



A Study On The Impact Of The Over-The-Top (OTT) Platform Among Undergraduate Students At Rimt University.

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ABSTRACT

The advent of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms has revolutionized content consumption patterns, particularly among youth. This study looks at how OTT platforms affect Punjabi students' viewing preferences, academic achievement, and lifestyle modifications. Through a mixed-methods approach involving surveys and interviews, data were collected from students across various educational institutions in Punjab. The results show that although OTT platforms offer a variety of entertaining and instructive content, some students have experienced time management issues, sleep disturbances, and a decrease in academic attention as a result of excessive usage. The study highlights both the benefits and challenges of OTT platforms, offering recommendations for achieving a balanced and mindful consumption of digital content.

Keywords: OTT platforms, content consumption, student behavior, Punjab, academic performance, digital media.

Introduction

The generation of the internet, where things are just a click away, has grabbed and become a trend among the youth. Nowadays, watching content like web series and movies on Over the Top (OTT) platforms has become a turmoil for youngsters. Earlier, television and films had control over the media industry, where the viewers had to watch it at a scheduled time and place, but OTT platforms have given the freedom to watch without any time and place-bound.

The conventional media distribution routes, such as cable television providers and telecommunications networks, are bypassed by OTT services. One can access the entire service whenever they want as long as they have a local or mobile internet connection. Additionally, it is highly liked for the variety of unique and different genre material it provides to customers, as well as for its affordability and compatibility with a variety of platforms (such as smartphones, tablets, game consoles, and smart TVs).

Reliance Entertainment launched the first OTT platform named BIGFlix in the year 2008, after then, Digivive, a group of Media Matrix Worldwide, started an app called NexGTV in 2010 to provide entertainment to their audience through all the devices such as mobiles, tablets, and laptops, etc, (Laghate, 2016).

Around 2013, OTT became increasingly popular in India with the launches of DittoTV (Zee) and SonyLiv. Due to the simultaneous launch of Sony Liv and DittoTV (Zee), OTT gained significant traction in India in 2013. DittoTV offered content from all media outlets, including Sony, Star, Viacom, Colors, Zee, and others. (Sundaravel & Elangovan, 2020).

Online streaming or cord-cutting, which were long seen as luxuries, are becoming more and more popular in India. But the VoD market is still in its infancy. The fact that almost 40 VoD firms have launched in only three years speaks volumes about the industry's immense potential. In India, at least four out of five smartphone owners view the contents of different genres by using at least one OTT entertainment App. (IANS, 2019).

The technological shift of the internet has increased the demand for OTT among viewers as it can be accessible 24X7 in any language and on any device. In 2012, there were just nine OTT players; by 2018, there were 32. Between August 2016 and August 2017, the top 16 OTT platforms' user bases increased from 63 million to 164 million, resulting in a remarkable 160 percent growth in the Indian OTT business in 2017.

(Kathuria, 2019)

OVER-THE-TOP (OTT) USERS IN INDIA

The way Indian audiences consume media has altered as a result of COVID-19. Because it offers amusement, productivity, and convenience at a relatively low cost, audiences have readily embraced the switch from television to over-the-top (OTT) content throughout the epidemic.

According to the reports published by MICA in their fourth edition of the '**Indian Over-the-Top (OTT platform) 2021 Post Pandemic consumption, the Indian OTT (video and audio)**' industry is presently valued at USD 1.8 billion (INR 13,500 crores), and it is anticipated that this market would increase to USD 4.2 billion by 2025 and USD 12.5 billion by 2030. This expansion will be supported by rising daily internet usage, the adoption of smartphones, and a further decline in data prices. 'International media consumption report 2021' by YouGov stated that more than 60% of Indians are ready to watch free content even if they have watched ads in exchange for it.

MAJOR OVER-THE-TOP (OTT) STREAMING PLATFORMS IN INDIA

Increasing the number of Internet users in India, OTT has created its own wide space in the country. Right now there are 40 Video on Demand (VoD) service providers available in the market (Anonymous, 2022) and by 2023, it is expected that nearly 100 companies will start providing the services in the Indian market (Sundaravel E. and Elangovan N, 2020).

Objectives

1. To explore the perception of youth concerning web series.
2. To find out the reach of the OTT platform among students
3. To find the impact of web series on the behavioral changes among students.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The main concern of reviewing the literature is that it will help provide advanced information about the study area which will be explored during the research. A review of the literature gives us insights into the different areas of the study. In order to meet the objectives of the study, going through the vast reservoir of material available on the subject was imperative. Relevant literature was called and reviewed. Here are some studies quoted from different research papers and research articles which are given below:

Banarjee et al. (2013) in their study "**Video Viewing Behavior in the Era of connected device**" explained that several families use a combination of streaming video and traditional pay TV to meet their demands in the television and video industries, especially as both watching options get better at enabling real and time-shifted watching as well as streaming from stationary locations and while travelling. The study reveals that connected devices (both their usage and their variety) and some important demographics (age, yearly household income, and race/ethnicity) impact the household choice of OTT sector. The researcher conducted a longitudinal survey panel of 7,655 unique homes observed over three consecutive quarters in 2011 and used the data to estimate relative risk ratios using multinomial choice models.

Chen (2017) in her study "**Competition among OTT TV Platforms and Traditional Television in Taiwan; A Niche Analysis**" examined that OTT TV outperforms traditional TV, dimension of convenience showing a strong influence in all seven dimensions. OTT TV has easily replaced traditional TV in terms of all kinds of programs like News, movies, and sports quite easily among the users.

Dhanuka et al. (2019) in their research paper "**Binge-Watching: Web-Series Addiction amongst Youth**" opined that the youth has moved towards Binge-watching and has become more addicted to web series and video streaming on OTT platforms. The research also depicted the adverse effects on youngsters' physical, psychological, and emotional health. The study is based on a cross-sectional survey method in which youth (18-25 years old) is based on a sample of 90 respondents from Mumbai. In contrast, Pieterse and Klooster (2019) in their study "**Binge-Watching and Influences on Psychological Well-Being and Important Daily Life Duties**" established positive results in their study. They found that the participants feel happy and relaxed after watching, but the study has shown no results on the adverse health issues and negligence of daily life work due to Binge watching. For the study, the researcher has taken a sample of 45 participants (64.4% female, 35.6% male), aged between 17 and 30 from different Nationalities. An experience sampling method (ESM) was employed enabling a longitudinal intensive measurement with a smartphone app called The Incredible Intervention Machine (TIIM) designed by the BMS lab of the University of Twente ("TIIM (The Incredible Intervention Machine)," 2018).

