

JUNE 2022

CHILD ARTISTS IN INDIA

An exploratory study in Mumbai, India

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Printed in India

First Printing: 2022

Citation: Child Rights and You (CRY), 2021, “Child Artists in India: An Exploratory Study in Mumbai, India”, June 2022, New Delhi

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FOREWORD

According to estimates, India's Media and Entertainment (M&E) industry was valued at Rs. 1.67 trillion (almost \$24 billion) in 2019 and is likely to rise significantly in the coming years. During the same period, with a population of 1.3 billion, and already having tele-density of about 89 per cent of households, almost 700 million internet subscribers, and nearly 400 million smartphone users (as per estimates put forth by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industries [FICCI]), India's growing M&E industry is not only creating new and exciting avenues for companies to reach a significantly larger addressable market, but also creating opportunities for content creators and artists, including children who work in films and television. Further, based on FICCI's estimates, children (up to 15 years of age) make up nearly 30 per cent share of "impressions", which means that they account for a significant portion of those consuming films and television (regardless of the platform). This also means that the content generated on these platforms is generated automatically and tweaked to appeal to a larger audience across various age-groups, including children. The success of child-centric content in film and television has elevated child actors from supporting roles to central characters who carry entire plots and, more significantly, contribute to earning box office revenues.

As the number of child artists in film and television industries continues to expand, child rights organisations have become increasingly concerned about child artists' rights, child labour, and the impact of work on children's development. The 2016 amendment to the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (CALPRA), 1986 included a number of measures aimed at financially, emotionally, socially and psychologically safeguarding children engaged in the M&E industry in general. Part III of the CALPRA, 1986 requires producers of television shows, advertisements, and films to adhere to a longer list of requirements aimed at ensuring fair working conditions and child-friendly environment for children under the age of 14. Similarly, in 2011, the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR) issued guidelines regarding children working in Indian television serials, reality shows, and advertisements.

FOREWORD

However, there are few studies on child artists in India, with the notable exception of anecdotal evidence in news reports. I am pleased to share with you the findings of this study, which is a fine blend of secondary and primary data – in terms of providing estimates of the number of child artists in India as well as documenting the key concerns through interviews with various stakeholders such as acting academies, guilds / associations, former child artists, parents of child artists, producers / directors, and casting agencies / agents. The analysis suggests that the overall number of child artists is estimated to be between 6,059 and 12,334 based on Media and Entertainment Skills Council estimates for 2017 and Census of India (2011) respectively. The study also throws light on the key concerns regarding the working conditions of child artists, child protection, and development aspects.

Child Rights and You (CRY) strongly believes in the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), namely children’s right to survival, right to protection, right to development and right to participation. All of our efforts, whether programmatic or advocacy-based, are directed towards ensuring that these rights are effectively implemented. Eliminating child labour is one integral component of our programmes and we work strenuously towards reducing vulnerabilities of children who eventually drop out from schools. We believe that all children have a right to thrive, develop and achieve their full potential, and child artists should not be barred from these rights – survival, protection, development and participation.

To deliberate further on this issue, I leave you with the findings of this report that seeks to address a few of these concerns. CRY strongly believes that empirical evidence is critical in bringing issues and concerns of child artists to the forefront of public debate, and that effective deliberations may aid in the effective implementation of guidelines aimed at improving the lives of child artists and ensuring their rights.

With faith and hope,

Puja Marwaha,
Chief Executive,
Child Rights and You

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our profound gratitude to all who assisted us with this research. We appreciate our research partner, Monk Prayogshala, Mumbai, India, for ensuring completion of this study. We would like to express our gratitude to the participants in this study for their insights and time.

Child Rights and You



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines child labour as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and is harmful to their physical and mental development. The work mentioned in the ILO's definition is any occupation that is mentally, physically, socially and morally dangerous and harmful to children (1). Whether or not particular forms of work can be referred to as child labour, depends on the child's age, the type and hours of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed, and the objectives pursued by individual countries.

In India, The Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (CALPRA), 1986 defines a child artist as a child who performs or practices any work as a hobby or profession directly involving her / him as an actor, singer, and sports person or is engaged in such other activity relating to the entertainment or sports activities. This child labour law makes an exception for child artists who work in audio-visual entertainment industry including advertisement, films, television serials or any such other entertainment or sports activities except circus, as long the continuity of school education and safety measures are ensured.

In addition to this, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) set up a working group to formulate guidelines and recommend measures to address concerns regarding the protection of child rights in tele-serials, reality shows, and advertisements. This report titled "Guidelines to regulate child participation in TV serials, reality shows and advertisements (2010 – 2011)" covers topics such as content of programmes, parental supervision, age-related norms, etc. to ensure that every last child working in the entertainment industry is protected.

In the last few years, following the successful spate of child-centric content, the stature of child artists have been elevated to central characters holding up entire plots in both films and tele-serials. As the number of child artists in film and television industries is growing, there has been a growing concern within the child rights organisations regarding the rights of child artists, their working conditions, and the impact of working on the development of children. It has also been observed that studies on the impact of working in films and tele-serials on child artists is minimal, and is limited to a few news articles in the popular press. Given this scattered discourse, this study seeks to provide an overall situational analysis of conditions in which child artists are forced to work and recommendations to make film sets and studios child-friendly in nature.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STUDY OBJECTIVES -

This report documents the outcomes of an exploratory study of the child artists sector in Mumbai, India, with special reference to film and television artists. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Provide a preliminary empirical estimate of the size of the child artists sector in M&E industry in Mumbai, India, and identify the various stakeholders involved, along with their concerns and interests.
2. Explore and assess the viewpoints and perceptions of these stakeholders including parents of child artists, former child artists, casting agencies, producers / directors, guilds and associations, and acting academies.
3. Formulate policy recommendations in the context of existing legislation and guidelines on children working in artistic enterprises, so as to ensure safe working conditions for child artists and take into account concerns and recommendations from all stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY-

This study adopted a mixed method approach (both qualitative and quantitative) to serve the objectives outlined previously. Before analysing qualitative data, extensive research was undertaken from secondary data sources.

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH -

To estimate the number of child artists, the study looked at a baseline understanding of the ratio of child artists to all artists in India. Secondary data was compiled from a diversity of sources including the Census 2011 data on industrial classification of main and marginal workers, the Sixth Economic Census of India, and information from the Media and Entertainment Skills Council (MESCC). This data was supplemented by information scraped from online portals where artist profiles are hosted, as well as classified. A ratio of child artists to overall artists was computed using the data from online portals and applied to the Census and MESCC data to provide a broad range of estimates of distribution of child artists in India.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH-

For the purpose of this study, a stakeholder map was drawn out to identify the stakeholders who engage with child artists in different capacities to enable their engagement and involvement in films and television. There were 16 participants who were interviewed for this study which included two representatives of coaching centres where child artists are enrolled for training, five parents of child artists, six production houses' representatives, two former child artists, and one representative of Cine & TV Artistes' Association (CINTAA) (2). Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire and an interview guide. A mix of snowball and convenience sampling was used for all stakeholders.

SALIENT FINDINGS-

Estimated number of Child Artists: A sample of seven casting agencies (3) that contained a total of 41,392 profiles of artists online (across India), suggested that 24.9 per cent were classified as child actors (i.e., under the age of 15 [4]). There were nearly 3,752 profiles of female child actors listed on these casting agency portals, and 4,642 profiles of male child actors.

Taking the two largest casting agency portals, the study found that the share of child artists / actors in the total number of actors listed is approximately 12.2 per cent on average. The portal search also suggests that 8.7 per cent of all male actors are child actors, and 15.7 per cent of all female actors are under the age of 18.

From the analysis of the ratios of child artists to all artists listed in casting agency websites, the total number of child artists are estimated to lie in the interval of 6,059 (MESC, 2014) and 12,334 (Census, 2011) with a 95 per cent confidence interval (CI) and a 2 per cent margin of error on the basis of the sample from online portals.

2- Established in 1958 it was named as Cine Artistes' Association. Later, in 1997, with the advent of television and private channels, the name was changed to CINTAA. Governed by an elected executive committee that works on an honorary basis, CINTAA has its membership base of over 9,000 members. (<https://www.cintaa.net/about-us/>, accessed 15 October 2021)

3- Casting agencies / agents (individuals or companies) that specialise in placing child artists into appropriate forms of work, and connecting producers / directors and other stakeholders with child artists judged to be suitable for their work.

4- Many portals had filters for the age of the profiles that were posted, but were often grouped into brackets such as 0-5 years, 5-10 years, and so on. As a result, the secondary data used here varies marginally by age group from the original definition of child artists in Section 1 (under 15 years of age).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Number of Establishments (Acting Academies, Casting Agencies, and Production Houses) :

The Sixth Economic Census finds that there are a total of 242,495 establishments in India falling under the broad category of “Arts entertainment, sports & amusement, and recreation”, of which 120,690 are located in urban areas. Within this broad sector, data from online portals such as (Justdial, Quikr and Sulekha) and classifieds suggest that the number of acting academies in India lie between 525 and 943, of which approximately 355 specifically mentioned tutoring for children’s acting and talents. Thus, we can consider that on average, about 37.6 per cent to 67.6 per cent of all acting academies offer services specifically aimed at child artists.

Working Hours for Child Artist: While it is clearly mentioned in CALPRA, 1986 that no child shall be allowed to work for more than five hours in a day, and for not more than three hours without rest (Rule 2C(1)(a)), it was found that the work shift stretches to 12-13 hours for six days a week (based on survey findings related to this study).

Ensuring the Education of Child Artists: CINTAA has a register to maintain a log of complaints as and when they are reported; however, it voluntarily does not monitor and only redresses grievances. CINTAA mentioned that they have come across cases where the parents have discontinued formal education of child artists. It was found that there is a general understanding of the importance of formal education amongst all stakeholders in principle.

Terms and Conditions for Parental / Guardian Consent: In cases where formal contracts are signed by parents (which, according to producers, is only done at the request of the parents), the terms of the form are generally nuances concerning payments and shooting hours. It has been claimed by parents that the contracts only safeguard the interests of the producers, as they mention all the child-friendly guidelines on paper which are barely adhered to.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Child Protection and Supervision: Rule 2C(1)(e) of CALPRA, 1986 states - one responsible person be appointed for maximum of five children for the production or event, so as to ensure the protection, care and best interest of the child. Majority of the stakeholders understood child protection instinctively rather than looking at it as something which is mandatory by the law. Child artists are mostly accompanied by their parents or guardians to the set but none of the production houses or coaching centres had any formal child protection guidelines in place.

