

## 2

BRAZIL:

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## Introduction

In Brazil, the COVID-19 pandemic engendered the greatest health tragedy in history, exacerbated by the Federal Government's neopolitics. Thereby, Brazil was ranked among the countries with the highest number of deaths from coronavirus. Despite the social suffering, or even because of it, we have observed different actions in the Brazilian audiovisual sector and by its audiences, both in fictions material and in its production and vehiculation. These we called *pandemic formats and resources*.

Therefore, in addition to the usual analyses in this chapter, we intend to highlight what these actions have brought about by comparing the years of 2020 and 2019.

### 1. Brazil's audiovisual context in 2020

#### 1.1. Open TV in Brazil

The Brazilian television system is composed of seven national networks, of which five are private and two public. Of those, only RedeTV! did not broadcast fiction works in 2020.

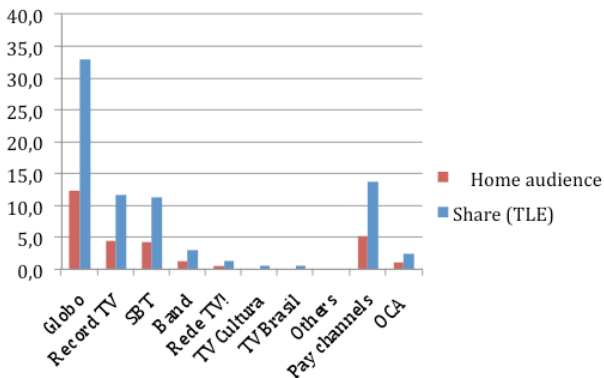
**Chart 1. National Open TV broadcasters in Brazil in 2020**

Private broadcast / channel (5)	Public broadcast / channel (2)
Globo	TV Brasil
Record TV	TV Cultura
SBT	
Band	
RedeTV!	
<b>TOTAL CHANNELS= 7</b>	

Source: *Obitel Brasil*

**Graph 1. TV audience and share by broadcast in 2020<sup>2</sup>**

Channel	Home audience	Share (TLE)
Globo	12.4	32.9
Record TV	4.4	11.8
SBT	4.3	11.4
Band	1.2	3.1
Rede TV!	0.5	1.4
TV Cultura	0.3	0.7
TV Brasil	0.2	0.6
Others <sup>2</sup>	0.2	0.4
Pay channels	5.2	13.8
OCA <sup>3</sup>	0.9	2.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29,5</b>	<b>–</b>

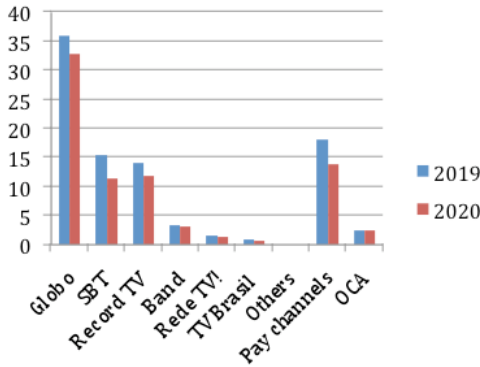


Source: Kantar Ibope Media – Media Workstation – 15 Market<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Others: Record News, TV Câmara, TV Justiça, TV Senado.

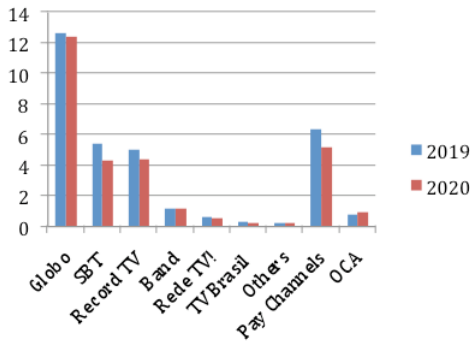
<sup>3</sup> OCA: *Outros Canais Abertos* (Other Open Channels) that have not individual published audience.

**Graph 1.a. Home audience comparative 2019/2020**



Source: *Obitel Brasil*

**Graph 1.b. Share (TLE) Comparative 2019/2020**



Source: *Obitel Brasil*

Data suggest stability of Open TV audience, which maintained 93.3% of audience relating the previous year<sup>4</sup>. Still, following a trend observed in 2019, the Brazilian TV audience was down 2.9 points.

In Open TV audience, Globo had a drop of 0.3 points, but it still remains leading. Record TV overcame SBT and, despite a loss

4 From 2019 to 2020, open TV reported a 1.7 audience points drop, falling from 26.0 to 24.3.

of 0.6 point in 2019, is now the vice-leader. SBT recorded a loss of 1.1 point and moved into third place. About the share of television channels (TLE, also known as “pure TV audience”) a general drop is observed in Open TV. Globo, SBT and Record TV had drops around 2 to 4%.

The audience of Pay TV reported a great drop of 18.1% compared to 2019. Overall, the sum of pay channels dropped from 6.4 to 5.2 - a loss of 1.2 point, and, about share, drop was 4.2%.

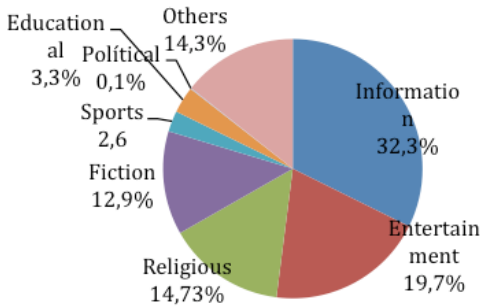
Regarding media penetration<sup>5</sup>, audience dropped 2.6% for Pay TV, 1.1% for magazines, 1.0% for newspapers and 0.9% for Open TV. On the other hand, Internet had an 1.1% increase, while the increase for extensive media was 1.2%. Since 2019, Internet was consolidated as the most consumed media among Brazilians, outweighing the Open TV.

**Graph 2. Genres and hours broadcast on TV programming in 2020<sup>6</sup>**

Genres channel	Hours of exhibition	%
Information	33026.8	32.3
Entertainment	20106.9	19.7
Religious	15043.8	14.8
Fiction	13198.3	12.9
Educational	3376.7	3.3
Sports	2656.7	2.6
Political	105.6	0.1
Others	14636.3	14.3
Total	102.151.1	100.0

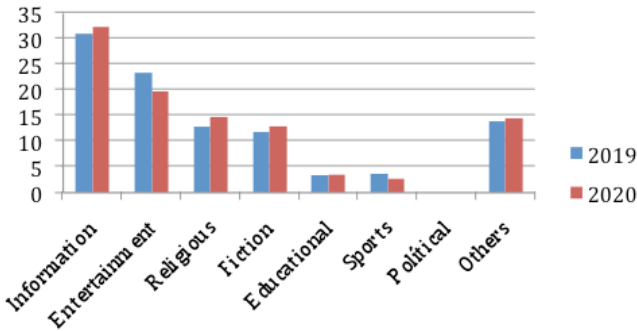
5 Media penetration index from 2019 to 2020: Open TV, 86.1 to 85.2%; extensive media, 82.5 to 83.7%; Internet, 86.1 to 87.2%; radio, 58.8 to 57.2%; pay TV, 37.5 to 34.9%; newspapers, 12.0 to 11.0%; cinema, 14.8 to 15.4%; and magazines, 9.8% to 8.7%.

6 Genres: Information: debate, documentary, interview, journalism, report; Entertainment: talk show, cars and engines, gastronomy, female, game show, comedy show, children cartoon, fashion and beauty, musical, awards, reality show, performance; Sports: sports, football; Fiction: telenovela, film, miniseries, series, adult cartoon; Others: not listed, rural, health, sweepstakes, shopping channels, travel and tourism; educational; political; religious.



Source: Kantar Ibope Media – Media Workstation – 15 Markets

**Graph 2.a. Genres broadcast comparative 2019/2020**



There were no significant changes in the ranking of the most broadcast genres on the TV grid in 2020. Information and Entertainment continue as the main ones (52%). The Religious genre had the largest percentage increase (1.9%) and follows the growing occupation of the TV grids by Pentecostal churches that currently mark their presence in the federal government. The in-

crease of Fiction content (1.1%) in the Open TV grid does not go unnoticed, despite the interruption of shooting due to the coronavirus. This increase may be attributed to greater consumption of this genre during domestic confinement and to the expressive audience won over by reruns.<sup>7</sup>

## 1.2. Pay TV and VoD in Brazil

In 2020, the number of Pay TV consumers in Brazil was 14 million, approaching the December 2019 index and matching the level recorded for 2012.<sup>8</sup> Among the causes for the decline of Pay TV, we could mention: competition with Over-The-Top (OTT)<sup>9</sup> services, improved video quality of open channels with Digital TV, and lower purchasing power in the country.

