

Analysis of Impact of OTT Platforms on College Students in Lucknow

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Abstract: The demand for Over-the-Top content is increasing at a faster rate. These OTT Platforms have got a tremendous success in the entertainment industry within such a short span of time. The fast 4G internet services have helped to boom the demand of OTT content. The demand for OTT content is more as compared to television because of its easy accessibility and having collection of different genres. The platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Hotstar, YouTube, Voot, etc. are gaining popularity. After the pandemic, these platforms have become much more convenient and agreeable choice of everyone. The closing of movie theatres has started the trend of movie release at these OTT Platforms during pandemic which has now become the culture to launch movies on these platforms. This paper aims to analyse the psychosocial impact of these OTT Platforms on the college students who are in age group of 18 to 23 years in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India. Majority of students use OTT Platforms for their entertainment.

Keywords: *OTT Platforms, Binge Watching, Evolution of OTT in India, Subscription of OTT, OTT and Youth, OTT, and Behaviour of Youth.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Today majority of youngsters are social media addicts and are always seen with a gadget. OTT has made it easy to watch the content of any category at any place. The social media addiction and feature of web series to be small, involving new concept and creativity has helped it to gain popularity so fast. The transformation of demand of content and various platforms available to serve it has been the key of success. The cheap internet availability whether in form of mobile networks or dongle or LAN and broadband services have made viewers frequently visiting these apps. The cheap mobile sets and their penetration to rural areas have increased the consumer base. The rising pay capacity of upper middle class have increased the subscriptions too. According to a survey by global digital content delivery platform Limelight Networks, Indian viewers spend significantly more time watching online

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videos than the global average of six hours and 45 minutes per week in 2018, which is up 58% from the previous year.¹ Earlier this trend of online video streaming was popular in the western countries but now it is popular in India too within few years. These OTT Platforms are based on Binge watching model.

The research propounded that digital media is contributing 72% in the industry and there is the prediction that annual growth rate of 21.3% will be accounted in the global video streaming market from the period of 2022 - 2030.² Pandemic drastically impacted the film industry Indian Cinema is having a rapid change as the consumers are moving towards alternative means for entertainment. The pandemic situation resulted in boon for these OTT Platforms. The content on these platforms is easily to consume, convenient and is affordable.

According to an article published by Chaterjee and Pal, OTT platforms are changing the watching pattern of audience and are evolving as an important part of main stream media.³

1.1 MEANING OF OVER-THE-TOP

Over The Top (OTT) refers to kind of streaming services which delivers the content via Internet instead of traditional means like DTH and Cable (Investopedia). Tech Terms had defined OTT as a data which is sent over the internet and bypasses the traditional mediums. Many OTT Platforms are available now like Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Hotstar, Alt alaji, YouTube, SonyLiv, Zee 5 and etc. Many of these big companies are investing steadily for regional contents. These web series are taking the audience at a journey where television does not. The television serials go on for long time but the web series don't and are short, having few episodes and gets finished within limited time span. Binge watching creates interest to watch next episode. It contains all kinds of entertainment which enables everyone to search their choice. The history of users on these platforms is analysed by the software and based on which the recommendations for other series are made which makes user feel personalised experience.

Web series contain a short video in the form of episodes which are been released over a certain period to tell any story or plot to the viewer. Large number of views comes from YouTube which is owned by search engine Google. Mainly the youth of 18 to 30 years form the large customer base. The series are made focussing on Younger

¹ DevDiscourse, 'Indians Nowadays Spend More Time Watching Online Video than TV: Survey | Entertainment' (*Devdiscourse*4 October 2018) <<https://www.devdiscourse.com/article/entertainment/205821-indians-nowadays-spend-more-time-watching-online-video-than-tv-survey>> accessed 1 November 2023.

² MillionInsights, 'Video Streaming Market Size & Share, 2030 | Industry Report' (*www.millioninsights.com* November 2022) <<https://www.millioninsights.com/industry-reports/global-video-streaming-market#:~:text=The%20global%20video%20streaming%20market>> accessed 1 November 2023.

