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## Exploring Consumer Perception and Preferences in OTT Platforms: A Study on the Kerala Market

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### ABSTRACT

The importance of this study lies in its exploration of the shifting consumer preferences towards Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms, which have become a significant part of the entertainment industry. As OTT platforms continue to reshape the media landscape, understanding the factors driving their growth is essential for content providers, marketers, and stakeholders in the entertainment sector. The study used a descriptive research design with a structured survey to capture a broad picture of factors influencing OTT growth among customers in Kerala. Convenience sampling was applied, with primary data collected from 154 respondents. Kerala, known for its high internet penetration and widespread technology usage, provided a suitable sample for this research. Data was gathered via Google Forms, focusing on demographics, OTT usage, and consumer perception. A multiple correlation test was performed to determine the strength of the factors impacting OTT adoption. Future research could explore the role of emerging technologies in shaping OTT consumption.

Keywords: OTT, Adoption, Consumer preferences, Correlation, Factors, Media.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The entertainment industry has undergone a seismic transformation in the past two decades, evolving from linear, scheduled programming to on-demand, personalized content consumption. Traditionally dominated by television and cinema, this sector was anchored by rigid distribution models, time-slot-dependent engagement, and limited viewer flexibility. Broadcast networks and cable TV channels served as primary sources of entertainment, delivering news, serials, films, and reality shows to captive audiences. However, technological advancements and changing consumer behaviours have drastically reshaped this once-static landscape.

In the Indian context, traditional media channels such as Doordarshan, Star Plus, and Asianet have long held cultural significance, especially in regional storytelling and live broadcast journalism. In India, iconic channels like Doordarshan and Asianet News catered to regional storytelling and live journalism, offering a cultural anchor in broadcast media (Abraham, 2025). Cable subscriptions saw a notable decline as audiences sought convenience, variety, and control over their viewing experience. The global entertainment paradigm mirrored this shift, with traditional broadcasters increasingly competing with digital-first content creators and distributors. India's internet penetration reached 67.03% in 2025, accounting for over 971 million users, with rural access climbing steadily (Kumar et al., 2025). This transformation laid the foundation for the exponential rise of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms, which deliver content directly to consumers via internet-enabled devices.

Over-the-top (OTT) platforms, offering content streamed via the internet, have emerged as the new epicentre of entertainment. Services like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+ Hotstar, and ZEE5 allow consumers to watch movies, TV series, documentaries, and regional content across devices at any time. In India, the OTT boom accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic, where lockdowns pushed audiences toward digital escapism. Platforms began curating hyper-local content in multiple languages, tailored to distinct cultural sensibilities and genres—from thrillers to mythology, comedy to social drama.

OTT platforms offer unmatched convenience, cost-efficiency, and content diversity. Subscription models and freemium access cater to all economic segments, making them accessible to rural and urban populations alike. The ability to pause, resume, or binge content at one's own pace has fundamentally changed viewing habits. Globally, the trend is consistent: viewers favor platforms that deliver immersive storytelling, viewer-centric control, and algorithm-based personalization. As 5G rolls out and AI enhances content recommendations, OTT is poised to not just coexist with traditional media but redefine how entertainment is created, consumed, and monetized.

### ***1.1 Objectives***

1. To study the demographic characteristics and the consumer perception towards OTT platforms
2. To study the factors that influence preference towards OTT platforms..

### ***1.2 Scope of the study***

The scope of this study encompasses the exploration of demographic characteristics and consumer perceptions of OTT platforms in India. It will examine the factors influencing preferences for OTT services, including convenience, affordability, content variety, and quality. The study will also analyze how technological advancements and changing consumer behaviours contribute to the rise of OTT platforms. Additionally, it will investigate the cultural impact of OTT platforms, particularly in the context of regional content consumption. The findings aim to provide insights into the evolving entertainment landscape in India and the growing influence of OTT platforms.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

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Consumer preferences for OTT platforms in Kerala are shaped by youth-led adoption, economic accessibility, and widespread smartphone usage, especially amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic (K & K P, 2025). Users show high satisfaction with content variety, underscoring the resilience and growing relevance of streaming services. Consumer preferences toward OTT platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video in India are shaped by content variety, user experience, and pricing strategies, with significant differences in satisfaction levels across users (Nayana et al., 2025). Strategic improvements tailored to these preferences are key to remaining competitive in a rapidly evolving entertainment landscape. Consumer preferences for OTT platforms in India have shifted during the COVID-19 pandemic, with increased viewership driven by factors like time, content quality, convenience, and work-from-home dynamics (Chatterjee et al., 2024). Satisfaction levels are influenced by viewing environment, device choice, and socio-demographic variables.

