

# Exploring the Rise of Regional Content on OTT Platforms in India

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## Abstract

The emergence of Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms has revolutionised the way people access content. This new digital ecosystem has enabled the rise of regional content, which has been gaining popularity among viewers and has enabled viewers to access content in their native language, which has improved engagement within the platforms. The study aims to analyse the regional content availability on OTT platforms and its impact on consumers. It examines the differences in regional content offered by different platforms and the factors influencing these differences. Moreover, the study addresses the implications of such differences on user engagement, what drives users to stream regional content, and satisfaction with OTT services. The study was conducted on 225 youths between the age of 15-29 years using OTT platforms. The findings of this research provide valuable insight for OTT providers in their efforts to better engage their users and capitalise on the potential of regional content.

**Keywords:** OTT platform, popularity, regional content, user satisfaction, Netflix, Amazon prime, Disney+ Hotstar

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## I. Introduction

### 1.1. New Media

"New media is a cultural and technological means of communication that has given rise to a new way of thinking about communication and how we consume and generate media. It is a shift away from conventional media like print and television and toward interactive, digital forms that encourage increased user engagement and interaction.." (Manovich, 2001).

New media is a term that refers to digital technologies and platforms that have emerged in recent years and have revolutionised the way we create, distribute, and consume information. From social media to mobile applications, new media has had a profound impact on our daily lives, communication, and the way we engage with the world around us. This research will explore the nature of new media, its role in society, and its potential to transform various aspects of our lives.

New media is characterized by its convergence. Different media formats such as text, audio, and video are merging into a single platform, creating new forms of communication and expression. One of the key characteristics of new media is its interactivity. Unlike traditional media such as print or broadcast, new media allows users to actively engage with the content and participate in its creation. Users can comment, share, like, and create their content, which has led to a democratisation of the media landscape.

### 1.2. OTT Platforms

"Over-the-Top" (OTT) refers to a form of media streaming platform that enables users to access content including movies, TV series, music, and live streaming broadcasts over the internet without needing a satellite subscription or traditional cable. Popular OTT platforms include, among others, Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, Spotify, and YouTube.

OTT services are becoming increasingly popular in India due to the convenience and affordability they offer to users, allowing users to view what content they want whenever they want. Additionally, OTT services provide features such as mobile streaming, offline downloading, and high-definition quality video, which are very appealing to consumers.

"OTT provider" is a service provider who delivers Information and Communication Technology (ICT) services but does not own a network or lease network capacity from a network operator, according to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Consultation Paper (2015). Instead, OTT providers go "over-the-top" of a TSP's network by relying on the global internet and access network speeds (varying from 256 kilobits for message to rates in the range of Megabits (0.5 to 3) for video streaming) to reach the consumer. The three primary categories of OTT apps are voice and messaging services (communication services), non-real-time application ecosystems connected to social networks and e-commerce, and video/audio content.

### **1.3. Rise and growth of OTT Platforms in India**

"India's media, communications, and entertainment sectors have undergone a significant transformation courtesy to the millennial digital revolution, making it one of the world's fastest-growing and most competitive marketplaces for online streaming platforms and content producers." (Bose, 2022)

Unlike most other industries, the Covid-19 outbreak changed the game for the media and entertainment sector. As cinemas were largely shut down and television material remained stable, OTT emerged as the brand-new and exciting location for premium entertainment.

"The preference for OTTs in India can be traced back to the launch of ditto TV in 2012 by one of the pioneers in satellite television, Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd, which became India's first home-grown OTT TV distribution platform. Customers may access live TV channels and video-on-demand (VOD) material on their smartphones, tablets, laptops, desktops, entertainment boxes, and even linked TVs with the help of this service..... In the same year, Eros Now, a division of Eros International Plc, was launched, providing customers have access to the largest selection of premium Indian entertainment, which includes hundreds of films in multiple languages, including Tamil and Hindi.." (Varma, 2015).

One of the world's fastest-growing OTT markets is in India, with a current user base of over 400 million and an expected market size of \$14 billion by 2025. The OTT market in India is dominated by a few major players such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+ Hotstar, and Zee5. These platforms provide a wide variety of content, including movies, TV shows, web series, and documentaries from India and around the world. They have also invested heavily in producing original content tailored to Indian audiences, featuring local languages and diverse cultural themes.

"The Indian OTT ecosystem has been further energised by the entry of international players Netflix and Amazon Prime, the video-on-demand (VoD) platform of the Seattle-based online retailer adding a competitive edge, and is now witnessing a fierce competition between home-grown platforms like Star India's Hotstar, Viacom18's Voot, Zee's ditto TV, Balaji Telefilms, ALT Balaji, and Sony's Sony LIV, independent players like Spuul and other global streaming platforms.." (Bose, 2022)

### **1.4. Availability of Regional Content**

With the rise of OTT platforms in India, creators are increasingly catering to regional audiences, producing content in various languages and dialects. According to the 2022 FICCI EY analysis, as more streaming platforms adopt regional shows and films, the percentage of regional languages in total OTT (over-the-top) video content will increase from 27% in 2020 to 54% in 2024.

According to a report by Boston Consulting Group and Confederation of Indian Industry, "OTT platforms are now offering a range of local-language and regional content to capture the next wave of growth in the Indian market" (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2021).

Vijay Subramaniam, former Director and Head of Content at Amazon Prime Video India, stated in an interview with Livemint, "India is a land of diverse stories and we've always believed in the importance of bringing a variety of content to our audiences, including regional stories and language shows" (Livemint, 2020).

This rise in the availability of regional content can be attributed to several factors. One of the main factors is the growing demand for such content. According to Hoichoi's Head of Operations and Strategy, Soumya Mukherjee, there is a rising need for top-notch regional language OTT content. There is a big potential market in India for regional content, so it might do well there. Globally, Bengali is spoken by more than 250 million people, or about as many as there are in the United States. It is also the sixth most extensively used language worldwide. Before we launched Hoichoi, that considerably increased our confidence. We were one of the first regional OTT platforms in the country." (Farooqui, 2021)

Popular regional OTT platforms in India are, Sun NXT which is owned by Sun TV Network, which offers a wide range of content in various regional languages, including Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Kannada. It offers a variety of Indian and foreign content, including live TV stations, films, TV episodes, and web series.

Kodeeswari is a Tamil language OTT platform that offers educational and informative content for women. A Kalinga TV, an Odia language OTT platform that offers news, entertainment, and informative content in Odia. These are just a few examples of the many regional OTT platforms available in India.

### 1.5. Statement of the Problem

The increasing penetration of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms in India has directed to a surge in demand for content in regional languages. This trend is driven by the diverse linguistic and cultural landscape of the country, where people prefer consuming content in their mother tongue. While the popularity of regional content on OTT platforms is obvious, there has been little research on the continued trend of regional OTT platforms and the influence it has on the Indian OTT sector. This research aims to explore the rise of regional content on OTT platforms in India, its impact on user behaviour, and the potential for further growth.

### 1.6. Research Questions

- What factors have contributed to the growth in regional content on OTT platforms in India in recent years?
- How has the availability of regional content on OTT platforms impacted the consumption patterns of Indian audiences and user satisfaction?
- What are the different types of regional content that are popular on OTT platforms in India?

### 1.7. Significance of the Study

The increase of regional content on OTT platforms has implications for language preservation and cultural diversity in India. By providing a platform for regional creators to showcase their work, OTT platforms are contributing to the preservation and promotion of local languages and cultures.

The study of regional content on OTT platforms has the potential to shed light on the viewing habits and preferences of Indian audiences. Understanding these patterns can help OTT platforms and creators to better provide to the requirements and interests of their target audience.

Overall, the study of the rise of regional content on OTT platforms in India is significant because it not only provides insights into the shifting landscape of the media and entertainment industry but also highlights the importance of preserving and promoting cultural diversity in the country.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Review of Literature

In the article, *'Factors Affecting Online Streaming Subscriptions'* explores how gaining customers nowadays takes more than just advertising as digital media continues to expand and online streaming services increase. In this study, researchers investigate various factors that consumers take into account while selecting cable television service and online streaming services. A survey questionnaire was used to acquire the sample data at a public university. Regression models with multiple variables were advanced to find the variables influencing each option. Statistics proved to be significant for both models. The regression model for cable TV showed statistical significance for extra purchases, societal trends (negative), cost, and customer service components. In contrast, the regression model for internet streaming only considered societal trends and accessible options as relevant variables." (Lee et al., 2018)

The paper titled, *'Localization, diversification, and heterogeneity: Understanding the linguistic and cultural logics of Indian new media'* study about the pervasiveness of India's new media economy, which has resulted from the emergence of streaming media platforms and the growth of new regional online content makers in India. Regional content is in demand as streaming platforms and online creators increasingly invest in "non-Hindi" and "non-English" language content to cater to India's linguistically and culturally diverse population. Indian audiences increasingly prefer online content in their native language.

