

# A Study on Increase in the Usage of OTT Streaming Services

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**Abstract:** OTT Platforms have been becoming more and more popular in India due to locally-oriented content, low costs, and the widespread use of 4G (and 5G in the future), and are predicted to grow even more. Streaming Services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Hotstar dominate the market, with others such as AltBalaji and Voot also becoming more popular. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of active subscribers to these OTT streaming platforms has increased by almost 6 million users in a single year. 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. The study found that the subscribers of these OTT platforms had increased their usage by almost 3 hours on a daily average due to the pandemic, citing various reasons such as 'Boredom', 'Excess time', 'New content' etc. This increase in usage is very encouraging for the new players in the market to launch their streaming services and foreign OTT platforms looking to launch in India (for ex. Hulu and HBO Max). It means that there is a demand for such services in India.

**Keywords:** Amazon Prime, Decrease in the usage of cable, Disney Plus, Hotstar, Netflix, OTT, Streaming services.

## 1. Introduction

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in the usage of the internet, not only for work from home but also for entertainment purposes. Streaming platforms such as Netflix and Amazon Prime have increased their user base, with new streaming giants such as AppleTV and Disney+ entering the market and creating a strong foothold in the market.

In less than half a year of operation, Disney+ has managed to gain 95 million subscribers, surpassing the likes of Hulu and HBO Max. With films and television series exclusive to these platforms releasing almost every week, this number is expected to grow even further in the coming years.

India was no exception to this spike in OTT usage. The country witnessed a 60% growth in paid OTT streaming services during the pandemic, with more than half of these new users likely to continue using the service, according to the annual M&E report by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) along with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Some of the most popular streaming sites in the country, such as Netflix India, Disney+ Hotstar, AltBalaji, Voot, Zee5, Sony Liv etc. all saw an increase in subscribers, largely owing to the Indian targeted content. Particularly, the popularity of new shows such

as Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story and Mirzapur S2 have proven that Indian audiences are ready for largely content-oriented television shows rather than the traditional Indian serials.

Our study aims to ascertain the factors behind this increase by surveying a sample population.

## 2. Literature Review

Manisha Pandit (2020) explores in her study that OTT Platforms have seen a significant annual growth of more than 22% due to not only ease of availability but also pocket friendly subscription plans and increase in local regional content, which was not the case just a few years ago (Dr. Virendra Khanna, 2009).

There is a large number of different streaming services offering different types of content, at different prices, but (generally speaking) all targeting the same audience. This means that there is a ferocious competition among streaming service providers wanting to capture the maximum market share (Sundaravel E. and Elangovan N, 2020).

This competition is very dynamic and fast-changing. According to a study conducted in 2018 (Quresh Moochhala), Amazon PrimeVideo was the most popular OTT streaming platform in India, but today Disney+Hotstar has around 40% market share. This volatility is due to a mix of various factors such as changes in pricing and improvement of content. There are 24 million OTT users in India and the market for OTT subscription had been projected to grow to Rs. 4000 Crore by 2020 (Dasgupta and Grover, 2019).

There are many factors which have led to this drastic increase in streaming services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, AltBalaji, Zee5, and Disney+Hotstar. These factors include cost, availability, content, perceived usefulness and cost (Bhullar and Chaudhary, 2020). Many similar studies concluded the same data for these findings (Rohit Jacob Jose, 2019) and (Dr Paramveer Singh, 2020).

This increase is mostly thanks to millennial customers, who are estimated to spend around 2 hours watching OTT platforms every day. For example, talking specifically about Netflix, (Sidneyeve Matrix, 2014) found in a study people watch Netflix content the day it is released, whether it is a new episode of an ongoing TV Show, a movie, or a Netflix Original. Young

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customers also prefer OTT streaming services over traditional cable television services, due to huge library of content and affordable plans (Sadana and Sharma, 2021).

