

SHIFT IN CONTENT CONSUMPTION HABIT DUE TO OTT PLATFORMS

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Abstract

OTT media distribution is found to be one of the strongest media for entertainment and recreational needs of the consumers, in today's time. The impact of OTT platforms cannot be denied, them being easily accessible to the people, being inexpensive as well as offering an elaborate catalogue of content. These platforms have made the most noise among the youngsters with 89% of the consumers of OTT-services ranging from 18-25 years of age. There has been an observation where OTT platforms are carrying out a wider distribution of films which range from 75-90 Minutes in duration and barely touching 120 Minutes mark. The films of 120 minutes and more in duration have seen a decline. Also, the reisasudden escalation in mini-series format where all the episodes are provided in one release, which triggers binge-watching tendencies among the consumers where they may invest their most engagement in one session of watching. Since Mini series format and short-duration movies are getting highest consumer engagement, this study will inquire the shift in the viewer's consumption habit of films/TV shows due to OTT platforms and what may the socio-psychological aspects triggering such shift.

Keywords: Television, OTT Platforms, Consumption Habit, Media, Youngsters.



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Methodology

Since it will be a descriptive research which will take into consideration qualitative and quantitative attributes taken into consideration, following methods would be taken to support my research:

- A questionnaire (web survey) with the sample size of 50 people, comprising of people who are subscribed to or have used OTT platforms for their TV consumption

- Structured interview with an experienced psychologist to gain information regarding what are the sociological and psychological aspects triggering the shift and to also verify the responses of questionnaire.
- Use of secondary data from the online portals to acquire previous facts and figures related to content consumption.

Objectives of the study

To access the impact of OTT-platform on psychology of People. To find the genre of content in vogue among the people.

To ascertain the reasons for opting content of a certain duration.

What is OTT?

According to the Federal Communication Commission of the U.S., OTT is an online provider of video content via Internet. OTT or Over-the-top platforms refer to subscription-based services which legally allow the consumers to access films and television services directly from the file server system of the website or application. It is often considered to be within the similar breath of Video-On Demand concept found on terrestrial television but OTT platforms tend to comprise of no mediators between the service. The content of the OTT platforms may range from flagship offering of the platform's original films and TV shows to distribution of older releases of films and TV.

Some major distributors of OTT services in India are Hot star (which is currently the OTT platform with highest number of subscriptions); Netflix (the service with highest average daily viewership), Jio Cinema (the service is available for free to Jio Cell Network subscribers); Amazon Prime Video (the service offers parallel membership to Amazon Music), etc.

Shift in Content Distribution and Consumption

Prior to the revolution of OTT platforms, content consumption was heavily based on television broadcasts, cinema releases as well as distribution of VCDs and DVDs, so the consumers had to be on the look-out for the viewing of film/TV, otherwise they had to wait for the release of physical CD. Also, the viewers were able to consume content of 180 minutes (3 Hours) and above very easily. There was a sense of urgency among the consumers.

In today's time, the distribution of the content takes place at a higher rate in OTT platforms in the form of direct-to-OTT release which has made the consumption of the

content very instant but has rather led to subsequent decline in the urgency of the viewers to consume the content.

As the rise in the busy lifestyle of the people is taking place, A wider distribution of short duration content has been noticed in OTT platforms. It has also been a driving force behind the building of new short duration content distributors like Tik Tok, Reels, Like, etc. which has further catered to short term pleasures of the consumers providing 15 – 30 second of content to watch, with Gen Z and Millennials being the most avid ones. This has opened up many conversations related to attention span of the consumers.

Literature Review

Dr. Priyanka Shah Dattani from NH SRCC hospital, Mumbai conducted a research on the health problems related to OTT-platform consumptions which states that OTT-platforms are heavily based on indulgence rather than content where the binge-watching has provided instant gratification to the consumers where they become emotionally numb for the duration they watch and disturbance may result in anger spasms. It also has led to depression and spondy lit is among the youngsters and lack of social skills. She addressed OTT- platform as a tool which is a suspension from reality and it disconnects the person from inner world. The content has created distractions related to relationships, work and productivity.

