

Have and Show Emotions

Research report



Netherlands

Scientific head

Dr. Maya Götz

Project management

Judith Schwarz M.A.

Data collection Netherlands

Erika Broschek

Analysis and report

Judith Schwarz,
Simone Gruber,
Hannah Steinberg,
Monika Eder

Abstract

To gain a better understanding of their emotional experience and expression during everyday life and while watching television, 5,190 children and preteens from 17 countries were examined in a study. Moreover, it was of interest how the social expectations are assessed. The Dutch sample comprised 143 questionnaires and induced the following results:

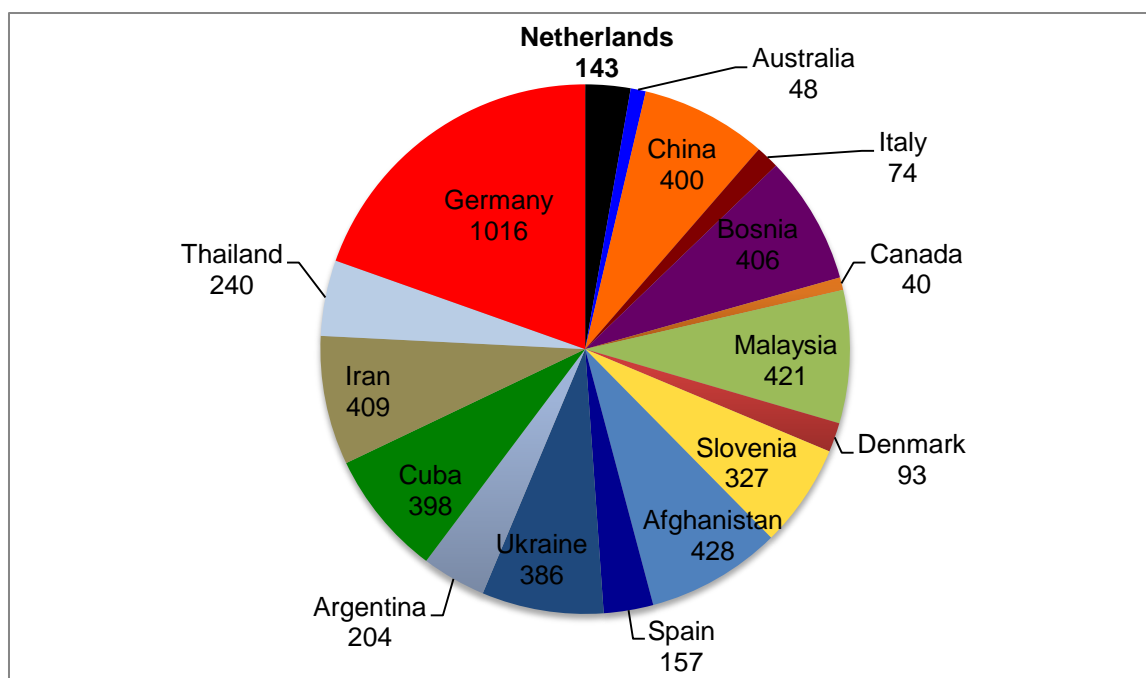
- In the Netherlands as well as in other countries joy is the emotion most frequently experienced.
- By comparison, Dutch respondents experience fear less often than participants from other countries.
- Dutch children are more often sad, angry or envious in comparison with children from other countries.
- Children from the Netherlands were often proud of themselves.
- Dutch children show their emotions not in the same manner they experience it.
- Girls from the Netherlands show their feelings of joy, fear, sadness or envy more often than the Dutch boys.
- Boys, however, are prouder than girls.
- Dutch children demand emotional honesty from TV characters.
- Compared with the children's own experience and expression of emotions, TV characters should openly display their emotions.

1. Objective and sample

The objective of the international study „Have and Show Emotions“ was to get a better understanding of children's and preteens' experience of emotions. In cooperation with international colleagues, 5,190 children and preteens between 6 and 15 years of age were surveyed using the same questionnaire. The questionnaire centered on the children's self-evaluation of the emotions they had recently experienced, how often they had felt certain emotions within the past seven days and to what extent they had shown these emotions to others.

In addition, respondents were asked to self-evaluate how their parents react to the demonstration of particular emotions, which emotions they feel while watching television, and to what extent they think TV characters should honestly show how they feel.

The central emotions were joy, fear, anger, sadness, pride and envy. The country-specific sample varied from $n = 40$ in Canada to $n = 1,016$ in Germany. In this regard, it is not possible to formulate representative statements for most of the countries. Only the results of the German sample can be considered as representative for the Federal Republic of Germany. Based on the wider age distribution, however, a greater reliability of the results can be expected in countries with more than 300 respondents.



III. 1: Distribution of the total sample by countries

In the Netherlands, 143 children and preteens, 94 girls and 49 boys, participated in the study.¹

Age category	Boys (n=49)	Girls (n=94)
13 – 15 years (n=143)	34% (n=49)	66% (n=94)

III. 2: Sampling distribution – Netherlands

¹ Due to the small number of cases the shown figures are necessarily approximate. This must be taken into account in the interpretation of the results.

2. Results²

2.1 Emotion “joy”

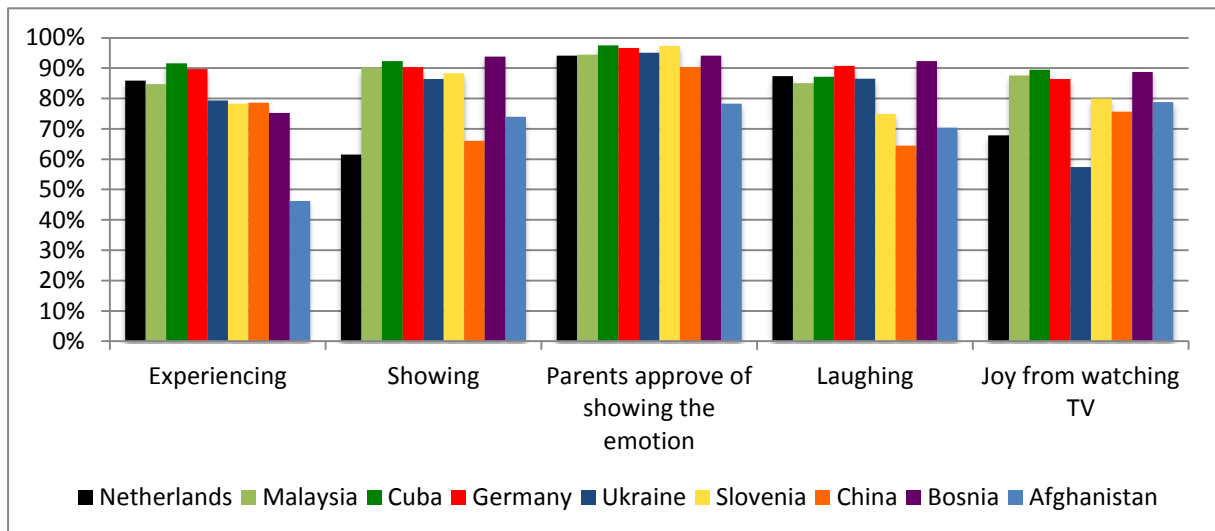
The first emphasis of the questionnaire was put on the emotion joy. All items in the questionnaire were rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Participating children and preteens were asked about their recent experiences of joy: *“How often did you feel really happy in the past 7 days?”* and *“Was there a moment when you really had to laugh out loud?”* We also wanted to know how they deal with their emotions. Thus we asked: *“How much did you show others that you feel really happy?”* As a next step the children were asked to self-evaluate how their parents would assess the expression of this emotion by answering the question *“How do your parents like it when you show them that you feel really happy?”* In line with the research interest of the International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television (IZI) the last question was: *“Are you getting really happy from time to time from something you see on TV?”*³

