

Have and Show Emotions

Research report



Italy

Scientific project management

Dr. Maya Götz

Implementation in Italy

Gerdis Thiede

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 Italian sample comprised 74 questionnaires and induced the following results:

- In Italy as well as in other countries joy is the emotion most frequently experienced.
- Unlike to the international comparison in Italy not fear but pride is the second most frequent emotion.
- Italian children are often sad and experience anger most of all.
- By comparison, Italian children are often envious.
- Italian girls show their feelings of joy, fear, grief, and anger more often than the Italian boys.
- Boys from Italy are prouder than the Italian girls, whereas girls are more envious.
- Italian 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.

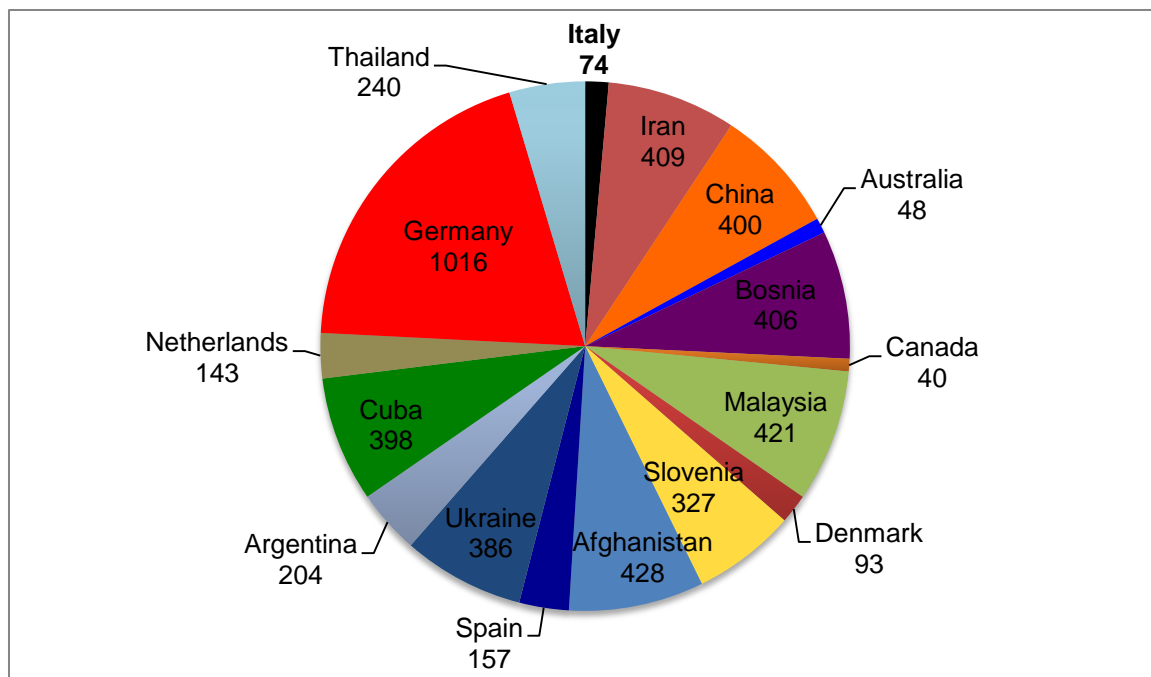
1 Objective and sample

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 Italy, 74 children and preteens participated in the study with the amount of girls and boys evenly distributed.¹

Age category	Boys (n=38)	Girls (n=36)
10 – 12 years (n=71)	50% (n=37)	46% (n=34)
13 – 15 years (n=3)	1% (n=1)	3% (n=2)

III. 2: Sampling distribution – Italy

Because of the sampling distribution the age differences will not be taken into account. Instead we will focus on gender differences.

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”

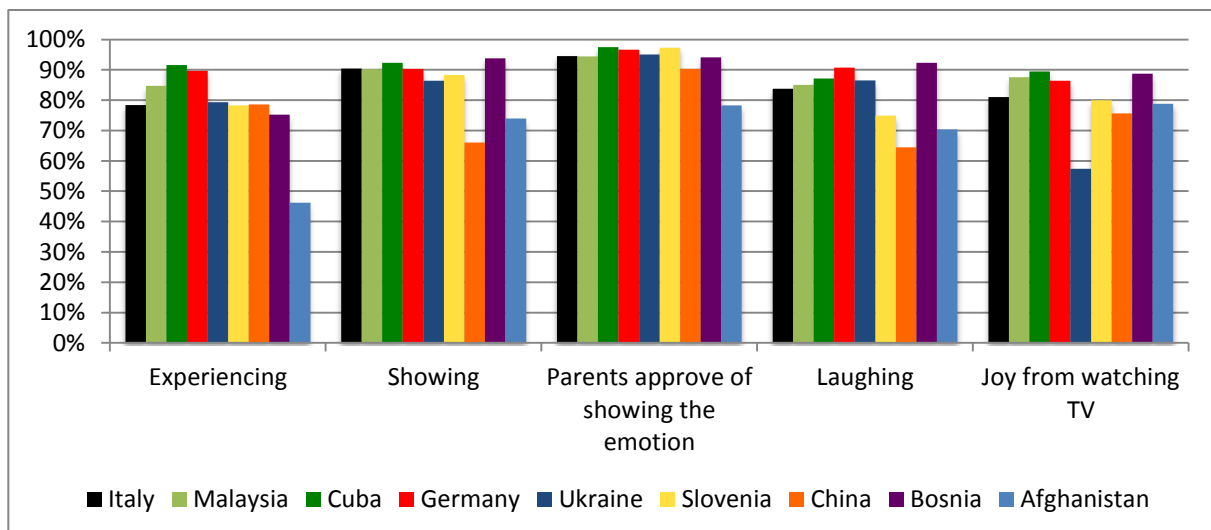
The first emphasis of the questionnaire was put on the emotion joy. All items in the questionnaire were rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Participating children and preteens were asked about their recent experiences of joy: *“How often did you feel really happy in the past 7 days?”* and *“Was there a 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

Italian children openly show their joy

More than three quarters of Italian children were fairly often or permanently happy in the past seven days. They show their joy even more often than they experience it. More than 80% report that they have laughed out loud at least once in the past seven days. On top of that, the children assume that their parents would approve their expression of joy. And about 80% of the Italian children and preteens state that TV has triggered feelings of joy at least once.

² In the following, the results of the Italian 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 (*).

