

Analyzing the Influence of OTT Platforms over Movie Theatres in the Light of Post Pandemic Scenario

M. Krishna Mohan

PhD Scholar, Christ (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru, Karnataka, India

Pallavi Datta

PhD Scholar, Christ (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru, Karnataka, India

Parvathy Viswanath

PhD Scholar, Christ (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru, Karnataka, India

Roseliya Thomas

PhD Scholar, Christ (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru, Karnataka, India

Abstract - Theatre, talkies, cinema hall, multiplex or big screen, be it any term or name, this nomenclature has always been the center stage for entertainment. These centers have been more than entertainment platforms, reflecting a great deal of social life and culture. Are they going to be the elements of past? With the advent of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms and online streaming services (both International and National) like Jio Cinema, Hot Star, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Voot, Zee5 etc., would the movie theatres lose its importance and demand which they earlier had? The concept of big screen, is it going to be extinct soon? This paper attempts to elaborate the impact of online streaming services over the market of main stream cinema theatres and multiplexes with a special reference towards post pandemic condition. The paper explores the influencing factors towards the audience preference of movie watching via a quantitative approach in India. The research also suggests new methods for the movie theatres to attract customers and swing back to its full form post Covid-19.

Keywords - Movie Theatres, OTT, Technology, Internet, Safety Standard, Demand Analysis, Customer Preference

I. INTRODUCTION

Evolution of communication has been pivotal in entertaining humans. People of all age since historical times have invented different means to entertain themselves, their family and society. People in the ancient time expressed themselves through rock painting, folktales, storytelling, folksongs, legends, myths and in the later years' humankind exhibited their feelings through writing. Further, with the advancement of technology new and creative modes of expressing scenarios, feelings and interpretations came up. The reach and scope of entertainment has become unimaginable with the advancement in the field.

New age of technology, gave people unlimited access to knowledge. Radio, Newspapers and Television called in for a worldwide decentralization of awareness. People could choose from different means of entertainment to keep them occupied and relaxed from anywhere. Communication grew in a large scale and extended beyond boundaries. With

internet, TV and smartphones as the latest addition that aided entertainment, it has influenced every sphere of communication. Internet ensured closed proximity between humans and their needs. People had unlimited access to all types of knowledge, evolution in terms of their relationships they share with other humans using all these means.

Movies on the other hand, 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 like Netflix, Amazon prime, Jio movies and Sun NXT, etc.

In the recent years' people changed from what is available to watch to what they want to watch (Sowbharnika, 2020). The viewers have gone a wide range of choice to choose among many OTT platforms to avail the privilege of flexibility and their preference of what, when, where to watch their preferred content from all over the world.

However, the trend of going to cinema in theatre prevailed against all disadvantage right until 2020. In 2020, people were forced to stay indoors due to the global pandemic, Covid-19. An indefinite shift towards OTT platform began with the pandemic and trend has been increasing ever since. With schools, work places and religious places being closed, people now had more time to spend and seemed to have adapted to OTT platforms that provide unlimited access to different movies from around the world within the safety of indoors. OTT must have gotten the lime light due to Covid-19, but there have been other reasons such as increasing demand for high quality videos and affordable subscriptions to OTT platforms that have made it inseparable from its customers (Chhajer, 2020).

This study aims to understand the impact of OTT platforms over the current and future business scenario of Movie theatres, and the changes that existing Movie theatres will have to establish post pandemic to compete with OTT platforms. Many researches suggests that movie theatres would co-exist along with OTT platforms (Varghese, 2021) but the realistic scenario is yet surrounded with uncertainty and to reduce it this article works on understanding the viewers' perspective for their demand on movie watching experience post Covid-19.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. As per the survey conducted by Ormax Media Report, neither TV nor the OTT has discouraged the audience from having the theatrical experience (Karuna Sharma, 2020). About 82 % of the respondent in the survey were missing the big screen experience and are willing to have it within 2 to 3 weeks of reopening (Ormax Report, 2020). Of course, the rules of SOP with respect to safety standards and parameters are going to be very steep and redefined in the light of post pandemic situation, and it is not going to fade away the future of Movie Theatre Industry (Tandon, 2020). But regaining the trust from audience is not that simple and is not going to be a cake walk. Bigger chains like PVR, INOX and big cinemas might win the trust, but it is going to be a big challenge for the smaller chains and local cinemas / single screens (Gangal, 2021).