Dutch children laugh a lot and are very joyful

With respect to the emotion “joy” the international comparison shows that Dutch children and preteens rank in the upper range in terms of nearly all categories. This means that the Dutch respondents often answer that they do experience joy. However, Dutch respondents show their feelings of joy less often than they experience it, although more than 90% of the Dutch children assume that their parents would approve their showing of joy. Beyond that, nearly 70% of the Dutch children and preteens state that TV has triggered feelings of joy at least once. Only Ukraine attains a lower result in this category.

² In the following, the results of the Dutch sample will be analyzed in terms of an international country comparison as well as separated by gender. In each case the top-two items of the four-point Likert-Scale will be represented. Significant differences will be specified by using asterisks (*).

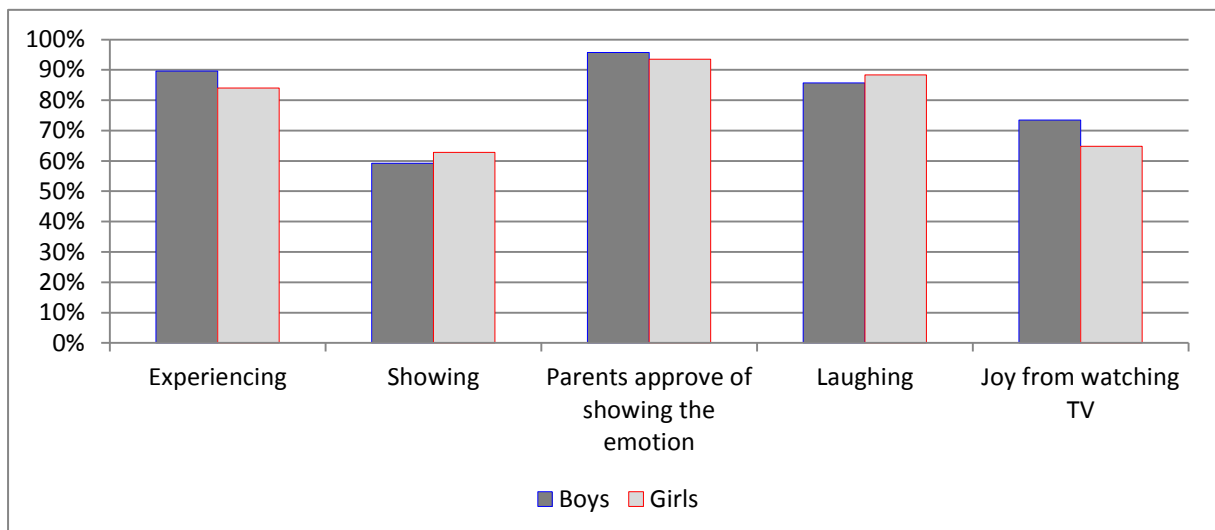
³ The detailed questionnaire can be found in the appendix.



III. 3: Differences in terms of showing and experiencing the emotion “joy” by countries (n > 300) – agreement

Girls show more joy

A gender comparison reveals that by tendency, girls show joy more frequently than boys, although boys experience feelings of joy slightly more often. Moreover, past TV experiences had triggered feelings of joy more often among boys than among girls.



III. 4: Differences in terms of showing and experiencing the emotion “joy” by gender – agreement

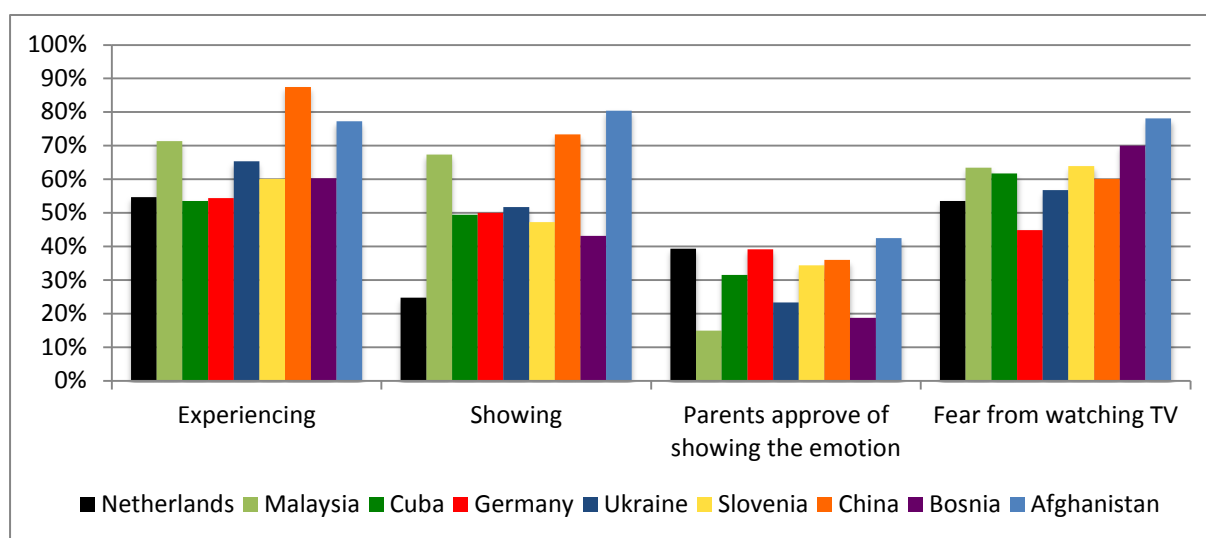
2.2 Emotion “fear”

The next set of questions focused on the emotion fear. All items in the questionnaire were rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Participating children and preteens were asked about their recent experiences of fear: “*How often did you feel anxious in the past 7 days?*” We also wanted to know how they deal with their emotions. Thus we asked “*How much did you show others that you feel anxious?*” As a next step the children

were asked self-evaluate how their parents would assess the expression of this emotion by answering the question “*How do your parents like it when you show them that you feel anxious?*” The last questions were: “*Are you getting anxious from time to time from something you see on TV?*” and “*Do you sometimes get nightmares from something you saw on TV?*”

Dutch children seldom experience fear

The country comparison reveals that Dutch children experience fear less frequently than the respondents of most other countries.⁴ Only Cuba and Germany attain lower results in this category. Similar to the emotion “joy”, the Dutch respondents show their fear less frequently than they do actually experience it. However, nearly 40% of the Dutch children think that their parents would approve the expression of this emotion. On top of that, every second child of the Netherlands has already experienced fear as a consequence of watching TV.

