



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE OTT USAGE: A STUDY OF CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

As part of Covid-19, this research looks at OTT platforms. To predict how far these platforms will expand in the future, it is necessary to evaluate their usage throughout the outbreak. Due to the change in people's entertainment consumption patterns caused by the epidemic, over-the-top (OTT) services like as Netflix and Hulu have witnessed a surge in popularity and usage since their inception. When it comes to entertainment, people's attitudes and consumption patterns are crucial in deciding whether OTT platforms will eventually replace conventional media. This research will look at these elements and compare them to conventional media. Analyzing the long-term impact of growing content intake on psychographic segmentation was essential for extracting any significant conclusions from the research (children, adults, and elderlies). The outbreak in Mumbai, according to their results, had a considerable influence on the city's rising OTT media consumption. Researchers examined the data using both qualitative and quantitative approaches before extrapolating the conclusions. Aside from that, the target audience was identified and studied. The analysis of current news items, industry research papers, and publications from other nations enabled the identification of significant trends. People utilise OTT services to entertain themselves more than any other media, including television and YouTube. Many individuals are increasingly using over-the-top (OTT) services. The vast majority of respondents claimed they would rather watch movies at home than go to the cinemas. As a consequence of this epidemic, our research indicated that OTT platforms have the potential to expand.

***Keywords:* OTT, Covid-19, consumer perspective, lockdown, Mumbai**



INTRODUCTION

Because of the explosive rise of digital media, the media and entertainment sections in the United States have seen significant transformations in the previous decade and beyond. "Entertainment Goes Online" from Boston Consulting Group predicts that India's OTT content industry would grow to \$5 billion by 2023. (BCG). Our consumption of material has been transformed as a result of the rise and acceptance of OTT companies, and this is the foundation for my prognosis (ET Brand Equity, 2020). Another factor contributing to the recent surge in OTT gaming is the catastrophic COVID-19 health problem, which has proven beneficial to many of these players during the last two years (Berger and Nasr, 1998). Rising household incomes (Ganuja and Viicens, 2014), an increase in exposure to global trends, an increase in the frequency of travelling for both fun and business, the adoption of internet in tiers 2 and 3 markets (Dwyer, 1989 and 1997), an acceptance of content pertaining to females as well as older generations and a growing acceptance of the internet in tiers II and III markets (Bradley and Bartlett, 2011). For this research, we'll look at how the recent introduction of Covid has affected the Indian OTT market, as well as how those changes may affect distinct consumer groups.

According to Singh, even while the number of people using OTT services has increased, there has been no increase in the number of people signing up for them (2020). Almost two-thirds of shoppers want to make more online purchases in the near future, according to the research. According to industry observers, OTT services will continue to rise until traditional networks run out of content. As a result of the show's demise, a number of networks are rebroadcasting old episodes. The author anticipates that individuals will use OTT services to stay up to date on fresh information. There was so much demand that both Amazon Prime and Zee5 have made certain episodes existing for free as a result. There has been an 81% increase in subscriptions, and a 52% increase in hours spent on the site. The number of people watching movies has escalated on all digital media domains. There was a 28 percent rise in the number of persons viewing MIBI in March compared to February.



If OTT services may be utilised as a replacement for television in Taiwan, researchers Chen (2019) compare the reasons Taiwanese people watch TV with the reasons Taiwanese people use OTT services. Discussions about net neutrality laws or suggestions for regulation are being discussed as more and more organisations develop their goods in the market for online video streaming. More and more people are using online video services like Netflix and Hulu to get their news and entertainment. Content, creativity, formats, legislation, telecommunication, device markets (including software and hardware), and ISPs are just some of the many aspects of the media and entertainment business that are impacted. This is a significant piece of the jigsaw that has to be included in this study.

Indian filmmaking is being affected by the pandemic, according to D. P. Laghate (2017). Streaming services have grown in popularity as more people have access to the internet. Many firms are involved in the production of OTT video content. The television and cinema industries in India are being disrupted by foresight firms. Customers' viewing habits are tracked by OTT providers, which helps them provide more relevant material for their users to enjoy. Many people take advantage of free services. OTT platforms like Hotstar offer a limited amount of free material. It's a unique experience to combine local and international information. Popular film genres include action and comedy. OTT services are used by consumers on average for two hours every day, according to the results of the poll. A growing number of OTT services are dependent on Web-based services. Among the subgenres are young adult romance, action, and urban drama. Many individuals now view movies and TV programmes through over-the-the-top (OTT) services. The second most important factor is the device's portability. Accessible materials are the third kind of content.

