

**Research Paper on “How OTT platforms affect Teenagers”**

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**Abstract**

Over the past few years, the use of video materials on various online platforms in India has increased dramatically. These platforms offer a variety of content like web series, short films, movies, TV shows, documentaries, news, and many more, and recommend content using artificial intelligence based on personal interaction with the platform. Most of the services on these platforms are paid. They offer free subscriptions to premium content, which is not available elsewhere.

OTT is a vast sector that has evolved over the past few years, especially during and after Covid 19. Its viewers range from working adults to teenagers. OTT platforms have become a trend for the youth these days, due to their binge-watching habits & social media addiction. With OTT platforms new to India, there are currently no laws or guidelines governing these platforms which is a matter of concern as it is negatively affecting the lives of our youth and teenagers.

Content available on OTT platforms these days is promoting smoking, drinking, use of drugs, abusive language, nudity etc. Most of the young people & teenagers don't understand the ill effects of the content they watch on OTT and don't set any time limit for watching this content which eventually becomes an addiction and reason for many health issues like depression, sleeping disorders, eyes problems, etc.

In this paper, the researcher aims to identify the kind of impact OTT has on teenagers. How these changing Television viewing habits of teenagers affect their physical & mental health, their behavior & their relationships with their family, friends & relatives, and also to understand the importance of a time limit for watching OTT content.

**Key words:** OTT, Teenagers & Binge-watching.

## Introduction

Advancements in Digital Technologies have dramatically transformed the face of Journalism, smart phones, the internet, digital audio recorders, and laptops allow instant communication no matter in which part of the world you are sitting, and the outcome is the convergence of the new technologies on one platform. Digital Media these days has emerged as an important tool of communication, education, information, and entertainment, especially during the period of COVID-19, which put breaks on all face-to-face communication, education, and other activities like eating outside, watching movies in the theatre, shopping, etc. and that time witnessed the maximum growth in the viewers of OTT, which immediately became the replacement for the movies in the theater.

"OTT" stands for "Over-The-Top,". OTT refers to online streaming media services, which deliver content over the internet. The best feature of the OTT platform is that users can watch the content anytime, anywhere with the help of an internet connection and subscription fee, which was not possible with the earlier traditional broadcast or cable TV platforms. OTT platforms give the flexibility to their users to access a wide range of content like web series, short films, movies, TV shows, documentaries, news, and many more. Users can access the above-mentioned content on any device like a smartphone, computer, tablet, or TV. Majority of OTT users watch their favorite content while traveling from one place to another, which utilizes time and makes these OTT platforms unique and popular. Some common examples of OTT are Netflix, Hot Star, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, Hulu, HBO Max, Apple TV+, and more.

Significant features of OTT platforms include:

**Internet-Based Delivery:** The device needs to have an internet connection for content delivery to users. Without internet you cannot access OTT.

**Available on-Demand:** Content is available on demand and users can decide the content they like to watch and time as per their requirement.

**Variety of Content:** OTT platforms offer a wide range of content, like web series, TV soaps, movies, news and so many other things.

**Device Constraints:** No device constraints are there in usage of OTT. Users can access their desired content on many devices, like smart TV, smartphone, tablet, laptops, and desktop etc.

**Subscription based content:** OTT platforms offer monthly subscriptions to the users. Users pay the fee to watch the content.

**Wide Reach:** OTT platforms have global reach. Users can access to OTT from every corner of the world.

**Personalized Viewing Experience:** This is the most important feature of OTT. This is what makes it unique. Users can create their profiles, tailor preferences, create watch lists, and receive recommendations based on their viewing habits.

### **History of OTT**

The history of OTT can be traced back to the initial years of the internet. Shockwave player launched by Macromedia launched in the year 1995 became fundamental streaming tool in late 90s & 2000s. RealPlayer was launched in 1997 by Real Networks allowed users to stream audio & video content over the internet for the first time.

Akamai Technologies started providing audio and video streaming in 1999 by using global networks of servers for better quality & reliability. YouTube was launched in 2005, a platform where anyone can upload and share their content. In 2007, in addition to DVD rental, Netflix started offering streaming video to its subscribers.

The COVID-19 pandemic also played a significant role in the growth of OTT platforms. During lockdowns the social distancing measures led to a surge in the use of various services and activities and then people made OTT the substitute for those services.

OTT platforms in India started in 2008 with BigFlix launched by Reliance Entertainment. In 2013 OTT started flourishing in India with the launch of Zee TV and Sony Liv. In 2015 Disney Hotstar came into the OTT world and today Hotstar is among the most favorite OTT platform. Viewership of Hotstar has increased tremendously over the years and today it is one of the most watched OTT platforms. In 2016 Netflix also started providing its services in India.

### **Teenagers**

A teenager, or teen, is a person who belongs to the age group of 13 to 19 years. This is a transition phase from childhood to adulthood. This phase is marked by significant physical, emotional & social changes. It is a unique & important stage of life that shapes our future. Adolescent is another word used for a teenager.

### **Binge watching**

Watching multiple episodes or seasons of a show, web series or movies etc. refers to binge watch. This phenomenon started after the accessibility of video on demand services like Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hotstar, Sony liv, Zee5 etc. & availability of devices like smart phones, tablet, laptop, desktop etc. required for streaming.

These OTT platforms have changed the Television viewing habits of people as the whole season is available to watch unlike earlier Television where you have to wait for the whole week for

next episode. With the advent of OTT binge-watching has certainly become the common and entertaining way of consuming media content.