Sudeep & Asif, (2020) in their paper "**Parents worry over teenagers' access to OTT content**" revealed their study that the students who watched more web series signify a negative and psychological impact on their behavior.

Gupta (2021) in his study "**The Factor effecting shift on Indian customers from**

T.V Series to Web Series-The Future of OTT Services in India" indicated that, should the companies begin offering subscriptions at a reasonable price, Indian consumers are willing to embrace OTT services, particularly web series, as their major consumption platform. Since OTT platforms offer material around-the-clock, the majority of young people choose them because they dislike commercial breaks. The researcher has chosen a sample size of 120 people for data analysis purposes. These 120 people come from all around India and live in cities, towns, and villages. They are between the ages of eighteen and over sixty.

Priya et al (2021) in their study **"Understanding the Intentions of Students to Use OTT Platforms"** explored the factors which affect the relationship between OTT platforms and their users. The OTT platform significantly influences subscription intention, and as a result, has high dependability with subscription intention. By providing accurate knowledge about the advantages, disadvantages, measurements, and feedback of the brand that a customer might choose to acquire, the intention to use the platform improves the development factor. Additionally, it is discovered that customers must be literate and have interactive technologies in their smart devices in order to use the OTT platform.

Parnami and Jain (2021) in their study **"A Study on Increase in the Usage of OTT Streaming Services"** examined that the number of OTT streaming subscribers has increased their usage during the COVID-19 to remove the boredom and availability of content at a low cost. This surge in consumption is tremendously motivating for new market entrants to begin offering streaming services, as well as for overseas OTT platforms aiming to enter the Indian market (for ex. Hulu and HBO Max). It indicates that there is a demand in India for these services. This study surveys a sample population of 200 respondents and aims to ascertain whether their usage of OTT platforms has increased or not, by how much time, and the perceived reasons behind this increase.

Mallick (2021) in her study **"Impact of Over the Top (OTT) Platform in Film Industry: A Critical Analysis"** explored that the OTT Platforms are the future of the Film Industry, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, viewership of OTT Platforms got increased and the involvement of big stars towards this platform justifies it. The results of this study demonstrate that OTTs are better for the release of new movies, and the future of OTT platforms in India is promising. The study is based on both qualitative and quantitative approaches. An online survey was conducted through google forms to know the watching habits of OTT applications among Indian viewers. A total of 90 respondents from different college students and professionals have been selected for data collection.

Saravanan (2021) in his study **"The Use of Online Platforms for Content Delivery; Mapping Students' Viewing Habits of Web Series on OTT Platforms"** reported certain issues among youngsters as they are viewing content which is filled with graphic violence, crime, and other violent situations that are unsuitable for the target demographic. Web series like Game of Thrones which are high on the above-given content are considered the highest-watched web series by the audience in the study (Chari, 2017). Google forms are utilised to carry out an online survey in Bangalore. Data were gathered using 500 samples of real viewers of the online series. The data gathering approach utilised by the researchers is called the snowball sampling method, and they made every effort to keep gender equality intact. The research included pupils in the 10th through the postgraduate levels.

Wagh. et al (2022) in their research paper **"A Study of Impact of Web Series and Streaming Content on Youth of India"** considered the various factors, which show the significant impact of web series and internet streaming entertainment. The addition of web series shows many problematic psychological symptoms like insomnia, despair, insecurity in their daily lives, losing ground academically, and becoming more vulnerable to health problems, etc. In this study, the researcher has taken is about 100 respondents in Pune city by using simple random sampling techniques.

C.P Rashmi et al. (2023) in their study **"An Empirical Study on Indian Crime Web Series and Its Effects"** concluded that OTT platforms have the power to successfully express ideas and bring people together, impacting society through television, movies, and other media. Nonetheless, material creators have moral dilemmas when they normalize violence and celebrate criminality. The target audience and the possible vulnerability of particular categories, such young or impressionable viewers, should be taken into account. Repercussions can be lessened by using cautionary tales and disclaimers or cautions. Religion, cultural views, age, gender, family structure, amount of time spent online, and economic position are some of the factors that have a big impact on how people view material.

Research Methodology

In this study, the researcher collected data from graduate students from several Punjabi colleges and universities using the online survey approach. To get the most out of the study, a quantitative approach has been employed to determine how OTT platforms' violent material affects RIMT University graduate students. In order to obtain the purposive results from the students, a purposive random sample was carried out on 100 RIMT University students using a Google Form to create a closed-ended questionnaire. The link was sent by email and Whatsapp in order to gather the data.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The research data has been collected and analyzed on the basis of descriptive research methodology. The data

given in the form of pie charts, bar graphs, and tables were further discussed and analyzed. The reason for various responses of the respondents was also explored and analyzed.