To better understand how the emergence of OTT subscriptions has altered the tech industry, government policy, and customer components of the media sectors, Banerjee, Rappoport, and Alleman (2014) developed a TPC model. The competitive viability of OTT and traditional pay TV platforms were studied using specialised research. The data reveal how OTT platforms either



overlap with or exceed existing ones in terms of competitiveness, indicating the influence of current systems on OTT platforms. Analysis of OTT services is necessary to understand the present and future changes in the media industry since they have disrupted the traditional production, distribution, and consumption stages of the industry and will continue to do so (Crawford, 2015).

OTT services have had a substantial impact on customers' attitudes since the introduction of Covid-19, according to the study done so far. Aiming to learn more about these and other relevant elements, the objectives to the study are as follows

1. To study the key trends around OTT adoption triggered by COVID-19 in Mumbai region
2. To study the shift in consumption from old entertainment to new in Mumbai region
3. To assimilate the consumer perspectives regarding OTT adoption in Mumbai region

The hypothesis for the study are as follows:

H1 : There is a rise in popularity of OTT platform during the lockdown phase

H2 : Consumers prefer OTT over any other platform even in post covid era

H3 :Covid-19 has led to behaviour shift of consumers from old entertainment to new ones

METHOD

In order to provide answers to the study questions presented earlier, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was used. The researchers conducted extensive primary research, which was complemented by research from secondary sources, in order to analyse the preferences of consumers and trends in the adoption of OTT services. We conducted secondary research by reviewing publications from a variety of organisations, doing research



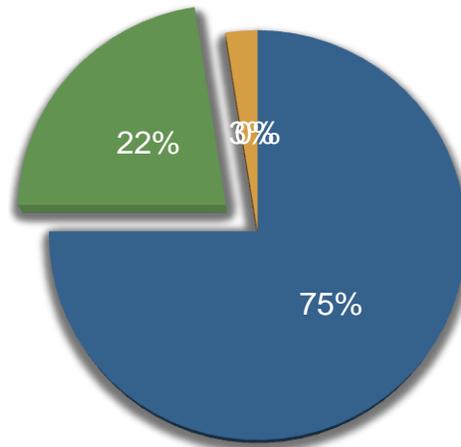
into historical worldwide literature on OTT acceptance and trends, referring to white papers, media extracts, and a large number of other research reports, and so on. It was very necessary to determine whether or not consumers depended on content led by OTT platforms to keep them interested or whether or not there were other causes driving growth and acceptance. These intricacies may only be revealed via a qualitative research that places an emphasis on the causes that underlie behaviours. This primary survey had the goal of identifying consumption patterns and noticeable trends so that they could be compared to secondary data derived from publications such as journals, research papers, and news stories.

The primary investigation consisted of collecting data via the use of a survey. The participants in this paper were users of OTT domain who ranged in age from 14 - 45, and a random sample was taken from each participant's pool. The whole survey was completed within two weeks by a random sample of one hundred respondents, and their responses were analysed for the objectives of the study. In order for respondents to continue with the survey, they were required to answer a screening related questionnaire. This exact set of sample population was selected since all OTT platforms are appealing to all consumer groups, ranging from content geared toward infants and toddlers to content aimed at adults. Aside from that, clients who are older than 14 years old are expected to have developed their own thoughts and, as a result, will discuss those ideas. The survey was broken up into two primary parts: the first was a demographics component, and the second was an OTT consumption behaviour section, which included questions about OTT usage, previous patterns, and their viewpoints. The investigation was conducted in 2020, and the data was collected in 2022; hence, the results are highly objective and fair-minded. In order to evaluate the data, certain fundamental descriptive statistical techniques were carried out.