### **Research Questions/Objectives of the study**

This study has been done in order to:-

- Understand the concept of OTT?
- Usage of OTT by teenagers?
- What is their pattern of usage of OTT?
- Whether usage of OTT is addictive or not?
- How OTT platforms affect Teenagers?

### **Research Methodology**

The important part of any research paper is its objectives or the purpose of conducting the research and the objectives can be achieved by the methodology used by the researcher to conduct the study. The methodology of any study must be in corresponding with the objectives of the research. The data for the purpose of achieving the objectives may be collected from two ways, primary and secondary.

#### **Primary Data**

Primary data is the original data collected from respondents through surveys, observations or direct communication with respondents through personal interviews.

#### **Secondary Data**

The secondary data refers to the data which is already available and collected by someone else. The sources of secondary data collection are reference books, journals & magazines and internet.

For the collection of primary data researchers have used questionnaire and interview method.

#### **Sample size & sample composition**

An integral component of a research design is the sampling plan. Specifically it addresses three questions: whom to survey (The sample unit), how many to survey (The sample size) and how to select them (The sampling procedure). Making a census study of the entire universe will be impossible on the account of limitations of time and money. Hence sampling becomes Inevitable. A sample is only a portion of the universe of population. Properly done sampling produces representative data of the entire population.

The sample method chosen for the study is random sampling & sample size is 100 teenagers from various schools/colleges of Delhi & NCR.

### **Review of Literature**

Various researchers from different fields & countries of the world conducted many studies to access the impact of OTT on society and people.

(Sharma & Lulandala, 2023) conducted a study on OTT and identified the features like convenient watching, local & innovative content, flexibility of technology, monthly subscriptions etc. which make the OTT unique and popular platform among people of all age groups.

(Ghalawat et al., 2021a) conducted the study called “Factors Influencing Consumer’s Choice of Streaming Over the top (OTT) Platforms”. This study concluded that OTT platforms are gaining popularity day by day and has possibilities to grow more for which OTT’s need to develop strategies.

(Sundaravel & Elangovan, 2020) concluded that online streaming of audio & video content has become one of the most popular and successful avenue in the content delivery & consumption. All the OTT platforms whether big or small are gaining popularity and making business. According to the study this popularity of OTT will affect the future of cable TV in India.

(Saini, 2020) According to this study there is remarkable growth in the popularity of OTT. OTT is a preferred medium because of many reasons like content variety, availability of content from all over the world, monthly subscriptions, flexibility etc.

(Fitzgerald, 2019) This study evaluates the changing aspects of the growth of OTT platforms with respect to the changing digital technology & infrastructure among the various OTT players.

(2020-IJMRJUNE2021FULLJOURNAL, n.d.) According to this study the with technical developments in the mobile phones and increasing usage of internet OTT platforms are doing well. This study also concludes that Covid 19 pandemic played a huge role in the popularity of OTT platforms and its increased subscriptions.

Ahuja, R. (2020, Sep 09) in his research study effects of web series & streaming content on Indian youth found that binge watching has led to issues like sleeplessness, anxiety & depression. It also concluded that it also affects the academic performance, physical activities & social relations of respondents.

Dhiman B, Malik PS (2021) in their study called Psychosocial Impact of Web Series and Streaming Content: A Study on Indian Youth found that OTT platforms has negative

psychological impact on youth because the content available on OTT platforms is full of abuses, violence and sensual scenes which leaves a negative impact on users mind.

Seetharaman, A. Subramanian, A., & Maddulety, K. (2020) conducted a study about Binge watching behavior concluded that, even though binge-watching provides us an escape from the day-today problems but its addiction can lead to many health issues including anxiety, insomnia and depression etc.

**Data analysis and Interpretation**

Q.1 Are you aware about OTT?

Fig 1

Awareness about OTT

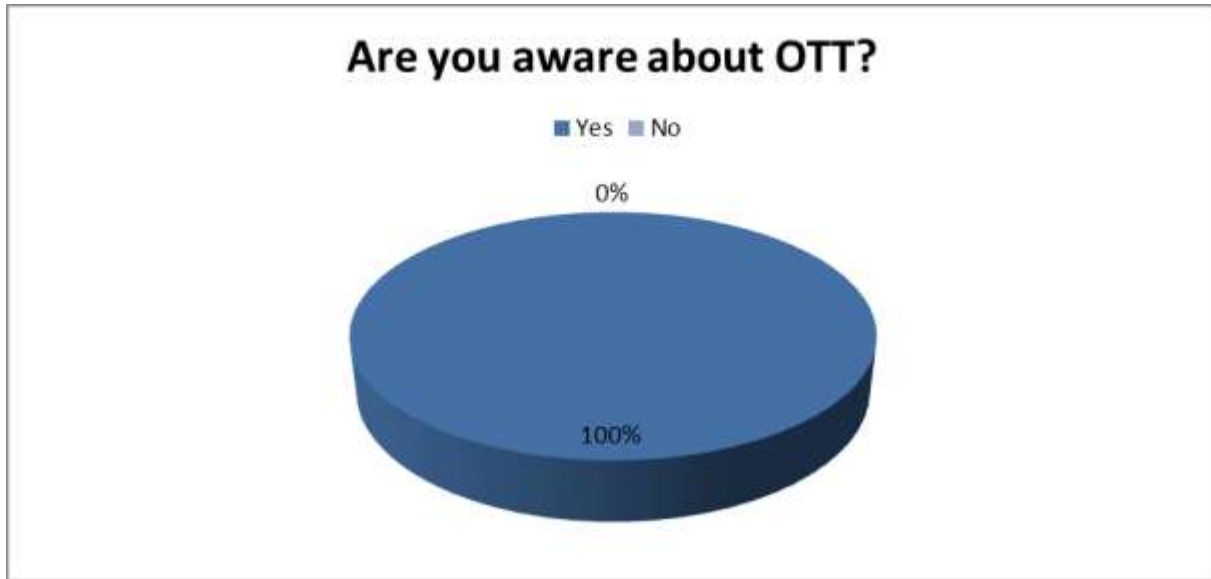


Fig 1 indicates that all the 100 respondents chosen for the study are aware about OTT.

