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AN ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER PERCEPTION ON OTT PLATFORMS IN CHENNAI CITY

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I. ABSTRACT

This research tries to study the rise of OTT platforms during the pandemic. It is a well-established fact that OTTs have seen a boom in their market since their launch whereas these platforms have seen an upward curve even in the pandemic period. It was found that many weren't aware of OTT platforms like Netflix, Amazon prime, Disney Hotstar etc., but became regular users after the pandemic period. It is true that it is one of the best mode of passing time in the lockdown where serious curfews were imposed, many found it difficult to stop their usage in these platforms as it sort of became an addiction to watch series, movies and animes in these platforms, even after the situation returned back to normal. There are even some physical and psychological impacts of these platforms which are discussed in the research. From the age of 12-65 there are users of these platforms indicating that wider age group of people are using these platforms. The experiences of users are collected via sample's preferences and further suggestions to increase its development are listed based on the user's opinion. At the outset, various positive and negative aspects are compared and a conclusion is deduced whether OTT platform is a boon or a bane.

II. KEY WORDS:

Netflix, Amazon, Over-The-Top Platforms.

III. INTRODUCTION:

OTT is an abbreviation for over-the-top. It describes any service that may be accessed

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online rather than through more conventional distribution networks like DTH and cable. The majority of the time, the word "OTT" refers to video streaming services.

Technology is advancing daily, and these sectors are improving quickly as a result. This digitized platform, where users may access the accessible digital resources around-the-clock, was made possible by the contemporary dynamic environment. Over the past several years, different patterns of content consumption have emerged in India as a result of the development of over-the-top (OTT) video streaming services.

The entertainment business is erratic as its primary sources of income are determined by a TV channel's TRP or a movie's box office receipts. As was already established, there are a lot of ways to view this entertainment in different ways. These days, even the advertisers are aware of this idea and are determined to use it in fresh, visually striking ways. Customers look for originality and inventive ideas that appeal to them and help them think and recall a brand or product in a certain way.

There was a time when people would wait in queue to purchase tickets outside theaters showing plays or films. Nowadays, people merely complete it online from their homes, offices, or pretty much anyplace else. You may quickly and easily reserve four seats of your choosing online, along with selecting the theaters and performance times. Furthermore, you may make payments online with convenience and securely using simple payment options including credit cards, debit cards, banking applications, net banking, etc. OTTs provide end consumers access to the OTT networks, whereas mobile operators give OTT firms access to mobile Internet. But ownership transfer in conventional physical product distribution is very different from "access," which refers to the ability to join and utilize a network.

There weren't as many options and forms of entertainment in the past. In the past, families would settle down and enjoy time spent with their loved ones and one another by sitting down together.

OTT is being adopted at an ever-increasing pace because of technological

advancements like smartphones, ultra-fast IP networks, open source platforms, creative services, cutting edge functionality, and a shift in consumer preferences towards its "freemium" based business models. (Sujata Joshi, 2015) Customers are enticed by this freemium notion. They don't realize that nothing comes for free.

The internet can only be used to surf certain content after we have paid for our internet plan. Consequently, the user will not be able to utilize any of the apps, such as data connection, until and until he pays for his internet data. During the pandemic, when severe curfews were implemented globally to stop the spread of COVID 19, a number of industries and commercial enterprises suffered significant losses that led to their closure. In the corporate world, only a select few companies managed to recover after suffering significant losses. However, as compared to the pre-pandemic period, OTT platforms are among the rarest sectors to have seen a significant gain in income. It made it through the pandemic and demonstrated remarkable growth, positioning itself as one of the fastest-growing and most promising commercial sectors. The time will come when consumers view OTT as a similarly well-liked movie-watching platform.

Everything has two sides, including OTTs, which have benefits and problems of their own. This research study attempted to weigh the benefits against its drawbacks in order to determine if it is a boon – that is, advantageous or helpful – or a bane – that is, damage or problem.