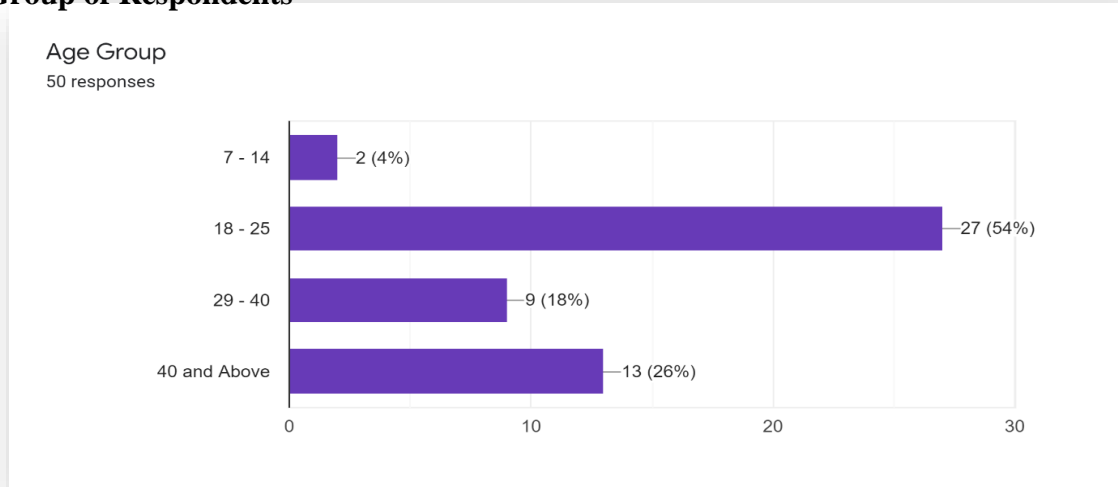
Abreu Jorge in Viewers behavior and practices in the (new) television platform [2013] depicts a detailed analysis of the consumer behavior in which it was stated that the consumer habit recorded by OTT platforms suggest recommendations due to which most of the content which is watched by the consumers surrounds around what is currently charting and the recommendations they received. Other stimuli comprised of gender, people sitting along with them, state of mind during watching.

Paramveer Singh conducted a research New Media as a Change agent of Indian Television and Cinema [2019] which depicted change in consumer behavior of Indian audience towards primitive methods of content distribution where people addressed lack of dependency on cinema or VCDs/DVDs due to OTT platforms, cited comfort and zero time bounds as its major attribute and there is no worry to catch the content quickly. People preferred Action to be their favorite genre of films.

Data Presentation

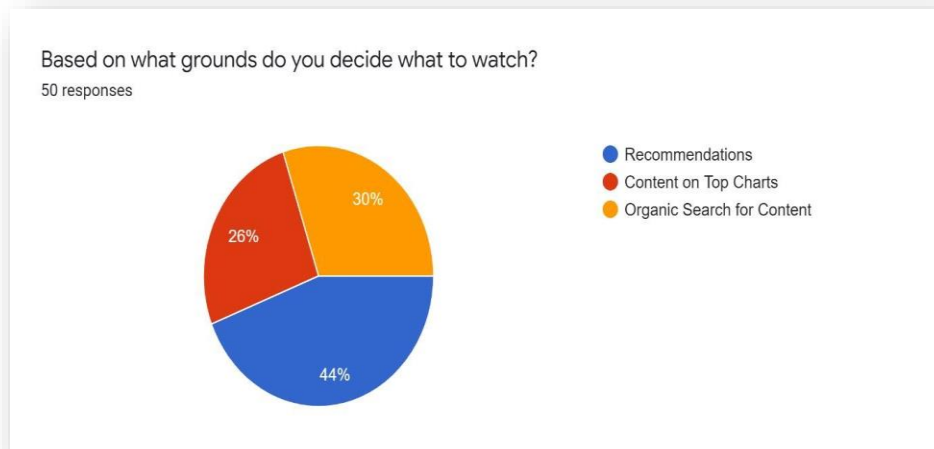
- Web survey with a closed-ended questionnaire was conducted among 50 people who were either subscribed to or have used OTT Platforms for their TV/films Consumption needs

Age Group of Respondents



The following data represents the age proportion of the respondents to the survey conducted. It shows 4% of the respondents fell within the age group, 7-14 years; 54% of the respondents were of the age group, 18-25 years; 18% of the respondents were in the age group, 29-40 years and 26% of the respondents were, 40 and above as per age group. Hence, the majority of the respondents were of the age group, 18-25.

