

A STUDY ON CONSUMERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS OVER THE TOP (OTT) PLATFORMS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GUWAHATI CITY

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ABSTRACT

Over The Top platforms commonly termed as OTT platforms are online streaming media services which from past few years is gaining a lot of popularity amidst the masses. NETFLIX, AMAZON PRIME VIDEO, DISNEY + HOTSTAR are some of the many OTT channels offered to the viewers in India. As per reports the Indian OTT market is expecting \$5 Billion Customers by the year 2023. The present study hereby is an attempt to analyze the perception of consumers towards OTT platform with special reference to the City of Guwahati in Assam. The study further attempts to identify the factors influencing consumers choice towards OTT platforms and also their level of satisfaction towards the services of OTT.

Keywords: OTT Platforms, Consumer Perception, Consumer Preference, Satellite Provider.

Introduction Over The Top (OTT) Platforms

The world has seen drastic changes in the way it consumes content over the past few decades. One of the more recent is the content shift from television to OTT platforms. Over the Top platforms (OTT) like Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+ Hotstar, etc., are becoming more popular by each passing day and increasing its subscriber base. OTT refers to film and television content provided via a high-speed Internet connection rather than a cable or satellite provider. An OTT platform has a large repository of movies and TV serials from across the globe which can be accessed through different devices like phones, laptops, Android Televisions, etc. These platforms even produce their original shows and gives their users a different experience altogether. It is basically a media streaming service which is available for the users through internet connectivity.

In India, Big Flix also termed as "Personal Blockbuster Theatre" was the first OTT platform which was launched by Reliance Entertainment in 2012 which offered numerous movies on demand with a subscription fees. Netflix on the other hand was launched in the year 1997 in California, USA. Originally a rent by mail DVD service that used a Pay Per -Rent- Model. It was in the year 2015 that Netflix successfully launched its streaming services in India. Thereafter the Indian internet streaming market kept evolving with the entry of players like Amazon Prime Video, Sony LIV, Zee5,VOOT etc.

Market Scenario of OTT platform in India

With over 40 over the top media services (OTT) in India, more and more people are opting to watch content online. As per reports in the fiscal year 2018, the OTT market in India was worth ₹21.5 billion and in 2019 its value grew up to ₹35 billion. The OTT sector in India witnessed a 30% rise in the number of paid subscribers, from 22.2 million to 29.0 million between March and July 2020. India's video streaming industry is set to be valued by ₹ 11.9k billion by 2023. This growth is directly connected to the surge in the number of internet users which are expected to cross 735 million by 2021 with more than 73% of them consuming content in Indian regional languages.

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Popular Over The Top (OTT) Platforms in India**Table 1: Popular Over The Top (OTT) Platforms in India**

Serial Nos.	OTT Platforms	Year of streaming	Owner	Languages Offered
1.	Big Flix	2012	Reliance Entertainment	Hindi, Telegu, Tamil, Punjabi, Malayalam, Gujarati, Marathi, Bhojpuri and Bengali
2.	Sony LIV	2013	Sony Pictures Network India	Hindi, English, Telugu, Tamil, Bengali, Malayalam, Kannada, Punjabi
3.	Netflix	2015	Reed Hastings	English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Bengali, Malayalam, Kannada
4.	Disney + Hotstar	2015	Star India Private Limited	Hindi, English, Malayalam, Telugu, Tamil, Bengali, Kannada, Marathi
5.	Amazon Prime Video	2016	Amazon.com	Marathi, English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Bengali, Malayalam, Kannada, Odia, Punjabi, Gujarati
6.	VOOT	2016	Viacom 18	English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Bengali, Malayalam, Kannada, Odia, Punjabi, Gujarati
7.	Zee5	2018	Zee Entertainment Enterprises	Marathi, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Bengali, Malayalam, Kannada, Punjabi, Odia, Gujarati, English

Source: Self Compiled by Author

Advantages and Disadvantages of Over The Top (OTT) Platforms**Table 2: Advantages and Disadvantages of OTT Platforms**

