JETIR.ORG ISSN: 2349-5162 | ESTD Year : 2014 | Monthly Issue
JOURNAL OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIVE RESEARCH (JETIR)
An International Scholarly Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

A study on the preferences of youth and middle-aged consumers towards movie theatres and OTT platforms after Covid-19 in Bhopal.

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way the Indians consumer consume entertainment. While previously cinema theatres were synonyms to hangout places and movies nowadays consumers are more interested in staying in and use OTT platforms for entertainment. For more than a year now, the pandemic has caused consumers to stay indoors and hence search for more adaptive ways of entertainment. This has naturally propelled the rise of the OTT platforms. This study tries to evaluate the preferences of youth and middle-aged consumers towards movie theatres and OTT platforms after Covid-19 in Bhopal. COVID-19 had put astop to filming, pushed back release dates, and had not spared the Indian film industry. OTT,on the other hand, came to the rescue. Prior to the pandemic, India's film industry was a major contributor to the country's economy. The last ten years (2010-2019) have been nothing short of spectacular. With a 25.53 percent increase in box office earnings in 2019, 2019 was a strong year for movies. However, the current situation has raised numerous worries regarding the present and future of India's vast film industry. Consumers are returning to movie theatres, although at a lower frequency than before Covid, according to the survey.

Keywords: movie theatres, OTT platforms, consumer preference, entertainment, pricing

INTRODUCTION

Communication has played a crucial role in human entertainment. People of all ages have devised many forms of entertainment for themselves, their families, and society since the dawn of time. People used rock painting, folktales, storytelling, folksongs, folklore, and myths to express themselves in ancient times, and later generations used writing to communicate their feelings. Furthermore, as technology advanced, new and innovative ways of presenting events, sentiments, and interpretations emerged. With advancements in the sector, the breadth and scope of entertainment has become inconceivable.

People now have unrestricted access to knowledge thanks to the new technological era. Radio, newspapers, andtelevision all called for a global consciousness decentralisation. People may choose from a variety of forms of entertainment to keep themselves amused and calm regardless of where they were. Communication grew in a large scale and extended beyond boundaries. Movies communicated to people in masses. It showcased the lives of people around the world in a way that it was felt by all. Movies are a form of escapism for people young and old. Theatre played a crucial in this evolution of entrainment.

Theatre bloomed from playing a single movie for months to changing movies in days, based on the demand of people. This affected considerably by televisions followed by a strong blow that accompanied Internet and (over- the-top) OTT platforms.

However, until 2020, the trend of going to the movies in a theatre triumphed against all odds.The global pandemic, Covid-19, compelled people to stay indoors in 2020. With the pandemic, a permanent shift to OTT platforms began, and the trend has been growing ever since.

People appeared to have acclimated to OTT services, which allow unlimited access to diverse movies from across the world within the safety of indoors, as schools, work places, and religious locations were closed. OTT must have garnered a lot of attention because of Covid-19, but there are other factors, like as the growing desire for high-quality videos and low-cost OTT subscriptions, that have made it inseparable from its users. Many researches

suggests that movie theatres would co-exist along with OTT platforms (Varghese, 2021) butthe realistic scenario is yet surrounded with uncertainty and to reduce it this study works on understanding the viewers' perspective for their demand on movie watching experience postCovid-19.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A study by Meghan McAdams showed that the future of over-the-top (OTT) applications in India is bright and promising. She says in her research that at least half of OTT users experience a syndrome known as "subscription fatigue," which occurs while engaging with a large variety of platforms all over the world. Apart from that, it was also pointed out that withlarge production companies such as ZEE and Sony launching their own OTT platforms, nicheand stand-alone broadcasting platforms (primarily catering to regional and cultural tastes) arebeing badly impacted (McAdams, 2019).

According to another study conducted by Sundaravel and Elangovan, Indians, who once considered streaming services to be a luxury, are increasingly shifting their attention to subscription-based internet streaming. Paid OTT services are used by at least four out of every five smartphone users in India. Their study discusses the fast introduction of streamingservices in India and goes on to show that OTT is to blame for the rise in content consumption in India. This article also highlights certain customer habits and characteristics,prompting one to consider the difficulties and future of subscription-based OTT services in India, particularly in light of COVID-19 (Sundaravel and Elangovan, 2020).

