

A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN THE PUBLIC'S INTEREST IN WATCHING MOVIES AT THEATRES AND OTT PLATFORMS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO VIRUDHUNAGAR CITY

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Abstract:

Theatre, cinema hall or big screen, whatever be the term; this terminology has always been the center stage and focal point of entertainment. Besides being an entertainment platform, reflects a great deal of our culture and social life. Theatre enhances the experience of watching on a large screen by providing the best possible audio and visuals. Any movie's visual clarity could be felt solely with the well-designed ambience in theatres. With the "Anyone, Anywhere" phenomenon facilitated by advanced gadget features stimulates the demand for a new visual experience, which ultimately leads to OTT platforms. The Over-the-top (OTT) platforms have a significant influence on the innovative drive in the entertainment sectors. Keeping this in view, this paper attempts to study the public's interest in watching movies at theatres and OTT platforms.

Key Words: OTT, Perception, Digital media, OTT Platforms, Hotstar, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney.

INTRODUCTION

In India, watching movies and other digital content has been considered as a consistent activity and a part of our lifestyle which provides recreation and relaxation from our hectic work. The main aspect is the medium through which the movies and series are consumed. From 1990s to 2010s, television and cinemas were the key platforms through which the movie was consumed. Hence, people had the habit of watching movies in television and at theatres. Further, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the OTT wave, forcing the theatres to shut down, the OTT players have been able to set a strong position as the prime medium and source for streaming web series, movies and a wide variety of other digital content. This has impacted the theatres much in terms of market share and revenue which in turn resulted in direct competition between OTT and theatres, despite their different business models.

Over the past 3 to 4 years since 2019, the shift in consumer preferences towards consuming digital content is the major stimulator for the rivalry between theatres and OTT platforms. People have switched to OTT platforms for various reasons such as convenience, availability of variety of content, price value, etc. Thus this validates the need for this research study to know the people's preference behind choosing OTT platforms and Theatres and to analyse the rationale behind the shift in consumer behavior.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the people's preference behind choosing OTT platforms and Theatres.
2. To study the influential factors for preferring one media over the other.
3. To predict the future trend of the Indian movie and entertainment industry.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Krishna Mohan et al. (2021) concluded that although there is a noticeable influence of OTT platforms and streaming services on Movie theatres, but that does not limit the opportunities of growth for both sides. Even if OTT platforms are having a mushroom effect, when compared to the potential market size, they have only scratched the surface.

A study by Tripathi (2020) stated that in the post COVID-19 research of OTT vs. Theatres, both have their own advantages and disadvantages in terms of experience, cost, time management, convenience and so on.

According to Saha and Prasad (2021), there is more scope for OTT platforms in the future due to favourable demographics, pertinent and captivating free content, and the variety of subscription plans for premium content. The widely dispersed population can access their preferred content on multiple screens and spends nearly one-eighth part of their day in watching their favorite movie, TV show or drama.

Chatterjee and Pal (2020) through the analysis in their paper mentioned that OTT platforms are preferred by consumers not only because of technological advancement but also due to behavioral and socio-economic changes impacted by globalization.

Sundaravel and Elangovan (2020) evaluated in their paper that video real time has emerged as the most potential avenues in India for content consumption. Even the smallest OTT stages are having a significant impact.

As evaluated by Ning and Chen (2019) in their study that in terms of niche overlap, the traditional TV and OTT have a lot in common when it comes to entertainment and usage simplicity. On the whole, OTT platforms outperform traditional TV in all the competitive ways.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a Descriptive research study conducted in Virudhunagar city with 150 respondents. The primary data was collected through an online survey of the audience of Theatres and OTT platforms. A non-probability Judgement sampling method was adopted in the present study. The rationale behind choosing this technique is to keep control of the quality of responses and to ensure that relevant target audience only are chosen for data collection. The secondary data was collected from articles, newspapers and websites. Charts, Frequency tables, Percentage analysis were used for analyzing the data collected.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Some of the limitations of the study include:

- The sample size for the study is restricted to 150 respondents only.
- The survey results are limited to Virudhunagar city only.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE-1 GENERAL PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Variables	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	103	68.7
	Female	47	31.3
Level of Education	SSLC/+2	29	19.3
	UG	96	64.0
	PG	15	10.0
	Others	10	6.7
Occupation	Private Employee	74	49.3
	Government Employee	31	20.7
	Business	23	15.3
	Housewife	22	14.7
Age	Less than 20 years	38	25.3
	20 – 30 years	56	37.3
	30 – 40 years	23	15.4
	Above 40 years	33	22.0
Marital Status	Single	54	36.0
	Married	96	64.0
Monthly Income	Below Rs. 15,000	42	28.0
	Rs. 15,000 – Rs. 25,000	76	50.7
	Rs. 25,000 – Rs. 35,000	22	14.7
	Above Rs. 35,000	10	6.6

Source: Primary data, 2022

From the above table, the gender-wise distribution of respondents shows that 68.7% of the total respondents were male and 31.3% of the respondents were female. In case of age of the respondents, 37.3% of the respondents belong to the age category of 20 - 30 years and a majority of 64% of the respondents is graduates. Most (49.3%) of the respondents are private employees. 64% of the respondents are married and 50.7% of the respondents are earning a monthly income in the range between Rs. 15,000 – Rs. 25,000.

