



# What Kerala youth prefers on OTT? A study on the emergence of OTT platforms in the state

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

OTT platforms are becoming one of the go-to entertainment sources for everyone round the world. Just the way the new age entertainment platform is widely accepted in India, the same has become a trend in Kerala too. Be it watching movies or tuning into their favourite TV show, from youth to senior citizens, a large population has shifted to OTT platforms. When the OTT market in India is blooming, this study aims to record the emergence of OTT platforms in Kerala, especially among youth. The research article records the preferences of the youngsters in Kerala and their viewing pattern in the OTT space.

**Keywords** – OTT, Over-the-top platforms, Kerala Youth, Pandemic

## Introduction

The entertainment industry in India is ever evolving. From radio to television to movie theatres, the industry keeps changing with technology. With OTT platforms becoming the newbie to the list, the entertainment sphere keeps engaging the viewers with national, international and even regional content within fingertips.

In simple words, Over-the-top (OTT) refers to the streaming of content over the internet without the medium of a traditional cable or satellite pay-tv subscription. In short, OTT allows media content to be delivered directly through the internet, without the need for a cable or satellite provider.

A report from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting indicates that there are currently 57 active OTT platforms in the country. According to recent studies, India's OTT audience has reached 547.3 million people. The growth from 2023 to 2024 is 13.8%, and OTT penetration in India has risen to 38% of the population, up from 34% the previous year. (Ormax Media, August 2024). When the pandemic is said to be one of the major aspects that has influenced in the exponential growth of OTT platforms in India, the trend seems to be still evolving even after years of the national wide lockdown.

## Review of Literature

OTT platforms are becoming one of the go-to entertainment sources for Indian audience. The literatures related to this suggests that there are many factors that are influencing the preferences of the viewers especially the youth. According to Rohit Jacob Jose, as per the study, user friendliness and content richness are two factors that can make viewers shift from traditional TV to OTT platforms. However, it is interesting that the he finds that cost is not a significant factor that can influence the same shift.

Though the OTT platforms existed before the pandemic, it is not an exaggeration to mention that the COVID 19 has been a catalyst in the advancement of OTT in India. The pandemic has evoked a change in the way Indian consumers consume entertainment and platforms like Disney + Hotstar, Netflix, Amazon Prime and more, which was earlier lesser known to them, became a trend. There are studies which explains that though the OTT platforms were showing an increase in viewership over the past years, the pandemic has resulted in an exponential growth in it (Ria Patnaik and Upendra More, 2021). As per Vidya S, OTT platforms is one industry segment which got a booster dose during the pandemic. The writer says that the OTT business will have a 21 CR turnover in the next four years and the formula to grab the maximum revenue is by streaming original content, sports and movie acquisitions, enhancement to games, shopping, interactivity, bundling, partnerships, aggregation, AVOD, SVOD or through TV on demand content.

Talking about the emergence of OTT platforms in India, one category of audience definitely deserves a mention and they are the millennials. They are the biggest consumers of the OTT platforms since they have grown up as tech savvy people and they lack the patience to wait for movies or TV series to come on TV or theatres. Studies suggest that the innovative and wide range of content, quality of the options and cheaper subscriptions attract millennials to OTT platforms.

Just like in the whole country, OTT platforms are also having a boom among Kerala consumers too. There are studies which suggests that the Kerala users are pretty much satisfied with the content provided by them on various OTT platforms. However, though the users wait for the release of a new movie on OTT, they prefer to watch it in theatres considering the theatrical experience. The exponential growth in the usage of mobile phones and internet is expected to accelerate the reach of OTT platforms among the Malayali users too. The convenience of usage and variety of content being presented on a single platform are said to be the reasons for the wide acceptance of OTT platforms among the users.

### Objectives

- The study proposes to understand the emergence of OTT platforms among Kerala youth
- To study the role of the pandemic in the growth of OTT platforms in the state
- To study about the preferences of the Kerala youth with respect to OTT platforms

### Methodology

The methodology chosen for the research is a quantitative approach survey. A questionnaire consisting of questions that helps to study different aspects of the objectives was prepared.

The questionnaire was circulated among 100 individuals from Kerala, within the age group 16 to 35 and the responses were collected with Google Forms. The questionnaire consists of 17 questions that explore the preference for OTT services. The findings are arrived through simple percentage analysis.