We are at the onset of a revolutionary change in the way we consume entertainment. Sean Flanagan (2018) compares the experience of watching a movie at home vs watching it in theatres. He mentions that cinemas are trying to retain customers by enhancing the movie-goer experience – better seating, the desire to watch films on the big screen and the ability to watch movies as soon as they release.

Furthermore, consumers have also shifted from Physical DVDs and Blu-Ray Discs to subscription-based streaming platforms, as they are getting more quantity of content from relatively the same amount of money (Terje Gaustad, 2019). With the increase in the content library of these platforms, the consumers have shifted from watching local content to international content, which thanks to the internet is just as easily available as local content.

#### A. Research Gap

This paper aims to collect responses from only respondents between the ages of 16-25, as youth comprises a large target base for these OTT streaming platforms. The other papers did not consider this age restraint. The study will be quite interesting and important for organizations offering such services, as this will not only let them gain insight into their potential customers but also understand which factors attract them (whether the consumers are more content-oriented, price-driven, indifferent etc.).

The study will also aim to ascertain which platforms are the most popular among the respondents, and the reasons behind their preference.

#### B. Research Methodology

Research Methodology refers to those specific techniques or procedures which are used to identify select process and analyze information on a specific subject. The research methodology section of a Research Paper is used to familiarize the reader with the various tools, procedures and processes by the Author(s) plan to conduct their research on a given topic. This includes identifying the type of Research Design, Methods of Data Collection and limitations of the research if any. This provides important information to the reader in a summarized way.

##### 1) Research Objective

The purpose of setting a research objective is to provide a direction to the study. The inclusion of the Research Objective enables us streamline relevant information in a cohesive and comprehensive manner.

As such, our research objective is to ascertain whether the usage of OTT Platforms has increased during the COVID-19 Pandemic and by how much, from a set of sample population.

##### 2) Research Type

**Primary Data Collection:** The study involves Primary Data collection as data has been collected first-hand through a questionnaire.

**Secondary Data Collection:** The study involves Secondary

Data Collection since some data (in the form of Research Papers) has been taken from other sources such as online journals, research publications etc.

##### 3) Research Method

Our Research includes aspects of both Qualitative and Quantitative research.

**Qualitative:** Research is carried out to ascertain preference or liking, i.e., qualities of the data. Our questionnaire aims to ascertain certain qualitative aspects of a subscription to OTT Streaming Platforms such as the reasons behind subscribing to any platform.

**Quantitative:** To figure out percentages of sample population which preferred one option over another, using numbers. The study aims to quantify the size of the user base of these OTT Streaming Services.

##### 4) Research Design

**Exploratory:** This is a Research Design about a research problem when there are only a few studies to refer to. The focus is on gaining familiarity with the subject.

##### 5) Data Processing

Data is being processed by Google Forms. This would help us in an easier analysis of raw data.

##### 6) Data Collection

**Primary Data:** Primary Data in the form of Survey

**Secondary Data:** In form of a Literature Review.

##### 7) Data Collection Tool

A questionnaire is the most suitable method for collecting responses from a vast sample population. It should be convenient, quick and easy to fill. There are many online questionnaire tools available to the general public. Out of these, we found that Google Forms was one of the easiest tools at our disposal.

Secondary data was collected through online search engines for scholarly articles and online libraries and depositories. These include EBSCO, Google Scholar, Web of Science, Jstor etc.

##### 8) Practical Implementation

This increase in the usage of OTT Platforms would not only encourage the emergence of new streaming services in India but would also encourage Foreign Streaming Services which are currently not available in India (such as Hulu, HBO Max etc.) to view India as an emerging potential market.

#### C. Data Interpretation and Analysis

Upon carrying out the actual survey, we received 200 responses from all over India and the conclusion has been drawn based on data collected from the same.

