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A STUDY ON CONSUMERS PERCEPTION TOWARDS OVER THE TOP PLATFORMS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY.

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Abstract :
OTT (over-the-top) is a means of providing television and film content over the internet at the request and to suit the requirements of the individual consumer. The term itself stands for “over-the-top”, which implies that a content provider is going over the top of existing internet services. India is the world's fastest-growing market for streaming platforms, also known as overthe-top or OTT service providers, according to a recent report by PwC. With an annual growth rate of 28.6 percent, it is expected to become the sixth-largest market by 2024, ahead of South Korea, Germany, and Australia. There were about 40 OTT platforms in India in 2020, most of them in regional languages, according to another report by the National Association of Software and Service Companies. Within the end of 2023, the market size will be $5 billion, a Boston Consulting Group report predicts. The online streaming audience expanded beyond millennials. As metros, homemakers and senior citizens became OTT viewers, it led to a mushrooming of regional streaming applocations that cater to non-Hindi and non-English markets. With the extended lockdowns and the current state of the economy, OTT seems to be the next normal platform for the world of entertainment. For months now, films have been bearing the brunt of theaters which partially opened and then closed again due to the second wave. As the lights are going out on live events, shoots and movie premiers, the only silver lining amidst all this is the rise of the popularity of OTT.

Keywords: Consumer Buying Behavior, Over the top(OTT), internet

INTRODUCTION

In the Digital scenario contemporary environment with digital technologies like computers, Smartphones, internet play a central role in shaping and influencing various aspects of human life.

The digital world continues to evolve rapidly, influencing how individuals, businesses, and societies operate and interact. As technology advances bring out further changes and innovations in various aspects of our live, traditional TV services that may require specific set-top boxes, dishes are been replaced by OTT which requires just an internet connection and compatible device. OTT services are often more cost-effective than satellite TV subscriptions. OTT platforms offer a wide range of content, including movies, TV shows, documentaries and original programming, catering to diverse audience preferences.

About OTT platforms

OTT stands for “over-the- top” and refers to technology that delivers steamed content through internet-connected devices. Simply can say delivering content through the internet without sporting traditional cable service provider. OTT steaming is video or audio content that is played over the internet. There are two types of OTT steaming 1. Pay-to-access 2. Free to access. The most commonly referred to OTT service is video streaming. Netflix, Amazon Prime, HBO Max, Disney+, Hulu, and YouTube are OTT providers in the video streaming space. Spotify is considered an OTT platform in the audio streaming space for both music and podcasts, while WhatsApp, Telegram, Slack, and Signal are considered OTT platforms in the communication space. OTT describes the

technology that delivers on demand content via the internet across devices like mobile phones, CTVs, computers, and tablets live steaming is the broadcasting of content in real time over the internet, allowing, allowing viewers to tune in and watch as it actively happens.
Overall, the OTT model has revolutionized the way people consume content, offering a more personalized, flexible, and accessible entertainment experience.

Origin of OTT Platforms in India

BIGFlix was the first independent Indian OTT platform introduced by reliance Entertainment in 2008. In 2010, Gurugram –based digivive launched the first OTT mobile app in India. nexGtv introduced steam live Indian Premier league match app on mobile devices in 2013 & 14. Currently there are 46 providers of OTT media services in India. There are currently over 45 million OTT subscribes in India. The end of 2023 expected to reach 50 millian. Now OTT Platform player MX Player, Disney Hotstar, Netflix, Amazon Prime Videos, Voot, Alt Balaji, Zee5, Sony LIV, etc. are some of the popular OTT platforms.

Objective of the study

- To identify the most popular and preferred OTT operator in Coimbatore City.
- To analysis customer preference and perception towards OTT operators.
- To examine the factors influencing customer preference towards OTT platforms.

Research methodology

The study is intended to analyse the consumer's perception towards Over the Top Platforms namely Netflix, Amazon prime, Disney+ Hot star and Zee

Research approach

The study uses quantitative research approach. In this regard, a structured questionnaire is prepared. The proposed research hypothesis is tested with the help of statistical tools. An extensive review of literature was conducted to understand variables used for the study.

Research design

The study used descriptive design. The aim of the descriptive research is to observe, describe, aspects of a situation without manipulating variables to establish cause –and effect relationship. So descriptive research design helps to obtain the complete and accurate information about influencing factors of the OTT Platforms consumers and preference towards OTT operators.

Sampling technique

A convenience sampling technique in non-probability sampling is used to find out the overall nature of consumer preference towards OTT platforms. Respondents were selected using a non - probability approach of sampling to ensure that the respondents were representative of both the genders, different age groups, education level and nature of occupation.

Limitations of the study

1. This study is limited to 50 respondents. So findings and suggestions given on the basis of the study cannot be extrapolated to the entire population.
2. The study also restricts itself to the geographical area of the city.

