



THE BURGEONING OTT PLATFORM AMID THE RURAL CONSUMER: A CASE OF VILLAGE SAWALI IN BULDANA DISTRICT OF MAHARASTRA

HRIDAYNATH SONUNE

Assistant Professor
Department of Economics
YCC Sillod Aurangabad
(MS) INDIA

ABSTRACT

Over the top platforms commonly known as OTT platform. OTT is media service provided directly through internet. It includes video, audio, messaging and games. In the past 7-8 years is gaining popularity among the Indian population. As per KPMG report Indian OTT market to grow by 45% by the 2023. The present study is an attempt to analyze rural consumer perception towards the OTT platform with reference to village Sawali in Buldana district of Maharashtra. The study further making the SWOTH analysis.

Keywords: OTT platform, consumer perception and preferences, online streaming

INTRODUCTION

About the OTT platform:

Over-the-top platform (OTT) is media service directly provided via internet, unlike the traditional media services mechanism i.e. cable broadcast, satellite television etc. OTT content is the video, audio, media, messaging, games provided without the action of intermediate operators in regards of content and distribution.

In India indigenous OTT platform was started back in 2008 by Reliance Entertainment then after the OTT platform gain momentum in Indian market. As per KPMG Media and Entertainment Report 2018, the Indian OTT market is expected to grow 45% by the end of

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fiscal year 2023. Various report shows India is the second biggest market after the US. Many OTT platform already had made its consumer base in urban cities, but technological and network penetration in rural also made possible way to these platform but it's in nascent stage.

Thus, the technological disruption happening but took time to be imitated in rural areas, so on this line study here focusing on consumer perception about the OTT platform in rural area village name Sawali.

About the Village:

Sawali is a medium size village located in Buldana district in northern Maharashtra. The village has total 275 families residing in the village. According to the Census 2011 village has population of 1547 of which 813 are males while 734 are females. As since 2011 there is increase in literacy rate in the village from 66.1 in 2011 to 74 in 2018 according to the Grampachayat survey due the increasing access to the modern education and various facilities. Most of the working population migrated to Pune, Aurangabad and Mumbai etc. so along with them they carries modern ideas that attract the remaining people in the village. Eventually the increasing effect of OTT has been seen in the village along with traditional media services.

Under the digital India mission and BharatNET scheme at Grampanchayat level providing free Wi-Fi facilities to everyone. Thus this leads to increasing internet users in the village

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the consumer preferences or perception towards OTT platform in the village Sawali.
2. To make the SWOT analysis

Literature Review

Ruchita Ota, Animesh Chandra and Sushree Sangita Roy (2020) analyses the customer preferences towards Netflix and HotStar during pandemic with special reference to the Jamshedpur city. Along pointed out underlying influencing factors.

KPMG Report (2017): the 'Digital First' journey, How the OTT platform remains on demand ready providing all theoretical and technical knowledge and also recommended various strategy for the development off OTT market in India.

Yesha Mehta, Harsh Agarwal and Dhanshree Bajaj (July2020) this paper focused on consumer behavior and attitude pattern and adaptability factors across the country.

Daniel Varun Paul (march2020) this paper investigating various factors that influencing consumer choice between OTT platform and DTH connection. Along with used correlation to established relation between various consumer behavior factors.

Dr.Sabyasachi Dasgupta and Dr.Priya Grover(2019) This research paper tries to understand the factors leading to adoption of OTT services by millennial consumers on a long term using innovation adoption factors(AIETA MODEL) developed by ROGERS to understand mental process of consumers

Research Gap

Consumer preferences and perception are very difficult to trace in reality. It's not stagnant for several years and thus made it difficult to gauge very precisely. So above discuss papers has explaining the urban consumer perception regarding the OTT platform by using various tools and reach to various conclusion.

But here researcher could not found any explicit study on rural consumers' perception towards the OTT platforms while doing literature review. So in this paper researcher will going to trace the rural consumer perception in his village named Sawali. As we have been seen that rural people have been started taking the benefits of 4.0 industrialization in limited sense. So this study will going to highlight one of tread of 4.0 industrialization in rural India with the help of OTT platform.