Another study conducted by Madnani, D., Fernandes, S. and Madnani, N. demonstrates that the nationwide lockdown significantly increased the number of customers using OTT services, owing to an increase in viewership from many employees working from home. Priorto the pandemic, the average person would spend 2 to 2.5 hours per day utilising OTT services after paying a monthly fee of Rs 100 to Rs 300. Consumers are now willing to pay more for all platforms that offer OTT services, and the amount of time they spend using themhas climbed to 3.2 hours per day (Madnani, D., Fernandes, S. and Madnani, N., 2020).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To compare the consumer preference of movie theatre before and after covid.
- To compare the consumer preference of OTT platforms before and after covid.
- To find out consumer preference towards movie theatres or OTT platforms postcovid.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is restricted to youth and middle-aged consumers (18-40 years of age)in Bhopal only. In this study, the researchers have evaluated the consumer preference towards movie theatres and OTT platforms by circulating a questionnaire fulfilling the givenobjectives. The findings and interpretation drawn are based on analysis of the data collected through questionnaire filled by the 18-40 aged consumers living in the city of Bhopal.

HYPOTHESIS

H_0 There is no significant difference between consumer preference towards OTTplatforms pre-covid and post covid.
H_1 There is significant difference between consumer preference towards OTTplatforms pre-covid and post covid.
H_{02} There is no significant difference between the number of times a consumervisits movie theatre in a month pre-covid and post covid.
H_2 There is a significant difference between the number of times a consumervisits movie theatre in a month pre-covid and post covid.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The sample size comprises of only 100 respondents which might not be sufficient toinfer the entire population.
This study limits only to youth and middle-aged consumers, i.e., from the age 18-40.
Another limitation is that this study focuses on the consumers living in Bhopalregion only.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Both primary and secondary data are used in the research.
Primary Data: The majority of this research is based on primary data. Primary data was collected from random youth and middle-aged consumers in Bhopal using a structuredquestionnaire via Google Forms, and the responses were entered in Excel and necessarystatistical tools like Mean, Chi-Square test of Independence were used to derive the conclusion.
Secondary Data: To develop a concrete study, a few published and unpublished sources werechosen to provide solid support for the analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

I. Demographic Profile

Sr. No.	Demographic factors	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	*Age*		
	a. 18-25	54	54%
	b. 25-40	46	46%
2.	*Gender*		
	a. Male	48	48%
	b. Female	52	52%

Table 1: Demographic questions

It is observed from the above Table-1 that 54% of the respondents were from the age group of 18-25 years and 46% of the respondents were from 25-40 years of age group. Itcan also be observed that 48% of the respondents are male and 52% of the respondents are female. Also, all the respondents belong to Bhopal since the google form wascirculated to consumers living in Bhopal.

II. Interpretation using Chi-square test of independence

(i) H_0= There is no significant difference between consumer preference towards OTTplatforms pre-covid and post covid.
H_1= There is significant difference between consumer preference towards OTTplatforms pre-covid and post covid.

Category	**Observed(O)**	**Expected(E)**	**O-E**	**$(O-E)^2$**	**$(O-E)^2/E$**
Pre-covid (YES)	47	52.5	-5.5	30.25	0.58
Pre-covid (NO)	53	47.5	5.5	30.25	0.64
Post-covid (YES)	58	52.5	5.5	30.25	0.58
Post-covid (NO)	42	47.5	-5.5	30.25	0.64
				CHI_{cal}=	**2.44**

Table 2:

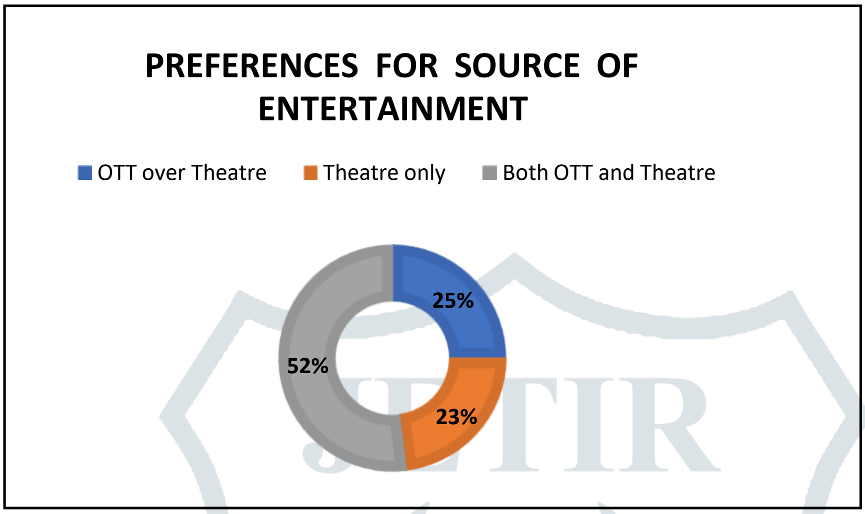
Chi-square test of independence is used to see whether there is a significant difference between consumer preference towards OTT platforms pre-covid and post covid. The CHI_{cal} value of the data is 2.44 which is greater than CHI_{tab} value i.e., 0.455. The degree of freedomis 1 with 5% level of significance. Since the CHI_{cal} value is more than CHI_{tab} value, null hypothesis is rejected at 95% of level of confidence with 1 degree of freedom and conclude that there is significant difference between consumer preference towards OTT platforms pre-covid and post covid.

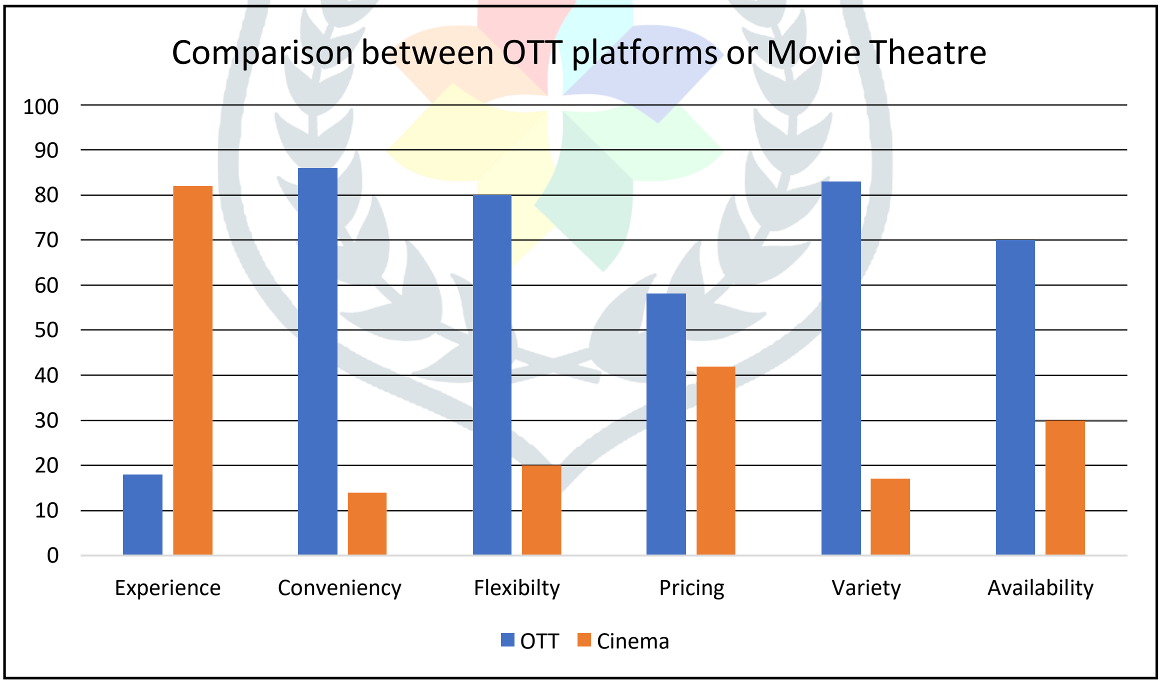
(ii) **H_0=** There is no significant difference between the number of times a consumervisits movie theatre in a month pre-covid and post covid.
H_1= There is a significant difference between the number of times a consumervisits movie theatre in a month pre-covid and post covid.