Towards achieving this new normal, it is also equally important to focus on phenomenal changes that are bound to take place towards distribution and pricing strategies. Lockdown had a palpable impact on the viewership patterns and habits of Indian audiences (Saini, 2020). On a parallel line, exhibitors are exploring every possible innovation to meet the new post Covid-19 requirement, Oma Cinemas a France Based Architecture company has come up with a unique pod – like design which mandates social distancing and ensures better viewing experience (Thaker, 2020) Even the Indian scenario is no different from the rest, with a population of 1.3 billion, an estimated number of 100 million movie-goers, an under-screened market with around 9,500 screens, a growing number of smartphone users, over 600 million Internet subscribers, insatiable appetite for quality entertainment, an evolving digital payments infrastructure, and affordable OTT subscription costs, has emerged as a win-win for all associated stakeholders. A

trend of people viewing multiple content channels at the same time, along with demand for new and exclusive content is forcing the big production houses and directors to release movies directly onto the OTT channels rather than Cinema halls (Patel, 2020).

Exhibitors across the country, and the Multiplex Association of India, had made their dissent clear when a set of films locked deals for a direct-to- OTT release in the initial months of the lockdown. With an exponential growth of digital space in India, the OTT bigwigs like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney Plus Hotstar, Sony LIV, ZEE5, Eros Now, Voot, ALTBalaji, MX Player continue to grow, the entry of MUBI in the Indian market to offer hand-curated films on demand, the launch of cinemapreneur — an avenue for independent filmmakers, of ShemarooMe Box Office — a platform for releasing new movies directly on digital with a pay-per-view model; are all cases in point of the growing segmentation within the ecosystem (Bhirani, 2020). The funding aspect of movies is also going through a sea change (Banerjee, 2019) and these changes are going to show their impact over the way the audience would prefer to have their Movie experience.

But that doesn't mean that the audience's appetite is under flex, still the concept theatrical release and experience has its own gravity. Hence many big banners have rescheduled the movies like *Mulan*, *Fast & Furious 9*, *Black Widow*, and *James Bond: No Time to Die* to Q4 2020 through Q2 2021 (Ball, 2020). Theatrical releases not only drive box office revenues; they also typically determine how revenue from subsequent windows are negotiated. For example, the license fee for TV windows is determined by the success of the theatrical release: the higher the box office revenue, the higher the license fee paid to studios. If more movies skip theatres or shorten theatrical windows in favor of digital platforms, fewer movies would likely be able to generate required box office results or reach minimums for TV deals. Comparisons between the Indian and International film markets are arguably appropriate as there are similarities among them (Dastidar, 2020).

Likewise, movies still account for much of the daily scheduling on premium cable networks. Changes to the theatrical window—such as releasing a movie on PVoD instead of in a theatre—could create a domino effect of change across other windows and put more pressure on the success of streaming efforts to compensate.

This shifting landscape puts studios in a difficult position. They may be able to reach more people through streaming services, particularly during the pandemic, but doing so could undermine theatres and the large revenues they generate. It could also affect revenue from other windows—if they choose to use them. Such considerations impact upfront financing of productions, existing distribution agreements, and licensing terms (Westcott, 2020).

Over the last few years, the online media industry has understood that India is not a single market but a combination of multiple markets, each with its unique characteristics. The subset of regional language speaking internet users is growing faster than the Hindi and English-speaking user base. Localized content shows uptake in terms of engagement, as viewers always prefer to consume content in their language. So, primary streaming services like Amazon Prime and Netflix are investing more on producing content besides Hindi and English, in eight major Indian languages (Elangovan, 2020).

Majority of the studies obtained from past literature explored the impact of Covid-19 on dependence and increased preference for OTT platforms. Few studies determined the association between the demographic profile of individuals and OTT platforms (Mahendher et al., 2021; Bellamkonda et al., 2020). Mahendher et al., (2021) studied the impact of Covid-19 over subscription of OTT platforms among Indian population. The researchers identified that due to lockdown and pandemic restrictions, people got more dependent on watching content over OTT platforms. An analysis of the demographic profile of individuals revealed that the younger generation spend more time watching content through OTT platforms than the older generation as elderly people are less adapted towards using technology.