**Chart 2 - Pay TV in Brazil**

<b>Pay TV Channels</b>
1) Canal Viva (fiction reruns), 2) Globo News (news), 3) Cartoon Network (child), 4) Discovery Kids (child), 5) Discovery Channel (documentary), 6) Megapix (films), 7) Universal TV (series), 8) Sport TV (sport), 9) AXN (series), 10) Gloob (child), 11) Discovery Home &Health (documentary), 12) Multishow (varieties), 13) TNT (films), 14) Nickelodeon (child), 15) Star Channel (series/films), 16) Space (films), 17) Warner (films), 18) Telecine Pipoca (films), 19) Telecine Action (films), 20) TNT (films)

*Source: Kantar Ibope Media*

7 We will further resume the phenomenon of the repercussion of prime time reruns on the audience.

8 Cf. <https://bit.ly/3xxzqCq>

9 Content distribution by the Internet.

We considered the 20 most watched Pay TV channels to identify the premiering Brazilian fiction. The Universal TV, with the second season of the medical series *Unidade Básica* (Gullane Filmes, 2020), ranks among the 10 top audiences. From the 11th to the 20th ranking, only two channels have aired premiering Brazilian fiction: Multishow with the third seasons of *Os Roni*, (V8/Formata, 2020), and *Dra. Darci* (Formata, 2020). The Star Channel, in turn, exhibited the fourth season of the International Emmy nominee police drama *Um contra todos* (FIC/Conspiração Filmes, 2020).

**Chart 3 - VoD in Brazil**

Types	Platforms	Total
<b>VoD linked to Open TV</b>	Globoplay (Globo), SBT Videos (SBT), PlayPlus (Record), EBC Play (TV Brasil), Sara Play (TV Gêneseis)	5
<b>VoD linked to Pay TV</b>	AXN, Sony Channel, NOW NET and Claro, WatchESPN, Discovery Kids Plus, Globo Channels, Gloob Play, Box Brazil Play, Fox Play, Fox Sports, TNT Go, TCM Play, HBO GO, Cartoon Network, Rá Tim Bum Play, A&E Play, EI Plus, FishTV, History Play, Tamanduá TV, Arte1 Play, Premiere, SKY Play, Telecine Play, A&E Brasil Channel (YouTube), Lifetime Brasil Channel (YouTube), CineBrasil Já, Combate Play, Noggin, Pluto TV, Directv GO	31
<b>VoD linked to telecommunications companies</b>	Claro Video, Apple TV Plus, Oi Play, Vivo Play, VID+ (Algar Telecom), Brisa Play (Brisa Net), Now Online (Claro)	7



Types	Platforms	Total
<b>VoD not linked to TV networks</b>	Afrolix, Prime Video, Babidiboo.Tv, Pluto TV, Crackle, Crunchyroll, Enter Play, Google Play, LibreFlix, Looke, Microsoft Movie and TV, Mubi, My French Filme Festival, NBA TV, Netflix, Oldflix, Smart VOD, Univer, Vevo, Videocamp, Vimeo, Youtube, O2 Play, Sot.TV, Dazn, Estadio TNT Sports, À La Carte, Apple TV +, Box Brasil Play, Vix Films and TV, Uol Play, Crunchy, Roll, Inff Online, Filme, Samsung TV Plus, Supo Mungan Plus, Disney+, Quibi, SPCine Play, Netmovies, Vix Cine TV, StarzPlay (Lionsgate), SPCine Play, Kinopop, Darkflix, Cinema Virtual	47
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>90</b>

Source: *Obitel Brasil*

The VoD scape in Brazil was marked by the increased number of users and the trend toward channel aggregation, as is the case of Globoplay, which absorbed two Pay TV channels, BIS and Multishow, reaching the milestone of 20 million unique users, against 17 million of Netflix<sup>10</sup>, becoming the streaming leader in Brazil. The arrival of Disney+ in Brazil in partnership with Globoplay made available a subscription package of both platforms for an amount lower than the subscription of each streaming individually. Another highlight is the availability of old telenovelas (called “classic”) from TV Globo on Globoplay, since May 2020.

The releases of the free platforms, Pluto TV and Vix Filmes e TV - which exhibit series, movies, documentaries and other audiovisual products - pointed to a cost-free business model for users.

10 Cf. <https://bit.ly/3gM4veS>. Accessed on November 23, 2020.

### 1.3. Independent television fiction producers

In 2020, the Brazilian Film Agency – Ancine (*Agência Nacional de Cinema*) recorded 8,651 independent producers in Brazil, an 0.7% drop, i.e., 68 producers. Their participation in the production of national fiction works to the free-to-air TV fell by half, from 31 (65%) to 10 (31%). Likewise, the exhibition of Brazilian works produced or co-produced by independent producers has also dropped: from 28 (2019) to only 9 (2020), i.e., 321% less. This scenario intensely reflects the Bolsonaro administration's cuts in public policies of fostering audiovisual industry.

About Pay TV, in 2020, national titles produced or co-produced by independent producers totaled 14, a 56% drop in relation to 2019, when there were 25 titles. In opposition, in 2020, we observed in VoD a trend toward an increase of 15%: there were 23 titles, compared to the 20 titles of the previous year, which counted with the participation of these producers.

Contrary to previous years, O2 Filmes<sup>11</sup> was not among the main producers of TV fiction, and the list appeared more balanced. Tied, with two titles each, are Boutique Filmes (*Onisciente* and *3%*, both exhibited on Netflix); Gullane Filmes (*Unidade Básica*, broadcast on Universal TV and *Boca a Boca*, on Netflix); Conspiração Filmes (*Um Contra Todos*, co-production with FIC exhibited on FOX, and *Reality Z*, on Netflix); Casablanca (*Jesus* and *Amor Sem Igual*, produced for Record TV); Formata (*Os Roni* co-production with V8, and *Dra. Darci*, both aired by Multishow and Globoplay).

11 In 2019, O2 Filmes led with 6 national titles.

#### 1.4. The audiovisual sector sources of funding

Private investment in media advertising was R\$145 billion in 2020. The 15% decline in investment in the pandemic year brought the amount back closer to the 2018 level. The biggest beneficiaries were Open TV with R\$72 billion (49%), and Pay TV with R\$17 billion (12%). Commerce, consumer service companies, and banking were the main advertiser sectors, in addition to official government advertising.

The merchandising of telenovelas, which in recent times gained relevant place on the Brazilian TV, was interrupted in its productions in March 15, 2020, causing a drop of 17% Globo's advertisement-related revenues.<sup>12</sup> However, an advertisement action in the telenovela *Amor de Mãe* (2019/20/21), which transformed the character Ryan into a telephone operator employee, was worth of notice.

The pandemic seems to have prompted vehicles, advertisers and agencies to find new formats.<sup>13</sup> As productions were suspended, the social merchandising operations were on themes presented by reruns that rekindled debates in Brazil. In the day time slot, the program *Vale a Pena Ver de Novo*<sup>14</sup> exhibited again the telenovela *Laços de Família* (2000), which supported blood and bone marrow donation through the story of a main character with leukemia. The telenovela *A Força do Querer* (2017), re-aired in prime time, approached transsexualism topic by showing the transition of a character through surgery and self-application of hormone.

12 Cf. <https://bit.ly/3zKNNp8>.

13 Cf. <https://bit.ly/2TLBLLm>.

14 The program *Vale a Pena Ver de Novo* (*Worth Seeing Again*) re-airs old telenovelas on the TV Globo day time schedule

## 1.5. Communication Policies

The pandemic made clear the central role of telecommunications in Brazil, and the need for more investment in infrastructure<sup>15</sup>. At the federal government level, besides the recreation of the Ministry of Communications, the year was marked by discussions about a new legal framework for both Pay TV (Law 12.485/2011) and VoD<sup>16</sup>. Despite that, the debates continued with no further updates.

Among the difficulties toward ruling the Internet economic agents - who provide similar services to operators, but without regulation and action by the State<sup>17</sup> - the vagueness about which services and activities can be classified as telecommunications stands out. The challenge is to match the traditional regulated environment with the current model that emerges in a disruptive manner. Some habits acquired during the pandemic such as online classes, telework and home office, are here to stay, urging for more infrastructure and evidencing the relevance of the telecommunications sector for the smooth functioning of essential activities of society.

Within this scenario of asymmetry and challenges, the governmental effort toward passing a law that creates new models for the sector and changes several clauses in the *Lei Geral das Telecomunicações*<sup>18</sup> (Telecommunications General Law) has flagged the interest of the State in updating operations and legislation. The audiovisual sector was marked by crises, fragilities and institutional uncertainties that existed since before the pandemic. Besides the threats of a possible merger of the National Telecommunications Agency (*Agência Nacional de Telecomunicações, Anatel*) with

15 Cf. <https://bit.ly/35LtaLP>. Accessed on October 20, 2020.

16 Cf. <https://bit.ly/3zwCRvf>.

17 Cf. <https://bit.ly/3xwoKEd>.

18 Cf. <https://bit.ly/3wF7k8u>.

the National Film Agency (Ancine), the sector suffered with deliberate cuts in funds for projects already approved, and with the announcement of shortage of federal financial resources to meet investment commitments assumed by the Audiovisual Sector Fund (*Fundo Setorial do Audiovisual*, FSA).<sup>19</sup> The dismantling of Ancine and public policies that promote the audiovisual sector have interrupted at least 700 ongoing productions.