RESULT AND DISCUSSION

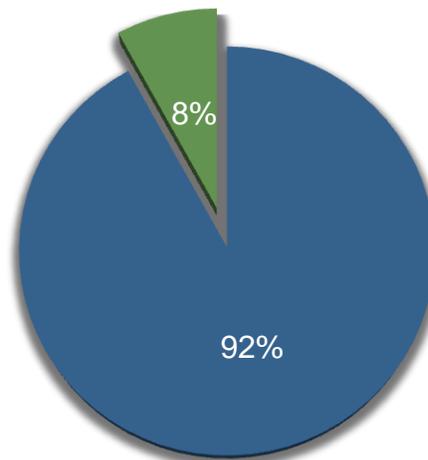
Which age group do you belong?



■ 15-25 ■ 26-35 ■ 36-45 ■ 45 and above

According to the chart above, most of our responses are between 15 and 25. It's assumed that this age group is more acquainted with OTT advancements. Their thoughts helped produce this research study.

Do you use any OTT services?

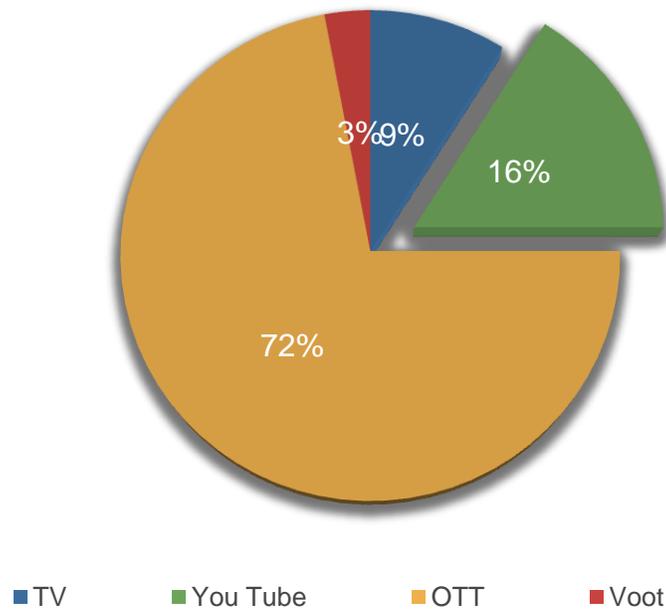


■ yes ■ no



The response to the preceding question served as a preliminary test for the responders. Because 92% of the people who filled out the survey had utilised at least one of the over-the-top (OTT) platforms, they were eligible to take part in the study.

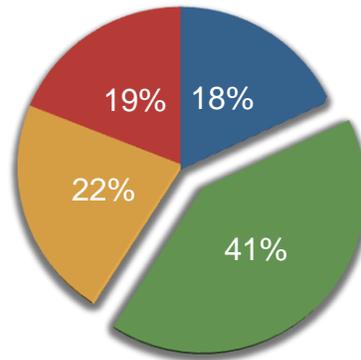
Which media platform did you use the most during lockdown?



The preceding question asks about respondents' lockdown entertainment habits. Over-the-top (OTT) platforms are favoured by consumers over traditional entertainment channels. This shows the popularity of OTT platforms during incarceration.



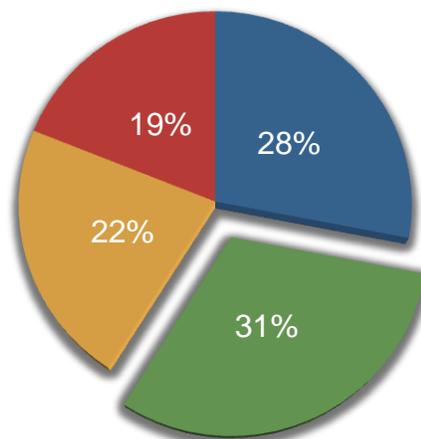
How did you know about your current OTT services?



■ Friend recommendation ■ Advertisement

The prior probe aims to understand where their OTT services get their data. The poll asks which OTT source has the largest impact on consumers. Commercials and social media may help OTT consumers get the message.

How many hours do you spend on OTT platform per day?