This paper examines the 'local', 'regional', 'transnational', and 'global' appeal of Bengali and Marathi languages, as well as the subsequent distorting of the lines among regionalization and 'localization,' with a key focus on online content development in those languages. It also emphasizes on the growing diaspora of local online content providers who are adopting different content approaches to advance connections with online communities built on shared language and cultural qualities. (Mehta, 2019)

In the study by Aras Özgün and Andreas Treske, titled *'On Streaming-Media Platforms, Their Audiences, and Public Life'* investigates how audience behaviour on streaming media platforms is divided into its individual components while shifting in terms of time, space, and relational dynamics. Drawing on fundamental ideas from television, audience, and film studies, it explores the current as well as possible consequences of this new technological form on public life. (Özgün and Treske, 2021).

Due to this new economic paradigm, businesses that offer a variety of media-related along with a number of other services through algorithmically measured marketing processes now dominate the media and entertainment sectors. Several of these platforms, including Google, Amazon, and Apple, are solely focused on

offering entertainment products in a variety of narrative forms and styles that can be accessed online via computer screens, contemporary TV sets, as well as on mobile devices. However, other platforms, including Netflix, Hulu, and YouTube, also offer a variety of entertainment products in a variety of narrative forms and styles.

“When compared to regional content, growing interest in diverse cultures, as well as the type of entertainment accessible, this scenario appears to be evolving as a result of the introduction and growth of several domestic and foreign OTT (Over the Top) video streaming services. The demand for both original content and international content that has been subtitled, adapted, or dubbed indicates that these platforms need to step up their game and bring in more content in these categories. The interviews conducted for the research study were helpful in gaining insight into how Indian regional language content is establishing its own niche, how audiences respond to it, the challenges that still lie ahead, the need for content evolution, and how it will, despite the obstacles, expand the opportunities for regional content creators.” (Golwalkar and Mishra, 2023)

The paper, *‘How over-the-top (OTT) platforms engage young consumers over traditional pay television service? An analysis of changing consumer preferences and gamification’* intends to investigate in what way the top over-the-top (OTT) platform is becoming a top choice of entertainment among young customers in India over traditional TV service (Cable TV/DTH), and what factors effect such preferences, as well as content gamification. The study refers to the theoretical outlines of niche analysis and use and gratifications theory. According to empirical data and discussion, content and viewing habits, service costs, shifts caused by offers or incentives, convenience, and connectivity are the five elements that affect consumers' entertainment choices. By using logistic regression to assess the effectiveness of these characteristics, it was found that the three most important variables were content and watching habits, service costs, and convenience. (Sadana & Sharma, 2021)

In the research paper, *‘Emergence and future of Over-the-top (OTT) video services in India: an analytical research’* discovers the rise, benefit, and future of streaming services in India via analytical research. It talks about OTT services, their growing factors, technology background, viewers characteristics, content, censorship, and future growths... Internet users who speak regional languages are growing more quickly than those who speak Hindi or English. Content demonstrates uptake in terms of engagement as viewers continue to choose to consume it in their native language. As a result, in addition to Hindi and English, big streaming services like Amazon Prime and Netflix are spending more money creating content in eight important Indian languages. Hoichoi, a multimedia streaming platform that primarily supports Bengali, saw an 85% increase in traffic in March 2019, going from 76 thousand total unique visitors in March 2018 to 140K in March 2019.

In contrast to the initial niche offering, the inclusion of regional content has paved the method for mass-market adoption. The demand for local dialectal content progress will result in the formation of new platforms and content creators who will effort to create narratives that provide to each market. (Sundaravel & Elangovan, 2020)

In the paper, *‘Competitions among OTT TV Platforms and Traditional Television in Taiwan: A Niche Analysis,’* investigates whether OTT is a complement or a substitute for traditional television. By grouping satisfaction into seven categories, the study applies niche theory to investigate the elements that affect how complementary or substitutive OTT TV is to cable TV. An online poll that was performed in March 2016 obtained 620 valid replies. According to the data, there are more significant western OTT platforms than local OTT operators. The statistics demonstrate that OTT TV surpasses traditional TV in all seven niche breadth metrics, with convenience showing the highest difference. According to research, there are many similarities between OTT and traditional TV in terms of ease of use and level of enjoyment. (Katherine Chen, 2019)

## 2.1 Research Gap

There have been many research papers that studied on OTT platforms, but there is no significant research study on the availability of regional content on these online streaming services. While many studies have focused on English-language content on OTT platforms, there is a need for more research on regional content in non-English languages. This is particularly important given the growing popularity of OTT platforms in regions with diverse linguistic backgrounds. This research seeks to explore the factors that have contributed to the growth of local content on OTT platforms, regional content availability on OTT platforms, and changing consumer preferences.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This paper aims to find out how the availability of regional content on OTT platforms has impacted consumer behaviour. With the growth of OTT platforms in India, content creators are increasingly catering to regional audiences, creating content in a variety of languages and dialects. The purpose of this study is to examine the rise of regional content on OTT platforms in India, its impact on user behaviour, the challenges and opportunities for the OTT industry, and the potential for future growth.

### **3.1 Objectives of the Study**

- To study consumer preferences and behaviour towards regional content on OTT platforms.
- To explore the types of regional OTT platforms and content availability that are popular among audiences in India.
- To study the factors that motivate users to stream regional content, and examine the level of satisfaction of users with OTT services.

### **3.2 Operational Definition**

#### **• OTT platforms**

““Over-the-Top,” or OTT, is a cutting-edge method of delivering television and movie content via the internet at the request and in accordance with the needs of the individual consumer.” (Telestream, n.d)

#### **• Youth**

“Youth, unlike a fixed age range, is a more fluid category. The term "youth" refers to a person between the ages of leaving compulsory education and getting their first job. Several nations/agencies, as well as the same agency, define the young age group differently in different contexts. The youth age group is commonly characterised as being between the ages of 15 and 29.” (National Youth Policy, 2014)

#### **• Subscription model**

"This is a Paid membership model in which an OTT company charges users a monthly or yearly subscription fee to stream on-demand content." (Paytm blogs, 2022)

#### **• Regional content**

"Regional OTT content is defined as any content created and consumed by people in a specific region." This might range from current events and news to television series and films. The major difference between regional OTT content and other types of material is that it is tailored precisely for the region in which it is viewed." (Reelinreel, 2022)

### **3.3 Research Design**

This research study has adopted the ‘survey method’ for the primary data collection. It will be carried out by formulating a questionnaire to operate the survey method to understand the popularity of regional content on the OTT platforms.

#### **3.3.1 Survey method**

A survey method is a method of gathering data that consists of a series of structured questions to which respondents respond based on their knowledge and experiences.

#### **3.3.2 Questionnaire Design**

A questionnaire is a set of questions or items used to gather data about respondents' views, experiences, or opinions. (Bhandari, 2023)

A multi-paged detailed structure was drafted and circulated among the respondents via google forms. This involves a questionnaire with scalable options which makes it a quantitative survey.

The survey questionnaire consists of two segments, namely Section A and Section B.

Section A consists of demographic information such as name, age, gender, location, occupation, and contact details.

Section B of the questionnaire consists of 20 close-ended questions based on OTT usage: This section consists of questions about the respondent's usage of OTT platforms, the frequency of usage, and the preferred platform, the information about the respondent's preference for regional content on OTT platforms, the impact of regional content on their usage of OTT platforms, and the quality of regional content available on OTT platforms.

### **3.4 Sampling and Sample size**

The youth population (ages 15 to 29) was given the questionnaire. The National Youth Policy (2014) defines youth as those between the ages of 15 and 29. According to the National Youth Policy of 2014, "youth" is now defined as being between the ages of 15 and 29. The National Youth Policy of 2003 described youth as being between the ages of 13 and 35. (National Youth Policy, 2014).

The questionnaire was circulated among 250 respondents across India by using a Simple random sampling approach. “A simple random sample is a subset of a population chosen at random. Each member of the population has an exactly equal probability of being chosen using this sampling procedure.” (Thomas, 2022).

### **3.5 Theoretical Background**

#### **3.5.1 Uses and Gratification Theory**

One of the major theories this research paper can be backed with is, Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) which is a communication theory that focuses on how individuals actively use media to satisfy their specific requirements



and requests. In relation to the objections of the study, the theory will promote a deeper understanding of its implications.

“A more fundamental shift in focus was to explore why or how audiences react to media rather than what effect media has on them.” Researchers established the uses and gratifications model on the premise that audiences are not passive or weak, but rather exercise choice. This depicts the decision-making process that audiences go through while deciding whether to respond to advertising by shopping more or ignoring them. Audiences are active seekers of media that best fits their wants or reinforces their existing views and interests, according to the uses and gratifications paradigm.” (Media text hack, 2018)

### 3.5.2 Innovation Adoption Model (AIETA Model)

This model was developed by Everett Rogers and focuses on the mental processes that a consumer goes through from the time he hears about an invention until he finally adopts it (Kotler et al., 2022). The model refers to Awareness - Interest - Evaluation - Trial - Adoption (AIETA). This model proposes that the adoption of any innovation is a multi-step process, which means that individuals do not make adoption decisions in a vacuum or that adoption is not an immediate behavioral choice. The five steps that people seem to go through before acting to adopt an innovation are listed below.

