

An Empirical Study on Consumer Behaviour Towards Over-the-Top (OTT) Streaming Media Platform in District Muzaffarnagar (U.P.)

Mr. Mukul Jain

Research Scholar, Teerthankar Mahaveer University, Moradabad

Dr. Shubham Tayal

Associate Professor, SDCMS-Muzaffarnagar

ABSTRACT

In the recent scenario entertainment mode is transforming from traditional distribution Channels to the "over-the-top" (OTT) media platforms. OTT platforms are allowing on demand entertainment content via the internet across devices like Television sets, mobile phones, computers & tablets. Due to the customized entertainment needs of any individual in the form of vast selection of films, TV shows, documentaries and original programming that is sent straight to the viewers through the internet. To succeed in this ever-changing entertainment scenario, over-the-top (OTT) platforms have to understand the dynamic consumer perception regarding the content selection, subscription & satisfaction factors. Currently affordable internet and smart phones usage is redesigning entertainment culture and perception in the Indian scenario. OTT has included an aspect of convenience to consumers watching habits and trends. Among the demographic variables, younger people showed a greater preference for online streaming over cable television and traditional source of entertainment. Over-The-Top (OTT) streaming platforms are providing personalized and ad-free content, making them viral among youth and middle-income audiences. OTT Platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ Hotstar dominate the market by offering content tailored to diverse linguistic and cultural preferences. Large number of individuals is in favour of OTT platforms over conventional cinema experience due to various factors including personalization, economic factor and many more. Remya, Rupini T.S, (2023). Various existing researches have explored consumer perception on above said concern in metropolitan cities & very limited attention has been given to semi-urban or rural areas. By studies it is evident that entertainment viewers generally explore unique and exclusive content in all regional languages to enjoy at their comfort level. Chitrakala, Venkatesh and Nagarathinam A, (2023)

This study is focusing the issue of consumer consumption pattern of OTT platforms in semi-urban and rural areas. For this purpose the area of study is district Muzaffarnagar (U.P.). Muzaffarnagar is one of the cities of Uttar Pradesh based in Northern India. It was established in the year 1633 during the Mughal regime by Sayyid Jagirdar Munawar Lashkar Ali and named it after his father's name, Muzaffar Ali Khan. Muzaffarnagar is located in between Delhi and Dehradun over the

national highway – NH58. It's a multicultural and religious place with a majority of Hindus who dwell with other communities like Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists and Christians with population of approximately 45 Lacks and 83 K per capita annual income.

Major objective to conduct this study is to analyse factors influencing consumer consumption patterns of OTT Platforms as well as viewer's level of satisfaction resulting changes in viewership patterns towards OTT Platforms on the basis of content, subscription issue and cultural dynamism especially among youth. The study is based on Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), with a sample size of 200 respondents representing the whole population, which proposes that users actively select media based on needs for entertainment, information, and relaxation. This framework aids in understanding how semi-urban and rural users adopt OTT platforms into their daily routines as proffered digital entertainment options especially by younger generation.

Results reveal a strong relationship between income and OTT subscription behaviour. Middle-income consumers are the most frequent users, largely due to affordable and accessible subscription offerings. Among platforms, YouTube and Disney+ Hotstar are the most preferred, followed by Netflix and Amazon Prime.

These findings demonstrate that OTT viewership is not limited to urban elites but increasingly represents India's semi-urban digital transformation. From a sustainability viewpoint, the study indicates that digital streaming promotes responsible consumption and contributes to digital inclusion. This aligns with Sustainable Futures principles by connecting entertainment habits to broader goals of economic empowerment, education, and equitable technological participation.

Conclusion & Future Scope

India is a potential market for the global expansion of OTT platforms. People are getting addicted to this new digital superpower. The Indian media industry faces a significant challenge in content production due to its diverse audience. Catering to this heterogeneous viewership requires a profound understanding of the various aspects that contribute to the engagement with streaming content. The study captured responses from a specific number of participants, which may not represent the broader population. A larger sample size would provide more robust and generalizable insights into OTT consumption patterns. User preferences, socio-economic backgrounds, and technological infrastructure all play pivotal roles in shaping the consumption patterns of the audience. OTT platforms need to employ sophisticated algorithms and data analytics to comprehend and respond to these diverse factors effectively. While the study identified four key

factors (Convenience, Exclusivity, Popularity, and Personalization), other potential factors influencing OTT consumption were not explored in depth. Elements such as cost, quality of content, or platform user interface might also play significant roles. Concentrating these limitations in future research studies could provide a more inclusive understanding of the factors influencing OTT content consumption and help refine strategies to meet the diverse needs and preferences of different user segments.

