

The Impact of OTT Platforms on Conventional Broadcasting Post-Lockdown of Covid-19 in WestBengal

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Abstract. The aftermath of the lockdown witnessed a sea change in media consumption patterns especially in West Bengal where Over-the- Top (OTT) platforms emerged as the dominant players in the entertain- ment arena. A comprehensive analysis of available literature on changing media landscape is provided which shows an increasing rivalry between OTT players and traditional broadcasters in post-lockdown West Ben- gal. The catalysts behind this shift to OTT as well as the corresponding challenges facing traditional channels are methodologically and exten- sively investigated. It describes how the survey was designed, sampling methodology used and methodologies employed to measure users' perceptions and preferences about OTT and traditional broadcasts. In addition, ethical issues have been thoroughly addressed along with methodological limitations.

The data collection and research findings that differentiate OTT from other forms of new media in terms of their influence on consumer behavior among people who use the internet for information purposes only must be mentioned at once. Such factors therefore may be named as rea- sons for shifts in user behavior in respect to platforms' preference, while this study has attempted to find them out.

Keywords: Covid-19 Lockdown, Over-The-Top (OTT), Post-Lockdown, Conventional Broadcasting, West Bengal (WB).

INTRODUCTION

The digital revolution and the rise of over-the-top (OTT) platforms have had a significant impact on the media and entertainment sector in recent years. They have transformed the way people receive information by overturning decades of traditional television-oriented approach [1]. Radio and traditional TV broad- casting have long been important sources of news and entertainment. However, consumers' tastes have shifted significantly. Users can now watch their favorite films or TV series whenever and wherever they want thanks to on-demand video providers like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+ Hotstar, and others. Con- sequently, changing tastes are forcing us to reconsider where traditional media fits into this post-lockdown world that values flexibility and convenience above all else.

Surge of OTT Usage Amid Lockdown:

People turned to digital content consumption during the lockdown to try and get around the limitations on outside activities. This resulted in a notable increase in the usage of OTT platforms. A research by authors [9] found that during the lockdown, West Bengal

saw a 67% rise in daily subscriptions and OTT platform usage. This phenomenon emphasizes how people tend to favor over-the-top (OTT) platforms when they want to access a wide variety of content, such as movies, web series, and videos, among other things.

Transformation in Advertising Dynamics:

Owing to over-the-top (OTT) services, not only has consumer behavior changed, but advertising has also undergone novel changes. For example, brands are increasingly paying greater attention to online platforms since they are aware of personalized content recommendations and targeted advertisements. This claim has sparked discussion about the potential demise of traditional TV advertising, which typically uses a linear scheduling system and broad demographic targeting [4].

Evolving Challenges for Traditional Broadcasting:

The emergence of over-the-top (OTT) platforms has forced established broadcasters to realign themselves in the changing media landscape. Traditional television approaches are unlikely to endure due to declining viewership, particularly among younger viewers. These worries are confirmed by recent Media Watchdata on viewing habits in 2021, which shows that prime-time TV consumption declined, worsening the situation [2].

Objectives of This study:

The following is a description of the study's objective:

To determine the number of West Bengalis who shifted from traditional television to over-the-top (OTT) services both during and after the shutdown.

To ascertain the factors that influence users' decision to consume material after the shutdown between normal broadcasts and over-the-top (OTT) services.

To examine how West Bengali users' interests in content and how they consume it have evolved as a result of increased availability of OTT services.

To ascertain how consumers perceive the ease, variety, and quality of content in respect to the relationship between over-the-top (OTT) and traditional television.

To determine the impact of age, gender, and socioeconomic status (SES) on users' usage of regular broadcasts and over-the-top (OTT) apps following the lockdown.

To identify potential issues that West Bengal's traditional media may encounter as a result of the growth of OTT platforms and to provide solutions.

LITERATURE SURVEY

This review aims to bring together the research that has already been done on how OTT affects standard broadcasts. It looks at changes in how people use material, how they interact with it, and what challenges and possibilities this split might offer. By explaining the media environment in West Bengal after the lockdown, this review tries to show how complicated the relationship is between OTT and regular television platforms.

