Major Research Report

The impact of COVID-19 on consumer preferences for OTT platforms

Submitted By:

Apoorva Tiwari

Roll no: 2K22/EMBA/07

Under the Guidance of

Prof. Anil Singh Parihar

DELHI SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Delhi Technological University

Bawana Road, Delhi-110042

DECLARATION

I, Apoorva Tiwari, Roll No. 2K22/EMBA/07 student at Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technical University, Bawana Road Delhi – 110042 studying in EMBA, hereby declare that I have completed the project on "The impact of COVID-19 on consumer preferences for OTT platforms" during the semester 4th of academic year 2022-2024 under the guidance of project guide Prof. Anil Singh Parihar. The information submitted is true and original to the best of my knowledge.

Apoorva Tiwari (2K22/EMBA/07)

Delhi School of Management,

Delhi Technological University

CERTIFICATE

I, Prof. Anil Singh Parihar, hereby certify that Mrs. Apoorva Tiwari Roll No. 2K22/EMBA/07 of Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technical University, Bawana Road Delhi – 110042 of EMBA 2022-2024 has completed her project on "The impact of COVID-19 on consumer preferences for OTT platforms" during the semester 4th of academic year 2022-2024. This information submitted is true and original to the best of my knowledge.

Prof. Anil Singh Parihar

(Project Supervisor)

Delhi School of Management,

Delhi Technological University

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to head of department of Delhi School of Management Dr. Saurabh Agarwal, Programme coordinator Dr. Vikas Yadav and Project guide Prof. Anil Parihar, for providing me an opportunity to do my project work on "The impact of COVID-19 on consumer preferences for OTT platforms". I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to the non-teaching staff of our college.

I sincerely thank to all of them in helping me to carrying out this project work. Last but not the least, I wish to avail myself of this opportunity, to express a sense of gratitude and love to my friends and my beloved parents for their mutual support, strength, help for everything.

Apoorva Tiwari (2K22/EMBA/07)

Delhi School of Management,

Delhi Technological University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Film Industry Struggles:** COVID-19 slammed the brakes on the film industry, hurting not just moviemaking but related creative fields too. Lockdowns and restrictions stifled growth and profits.

2. **Entertainment Goes Online:** India's online entertainment scene has boomed in recent years. Faster, cheaper internet and widespread broadband access fueled this rise, along with changing lifestyles.

3. **OTT Platforms Take Center Stage:** Netflix, Amazon Prime, ALT Balaji, MX Player, TVF - these are just some of the popular OTT platforms redefining Indian entertainment. They offer a vast library of high-quality content like web series, movies, TV shows, sports, and news, all in multiple languages.

4. **Binge-Watching and Web Series Craze:** Viewers are ditching traditional TV schedules and diving into the world of binge-watching, devouring entire seasons of web series in one go. These serialized shows, released episodically, perfectly fit the on-demand viewing habits of young audiences.

5. **OTT: Shaking Up Entertainment:** OTT platforms, or over-the-top services, deliver digital media directly to viewers via the internet, bypassing traditional gatekeepers like cable companies. This has disrupted the TV landscape by offering live channels and specialized content streamed directly over the public internet.

6. **Watch Anywhere, Anytime:** The beauty of OTT is its accessibility. You can catch your favorite shows on almost any device - Android or iOS phones, smart TVs, tablets, laptops, desktops, even gaming consoles.

   Benefits of OTT: User-friendly interfaces, affordable subscriptions, the convenience of watching on your own schedule, and a massive library of content - these are just some of the reasons why OTT platforms are here to stay.

TABLES OF CONTENT

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns didn't just hit businesses and the economy hard; they also fundamentally changed how people view and use products, services, and especially the internet. Consumer habits shifted dramatically due to the government shutdown, and many experts believe these changes will have a lasting impact. The film industry was especially affected in 2020, 2021, and 2022, but the ripples were felt throughout the creative sector.

India's entertainment landscape has undergone a dramatic shift in recent years, with online entertainment becoming the new normal. This surge is fuelled by two key factors: the rise of dynamic streaming platforms and evolving consumer habits.

Faster and more affordable internet access, particularly on mobile devices, has revolutionized information access. The number of internet users and the time spent streaming content have both skyrocketed. Popular services like Netflix, Amazon Prime, ALT Balaji, MX Player, and TVF, among many others, have become household names, further fuelled by the convenience of apps and web browsers.

This explosion in online viewership has also created a win-win situation for content creators. The increased accessibility (fissionability in your original text) of online platforms has led to a surge in content production, offering viewers a wider variety of shows and movies to choose from.

The widespread availability of 4G in India has fueled the growth of OTT platforms like Disney+ Hotstar, Netflix, and Amazon Prime Video. These platforms offer a vast library of content, including web series, movies, sports, and news, catering to diverse audiences across India with content in various languages and dialects. The allure of binge-watching, the act of consecutively viewing multiple episodes of a TV series, became increasingly prevalent due to these streaming platforms. Capitalizing on this trend, these platforms effectively capture the attention of young smartphone users seeking entertainment. A web series can be likened to a serialized narrative comprised of short episodes, distributed over time, exclusively available online, mimicking the format of traditional television programming.

Predominantly consumed by the younger demographic, including teenagers and young adults, web series offer the freedom for viewers to consume content at their convenience, transcending barriers of time and location.

Over-the-top (OTT) services are revolutionizing how we watch content. Unlike traditional radio and cable TV, which controlled both content and distribution, OTT delivers digital media directly to viewers through the internet. This bypasses monopolies and creates a more open market, with mobile phones (even those free of carrier data restrictions) joining the party.

OTT isn't just about movies and shows on demand. It's also birthing a new generation of TV networks. Similar to cable or satellite, these services stream live channels directly over the internet, ditching the need for set-top boxes. Technology is changing our habits too. Gone are the days of everyone in the house watching the same program. With OTT, smartphones provide instant access to a vast library of content, making separate TVs in each room a relic of the past.

This essay explores the sentiments of individuals towards online portals during the COVID-19 outbreak. The perception of users is shaped by their utilization of various online viewing applications, which in turn is influenced by the time they spend on them and their individual experiences. Streaming services make it easy to enjoy your favorite shows and movies on the big screen (laptops and desktops) or on the go (tablets and smartphones). No matter what device you prefer, there's a compatible option with Android, iOS, or Windows operating systems.

User-friendly interfaces, affordable pricing, on-demand access, and a massive library of content – these are just some of the reasons why Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms are exploding in popularity. This trend, fueled by the growing "fissionability" of content (availability across multiple platforms), is leading to a surge in OTT usage (as referenced in Wikipedia, 2022). In simpler terms, the more accessible and convenient OTT becomes, the more people use it, and the more content becomes available. (2022; Wikipedia)

1.2 Statement of the problem

- This project focuses on analysing how customers perceived online entertainment platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal is to examine the accessibility of various streaming services, user engagement levels, and overall user experiences.
- The research will explore a range of factors that may have influenced online platform usage during the pandemic. This includes customer satisfaction with these platforms, along with their consideration of recommendations and peer experiences.

1.3 Significance of study

The COVID-19 pandemic left its mark on nearly every industry, and the entertainment sector was no exception. This disruption, however, has propelled online entertainment platforms to the forefront. These platforms are experiencing a surge in popularity across all age groups, making India a global leader in OTT (Over-the-top) viewership growth according to analysts. The ease of accessing a world of entertainment from the comfort of home is a major driver behind this rising adoption of OTT services.

1.4 Study Objectives

- Focusing on the factors influencing customer choice of OTT platforms
- Exploring Consumer Perceptions of Online Streaming Services
- To determine the extent about customer contentment with Online streaming portals.

1.5 Hypothesis

- Online portals attract users regardless of gender.
- Students across disciplines share similar views on online portals.
- No significant differences in online portal perception.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic forced theatre closures, prompting production companies to actively create content for OTT channels. This shift worries multiplexes who fear the traditional windowing model (exclusive theatrical release before streaming) could be disrupted. Industry giants like PVR and INOX have voiced their concerns.

While some experts see this as a brief window to address existing problems in the film industry, it's a double-edged sword. Filmmakers stuck with unreleased projects find a new platform on OTT, while OTT services gain fresh content. However, this is unlikely to become a permanent trend after normalcy returns. Traditionally, theatrical releases generate higher revenue for studios compared to online streaming.