Research Methodology

Primary data:

- I. Data is collected through detail questionnaire through Google form and circulated through social media i.e. what's app, emails, Facebook etc. due to COVID-19 pandemic situation
- II. Data is also collected by telephonic interview process also
- III. The sample of study confined to the village SAWALI and sampling technique used as Convenience sampling
- IV. Targeted population: age group 18-30

Features of targeted group as follows:

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- a) Major income generating source in village
- b) Most mobile user and internet user
- c) Self-directed and self-motivated
- d) Able to analyses critically
- e) Draw meaningful experience
- v) Sample size 200
- vi) It's an exploratory study with descriptive research design

Secondary data:

The data is collected with help of internet and other media platform, various OTT platform, website, reports etc.
Thus, the data analyses by Excel

Limitation:

1. The limitation of study is that restricted itself to the analysis of consumer preference and perception only. (demand side)
2. The study restricted to the geographical area the village named Sawali.
3. Focused on targeted age group 18-30 years

Finding of study

The study was targeted towards the rural consumer perception in village named Sawali. In this study targeted group is 18-30 age. The responses collected belongs to village Sawali and above mention age group and other age groups were deleted latter while analysis so that the most authentic result is derived according the objectives formulated.

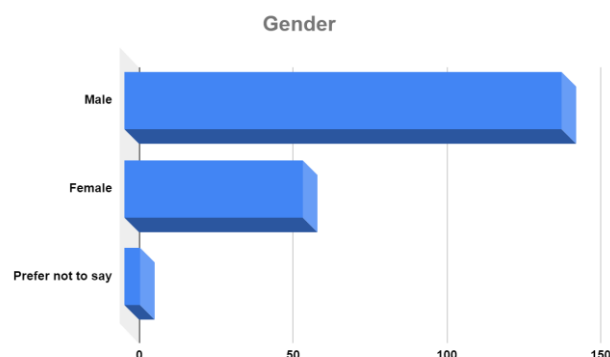
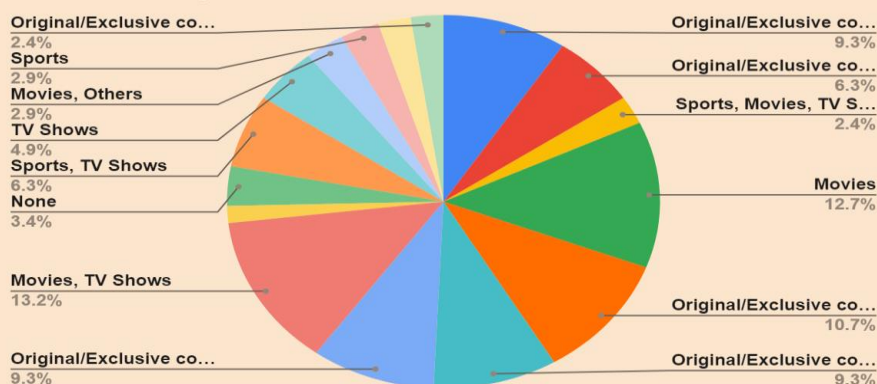


Chart 1.1 Gender data

What do you watch the most on online streaming platform like Amazon prime, Hotstar, etc?



The above chart 1.3 and 1.4 the response was to multiple choice question to find the most preferred OTT platform and its popularity among in village. Here the result indicate that people preferred the multiple OTT platforms for different context such as movies, sports, TV shows etc. so the as per result most preferred OTT platforms were Netflix, Amazon and Hotstar. Whereas, mostly OTT platforms used for movies (12.7%), followed by original content run by various OTT platform on their respective app. While doing telephonic interview one point most respondents mention about the MX player and Voot they preferred initially because of free content available there and then they search for another platform. While in observation column in questionnaire most women mention about the Hotstar because platforms also providing DTH channel content over it. Specially TV serials.

