



# THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION: TRANSFORMING MEDIA CONSUMPTION THROUGH OTT PLATFORMS

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**Abstract:** The continuous development of technology and the widespread use of the internet have changed the way individuals consume media. At the same time, the proliferation of smart phones and other technical gadgets has led in the emergence of new OTT media that provides services to viewers directly via the internet. India's OTT media services market is quickly increasing, having doubled in size during the last four years. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on media consumption habits, with more users turning to OTT platforms for entertainment. The study examines various prominent OTT platforms, measures customer experiences and views, and explores factors influencing platform usage and satisfaction levels. The study was conducted among 100 respondents of Thrissur district. Most consumers choose to view movies via OTT. And the pandemic era drove people to adopt OTT platforms, with the majority of users starting to use them during the epidemic. Netflix is the most popular app, followed by Amazon Prime, Disney HotStar, ZEE5, and Sony Liv. Better and more effective subscription plans will be launched to meet the needs of the vast majority of consumers who only sometimes use OTT services.

**Index terms:** Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms, Subscription-based streaming services, Content preferences

## INDRUDUCTION

Advancement of technology and high penetration of internet has changed the way media is consumed. At the same time availability of smart phones and other technological devices have resulted in the rise of new OTT media that offers services to viewers directly via the internet. India's OTT media services sector is expanding rapidly, doubling in size over the past four years. In a 2022 report, it is estimated that Indian subscriber figures will expand at 17 percent CAGR to reach 224 million by 2026 from the current 102 million.

Deloitte highlights that India's video streaming industry is highly fragmented. There are currently more than 40 operators, including global streaming service providers such as Amazon, Disney-owned Hot star, and Netflix which compete with domestic service providers including Zee5, Voot, and MX Player. (India's OTT Media Services Industry: Rapid Growth Amid Competition for Market Share, 2022).

In Kerala also many people are changed the way of media consumption. It has become the first state in India to launch a state-owned over-the-top (OTT) platform, 'Cspace', on November 1. The platform will have movies, short films and documentaries. Cspace is an initiative of Kerala State Film Development Corporation (KSFDC), the first public sector corporation for film development in India, on behalf of the state government.

## COVID-19 LOCKDOWN AND CHANGE IN MEDIA CONSUMPTION

COVID-19 is a global pandemic that has changed the Indian audience behaviour and lifestyle in terms of media consumption. It has forced the people to make maximum usage of internet. More and more users are adapting to OTT platforms. Moreover, Social distancing norms and isolation of people have increased at-home digital consumption, thus creating a surge in the demand for subscription-based streaming services (Singharia, 2021).

It is in the backdrop of this changed consumption behaviour the present study examines the various OTT platforms that are available to use, which of them are prominent and measure the customer's experiences and views. This study also focuses on the various factors that may have influenced to the use these platforms and also degree of satisfaction by using these platforms is also measured.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

OTT stands for "Over the Top" which refers to any streaming service that provides content over the internet. It is a platform that delivers movies and TV series/shows over the Internet. This OTT platform is just like any other application or service available on the internet. The growing popularity and increased usage of the OTT platforms are aided with various benefits like easy to use. cost friendly, convenience, variety content etc. Under OTT platform, You-tube has grabbed the consumer attention from 2005 & Netflix from 2016 whereas, current situation formed many more such as Amazon, Hot star, ALT Balaji, Voot, Sonyliv, Zee5, and many more.

Covid has made the people to make maximum usage of Internet from a small kid to the old fellow to subscribe the internet packages along with OTT platform packages. Technological innovation has made the development of OTT platform great in India, and also in Kerala. The literature review provides a description, summary and evaluation of each source.

Menon (2020) noted that the restrictions imposed in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic have significantly changed consumption patterns for both media and entertainment. Social activity is increasingly moving online as quarantines prevent people from walking, playing or working. Web social networks allow you to stay in touch with family, friends, partners, neighbors, etc. The home entertainment system has shown steady growth and development since the external entertainment channel (home entertainment) was closed by the government.

Gangwar et al. (2020) investigated the preference for OTT platforms in India. Technological advancement and content quality are the main factors driving the adoption of OTT platforms by Indian customers. The study found that millennial is drawn to OTT platforms because of overseas content and video- on-demand capabilities.

Sharma & Chakraborti (2020) COVID-19 is a virus that affects the respiratory system and creates serious complications in the human body. To prevent the community spread of this virus many countries like China, Italy, Spain, the USA, and India resorted to complete lockdown. Thus, leading to a standstill in business operations, service sector and there were a fear of job loss and loss in profitability. This study identified the economic impact of lockdown due to COVID-19 on the Service Sector in India and its economic impact.