According to authors [7], a Boston consulting firm, India's OTT business is worth nearly 5 billion by 2023. The authors also notices that OTT is becoming a common way for

certain movies to reach their target audience. Video streaming services have made it easy, cheap, and available to watch movies on the go, especially for people who like to watch a lot of movies at once.

India has a terrible lack of movie theaters. China, for example, has about 60,000 screens, while India has only about 10,000. According to appearances, there are only 8 movie theaters for every million people, and when Indians get out of jail, two-thirds of them can't go to the movies anymore. Large production companies and directors are being pushed to put movies out straight on OTT channels instead of in theaters. This is because people tend to watch multiple channels at once and want new and different content [3].

Over the past few years, the online media industry has learned that India is a mix of different countries, each with its own unique traits. The number of people who speak regional languages and use the Internet is growing faster than the number of people who speak Hindi and English. Localized content gets more interaction because users always prefer to watch content in their own language. Because of this, big streaming services like Amazon Prime and Netflix are spending more money to make material in Hindi and eight other major Indian languages besides English [6].

On the other hand authors [8], says that the limits put in place after the COVID- 19 spread had a big effect on how people used media and leisure. As lockdowns kept people from going outside to work or have fun, public events moved online. People can stay in touch with their families, friends, partners, coworkers, and others through web-based social networking. Due to the government's request to shut down entertainment programs outside of the home, home-based entertainment modes have grown and improved steadily.

As per the study by authors [10], OTT platforms are getting better and that they have a big edge over standard television outlets. Based on an online poll with 95 percent of the key players between the ages of 20 and 40, the study says that OTT will positively grow in India because it is cost-effective and its material keeps getting better and better. Lastly, the author thinks that the fast growth of streaming media in India is because it gives people the freedom to get information at any time, no matter where they are.

This literature review shows how the media environment has changed since the COVID-19 lockdown in West Bengal and how Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms have affected traditional broadcasts as a result [5]. By looking at the research that has already been done, this piece hopes to put light on how readers' tastes and behavior are changing. This can help people in the media business learn how to change and thrive in a world that is changing quickly.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to ascertain how West Bengal residents would respond to OTT versus traditional broadcasts following the lockdown. The quantitative approach was adopted for the same reason.

Sampling

The participants in this study were people of various ages and professions who lived in

West Bengal and watched both OTT and conventional broadcasts. More than 100 participants took part in this investigation. Evaluation of the data sample is made very simple because the majority of respondents provided answers to the question that was asked. Table 1 illustrates the questionnaire details about the survey.

Table 1. Questionnaire Details

No of question	10
Question Type	Voting Poll, Multiple Choice
How many numbers of people participate	100+
Ratio of female and male	7:3
Participants Age range	15 and above
Job fields details	Office workers, housewives, students (college, school)
Communicating Platform	WhatsApp (Majority), Mail, Telegram

Research Design

To gather study data, the scientific approach was applied. Multiple choice questions and a voting poll were set up for this strategy. A sample size of more than 100 respondents was selected for the investigation.

EXPERIMENTAL DATA ANALYSIS

The respondents received the assessment via several widely used messaging services, including mail, WhatsApp, telegraph, etc. People of different ages and types have voluntarily participated in this survey. The following figures assess each question's visual assessment as well as all the participant replies to that question.

Analysis of Question 1

The first question was 'How frequently do you use OTT platforms?' Figure 1 depicted the analysis of this question.

Based on the analysis of the figure 1, it was observed that the maximum percentage (39%) of people in West Bengal have weakly used OTT platforms in post-lockdown situations. Some people use it in their daily routine (35.2%), and a few people use it rarely.

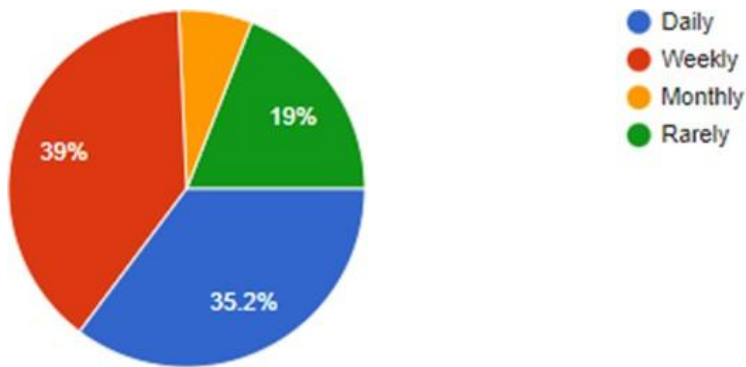


Fig. 1. Result: How many days spends on OTT Platform

Analysis of Question 2

The second question was ‘Which OTT platforms do you use most?’ Figure 2 depicted the analysis of this question.