³ Mrinal Chatterjee, 'Globalization Propelled Technology Often Ends up in Its Micro- Localization: Cinema Viewing in the Time of OTT' (2020) 12 *Global Media Journal-Indian Edition* 1 <<https://gmj.manipal.edu/issues/june2020/2%20Cinema%20viewing%20in%20the%20time%20of%20OTT.pdf>>.

generation as the target audience. According to a report published by business today magazine in 2018, it was showcased that the Indian OTT business will reach 35000 crores in the financial year 2023.⁴

2.1 EVOLUTION OF OTT IN INDIA

In 2008, Big Flix was launched by Reliance Entertainment which made users to stream or download movies at any time. It was first OTT Platform in India. Then many Indian companies also started offering OTT services like Reliance (Jio Cinema and Jio TV), Zee (Zee5), Times Group (MX Player), Viacom-28 (Voot), Balaji telefilms (Alt Bala ji). Many international companies like Eros International (Eros Now), Netflix Inc. (Netflix), Disney (Hotstar), Amazon (Amazon Prime), Sony (Sony Liv) etc. also started their services in India analyzing the highly potential Indian Market.

In 2013, Ditto TV (Zee) and Sony Liv were launched in the Indian Market which gave more rise to OTT in India. NexGTV was the first to have a live streaming of Indian Premier League on mobile phones. In 2015, Hotstar entered the Indian Market who in 2018 gave the report that 96% of its watch time is generated from the video which is longer than twenty minutes. After 2016, Netflix came which is the most favourable OTT Platform around the world. It recorded highest watch time as 120 minutes. It has stated intent to invest around six hundred crores to produce unique content for its audience. Hotstar has 75 million loyal customer bases in India. Amazon Prime video contains 11 million subscribers whereas Netflix in India has only five million subscribers.

2.2 SUBSCRIPTION OF OTT

OTT Platforms contain variety of content like cricket matches, movies, shows etc. One must purchase subscription of one platform and will get variety of content in different languages available at one space. Television subscriptions are hassle as one must subscribe every channel as per one's preference separately. Viewers are paying readily because it is available anytime and anywhere and whatever type of content they want.

2.3 OTT PLATFORMS AND YOUTH

The Data Sciences Division of Dentsu Aegis Network (DAN) stated that around 49% of Indian Youth spends 2 to 3 hours in a single day in the binge watching. Media contains an article stating, that primary subscribers of OTT are youths. It also stated that even class seventh student has premier subscription of these OTT Platforms because of absence of any age limit restrictions. More than two third prospects in this research said that they watch OTT. Today the Youth has shifted their preference towards these OTT Platforms from television because they feel that the content of television is boring, lacks reality, creativity and goes on for long time.

⁴ BusinessToday, 'Indian OTT Market to Reach \$5 Billion in Size by 2023, Says BCG Report' (*Business Today* 21 November 2018) <<https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/economy-politics/story/indian-ott-market-to-reach-dollar-5-billion-in-size-by-2023-says-bcg-report-117242-2018-11-21>>.

2.4 BINGE WATCHING

It refers to watching multiple episodes of a web series at one sitting. The web series can be finished at a go because of absence of any kind of interruption which results in long watch hours. This model attracts more and more youth who are watching specially from mobiles and laptops.

Binge watching is often termed as addiction. Research by Sung, et al (2018) demonstrated that binge watching relates to negative feelings.⁵ Binge watching is correlated to depression, low esteem, academic loss, and body dissatisfaction. It was found that the rhythm of day of many people is built around binge watching. Many people make their schedules where binge watching is allotted a time span which is generally much higher and after completion of the series, they feel like achieved accomplishment. The grades and social lives of students are suffered by Binge watching. Many prospects agreed that they give more time to OTT than they had decided to give.

