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Sony Pictures networks india: Strategizing humour Television content

Darshan Ashwin Trivedi and Smita Pranav Kothari wrote this case solely to provide material for class discussion. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to protect confidentiality.

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On October 5, 2017, N.P. Singh, the chief executive officer of Sony Pictures Networks India (Sony), was sitting in his office in the Malad suburb of Mumbai, India, wondering what to do about some impending problems. Singh was concerned about the future of the television show *Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah* (TMKOC), which aired on the television channel Sri Adhikari Brothers Television (SAB TV), a general entertainment channel (GEC) owned by Sony. TMKOC was a flagship, family-friendly comedy show that had enjoyed top ratings for years. However, new comedy shows that featured edgier and less family-oriented content, with jokes at the expense of characters rather than at situations, were gaining new viewers.[[1]](#endnote-1) Current viewers were also using mobile devices, rather than traditional television sets, to watch content;[[2]](#endnote-2) SAB TV’s online platform was less popular than those of their competition. Singh was concerned about how to sustain SAB TV as a market leader despite the growing popularity of unsavoury content from new comedy shows and emerging digital platforms (see Exhibit 1).[[3]](#endnote-3) What steps could Singh take to ensure that SAB TV’s high ratings would continue?

OVERVIEW OF INDIA’s MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

India’smedia and entertainment (M&E) industry was among the fastest-growing in the world, with television, radio, film, print, and the Internet among the various platforms available to 1.324 billion potential consumers.[[4]](#endnote-4) To date, television had been the top revenue-generating platform. In 2016, India’s television industry was worth ₹588 billion[[5]](#endnote-5) of a total M&E industry valued at ₹1.262 trillion.[[6]](#endnote-6)

Television was introduced in India in 1959 under the monopoly of the public broadcaster Doordarshan. In 1991, during the Gulf War, the US Cable News Network (CNN) started transmitting television content to India via satellite, thus giving the country its first taste of private television. With globalization becoming a trend during that time, India allowed private television to grow without stringent regulations, which led to a tenfold growth in the consumption of television content.[[7]](#endnote-7) During this first phase, Indian television was flooded with foreign programming. However, in October 1992, Zee TV began providing Indian viewers with local content on private satellite channels. Zee TV had established a 50/50 joint venture Star TV to make this possible. By 2017, India’s television industry had 877 granted satellite television channels.[[8]](#endnote-8) During that same period, the industry catered to 183 million television households, roughly equivalent to 870 million individuals.[[9]](#endnote-9) The television industry in India was expected to grow to ₹1.166 trillion by 2021, at a compound annual growth rate of 14.7 per cent.[[10]](#endnote-10) In 2016, an average Indian viewer spent three hours and 16 minutes per day watching television.[[11]](#endnote-11)

In 2008, India’s television industry was worth ₹245 billion and was growing at a rate of 9.3 per cent, compared to 17.4 per cent annual growth between 2004 and 2008. Of the total revenue in 2008, 61 per cent was generated from distribution and 34 per cent was earned from advertising. Total revenue from cable and satellite television households amounted to ₹118 million.[[12]](#endnote-12)

The 2008 financial crisis had an adverse effect on the television industry—especially in regard to advertising revenue. Television channels realized that to remain in operation, they had to increase consumption, despite severe challenges, including rising production and marketing costs, restricted funding, investment in both analogue and digital distribution, retrenchments, and the addition of four new GECs: 9X, Colors TV, New Delhi Television (NDTV) Imagine, and Real. Although the share of viewership was being divided among even more channels, greater competition was helping raise the overall quality of programming. As a result, viewership for GECs increased from 900 gross rating points (GRPs) to 1,200 GRPs in less than a year, for 33 per cent growth.[[13]](#endnote-13)

In 2017, the M&E industry grew at a rate of 11.2 per cent, for a total revenue of ₹660 billion. Cable and satellite penetration of the country reached a high of 64 per cent, with access to 780 million individuals in 183 million households, while television penetration was at 52 per cent in rural areas. Each day, Indians were spending an average of over three hours and 44 minutes watching television, and 77 per cent of total viewership came from GECs and film channels.[[14]](#endnote-14) Government initiatives such as demonetization and the introduction of a goods and services tax complicated the industry’s attempts to recover losses from slower periods, but content creators experimented with new genres and ideas to increase viewership.