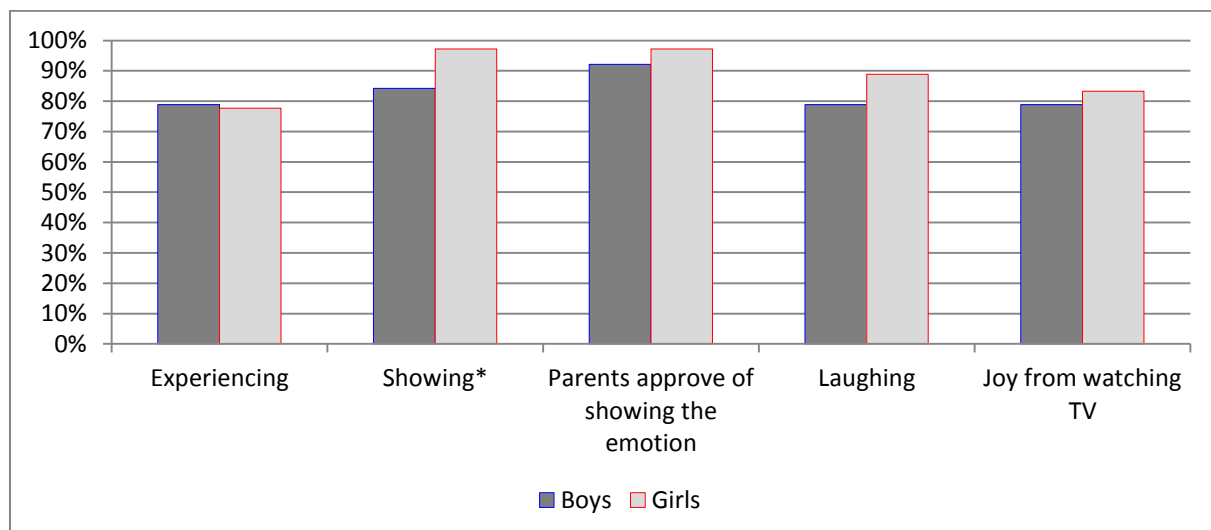
³ The detailed questionnaire can be found in the appendix.



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

Girls show more joy and laugh more often

A gender comparison reveals that girls express joy more frequently and laugh more often than boys. Beyond that, more girls than boys assume that their parents would approve their showing of joy.



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

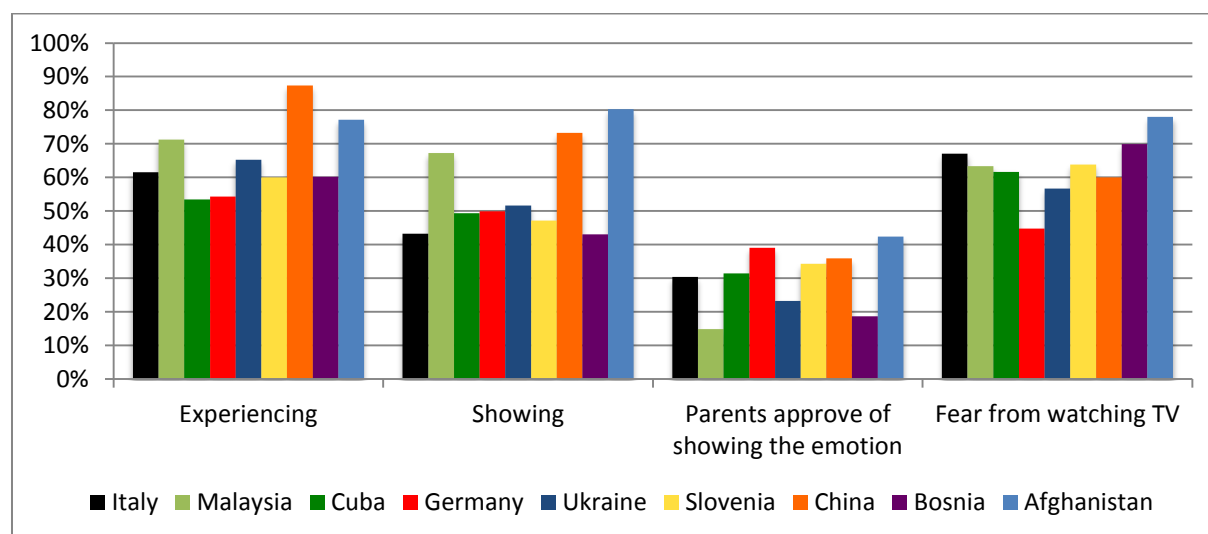
2.2 Emotion “fear”

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?*”

Italian children rarely show their fear

The country-comparison reveals that Italian children experience fear less frequently than the respondents of some other countries.⁴ In contrast to the emotion “joy”, the Italian respondents show their fear less frequently than they do actually experience it. The international comparison reveals also that the Italian and Bosnian children and preteens express their fear the least. Only a small percentage of children think that their parents would approve the expression of this emotion. On top of that, more than two thirds of the Italian respondents have already experienced fear as a consequence of watching TV.

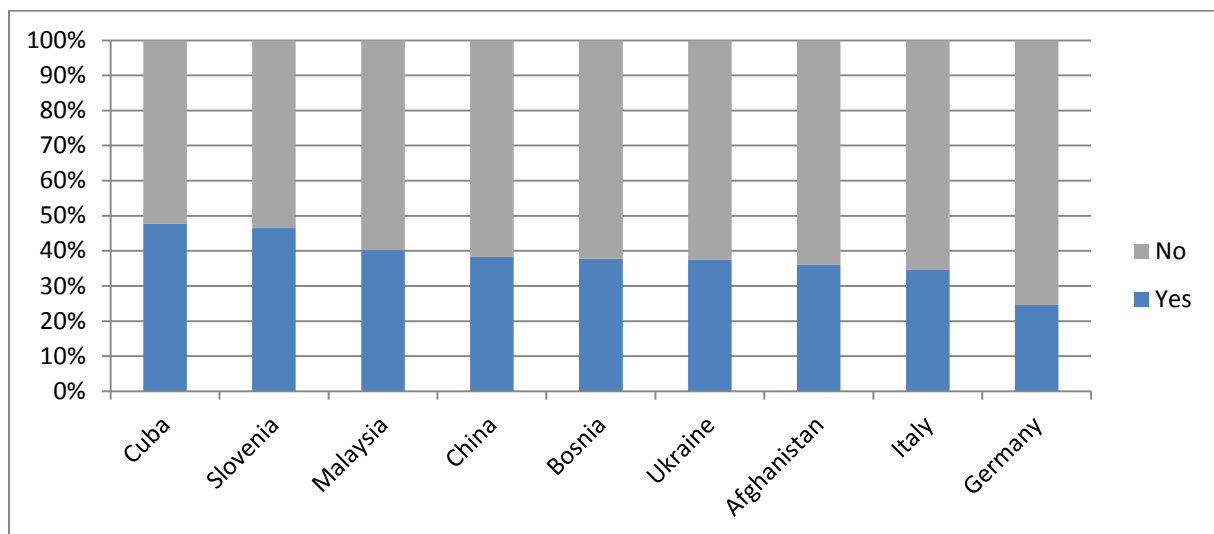


III. 5: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion “fear” by countries (n > 300) – agreement

Beyond that, three out of 10 children state that they had had a nightmare from watching something on TV at least once. With this result, Italy ranks on ninth place in the international comparison. 39 children and preteens answered the question which show or movie made them feel anxious. In this context *Paranormal Activity* (n=5) was