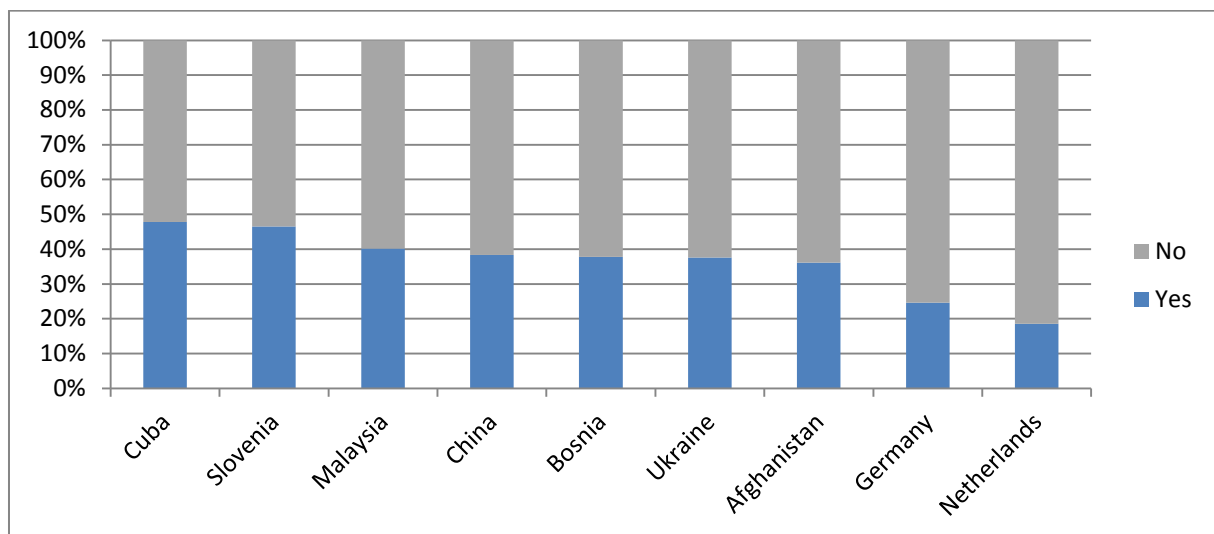


III. 5: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion “fear” by countries (n > 300) – agreement

Beyond that, two out of 10 children state that they had had a nightmare from watching something on TV at least once. With this result, the Netherlands ranks last in the international comparison. 88 children and preteens answered the question

⁴ Only the evaluation of fear uses the top-three items of the four-point Likert-Scale.

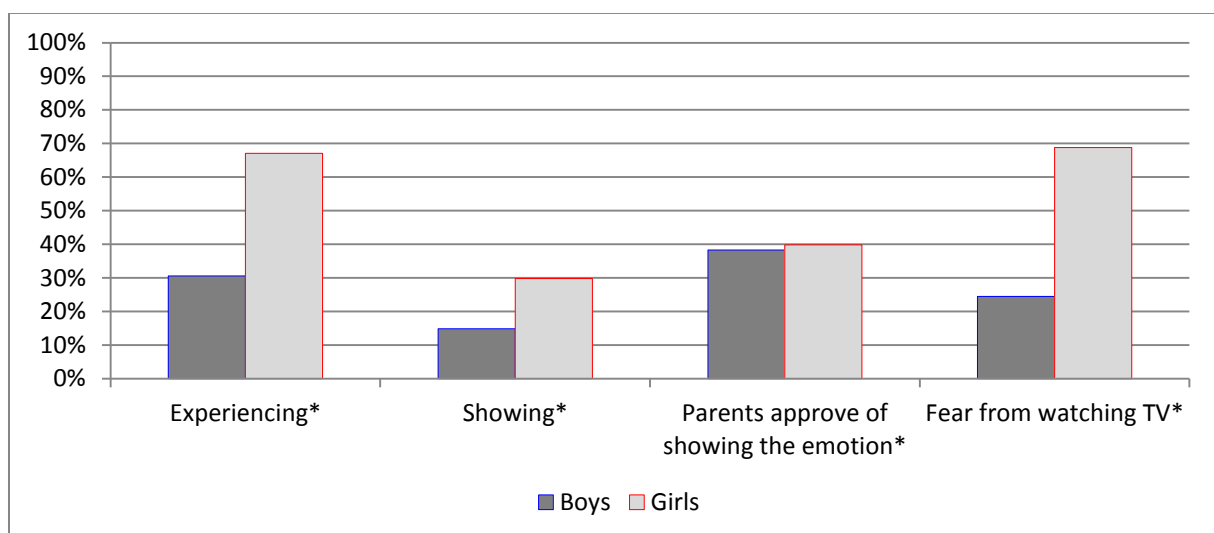
which show or movie made them feel anxious. In this context *Sinister* (n=8) was most often mentioned followed by *The Ring* (n=8), *CSI* (n=6), and *The Conjuring* (n=5).⁵



III. 6: Overview of "Nightmares from watching TV"

Girls experience fear more often

The gender comparison reveals that girls experience and show fear more often than boys. Additionally, girls experience fear from watching TV more frequently than boys.



III. 7: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion "fear" by gender – agreement

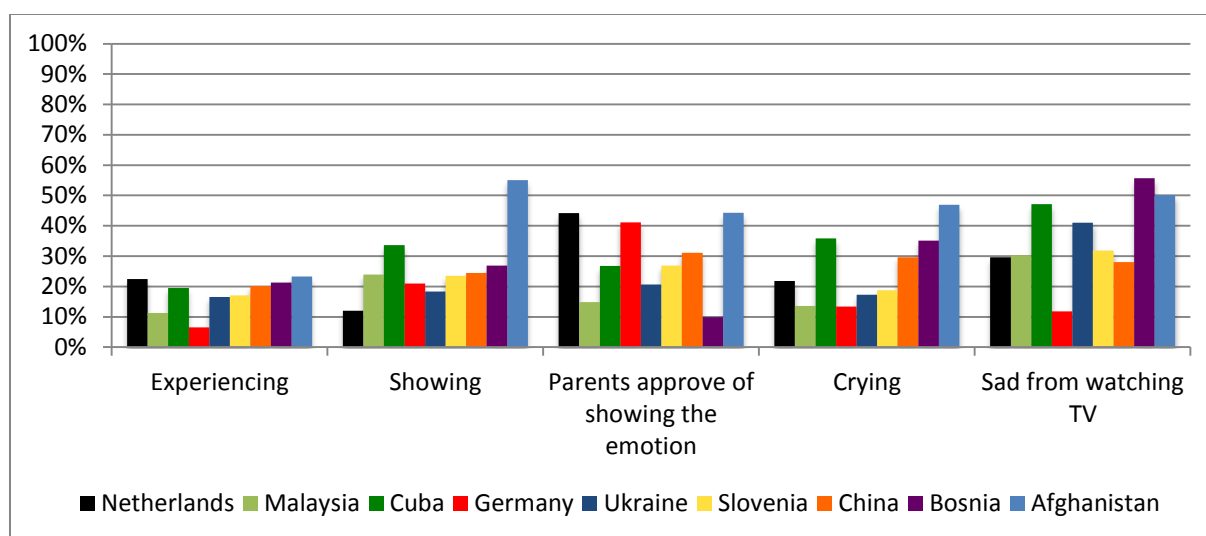
⁵ Some children wrote down more than one show/movie. But for the analysis only the first mention was taken into account.

