



Web series – The Medium of entertainment among young (Generation: A Case Study based on college students in Birbhum District)

S.K. Abbasuddin

M.A. Journalism & Mass Communication

Rabindra Bharati University

Contact: +91- 6294505780

E-mail: au3264176@gmail.com

Abstract

Internet has become an integral part of our life. The media is able to create awareness among the audiences through the propagation of information, education, entertainment and culture. This world is always changeable. In the late 1970's with the introduction of internet every form and genre of mass media has been continuously evolved and changed. After 2010 the demand of OTT Platform has been increased and various experimental contents are coming and its popularity of continuously increased in the of 21st Century with the detection of covid virus and announcement of lockdown the direct and indirect impact is observed. As a result, there are several new technologies, which are used by audience to watch web series on their personal gadgets. Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hot star, Zee5 and ALT Balaji, Jio Tv are some examples. How youths see 'WEBSERIES- AS THE MEDIUM OF ENTERTAINMENT'? To know the answer research has been carried out on the students of Birbhum Mahavidyala College and Suri Vidyasagar College in the Suri region of Birbhum district. The research has been done by giving various questions related to the topic to the students and taking answers from them. This research study is based on descriptive survey with single design and qualitative & quantitative method.

Keywords: OTT Platforms, Digital Media, Web Series, Internet

Introduction:

The 'Web' or 'Website' is basically a system of internet servers that support specially formatted documents the documents are formatted in a markup language call HTML that supports links to other documents as well as graphics, audio and video files. A 'Serial' is a story which is broadcast on television or radio or is published in a magazine or newspaper in a number of parts over a period of time. Serial typically follow main story arcs that span entire television seasons or even the full run of the series which distinguishes them from traditional episodic television that relies on more stand- alone episodes. Worldwide the soap opera is the most prominent form of serial dramatic programming.

An 'over the top'(OTT) media service is any online content provider that offers streaming media as a standalone product. The term is commonly applied to video on demand platforms, but also refers to audio streaming messaging services or internet-based voice calling solutions. OTT



services circumvent traditional media distribution channels such as telecommunication networks on cable television providers. As long as you have access to an internet connection either locally or through a mobile network- you can access the complete service at your leisure. Popular OTT mediums include 'Netflix', 'Hulu', 'Amazon Prime' and 'HBO Now'. Free services like 'Youtube' and 'Vimeo' are also considered OTT.

'Webseries' is a sequence of scripted or non-scripted shows that releases on the internet in an episodic form, which is known as webisodes. They are generally built upon each other and are produced in the form of seasons. Webseries are streamed on various platforms such as YouTube Netflix Amazon prime, Hotstar and many more. The era of digitalization has changed the scene of watching drama and what they have offered us till date. We have evolved a lot from watching typical daily soaps on TV to watching realistic and less melodramatic content on digital platforms in the form of Webseries. The medium through which we are consuming entertainment is gradually changing and the taste of viewers seems to be changing. 'Youth' is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. That's why as a category youth is more fluid than other age groups. Yet, age is the easiest way to define this group particularly in relation to education and employment because 'youth' is often referred to a person between ages of leaving compulsory education and finding their first job. The United Nation for statistical purposes define 'youth', as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member. However, the secretary-general also recognized that, apart from the statistical definition, the meaning of the term 'youth' varies in different societies around the world(5).

In the Indian entertainment industry there is an increase in the number of viewers with the recent arrival of web series as most of the series are youth oriented. Web series have new plots and new creative ideas for story line and it is much closer to the reality. Unlike soap operas, it is finite with lesser drama and realistic dialogue delivery. Webseries are more realistic as it has to face less censor. Every second, a youth present in India is using the mobile phone, tablets, laptops and other gadgets to watch webseries. It attracts a large audience to tune in and watch it regularly as most of them are free to watch and the whole series is released at once. The researcher decided to select two renowned colleges of Suri- Suri Vidyasagar College, Birbhum Mahavidyalaya College.

