

User Preference of OTT platforms Post Covid in Coimbatore City

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Abstract: The Covid19 pandemic and nation-wide lockdown played a significant role in the growth of viewership of OTT platforms. Consumer behavior is undergoing profound change as the world adjusts to new normal. People working from home, utilize the OTT platforms, the average time people consuming on OTT platforms have risen to 2-3 hours per day, the average spending of money on OTT platforms is Rs.100-400 (per month). As pandemic situation improved, the government permitted to operate 100% seating in multiplexes and single screens. On a recovery side, India's gross box office statistics reached Rs.4,002 crores in Jan-April 2022, signaling best ever performance post-covid. Thus the study makes an attempt to find the preferential factors considered in selecting the OTT platforms and the challenges for OTT platforms post-covid.

Keywords: User preference, 5G Technology, challenges, marketing strategies, OTT platform, problems faced

I. INTRODUCTION

OTT (Over-the-top) media platform is a digital media service that is delivered directly to viewers via Internet. Companies that historically acted as administrators or distributors of content such as cables, radio and satellite TV channels are now being bypassed by OTT platforms. OTT has gained an advantage by providing better connectivity, being budget friendly and also allows its users to have the experience of watching movies at their own convenience. The number of Indian households with a Pay TV subscription, such as Tata Sky and Dish TV, has essentially reached a state of little or no change, expanding at a rate of only 2%. However, the number of households having a subscription-based video-on-demand service, or SVOD, has increased by 51% in India. Above all, these companies have invested heavily in content, price innovations, and bundling to develop niche properties. Major players in the OTT platforms have informed that pre COVID there was only 40-45% subscription rate but in recent days it has risen to almost 75% according to Business Insider.

The Covid 19 pandemic and national wide lockdown not only slowed business growth and financial outcomes, but also changed individual behavioral patterns for the consumption of products and services, including digital-based consumption. It is hypothesized that this rise in the usage of OTT platforms post COVID is not transient in nature in fact they are expected to be long term. Filmmakers are now changing the game by releasing their movies on theatres and on OTT platforms together. The subscription-based OTT services became successful during the pandemic by catering to media-hungry audiences and perfectly fitting around its user's increasingly hectic lifestyles. However

issues such as delivery speed, content, service quality, competition and customer retention need to be addressed in the new normal.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Nokuphiwa Udoakpan, (2020) ¹ was to determine the impact of OTT TV services on traditional pay-TV services in South Africa. The study's main findings revealed that OTT TV services are a supplement to pay-TV services rather than a replacement. Low-income earners use free/paid mobile applications to consume TV content, and free-to-air services are the preferred platform for TV consumption for those who do not have OTT TV or pay-TV services. All stakeholders in digital media and business strategy, as well as marketing students, will benefit from this research.

Sharma (2021)² analyze how the Over-The-Top platform is becoming a preferred source of entertainment amongst young customers in India over traditional Pay TV service (Cable TV/DTH) and what factors influence such preferences, including content gamification. The research adheres to the theoretical frameworks of use and gratifications theory and niche analysis.

Ria Patnaik (2021) ³ examined in their study about people's attitudes toward OTT platforms, their consumption patterns and their comparison to cinema to determine whether OTT platforms are gradually displacing the most popular traditional medium of entertainment. People used OTT more than any other platform, including TV and YouTube, to pass the time or for pleasure. The study reveals that OTT platforms have a lot of potential in the future and the pandemic played a big part in that.

Shilpa Parihar (2021)⁴ primarily focused on consumer happiness and the impact of marketing mix on OTT platform users. The study revealed consumer satisfaction levels and determined that OTT platforms like as Amazon, Netflix, Hotstar, Voot, and SonyLIV are now popular not only among youth but also among homemakers, working men, business owners and children. The content of these platforms strongly appeals to individuals, creating demand and expanding popularity.

Christopher Nata (2022)⁵ aimed their study sought to investigate the antecedents of viewing experience in the context of an OTT platform, as well as the role of viewing experience in mediating behavioural intentions in Indonesia. The study also sought to determine how sound viewing experience, social media exposure, and fear of missing out predict the intention to recommend movies, platforms, and continue subscribing. Finally, this study determined which antecedent of viewing experience has the greatest influence on forming a good viewing experience.

Menon (2022)⁶ identified eight U&Gs for OTT use: easy navigation, binge watching, entertainment, relaxation, social interaction, companionship, voyeurism, and information seeking. Based on the U&G theory, a comprehensive research model was developed and tested using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) on cross-sectional data from 576 OTT users of various ages and gender from India. According to the findings, convenient navigation, binge watching, and relaxation U&G predict OTT subscription intentions, whereas convenient navigation, binge watching, and entertainment U&G predict its continuation intentions.