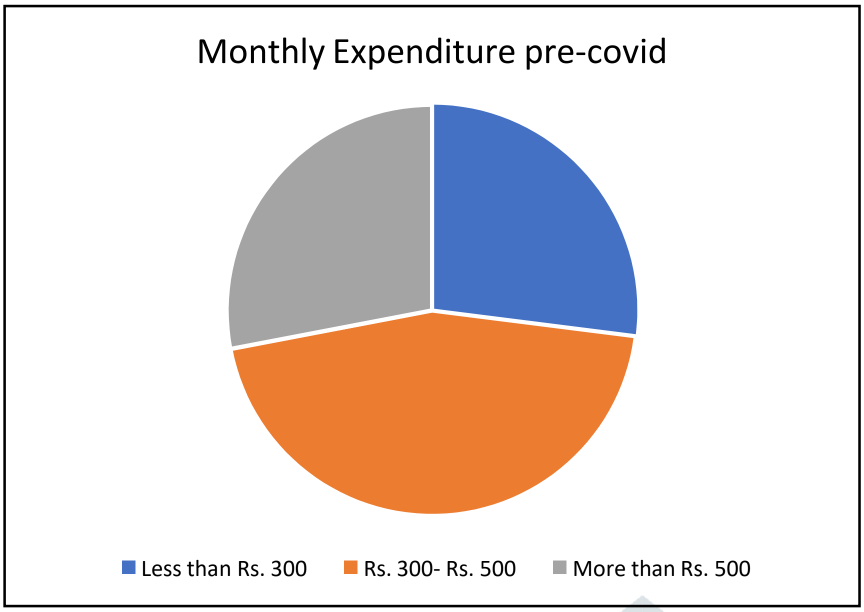
Category	**Observed(O)**	**Expected(E)**	**O-E**	**$(O-E)^2$**	**$(O-E)^2/E$**
Pre-covid (1-2 times)	41	44	-3	9	0.20
Pre-covid (2-4 times)	29	26	3	9	0.35
Pre-covid (More than 4 times)	30	30	0	0	0
Post-covid (1-2 times)	47	44	3	9	0.20
Post-covid (2-4 times)	23	26	-3	9	0.35
Post covid (More than 4 times)	30	30	0	0	0
				CHI_{cal}=	**1.1**

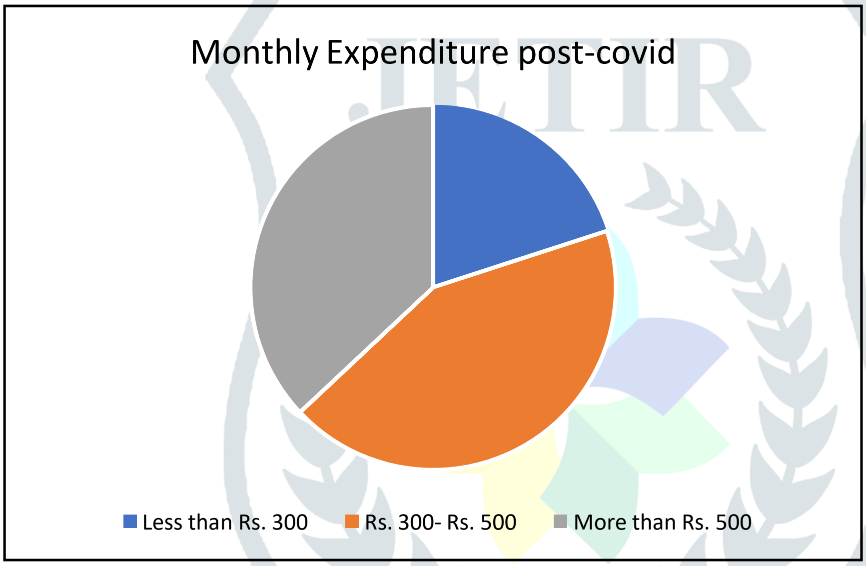
Table 3:

Chi-square test of independence is used to see whether there is a significant difference between the number of times a consumer visits movie theatre in a month pre-covid and post covid. The CHI_{cal} value of the data is 1.1 which is lesser than CHI_{tab} value i.e., 1.38. The degree of freedom is 2 with 5% level of significance. Since the CHI_{cal} value is less than CHI_{tab} value, null hypothesis is accepted and it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the number of times a consumer visits movie theatre in a month pre-covidand post covid.









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