Which device do you prefer most to watch Hotstar, Amazon, etc

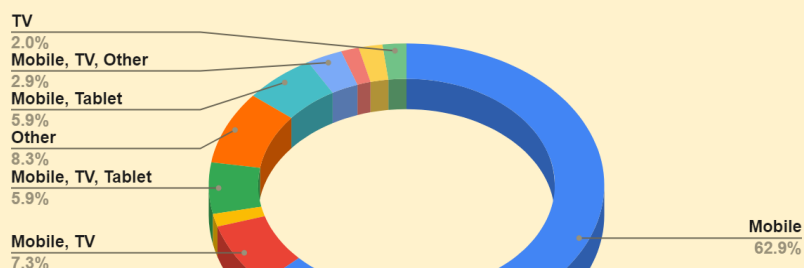
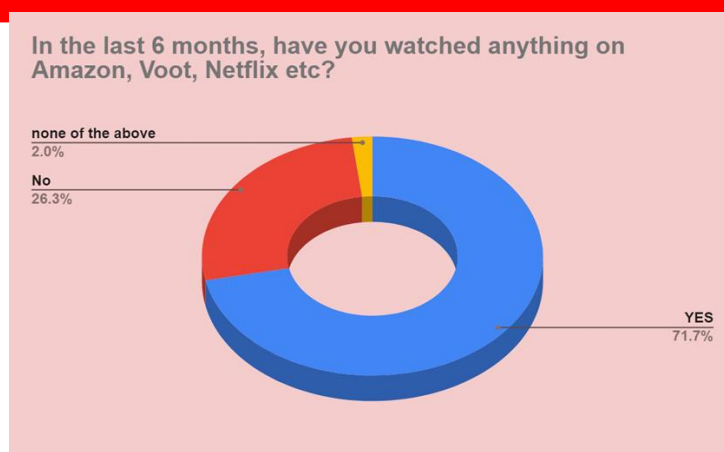


Chart 1.5 device prefer to watch OTT platforms

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When the respondents enquired about which the mode preferred to access the OTT content. The result in pie chart 1.5 clearly shows 62.9% people preferred mobile phone than TV and tablet.

Because many respondents in telephonic survey said that many content on OTT platforms can't

be seen in group. So they preferred mobile. As we know that mobile phone is feasible to use and

carry on. Oppositely those who have families most of them connect mobile to smart TVs instead

of paying for DTH service charges. Another important point highlight is that before lockdown

most of people in age group 18-30 used to see in groups. But now situation is different mostly we

can see individual watching on single mobile

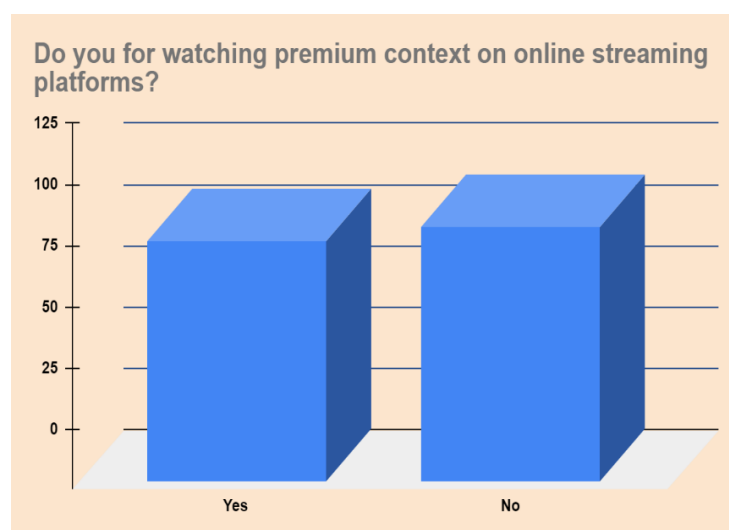


Chart 1.6 last 6 months watch preferences

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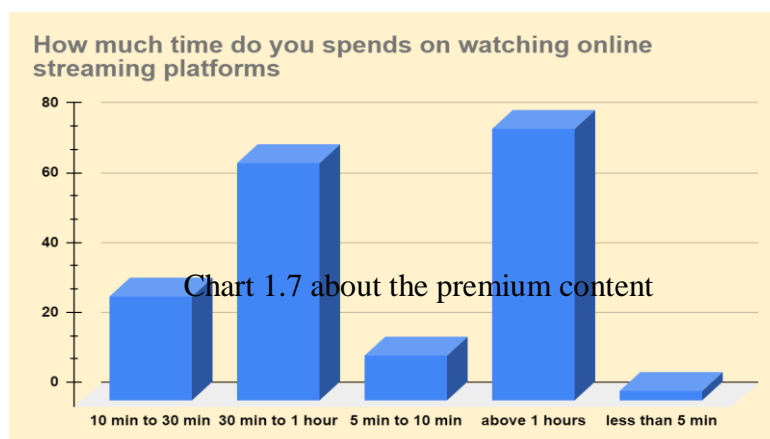


Chart 1.7 about the premium content

The people were later asked about 'whether they in last 6 months watched OTT platforms yes or no so 71% responded yes and 26 % responded no. Thus the chart 1.6 can be inferred that during lockdown OTT platforms grow up significantly.