Kalagato report (2017) presented a breakdown of the market share in the Indian video OTT Industry for the respective players. The report states that Hot star was a market leader with 73.19% with Netflix with 1.26% of the market share.

Patnaik et al. (2021) explores the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the entertainment industry, specifically focusing on Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms. The study delves into consumer behaviour towards OTT services during the pandemic, highlighting a significant increase in OTT consumption. The research aims to understand the shift in consumption patterns from traditional entertainment mediums to OTT platforms, as well as to explore the future scope of OTT services. The study involved primary data collection through a questionnaire distributed to 100 respondents, focusing on demographics and OTT consumption behaviour. The findings suggest a notable rise in OTT platform usage during the pandemic, indicating a changing landscape in the entertainment industry.

Chopdar & Tarafdar (2021) explores consumers' perceptions towards Over the Top (OTT) platforms in Guwahati City. The study focuses on factors influencing consumer choices, satisfaction levels, and preferences regarding OTT content. It highlights that a significant percentage of respondents prefer original content on OTT platforms, with web series and short films being popular choices. The research also indicates that the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the choice of OTT platforms for a majority of respondents. Factors such as unlimited variety of content, portability, latest

and quality content, and cost-effectiveness compared to traditional TV are key influencers in consumers' decisions to use OTT platforms. The study acknowledges limitations such as a small sample size of 100 respondents. The study provides valuable insights into the growing popularity and impact of OTT platforms on consumer behaviour in the digital entertainment landscape.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

COVID-19 is a global epidemic that has transformed the Indian audience's media consumption habits. More and more users have adopted OTT platforms. While global firms like Netflix and Amazon Prime continue to gain market share in India. Indian streaming firms like Hot Star and JIO Cinema intend to enhance their positions. According to the analysts, India is the world's largest and fastest growing OTT market. These platforms have met the demand for easy access to global entertainment. The aim of this research is to explore the variety of OTT platforms accessible for usage, identify which are the most popular, and assess consumer experiences and viewpoints. In past studies, researchers attempted to compare OTT platforms to traditional streaming media. This study would assist to focus on the numerous elements that may have affected individuals use of these platforms. The level of pleasure in using these platforms is also assessed. This study looks at the significance of the pandemic on the evolution of OTT media consumption habits and their future in India.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Determine OTT platform usage patterns during the epidemic.
2. Identify the factors that influence consumers to choose OTT platforms.
3. Identify the most prominent OTT platforms and the customer content preferences.

### HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- H1:** There is significant difference between commencement of usage and hours spent.
- H2:** There is significant difference between time spent by the viewers before pandemic and during the pandemic
- H3:** There is significant difference between change in usage pattern and pandemic period.
- H4:** There is significant difference between sample mean and population mean relating to the factors attracting towards the usage of OTT platforms.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research is descriptive in nature. The study included both primary and secondary data. Primary data was acquired via a questionnaire. Secondary data was acquired through the use of periodicals, books, and the internet. The survey included 100 respondents located in the Thrissur district. The primary goal of this study is to Determine OTT platform usage patterns during the epidemic as well as to identify the elements that influence consumers to choose OTT platforms and to Identify the most prominent OTT platforms and the customer content preferences.

The data was acquired via a standardised survey from the Thrissur district using Google Forms, which included demographic information, perceptions, and satisfaction variables.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

During the dissemination of COVID-19, the OTT platforms went through changes and advanced to the next level. This research intends to examine the usage patterns of OTT platform during the epidemic., and to identify the factors that influence consumers to choose the same. Percentage, weighted average and various statistical tools like chi square and t test is used for the analysis.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF USERS OF OTT PLATFORM.

Variable	Attributes	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	52	52
	Male	48	48
	Total	100	100
Age	>18	9	9
	18-25	73	73
	25-35	14	14
	<35	4	4
	Total	100	100
Occupation	Employed	24	24
	Student	73	73
	Unemployed	3	3
	Total	100	100
Area of Residence	Rural	57	57
	Urban	43	43
	Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

The descriptive characteristics of samples collected from the Thrissur. Out of 100 samples majority of respondents are female with a frequency of 52 against male of 48. Majority of respondents are students i.e.;73 percent belong to 18 to 25 age group. Most of the respondents are from rural area with 57 percent.



