, which is increasing year on year with every new character on the show. This trend gives more business openings for all Local and Global companies. In this decade, India has established itself as one of the leading retail markets for merchandising of animated properties of all global and local brands. This is due to the success in building the connection between their favourite shows, characters and the products, like Superman, Chotta Bheem, Motu Patlu, etc. Children consume animated content as well as products featuring their favourite characters. This trend has enabled the retailers to remodel their business model in bringing more visibility to their products, and this set up has pushed them to look into the need for licensing. More unorganised business is coming into the organised way of promoting their business. This trend would help the retailers in lowering their interest in imports of these goods, and it's good for the local retailers and better for the economy.

There are licenses for a range the product categories like Toys, Back to School, Electronics such as Mobile, Laptop, Laptop Skins, Pen drives, Headphones, Watches, Bobble Toys, Fashion, Electronics accessories and more providing range of items to all age group from kids zero to adults. Licensing & Merchandising in India though it is a smaller market of about Rs.4, 000 crores (\$600 million), is growing tremendously to hit double-digit growth in the future, (George, 2017).

A qualitative analysis on television cartoon shows among young parents would provide an opportunity for the parents to share information about their children's television viewing habits. The critical information would help in understanding the expectations of the young parents from cartoon television Channels and the kind of themes and content children are interested in. Recommended observation derived from the results of this research would help to understand the expectation of animation content better.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature introduces the framework that comprises of the main research focus that is the context in analysing the perception of young parents having children watching cartoon shows on the television.

Effects of Cartoon Shows

Shazia Akbar Ghilzai, Rabia Alam, Zubair Ahmad, Amina Shaukat, Syeda Shahum Noor (2017), highlighted the consequences of violent cartoons, they indicated that the children watching high level of violence are more likely to engage in acts of cruelty and violence. Those who watch violent cartoons may show aggressive behaviour earlier than the children who watch non-violent cartoons. Throughout the course of time, integration may result in an under estimation of cognitive abilities, discrepancy from drugs, and an increase in negative behaviour. Children have the ability to imitate actions and events that they repeatedly see over. Thus, the researcher stated unequivocally that colourful cartoon characters may easily change one's cognitive state into a pleasant reaction

Johnson (1970), according to his research, television has a significant effect on the structure of family life. He reports that 60% of the parents have altered their sleeping habits as a result of the television, 55% have altered their eating times, and 78% of parents use television as a digital babysitter. Likewise, Robinson (1972) investigated the impact of television by comparing daily activities by using a time budget technique. He asked set of viewers at 15 locations in 11 countries to use dairies to record their activities

24 hours a day. The results conceded that the certain activities were decreased, such as social gathering, leisure activities, sleep and even decline in newspaper reading. Even young people participating in community activities and high school students participating in sports dropped remarkably.

Similarly, Sheehan (1983) in the research, states that the presence of the television has altered some activities in the life of school going children. They are using overlapping longitudinal design with 120 children from Grade 3, 4 & 5 over three years. The studies showed that a larger number of children did their homework while watching the television. Kindergarten children ate their evening snacks while watching television shows.

Robert M. Liebert (1989) states that by the age of 18, apart from sleep, children would have spent the majority of their time watching television. The researcher pointed that it is a gross oversimplification to say that violence on TV does increase children's violent behaviour, for there are many caveats required. Children today watching more television programs than their parents and grandparents got out of comics and records combined. What children watch on television is considered to be their programme. However, most of the programs children watch are designed for adult and family audiences. His research points to the major effect of television and later to the television content, where the television tends to remain commercial than social. Since a child's attention span is limited, quick movements and loud noises are required to gain their attention. The content is geared to appeal for the target group of 2-11 years, and the format is widely animation involving various themes.

Khaled Habib (2015), reveals that between kindergarten and high school, an average kid watches almost 18,000 hours of television, this engagement affects the child's mental response and behaviour. Studies conducted by Khaled Habib and Tarek Soliman answer how children are affected by cartoons. An experiment was conducted with 400 school going boys and girls with an age group of 7-12 years. The results concluded that cartoon TV shows have a larger influence on the children. Television occupies maximum of their time than any other activities. Also, due to the busy working life style of the parents, on the other hand, the parents do spend very less time with their children. Hence the children spend most of the time watching cartoon shows. The study also proves that it does affect their language skills, and they tend to imitate the actions from the cartoon characters. It also takes away substantial time from their schedule. Apart from the school teacher and parents, the children learn from the television shows as well.

Similarly, Shailesh Rai, Bhagwan Waskel, Salil Sakalle, Sanjay Dixit, Rajendra Mahore (2016), observed in his research that watching cartoon shows significantly affect the behaviour of the children, both positive and negative manner. In common, the children act as the way the cartoon characters perform on the television. They follow this in their daily life as they watch too much of the cartoon shows on the television. As children develop more interest in watching cartoon shows, over the years they become violent and addictive. The research is included 200 children age range from 5 to 15 years. They used observational cross-sectional study and random sampling over four months. Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. Results summarised that the cartoon shows have a stronger effect on their lifestyle, behaviour and language. Likewise, cartoon shows have both favourable and adverse influence on moral development of children. The children of all group, ages backgrounds, genders, and intelligence are affected by television cartoon shows.

