

Binge Watching in Rural Areas- A study with special reference to Jagtial District, Telangana

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ABSTRACT: The Covid-19 pandemic has brought the world to a standstill especially during lockdown in almost all the parts of the world. The people were forced to live in indoors. Unable to decide to do what, a considerable number of people shifted to OTT platforms and streaming their favourite content to make the best of their free time which otherwise was lost in office and household chores during normal days before Covid-19. They just want to have entertainment to come out of fear of the pandemic. They want to watch their old serials, programmes etc in one go. They started binge watching. Binge watching is watching multiple episodes of (a TV programme) at a stretch either by means of DVDs or digital streaming. Indian consumers have a new big appetite for binge watching which is growing exponentially not only in urban areas but also in rural areas. This paper deals with Binge watching in rural areas with special reference to Jagtial. Questionnaire is designed and distributed among the people of Jagtial using convenient sampling method during the months from October & November. The data is analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Subscription. The results show that Binge watching has grown to be moderately stress free and to watch sexual and violent content.

Key Words: Rural Consumer, Binge Watching,

INTRODUCTION:

Entertainment has always been a booming and glamorous industry in India which originated more than 100 years ago. It stands as the second oldest film industry in the world. It produces more than 1,600 films in various Indian languages every year. The reports by PwC highlighted that the Indian entertainment and media industry will grow at a CAGR of 11.6 percent and may reach Rs 3,53,609 crore by 2022. This will set India to be among the top 10 over-the-top video markets in four years.

Indian consumers have a new big appetite for binge-watching. Binge-watching has been growing manifold not only in urban India but also in rural India. The marketers are attracting rural consumers. Rural consumer is a consumer who lives in far off places from cities and towns. The buying decision of a rural consumer is influenced by their culture, lifestyle, family and friends. They started adopting technology to change their lifestyle. Binge watching is one such trend that they are catching up very fastly. Binge watching is the practice of watching multiple episodes of a television programme in quick and rapid succession either using DVDs or digital streaming. With the increase number of OTT platforms and Smartphone users, consumers are not only watching their favorite film or programme by sitting in one place but also binge watching anywhere and at anytime be it cafes or restaurants, waiting in line, walking in parks, or on the way to work etc. The other reasons for binge watching are cheaper mobile data, localized content, adoption of technology, need for a better lifestyle, accessing the internet to watch videos, exploring new content on OTT, 4G offerings by telecom operators, increasing offers that caters to user-personal preference for content etc.

Table showing the percentage of online consumption in rural areas

Rural Areas	87%	Consumption of data by rural areas
	58%	Internet Usage (For watching Videos)
	56%	Online communication
	49%	Social networking
	35%	Online services
	16%	Online Financial transactions

Source: IAMAI reports

The above table shows the percentage of online consumption in rural areas which clearly depicts the developing status of rural areas at great speed due to with higher adoption of technology and their wish and need for a better lifestyle. They wish to optimize the time that they invest in commuting or while doing odd jobs by binge-watching or catching up on their favorite video content that they missed due to the lack of time. They also started exploring new content on the OTT platforms as they are not time bound and can be watched at one's convenience.

Table showing the trend to watch content through online platforms with 4G Offerings

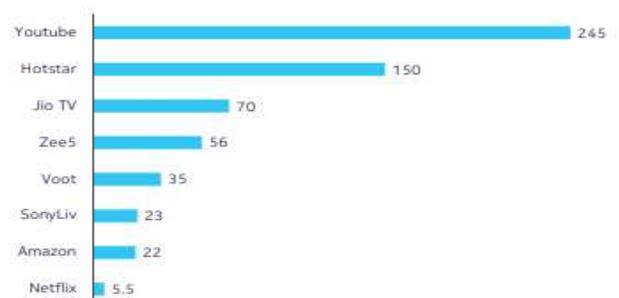
4G Offerings	Percentage	Purpose
	70-80 per cent	video streaming
	12-14 per cent	Browsing
	10-12 per cent	Social Networking
	5 -10 per cent	Others

Source: India Mobile Broadband Index 2019

The above table from India Mobile Broadband Index 2019 shows the percentage of users with 4G offerings to binge watch. They watch for streaming, browsing, social networking and others.

Monthly Active Users (Mn) of OTT Platforms²

- Operators joining hands with OTT content providers to boost their subscriber base with offerings like free subscriptions and unlimited video streaming has been a major driver for the OTT market in India
- Increasing smartphone penetration in rural areas will further drive the growth
- Regional language content and other events like sports have predominantly led to increase in OTT consumption



Source: India Mobile Broadband Index 2019

The data taken from India Mobile Broadband Index 2019 shows that Youtube is the most popular platform to binge watch.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data is collected administrating a designed questionnaire to 110 respondents in Jagtiyal district using convenient sampling method. The data is analyzed using IBM SPSS package. The data is collected in October and November, 2020- the short period of Covid-19 pandemic.