Advantages of OTT platforms	Disadvantages of OTT platforms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity- OTT platforms are easy to use. An OTT platform requires only minimal things to access. It requires only a stable internet connection and a device like Mobile Phone or Laptop etc. Cost Friendly- OTT platforms are Cost Friendly in compare to the Traditional TV connection. The content you can get on TV cable for a premium costly package is accessible on OTT for minimal prices. Convenience- OTT platforms allow you to access your favorite media content whenever, wherever and as often as you want. Variety content- Users can access hundreds and thousands of movies and shows. Also including, news, sports, kid's content and many more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connectivity- OTT platforms only require a stable internet connection. If there is a weak internet connection the quality of the service will degrade. OTT Rights-OTT providers sometimes they don't acquire OTT rights of certain shows, which are strictly made for cable only. Data Consumption- OTT platforms consume a lot of data will providing their services. No Age Limit- There is no age limit on OTT platforms. Underage kids can access to contents which is Abusive, Dark, and Violent in nature.

Source: Self Compiled by Author

Introduction to Direct – to- Home (DTH)

The DTH technology enables a broadcasting company to directly beam the signal to your TV set through a receiver that is installed in the house. There is no need for a separate cable connection. Direct-to-Home (DTH) television is a method of receiving satellite television by means of signals transmitted from direct-broadcast satellites. The Government of India (GoI) permitted the reception and distribution of satellite television signals in November 2000. The first DTH service in the country was launched by Dish TV on 2 October 2003. DD Free Dish, the first free DTH service in India, was launched by Public Broadcaster Prasar Bharati in December 2004.

Popular Direct to Home (DTH) Platforms in India**Table 3: Popular Direct-To-Home (DTH) Platforms in India**

Serial No.	Satellite Television /DTH Operators	Year of Service Launching
1.	Dish Tv	2003
2.	Dd Free Dish (Formerly Dd Direct Plus)	2004
3.	Tata Sky	2006
4.	Sun Direct	2007
5.	Airtel Digital Tv	2008
6.	D2h (Formerly Videocon D2h)	2009
7.	Reliance Digital Tv (Formerly Reliance Big Tv)	2010
8.	Independent Dish Tv	2018
9.	Jio Dth	2020

Source: Self Compiled by Author

Difference Between Over The Top Platforms and Direct-to-Home Platforms**Table 4: Difference Between OTT and DTH Platforms**

Basis	Over The Top platforms	Direct-to-Home platforms
Meaning	An Over The Top (OTT) media service is a streaming media service offered directly to viewers via the Internet.	The DTH technology enables a broadcasting company to directly beam the signal to your TV set through a receiver that is installed in the house. There is no need for a separate cable connection.
Cost	The cost of an OTT services is very low. Premium subscription of Amazon Prime Video starts from a price of Rs 999/year.	The cost of a DTH services is comparatively high than OTT services. Tata Sky's HD Digital set-top boxes are expensive starting at Rs 1,699 depending on the consumer's preference.
Control	The control of choice stays in the consumer's hand. The consumer can choose between different contents.	The control of choice stays in the hand of the service providers.
Versatility	OTT platforms can be watched in different devices such as Televisions, Mobile phones, Tablets and Laptops.	DTH platforms can only be watched in Televisions.
Examples	Examples of OTT platforms are Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Disney+ Hotstar etc.	Examples of DTH platforms are TATA Sky, Dish TV, Airtel digital TV etc.

Source: Self Compiled by Author

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study are:

- To analyze consumer preference towards OTT Platforms and DTH Services.
- To identify the factors affecting consumer's choice for OTT Platforms.
- To measure consumer's level of satisfaction towards OTT Platforms.

Research Methodology for the Study

The table below highlights the methodology adopted in the present study:

Table 5: Research Methodology for the Study

Serial No.	Particulars	Methodology
1.	Area of Study	Guwahati City, Assam
2	Data	Both Primary and Secondary Data
3	Type of Research	Descriptive Research
4	Sampling Technique	Judgement Sampling – It is a type of non-probability method which relies on the judgment of the researcher for selecting the respondents.
5	Sample Size	The sample size for this study is 100
6	Data Collection Technique	A Structured Questionnaire was used in this study
7	Tools for Data Analysis	Charts, Diagrams, frequency tables, percentage analysis and Cross tabulations were used for analyzing the requisite data. Further, MS Excel and SPSS has also been used for analysis of the data collected.