- Awareness: The consumer is aware of the invention but is unaware of its details.
- Interest: The consumer feels compelled to learn more about the innovation.
- Evaluation: The consumer decides whether or not to test the new product.
- Trail: Consumers test the innovation for the first time.
- Adoption: It occurs when a consumer becomes a regular user of a product. (Dasgupta & Grover, 2019)

### 3.7 Limitations of the study

Every research study has limitations, and it's important to acknowledge and address them in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings

- Sample Size: This study was conducted on a small sample size, which may have limited the generalizability of the findings.
- Data Collection Challenges: It was difficult reaching participants as the survey was conducted online via google forms.
- Time Constraints: There was a limited amount of time to conduct the study.

## IV. DATA ANALYSIS

### 4.1. Demographic Profile of the population

The demographic profile of the respondents has revealed interesting data by giving an insight into the demographic picture of the respondents. The demographic details have been highlighted with the following information regarding the respondents- gender, age, and geographic location.

#### 4.1.1 Gender

The gender profile showed 49.78% (n=112) of the respondent are male, 48.89% (n=110) are female and only 1.33% (n=3) is transgender.

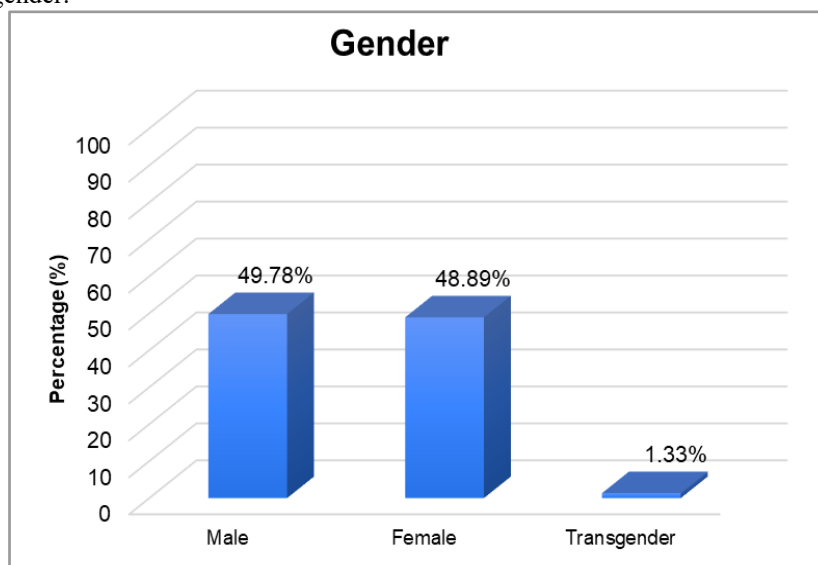


Fig. 1.1 Graph representing gender

#### 4.1.2 Age Group

The sample shows that 27.56% (n=62) belong to the age group (15-19 years) followed by the age group between (20-24 years) i.e, 33.78% (n=76), and the rest of the respondents belong to the age group of 25-29 years covering 38.67% (n=87).

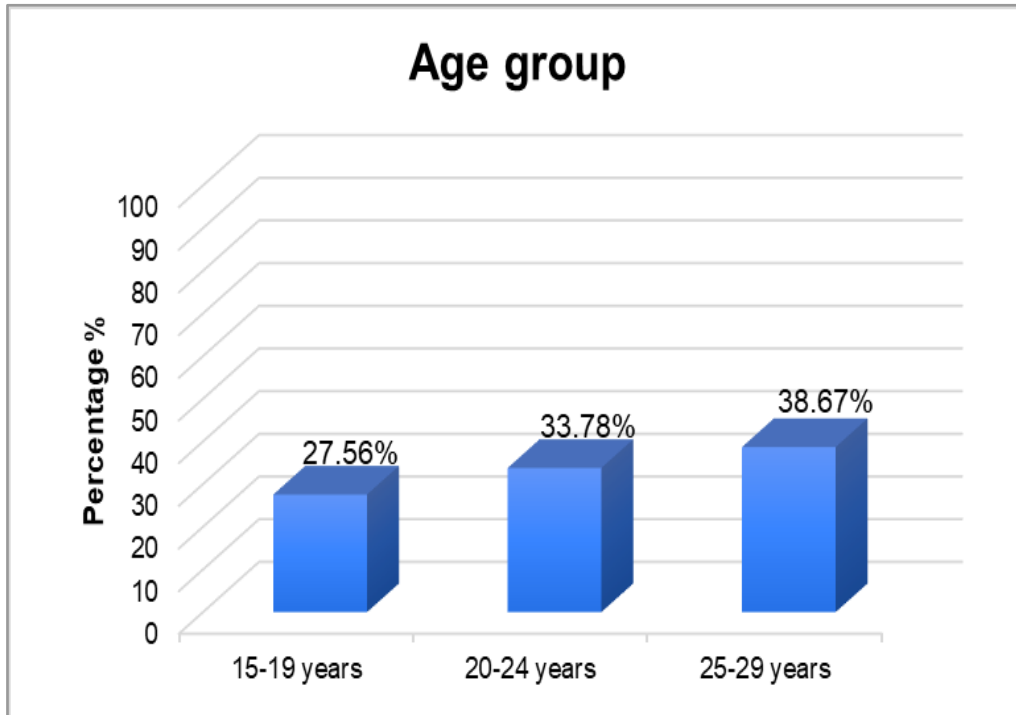


Fig 1.2 Graph representing Age group.

#### 4.1.3 Location

The data for this research study was collected from 28 states and 4 union territories of India listed below in table 1.1.

State Name	Number of Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Island	1	0.44
Andhra Pradesh	3	1.33
Arunachal Pradesh	2	0.89
Assam	28	12.44
Bihar	5	2.22
Chhattisgarh	4	1.78
Delhi	9	4.00
Goa	4	1.78
Gujarat	6	2.67
Haryana	10	4.44
Himachal Pradesh	2	0.89
Jammu & Kashmir	4	1.78
Jharkhand	6	2.67

State Name	Number of Respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
Karnataka	33	14.67
Kerela	6	2.67
Madhya Pradesh	8	3.56
Maharashtra	9	4.00
Manipur	2	0.89
Meghalaya	2	0.89
Mizoram	3	1.33
Nagaland	3	1.33
Odisha	5	2.22
Puducherry	3	1.33
Punjab	5	2.22
Rajasthan	8	3.56
Sikkim	3	1.33
Tamil Nadu	10	4.44
Telangana	4	1.78
Tripura	5	2.22
Uttarakhand	4	1.78
Uttar Pradesh	13	5.78
West Bengal	15	6.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 1.1** List of Indian states and union territories with the number of respondents.

#### **4.2. Usage of OTT platforms**

The majority of the respondents, i.e., 98.67 % (n=222) are using OTT platforms, and only 1.33% (n=3) of the respondents have not heard of OTT platforms.



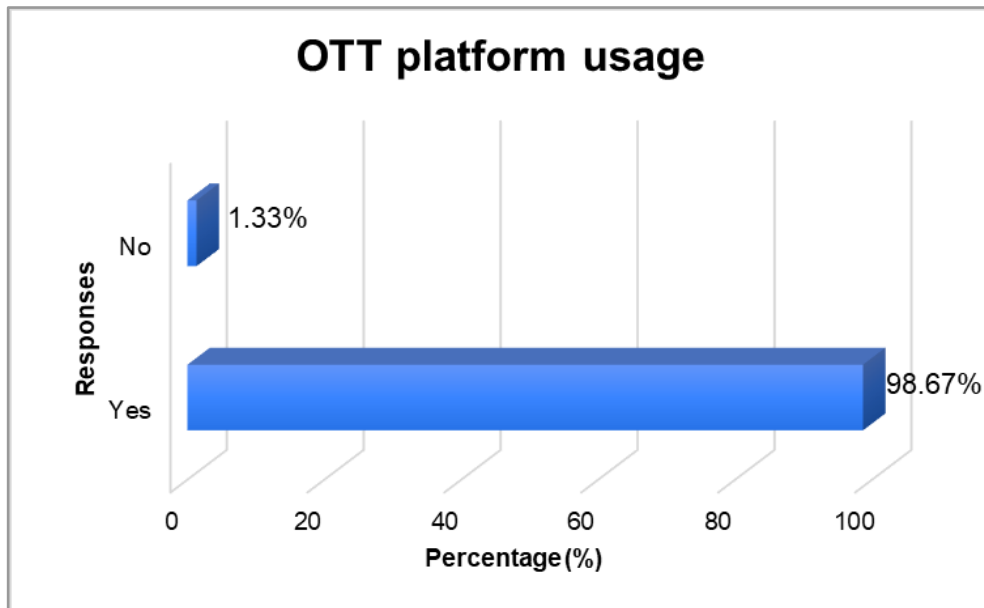


Fig. 1.3. Chart showing usage of OTT platforms

#### 4.3. Content consumption

About 4.89% (n=11) of the respondents rarely consume content on OTT platforms. Only 6.67% (n=15) watch once a month. 28.89 % (n=65) of the respondents consume content on OTT platforms once a week, and lastly, 59.56% (n=134) people watch content on a daily basis.