		Gender		Valid	Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid	Male	57	51.8	51.8	51.8
	Female	53	48.2	48.2	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents are male i.e. 51.8 percent followed by females i.e. 48.2 percent.

		Education		Valid	Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid	High School	32	29.1	29.1	29.1
	Class XII	24	21.8	21.8	50.9
	Graduation	26	23.6	23.6	74.5
	Post Graduation	17	15.5	15.5	90.0
	Above PG	11	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents have pursued high school qualification i.e. 29.1 percent only followed by graduates (23.6 percent), class XII (24 percent), post graduates (15.5 percent) and only 10 percent acquired above PG qualification.

		Occupation			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Student	38	34.5	34.5	34.5
	Business	28	25.5	25.5	60.0
	Profession	24	21.8	21.8	81.8
	Employee	7	6.4	6.4	88.2
	Unemployed	13	11.8	11.8	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents are students i.e. 34.5 percent followed by business (25.5 percent) and Profession (21.8 percent). Unemployed constitute 11.8 percent. Employees are least in number in Jagtial district with 6.4 percent.

		Income			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	< 10000	32	29.1	29.1	29.1
	10001 to 20000	35	31.8	31.8	60.9
	20001 to 30000	19	17.3	17.3	78.2
	30001 to 40000	7	6.4	6.4	84.5
	>40000	17	15.5	15.5	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents are earning income between 10001 to 20000 (31.8 percent) followed by people earning less than 10000/- (29.1 percent). Others are earning between 20001 and 30000 (17.3 percent) followed by people earning more than 40000 (15.5 percent). Only 6.4 percent are earning between 30001 and 40000.

		Age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	< 18 years	32	29.1	29.1	29.1
	18 to 25 years	39	35.5	35.5	64.5
	25 to 45 years	23	20.9	20.9	85.5
	> 45 years	16	14.5	14.5	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents are between the age group 18 to 25 years (35.5 per cent) followed by people of less than 18 years (29.1 percent). The respondents between 25 to 45 years are 20.9 percent followed by 14.5 percent above 45 years.

		Marital		Valid	Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid	married	63	57.3	57.3	57.3
	unmarried	47	42.7	42.7	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents are married i.e. 57.3 per cent followed by unmarried i.e. 42.7 percent.

		Plan to binge watch		Valid	Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid	yes	63	57.3	57.3	57.3
	no	47	42.7	42.7	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents plan to binge watch i.e. 57.3 percent followed by 42.7 percent who said no that they never plan to binge watch.

		How binge watch		Valid	Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid	Alone	60	54.5	54.5	54.5
	with family	17	15.5	15.5	70.0
	with friends	33	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents said that they love to binge watch alone only i.e. 54.5 percent. Others love to watch with friends i.e. 30 percent and with family i.e. 15.5 percent.

		platform		Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
		Frequency	Percent		
Valid	Netflix	34	30.9	30.9	30.9
	Amazon video	32	29.1	29.1	60.0
	Prime video	27	24.5	24.5	84.5
	Youtube	7	6.4	6.4	90.9
	Zee5	5	4.5	4.5	95.5
	Voot	1	.9	.9	96.4
	Disney	2	1.8	1.8	98.2
	Hotstar				
	other	2	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents watch Netflix (30.9 percent) followed by Amazon Video (29.1 percent and Prime video(24.5 percent), Youtube (6.4 percent), Zee5 (4.5 percent), Disney Hotstar and others(1.8 percent) and voot(0.9 percent). Netflix is very popular in Jagtial.

Reason to choose the platform

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	price	6	5.5	5.5	5.5
	Design & features	12	10.9	10.9	16.4
	content variety	29	26.4	26.4	42.7
	no ads	24	21.8	21.8	64.5
	Live streaming	34	30.9	30.9	95.5
	other	5	4.5	4.5	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents binge watches for live streaming (30.9 percent) and content variety (26.4 percent). Others watch as they do not have advertisements popping up (21.8 percent). Some love for its design and features (10.9 percent) followed by price (5.5 percent) and others (4.5 percent).

		Genre		Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
		Frequency	Percent		
Valid	Drama	24	21.8	21.8	21.8
	comedy	18	16.4	16.4	38.2
	crime	29	26.4	26.4	64.5
	Horror	27	24.5	24.5	89.1
	other	12	10.9	10.9	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents binge watch for Crime content (26.4 percent) followed by Horror (24.5 percent), Drama (21.8 percent), comedy (16.4 percent) and other stuff (10.9 percent).

		Entire season		Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
		Frequency	Percent		
Valid	yes	65	59.1	59.1	59.1
	no	45	40.9	40.9	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents binge watch the entire season (59.1 percent) followed by 40.9 percent who said that they do not watch entire season.