With the pandemic receding, theatres are reopening, potentially leading to a surge in multiplex attendance in the short term. The long-term impact on the relationship between theatrical releases and OTT platforms remains to be seen. (2020, Sharma.K)

As per Menon (2020), the restrictions stemming from the COVID-19 outbreak significantly impacted people's media consumption and leisure activities. With lockdowns preventing outdoor activities for both leisure and work, many individuals shifted towards online platforms. Through online social networking, the public could stay connected with their families, friends, and other acquaintances. Because of government directives to close external entertainment avenues apart from those available at home, home- based entertainment methods have seen steady growth and evolution (G, 2020).

A 2020 study by Deloitte, titled "Digital Media: Rise of On-Demand Content," highlights a global trend: the increasing availability of internet-enabled devices capable of handling digital information has led to a significant rise in digital content consumption. This trend is evident across various media formats, including audio, video, news, and music, with India serving as a prime example. 2020 (Delotte(n.d.))

A 2020 study by Manoj Kumar Patel found that online streaming platforms are rapidly growing and surpassing traditional entertainment channels in India. An internet survey targeting a broad range of participants aged 20-40 revealed that 95% of responses favored

online streaming due to its affordability and continuous stream of fresh content. Patel's research suggests that the convenience of accessing content anytime, anywhere is a key driver behind the explosive growth of streaming media in India. (Patel, 2020)

Dasgupta and Grover's research on "Undertaking Adoption Factors of Over-The-Top Video Services Among Millennial Consumers" identifies four critical elements impacting consumer adaptation to various platforms: convenience, mobility, content variety, and pricing. 2019 (Dasdupta)

A 2019 study by P Singh titled "New Media as a Change Agent of Indian Television and Film: A Study of Over-the-Top Platforms" explores how teenagers in India are engaging with the new world of online streaming services offering a wide variety of content.

The research highlights that teenagers are enjoying the freedom to watch OTT shows and movies. The average daily viewing time sits around two hours, with evenings being the most popular time to stream. Notably, the study finds that young people in India prefer OTT platforms over traditional television due to the convenience and access to international content. (Singh, 2019)

A 2019 study by Paramveer Singh suggests that Jio, Hotstar, and Netflix are the most popular OTT platforms among young people in India. This demographic leans towards taking advantage of the free trial periods offered by many platforms. They tend to watch content at night and prefer serialized television shows over movies. Singh's research implies that OTT platforms are significantly reshaping media consumption habits in India. (Singh, 2019)

Priya Grover and Sabyasachi Dasgupta's study, titled "Understanding Adoption Factors of Over-the-Top Video Services Among Millennial Consumers," explores how Indian millennials readily embrace OTT content. Their research suggests that Indian consumers are willing to pay for subscriptions that offer unlimited access to content, regardless of time or location. This highlights an interesting dynamic: there's no clear negative correlation between an OTT platform's price and its popularity in India. However, data consumption remains a concern for Indian consumers due to their viewing habits and preference for video content over other media. (Grover, 2019)

Ritu Bhavsar's 2018 research paper, "The Burgeoning Digital Media Consumption: A Challenge for Traditional and Advertising Industries- An Analysis," highlights the pervasive

influence of digital media in our lives. Bhavsar argues that digital media has become a cornerstone for information access, entertainment, social connection, and even marketing. Factors like faster internet, stylish devices, affordability, and the freedom of "anywhere, anytime" viewing have fuelled our desire for digital content, shifting consumer preferences towards on-demand entertainment.

Furthermore, KPMG's 2017 "Digital First Journey" study reinforces this trend by showcasing an increasing investment in OTT platforms and original Indian content. This study also acknowledges the rise of live streaming as an emerging subgenre within the digital media landscape. (KPMG-FICCI, 2017)

Khanna's 2016 research, "A Study on Factors Affecting Subscription Rates of Netflix in India," found that Indian viewers are more likely to choose free online entertainment instead of paying for subscriptions. This explains, in part, why Netflix has struggled to attract subscribers in India. They also lack a strong library of local and regional shows and movies, which Indian audiences prefer. (Khanna, 2016)

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research constitutes a thorough exploratory analysis aiming to utilize computer models and statistical modeling to achieve specific objectives. This chapter outlines the research strategy, providing a concise overview of the instruments and methodologies employed for the investigation.

3.1 Population and Sample Size Determination

A survey was conducted using Google Forms to collect opinions on online platforms during COVID-19 from 110 Indian consumers, including working adults, students, entrepreneurs, and stay-at-home moms. Non-probability sampling, specifically convenience sampling, was used to gather data from this target audience.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

The survey instrument was a pre-designed, structured questionnaire distributed to participants recruited through convenience sampling. The questionnaire included demographic questions, single-choice options, and mostly closed-ended questions using a 5-point Likert scale. On this scale, 1 indicated strong disagreement and 5 indicated strong agreement. The survey explored the potential influence of environmental attitudes, eco-friendly packaging, green branding awareness, and perceived benefits on consumers' purchase intentions. Data collection occurred online via Google Forms.

3.3 Data Tools Used

To interpret and validate the collected data, researchers employed various statistical methods. Primarily, the analysis was conducted using SPSS software. Data analysis itself can be broadly categorized into two main approaches: descriptive and inferential.

CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS

This study explores how people use and view different online portals, along with predictions for their future popularity. By analyzing this data statistically, we can gain insights into customer preferences. We will also conduct a survey to understand the perspectives and experiences of people who use OTT platforms.

4.1 Demographics analysis

Table 1: Audience Profile (Source: Own analysis using primary data)

		Count(s)	Col. %
Gender	Female	30	40.50%
	Male	44	59.50%
Age	26-35	27	27.30%
	36-45	1	1.30%
	Below 25	46	62.16%
Where do you live?	Rural	1	1.30%
	Semi-Urban	11	14.86%
	Urban	62	83.78%
Qualification	Postgraduate	64	86.48%
	Undergraduate	10	13.50%
Occupation	Businessmen	2	2.70%
	Employee	16	21.60%
	Freelancing	1	1.30%
	Professional	3	5.40%
	Recently not working	1	1.30%

	Student	51	68.90%
Marital Status	Married	9	12.16%
	Not Married	65	87.83%

The following insights were derived from the provided data:

- Male participants constitute 59.5% of the total sample, while female participants account for 40%.

- A majority of the participants are under the age of 25 (62.16%), with those aged between 26 and 35 making up 27.3%.

- Participants aged between 36 and 45 represent a mere 1.3% of the sample.

- Only 14.9% of participants reside in metropolitan areas, whereas 83.78% live in semi urban or rural regions.

- The majority of participants (86.48%) hold postgraduate degrees, compared to a smaller group (13.5%) with undergraduate degrees.

- Students dominate the occupational categories at 68.9%, followed by workers at 21.6%.

- A small percentage of participants identify as entrepreneurs, freelancers, professionals, or recently unemployed individuals.
  The majority of participants (87.83%) are single, while a minority (12.16%) are married.

4.2 Understanding OTT

Over-the-top (OTT) services deliver streaming content directly to viewers over the internet. This bypasses the traditional cable, satellite, and broadcast television platforms. The term "over-the-top" refers to how these services operate "on top of" the existing internet infrastructure.

OTT services are relatively new and have seen explosive growth in recent years. They provide users with the ability to sign up and watch content online, offering a wide range of choices compared to traditional television. This growth in OTT has also created new opportunities for businesses in the online entertainment market. Marketers can now reach a wider audience through OTT advertising.

Here are some of the most popular OTT services available (as of 2023): Popular streaming

services include global giants like Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu (US), and HBO Now (US), alongside Indian powerhouses like Disney+ Hotstar, Sony LIV, Zee5, Voot, and Eros Now.

4.2.1 Footprint of covid-19 on online portals

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the trend of using online portals, fueled by a surge in remote work.

Lockdowns spurred a surge in demand for family-friendly content. Online platforms filled the gap with readily available, high-quality entertainment, offering a convenient and enjoyable alternative to traditional television. This shift in viewing habits fueled predictions by Media Partners Asia that streaming services in India would reach an expenditure of Rs. 530 crore (approximately $700 million) by 2020. However, the cancellation of major sports leagues worldwide dealt a blow to OTT providers, as sports content is a significant revenue stream for many platforms.

Good News for Sports Fans and OTT Providers

There's light at the end of the tunnel for sports fans and OTT service providers alike, with most major leagues expected to resume play in October. OTT services effectively filled the void left by closed cinemas and stadiums during lockdowns.