2.5 OTT AND BEHAVIOUR OF YOUTH

It is generally observed that kids and youth learn songs, dialogues, attitude, morals etc. from movies and OTT which changes their behaviour. Parents use to prefer those movies or contents which have positive impact on their children. The content on these platforms contains hatred, abusive language, vulgarity, religious rebellion, and parental rebellion which influences students. The physical and mental development is slowed because of less exposure to different activities, outdoor and indoor games, friends, and family. Regularly watching violent series might change their behaviour towards aggression. The nudity and obscenity shown encourages irresponsible sexual behaviours. Physical or mental diseases might arise because of less exercise, less physical activity, eyes more in contact with gadgets, less sleep etc. Consumption of drugs, weed, alcohol, smoking, tobacco is increased among students because of frequent watching of it on the OTT content.

2.6 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

OTT Platforms are investing heavily in Indian market because of large customer base. The Economic Times, 2020 stated that by 2023 India will be having more than 907 million active Internet users. Reliance Jio free data use launch has worked as a catalyst for growth of these OTT Platforms.

It has been observed by a recent national survey in India that 60 per cent of youngsters between the age of 9 to 17 spend more than three hours daily on social media or gaming platforms. It is propounded that an Indian youth spends almost 17% of monthly expenditure and 14% time on entertainment. Audience is now interested in watching factual based content rather than watching melodrama. The tough competition between OTT Platforms

⁵ Yoon Hi Sung, Eun Yeon Kang and Wei-Na Lee, 'Why Do We Indulge? Exploring Motivations for Binge Watching' (2018) 62 *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 408.

to serve good content increases popularity. Future of web series is bright because of it serving the content-based show which focus on originality. (Adlakha, 2018) OTT content was used by 70% youth for entertainment during lockdown. Consumption was 4 to 6 hours for 31% urban youth. 14% consumed for 6 to 9 hours and half of them consumed for 2 to 3 hours daily. Large variety of availability of content made Indian youth shift towards OTT during lockdown.⁶

Majumdar, 2020 stated that OTT Platforms have both positive and negative impact on youth. It increases aggressiveness and violence. It also gives idea about the crime of kidnapping and murder. In many incidents, the criminals got idea about how to commit offence from OTT. As stated by Moochhala⁷, the consistent growth of these OTT points that it is giving Indians a new substitute for traditional cinema and cable television. Kumari, 2020 stated that OTT players have now become a part of mainstream media and it influences the watching behaviour of consumers all over the world. Madnani, Fernandes & Madnani (2020)⁸ revealed that in lockdown the people who were working from home were also consuming a lot of OTT content which increased views on these platforms. Mishra, Rout, Kantha and Jha (2021)⁹ stated that the greatest merit of digital platforms is that there is no too much problem of piracy and theft which exists for film industry.

3.1 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

To study the impact of OTT Platforms on the education, health, behaviour and on social life of college students in Lucknow. To study whether students are addicted to binge watching.

3.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study whether studies are getting affected because of OTT.
- To study whether behaviour is getting affected because of OTT.
- To study whether sleep is getting affected because of OTT.
- To study whether social life is getting affected because of OTT.
- To study whether binge watching affects students.

⁶ Garima Sharma Nijhawan and Surbhi Dahiya, 'ROLE of COVID as a CATALYST in INCREASING ADOPTION of OTTS in INDIA: A STUDY of EVOLVING CONSUMER CONSUMPTION PATTERNS and FUTURE BUSINESS SCOPE' (2020) 6 2456 <https://www.amity.edu/gwalior/jccc/pdf/dec_28.pdf>.

⁷ Quresh Moochhala, 'The Future of Online OTT Entertainment Services in India' (2018) <https://actionesque.com/research-papers_pdf/QM-OTT-future-2018.pdf> accessed 1 March 2023.

⁸ Divya Madnani, Semila Fernandes and Nidhi Madnani, 'Analysing the Impact of COVID-19 on Over-The-Top Media Platforms in India' (2020) 16 International Journal of Pervasive Computing and Communications 457.