Payment towards child's engagement or involvement: Rules 2C(1)(f) of CALPRA, 1986 states – at least 20 per cent of the income earned by the child from the production or event to be directly deposited in a fixed deposit account in a nationalised bank in the name of the child which may be credited to the child on attaining majority. But it was found out that the onus of the money is being utilised completely on the families. In other words parents are in the authority to use the payments and, at times, it is in contravention of the rules stated. In cases where the child artist is the sole breadwinner of the family or the family has come from outside of Mumbai, keeping 20 per cent of the payment in a fixed deposit seems highly unlikely.

Regulatory and Monitoring Mechanisms: There are regulatory and monitoring mechanisms in place as far as the Act is concerned. However, there is not much awareness regarding the same. For example, the parents that were interviewed thought that it was CINTAA's responsibility to do periodic inspections at shoot locations. As per the rules, it is supposed to be done by an Inspector and the report of which needs to be submitted to the office of the District Magistrate (DM). Similarly, there was no mention of Form C – an undertaking under Rule 2C(1)(b) of The Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Rules (CALPRR), 1988 – by any producer which is mandatorily submitted to the DM's office before the commencement of the shoot.

WAY FORWARD

Creating a dynamic database of child artists

This study is exploratory in nature, with an objective to attempt an estimate of the number of children working in the entertainment industry in Mumbai. However, a large scale study is needed to truly understand the magnitude and working conditions of child artists. A comprehensive database of all child artists must be created and kept at the State as well as Central level, jointly held by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE), and Ministry of Education (MoE) in order to ensure convergence of efforts and ensuring children's well-being.

Creating and implementing child protection policies, training and awareness generation to safeguard children's rights

- Creation of child protection policies for every production house as well as coaching centres, along with staff training to ensure its implementation would also be critical to ensure that children's rights are protected. Child protection experts and / or civil society organisations (CSOs) can play a strong supportive role in creating child protection policies and related trainings.
- Child rights awareness sessions along with mechanisms for grievance redress available for reporting different violations may be conducted by CSOs in collaboration with Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) to enable better reporting mechanisms and information flow.

Strengthening reporting and monitoring mechanisms to ensure adherence to the child labour laws

- While the Child Labour Amendment Rules, 2017 state that "the producer of any audio –visual media production or any commercial event involving the participation of a child, shall involve a child in participation only after obtaining the permission from the DM of the district where the activity is to be performed", it does not explicitly mention the mechanism to monitor children's safety and well-being. The Rules lay down norms for ensuring that children receive adequate rest, nutrition, minimum disruptions in education as well as their protection. Therefore regular visits by the CWCs and information to the DM's office could be a way to increase adherence to the law, accountability from production houses.

WAY FORWARD

- CINTAA being a trade union does not have authority and resources to put regulatory mechanisms pertaining to child protection in place. While CINTAA does act as the primary forum for such complaints, it would be more appropriate for it to forward such complaints to the CWC as well as the NCPCR and State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) for the appropriate action.

Terms and conditions for contract including parental / guardian consent

- As casting agents play a vital role in being the intermediary between the producer and the artist, they should ensure that the terms and conditions for parental / guardian's informed consent should be duly mentioned in the contract.
- While preparing the contract between the production house and the party signing on behalf of the child artist, the clauses may be phrased in a manner that they are fair to all parties involved, however, safeguarding children's rights in keeping with the best interest of the child must be paramount.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BCCC	Broadcasting Content Complaints Council
CPP	Child Protection Policy
CALPRA	The Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986
CALPRR	The Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Rules, 1988
CINTAA	Cine & TV Artistes' Association
CRY	Child Rights and You
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
DM	District Magistrate
GEC	General Entertainment Channel
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMPPA	Indian Motion Pictures Producers' Association
M&E	Media and Entertainment
MESC	Media & Entertainment Skills Corporation
MoE	Ministry of Education

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MoIB	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
MoLE	Ministry of Labour and Employment
MoSPI	Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
MoWCD	Ministry of Women and Child Development
NCPCR	National Commission on Protection of Child Rights
SCPCR	State Commission on Protection of Child Rights
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

LIST OF DEFINITIONS

Child	A 'child' is a person who has not completed her / his fourteenth year of age, according to CALPRA, 1986.
Artist	An 'artist' is a child who performs or practices any work as a hobby or profession directly involving her / him as an actor, singer or sportsperson.

BACKGROUND

India's Media and Entertainment (M&E) industry was worth Rs. 1.67 trillion (nearly \$24 billion) in 2019, and is expected to grow much larger in the years to come. The main driver of this growth is no longer the homestay of the industry i.e., Bollywood cinema, but rather the growth in digital media. This rapid transformation in the M&E industry can also be attributed to the proliferation of mobile access that has enabled on-demand, anytime-anywhere content consumption nationwide. During the same period, with a population of 1.3 billion, and already having tele-density of about 89 per cent of households, almost 700 million internet subscribers, and nearly 400 million smartphone users, India's growing M&E industry is not only creating new and exciting avenues for companies to reach a significantly larger addressable market, but also creating opportunities for content creators and artists, including children who work in films and television (FICCI, 2020).

Children (up to 15 years of age) make up nearly 30 per cent share of "impressions", which means that they account for a significant portion of those consuming films and television (regardless of the platform) (FICCI, 2019). This also means that the content generated on these platforms is automatically generated and tweaked to cater to one of the larger audiences i.e., children. Apart from animated shows that are a staple on kids' channels, there is also an increasing engagement of children in the M&E industry.

The successful spate of child-centric content in both films and television has resulted in child artists being elevated from mere supporting actors to central characters holding up entire plots, and more importantly, contributing to box office earnings. Child artists, therefore, are growing in stature within the M&E industry and are becoming more prominent in advertisements, films, television shows, and web series. Both films and television are the gateways to instant recognition and adulation, but with big budgets come high stakes. The child artists are made to work in an adult environment of long and tight schedules and heavy responsibilities wherein the shootings run for hours with multiple takes and retakes (Gill and Dias, 2015).

As the number of child artists in film and television are growing, there has been a growing concern within the child rights organisations concerning the rights of child artists, child labour, and the impact of working on the development of children. It has also been observed that the studies on the impact of working in films and television on the development of children is extremely limited. As suggested by the title, this study is exploratory in nature and documents findings using primary and secondary data.

BACKGROUND

India is one of the few countries that have tailored responses to children working in the audio-visual entertainment industry including advertisements, films, tele-serials or any such other entertainment or sports activities except the circus. Despite such legislative arrangements and other child protection policies, there is a dearth of knowledge on the status of child artists working in film and television, which constitutes the ground and rationale of the present study. Hence, the present study seeks to provide an overall situational analysis of conditions in which child artists work, and recommendations to make film sets child-friendly in nature.

National Legislation on Child Labour and Child Artists

The main legislation pertaining to child labour in India is the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (CALPRA), 1986 (MoLE, 1986), which was amended in 2016 (MoLE, 2016) in light of India ratifying two conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). This is a recent legal development (Rana and Chopra, 2017) in a long line of guidelines and regulations that are specified in the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012. The 2016 amendment to the CALPRA, 1986 introduced a variety of measures meant to financially, emotionally, socially and psychologically safeguard children engaged in the M&E industry broadly (Nalhe, 2020).

As per Part III of the CALPRA, producers of television shows, advertisements, or films need to comply with a longer list of requirements that are meant to ensure fair working conditions for the child under the age of 14 years. This includes being accountable to the DM in terms of reporting on working conditions for the child artist (Kumar, 2019). The Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Rules (CALPRR), 1988 (MoLE, 1988) has specific provisions that account for children employed in artistic pursuits, while ensuring that overall there is no emotional, physical, or social risk to children in general.

The NCPCR issued certain guidelines in 2010 regarding children working in Television Serials, Reality Shows and Advertisements in India (NCPCR, 2011). These guidelines covered the content of programmes involving children, defining age-related norms, child protection and supervision, ensuring the physical conditions and safety of children, terms and conditions for parental / guardian consent, ensuring the education of child artists, and for setting up regulatory and monitoring mechanisms.

BACKGROUND

In addition to that, there is an independent and self-regulatory body, the Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC), set up by the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) in June 2011 for non-news general entertainment channels (GECs) (IBF, 2011). The BCCC was set-up in compliance with the mandate by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MoIB) for regulatory processes as well as grievance redressal of GECs. It has also laid down certain guidelines in the interest of and to regulate the employment of children and the manner in which they are depicted in the audio-visual industry in India. These guidelines set out principles and ethical practices that service providers need to conform to, under the Programme Code prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulations) Act, 1995, irrespective of the medium / platform used for broadcasting the programme.

National Estimates of Child Artists

As per the Census of 2011, there are approximately 10.1 million working children in India. Apart from the global incidence of child labour in industrial work, there is no data that explicitly identifies the number of children employed in the M&E sector. Part of this report is dedicated to identifying a reasonable estimate of the number of child artists in India. Figures 1–3 below show the number of individuals engaged in the artistic sector (across age groups) from the Census (2011) data. The main activity, as per the definition in Census, refers to “those who worked for at least 180 days in the preceding 12 months” at the time of data collection. Marginal workers are therefore those who have worked less than 180 days in the past 12 months at the time of the Census (MoSPI, 2016). An important assumption for this study is that child artists are more likely to fall under the latter category (marginal worker) than as the main worker given that a majority of them are assumed to be enrolled in school at the time of being child artists. Thus, enumerators are likely to capture their data as marginal workers rather than main workers, although this claim remains to be verified empirically.