Sri Adhikari Brothers Television

SAB TV was founded by Gautam Adhikari, the current chairperson and director. The television channel was incorporated in December 1994 and listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange in June 1999. Since April 2000, the Doordarshan channel ran syndicated content such as comedy shows like *Dekh Bhai Dekh*, *Shrimaan Shrimati,* and *Zabaan Sambhalke* (see Exhibit 2).[[15]](#endnote-15) With 1,305 hours of content and related assets, SAB TV was acquired in March 2005 by Sony Entertainment Television (later renamed Sony Pictures Networks India), which eventually owned 31 channels. The network positioned SAB TV as a channel for young people and broadcast International Cricket Conference World Cup 2007 matches in Hindi. However, when India failed to qualify to the group stage in cricket that year, Sony’s plan to expand the viewership of the channel did not go as expected. Singh said, “When we came back with the second season of all the shows—SAB had taken a season break on all its successful shows during 45 days of World Cup—the loyalists had moved on.”

In June 2008, SAB TV was repositioned as a comedy GEC, as was originally intended before Sony’s purchase, and Sony looked for a cost-effective show to help it increase viewership over the long run.

TAARAK MEHTA KA OOLTAH CHASHMAH

In 2006, Asit Modi proposed a new show, TMKOC, to Singh. Modi was the founder of Neela Tele Films Private Limited. Modi pitched TMKOC as a show about the comic interplay between multicultural residents of a residential society called Gokuldham (see Exhibit 3) in their day-to-day lives, supplemented with social commentary. TMKOC was inspired by the 1970s popular magazine column “Duniya Ne Undha Chasma,” written by humourist Taarak Mehta for the Gujarati magazine *Chitralekha*. Singh offered to commission Modi’s show specifically for SAB TV, rather than for the entire Sony network, which Modi found disappointing because SAB TV had only 25 GRPs at the time. However, Singh stressed that the show would be a good fit because SAB TV was being reinvented as a comedy channel, from the former youth-based content.

Modi had previously pitched the show idea to Sony six times without success. On one occasion, the creative team suggested that Modi include a female protagonist in the show, but as Modi had always visualized the main character, Jethalal, as the focus of the show and was not prepared to change, he turned down the offer. After a proposal to Disney Channel, the entertainment giant asked that the grandson character, Tapu, be portrayed as less mischievous, but Modi refused that offer as well. Zee TV and Star TV had also rejected the show proposal.

Modi would narrate stories from his show idea to his family for their feedback. His seven-year-old son enjoyed listening to the stories. Eventually, with persuasion from his wife, Modi accepted Singh’s offer to air the show on SAB TV.

Singh’s team drafted an agreement for 104 episodes of TMKOC; however, Modi asked for a base agreement of at least 208 episodes. “I was thinking that 104 episodes will get over in six months, and so artists will feel insecure,” Modi said. He was asked by SAB TV to keep to a low budget for the show’s set, but Modi opted for more permanent construction, which would last at least two years, in case the show became successful. This plan required Modi to invest more of his own funds, without a long-term commitment by SAB TV. Despite uncertainties, Modi believed in the show enough to endure the high initial investment. After Singh approved the contract for 208 episodes, TMKOC aired on July 28, 2008, as a daily (Monday to Friday) comedy sitcom.

THE BEGINNING

For the first six months, TMKOC garnered less than 0.5 television rating points (TRP). The low ratings coincided with SAB TV’s operation during a recession. Still, Singh upheld his conviction in the show.