Q.2 Do you have access to OTT platforms?

Fig 2

Access to OTT

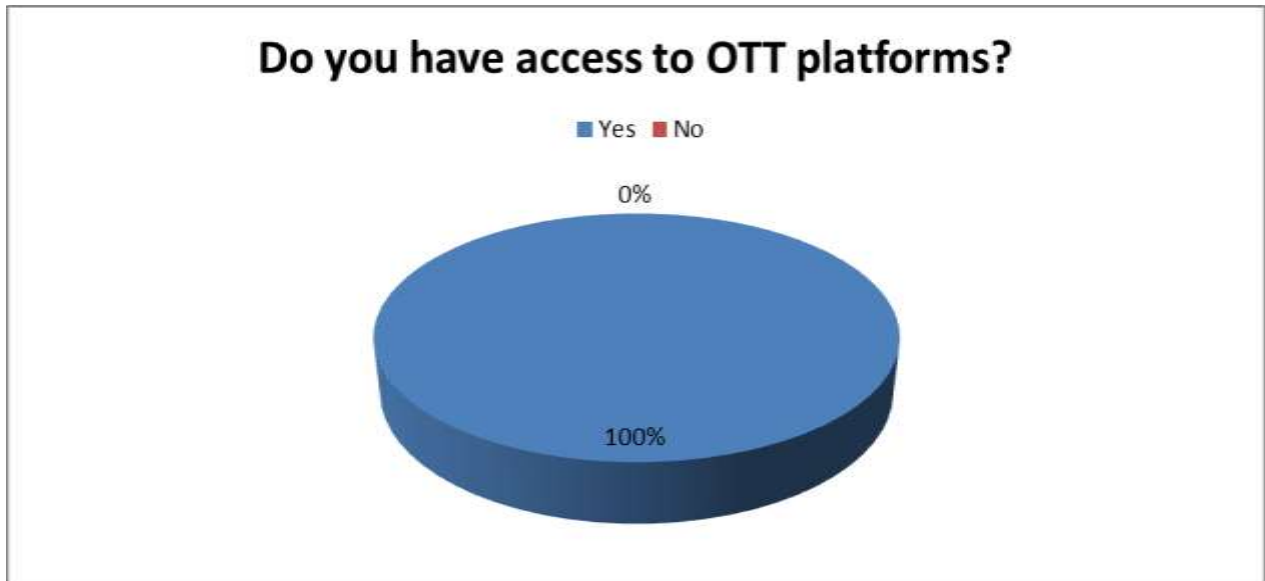


Fig 2 indicates that, all the 100 teenagers have access to OTT platforms.

Q.3 What type of content you like to watch on OTT platforms?

Fig 3

Type of content liked by respondents

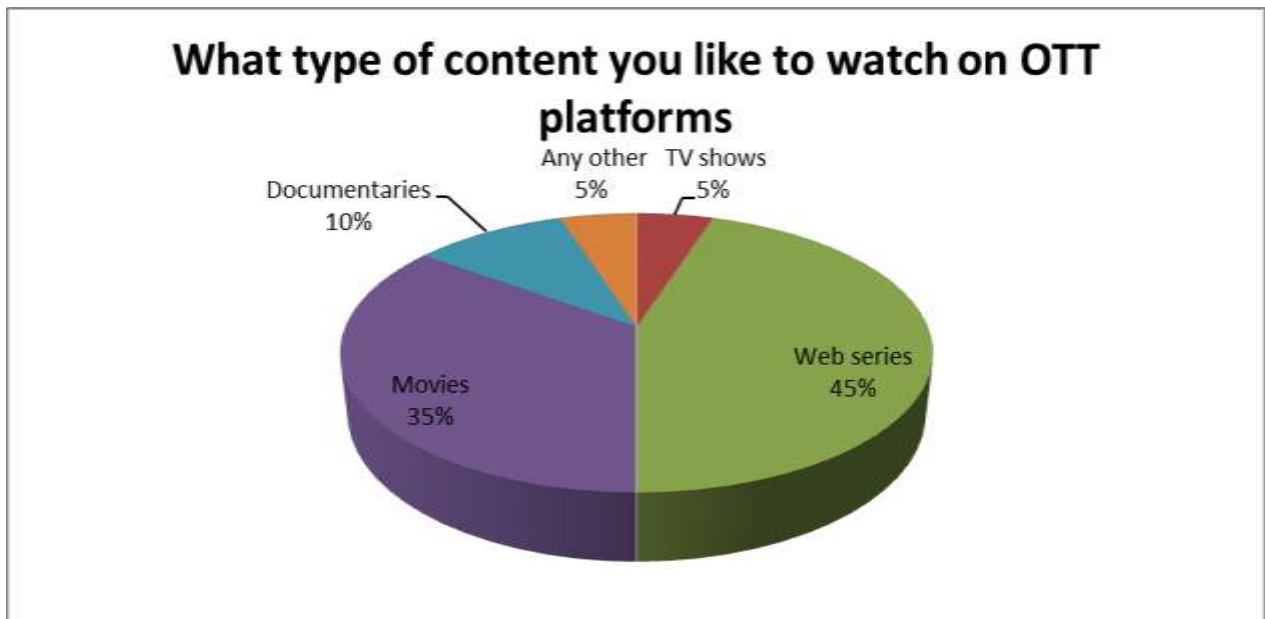


Fig 3 shows the type of content respondents like to watch like 45% watch web series, 35% movies, 10% documentaries, 5% movies and 5% other programmes.