Besides, studies were also conducted to identify the most commonly used OTT platform, intention behind subscribing OTT platforms, and consumer sentiments towards the cost-benefit analysis of using OTT platforms to watch movies and other content. For instance, Bellamkonda et al., (2020) analyzed the impact of various demographic factors such as age, gender, and income on the preference for OTT platforms. Besides, it was identified that the major OTT platform used by Indian population is Amazon prime and the majority are inclined towards subscribing OTT platforms due to the influence of social media. However, the researchers concluded that in India, chances are still less for people to completely depend on OTT platforms for watching content due to heavy pricing. Similar studies also identified the various reasons behind increased engagement in watching OTT content during the pandemic and the perceived benefits of the same (Kaur et al., 2020; Nijhawan and Dahiya, 2020).

However, such studies didn't investigate the impact of evolving preference for OTT platforms over the movie theatre industry. Besides, those studies were examining the difficulties faced by individuals while watching content on OTT platforms and the scope for OTT platforms in future. This indicates a research gap in exploring the challenges faced by the movie theatre industry due to the predominance of OTT platforms in the pandemic era.

2.2. Studies Assessing the Impact of Preference for OTT Platforms on the Movie Theatre Industry-

Though studies exploring the challenges OTT platforms pose over the movie theatre industry in light of Covid-19 are considerably less, few notable studies are published related to this area. Findings and significance of those studies are summarized below.

Upon exploring the emerging preference for OTT platforms over movie theatres due to pandemic constraints, the researchers conducted a survey among individuals from Bhopal and identified that in the pandemic period, people found comfort in watching movies over OTT platforms. It has led to a culture of watching content according to individual interests, deviating from the pattern of collective movie watching (Patel, Khaida, and Awasya, 2020).

This transformation is going to be having an adverse impact on the movie theatre industry in the post pandemic era, leading to a heavy competition with OTT platforms. Parikh (2020) assessed the growing trend among people to depend on OTT platforms to watch movies during the pandemic period. A descriptive analysis of individuals from Gujarat indicated that due to the lockdown restrictions, people are more dependent on OTT platforms for entertainment. The researcher proved that this evolving trend will lead to the growth of OTT Platforms in the post pandemic era.

However, the researcher couldn't precisely ascertain that this shift from watching movies on OTT platforms rather than in theatres will not lead to a significant decline in the demand for cinema halls. The respondents stated that choosing between OTT platforms and movie theatres will depend on the type of movie and the content it offers, albeit there is an increased preference for OTT platforms in general. For instance, it can be observed from the descriptive analysis that majority individuals prefer to watch TV series through OTT platforms rather than movies, which motivates them to retain an optimistic perspective towards the re-growth of the movie theatre industry.

Additionally, Tripathi (2020) mentioned that engagement of individuals in watching content over OTT platforms during lockdown and self-isolation period can eventually become a habit for them. In such instances, people may continue watching content over OTT platforms even post the pandemic, which can be a threat to the movie theatre industry.

Another study that analyzed consumer sentiments towards OTT platforms before and after the pandemic era also identified that there is a growing preference for OTT platforms among individuals since the onset of Covid-19

(Dastidar, 2020). Thus, an extensive analysis of the challenges faced by the movie theatre industry and adopting appropriate measures to overcome these barriers is necessary for the movie theatre industry to sustain the future.

On the other hand, few studies identified that there may be an increase in the preference for web series and other content streamed on OTT over television programs, but this effect may not be significantly adverse on the movie theatre industry (Marne, 2021). However, research on the comparison of individuals' perception towards OTT platforms and movie theatre industry post pandemic era is still in its nascent stage. Thus, a precise conclusion cannot be drawn on this perceptual difference and whether the growth of OTT platforms will affect the movie theatre industry, until and unless more rigorous and comprehensive research is carried out. This ascertains the need and significance of the present study.

A study conducted to learn how digital streaming platforms are affecting the experience for a movie theatre in India amongst the young population showed that the viewer of the modern era is in search of originality, relatability and interactive entertainment and are ready to pay that extra amount on either OTT platform or a movie theatre, whichever provides them with these experiences. This leads to the notion that in a long term both OTT platforms and movie theatres would coexist. The data was collected in the form of questionnaires and interviews.