Modi was also learning along the way. During the first two months of the show, an issue would be covered over two consecutive episodes. Around episode number 40, the storyline revolved around Janmashtmi, an annual Hindu festival that celebrated the birth of the Indian god Krishna. During that time, the show’s TRP increased to 0.7 from the usual 0.3 or 0.4 rating, and viewers expressed a desire for more episodes on the same theme. Realizing that people were interested in stories, Modi decided to run each storyline for more than two episodes. “I got a grip on storytelling,” he said.

After six months of airing episodes, TMKOC had arrived at its inflection point, a significant change in the situation, as Singh realized: “If we stay true to the core Indian values of joint family and community living, this show will appeal to the masses.” Modi also believed in incorporating core family values, as well as joint family systems, in his show’s content.

CONSUMER INSIGHTS

Modi had been a regular reader of Mehta’s writing during his high school years. For his show, he altered some of the characters in Mehta’s magazine column, which was written in 1972, to suit the current times. For example, he replaced the “Himmatlal master” character with a Marathi-speaking teacher to attract more Marathi viewers to the show. He also included Punjabi and Tamil families in the show to attract a wider viewership.

Mehta’s column was originally based in a low-income tenement neighbourhood (known as a *chawl* in India), but Modi moved the setting to a more appealing housing co-operative (known as a residential society in India), where many different families lived and interacted regularly. During the show’s development, Modi had visited various *chawls* in the Mumbai suburbs of Bhuleshwar, Kalbadevi, and others to see how people lived, but he realized that chawls had changed over time from the setting Mehta had depicted in her column in 1972. Modi decided instead to creating a housing co-operative for the show, where different families lived like one large family, which he thought would appeal to everyday people. He applied the insights he had gathered and an Indian mindset to the show’s joint family system.

Modi created relatable and innocent characters, like Tapu Sena (a mischievous group of children); Daya (Jethalal’s wife), who broke into dance (the Indian *Garba*) on any happy occasion; and Popatlal, with his characteristic umbrella. He highlighted the bond between grandfather and grandson in the show. Moreover, he visualized Gokuldham society itself as a character.

Modi also adapted the show to reflect viewer feedback. For example, when a particular ghost storyline had covered four episodes of TMKOC, Modi planned to get to the story’s climax over the next three or four episodes. However, after a viewer told Modi that he was curious how Daya would engage with the ghost, which Modi had not yet considered, he asked the show’s writers to extend the storyline over 16 episodes to accommodate more character interactions.

Regarding some aspects of the show, however, Modi was inflexible. For example, he insisted on having a narrator in the show despite some viewer reactions that the narrator slowed the action in the show.

Modi brought to life everyday situations through actors who portrayed lovable people-next-door characters. The episodes were based on events that viewers found familiar. “We had to think what people would expect in terms of story on this *Ganesh Chaturthi*,” stated Modi, referring to the 10-day festival celebrating the birth of Lord Ganesh. “What is the political environment? How is the husband and wife relationship changing?” The scenes of celebration, such as *Janmashtmi* and *Ganesh Chaturthi*, that Modi included in the show where portrayed as larger-than-life, just like in a mega-budget show. TMKOC also addressed current events like the Indian government’s demonetization initiative. Other stories from the show that sparked viewer attention included the ghost in Gokuldham, the Gokuldham Premier League, Tapu’s child marriage, and Jethalal in Pakistan.

Throughout the journey of developing the show over the years, Modi was in constant touch with key stakeholders. At gatherings, parties, and social visits at home or in public, he was constantly seeking consumer insights.

**CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHANNEL**

Although TMKOC’s TRP ratings were only at 0.3 at the start, all other SAB TV shows had lower ratings (around 0.2 TRP). At the show’s first party, SAB TV staff members worried that no one was interested in the channel, but Modi reassured Singh: “I believe that if the program is good, people will come searching for the channel.”

TMKOC eventually became important to the channel for more than just viewership, as Singh explained. “When you have a driver like this, it also gets a lot of revenue riding on it.”