Then further asked about the premium content and referral code in chart 1.7 and 1.8 respectively. But there was not significant difference between answer YES or NO. As we see in chart 1.6 researcher conclude that people watching both free and premium content. If anyone get addicted to it he may definitely go for premium content as researcher observe from survey.

While applying for premium content most of the people search for referral codes. In chart 1.8 indicate the result about the referral code, more than 100 respondents don't use referral code while most are confuse or may be not aware about it were 70 respondents. As researcher inferred from that in rural area OTT platforms are in nascent stage most of the user not known about the referral code. Those who are using were menisc people. As the OTT platforms penetration increase in village there will be increase chances of using referral codes

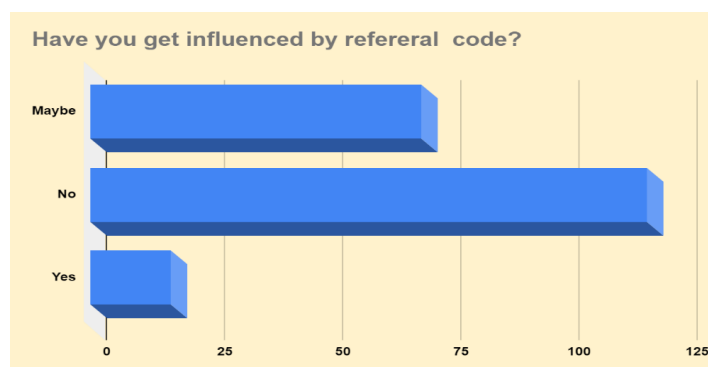


Chart 1.9 time spends on OTT

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In the development process time plays a crucial role for the success of plan. Similarly the next quires asked about the how much time spends to watch various series shown in chart 1.9 and 1.10 respectively. Thus the result indicate that direct correlation that around 80 respondent spends more than 1 hours on OTT platform and next 153 respondent watch at most 5 series in one time. To make analysis simpler average time spent is 45 minutes to watch 3 series in one time. So the higher time spends may indicate the acceptability of OTT platform among village but it is confined to only age group 18-30 specifically. We can't conclude for same result for another age groups.

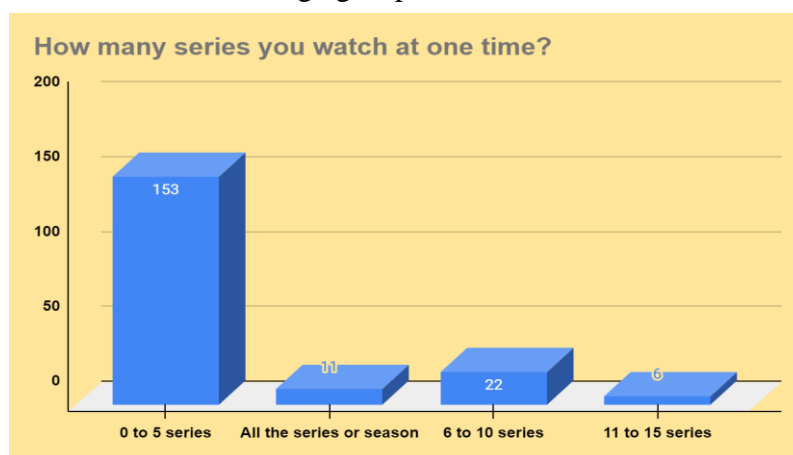


Chart 1.10 watching series

The most crucial question asked about what factors makes them to watch specific program through multiple choice question. Bulk of respondent answered for random choice on another side 29% preferred the popular program, 22% watch recommended program by their friends, relatives etc. only 2.5% watching for study purposes and other solely entertainment purpose. As indicated in the chart 1.11.



Chart 1.11 reason for watching specific program

In the digital era advertisement plays important role to persuade the consumers' in a specific direction. So in that context next question was regarding the advertisement effect on rural consumer to turns towards the OTT platforms. Results indicate that only 20.3 % respondent watch the advertisement. But left respondent preferred to change the channel, turn it off and go for find something else in following proportion of 30.7%, 29.7% and 9.95 respectively.