The concept of delivering video content over the internet began to gain traction in early 2000s. However, internet speeds were relatively slow, limiting the quality and quantity of content that could be streamed effectively. With advancements in technology and internet infrastructure, companies started experimenting with delivering high-quality, on-demand video content over the internet in late 2000s. Netflix, initially a DVD rental service, transitioned to streaming, offering a subscription-based model for accessing a vast library of movies and TV shows. The popularity of OTT platforms soared during 2010. Netflix expanded globally, producing original content and disrupting the traditional television industry. Other companies like Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, and

HBO Now (later HBO Max) also entered the market, offering their own streaming services. The number of OTT platforms continued to grow, leading to an increase in competition between 2015 and 2019. Disney launched Disney+ in 2019, focusing on family-friendly content and leveraging its extensive library of movies and TV shows. Additionally, Apple introduced Apple TV+ and Warner Media launched HBO Max. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift towards OTT platforms as people spent more time at home in the year 2020. Streaming services saw a surge in subscribers, with many new players entering the market. This led to further fragmentation and competition, with each platform vying for exclusive content and subscriber loyalty. Throughout this period, advancements in streaming technology, such as improved video compression algorithms and the widespread adoption of high-speed internet, have enhanced the quality and reliability of OTT services. Additionally, the proliferation of smart TVs and streaming devices has made accessing OTT content more convenient for consumers. However, studying the historical development of OTT platforms helps in analyzing the changing consumer preferences, intense competition within the streaming industry.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

1. Emmanuel Elioth Lulandala (2022)“OTT platforms resilience to COVID-19 – a study of business strategies and consumer media consumption in India” Seven resilient over-the-top (OTT) tactics were identified by this study: proactive sales promotion, flexible technology adoption, content localization, creative service plan launches, customer experience, and strategic cooperation. Following the implementation of these tactics, customers' OTT usage changed from sporadic to regular. Consumer choice for OTT is driven by factors including pricing, online reviews, diversity and quality of content, accessibility, and convenience. This survey also showed the variety of OTT experiences that customers had.
2. Nandhani parikh(2020) “ The emergence of OTT platforms in pandemic

and their scope” indicates that the COVID-19 era caused the market for OTT platforms to soar, and that over 91.7% of Indians are aware of OTTs, making them a widely used medium. People are continuously devouring various forms of media for enjoyment as a result of the present lockdown. When looking for entertainment, the majority of individuals (72.7%) turn to OTT, followed by YouTube (17.3%) and television (9.1%). Users' consumption habits have changed as a result of the lockout. The study's findings showed that 73.6% of respondents reported using OTT more frequently on a daily basis. Regarding consumption modes, individuals like smartphones (55.5%) over laptops (24.5%) and televisions (20%). 59.1% of users began utilizing a new over-the-top service during the lockout. Most consumers, according to the statistics, want films to be published on streaming services on the same day that they open in theatres.

3. Sumitra Saha,V.K. Satya Prasad (2020)“Consumption pattern of OTT platform in India” According to the data that was obtained, YouTube ranked top, with Netflix and Amazon Prime coming in second and third, respectively. MX Player took the fourth spot, Sony Liv came in fifth, Voot, Zed 5, Hoichoi, and BIGFlix came in that order, with Ditto TV coming in at number 10.
4. Dr Shilpa Parihar , Mr Kamal Kant(2021) “A Study of Consumers of OTT Platforms in India” indicated that the greatest place for viewers to get entertainment during a pandemic was on OTT platforms. The impact of over-the-top (OTT) platforms on customer satisfaction and the factors influencing customers were surveyed by the researcher. The researcher found that viewers under the age 30 tend to favor over-the-top (OTT) services. It has been demonstrated that during the epidemic, OTT was the greatest entertainment option. Because OTT channels offer high-quality

audio and video material suitable for all age groups, including children, and convenience, users have been watching them for over five hours.

5. Shin, J. Park, Y. and Lee, D (2019) "Strategic management of over-the-top services: With an emphasis on Korean consumer adoption patterns, the analysis revealed that the OTT platform industry is seeing significant growth. The usage of broadband connections and the Internet is growing, which is why this rise is more pronounced than in other emerging nations.
6. Jirakasem and Mitomo (2020) "Relationship of OTT Communications and Traditional Telecommunications Services" determined that advertising plays a crucial role in all print and electronic media, including OTT platforms. The author claims that the availability of video calling, conferencing, and other services has led to an increase in smartphone usage. According to data, 362 million hours were spent on OTT platforms by 144 million users in February 2019. of whom 87% use smartphones and 13% use desktop computers.
7. Suman Kumar and Dr. Rajendra Prasad (2023) "The rise of OTT platform: changing consumer preferences" have highlighted the resilience of OTT services during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on business strategies and consumer media consumption in India. Studies have also examined factors influencing consumer choice of streaming platforms, such as content availability, pricing, and overall user experience. The emergence and future trends of OTT video services in India have been analyzed, showcasing the impact of the pandemic on media consumption patterns and preferences.
8. Dr. Swati Manoj Yeole Dr. Lambodar Saha (2022) "A study on User Perspective on OTT platform in India" This study aims to ascertain the factors that influence the OTT video streaming and the effect of cost efficiency on user subscription for OTT video streaming. The research

paper concludes the user friendliness and content richness as significant factors in the usage and promotion of OTT. Price sensitivity matters a lot to speculations on the OTT Services Market, individuals. The cost effect makes the platform stronger than usual. It brings cost sensitivity to users and encourages the platform.