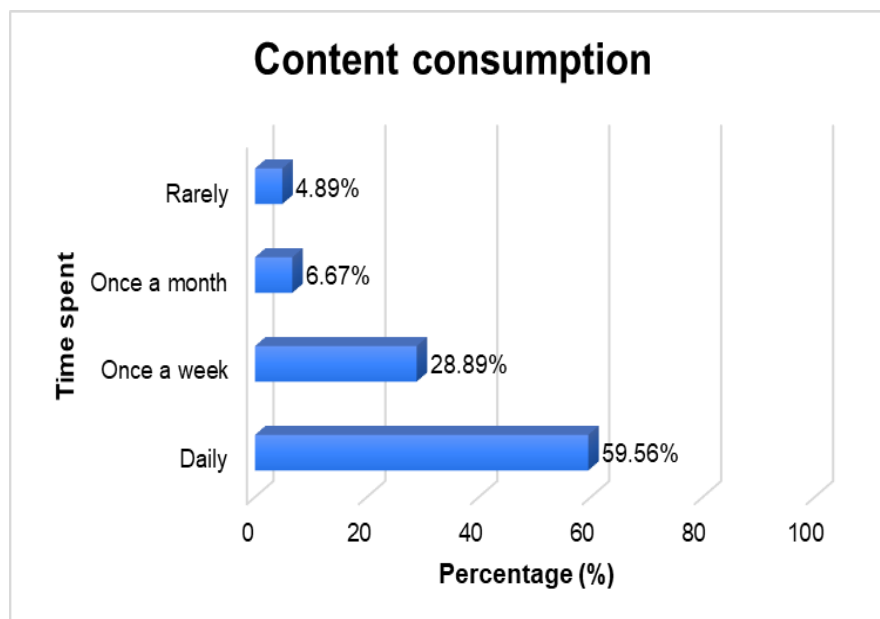
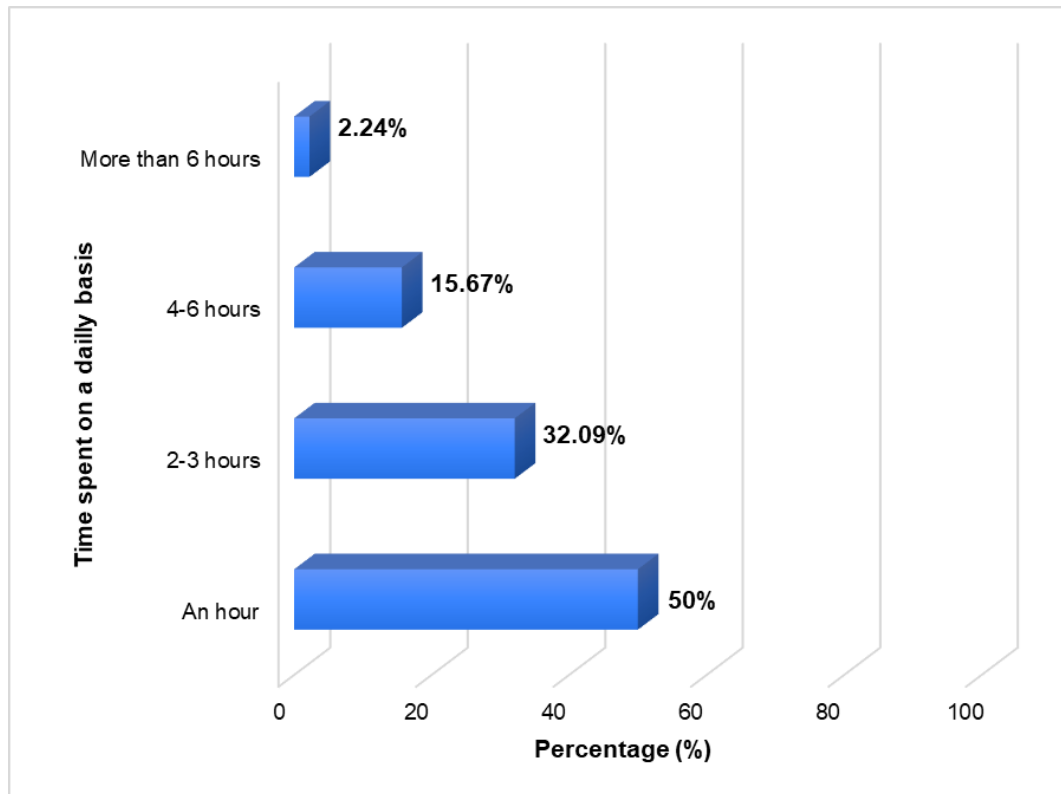


Fig. 1.4. Time spent on OTT platforms

#### 4.4. Time spent on OTT platforms daily

134 respondents said that they consume OTT content daily. Out of that, 50% (n= 67) watch for an hour. 32% (n=43) consume for 2-3 hours per day and 15.671% (n=21) spend 4-6 hours on these platforms. And, only 2.24% (n=3) responded that they spent more than 6 hours on OTT platforms daily.



**Fig. 1.5.** Time spent on OTT platforms per day.

#### 4.5. Factors liked about OTT platforms

In this section, the respondent could choose multiple options on the list given. 141 opted for original content, as these OTT platforms are popular for producing their exclusive originals. 129 respondents like Ads-free content on the OTT platforms. 113 responded conveniences. 95 people like OTT platforms because it is affordable. In many OTT platforms, when the subscription is taken there is an option of downloading the content and watching it offline, so 82 responded for that. 76 responded to Smart recommendations, an AI-powered search and recommendation service for OTT that analyses the past data history of a user and provides recommendations that are more likely to engage the user. 60 opted for regional-based content and 59 responded to Live broadcasts of sports.

FACTORS	Number of Respondents (N)
Original content	141
Ads-free content	129
Convenience	113
Affordability	95
Downloadable/offline videos	82
Smart recommendations	79
Region-specific content	60
Live broadcasting of sports	59

**Table 1.2** Factors liked about OTT platforms

#### 4.6. Platforms used by the respondents to watch content

In this question, the respondent could choose multiple options on the list given. From the data collected, 181 choose Netflix, it was launched in late 2016 in India. Since then, its popularity has grown steadily. Disney+ Hotstar is referred to as it streams IPL, so 163 opted for that. Similarly, 161 responded to Amazon prime video. YouTube got 155 responses as it doesn't require a subscription. Zee5 and SonyLiv got a similar response of 78. 43 people chose Jio cinema, which provides endless entertainment in HD quality videos exclusively for Jio users. Voot, for enthusiasts of MTV shows like Roadies, Splitsvilla, Myntra Fashion Superstar, etc. got 37 responses whereas MX player got 20 responses. ALT Balaji is preferred by 14 respondents. Hoichoi is an Indian subscription OTT streaming service focused mainly on Bengali content which received 10 responses. GMMTV got only 2 responses. Apple TV, Lionsgate, Asian TV, and Drama cool got 1 response each.

OTT PLATFORMS	Number of Respondent (N)
Netflix	181
Disney+ Hotstar	163
Amazon Prime Video	161
Youtube	155
Zee5	78
SonyLiv	78
Jio Cinema	43
Voot	37
MX player	20
ALTBalaji	14
Hoichoi	10
GMMTV	2
Apple TV	1
Lionsgate	1
Asian TV	1
Drama cool	1

**Table 1.3** Platforms used by the respondents to watch content.

#### 4.7 Preference for watching regional content on OTT platforms

From the data collected almost majority of the respondents i.e., 47.11% (17.78% + 29.33% ; n=40 , 66) responded that they always or often prefer watching regional content because regional language contenting India is going beyond simply dubbing from one language to another. There are a growing number of regional platforms and OTT apps that cater to viewers looking for content in their native languages. Another 34.67% (n=78) responded for sometimes. And, 18.22% (13.33% + 4.89 %; n=30, 11) rarely watch regional content on OTT platforms.

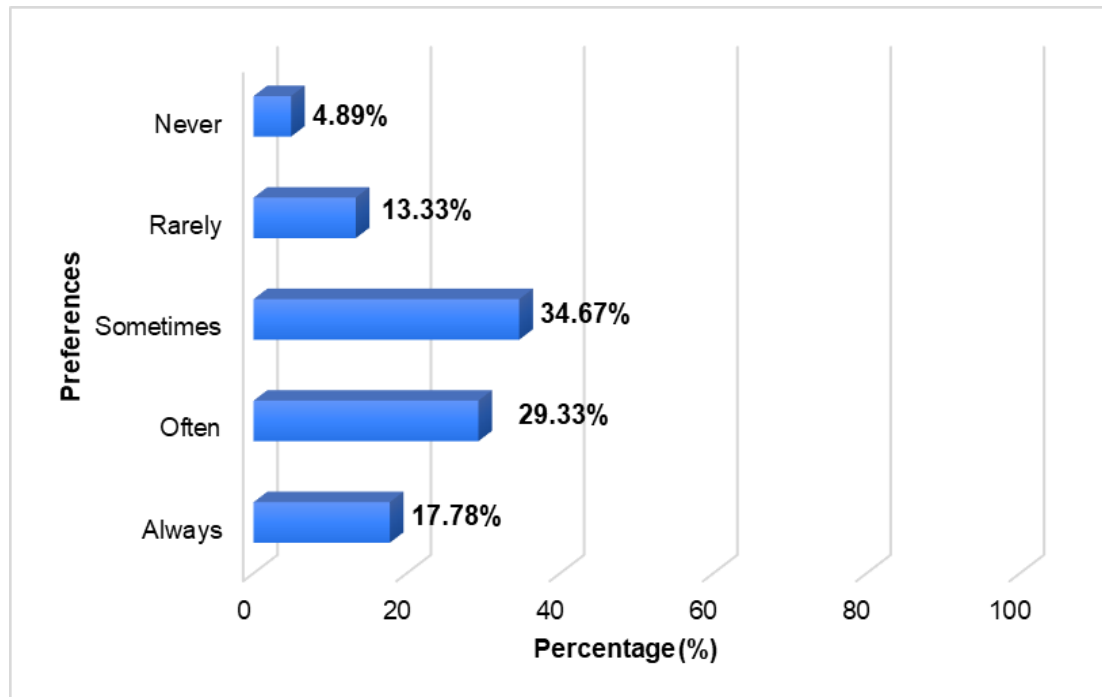


Fig. 1.6. Preference of regional content on OTT platforms

#### 4.8. Increase in regional content on OTT platforms in India

According to a recent FICCI EY report, regional language content on OTT would account for 54% of all content by 2024. From the responses, 73.38% (47.56% + 26.22%; n=107, 59) agree that they have noticed an increase in regional content on OTT platforms available in India. 19.56% (n=44) have no opinion about this, and only 6.67% (n=15) disagree and they don't think there's an increase in regional content. It shows that people are more comfortable in their regional language.