Table 1.
DEMOGRAPHIC CLASSIFICATION OF CONSUMERS

Demographic Variables	Classification	Respondents		
		No. of Consumers	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage
Gender	Female	23	46	46
	Male	27	54	100
Age(in yrs)	Below 20 years	25	50	50
	21-30 years	20	40	90
	31-40 years	5	10	100
	41-50 years	-	-	-
	Above 50 years	-	-	-

Education	School Level	5	10	10
	Under Graduate	37	74	84
	Post Graduate	5	10	94
	Professional	3	6	100
Occupation	Student	45	90	90
	Employed	2	4	94
	Business	-	-	-
	Housewife	3	6	100
	Agriculturist	-	-	
Marital Status	Married	5	10	10
	Unmarried	45	90	100
Monthly Income	Below Rs.20, 000	8	16	16
	Rs.20, 001 - Rs.30, 000	10	20	36
	Rs.30, 001 - Rs.40, 000	14	28	64
	Rs.40, 001 - Rs.50, 000	8	16	80
	Above Rs.50, 001	10	20	100

Source: Compiled and calculated using primary data

The table 1 depicts the demographic classification of the Consumers perception towards over the top platforms with special reference to Coimbatore city. It can be inferred from the table that:

Most of the consumers are male (54 %) and followed by (46%) female consumers. The majority of the consumers belong to the age category of below 20 years stands 50% samples, followed by the age group of 21 – 30 in the quantity 40% per cent; age group 31-40 possesses 10% consumers.

A majority of 74 % consumers are graduates, followed by 10 % of the respondents are school level and post graduate, 6% of the respondents are professionals. Most of the 90% consumers are employed persons followed by 6% consumers are housewife, and 4% consumers are being self-employed.

A majority of 10% consumers are married and remained 90% consumers are unmarried. A high proportion of consumers 28% belonged to income group of 30,000 – 40,000.

TO ANALYSE THE PERCEPTION AND PREFERENCE OF THE CONSUMERS

The perception and preference of the respondent on any product represent the consumers' view. The consumers' perception and the preference can be well identified when all its essentials are being considered.

Table 2.
Content preferred on OTT by the respondents

S. No	Content	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1	Web series	20	40%
2	Sports	14	28%
3	Movies	10	20%
4	TV shows	6	12%
	Total	50	100

The above table represents the perception and preference of the consumers 40% of respondents preferred web series, 28% of the respondent viewed sports content, 10% of the respondent preferred and only 6% of the respondents are preferred TV shows.

Table 3.
Device used for using OTT by the respondents

S. No	Device	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1	Android	39	78
2	Tablet	2	4
3	Smart/Android TV	5	10
4	PC/Laptop	4	8
	Total	50	100

Table 3. shows that out the total respondents taken for the study, 78% respondents use Android, 10% respondents use Smart/Android TV, 8% respondents use PC/Laptop, 4% respondents use tablet.

Table 4
Language preferred by the respondents

S. No	Language	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1	Tamil	32	64
2	English	15	30
3	Hindi	1.5	3
4	Telugu	1.5	3
	Total	50	100

Table 4 shows that out of the total respondents taken for the study, 64% respondents prefer Tamil, 30% respondents prefer English, 3% respondents prefer Hindi, 3% respondents prefer Telugu.

Table 5
Genre preferred by the respondents

S. No	Genre	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1	Comedy	18	36
2	Action	13	26
3	Drama	11	22
4	Horror	8	16
	Total	50	100

Table 5 shows that out of the total respondents taken for the study,36% respondents prefer comedy, 16% respondents prefer Horror, 26% respondents prefer Action, 22% respondents prefer Drama.

Table 6
Payment term preferred by the respondents

S. No	Payment term	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1	Monthly	17	34
2	Quarterly	7	14
3	Annually	13	26
4	None	13	26
	Total	50	100

Table 6 shows that out of the total respondents taken for the study, 26% respondents prefer none payment term, 26% respondents prefer annual payment term, 34% respondents prefer monthly payment term and 14% respondents prefer quarterly payment term.

Table 7
Network used on OTT services by the respondents

S. No	Network used	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1	Jio	19	38
2	Airtel	19	38
3	Vi	11	22
4	BSNL	4	2
	Total	50	100

Table 7 shows that out of the total respondents taken for the study, 38 % respondents are using Airtel, 38 % respondents are using Jio, 22% respondents are using Vi and 2 % respondents are using BSNL.

Table 8
Opinion on availability of connectivity on OTT by the respondents

S. No	Opinion on connectivity	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1	Very high	5	10
2	High	25	50
3	Moderate	15	30
4	Low	5	10
	Total	50	100

Table 8 shows that out of the total respondents taken for the study, 30% respondents have opined that connectivity as moderate, 50% respondents have opined that connectivity as high, 10% respondents have opined that connectivity as very high, 10% respondents have opined that connectivity as low .