2.3 Emotion “sadness”

This section dealt with recent experiences of sadness: “*How often did you feel really sad in the past 7 days?*” and “*Did you have to cry in the last 7 days?*” Additionally we wanted to know the reasons for crying by offering the categories *pain, anger, sorrow, fun, and fear* as answer options. We also wanted to know how they would show their sadness. Thus we asked: “*How much did you show others that you feel really sad?*” As a next step the children were asked to self-evaluate how their parents would assess the expression of this emotion by answering the question “*How do your parents like it when you show them that you feel really sad?*” In line with the research interest of the International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television (IZI) we then asked: “*Are you getting really sad from time to time from something you see on TV?*” Again all items in the questionnaire were rated on a 4-point Likert scale, except the additional question for this section.

Dutch children rarely cry

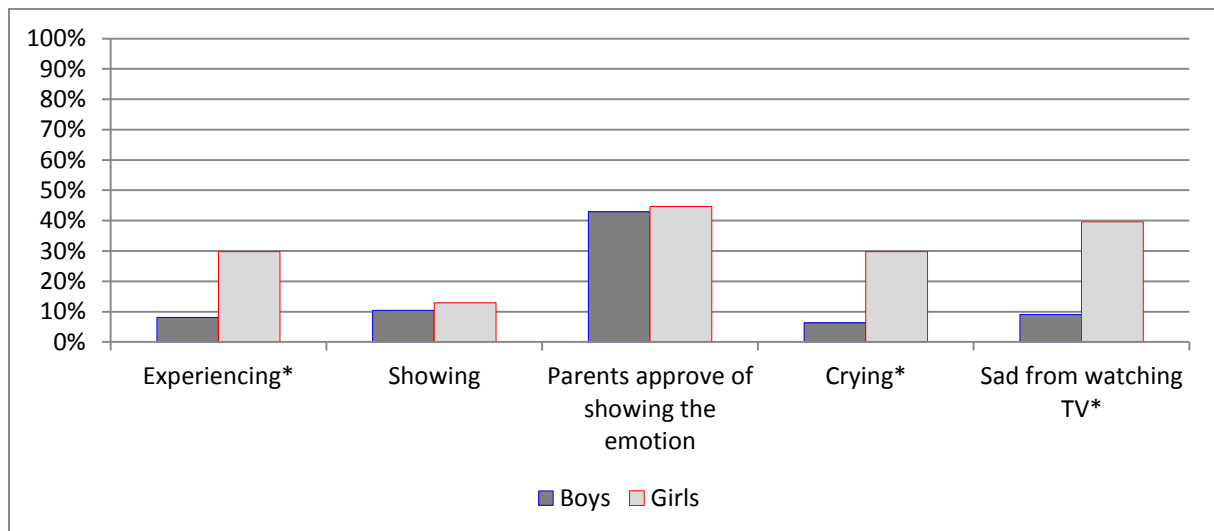
The international comparison demonstrates that Dutch children and preteens experience sadness more often than the respondents from other countries. The willingness to show this emotion to others, however, ranks last. Moreover, Dutch children state that they rarely cry, although Dutch children and preteens assume that the expression of sadness is approved by their parents. In this context, Dutch respondents name mostly grief as reason for this emotional outburst, followed by anger and joy.



III. 8: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion “sadness” by countries (n > 300) – agreement

Girls cry more often

The gender comparison reveals that girls experience feelings of sadness more often and cry more often than boys. Beyond that, previous TV events triggered feelings of sadness more often among girls than among boys.



III. 9: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion “sadness” by gender – agreement

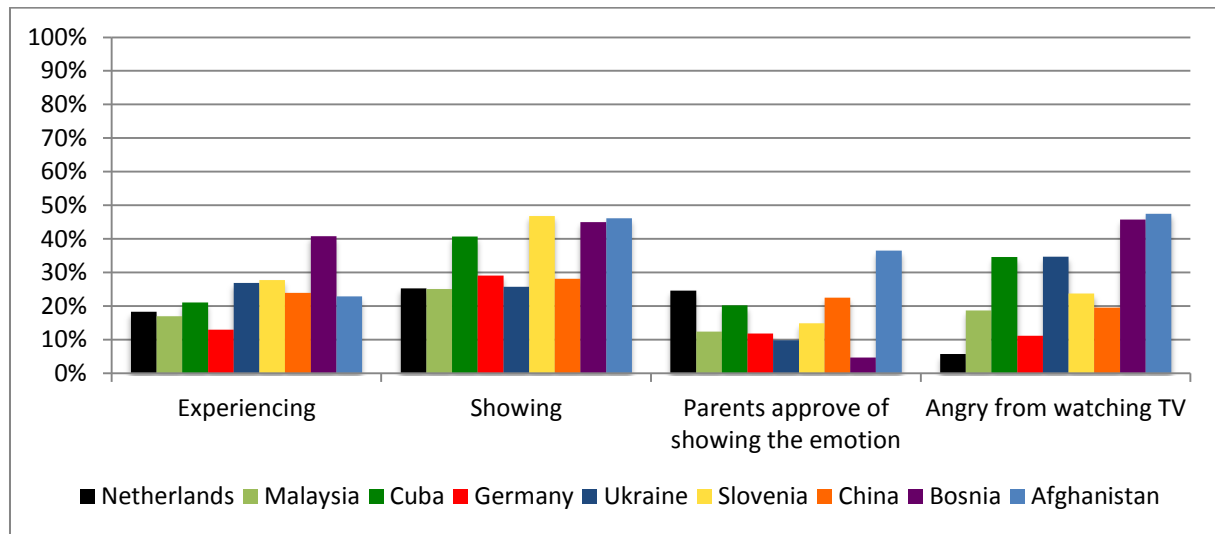
2.4 Emotion “anger”

The next set of questions dealt with anger. We wanted to know more about the recent experiences of the participants: “*How often did you feel really angry in the past 7 days?*” We also wanted to know to what extent they showed their anger. Thus we asked: “*How much did you show others that you feel really angry?*” As a next step the children were asked to self-evaluate how their parents would assess the expression of this emotion by answering the question “*How do your parents like it when you show them that you feel really angry?*” In line with the research interest of the International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television (IZI) we asked: “*Are you getting really angry from time to time from something you see on TV?*”

Dutch children experience anger rather rarely

Similar to the emotion “fear”, Dutch children and preteens experience anger less often than the respondents from other countries. This applies also to the expression of this emotion where the Dutch participants rank in the lower range. By comparison, the parents’ approval of showing this emotion, however, is considered very high.