TABLE-2 SHOWING THE DURATION OF WATCHING OTT PLATFORM PER DAY

S. No	Hours	% of the Respondents
1	0 – 2	55.71%
2	2 – 4	37.14%
3	More than 4 hours	7.15%
	TOTAL	100%

Source: Primary Data, 2022

The above table shows that 55.71% of the respondents are using OTT platform 0 – 2 hours per day & 37.14% of the respondents are using OTT platform 2 – 4 hours per day & 7.15% of the respondents are using OTT platform More Than 4 Hours.

TABLE-3 REASONS TO PREFER OTT OVER THEATRES

S. No	Reasons	% of the Respondents
1	Content	30.00%
2	No Ads	34.29%
3	Convenience	35.71%
	TOTAL	100%

Table-3 indicates that a majority of 35.71% of the respondents prefer OTT over Theatres for Convenience, 34.29% of the respondents felt No Ad's Content attracted them to watch OTT service and 30% of the respondents felt Content attracted them to watch OTT service

CHART-1 SHOWING THE REASONS TO PREFER OTT

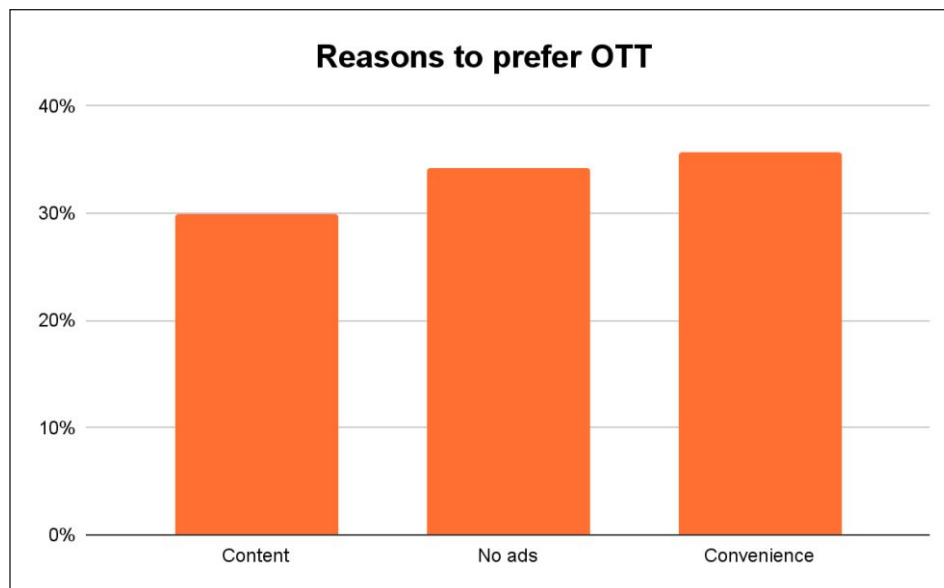


TABLE-4 SHOWING DO PEOPLE FEEL THAT WATCHING MOVIE ON OTT IS INCREASED DURING LOCKDOWN

S. No	OTT's Growth During Lockdown	% of the Respondents
1	Yes	80%
2	No	20%
	TOTAL	100%

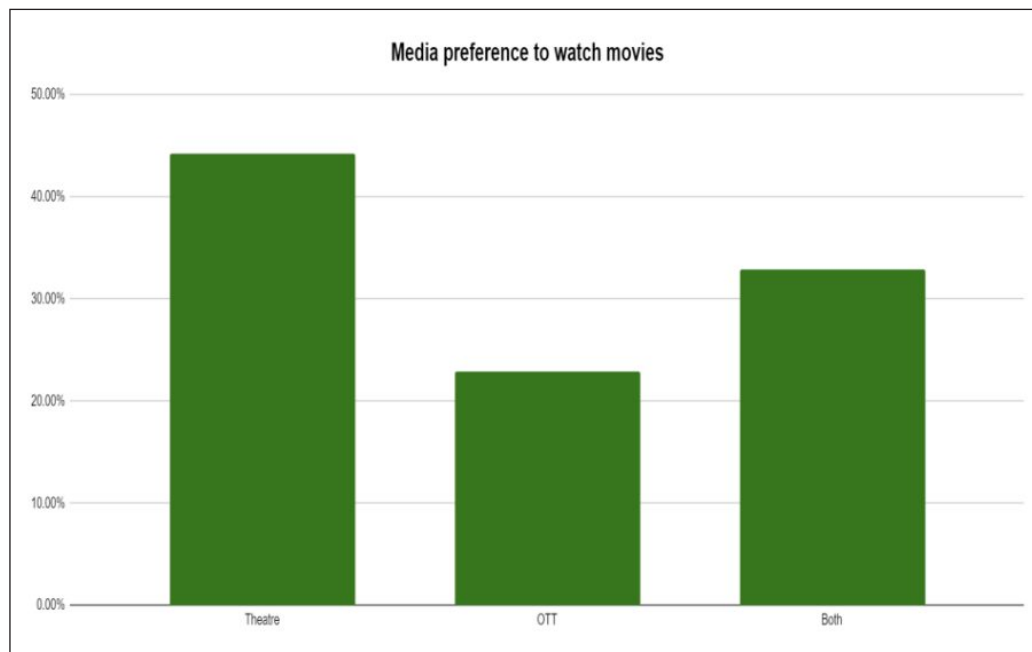
Source: Primary Data, 2022

The above table shows that 80% of the respondents felt OTT's growth was increased during lockdown & 20% of the respondents felt OTT's growth was not increased during lockdown.

TABLE-5 RESPONDENTS' MEDIA PREFERENCE TO WATCH MOVIES

S. No	Reasons	% of the Respondents
1	OTT	22.86%