Bignell (2013) in his television studies, he has worked on how social behaviour is related to television viewing habits. His studies include how different programmes have different kinds of audience. For several decades, a focused study on children watching television has experimented in which the effects of television could be revealed, Bandura (1977). This experimental research was criticized because of the settings, methods and the kind of shows used by the researcher, which children normally watch on the television. Nevertheless, studies such as these provided the required support for the campaigns for regulating the kid's television, protecting the children from the vulnerable content that might be associated with the program. While watching television is enjoyable for children, it is also a necessary for their eventual entry into society. Research on viewing habits confirms that the primary benefit of television for children is that it serves as a resource for working through natural identifications of their identity.

Learning from Cartoon Shows

Sajana (2018) in the study, attempts to find a teaching method to improve the learners speaking and writing skills using television cartoons. Cartoons are multipurpose and brilliant medium in improving teaching due to their visual appeal and have the capacity to hold the attention and interest of the learners. The learners connect with the character's design, voices, and background music. As a result, the learners quickly develop reading, writing and speaking skills through activities learned based on cartoon animation. This also helped to keep the learner's interest and participation in various activities with great enthusiasm. The researcher states that the nature of teaching requires an understanding of the community through which the learners come from. Teaching activities using cartoons would yield productive and receptive skill among learners in almost all streams of education.

Syed Raza (2016) in his research, observes that the physical and emotional effects of cartoons on children. The finding reveals that the cartoons are not the reproduction of real-life situations, instead of imaginary circumstances which affect the kids in many ways. The researcher employed the quantitative survey method with a purposive sampling consists of 100 primary school students at five schools at Multan. The leading impacts were on general knowledge, vocabulary, and intelligence in personality building. And also healthiness combined with personality, imagination with emotion and cognitive with psychological behaviour. The findings also enlighten the influence of cartoon on children needs adaptations of new methods to find the phenomenon connected with cartoon characters.

Lbata (1981), in his research, compared American and Japanese children's television programmes. The study is based on the transcultural elements in line with the main theme and the main characters in the children television. The researcher used 50 American and 42 Japanese children's television shows with 36 children on an age group of 12 years over two months. The most common theme out of the stories was an authority, the way American viewers viewed authority as competitors, whereas the same is being viewed as an evil in Japanese. American stories and characters emphasised on Individualism, while the Japanese on collectivism. As the children involved in more and more television viewing, they are less and less connection with their parents or grandparents. The programmes reflect cultural behaviour, thinking pattern, which has a mutual impact on the personality development of the children. There is a greater need for understanding cultural materials in relation to tales, myths, and folklores than ever before. The same tales told by the grandparents had greater intimacy with an obligation

towards the mental and physical development of the child which the television stories lack today.

Hidden Effects of Cartoons On Little Spectators

(Khulood Kayed Shattnawi, 2021) details in the research that several parents in the research expressed regret for allowing their children to watch cartoon television cartoon programs for longer durations while they completed household tasks. Most parents criticize television in causing Autism Spectrum Disorder. Researchers found that adolescents watching cartoon television for an estimate above 67 minutes per day prior to two years of age are chances of slowing down on learning and memory development. Early exposure to the electronic screen before the age of two years can also influence linguistic skills and result in autism.

(Holzbach, 2021) points to a game programme geared at youngsters that incorporates television cartoons. These television programmes were often shown in the daytime from Monday through Saturday to catch the attention of children who previously attended school merely in the afternoons. As a result, the format of these shows was very direct: an outgoing presenter, often a young lady along with a group of delighted youngsters, encouraged the children playing games in return for rewards. Following the game, television cartoons were screened. This type of show became a hit on numerous Brazilian channels almost for two decades.

Aliyeva (2013) in the articles points about the popularity of the cartoon shows among the children due to the availability of the number of television channels and programs round the clock. This scenario is making the children glued to the television, unlike the earlier generation, children spend a good time doing outdoor games and activities. But now television being the main entertainment element, children as early as six months become an active viewer of the cartoon shows. Television is also used as an alternate tool for education. Television programs benefit the pre-schoolers in learning about colours, letters, animals and nature. The flipside of this is that children watching long hours of television are addicted and spend more time in front of the television. Some parents use television as supplement time to feed their children.

Psychologists stress on prolonged hours of watching the cartoon shows with the negative side of behaviour over time. Studies reveal that infants hold a short time interest; however, as they grow, they become active viewers with the capacity of imitating characters that turns out to be their role models of the children.

Children as they watch the television show, they learn and apprehend the visuals and information shared in the show. The television shows are chosen as an easy entertaining tool by the parents so that they can do their household works. Children spend long hours watching the shows that are not supervised by their parents. Any child at this year learn about bombs, pistol fire, physical destructions and arms aggressive actions from cartoon shows and use in actual life.