Age of the Undergraduate students

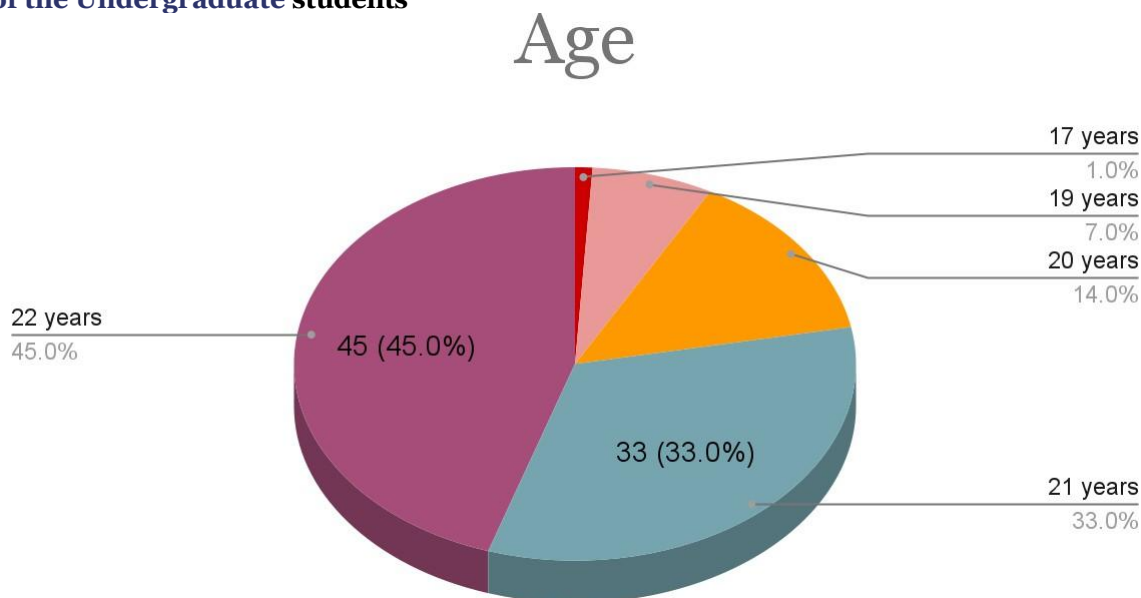


Fig 1 Age of the Undergraduate students

(Total number of Undergraduate students - 100)

In the given figure of Age groups, the highest number of respondents are of 22 and 21 years old i.e 45 percent and 33 percent respectively. In comparison to the same, the lowest number in the age group of 17 years of participants is only 1 percent.

Gender of the Undergraduate students

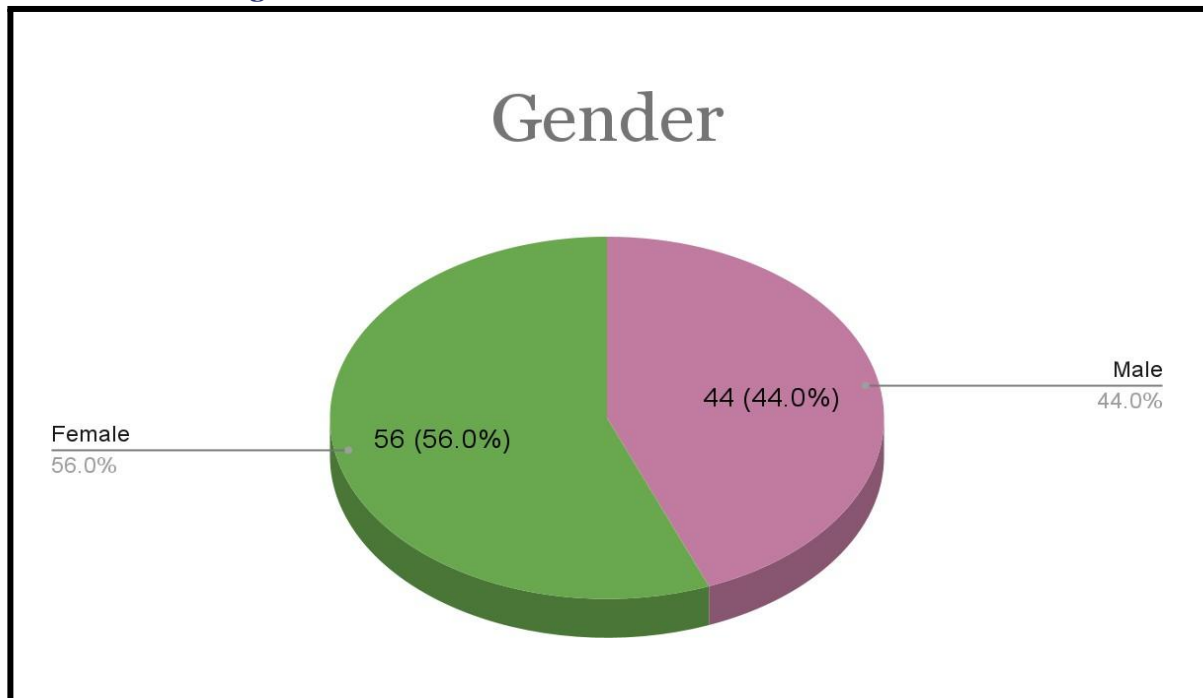
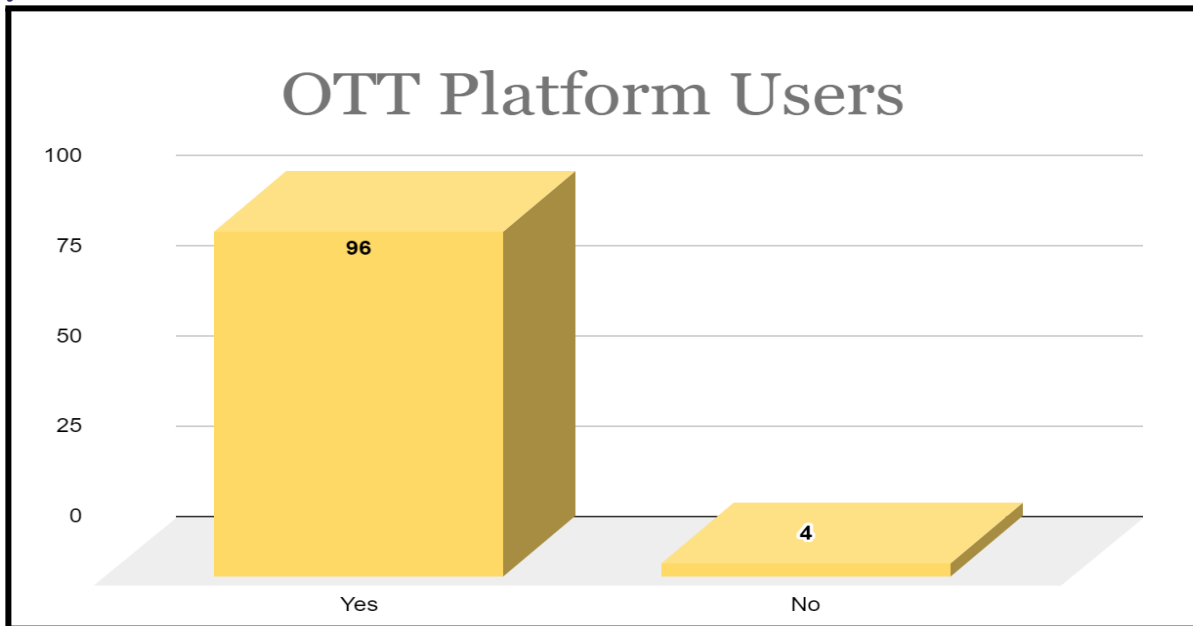