Personalization Fuels Growth

The trend towards personalized content and tailored delivery, which fosters user engagement, is expected to further accelerate the growth of the OTT market. However, the comparison to "drug addicts" with access to over 300 platforms is not ideal. A more accurate portrayal would be the vast array of choices that cater to diverse interests, exceeding the limitations of traditional television channels.

Subscription Boom and Government Support

Subscriptions to OTT platforms have surged since lockdowns were imposed. Additionally, many governments are actively promoting investment in supporting infrastructure for online services. This is because online portals are seen as a valuable tool for delivering educational information, promoting public initiatives, and empowering regional content creators and businesses to connect with customers.

4.3 Customer perception

In marketing, understanding customer perception is key. It's all about how customers see your brand, what they think of your products, and the overall impression they have of your

company. This perception is shaped by a combination of factors:

   4.3.1   **External Information:** Customers gather information from various sources, including advertisements, promotions, customer reviews, social media comments, and interactions with the company itself.

   4.3.2   **Internal Interpretation:** Customers filter this external information through their own needs, expectations, and past experiences to create a personal understanding of the product or company.

This process begins the moment a customer becomes aware of a product or service and continues until they form a final opinion.

4.4 Factors influencing consumer decision-making

Multiple factors influence how consumers perceive products or services.

- A key consideration is its performance history, or its consistency in delivering results over time.

- Recognizing the value of emotional connection, successful businesses cultivate strong bonds with their customers, ultimately driving brand growth.

- Reaching the right people: Marketing communications are the strategies and tools brands employ to deliver targeted messages to their audience.

- Even exceptional brand employees can't overcome consistently poor support experiences. To truly differentiate themselves, brands need to excel across all customer touchpoints, delivering satisfaction at every interaction. This comprehensive approach is known as holistic marketing.

- Direct experience is a major factor shaping how consumers perceive products. Our personal encounters hold significant weight in forming an opinion. Both the quality of the good or service itself and the quality of the assistance received, whether for a simple purchase or resolving an issue, influence a customer's overall satisfaction.

4.5 Statistical analysis: Descriptive analysis of time series

1. Respondent Demographics (Gender included)

Table 3: Gender-based responses

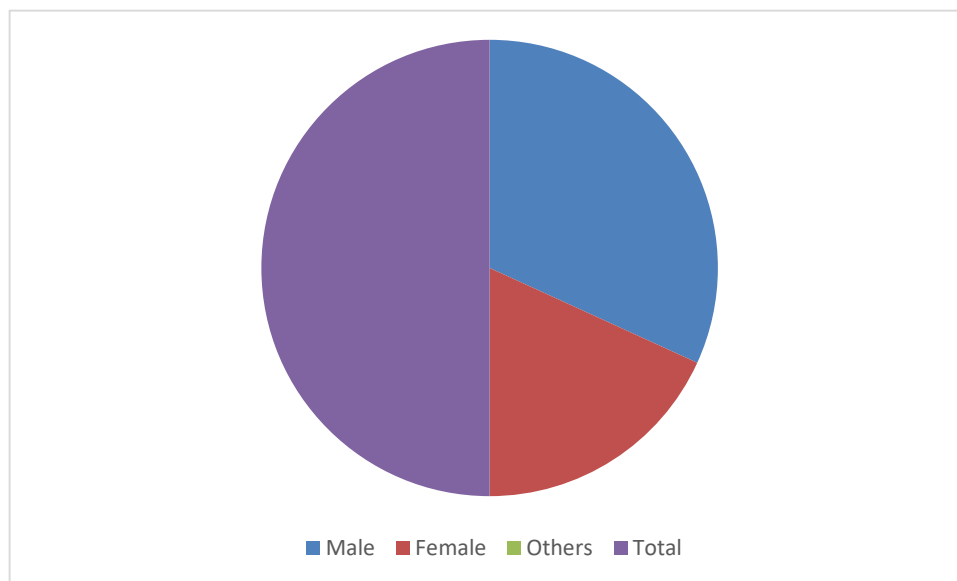| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Male	70	34
Female	40	66
Others	0	0
Total	110	100

Figure 1: Gender-based responses

The table shows the gender breakdown of the 110 survey responses. Females make up the majority at 66%, while males account for 34%. There were no responses who identified as other genders in this sample.

2. Recognition of OTT services

Table 4: Recognition of OTT services

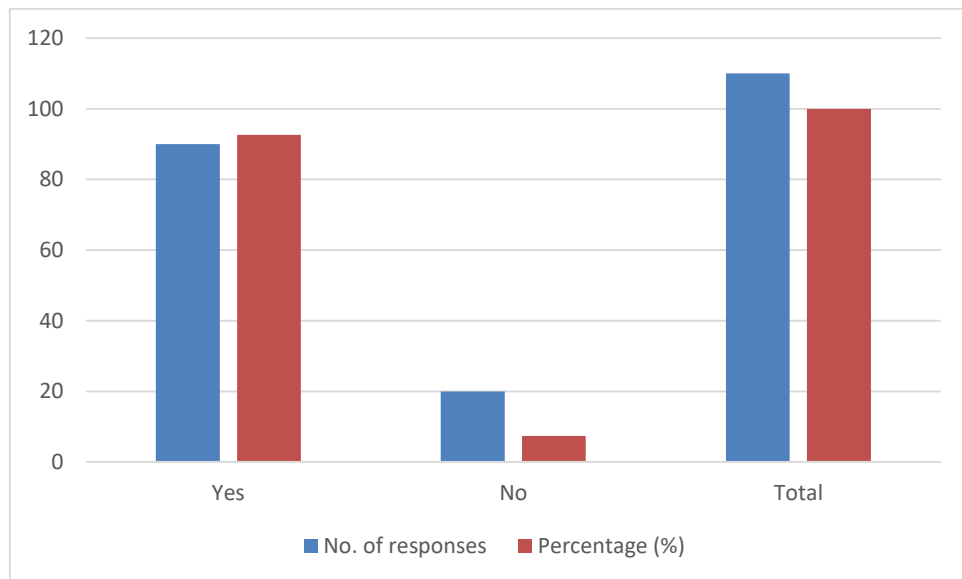| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	90	92.6
No	20	7.4
Total	110	100

Figure 2: Recognition of OTT services

Awareness of Online Portals

This table shows a high awareness of online portals among the survey responses. **92.6%** indicated they are familiar with online portals, while only **7.4%** were unaware.

3. Number of OTT Platform Subscribers

Table 5: OTT subscriber

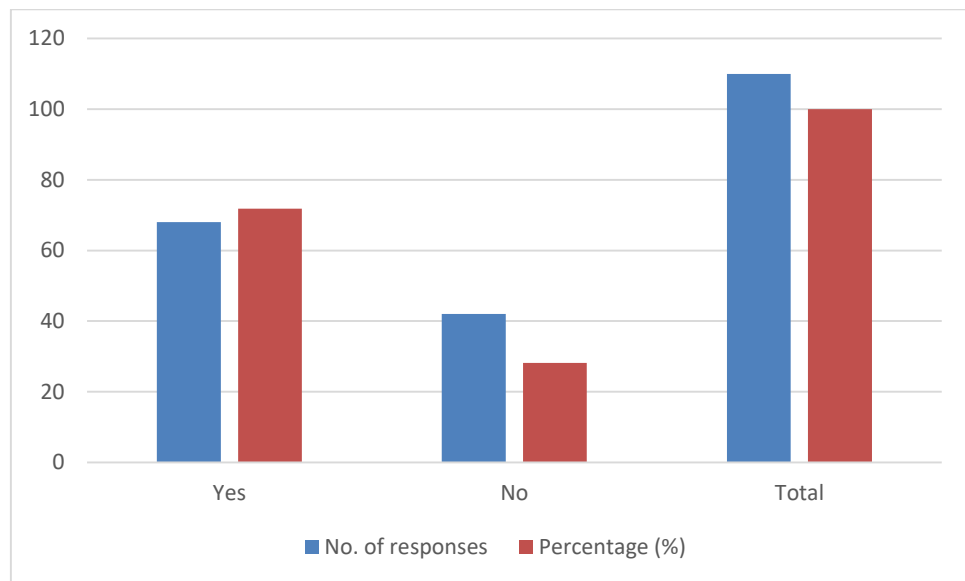| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	68	71.8
No	42	28.2
Total	110	100

Figure 3: OTT subscriber

Table 5 shows that 71.8% of the 110 responses are OTT subscriber, compared to 28.2% who are not, showing that this is the case for most of the responses.