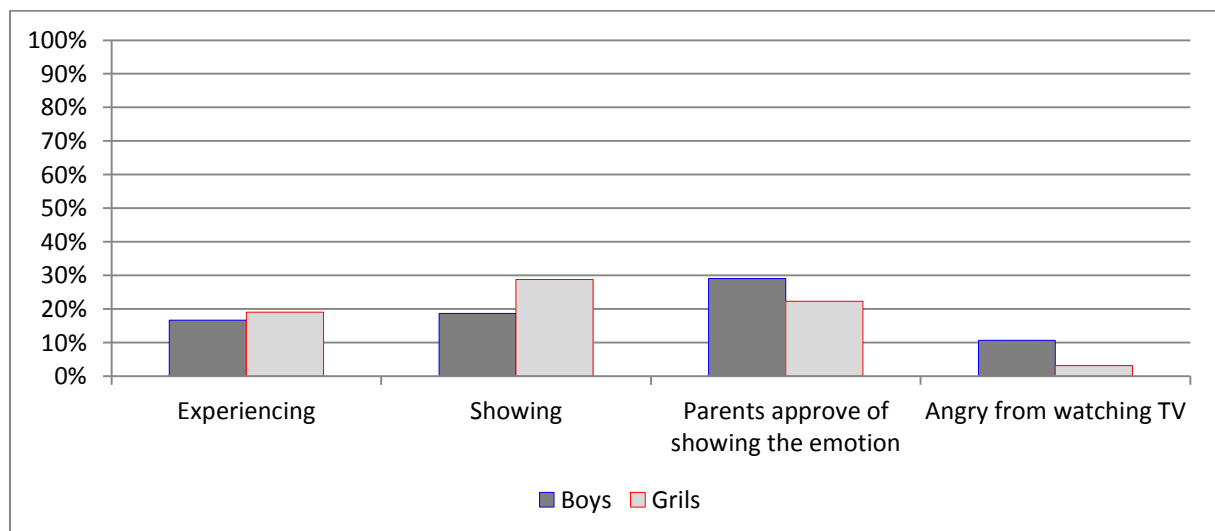
Regarding anger triggered by past TV experiences, t Dutch children agreed the least.



III. 10: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion “anger” by countries (n > 300) – agreement

Girls show anger more often

The gender comparison shows that girls express their feelings of anger more often than boys, although more boys than girls believe that their parents would approve that they show their feelings of anger. Beyond that, boys refer more often to feelings of anger caused by watching TV.



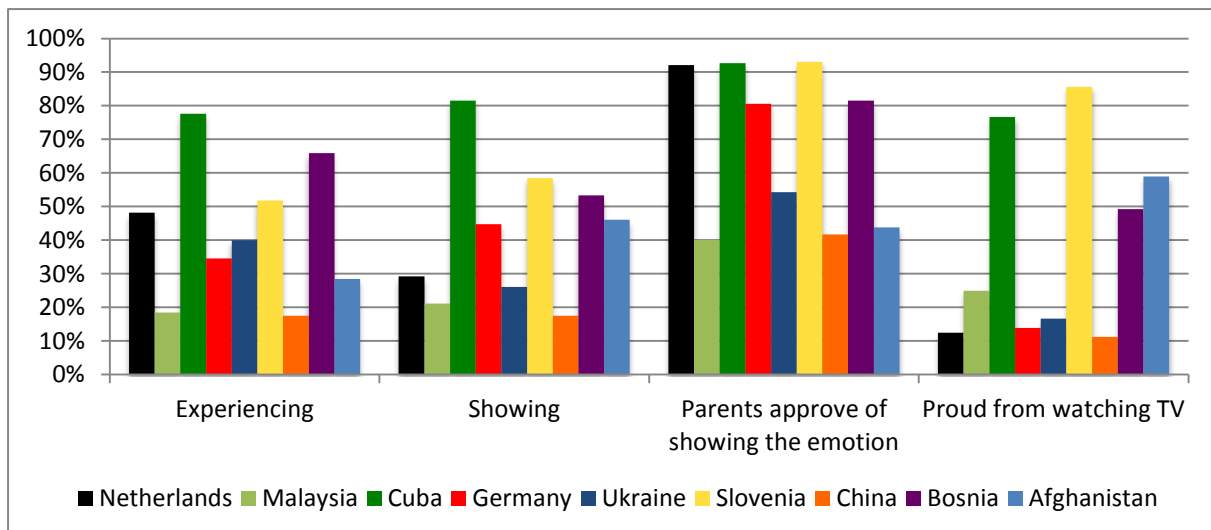
III. 11: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion “anger” by gender– agreement

2.5 Emotion “pride”

The next set of questions focused on the emotion pride. All items in the questionnaire were rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Participating children and preteens were asked about their recent experiences of pride: *“How often did you feel really proud in the past 7 days?”*. We also wanted to know how they deal with their emotions. Thus we asked: *“How much did you show others that you feel really proud?”* As a next step the children were asked to self-evaluate how their parents would assess the expression of this emotion by answering the question *“How do your parents like it when you show them that you feel really proud?”* In line with the research interest of the International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television (IZI) we asked *“Are you getting really proud of yourself from time to time from something you see on TV?”* *“What were you proud of?”* was the last question in this section. With this open question we wanted to learn more about the children’s reasons for feeling pride.

Dutch children are proud

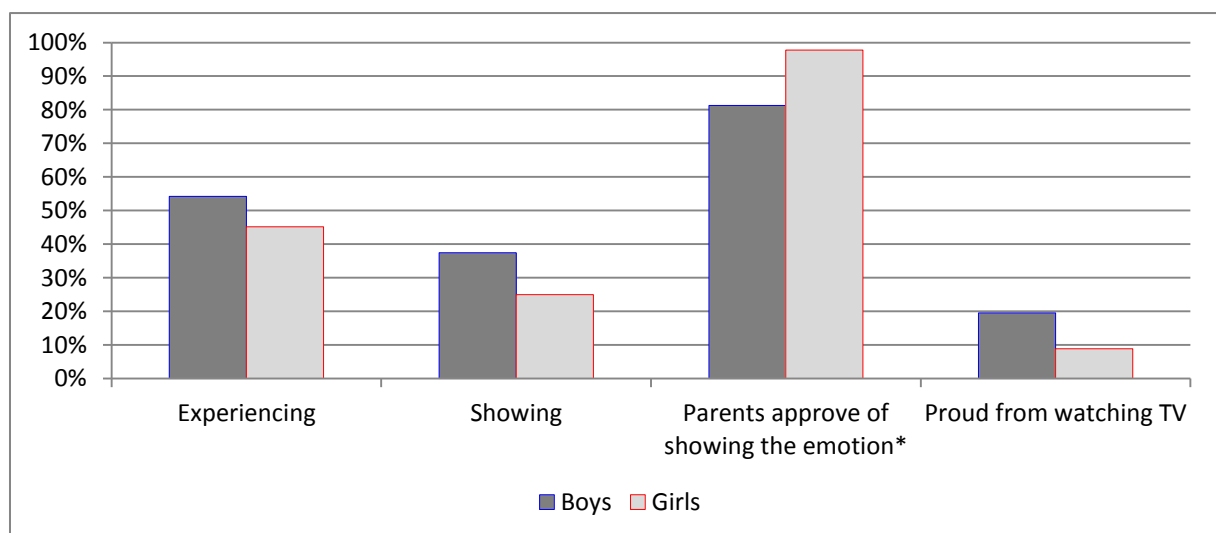
Regarding the frequency of experiencing pride, Dutch children and preteens rank above the international average. While only about 20% of the Malaysian respondents experience this emotion often or permanently, nearly 50% of the Dutch respondents report about having experienced this emotion. If the Dutch participants experience pride, the emotion is related to their abilities or their talents. The country comparison also reveals that Dutch children and preteens show their pride not in the way they experience it, although more than 90% of the Dutch participants state that their parents would approve or very much approve showing this emotion.