Limitations of the Study

Some of the limitations of the study includes:

- The sample size for the study is limited to 100 respondents only.
- The survey covers the City of Guwahati only.
- Due to the Pandemic situation the study is partially relied on secondary information.

Analysis of the Study

- Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Age - Gender (Cross Tabulation)

Table 6: Age – Gender (Cross Tabulation)

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Age	Below 18	6	0	6
	Between 18 -25	31	49	80
	Between 26-32	1	9	10
	Above 32	3	1	4
Total		41	59	100

Interpretation

The above Table no.6 depicts the Age and Gender Cross Tabulation of the respondents. As seen, below the age group of 18 years 6 respondents are Male and zero Female. Followed by 31 respondents are Male and 49 Female between the age group of 18-25 years, 1 Male and 9 Female between the age group of 26-32 Years and 3 of the respondents are Male and 1 Female above the age group of 32 years.

Analysis of Objective 1: Consumer Preference towards OTT and DTH Platforms

Table 7: Consumer Preference towards OTT and DTH Platforms

Consumer Preference towards OTT and DTH Platforms				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
	OTT Platform	42	42.0	42.0
	DTH Platform	8	8.0	50.0
	Both	50	50.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

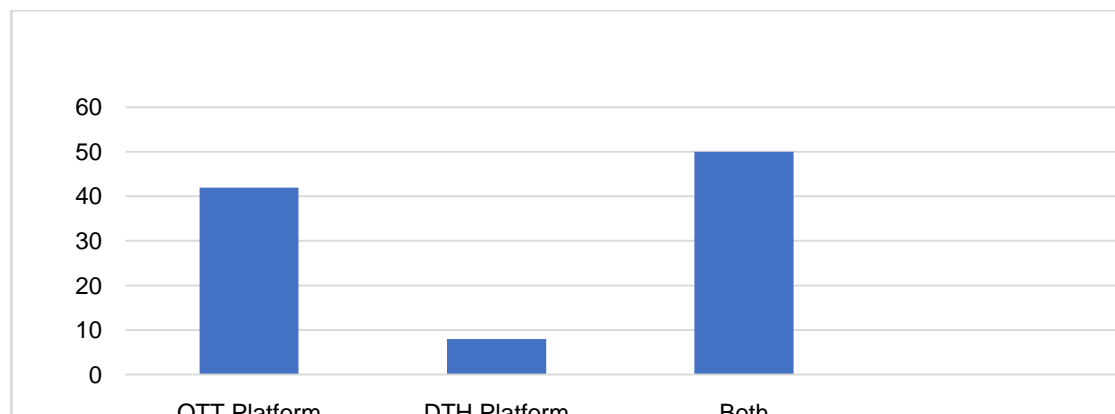


Figure 1: Consumer Preference Towards OTT and DTH Platforms

Interpretation

The above Table no.7 and Figure no.1 shows the Consumer Preference Towards OTT and DTH Platform. As seen, 42% of the respondents choose OTT Platforms over DTH Platforms, 8% of the respondents choose DTH Platforms over OTT Platforms and 50% of the respondents choose both OTT Platforms as well as DTH Platforms.