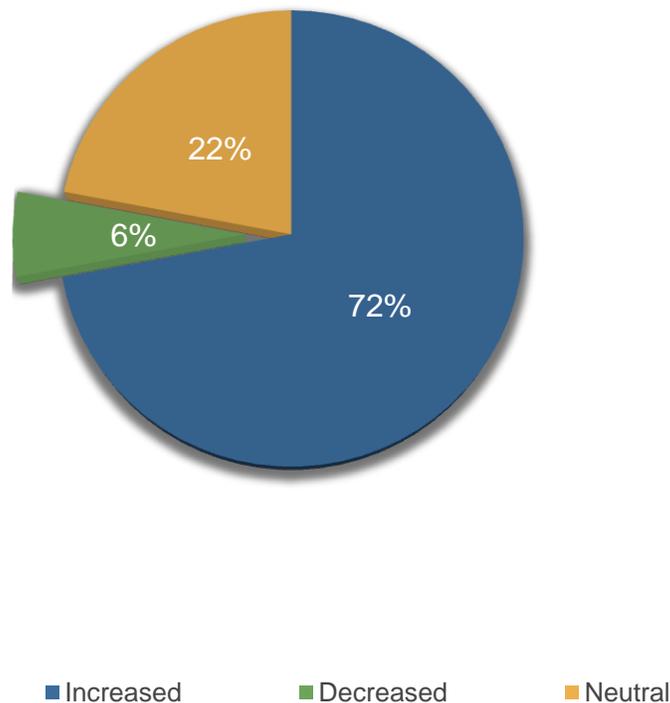


■ < 2 hours ■ 2-4 hours ■ 4-6 hours ■ > 6 hours



Consumers spend two to four hours each week on average watching over-the-top (OTT) content. 31% of respondents are customers, and 31% of customers spend two to four hours a day on OTT platforms.

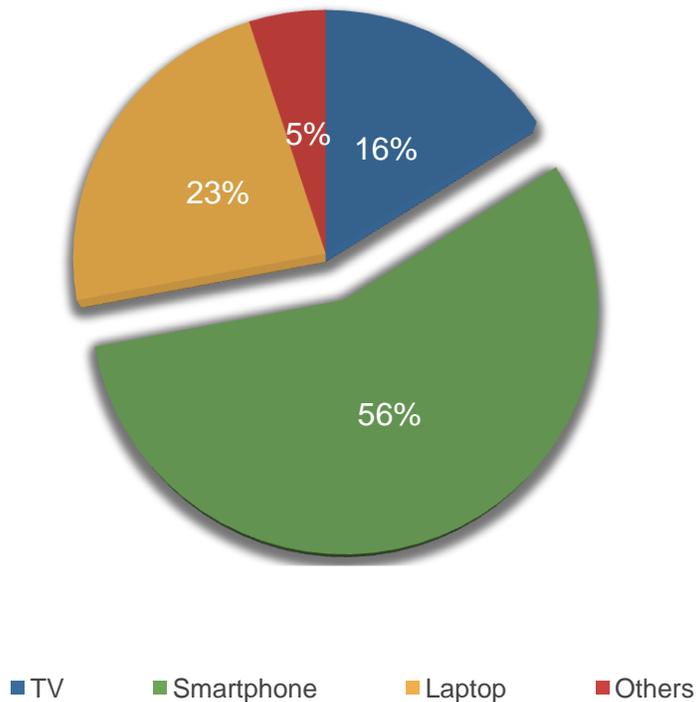
Is there any change in your OTT usage post Covid era?



Once again, the purpose of the aforementioned inquiry is to acquire an understanding of the consumption habit of OTT platforms among lockdown consumers. One might get the conclusion that around 72 percent of the respondents have seen an increase in the amount of time spent using OTT platforms.



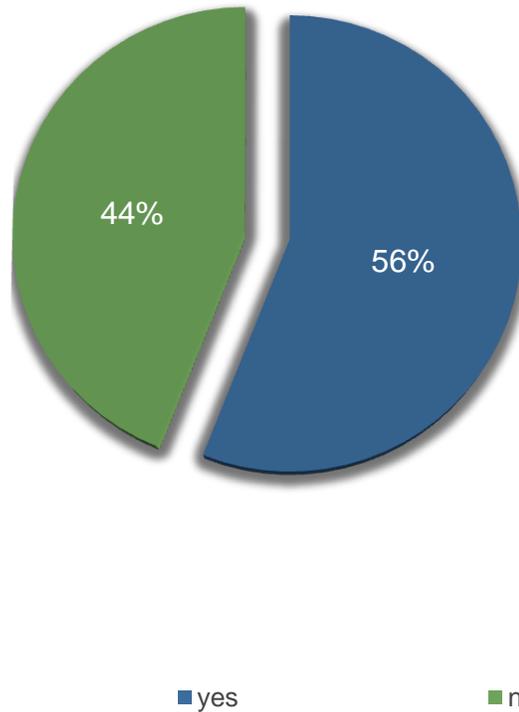
How do you consume OTT mostly?