The data received is presented as follows:

Are you currently subscribed to any OTT Platform? (Netflix, Disney+ Hotstar, Prime Video)  
200 responses

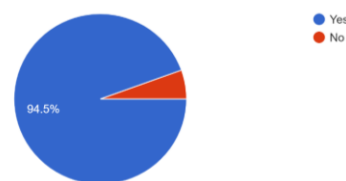


Fig. 1. Data representation for Question 1

94.5% of the respondents (189 People) answered that they were subscribed to at least 1 OTT Streaming Service. Out of 200, only 11 people said that they had not paid for any OTT Streaming Services. This shows us that Streaming Services are very popular among the general population.

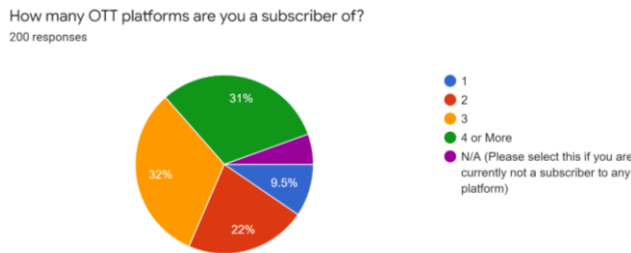


Fig. 2. Data representation for Question 2

Out of the 189 respondents who were subscribed to at least 1 OTT Streaming Platform, 19 were subscribed to just 1 platform, 44 were subscribed to 2 Platforms, 64 Were subscribed to 3 Platforms and 62 were subscribed to 4 or more Platforms.

Since more than half of the respondents were subscribed to 3 or more OTT Platforms, we can assume that they might be willing to subscribe to new streaming services which may launch in the Country.

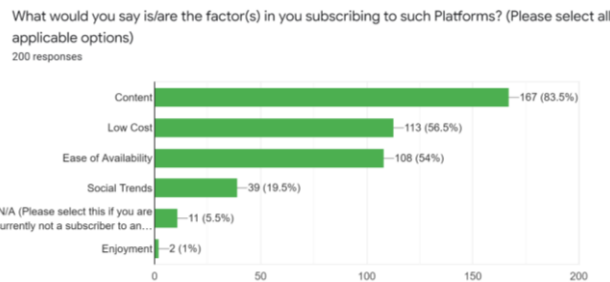


Fig. 3. Data representation for Question 3

When asked to name some reasons for subscribing to a particular Streaming Service, more than 83% of the respondents cited the strongest factor.

Affordability was also a strong influencer in their purchasing habits with more than half the population selecting “Low Cost.”

Ease of Availability and Social Trends was also cited as some of the factors influencing their purchasing decisions.

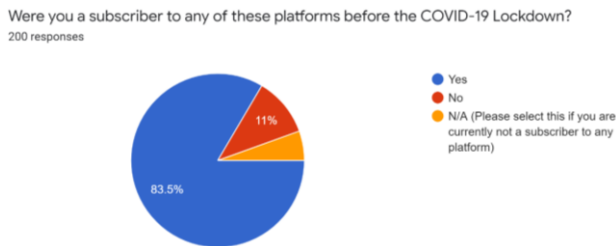


Fig. 4. Data representation for Question 4

Out of 189 respondents, 167 were pre-existing customers of at least 1 OTT Streaming Service. However, 22 respondents stated they subscribed to these platforms after the COVID-19 Pandemic hit the country. This means that 11% of the sample

population subscribed to these services directly as a result of COVID-19.

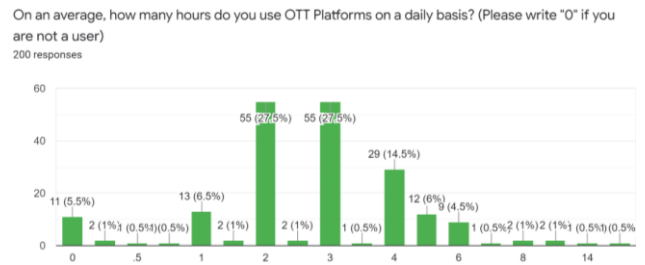


Fig. 5. Data representation for Question 5

More than half of the population comprises people who spend anywhere between 1-4 hours of their day using the streaming services.

Very few respondents use these streaming services for more than 5 hours.