The analysis used was that of a descriptive statistics method. It examined the viewing habits of the young people in the new digital platform where it found that among 326 samples 32.5% of people spent at least 1 to 2 hours a day on OTT platforms and 50.9% spent more than 2 hours in a day. Also, the data revealed that the majority of 37.1% of the sample size selected to occasionally watch movies on movie theatres and mostly in video streaming platforms. The author mentioned a few reasons being smartphone penetration, cost effectiveness, convenience of service, personal medium and availability of international content which influences the decision making of young people (Varghese, 2021).

Another study also states a similar conclusion to its research of OTT vs. theatres post Covid-19 saying that both has its own advantages and disadvantages like the experience, convenience, cost and time management and so on (Tripathi, 2020).

3 out of 4 Indians prefer to watch movies on an OTT platform and 1 person is ready to watch a movie in the movie theatre amidst the pandemic. Also, as per the survey 72% of the respondents would prefer to invest on a large screen television to watch movies at home post-Covid 19 too.

The article proves that definitely the preference during the pandemic time is toward the OTT platform usage and on the other hand the theatre owners are scared and disappointed with this new move. But the mystery of knowing what would happen to the movie theatres post Covid-19 remains a mystery (Aggarwal, 2020).

With the emergence of OTT platforms, movie theatres need to focus on the competition which the new way of watching movies has come up with. The movie theatres need to work on providing more special effects content to the audience like in 4DX, IMAX and so on.

Also, the movie theatres would need to cut on to their prices on both the movie tickets and the food and beverages for attracting more customers. In the past the movie theatres were challenged with DVDs, VCs, TVs but they managed to maintain their importance in the market and hence there is a belief that they would be able to surpass the challenge brought in by the OTT platforms too (Research Team, 2020)

Single screens were the popular entertainment place before the multiplex had arrived in the market. Single screen theatres faced a huge competition in maintaining its demand from the customers. At present there are comparatively fewer single screens existing in India than it used to 10 years ago. Nevertheless, if we look into the future of single screen theatres, we can see that it has two different types which are a short-term result and the other a long-term result. In the short term the single screens would still exist however if they do not invest on improving the

experience in the hall and buying new screens, the future of single screens would be that the multiple screens will take over their market too on a long-term basis (Farooqui, 2019). Similarly, the multiplex will need to make some changes to survive in the market where the OTT platforms have captured a huge space.

An analysis to understand the consumer behavior towards OTT platforms during the lockdown period shows that there is a positive response towards it. There are numerous benefits of using an online platform to watch movies like economic benefit, easy access, better time management and so on however Post pandemic when the movie theatres reopen the OTT tycoons can still manage to keep their customers attracted towards the OTT screens by coming up with innovative strategies like extended period offers, free subscription, multiple viewership feature and so on. This poses a risk for the movie theatre though (Dastidar, 2020).

2.3. Objectives of the Study-

The objective of the study is to analyze the effect of OTT platforms over the Movie theatres, especially in the light of pandemic situation and to highlight and predict the changes that might become the new norms of the near future. Apart from that the Paper also attempts to analyse the trend of attitude towards the safety standards, and the probable mind-set of viewers, in shaping the preferences and expectations, Post Covid-19 period.

- To analyze the impact of OTT platforms over the current and future business scenario of Movie Theatres
- To understand the customer preference of OTT platforms and Movie Theatres during and PostCovid-19
- To identify the changes required by the Movie Theatres to establish well during the PostCovid-19 situation

The work also calls for the attention towards the existing set of gaps in terms of understanding the reasons due to which a prospective customer or a subscriber is not satisfied from any given streaming service and what alternative improvements or betterments can be further developed so as to enhance the experience of user.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This Paper is based on a combination of research methods that include: Observation, Focus group study, Survey, Descriptive Analysis. Observation of trends and reports available online is carefully conducted to discern important data. The data was collected using a questionnaire with multiple response formats. There were 20 items in total, including demographic details.

Four groups of 344 participants between the age group of 10-60 years were made on the basis of the occupation of the respondents using Snowball sampling

Group 1: Students

Group 2: Homemakers

Group 3: Corporate Employees

Group 4: Entrepreneurs / Self Employed

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

OTT is becoming increasingly popular because of the ease and convenience it offers (Nijhawan, 2020). Upon analysis of the influence of OTT Platforms over the current and future business scenario of the main stream Movie Theatres, the effect of lock down seemed to be evidently detrimental. With a Kurtosis value of 1.963 and Skewness at 1.312, it resembles the Non parametric feature of the data. Out of given sample size of 344, the majority have preferred OTT along with Movie Theatres compared to only traditional theatres in the post covid-19 scenario. But change is inevitable, though the term 'Normal Situation' seems to be beyond the visible horizon, under the assumption of Normality being restored; more than 50% of the respondents (184) are willing to explore both options of OTT as well as theatres.