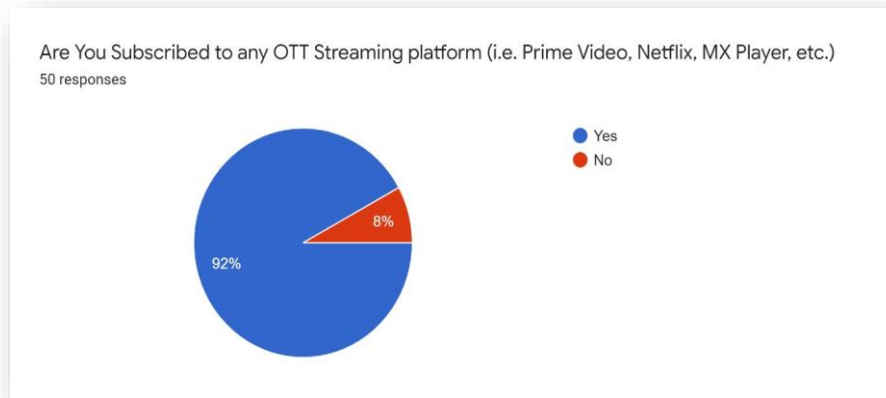
Q1.



Findings: As per the pie chart, 92% of the respondents were subscribed to OTT platform/s and 8% of the respondents were not subscribed to OTT platforms.

Observation: This mechanism helped us to understand the degree of the authenticity within the data provided by the respondents, whether they are having a frame of reference for the data provided or not. Random samples (out of 50) were reached out through call-interview. The respondents who were subscribed were keen consumers of films/TV and were also active users of the OTT services while the people who were not subscribed, have never been active users but have used OTT platforms in the past.

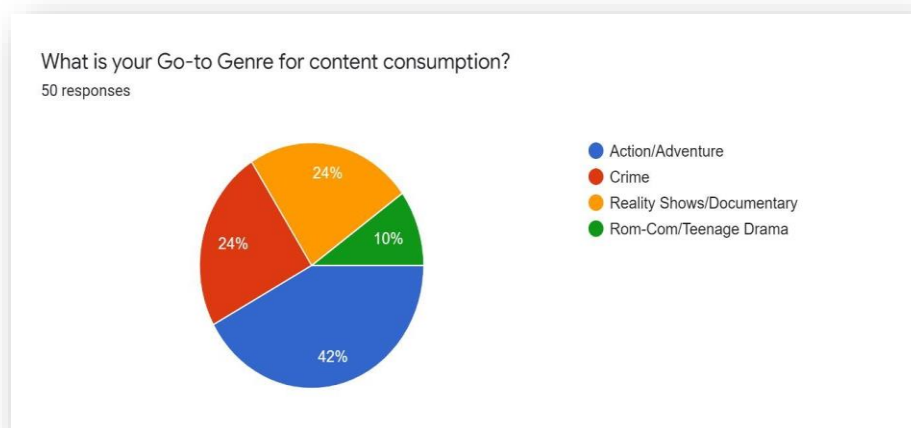
Q2.



Findings: The pie chart represents that 44% of the respondents decide what to watch based upon the recommendations they receive; 26% of the respondents decide based upon the content on top charts and 30% of the respondents decide what to watch based on the organic search which they conduct.

Observation: Approach of the respondents towards the content was identified with most of the respondents (44%) decide what to watch based upon the recommendations which OTT platforms provide to them. According to call-approached samples, the instant nature of recommendation helps in immediate viewing while other mechanisms are lengthier process for them.