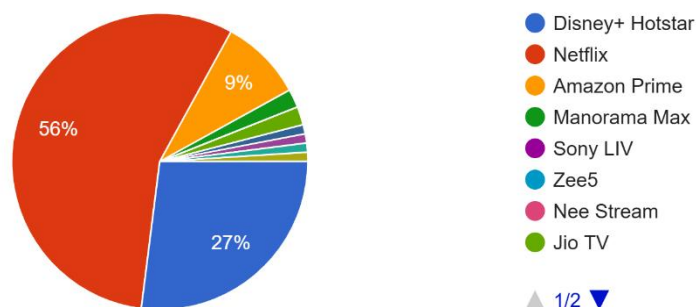
### Data Analysis and Interpretation of the findings

The data was collected among 100 respondents over a Google Form is being tabulated. The respondents ranged from age group 16 to 35, equal male-female ration. The samples also represented different districts as well as job profile. Out of the 100 respondents, 69% were regular viewers of OTT platforms.

#### Finding 1

##### Most frequently used OTT platform

Which is your frequently used OTT platform  
100 responses



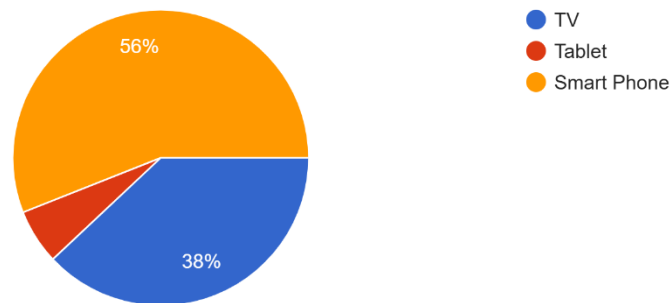
As per the survey, 56% of the Kerala Youth frequently used Netflix, followed by Disney + Hotstar (27%) and Amazon Prime (9%). So, it can be concluded that Netflix is the most commonly chosen OTT platform among the youngsters of the state.

## Finding 2

### Most preferred device for using OTT

How do you watch the OTT platforms?

100 responses



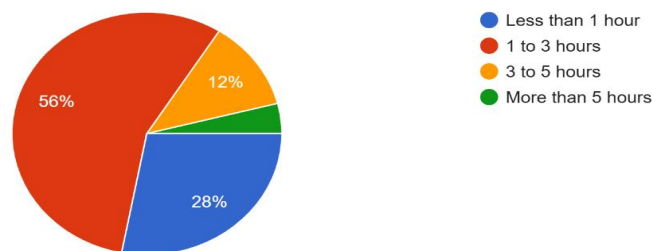
The most preferred device for OTT consumption is Smart phone (56%), followed by TV (38%). Only 6 % of the respondents prefer to watch the content on Tablets.

## Finding 3

### Daily consumption of OTT platform

How much time do you spend on OTT daily?

100 responses



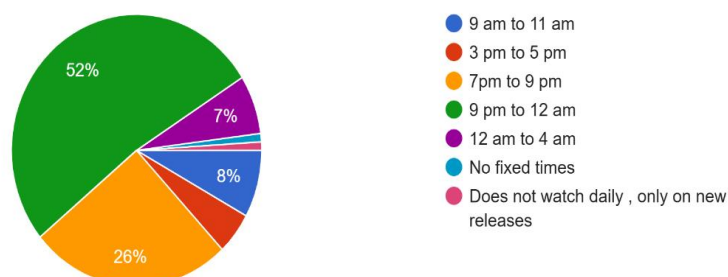
56% of the people share that they use OTT platforms daily for about 1 to 3 hours. When 28% use the platform for less than 1 hour, 16% use it for more than 3 hours. Thus, it can be concluded that 72% of respondents (56% using 1-3 hours + 16% using more than 3 hours) are engaging with OTT platforms for at least 1 hour or more daily.

## Finding 4

### The most preferred time to watch OTT

Which is your preferred time to watch OTT?

100 responses

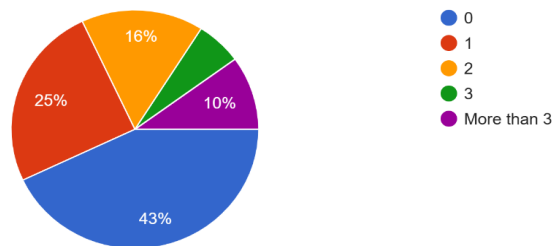


As per the survey, 52% of the respondents prefers to watch OTT between 9PM to 12 AM. When 26% consume content mostly between 7PM to 9PM, 8% of the respondents prefer to watch OTT in the morning hours. So, the prime time of OTT platforms can be considered between 9 PM to 12 AM.