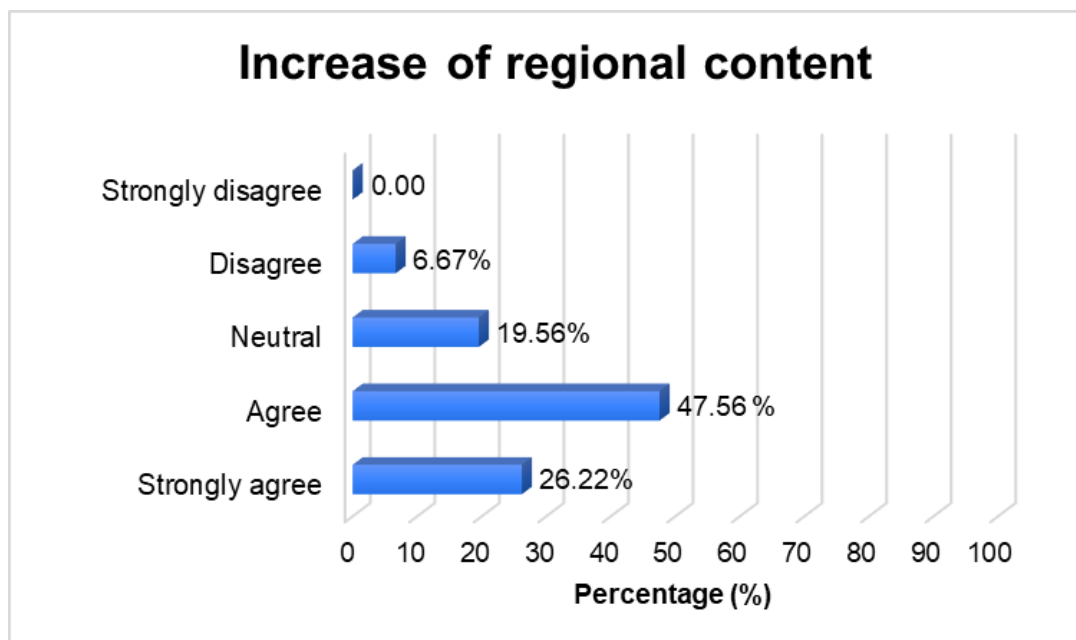
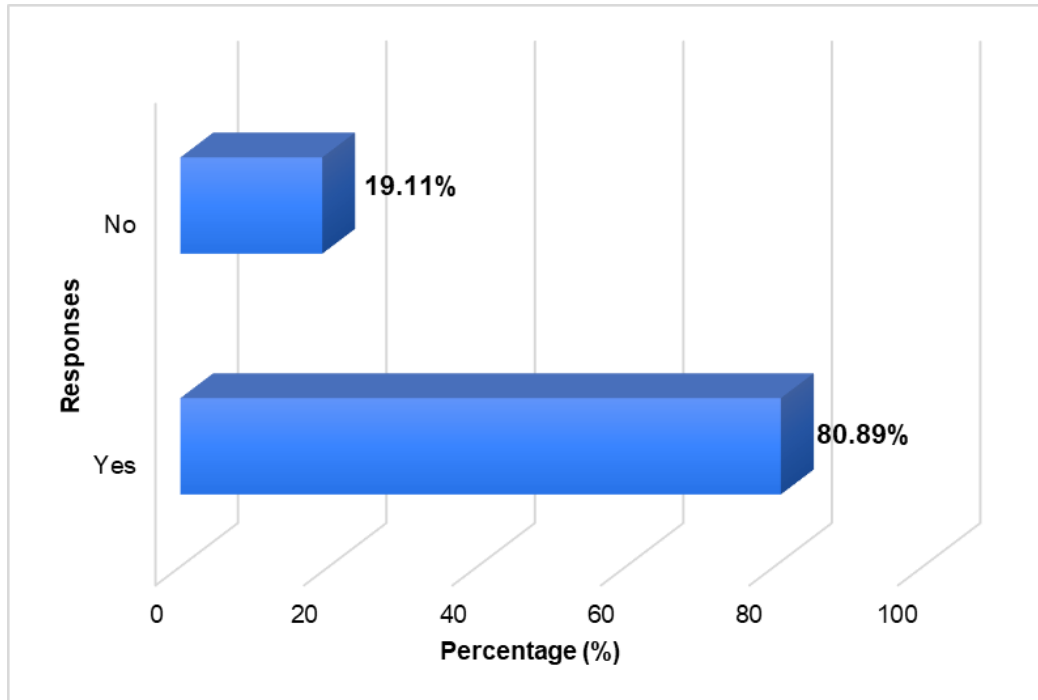


Fig 1.7. Graph representing an increase in regional content on OTT platforms in India

#### 4.9. Subscription to regional-specific OTT platforms

From the responses obtained, we can state that 80.89% (n=182) of the respondents have subscribed to region-specific online streaming platforms, it shows that people want to see stories and characters that they can relate to. Whereas, only 19.11% (n=45) of respondents have not subscribed to the OTT platforms, shows that they are not keen on spending money to watch content on these platforms.



**Fig. 1.8.** Subscription to regional-specific platforms by the respondents

#### 4.10 Regional language preference

In this question, the respondent could choose multiple options on the list given. We can see from the table below that, 118 watch Hindi content on OTT platforms, Bengali content is popular among respondents, and 58 opted for it. Tamil and Kannada language contents are consumed by 51 respondents. 32 responded to the Malayalam language and 23 responded to Marathi. Gujarati language content is watched by 6 respondents. And Assamese, Tulu, and Hariyani languages to 1 response each.

REGIONAL LANGUAGE	Number of Respondents (N)
Hindi	118
Bengali	58
Tamil	51
Kannada	51
Telugu	47
Malayalam	32
Marathi	23
Gujarati	6
Assamese	1
Tulu	1
Hariyanvi	1

**Table 1.4.** Preference for regional language content

**4.11 Availability of regional content on different OTT platforms**

Amazon prime video is quite popular for its regional language content getting 136 responses, followed by Netflix with 112 responses and Hotstar getting 106 responses. 55 responded that they think that Zee5 has a good collection of regional language content. Whereas Voot and Hoichoi received 38 and 31 responses respectively. Aha which streams Telugu and Tamil-language content gets 11 responses. Sun NXT and MX player got 9 and 8 responses respectively. Talkies and CND play are the least popular among the respondents by getting 1 vote each.

OTT PLATFORMS	Number of Respondents (N)
Amazon Prime Video	136
Netflix	112
Hotstar	106
ZEE5	55
Voot	38
Hoichoi	31
SonyLiv	12
Aha	11
Sun NXT	9
MX Player	8
Talkies	1
CND play	1

**Table 15.** The popularity of OTT platforms is based on regional content

**4.12. Preferences on types of regional language-based content**

From the data collected, 193 respondents prefer watching regional language movies on the OTT platform. And 171 prefer web series. Another, 93 responded that they watch serials on the OTT platform in their preferred regional language. Original movies and series are quite popular getting 92 and 91 responses respectively, exclusive content is turning out to be one of the biggest drivers in online streaming platforms. 61 prefer documentaries, followed by sports getting 38 responses. And kids' shows are preferred by only 8 respondents.

PREFERENCE	Number of Respondents (N)
Movies	193
Web series	171
TV shows/Serials	93
Original movies	92
Original series	90



Documentary	72
Short films	61
Sports	38
Kids show	8

Table 1.6. Preference of content

#### 4.13. Quality of content

The number of OTTs offering services in regional languages has increased over the past 12 months. Spark (an OTT network) was founded by well-known figures like Ram Gopal Varma, and AHA was founded by Tollywood producers like Allu Aravind.

The present sample shows that 75.56% (50.67% + 24.89%; n=114, 56) feel that the quality is good or excellent. Approximate, 17.33% (n=39) have no option about this. And, only 7.11% (6.67% + 0.44%, n=15,1) stated that they feel that the quality of regional content on OTT platforms in India is average or poor.