2	Theatres	44.29%
3	Both	32.85%
	TOTAL	100%

The table above shows that 44.29% of the respondents prefer to watch movies in Theatres when a movie is released in cinema theatres and OTT platform simultaneously, 22.86% of the respondents prefer OTT platforms & 32.85% of the respondents prefer to watch movies in both OTT and Theatres.

CHART-2 SHOWING MEDIA PREFERENCE WHEN A MOVIE RELEASED IN CINEMA THEATRE AND ON OTT PLATFORM SIMULTANEOUSLY

**TABLE-6 SHOWING WATCHING CONTENT
ON OTT IS CHEAPER THAN THEATRES**

S. No	Particulars	% of the Respondents
1	Cheaper	64.29%
2	Not Cheaper	35.71%
	TOTAL	100%

Source: Primary data, 2022

Table-6 depicts that 64.29% of the respondents felt OTT is cheaper than Theatres & 35.71% of the respondents felt OTT is not cheaper than Theatres.

**CHART-3 SHOWING WATCHING CONTENT ON OTT IS CHEAPER
THAN THEATRES**

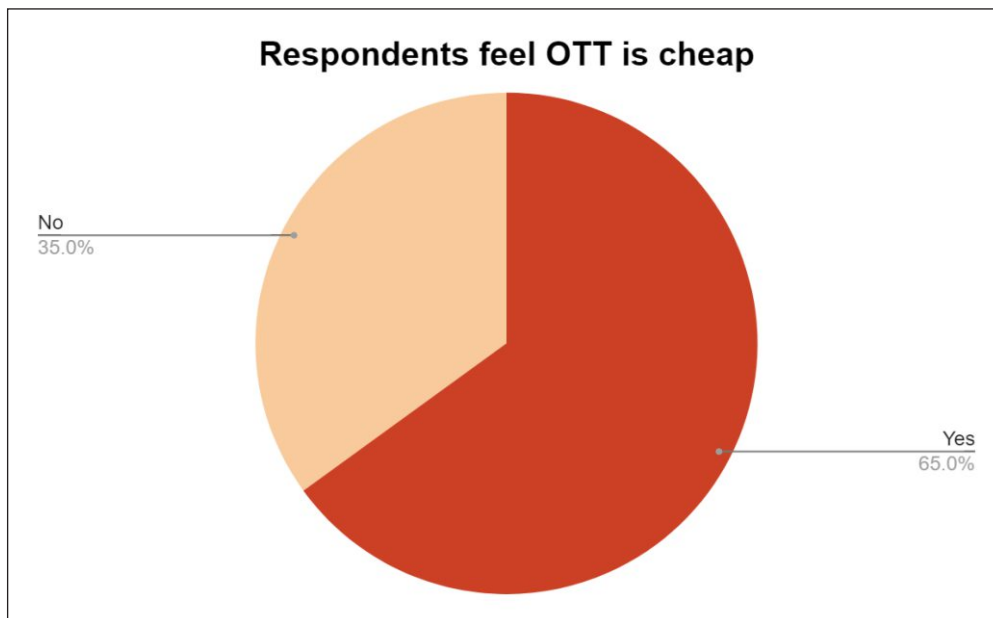


TABLE-7(a) SHOWING RESPONDENTS SATISFACTION LEVEL OF WATCHING MOVIES IN THEATRES

S. No	Particulars	% of the Respondents
1	Highly Satisfied	48.57%
2	Satisfied	34.29%
3	Neutral	14.29%
4	Dissatisfied	2.85%
	TOTAL	100%

Source: Primary data, 2022

The above table shows that 48.57% of the respondents are Highly Satisfied to watch movie in theatres, 34.29% of the respondents are satisfied to watch movie in theatres, 14.29% of the respondents are Neutral to watch movie in theatres and only 2.85% of the respondents are dissatisfied to watch movie in theatres.