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

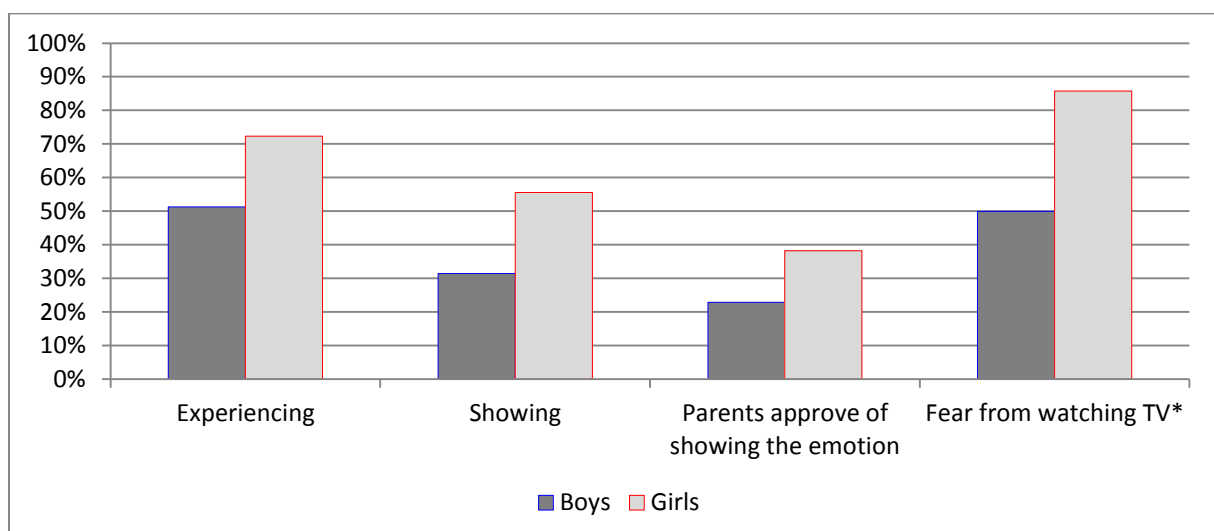
most often mentioned followed by *The Exorcist* (n=4), *The Ring* and *Saw* (each n=3), and *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, *The Conjuring*, *Mama*, and *La Paura* (each n=2).⁵



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. Girls also think more often that their parents would approve their expression of fear. Beyond that, significantly more girls than boys experience fear from watching TV.



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

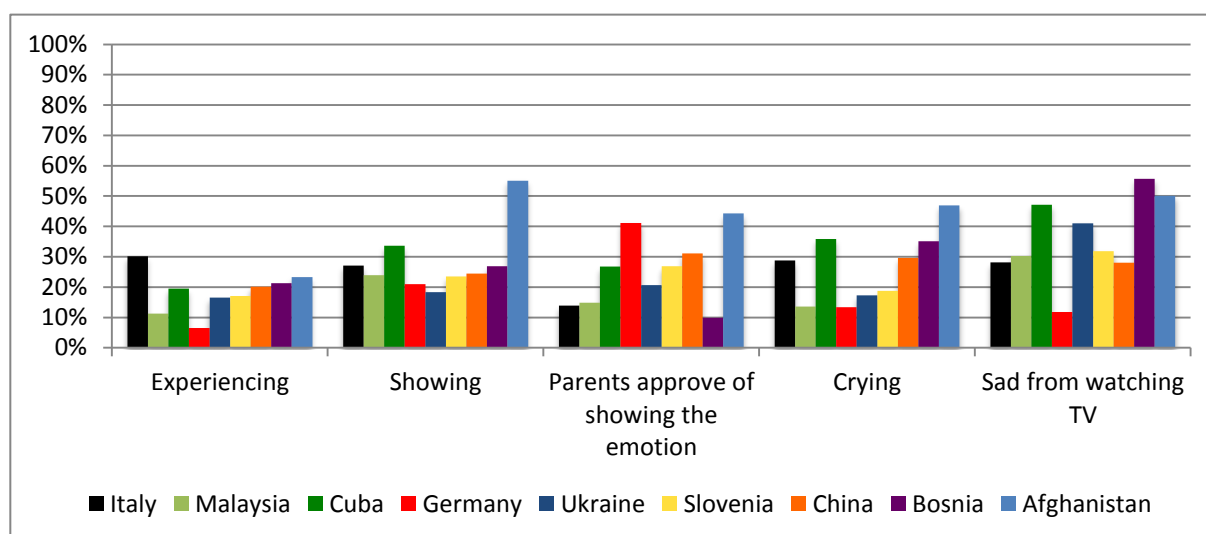
⁵ Some children wrote down more than one show/movie. But for the analysis only the first mention was taken into account.

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.