TMKOC’s success helped SAB TV hold its position in the industry, much like the hit show *Kaun Banega Crorepati* was influential in the success of Star Plus. In fact, TMKOC kept increasing its viewership beyond the show’s 10th season. According to data from the Broadcast Audience Research Council of India,[[16]](#endnote-16) in 2017, TMKOC topped the rating charts between June 17 and June 23, surpassing some of the biggest shows on Indian television, including *Naagin* *2* and *Kumkum Bhagya* (see Exhibit 2).[[17]](#endnote-17)

According to Modi, TMKOC was the number-one show in the 4–14 age group, surpassing both Disney Channel and Cartoon Network. The show was also popular among those aged 35 and over. Modi admitted, however, that viewership for the show was low in the 15–35 age group, which was the main viewership of Star TV and Colors TV.[[18]](#endnote-18)

In 2016, Jethalal and Daya were among the top 10 fictional characters on Hindi television,[[19]](#endnote-19) which reflected the popularity of the show in its 10th year (see Exhibit 1). Modi advised the actors that their characters would remain popular as long as they did not allow vanity to affect their work. Modi was also concerned about the actors growing older, which had to reflect their characters. However, Modi was pleased with the show’s success to date:

The show not only grew in the last decade, it also fetched better time spent than many other shows in the 8:30 to 9:00 p.m. slot on Indian television. Constant innovations in storytelling, look-feel, and characters, as per the changing times, could have helped us achieve this.

**ESTABLISHING A BUSINESS CASE**

Modi thought back to the ideation of TMKOC, around year 2000, when the television environment was changing. “Most of the weekly shows stopped and the era of daily soaps began,” he said. Shows like *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* and *Kahaani Ghar Ki* were launched around that time (see Exhibit 2). Within the comedy category, other shows also suffered; for example, *Sarabhai vs Sarabhai* lost viewership when it ran as a weekly show.[[20]](#endnote-20) Modi had produced many successful weekly comedy shows, such as *Hum Sab Ek Hain* (for Sony), *Yeh Duniya Hai Rangeen*, *Meri Biwi Wonderful*, and others (see Exhibit 2). He felt that a daily show was needed to fit the new trend, but demand for comedy was declining. “Whenever I would pitch comedy, the other person would put the phone down, as there was a demand of typical family drama that revolved around *saas-bahu* (mother-in-law and daughter-in-law) conflicts.” But he found that humour was a missing element in day-to-day life, so he wanted to deliver a light-hearted show to viewers in a daily format.

In 2008, when Singh was trying to relaunch SAB TV as a comedy channel, the recession was forcing television channels to keep costs under control. SAB TV’s content had not been successful so far, and financial pressure was increasing. Singh had to ensure that TMKOC was produced at a reasonable cost, even though top management had confidence in the show, as he explained:

The viewership was not very strong, and therefore revenue was also slow to come by. There was that initial phase of six to nine months (after the show was launched) when everything was iffy, and that was right in the middle of the recession, and keeping your head above water was more important for everyone.

Singh believed in the channel’s new strategy and was confident about the content of TMKOC, which made him support the show. Singh was ready to suffer losses for one or two years because he believed that TMKOC was going to be successful.

TMKOC soon became a household name in Hindi-speaking homes of India. Hindi was only one of 22 major languages prevalent throughout India, but TMKOC managed to also gain popularity across non-Hindi-speaking markets because the show incorporated characters and references representing India’s diverse cultures. Modi’s efforts to bring positive attention to social issues through humour helped TMKOC become the preferred platform for a progressive India. The show was nominated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to represent and contribute to the government’s Clean India (*Swachh Bharat*) Mission, which was one of several government initiatives intended to encourage participation by the Indian people. The show was also one of the most desirable programs on Indian television for the promotion of Bollywood films. The success of TMKOC helped other channels realize the potential of the comedy genre, which led to the launch of shows with similar appeal, such as *Bhabi Ji Ghar Par Hai* (see Exhibit 2).