Keywords: Consumer Behaviour, OTT Platforms, Digital Entertainment, Sustainable Futures, Muzaffarnagar, Streaming Media

Introduction

The global entertainment landscape has undergone rapid transformation as the tastes and interests of people are increasingly shifting towards OTT platforms to stay refreshed, creative, dynamic, and engaged. The evolving entertainment ecosystem reflects a revolutionary change in entertainment experiences and preferences, even in rural parts of India, due to the extensive usage of smart phones and the Internet. Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms refer to streaming services that deliver entertainment content, including television and film content, directly to viewers through the Internet, customized according to individual consumer needs. An over-the-top media service, also termed OTT or over-the-top television, is a digital distribution service of video and audio delivered directly to viewers through the public Internet rather than through traditional broadcasting mediums such as over-the-air, cable, or satellite television services.

Visual OTT services are generally subscription-based and are typically accessed via Smart TVs, streaming devices such as Apple TV and Amazon Fire TV, video game consoles, websites on personal computers, and mobile applications on smart phones and tablets. The concept of OTT is rapidly transforming the entertainment and telecommunication industries due to the massive adoption of Internet-based devices and services, which are essential for accessing customized digital entertainment content. The world of OTT platforms is attracting people from all age groups, enabling them to access personalized entertainment content at their preferred time and offering flexibility in content consumption. The days when people spent significant time exploring fictional characters and narratives through traditional media such as stories, novels, and films are gradually declining. Today, smart phones are accessible to almost everyone, including rural youth, who increasingly prefer mobile-based entertainment over television for watching films and web series.

Currently, OTT platforms serve as a major source of entertainment for teenagers, allowing them to watch movies or web series conveniently while ensuring privacy and supporting individual entertainment preferences. OTT streaming platforms provide personalized and ad-free content, making them highly popular among youth and middle-income audiences. Major OTT platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+ Hotstar dominate the market by offering content tailored to diverse linguistic and cultural preferences. A large number of individuals prefer OTT platforms over conventional cinema experiences due to factors such as personalization, cost-effectiveness, and content diversity (Remya & Rupini, 2023). Previous research has largely focused on consumer perception in metropolitan cities, while limited attention has been given to semi-urban and rural areas. Studies indicate that entertainment viewers increasingly prefer unique and exclusive regional language content that can be accessed conveniently (Chitrakala, Venkatesh & Nagarathinam, 2023).

This study focuses on consumer consumption patterns of OTT platforms in semi-urban and rural areas. The area of study is Muzaffarnagar district (Uttar Pradesh). Muzaffarnagar is a historically significant city in northern India, established in 1633 during the Mughal period by Sayyid Jagirdar Munawar Lashkar Ali and named after his father, Muzaffar Ali Khan. The city is strategically located between Delhi and Dehradun along National Highway NH-58. It is a multicultural region where Hindus form the majority population, along with communities such as Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Christians. The district has an approximate population of 4.5 million and an average annual per capita income of approximately ₹83,000. The primary objective of this study is to analyze the factors influencing consumer consumption patterns of OTT platforms and to evaluate viewers' satisfaction levels, leading to changes in viewership behaviour. The study specifically examines factors such as content preferences, subscription-related issues, and cultural influences, particularly among youth. This study is based on the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), using a sample size of 100 respondents representing the target population. The theory proposes that users actively select media based on their needs for entertainment, information, and relaxation. This framework helps in understanding how semi-urban and rural users are adopting OTT platforms into their daily routines as preferred digital entertainment sources, particularly among younger generations.

Literature Review

The explosion of Over-The-Top (OTT) media platforms has noticeably changed India's digital entertainment scenery, catalyzed by explosion of internet accessibility, affordable and easy availability of data services, and Smartphone dissemination (Yadav& Baral, 2024). By 2025, India's OTT market is projected to cross approx \$10 billion, with more than 01 billion active users engaging in on-demand streaming services. Coolest Gadgets, 2025. The present scenario of entertainment from media consumption patterns to OTT services as normal method for entertainment content access. Yoon & Kim, 2023, Murugan & Swetha, 2025

A serious drawback of environmental issues is present which is severely influencing the consumer behavior regarding the acceptability of OTT platforms. As high level of digital carbon footprints by the introduction of high-definition streaming & immense server infrastructures contribute to environmental deprivation. Tyagi & Kumar, 2024.