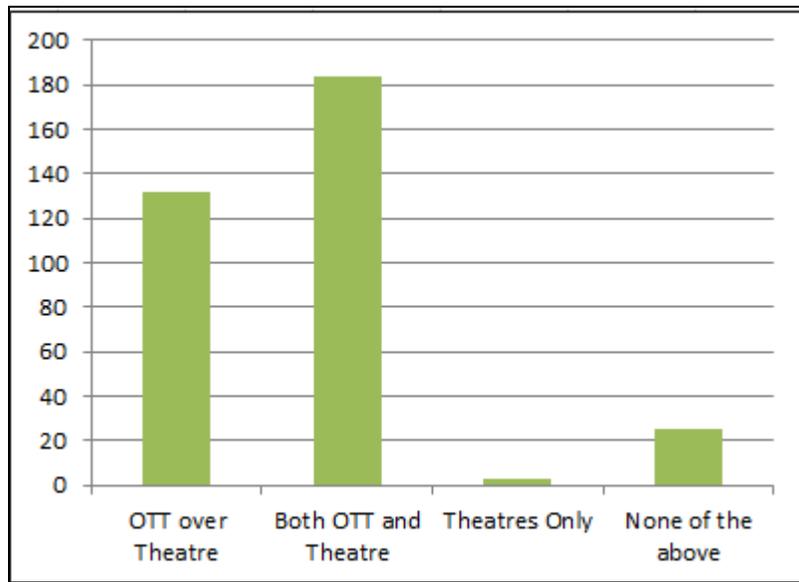


Figure1. Demand Analysis Chart for OTT vs. Movie Theatres during Post Covid-19

A very minuscule fraction of respondents, 5 to be precise preferred Movie theatres as the only means towards the entertainment, while 12 people felt there are other means and alternatives to substitute the need for entertainment.

Even though the managements of Movie Theatres are implementing new protocols to protect their guests (Michael Ordon, 2020), with minimum inconvenience and maximum protection, but the question remains, are they enough? If not, what exactly is the meeting the safety standard requirement according to the perception of audience or for that matter ‘us’.

Towards addressing this objective there are many suggestions and recommendations that we have received from our diversified sample size.

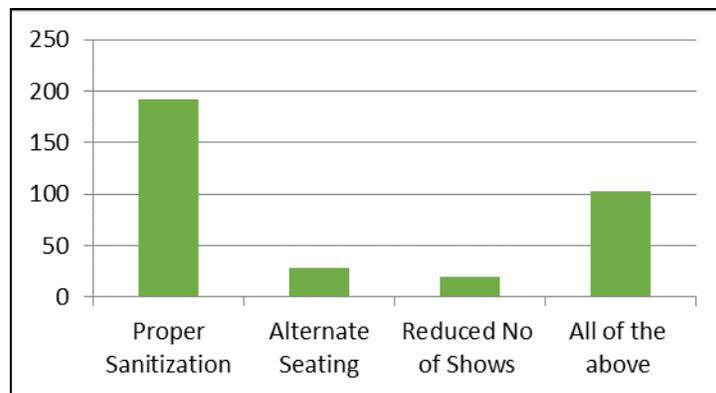


Figure2. Customer Preference on Safety Standards in Movie Theatres

But out of all, the most common expectations are found to be proper sanitization after every show, alternative seating arrangement to ensure proper social distancing and more importantly, reducing the number of shows per day so as to provide ample time for the managements of Movie theatres to ensure safety standards.

However, with such added services and reduced shows, what cost it would incur over the movie theatre managements, what sought of new pricing strategies is going to fit in the frame? These strategic price changes which

are mandatory, how are they going to be perceived by the target audience? What kind of cascading effect is due over the fragile eco system of Big Screen Experience? Hence running the show is not going to be an easy task hereafter for cinema hall owners under the new guidelines (Srinivas Rao, 2020).

From the given study, it can be determined that the concept of affordability is about to be redefined under the new norms.