Character Influencing Attention of the Children

Perea (2018) asserts, the creative impact of Abstract Expressionism in the post-1945 era inspired rebel animators to develop the limited-animation style: cartoons with bright colours, restricted movement, and backdrops represented by symbols rather than completely drawn-out realistic sets. Due to the high cost of producing new television cartoons, animators discovered more profitable methods to portray motion by utilising sound effects and speech to represent movement rather than sketching it all out. Similarly, Melanie J. Spence (2002) discourses that television is a strong audio and visual

medium that offers a unique opportunity to hold the attention of children, be it from the diversity of animation characteristics, such as visual, fast-paced motions, and sound effects, it has been consistently shown that they enhance children' attention. (Alwitt et al. 1980; Fowles 1976; Hayes and Birnbaum 1980; Huston-Stein and Wright 1979; Wright and Huston 1983).

Fowles (1976) says Television is a very dynamic audio-visual medium used to deliver entertainment and information content to the children. Due to its very nature, it can attract attention to a greater extent. Communication studies with children propose that due to the dynamic nature of the content presented using verbal & visual forms television interaction provides a unique source of knowledge by means of animation, action, visual forms, timings and sound effects. This dynamic nature increases the attention of the children.

Sultana (2014) says, Cartoon shows in kid's channel remain the major source of entertainment for children across world. The researcher studies how these cartoon shows have developed over the period to be an indispensable part of children of older generations and even living today. The researcher aims to comprehend the influence of cartoon shows on children by assessing different class of people by the survey and interviews in Bangladesh. The survey conducted among 40 selected people, and among them, 20 chosen for an interview. The survey reflects that almost every person likes cartoon shows, and the parents believed that the cartoons are the stress-free source of entertainment for children. The respondents agree that the children are learning from their favourite cartoon characters. It is found that "Tom & Jerry" is a famous cartoon show among the respondents. The respondents also believe that cartoon show helps build creativity. They believe that cartoon shows are vital for the growth of a child's mental health. The researcher concludes that cartoon shows being the most popular mode of entertainment of all ages; parents need to take enough measures to monitor the content consumed by the children.

Qualities of The Character Persuading Children as Active Viewers

Ghalian (2016) observed that the foremost intelligence of childhood is communicated to the children through well-known media like movies, books, and television. The depiction of childhood in these mediums carries within it a sense of moral values. The research discusses that the children stood more precise at identifying more familiar than less familiar voices of their cartoon icons. The results recommend that linguistics and rough voice of the characters becomes an essential part of the interpreted memory recorded and can be used by children at a very young age. And they also describe the characterisation of cartoon characters in greater detail. Major media and entertainment companies in the world have focused their attention on producing content for children apart from television shows and movies from popular production houses such as Disney, Pixar influences children across the globe and culture.

Shailesh Rai (2016) states that over the years, children's interest in cartoons has grown significantly, to the point where it has become a major activity in their lives. This has become an issue as a result of too many youngsters viewing too many cartoons, which have developed into violent and compulsive behavior. Children nowadays are affected by cartoon characters in many ways in their daily lives, there is a significant effect of cartoon shows on children, which changes children living style, clothing, aggressive conduct and language. Other research shown that intentionally negative content or information

portrayed may cause children to question their upbringing, abilities, perception, way of life, or beliefs. A cartoon superhero character with a negative mind set can highlight life and actions in a violent or overacting manner in response to the situations in which they previously chose to act optimistically due to true interpretation.

Paul Messaris (1984) pointed in his research about Children's perspective on Television cartoon characters, the mother's statements are very important to the beliefs of the children, whether television characters are representative or not related to real world. The experimental research points that the character's voice strengthens the children's response to the visual medium and while they watch the program along with their mother it encourages the children to learn more from watching the television shows. The mother's interaction with children about the cartoon character further creates awareness about the character and adds new insights about their favourite shows. The study conducted among 296 mothers and 296 children, Children from grade one, three and five. Focused interview with children, a question like their favourite cartoon character, how long they watch the show, and how many hours they watch along with the company of the mother. The findings support the belief of children response to the specific focus on television content with environmental emphasis and discussion of co-viewing, post discussion of the content are essential.

Likewise, Zahed (2005) stated in his article that one of the most appealing aspects of the animation is its suitability for "co-viewing," this year's trendy watchword among TV experts, which essentially refers to cartoon episodes that parents can watch along with their children without even being bored. It was critical to design which the entire family could see together. It really does make them giggle and also teaches children valuable lessons, and parents can watch without turning their eyes.

The findings from the review reveal a lot about television influencing the children and the impact on their routines. Johnson (1970) points out to the impact as the parents use television as a babysitter, and as the children grow, how television reduces the family time. Sheehan (1983) studies reveal that the children did their homework while watching the television. Kindergarten children ate their evening snacks while watching television shows.

On the other hand, parents do spend very less time with the children, due to their busy working life Khaled Habib (2015). Whereas the children spend most of the time watching cartoon shows. The study also proves that it does affect their language skills, and children tend to imitate the actions of the cartoon characters. Lehman (2020) stress on prolonged hours of watching the cartoon shows with the negative shade of behaviour over time would influence their good behavior. Studies also reveal that infants hold a short time interest; however, as they grow, they become active viewers with the capacity of imitating characters that turns out to be their role models of the children.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand the expectations of the young parents from Kids' Television Channels and its content.
2. To analyse Children's interest in various themes of Cartoon Shows and the Main characters.

METHOD

Qualitative Method – Using semi-structured interviews with young parents, the study strives to discover the different themes of the cartoon television shows and examine the nature of television viewership, co-viewing habits and viewership effects.

