

Japanese Content on Children's TV in India - A Preliminary Study

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Premise

Children's media content when exported or imported tends to push boundaries between local and global forms, encourages new forms of cosmopolitanism by providing opportunities for children to encounter and engage with greater cultural and social diversity

Television

- Between what was earlier available, the spurt of the ever evolving new media, and changing media literacies consequently, one medium that has seen it all and still delves as an excitement in children's media engagement has been television.
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Children's Television in India

Limited Research –

Broad category of development of broadcasting in India

Philosophy of initial programming – education and social development,
Impact of the broadcasts on different groups

Sporadic studies on impact of educational programming on children

UNICEF Supported Research

'Children's Television in India - A Situational Analysis' (Agrawal, Karnik, Lal & Vishwanath, 1999) - provided a set of recommendations to improve the quality of children's television in India - to provide education through a visual medium considered to be a successful means in other parts of the world

'Growing up with TV – Asian Children's Experience'

An empirical study that was carried out in March-April 1996 in Chennai

Concluded with recommendations to look at the quantity, quality, and scope for children's television programming in India through a concerted effort with other Asian nations

Lacked pan-Indian perspective

Limitation

Though animation is not the only category of children's programming, this paper is limited to this particular genre - programming for children under 12

The Indian Scenario

- ❑ Television - one of the major fields in which India has experienced forces of globalization
 - ❑ India represents immensely attractive markets to the major corporations that provide television programme content and services across borders and regions, and whose pressures on the systems of this country have achieved liberalization
 - ❑ Local resistance and adaptation have opened up more pluralism of cultural choices, as well as new forms of modernization to pursue
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Children's Programming in India

- ❑ Children's programming also moved on with satellite TV revolution in the early 90s
 - ❑ From a couple of hours' segment on the weekend to daily morning and evening segments on satellite channels -the first exclusive children's television channel - Cartoon Network in 1996
 - ❑ 14 children's channels currently, others in pipeline
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Children's TV in India – Quick Stats *(indiantelevision.com)*

Reach levels for 10-14 years age band improved in 2011

Increase in number of channels

Continuous increase in viewership share since 2008

Homes with kids are faster in adapting to Digital TV platforms with growth rate touching almost 60 per cent in 2011

Viewership Stats *(Source: TAM Media Research | TG: CS 4-14 | Market: All India | Period: 2010 – Wk 3 of 2012).*

Kids' genre largest genre in terms of viewership after mass GECs

Contributed to 18.3 per cent of the viewership pie in 2011

Grew in regional languages as well. (In Tamil, for example, the share of Kids is higher than News)

Kids' entertainment space very viable market - continued investments in launching new channels and content

Foreign content on children's television (Vasanti, 2009)

INADEQUATE INDIGENOUS INPUTS

Content type in top 3 popular children's channels

□ Number of programmes
■ Foreign ■ Indian



Study period: 28 November-4 December 2009

Source: CMS Media Lab

Problematizing Issues with Content on Kids' TV

- ❑ Gap between demand and supply with 24x7 children's television channels
 - ❑ Indigenous Indian content - majorly rooted in mythology and folklore - may tend to get repetitive - does not find international market-limiting its avenues
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Japanese Content

- *Hungama*
launched the first
Japanese cartoon
show *Doraemon*
in 2006





Shin Chan in 2007



Ninja Hattori on Nick immediately after

The Economics – TV Ratings (Table I)

TAM relative HSM channel shares from January - June 2007 for HSM

Channels	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June
Cartoon Network	27	26	28	28	26	23
Disney Channel	15	16	15	16	15	17
Hungama TV	21	24	21	22	21	25
Nick	8	9	10	10	11	11
Pogo	22	19	19	18	21	18
Jetix (Toon Disney)	7	7	7	6	5	5

The Economics – TV Ratings (Table II)

HSM Market 2009					
Channel	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Nick	22	20	18	25	25
Hungama	17	19	21	17	22
Cartoon Network	27	25	25	21	20
Pogo	22	24	24	21	19
Disney	8	8	8	10	10
Jetix	4	4	4	5	5
Spacetoon Kids TV	0	0	0	0	0

Source: TAM, C&S 4-14, HS

Analysis

- Table I establishes Cartoon Network as the leader in popular children's programmes.
 - Table II illustrates the rise of Nick (Nickelodeon) and Hungama as market leaders by 2009.
 - TAM data (Table II) shows
 - a) *Hungama*, the kids channel for 4-14-year-olds, which saw 8.8 per cent fall earlier, relocated to the number two spot to push *Cartoon Network* down the ladder for the month of May, 2009
 - b) *Nick* attained the top spot
 - c) *Cartoon Network* had seen a slight dip for the same period over last (Jan - May 2007), ousted for the first time ever by *Nick* in 2009 (Sarkar, 2009)
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Analysis

- ❑ Large presence of Japanese cartoons on Indian children's television channels
 - ❑ Has helped players like *Hungama* to lead the bandwagon within a span of 2-3 years, usurping veterans like *Cartoon Network* and *Pogo* from the top slots.
 - ❑ Encouraged all the other channels to acquire and telecast Japanese animation programmes.
 - ❑ *Nick* (top rated) runs one of the most popular Japanese Anime *Ninja Hattori*, channel driver for Nick India.
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The Indian Context