⁹ Debasish Rout and others, 'IMPACT of WEB SERIES in OTT PLATFORM on the YOUTH in BHUBANESWAR CITY' (2021) 6 © 2021 IJRTI | <<https://ijrti.org/papers/IJRTI2111002.pdf>>.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary data was collected by conducting the survey. The questionnaire was used to collect data. It was done online through filling of google form. Convenient sampling method was used. 200 samples were collected and at random 100 were selected from them for study. The prospects were college students from Amity University, Lucknow, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya National Law College, Lucknow, Lucknow Public College, Sri Ramswaroop Memorial College, Babu Banarsidas University and etc. colleges in Lucknow.

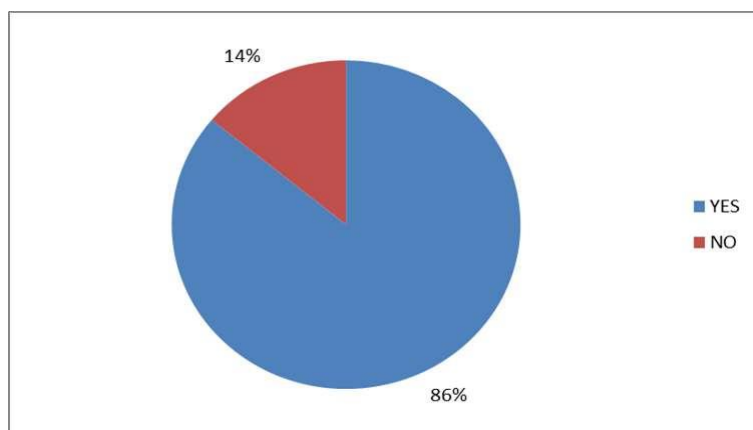
3.4 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The study was limited to age group of 18 to 23 years only.

3.5 RESULTS OF STUDY

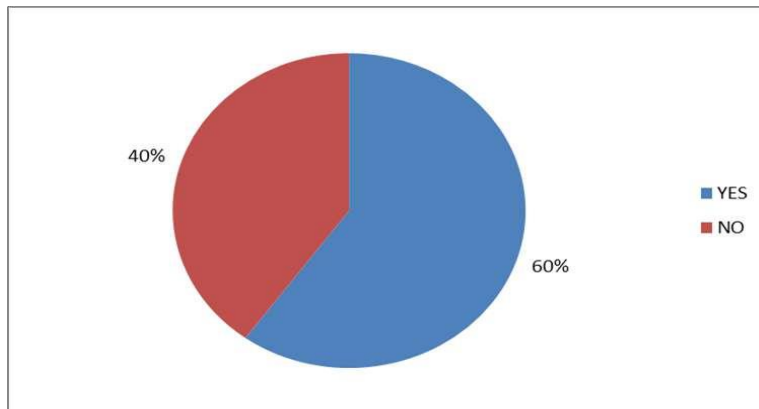
The questions asked were the following and the following interpretations are made from them:

3.5.1 Do you use OTT platforms for your entertainment?



86% prospects are engaged in watching OTT Platforms and 14% don't use OTT Platforms for entertainment.

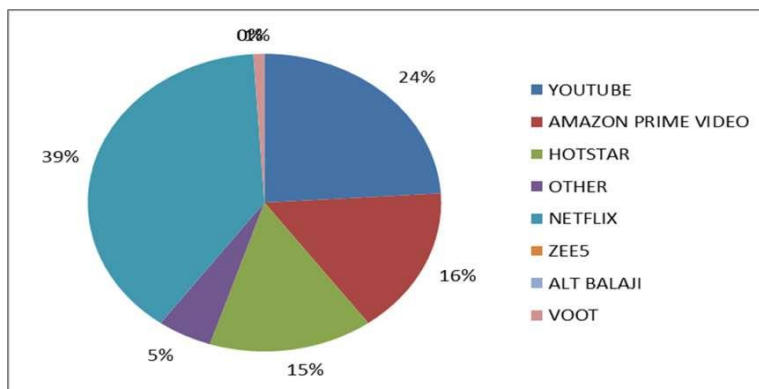
3.5.2 Do you have subscription of OTT apps?