4. Responses' usage of OTT platforms

Table 6: OTT Platform User Segmentation

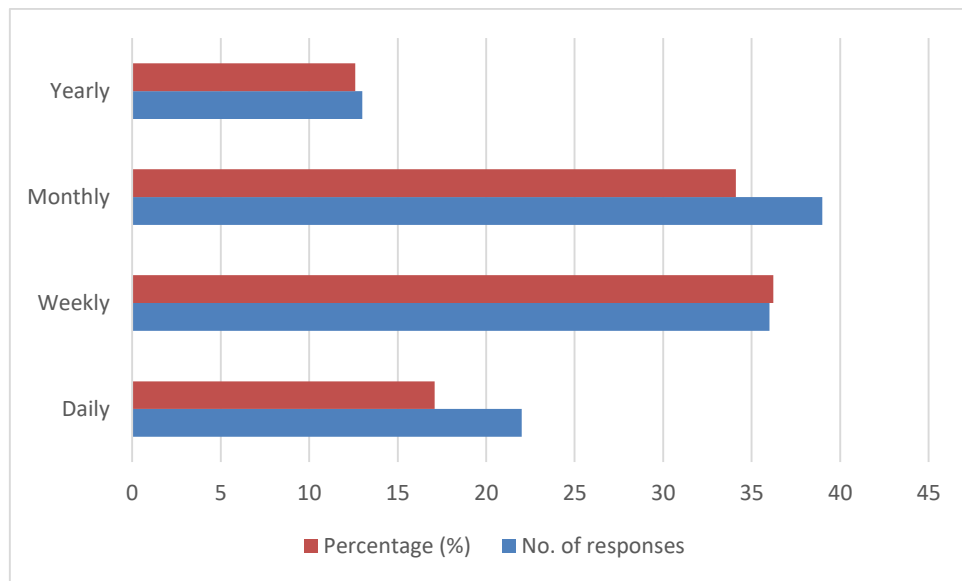| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Daily	22	17.08
Weekly	36	36.22
Monthly	39	34.10
Yearly	13	12.6

Figure 4: OTT Platform User Segmentation

According to Table 6, 17.08% of the 110 responses utilize online portals every day, 36.22% every week, 34.10% every month, and 12.6% every year. This information makes it clear that most responders have utilized online portals weekly.

5. Awareness Channels for OTT Platforms

Table 7: How responses came to know about OTT platforms

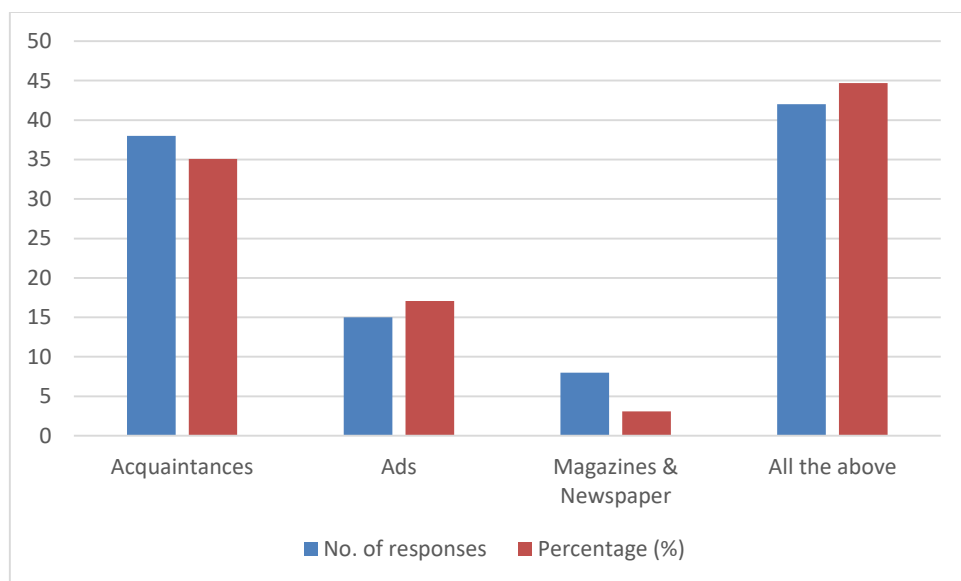| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Acquaintances	38	35.1
Ads	15	17.09
Magazines & Newspaper	8	3.1
All the above	42	44.71
Total	110	100

Figure 5: How responses came to know about OTT platforms

A survey of 110 people investigated how they learned about online portals. The findings reveal multiple channels were influential:

- **Friends and family:** 35.1% of responses reported learning through this channel.
- **Commercials:** 17.09% credited commercials for their awareness.
- **Magazines and newspapers:** 3.1% learned from print media.

Interestingly, the total percentages listed (68.56%) exceed 100%. This suggests that some responses likely learned about online portals from multiple sources.

6. Preferred Viewing Times for OTT Content

Table 8: Preferred Viewing Times for OTT Content

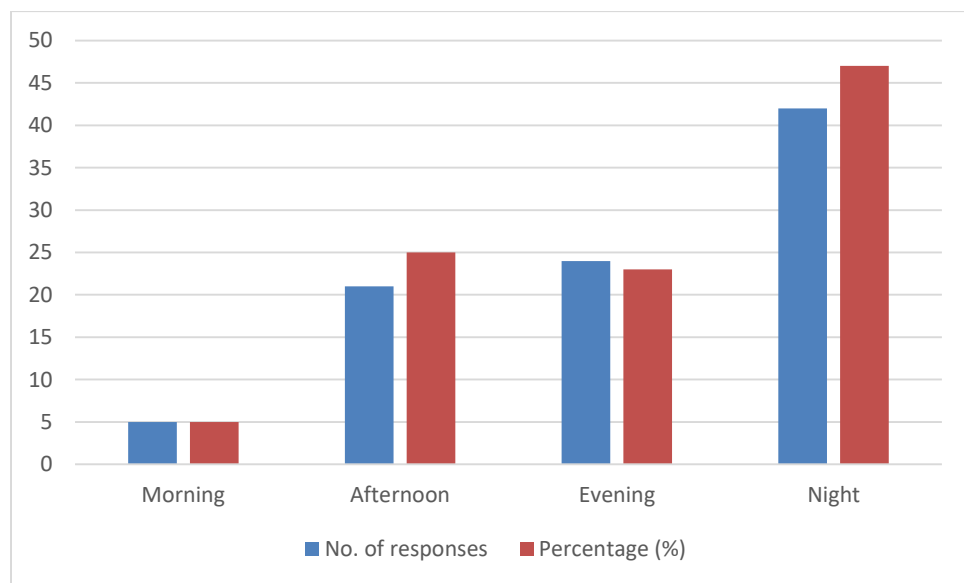| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Morning	5	5
Afternoon	21	25
Evening	24	23
Night	42	47
Total	110	100

Figure 6: Preferred Viewing Times for OTT Content

Preferred Time to Use Online Portals

This table reveals night as the most popular time for online portal use among responses. **47%** indicated they prefer this time slot. Evening use is also significant at **23%**. The remaining responses are spread across morning (**5%**) and afternoon (25**%**).

7. Movie Consumption Trends

Table 9: Movie Consumption Trends

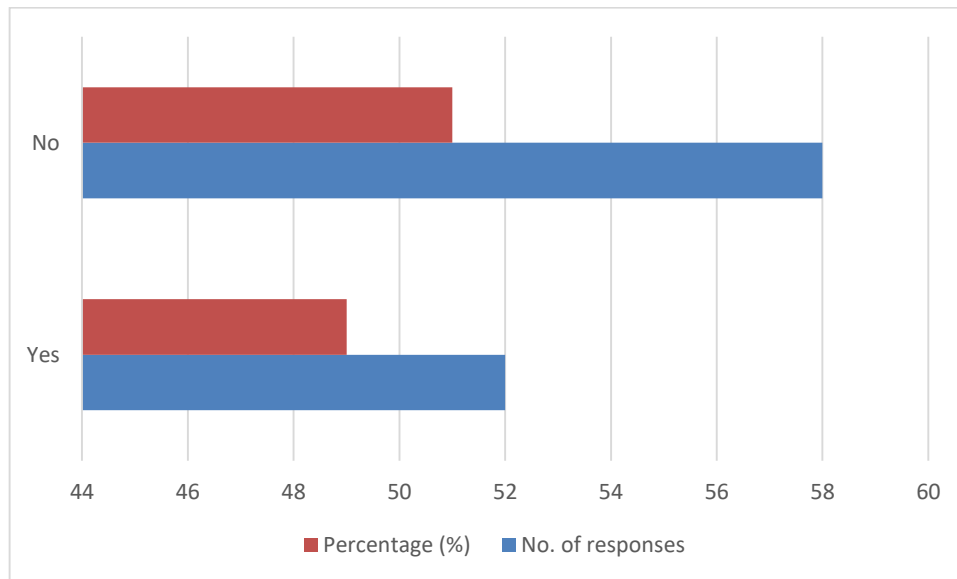| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	52	49
No	58	51
Total	110	100

Figure 7: Movie Consumption Trends

Table 9, while some responses favor cinema halls, others seem to prefer online portals for movie viewing.