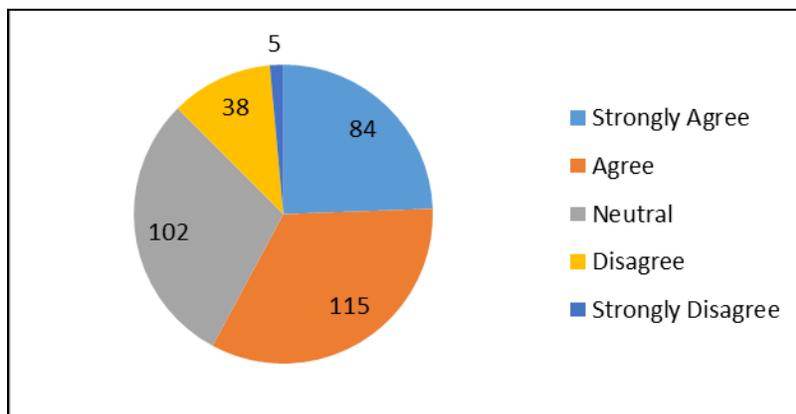


Figure3. Chart on Customer Preference of choosing movie theatres if new technology and experience is introduced in the theatres

When asked for respondents’ if they would choose movie theatres if new technological experiences are added by the movie theatre owners 24.4% of them strongly agreed (84) and 33.4% agreed (115). Though there are a set of people who disagree, the same can be influenced by the marketing strategies and promotional offers from the theatre owners.

Upon testing for skewness and kurtosis of our variables, the respective values are found to be -0.435 and 0.276, which means the nature of data is parametric and majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the change in the price can be justified.

Especially when it comes to the alternative option of OTT platforms that are available today, majority of them like Amazon Prime, Netflix, Disney Hotstar etc., are subscription based, and lacks the customization in terms of watching a particular movie or web series alone. In other words, if a user wants to watch only one particular show or movie, such options are not available with the current subscription packs among reputed streaming services. Though such option of buying or renting a movie is available under selected few like Vudu, but it is yet to be added to that of remaining major players. As per the study conducted a majority of respondents (226) have opined to prefer such customized option while, the remaining were indifferent towards such change.

On an experimental and futuristic basis, the Movie Theatre Managements can even come up with ‘One-time subscription package’ as an option. However, the results of this outcome seem to be skeptical as among the given respondents’ majority (121) of those who have responded positively for such an option has a conditional clause of price remaining affordable. On the other hand, only 42 respondents are willing to try such an option irrespective of the price slab.

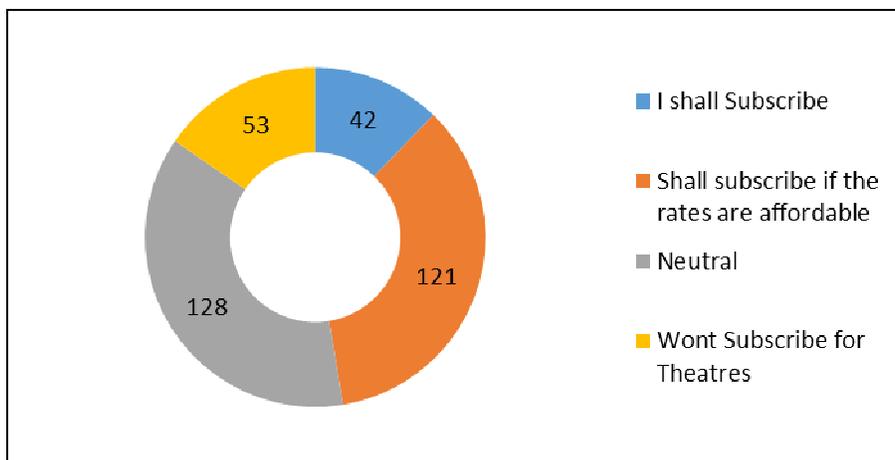


Figure4. Analysis on the demand of an idea on subscribing to the movie theatres on monthly or yearly basis similar to OTT platforms

But a considerable proportion of the study group (128) are neutral towards the option, which means they may or may not fall under the prospective group and 53 respondents have out rightly denied such an option as their choice. With both Kurtosis and Skewness determined to be within the Parametric range (-0.743 and -0.044), there is a scope for innovative business model to fill the gap.