Analysis of Objective 2: Factors Affecting Consumer's choice for OTT Platforms

Table 8: Factors Influencing Choice of OTT Platforms

Factors Influencing Choice of OTT Platform				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Unlimited variety of choice	34	34.0	34.0
	Portability	9	9.0	43.0
	Latest and Quality Contents	51	51.0	94.0
	Cheaper than regular TV	2	2.0	96.0
	Catching up on shows that one missed on regular TV	4	4.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

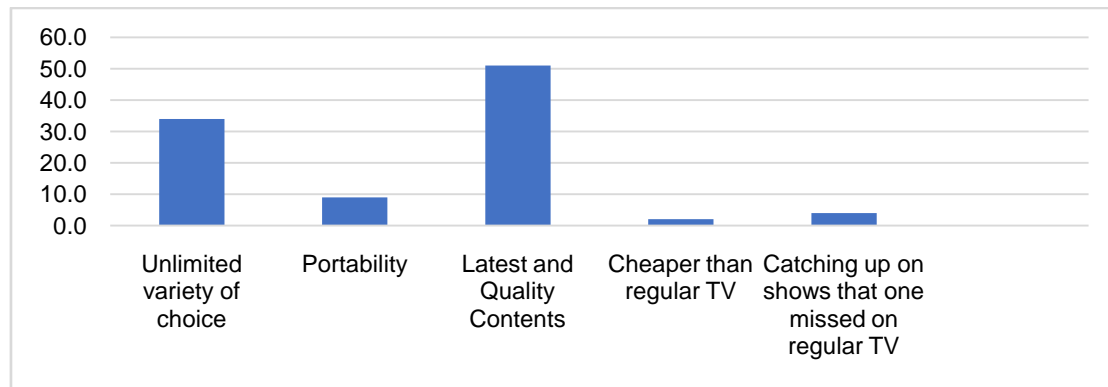


Figure 2: Factors Influencing Choice of OTT Platforms

Interpretation

The above Table no.8 and Figure no.2 shows the Factor Influencing Choice of OTT Platform among the respondents. As seen, 34% of the respondents are influenced by the unlimited variety of choice, 9% of the respondents are influenced because of portability, 51% of the respondents are influenced by the latest and quality contents, 2% of the respondents are influenced because OTT Platforms are cheaper than T.V., 4% of the respondents are influenced by the feature of catching up shows that they missed on the regular T.V.

Table 9: Age – Factors influencing Choice of OTT Platforms (Cross Tabulation)

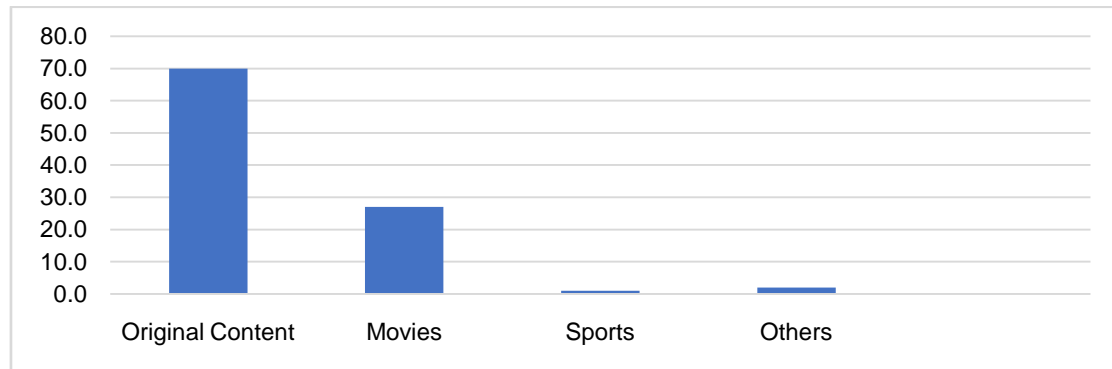
Age - Factors Influencing Choice of OTT Platform (Cross Tabulation)							
		Factors Influencing Choice of OTT Platform					Total
		Unlimited variety of choice	Portability	Latest and Quality Contents	Cheaper than regular TV	Catching up on shows that one missed on regular TV	
Age	Below 18	4	0	1	1	0	6
	Between 18 -25	25	7	44	1	3	80
	Between 26-32	4	1	4	0	1	10
	Above 32	1	1	2	0	0	4
Total		34	9	51	2	4	100

Interpretation

The above Table no.9 depicts the Age and Gender Cross tabulation of the respondents. As seen, the age group above 32 years having 4 respondents watch least on OTT platforms as compared to the age group between 18 – 25, having 80 respondents out of which 25 respondent's choice have been influenced by the factor of unlimited variety of choice, 7 respondent's choice have been influenced by the factor of Portability, 44 respondent's choice have been influenced by the factor of Latest and Quality Contents, 1 respondent's choice have been influenced by the factor of That OTT is Cheaper than regular T.V., 3 respondent's choice have been influenced by the factor of Catching up on shows that one missed regular T.V.