8. Preference of OTT platforms

Table 10: Currently subscribed platform

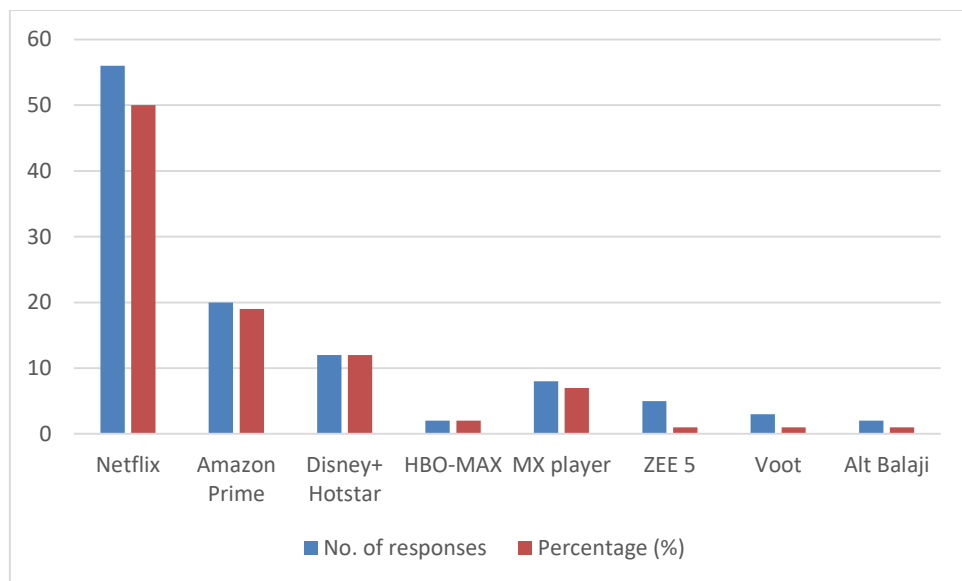| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Netflix	56	50
Amazon Prime	20	19
Disney+ Hotstar	12	12
HBO-MAX	2	2
MX player	8	7
ZEE 5	5	1
Voot	3	1
Alt Balaji	2	1
Total	110	100

Figure 8: Currently subscribed platform

Preferred Online Portal

This table shows Netflix as the most popular choice among responses for online portals, with **50%** selecting it. Amazon Prime follows at **19%**. The remaining options received lower percentages, with the 3rd option at **12%**, followed by the 5th option (**7%**), 6th option (1**%**), and 4th option (**1%**). Least of the responses chose ALT Balaji (**1%**).

9. Count of online portals with subscribers

Table 11: Count of online portals with subscribers

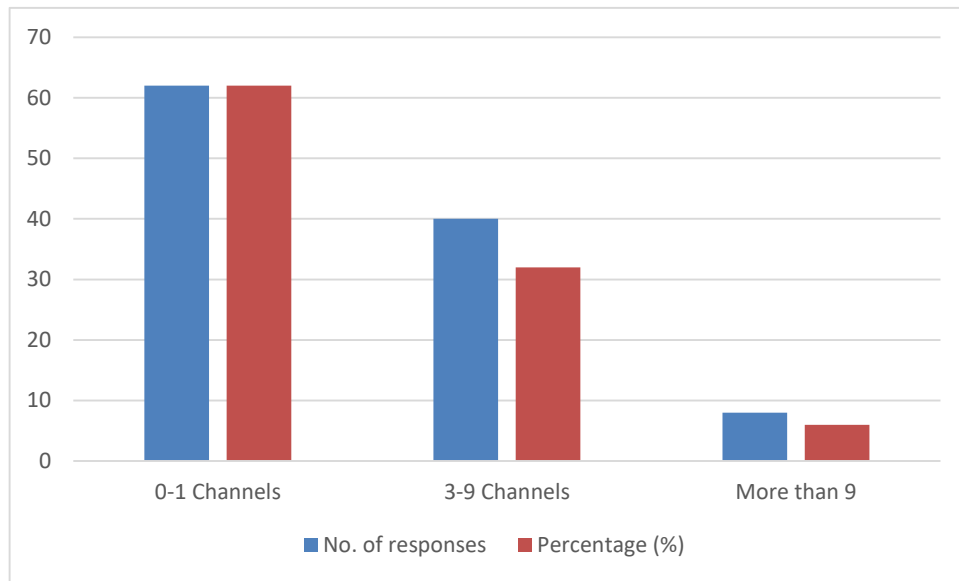| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
0-1 Channels	62	62
3-9 Channels	40	32
More than 9	8	6
Total	110	100

Figure 8: Count of online portals with subscribers

The table indicates that a majority (62%) of the 110 responses subscribe to 0-1 OTT channels. Additionally, 32% subscribe to 3-9 channels, and a smaller percentage (6%) subscribe to more than 9 channels.

10. The justification behind having several paid internet videos subscription

Table 12: Reason for video subscription

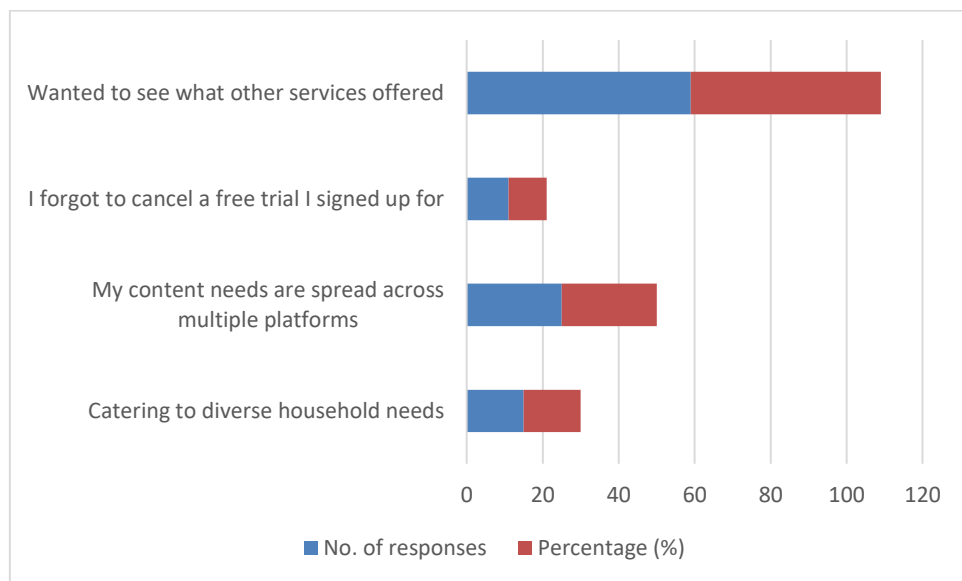| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Catering to diverse household needs	15	15
My content needs are spread across multiple platforms	25	25
I forgot to cancel a free trial I signed up for	11	10
Wanted to see what other services offered	59	50
Total	110	100

Figure 9: Reason for video subscription

A survey of 110 responses explored the motivations behind having multiple paid online video subscriptions. The findings reveal several key factors:

i. **Content Variety (50%)**: The largest group (50%) subscribes to multiple services to access a wider range of content, catering to different family members' preferences.

ii. **Incomplete Libraries (25%)**: Nearly a third (25%) cited the lack of all desired content on any single platform as a reason for having multiple subscriptions.

iii. **Accidental Subscriptions (10%)**: A smaller group (10%) admitted to having forgotten to cancel free trials, resulting in paid subscriptions.

iv. **Family Needs (15%)**: A significant portion (15%) utilizes multiple subscriptions to satisfy the viewing preferences of various family members.

Key takeaway: While some subscribe due to accidental charges or incomplete libraries, the desire for content variety across platforms is the most significant driver for multiple subscriptions.