V. RESEARCH GAP:

The aforementioned studies, conducted by a number of writers, attempted to determine the causes for the abrupt rise in OTT platform usage during the pandemic, as well as the effects of this increase on other fields where the platform's user base rose. Additionally, it looked at user-influencing characteristics and different consumption patterns on OTT platforms. But this research intends to find the positive and negative aspects of this platform and to come at a deduced conclusion whether it is a good or bad influencer of the society. This research intends to prove that pandemic is not the only reason for the increase in OTT platform users. OTT was already one of the emerging sectors and have developed much more than predicted in this pandemic situation but that doesn't mean that it developed only because of pandemic situation where people were left with no choice rather than OTTs.

VI. STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS:

The purpose of the study is to,

- Determine the cause behind the rise in OTT platforms.
- Also, the customers' experiences on these platforms are examined in order to determine the consumer perception on OTT platforms and the impact of OTTs on consumers.
- This research aims to investigate how the OTT platform affects its users in terms of finance and mental health.

The objective of the research is to

- Determine how these platforms' ease, accessibility, and the way it affects users' day-to-day lives and/or shift in lifestyle.
- As there is a chance for extensive exposure to a global ecosystem, the researcher hopes to identify changes in users depending on behavioral and cultural features.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. To know whether the pandemic is the sole reason for increased OTT users.
- b. To analyze the regulation of sensor boards of OTTs and opinion of users on their self-ratings.
- c. To identify the physical and psychological impacts and change in behavior of the users by influence of OTT platforms.

VII. METHODOLOGY:

An online survey was conducted by sharing a questionnaire via Google Forms which consisted of 20 questions related to this study. It was majorly circulated through cross-platform messaging, like Whatsapp for a week. Altogether 65 responses were collected in total within the local limits of Chennai district as the study was restricted within it. The questionnaire mainly aims to ascertain the level of satisfaction of OTT platform users. The factors which tend to influence the users to shift to OTT platforms from traditional platforms was also major aspect covered by the questionnaire.

Primary data was collected from the sample survey and non-probability sampling was carried out. A convenient random sampling was carried out by the researcher for it provides more reliable data and simple interpretation was made from the same. Convenient sampling often leads to sampling bias because it relies on selecting individuals who are readily available or easily accessible. This can result in over-representation or under-representation of certain groups within the population, leading to biased results. Convenient samples may not be representative of the population of interest. Since participants are chosen based on their availability or

proximity to the researcher, the sample may not accurately reflect the characteristics of the broader population.

VIII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Demographic and socio-economic variables

Variables	Particulars	NOR	Percentage
Age	Below 18	6	9.2%
	18-35	52	80%
	35-60	4	6.2%
	Above 60	3	4.6%
	TOTAL	65	100%
Gender	Male	39	60%
	Female	26	40%
	TOTAL	65	100%
Educational Qualification	12 th grade	13	20%
	UG	42	65%
	PG	10	15%
	TOTAL	65	100%
Annual Income	Below 500,000	15	23%

	500,000-10,00,000	1	1.5%
	Above 10,00,000	1	1.5%
	None	48	74%
	TOTAL	65	100%
Marital Status	Married	54	83%
	Unmarried	11	17%
	TOTAL	65	100%

Source: Primary Data

IX. INTERPRETATION:

- Age: Regarding the age group, the collected samples in Chennai city, 9% of respondents are below 18, 80% of respondents are between 18-35 age and 6% of respondents are in the age group of between 35-60 age and 5% of respondents are above the age of 60. The majority of respondents are focused in 18-35 age as it studies about the mental and physical illness of persons because these platforms can be studied well if concentrated on this age group.
- Gender: From the data collected from 65 respondents for the study, 60% are male respondents and 40% are female respondents. Here it is clear that the majority of the respondents are male
- Educational Qualification: Here, the data thus collected clearly shows that 20% of respondents are 12th graduates, 65% of respondents are UG graduates and 15% of the respondents are PG graduates. Here the majority of respondents are UG graduates.
- Annual Income: From the collected data, it is inferred that 23% of respondents are

persons earning an annual income of below ₹500,000. 2% of respondents are persons earning income between ₹500,000-10,00,000 and 2% of respondents are persons earning above ₹10,00,000 annually and 73% of respondents are persons without any income . Therefore it is concluded that non-earning persons are higher when compared to other category of income earning persons