Fig 2, Gender of the Undergraduate students

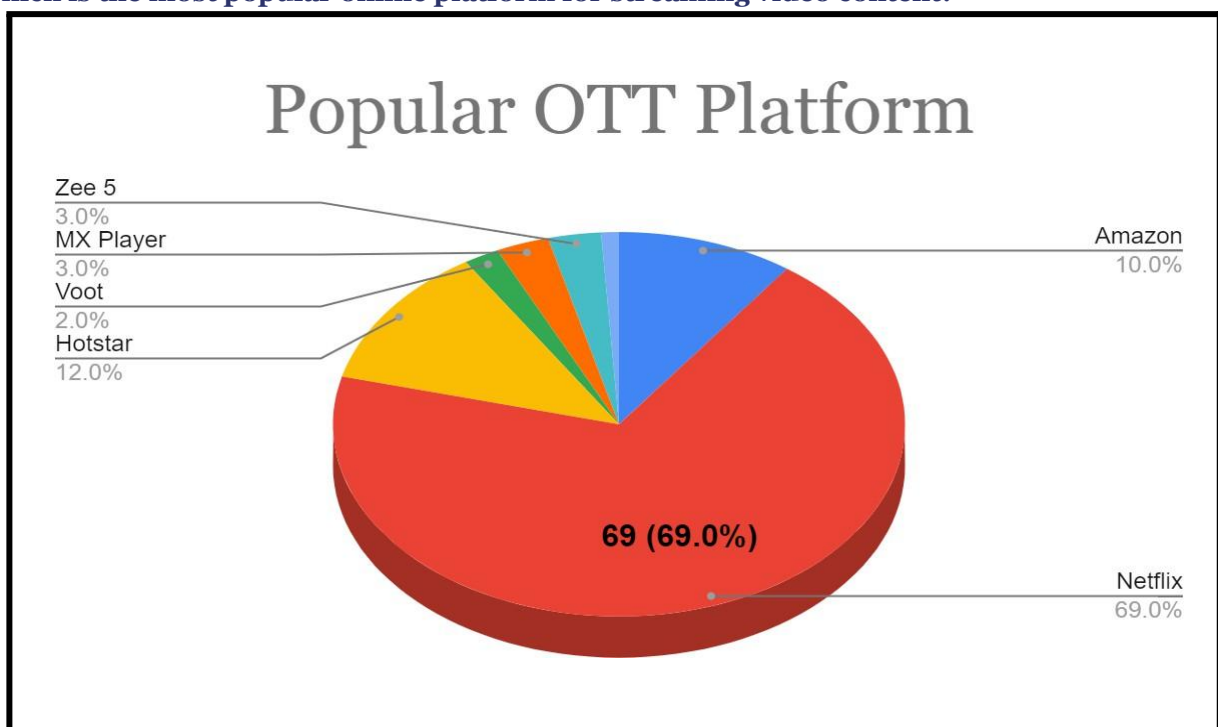
(Total number of Undergraduate students - 100)

The figure represents that the Female respondents are 56 percent which is nearly 11 percent more than the male respondents i.e 44 percent. This shows that the Females are using more of the OTT platforms as compared to the males.

Do you use OTT Platforms?**Fig 3, OTT Platform Users**

(Total number of Undergraduate students - 100)

OTT is found as way too popular among the youngsters of Punjab as it is evident from Fig 3, that 96 percent of the users are using OTT platforms in Punjab, and only 4 percent students out of 100 respondents are not using the OTT platforms.

Which is the most popular online platform for streaming video content?**Fig 4, Popular OTT Platforms**

(Total number of Respondents - 100)

The respondents were asked to choose the most popular OTT platform and 69 percent of the respondents chose Netflix as the most popular online platform for streaming video content. Hotstar and Amazon prime were rated second and third position, i.e 12 and 10 percent respectively.

Which device do you use for watching series and movies on OTT platforms?

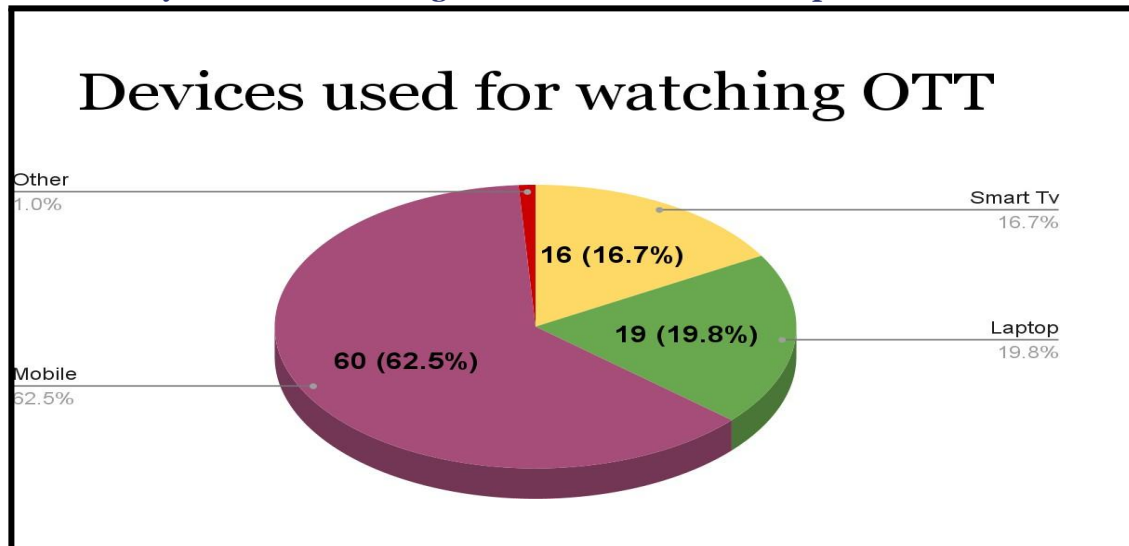


Fig 5, Devices used for OTT Platforms

(Total number of Respondents - 96, Non Users - 4)