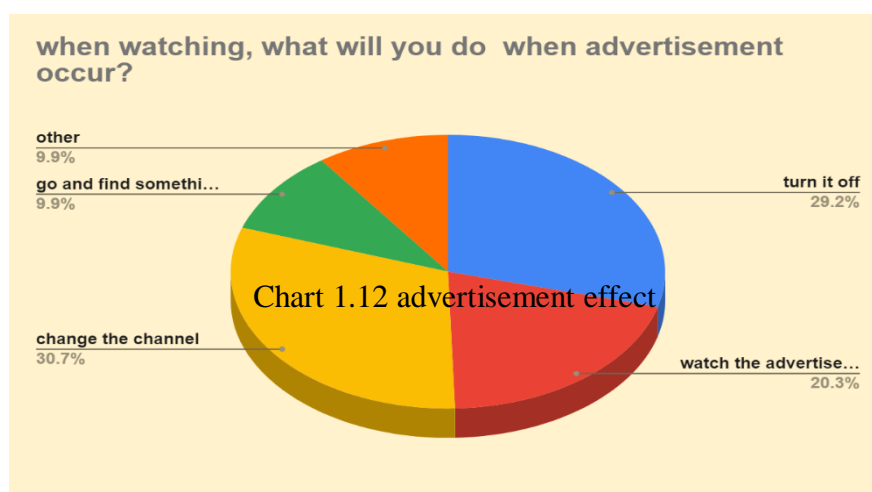


Chart 1.13 what will do after finishing content



The last question was what will do finishing all the episodes. So more than 100 respondents go to find another one and only 25% read the reviews about it. Thus we conclude that consumer were eager to watch another content rather than read reviews over it. In telephonic survey respondent mention that rather than reading review he preferred to take overview of any program within a 3 to 4 minutes.

Due to pandemic it's difficult to physically collect the data so researcher used telephonic survey method by using snowball method. During this survey researcher came across various cases discuss by the people as follows:

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CASE 1.0

In the Buldana district in the state of Maharashtra .Usha is working, as her own problems “work from home” her office said. But who’s going to explain that to her family? Her husband and children expect her to do all the housework, cook good food, and take care of them. Her home prison now, because she don’t have any entertainment in her life and stressful. So her friend suggest her about the HOTSTAR where she can spent her time during working in home. So by watching various program on it she happily doing work with more enthusiastically and relief from stress.

CASE 2.0

This is the story of a boy named Ram. He is 19 years old. For the last two year he is suffering from rare disease. So he unable to work like he used to do before. Because of disease he can’t go outside frequently. So to pass his time, he used mobile phone. One day he come up with Max App advertisement on YouTube where he find different web series. Through which he spent his time on it. By seeing the disadvantage of mobile on health his father buy LED TV set where he can connect his mobile. Now he is enjoying series on big screen

CASE 3.0

Keshav has a grocery shop in village Sawali. Few years ago he saw his friend watching horror serial on mobile. He always fascinating about the various serial on Vivoo APP. So he convinced his parents to buy mobile and now he is watching and having subscriber of various platforms on Netflix, HotStar etc. He also mentioned that by saw him many other his friends get attracted to these platforms. And many of them came to him for recommending them to which video they should watch. As initially he was refusing his parents to sit in grocery shop but now he voluntarily ready to sit in shop because at the same time he has been watching videos on OTT platform.

2. SWOTH ANALYSIS

The concept of Over-the-Top platform is seen to have gaining larger consumer base across the world since last 7-8 years. Though there is digital divide is concern in rural area, but still OTT platform satisfactorily gaining the base. In order to understand more presence of this platforms in rural area, it is important to conduct SWOTH analysis.

Strength

- 1) Both free and premium content
- 2) Diverse OTT Platforms available to consumer
- 3) Worldwide content on one tap

Weakness

- 1) Low broadband connectivity
- 2) Digital divide
- 3) Price sensitivity as rural consumer less likely to pay for content

Opportunities

- 1) Better quality content
- 2) Localization- real life issues discussed, local language used
- 3) Great viewing experience
- 4) Earlier access to content

Threats

- 1) Risk of privacy
- 2) Violent content
- 3) Pornographic content
- 4) Sensitive issues

CONCLUSION

This study was the novel attempt to study the consumer perception in rural area towards the OTT platforms. This new platforms is growing and gaining momentum as the time passes. The youth are attracting to OTT platforms due to foreign content and regional content on demand. The present generation has moved from traditional media platforms to OTT platforms. The emergence of cheap data packages and free Wi-Fi facilities has helped the OTT platforms to make it base in rural areas too.

All the respondent in survey were aware about the OTT platforms and accepted it as alternative to the rational DTH service. The acceptance of this platforms was signifying greater change will happens in near future in rural as well as urban areas. There is need of more internet penetration in rural areas under the BhartNet and digital India mission. Government should regulated this platform at par with the traditional media services under the IT act 2002.



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