According to the figure 2, it can be concluded that nowadays West Bengal’s maximum population likes to watch ‘Netflix’ (57.1%). After that, they watch ‘Disney +hotstar’ (51.4%). Some of them, respectively, watch ‘Amazon Prime Video’ (47.6%) and ‘Hoichoi’ (43.8%).

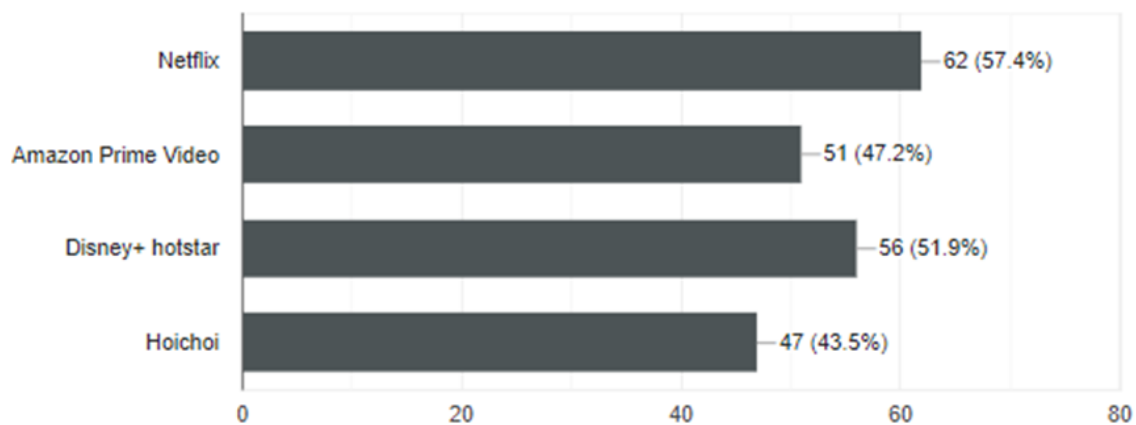


Fig. 2. Which OTT platform do people like most

Analysis of Question 3

The third question was ‘What type of content do you prefer to watch on OTTplatforms?’ Figure 3 depicted the analysis of this question.

Based on figure 3, the pie chart it has been visualized that, the maximum number of respondents like to watch ‘Web series’ (61.5%). Some people like to watch ‘movies’ (24%) and very nominal present of people watch ‘TV shows’ and ‘Documentaries’ in OTT platform.

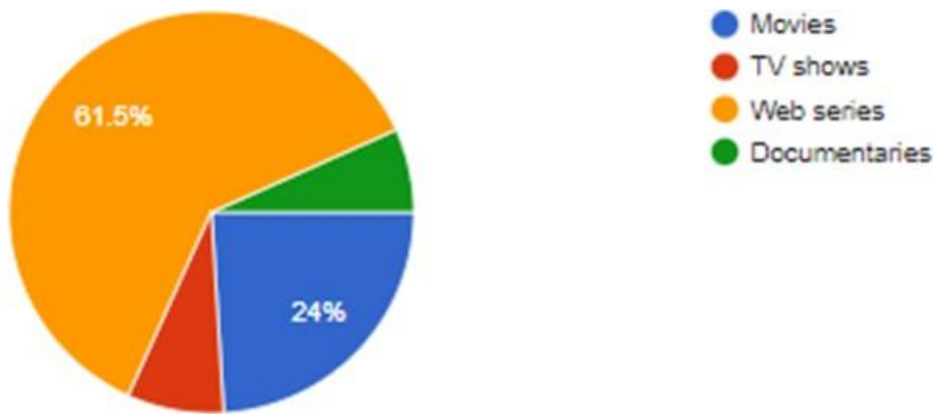


Fig. 3. Which type of content people like most in OTT

Analysis of Question 4

The fourth question was ‘How often did you watch traditional TV channels before the lockdown?’ Figure 4 depicted the analysis of this question.