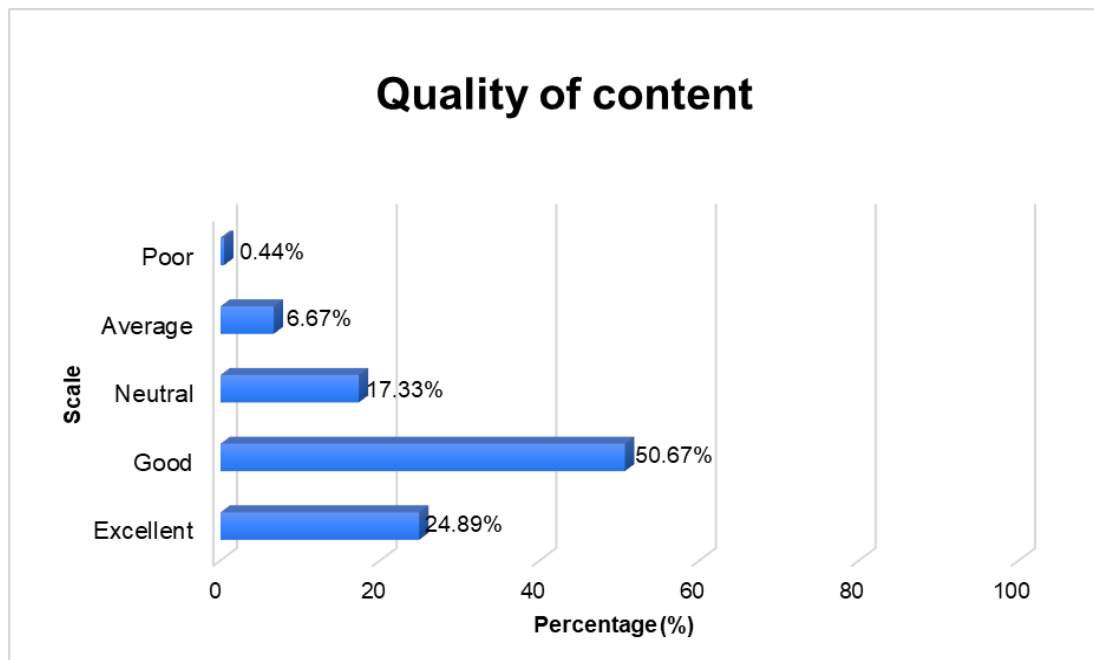


Fig. 1.9 Quality of regional content on OTT platforms in India

#### 4.14. Factors influencing the rise of regional content on OTT platforms

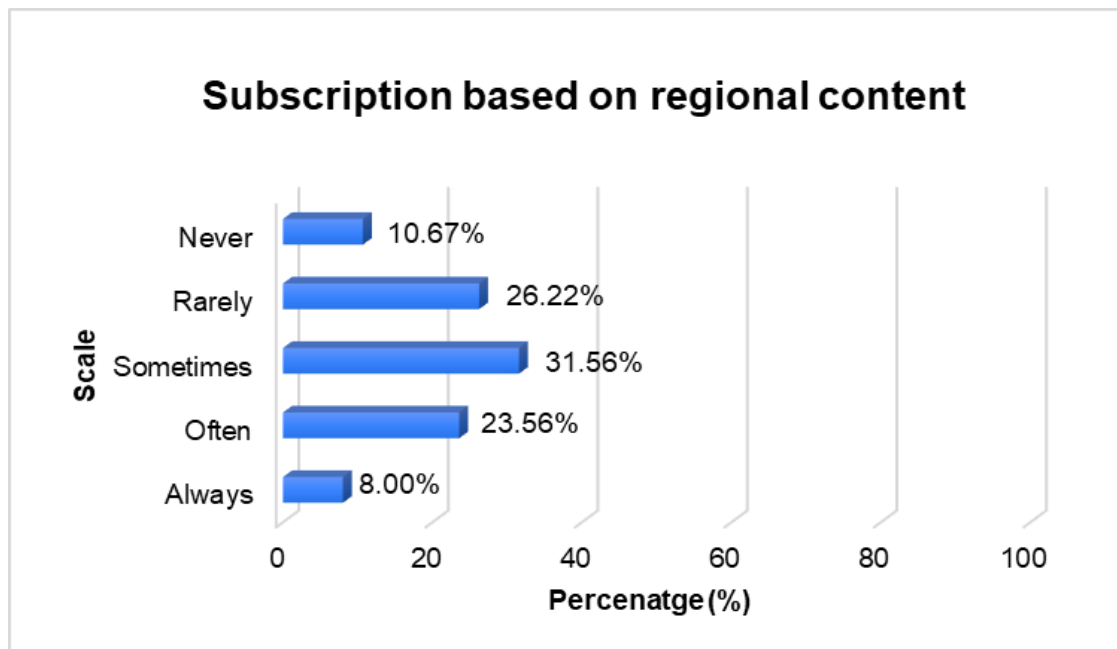
The OTT market nowadays is a very competitive landscape with an enormous library of regional content competing with Hindi and English content so the competition among OTT platforms is also high, believe 143 respondents. Another 134 responded feel that major factor for the rise of regional content is the increase in demand. Better accessibility to this regional content has led to the rise feel 104 respondents. 91 respondents' relevance opined content is important for growth. Indians are more comfortable with vernacular language content compared to English revealed 82 respondents. Only, 12 respondents agree that support from the government in terms of content regulation influenced regional content.

FACTORS	Number of Respondents (N)
Competition among OTT platforms	143
Increase in demand for regional content	134

Better accessibility to regional content	104
Relevance of the content	91
Indians are more comfortable with vernacular language than English	82
Support from the government	12

**Table. 1.7.** Factors influencing the rise of regional content**4.15. Subscription-based on regional content**

The subscription cost of the Indian regional platforms is lesser when compared to the international platforms so, 31.56% (8% + 23.56%; n=18,53) of the respondents always or often pay extra for the content. For some people, regional content may be very important, either because it is tied to their cultural identity or because it reflects their interests and preferences. In these cases, they may be willing to pay a premium to access that content. And other 31.56% (n=71) of the respondents are sometimes willing to pay extra. And 37.27% (10.67 % + 26.6%; n=24,59) are not willing to pay more for a subscription if it includes more regional content.

**Fig. 1.10.** Willingness to pay extra based on regional content**4.16. Satisfaction with the availability of regional content on OTT platforms**

Majority of the respondents are satisfied with the vernacular language content that are available in India covering 56.45 % (44.89%+11.56%; n=101,26) of the respondents because in recent years the availability of regional content on OTT platforms has enlarged, with many platforms offering a dedicated section for regional content. About 39.11% (n=88) are neutral, they don't have any opinion about the same. Only 4.44% (n=10) of respondents are not satisfied with the content that is available.

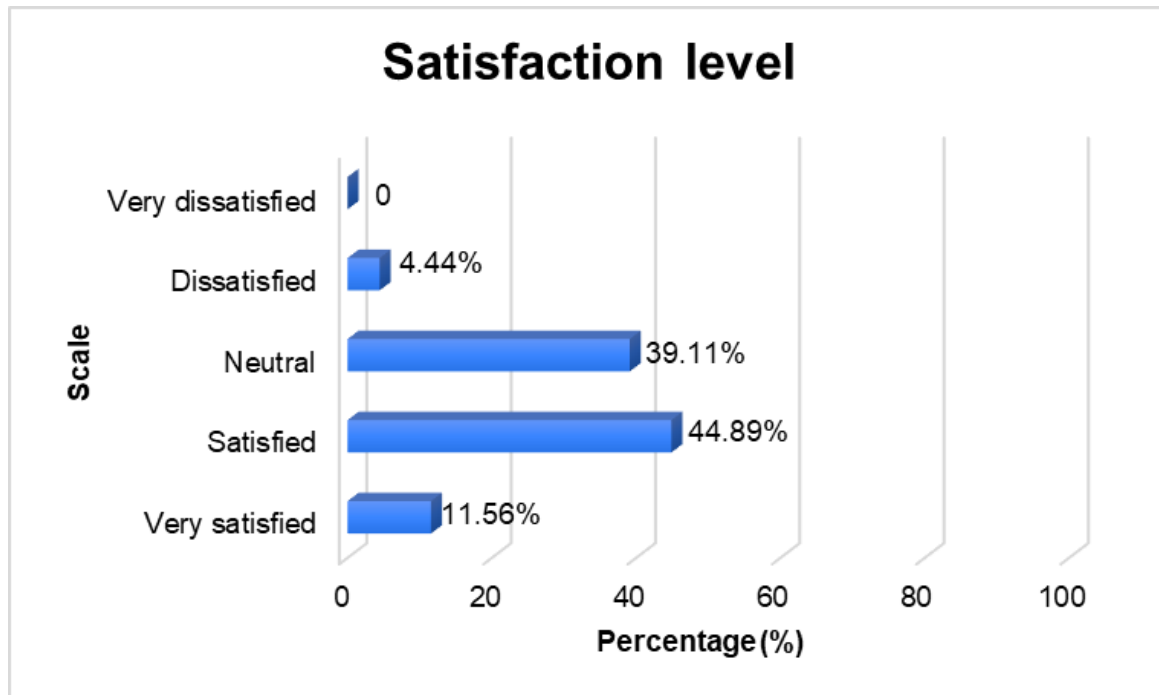


Fig. 1.11 Satisfaction level with the availability of regional content

#### 4.17. A positive development on the Indian entertainment industry

From the data collected, majority of the respondents 77.56% (43.56%+33.78%, n=78,98) believe that OTT will have a positive impact on the growing OTT industry. These platforms have helped to democratize access to entertainment content by providing a platform for regional language content makers to showcase their work and reach a wider audience. Whereas, 14.67% (n=33) don't have any opinion about the same. And only 8% (6.67%+1.33%, n=3,15) of people don't think that the rise of regional content will have a positive impact on the entertainment industry.