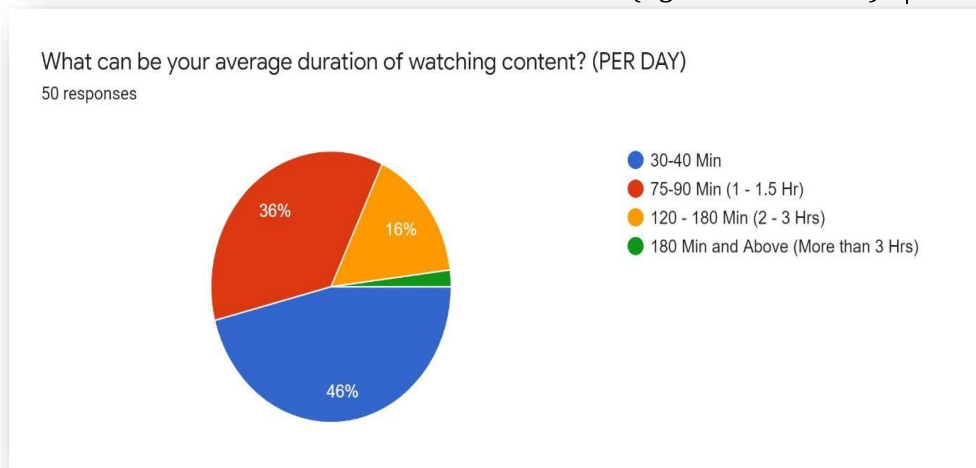
Q3.



Findings: As per the pie charts, the go-to genre for content consumption is Action/Adventure with 42% of the respondents approaching it on usual basis, followed by Crime and Reality Shows/Documentaries with 24% and Rom- com/Teenage dramas being at the bottom with 10%.

Observation: Most of the respondents chose Action/Adventure. Based on call- interviews, Action/Adventure films/TV shows (suggested by them like Stranger Things, The Mandalorian, The Boys etc.) are entertaining, engaging and provide quick thrill which other genres tend to lack. The observation helped to fulfill one of the objectives to find the genres of content which is in vogue.

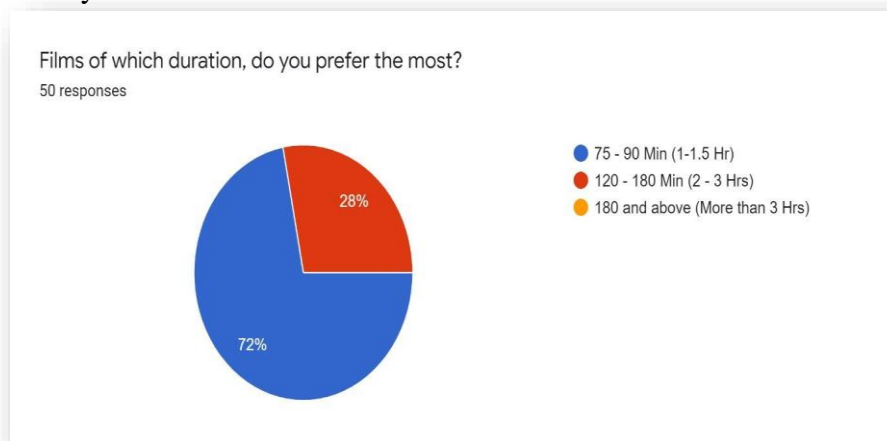
Q4.



Findings: It was found that 46% of the respondents' daily duration of content consumption range from 30-40 min; followed by 36% watching content for 75- 90 Min; 16% watching content for 120-180 Mins and only 2% of the respondents watching content for more than 180 Minutes.

Observations: The majority of the respondents watch content for 30-40 Minutes regularly which depicts that people are willing to watch anything which satisfies their recreational needs within a small duration and they are no willing to invest a lot of time over the consumption. The sample interviewed addressed the habit to invest less duration of time being an affinity for "short and sweet content".

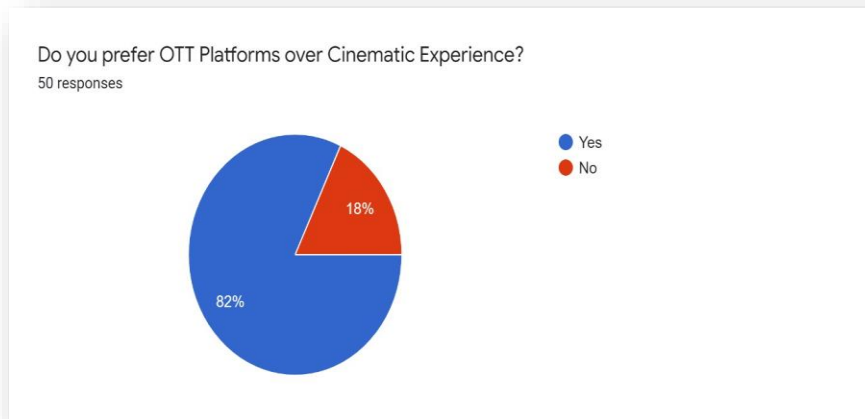
Q5.