In the midst of the coronavirus crisis, the government left its mark on the Brazilian audiovisual, mainly characterized by scrapping, lack of funding and of public incentive.

## 1.6. Infrastructure of digital and mobile connectivity

The pandemic placed the digital environment on the center stage. The Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) become the main tools for communication and information, work, public service provision (including education and health), commerce, entertainment and leisure.

As a result, Brazilians' access to and use of the Internet is increasing and new digital habits are being rapidly adopted<sup>20</sup>. In the year, computer and notebook-based Internet connections increased around 9% against 2019. The use of digital television, which was already on the rise, recorded a growth of about 18%. Cell phone remains the prevailing means of Internet access for

19 Cf. <https://bit.ly/3zF8e6W>.

20 Cf. Panel ICT COVID-19: Research on internet use in Brazil during the new coronavirus pandemic. 1st edition: internet activities, culture and e-commerce. Regional Center for Studies for the Development of the Information Society. 2020. Retrieved from: <https://bit.ly/3xtYevc>.

98% of the people. As for the connectivity network, the use of WiFi networks is favored over mobile data connections (3G and 4G). The most common activities in the digital environment are: messaging (97%); social media (93%); audiovisual products (90%) or music (86%); and voice or video calls (84%)<sup>21</sup>. The consumption of streaming and VoD services is also increasing: 43% of Internet users stated to pay for digital services of movies or series.

## 2. Analysis of the year: Brazilian and Iberian-American premiere fiction

**Table 1. Fiction aired in 2020 (national and imported; premieres and reruns; co-productions)**

<p><b>NATIONAL PREMIERE TITLES: 23</b></p> <p><b>Globo - 15 national titles</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>A Divisão</i> (series - release episode, VoD premier)</li> <li>2. <i>Amor de Mãe</i> (telenovela)</li> <li>3. <i>Amor e Sorte</i> (series)</li> <li>4. <i>Arcanjo Renegado</i> (series - release episode, VoD premier)</li> <li>5. <i>Aruanas</i> (series, VoD premier)</li> <li>6. <i>As Five</i> (release episode, VoD premier)</li> <li>7. <i>Bom Sucesso</i> (telenovela)</li> <li>8. <i>Diário de um Confinado</i> (series-. episodes start in VoD)</li> <li>9. <i>Éramos Seis</i> (telenovela - partial VoD premier)</li> <li>10. <i>Falas Negras</i> (single episode)</li> </ol>
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21 Cf. CGI.br/NIC.br, Regional Center of Studies for the Information Society Development (*Centro Regional de Estudos para o Desenvolvimento da Sociedade da Informação*, Cetic.br), Survey on the use of Internet in Brazil during the new coronavirus pandemic - ICT COVID-19 Panel (*Pesquisa sobre o uso da Internet no Brasil durante a pandemia do novo coronavírus - Painel TIC COVID-19*) - 3rd Edition.

**NATIONAL PREMIERE TITLES: 23**

11. *Gilda, Lúcia e o Bode* (single episode)
12. *Hebe* (miniseries, starts in VoD)
13. *Malhação – Toda Forma de Amar* (telenovela-  
starts partially in VoD) – 27th season
14. *Salve-se Quem Puder* (telenovela)
15. *Sob Pressão – Plantão Covid* (series)

**TV Cultura - 6 national titles**

16. *Boto* (series)
17. *Crias de Dulcina* (series)
18. *Os Ovos da Raposa* (series)
19. *Pequeno Gigante* (series)
20. *Sacoleiras S/A* (series)
21. *Transviar* (series)

**Record TV – 1 national title**

22. *Amor sem Igual* (telenovela)

**SBT – 1 national title**

23. *As Aventuras de Poliana* (telenovela)

**CO-PRODUCTION TITLES: 0**

**PREMIERE IMPORTED TITLES: 4**

**SBT – 3 imported titles**

24. Ugly Betty in New York (telenovela – USA)
25. Cuando me Enamoro (telenovela – Mexico)
26. Triunfo del Amor (telenovela – Mexico)

**Band – 1 imported title**

27. Ouro Verde (telenovela – Portugal)

**NATIONAL RERUN TITLES: 25**

**Globo - 11 reruns**

28. A Força do Querer- Special Edition  
(telenovela)
29. Cine Holliudy (series)
30. Êta Mundo Bom (telenovela)
31. Fina Estampa – Special Edition (telenovela)
32. Flor do Caribe – Special Edition (telenovela)
33. Haja Coração – Special Edition (telenovela)
34. Malhação – Viva a Diferença – Special Edition  
(telenovela) – 25th season
35. Novo Mundo - Special Edition (telenovela)
36. O Auto da Compadecida (miniseries)
37. Tapas & Beijos (series)
38. Totalmente Demais – Special Edition  
(telenovela)



**Record TV – 7 reruns**

39. A Escrava Isaura (telenovela)
40. Apocalipse – Special Edition (telenovela)
41. Caminhos do Coração (telenovela)
42. Escrava Mãe (telenovela)
43. Jesus (telenovela)
44. O Rico e Lázaro – Special Edition (telenovela)
45. Os Mutantes – Caminhos do Coração  
(telenovela)

**SBT – 5 reruns**

46. Abismo de Pasión (telenovela – Mexico)
47. Chiquititas – Special Edition (telenovela)
48. Cúmplices de um Resgate (telenovela)
49. Mi Corazón es Tuyo (telenovela - Mexico)
50. Lo que la Vida Me Robó (telenovela – Mexico)

**Band – 1 rerun**

51. Floribela (telenovela)

**TV Brazil - 1 rerun**

52. O Vigilante Rodoviário (series)

**TOTAL PREMIERE TITLES: 27**

**TOTAL RERUN TITLES: 25**

**TOTAL TITLES SCREENED: 52**

Brazil screened a total of 52 titles, corresponding to 73% of the titles screened in 2019 (71) and a 27% drop from the previous year. Of that total, 52% were premiere titles and 48% reruns. Since the *Obitel* historical data series, began in 2008, there has never been a single year in which the number of reruns was so close to that of premieres. In 2020, however, premiere titles were 27 and reruns were 25, which means that for 10 premiere titles, 9 were reruns.

Brazil recorded a 52% drop in the number of premiere national titles, partly because of the suspension of recordings caused by the health crisis. Compared to the previous year, there were 23 fictions against 48 aired in 2019. The reruns, on the other hand, had an increase: 25 against 19 in the previous year. It is worth noticing that 40% of reruns were screened to fill the gap of the suspended works.

Globo, the main producer of national fiction, put on hold the recording of all its fictions due to the pandemic. The telenovela *Amor de Mãe* that was on air was interrupted on March 15, 2020. The telenovelas *Fina Estampa* (2011) and *A Força do Querer* (2017), were successively scheduled to replace that in the “Special Edition” format.<sup>22</sup>

The “Special Edition” format deserves some special comments, since it is an operation created during the pandemic, and because it has been adopted in the main fictional productions of the prime time.

“Special Edition” was the term adopted by Globo, incorporated into the very title of the telenovela, and which we call *pan-*

22 We noticed that Globo continued to adopt this format in 2021 with the rerun of *Império* (2014) at the prime time. This is expected to continue while Globo cannot provide sufficient health guarantees to produce and launch a new premiere fiction.

*demic format* of prime time reruns. The original story underwent some interventions so as to be closer to the current formats, with shorter scenes and twists quickly triggered. This also implied a reduction in the number of chapters.

For illustration purposes, we present two reruns of the 9 pm time slot with data of this new format.

### **About *Fina Estampa***

- 1) number of chapters of the original telenovela: 185
- 2) number of chapters of the rerun telenovela: 155
- 3) start and end date of the rerun telenovela: March 23 to September 18, 2020
- 4) audience of the original telenovela: 35.4
- 5) audience of the rerun telenovela: 30.99

### **About *A Força do Querer***

- 1) number of chapters of the original telenovela: 172 chapters
- 2) number of chapters of the rerun telenovela: 149 chapters
- 3) start and end date of the rerun telenovela: September 21, 2020 to March 12, 2021
- 4) audience of the original telenovela: 40.1
- 5) audience of the rerun telenovela: 26.03

In April 2020, Globo only broadcast reruns of telenovelas and series previously launched on Globoplay, but unreleased on open TV channel, such as *Aruanas* and *Hebe*.<sup>23</sup> As a result, Globo delayed by almost a year<sup>24</sup> the premiere of its scheduled telenovelas. During the year, four fictions with *pandemic formats* premiered:

23 The situation endured until July, when Globo premiered *Diário de um Confinado*- the first pandemic fiction screened.

24 Cf. <https://bit.ly/3q5tCOF>.

*Amor e Sorte* (antologic series); *Diário de um Confinado* (sitcom); *Sob Pressão. Plantão Covid* (two special episodes of this series); e *Gilda, Lúcia e o Bode* (single episode) a year end special program.