On a parallel line the quality of content on OTT platforms seems to be more exclusive and especially youth are attracted towards the web series. With the better data packages and internet access, a direct influence is visible over Movie Theatres (Paramveer Singh, 2019). Youth prefer watching their movies and series when they are alone in their comfort zone at their own convenience (Mrinal Chatterjee, 2020).

And as per the study among those who have preferred to continue watching movies in theatres post pandemic while continuing the subscription of OTT, have expressed their specific preference on the grounds of their interest towards web series.

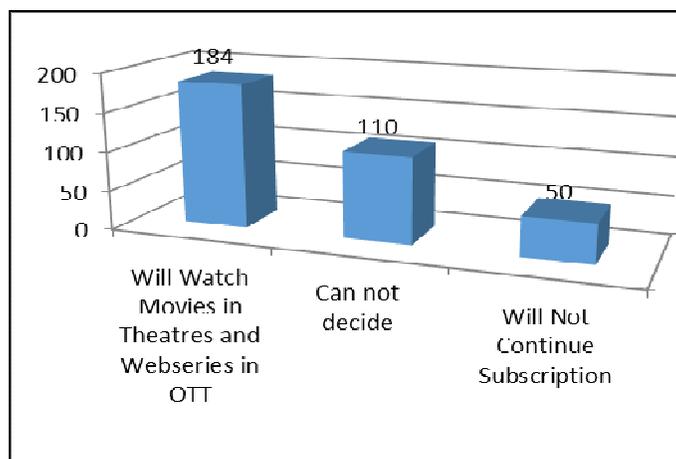


Figure5. Analysis on Demand towards watching shows and series in OTT and movies in Theatre

Upon testing for skewness and kurtosis of our variables, the respective values are found to be -0.425 and 0.368, which means the nature of data is parametric and majority of the respondents are in consensus to continue having the Movie experience on a big screen while continue watching the Web series and other shows on OTT platforms.

But that doesn't mean that OTT platforms are perfect and devoid of any dents. As per the study there are many areas and concerns which demotivate the potential subscriber, and hence there is scope for further improvement.

Table – 1 Survey Result for Reasons of Dissatisfaction towards OTT Platform

Areas of Improvement / Reasons for Dissatisfaction	Percentage of Respondents
Small Screen	14%
High Internet / Data Consumption	52%
Uncensored content	24%
Expensive	10%

Table 1 shows the reasons / areas for further improvement with respect to OTT Platforms and Streaming Services

Hence there is more room for further improvements and despite of having technical advantage, the change is going to be one standard 'Norm' irrespective of pre and post Pandemic conditions.

V. KEY FINDINGS

- 5.1 The comparison between the demand of movie theatres pre Covid-19 and post the pandemic is almost the same. Pre Covid-19, 29.8% of the respondents watched movies in theatres on once-a-month basis and post Covid-19, 28.4% respondents are likely to watch movies in theatres once a month. Similarly, the results show that 25.3% of the respondents used to watch a movie once in 3 months in the theatre before the pandemic and 24% of the respondents would continue to watch movies in theatres once in 3 months after the pandemic too.
- 5.2 Majority of the respondents (65.8%) had started to use OTT platforms even before the pandemic hit the world. Merely 21.5% started using this online platform after Covid-19 was discovered in the country.
- 5.3 Most of the viewers use the OTT platforms on daily or weekly basis which is respectively 38% and 27.8%.
- 5.4 Hardly 2.2% of the respondents stated that they would prefer movie theatres over OTT platforms and would unsubscribe from the online platforms post Covid-19. Majority of the respondents agreed that they would continue to use the OTT platforms like they are currently using and also visit the movie theatres to have a different experience of movie watching.
- 5.5 A vast number of respondents are open to the new concept of subscription from the movie theatres on monthly or yearly basis. 12.7% of the respondents would definitely opt for this option and 35.5% would choose this option if the rates offered are affordable. 36.4% of the respondents are not yet sure for their choice and can be influenced through external factors.
- 5.6 Proper Sanitization, alternative seating arrangement and reduced number of show are the most sought after ideas for safety, with 83% of the respondents referring them to be standard parameters.
- 5.7 Even though the majority of 54% of the respondents have said that they would not be coming up with a home theatre at their place for better movie watching experience, a great percentage of people have opted for yes they would (30.6%) and yes they already have a home theatre (15.4%).
- 5.8 Netflix, Amazon prime and Disney + Hotstar are the most subscribed OTT plat forms in India. (74.3 %)
- 5.9 More than half of the respondents agree that they would watch the series, documentaries and short movies in the OTT platforms and they would prefer theatres for the movies (55.1%).
- 5.10 In case the movie theatres bring new technology inculcated in the movie watching experience then a majority of 56.8% respondents agree to prefer the movie theatres over OTT platforms, condition kept that the same is provided in affordable rates.
- 5.11 34.5% of the study group are preferring the 'Pay per view' model for specific content or movies, rather than subscribing for the OTT. 31.4% of the respondents are neutral to this concept.