OTT platform preferences in Chennai are shaped by post-pandemic behavioural shifts, smartphone access, and content diversity, with platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hotstar drawing users across age groups (Iyengar & Venkatesh, 2024). The study highlights declining cable TV subscriptions and rising demand for accessible, localized digital entertainment. Consumer preferences for OTT video streaming are shaped by five key factors—information, accessibility, features, affordability, and quality—with subscription decisions strongly influenced by pricing and demographic variables (Kumar et al., 2025). Multivariate analysis reveals that tailored service offerings can enhance satisfaction and retention in a competitive streaming market. OTT adoption in Kerala is driven by performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, and the COVID-19 pandemic, as revealed through the UTAUT framework (Sujith, 2024). High internet penetration, regional content, and flexible pricing further encourage streaming platform usage among diverse demographics. Consumers increasingly prefer OTT platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime due to their convenience,

content variety, and accessibility across devices. Viewer choices are significantly influenced by factors such as pricing, video quality, and ease of use (Rejo & Ramadevi, 2024). OTT accessibility in Kerala surged during COVID-19, yet digital divide shaped by caste, class, gender, and age created exclusionary barriers for many viewers (Varkey & Johny, 2024). The study underscores the need for inclusive access strategies in entertainment technologies.

Indian consumer preferences for OTT platforms over traditional TV are shaped by on-demand access, ad-free experiences, and personalized content, while TV remains valued for structured programming and affordability (Kant & Sanglod, 2025). The study highlights how digital disruption has transformed entertainment consumption across demographics. Consumer preferences in Kerala have shifted toward OTT platforms due to increased internet access, mobile usage, and pandemic-induced entertainment needs, with regional content and affordability playing a critical role (Kalorth, 2025). The study highlights the expanding digital media landscape and its implications for audience engagement and consumption habits.

Digital marketing strategies among Malayalam news channels in Kerala are driven by platform-specific tactics, B2B and B2C audience engagement, and metrics-based content evaluation to sustain competitiveness (Abraham, 2025). A shift toward Instagram and real-time digital adaptation reflects evolving consumer behaviour and media trends. Netflix's success in India hinges on understanding local viewing behaviours, as predictive models using big data reveal consumption patterns influenced by demographics, cultural preferences, and user reviews (Sahoo & Dutta, 2024). Tailored content strategies driven by machine learning could enhance engagement across India's diverse OTT landscape.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive research design with a structured survey to get a broad picture of the factors that have impacted the growth of OTT platforms among customers in Kerala. Convenience sampling was applied, with primary data collected from 154 respondents in Kerala, India.

Kerala is one of the states in India with a higher rate of internet penetration, and the usage of technology is widespread across the population. Data was gathered via Google Forms, focusing on demographics, OTT usage, and consumer perception. A multiple correlation test was done to check the strength of the factors and which are the most prominent in the group.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Demographic characteristics

Table 1: Demographic characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	Percentage
Age	
18-25	52.1
26-35	23.9
36-45	14.1
46 or older	7
Age (below 18)	2.8

**Gender**

Male	60.6
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Female	39.4
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**Occupation**

Employed	45.1
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Student	42.3
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Self-employed	12.7
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**Domicile**

Urban	53.5
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Rural	46.5
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**Note :** Sample Size, n= 154.

The study's demographic analysis shows that the majority of respondents (52.1%) were aged 18-25, with fewer participants in older age groups. Males represented 60.6% of the sample, while 39.4% were female. Employed individuals (45.1%) and students (42.3%) were the largest occupational groups, with a smaller proportion (12.7%) being self-employed. The sample was fairly balanced in terms of domicile, with 53.5% from urban areas and 46.5% from rural areas. These characteristics provide insight into the diverse consumer base of OTT platforms.

**Table 2 : General Survey on OTT**

Variable	Items	%
Usage Frequency	Once a week	38
	Occasionally	33.8
	Daily	28.2
OTT Platform	Netflix	38
	Disney+Hotstar	35.2
	Amazon Prime	15.5
	Sony Liv	11.3
Daily Usage Time	2-3 hours	77.5
	1-2 hours	12.5
	4 or more hours	7

Device	Less than one hour	2.8
	Smartphones	50.7
	TV	38
	Laptops	11.3
Traditional TV Usage	Several times a week	43.7
	Rarely	26.8
	Daily	16.9
	Once a week	12.7

The survey data reveals that most respondents (38%) use OTT platforms once a week, with 33.8% using them occasionally and 28.2% daily. Netflix (38%) and Disney+ Hotstar (35.2%) are the most popular OTT platforms. Regarding daily usage time, 77.5% spend 2-3 hours, while 12.5% use it for 1-2 hours. Smartphones (50.7%) are the primary device for OTT access, followed by TVs (38%) and laptops (11.3%). Traditional TV usage remains notable, with 43.7% watching it several times a week. These trends indicate a shift toward OTT platforms, particularly on mobile devices, although traditional TV is still widely used.

The shift toward mobile-first consumption is evident, with smartphones emerging as the dominant device for accessing OTT content. This trend is driven by affordable data plans and the convenience of on-the-go viewing, particularly among younger demographics (Gangwar et al., 2024). Platform preferences also mirror broader market trends. Netflix and Disney+ Hotstar continue to lead due to their diverse content offerings, including international series and regional programming. Their popularity is reinforced by strategic bundling with telecom services and aggressive content localization, which resonates with Indian audiences (Madhani & Nakhate, 2024).