The other channels, SBT and Record, also had a drop in the production of television fiction, each screening only one new national title along the year. Record, which had to put on hold the premiere of its new biblical telenovela, *Gênesis*<sup>25</sup>, until January 2021, screened five less fictions in relation to 2019, and SBT, two less. The figures for imported productions remained at the same level as the previous year and, as in 2019, in 2020 these broadcasts had not screened co-productions.

Following the same trend, the programming schedule of public televisions was affected as well. TV Brasil, which in 2019 had recorded four premieres, did not premier any program in 2020, but rebroadcast, in an unprecedented bet, the series *O Vigilante Rodoviário*, a pioneering Brazilian audiovisual production that was a hit of the former TV Tupi in 1962. TV Cultura, in turn, presented a drop of three fictions, going from nine to six in relation to 2019.

We highlight the continuity of the dialogue between open TV and VoD regarding the distribution of television content: eight fictions, i.e., 34.8% of the premiered national titles elected the streaming platforms as their first window of exhibition. Of these, four fictions aired only a few episodes via broadcasting, with full episodes being made available on VoD. The series were: *Arcanjo Renegado*, *Diário de um Confinado*, *As Five* and *A Divisão*, all launched by Globoplay in 2020.

25 Scheduled to be aired in April 2020 the recording of *Gênesis* were suspended in mid-March and only resumed in the second half of October.

**Table 2: Fiction Premiered in 2020: Country of Origin**

Country	Titles	%	Chapters / Episodes	%	Hours	%
<b>NATIONAL (total)</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>85.2</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>57.4</b>	<b>416: 07</b>	<b>50.0</b>
<b>OBITEL COUNTRIES (total)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>42.6</b>	<b>416: 23</b>	<b>50.0</b>
Argentina	0	0.0	0	0.0	0: 00	0.0
Brazil *	23	85.2	653	57.4	416: 07	50.0
Chile	0	0.0	0	0.0	0: 00	0.0
Colombia	0	0.0	0	0.0	0: 00	0.0
Spain	0	0.0	0	0.0	0: 00	0.0
USA (Hispanic production)	1	3.7	135	11.9	133: 52	16.1
Mexico	2	7.4	154	13.5	146: 56	17.6
Peru	0	0.0	0	0.0	0: 00	0.0
Portugal	1	3.7	196	17.2	140: 31	16.9
Uruguay	0	0.0	0	0.0	0: 00	0.0
Venezuela	0	0.0	0	0.0	0: 00	0.0
<b>CO-PRODUCTIONS (total)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0: 00</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Brazilian co-productions	0	0.0	0	0.0	0: 00	0.0
Obitel countries' co-productions	0	0.0	0	0.0	0: 00	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1.138</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>832: 30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: *Obitel Brasil*

The number of chapters / episodes of the Brazilian productions registered drastic drop of 68.5% and of 68% in the num-

ber of screening hours compared to 2019, due to the recording cancel from March 2020.

However, 2020 was not characterized only by drops: there was an increase of 31.1% in the number of chapters/episodes of Ibero-American titles, and of 84.7% of screening hours compared to the last survey. That is because, unlike the previous year, only telenovelas – long serial format - were imported. The nationalities of the imported productions remained similar to the previous year, two being of Mexican origin and one Portuguese. The novelty was the American *Ugly Betty in New York*, a Hispanic production aimed at the Latino audience.

**Table 3: Formats of national and Ibero-American fiction**

Format	National						Ibero-American					
	Title s	%	C/ E	%	H	%	Title s	%	C/E	%	H	%
Telenovela	6	26.1	493	75.5	339:35:00	81.6	4	100.0	485	100.0	416:23:00	100.0
Series	9	39.1	73	11.2	34:10:00	8.2	0	0	0	0	0:00	0.0
Miniseries	1	4.3	10	1.5	7:47	1.9	0	0	0	0	0:00	0.0
TV film	0	0	0	0	0:00	0	0	0	0	0	0:00	0.0
Single Episode	2	8.7	2	0.3	1:40	0.4	0	0	0	0	0:00	0.0
Docudrama	0	0	0	0	0:00	0	0	0	0	0	0:00	0.0
Others (soap opera, etc.)	5	21.7	75	11.5	32:55:00	7.9	0	0	0	0	0:00	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>416:07:00</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>416:23:00</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Obitel Brasil*

For the fourth consecutive year, the production of series was higher than that of telenovelas. In 2020, short serial formats (series and miniseries) account for 43% of the total premiere national fiction screened on open TV. But diversification in production formats was lower, with the absence of docudramas and TV films.

Unlike 2019, when the offer of Ibero-American titles included telenovelas and series, in 2020 only telenovelas (4) were imported. On the other hand, it is worth noting the significant number of hours that these Ibero-American productions occupied in the television programming, reaching the same level of hours as the national releases, while in 2019 they occupied only 15% of the total screening time. Moreover, this total number of hours indicates much longer duration of imported telenovelas in comparison with the Brazilian ones.

**Table 4: Top ten watched titles**

	Title	Channel	Country of origin of the original idea or script	Format/Genre	No. of chap./ep (in 2020)	Time slot	Rating	Share
1	<i>Fina Estampa, Special Edition</i>	Globo	Brazil	Telenovela / drama	155	Prime time	31.0	48.6
2	<i>Amor de Mãe</i>	Globo	Brazil	Telenovela / drama	70	Prime time	29.8	48.1
3	<i>Bom Sucesso</i>	Globo	Brazil	Telenovela / romantic comedy	22	Prime time	29.1	49.8
4	<i>Totalmente Demais, Special Edition</i>	Globo	Brazil	Telenovela / romantic comedy	166	Prime time	29.1	45.6

Title		Channel	Country of origin of the original idea or script	Format/Genre	No. of chap./ep (in 2020)	Time slot	Rating	Share
5	<i>Salve-se Quem Puder</i>	Globo	Brazil	Telenovela / romantic comedy	54	Prime time	28.0	45.7
6	<i>A Força do Querer, Special Edition</i>	Globo	Brazil	Telenovela / drama	88	Prime time	26.5	43.7
7	<i>O Auto da Compadecida</i> Rerun	Globo	Brazil	Miniseries	4	Night	25.0	45.3
8	<i>Haja Coração, Special Edition</i>	Globo	Brazil	Telenovela / romantic comedy	70	Prime time	23.0	39.2
9	<i>Éramos Seis</i>	Globo	Brazil	Telenovela / drama	76	Evening	22.3	40.3
10	<i>Éta Mundo Bom</i> Rerun	Globo	Brazil	Telenovela / romantic comedy	100	Evening	22.1	43.2
<b>Total productions: 10</b>				<b>Foreign scripts:</b>				
100%				0%				

Source: Kantar Ibope Media - 15 markets and *Obitel Brasil*

In the pandemic year, the list of the top 10 most watched titles is completely unprecedented, as it consists more of reruns (5) than premieres (4).<sup>26</sup> In 2019, all the productions in the ranking were unreleased. Note that these premieres in 2020 indicate the number of chapters that had been aired when all recording were put on hold due to COVID-19. The table shows the rerun titles chosen by Globo to fill the grid throughout the year, and that reached the top ten: *Fina Estampa Special Edition*; *Totalmente Demais Spe-*

26 What has neither changed nor is a novelty is the fact that the list is occupied entirely by Globo productions.



*cial Edition; A Força do Querer Special Edition; Haja Coração Special Edition*. Four reruns are “Special Edition”<sup>27</sup>, and one of these, *Fina Estampa, Special Edition*, is ranked the first. We want to note that the second place, the unreleased telenovela *Amor de Mãe*, will be our case study for the Theme of the Year topic.

Telenovela remained the most present format on open TV in 2020. Among the 10 most watched titles, nine are telenovelas and one is miniseries.

Compared to the previous year’s data, the audience ratings showed a slight increase, except for the first place in the ranking. At the top of the table, the rerun of *Fina Estampa* reached 31 points, just below the premiered *A Dona do Pedaço* in 2019 - which earned 34 points. Even so, it was a surprising score for a rerun.<sup>28</sup> The remaining nine titles had more audience than those of 2019, when the last four positions reached the lowest ratings within Obitel’s historical data series, averaging 20.9 points. In 2020, in turn, the last four titles in the top ten averaged 23.1 points, a recovery of the open-to-air TV audience in the year marked by the pandemic.

27 We have already explained the meaning of “Special Edition” as being a pandemic format of reruns.

28 Reruns bear a special meaning within the “telenovela culture” historically built in Brazil. They go beyond just re-watching and, making a pun on a program name, we claim these reruns are “worth watching again” (which is the literal translation of the program *Vale a Pena Ver de Novo*).