III. 12: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion “pride” by countries (n > 300) – agreement

Boys are prouder than girls

The analysis of the gender differences reveals that boys experience and show pride more often than girls. However, more girls than boys agree that their parents would approve the expression of this emotion.



III. 13: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion “pride” by gender – agreement

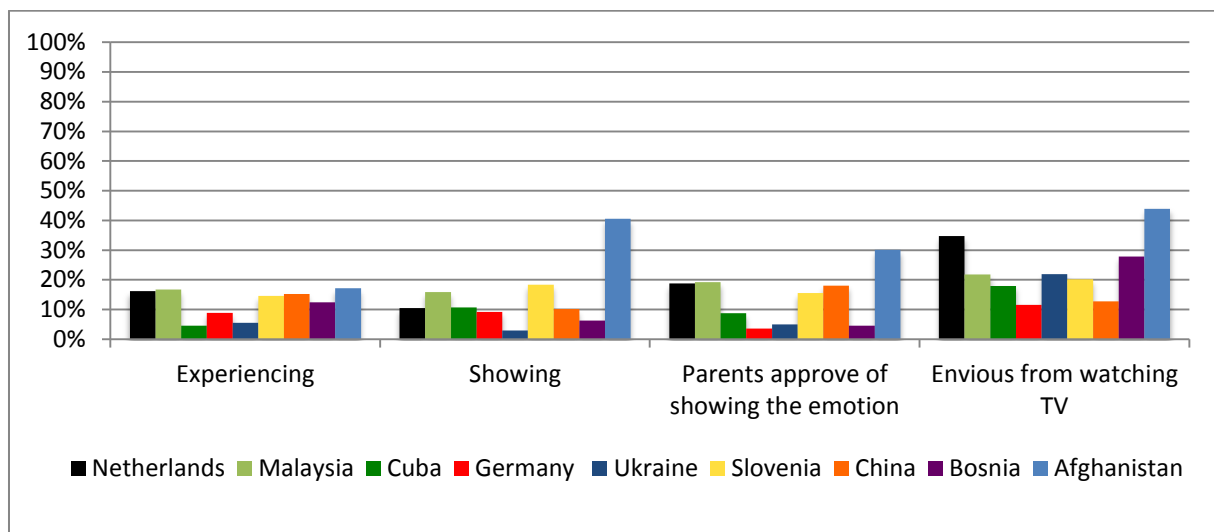
2.6 Emotion “envy”

The last set of questions focused on the children’s emotion envy. All items in the questionnaire were rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Participating children and preteens were asked about their recent experiences of envy: “*How often did you feel really envious of others in the past 7 days?*” We also wanted to know how they deal

with their emotions. Thus we asked “*How much did you show others that you feel really envious of others?*” As a next step the children were asked to self-evaluate how their parents would assess the expression of this emotion by answering the question “*How do your parents like it when you show them that you feel really envious of others?*” In line with the research interest of the International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television (IZI) we asked: “*Are you getting really envious of others from time to time from something you see on TV?*” “*What did you envy?*” was the last question in this section. With this open ended question we wanted to get answers about the children’s reasons for feeling envious.

Dutch children are often envious

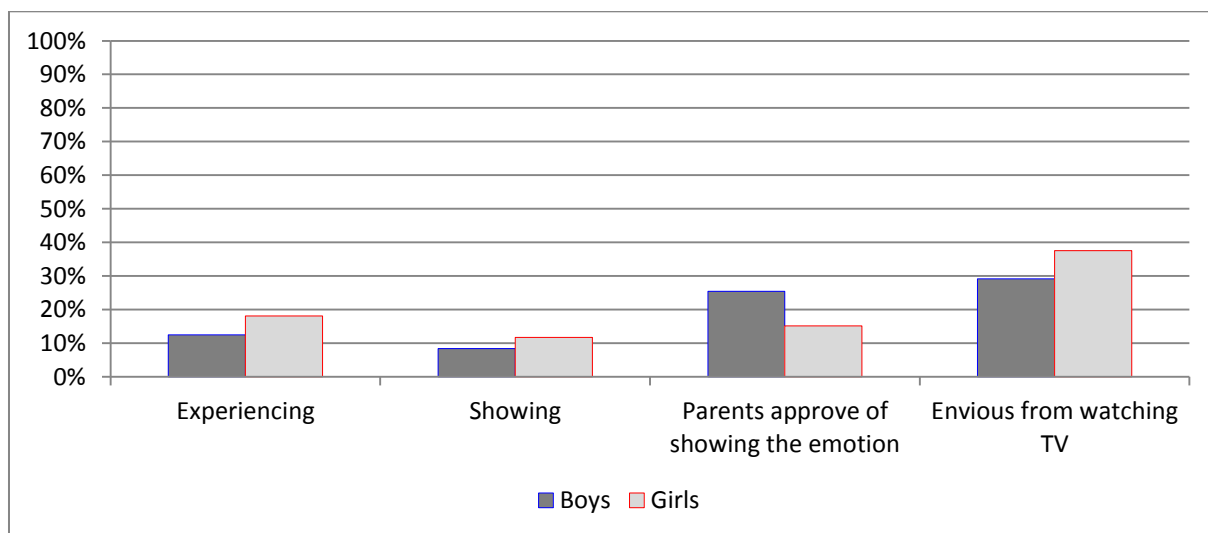
The international country comparison reveals that Dutch children and preteens experience, to a certain extent envy more often than the respondents of other countries. Regarding the frequency of showing envy, the Dutch participants rank in the mid-range. Dutch children especially envy other people’s material possessions, their families or celebrities.