From the given pie chart, we can interpret that nearly 63 percent of the respondents are using mobile devices instead of watching movies and web series on Laptop and Smart TV. The second position was secured by Laptop (20 percent approx) and the third position was held by Smart TV (17 percent approx).

How many hours do you spend on watching web series or other online video content every day?

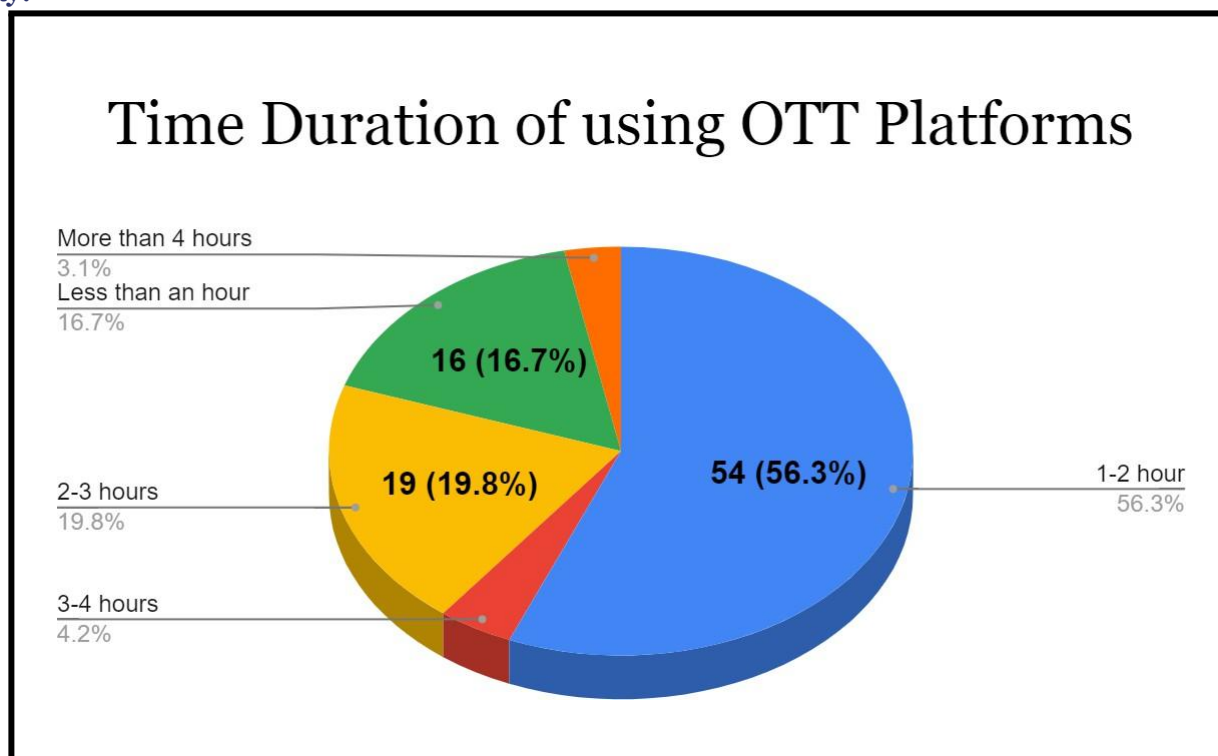


Fig 6, Time Duration of using OTT Platforms

(Total number of Respondents - 96, Non Users - 4)

The data in the given figure represents the time duration spent by the respondents on OTT platforms. 54 percent of respondents agreed to spend 1-2 hours of the day on OTT platforms while only nearly 4 percent agreed to spend 3-4 hours and only 3 percent for more than 4 hours.

The language you prefer in watching your favorite web series.

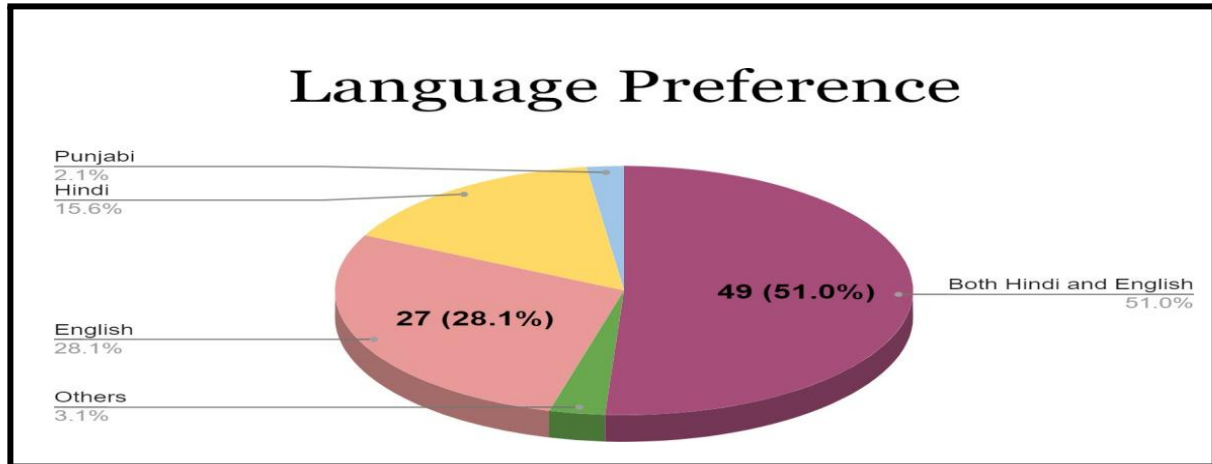


Fig 7, Languages Preferred by the Respondents

(Total number of Respondents - 96, Non Users - 4)

In terms of Language preferred by the respondents, 51 percent accepted to watch the content in both Hindi and English languages, whereas 3 percent of the respondents had selected the other languages like Malayalam, Tamil, Japanese, Korean and Thai languages to watch the content with the help of subtitles.