TABLE 2-PREFERENCE LEVEL OF DIFFERENT OTT PLATFORMS

OTT Platforms	Weighted average	Rank
Amazon	77.2	II
Netflix	79.2	I
Hotstar	66.4	III
SonyLiv	60	IV
ZEE5	53.8	V

Source: Primary data

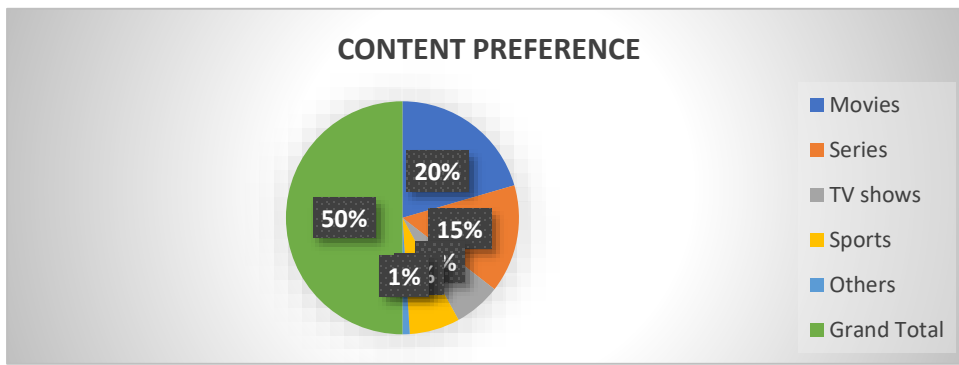
The preference level of different OTT platforms among the users. Netflix is the most preferred App with a weighted average mean value of 79.2. The next preferred App is Amazon prime with a weighted average mean value of 77.2. The least preferred Apps are ZEE5 and SonyLiv with a weighted average mean value of 53.8 and 60 respectively.

TABLE 3 CONTENT PREFERENCE AMONG RESPONDENTS

Content	No. Of respondents
Movies	41
Series	30
TV shows	13
Sports	14
Others	2
Grand Total	100

Source: Primary data

FIGURE 1 CONTENT PREFERENCE



41 Percent of the respondents prefer to watch movies on OTT platforms and 30 Percent of the respondents watch series on OTT platforms. Only 13 Percent of the respondents watch TV shows and 2 Percent of the watch Travel vlogs, Animations etc.

#### HOURS SPENT AND COMMENCEMENT OF USAGE

H<sub>0</sub> = There is no significant difference between commencement of usage and hours spent.

H<sub>1</sub> = There is significant difference between commencement of usage and hours spent.

TABLE 4 OBSERVED FREQUENCY

Commencement of usage	Hours spent on OTT platforms			Grand Total
	0-2 hrs	2-4 hrs	>4 hrs	
Before pandemic	11	17	2	30
During pandemic	22	37	11	70
<b>Grand Total</b>	33	54	13	100

Source: Primary data

TABLE 5 EXPECTED FREQUENCY

Commencement of usage	Hours spent on OTT platforms			Grand Total
	0-2 hrs	2-4 hrs	>4hrs	
Before pandemic	9.9	16.2	3.9	30
During pandemic	23.1	37.8	9.1	70
<b>Grand Total</b>	33	54	13	100

Source: Primary data

P value = 0.459924736, Calculated Value = 1.553385, Table value = 5.991465

Table 4 explains the observed frequency and Table 5 explains the expected frequency wherein chi square has been executed to check whether there is any significant difference between hours spent and commencement of usage of OTT. As the Table value, 5.991465 is greater than the calculated value, 1.553385 and the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% of significance. Hence, it is concluded that there is significant difference between the viewing hrs and commencement of usage of OTT. Considering the frequency, during the pandemic the viewers spent more hours on OTT for 2-4 hours a day.

**BEFORE PANDEMIC AND AFTER PANDEMIC**

H<sub>0</sub>= There is no significant difference between time spent by viewers before the pandemic and during the pandemic

H<sub>2</sub>= There is significant difference between time spent by the viewers before pandemic and during the pandemic

TABLE 6 OBSERVED FREQUENCY

<b>Commencement of usage</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Before pandemic	30
During pandemic	70
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

TABLE 7 EXPECTED FREQUENCY

<b>Commencement of usage</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Before pandemic	50
During pandemic	50
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

P value = 0.000063342483666, Calculated value =16, Table value = 3.841458821

Table 6 explains the observed frequency and Table 7 explains the expected frequency wherein chi square has been executed to check whether there is any significant difference between during the pandemic and after the pandemic. As the Table value, 3.841458821 is less than the calculated value, 16 and the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% of significance. Hence, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the time spent between during the pandemic and before the pandemic.