The Semi-structured, “Research interview is a purposeful conversation between two or more people, requiring the interviewer to establish rapport, to ask concise and unambiguous questions, to which the interviewee is willing to respond, and listen attentively – Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016)”.

According to Cresswell (1994) "A qualitative study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting”.

“Quantitative methods produce factual, reliable outcome data that are usually generalizable to some larger population; qualitative methods generate rich, detailed, valid process data that usually leave the study participants’ perspectives intact” (Steckler et al., 1992).

Questionnaire for Semi-Structured Interview

Centred on a planned and standardised set of questions, which include the references and observed themes from the review of the literature. The sample is from Young Parents having children and children following cartoon shows on the television. The question was linked to each other, further probing and validating the previously answered questions (Refer to Table 1).

Phase 1: Familiarisations with the data
Phase 2: Creation of Initial codes and creation of categories
Phase 3: Searching for themes
Phase 4: Reviewing themes
Phase 5: Defining and naming themes
Phase 6: Producing the report

Table 1. Thematic Analysis adapted by Braun and Clarke (2006)

Young Parents:

For the convenience of the research definition, Parents aged between 30 to 45 years, having children between the age of 3 to 12 years.

Sampling:

“Purposive Sampling” criteria and traits being the representation of young parents belonging to different states of India, living in Manipal, Karnataka and having children and children following cartoon shows on the television. The sample comprised of parents having a single child, boy twin & girl twin, and children.

Sample Size:

07 Fathers and 07 Mother, in a total of 14 respondents between the age group 34 – 47.

The Researcher planned to conduct the interviews with 20 respondents initially, whereas reached a saturation point at the 14th respondent, owing to the fact that no new responses were generated.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The objectives of the study demanded specific theme of information from the interview to analyse and interpret. Hence, the researcher adopted to thematic analysis method. For the creation of codes and categories. For the study semi structure questionnaire was divided into three sections, referring to the key identifications from the reviewed literature, such as;

- I. Nature of Television Viewership
- II. Cartoon Viewership
- III. Viewership effects

NATURE OF TELEVISION VIEWERSHIP

The aim of this section was to uncover patterns of Television viewing habits.

Respondent 01 testified that their children once they come back from school, immediately they wanted to watch TV and have to serve snack, tea everything are in front of TV only. Respondent 02 allowed their daughter to watch the show at 6:00 pm since the show is too good. Like several other respondents, Respondent 03 said that they can watch television program, only after sending their children to school, otherwise the remote is always with their children. Respondent 09 shared that his younger kid thinks that there are only two channels, so he swaps between the two Nick Jr & Disney Jr. Some of the respondents have taken prepaid DTH connection, so that they do not subscribe during the examination time. Majority of the respondents reported that their children watch television on weekdays, in the morning before going to school, then over lunch, and finally even in the evenings. On weekends, the majority of their children stayed up from morning until midday and then returned in the afternoon. And during holidays they prefer to watch the whole day. It was fascinating to discover that some of the respondents let their children to watch in Mobiles and computers too, similarly, stated by Shanthipriya (2017).

Majority of the respondents are working parents, which also reflects the long hour of watching television by their children and also not being supervised about the duration and the content they watch on television. Some of the respondent reported that minimal monitoring of their children's television viewing is required, Respondent 14 stated that she was sometimes unable to oversee what her kid is watching on television because she works on shifts and comes back home exhausted. Respondent 12 testified that she lacked the time necessary to look after her kid since she works all day. However, few respondents said that they monitored their children's television viewing. Additionally, respondents stated that there have been clear guidelines about when, what, and how long their children may watch television, and that the majority of the choices affecting these rules were made jointly. Likewise, advised by Sultana (2014), that parents must take sufficient steps to supervise the content their children consume.

More than half of the working respondents' agreed to have used television as an electronic Babysitter while doing their household chores, Respondent 02 agrees that it's not a good idea, but can't avoid and makes a request to all the parents to avoid such actions, eventually advised by Lehman (2020).

Commonly all the respondents stated that cartoon shows are an alternate tool to teach children in an entertaining way with exceptions of learning some violence along. Respondent 01 reported that both of their son would like to watch only fighting and they have learnt to fight, but when they were smaller kids, they used to learn colors, alphabets, rhymes and to name different types of vehicles from the cartoon shows. Respondent 04 indicated that their daughter learnt about culture and language from the shows. Respondent 09 observed that their child learnt to count numbers and vocabulary a lot from the cartoon show. Likewise, majority of the respondent shared that their children learnt dance, music, language, crafts, good manners and acting.

All the respondents in common shared that they had limited television channels, time and choice of watching cartoon shows in their childhood, but had lots of outdoor play and activities.

CARTOON VIEWERSHIP

Majority of the respondents were able to share the favourite cartoon characters and shows their children watch on television. Figure 4 Favorite cartoon characters, reflects the data by age and gender. Majority of the boys liked Chhota Bheem and the girls liked Shin-Chan, whereas among the toddlers, boys liked 'Peppa Pig' and girls liked 'Doraemon'.