Do you like Binge-watching?

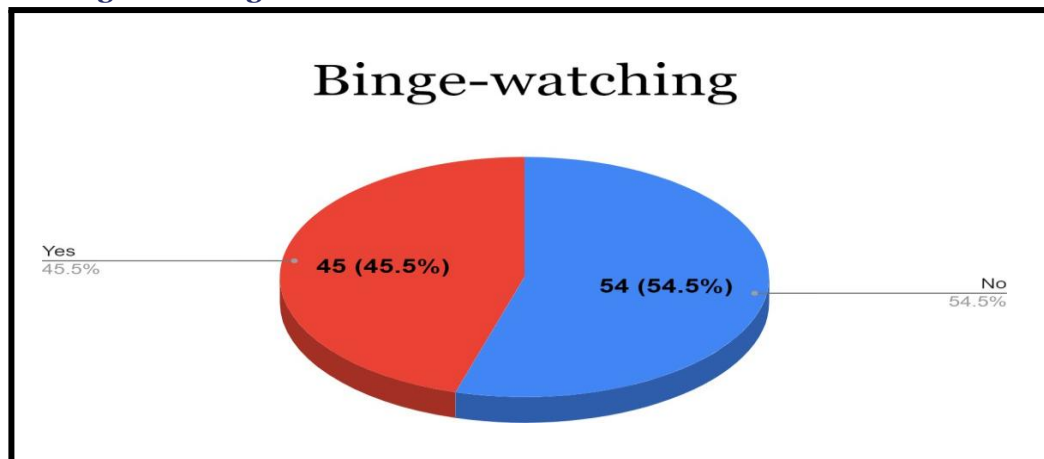


Fig 8, Binge watching

(Total number of Respondents - 100)

When asked by the respondents about Binge watching, 45 percent of the respondents agreed that they used to watch continuously for hours in a day on OTT platforms, while 54 percent denied binge watching the content on OTT platforms.

Do you have your own subscription?

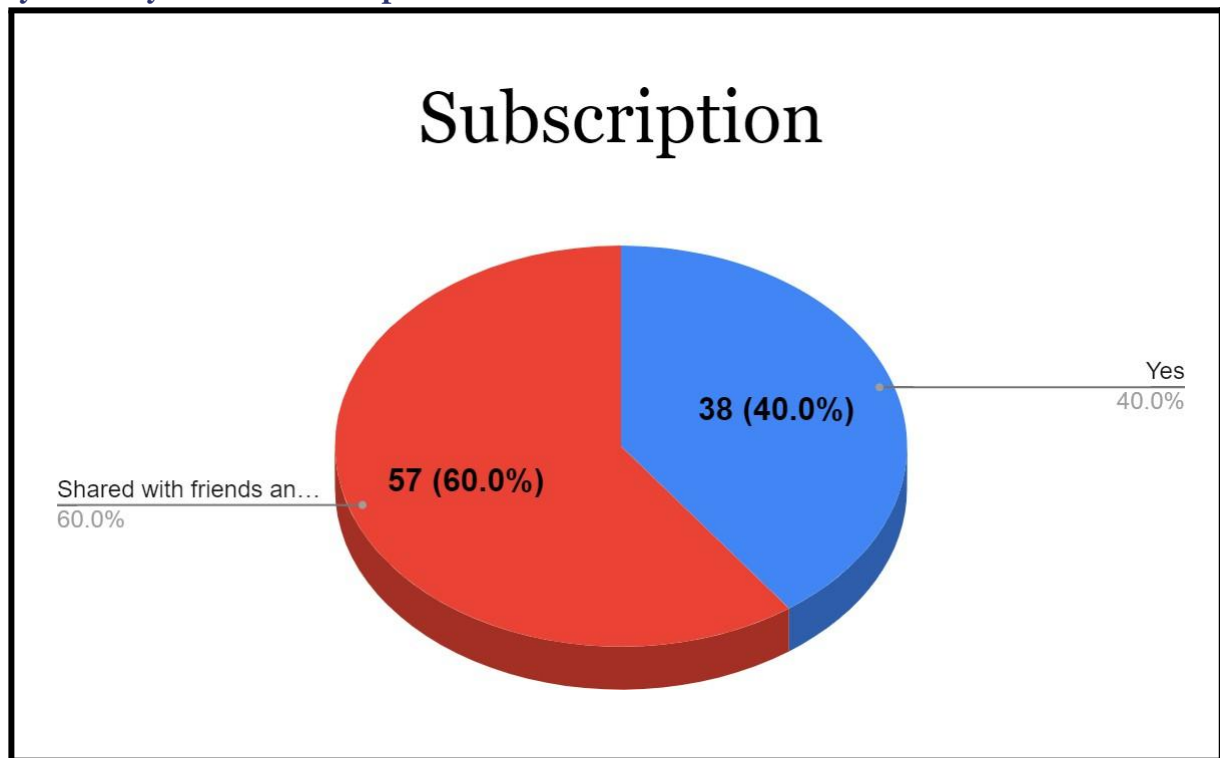


Fig 9, Subscription report by the Respondents

(Total number of Respondents - 96, Non Users -4)

As it is evident from the above pie-chart that the 60 percent of the respondents uses the shared subscription from their Friends and Family, and only 40 percent of the respondents actually spend their money to buy the subscriptions of different OTT platforms.

What kind of content is shown in series or movies these days?