- ❑ Creation of a non-western culture on television for children.
 - ❑ Representations in anime have incorporated essentialist images that not only relate them to with images of Indian culture, but simultaneously offer a strong connotation of the exotic or mystical.
 - ❑ The exploration of the postcolonial subtext to India's desire to build cultural capital using the Japanese soft power framework would certainly highlight the complexity of the global media market (Byrce et al, 2010).
 - ❑ The popularity of these programmes therefore can also be looked at from the perspective of foreign, but not-so-foreign.
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Recent Developments

- Reliance MediaWorks has collaborated with Japan's leading private broadcaster TV Asahi to create all new episodes of Ninja Hattori
 - The latest study shows that Doraemon, the robotic cat on Hungama TV, is now the number one favourite character among kids (Omaxe Research, 2012)
 - FICCI Frames' 2012 dedicated session on Japan-India partnerships in animation
 - Mojacko, another Japanese Cartoon show launched
 - India happens to be one of the biggest growing markets in the world for the animation industry. Japan exports between 40 and 70 works of animation films to India.
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Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh issued a joint statement (Jan, 2012) “strengthening of cooperation in creative industries... animation and manga” (among other things) would further promote and deepen mutual understanding of the two countries”

"Doraemon in Nobita's Little Space Wars"

- The Indian television premiere of Doraemon's first movie --- "Doraemon in Nobita's Little Space Wars" is the highest rated movie of the decade on kids' genre! The premiere delivered 4.34 TVR among all kids. Over 5.4 million individuals tuned into the movie on the day of its premiere making it the #1 programme for kids across all TV. The premiere put Hungama TV on top across all channels in HSM with 1.22 TVR among all audience and in All India Market with 1.02TVR (*TAM, indiantelevision.com*)
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Integrating the Cognitive, Discursive and Social Aspects

- ❑ Characters though ethnic in names and structure have a generic narrative and a global appeal
 - ❑ Slick dubbing in Hindi and other regional languages -since cartoons don't suffer from the limitations of live action programs in that they lend themselves quite well to translation
 - ❑ Characters are ordinary boys and girls who do not step out of the pages of an epic.
 - ❑ The TV channels have also used an integrated approach of deluging the markets and kids' imagination with merchandise and other accessories to popularize these characters.
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Ajay Jadeja launched 'Nick Chak De Ninja' and gets the 'Ninja Hattori' team to cheer for Team India for the Indo-Pak series, Kolkata, October 30, 2007. (Photo/Pradip Datta) (BCCL) - 30 Oct, 2007



Becoming Part of Local Culture





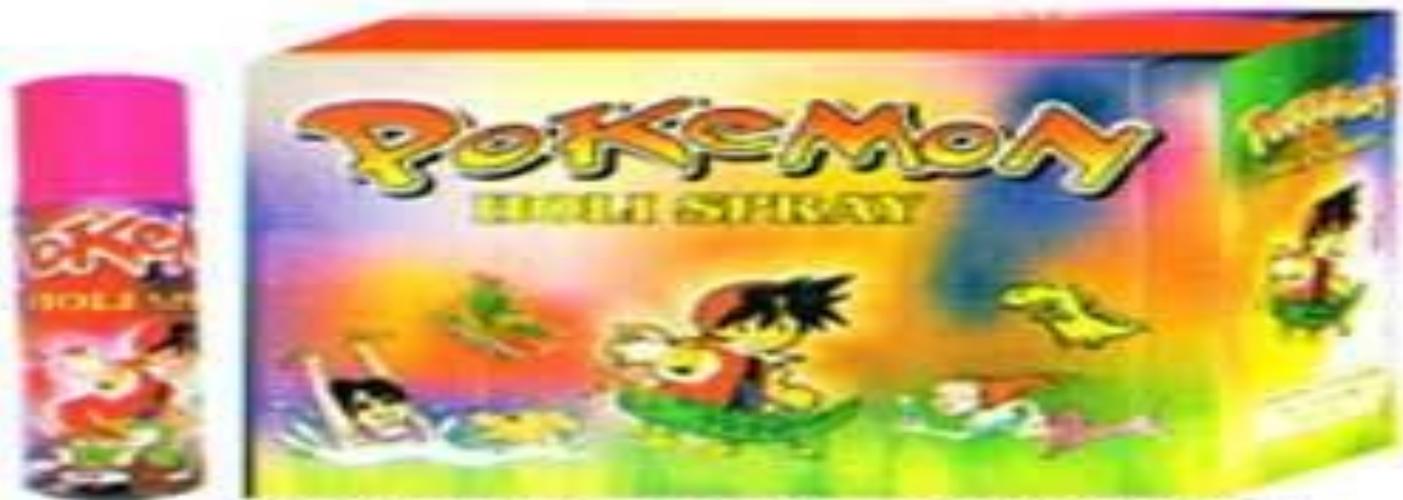
Launch of *Doraemon* Bed Sheets at a Pune Mall



Doraemon Eggless Cake – Local Bakery



Pokemon Holi Colors



**Crazy Holi Colour Spray 100 ml.
(10 pcs. in a box)**

Shin Chan Rangoli on Diwali!



In Nutshell

- ❑ The telecast of Japanese content bridged the gap between demand and supply. Children could empathize well with the characters, themes and plots.
 - ❑ A shift from traditional mythological and folk narratives, and also American shows that offered a repetitive context
 - ❑ Slick dubbing in Hindi and other regional languages worked well
 - ❑ Integration of these images in the local, traditional, consumerist everyday discourse
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