

Representation of women in female-directed Bollywood films

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Introduction and background

- Bollywood films are popular in India for their engaging plots, music, and storytelling.
- This research project is focused on how movies directed by females portray the female characters in the different films.
- The student researchers gathered data by using film coding, making note of key factors such as career, skin color, religion, taboo behavior, education, work, and interactions with other speaking characters in the films.
- The purpose of this research is to determine how female characters are illustrated in films that women direct.
- This research is still ongoing, but from the research so far, we can amazing results.

Methods

Trained in film coding

- Discussed terms of Indian culture that may be present in the films
- The coding methods have been refined and updated through the course of the research

Watch and record the behavior of the female and female-presenting characters

- The coders note when information is present or absent at any point in the film for each character

Surveys reviewed by students

- Editing and reviewing the completed surveys together to check for accuracy

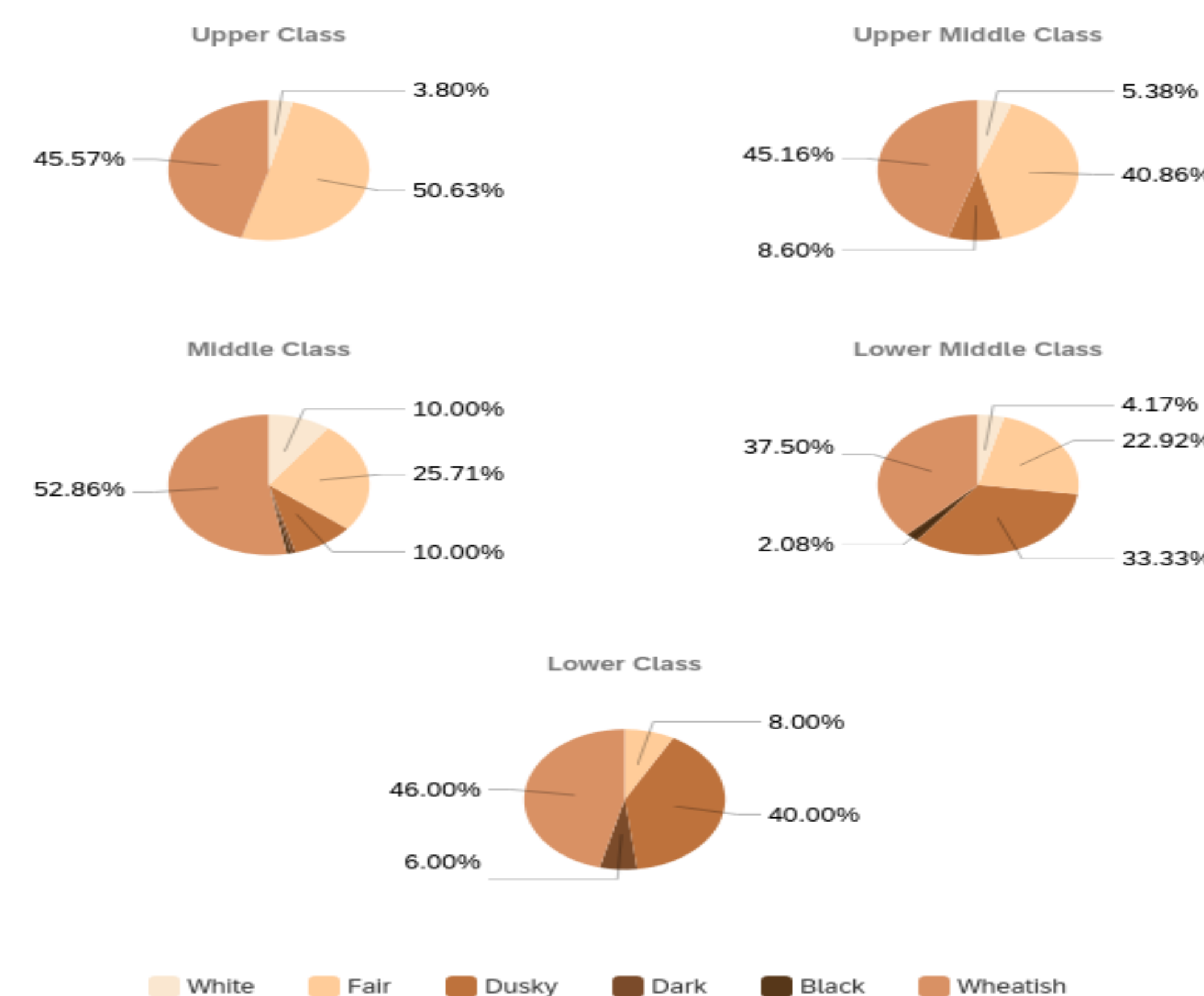
Answers are compared with a partner, and errors are reviewed