Content Showing on OTT Platforms

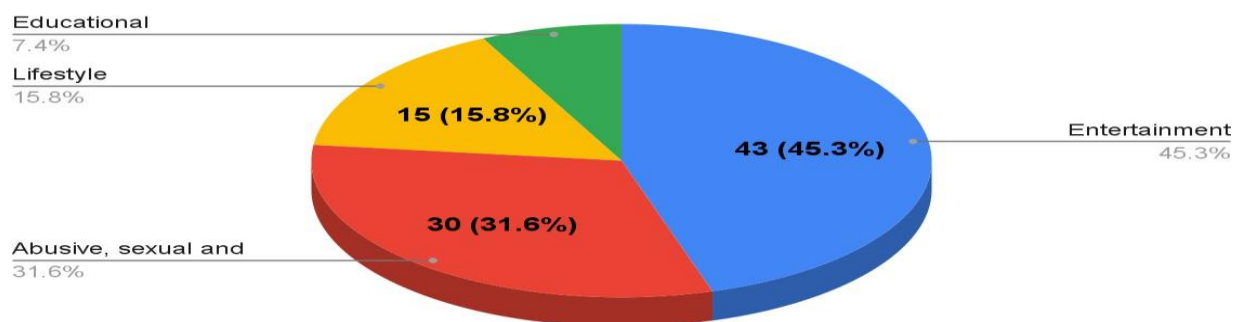


Fig 10, Content showing on OTT Platforms

(Total number of Respondents - 96, Non Users -4)

46 percent of the respondents believed that the content shown on the OTT platforms are meant only for the entertainment purpose, while 31 percent believes that it contains Abusive, sexual and violently impulsive content for the consumers. Only 7 percent of the respondents believe that the OTT platforms are showing educational content for their consumers.

What are the factors that affects students to watch the web series?

Factors Affecting the Respondents

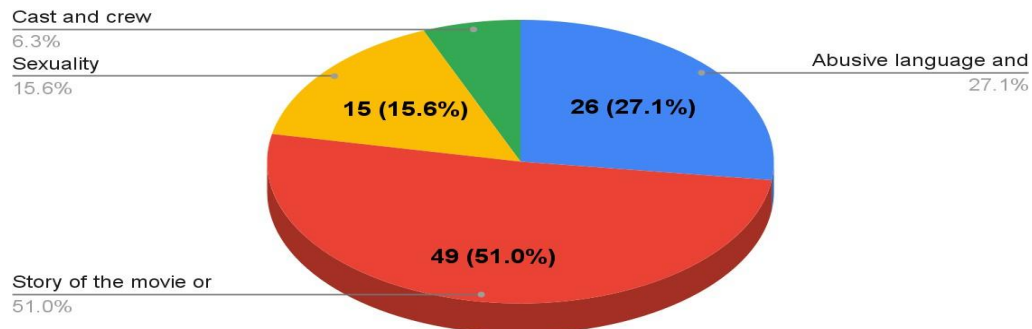


Fig 11, Factors Affecting the Respondents on OTT Platforms

(Total number of Respondents - 96, Non Users -4)

Majority of the respondents i.e 52 percent considered the Story or plot of the movie as a major factor to watch a movie or web series on OTT platform, whereas Abusive language and vulgarity is the second most major factor that affects the audience to watch the content on OTT Platforms. Only 6 percent of the respondents focus on the cast and crew of the story as a factor to watch any movie or web series on OTT platforms.

What kind of genre do you like?

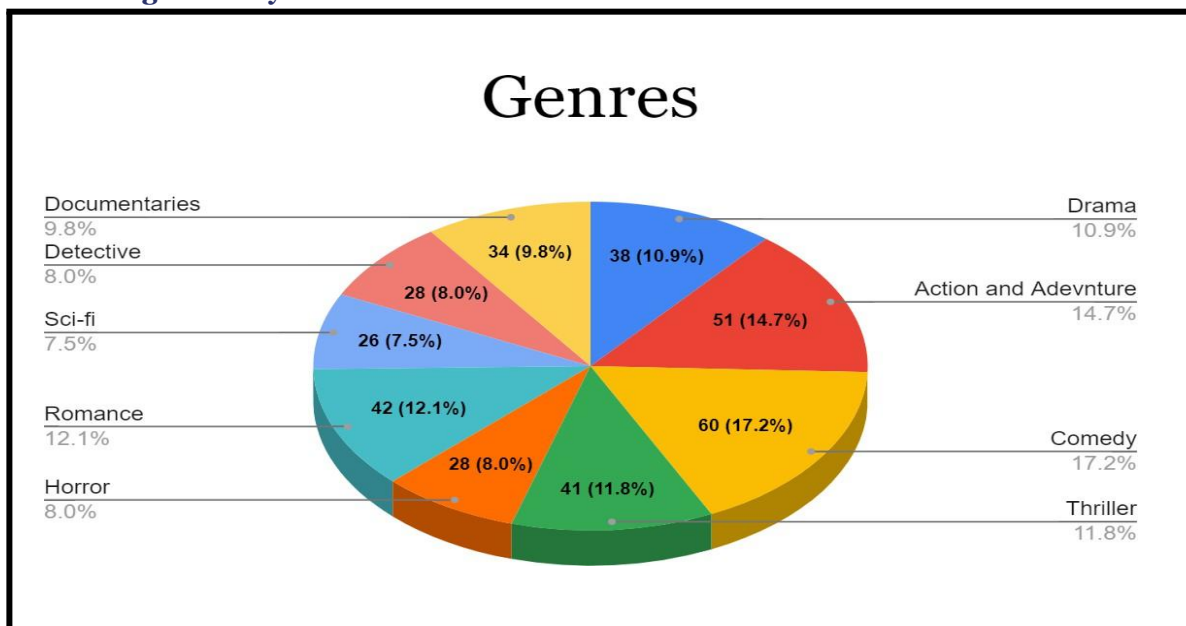


Fig 12, Genres preferred by the Respondents

(Total number of Respondents - 96, Non Users -4)

(Respondents was having the choice of selecting more than one genre)

In this question, the respondents were given choices for selecting more than one genre which they prefer to watch on OTT platform and 60 and 51 respondents chose Comedy and Action and Adventure as their most preferred genre respectively. Whereas the respondents were not highly influenced by the genres like Sci-fi and Detective as it receives the low responses as compared to the other genres.