Table 9
Medium influenced by the respondents

S. No	Medium influenced	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1	Social media	25	50
2	Newspaper	15	30
3	Friends and family	5	10
4	TV	5	10
	Total	50	100

Table 9 shows that out of the total respondents taken for the study, 10% respondents are influenced by friends and family,50% respondents are influenced by social media, 10% respondents are influenced by TV and 30% respondents are influenced by newspaper.

Table 10
Sales promotional offers availed by the respondents

S. No	Sales promotional offers	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage (%)
1	Free trial	20	40
2	Discount	20	40
3	Free shipping	5	10
4	Fast delivery	5	10
	Total	50	100

Table 10 shows that out of the total respondents taken for the study, 40% respondents have opted free trial, 40% respondents have opted discount, 5% respondents have opted fast delivery and 5% respondents have opted free shipping.

Findings

In the above respondents majority of them levies 20 age group of male and also most of the under graduation. Most (42.3%) of the respondents are Disney+ Hotstar users and also (37.3%) of the respondents prefer to watch movies. Majority (68.5%) of the respondents use Android device and (34%) of the respondents prefer Tamil language. Most (24.2%) of the respondents prefer Comedy and (37%) of the respondents opted free content without any payment.

Most (37%) of the respondents prefer none of the given payment term. (i.e. free content users without any payment). Most (37%) of the respondents spend no amount on OTT services. (i.e. free content users without any payment).

Majority (50%) of the respondents are Airtel users on OTT services. Most (49%) of the respondents have opined that connectivity as moderate. Majority (59.5%) of the respondents are influenced by friends and family.

Most (47%) of the respondents have opted for No idea/Not sure on payment for OTT services as a part of telecom/broadband plan. Majority (57.4%) of the respondents chosen easy to pay for a service via phone/internet bill as a reason for purchasing telecom/broadband plan with OTT services. Most (38.4%) of the respondents have opted nil on availed of sales promotional offers.

The study reveals that the most popular and preferred OTT operators are Airtel and Jio. The respondents are influenced by social media for usage of Network. The factors like high connectivity, telecast of web series, free trial, discount and nature of programs influence

Suggestions

Content

A content is the strongest factor for the success of any OTT platform. As respondents are much more interested in viewing free content without any payment, it is advisable to increase free content as well as original and exclusive content that encourage the viewers to hold back on the platform for a long period. On the other hand, most of the respondents prefer comedy genre to escape themselves from a stressful situation. If more comedy genre content has been increased it may results in increasing the time spend by the viewers on the platform to relax and escape themselves from the stress for a while.

Language

As the study has been undertaken from the people of Coimbatore city, it is clearly understood that people mostly prefer their own regional language which is Tamil. Platforms can concentrate on making availability of Tamil language content as language preference differs widely between different regions. However, most of the content are available in only few languages.

Movies

The excitement to go back again for a movie experience with family, friends at a big screen has also varied among the respondents as they prefer to watch movies on the OTT platforms. It is a sign of change in the mind-set of the respondents. They may feel that watching movies through digital OTT platforms is comfortable than watching movies at a cinema hall especially in upcoming days as a country underwent a pandemic situation. Moreover, depending upon the individual convenience movies can be downloaded and they can watch them later anytime. So the platforms can concentrate on telecasting more movies frequently ofbig stars of any genre in all regional languages can increase the consumption of OTT platformsamong the viewers.

Free Trial

Free trial for a particular period without any payment can be offered to make the viewers to experience the platform for a particular period that may attract the viewer's towards the OTT platform. If it is possible remind/send notifications to the viewers who are using free trail about the validity of the free trial daily as it may help in acquiring viewers' attention till the expiry of that free trial.

Publicity

As most of the respondents are influenced through family and friends, so it is advisable to improve the publicity of OTT platforms in a possible ways through any medium that may influence more viewers to experience the channel to get updated among their family and friends. It is helpful in expansion of viewers towards the platform.

Conclusion

India has a thriving and flourishing over the top (OTT) industry that continues to grow at a fast rate. Over the top (OTT) industry is loaded with both national and international platforms that are going through heavy competition to withstand in the market. They are in the situation to prove their progression in a unique way among its competitors by following various strategies and services to its viewers. OTT platforms have been investing massive investments on various dynamics to expand its audience. From the findings of the study, it has clearly understood that the viewers are expecting more original and exclusive content in all regional languages to spend a quality time on quality and diverse content at their convenience on any time according to their preferences. OTT platforms can concentrate on providing a various sales promotional offers like free trail without any payment to grab the attention of new viewers and also to retain its existing viewers. In upcoming years we can expect a massive growth, demand and domination of various OTT platforms with 5G technology that will pave the way.

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