Philomina (2022)⁷ seeks to investigate the impact of OTT platforms on adolescents using previous literature from scholarly research studies, articles, and book journals. The Indian OTT market is rapidly expanding as a result of an increase in smart phone users, particularly teens and tweens, a greater proliferation of smart devices, lower-cost internet plans, higher-quality content, and a growing urban population. As a result, there is a need to investigate higher forums and their impact on adolescents. To gain valuable knowledge about the current study. The current study's literature review is divided into three sections: international, national, and regional.

Unnamalai Swetha CT (2022)⁸ aim to identify and analyse the factors that influence them to watch, as well as to comprehend the competitive analysis of OTT. This study was conducted to determine whether people were aware of the OTT platform prior to the pandemic. According to the sample collected, two-thirds of the respondents were aware of OTT Platforms prior to Covid-19. Customers are extremely satisfied with OTT Platforms. Customers are influenced to watch OTT because it is available at any time and from any location.

Vidushi Negi (2022)⁹ The purpose of this research is to better understand the impact of OTT platforms on the changing lifestyles of youth in the Uttarakhand region during lockdown. Several OTT platforms, including Netflix, Disney+Hotstar, Amazon Prime, Voot, Zee5, MX Player, and others, have developed a variety of entertainment programmes. These OTT platforms have had a significant impact on the lifestyles of children, and this study is attempting to understand why. As a result, the desire for entertainment increased among young people during this time period, and OTT emerged as a powerful medium of entertainment. The research is being carried out in Uttarakhand's Kumaon and Garhwal regions.

(Sharma K. , 2022)¹⁰ in his study investigates the future of streaming services, their emergence, and their benefits. As a result, traditional television stations must prepare for the paradigm shift brought about by over-the-top (OTT) services. They also show various OTT services and their technological background, content characteristics, and future industry and censorship developments.

Amisha Gupta (2022)¹¹ investigates the impact of OTT platform subscription intention in a post-covid scenario. They discovered that content liking has the greatest influence on the intention to subscribe to OTT, with a "t value" of 1.452. They also discuss the content variety, stating that people prefer comedy and thrillers over other genres. However, there is room for improvement because most people believe that OTT subscriptions should be more affordable. Their research study is very reliable because it focuses on post-covid data, which other research papers have not taken into account.

III. OBJECTIVES

- 1) To identify the source of awareness and preference of OTT platforms by the customers post-covid.
- 2) To analyze the marketing strategies adopted and its impact on usage of OTT platform.
- 3) To know the problems faced by the customers while using OTT platforms.

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The internet revolution has drove the popularity of Over-The-Top services and the content and convenience it provides is worthy of recognition. The introduction of 5G Technology enables delivery of quality content much faster than before. Perceived entertainment, changing audience preferences, internet access speeds, device proliferation, and customization of content contributed towards the increased number of OTT players and users. It is a known fact that OTT platforms had increased user-base during the lockdown period. This study aims to analyze the consumer preference towards Over-The-Top platforms and the challenges faced by the players of OTT platforms post-covid.

V. METHODOLOGY

- Population: Population includes people using OTT platforms in Coimbatore city.
- Sampling technique: Random and Convenience Sampling Technique has been used to select the sample.
- Sample size: Sample size of 200 respondents was taken from various parts of Coimbatore city. They were asked to fill the questionnaire.
- Tools for collection of data: Questionnaire was framed in a structured manner in order to collect the data that are relevant for the study. Pilot study was conducted to test its reliability and validity.
- Type of Data: It includes Primary and secondary. Primary data was collected through questionnaire and secondary data were collected from published articles, journals and magazines.
- Tests carried out: Weighted Average Score, Chi-Square Test and Regression Analysis were carried out to test the Hypothesis. The following are the hypothesis framed for the conduct of the study.
 - There is no association between the marketing strategies and the usage of OTT platform among the customers
 - There is no significance between the number of channels subscribed by the respondents and the personal factors.
- Time period: The study was conducted for a period of five months from March 2022 to July 2022.

VI. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1 Simple Percentage Analysis

	Options	No. of respondents	Percentage
Source of awareness	Newspaper	12	6
	YouTube	43	21.5
	Social media	98	49
	Television	27	13.5
	Others	20	10
Most Preferred OTT Platform	Netflix	83	41.5
	Disney Plus	57	28.5
	Hotstar		
	Amazon Prime	47	23.5
	Zee 5	10	5
Problems faced by OTT users	Sony Live	3	1.5
	No Free trial period	32	16
	High speed Internet requirement	92	46
	High Subscription rates	71	35.5
	Others	5	2.5

Source: Primary Data

The **Table 1** shows the percentage analysis of the source of awareness through which the respondents are aware of the OTT platform. Out of the various source of awareness such as Newspaper, Youtube, Social media, Television, majority

(49%) of the respondents are aware of the OTT platforms through social media. Subsequently, Out of the various OTT platforms such as Netflix, Disney Plus Hotstar, Amazon Prime, Zee 5 and Sony Live, majority (41.5%) of the respondents preferred the OTT platform ‘Netflix’ and of the type of problem faced while using the OTT platform such as No free trial period, High speed Internet requirement, High Subscription rates, majority (46%) of the respondents faced high speed internet requirement as a major problem while using the OTT platform.