Table 10: Mostly watched in OTT Platforms

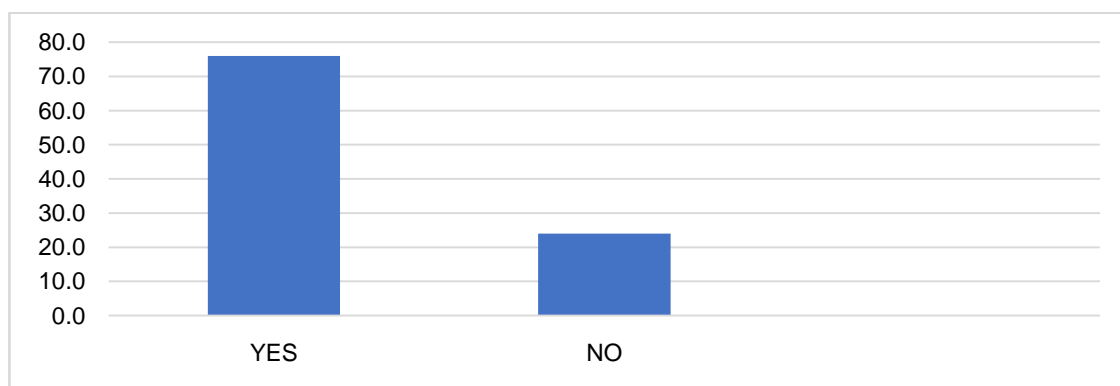
Mostly Watched In Ott Platforms				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Original Content	70	70.0	70.0
	Movies	27	27.0	97.0
	Sports	1	1.0	98.0
	Others	2	2.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

**Figure 3: Mostly Watched in OTT Platforms****Interpretation**

The above Table no.10 and Figure no.3 the Mostly Watched contents in OTT Platforms among the respondents. As seen,70% of the respondent watch Original Contents like Web-series, short films etc., 27% of the respondent watch Movies, 1% of the respondent watch Sports and the remaining 2% of the respondent watch other contents.

Table 11: Pandemic and OTT

Influence of Pandemic on Choice of OTT Platform				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Yes	76	76.0	76.0
	No	24	24.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

**Figure 4: Pandemic and OTT****Interpretation**

The above Table no.11 and Figure no.4 shows the Influence of the Pandemic on Choice of OTT Platforms. As seen, 76% of respondents' choice have been influenced by the Pandemic i.e. COVID-19 and 24% of the of respondents' choice have not been influenced.

Table 12: Choice of OTT Channel

Choice of OTT Channels				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
	NETFLIX	38	38.0	38.0
	AMAZON PRIME VIDEO	11	11.0	49.0
	DISNEY + HOTSTAR	5	5.0	54.0
	All of the Above	46	46.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