Italian children are often sad

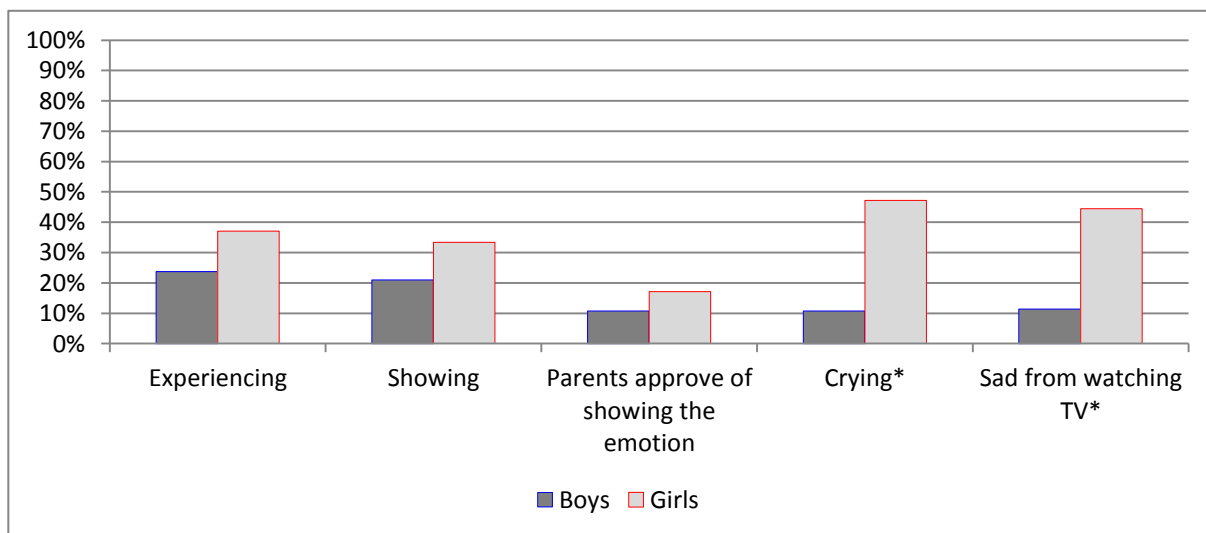
The international comparison demonstrates that Italian children and preteens experience sadness more often than the respondents from other countries. The willingness to show this emotion to others ranks in the upper mid-range, although the Italian children and preteens assume that the expression of sadness is not really approved by their parents. However, nearly one third of the Italian respondents state that they had cried in the past seven days. Italian respondents name mostly anger as reason for this emotional outburst, followed by pain, grief, and joy.



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

Girls cry and show grief more often

The gender comparison reveals that girls experience and show feelings of grief more often than boys. Girls also cry significantly more than boys. Reasons why girls cry are feelings of anger and pain whereas boys cry because of anger and joy. Moreover, previous TV events triggered feelings of sadness more often among girls than among boys.



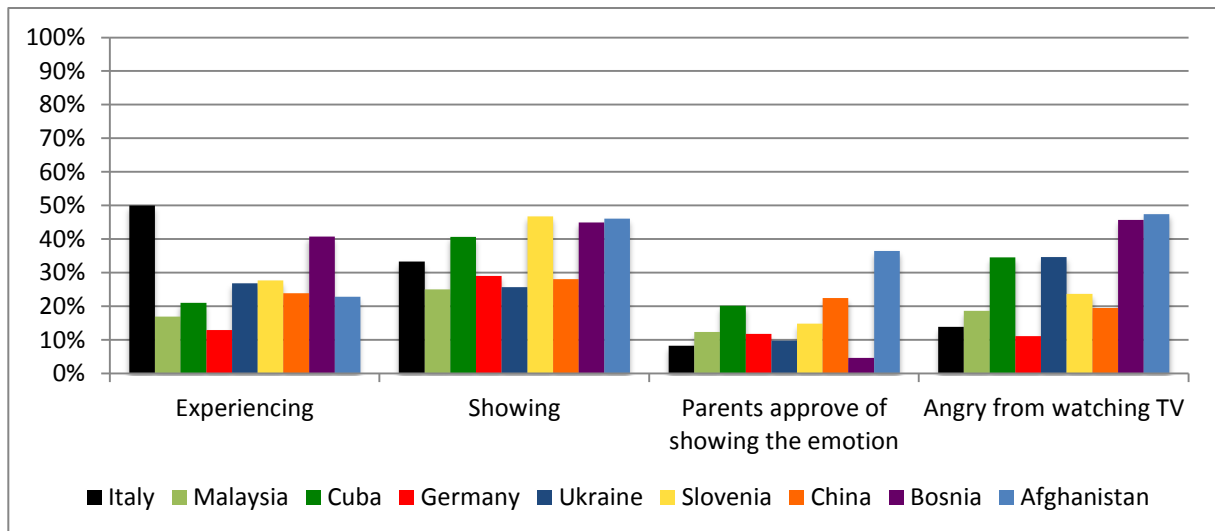
III. 9: Differences in terms of experiencing and showing the emotion “sadness” by gender – agreement

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?”*

Italian children experience anger most of all

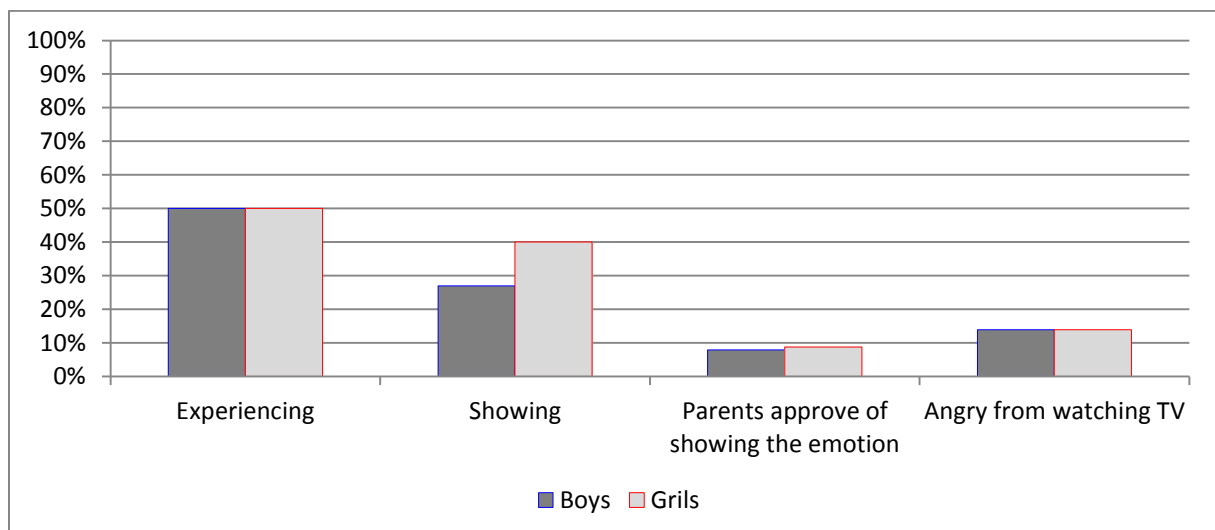
Italian children and preteens experience anger more often than the respondents from other countries. They also rank in the upper range of showing this emotion. Interestingly, the parents’ approval of showing anger is considered very low.