There are currently about 40 providers of over-the-top media services (OTT) in India, which distribute streaming media over the Internet. In fiscal year 2018, the OTT market in India was worth ₹2,150 crore (₹21.5 billion, US\$303 million as of 2018), and its value grew to ₹35 billion in 2019(6). An organization called ComScore recently conducted a survey of viewers on 50 million OTT platforms. It shows that the amount of visitors who want to watch with money is 69 percent. What do they want to see again? do they want to see again? 30 percent said they want to watch the game, 35 percent said they want to see the original content, meaning their own creation. And 19 percent want to watch movies and 16 percent want TV shows(7).

Literature Review:

There are several researches on web series such as analysis of product placement in web series and its influence on coliseum buying behaviour by Alpana kakkar and Kalyani Nayak (2019); this paper disseminate that the web series with its intellectual video contents plays an important or significant role to break the taboos of our society in India. In a country where television shows and the different movie or entertainment industries have to face the tight censorship in their content, webseries have been the go to source of thought provoking entertainment for millennials. Brands are rapidly catching up with this changing trend and started merging their products with the help of product placement in entertainment media. This research is conducted to know whether consumers are affected by product placement or not. Also this paper shows the relationship between product placements and the digital platform(1).

Kakkar.A.Nayek. K.(2019), "*Intellectual video content, web series have been playing a significant role in India*".

Another one is "The Netflix Effect: Teens, Binge watching and on-demand Digital Media Trends"(2014) by Sidneyeve Matrix; this journal contain the fact how popular press, binge viewing and Netflix are becoming synonymous especially for young viewers, including 'screenagers'. Of course not all millennials 'born digital' or have access to these services(2).

Matrix.S.(2014), "*The Netflix Effect: Teens, Binge Watching, and On-Demand Digital Media Trends*".Queen's University.Australia.

Those who do, however, increasingly are not content to abide by traditional weekly and seasonal programming schedules: connected Gen Y(currently aged 18 to 34), and Gen Z(young people born after 2005) with access to these services are practising new television viewing styles using a variety of digital technologies particularly subscription best video on demand(VOC or SVOD) via Netflix. With the long tail inventory of TV shows and movies, commercial free viewing experience, and 'post play' seamless episode delivery, Netflix is changing viewers expectations concerning what, how and when the watch TV.

Objectives:

To know different types of online entertainment platforms.

To find out how webseries take over the traditional form of entertainment such as TV programmes, Radio programmes.

To predict the future of entertainment with webseries.

Research Area:



This study has conducted in the Suri region particularly two colleges i.e. Suri Vidyasagar College and Suri Mahavidyalaya in Birbhum Districts. Sample size of 200 (100-100) respondents has drawn from these two colleges in Birbhum Districts.

Research Method:

This research study trying to figure out how the advancement of technology is slowly making the Web Series popular among the Indian youth community. The researchers trying to find out could be best answered by collecting qualitative and quantitative data. This study is based on survey method. Questionnaire is used for data collection. Online survey through Google forms are conducted to know the concept about 'Webseries' among some college students in Birbhum. Types of surveys might be: Explanatory, Exploratory/Descriptive.

Sampling:

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the researchers was unable to go out of the house and do the primary research, so the researcher have collected data via a web- based survey. Stratified Random Sampling was done by taking 100 students each from both colleges, Suri Vidyasagar College and Suri Mahavidyalaya(3).

Historical Context of OTT Platform and Web Series:

In the mid-nineties, New York producer Scott Zakarine came up with the idea for the web series "The Spot". Mainly it was a web based story series which was built at California Beach house. This series ran successfully for two years 1995 to 1997. The story was spread by presenting the daily livelihood of a group of young people to the audience. There was also revelation of their sex lives. Web series have become more popular since the early 90's, especially in the Western world. In 2013, the only OTT platform, Netflix, won the 85th Pricetime Emmy Award for its series. During that time three series, House of Cards, Arrested Development and Hemlock Grove were nominated for the honor. This is the first official recognition of the web series in the world.