Smartphones and the internet have given consumers more entertainment options. The investigation wants to know which OTT media is most popular. According to the data, OTT platforms are most popular on smartphones, then computers, and finally TVs.



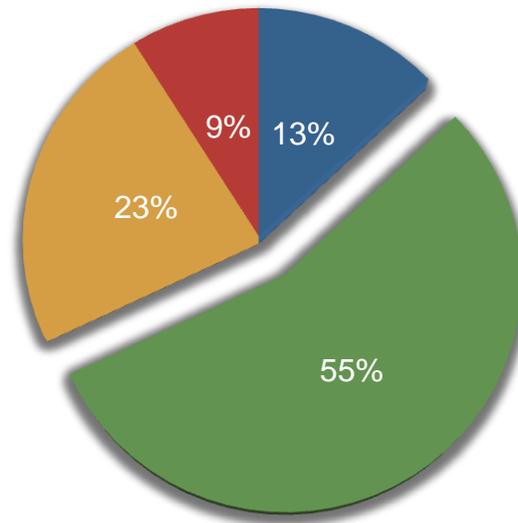
Did you start using a new OTT platform during lockdown?



The preceding question asked about the emergence of OTT platforms. During the lockout, 56% of consumers started using new OTT platforms for content consumption, according to the aforementioned data. The lockout may have helped OTT platforms flourish.



Do you prefer watching a movie on OTT rather than theatre?

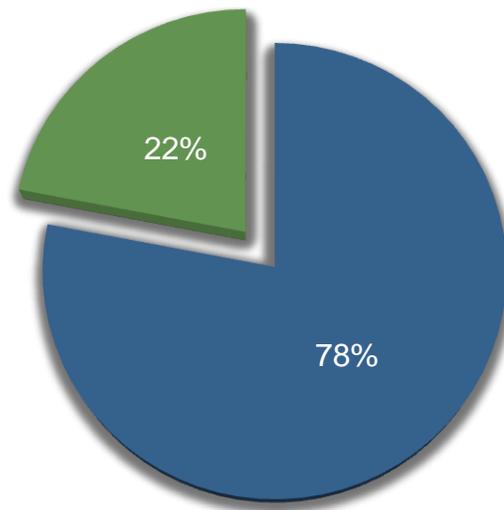


■ Always ■ Sometimes ■ Never ■ Depends on time and money

The previous questions explored OTT platforms' entertainment capabilities. This survey asks whether consumers have ever seen a movie on an OTT platform rather than in a conventional theatre. 55% of survey participants sometimes waited, while 13% always waited for a movie to launch on OTT rather than at a theatre.



Are you comfortable using OTT post pandemic?



■ Yes

■ No

Following up from the inquiries that came before it, the purpose of this last inquiry is to determine whether or not customers are content with the concurrent operation of OTT platforms and conventional media. Based on the information presented above, we may deduce that 78 percent of customers would choose an OTT platform above any other option even when Covid is on the edge of being discontinued.



CONCLUSION

Watching content on any medium is a habit that is formed over time. Content diversity has always been a priority for Indians. Young India's imagination was stifled by a single family television with just a few stations to choose from, limiting their potential. Young Indians were able to watch anything they wanted thanks to OTT players at COVID 19, who took advantage of the ability to watch a wide range of material on their own devices, such as cellphones and tablets. OTT providers, on the other hand, have just scratched the surface of the Indian market; there is a lot of room for growth in the future. Only 40 OTT outlets exist in India's metropolitan areas, yet despite the lack of localised content, this medium has made a name for itself there. Because of the greater buying capacity of urban dwellers than those in rural or semi-rural India, Covid-19 has had a significant role in the widespread popularity of the media. Because of all the hype around them, OTTs are swiftly gaining traction among people of all ages and sociodemographic backgrounds who had been on the fence about subscribing. Some aspects of Covid-19 became the new normal, such as work from home, which appeared to allow many people to have more control over their schedules. Covid-19 has shown to be a watershed point in supporting this behaviour change, since all research indicate that the time spent watching video material grows year after year.

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