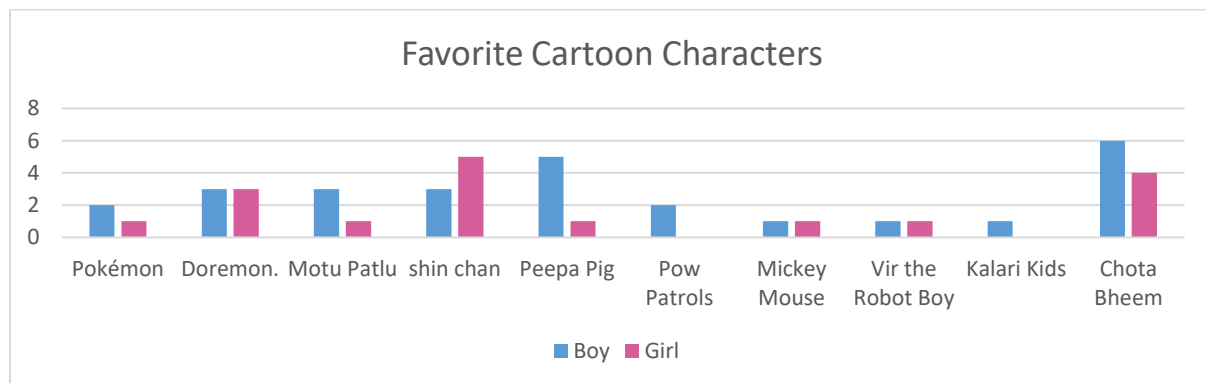


Figure 4. Favorite Cartoon Characters

Amongst the themes, characters and plot, there are many genres in Indian television cartoon shows, like action, science, fiction, fantasy, comedy, adventure, horror, drama etc., All the respondents were able to share the genre of their children favorite cartoon shows. Figure 5 Genre of the cartoon shows shares the data that has majority of preference. Irrespective of the age group boys shows the relative preference to action, whereas girls tend to like fictional content. While the Respondent 02, 04 & 09 pointed that their children like to watch every genre of the cartoon channel and have no specific preferences. Respondent 09 also revealed that their children watch comedy and does not like bullying and teasing that is portrayed in the cartoon shows. From the data, significant gender biases emerge from the cartoon genre preferences.

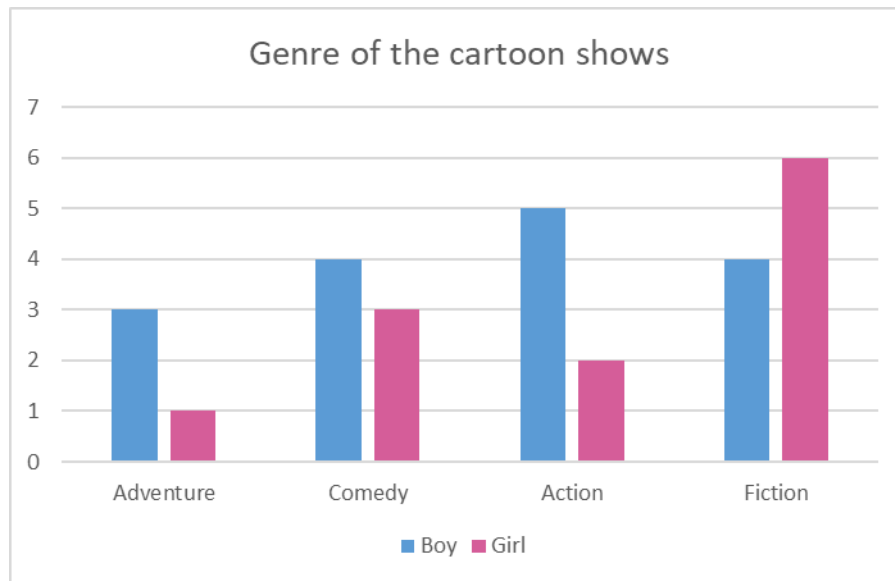


Figure 5. Genre of the Cartoon shows

Some of the respondents have their co-viewing time with their children. Due to this majority of viewing takes place on non-Kids channels also. And most of it happens with the opposite respondent genders, but largely female respondents prefer watching with their children, similarly referred by Zahed (2005). Respondent 14 specified that the most of the co-viewing happens between brother and sister. This pattern may also be because of the difference in the choice of the content between boys and girls. In contrast, Respondent 05 expressed that we like to take them to theatres to watch animated movies and no co-viewing at home. On the contrary, Respondent 06 indicated that she likes to watch Pow Patrol with her younger kid. However Respondent 09 hinted, they both love to watch almost all the shows together, but only when she has household work. she lets her son watch alone. Otherwise, the respondent would first review about the show, characters and storyline and then allow her son to watch. Respondent 11 commented that seeing Chhota Bheem, his son said that he does not want to wear shirt, because Chhota Bheem is not wearing shirt (Refer to Figure 6). Indeed, most of the respondents have shared that they do not like what their children are watching on the cartoon television.



Figure 6. Chhota Bheem

Source: Property belongs to Green Gold Animation Pvt Ltd.