**Table 5: Audience profile of the top ten titles: gender, age, socioeconomic level**

Titles		Channel	Gender %		Socioeconomic level %		
			Women	Men	AB*	C*	DE*
1	<i>Fina Estampa, Special Edition</i>	Globo	62.5	37.5	28.2	50.2	21.6
2	<i>Amor de Mãe</i>	Globo	62.9	37.1	30.1	49.5	20.5
3	<i>Bom Sucesso</i>	Globo	65.0	35.0	27.8	50.1	22.0
4	<i>Totalmente Demais, Special Edition</i>	Globo	64.3	35.7	25.3	51.3	23.4
5	<i>Salve-se Quem Puder</i>	Globo	65.5	34.5	27.3	50.6	22.1
6	<i>A Força do Querer, Special Edition</i>	Globo	62.2	37.8	25.0	52.3	22.6
7	<i>O Auto da Compadecida Rerun</i>	Globo	60.0	40.0	27.2	49.4	23.4
8	<i>Haja Coração, Special Edition</i>	Globo	63.8	36.2	23.9	52.4	23.7
9	<i>Éramos Seis</i>	Globo	66.8	33.2	28.7	49.8	21.4
10	<i>Êta Mundo Bom Rerun</i>	Globo	64.3	35.7	23.6	51.3	25.2

Titles		Channel	Age Group %					
			4-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-49	50+
1	<i>Fina Estampa, Special Edition</i>	Globo	5.4	4.9	6.9	12.2	23.8	46.8
2	<i>Amor de Mãe</i>	Globo	5.5	4.7	7.1	12.6	24.1	46.0
3	<i>Bom Sucesso</i>	Globo	5.9	5.0	6.8	11.7	22.8	47.8
4	<i>Totalmente Demais, Special Edition</i>	Globo	6.1	5.5	6.8	12.0	23.0	46.6
5	<i>Salve-se Quem Puder</i>	Globo	6.0	5.4	7.1	12.0	22.9	46.6
6	<i>A Força do Querer, Special Edition</i>	Globo	5.4	5.0	7.0	12.8	24.0	45.8
7	<i>O Auto da Compadecida</i> Rerun	Globo	6.5	6.1	7.8	14.2	25.2	40.2
8	<i>Haja Coração, Special Edition</i>	Globo	5.7	4.9	6.2	11.9	23.0	48.2
9	<i>Éramos Seis</i>	Globo	5.5	5.0	6.9	11.3	21.8	49.5
10	<i>Éta Mundo Bom</i> Rerun	Globo	6.1	5.8	7.4	11.6	23.0	46.3

Source: Kantar Ibope Media - 15 markets

Women continue to be the main audience of the top ten fictions, mostly at 6pm and 7pm time slot, as can be seen with *Éramos Seis*, *Salve-se Quem Puder* and *Bom Sucesso* (all premiere titles). The favorite fictions of the male audience, on the other hand, continue to be the top prime time telenovelas and the series shown after the 9 pm fictions - here, *O Auto da Compadecida*

(rerun), which recorded the highest concentration of the C class viewers with 50+ years old. The DE class maintains preference for the romance and comedy genres, while the AB class prefers drama. As for the age group, the audience of 50 + years was the one that most watched the top ten fictions, with highlight to the 6pm and 7pm time slot intrigues that privileges melodramatic matrices, such as *Haja Coração, Special Edition* and *Éramos Seis*. The 25 to 49 years old viewers, on the other hand, has preference for the 9pm telenovelas, in this case, *Amor de Mãe, A Força do Querer, Special Edition* and *Fina Estampa, Special Edition*.

### 3. VoD Monitoring

The year of 2020 was marked by the consolidation of streaming platforms in the

Brazilian audiovisual and by the increased number of users<sup>29</sup>. On the other hand, the Brazilian audiovisual scenario faces a serious crisis resulting from the pandemic and cuts in government funding. This has created a complex and ambivalent scenario in which coexist, on the one hand, the 61% increase of unreleased national productions in VoD and, on the other hand, the interruption or cancellation of many other audiovisual projects.

#### 3.1. VoD platforms market

Platforms have become very fast a consumption habit especially among youth<sup>30</sup>. Globoplay, Netflix and Prime Video have

29 Netflix alone had 17 million subscribers in 2020, 7 million more than in 2019, a 70% growth in one year.

30 Cf. <https://bityli.com/0qXSsw>

reached historic numbers of subscribers and revenues. Globoplay leads the national market with 20 million users<sup>31</sup>, followed by Netflix with 17 million subscribers and Prime Video with 10 million.

Globoplay, Globo Group's streaming service, ended the first half of 2020 with 150% more subscribers compared to the previous year. Growth strategies have been varied and innovative, based on logics of combination and diversification ("one single Globo", "one Globo just for you").<sup>32</sup> Through them, the Group has a real opportunity to become a transmedia communication company, preserving broadcasting programming, but investing preferably in streaming and aiming at internationalization<sup>33</sup> and, above all, creating changeable production and distribution strategies for rapidly changing scenarios. So has been the production of exclusive content together with co-productions by independent producers; partnerships with major players such as Disney+, Apple TV+, HBO-GO and Deezer<sup>34</sup> diversifying the platform's subscription models.

In 2020, Netflix Brazil was estimated to have grossed R\$6.7 billion<sup>35</sup> (about US\$1.2 billion), having surpassed the number of subscriptions of all cable TVs and engaging the users on social networks: of the 30 fictions shown in streaming with the highest number of impressions on Twitter, 28 were from Netflix.<sup>36</sup>

Next in the national ranking appears the Amazon Prime Video, whose number of subscribers reaches 10 million. To be

31 <https://bitly.com/GrHeu>

32 Globo Group has been carrying out in recent years a general restructuring program, merging, dividing, firing and changing hierarchies in all its units and sectors. In January 2020 the new structure was introduced. In addition to having gathered in a single company what used to be 5 and having established new commands, what matters here is the unification of open TV, pay TV (cable channels) and streaming services.

33 On 01/19/2020, Globoplay debuted in the United States, the first step towards becoming an international streaming platform

34 <https://bit.ly/3vzr7Vp>; <https://bit.ly/3gCSauW>

35 Source: <https://bit.ly/35zcNBC>

36 Source: Kantar Ibope Media 2020..

competitive in the local market, it has invested in original programming, expanding the Brazilian catalog. In 2020, four fiction series, one documentary, and one reality show were produced in partnership with the Brazilian producers O2 Filmes, Los Bragas, and Conspiração Filmes.

### 3.2. Analysis of VoD in 2020: the Brazilian and Ibero-American fiction premier in Brazil

**Table 6. National and Ibero-American fictions aired as VoD in 2020**

NATIONAL RELEASED PRODUCTIONS	IBERO-AMERICAN RELEASED PRODUCTIONS	CO-PRODUCTIONS
<p><b>Globoplay – 19 titles</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Chacrinha - A minissérie</i> (miniseries)</li> <li>2. <i>Meus Dias de Rock</i> (series)</li> <li>3. <i>Arcanjo Renegado</i> (series)</li> <li>4. <i>Todas as Mulheres do Mundo</i> (series)</li> <li>5. <i>O Dono do Lar</i> (series)</li> <li>6. <i>Os Romi</i> (series)</li> <li>7. <i>Dra. Darci</i> (series)</li> <li>8. <i>Diário de um Confinado</i> (series) - 1st season</li> <li>9. <i>Xilindró</i> (series) – 4th season</li> <li>10. <i>Rio Heroes</i> (series) – 2nd season</li> <li>11. <i>A Divisão</i> (series) – 2nd season</li> <li>12. <i>Diário de um Confinado</i> (series) - 2nd season</li> <li>13. <i>Santo Forte</i> (series)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Netflix – 14 titles</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>El Robo del Siglo</i> (Miniseries, Colombia)</li> <li>2. <i>Las Chicas del Cable</i> (Series, Spain) - 5th season/1st part</li> <li>3. <i>Élite</i> (series, Spain) – 3rd season</li> <li>4. <i>La Casa de Papel</i> (series, Spain) – 4th season</li> <li>5. <i>Valéria</i> (series, Spain)</li> <li>6. <i>Perdida</i> (series, Spain)</li> <li>7. <i>Las Chicas del Cable</i> (series, Spain) – 5th season / 2nd part</li> <li>8. <i>Vis a Vis: El Oasis</i> (series, Spain)</li> <li>9. <i>Alta Mar</i> (series, Spain) – 3rd season</li> <li>10. <i>Los favoritos de Midas</i> (series, Spain)</li> <li>11. <i>Jane the Virgin</i> (series, US)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Globoplay – 3 titles</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Longe de Você</i> (series, Spain and Italy)</li> <li>2. <i>Todo por el Juego</i> (series, Argentina and Spain)</li> <li>3. <i>Jugar con Fuego</i> (series, US and Brazil)</li> </ol> <p><b>Netflix – 2 titles</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Alguién Tiene que Morir</i> (series, Spain and Mexico)</li> <li>2. <i>Narcos Mexico</i> (series, Mexico and US)</li> </ol> <p><b>BoxBrazil Play – 1 title</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Submersos</i> (series, Brazil and Argentina)</li> </ol>