Based on analysis of figure 4, it can be said that most of the respondents (48.1%) rarely watched TV before lockdown, maybe because of their busyness. 27.4% of people (most of them housewives and retired people) watched it on the daily basis. Few people use it weekly and monthly.

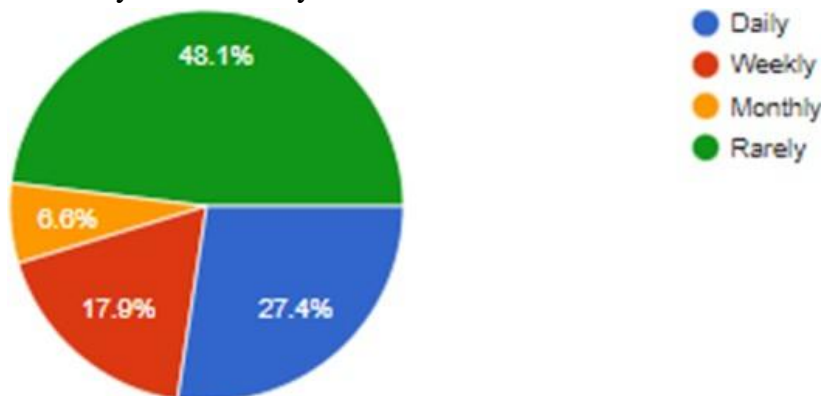


Fig. 4. Before lockdown many days’ people spend on T.V

Analysis of Question 5

The fifth question was ‘Which type of traditional TV content do you prefer?’ Figure 5 depicted the analysis of this question.

Based on figure 5, it can be visualized that most of the viewers (33.3%) like to watch news channels on TV. Some of them like to watch Sports (28.6%) as well as reality shows (24.8%). Few people like to watch dramas and operas on TV.

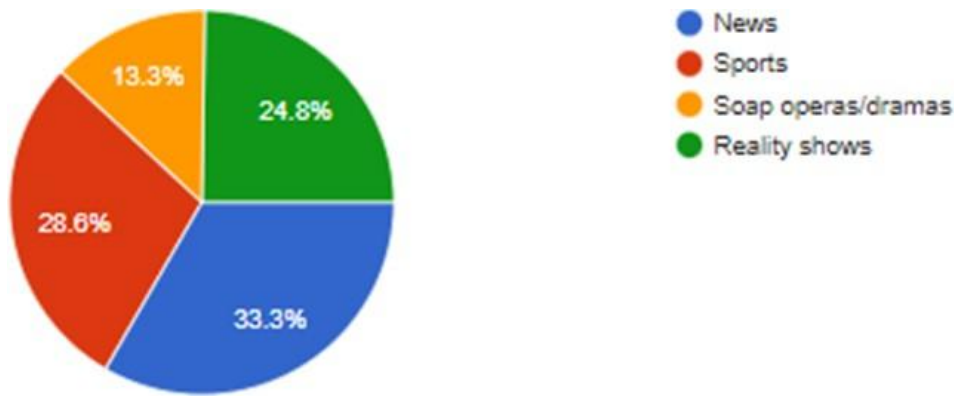


Fig. 5. Which type of traditional TV content viewers prefer

Analysis of Question 6

The sixth question was ‘Has your viewership of traditional TV channels changed after the lockdown?’ Figure 6 depicted the analysis of this question.

Based on figure 6, it can be visualized that the majority of respondents (45.8%) said that their viewership of traditional TV channels did not change after lock-down. Few of them said that it has increased after lockdown (10.3%), and some of them do not want to talk about this (13.1%).