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 reveals that girls experience anger as often as boys. Girls, however, show their feelings of anger more often than boys. Yet regarding gender there are no further differences.



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

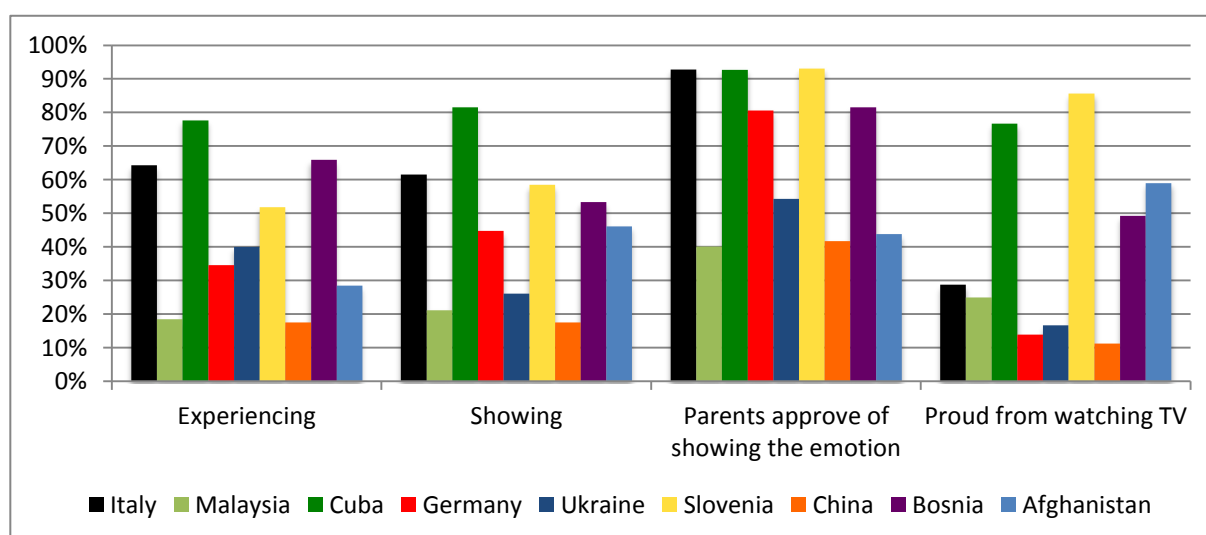
2.5 Emotion “pride”

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.

Italian children are proud

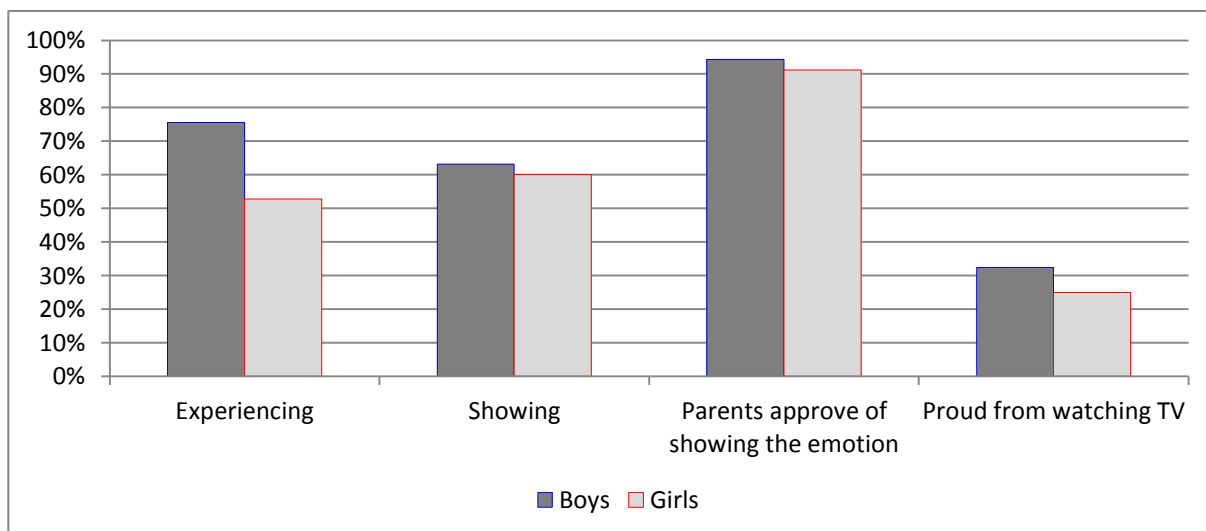
Regarding the frequency of experiencing pride, Italian children and preteens rank higher than the international average. While only about 20% of the Malaysian respondents experience this emotion often or permanently, more than 60% of the Italian report about having experienced this emotion. Only Bosnia and Cuba attain higher values in this category. If the Italian participants experience pride, the emotion is related to their abilities, their talents or their own character. The country comparison also reveals that Italian children and preteens show pride more often than respondents from other countries. On top of that, more than 90% of the Italian 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 experience and show pride more often

Gender-differences become apparent in the category “experiencing”. Boys experience pride more often than girls and show their pride a bit more frequently too.



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

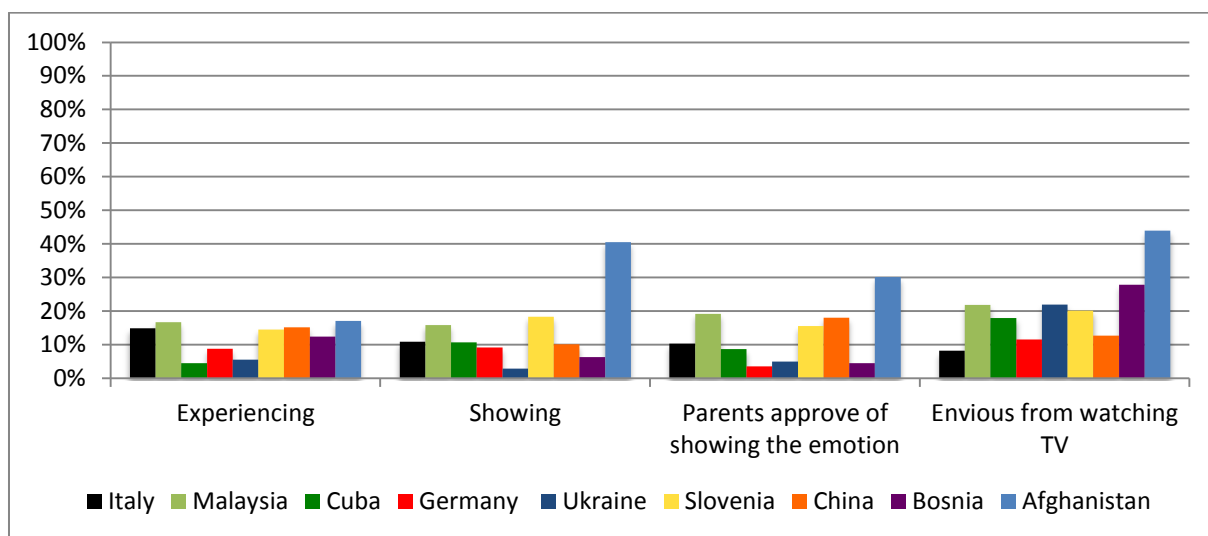
2.6 Emotion “envy”

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.