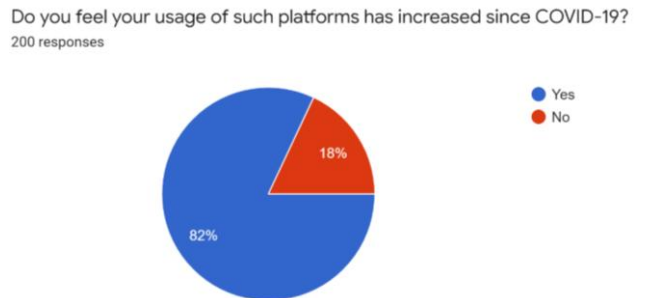


Fig. 6. Data representation for Question 6

Over 80% (164 out of 200) of the respondents feel that their usage of OTT Platforms has increased during this Pandemic, while 36 respondents (out of 200) answered ‘No.’

Out of the respondents who chose ‘No’, 11 were those who were not subscribed to any streaming service at all. This means that 25 people did not feel that their usage of OTT Platforms has increased.

The increase in usage and the reasons behind it have been discussed in the subsequent questions.

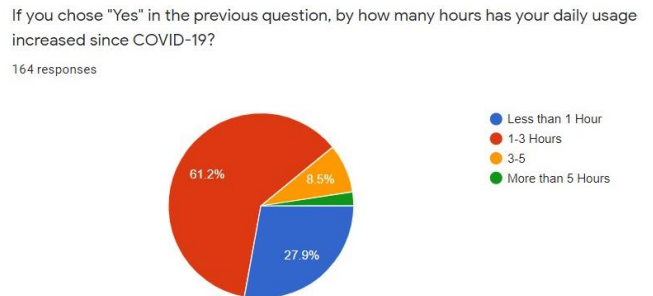


Fig. 7. Data representation for Question 7

Only 4 people felt that their usage of OTT Streaming Services Increased by more than 5 hours.

14 People felt that the increase in their usage was between 3 to 5 hours daily.

46 People felt that their usage increased by less than 1 hour

daily.

More than half of the respondents felt that the increase in their usage was between 1 to 3 hours daily.

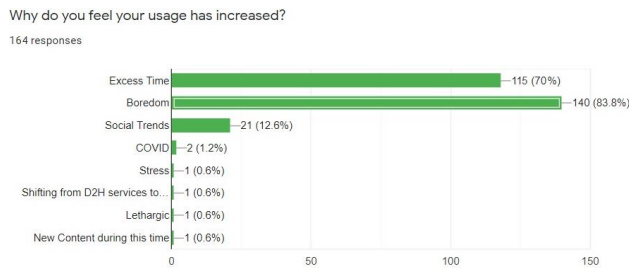


Fig. 8. Data representation for Question 8

When asked about some of the potential reasons behind the increase in their usage, around 70% of the respondents responded with ‘Excess Time’, with more than 80% also citing ‘Boredom’ as a major reason. A few others responded with a variety of reasons such as ‘Stress’, ‘Lethargic’, ‘New Content During this Time’ etc.

### 3. Major Findings and Conclusion

The study “Increase in the Usage of OTT Streaming Services” reveals that 82% of the sample population feels that their usage of these OTT Platforms has increased. The majority of these users feel that their usage has increased between 1 to 3 hours every day. The study also found that a whopping 63% of the users are subscribed to 3 or more OTT Streaming Services out of which 22 respondents subscribed to at least 1 service after the pandemic hit the country. The factors contributing to this decision of subscribing to a streaming service include Content, Low Cost and Availability with ‘Content’ being the factor affecting the majority of users

The majority of the subscribers to these platforms have

increased their usage of OTT Streaming Platforms during the pandemic citing various reasons but majorly ‘boredom’ and ‘excess time.’ This means that there is a high demand for such streaming services. This is extremely relevant to the organizations looking to enter the Indian Market for Streaming Services because this study proves that there is not only a high demand but also a high usage rate of such Platforms.

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