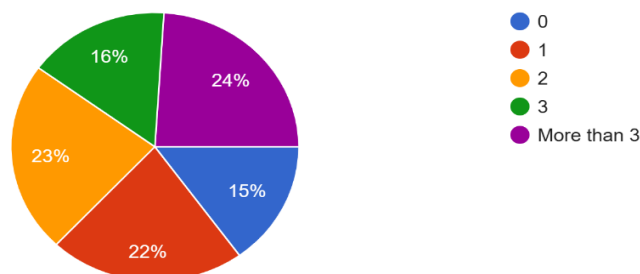
### Finding 5

#### Role of pandemic in the adoption of OTT platforms

How many OTT subscriptions did you have before the pandemic  
100 responses



How many OTT subscriptions do you have now?  
100 responses



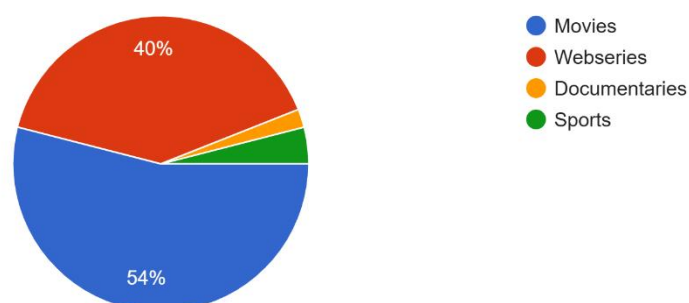
Two questions were asked in the survey to understand the role of the pandemic in the emergence of OTT platforms in India. In the question about OTT subscriptions before the pandemic 43% had no subscription and 25% had one paid subscription. When combined (one, two, three and more than 3 paid subscription) about 57% had at least one. However, in the question about the current paid subscription, 85% of the respondents share that they have at least one paid subscription, in which 24% has owns more than 3. Only 15% recorded to have no paid subscription on OTT.

The finding suggest that the pandemic has played a major role in increasing the adoption of OTT platforms in Kerala. Pre-pandemic, only 57% of respondents had at least one paid OTT subscription, whereas post-pandemic, this number has risen significantly to 85%.

### Finding 6

#### Preferences of Kerala Youth

What do you prefer to watch on OTT?  
100 responses



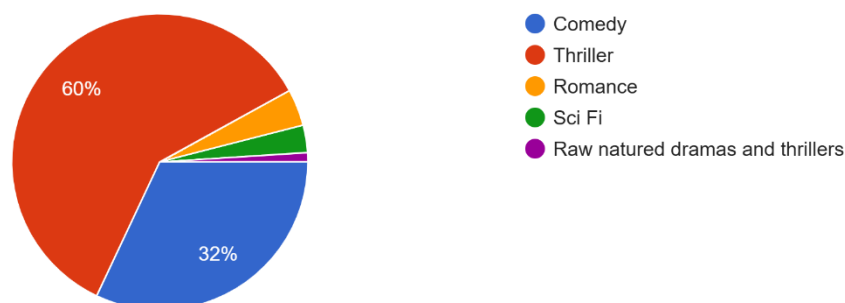
In the survey, 54% of the respondents recorded that they prefer to watch movies on OTT, followed by 40% choosing webseries. In yet another question, 54% share that they prefer to watch English language content on OTT, followed by 33% preferring Malayalam content.

## Finding 7

### Choice of Malayalam content

Which genre do you prefer in a Malayalam web series?

100 responses



In the survey, 88% of the respondents share that they prefer to watch Malayalam originals on OTT. Sharing their preference of the genre, 60% prefers to watch thrillers in Malayalam, whereas 32% opted for Comedy

### Summary of the findings

- Netflix is the most chosen OTT platform among the youngsters of Kerala
- Smartphone is the most used device to consume OTT content
- 72% of the Kerala Youth are engaging with OTT platforms for at least 1 hour or more daily
- The peak time of OTT platforms among youngsters is between 9 PM to 12 AM.
- The pandemic has played a major role in increasing the adoption of OTT platforms in Kerala
- An average of 28% growth has happened in the paid subscription of OTT platforms has happened among Kerala Youth post-pandemic
- Kerala Youth use OTT platforms more to watch movies
- Though they prefer to watch English content on OTT, Malayalam originals are having a strong acceptance among the youngsters.
- Kerala Youth prefer to watch more thrillers in Malayalam originals

### Conclusion

OTT consumption is experiencing an exceptional growth in India and the same is evident in Kerala too. The acceptance of OTT premieres of blockbuster movies, how many movies that fail to gain attention in the theatres get celebrated on OTT are some of the key examples that proves the advancement of OTT platforms as an entertainment platform. Not just movies, OTT originals, especially web series are being talked about and widely appreciated by fans.

Along with the large population, the youngsters seem to be had the lion share of the consumption and OTT platforms have already become a part of their entertainment consumption. The growth in the paid subscriptions post pandemic, substantiates the role of COVID 19 as a catalyst in the emergence of this new entertainment platform among viewers. Though there is a huge love for other language content, Malayali audience are open to watching more original content in the mother-language and it opens an arena of possibilities in this new media platform.

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