Q. 4 What do you like most about these OTT platforms?

Fig 4

Most liked feature of OTT

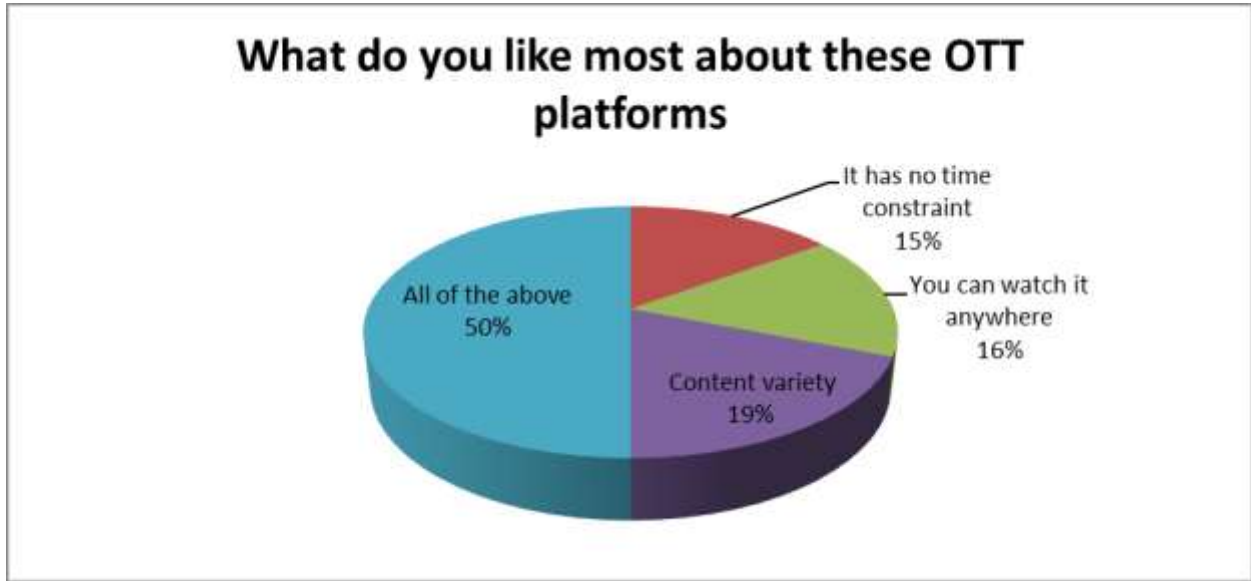


Fig 4 indicates that teenagers like OTT as it offers variety, it has no time constraint & can be viewed anywhere.

Q.5 Which application you like the most for watching the OTT content?

Fig 5

Most liked feature of Application

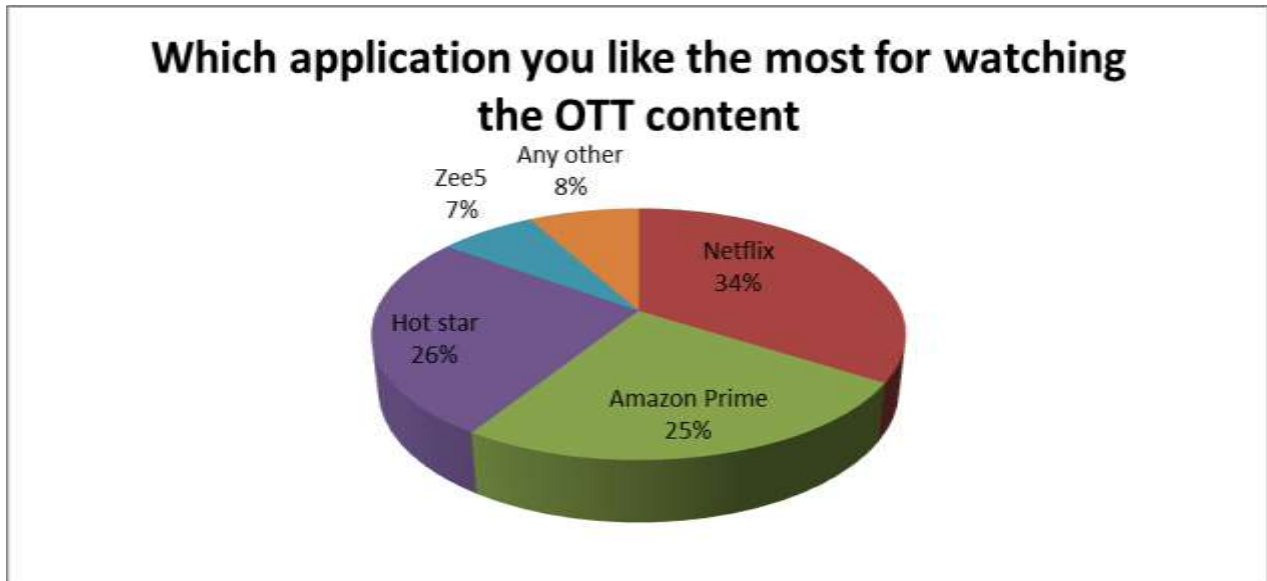


Fig 5 indicates that the most popular OTT platform among teenagers is Netflix liked by 34%, after that comes Hotstar (26%) & Amazon prime and others

Q.6 How frequently you access the OTT platforms?