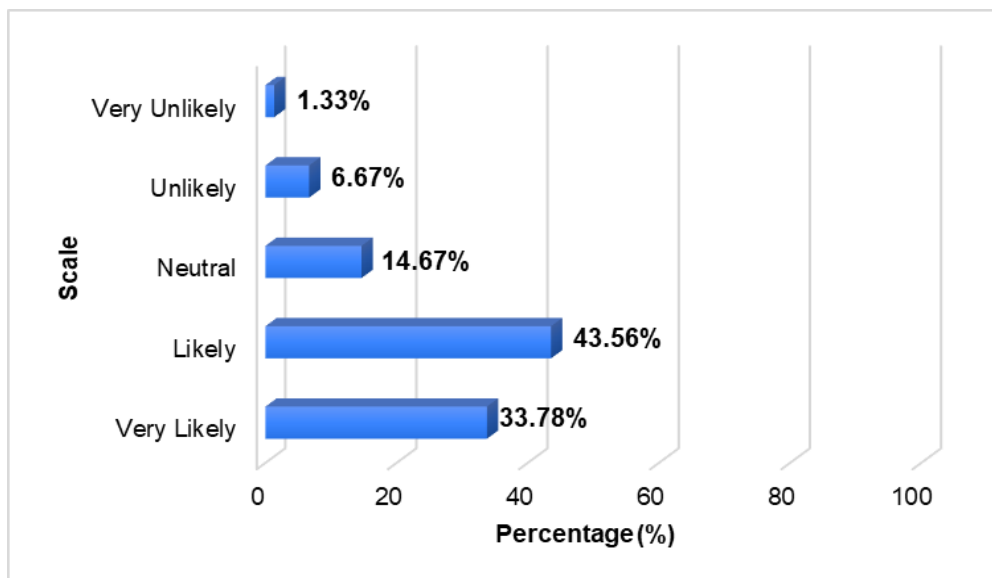


Fig 1.12. Positive impact on the OTT industry.

#### 4.18. Recommendation of the regional content

About 67.11% (37.78% + 26.67%, n=85,66) of respondents are likely to recommend others to watch the OTT content in other languages, when they find content on an OTT platform that reflects their regional identity and values, they are more likely to recommend it to others who share those same interests. And 26.67% (n=60) have no opinion about the same. Meanwhile, 6.22 % (5.78%+0.44%, n=1,13) of respondents are not satisfied with the available content and hence they don't recommend others to watch OTT content in vernacular language.

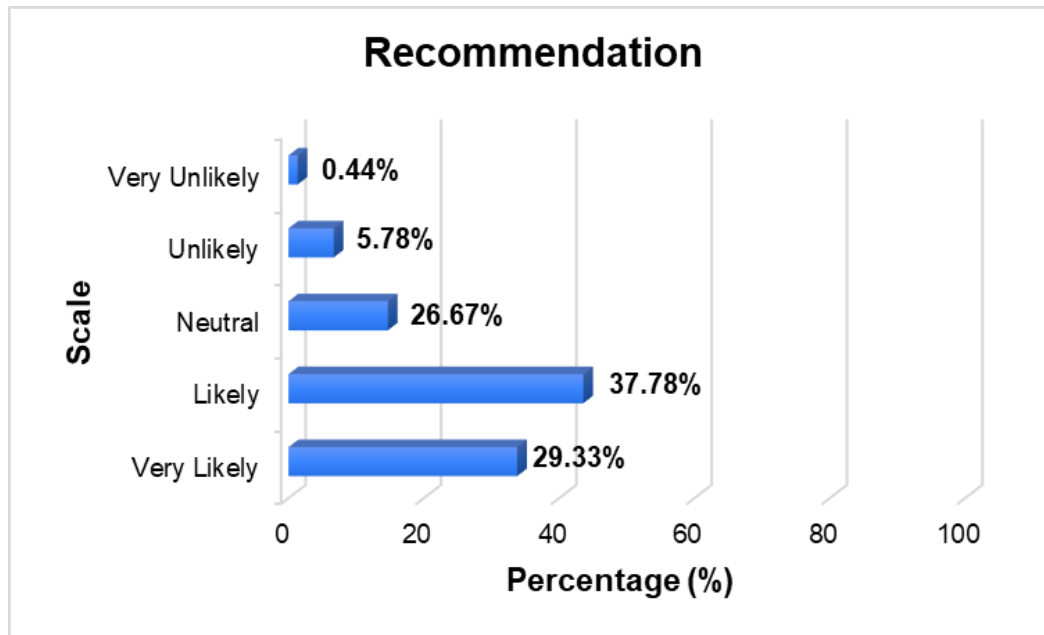


Fig 1.13. Recommending regional content

#### 4.19. Viewership of regional OTT platforms vs International OTT channels

These platforms have a extensive variety of regional language content, including movies, TV shows, and web series, which have helped to increase their viewership. From the data collected, majority of the respondents 49.33% (36%+13.33%; n=81,30) likely to believe that viewership of regional OTT platforms might take over the International streaming platforms. About, 24.44% (n=55) don't have any opinion about the same. Only 26.23% (18.67%+7.56%; n=42,17) of the respondents are unlikely to believe that the viewership of regional OTT platforms will overtake international OTT channel.

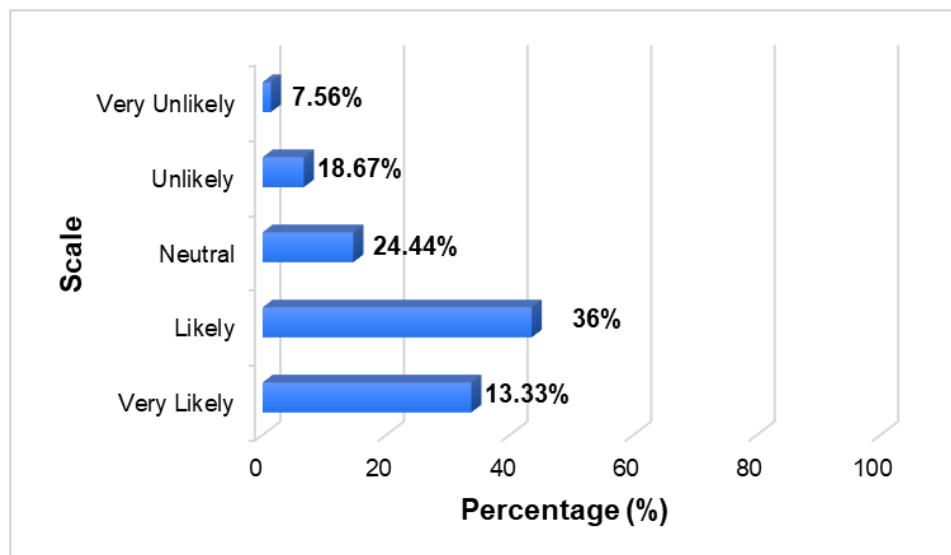
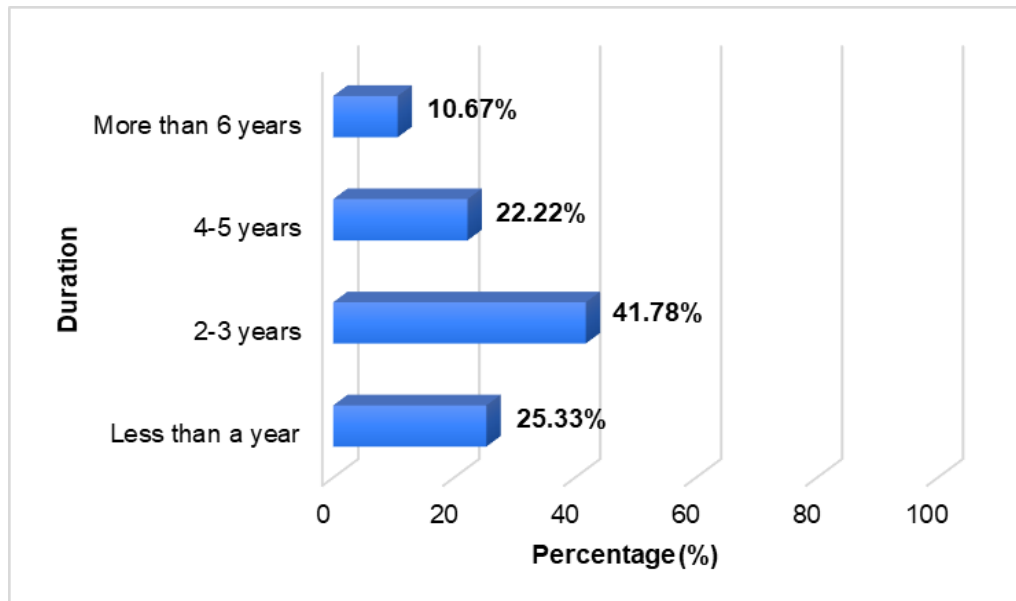


Fig 1.14. Regional vs International OTT platforms

#### 4.20. Regional OTT platforms overtaking international platforms

About 10.67 % (n=24) of respondents believe that it will take more than 6 years for the regional OTT platforms to take over the international platforms in India. Out of the 225 responses, 22.22% (n= 50) responded that it might take 4-5 years. 41.78% (n=94) of respondents think that it might take 2-3 years. 25.33% (n=57) out of the total respondents believe that it will take less than a year for the regional online streaming platforms to overpower the English international ones. While regional OTT platforms have gained popularity in recent years, international platforms have also seen a steady increase in their viewership in India. Many viewers are interested in watching a mix of regional and international content, and therefore, they subscribe to both regional and international platforms.