BACKGROUND

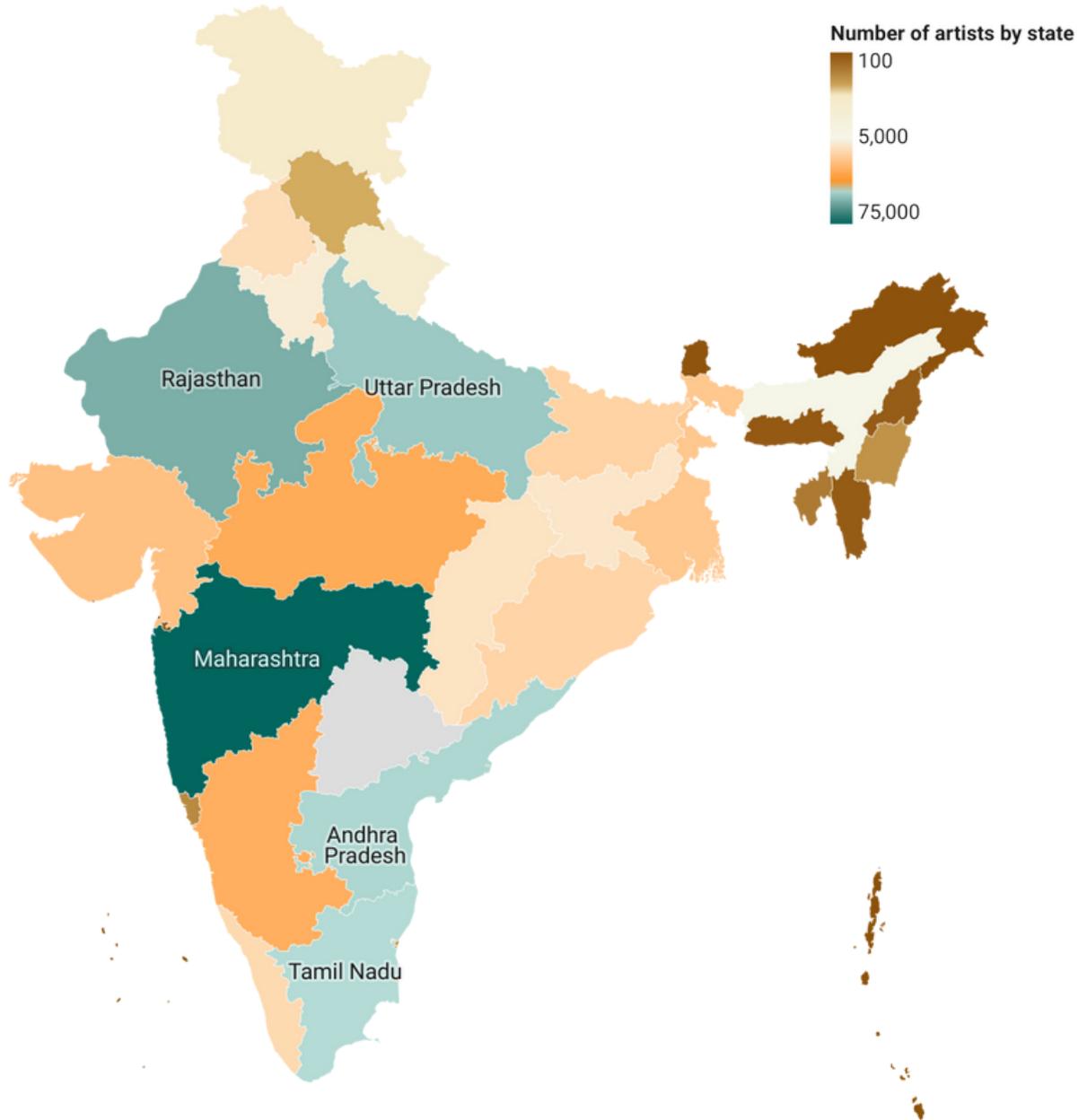


Figure 1: Number of Workers Employed in Artistic Activities as the Main Activity
 Source: Census of India (2011)

BACKGROUND

Note: The darker shades indicate a number higher than the previous group in the legend.

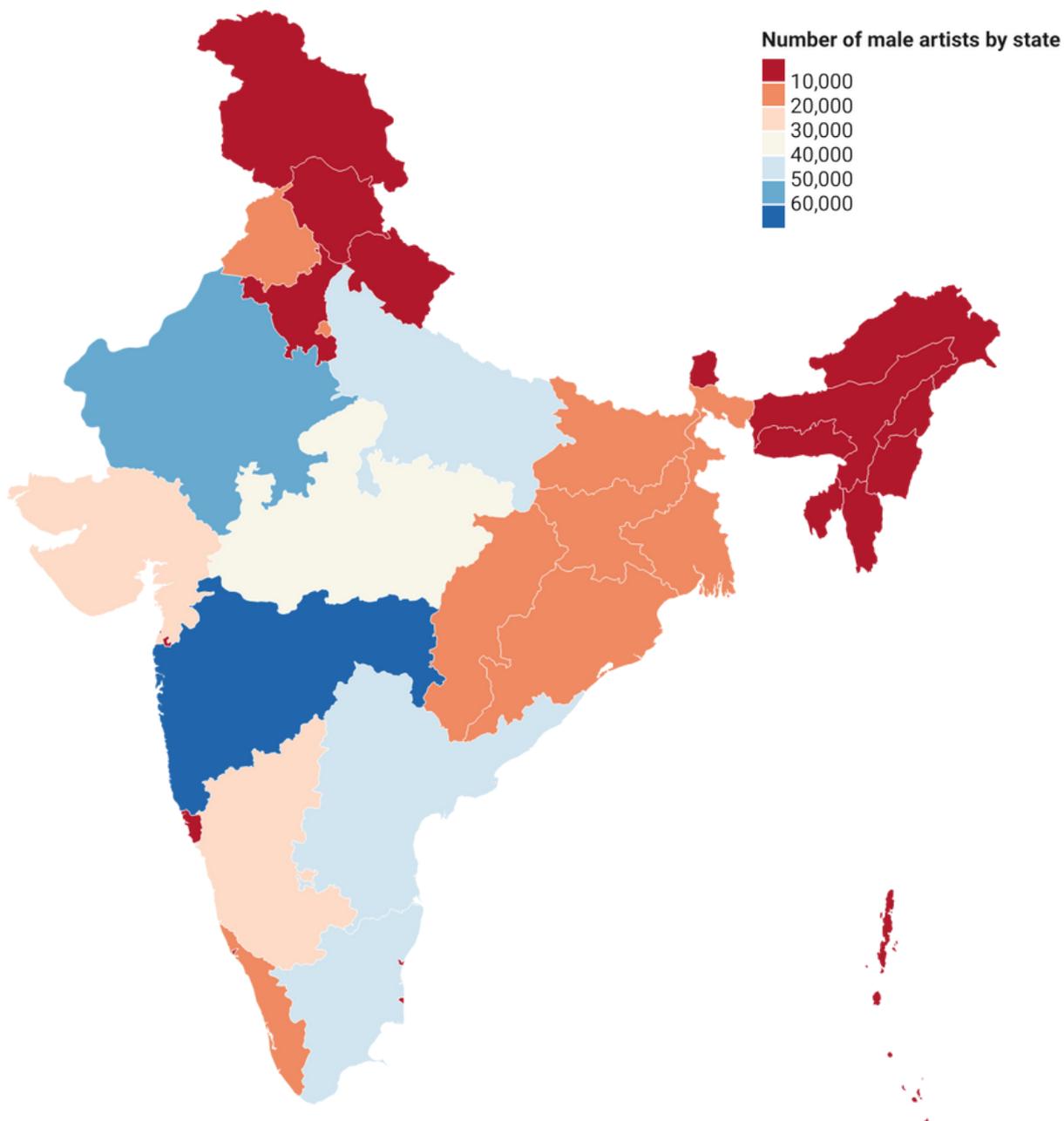


Figure 2: Number of Male Workers Employed in Artistic Activities as the Main Activity

Source: Census of India (2011)

Note: Where data is not available, the region is not presented in the map.

BACKGROUND

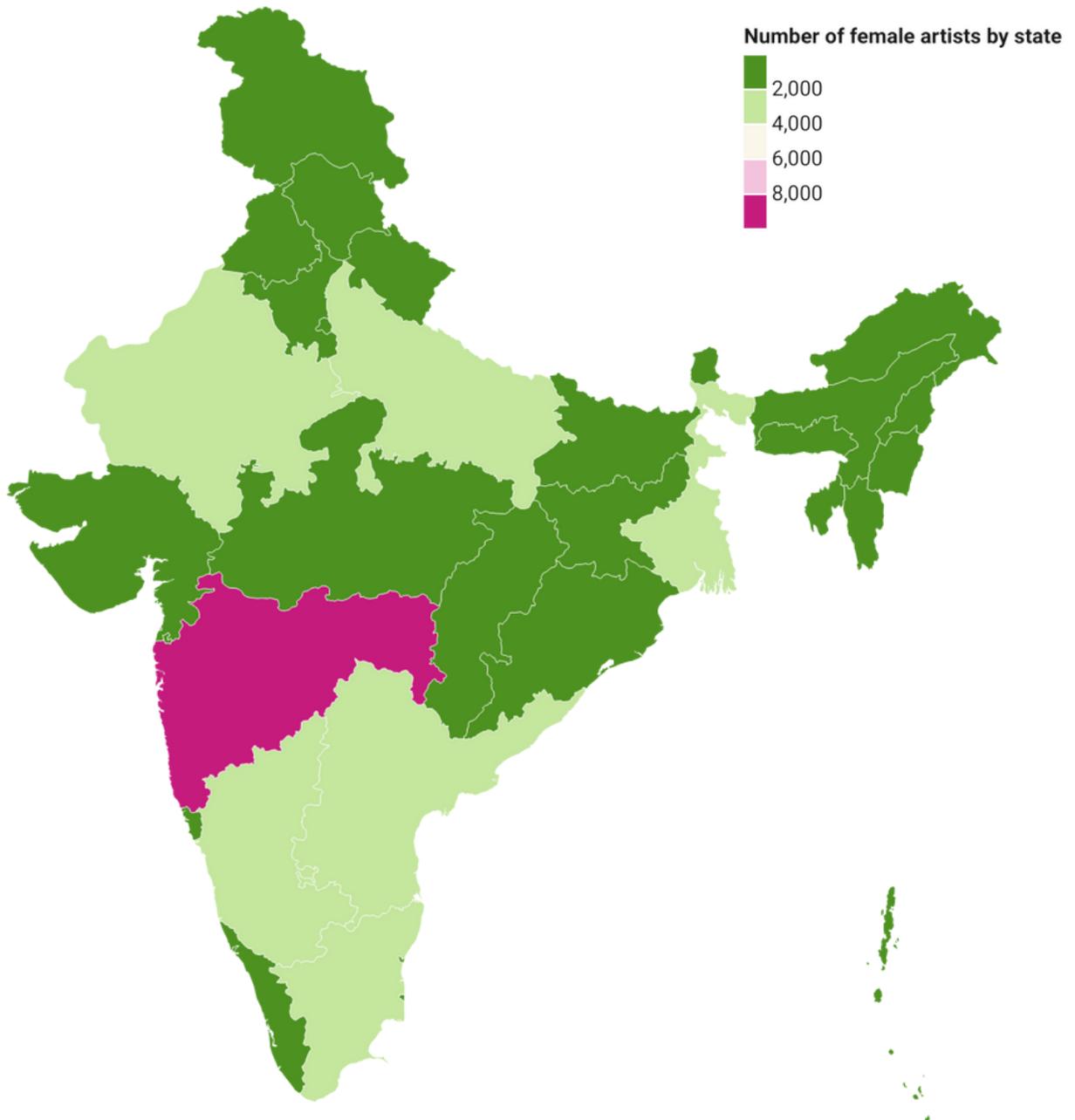


Figure 3: Number of Female Workers Employed in Artistic Activities as the Main Activity