However, if we look at it gradually, it is understood that the audience of OTT platform is increasing. Europe had 11.2 million visitors in 2014, 14.3 million in 2015, 16.5 million in 2016, 20.9 million in 2016, 24 million in 2016, 28 million in 2019 and 29.7 million in 2020, which is 2021 million. They expect to stand at 31.6 million. Let's take a look at the situation in America alone. The number of visitors was 153 million in 2016, 160.1 million in 2016, 161.5 million in 2019 and 16.3 million in 2020. In the next two years, in 2021, the number of visitors will stand at 193.2 million and in 2022, it will stand at 198.7 million.

India Adoption of OTT Platform and Web Series:

The first dependent Indian OTT platform was BIGFlix, launched by Reliance Entertainment in 2008. In 2010 Digivive launched India's first OTT mobile app called nexGTV, which provides access to both live TV and on-demand content. nexGTV is the first app to live-stream Indian Premier League matches on smart phones and did so during 2013 and 2014.

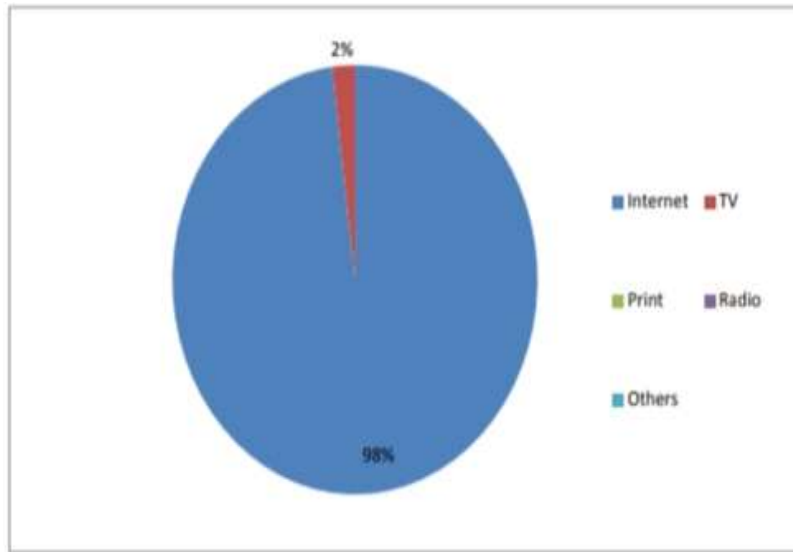
OTT gained significant momentum in India when both DittoTV (Zee) and Sony Liv were launched in the Indian market around 2013. Ditto TV was an aggregator platform containing shows across all media channels including Star, Sony, Viacom, Zee, etc. Some of the popular web series in the recent times are as follows(4).

Serial No	OTT Platforms	Web Series Name
1.	Amazon Prime Video	The Family Man
2.	Amazon Prime Video	The Family Man-2
3.	Amazon Prime Video	Paatal Lok
4.	Amazon Prime Video	Mirzapur
5.	Amazon Prime Video	Four More Shots Please!
6.	Amazon Prime Video	Breathe
7.	Amazon Prime Video	Made In Heaven
8.	Amazon Prime Video	Panchayat
9.	Netflix	Sacred Games
10.	Netflix	Delhi Crime
11.	Netflix	Selection Day
12.	Netflix	Little Things
13.	Disney+Hotstar	Special Ops
14.	Disney+Hotstar	Hostages
15.	Disney+Hotstar	Criminal Justice
16.	Imdb	Alisha
17.	Imdb	Girl in the City
18.	Imdb	Rangbaaz
19.	Voot	The Raikar Case
20.	Voot	Asur
21.	ALT Balaji	Apaharan
22.	ZEE5	The Final Call
23.	VB	Twisted
24.	Arre	A.I.SHA
25.	TVFplay	Kota Factory
26.	Hoichoi	Charitraheen