Findings: Pie chart shows 72% of the respondents preferring movies of 75-90 Minutes of length and 28% of the respondents choosing movies of 120-180 minutes and 0% preferred movies lengthier than 3 Hrs.

Observation: Majority of the respondents falling for films with length, 75-90 minutes justify the trend where people only prefer to spare less amount of time on films today and rejecting lengthy films which were earlier the trend. The sample interviewed considered, a 180+ Minute movie to be "an event to prepare one self for".

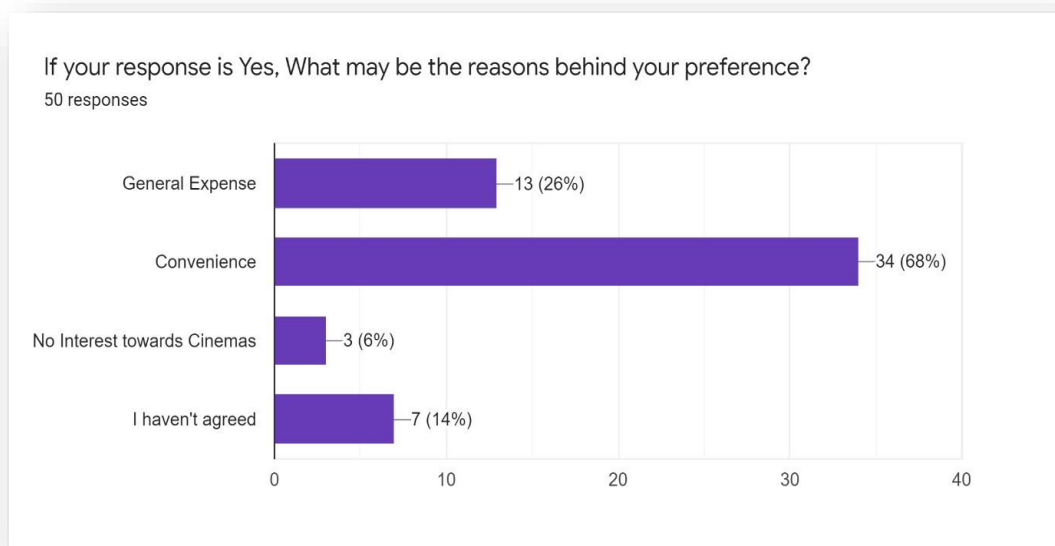
Q6.



Findings: 82% of the respondents preferred watching Films/TV shows through OTT Platforms while 18% of the respondents were against the notion.

Observation: The respondents have shown their support for OTT platforms over Cinematic expression. The respondents addressed instant nature and larger catalogue of films as an advantage of OTT over cinema.

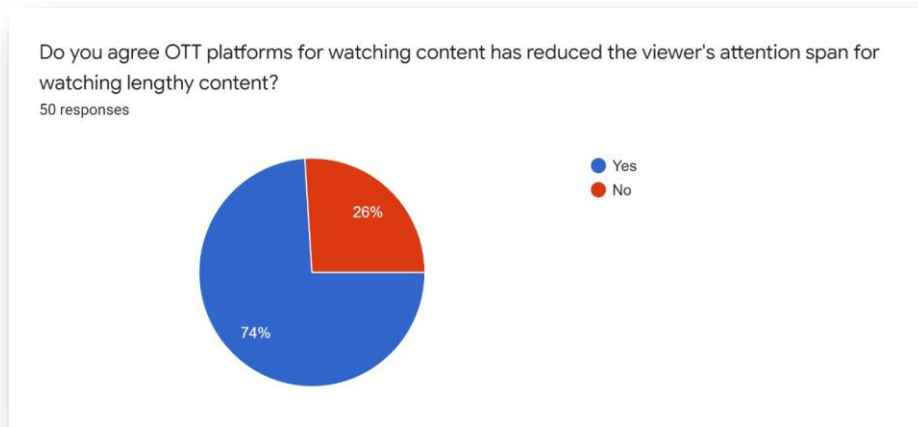
Q7.