11. OTT advantages over other conventional media

Table 13: OTT advantage over other conventional media

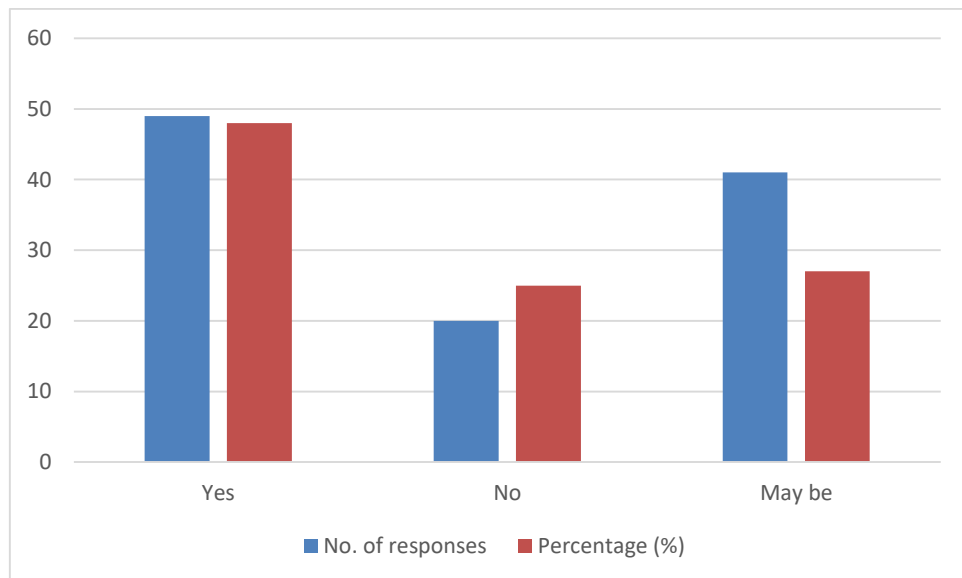| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	49	48
No	20	25
May be	41	27
Total	110	100

Figure 10: OTT advantage over other conventional media

Nearly half (48%) of the 110 responses felt that conventional media offered a more affordable and convenient way to watch movies compared to streaming services.

12. Content preference

Table 14: OTT content preference

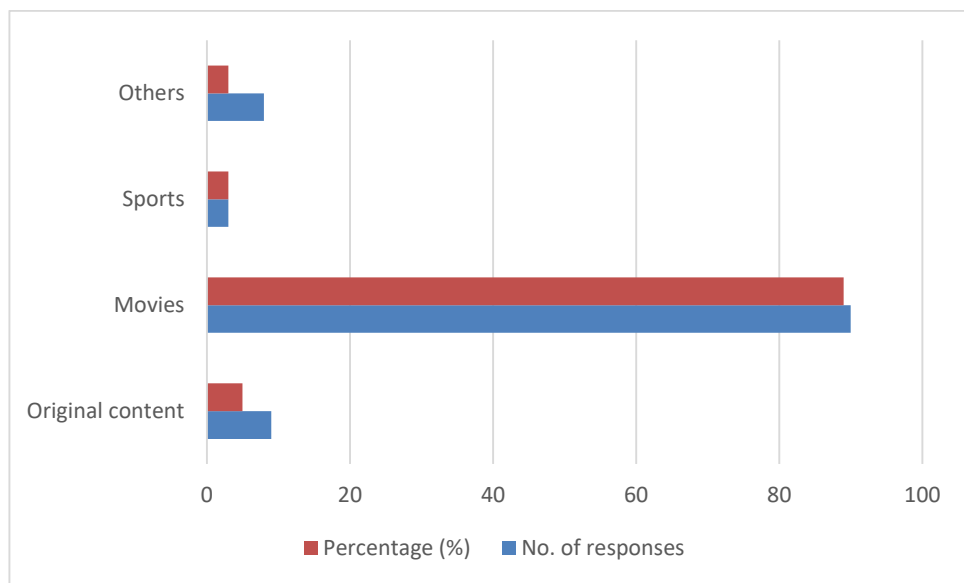| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Original content	9	5
Movies	90	89
Sports	3	3
Others	8	3
Total	110	100

Figure 11: OTT content preference

According to the above table, the survey results indicate that OTT services are a widely used platform for watching movies.

13. OTT usage during the pandemic changed

Table 14: OTT usage during pandemic

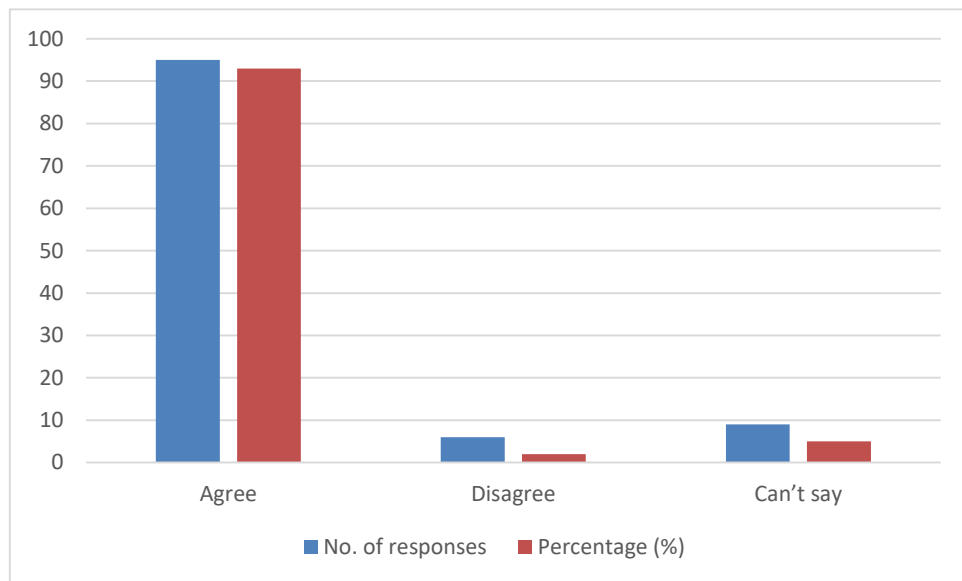| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Agree	95	93
Disagree	6	2
Can't say	9	5
Total	110	100

Figure 12: OTT usage during pandemic

This table highlights the perceived rise in OTT video consumption during the pandemic. **93%** of responses believe OTT viewership increased, suggesting a widespread observation of this trend. Only **2%** disagreed, and **5%** remained unsure.

14. The pandemic fueled a boom in online portals

Table 15: Pandemic impact on online portals

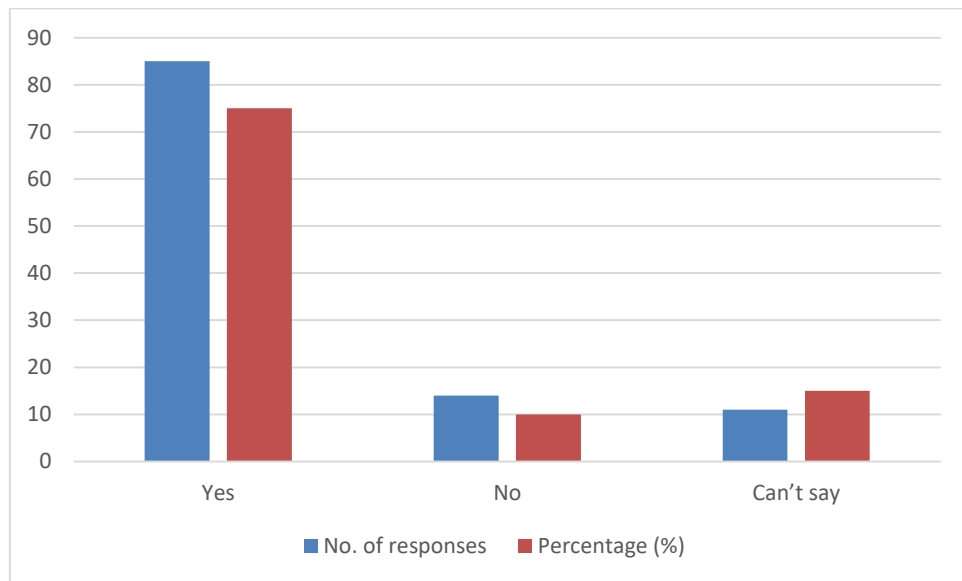| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	85	75
No	14	10
Can't say	11	15
Total	110	100

Figure 13: Pandemic impact on online portals

The survey results indicate that the pandemic significantly impacted OTT content usage for a majority of responses. 75% reported a change in their OTT use, while 10% indicated no change and 15% were unsure.