Fig 6

Frequency of using OTT

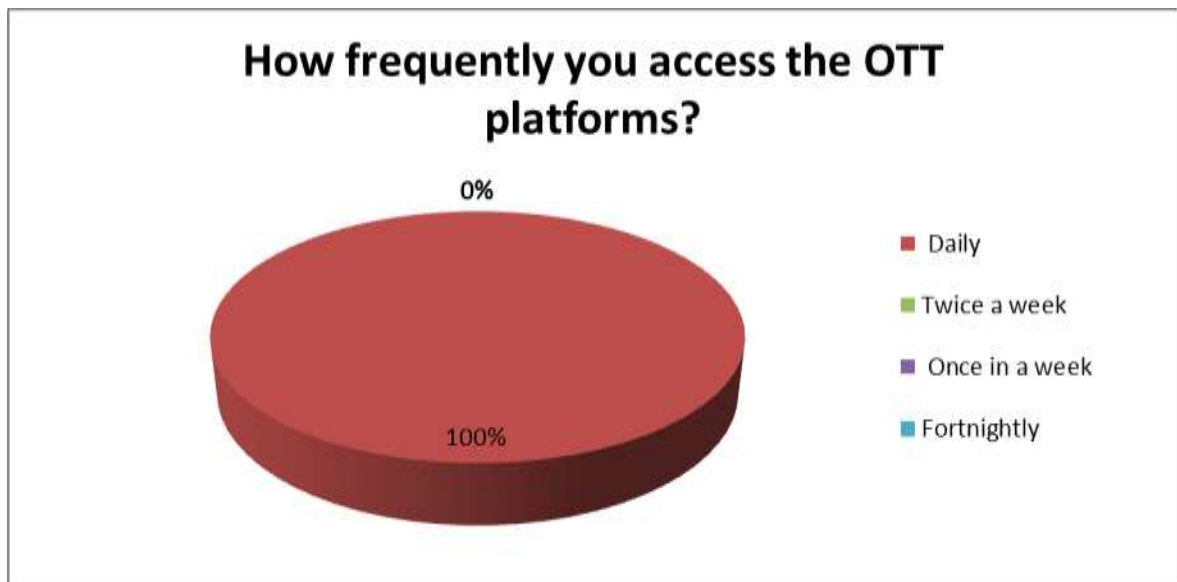
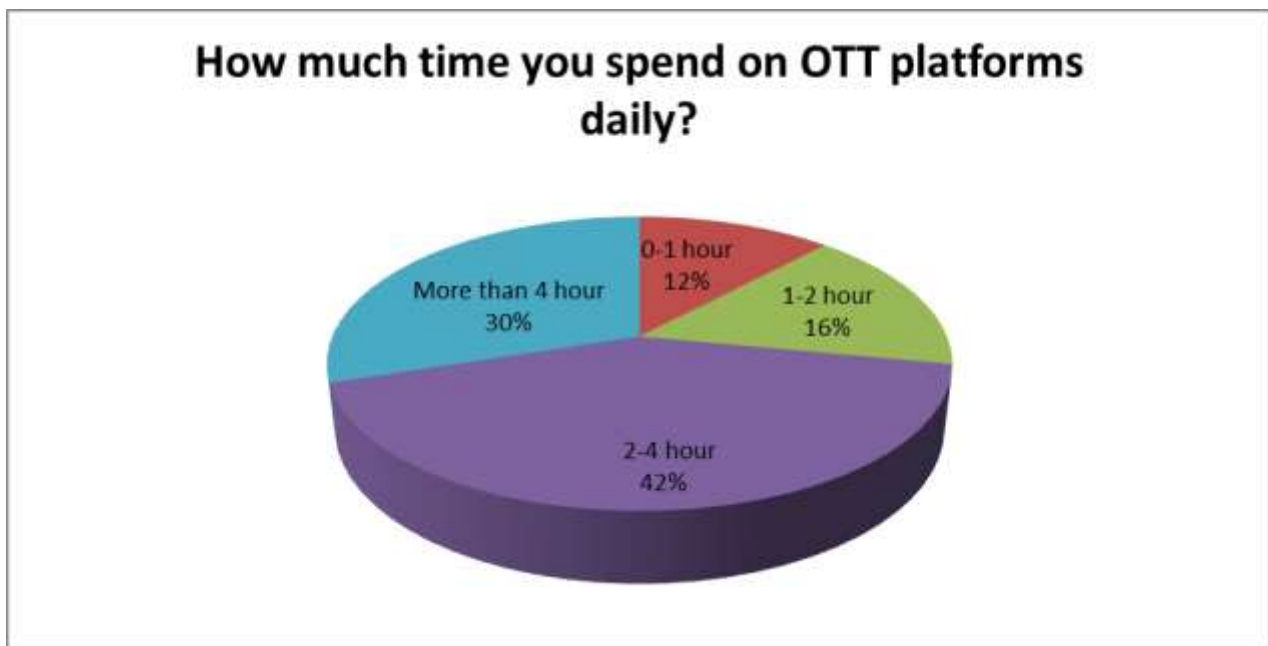


Fig 6 indicates that all the 100 respondents access OTT platforms daily. It seems OTT is important part of their life.

Q.7 How much time you spend on OTT platforms daily?

Fig 7

Time spent on OTT



The results of fig 7 are alarming that 30% teenagers spend more than 4 hours on OTT while 42% spend 2 – 4 hours on OTT everyday. 16% spend 1-2 hour & only 12% respondents spend 0 – 1 hour.