- Data is collected for every character by others in the group to make sure the data collected is accurate
- Meeting regularly to review the data collected on female characters

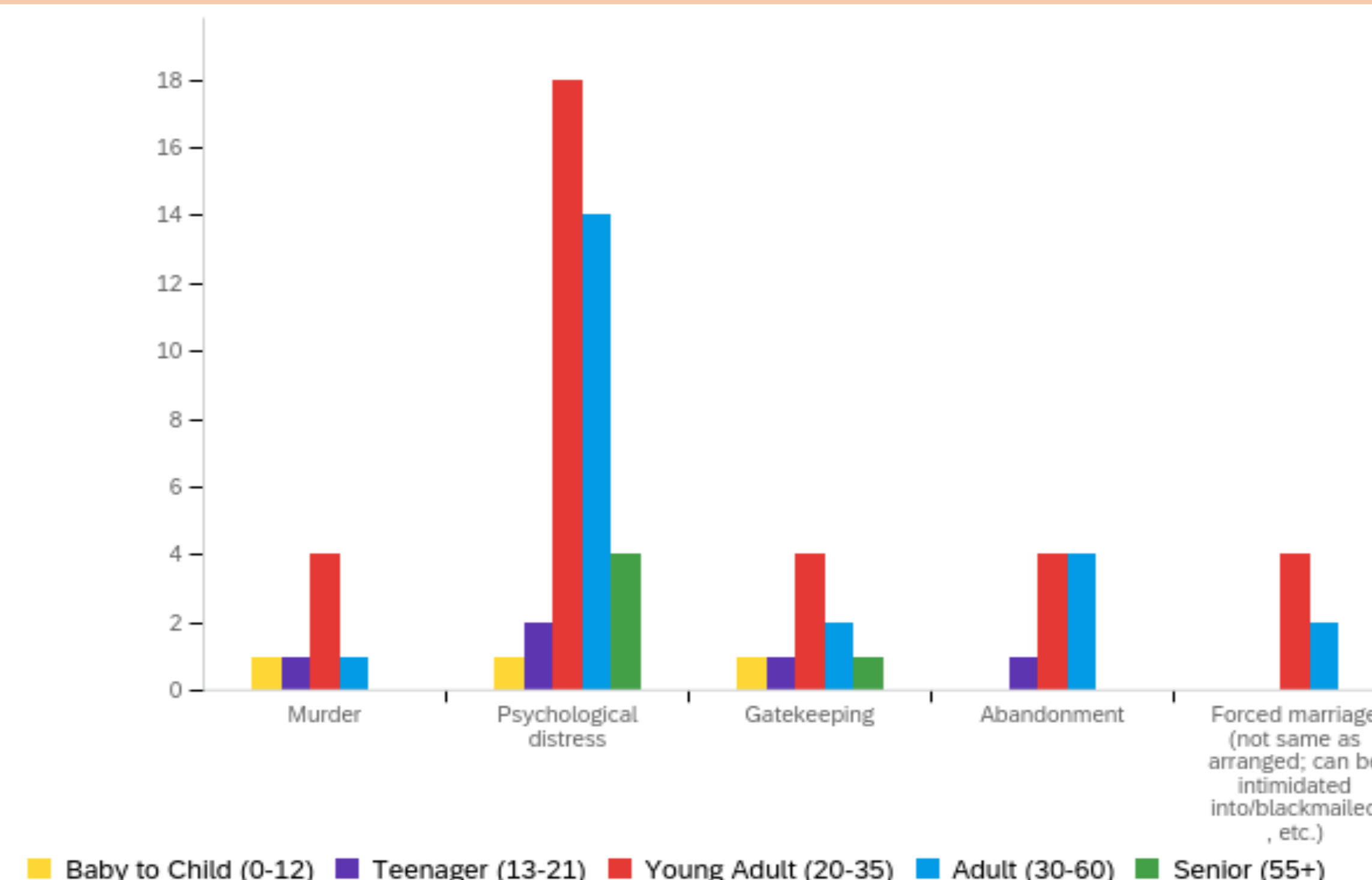
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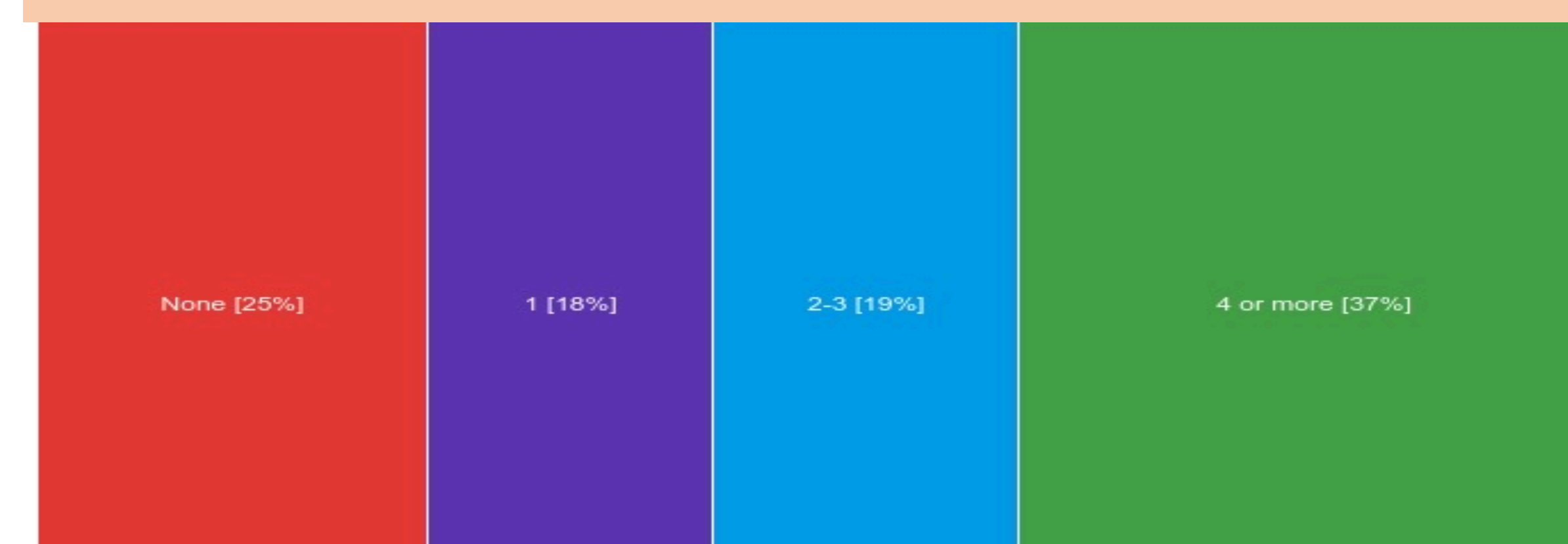
Graph 1: Class By Color



Graph 2: Suffering by Age



Graph 3: Number of relationships with other women in the film



Results

- When it comes to female directors, you can see that diversity with skin color between the classes is still a problem. As the upper class has lighter skin tones compared to the lower classes which show having darker tones.
- Out of the almost 500 female characters surveyed the the highest number in suffering presented was 18 people in one of the categories.
- The types of suffering presented were shown to be prominent in young adults and adults. Not so much in children or seniors.
- When it comes to the relationships with other women the female director are showing present those relationships.

Discussion

- We currently have no conclusive results, although we have completed over 30% of the films
- Although there are still difficulties, we have noticed that a female director does have an impact on the representation in Bollywood.
- We note common patterns that there are common patterns of how female directors portray their female characters.
- The shifts in how these characters are presented in Bollywood films may indicate the changing beliefs and values surrounding women.
- Different perspectives have had an influence in cinema; this is seen in female directors directly influencing the ways women are represented in the films.
- In the future, this project will show us the progress made in Bollywood films concerning character development.

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