Finding: As per graph, 68% of people preferred OTT platforms over Cinematic Experience due to convenience they acquire from it, followed by General Expense being mentioned by 26%, 6% of the respondents addressed no interest in cinema and 14% didn't preferred OTT platforms.

Observation: The response of the majority (68%) being convenience of OTT platforms, reiterate the instant nature to find the content to watch, with zero physical effort to prepare oneself to watch something by going to cinemas. General expense is also a valid point because usually cinematic experience is more expensive than the subscription to OTT services.

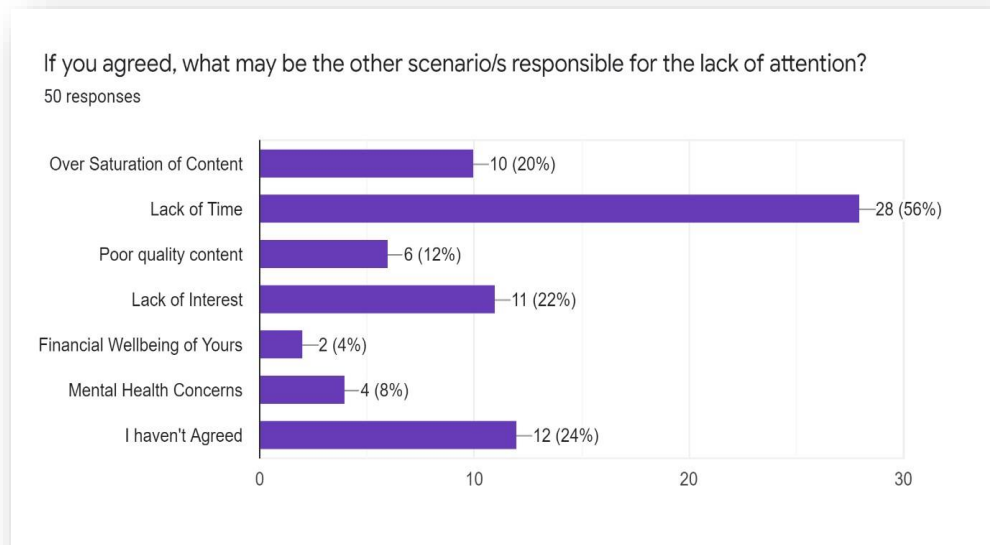
Q8.



Finding: The pie chart shows 74% of the respondents agreeing to the statement of OTT platforms reducing the viewer's attention span for watching lengthy content. 26% disagrees with it.

Observation: Majority has agreed that OTT platforms is having the tendency to reduce the attention span of the viewers. The sample stated its possibilities because a viewer may prefer to watch multiple content within the span of one film, which potentially make a lengthy film, a tiring experience for them.

Q9.

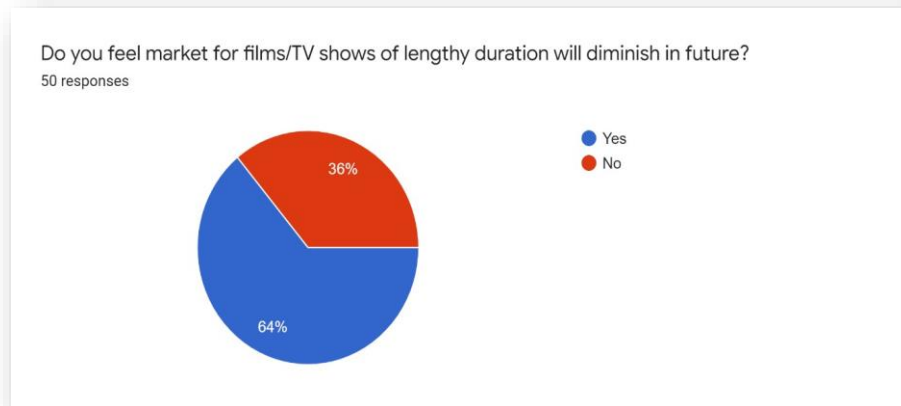


Findings: The graph shows 56% of the respondents finding Lack of Time being the other scenario which is leading to the lack of attention, followed by Over Saturation of Content (20%), Lack of Interest (22%), Poor Quality Content (12%), Mental Health concerns (8%) and Financial wellbeing (2%).