Table 2 Weighted Average for factors influencing the Selection of OTT Platform

Factors	Mean Square	Rank
Price	4.24	4
Audio and Video quality	4.54	2
Content	4.7	1
Customization	3.96	5
Accessibility across Devices	4.39	3
User Interface	3.58	6

Source: Primary Data

The **Table 2** shows the factors influencing in selecting the OTT platform. The factors including content (4.7), audio and video quality (4.54), accessibility across devices (4.39) and price (4.24) are considered as more influential factors in selecting the OTT platform while customization (3.96) and user interface (3.58) are considered less influential factors while selecting the OTT platform.

Table 3: Chi-Square Tests - Marketing strategies adopted * Usage of OTT platforms

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.470E2 ^a	65	.000
Likelihood Ratio	66.217	65	.435
N of Valid Cases	201		

Source: Computed from primary data

H0 - There is no association between the marketing strategies and the usage of OTT platform among the customers

The marketing strategies adopted by OTT players includes offline campaigns, Digital campaigns, Commercials and Subscription packages influence the respondents in selecting the OTT platform. The frequency of usage of OTT platform by the respondents may be daily, weekly, occasionally and rarely. The hypothesis was framed to test whether there is any association between the marketing strategies adopted by the OTT players and the frequency of usage of OTT platforms.

Table 3 shows that the p value is 0.05, so if the value is less than 0.05, we accept null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis and vice versa. The significance value is 0.000 which is smaller than 0.05, hence we reject alternative hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis. Hence it is found that, there is no association between the marketing strategies adopted and the usage of OTT platform among the respondents.

Table 4: Regression Analysis - Personal Factors * Number of Channels subscribed by the respondents

S.N O	INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	(PARTIAL REGRESSION COEFFICIENT) (B)	STD. ERROR	T	SIGNIFICANCE
	CONSTANT	1.494	0.336	4.452	<.001
a	Age	-0.048	0.083	-0.573	0.567
b	Gender	-0.168	0.106	-1.587	0.114
c	Occupation	0.003	0.056	0.051	0.960
d	No of family members	0.040	0.071	0.564	0.573
e	Monthly family income	0.185	0.055	3.365	<.001

Source: Primary Data

$R^2 = 0.073$

$F = 3.054$

Significance = 0.011

VII. HYPOTHESIS

(H0): There is no significance between the number of channels subscribed by the respondents and the personal factors.

The table describes the results of complete multiple regression analysis of expectation indices in terms of other independent variables. The dependent variable is the number of channels subscribed and the independent variables considered for the test are age, gender, occupation, number of family members and monthly income.

Table 4 shows that the coefficient of linear determination (R^2) value is 0.073. This indicates that all the five independent variables put together contributes 7.3% to the dependent variable. This R^2 value, when tested for its significance by applying ANOVA technique, the F value 3.054 was found to be significant at 5% level. The significance level of 0.011 is lesser than the required significance level of 0.05 thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is concluded that there is significant relationship between the number of channels subscribed and the personal factors considered.

Challenges faced by the OTT Players

No doubt that the OTT platforms will grow successfully with new trends in the market based on the users changing preferences in the forthcoming years. But the OTT players have the following challenges to be looked into;

1. Increased demand for large storage capacity.
2. Speed and quality
3. Appropriate content delivery
4. Retaining the customers
5. Heavy competition from other players
6. Reducing the gap between expectation and perception of OTT users
7. Video Piracy

VIII. CONCLUSION

From this study it is clear that the OTT platforms have become an essential part of life post-covid. The OTT platforms like Netflix, Amazon and Disney plus Hotstar are the highly preferred OTT platforms as they satisfy the users with unlimited shows, multilingual, extra benefits to premium users etc. Competition is getting intense among the OTT players. The users of OTT platforms are highly influenced by the marketing strategy adopted by OTT players like digital campaigns, commercials etc. There is an increase in customers who demand the best without compromises. People are very happy to pay more if they are given a quality product/service. Existing OTT platform users are pleased with their experience and the consumers intended to increase their OTT usage in the future. High speed internet requirement by the OTT users will be matched soon by the introduction of 5G technology in India which is expected in the month of October, 2022. Thus, there is ample opportunity and scope for OTT players to get a larger pie in market share as long as they are to innovate in the industry.

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