**Fig 1.15.** Regional OTT platforms overtaking international platforms

#### 4.21. Improvements in the Regional OTT platforms

About 184 stated that they would like to see a better representation of regional cultures on these platforms. There is still a need of more variety of content in the vernacular language responded 144 respondents, while regional OTT platforms have a wide range of regional language content, there is still a lack of diversity in terms of genres and themes. Another, 208 respondents still feel the subscription fee is too high for the streaming platforms, so, a reduction in the fee would help them to browse freely. Platforms can work towards introducing more affordable pricing plans for students and other price-sensitive segments of the audience.

IMPROVEMENTS	Number of Respondents (N)
Better representation of regional cultures	184
More Variety	144
Reduction of the subscription cost/fees	208

**Table. 1.9.** Improvements in the regional platforms

## V. CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Summary of the findings

Majority of respondents, 98.67 % are using OTT platforms, and only 1.33% of the respondents have not heard of OTT platforms. Among the respondents who consume content, 59.56% of people watch content daily. Out of that, 50% of the respondents watch for an hour. About 32% consume for 2-3 hours per day and 15.671% spend 4-6 hours on these platforms. And, only 2.24% responded that they spent more than 6 hours on OTT platforms daily. And about 28.89 % of the respondents who consume content on OTT platforms once a week. Only 6.67% watch once a month, and, about 4.89% of the respondents rarely use OTT platforms.

Factors that respondents like about these platforms are original content (n=141), followed by Ads-free content (n=129). (n=113) responded conveniences. (n=95) people like OTT platforms because it is affordable. (n=82) respondents like the option of downloading the content and watching it offline. (n=76) responded to Smart recommendation. And (n=60) opted for regional-based content and (n=59) responded to Live broadcasts of sports.

From the data collected, (n=181) choose Netflix and (n=163) for Disney+Hotstar. Similarly, (n=161) responded to Amazon prime video. YouTube got (n=155) responses. Zee5 and Sony Liv got a similar response of (n=78) each. (n=43) people choose Jio cinema. Voot got (n=37) responses and whereas MX players got (n=20) responses. ALT Balaji is preferred by (n=14) respondents. Hoichoi got (n=10) responses. GMMTV got only (n=2) responses. Apple TV, Lionsgate, Asian TV, and Drama cool got (n=1) responses each.

About 17.78% always prefer watching regional content on online streaming services and 34.67% responded sometimes. 13.33% rarely watch, and 29.33% responded that they often consume content that is in a regional language. And lastly, 4.89 % responded that they don't prefer watching regional content.

From the responses, 73.38% agree that they have noticed an increase in regional content on OTT platforms available in India. 19.56% have no opinion about this, and only 6.67% disagree with it.

About 80.89% have subscribed to region-specific online streaming platforms. And among that, (n=118) watch Hindi content on OTT platforms, Bengali content is popular among respondents, and (n=58) opted for it. Tamil and Kannada language contents are consumed by (n=51) respondents. (n=32) responded to the Malayalam and (n=23) responded to Marathi. Gujarati language content is watched by (n= 6) respondents. And Assamese, Tulu, and Haryanvi languages too (n=1) respond to each. Whereas, only 19.11% have not subscribed.

Amazon prime video is quite popular for its regional language content getting (n=136) responses, followed by Netflix with (n=112) responses, and Hotstar getting (n=106) responses. (n=55) responded to Zee5. Whereas Voot and Hoichoi get (n=38) and (n=31) responses respectively. Aha gets (n=11) responses. Sun NXT and MX player got (n=9) and (n=8) responses respectively. Talkies and CND play are the least popular among the respondents getting (n=1) votes each.

Almost 85% of the respondents prefer viewing regional language movies on the OTT platform. And 76% prefer web series. (n=93) responded that they watch serials on the OTT platform in their preferred regional language. Original movies and series are quite popular getting (n=92) and (n=91) responses respectively. (n=61) prefer documentaries, followed by sports getting 38 responses. And kid's shows are preferred by only (n=8) respondents.

The present sample shows that only 0.44% (n=1) feel that the quality of regional content on OTT platforms in India is poor, followed by 6.67% opting for the option average. 17.33% have no opinion about this. And 50.67% feel that the quality is good. And 24.89% opted for excellent.

Factors influencing the rise of regional content on OTT platforms, (n=143) believe that the competition among OTT is leading to that. (n=134) responded to the increase in demand. Better accessibility to this regional content must led a rise of regional content on OTT platforms thinks (n=104) respondents. And (n=91) respondents' relevance of content is important for growth. Indians are more comfortable with vernacular language, (n=82) agree. And only, (n=12) agree that support from the government in terms of OTT content regulation.

About 10.67 % is not willing to pay more for a subscription if it includes more regional content. 26.6% stated rarely. 31.56% are willing to pay extra. 23.56% often pay based on the quality of content. And, only 8% always pay for the regional content.

Only 4.44% of respondents are not satisfied with the content that is available. 39.11% feel neutral. And, most of the respondents are satisfied with the vernacular language content i.e., 56.45 %.

From the respondents, only 8% of people do not think that the rise of regional content will have a positive impact on the entertainment industry. 14.67% do not have any opinion about the same. And on the other hand, 77.56% respondents believe that it will have a positive impact on the growing OTT industry.

About 6.22 % of respondents are not satisfied with the available content and hence they don't recommend others to watch content in vernacular language. 26.67% have no opinion about the same. Meanwhile, 67.11 % of respondents are likely to recommend others watch the content in other languages.

From the data, we can accomplish that only 26.23% of the respondents are unlikely to believe that the viewership of regional OTT platforms will overtake international OTT channels 24.44% do not have any opinion about the same. And, almost most of the respondents 49.33% likely to believe that viewership of regional OTT platforms might take over the international streaming platforms.

10.67 % of respondents believe that it will take more than 6 years for the regional OTT platforms to take over the international platforms in India. Out of the 225 responses, 22.22% responded stated that it might take 4-5 years. 41.78% of respondents think that it might take 2-3 years. 25.33% out of the total respondents believe that it will take less than a year for the regional online streaming platforms to overpower.

(n=184) stated that they would like to see a better representation of regional cultures on these platforms. There is still a lack of variety of content in the vernacular language (n=144) people responded to that. (n=208) respondents still feel the subscription fee is high for the streaming platforms, a reduction in the fee would help them to browse freely.

## **5.2. Conclusion**

The rising popularity of regional content on OTT platforms in India has significantly changed the entertainment industry. Due to India's enormous cultural and linguistic diversity, there has been an increase in the demand for regional content. It is now easier for viewers to watch content in their native languages on OTT platforms due to the accessibility of low-cost high-speed internet and the rising popularity of smartphones.

According to the discoveries of the current study, consumer prefer to view content in their native tongues and are becoming accustomed to local regional language OTT. It also aided in increasing cultural interchange and



bridging the gap between various geographical areas. It has also provided a platform for regional talent to showcase their skills and reach a wider audience.

The study found that the regional OTT platforms that offer content in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, and Malayalam are the most widely used in India. These platforms have an extensive user base and provide a diversity of content, such as films, TV shows, and web series. In the upcoming years, we can anticipate more appealing and varied stories being told due to the rising demand for regional content.

Users have expressed a high level of satisfaction with OTT services, appreciating the variety of content and the personalized watching experience. Users have also praised the freedom to select the language and genre of their choice.

Overall, viewers and content producers have benefited from the growth of regional content on OTT platforms. It has given regional producers a new platform to display their abilities and improved audiences' entertainment experiences by giving them access to diverse and exciting content in their native languages.

### 5.3. Scope for future research

As OTT platforms continue growing in popularity among Indian viewers, the accessibility of regional content on these platforms has increased significantly. Here are some potential future study areas:

- A study of OTT platform business models and the economics of creating and distributing regional content might shed light on the sustainability of the trend of regional content on these platforms.
- Exploring the insights into India's shifting cultural landscape can be gained by examining the cultural effects of the increase of regional content on OTT platforms.

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