TMKOC was the only daily show airing on a GEC within India where the intellectual property rights to the story and characters were held by the production house, rather than by the channel.[[21]](#endnote-21) Modi treated each of his characters as a brand, with trademarks for all characters. To ensure that TMKOC remained at SAB TV, the channel provided regular incentives over the course of the show’s first 10 years. Modi also had the demanding task of keeping the show’s 26-member cast together over that decade, which he was able to do successfully for all but one character. Modi was able to keep his cast intact by providing generous remuneration and understanding their whims and emotions. Most crew members had also stayed with the show all that time. TMKOC had started out with a lower budget than most other shows on Hindi GECs, and Modi was prepared to wait for a long-term breakeven point. However, positive results began appearing by the end of the first year.

**JOURNEY OF COMEDY**

Shows like *Dekh Bhai Dekh, Hum Sab Ek Hain,* and *Shrimaan Shrimati*, which were popular in the 1990s, led the way for shows like *Khichdi* and *Sarabhai vs Sarabhai* in the early 2000s, and with *Comedy Circus* making its debut in 2007, a new brand of comedy was emerging. The new shows featured edgy content with double meanings and louder characters. One of these new shows, *Comedy Nights with Kapil*, aired from June 2013 to January 2016 and ruled the non-fiction comedy category in 2014.[[22]](#endnote-22)

Modi saw the new trend as being more accepting of questionable content. “Now, if a vulgar joke is playing on TV, people would see it with their daughters. Previously, they used to switch it off,” he said. SAB TV seemed to be the only channel to avoid featuring “in-your-face comedy,” and TMKOC was becoming the only show that parents felt comfortable allowing their children to watch without supervision.

**DIGITAL FORMAT**

Singh recalled how episodes of TMKOC were distributed among viewers before digital streaming of content became common. Pirated copies of television shows, including TMKOC’s shows, on digital versatile discs (DVDs) were sold outside railway stations the same night that they aired on television. Viewers had the opportunity to catch up on the missed shows at their preferred time.

By 2016, TMKOC was viewed by 2.5 to 3.0 million people in digital format, according to Modi. After the launch of the Indian mobile network operator Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited, many more people were watching the show on their mobile devices than at a fixed time on their television sets. Modi wondered how the viewing habits of his loyal audience would change in the future.

Research suggested that adults in India were expected to spend an average of one hour and 18 minutes per day on digital media.[[23]](#endnote-23) In 2016, there were 412 million Internet consumers in India.[[24]](#endnote-24) For all online videos viewed by consumers in India, 47 per cent used Facebook and 42 per cent watched videos on YouTube, where[[25]](#endnote-25) TMKOC episodes were available. The remaining 11 per cent of online viewing was on online video streaming platforms such as Hotstar, VOOT, Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Jio TV.[[26]](#endnote-26) Although SAB TV had its own video streaming platform called SonyLiv, on which TMKOC episodes could be viewed, it was not among the most popular online video sources in the country.[[27]](#endnote-27) Star TV’s platform, Hotstar, was one of the more popular sites and streamed the second season of *Sarabhai vs Sarabhai* starting in May 2017.

WAY FORWARD

TMKOC had been successful in attracting viewership to SAB TV, but general comedy content on television was diverging away from the typical content on TMKOC. Singh worried about potentially negative effects on the channel’s viewership and wondered what pre-emptive steps might be necessary. He also had to consider how extending SAB TV content on digital sources would require changes in programming time, advertising models, and other areas. In general, Singh wondered how he could ensure the growth of viewership for SAB TV content.

**EXHIBIT 1: *TAARAK MEHTA KA OOLTAH CHASHMAH* SHOW PERFORMANCE, 2008–2017**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Average TVT** | **Source** | **Market** |
| 2008 | 46 | TAM | HSM CS 4+ |
| 2009 | 212 | TAM | HSM CS 4+ |
| 2010 | 383 | TAM | HSM CS 4+ |
| 2011 | 436 | TAM | HSM CS 4+ |
| 2012 | 472 | TAM | HSM CS 4+ |
| 2013 | 2,857 | TAM | HSM CS 4+ |
| 2014 | 6,890 | TAM | HSM CS 4+ |
| 2015 | 6,374 | TAM | HSM CS 4+ |
| 2016 | 5,487 | BARC | HSM CS 4+ |
| 2017 | 5,795 | BARC | January 2 to February 17 (HSM CS 4+) |
| 2017 | 5,573 | BARC | February 20 to September 15 (HSM CS 2+) |

Note: TVT = television viewership in thousands; TAM = television audience measurement; HSM = Hindi-speaking market; CS = cable and satellite homes; BARC = Broadcast Audience Research Council (trusted Indian media research organization, as of 2016).