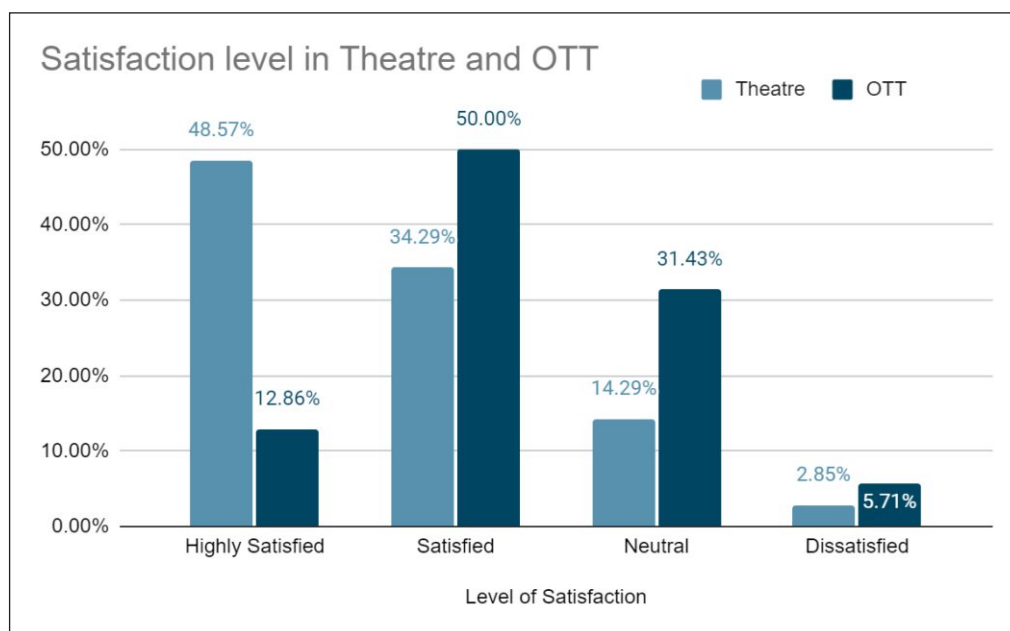
TABLE-7(b) SHOWING RESPONDENTS SATISFACTION LEVEL OF WATCHING MOVIES IN OTT

S. No	Particulars	% of the Respondents
1	Highly Satisfied	12.86%
2	Satisfied	50.00%
3	Neutral	31.43%
4	Dissatisfied	5.71%
	TOTAL	100%

Source: Primary data, 2022

The above table shows that 12.86% of the respondents are Highly Satisfied in watching movie in OTT platform, 50% of the respondents are satisfied in watching movie in OTT platform, 31.43% of the respondents are Neutral to watch movie in OTT platform and the balance 5.71% of the respondents are dissatisfied in watching movie in OTT platform.

CHART-4 SHOWING THE RESPONDENTS' SATISFACTION LEVEL OF WATCHING MOVIE IN THEATERS AND OTT



FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

- From the findings it is known that majority of the respondents do not have any issue with the usage of OTT platforms. Therefore, the only way for the theatres to attract large audience would be to innovate and become creative in the pricing, marketing and technical strategies. The findings further suggests that if the theatres are successful in bringing up the required changes then both the OTT platforms and the theatres will co-exist together in the country.
- Also, the idea of subscribing to movie theatres on monthly or yearly basis shall be implemented and provided in an affordable rate.

- Though OTT platforms replicate the audio and video quality as like theatres, the ambience and the IMAX 3D or 4DX experience may still be a winning point for theatres for the foreseeable future. This is a big pact for the theatres to fight against OTT platforms and shall make a good impact to bring back people in choosing theatres as their preferred medium of watching movies.

CONCLUSION

The major shift in consumer behavior from theatre to OTT platforms has been proven considerably based on the findings of this comparative study. In order to predict the future trend of the Indian movie and entertainment industry, the OTT platforms occupy the prime position in dictating terms and drive the entertainment industry forward as the most popular and preferred medium of the people. Though there is no threat for theatres to go non-existent, with the current consumer trend, it will be tougher for the Cinema theatres to tackle the challenges posed by OTT platforms.

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