III. 14: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion “envy” by country (n > 300) – agreement

Girls experience and show envy more often

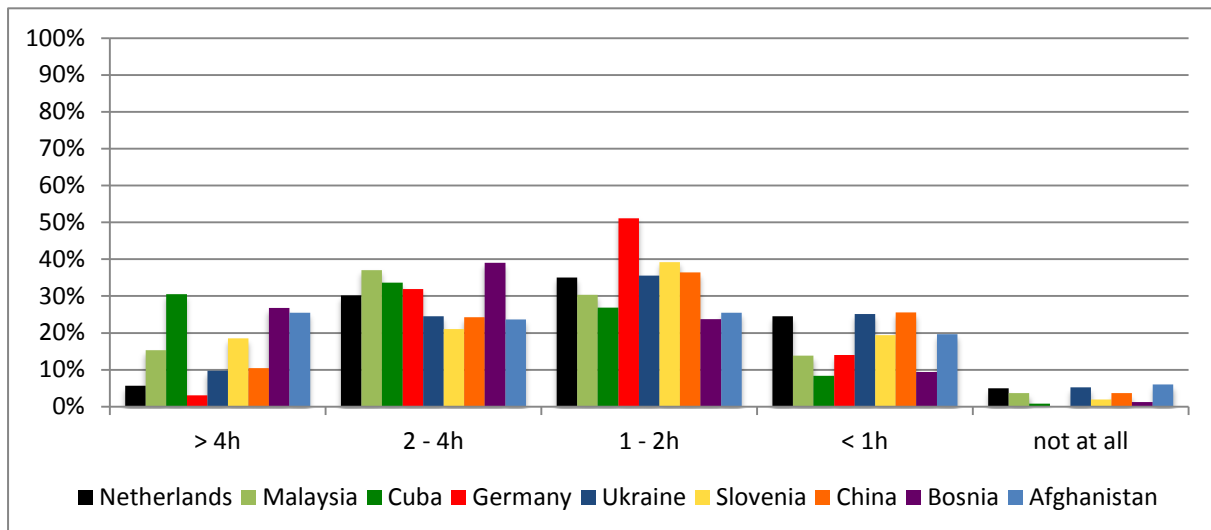
The gender comparison reveals that girls experience feelings of envy and show this emotion more frequently more often than boys. They also refer more often to emotionally charged TV events. In contrast, more boys think their parents would approve showing envy.



III. 15: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion "envy" by gender – agreement

2.7 TV viewing behavior and emotions on TV

The last part of the questionnaire focused on TV viewing behavior. First we wanted to know how often children and preteens of different countries watch TV. Thus we asked: “*How often do you watch TV?*”; and offered the following answer options: *daily, several times a week, once a week, rarely, or not at all*. About half of the Dutch children and preteens states that they watch TV every day. In the next step we wanted to know more concretely “*How many hours per day do you watch TV?*” The children and preteens were offered the following categories: *more than 4 hours, 2 to 4 hours, 1 to 2 hours, less than 1 hour, and not at all*. Here, the major part spends one to two hours a day in front of the TV. Therewith, Dutch ranks in the upper range.

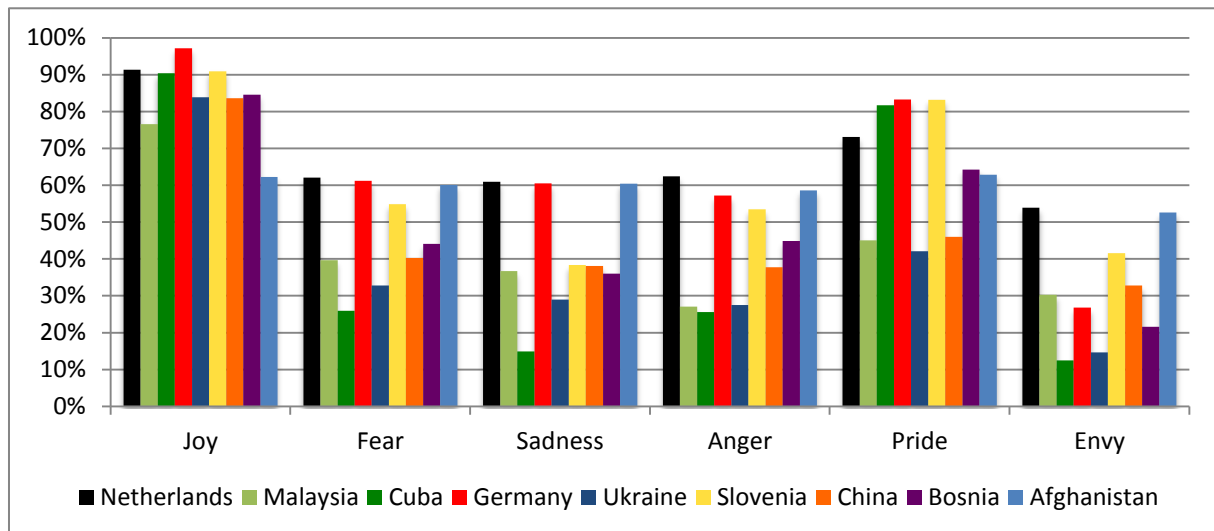


III. 16: Daily viewing time by country (n > 300) – agreement

TV characters should show their emotions

The last part of the questionnaire dealt with TV characters showing emotions. The children were asked “*How do you like it when the characters show honestly that they feel really happy?*” The same question was asked with respect to the other emotions: fear, sadness, anger, pride and envy. Again all items were rated on a 4-point Likert scale.

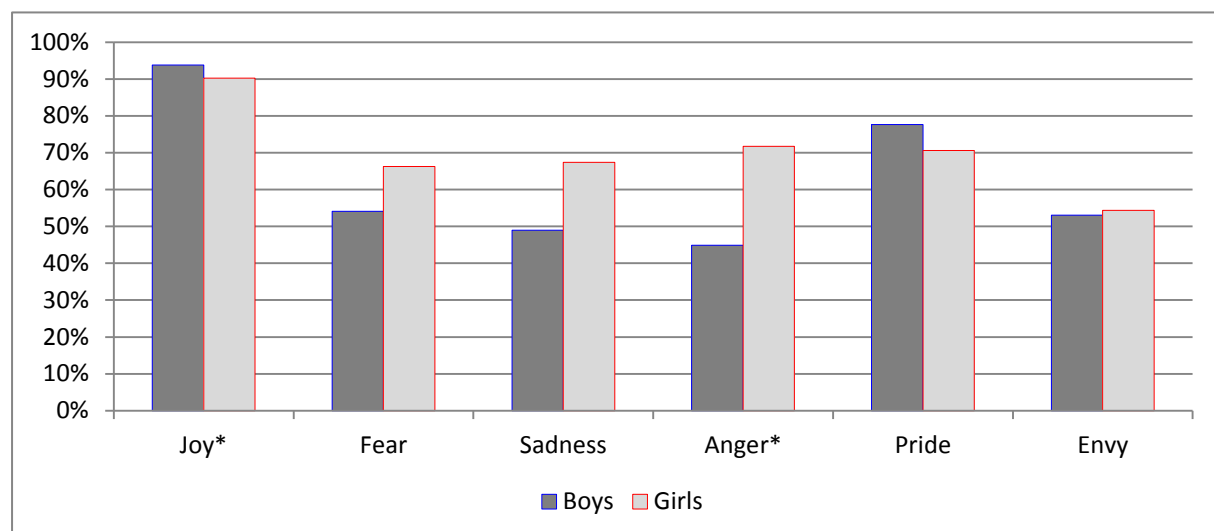
Joy is the emotion which the respondents in the Netherlands and in other countries of the international comparison wish to experience through TV characters. Second ranks the wish to experience pride, followed by the emotions anger, fear and sadness which are at the same level. Despite marked differences in levels between the countries, this ranking is similar to other countries like Germany, Ukraine or Bosnia.