**CHANGE IN USAGE PATTERN OF OTT AND PANDEMIC PERIOD**

H<sub>0</sub> =There is no significant difference between change in usage pattern and pandemic period.

H<sub>3</sub>=There is significant difference between change in usage pattern and pandemic period.

TABLE 8 OBSERVED FREQUENCY

<b>Count of Since when have you started using OTT platforms</b>	<b>Change in usage pattern</b>			<b>Grand Total</b>
	Maybe	No	Yes	
Before pandemic	9	9	12	30
During pandemic	14	14	42	70
<b>Grand Total</b>	23	23	54	100

Source: Primary data

TABLE 9 EXPECTED FREQUENCY

Commencement of using OTT platforms	Change in usage pattern			Grand Total
	Maybe	No	Yes	
Before pandemic	6.9	6.9	16.2	30
During pandemic	16.1	16.1	37.8	70
<b>Grand Total</b>	23	23	54	100

Source: Primary data

P value = 0.18437, Table value = 3.38162134, Calculated value = 5.99146455

Table 8 explains the observed frequency and Table 9 explains the expected frequency wherein chi square has been executed to check whether there is any significant difference between change in usage pattern and pandemic period as the table value, 3.38162134 is less than the calculated value, 5.99146455 and the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between change in usage pattern during the pandemic and before the pandemic.

#### FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE USERS TOWARDS USING OTT PLATFORMS

H<sub>0</sub>= There is no significant difference between sample mean and population mean relating to the factors attracting towards the usage of OTT platforms.

H<sub>4</sub>= There is significant difference between sample mean and population mean relating to the factors attracting towards the usage of OTT platforms.

TABLE 10 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE USERS TOWARDS USING OTT PLATFORM

Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation	t – value	P value
Diversity of content	4.12	0.7935353 54	-21.10448259	< 0.05
Ad-free	3.73	1.2697979 8	6.478217788	< 0.05
Convenience	4.12	0.6521212 12	13.86927818	< 0.05
Language of choice	4.09	0.6887878 79	13.13359894	< 0.05
Reasonably priced	3.06	1.2690909 09	0.532604564	>0.05 (0.59)

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the factors that attract the users towards using OTT platforms with Mean, Standard deviation, t-value and p-value. For inferences independent t-test has been executed in which p-value is less than 0.05 for factors such as diversity of content, ad-free, convenience, language of choice. Here the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% of significance level and it is concluded that these factors influence the users positively towards using OTT platforms in Thrissur district. But for the factor reasonably priced the p-value is greater than 0.05 and the mid value here is almost equal to 3 which indicates this factor is neither positively evident nor negatively evident.



## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the perception of consumers towards OTT platforms during Covid pandemic. Most of the users prefer to watch movies on OTT. And the pandemic period had influenced the users to use OTT platforms and most of the users started using OTT platforms during the pandemic period. Netflix is the most preferred App and then followed by Amazon prime, Disney HotStar, ZEE5 and SonyLiv. Better and effective subscription plans are to be introduced to cope up with the need for a majority of users who are occasionally consuming OTT platforms. Segmentation of the user's experience are to be made from the content selection to the payment model, all have to be finely tuned to the expectations of the irrespective audience bases. The consumers should be made aware about the negative impact of sharing login details with others and also implement steps for resisting the same.

Freedom should be given to the consumers regarding the selection of their language and the choosing of their preferred contents. More broadcasting of regional movies and programs which would give rise to an increased number of OTT consumers

## CONCLUSION

As India is the world's fastest growing OTT industry, this momentum is being leveraged by a major rise in the entrance of new OTT businesses to the market and quick improvements in the provision of customized content. Even smaller OTT platforms are attracting funds from overseas investors and having a big influence on the industry.

It is clear that the emergence of the COVID-19 epidemic has boosted OTT platforms, with increasing consumption and OTT being the most popular medium. The main advantages of OTT platforms are their freedom of use, the availability of cross-cultural and global entertainment, and the subscription to user-friendly infinite material. In India, factors such as increased smartphone adoption and the availability of internet data at cheap costs are also critical.

Movies and web series are the most popular on OTT. Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+hotstar are the most popular OTT services because they provide high-quality content and excellent user experience. In addition, the number of regional OTT companies entering the market is rapidly increasing. Most current users of OTT platforms are satisfied with their experience, and the majority of consumers want to expand their OTT usage in the future. This trend may be effectively explored by many OTT platforms. The OTT will undergo several adjustments and enhancements before settling on the ideal model.

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