		No of times		Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
		Frequency	Percent		
Valid	once a week	16	14.5	14.5	14.5
	twice a week	12	10.9	10.9	25.5
	thrice a week	34	30.9	30.9	56.4
	Almost everyday	48	43.6	43.6	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents watch binge watch almost every day i.e. 43.6 percent) followed by thrice a week (30.9 percent), once a week (14.5 percent) and twice a week (10.9 percent).

		Device			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Smartphone	66	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Smart TV	28	25.5	25.5	85.5
	PC/LAPTOP	8	7.3	7.3	92.7
	Gaming Console	5	4.5	4.5	97.3
	other	3	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents watch in their Smart phones (60 percent) followed by Smart TV (25.5 percent) , PC/LAPTOP (7.3 percent), Gaming Console (4.5 percent) and others (2.7 percent).

		Episodes			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	< 3 episodes	21	18.9	19.1	19.1
	3 to 5	17	15.3	15.5	34.5
	> 5	19	17.1	17.3	51.8
	Entire season	53	47.7	48.2	100.0
	Total	110	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		111	100.0		

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents watch entire season (47.7 percent) followed by less than 3 episodes (18.9 percent), more than 5 episodes (17.1 percent) and 3 to 5 episodes (15.3 percent).

Influence of Friends for Binge Watch

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	poor influence of friends	14	12.7	12.7	12.7
	Moderate influence of friends	54	49.1	49.1	61.8
	high influence of friends	42	38.2	38.2	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents are influenced by friends moderately (49.1 percent) followed by high influence (38.2 percent) and poor influence of friends for binge watching (12.7 percent).

Influence of Group for binge watching

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid poor group influence	20	18.2	18.2	18.2
moderate group influence	50	45.5	45.5	63.6
high group influence	40	36.4	36.4	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents are influenced by groups moderately (45.5 percent) followed by high influence (36.4 percent) and poor influence of friends for binge watching (18.2 percent).

Reason to binge watch

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid less lonely	12	10.9	10.9	10.9
moderate lonely	62	56.4	56.4	67.3
high lonely	36	32.7	32.7	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents are moderately lonely in Jagtial to binge watch (56.4 percent) followed by highly lonely i.e. 32.7 percent and less lonely (10.9 percent).

Binge watch for Stress Reliever

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid poor stress reliever	20	18.2	18.2	18.2
moderate stress reliever	72	65.5	65.5	83.6
high stress reliever	18	16.4	16.4	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents are moderately feel stress free while binge watching i.e. 65.5 percent followed by poor stress reliever (18.2 percent) and high stress reliever (16.4 percent).

Binge watch for violent content.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	15	13.6	13.6	13.6
	disagree	25	22.7	22.7	36.4
	agree	34	30.9	30.9	67.3
	Strongly agree	36	32.7	32.7	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents strongly agree that they binge watch for violent content (32.7 percent) and only 13.6 percent strongly disagree it.

Of the sexual content.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	10	9.1	9.1	9.1
	disagree	19	17.3	17.3	26.4
	agree	36	32.7	32.7	59.1
	Strongly agree	45	40.9	40.9	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

Most of the respondents strongly agree that they binge watch for sexual content (40.9 percent) and only 9.1 percent strongly disagree it.

CONCLUSIONS

Binge watching is growing exponentially in rural areas. The Socio-demographic profile of the study shows that Male members of 18 to 25 years age group love to binge watch. High School passed outs are many. Many students are there who binge watch. The respondents' income level is Rs. 10001 to 20000. Most of them are married. They plan to binge watch and that too alone by themselves. The most popular platform among them is Netflix. They choose it for live streaming. They love to watch crime and horror. They binge watch almost every day and complete the entire season episodes. The rural people are moderately

influenced by friends and group to binge watch. They are moderately lonely. They are moderately stress relievers. They watch for violent and sexual content.

Limitation: Although this research is limited to Jagtial area, it is a preliminary step from which future research can uproot and grow. Continuation of this research could bring valuable information and understanding into the reasons for binge watching in Telangana. The results of this research might be considered as a leading point for some upcoming studies to further understand the OTT platforms for binge watching.

Binge TV-watching is a phenomenon that is related to internet related technology. People are using new OTT platforms to watch various content even more than they used to. A collaborative work should be dedicated to identify the effects of binge watching. More research should be conducted to test binge-watching and its relations to other factors, such as self-control, attachment, and well-being as most of the youngsters are expose to crime, horror, violent and sexual content. Also, it is recommended more research is conducted to examine the motives behind the availability of such content for binge-watching. More research might investigate and analyze the TV content that teenagers and adult are binge-watching to have better information related to their education and career.

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