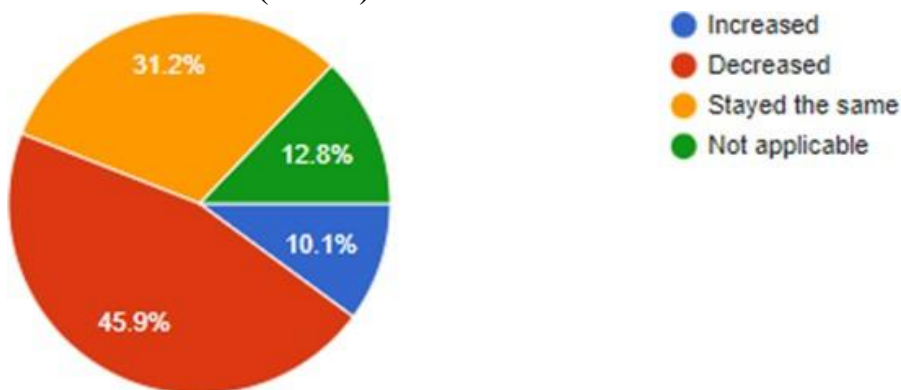


Fig. 6. Has viewership of traditional TV channels changed after the lockdown

Analysis of Question 7

The seventh question was ‘Did the lockdown lead you to explore OTT platforms more than before?’ Figure 7 depicted the analysis of this question.

Based on figure 7, it can be said that the maximum number of people (48.6%) strongly agree with the statement that they are exploring OTT in the lockdown period more than before. Some people (32.8%) partially agreed with the statement, and a very nominal number disagreed with it (11.2%).

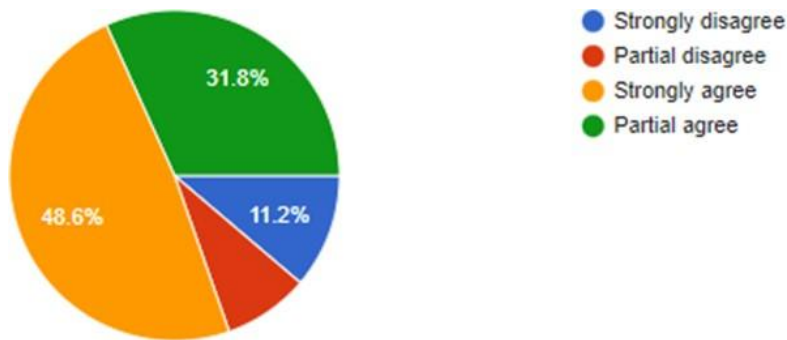


Fig. 7. Dose the lockdown lead to explore OTT platforms more than before

Analysis of Question 8

The eight question was ‘What influenced your increased OTT usage during the lockdown?’ Figure 8 depicted the analysis of this question.

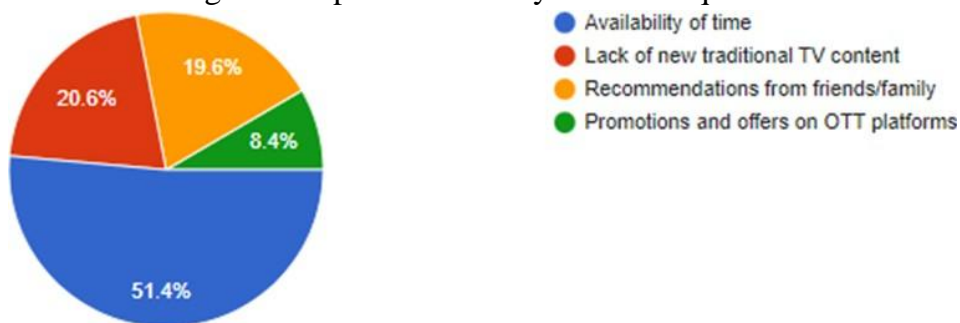


Fig. 8. Influences which increased OTT usage during the lockdown

Based on figure 8, it can be said that during the lockdown period, huge amounts of free time influenced people to watch OTT platforms. 51.4% of people agreed with this. Few of them (20.6%) said that a lack of new traditional TV content picked them for OTT, and some viewers were influenced by friends and family recommendations as well as OTT platforms promotions.

Analysis of Question 9

The ninth question was ‘Do you find OTT platforms to offer more diverse content compared to traditional TV?’ Figure 9 depicted the analysis of this question. As per the figure 9, it can be stated that the maximum percentage (63.6%) of viewers of W.B. strongly agreed that OTT services offer a wider range of material than regular TV. Some people (18.7%) were a little bit confused about it, so they partially agreed, and a very small percentage (9.3%) of people disagreed about the matter.