Viewing habits have also transformed, with binge-watching becoming a normalized behaviour. Most users now spend 2–3 hours daily on OTT platforms, reflecting a shift in entertainment routines and time allocation. This pattern is particularly pronounced among urban users who value flexibility and personalized content (Patel, 2024). Despite the rise of OTT, traditional television remains relevant. Studies show that while OTT platforms dominate among younger users, traditional TV still holds a significant share among older demographics and for live content such as news and sports (Dasgupta & Grover, 2024).

**Table 3 : Consumer Perception of OTT**

Variable	Items	%
Affordability Perception	Slightly more affordable	54.9
	Same	19.7
	Much more affordable	18.3
	Slightly more expensive	7
Future OTT Usage	Yes	60.6

	Maybe	33.8
	No	5.6
	Need both	54.9
OTT vs Cable TV	Replace with OTT	25.4
	Would not replace	19.7
OTT Users' preference due to:	Availability of contents	59.2
	User interface	22.5
	Quality	18.3

The survey reveals that 54.9% of respondents perceive OTT platforms as slightly more affordable, while 19.7% view them as equally priced and 18.3% as much more affordable. Regarding future usage, 60.6% plan to continue using OTT, while 33.8% are uncertain, and 5.6% do not intend to use them. In terms of OTT vs Cable TV, 54.9% believe both are necessary, 25.4% would replace cable with OTT, and 19.7% would not replace traditional TV. OTT users' preferences are driven primarily by content availability (59.2%), followed by user interface (22.5%) and quality (18.3%). These findings highlight the importance of affordability, content variety, and user experience in driving OTT adoption. User experiences on OTT platforms are strongly shaped by influencer credibility, user satisfaction, and behavioural patterns, which collectively drive continued usage and engagement (Prabhavathy & Senthilkumar, 2025).

#### **Multiple Correlation:** *Factors Influencing You to Shift to OTT Platforms*

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between factors influencing the shift to Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms. The results indicate significant positive correlations among all measured factors.

**Table 4 :** Factors Influencing You to Shift to OTT Platforms

Factors	n	1	2	3	4	5
1. Convenience of watching	154	1	.551**	.551**	.649**	.769**
2. Affordable subscription	154	.551**	1	.612**	.610**	.535**
3. Variety of content	154	.551**	.612**	1	.596**	.694**
4. Ad-free experience	154	.649**	.610**	.596**	1	.653**
5. Better quality content	154	.769**	.535**	.694**	.653**	1

**Note:** \*\* indicates  $p < .05$ . 1=Convenience of watching 2=Affordable subscription 3= Variety of content 4=Ad-free experience, 5=Better quality content.  $n=154$ .

A moderate positive correlation was found between convenience of watching and affordable subscription ( $r(70) = .551$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and between convenience and variety of content ( $r(70) = .551$ ,  $p < .001$ ). A strong correlation was observed between

convenience and better quality content ( $r(70) = .769, p < .001$ ), as well as between convenience and ad-free experience ( $r(70) = .649, p < .001$ ).

The relationship between affordable subscription and variety of content was strong ( $r(70) = .612, p < .001$ ), while a moderate correlation existed with better quality content ( $r(70) = .535, p < .001$ ). Affordable subscription also correlated with ad-free experience ( $r(70) = .610, p < .001$ ). Variety of content was strongly correlated with better quality content ( $r(70) = .694, p < .001$ ) and moderately correlated with ad-free experience ( $r(70) = .596, p < .001$ ).

The findings indicate significant positive correlations between convenience of watching and factors such as affordable subscription, variety of content, better quality content, and ad-free experience, with strong associations between affordable subscription, content variety, and quality. Content quality and pricing are the most influential factors driving Irish consumers' willingness to subscribe to OTT platforms, with household structure and income also shaping adoption decisions (Tauro, 2024). OTT users in India exhibit strong continuance intentions and recommendation behavior influenced by immersive content, customer engagement, and perceived value, with subscription costs playing a secondary role (Chavadi et al., 2025). User surveys reveal that satisfaction with OTT platforms is influenced by usability, content quality, platform experience, and social factors like peer recommendations and digital fluency (Pandey et al., 2024).

## 5.CONCLUSION

The study highlights that OTT platforms are rapidly gaining popularity, with users primarily drawn to factors such as affordability, convenience, content variety, and high-quality content. A significant shift in consumer behaviour was observed, with a preference for mobile devices and increased engagement in binge-watching. Despite the rise of OTT, traditional TV remains relevant for certain demographics, particularly for live content like news and sports. The study also found strong correlations between key factors influencing OTT consumption, such as subscription affordability, content variety, and ad-free experiences. As the OTT market continues to evolve, future research could explore the impact of emerging technologies like AI and 5G on consumer preferences and engagement.

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