VIEWERSHIP EFFECTS

Children learn behaviors from others, especially from their cartoon superheroes as role models. It was interesting to learn that some respondents allowed their children with the opportunity to learn and watch cartoon channels. Some of respondents seemed concerned with the effects of watching certain type of cartoon animation. Respondent 01 claimed that their child learnt language, counting and helping others from the shows. Respondent 04 explained that their children funny actions, dance, music and more of English words. Respondent 13 said that their child started to imitate their favorite cartoon character and the actions, similarly Respondent 14 observed that their child imitate the characters from the shows and become very naughty and also he used to recite the same dialogue from the shows, On the other hand, this interview outcome is in contrast with Khaled Habib (2015).

Television shows influence children's food habits, eating while watching has become a norm nowadays with the children. Most of the Respondents agreed that their children have food in front of the television screen to combine the dinning time and screening time. Respondent 02 and 05 revealed that they used mealtime diversions to get their picky eating children to consume a specific type of food. Respondent 03 shared that eating while watching Television makes children eat more, as well as some nutritious food that they dislike, and they eat during that time. Respondent 04 complained that her child eats slowly because of the habit of watching while eating. Respondent 13 pointed that what used to take 5 minutes takes 30 minutes while eating in front of the television.

Prolonged hours of television viewing results in social isolation. Majority of the Respondents feel that it takes away the family time and worry about overall health of their children, stressed similarly by Bignell (2013). Respondent 02 observed that it takes both family time as well as no time for friends, which would lead into problem into peer relationships. Respondent 05 indicated that this would be only for children who watch for longer duration, though some respondents say it is manageable. Socialising enables children to improve their social skills and build connections. However, watching television with friends may offer an opportunity for the development of these abilities.

Discussing on the censorship, regulations & guidelines on children television content which includes superheroes, cartoon characters, games & activities, funny stories, that reflect an intention of producing primary for children consumption. Sexually explicit, violent, vulgar language, or other adult topics are not appropriate for these young viewers, Jean M. Twenge (2018). Indian parents are conservative about what their children are viewing on television. They do not want content that are not targeted for children consumption on cartoon channels. They demand for regulatory bodies to monitor and create policies and censorship for age-appropriate content. In contrast, Respondent 03 guessed that "As of now I don't see that we need any censorship, there is no animation show with abusive content and the violence is not that gory and it is okay". Likewise, Respondent 11 urged "Yes we may have to regulate, but I don't wish, otherwise the charm of watching animation would be lost".

Additionally, it is enlightening to find that content regulation varies according to platform. satellite channels are subjected to closer censorship whereas Pay TV channels are subject to less, with gravity decreasing as one approaches OTT platforms. Notably majority of the respondents agreed that the shows are not age appropriate for their children and need strict guidelines.

FINDINGS

1. Expectations of The Young Parents from Kids Television Channels and Its Content.

- The impact of television shows can be felt on the children, they tend to like violence and are exposed to aggressive behaviors etc., Parents prefer to have constructive programs that would help the adolescents in every stage of their life.
- The visual theme of the shows need to be lighter with humor and content filled with with educational values.
- Content with actions themes provokes aggressive behavior in the children.
- Need more of mythological content that reveals the Indian culture to build reading habits that cultivate the understanding of cultures and experiences. Imported content does not reflect traditional Indian values.
- Need more of educational based content, shows that would be thought-provoking and content that keeps them engaged. Content that would make the day feeling light and feel good. Imported content does not give a positive message.
- Need shows that deals with Nature & Environment and help in valuing the relationship and be humane.
- Need more Educational content shows that could provide information about new technology.
- More educational content reflecting the real-time value of life, that helps to build personality. Creative content that would engage them with certain tasks.
- Quality Indian Content with interesting storylines, keeping the roots of culture and living with positive messages.
- Need content that doesn't head to censorship, Content that is free of parental control.
- Need Regional dubbed animation content with good dialogues and liners that are appropriate for the children.

2. Children's Interest in Various Themes of Cartoon Shows and The Main Characters.

Themes / Genre of television cartoon shows suggest an understanding of themes as cultural groups, otherwise offering an in-depth understanding of the children and their preferences based on the choices they make. This involves the gender, age, siblings, number of televisions, availability of the number of channels and the content, access to devices like mobile & tabs.

The data-driven from 14 parents (7 Fathers & 7 Mothers) having 11 Boys and 10 Girls. There was an interesting mix of two parents with twin children of 2 boys and 2 girls, parents with a boy and a girl and also a single boy and single girl. (refer to Figure 7) Interesting facts to be noticed here is the Indian Character Chhota Bheem is very popular among boys and Japanese Character Shin Chan is very popular among the girls. Another Japanese character Doraemon is equally popular among both boys and girls. Children aged between 3-5 years follow Pow Patrols and Peppa Pig. Action, adventure, fiction & comedy are the popular genre / themes among the children. Crime, drama & horror are not finding the place with children between the age of 3 to 12 years.