Source: Prepared by the author with information from company documents.

EXHIBIT 2: INDIAN TeleVision SHOWS

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **TV Serial** | **First Aired** | **Channel** | **Description of show** |
| *Dekh Bhai Dekh* | 1993 | Doordarshan | Hindi sitcom about three generations of a family that stay together in a bungalow and how they go through ups and downs in life |
| *Shrimaan Shrimati* | 1994 | Doordarshan | Hindi sitcom about the lives of two couples who are neighbours |
| *Zabaan Sambhalke* | 1993 | DD Metro Channel | Hindi sitcom, based on the British show *Mind Your Language*, about a Hindi teacher who is an engineer, which examines how things are lost in translation, differences in culture, and job dissatisfaction |
| *Kaun Banega Crorepati* | 2000 | STAR | Game show on Indian television based on the British show *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*? |
| *Naagin* *2* | 2016 | Colors | Sequel of fantasy drama about a woman who can lose all powers if she falls in love with a human |
| *Kumkum Bhagya* | 2014 | Zee TV | Drama about a married couple, where the wife finds herself constantly fighting with the husband’s former girlfriend |
| *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* | 2000 | Star Plus | Drama about the an ideal daughter-in-law married to a business tycoon |
| *Kahaani Ghar Ki* | 2000 | Star Plus | Soap opera about a married couple living in a joint family |

exhibit 2 (continued)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Sarabhai vs Sarabhai* | 2004 | Star network | Hindi sitcom about an elite Gujarati family in Mumbai, revolving around middle-class habits of the daughter-in-law and snobbish habits of the mother-in-law |
| *Hum Sab Ek Hain* | 1998 | Sony Entertainment Television | Hindi sitcom about a joint family |
| *Yeh Duniya Hai Rangeen* | 2000 | Sony Entertainment Television | Serial comedy about neighbours in a reconstructed society that was previously a *chawl* (low-income housing) |
| *Meri Biwi Wonderful* | 2003 | SAB TV | Sitcom based on the 1970s US sitcom *Bewitched*, about a couple clashing between reality and fantasy |
| *Bhabhi Ji Ghar Par Hain* | 2015 | Zee TV | Sitcom about two couples living in the same colony, where the men are attracted to each other’s wives |
| *Khichdi* | 2002 | Star Plus | Sitcom about an upper-middle-class joint family |
| *Comedy Circus* | 2007 | Sony Entertainment Television | Reality-based comedy show where celebrities and professional comedians compete with each other |
| *Comedy Nights with Kapil* | 2013 | Colors TV | Non-fiction comedy and celebrity talk show |