NATIONAL RELEASED PRODUCTIONS	IBERO-AMERICAN RELEASED PRODUCTIONS	CO-PRODUCTIONS
<p>14. <i>Impuros</i> (series)</p> <p>15. <i>Desalma</i> (series)</p> <p>16. <i>As Five</i> (series)</p> <p>17. <i>Feras</i> (series)</p> <p>18. <i>Me Chama de Bruna</i> (series) - 4th season</p> <p>19. <i>Diário de um Confinado</i> (special)</p> <p><b>Netflix – 7 titles</b></p> <p>1. <i>Onisciente</i> (series)</p> <p>2. <i>Spectros</i> (series)</p> <p>3. <i>Reality Z</i> (series)</p> <p>4. <i>Coisa Mais Linda</i> (series) - 2nd season</p> <p>5. <i>Boca a Boca</i> (series)</p> <p>6. <i>3%</i> (series) – 4th season</p> <p>7. <i>Bom dia, Verônica</i> (series)</p> <p><b>Prime Video – 5 titles</b></p> <p>1. <i>Homens?</i> (series) – 2nd season</p> <p>2. <i>Sonhadores</i> (miniseries)</p> <p>3. <i>Me Chama de Bruna</i> (series) – 1st to 3rd seasons</p> <p>4. <i>1 Contra Todos</i> (series) - 2nd season</p> <p>5. <i>Impuros</i> (series) - 2nd season</p>	<p>12. <i>Control Z</i> (series, Mexico)</p> <p>13. <i>Historia de un Crimen: La Búsqueda</i> (Anthology series, Mexico)</p> <p>14. <i>Oscuro Deseo</i> (series, Mexico)</p> <p><b>Prime Video – 7 titles</b></p> <p>1. <i>El Presidente</i> (series, Chile)</p> <p>2. <i>Dignidad</i> (series, Chile)</p> <p>3. <i>El Cid</i> (series, Spain)</p> <p>4. <i>Ana</i> (series, Mexico)</p> <p>5. <i>Maria Magdalena</i> (series, Mexico)</p> <p>6. <i>Cómo Sobrevivir Soltero</i> (series, Mexico)</p> <p>7. <i>De Brutus, Nada</i> (series, Mexico)</p> <p><b>HBO GO – 5 titles</b></p> <p>1. <i>Entre Hombres</i> (miniseries, Argentina)</p> <p>2. <i>El Día de Mañana</i> (series, Spain)</p> <p>3. <i>Vida Perfecta</i> (series, Spain)</p> <p>4. <i>Vergüenza</i> (series, Spain)</p> <p>5. <i>Dime Quién Soy</i> (series, Spain)</p> <p><b>Globoplay – 2 titles</b></p> <p>1. <i>Mães A(r)madás</i> (series, Spain)</p> <p>2. <i>Urgencia Cero</i> (series, Spain)</p>	

NATIONAL RELEASED PRODUCTIONS	IBERO-AMERICAN RELEASED PRODUCTIONS	CO-PRODUCTIONS
<b>BoxBrazil Play – 5 titles</b> 1. <i>Via Pública</i> (series) 2. <i>Imagem Vinil</i> (series) 3. <i>Amélio, o Homem de Verdade</i> (series) 4. <i>Liberto</i> (series) 5. <i>Verona</i> (series)  <b>HBO GO – 1 title</b> 1. <i>Todxs Nós</i> (series)		
<b>Total: 37</b>	<b>Total: 28</b>	<b>Total: 6</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL: 71</b>		

Source: *Obitel Brasil*

According to Table 6, 71 titles from Obitel countries were premiered in the VoD market in Brazil in 2020. The growth of Brazilian productions in this market is noteworthy.<sup>37</sup> Of these 52% (37) are national fictions; 39.5% (28) are Ibero-American and 8.5% (6) are Obitel countries' co-productions. In 2020, the number of premiere Brazilian fictions for VoD was 37 titles, a 61% increase over 2019, when there were 23.

Globoplay increased its production by 73%, with 19 titles against 11 in the previous year. It remained the main VoD platform for national fictions and also in co-productions with Obitel countries. Netflix recorded a slight drop in local production, from eight

37 It was just in 2016 that the first Brazilian series premiered on a major platform - 3%, a production by Boutique Filmes for Netflix. Today, virtually every major Brazilian producer makes series and films for streaming.



to seven titles. It is worth mentioning that, as of 2020, Prime Video, BoxBrazil Play and HBO GO started to produce national and Ibero-American fictions.

As for the number of premiere productions aired per platform, Globoplay ranked first with 34% (24), followed by Netflix with 32% (23) and lagging behind in the third place comes Prime Video, with 17% (12); BoxBrazil Play and HBO GO appear with 8% (6) each.

Ibero-American fiction premieres amounted to 28 titles, corresponding to 39.4% of the total. Spanish fictions prevailed among Ibero-American releases, with 100% increase over 2019. A highlight is the strong presence of the series *La Casa de Papel* and *Élite* in the social media.<sup>38</sup>

Most of the premieres on Brazilian VoD were worldwide, with some exceptions. These were the Spanish production *Urgencia Cero* (2016); the United States series *Jugar con Fuego* (2019), a co-production between Telemundo and Globo; and the remake of the Brazilian miniseries *Amores Roubados* (Globo, 2014), which premiered directly on Globoplay in 2020.<sup>39</sup> Two Chilean productions of Prime Video stand out: *El Presidente* and *Dignidad*, the first Chilean productions released on the Brazilian VoD. The Mexican series *Oscuro Deseo* was one of the hugest hits of Netflix in Brazil in 2020, standing for more than 7 weeks among the most watched series<sup>40</sup>.

38 Source: Kantar Ibope Media 2020.

39 <https://bit.ly/2TM38oY>.

40 Cf. <https://tinyurl.com/zzy9yzn>

**Table 7. VoD premiered fiction in Brazil in 2020: countries of origin**

Country	Titles	%
<b>NATIONAL (total)</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>52.1</b>
<b>IBERO-AMERICAN (total)</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>39.4</b>
Argentina	1	1.4
<b>Brazil</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>52.1</b>
Chile	2	2.8
Colombia	1	1.4
Spain	16	22.5
USA (Hispanic production)	1	1.4
Mexico	7	9.8
Peru	0	0.0
Portugal	0	0.0
Uruguay	0	0.0
Venezuela	0	0.0
<b>CO-PRODUCTIONS (total)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8.5</b>
Brazilian co-productions	2	2.8
OBITEL countries' co-productions	4	5.6
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Obitel Brasil*

For the first time since we registered the VoD premiered fictions, the Brazilian productions surpassed those from Ibero-American countries, with 37 titles (52.1%). Among the national

fictions in VoD, two series are remarkable: *Arcanjo Renegado* (Globoplay) fully released on the digital platform, and further displayed as weekly episodes series on TV Globo; and the second season of the series *Coisa Mais Linda* (Netflix) whose title in English was changed from *Most Beautiful Thing* to *Girls from Ipanema*, to attract the international audience.

#### 4. Fiction and audience participation in digital media

Streaming impacts both the transformation of the process of creation, production and distribution of television fiction, as well as of the reception. We will evidence multidimensional aspects of the audience participation in digital media, among them: digital expansion, social interactivity and emerging fiction production.

The suspension of fiction productions led to the rearrangement of recording schedules, imposed the adoption of health protocols - spread in making of and news<sup>41</sup> on the TV and digital media - and changed some narratives. On the other hand, we observed huge offer of classic telenovelas on Globoplay streaming, a case that drove a strategy of digital expansion.

Regarding the forms of participation and social interactivity of the audience, the imbrication of audiences on the Internet sharpens the fierce and internationally known activity of Brazilian fans in the digital media<sup>42</sup>. As regards the consumption of television narratives, what prevail are the Social TV and the production

41 We refer to the case of *Amor de Mãe*, whose recording protocols and the proper storytelling narrative were made available in making of and institutional videos on the Gshow website and by TV Globo itself along the programming.

42 <http://bit.ly/3vz2KHq>

of expanded content, such as *memes* and *fanfictions*. The way users appropriate television content, resignifying, reproducing and re-creating it has been understood as an important manifestation of the contemporary Brazilian culture (Vieira, 2021).

#### 4.1. Proposal on digital expansion proposal

Podcasts<sup>43</sup>, as interactive digital media, have had a remarkable boom in Brazil. We can mention the podcast of GShow (Globo Portal), *Novela das 9*, on air since 2018, which aimed to comment on Globo's telenovelas and, since 2019, includes exclusive interviews with members of the technical crew. In 2020, with the interruption of *Amor de Mãe* recordings, the *Novela das 9* started to talk about other titles, such as: *Vale Tudo* (1988), *Tieta* (1989), *Torre de Babel* (1999), *Laços de família* (2000), *A favorita* (2008), etc.