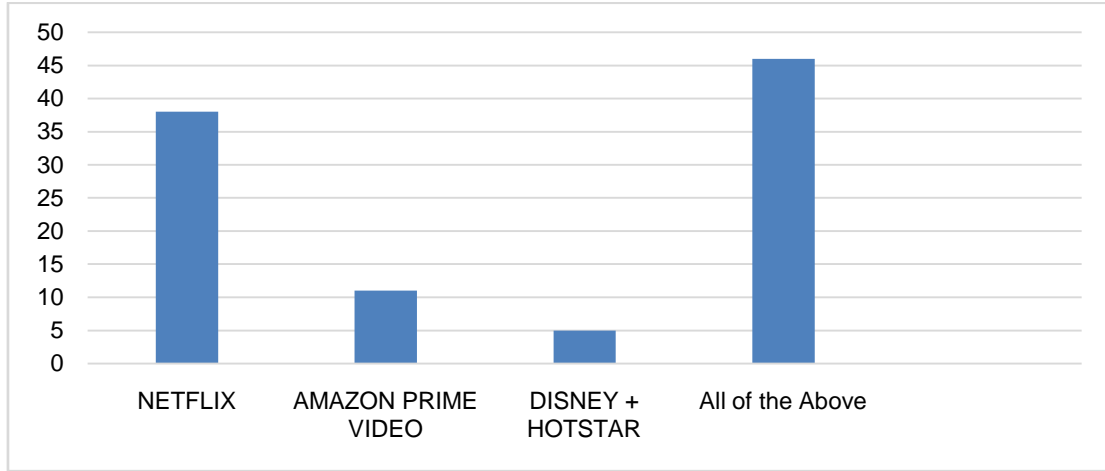


Figure 5: Choice of OTT Channel

Interpretation

The above Table no.12 and Figure no. 5 depicts the choice of OTT channels by the respondents. As seen, 46 % of the respondents prefer all the options listed followed by 38 % for Netflix channel, 11 % for Amazon Prime Video and remaining 5 % has responded for Disney + Hotstar channel.

Table 13: Choice of Platforms for Watching OTT Channels

Choice of Platforms for Watching OTT Channels				
		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
	TV	18	18.0	18.0
	Laptop	22	22.0	40.0
	Tablet	3	3.0	43.0
	Mobile Phone	57	57.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

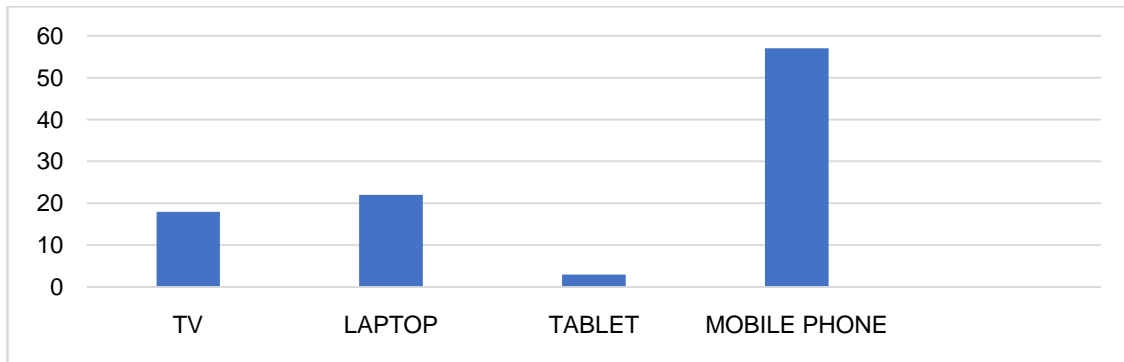


Figure 6: Choice of Platforms for watching OTT Channels

Interpretation

The above Table no.13 and Figure no. 6 depicts the choice of platforms for watching OTT channels by the respondents. As seen, 57% of the respondents prefer mobile phones ,followed by 22% Laptops,18 % TV and only 3% prefer Tablets for watching the contents in OTT Channels.

Analysis of Objective 3: Consumer's Satisfaction Level towards OTT Platforms

Table 14: Consumer's Satisfaction over OTT Platforms

Consumer's Satisfaction Over OTT Platforms					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Neutral	26	26.0	26.0	26.0
	Satisfied	59	59.0	59.0	85.0
	Highly Satisfied	15	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