VI. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1. Suggestions-

From the data it is revealed that the usage of OTT platforms is not high solely due to the pandemic scenario as 65.8% of the respondents stated that they started using the online platforms before the Covid-19 situation came up. This suggests that post Covid-19 too OTT is definitely to stay the same way it was existing in the pre Covid-19 era.

The data also reveals that there will not be much of a change in the frequency of visiting a movie theatre post Covid-19 compared to the number of times people used to visit theatres before the pandemic. The answer to this is that the number of movies and shows watched by the respondents has increased and this does not impact the frequency for them to watch movies in theatres. However, the reviews of the movies can definitely impact on their decision making to watch a movie in the theatre or OTT platform.

Majority of the respondents do not have any issue with the usage of OTT platforms hence the only way for the movie theatres to attract large audience would be to innovate and become creative in the marketing, pricing and technical strategies. The data suggests that if the movie theatres are successful to bring in the required changes then both the OTT platforms and the movie theatres will co-exist together in the country.

People are open to the idea of subscribing to movie theatres on monthly or yearly basis provided that it is done in an affordable rate. Those who are not yet sure can also be convinced with attractive offers and peer influence.

6.2. Limitations and Future Recommendations-

The present study is not without limitations. Firstly, the study was conducted only on a chosen sample from India. Further analysis with extended sample is required for generalizing findings of the study. Secondly, the present research relied on descriptive analysis for drawing conclusions. More extensive analysis, both quantitative and qualitative, are necessary to identify the emerging trend of OTT and evolution of the movie theater industry.

Besides, similar studies can also be conducted by choosing different sample including movie theater owners and film producers. As the professionals from the theater industry, their attitude about the impact of OTT on movie theaters will be more comprehensive and relevant to be explored. The present study can be a reference for the forthcoming studies on OTT platforms which is highly relevant for the better management of the movie theater industry in the post pandemic era.

VII. CONCLUSION

Be it Indians or the global audience, visual entertainment will never cease to have its strong hold over the world's culture and trend. The saga of a common man eagerly planning his day so that he or she wouldn't miss his favorite show like 'Ramayan' or 'News Hour' or the whole family waiting for the movie to be telecasted on Doordarshan on a Sunday evening, they are not mere nostalgic memoirs, they reflect the origins from where the change has started to the point at which, today we can select, customize the content in terms of what, where, when, and how to watch. And this is not an overnight change, slowly but gradually technology in its true sense has revolutionized the concept of 'feasibility'.

The journey from makeshift screens in streets to Multiplexes with 8D experience can never be one big giant leap, Internet, Smart phones, Computers, Gadgets etc., have become more common than ever. But this is not the end, as we progress; there is always huge scope for betterment and improvement.

A household television which used to offer limited channels created the need to break the restriction. The very thought upon exploration took the shape of OTT services. Above all the pandemic condition due to Covid-19, the imposed lockdown throughout has created a perfect atmosphere for the OTT business to Bloom. Providing the modern-day individual with the freedom to watch what he/she desired.

Nevertheless, there will be a clear impact of OTT Platforms and Streaming services on Movie theatres, but that doesn't limit the options of growth for both sides. Still there is a considerable opinion among the viewers to justify that the concept of experiencing a movie in its best possible way is only through the theatre and the remaining options are alternatives. The current down trend might continue until the normal conditions are restored.

However, as it is uncertain to estimate when the normalcy would return, until then the theatres can try to innovate and improvise with concepts like drive-in theatres etc., without compromising with the safety standards.

Though the OTT platforms are coming up with a mushroom effect, but when compared to the size of the potential market, they are yet to scratch the tip of ice berg. Upon adopting the formula of regional content, still there is a wide scope for both Movie Theatres and OTT Platforms to go hand in hand.

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