#### 4.2. Social interactivity

The uses of digital media as a second screen of TV programs has become a habit of the Brazilian viewer.<sup>44</sup> These are standpoints, opinions, debates, interpretations, and other modes of *sociability* that express the competencies of reception (Martín-Barbero, 2009). In 2020, among the 10 most commented fictions on Twitter, 60% were Globo telenovelas and 40% Netflix series – an image of the Brazilian market.

43 The word podcast is a combination of POD (Personal On Demand) and CAST, from broadcasting, and designates the digital audio file made available on the Internet, usually through series. Its popularity in Brazil was already growing, but it exploded in the midst of the pandemic, due to domestic confinement, thus creating a new non-image interactive audience.

44 Research shows that in 2018 the number of Brazilians with Internet access who used the net while watching television was 95%, very far from 88% recorded in 2015. Cf. <https://bit.ly/2TM58x7>.

**Table 8: TV fictions with greater interaction (RTs<sup>45</sup>, likes and responses) on the Brazilian Twitter in 2020**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Channel / Streaming</b>	<b>Tweets</b>	<b>Total Interactions</b>
1. <i>Avenida Brasil</i> Rerun	Telenovela	Globo	2,864,055	8,915,582
2. <i>Fina Estampa</i> <i>Special Edition</i>	Telenovela	Globo	1,356,531	4,413,437
3. <i>Amor de Mãe</i>	Telenovela	Globo	1,353,640	4,413,437
4. <i>A Força do Querer</i> <i>Special Edition</i>	Telenovela	Globo	1,116,632	3,410,180
5. <i>Dark</i>	Series	Netflix	939,820	3,373,116
6. <i>Sex Education</i>	Series	Netflix	939,276	3,338,146
7. <i>La Casa de Papel</i>	Series	Netflix	922,666	3,134,052
8. <i>Malhação. Viva a Diferença</i>	<i>Telenovela</i>	Globo	822,902	3,007,238
9. <i>Totalmente Demais</i> <i>Special Edition</i>	Telenovela	Globo	774,939	2,804,463
10. <i>Anne with an E</i>	Series	Netflix	688,858	2,441,390

Source: Kantar Ibope Media

45 RT is the acronym for retweet, i.e., sharing other person's publication on your timeline.

Another relevant aspect of the table is that of the 6 Globo's fictions, 5 are reruns: *Avenida Brasil* (2012), *Fina Estampa* (2011), *Totalmente Demais* (2016), *A Força do Querer* (2017), *Malhação-Viva a Diferença* (2017).

*A Força do Querer* (ranked fourth place) got the highest number of tweets per minute in 2020 - 1.171 on September, 21; *Fina Estampa* (ranked second place) got the second and the third, with 820 posts per minute on April 1, and 691 on March 23.

*Memes* are “user-generated content” (UGC) format and correspond to a large part of posts. In joking and satirical tone, the *memes* reflect the audience's reaction. The *memes* of *Avenida Brasil* are remarkable and since the first screening they have become iconic in the Brazilian digital language.

The production of *fanfictions* by the audience of *Malhação - Viva a Diferença* has more than 300 stories on the website *Spiritfiction.com*<sup>46</sup>, mostly dedicated to the “Limantha” *ship*, formed by the lesbian teen couple Lica and Samantha. As it seems, these stories pretend to explore unmentioned aspects of sexuality and intimacy of the characters.

#### 4.3. Emerging fiction production

The lack for LGBTQIA+ representation on television has driven their presence in independent productions, mainly available on the YouTube. *Esconderijo*, *Septo*, *Madu*, *The Stripper*, *Contos Latentes*, *Magenta* and *Ellas* are some of the webseries released in 2020 addressed this theme. Social isolation ensuing from the pandemic was presented in *Sintomas*, *Horas em Casa*, *Quarentenados* and *Home Office - A série da Quarentena*.

46 Accessed on Apr. 19, 2021, 3:00 pm.

The national webseries last 15 minutes on average. In addition to single episodes, some launch the whole season in one single video. They are usually crowdfunded and, as advertising strategy, also launch the videos making of.

## 5. Highlights of the year

The pandemic directly affected the chain of television fiction production, from the script to the production, circulation and consumption of this genre. This context defined the highlights of the year in the country.

### 5.1. *Diário de um Confinado* and *Amor e Sorte*: the challenge of creating in the pandemic, about the pandemic

When the studies were closed, Globo had to innovate to guarantee the exhibition of new fictions. Therefore, it resorted to recordings in which actors used their own homes as locations, also taking responsibility for the technical part, with remote assistance from other professionals. There was the case of two series, *Diário de um Confinado* and *Amor e Sorte*, two comedies about the attempts to prevent the contamination. Both replaced fixed programs on Globo's schedule and are available on Globoplay.

*Diário de Um Confinado* (6/26 to 9/24/2020), a 12-episode comedy series (10 minute each episode), follows Murilo, a man who lives alone, and the conflict between his problems and the restrictions imposed by the quarantine. The series takes place inside an apartment and incorporates video calls (which we will call *pandemic resource*) to introduce new characters into the plot.

In weekly episodes with independent casts, *Amor e Sorte* (09/08 to 09/29/2020) was an anthology series of four stories about the challenges of love and intimacy in the forced coexistence imposed by the quarantine.<sup>47</sup> The first episode, called *Lucia e Gilda*, told the journey of a mother and daughter forced to deal with their differences during isolation in their country home; in the second episode, *Linha de Raciocínio*, we see the debate over participating in a “*panelaço*”<sup>48</sup>; other episode, *Territórios*, featured two ex-weds forced to live together while waiting for the result of the COVID-19 test; and the last episode, *A Beleza Salvará o Mundo* featured a newlywed couple trying to discover a drug for the virus while making movies.

We saw innovation processes by which unusual conditions under which *Amor e Sorte* was produced were incorporated into the work itself, through behind-the-scenes shots and crew comments exhibited during the breaks or released on Globoplay and the Globo channel’s website. It seemed that the aspects listed (use of a single location; remote crew; small cast; current thematics) constituted both creative innovations and narrative, formal, and technical originality.

47 Even in these pandemic formats, the narrative combined humor and the tradition of realism that is the hallmark of the Brazilian television fiction.

48 “Panelaços” (banging pans) are collective demonstrations of people banging household utensils (mainly pans) at a time scheduled on social networks, generating a noisy and characteristic sound. They have become very common in recent years in Brazil as a form of opposition to the government.



## 5.2. *Sob Pressão-Plantão COVID*: reality and alert

Globo also used existing productions to address the pandemic, as in the Special Program of the medical series *Sob Pressão - Plantão COVID*, released both on Globo and Globoplay on 10/06 and 10/13/2020.

In two episodes, the protagonist couple of doctors works in one of the hospitals built to expand pandemic care. The characters have to manage the lack of information about the virus, as well as the shortage of beds and equipment, while taking risks related to threat of contamination.

Following the naturalistic aesthetic, the work serves as an alert to the people, emphasizing symptoms and risks of the diseases, forms of prevention, and the precariousness of the Brazilian health system. At the end of the first episode, it has been shown the card “The pandemic is not over yet. Caring for yourself is caring for others”; and in the second episode, “This is our tribute to the health professionals who care for patients contaminated by COVID-19”. The cards displayed at the end of each episode clarify the *pedagogical action* (Bourdieu, 1970) identified in the Brazilian television fiction.

## 5.3. Globoplay and the “telenovelas digital library”

In 2020, Globo boosted the catalog of Globoplay, its streaming platform (which in 2019 already had 91 telenovela titles, mostly post-2010), with an unprecedented release of old teleno-

velas with remastered image.<sup>49</sup> In May, the network announced the gradual release of 50 of its “classic novelas”, many never rerun. So it was truly created a “digital library”, according to Newcomb (1999):

(...) as the first authors were publishers and booksellers, so today’s broadcasters may find themselves in the position of publishers, offering materials for a large digital e-library. Users will access these virtual collections as they have accessed all libraries (free translation, p. 120).

It has been a response to the year of pandemic restrictions on television. *A Favorita* (2008) was the first telenovela released, and every 15 days a new title, prior to 2010, is added to the library.

The offer of telenovelas<sup>50</sup> such as *Dancin’ Days* (1978), *Roque Santeiro* (1985), *Selva de Pedra* (1986), *Que Rei Sou Eu?* (1989), *Tieta* (1989), *Rainha da Sucata* (1990) among others, and the possibility of watching them on demand, make evident the links that the telenovela sustains with history and memory, as archive of individual knowledge (Motter, 2001). And now, as a digital library, it urges further investigations on the effects of meaning the classics of this genre create and recreate with the present.

49 This is an unprecedented launching as it is made for streaming only telenovelas, when this platform has become known globally for making series as its identity format. However, it does not seem to have been a surprising launch at all. The previous experience with Canal Viva, Grupo Globo’s cable channel, whose programming comprised only reruns, has been noted for its good ratings, having even ranked the first among cable channels. It is very likely that Globoplay based on this experience to launch the project of rerunning old telenovelas.