Q. 8 Do you think OTT is addictive?

Fig 8

OTT is addictive or not

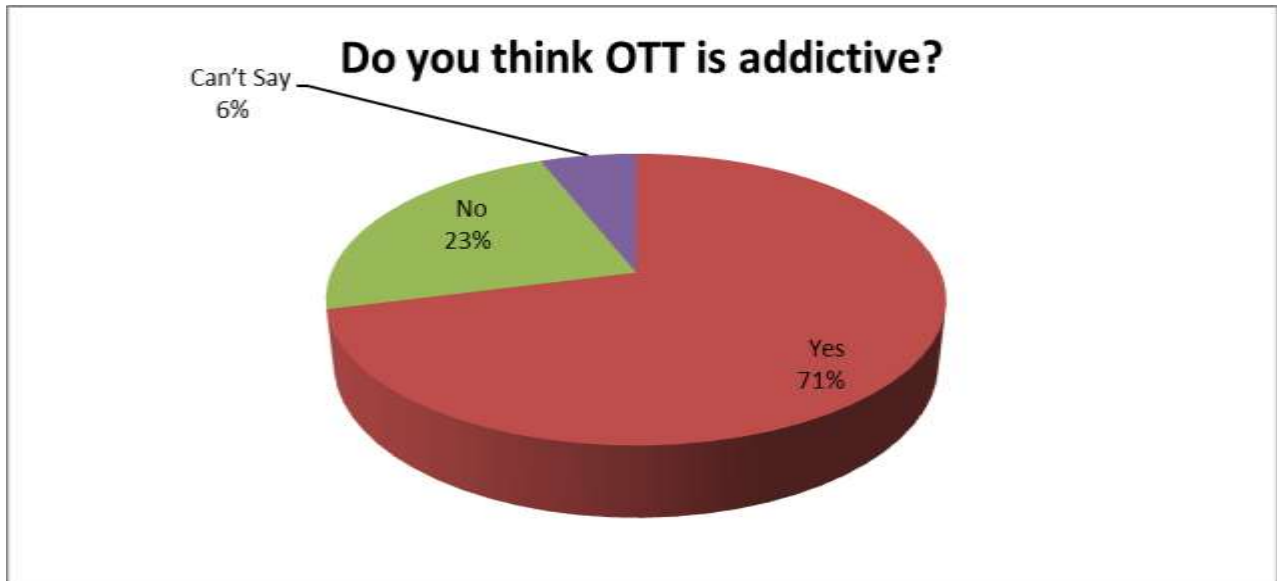


Fig 8 indicates that 71% respondents feels OTT is addictive. While 23% say it's not and rest 6% are not sure whether it's addictive or not.

Q.9 Do you believe that OTT have changed the Television viewing habits of people?

Fig 9

OTT have changed the Television viewing habits of people

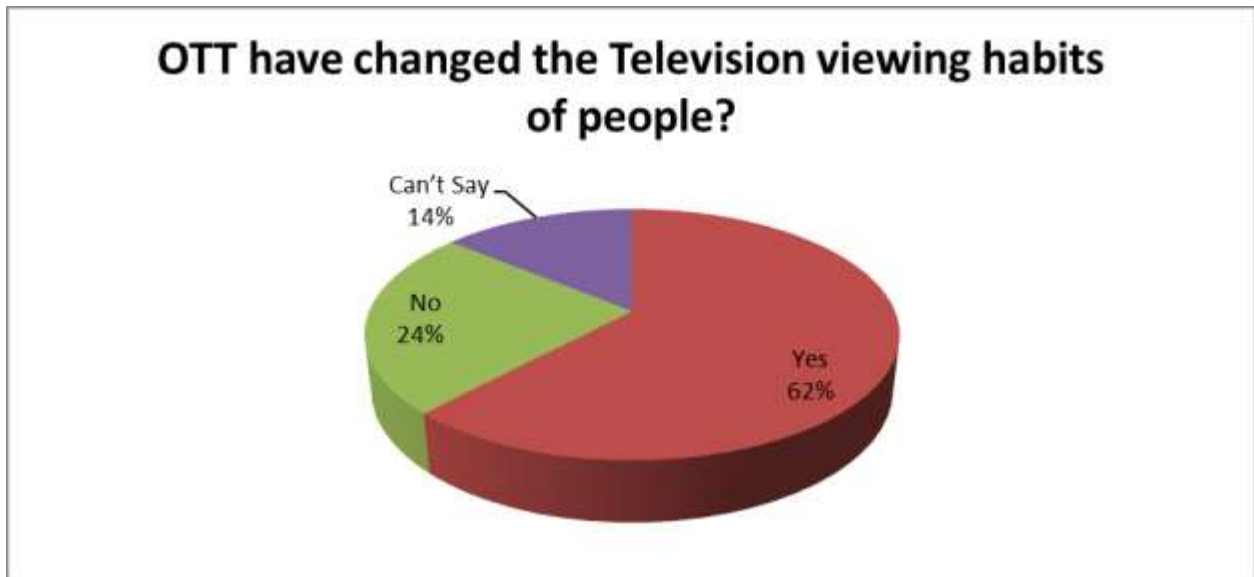


Fig 9 says that 62% respondents believes that OTT have changed the Television viewing habits of people while 24% says it's not and remaining 14% are not sure of anything.

Q.10 Do you think this use of OTT affect your relationships with your family, friends & relatives?