Italian children are more often envious

The international country comparison reveals that Italian children and preteens experience to a certain extent envy more often than the respondents of other

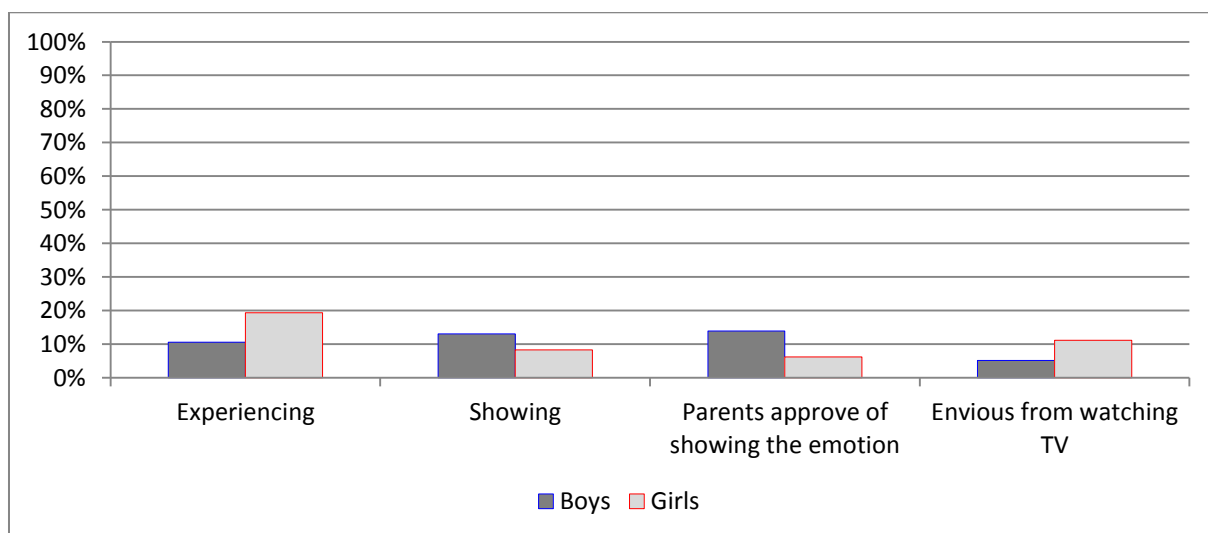
countries. Regarding the frequency of showing envy, the Italian participants rank in the upper range. Italian children especially envy other people's material possessions.



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

Girls experience envy more often

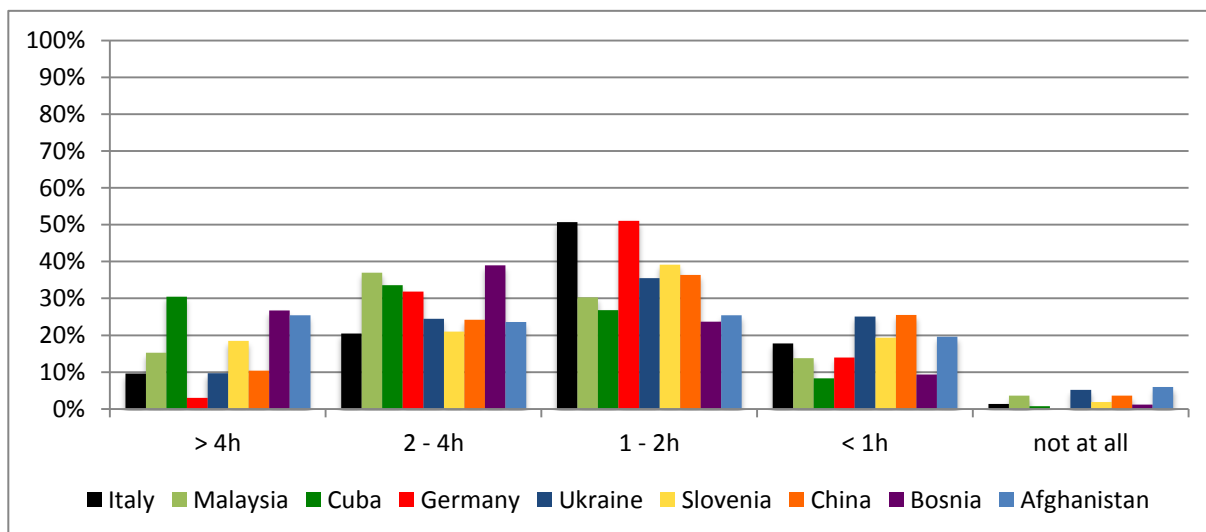
The gender comparison reveals that girls experience feelings of envy more often than boys. Boys, however, show this emotion more frequently.



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*. More than 60% of the Italian children and preteens state 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*. The major part spends one to two hours a day in front of the TV. Therewith, Italy ranks in the lower range.