50 Cf. <https://glo.bo/2UbXZGJ>

## **6. Theme of the Year: Television fiction in times of pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic - with the latent risk, suffering and fear of death spreading all over the world - challenged the mindset of many national and international thinkers, marked by the speech of philosophical anthropology, but easy to access and understand. For us, incorporating these readings into the Theme of the Year was crucial, serving as a macro frame for the analyses that follow. They allowed us to believe that despite the state of permanent crisis, society can create forms of global solidarity and cooperation. Our effort aimed to follow, to capture these ambivalences and to verify how the Brazilian television fiction tried to respond, resisting to this pandemic scenario in its very own way.

The adoption of social distancing proved to be one of the most effective measures to contain the spread of the virus. However, the progressive scientific advances about its lethality led the world to entering periods of social isolation, already characterized by Agamben (2004) as a “state of exception”. That because viral epidemics affect our most elementary interactions with people and objects surrounding us (Žižek, 2020). As we observed, this emerging and unprecedented context sharpened political and socioeconomic decisions that directly affected the audiovisual sector and, in particular, the production and broadcast of television fiction, as aforementioned. We soon noticed an increase in the use of streaming<sup>51</sup> and the expansion of multiple screens, potentiating assistance in the domestic room and thinning the limits between public and private spaces.

51 Cf. <https://cutt.ly/jnCLaoS>

Changes in the ways of working, learning, entertaining, and also watching television fiction create new habits, since all these activities, essentially, require partial or total using of screens, be they cell phones, notebooks, tablets or computers. Spread within the private space, these screens have transformed home into a place for work, rest, and leisure all at once.

The mediations of *sociality*, *technicity* and *rituality* (Martín-Barbero, 2009) give us clues to understand this pandemic domestic environment, because inside it the technological mutation to which contemporary society is submitted, has entered an accelerated rotation, and starts to configure a new communicative ecosystem. *Sociality* undergoes deep changes as a social bond, through which “social relations are established as well as the subjectivities composed by these relations that interfere in the contact of actors with the social world and also with the media” (Pereira, 2020, p. 63) and also contributes to the identity construction of these actors. *Rituality* corresponds to the social use of the media precisely in the interaction between spaces and the temporality of the everyday life, which was transmuted due to the contingencies imposed by the pandemic. The domestic room, the main place where people stay during social isolation, is composed of a set of rituals that make up the daily life and interaction of persons, having the media incorporated into this space. *Ritualities*, resignified by globalization and the pandemic, are materialized in relation to the new industrial formats enabled by *technicity* (Martín-Barbero, 2009, p. 152). Technicity consists of the competencies of uses and appropriations of materiality and technical apparatuses, that is, how technology shapes culture and social practices (Ronsini, 2011). The technical models that supply both the demand for reception/consumption and the pur-

suit of profit by media companies also needed to be modified as a result of the virus.

As we have already mentioned, the *production logics* (Martín-Barbero, 2009) of the media were drastically affected, leading to the suspension of recording of ongoing fictions. And for the first time, a telenovela, *Amor de Mãe* (Globo, 2020, 9pm), could not be seen as an “open-end work”, i.e., conditioned to the time it is on air, because the suspension of its recordings occurred when 102 chapters had already been broadcast. It was replaced by a rerun<sup>52</sup> and was rerecorded in late 2020, set to end in 23 chapters<sup>53</sup>, to be aired in early 2021. However, because of the unprecedented experiences we observed in this telenovela, we could not help but take it as a *case study*.<sup>54</sup>

### **Case study: The telenovela *Amor de Mãe*, pandemic and resistance**

*Amor de Mãe* (*Mother's Love*) enters the history of Brazilian television drama as the first telenovela to portray the pandemic.

It is an example of the classic naturalistic melodrama, impregnated with real life stories, the distinctive trait of the Brazilian telenovelas. The plot is about the stories of three women on their journeys of motherhood. The main character, Lurdes, a maid, has been searching for over 26 years for Domênico, the son sold by her alcoholic husband to the child trafficker Katia. The second character is Thelma, Danilo's overprotective mother, discovers she has an aneurysm, and must deal with the anguish of organizing her son's

52 The telenovela *Fina Estampa Special Edition*, originally recorded in 2011.

53 Called “second phase” to be aired from March 15 to April 9, 2021.

54 We relied on the fact that the telenovela recording was resumed and ended still in 2020 (08/10 to 11/14) in order to conduct this case study.

life before her death. The third is Vitória, a successful black lawyer, despite numerous failed attempts to become a mother, after a twist of fate, becomes the mother of three children, while reconciling motherhood with professional life brings her ethical challenges hitherto unforeseen.

The narrative strategy adopted for the resumption of exhibition was innovative. It started with a 15-day summary of the plot recorded before the pandemic. The aesthetic resource used was the *voiceover* of the three protagonists, each one narrating the scenes she had acted. The narrative, with a remarkable melodramatic accent, sharply marked by melodrama, is structured around strong female characters, employs changing approach on their identities, and shows an innovative aesthetic that brings it closer to cinematographic references. Manuela Dias, a praised scriptwriter, absorbed the pandemic into her plot, making *Amor de Mãe* a reference in how open-end work is not only susceptible to, but is potentially capable of dialoging with an unpredicted reality.

In its second phase, the telenovela starts depicting the daily life of its characters having to deal with the virus, taking advantage of the disease's impact to better outline the narrative. Recordings were interrupted in full climax, when Thelma discovers that Danilo, her beloved son, is actually Domênico, Lurdes' lost son. And so, the new phase begins with the anguish of Lurdes who, forced to remain in isolation, is prevented from following her saga. Meanwhile, Thelma, now definitively an antagonist, capable of killing to hide the secret of Danilo's adoption, celebrates the restrictions of circulation that will force her son to stay at home.

*Amor de Mãe* surprises by inserting reality into its plot with epic effects<sup>55</sup>, as the actors' gaze is directed at the camera, as if they were addressing the viewers directly. This record of acting, added to the temporal displacements and the morally questionable decisions of some characters, make up an aesthetic panorama that brings the telenovela closer to the Brechtian paradigm (Rosenfeld, 1985). We notice a strong dialogue with the journalistic discourse. Shown with an off-screen narration that contextualizes the incidence of the pandemic, the first telenovela scenes are aired, without commercial break, after Globo main TV news, leading to several layers of meaning by merging the news on the pandemic reality and the fictional narrative.

The absorption of the pandemic into the plot can be observed through the repeated use of communication technologies: Lurdes will use the internet to disseminate a video-testimonial about her search for her son; Davi, an environmental activist, will use "lives" to expose his struggle. Likewise, the video calls of the board meetings of Álvaro and Raul's company; in Vitória's chats with her sisters; in Sandro and Betina's online wedding, etc. In all these situations, mobile and/or computer screens interfaces overlap with the TV screen and express themselves by the aforementioned mediations of *sociality*, *rituality* and *technicity*.

The plot also portrays social problems resulting from the pandemic. Camila, a resilient public school teacher, faces difficulties teaching her classes online, when some of her students disappear. Betina, who had abandoned her job as a nurse, is compe-

55 We refer here to Bertolt Brecht's epic theater who, in search of a distancing effect (*Verfremdungseffekt*) to abolish the audience's catharsis, employs narrative artifices in his plays. The breaking of the fourth wall stands out, in which the character addresses the audience directly and breaks with the illusory tradition of the bourgeois theater.

lled to return to the overcrowded hospital to help treat the infected patients. Danilo, an entrepreneur who knew how to take advantage of the delivery service to keep his restaurant going, is in opposition to Nuno, the owner of a bar who had to close the doors of the establishment. Finally, Globo starts to carry out socio-educational actions by publishing an informative card about COVID-19 at the end of each telenovela chapter.

## **Final remarks**

The decision for incorporating the pandemic into a fiction narrative after the resumption of its recordings, clearly demonstrates the naturalistic character of the plot and the production's concern to portray with verisimilitude the economic and sanitary problems caused by COVID-19 which were unequally experienced in the stories of the three protagonists. At the same time, it showed the positive changes that took place in them, whether through maternal love for their children, by engagement in social causes, and by awakening of solidarity and cooperative consciousness.

Due to the negationist position (Caponi, 2020) adopted by the Brazilian government in relation to the coronavirus, *Amor de Mãe* represents a "communication resource" (Lopes, 2009), a pedagogical tool for the population, as it articulates the TV news that precedes the plot and materializes the dialogue between fact and fiction. García Canclini (2020) diagnoses that this educational role performed by the media, and especially by telenovelas in the Brazilian case, are symptoms of the current lack of confidence of citizens in their governments and in traditional political structures.

Social visibility is hitch up to television, as it represents the reality of the country on the imaginary level, with its conflicts, contradictions, and ambivalences. The naturalism of the telenovela



reaffirms this notion of reality, as for Guinsburg and Faria (2017) naturalism discloses the “rough world” of different social conflicts. In *Amor de Mãe* these elements are evidenced by inserting issues that are characterizing the pandemic context experienced by the country.

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