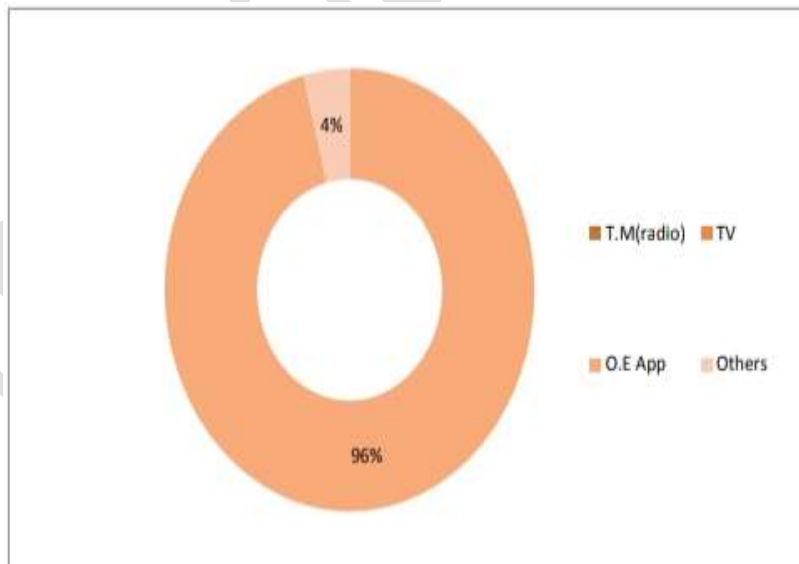
Data Interpretation and Analysis:

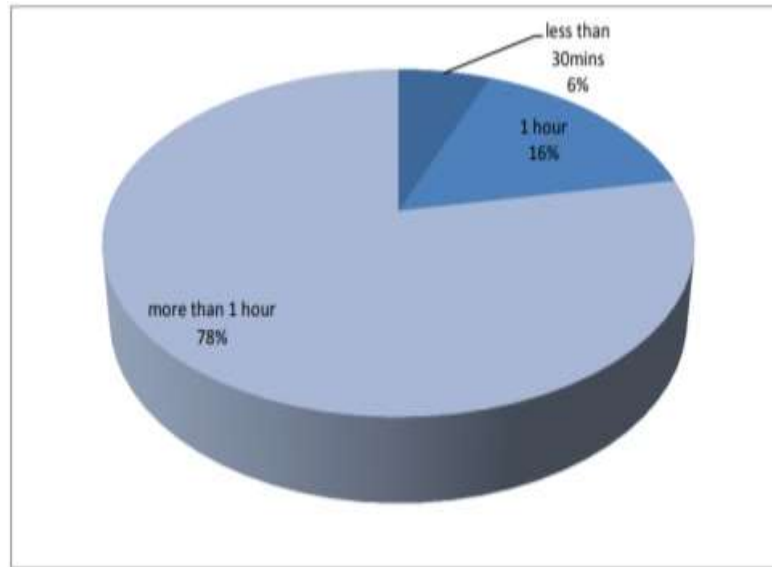
The following data collection and analysis was done by collecting various information related to Web Series from the students studying in these two colleges.

i. Percentage of entertainment content platform usage:



ii. Percentage of entertainment content source usage:



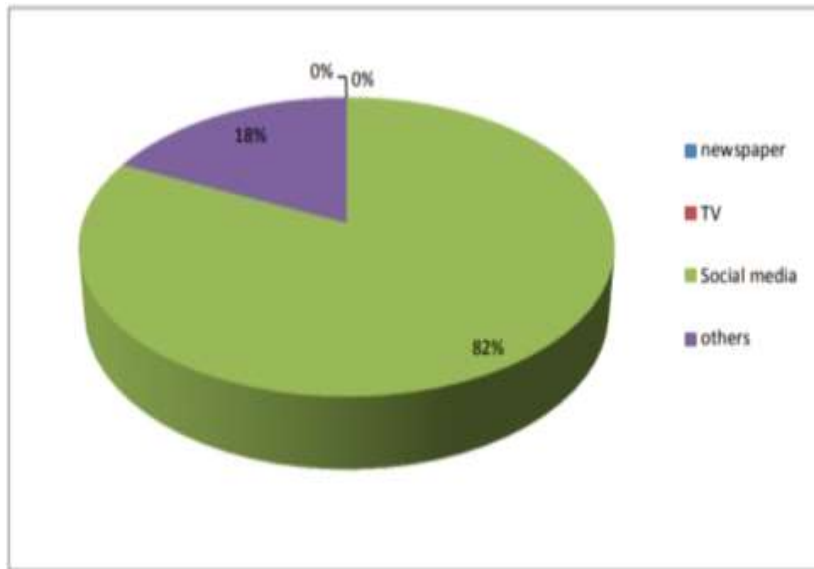


iii. Percentage of duration of time watching entertainment content:

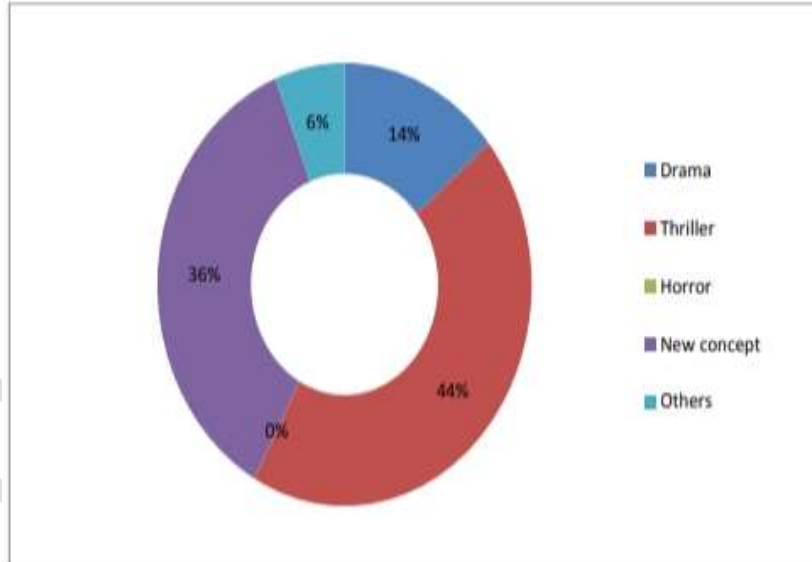
iv. Percentage of people who watches webseries:



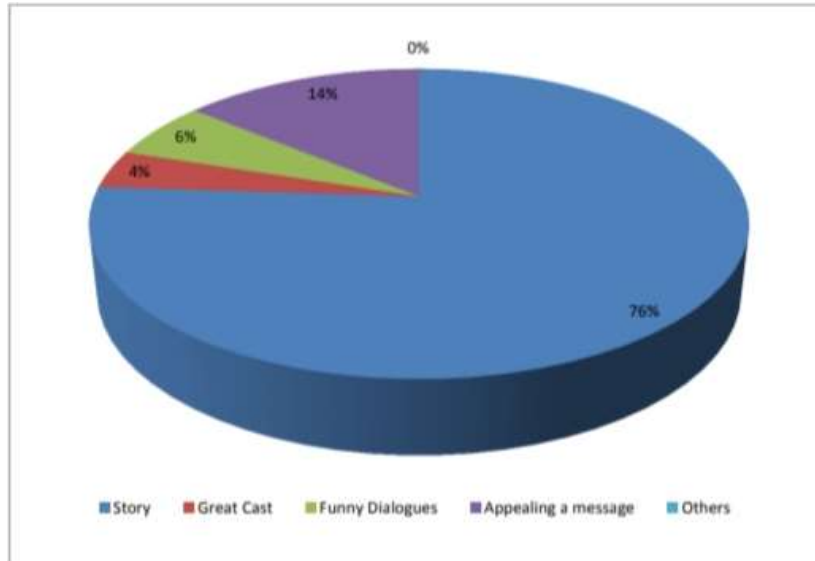
v. Percentage of medium informing about webseries:



vi. Percentage of preferable webseries:



vii. Percentage of attractive element or element in preferable webseries:

**Analysis:**

Among these young people the webseries format has become the new favourite. According to most of the students the Television series are seen instantly replaced by the internet webseries which are gaining popularity. Because they thought these kinds of entertainment contents are easily accessible, less melodramatic than daily soaps. Also the new concept based story lines, casting and dialogues attract them terribly. On the other hand according to few students the OTT platforms cannot replace traditional medium of entertainment because there is a huge difference between these kinds of entertainment genres. This study shows, according to most of these young people the online entertainment platforms such as- Youtube, Netflix, Amazon prime etc are more relevant hot consuming entertainment contents. Most of them are spending more than one hour to watch these kinds of contents. Basically 'pure entertainment' is the biggest reason behind the use of over the top applications. And secondly the biggest reason behind popularity of these applications is mobility of gadgets and availability of content on demand.

Key Findings:

- 1.The researcher 200 students for sampling. Among of them 98% use internet and 2% use TV as their entertainment content platform.
- 2.Among of the selected people 96% use online entertainment app(youtube, Netflix) and 4% use others source to watch entertainment content.
- 3.Among of these students 78% spend more than one hour, 16% spend one hour & 6% spend less than one hour to watch entertainment contents.



4. Among of them 96% watch webseries & 4% do not.

5. 82% out of these students get to know about webseries from social media & 18% out of these students get information from other sources.

6. Among of these people 44% like to watch thriller webseries, 14% like to watch drama webseries, 36% like to watch new concept based webseries.

7. Among of them 76% consider Story; 4% consider Great Cast; 6% consider Funny Dialogues & 14% consider Appealing a message, as attractive element in their preferable webseries.

Conclusion:

This study reveals that the online entertainment content such as webseries are replacing the television nowadays. The over the top applications are changing television watching habits among young generation. Reasons behind the change are convenience of service, personal medium and availability of internet content. Also this study shows that the future of over the top application are bright in our country and the reasons for this are smartphone penetration, international collaborations between media moguls and digital quality of the medium.

References:

1. Kakkar.A.Nayek. K.(2019), "*Intellectual video content, web series have been playing a significant role in India*". Retrieved from.

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://journalofbusiness.org/index.php/GJMBR/article/view/2755&ved=2ahUKEwiRg6_fzJXzAhXDYysKHT_6CDwQFnoECBIQ_AQ&usq=A0vVaw0z6wJeMR-bIZ6JHKstUkhz&cshid=1632417445934

2. Matrix.S.(2014), "*The Netflix Effect: Teens, Binge Watching, and On-Demand Digital Media Trends*". Queen's University.Australia.

3. Nijhawan.S.G, Dahiya.S.Dr,(2020), *Role Of Covid As A Catalyst In Increasing Adoption of OTTS In India: A Study Of evolving consumer consumption Patterns And Future Business Scope*. Journal of Content, Community & Communication. Amity University.Madhyapradesh

4. Srivastava.K.M.Dr,(2020), "*Growth of Web Series: A Descriptive Study*". ICONIC RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING JOURNALS. India

5. Singh.P.(2019), "*New Media as a Change Agent of Indian Television and Cinema: A study of over the top Platforms*". Central University of Punjab.Punjab.



6. Wikipedia. *OTT service in India Data*. Retrieved from

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Over-the-top_media_service_in_India

7. রহমান.মি.(Rahman.M),(2020), *ওয়েব সিরিজ ও এর শিল্পবিচার(Web series and its art judgment)*. Ekusheytv.com. Bangladesh. Retrieved from

<https://www.ekushey-tv.com/%E0%A6%93%E0%A7%9F%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%AC-%E0%A6%B8%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%9C-%E0%A6%93-%E0%A6%8F%E0%A6%B0-%E0%A6%B6%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%B2%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%AA%E0%A6%AC%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%9A%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B0/104725>