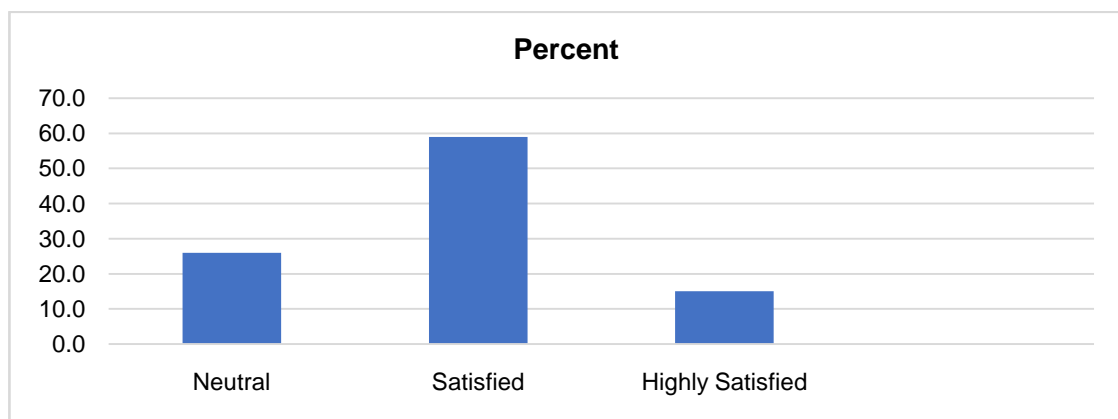


Figure 7: Consumer's Satisfaction over OTT Platforms

Interpretation

The above Table no.14 and Figure no. 7 depicts the Consumer Satisfaction over OTT Platforms. As seen, 26% of the Respondents are Neutral about their satisfaction. Followed by 59% of the respondents are Satisfied and 15% of the respondents are Highly Satisfied.

Findings of the Study

The data collected through 100 questionnaires has been analyzed for the study. Out of 100 respondents, dominant portion of the respondents lies in the age group of 18-25 years. Looking at the gender distribution of the respondents almost 80% of the respondents are Females and majority of the respondents are Graduates in the qualification status. In the occupation status, majority of the respondents are Students and the income level of majority of the respondents are below 10,000 per month.

Further it has been found that 50% of the respondents have chosen OTT platforms over DTH platforms. This shows that the OTT platforms have taken over the DTH platforms. 51% of the respondents watch OTT platforms because of the factor that it provides latest and quality contents. Regarding the OTT providers, 38% of the respondents choose Netflix over other OTT providers to watch different contents such as television shows, movies, sports etc. 70% of the respondents watch original contents such as web series and short films on OTT platforms.57% of the respondents prefer Mobile phones over other modes for viewing OTT Channels. 76% of the respondents' decision of watching contents on OTT platforms has been influenced by this ongoing pandemic situation. When it comes about satisfaction level, 58% of the respondents are satisfied with services that are provided by the OTT providers in Guwahati Region.

Conclusion

Over The Top (OTT) platforms is widely being used by the young peoples followed by the working class of peoples. The liberty of choosing the content that they want to watch is the biggest factor why people choose OTT platforms over DTH platforms. As OTT platforms are budget friendly, most of its

viewers are students. The many reasons why OTT platforms gained millions of consumers in a span of 5 years is because of its influential social media campaigns and quality contents. An average consumer spends about 2 to 4 hours of his daily time on OTT platforms. As the digital media market expands, OTT platforms have and will gain more consumers with time. COVID-19 has been beneficial for the OTT platforms. Many consumers have subscribed to OTT platforms to spend their time during the lockdown period. OTT platforms have benefited the telecommunications industry as the consumers were spending most of their internet data on these platforms. The Movie Industry has been benefited as they can release their movies online on these platforms and they can earn revenue in this crisis period. OTT platforms have ultimately made contributions in the Indian economy as the revenue they have earned are generated in India as well as spent in India. Over The Top platforms grew rapidly in India during the COVID-19 induced lockdown period, when there was a closer of theatres. This led several production houses to release their films directly on OTT platforms. With the OTT market getting bigger and bigger with time, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has taken the control of OTT platforms from the Ministry of Information and Technology. With the Ministry coming in power, the OTT operators now have to apply for certification and approval for the contents they wish to release on their platforms. Over The Top platforms is the primary choice of the consumers who wants to watch their favorite contents such as movies, web series etc. It has emerged as a tough competition for the DTH Operators and is slowly taking down the Theatre Industry as most of the movies are now launched online. In coming years, OTT platforms will get more competitive and it might take over the DTH platforms completely.

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