Likert Scale

The responses of the sampled respondents with respect to the Uses of OTT are as under:

Likert Scale	
Disagree	1
Neutral	2
Agree	3

To understand the third objective of the research paper i.e To find the impact of web series on the behavioral changes among youngsters, different statements were asked to the respondents and simple percentage method has been used.

S. No.	Statement	Disagree (1)	Neutral (2)	Agree (3)
1	Do you think that OTT and web series have a psychological impact on students?	10 (10.42%)	28 (29.17%)	58 (60.42%)
2	Does watching web series affect the academic performance of students?	11 (11.46%)	36 (37.50%)	49 (51.04%)
3	Do you agree that OTT has increased violence and sexuality among students?	12 (12.50%)	33 (34.38%)	51 (53.13%)
4	Do you think web series are arousing anger and aggression among students?	15 (15.63%)	40 (41.67%)	41 (42.71%)
5	Do you think that OTT has had a bad impact on Indian culture?	34 (35.42%)	35 (36.46%)	27 (28.13%)
6	Do you think watching web series and online video content is causing anxiety and depression?	34 (35.42%)	33 (34.38%)	29 (30.21%)
7	Has watching web series affected your performance in exams or other important works?	40 (41.67%)	30 (31.25%)	26 (27.08%)
8	Do you think that web series enhance violence in society?	18 (18.75%)	44 (45.83%)	34 (35.42%)
9	Do you think that web series are changing the language and behaviour of the students?	9 (9.38%)	27 (28.13%)	60 (62.50%)
10	Do you think that web series are responsible for enhancing criminal activities in society?	21 (21.88%)	41 (42.71%)	34 (35.42%)
11	Do you think there should be censorship for the "A-rated" content on OTT?	13 (13.54%)	33 (34.38%)	50 (52.08%)

*Figures in parentheses are percentages

(Total number of Users - 96, Non Users -4)

In the given table, according to the first statement, the undergraduate students were asked whether the web series and online content on OTT platforms psychologically affected the students or not and nearly 60 percent of the respondents agree on the statement.

In the second and third statements, where the students were asked whether OTT content affect the academic performance of the students and the OTT has increased the violence and sexuality among the students and more than 50 percent of the respondents agreed with both the statements.

In the fourth statement, where the students were asked whether OTT has aroused anger and aggression among the students, there is a slight difference in the opinions of the students where 42.71 percent of the students agreed with the statement and nearly 41.6 percent gave a neutral statement.

In the fifth, eighth, and tenth statements, where the respondents were asked the statement as OTT has had a bad impact on Indian culture, web series not only enhance violence in society, but are responsible for enhancing criminal activities in society, in all the statements, the respondents have given neutral responses which makes it clear that they are confused and can't be able to decide.

The respondents disagreed with both of the sixth and seventh statements, which asked students if watching web series and online video content caused them to experience anxiety or depression and if watching web series affected their performance on tests or other important tasks. They felt that these two statements might not apply to the students.

On the contrary, in the Ninth and eleventh statements, the students were asked whether web series are altering the vocabulary and conduct of the students and the censorship for the "A-rated" content on OTT should be applied or not, and in both the statements, the respondents highly agreed on both the statements.

Findings of the Study

- Female respondents are 56 percent which is nearly 11 percent more than the male respondents i.e 44 percent.
- 69 percent of the students chose Netflix as the most popular online platform for streaming video content. Hotstar and Amazon prime were rated second and third position, i.e 12 and 10 percent respectively.
- 63 percent of the respondents are using mobile devices instead of watching movies and web series on Laptop and Smart TV. The second position was secured by Laptop (20 percent approx) and the third position was held by Smart TV (17 percent approx).
- 54 percent of students accept that they spend 1-2 hours on OTT platforms while only nearly 4 percent agreed to spend 3-4 hours and only 3 percent for more than 4 hours.
- 51 percent agreed to watch the content in both Hindi and English languages, whereas 3 percent of the students had chosen other languages like Malayalam, Tamil, Japanese, Korean and Thai languages to watch the content with the help of subtitles.
- 45 percent of the students agreed that they used to watch continuously for hours in a day on OTT platforms, while 54 percent denied binge-watching the content on OTT platforms.
- 60 percent of the respondents use the shared subscription from their Friends and Family, and only 40 percent of the respondents actually spend their money to buy the subscriptions of different OTT platforms.
- 46 percent of the respondents believed that the content shown on the OTT platforms are meant only for entertainment purpose, while 31 percent believes that it contains Abusive, sexual, and violently impulsive content for the consumers. Only 7 percent of the respondents believe that the OTT platforms are showing educational content for their consumers.
- 52 percent considered the Story or plot of the movie as a major factor to watch a movie or web series on the OTT platform, whereas Abusive language and vulgarity is the second most major factor that affects the audience watching the content on OTT Platforms. Only 6 percent of the respondents focus on the cast and crew of the story as a factor to watch any movie or web series on OTT platforms.
- 60 and 51 respondents chose Comedy and Action and Adventure as their most preferred genres respectively. Whereas the respondents were not highly influenced by the genres like Sci-fi and Detective as it receives low responses as compared to the other genres.

Conclusion

India is generally experiencing an increase in OTT service consumption. OTT video services, formerly seen as a luxury, are now regarded to be commonplace. With Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hotstar emerging as the most popular OTT services, the number of subscribers are rising. The device that people use the most to watch OTT video, according to this study and others from Punjab, is the smartphone. The majority of respondents felt that the rise of OTT services has affected their tendency to watch web series and movies. The majority of people use it every day as a kind of amusement at night.

Internet services and the entertainment sector are combined in over-the-top services technology. Affordable internet access has fueled the expansion of OTT services across India, but users aren't switching to OTT platforms because they lack technological literacy and access to diverse content. Although the OTT sector is self-regulatory, there has been an increase in calls for government control of the sector. According to viewers, the content is aggressive and displays an excessive amount of nudity, making it inappropriate for younger generations. Overall, the study shows that OTT services have a promising future in India and that consumers are interested in using them.

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