Observation: The majority scenarios are Lack of Time (56%) and Over saturation of content (20%) as a driving force behind lack of attention. The sample stated that since there is lack of time, people prefer watching anything concise and over saturation of content makes people to

not pay immediate attention to the content since there is an abundance of it in the media which can be tapped anytime.

Q10.



Findings: The pie chart depicts 64% of the respondents addressing that market of lengthy film/TV Productions will diminish in future while 36% felt otherwise.

Observation: Based upon majority stating the market for lengthy productions will diminish in future is understandable because in previous questions, the samples have stated affinity towards concise product due to lack of willingness to invest much time and it can also be noticed that a large number of movies in OTT catalogue range from 75-90 minutes in length which is projecting towards the similar trajectory.

- An open-ended, Structured Interview was conducted with the help of Sheeba Messy (Ph.D., Psychology)

1. Action shows were found to be highest in viewership among the respondents. It has led to a pattern where every OTT platform got multiple action, crime shows, what can be the reason behind people attraction to such shows?

Ms. Sheeba addressed that people's attraction towards such content may stem from a primal instinct which demands for thrills and such content provide that dopamine hit which gives us pleasure, so to fulfill that demand OTT platforms may be generating more of such shows and more people are watching it.

2. Earlier we used to watch 3-3 1/2-hour long movie easily, now it is seen top charted films range from 1-1.5 hours but the movies crossing 2 hrs. decline in viewership. Is attention span of the viewers reducing with passing time?

Speaking her take on the situation, Ms. Sheeba explained that people may be gravitating towards short duration content because they may find lengthy material to be tedious and out of the catalogue of the platform, may be able to find out something much precise of shorter duration.

3. People who have agreed to OTT reducing attention span in my research have said the reason to be over saturation of content. How over saturation of content is reducing attention and making people prefer more short duration content.

Over Saturation of content may inculcate a sense of negligence within the viewers that the content is available for their dispose forever, so they may either watch it or leave it anytime they desire.

4. Why people prefer binge watching shows where they spend 5 hrs. to complete the series but if movies' length be 5hr they tend to repel?

Binge watching TV series divides the lengthy duration to small duration episodes so, the cliffhangers at the end of every episode keeps them hooked and at the same time allow them to take a break to prepare them for next watch which on the contrary, a lengthy movie will not provide.

From the very inception of the research, the concept was to study the shift in content viewing habits of the people with the objectives to attain within the process which were:

To access the impact of OTT-platform on content-psychology of People. To find the genre of content in vogue among the people.

To ascertain the reasons for opting content of a certain duration.

The alternative hypothesis was made assuming that the OTT platforms have reduced the attention span of the viewers which has led a shift in their content consumption habits to be more attracted towards short-duration content.

After the study, certain attributes related to the shift in content consumption habits came within the perspective. The findings depict that majority of the OTT platform subscribers watch content based upon the recommendations suggested by the platforms, they tend to 30-40 Minute of content daily and in terms of watching a film, they without a doubt are able to watch anything which fall within 75-90 Minute mark.

OTT platforms tend to render to its subscribers:

- Instant Content
- Inexpensive service
- 24X7availability
- Wide catalogue of content.
- Personalized experience.

Based on the responses of the survey and the professional interview, the alternative hypothesis of the OTT platforms having the tendency to reduce attention span of people, making them gravitate towards shorter duration of content is justified. The observation fulfilling the hypothesis were:

1. OTT platforms service to provide content rendering quick thrills.
2. Over Saturation of Content developing negligence among the viewers to watch content properly, distracting their viewing or bringing it to hold.
3. Mini TV-series get higher viewership than lengthy films of similar length because cliffhangers and ending of episodes provide time to break attention and regain it.
4. Preference to watch multiple content rather than one content equivalent to length of two.

Some other factors which were found to be vocal for the shift in consumption habits due to OTT platforms:

1. Lack of Time available to viewers leading to gravitation towards shorter duration of content.
2. Lack of General Interest in Cinema/TV leading to lack of motivation to consume lengthy content.

Limitations

Some of the respondents were not active subscribers of the OTT services but had used them in past, therefore may not be acquainted with current trends.

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