Fig 10

OTT affect your relationships

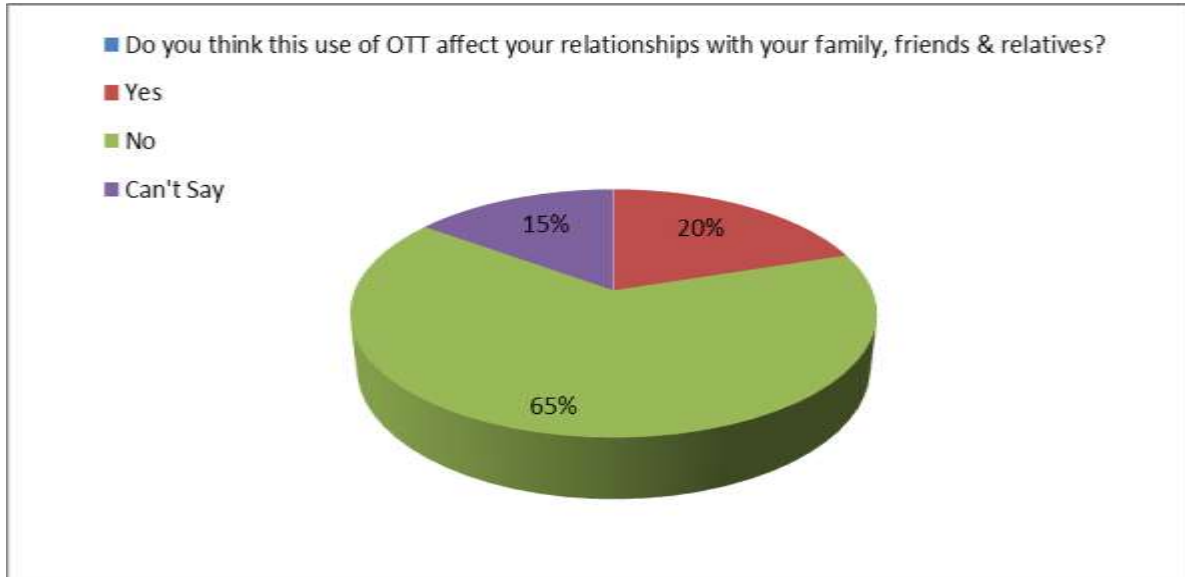


Fig 10 says that only 20% respondents believes that OTT affects their relationships while 65% says it does not and rest 15% are not sure whether it does or not.

Q.11 Do you feel that usage of OTT affects your mood?

Fig 11

OTT affects your Mood

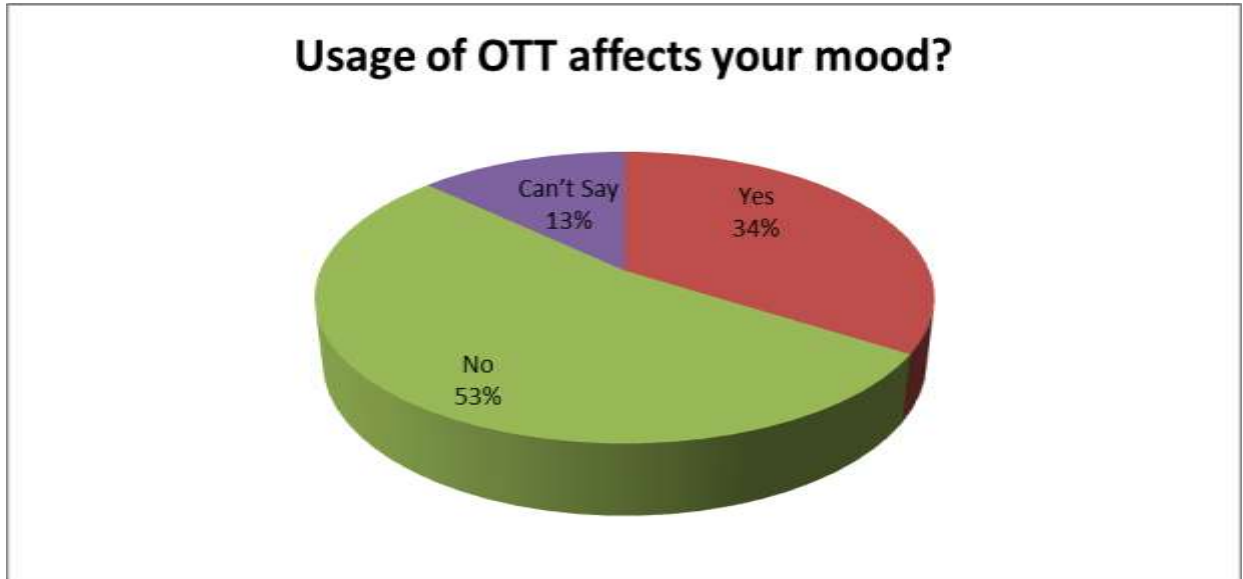


Fig 11 says that only 34% respondents believe that OTT affects their mood while 53% says it does not and rest 13% are not sure whether it does or not.

Q.12 Do you think that excessive usage of OTT affects your health?