Source: Census of India (2011)

Note: Where data is not available, the region is not presented in the map.

BACKGROUND

Current Scenario: What do we know about Child Artists working in Films and Television?

There are very few accounts of the lives of child artists in India, with a notable exception being the anecdotal evidence in a news report by Al Jazeera. This report encapsulated the primary data on the lives of child artists who work in daily soaps. Reportedly, the treatment of children on film sets has been abysmal, such as young children having been fed coffee and sugary drinks late at night to keep them awake. 'Outstanding students' and 'understanding schools' were common refrains among parents, when asked about whether working in films and television has interrupted the education of their children (Gill and Dias, 2015).

A report by NFX Digital stated that there is a growing concern amongst non-governmental organisations and civil society representatives, about the treatment of children on television, film, and advertisement sets. While some filmmakers clearly drew the line on working with children, others expressed concern that child artists risk missing out on their education in order to participate in the cut-throat world of Indian entertainment. This is not just the case in films and television, but also in the world of advertising, where there is often high demand for casting children to sell products (NFX Digital, 2019).

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) concluded their research titled "Report of the Pilot Research Project on Children Working in Artistic and Cultural Activities" in 2011 and adopted a similar approach as this study. The report recommended that both the legislative and the policy framework need to take children's special needs and developmental characteristics into consideration at the time of formulation. This referred to arranging work on the set so as not to interfere with the child's schooling, ensuring that those in the child's work environment are sensitive in their communication (not just with child actors / artists, but with others as well), and assigning jobs and roles appropriate to the age of the child, among many other suggestions (ILO, 2011).

STUDY OBJECTIVES

The growth in the M&E industry has resulted in an increased engagement of child artists in television serials, reality shows and advertisements. Even Though there are legislations and rules governing child artists and their working conditions, there is limited information available about the ground reality.

Therefore, this study aims to:

- Provide a preliminary empirical estimate of the size of the child artists sector in Mumbai, India, and identify the various stakeholders involved, and their concerns and interests.
- Explore the viewpoints and perceptions of these stakeholders, including parents of child artists, former child artists, casting agencies, producers / directors, guilds and associations, and acting academies.
- Formulate recommendations in the context of existing legislations and guidelines on children working in artistic enterprises, so as to ensure safe working conditions for child artists and take into account concerns and recommendations from all stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY

In order to facilitate effective implementation of the legislation concerning child artists, regulatory mechanisms need to be supported by both quantitative and qualitative information on child artists. For the purpose of this study, the terms 'child artist' and 'child actor' are used interchangeably but should not be taken to imply that all child artists are actors, as they could be employed in other performing arts such as dance and music, to name a few. As we note below, secondary data is less clear on this distinction, but the qualitative data collected is focused largely on child artists engaged in acting in films, and television. However, before applying such a mixed-methods approach to the problem at hand, the study undertook extensive secondary research to first provide quantitative estimates of the following variables.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

QUANTITATIVE DATA

The ratio of child artists to all artists in India, largely restricted to urban samples. A starting point for this investigation was via various online casting portals and classifieds that contained detailed postings of artist profiles for hire. These often included child artist profiles (male and female, under 15 years of age), as well as artists from all other age groups. Using web scraping tools, the total number of profiles listed on these portals was extracted and compiled into a dataset. For each portal, the dataset contained information on the number of child artist profiles and the number of all other artist profiles (disaggregated by gender). A caveat to be added here relates to the possibility that some profiles on such portals may be inactive, fake, or not belonging to artists. Thus, the possibility of over-reporting is possible in these estimates. Additionally, there could be cross-posting of the same profiles across web portals, potentially resulting in over-reporting.

The ratios for child artists (male) to total artists (male) and child artist (female) to total artists (female) was computed from this data. For the final estimation of the ratio, data from the two largest portals was retained – BollywoodHunts and Page3Artist (5). The ratios that were estimated from this data were then applied to the total number of artists working in India from two data sources – the Census data for 2011 and the Media & Entertainment Skills Council (MESC) projections data for 2017. As per the MESC, there are approximately 248,600 individuals employed in M&E in films (across India), and 280,400 employed in television, not accounting for any overlap between the two sectors (i.e., employees who work in both film and television). Of these, 19 per cent in the film and 4 per cent in television are actors (Jain et al., 2016). Thus, the MESC data being more recent may be understood to capture a larger number of child artists, but the estimations on the Census data can be considered to be more a broad-based measure.

This report uses data from the Sixth Economic Census conducted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India between January 2013 and April 2014 (MoSPI, 2016). The Economic Census surveys all establishments in India and covers those with employed / hired workers and those without.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

The establishment's main activity is categorised into a sector, and for the purposes of this study, the most relevant sector is "arts, entertainment, sports & amusement and recreation (excluding illegal gambling and betting activities)". Although this is not an accurate indicator of only those establishments working in the M&E industry, it does provide a larger estimate of the upper bound for the number of casting agencies, production houses, and acting academies in India.

Our study supplements this information from official government records with publicly available information on the number of production houses, casting agencies, and acting academies listed via heavily used online portals such as Justdial, Quikr, and Sulekha (6). There is additional data on the number of production houses collated from memberships in larger film associations and guilds, which are used to extrapolate the overall number of firms highlighted in the 6th Economic Census data.

Sampling

The study first undertook a stakeholder mapping exercise to better understand the domain of child artists in India. In this process, the study team identified five major stakeholders:

- **Acting Academies:** Establishments that primarily engage with child artists (or budding child artists) with the intention to train them in acting or other performing arts skills.
- **Guilds / Associations:** A collective (formally registered as a trust, a trade union, or a company) that seeks to represent and safeguard interests of producers, directors, or artists.
- **Former Child Artists / Parents of Child Artists:** Key stakeholders who were engaged previously as child artists, as well as parents of children who are actively engaged in artistic work in the M&E industry.
- **Producers / Directors:** Filmmakers who are key employers of children in artistic endeavours such as advertisements, films, television serials, and other formats. Producers are largely involved in financing and operational aspects of the project, whereas Directors are largely involved in the creative and technical process.

Casting Agencies / Casting Agents: Agents (individuals or companies) that specialise in placing child artists into appropriate forms of work, and connecting producers/directors and other stakeholders with child artists judged to be suitable for their work.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

All stakeholders (except parents of child artists) were identified using online search and contact details available in the public domain. A mix of snowball and convenience sampling was used for all stakeholders (including parents of child artists and former child artists). While approaching the relevant stakeholders, a snowball sampling method was used to access additional stakeholders to meet sample requirements. The study's aim was to sample five individuals or organisations from each stakeholder category and reach out to at least five parents of child artists. However, there were substantial challenges in identifying and engaging with stakeholders, and as a result the study documents findings from the truncated sample. The details of the sample can be found below in Table 1.

Table 1: Interviews with Stakeholders

S. No.	Stakeholder	No.
1	Acting Academies	2
2	Associations / Guilds	1
3	Producers / Directors	6
4	Former Child Artists	2
5	Parents of Child Artists	5

Qualitative Data

Qualitative data in the form of narratives from various stakeholders was collected in the city of Mumbai. The rationale behind conducting this study in the city of Mumbai was that the city is the epicentre of the entertainment industry in the country. Since this study is the first of its kind that aims to explore the conditions in which child artists work in films and television, Mumbai was the first choice for the same.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

Sample characteristics

1. The first category of stakeholders to be interviewed were directors. Out of the six directors and producers who were interviewed, three had extensive experience working in the capacity of Assistant Director (AD), of which two had worked extensively in the area of advertisements. The fourth interviewee in this category of stakeholders was a casting agent who had worked extensively with children. She also had extensive experience in the capacity of an AD mostly with overseas production houses. Further, two other directors who work with films, tele-serials, and web series were interviewed.
 2. The second category constituted of parents of child artists. Five individuals in this category were interviewed, of which one interview was with the parent of a child artist who had formerly been a participant at a reality show and had also played a central role in a feature film. Parents of other child artists who had been part of well-reputed feature films, tele-serials as well as advertisements were also interviewed for the study.
 3. Cine & TV Artistes' Association (CINTAA) is the only actors union that has been recognised by the government and hence it is the only union considered in the study. There were five members of the Executive Committee of CINTAA who were present for the interview. These members were also actors who are presently working in the industry and have had experience of working with child artists.
 4. Two former child artists were interviewed so as to gain the perspective of a child artist for the benefit of this research.
 5. Finally, one representative, each from two acting academies, were interviewed.
- The above-mentioned categories of stakeholders and the diverse areas that the child artists work in were considered to provide a multi-faceted perspective of the lives and the conditions that they work in, across the entertainment industry.