Table-2 : YES/NO Questions

Statement	Yes		Maybe		No	
	NOR	%	NOR	%	NOR	%
Awareness about OTT platform before Pandemic	43	66	-	-	22	34
OTT is replacing traditional cable	32	49	27	42	6	9
OTT provide high HD quality pic with clear sound effect	45	69	19	29	1	2
OTT platform being self-regulated have proper ratings system	14	21	35	54	16	25
Platform users are likely to lose track of time and discipline since it is open for 24/7	41	63	22	34	2	3
Eye problems increased in this pandemic situation and OTT is the	24	37	31	48	10	15

only reason for it						
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Source: Primary data

X. INTERPRETATION:

- From the following table it is inferred that 66% of people are aware of OTT platforms even before pandemic thus indicating that OTTs have started to gain importance in the market even before pandemic where COVID19 is merely a cherry on top which helped in the faster achievement of their goal where people are left with no other option other than OTT.
- About OTTs replacing traditional cable media network 49% of respondents felt that it is replacing whereas 42% are neutral about it showing the transformation of video media is improving through these platforms compared to cable media with regard to availability, convenience and mobility.
- Regarding the experience of users in this platform 69% have agreed that OTT platforms render satisfactory services and 39% are neutral with respect to HD picture clarity and clear sounding effect as in a theater. The respondents have shown a positive response regarding their experience in these platforms which is a good sign for these platforms to grow at a larger extent in the near future.
- Regarding the rating system in these platforms, there is no general sensor board likewise in normal cinemas. Each platform has their own mode of rating and restrictions , 21%of respondents agreed that their ratings are reliable and no need for a traditional sensor board but 25% are not satisfied and 54% respondents are uncertain with the rating method demanding for a proper sensor board to govern the content in OTTs without any disparity.
- About the OTT platform being an addiction and people binge watching series

have become a common thing. Likewise users might waste an ample of time and there is a scope for users to lose track of time and discipline. Supporting to this statement 63% agreed with it and 34% are uncertain with their experience where only 3% denied it.

- About the eyes and ear related problems which are increased and it is reasoned out by certain physicians that OTTs are the reasons for it. The above theory was accepted by 37% whereas 48% are uncertain but 15% have denied it thus showing that the respondents are accepting the fact that OTT platforms are also one of the factors that is responsible for these problems.

Table-3: Scalar questions:

QUESTION	AGREE		NEUTRAL		DISAGREE	
	NOR	%	NOR	%	NOR	%
OTT platform served as a good entertainment in pandemic	53	81.5	12	18.5	-	-
OTTs are cost efficient by letting access to wide range of contents by a single subscription	45	69	17	26	3	5
OTT platforms are a mode of addiction to young minds deviating them from their goals	32	49	28	43	5	8

OTT's being easily accessible attracts juveniles making them vulnerable to explicit content.	36	55	24	37	5	8
OTT platforms being available in all personal device tends to increase feel of loneliness.	32	49	22	34	11	17
Being digital pay the only mode of payment , there is a fear of bank details being misused	24	37	29	45	12	18
Some OTT platform providers put explicit ads which agitate users	47	72	17	26	1	2
OTT expose people to different foreign Cultures	51	78.5	14	21.5	-	-

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION:

- It is true that OTTs have been popular since their launch but the fact these platforms attained a boom in their business during the pandemic period cannot be ignored. Agreeing to the above statement 81.5% of respondents gave a positive response and 18.5% are against it.
- The fact that OTTs are cost efficient and letting access to wide range of video content is agreed by 69% of respondents whereas 26% are unsure about it and 5% disagreed with it. Considering the majority, respondents considered OTTs as cost efficient and budget friendly platform.
- OTTs tends to influence people mind and act as a mode of addiction to all age

group people especially young children are agreed by 49% of respondents whereas 48% of respondents are unsure about it and 8% denied it, and also 55% of respondents agreed that minors (that is) children below 18 are exposed to explicit content which is barred for their age via this platform and 37% respondents are uncertain and 8% consider it a safe platform for young children.