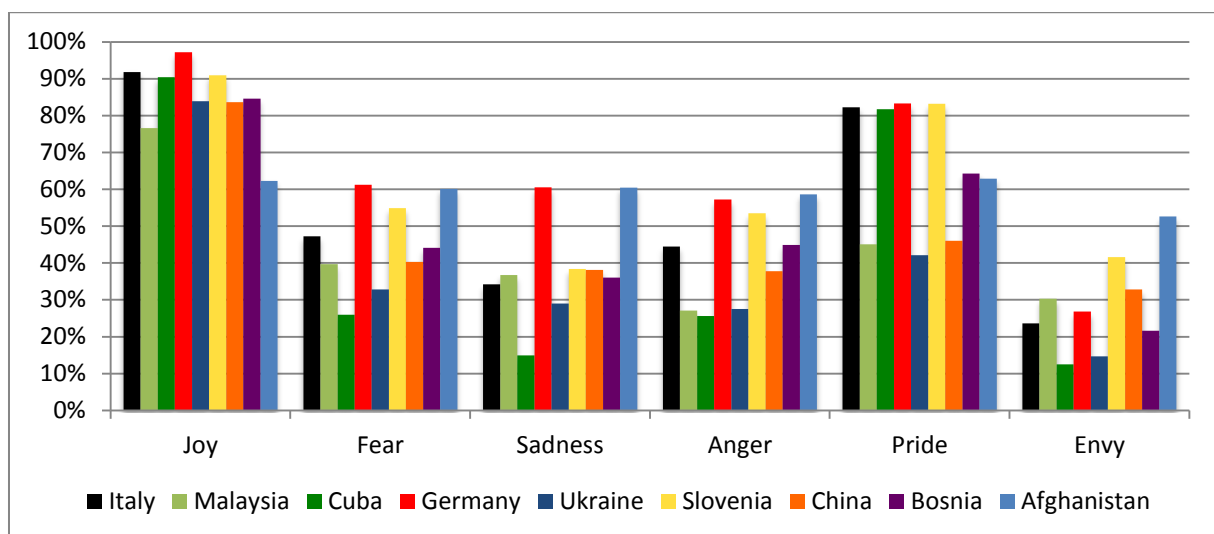


III. 16: Daily viewing time by country (n > 300) – agreement

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.

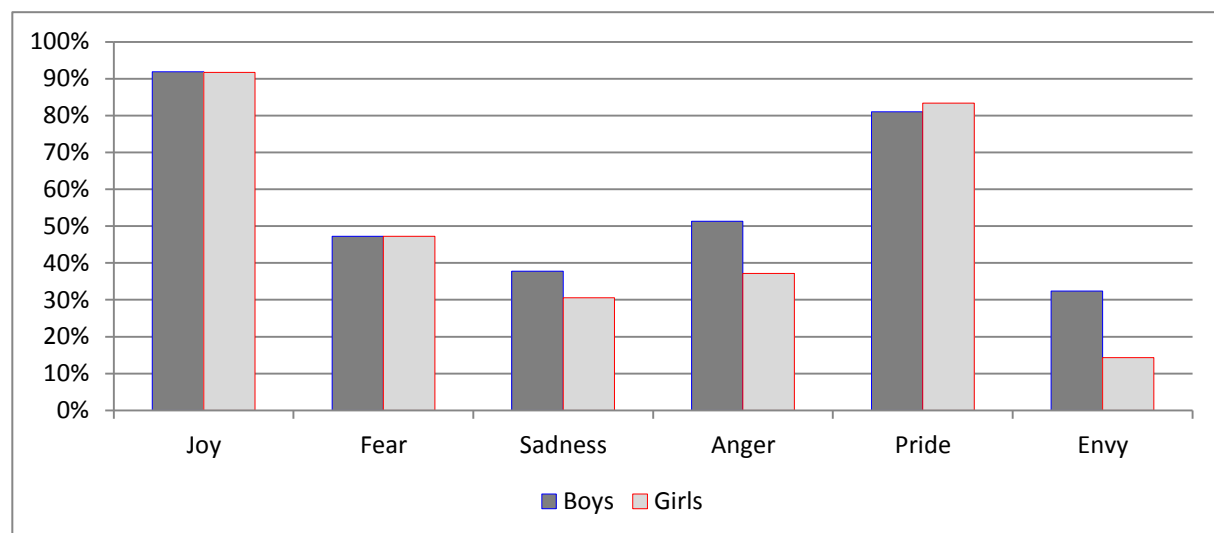
Joy is the emotion which the respondents in Italy and in other countries of the international comparison wish to experience through TV characters. Second ranks the wish to experience pride, followed by the emotions fear and anger. Despite marked differences in levels between the countries, this ranking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



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

Boys want to see sadness, anger and envy

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



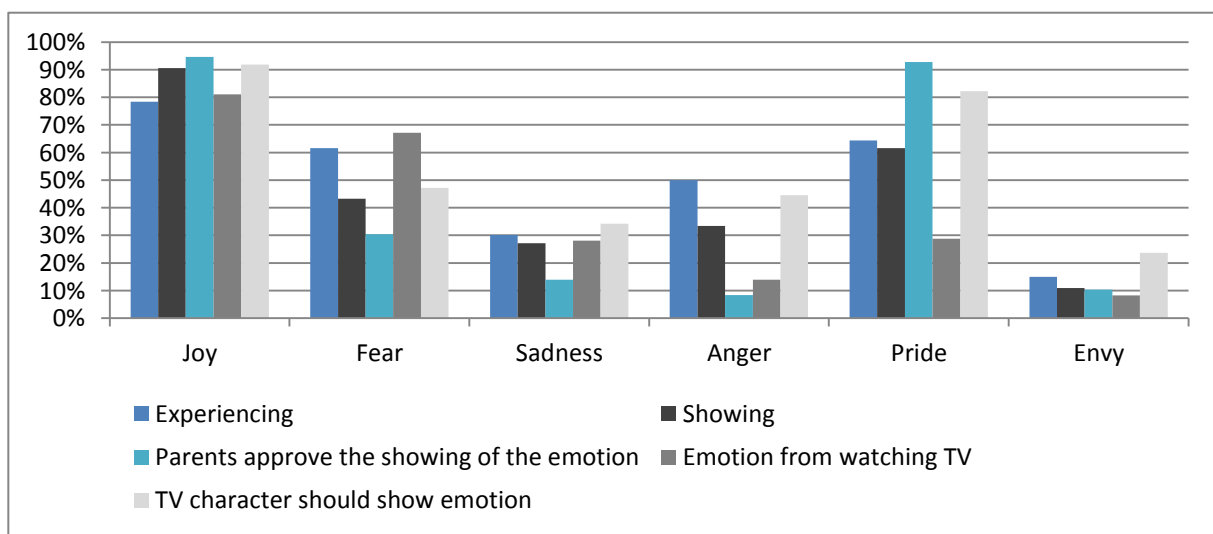
III. 18: TV characters and emotions by gender – agreement

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 Italy sample comprised 74 questionnaires with boys and girls evenly distributed. 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 Italian children and preteens. This emotion is also among the emotions most frequently experienced by the respondents from the other countries. However, in contrast to other countries not fear but pride is the second most frequent emotion felt by children in Italy. The country comparison also revealed that Italian children experience problematic emotions like sadness, anger or envy more often than the participants from other countries. With respect to express emotions, the Italian sample showed that girls have a higher willingness to show emotions like joy, fear or anger than boys. Beyond that, boys are significantly prouder than the girls, whereas the girls are more envious.