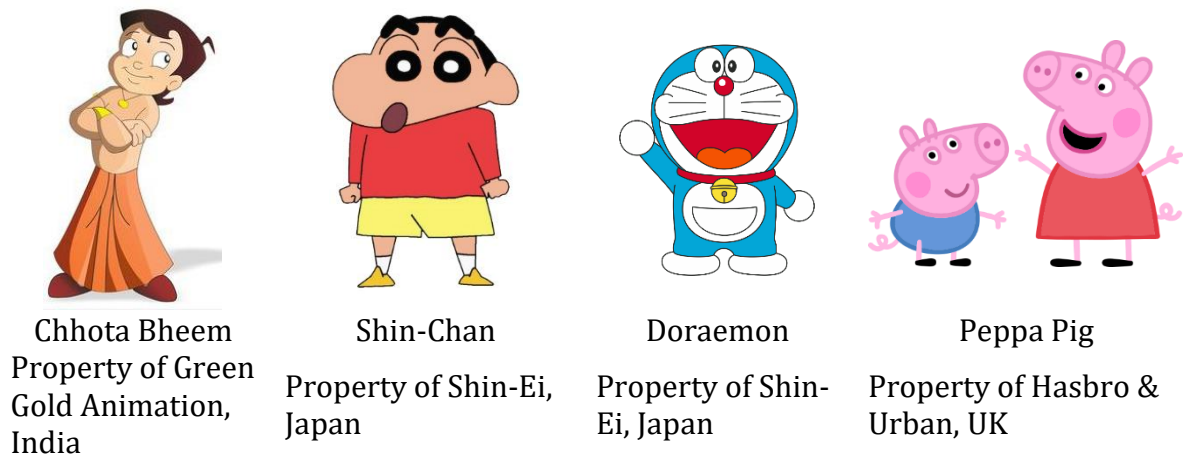


Figure 7. Popular Cartoon Characters

In line with the growth & globalization of satellite channels and the invasion of international television channels the Indian Children are active consumers of cartoon shows. International animated cartoon characters are increasingly gaining popularity with merchandising companies, as they are trying to target children as primary consumers of cartoon products.

SUGGESTIONS

For Assisting Children in Forming Positive Television Viewing Habits:

- Parental mediation is essential to decide the kind of program that is suitable for the children.
- Planning the screen time in advance, instead of randomly switching on the television.
- Choose programs with more educational and entertainment element and conduct casual discussions about the show. Discussions could be centred around the merits and demerits of the show content.
- No assumptions are to be made that all cartoons are good and appropriate for the children.
- Encourage activities like reading, since they have good imagination ability, parents can get the children involved while reading the stories for them.
- Inspire them with lots of play, exercise and fun activities.
- Keep the Children engaged with fun-filled activities so that they can be distracted from Television.
- Avoid rewarding television viewing for their good behaviour.
- Avoid watching TV during mealtimes.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

- The findings of the study can be used to create activities in schools for teachers, parents and children for discussions at home and schools.
- Reduce screen time for entertainment as well as online education, parents and teachers make a conscious effort at this pandemic times.
- Influence creative writers and producers to create content appropriate for children.
- Public health messages, especially for children can be woven into the cartoon shows programming strategies.

- Government, Broadcasting Companies and Central censorship board may consider guiding or regulating the content broadcasted in television cartoon programmes.

CONCLUSION

Animated television programs easily influence children by the audio visual element, as the children spend increased amounts of time in front of the television while it takes away their reading, learning and playing time. Indeed, some parents consider TV as a trusted source; relatively well protected from inappropriate content. Conversely children copy what they see, at times, before the child gets to know more about the world surpassing their age. Therefore, there is a need for age-segmented content and plots from a child perspective, there needs to be a better balance between creative liberty and moral sensibilities from the animation production houses. Furthermore; Parents can help the children by screening the shows, spending time as a co-viewer, discussing the storyline and characters, even limiting the time spent in front of the television by actively engaging with them. Particularly; there is a need for interactive shows that would encourage children to do some physical activities or make crafts as they watch the show. Such interactive shows would provoke them to train on activities rather than just watching the show. Specifically; observed points to broadcasters are with the advent of digitalization, children now have access to a vast array of alternatives, resulting in a decrease in cartoon television's long-standing dominance, to avoid this production house need to create content with shorter runtimes instead of longer ones, which can be both entertaining and educational, opening up new worlds for youngsters and instilling a wealth of values and lessons in them about heritage & culture of the country. In light of this, there is a larger need to support in holistic development of the children as good citizens.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The analysis was restricted to the limited sample size and location. Since, the Indian animation industry itself is in nascent stage, there is a lack of resource on age-segmentation, censorship and guidelines for the children's broadcasting agencies.

SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study can be further strengthened and extended based on other Indian & International parents perception (more representing various economic stratum; different age including teenagers and pre-adolescents). A detailed study could be conducted by comparing and contrasting several parents under various age groups using in-depth, triangulation can be considered. A Study covering the overall expectations of the parents be examined. An empirical study considering the different age groups of parents and their children viewing patterns in terms of animated shows could also be conducted.

REFERENCES

1. Aliyeva, A. (2013, September 04). Hidden effects of cartoons on little spectators. Retrieved from Azernews: <https://www.azernews.az/analysis/58562.html>
2. American Psychological Association. (2013, November 1). Violence in the media: Psychologists study potential harmful effects. <http://www.apa.org/topics/video-games/violence-harmful-effects>
3. Bandura, A. (1977). Social Learning Theory. London: Prentice Hall.