60% of prospects have OTT subscriptions. 40% does not have subscription might be they are using subscription of some others as only 14% prospects have stated that they do not watch OTT for entertainment. Students are paying subscription amount which indicates that how much value they give to OTT.

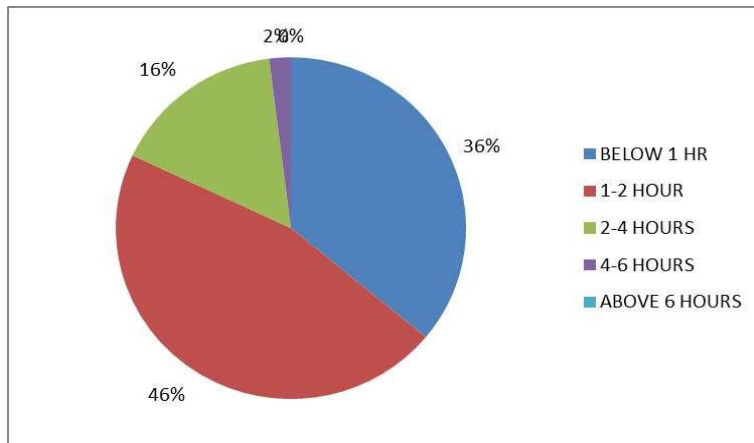
3.5.3 Which among the following is your first choice?

The choice was given to them between Netflix, Hotstar, Amazon Prime Video, Alt Balaji, YouTube, Voot, Zee 5 and Other.



Netflix is popular with 39% favourable choice, then the second choice is YouTube with 24%, Amazon Prime Video has 16%, Hotstar is having 15% which shows that there is not much difference between Hotstar and Amazon Prime Video. 5% opted for Other and only 1% opted Voot. No prospect opted for Alt Balaji and Zee 5 which shows that youth are not interested in the content provided by these platforms. Worldwide Netflix is considered favourable choice and this study reveals that too.

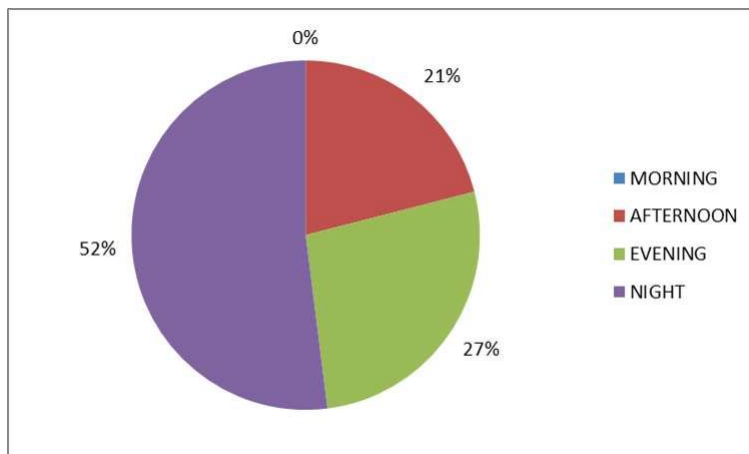
3.5.4 How many hours in a day you spend on watching OTT?



College students have to focus more and more on their studies to build their carrier. The time which they give to entertainment helps to make their mind refresh but too much time allotted to OTT can make them deviate from their requirement.

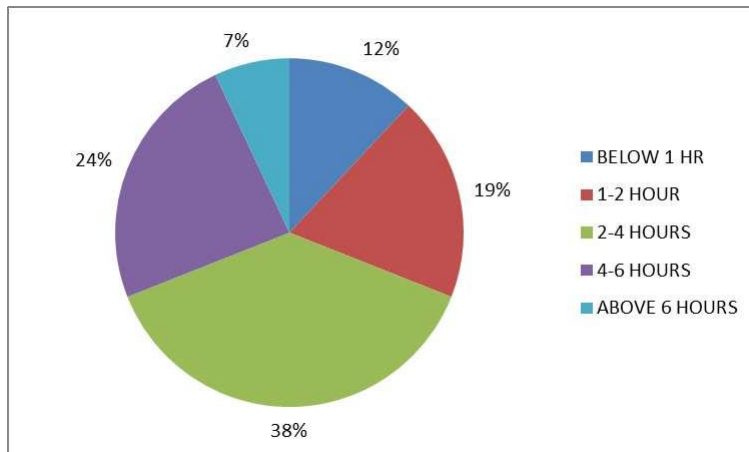
36% students give below 1 hr. to OTT watching content. 46% give 1 to 2 hours watching OTT. 16% give 2 to 4 hours which is very high. 2% give 4 to 6 hours and none give above 6 hours. Giving more than 2 hours to OTT will decline time to study.