Instruments

There were five sets of questionnaires used, one for each category of stakeholder (see Appendices). The items in these questionnaires were based on the themes obtained from the CALPRA, 1986 and the NCPCR guidelines. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and specific questions were only used as a thematic reference to guide conversations with stakeholders in an unfolding manner.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

Ethical considerations

1. At the beginning of each interview, participants were asked for their consent to use the data gathered from the interviews for the benefit of the research. They were also asked to sign a statement for Monk Prayogshala and CRY in this respect. There was also a statement of informed consent that all participants agreed to prior to the commencement of the interview.
2. Participants were also given the option of choosing anonymity; this implied that they would not be named for what they said while being quoted in the study.
3. For the interviews that were remotely conducted (over the phone, Skype, etc.), same procedure with the consent and permissions were followed virtually.

A majority of stakeholders sampled, did not complete their scheduled interviews due to lack of time or scheduling conflicts. Additional efforts were made to visit stakeholders at their offices or other locations to ensure consistency in data collection. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Monk Prayogshala prior to the commencement of data collection.

FINDINGS

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

There is very little data available specific to the number of child artists in India. As a result, estimates here come with caveats and limitations that can be improved by making more granular data available. A sample of seven casting agencies that contained a total of 41,392 profiles of artists online (across India), of which 24.9 per cent were classified as child actors under the age of 15 (7). There were nearly 3,752 profiles of female child actors listed on these casting agency portals, and 4,642 profiles of male child actors. As mentioned previously, there may be fake or inactive profiles on these portals, potentially skewing the ratio upward or downward. Given that there is no indication of the quantum of such profiles on the portals, the estimates may be noisy. However, the estimates presented in this study are a range, rather than a definite figure (see Table 2).

On some portals, there were clearly more child-centric casting profiles than others. Taking the two largest casting agency portals, the study finds that the share of child actors in the total number of actors listed is approximately 12.2 per cent on average. The portal search also suggests that 8.7 per cent of all male actors are child actors, and 15.7 per cent of all female actors are under the age of 18. It is to be noted that these figures do not account for potential double-counting in listings or omission of child artists from the online listings (i.e., children who may be working as artists but do not post their profiles online). There is some data from Census (2011) that we could use for those working as “other professionals” who are under the age of 15.

The study can thus potentially use this preliminary estimate of the share of child actors in the acting and entertainment industry to extrapolate a measure of the total number of child artists in India. The Census (2011) figure for the number of individuals employed in the broad category (NIC code 9001) of “drama, music, and entertainment” as their main activity is 491,257 for males and 38,168 for females across all groups

FINDINGS

The number of individuals reporting work as marginal workers in this sector is much smaller at 130,802, of which 116,670 are male and 14,132 are female. From the analysis of the ratios of child artists to all artists listed in casting agency websites, the total number of child artists are estimated to be in the range of 6,059 (MESC, 2014) and 12,334 (Census, 2011). The estimated number of child artists can be found in Table 2, alongside CIs for the same on the basis of sample sizes from online portals.

Table 2: Number of Child Artists in India

Category		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Marginal Workers (Census 2011 data)		12,334	27,939
	2% Margin of Error, 99% CI		
<i>Of which:</i>			
	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>
	10,121	21,468	2,213
			6,471
	2% Margin of Error, 95% CI		3% Margin of Error, 95% CI
Category		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
MESC		6,059	14,574
	2% Margin of Error, 95% CI		
<i>Of which:</i>			
	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>
	2,160	5,196	3,899
			9,378
	1% Margin of Error, 99% CI		3% Margin of Error, 95% CI

T Source: Authors' calculations based on Census (2011) and MESC (2014) data for India.

Notes: Refer to assumptions made above in deriving these estimates in Section 3; CI: Confidence Interval.

Using the ratios derived from the casting agency listings, we estimated the number of male child artists to be between 2,160 and 10,121 and female child artists to be in the range of 2,213 and 3,899.

FINDINGS

ESTIMATION OF NUMBER ESTABLISHMENTS

The Sixth Economic Census finds that there are a total of 242,495 establishments in India falling under the broad category of “arts entertainment, sports & amusement and recreation” of which 120,690 are located in urban areas. Additionally, data on Self-help Groups (SHGs), Cooperatives, and Public Sector Units (PSUs) are excluded (8) from these figures to arrive at the overall figure of 94,833 establishments in this broad sector. Within this broad sector, data from online portals and classifieds suggest that the number of acting academies in India lie between 525 and 943, of which approximately 355 specifically mentioned tutoring for children’s acting and talents. Thus, we can consider that on an average, about 37.6 per cent to 67.6 per cent of all acting academies offer services specifically aimed at child artists.

Data collected from memberships in professional organisations and guilds for 2018 show that there are between 2,908 and 5,917 production houses in India of varying sizes. For example, the lower bound of this estimate is derived from the total number of members of the Indian Motion Pictures Producers’ Association (IMPPA, 2019), whereas the upper bound of the measure is estimated from the maximum number of unique listings on Justdial for production houses. The data on casting agencies from online portals finds that on average there are 395 casting agencies involved across the industry (not just those involved with child artists).

Taken together, the upper bound of these estimates (taking the largest values possible) suggest that nearly 7.7 per cent of all establishments surveyed in the Sixth Economic Census are captured under the broad domain of casting agencies, production houses, and acting academies. A caveat to note here is that it is likely that some acting academies may fall under the separate category of ‘education’ under establishment type, which this study is unable to account for.

8- We assume here that it is statistically infrequent for an acting academy, casting agency, or production house to be set up as a SHG, PSU, or cooperative society. This is on the basis of observing the typical establishment mode of a large fraction of these entities, which are usually as partnerships, for-profit entities, limited private companies, or trusts.

FINDINGS

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

1. WORKING HOURS FOR CHILD ARTISTS (9)

Stakeholders	Findings
1. Coaching Centres / Academies	The coaching centres and academies do not dictate terms for the child artists' working hours as they are decided by producers and directors.
1. Guilds / Associations	<p>During the interview with the guild, it was mentioned that although standard television contracts are for 12 hours per day, often the child artists are made to work for around 13-14 hours a day by the production houses because the guardians often do not interfere in the scheduling.</p> <p>One of the complaints filed with the association was regarding the working hours of the child artists, which is often anything between 12 and 17 hours. It also included grievances about disregard of the production houses for the school schedules of the children.</p>
1. Parents	Parents mentioned that they come to an agreement with the production house they are working with that their child will only work on the weekends and shoot only from 11 AM to 6 PM.
1. Producers / Directors	<p>It was mentioned that the shooting schedule is usually eight hours daily for a six-day week but there is an understanding that sometimes the shifts of eight hours may stretch to 12 hours or even to 16 hours. If the child is the protagonist of the film, she / he is required to shoot for 25 days out of the 30-day shoot schedule. Independent production houses are usually strict about following rules and procedures set out by the laws governing child artists.</p> <p>The timings of the shift also vary with the age of the child artists. For example, the general understanding is that if a child is 2-3 years of age, their sleep patterns are flexible as opposed to older child artists. The work shifts for older child artists are generally stretched for 12 hours a day with due parental permission. It was also mentioned that the contract between parents and producers has clauses that do not allow the parent or the child artist to refuse shooting for 12 hours straight.</p>

9- CALPRR, 1988 limits the working hours of children to not more than five hours in one day and further mandates a rest period of not less than one hour after three hours of work i.e., a workday not longer than six hours which includes a one hour break.

FINDINGS

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

2. ENSURING THE EDUCATION OF CHILD ARTISTS (10)

Stakeholders	Findings
1. Coaching Centres / Academies	Coaching classes conduct courses for children after their school hours. Hence, they have no role in ensuring formal education for child artists.
2. Guilds / Associations	Though guilds and associations are autonomous bodies, they also act as the watchdogs for ensuring the safeguards for all the cine artists including child artists at their respective workplaces. As these guilds receive all kinds of complaints, it has been observed by them that a lot of child artists withdraw from their formal education after getting employment in the industry. Since education is looked at as the means to get employment in the future, when child artists get employment at a young age, their parents feel that it is their craft as an artist that needs to be worked on rather than their formal education.
3. Parents	While all parents unanimously admitted to the importance of formal education in principle, however, on triangulating the data that were gathered, it was brought forth that there have been times when the parents have prioritised the shoot above education for monetary purposes. From the data, the general understanding is that either the parents or the production houses are responsible for ensuring the continuity of the child artists in the formal education, and in the absence of both, there is no third party that is responsible for the same.
4. Producers / Directors	As most of the production houses understand the importance of formal education in principle, they make an effort to design their schedule in such a way that children do not miss their school which then disrupts the continuity of their school syllabus. If it is a shorter schedule, they design their schedule in a way that the shoot is done over the weekend. Skipping a day or two occasionally is not frowned upon either by the production house or the parents.

10- As per Rule 2C(1)(d) of the CALPRR, 1988, appropriate facilities for the education of the child are to be arranged so as to ensure that there is no discontinuity from their lessons in school and no child shall be allowed to work consecutively for more than twenty seven days.

FINDINGS

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARENTAL / GUARDIAN CONSENT (11)

Stakeholders	Findings
1. Coaching Centres / Academies	As coaching centres train child artists for different roles, their general mandate is to get a declaration form signed by the parents. These forms consist of basic information such as age proof, medical certificates, etc. to ensure that their documentation is in place.
2. Guilds / Associations	It was observed that the parents did not have many reservations about letting their children work overtime. This is also evident from their (parents') willingness to have their children available for odd shooting hours and skipped school-days. Oftentimes, these child artists are the sole breadwinners of their families which leads to increasing their vulnerabilities / exposure to facing exploitation in the work set up.
3. Parents	The contracts signed between the parents / guardians and the production houses generally contain nuances about the payment and shooting hour requirements of the artists. It has been expressed by parents of child artists that the contracts are made to only safeguard the convenience of the producers and none but one has ever had alterations made to the contract to serve their convenience.
4. Producers / Directors	Interviews with producers revealed that unless the parents of the child artists demand specific contracts or agreements from the producer, there is nothing in terms of a formal contract or agreement that is part of the regular procedure between a parent / guardian of the child artist and the producer.