15. Screen preferences for OTT Streaming

Table 16: Screen preferences for OTT Streaming

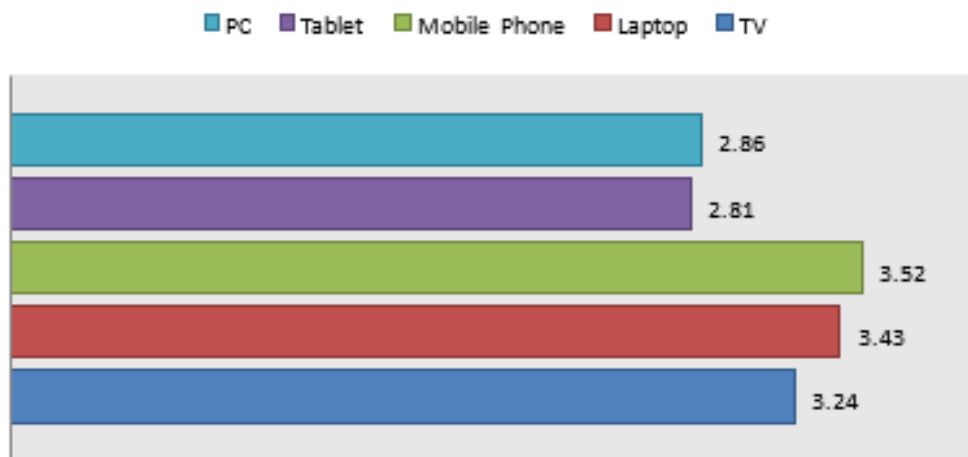| Social media	Rank		1	2	3	4	5	Total	Mean	Rank
	Weight	x	5	4	3	2	1			
TV	f		27	26	14	21	17	110	3.24	3
	fx		135	104	42	42	17	340		
Laptop	f		22	29	30	20	4	110	3.43	2
	fx		110	116	90	40	4	360		
Mobile phone	f		43	14	17	17	14	110	3.52	1
	fx		215	56	51	34	14	3700		
Tablet	f		17	12	23	40	13	110	2.81	5
	fx		85	48	69	80	13	295		
PC	f		17	10	34	29	15	110	2.86	4
	fx		85	41	102	58	15	300		

Figure 14: Screen preferences for OTT Streaming

The data clearly shows mobile phones as the preferred device for watching OTT content among responses. Smartphones reign supreme, followed by laptops, then televisions. Personal computers come in fourth, with tablets bringing up the rear.

16. Limitation of OTT platforms

Table 17: Limitation of OTT platforms

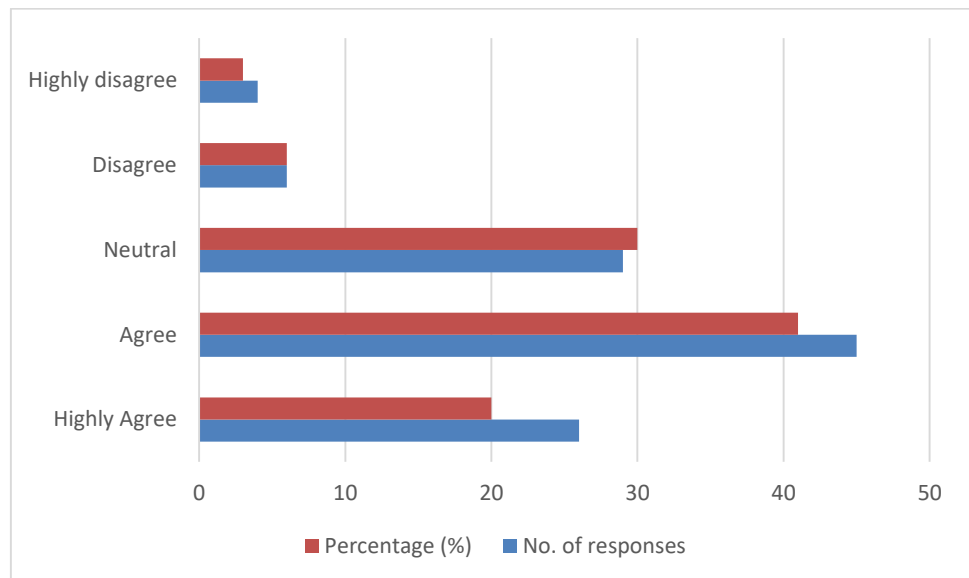| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Highly Agree	26	20
Agree	45	41
Neutral	29	30
Disagree	6	6
Highly disagree	4	3
Total	110	100

Figure 15: Limitation of OTT platforms

The survey highlights a significant challenge with internet connectivity for OTT streaming services. A combined 61% of responses (20% strongly agree + 41% agree) reported experiencing poor connections while streaming. Only a small minority (30%, including 6% disagree and 3% strongly disagree) did not experience this issue.

17. Vulnerability to security breaches and privacy violations

Table 18: Vulnerability to security breaches and privacy violations

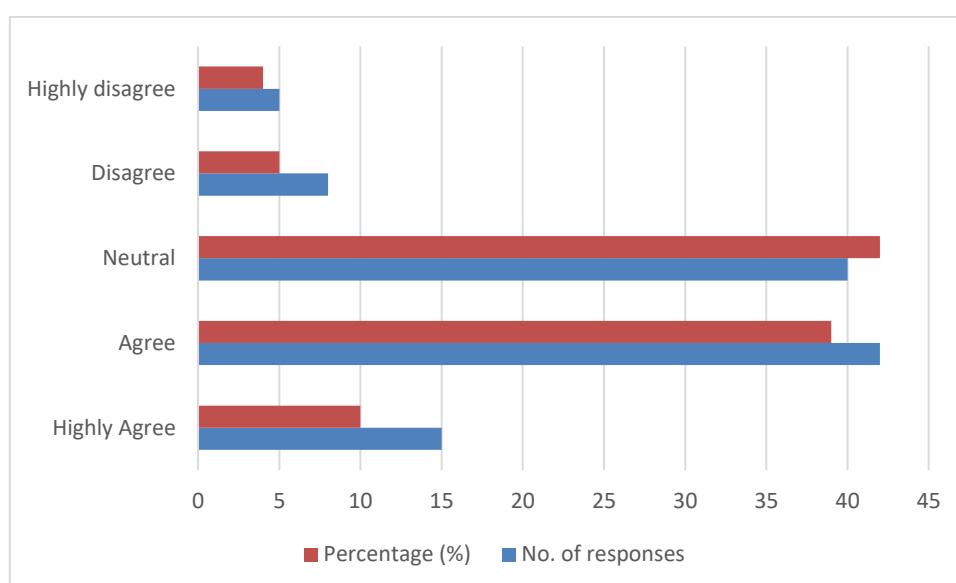| Particulars	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Highly Agree	15	10
Agree	42	39
Neutral	40	42
Disagree	8	5
Highly disagree	5	4
Total	110	100

Figure 16: Vulnerability to security breaches and privacy violations

Security Concerns with Online Portals

This table explores responses' concerns about security and privacy when using online portals. Here's a breakdown of their responses:

- **Strongly believe it's a Risk (10%)**: A significant portion of responses (10%) expressed strong concerns about security risks associated with online portals.
- **Agree (39%)**: Nearly half the responses (39%) agreed that online portals pose some security and privacy risks.
- **Somewhat Agree/Neutral (42%)**: Another sizeable group (42%) offered a more neutral response, possibly indicating some level of concern.
- **Disagree (5%)**: A smaller group (5%) disagreed with the statement, suggesting they

34

perceive online portals as relatively secure.

- **Strongly Disagree (4%)**: Only a small percentage (24) strongly disagreed, indicating a very low level of security concerns.

Overall, the data suggests that a considerable portion of responses (55%, sum of those concerned) have some level of security apprehension regarding online portals.

4.6 Finding and Recommendations

- **Demographics:**

  o The survey skewed heavily female, with 85% of responses identifying as women.

- **Education and Streaming:**

  o A significant majority (65%) of responses enrolled in undergraduate courses receive financial aid, suggesting a correlation between financial need and assisted programs. Conversely, graduate students are more likely to be self-funded (93%).

- **Streaming Awareness and Usage:**

  o Nearly all participants (93%) are aware of online streaming services, indicating a high level of familiarity with these platforms.

  o The survey found a strong adoption rate for OTT services, with 80% of responses being active subscribers.