3.5.5 Which time you prefer to watch OTT?



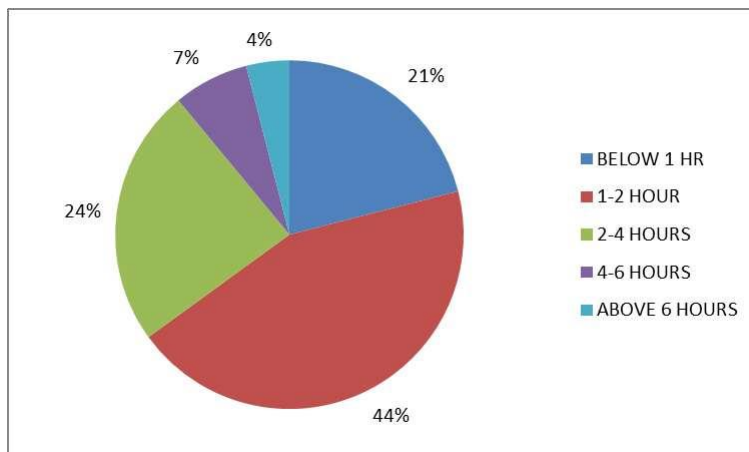
None watch OTT in the morning. 21% watch OTT in the afternoon which is the college time. It means that they sacrifice study and social life of interacting friends. 27% watch OTT in the evening which is the second choice of time. 52% watch at night which is the highest choice. Watching OTT at night if you are addicted to binge watching might be dangerous as one will suffer from sleeping disorder which will affect health and interest in other activities.

3.5.6 How much time you give to your studies?



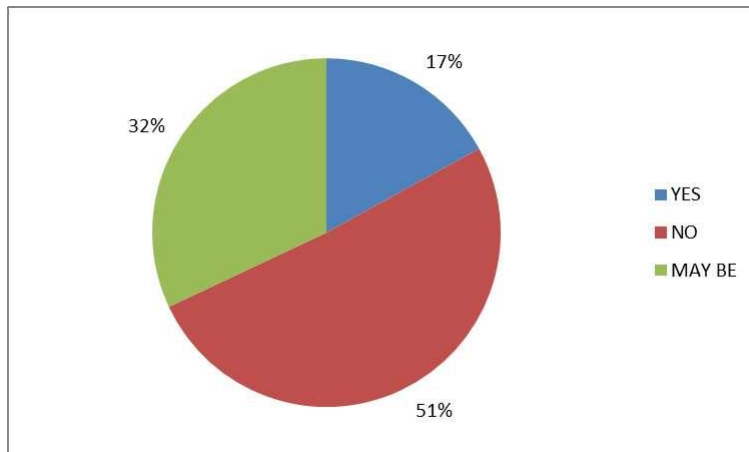
12% prospects give below 1 hour to their studies which is very less. 19% give 1 to 2 hours and 38% give 2 to 4 hours which is the highest percentage. 24% give 4 to 6 hours and 7% give above 6 hours which is the good sufficient. This data shows that students give enough time to their studies and OTT has not disturbed their studies.