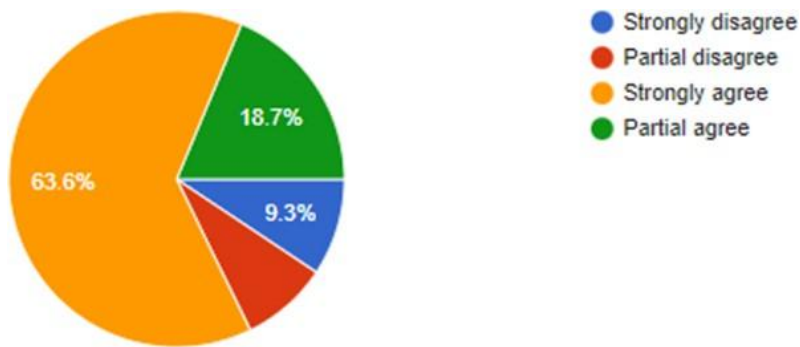


Fig. 9. Output for the no of OTT platforms to offer more diverse content compared to traditional TV

Analysis of Question 10

The tenth question was ‘Which do you find more appealing in terms of content diversity?’ Figure 10 depicted the analysis of this question.

Based on figure 10, it can be visualized that the majority (56.1%) said that OTT platforms are more appealing in terms of content diversity. The rest of them (34.6%) believe that mobile phones are more interesting in terms of the variety of material.

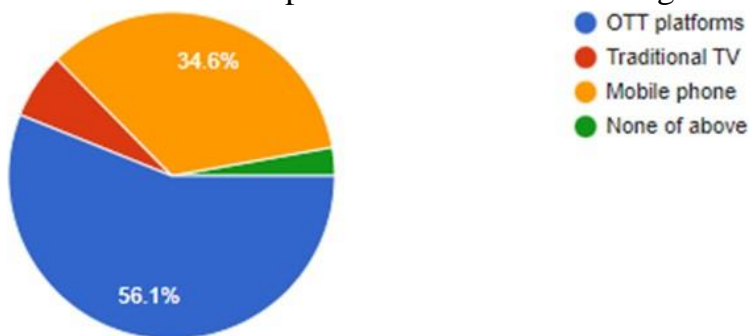


Fig. 10. Output for Which is find more appealing in terms of content diversity

DISCUSSIONS

The results of this survey shed light on how West Bengalis are modifying their media consumption habits, particularly in the wake of the closure. based on the figures. According to the aforementioned report, OTT (Over-The-Top) apps are becoming increasingly popular in West Bengal, where a sizable portion of the populace uses them on a daily basis. It’s impressive that 39% of respondents claimed to utilize OTT platforms at least once a week. This indicates that interest in digital streaming services is growing. One significant influence on how people read and viewed the news was the COVID-19 lockdown. With greater free time during the lockdown, the majority of respondents (48.6%) strongly agreed that they used OTT services more. Some claimed that they moved to over-the-top TV (OTT) because friends and family encouraged them to do so and because there wasn’t enough fresh content on traditional TV. The assertion that OTT platforms provide a greater selection of content than traditional TV is strongly agreed upon by 63.6% of respondents overall. There is a recurring motif here.

To put it briefly, the data indicates that West Bengal's media landscape is evolving, with over-the-top (OTT) apps gaining traction while yet not totally displacing traditional television. Regional preferences, accessibility, and a wide variety of information all influence viewing habits.

CONCLUSION

During the period of inactivity, West Bengal's watching preferences saw a significant shift, with over-the-top (OTT) apps growing in popularity but not completely displacing traditional TV. Because OTT platforms offer a variety of content, are user-friendly, and offer options in regional languages, the media landscape has undergone a transformation. If traditional stations wish to continue being relevant, they must adapt. They need to raise the caliber of their shows and adjust to the shifting preferences of their audience. With so many options and experiences available, it appears like West Bengal's media consumption landscape will continue to be a vibrant blend of traditional and digital platforms. Content providers, marketers, and producers can all benefit from this study's insights about how to operate in this dynamic media landscape.

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