Fig 12

OTT affects your health

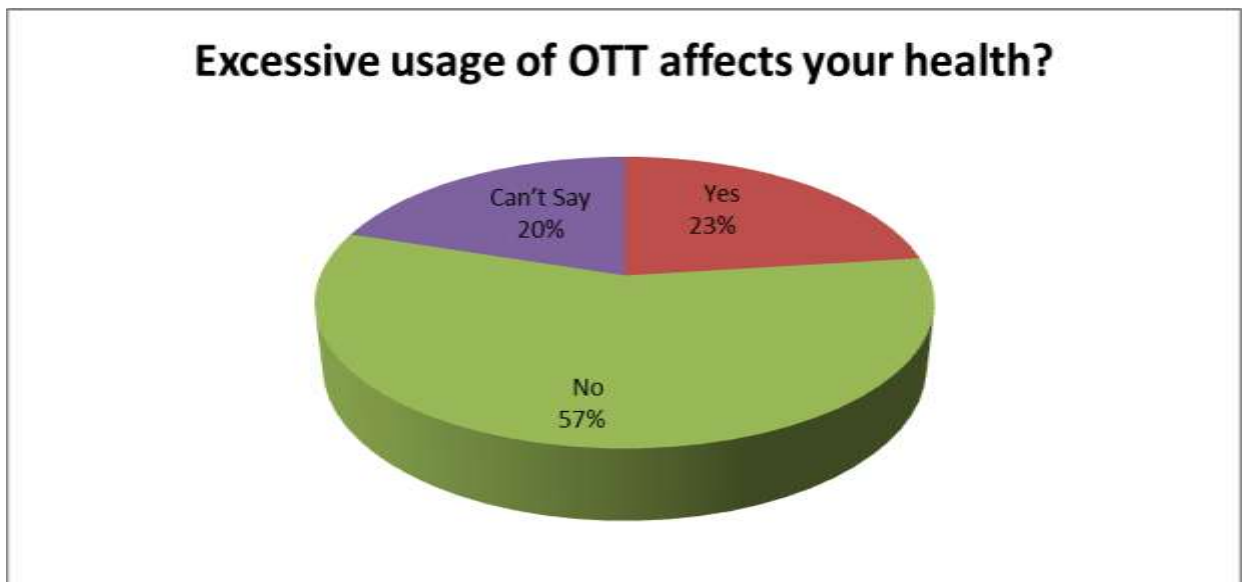


Fig 12 says that only 23% respondents believes that OTT affects the health while 57% says it does not and rest 20% are not sure whether it does or not.

Q.13 Do you prefer to stay at home enjoying OTT or like to go out and enjoy with your family & friends?

Fig 13

Prefer to watch OTT at home or like to go out and enjoy

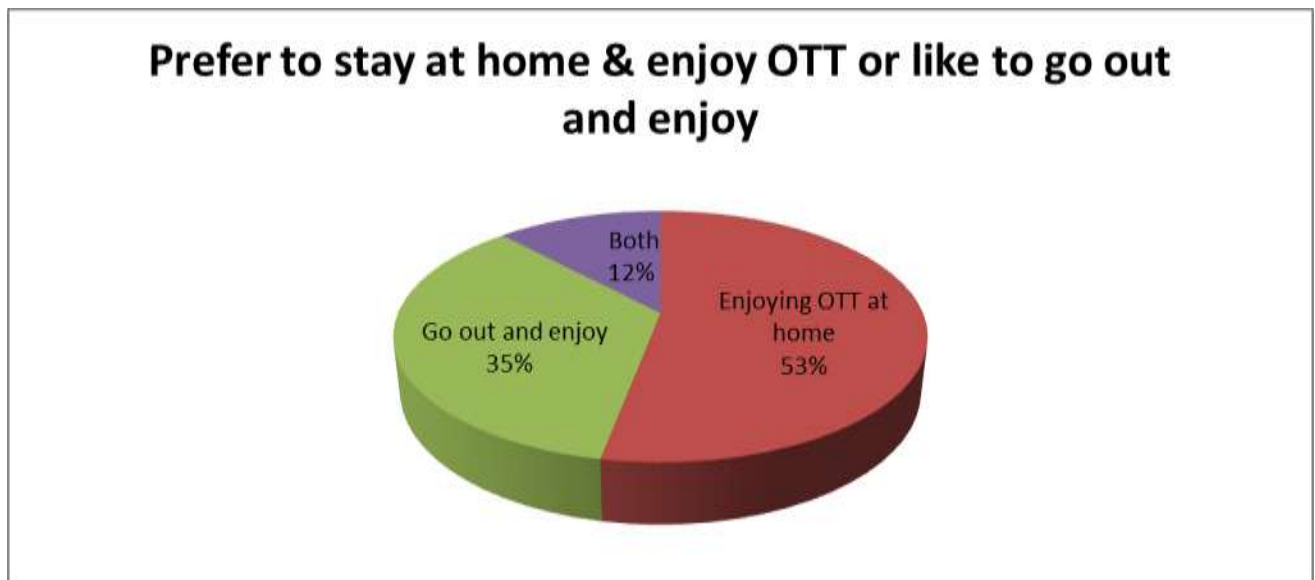


Fig 13 indicates that only 35% respondents likes to go out and enjoy while 53% likes to stay at home and watch OTT, rest 12% likes both.

## Conclusion

OTT platform have become part of our lifestyle these days. After analyzing the data it has been found that all the teenagers' chosen for the study access OTT for various reasons. They like OTT as it offers variety, it has no time constraint & can be viewed anywhere. The most popular OTT platform among teenagers is Netflix liked by 34%, after which come Hot Star (25%) & Amazon prime. Asking about the frequency & time to access OTT, it has been found that all respondents access OTT for hours. 30% spend more than 4 hours on OTT while 42% spend 2 – 4 hours, 16%

spend 1-2 hour & only 12% respondents spend 0 – 1 hour. 71% respondents also feel that OTT is addictive. 62% respondents believe that OTT has changed the Television viewing habits of people. 20% respondents believe that OTT affects their relationships with their family, friends & relatives as 34% respondents thinks it affects their mood. 23% respondents also believes that OTT affects their health while 57% says it does not and rest 20% are not sure whether it does or not. Another matter of concern is that only 35% respondents likes to to go out and enjoy while 53% likes to stay at home and watch OTT.

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