III. 17: TV characters and emotions by country (n > 300) – agreement

Boys want to see joy and pride

The gender comparison reveals that girls prefer the depiction of fear, sadness, and anger by the characters in their favorite TV shows whereas boys like to see joy and pride.

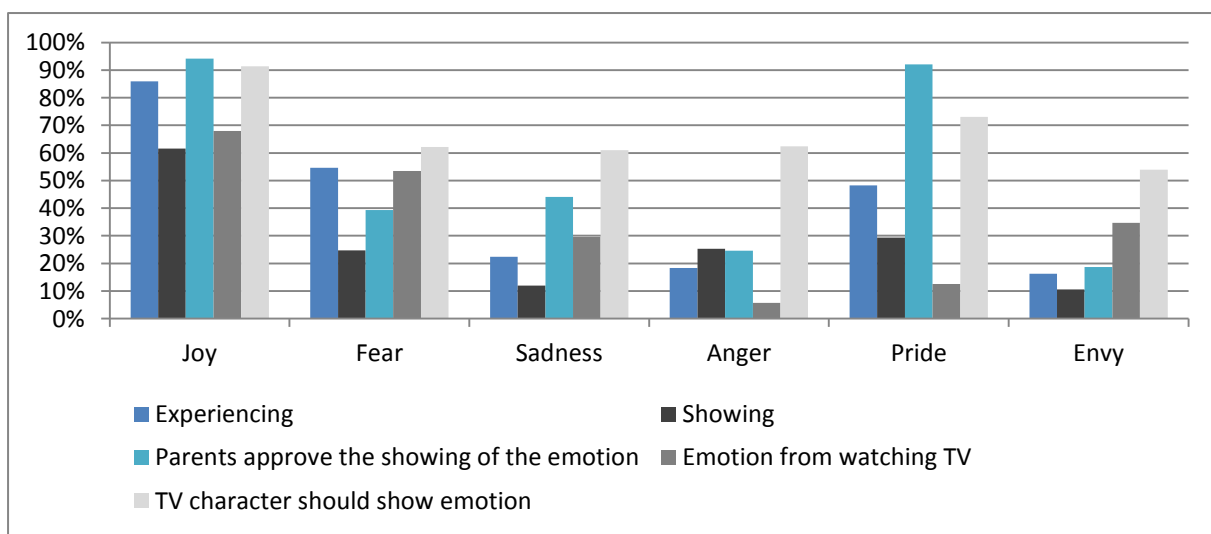


III. 18: TV characters and emotions by gender – agreement

3. Summary

5,190 children and preteens from 17 countries were surveyed with the aim of getting a better understanding of how emotions are experienced and shown in everyday life and while watching TV. The focus was on the emotions joy, fear, anger, sadness, pride and envy. The Dutch sample comprised 143 children and preteens; 94 girls and 49 boys. Again it shall be pointed out that due to the small number of cases the shown figures are necessarily approximate.

The results showed that joy is the emotion most frequently experienced by Dutch children and preteens. This emotion is also among the emotions most frequently experienced by the respondents from other countries. Fear is the second most frequent emotion felt by children in the Netherlands. In comparison, however, Dutch respondents experience fear less often than participants from the other countries. However, Dutch children and preteens were more often sad and envious. Beyond that, they were often proud of themselves. With respect to the expression of emotions, it got apparent that Dutch children and preteens express their emotions not in the same manner they experience it. Beyond that, the Dutch sample shows that girls have a higher willingness than boys to show joy, fear, sadness or envy. Boys, however, are often prouder than girls. For Dutch children and preteens, TV is related to a feeling of joy. Yet they also experience that TV can cause fear. Two out of 10 children from the Netherlands can refer to a nightmare caused by a TV event. In addition, Dutch participants by tendency wish that their TV characters would show more emotions than they themselves experience or express.



III. 19: Overview of „Having and Showing Emotions“ – Netherlands

Questionnaire on the experience with and showing of emotions

On the following pages we will ask you questions about certain feelings and about TV. Please consider carefully how often you experience certain feelings. No matter if at home, at school or in dealing with parents and friends – the important thing is that you are honest!

Let's talk about you first: I am a girl ☐ a boy ☐ and I am _____ years old.

Happiness

How often did you feel really happy in the past 7 days?

Never	rather rarely	fairly often	permanently
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much did you show others that you feel really happy?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do your parents like it that you show them when you feel really happy?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please think of the past 7 days: Was there a moment when you really had to laugh out loud?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Are you getting really happy from time to time from something you see on TV?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Fear

How often did you feel anxious in the past 7 days?

Never	rather rarely	fairly often	permanently
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much did you show others that you feel anxious?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do your parents like it that you show them when you feel anxious?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Are you getting anxious from time to time from something you see on TV?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Which show or movie made you feel anxious?

Title: _____

Do you sometimes get nightmares from something you saw on TV?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Sadness

How often did you feel really sad in the past 7 days?

Never	rather rarely	fairly often	permanently
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much did you show others that you feel really sad?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do your parents like it that you show them when you feel really sad?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Did you have to cry in the last 7 days?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why did you have to cry? Because of ... pain ☐ anger ☐ sorrow ☐ fun ☐ fear ☐

Are you getting really sad from time to time from something you see on TV?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Anger

How often did you feel really angry in the past 7 days?

Never	rather rarely	fairly often	permanently
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much did you show others that you feel really angry?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do your parents like it that you show them when you feel really angry?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Are you getting really angry from time to time from something you see on TV?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Pride

How often did you feel really proud in the past 7 days?

Never	rather rarely	fairly often	permanently
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much did you show others that you feel really proud?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do your parents like it that you show them when you feel really proud?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Are you getting really proud of yourself from time to time from something you see on TV?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What were you proud of?

I was proud of _____

Envy

How often did you feel really envious of others in the past 7 days?

Never	rather rarely	fairly often	permanently
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much did you show others that you feel really envious of others?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do your parents like it that you show them when you feel really envious of others?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Are you getting really envious of others from time to time from something you see on TV?

Not at all	scarcely	a little bit	very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What did you envy?

I envied _____

Now we want to find out some things about your TV consumption.

How often do you watch TV?

Daily	several times a week	once a week	rarely	not at all
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How many hours per day do you watch TV?

More than 4 hours	2 to 4 hours	1 to 2 hours	less than 1 hour	not at all
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please think of your favorite TV show and all other shows you watch.

How do you like it when the characters show honestly that they feel really happy?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do you like it when the characters show honestly that they feel really anxious?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do you like it when the characters show honestly that they feel really sad?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do you like it when the characters show honestly that they feel really angry?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do you like it when the characters show honestly that they feel really proud of themselves?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do you like it when the characters show honestly that they feel really envious of others?

Don't like it at all	rather don't like it	rather like it	like it very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank you for your participation!!! ☺