11- As per Rule 2C(1)(b) of CALPRR, 1988, any producer of any audio-visual media production or any commercial event involving the engagement of a child, shall involve a child in engagement only after obtaining the permission from the DM of the district where the activity is to be performed, and shall furnish to the DM before starting the activity an undertaking in Form C and the list of child participants, consent of parents or guardian, as the case may be, name of the individual from the production or event who shall be responsible for the safety and security of the child, and ensure that all screening of his films and television programmes shall be made with a disclaimer specifying that if any child has been engaged in the shooting, then, all the measures were taken to ensure that there has been no abuse, neglect or exploitation of such child during the entire process of the shooting. As per Rule 2C(1)(c) of CALPRR, 1988, the undertaking referred to in clause (b) shall be valid for six months and shall clearly state the provisions for education, safety, security and reporting of child abuse in consonance with the guidelines and protection policies issued by the Central Government from time to time for such purpose including: (i) ensuring facilities for physical and mental health of the child; (ii) timely nutritional diet of the child; (iii) safe, clean shelter with sufficient provisions for daily necessities; and (iv) compliance to all laws applicable for the time being in force for the protection of children, including their right to education, care and protection, and against sexual offences.

FINDINGS

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

4. CHILD PROTECTION AND SUPERVISION (12)

Stakeholders	Findings
1. Coaching Centres / Academies	Coaching centres do not have a formal child protection policy (CPP) as there is no such mandate for the same. The only safety measure that is emphasised upon is that children are only allowed to leave the premises once their parents / guardians come to pick them up.
2. Guilds / Associations	<p>CINTAA expressed its disappointment at the way child artists are treated on the sets, and that they have witnessed the inconsiderate and inappropriate practices of the directors while shooting with children. For instance, there have been times when measures have been taken like pinching a child to get him to cry in a 'realistic' manner. There have also been instances when child artists have been made to continue working on painkillers after grave injuries.</p> <p>In addition to that, it was also mentioned that there has been a lack of implementation of the existing laws governing child artists due to lack of accountability. CINTAA believes that the government must take responsibility for implementation of laws, such as ensuring the presence of a government representative on sets involving child artists to make sure that all the guidelines regarding working hours, education, safety, etc. are followed by the production unit.</p>
3. Parents	The parents of the child artists generally accompany the children at the shoots. In cases where parents or guardians are not able to accompany the child artists, there is generally someone on the sets always present who looks only after the necessities of the child. While this is prevalent, it is sometimes not present on low budget shoots.
4. Producers / Directors	There is a general verbal agreement between the parents and the production house regarding who is responsible for child artists on the sets. Usually, with smaller production houses, it's not possible to assign someone dedicated to look after child artists on the sets due to budget constraints. Although in bigger production houses there are dedicated persons who take care of child artists on the sets. But often the people in charge of child artists are neither trained nor adept at taking care of children as reported by one of the ADs, although there are people who they can talk to and converse with, if face any challenge / issue.

FINDINGS

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

5. ENSURING THE PHYSICAL CONDITIONS AND SAFETY OF CHILDREN (13)

Stakeholders	Findings
1. Coaching Centres / Academies	Interviews with the coaching centres did not reveal specific mention of ensuring safe physical conditions for the child artists. It is possibly because the coaching centres do not engage in risky / potentially dangerous physical stunts or conditions.
2. Guilds / Associations	CINTAA interviewees revealed that directors need to be more responsible and considerate to the needs and well-being of the children on the sets. It has been mentioned that CINTAA has received complaints about sexual misconduct on the sets in the past. For such complaints, they have aided in filing suits for individuals who have approached the Association with complaints which may be legally actionable. However, CINTAA does not have the authority to enforce penalties; its functions are like that of a trade union.
3. Parents	There were varied responses from the parents when enquired about the physical conditions as well as the general safety of child artists on the sets. While some expressed their concerns over the long working schedules affecting the physical well-being of their children, others mentioned that sometimes the content is not age-appropriate. For example, acting in a scene where the child is shown in an abusive household can be detrimental to a child's mental health and oftentimes parents are not equipped to navigate through such uncomfortable terrains. Some parents also discussed that the process of audition and subsequent rejection faced by their children is demoralising. It was mentioned that medical services are readily available on the sets for physical safety of children; however, there are no such provisions for helping the child mentally or emotionally.
4. Producers / Directors	The general understanding on a film set is that child artists are always accompanied either by their parents or their local guardians. So, for any activity that includes involvement of child artists on the set, parental consent or the consent of the guardian is the first mandatory step. Some sets have separate guidelines for the crew, such as, the crew is not allowed to touch the children and one can only hold their hands on the set after their permission is sought. However, this varies from one production unit to the other. While some of the production houses are aware of both CALPRA, 1986 and the NCPCR guidelines, adherence to the same varies from one set to another.

FINDINGS

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

6. PAYMENT TOWARDS CHILD ENGAGEMENT (14)

Stakeholders	Findings
1. Coaching Centres / Academies	It was found that the coaching centres are neither involved in nor do they determine the remuneration of the child artists for their engagement in the entertainment industry.
2. Guilds / Associations	It was mentioned that the parents disregard the clause of the earnings of the child being put into fixed deposit or used for the purpose of her / his education. The office bearers of CINTAA also stated that they have come across instances wherein the income from the work done by the children is utilised by the parents as it is the only source of income for the entire family. This results in putting a lot of pressure on the child artist to work to generate recurring income.
3. Parents	Some of the parents mentioned that the amount and method of payment are mentioned in the contract which they signed with the production house. According to the standard payment procedure for children in TV serials, the payment is supposed to be done after 90 days, while for adults in TV serials it takes 45 days for the payment to be made. During the interview, it was mentioned that this is a long period for the child artist to be paid and it should be reduced.
4. Producers / Directors	As far as the payment to child artists for their engagement is concerned, the onus of how that payment is utilised is more on the parents and less on the producers. It was mentioned by some production houses that there have been instances where parents pressurised their children for working overtime. Such instances are common for families coming from outside the city (Mumbai) and from outside the film and television industry, as they are more prone to financial abuse owing to no or low awareness of the ways of the industry.

FINDINGS

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

7. REGULATORY AND MONITORING MECHANISMS (15)

Stakeholders	Findings
1. Coaching Centres / Academies	There was no mention of regulatory and monitoring mechanisms that the coaching centres were aware of.
2. Guilds / Associations	As CINTAA is an autonomous body, it does not have the power vested in it by the State or the Union Government to reprimand parties that do not adhere to the provisions mentioned in the CALPRA, 1986. It then becomes the responsibility of the State to ensure that provisions of the law are followed and child artists are linked with necessary child protection mechanisms.
3. Parents	While most parents were aware that in case of issues with payments or unacceptable working conditions, they can approach CINTAA, but they also expressed their dissatisfaction regarding the functioning of the guild. For instance, the parents mentioned that they have never seen or heard of a representative from any regulatory body visiting the sets to monitor or inspect the working conditions or any other provisions being adhered to.
4. Producers / Directors	<p>It was mentioned that if a strict legal protection policy existed, then there would have been consequences in case of any wrongdoings / mishaps. There are however, some compliance documents signed such as insurance policy documents in which children on the sets are factored in. Apart from that, there are other documents that are signed between the parents and the producers.</p> <p>There is a stark power imbalance between the production houses and the parents of the child artists due to which parents do not report any wrong-doing.</p>

FINDINGS

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

8. CONTENT OF THE PROGRAMMES INVOLVING CHILDREN (16)

Stakeholders	Findings
1. Coaching Centres / Academies	Although the coaching centres do not have a say in the content of the programmes that involve children, they do not encourage violence or any inappropriate gestures during the training sessions they conduct with children.
2. Guilds/Associations	During the interviews, it was mentioned that the environment on the sets is not good for the development of a child and that the language used on the sets is inappropriate for children.
3. Parents	Some of the parents expressed concern over their children working with content related to abuse, death and any depiction of traumatic situation that the child will not be able to cope with or watch themselves. Additionally, most of the parents interviewed were opposed to reality shows as these are considered to have adverse effects on their children and considered to be time consuming.
4. Producers / Directors	As production houses are wary of retrospective actions and the subsequent fines that can be imposed on them under the law, they make it a point to brief parents of the child artists about the script which is then explained to the child artist. It was also mentioned that child artists are hired for commercials and programmes which are age appropriate for children and not for commercials and programmes not meant for them.

16- CALPRA, 1986 does not make a reference to the content of the program involving child artists. However, the NCPCR guidelines do reference age-appropriate content for programmes, serials, and reality shows. The guidelines state "consideration has to be given to the child's age, maturity, emotional or psychological development, and sensitivity". The Child Actor Code put forth by the Producers Guild of India also references adult content that no child should be made part of.

CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

Summary of Key Findings

This exploratory study presented the first look at child artists in India, using a mixed methods approach. Using a mix of official data sources from the Census of India (2011), the Sixth Economic Census of India, and the MESC, the study estimated a range for the number of child artists in India. This data was complemented by qualitative analyses that mapped various stakeholders of coaching centres / academies, producer's guilds / associations, parents of child artists, and producers / directors in Mumbai. In-depth structured interviews with these stakeholders helped uncover various themes that are central to the rights and status of child artists in Mumbai, and elsewhere. The findings suggest that there are various aspects in the lives of child artists that can be improved by improved regulation and articulation of specific policies. These are discussed in the following section.

WAY FORWARD

Creating a database of child artists

This study was exploratory in nature to attempt an estimate at the number of children working in the entertainment industry in Mumbai. However, a large scale study is needed to truly understand the magnitude and the gravity of working conditions of child artists. A database of all child artists must be created at the State as well as the Union level, jointly held by the MoWCD, MoLE, and MoE, in order to ensure convergence of efforts and ensuring children's safety and well-being.

Creating child protection policies, training and awareness generation to safeguard children's rights

- Creation of child protection policies for every production house as well as coaching centres, along with staff training to ensure its implementation would be critical to ensure that children's rights are duly protected. Child protection experts and / or CSOs can play a strong supportive role in creating child protection policies and conducting trainings on the same.
- Child rights awareness sessions along with mechanisms for grievance redressal available for reporting different violations may be conducted by CSOs in collaboration with CWCs to enable better reporting and information flow.

CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

Strengthening reporting and monitoring mechanisms to ensure adherence to the child labour laws

- While the Child Labour Amendment Rules, 2017 state that “the producer of any audio-visual media production or any commercial event involving the participation of a child, shall involve a child in participation only after obtaining the permission from the District Magistrate of the district where the activity is to be performed”, it does not explicitly mention the mechanism to monitor children’s safety and well-being. The Rules lay down norms for ensuring that children receive adequate rest, nutrition, minimum disruptions in education as well as their protection. Therefore, regular visits by the CWCs and information to the DM’s office could be a way to increase adherence to the law, and accountability from production houses.
- CINTAA being a trade union does not have the authority and the resources to put regulatory mechanisms pertaining to child protection in place. While CINTAA does act as the primary forum for such complaints, it would be more appropriate for CINTAA to forward such complaints to the CWCs as well as the NCPDR and SCPCR for appropriate action.

Terms and conditions for contract including parental / guardian consent

- As casting agents play a vital role in being the intermediary between the producer and the artist, they should ensure that the terms and conditions for parental / guardian’s consent should be duly mentioned in the contract.
- While preparing the contract between the production house and the party signing on behalf of the child artist, the clauses may be phrased in a manner that they are fair to all parties involved; however, safeguarding children’s rights must be paramount.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire for Producers / Directors

1. Respondent Information			
1.1	Survey ID		
1.2	Name of Respondent		
1.3	Designation of Respondent		
1.4	Name of Production House		
1.5	Contact Number		
1.6	Address		
1.7	Any Other Information (Optional)		
2. Interview Details			
2.1	Interviewed by	Name	Signature
2.2	Date of Interview	__/__/__	
2.3	Time of Interview	From: __: __ AM / PM To: __: __ AM / PM	
2.4	Place of Interview	1. Production Set 2. Production House Office 3. Other Specify _____	
3. Socio-demographic Details			
3.1	Gender (circle accordingly)	Male / Female / Other	
3.2	Age in completed years	_____ years	
3.3	Years of Experience in the current profile	_____ years/ _____ months	
We would like to ask you some questions about the work of the production house with child artists.			

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4.1	Could you please provide a description of the organisation you are associated with, including details of where it is primarily based, what type of content is produced, and the number of years it has been active.				
4.2	How many child artists did the production house hire in the last one year?				
	Average number of child artists hired	Age in Years	Male	Female	Total
		0-5			
		6-14			
		15-17			
4.3	What is the nature of the programme that you hire a child artist for? (TV Serials, Reality Shows or Advertisements). (Probe: Which type of programme requires most number of child artists? Children are usually interested to work in what programmes?)				
4.4	Do you specify the content of the programme in detail in the contract?				
4.5	Do you ask for an age proof from the parents when the contract is signed?				
4.6	What are the types of changes the parents usually ask for in the contract?				
4.7	What are the provisions for the child and the parents in case there is a breach in the contract or if the child's interest has been compromised on?				
4.8	Could you share a copy of the consent letter that is being signed by the parents / guardians?				
4.9a	Is there a child protection policy (CPP) in place? (Investigator: Ask for a copy)		Skip to 4.14 in case there is no CPP.		
4.9b	Who has drafted this policy?				
4.10	Do you require the CPP to be read and signed along with the contract for the participation of the child?				
4.11	How do you orient new staff at the production house with the CPP?				
4.12	Have trainings been conducted on CPP? If yes, how many in the last one year?				
4.13	Have other members on the set signed the CPP?				

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4.14	Does the production house ensure that the contract that you sign with child artists (parents / guardians) disclose the monitoring mechanism that is there to safeguard the best interest of the child?		
4.15	Who usually looks after child artists on the set?		
4.16	How many support staff are there exclusively for child artists?	Male	Female
4.17	What kind of training, if any, are the care-takers provided?		
4.18	How many children do each care-taker look after on the set? Are there different care-takers catering to different age-groups of children?		
4.19	In case a parent or a guardian could not be present on the sets with the child, and someone else comes to pick up the child from the set, how do you ensure they are authorised by the parent / guardian?		
4.20	How many hours a child artist shoot for and how many breaks are given to them? (Probe: How many hours does a shift last for?)		
4.21	How many days a child artist has to miss school for shooting? What is the measure that the production house takes so that the loss could be mitigated compensated for? (Probe: Ask if they shoot on weekends / afterschool hours to accommodate children?)		
4.22	At any given time, are child artists participating in more than one show / serial / advertisement or in more than one shift in a day? (Probe: What is the maximum number of shifts a child artist works in a day?)		
4.23a	Are any additional measures such as pick and drop facility provided if child artists work at odd timings like night shift, etc.?		
4.23b	If a child artist is traveling from out-of-town to the production set, do you provide facilities for boarding and lodging to the child and parents?		
4.24	Are these following facilities available on your sets? (circle accordingly)		
	i) Protection from (flickering) lights	Yes / No	Remarks:
	ii) Doctors in case of emergency	Yes / No	Remarks:

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	iii) Separate changing rooms/green rooms	Yes / No	Remarks:
	iv) Nutritious food and water facilities	Yes / No	Remarks:
	v) Recreational material and rest facilities	Yes / No	Remarks:
	vi) Psychologist / Counsellor	Yes / No	Remarks:
	Investigator: Please closely observe the studio / set and understand from the perspective of child security and safety and record your remarks. Is the studio well-lit and ventilated? What are the problematic areas of the studio that could cause possible harm to the child?		Remarks:
4.25	If the child artist is below six years of age, is there a provision of a registered nurse, counsellor and a midwife to cater to her / his needs?		
4.26	How many breastfeeding rooms are available for infants in the production house?		
4.27a	How do you assign work in the event of a child artist falling ill? Is there a provision to make concessions?		
4.27b	Do you provide refreshments and snacks to the child artists? What is the frequency of the refreshments that is being provided to them? What are the contents of it? What is the mechanism of quality control for the same?		
4.28	In the context of Reality Shows where the child is constantly being judged, what are the measures that have been taken to ensure the mental, emotional and intellectual well-being of the child?		
4.29	Are the judges on these Reality Shows briefed about how to communicate with children so as to make sure that their intellectual and emotional well-being is not being affected in a negative manner?		
4.30	If a scene or script demands that a child performs or enacts scenes or has dialogues that contain foul language or descriptions of age-inappropriate behaviour, how do you prepare the child for such a situation?		
4.31	Just in case, a child is not performing in the required manner, how do you convey the same to the child and her / his parents?		

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4.32a	Does the production house inform the DM about the child artists working in the production house?			
4.32b	How often do such information and other compliances have to be updated / renewed?			
4.32c	Are there any inspection visits by DM or by any other government authorities like SCPCR to production houses / sets where child artists are working?			
4.33	Does the concerned authority make provisions to ensure that the child artist is protected from every sort of injury that could be possible on the sets during or after shooting? Is the production house regularly inspected by the said monitoring body?			
4.34	Is there a different set of permissions required to produce shows / films / content that involves children? If yes, then what are those rules and do you adhere to the said rules?			
4.35	What kind of mechanism / procedure has been put in place, if any, to ensure no physical or sexual abuse of children takes place?			
4.36	What mechanisms have been put in place, if any, to address incidences of child abuse?			
4.37	What is the monitoring mechanism to ensure that the payment of the child artist is in safe hands and would reach her / him at the right age?			
4.38	<p>What is the fees paid to a child artist for one day's work? (Investigator: If they are paid on assignment basis or any other, please note details) What are the norms and rules regarding payments?</p>	Age in Years	Male	Female
		0-5		
		6-14		
		15-17		
		Remarks:		
4.39	Average Annual Revenue from hiring child artists last year?			
4.4	From your personal experience, what are the positive aspects of working with child artists?			

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4.41	From your personal experience, what are the negative aspects of working with child artists?
4.42	What are the changes you would like to see for the child artists' in the entertainment industry?
4.43	What are the fire and other safety compliances in place on production sets?

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Appendix B: Questionnaire for Parents / Guardians

1. Respondent Information					
1.1	Survey ID				
1.2	Name of Respondent				
1.3	Contact Number				
1.4	Address				
1.5	Any Other Information (Optional)				
2. Interview Details					
2.1	Interviewed by	Name:	Signature:		
2.2	Date of Interview	__/__/____			
2.3	Time of Interview	From: __:__ AM / PM To: __:__ AM / PM			
2.4	Place of Interview	1. Home 2. Production Set 3. Other Specify _____			
3. Socio-demographic Details					
3.1	Age in Years (completed)				
3.2	Gender (circle accordingly)	1. Male	2. Female	3. Others _____	
3.3	Highest Education Level Completed (Circle accordingly)	1. Did not attend school 2. Primary – Class 1-5 3. Upper Primary – Class 6-8 4. Secondary – Class 9-10 5. Higher Secondary – Class 11-12 6. Graduate and above 7. Other Specify _____			
4. Household Details					
4.1	Household Size		Male	Female	Total
		Children (0-17)			

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		Adults			
4.2	Religion (circle accordingly)	1. Hinduism 2. Islam 3. Christianity 4. Others Specify _____			
4.3	Social Group (circle accordingly)	1. Scheduled Tribe 2. Scheduled Caste 3. Other Backward Class 4. Others Specify _____			
4.4	Primary Economic Activity of the Household Head	1. Self-employment 2. Regular Wage/Salary 3. Casual Labour 4. Others Specify _____			
4.5	Secondary Economic Activity of the Household Head	1. Self-employment 2. Regular Wage/Salary 3. Casual Labour 4. No Secondary Activity 5. Others Specify _____			
4.6	Highest Education Level of Head of Household (circle accordingly)	1. Did not attend school 2. Primary – Class 1-5 3. Upper Primary – Class 6 -8 4. Secondary – Class 9-10 5. Higher Secondary – Class 11-12 6. Graduate and above 7. Other Specify _____			
4.7	Number of Earning Members		Male	Female	Total
		Adults			
		Children (0-17)			
4.8	Average Monthly Income of the Household	INR. _____			
4.9	Which is the home city of the family of the child?				
4.10	When did the family migrate to Mumbai? (Investigator: Please	_____ years ago			

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		ask only if home city is not Mumbai)								
Now I would like to ask you some questions about the child artists in your family.										
4.11	4.12	4.13	4.14	4.15	4.16	4.17	4.18	4.19	4.20	4.21
Child ID	Age (years)	Relation to the respondent (code A)	Gender (M / F / O)	Current Education Level	Years since artist	The primary medium of work (Code B)	Approx. monthly earnings (INR)	No. of projects completed in past 12 months	No. of monthly projects (on average)	No. of days of work per month
5.1	Why and how did your child / children get into this line of work? (Probe: Who has taken the decision for her / him/them to be a part of the entertainment business? Whom did they approach / who approached them?)									
5.2	What are the changes that has come about in your family and lifestyle since the day your child / children has entered into the entertainment business?									
5.3	What do you think are the positive aspects of your child / children being in the entertainment business? Could you please list at least three?									
5.4	What do you think are the negative aspects of your child/children being in the entertainment business? Could you please list at least three?									
5.5	In what way's your child's / children's school life is being impacted because of her / his / their engagement as a child artist?									
5.6	How has your child's/children's social life been impacted because of her / his / their engagement as a child artist?									
5.7	Could you describe how your child spends a typical working day? (Prompt: What are the types of activities they do and where do they go on a working day?)									
5.8	Is the content of the programme being made explicit / disclosed in the child's contract? (Probe: How much details about the programme are specified in the contract? Is there anything that is not disclosed?)									
5.9	Did the production house ask for the age proof of the child when your child was contracted for the programme?									