3.5.7 How much time you spend with your friends talking or doing any activity?



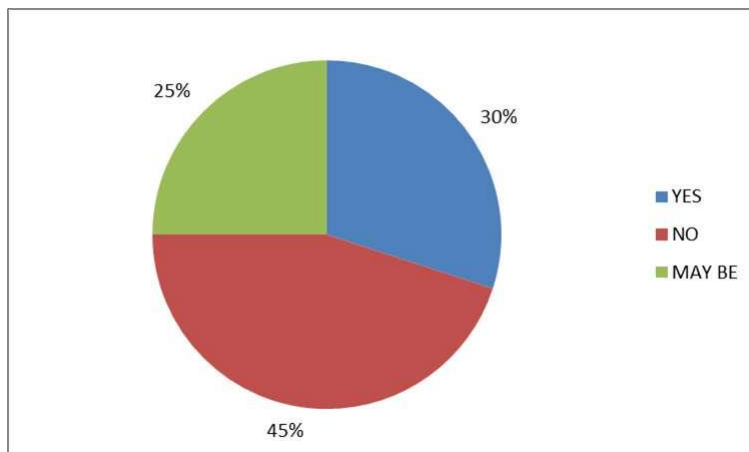
21% spend below 1 hour which is very less time as social interaction is necessary for good physical and mental development. 44% spend 1 to 2 hours which is the highest percentage. 24% spend 2 to 4 hours, 7% spend 4 to 6 hours and 4% spend above 6 hours with their friend talking or doing any work.

3.5.8 Do you feel that your health is getting affected because of watching OTT?



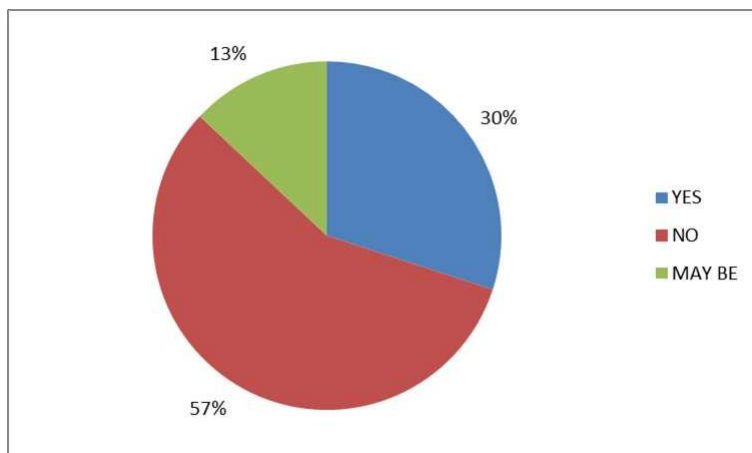
When asked this question only 17% agreed to it and 32% were not sure that watching OTT affects their health. 32% stated that they do not feel that their health is getting affected in any way.

3.5.9 Do you think that you get late to sleep or has less sleeping because of OTT?



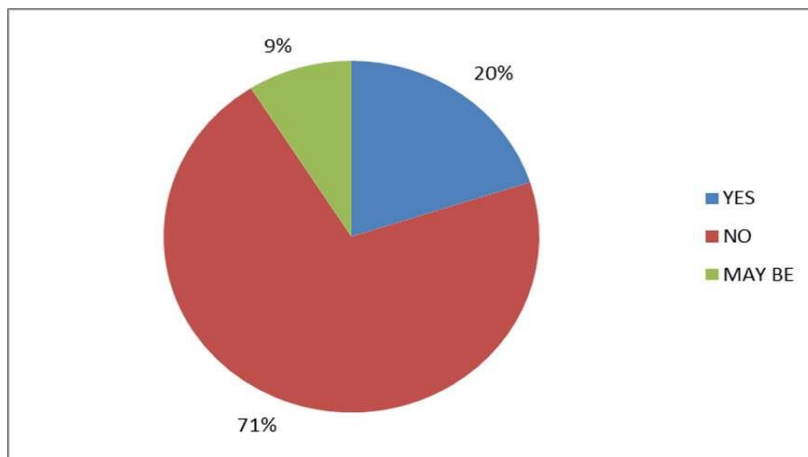
30% of students have agreed that they get late to sleep because of OTT and 25% were not sure which means that 0.5% probability for both yes and no. 45% believed that their sleep is not affected because of OTT.