Sources: India TV Entertainment Desk, “7 Die Hard Laughing Sitcoms that Will Make You Grin Ear to Mouth,” IndiaTV, June 27, 2016, accessed May 10, 2018, www.indiatvnews.com/entertainment/bollywood-best-comedy-serials-336734; Sana Farzeen, “Shriman Shrimati Set to Return on SAB TV, Here Are All the Deets,” *The Indian EXPRESS*, February 21, 2018, accessed May 7, 2018, http://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/television/shriman-shrimati-return-on-sab-tv-meet-new-cast-5072906; Roshni Chakrabarty, “Top 10 TV Series Showcasing Indian Culture,” NewsGram, December 31, 2015, accessed May 10, 2018, www.newsgram.com/top-10-tv-series-showcasing-indian-culture; “Kumkum Bhagya,” Zee5, accessed May 11, 2018, www.zee5.com/tvshows/details/kumkum-bhagya/0-6-127; “Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi,” Balaji Teleflims, accessed May 11, 2018, http://balajitelefilms.com/serial.php?id=18; “Cast of Kahaani Ghar Ki Reunites; Kavita Kaushik Shares a Fun Post,” *Times of India*, March 12, 2018, accessed May 11, 2018, https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/tv/news/hindi/cast-of-kahaani-ghar-ghar-ki-reunites-kavita-kaushik-shares-a-fun-post/articleshow/63265400.cms; “Sarabhai v/s Sarabhai,” TV DB, accessed May 8, 2018, www.thetvdb.com/series/sarabhai-vs-sarabhai; “Our Shows,” Neela Telefilms, accessed May 11, 2018, www.neelatelefilms.com; Menka Shivdasani, “Over to Sony,” *Business Line*, September 4, 2000, accessed May 11, 2018, www.thehindubusinessline.com/2000/09/04/stories/100444m9.htm; “Bhabi Ji Ghar Par Hain,” Zee TV, accessed May 11, 2018, www.zee5.com/tvshows/details/bhabi-ji-ghar-par-hain/0-6-199; “Star to Launch New Weekly Comedy in September,” Indian Television, August 22, 2002, accessed May 8, 2018, www.indiantelevision.com/headlines/y2k2/aug/aug131.htm; “Sony Announces New Reality-Based Comedy Format ‘Comedy Circus,’” Exchange4media, June 8, 2007, accessed May 11, 2018, www.exchange4media.com/media-tv-news/sony-announces-new-reality-based-comedy-format-comedy-circus-26392.html; Shweta Mulki, “Kapil Sharma’s Next: Star or Sony?,” Afaqs, January 22, 2016, accessed May 11, 2018, www.afaqs.com/news/story/46924\_Kapil-Sharmas-next-Star-or-Sony.

EXHIBIT 3: MAJOR CHARACTERS IN *TAARAK MEHTA KA OOLTAH CHASHMAH*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Description** |
| Jethalal | Jethalal is a street-smart and family-loving businessman who owns and runs an electronics store called Gada Electronics. Jethalal is popular among his friends for his witty comebacks and a great sense of business. |
| Daya | Daya is a traditional housewife who is very protective and devoted to her family. Her innocence and naiveté at times make life difficult for Jethalal (her husband), and her overly caring attitude towards her husband creates embarrassing situations for him. |
| Champaklal | Champaklal is Jethalal’s father, who was asked to come and live with the family when Tapu was becoming a menace. Ironically, Champaklal started siding with Tapu and Daya, thus creating difficulties for Jethalal. |
| Taarak Mehta | Taarak is a writer, poet, humourist, and columnist. He is also a very close friend of Jethalal, who completely trusts him as an advisor and rescuer in difficult situations. He is the person that the entire Gokuldham Society turns to for solutions. |
| Tapu | Tapu is Jethalal and Daya’s son, a sweet, hyperactive optimistic and a smart, yet very naughty, kid. Tapu is a natural leader and is deemed a “hero” by the kids in the community who have formed the group *Tapu Sena* (Tapu’s army). |
| Popatlal | Popatlal is an unmarried newspaper reporter who is always in search of an ideal bride and shares a special bond with his umbrella. |

Source: Company documents and “Our Shows,” Neela Telefilms, accessed May 11, 2018, www.neelatelefilms.com.

ENDNOTES

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2. Gaurav Laghate, “Smartphone Is the New TV: Digital Video May Give Advertisers Reach that Challenges TV’s Dominance,” *Economic Times*, May 1, 2018, accessed September 20, 2018 economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/media/entertainment/

   smartphone-is-the-new-tv-digital-video-may-give-advertisers-reach-that-challenges-tvs-dominance/articleshow/63980596.cms. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. According to Broadcast Audience Research Council data for week 39 of 2017, SONY’s SAB TV was ranked ninth overall but first in the comedy category in terms of performance of the top 15 Hindi general entertainment channels at the overall Hindi-speaking market level; “Weekly Data,” Broadcast Audience Research Council, accessed October 2, 2017, https://www.barcindia.co.in/statistic.aspx. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
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