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5.10	When your child was contracted by the production house, did they ask for a medical certificate of the child?	
5.11	Were you comfortable with the content of the contract? If you were not comfortable with the contract, did the casting centre / producer leave any scope for changes? Is there room for negotiation with the casting centre / producer?	
5.12	Are you aware of the payment norms and rules for child artists' work? If yes, what are they? Did the contract specify them?	
5.13	Are you aware of the provisions that are in place in case there is a breach in the contract or if the child's interest has been compromised on? If yes, what are those?	
5.14	Could you briefly tell us three major things that were being mentioned in the consent letter? How clear were you when you signed the letter?	
5.15	Are the foreseeable mental, physical and psychological consequences (e.g., bullying) of the child's participation made explicit in the consent letter?	
5.16	Did you receive a copy of the CPP along with the contract letter? Have you read it? If yes, what did you understand by it?	Skip to 6.1 if there is no CPP.
5.17	Do you know if other members on the set where your child is working signed the CPP as they too are an important stakeholder in maintaining a child-friendly workplace for the child artist?	
Now I would like to ask some questions about the conditions of the set.		
6.1	Who takes care of the child on the set? (Probe: Does anyone from the family accompany the child always?)	
6.2	One care-taker on the set takes care of how many children? Are there different care-takers catering to different age-groups of children?	
6.3	Do you know what kind of training the care-takers have taken?	
6.4	For children below six years of age, is there a provision of a registered nurse, counsellor and a midwife to cater to her / his needs?	
6.5	For infants between 3-6 months, are there facilities for breastfeeding at the production set? If yes, is the condition for the same hygienic and proper?	
6.6a	Are the green rooms and the toilets gender bifurcated?	
6.6b	Are any refreshments and snacks given to the child artist on the set? What is the frequency of the refreshments that is being provided to them? What are the contents of it? Are you satisfied with the quality? Who provides the food?	

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6.7	Do you know how many hours that your child can shoot for at a time and the number of breaks that are required?
6.8	At any given time, is your child participating in more than one show / serial /advertisement or in more than one shift in a day?
6.9	Are any additional measures taken by the production houses such as pick and drop facility provided if your child is working at odd timings like night shift, etc.?
6.10	Do production houses make concessions (especially in the case of drama serials) if your child has fallen ill?
6.11	Have you ever tried talking to the production house about rescheduling shoots in case of illness or any other problem? What has been the response for the same?
6.12	If your child has taken up an assignment that requires her / him to sometimes work during school hours, how do you ensure that the school attendance of child performers is not affected due to their acting obligations? (Probe: For how many days of schools they miss in an average month and in the last month?)
6.13	In case you are not present on the sets with the child, and someone else has been sent for supervision, does the authority ensure that they carry a valid authorisation letter along with them?
6.14 a	Does the production house make provisions to ensure that your child is protected from every sort of injury that could be possible on the sets during or after shooting? If yes, could you list at least three?
6.14 b	Does the child travel outstation for shoots / auditions? How many such trips are undertaken in a month? (Probe: Ask about the different places they usually travel to and the farthest place they have travelled to)
6.14 c	Does the production house bear the travel costs and provide boarding / lodging facilities for the child?
6.15	In the context of Reality Shows and auditions where the child is constantly being judged, what are the measures that have been taken to ensure the mental, emotional and intellectual well-being of the child by you and by the production house?
6.16	Do the people on Reality Shows or people who audition children communicate appropriately with children so as to make sure that their intellectual and emotional well-being is not being affected in a negative manner?
6.17	a) Has your child ever performed a scene which is depicted to be physically and verbally abusive in nature? b) If yes, how comfortable were you and your child in that scene?

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	c) Did you counsel your child before/after that scene?
6.18	Who monitors the treatment of the child to prevent any aberration of the CPP? (Probe: For people from home and production house who monitor any aberration of the CPP, who are they?)
6.19	What kind of mechanism / procedure has been put in place, if any, to ensure no physical or sexual abuse of children takes place?
6.20	What mechanisms have been put in place, if any, to address incidences of child abuse?
6.21	What would be the changes you wish to see, as a parent for children working in the entertainment industry?

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Appendix C: Questionnaire for Coaching Centres

1. Respondent Information					
1.1	Survey ID				
1.2	Name of the Agency				
1.3	Name of the Respondent				
1.4	Respondent's Designation				
1.5	Contact Number				
1.6	Address				
2. Interview Details					
2.1	Interviewed by	Name:	Signature:		
2.2	Date of Interview	___/___/___			
2.3	Time of Interview	From: ___:___ AM/PM To: ___:___ AM/PM			
2.4	Place of Interview	1. Agency Office 2. Production Set 3. Other Specify _____			
3. Coaching Centre Details					
3.1	Year of incorporation of the centre				
3.2	Is your coaching centre registered as a company / institute? Is it formally recognised by any government body?				
3.3	Number of students in the last one year	Male	Female	Total	
3.4	Number of children in the last one year	Age in Years	Male	Female	Total
		0-5			

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		6-14		
		15-17		
3.5	Number of Instructors who work with children currently	Male	Female	Total
3.6	Is there any specific focus on child artists? If yes, please describe?			
3.7	What are the services provided by your centre to child artists?	1. Coaching of children 2. Arranging auditions 3. Child artist casting 4. Any other (specify) _____		
3.8	Is there any eligibility criteria or any pre-auditions for a child to be coached in the centre?			
3.9	Do you ask for any age proof when you enrol a child artist in your coaching centre?			
3.10	Do you take a medical certificate from the parents to ensure that the child artist is in good health?			
3.11	What is the content of the consent letter that is being signed by the parents / guardians? Do you offer the option of tweaking the letter from the parents' end if they feel that there needs to be changes? What changes do parents generally want – can you give some examples?			
3.12	What is the content of the coaching programme? What are the aspects in which children are trained?			
3.13	What is the nature of the programme that child artists from your academy get placed in? (TV Serial, Reality Shows, Advertisements, etc.). (Probe: Which type of programme do the children get placed most in?)			
3.14	What are the timings of the coaching centre? (Probe: See if the classes are timed in a way that children don't have to miss school)			
3.15	How many hours does a child artist spend at your centre? How many breaks are provided to them during a day? (Get duration and number of breaks)			
3.16	Do you provide refreshments and snacks to the child artist? What is the frequency of the refreshments that is being provided to them? What are the contents of it? What is the mechanism of quality control for the same?			

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3.17	What are the recreational items made available for the children to use during breaks?
3.18	How many toilets does this premise have? How many are for girls and how many are for boys?
3.19	What is the source of drinking water for the child artists?
3.20	Is there a provision of fire extinguisher in your premises? If yes, then how many fire extinguishers are there?
3.12	What are the provisions made to ensure that the child artist is protected from every sort of injury that could be possible at your centre while practising? (Investigator: Please take a look around and understand for yourself what are the precautionary measures that are being ensured for the safety of the child)
3.13	In case a parent or a guardian could not be present to pick their children from the centre, and someone else has been sent for supervision, do you ensure that they carry a valid authorisation letter along with them?
3.14	How do you manage auditions for a scene with the child artist that depicts domestic abuse or violence? How do you prepare the child for such scenes?
3.15	If a scene or script demands that a child perform or enact scenes or have dialogues that contain foul language or descriptions of age-inappropriate behaviour, how do you prepare the child for such a situation?
3.16	What is the success rate of the coaching centre? What is the success rate your organisation guarantees to parents? How do you ensure that this success rate is met? (Alternatively: How many children who have been trained in your coaching centre, have got film or television / advertising projects? Do you give a guarantee to parents when they enrol their students here?)
3.17	How do you prepare children for rejection in auditions? (Prompts: What do you tell children when they have been rejected? If they need to be consoled, how is that done?)
3.18	Just in case, a child is not performing in a required manner, how do you convey the same to the child and her / his parents?
3.19	If a child does not meet with success in auditions despite numerous rounds of coaching, what is the way forward?
3.20	Average Annual Revenue (INR.)

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	Average Annual Fees charged per child artist for coaching (INR.)	Age (Years)	Male	Female	Total
		0-5			
		6-14			
		15-17			
3.21	Does the coaching centre provide any discounts / concessions for children from weaker socio-economic background?				
3.22	Does your coaching centre ensure that there are monitoring mechanisms to safeguard the best interest of the child? Please elaborate.				
3.23	How do you ensure that children are protected from physical / sexual abuse at the centre?				
3.24	What are the redressal mechanisms to address incidences of child abuse? How many such incidents of physical/sexual abuse have occurred in the centre? (Investigator: If they can't remember the number, ask for a specific period like past one year)				
3.25	What are the positive aspects of working with child artists?				
3.26	What are the negative aspects and challenges of working with child artists?				
3.27	What are the changes you would like to see for the child artists' in the entertainment industry?				