- Regarding the psychological impacts of these platforms which include hallucinations, stress, depression & anxiety, many felt lonely while using OTTs as they are available in all personal devices where 49% of respondents accepted this and 34% are unsure about it whereas 17% denied it.
- OTTs are mostly subscription based and are accessible only after the payment of premium. There isn't any official central area or a company to make payment for subscriptions to avail these platforms. They completely relied on online banking, card payments and other modes of cashless payment to facilitate easy payment of premiums. But still there is a fear of card details being misused, cybercrime, fraudulent activities, data spying and data leak. 37% of respondents fear the same whereas 45% are unsure and 18% denied the statement and feel that OTT is a safer platform.
- Some OTTs offer access to free contents but they put up many ads where some are explicit and not advisory for certain age users. 72% of respondents have agreed that they have felt the same and experienced it and 26% are unsure about their answer. Hence it is concluded that just because an OTT is free of cost doesn't give them any privilege to put up any ads just for compensating the premium amount with that of the money received from those ad companies. Those ads should be regulated and the interest of consumers should be protected. It is one of the factors that should be updated by these platforms to attain faster growth.
- OTTs, despite having some disadvantages, are still helpful in exposing people

to different cultures and traditions all around the world. Cultural heritage is promoted through these platforms where 78.5 % people accepted it 21.5% are neutral without any negative response which is a clear depiction that they promote and preserved through these platforms.

XI. FINDINGS:

It is found from the collected responses from the samples that,

- ✓ OTT platform usage not only increased in this pandemic period, but it was already one of the blooming sectors which is an endeavor towards digitalization.
- ✓ OTTs are likely to replace the traditional cable media in the near future.
- ✓ OTTs are comparatively cost efficient and provide a wider choice to its users.
- ✓ OTTs ratings need to be regulated as their own ratings are not very proper.
- ✓ OTTs tend to expose explicit content even to young children making them psychologically and sexually vulnerable.
- ✓ Users trust the end-to-end secure payment method and found it as a convenient mode of payment.

XII. LIMITATIONS:

There are certain limitations to this study. This research is restricted within the geographical boundaries of Chennai and the samples thus collected belong to Chennai locality. The major limitation of this study is due to time constraint and also a limited group of people has been taken as respondents. It is a simple convenient random sampling, which may defer based on a change in each socio-economic variable preference. The research focused on specific aspects or dimensions of a legal issue, which may limit the scope and depth of the analysis. Unlike doctrinal research, which may provide comprehensive coverage of legal rules and principles, non-doctrinal research may offer a more nuanced but narrower perspective. The research relies on

qualitative data which provide rich insights into complex phenomena but it may lack the generalizability and reliability associated with quantitative data as the perspective of consumers tend to be influenced by demographic variables and cannot be generalized.

XIII. SUGGESTIONS:

Suggestions to the users and platforms creators are that despite being cost efficient and convenience, customers expect much from the platforms to develop in the near future. Standard sensor board for all platforms without any bias is a mandatory requirement for this sector to evolve in a large scale .Regulation of content in OTT platforms by a standardized sensor board is vital for the development of this platforms in future and it is one of the needs put forth by its consumers. OTT platforms must ensure that their customer details are well secured and safeguarded from any other cybercrimes and such. The platform creators must also ensure the quality of picture to ensure the customers stay on the platform constantly as it tremendously influences the usage of OTT platforms. Some suggestions to the users is that addiction to OTT platforms will surely lead to mental and physical issues ,hence limiting the duration spent in these platforms helps to avoid such contingencies. Some struggle to come out of these platforms even after the pandemic has ended and the situation returned back to normal. The sooner the users overcome this addiction and bar a time limit for using it helps them to focus on their goals and strive towards their success.

XIV. CONCLUSION:

The data collected from the questionnaire survey was interpreted and analyzed. The objective that during pandemic there has been a significant rise in consumption of OTT platforms has been proven right. Since people have started consuming OTT more and more in the lockdown. The statement that OTT platforms have experienced substantial inorganic growth by taking up the market share of other platforms has been proved. It shows that even though OTT platforms cannot replace cinema but certainly is creating

its own segment. We can say that in the future, there might be few people who would prefer OTT over cinema. Thus, it is concluded here that positive aspects are comparatively more than the negative aspects and OTT platforms are a boon to its users which paves way for modernization and digitalization and would develop much further in the near future.

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