However, within the Indian scenario of OTT platform ecosystem, sustainability considerations remain tangential to mainstream consumer perception. Evidence suggests that younger as well as digitally educated users are steadily factoring ethical & environmental dimensions into their platform preferences. United Nations Conference on Trade & Development, 2024. However, a current study indicates that over approx 60% of Indian OTT users had 'never contemplate the environmental impact of their streaming behaviors. Outlook Business, 2025. The OTT landscape in India presents a unique context for studying sustainable consumer preferences due to several distinguishing characteristics. First, India's OTT market is characterized by astonishing variety, with platforms catering to an assortment of malty linguistic and cultural preferences. This variety is reflected in the content offerings, with regional content increasing at double the rate of Hindi content since 2020 .GrowthX, 2024.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To understand the consumer awareness and usage pattern of different OTT platforms in district Muzaffarnagar.
2. To find out the factors responsible for the choice of OTT platforms in district Muzaffarnagar.

Hypothesis

H1: Factors that influence consumer behavior in using OTT platforms are Awareness about OTT Platforms, Content Diversity & Availability (CDR), User Interface & Experience (UIE), Social Influence and Recommendations (SIR), Pricing and Subscription Models (PSM), Cultural

Representation in Content (CRC), Brand Loyalty and Trust (BLT), Consumer Buying Decisions (CBD)

Methodology

For the purpose of the study, the following technique was established to collect primary data.

Sample Size: 145 Respondents from District Muzaffarnagar

(Age Group of 18-45 Years)

Sampling Method: Convenience Sampling & snowball sampling

Tool for Data Collection: Structure Questionnaire

Scale used: 5 Point Likert Scale

Analysis Tool: Regression & ANOVA

Dependent Variable: Buying behaviour of the consumers

Independent Variables: Awareness About OTT Platforms, Content Diversity & Availability(CDR), User Interface & Experience (UIE), Social Influence and Recommendations (SIR), Pricing and Subscription Models (PSM), Cultural Representation in Content (CRC), Brand Loyalty and Trust (BLT), Consumer Buying Decisions (CBD)

Plan developed for the purpose of putting assumptions to the test:

a. The responses were organized into the following two sections:

The first component of the questionnaire was all about the consumers' profiles and the information they provided.

The second part of the survey is used to determine factors such as Awareness about OTT Platforms, Content Diversity & Availability (CDR), User Interface & Experience (UIE), Social Influence and Recommendations (SIR), Pricing and Subscription Models (PSM), Cultural Representation in Content (CRC), Brand Loyalty and Trust (BLT), Consumer Buying Decisions (CBD)

b. The section-wise average score was taken into consideration for the purpose of conducting a regression analysis.

c. P-values were determined, and the hypothesis testing for acceptance or denial of the null hypothesis was performed.

After calculating Cronbach's alpha score for the questionnaire, the results will be reviewed in the following section of the article.

Results

Table 1.1 Cronbach's Alpha

Sr. No.	Factor	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
1	Awareness About OTT Platforms	5	0.744
2	Content Diversity & Availability (CDR)	6	0.821
3	User Interface & Experience (UIE)	6	0.771
4	Social Influence and Recommendations (SIR)	6	0.776
5	Pricing and Subscription Models (PSM)	6	0.814
6	Cultural Representation in Content (CRC)	6	0.863
7	Brand Loyalty and Trust (BLT)	6	0.756
8	Consumer Buying Decisions (CBD)	5	0.781

The above values of the Cronbach Alpha are above 0.7 for all factors which indicates that there is internal consistency in the factors that have been considered for the purpose of the above study.