For Italian children and preteens, TV is related to a feeling joy. Yet they also experience that TV can cause fear. Three out of 10 children can refer to a nightmare caused by a TV event. In addition, Italian 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“ – Italy



Sondaggio su come i bambini e i ragazzi vivono e mostrano le emozioni

Di seguito ti faremo delle domande su determinati sentimenti e anche sulla televisione. Cerca di pensare ora a quanto spesso provi determinati sentimenti, non importa se a scuola o a casa, in compagnia dei tuoi genitori o amici – l'importante è che tu risponda con sincerità.

Ma iniziamo da te: lo sono

☐ una bambina di ____ anni.

☐ un bambino di ____ anni.

Gioia

Quante volte, negli ultimi 7 giorni, ti è capitato di essere veramente felice?

per niente	di rado	piuttosto spesso	continuamente
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quanto hai dato a vedere agli altri di essere veramente felice?

per niente	quasi niente	un po'	molto
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensano i tuoi genitori del fatto che dai a vedere di essere veramente felice?

non gli piace affatto	non va tanto bene	va bene	molto bene
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Se torni a pensare agli ultimi 7 giorni: ti è capitato di ridere veramente forte?

no, mai	di rado	un po'	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ti capita di essere veramente felice per quello che vedi in televisione?

no, mai	non veramente	alle volte	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Paura

Quante volte, negli ultimi 7 giorni, ti è capitato di avere paura?

mai	di rado	piuttosto spesso	continuamente
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quanto hai dato a vedere agli altri di avere paura?

per niente	quasi niente	un po'	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensano i tuoi genitori del fatto che dai a vedere di avere paura?

non gli piace affatto	non va tanto bene	va bene	molto bene
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ti capita mai di avere paura quando guardi la televisione?

no, mai	di rado	alle volte	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Durante quale trasmissione o quale film hai avuto particolarmente paura?

Titolo: _____

Ti capita di fare degli incubi per quello che hai visto in televisione?

☐ sì ☐ no

Tristezza

Quante volte, negli ultimi 7 giorni, ti è capitato di essere veramente triste?

mai	di rado	piuttosto spesso	continuamente
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quanto hai dato a vedere agli altri di essere veramente triste?

per niente	quasi niente	un po'	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensano i tuoi genitori del fatto che dai a vedere di essere veramente triste?

non gli piace affatto	non va tanto bene	va bene	molto bene
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Negli ultimi 7 giorni di è anche capitato di piangere?

no, mai	di rado	alle volte	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Perché hai pianto? Per... ☐ dolore ☐ rabbia ☐ afflizione ☐ gioia ☐ paura

Ti capita di diventare veramente triste per quello che vedi in televisione?

no, mai	di rado	alle volte	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Rabbia

Quante volte, negli ultimi 7 giorni, ti è capitato di essere proprio arrabbiato/-a?

mai	di rado	piuttosto spesso	continuamente
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quanto hai dato a vedere agli altri di essere proprio arrabbiato/-a?

per niente	quasi niente	un po'	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensano i tuoi genitori del fatto che dai a vedere di essere proprio arrabbiato/-a?

non gli piace affatto	non va tanto bene	va bene	molto bene
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ti capita di arrabbiarti veramente per quello che vedi in televisione?

no, mai	di rado	alle volte	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Orgoglio

Quante volte, negli ultimi 7 giorni, ti è capitato di essere veramente orgoglioso/-a di te stesso/-a?

mai	di rado	piuttosto spesso	continuamente
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quanto hai dato a vedere agli altri di essere veramente orgoglioso/-a di te stesso/-a?

per niente	quasi niente	un po'	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensano i tuoi genitori del fatto che dai a vedere di essere veramente orgoglioso/-a di te stesso/-a?

non gli piace affatto	non va tanto bene	va bene	molto bene
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ti capita di sentirti veramente orgoglioso/-a di te stesso/-a per quello che vedi in televisione?

no, mai	di rado	alle volte	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Di che cosa sei stato/-a orgoglioso/-a

Sono stato/-a orgoglioso/-a di _____

Invidia

Quante volte, negli ultimi 7 giorni, ti è capitato di essere veramente invidioso/-a degli altri?

mai	di rado	piuttosto spesso	continuamente
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quanto hai dato a vedere agli altri di essere veramente invidioso/-a degli altri?

per niente	quasi niente	un po'	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensano i tuoi genitori del fatto che dai a vedere di essere proprio invidioso/-a degli altri?

non gli piace affatto	non va tanto bene	va bene	molto bene
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ti capita di sentirti proprio invidioso/-a degli altri per quello che vedi in televisione?

no, mai	di rado	alle volte	spesso
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Di che cosa sei stato/-a invidioso/-a

Sono stato/-a invidioso/-a di _____

Adesso vorremmo sapere qualcosa di te e delle tue abitudini televisive.

Quanto spesso guardi la televisione?

quotidianamente	più volte la settimana	una volta la settimana	di rado	mai
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Quante ore circa al giorno guardi la televisione?

più di 4 ore	dalle 2 alle 4 ore	1 o 2 ore	meno di 1 ora	mai
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Pensa ora alla tua trasmissione preferita e a tutte le altre trasmissioni che ti capita di guardare.

Cosa pensi, quando i personaggi danno apertamente a vedere di essere proprio felici?

non va affatto bene	non va tanto bene	va bene	va benissimo
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensi, quando i personaggi danno apertamente a vedere di avere paura?

non va affatto bene	non va mica tanto bene	va bene	va benissimo
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensi, quando i personaggi danno apertamente a vedere di essere proprio tristi?

non va affatto bene	non va tanto bene	va bene	va benissimo
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensi, quando i personaggi danno apertamente a vedere di essere proprio arrabbiati?

non va affatto bene	non va tanto bene	va bene	va benissimo
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensi, quando i personaggi danno apertamente a vedere di essere proprio orgogliosi di loro stessi?

non va affatto bene	non va tanto bene	va bene	va benissimo
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Cosa pensi, quando i personaggi danno apertamente a vedere di essere proprio invidiosi degli altri?

non va affatto bene	non va tanto bene	va bene	va benissimo
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Grazie per aver partecipato!!! 😊