- **Frequency of Use:**

  o While a sizable portion (20%) use online portals daily, weekly usage emerges as the most common trend (39%). This suggests regular, but not necessarily constant, engagement.

- **Discovery Methods:**

  o Word-of-mouth remains a powerful marketing tool, with friends and family influencing nearly half (38%) of responses in their discovery of online streaming services.

- **Time Preferences:**

  o Evening and nighttime viewing dominate usage patterns, with a combined preference of 83% among responses.

- **Movie Watching Preferences:**

  o Interestingly, despite the prevalence of streaming services, movie theatres remain a popular choice for a majority (60%) of responses.

- **Subscription Preferences:**

  o Netflix emerged as the most popular platform with 58% of responses preferring it. Other notable options included Amazon Prime (20%), Disney+ Hotstar (17%), and HBO Max (17%).

- **Subscription Tiers:**

  o While 64% of responses subscribed to OTT channels, a significant portion (39%) only subscribed to 1-3 channels, suggesting a preference for targeted subscriptions.

- **Reasons for Not Subscribing:**

  o The survey revealed various reasons for not subscribing. Some (14%) preferred multiple subscriptions to cater to different household needs, while others (29%) found no single service offered everything they wanted. Additionally, a small portion (8%) signed up for free trials without cancelling.

- **Cost and Convenience:**

  o Nearly half (49%) of responses viewed OTT as a more affordable and convenient alternative to traditional media. Only 20% disagreed.

- **Content Preferences:**

  o Movies remained the dominant content type on OTT platforms, with 91% of responses watching them. Original content also saw interest, with 8% opting for that category.

- **Impact of Lockdowns:**

  o Lockdowns significantly boosted OTT viewership according to 99% of responses.

- **Impact of the Pandemic:**

  o The pandemic influenced OTT usage for a vast majority (85%) of responses.

- **Viewing Devices:**

  o Surprisingly, televisions were the preferred device for OTT viewing, chosen by

most responses over mobile devices, laptops, and tablets.

- **Factors Influencing OTT use:**

  - The study identified various factors influencing users' choice of OTT platforms during the pandemic. These included security, affordability, on-demand access, content variety, user interface, recommendations, additional features, price promotions, and access to international content. Interestingly, these factors were found to be equally important across demographics.

- **Gender and Educational Background:**

  - The study found no significant differences in OTT preferences between genders or educational backgrounds.

- **Future Considerations for OTT Services:**

  - Parental controls, free content, seamless streaming, personalized recommendations at lower costs, and a vast library could be key to attracting a wider audience. Focusing solely on smaller screens and foreign content might limit appeal.

4.7 Limitations

Research Approach

Due to ongoing public health considerations related to COVID-19, in-person qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews, are not feasible for this study. Therefore, we will be relying on alternative data collection methods (specify the methods you will be using, e.g., online surveys, focus groups).

Participant Eligibility

To ensure a focused and relevant sample, this study will target students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs (specify the field of study if relevant).

4.8 Suggestions

Enhancing the User Experience:

- **Fresh Content and Targeted Advertising:** Offer users a curated selection of fresh, highlighted content alongside relevant, non-intrusive ads.
- **Subscription Flexibility:** Provide diverse subscription options catering to different user needs and viewing habits.
- **Streamlined User Journey:** Optimize the user experience from content discovery to payment methods for a seamless journey.
- **Gathering Feedback:** Implement feedback mechanisms to understand user preferences and continuously improve service quality.

Building Customer Loyalty:

- **Relationship Building:** Foster positive customer relationships through active communication and responsiveness.
- **Referral Incentives:** Create a compelling referral program with attractive discounts and promotions to drive user acquisition.
- **Security Awareness:** Educate users about the risks of sharing login information and promote safe practices.

Content Strategy:

- **Social Media Marketing:** Leverage social media platforms to promote content and engage with target audiences.
- **Regional Content Focus:** Expand content libraries to include a wider selection of regional movies and television shows.
- **User Control:** Empower users to personalize their experience by choosing preferred content languages and types.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

India's OTT Boom: A Perfect Storm

India is experiencing a surge in online streaming thanks to a confluence of factors:

- **Rapid Growth:** India is leading the global charge in online streaming, with its market experiencing the fastest growth rate worldwide. This surge is driven by a steady stream of new OTT platforms entering the Indian market.

- **Personalized Content:** Platforms are constantly innovating, offering viewers a rapidly evolving selection of personalized content.

- **Lower-Tier Appeal:** Even lower-tier streaming services are attracting attention and investment due to their affordability and niche offerings.

The COVID-19 Catalyst

The COVID-19 further accelerated the rise of OTT based platforms in India:

- **Increased Teenage Consumption:** With traditional entertainment options limited, teenagers' flocked to online platforms, making OTT the dominant form of media consumption in this demographic.

- **Accessibility Advantages:** OTT platforms offer several advantages over traditional media: scalability, access to a wider range of content (including international options), and vast libraries of content (including "cannabis-friendly" content, depending on the platform's regulations).

- **Smartphone Dominance:** The widespread adoption of smartphones, coupled with affordable internet data plans, makes OTT a highly accessible form of entertainment in India.

Content Preferences and Regulation:

- **Youthful Cravings:** Movies and web shows are particularly popular among young audiences, especially uncensored original content unavailable in theatres.

- **Censorship Concerns:** Government efforts to regulate online content raise concerns among some users who oppose censorship.

A Competitive Landscape

- **High-Quality Content and Features:** Popular OTT platforms compete by offering high-quality content and engaging features to attract and retain users.

- **Growing Rivalry:** The market is becoming increasingly competitive with more and more players entering the scene.

Future Outlook: Evolving Needs and Adapting Platforms

- **User Satisfaction and Future Growth:** Current users are generally satisfied with their OTT experiences, and as they age, their usage patterns are likely to evolve, potentially leading to increased demand for even more sophisticated services.

- **Importance of User Research:** Platforms that prioritize ongoing user research and adapt their offerings accordingly will be well-positioned for success in this dynamic market.

Impact of the Pandemic:

- **Spike in Usage (2019-2022):** The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns significantly boosted OTT platform usage from 2019 to 2022.

- **Urban Dominance:** Urban areas currently have the highest concentration of OTT consumers, but internet penetration is increasing throughout India, making online entertainment more accessible to a wider audience.

- **Mobile and Computer Viewing:** Smartphones and computers are the preferred devices for consuming visual content on OTT platforms.

- **The Pandemic's Lasting Impact:** The pandemic played a major role in propelling India's OTT market forward. The widespread shift to online activities during lockdowns in 2022 led to a dramatic increase in internet usage, further accelerating the adoption of OTT platforms.

REFERENCES

Books

- P. Martinez, *The consumer mind: brand perception and the implication for marketers*. London: Kogan Page, 2012.

- L. Harte and R. McGarrahan, *Internet TV Systems*. Discovernet, 2016.

- G. Emilien, R. Weitkunat, and F. Lüdicke, *Consumer Perception of Product Risks and Benefits*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017.

Journal

- S. Mahajan, "Cinema in the World of OTT and the Ethics of Visual Representation in a Fictional World," *Proceeding International Conference on Science and Engineering*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 1473–1498, Feb. 2023, doi: https://doi.org/10.52783/cienceng.v11i1.301.

- G. Gupta and K. Singharia, "Lockdown."

- E. Sundaravel and N. Elangovan, "Emergence and future of Over-the-top (OTT) video services in India: an analytical research," *International Journal of Business Management and Social Research*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 489–499, 2020, doi: https://doi.org/10.18801/ijbmsr.080220.50.

- G. Gupta and K. Singharia, "Consumption of OTT Media Streaming in COVID-19 Lockdown: Insights from PLS Analysis," *Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective*, vol. 25, no. 1, p. 097226292198911, Feb. 2021, doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/0972262921989118.

Websites

- Wikipedia Contributors, "Over-the-top media service," *Wikipedia*, Jan. 27, 2020. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Over-the-top_media_service

- PricewaterhouseCoopers, "Television and OTT," *PwC*. https://www.pwc.in/industries/entertainment-and-media/television-and-ott.html

- "Business News Today: Read Latest Business News, Live India Share Market News, Finance & Economy News," *mint*. http://www.livemint.com

- "What is OTT? Everything You Need to Know | Endavo," *Endavo Media*. https://www.endavomedia.com/what-is-ott

- https://www.facebook.com/marketing91, "Importance of Customer Perception & its Influence on Consumer Behavior," *Marketing91*, Dec. 22, 2017. https://www.marketing91.com/customer-perception-important/