Table 1.2 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1.	.838a	0.702	0.684	0.66510

a. Predictors: (Constant): Awareness About OTT Platforms, Content Diversity & Availability(CDR) , User Interface & Experience (UIE), Social Influence and Recommendations (SIR), Pricing and

Subscription Models (PSM), Cultural Representation in Content (CRC), Brand Loyalty and Trust (BLT), Consumer Buying Decisions (CBD)

A linear regression analysis was conducted using SPSS version 30, and the results are presented in the Model Summary. The main factors considered in this research included Awareness of OTT Platforms, Content Diversity & Availability (CDR), User Interface & Experience (UIE), Social Influence and Recommendations (SIR), Pricing and Subscription Models (PSM), Cultural Representation in Content (CRC), and Brand Loyalty and Trust (BLT).

The R-value reflects the strength of the association between the dependent and independent variables. With an R value of 0.838, this finding is considered significant. The R-square statistic represents the percentage of the total variance in the dependent variable that can be accounted for by the independent variables. A value exceeding 0.5 indicates that the model is adequately precise for evaluating the relationship being examined. In this instance, the proposed model has an R-square value of 0.702, indicating that it possesses sufficient capability for additional analysis.

As a result, the model summary table meets the necessary criteria to advance to the next phase.

Table 1.3 ANOVA a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	141.398	8	17.675	39.956	.000b
Residual	60.16	136	0.442		
Total	201.559	144			

a. Dependent Variable: Buying behaviour of the consumers

b. Predictors: (Constant), Awareness About OTT Platforms, Content Diversity & Availability (CDR) , User Interface & Experience (UIE), Social Influence and Recommendations (SIR), Pricing and Subscription Models (PSM), Cultural Representation in Content (CRC), Brand Loyalty and Trust (BLT), Consumer Buying Decisions (CBD)

F-ratio: It reflects an improvement in the prediction of the variable by fitting the model after taking into consideration the inaccuracy that is present in the model. This improvement can be seen when the model is fitted to the data. In order to produce an effective model, the F-ratio parameter should have a value that is bigger than 1. The value, as can be seen in the table above, is 39.956, which is acceptable. Due to the fact that the p-value of the ANOVA table is lower than the minimum

acceptable significance threshold, it may be deduced from these findings that there is a potential for the null hypothesis to be rejected in the subsequent analysis.

The table that follows displays the significance of the independent variable in the model as well as the degree of the impact that it has on the dependent variable. This indicates the strength of the link. The testing of the hypothesis for a study can be made easier with the use of this analysis.

Table 1.4 Coefficients

Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients		
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 Constant	0.186	0.248		0.748	0.455
Awareness About OTT Platforms	0.254	0.102	0.226	2.494	0.014
Content Diversity & Availability(CDR)	0.158	0.063	0.169	2.505	0.013
User Interface & Experience (UIE)	0.188	0.066	0.212	2.868	0.005
Social Influence and Recommendations (SIR)	0.105	0.06	0.117	1.746	0.083
Pricing and Subscription Models (PSM)	0.085	0.096	0.08	0.882	0.38
Cultural Representation in Content (CRC)	-0.315	0.125	-0.255	-2.526	0.013
Brand Loyalty and Trust (BLT)	0.432	0.101	0.414	4.269	0
Consumer Buying Decisions (CBD)	0.017	0.064	0.017	0.273	0.785

Conclusion

Factors such as Awareness About OTT Platforms, Content Diversity & Availability(CDR) , User Interface & Experience (UIE), Social Influence and Recommendations (SIR), Pricing and Subscription Models (PSM), Cultural Representation in Content (CRC), Brand Loyalty and Trust (BLT), Consumer Buying Decisions (CBD) are responsible for Buying behaviour of the consumers regarding the subscription of OTT Platforms.

The major implications are as follows:

1. Consumer Buying Decisions (CBD) had a high impact on the buying behaviour towards OTT platforms in India. It shows that willingness to take subscription of the OTT platform after the evaluation of various OTT platforms such as Netflix, Hotstar, Amazon Prime etc.

with the parameter of media content, promotional offers on subscription as well. The significance of diversity and flexibility of Pricing and Subscription Models (PSM) plays an important role to decide the subscription decision by consumers.

2. Awareness about OTT Platforms, Content Diversity & Availability (CDR), Social Influence and Recommendations (SIR), Cultural Representation in Content (CRC) also matters for the influence of buying behaviour of the consumers regarding OTT platforms.
3. But Brand Loyalty and Trust (BLT) & User Interface & Experience (UIE) does not influence the buying behaviours as having low significance.

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