3.5.10 Do you feel that your studies are getting affected because of OTT?



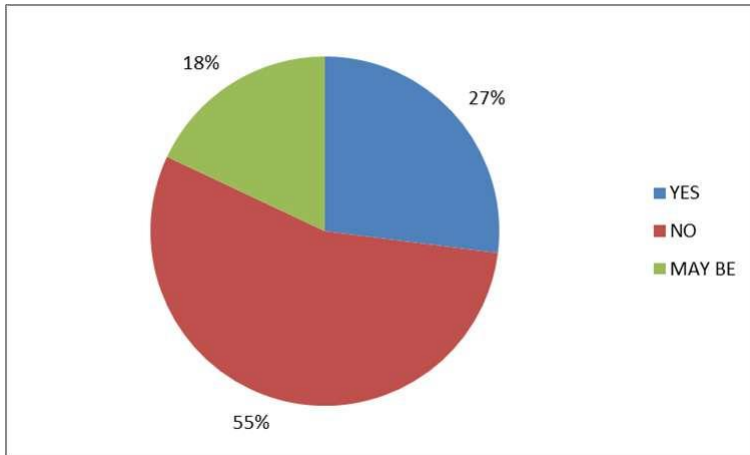
30% believe that their studies are getting affected because of OTT and 13% are not sure which and 57% believe that OTT is not affecting studies.

3.5.11 Do you feel that you get aggressive while or after watching OTT?



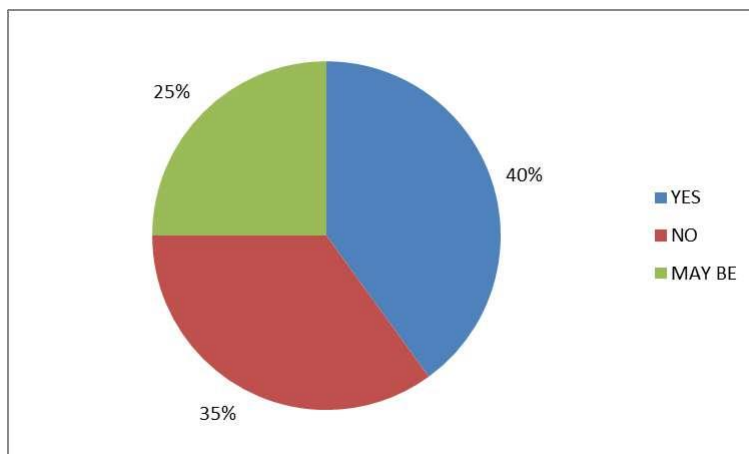
20% believe that they get aggressive while watching series and 9% believe that they are not sure whereas 71% believe that they don't feel any such issue which states that they are not getting negative impact of aggression while watching OTT.

3.5.12 Do you feel that your behaviour has changed because of watching OTT content?



27% believe that their behaviour has changes and 28% are not sure whereas majority which is 55% believe that they do not have impact of OTT on their behaviour.

3.5.13 Do you end up in giving more time to OTT than you had decided for to give?



40% believe that they give more time to OTT than they had seceded to give, 25% are not sure and 35% say that they not feel this. It means that majority are addicted to binge watching.

4.Findings and Conclusion

Majority of students watch OTT for their entertainment and majority of them have purchased the subscription too. International companies like Netflix have gained more youth market share than the Indian companies. A good amount of time is spent by the students on watching OTT content. Night is the most preferred time to watch OTT and studies and social life is not too affected because of these OTT platforms. Many does not believe that their sleep and health is getting affected. Some have agreed about change in their behaviour. Binge watching is affecting

students. It is agreed by the majority that they tend to spend much more time on watching OTT content than they had decided. Students should focus more on studies and other activities than OTT. They should try to avoid Binge watching as it increases day by day and is very much addictive. The change in behavioural patterns should be self- monitored and if found that negative effects are affecting then such type of content should be avoided.