4. Bignell, J. (2013). An introduction to television studies. In J. Bignell, *An introduction to television studies* (pp. 307-315). New York: Routledge.
5. Braun, V., Clarke, V. & Weate, P. (2016). Using thematic analysis in sport and exercise
6. Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.
7. Eggleston, B. (2018). Expressive & Dynamic Character Design. Retrieved from brookeseggleston.com: <http://brookeseggleston.com/> Accessed May 8, 2019
8. Fowles, B. R. (1976). MOPPETS IN THE MARKET PLACE: EVALUATING CHILDREN'S RESPONSES TO TELEVISION ADVERTISING. *Association for Consumer Research*, 520-522.
9. Gargi. (2017, Oct 13). CHARACTER LICENSING. Retrieved from License India: <https://www.licenseindia.com> Accessed May 5, 2019
10. George E. Belch, M. A. (2011). *Advertising and Promotion: An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Education.
11. Ghalian, S. (2016). Being Chhota Bheem in School: Implications for Education. *Bharatiya Pragna: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Indian Studies*.
12. Holzbach, A. D. (2021). Galinha Pintadinha Runs the World: A Made-for-Children Brazilian Cartoon in the Global Flow of Television Content. *Television & New Media*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15274764211025611>
13. Johnson, N. (1970). *How to Talk Back to Your Television Set*. Boston: Little Brown & Company.
14. Khaled Habib, T. S. (2015). Cartoons' Effect in Changing Children Mental Response and Behavior. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 248-264.
15. KPMG – FICCI – The Future of Streaming, Media and Entertainment Industry Report, 2016
16. KPMG-FICCI- Media for the masses: The promise unfolds, Indian Media and Entertainment Industry Report, 2017
17. Lbata, K. (1981). A Comparative Study of Children's Television Programmes: American and Japanese. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 301-306.
18. Lehman, C. P. (2020). Huck (Hound) and Jim (Crow): Syndicated Television Cartoons and Southern Segregation. *Film & History* (03603695), 50(1), 4–14.
19. Melanie J. Spence, P. R. (2002). Children's Recognition of Cartoon Voices. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 214–222.
20. P Shanthipriya, A. P. (2017). A study on parent's perception towards children viewing cartoon channels. *Journal of Applied and Advanced Research*, 31–36.
21. Paul Messaris, D. K. (1984). TV-Related Mother-Child Interaction and Children's Perceptions of TV Characters. *SAGE Journals*, 662-666.
22. Perea, K. (2018). Gender and Cartoons from Theaters to Television: Feminist Critique on the Early Years of Cartoons. *Animation*, 13(1), 20–34. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1746847718755591>
23. Poepsel, M. (2018). *Media, Society, Culture and You*. Southern Illinois University Edwardsville: Rebus Community.
24. research. In B. Smith & A. C. Sparkes (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise* (pp. 191-205). London: Routledge.
25. Robert M. Liebert, J. S. (1989). *The Early Window Effects of Television on Children and Youth*. Canada: Pergamon Press.
26. Robinson, J. P. (1972). Television's impact on everyday life. *Television and social behaviour*, 410-431.

27. Sajana.C. (2018). Cartoons in language teaching and learning. *International Journal of Pure and Applied Mathematics*, 2435-2450.
28. Shailesh Rai, B. W. (2016). Effects of cartoon programs on behavioural, habitual and communicative changes in children. *International Journal of Community Medicine and Public Health*, 1375-1378.
29. Shattnawi, K. K., Bani, S., Al-Natour, A., Al-Hammouri, M. M., Al-Azzam, M., & Joseph, R. A. (2021). Parenting a Child With Autism Spectrum Disorder: Perspective of Jordanian Mothers. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, 32(5), 474–483. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1043659620970634>
30. Shazia Akbar Ghilzai, Rabia Alam, Zubair Ahmad, Amina Shaukat, Syeda Shahum Noor., (2017). Impact of Cartoon Programs on Children's Language and Behavior. *ILSC*. 2. 104-126.
31. Sheehan, P. W. (1983). Age trends and the correlates of children's television viewing. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 417-431.
32. Steckler A, McLeroy KR, Goodman RM, Bird ST, McCormick L. Toward integrating qualitative and quantitative methods: an introduction. *Health Educ Q*. 1992 Spring;19(1):1-8. doi: 10.1177/109019819201900101.
33. Sultana, S. (2014). ROLE OF CARTOON: A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON HOW CARTOON PUT AN IMPACT ON CHILDREN. *ENH Community Journal*.
34. Syed Raza, S. G. (2016). Impacts of Cartoons Viewing on the School Going Kids: Is Really a Trouble to Contemplate. *Communication SSRN Journals*, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2827091.
35. Team, A. (2021, February 1). ATF 2020 carves a mark with region prolific diverse content and focus on practical issues. Retrieved from Animation Xpress: <https://www.animationxpress.com/event/online-events/atf/atf-2020-carves-a-mark-with-region-prolific-diverse-content-and-focus-on-practical-issues/>
36. Twenge, J. M., & Campbell, W. K. (2018). Associations between screen time and lower psychological well-being among children and adolescents: Evidence from a population-based study. *Preventive medicine reports*, 12, 271–283. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2018.10.003>
37. Zahed, R. (2005, Decmber). It's a Wonderful Holiday Special, Mate! *Animation*, pp. 33-33.