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Impact of OTT Platforms on Human society: A Comprehensive Review

Ms. Bhavya Nanda¹, Ms. Monica Thongam Nakra², Ms. Harshita Goyal^{3*}

ABSTRACT

The way consumers consume material has changed significantly as a result of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms, which have grown into significant competitors in the entertainment sector. This study examines the adverse impacts of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms on society as a whole, emphasizing the detrimental social, physical, and psychological effects of their widespread reach. In view of the numerous consequences, especially among teenagers, the language, substance, and presentation of the OTT platforms project have recently given rise to concerns. The study looks into 25 review papers published between 2017 and 2024 and finds that OTT platforms have a major negative influence on human society. Among the detrimental effects are the following: first, persons who binge watch are more likely to experience anxiety, sleeplessness, depression, and other mental health problems. Second, OTT has a significant effect on an individual's physical health in addition to their mental health. Nowadays, a lot of people are couch potatoes, which increases the risk of obesity and other disorders. Additionally, the impact of OTT on society is enormous and can lead to a surge in crime, the spread of misinformation, stereotypes, and a lack of humanity in people. It's critical to recognize the drawbacks of over-the-top (OTT) platforms in order to make wise decisions and better the well-being of people.

Keywords: OTT, Youth, Human Society, Impact, Addiction

What is OTT?

OTT stands for "over-the-top." It refers to the delivery of video content over the Internet without the involvement of cable or satellite TV providers. OTT includes services like Netflix, Hulu, Disney+, Amazon Prime Video, etc. OTT services can be viewed on a many gadgets, such as game consoles, smart TVs, tablets, and smartphones. To access OTT platforms an individual only requires an internet connection and compatible hardware device. In the upcoming generation, we can clearly see that the upcoming kids are more addicted and prone to OTT platforms as compared to previous generations.

OTT before covid-19

OTT (Over-The-Top) platforms were already gaining huge popularity before the COVID-19 pandemic. These platforms offered a new way to consume entertainment content such as TV

¹BA (H) Psychology- III Year, Lingaya's Vidyapeeth, Faridabad

²Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Lingaya's Vidyapeeth

³Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Lingaya's Vidyapeeth

*Corresponding Author

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series, movies, and other video-based content. The COVID-19 pandemic has only advanced the growth of these platforms. Before the pandemic, the competition among OTT platforms was already high. Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Hulu, and Disney+ were some of the popular OTT platforms that influenced the market. These services provided users with access to a huge content collection that let them watch their preferred TV series and films whenever and wherever they wanted. One of the remarkable advantages of OTT platforms was their ability to serve the changing viewing habits of people. Unlike traditional TV broadcasting, OTT platforms allow users to watch content on demand, and any device of their choice. Users could enjoy a more personalized viewing experience, creating profiles, suggesting recommendations, and providing modifying content. OTT platforms were also becoming more original content creators, making their own TV shows and movies customized to the needs and preferences of their audiences. Platforms such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video were investing heavily in creating their own content, which became very popular among audiences globally. Overall, OTT platforms were already on the rise before the COVID-19 pandemic and have seen vast growth in the last year.

OTT after Covid 19

The COVID-19 pandemic has notably impacted the way people consume entertainment OTT platforms have seen an enormous surge in demand since the pandemic began. As people have spent more time indoors to avoid the spread of the virus, the demand for these services has risen. OTT platforms have helped keep people entertained during the pandemic, with people relying extensively on them to access key content when cinemas and other sources of entertainment were unavailable or unsafe. Many OTT platforms saw a massive increase in user numbers, with subscription and viewership numbers incredibly growing. The pandemic has also further the shift to digital and online streaming services, with more and more people choosing to consume content over the top. Streaming services have adapted to the changing environment, releasing more exclusive content and providing high-quality viewing experiences to keep users busy. With the pandemic continuing to impact people's lives worldwide, OTT platforms are likely to continue to be in high demand. These platforms offer an excellent solution for people who want to stay entertained while staying safe at their home and distanced from part of people's lives during these times, and their others. They have become a crucial significance and are unlikely to decrease anytime soon.

Influence of OTT

Positive

There are many positive influences of OTT (Over-the-top) platforms on human society, including:

1. **Availability:** OTT services offer a large selection of films and TV series, and other content easily accessible, allowing young adults to watch whatever they want, whenever they want, and wherever they want.
2. **Low cost:** Compared to basic cable TV, OTT platforms are generally more affordable, and users can choose from different subscription plans based on their needs and budget.
3. **Variety:** OTT platforms offer a diverse range of content from different genres, languages, and countries, exposing young adults to different cultures and perspectives.
4. **Manageability:** With OTT platforms, young adults can watch their favorite shows and movies anytime and anywhere, making managing their time and schedule easier.

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5. Original content: Many OTT platforms are creating their original content, feeding young adults with fresh and innovative content that they may not have access to elsewhere.

Negative

Here are some arguments against the negative influence of OTT platforms on human society:

1. Addiction: Over-the-top (OTT) platforms are basically known to have highly addictive content, which can result in young people spending extra amounts of time binge-watching shows. This can lead to a lack of productivity, low academic performance, and social isolation. The extra use of OTT platforms can cause humans to become addicted to technology, which can also impact an individual's cognitive processes.
2. Exposure to inappropriate content: OTT platforms have a wide range of content that may not be relevant for young adults. This includes violent, sexual, and explicit content, which may harm their mental and emotional well-being.
3. Normalizing unhealthy behaviors: OTT shows frequently depict characters indulging in behavior like substance abuse, unhealthy eating habits, and casual sex, which can impact young adults to copy these activities in real life.
4. Unrealistic expectations: OTT content often draws distorted representations of reality, leading young adults to have unrealistic expectations of relationships, careers, and lifestyles. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy, depression, and anxiety.
5. Health concerns: OTT platforms encourage extended periods of screen time, which contributes to a bad and unhealthy lifestyle. Indulging more on OTT platforms will reduce the physical activity of an individual which has been linked to various health issues, including obesity, and cardiovascular problems.
6. Sleep disruption: Being addicted and binge-watching late into the night can disturb sleep patterns, which can lead to sleep deprivation and which is associated with negative impacts on cognitive functions, moods, and overall well-being of an individual.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Panda, S. et al. (2017) conducted a study titled "Binge watching and college students: motivation and outcomes," came to the conclusion that, although students are driven to spend time binge watching in order to achieve their expected gratification, there is undoubtedly a risk that they will develop an addiction to it. The results, according to the researcher, are alarming since college students are prone to developing an addiction to binge behavior as a way to cope with the unpleasant effects of binge watching.

A study was undertaken by Dhanuka, A. et al. (2019) to investigate the effects of young people's addiction to web series and binge watching. The research was a cross-sectional survey of young people (18–25 years old), with 90 respondents drawn from Mumbai. According to the study's findings, young people in Mumbai appears to be conscious of its digital media addiction and is fighting it. The detrimental effects of binge watching on young people's social, psychological, physical, and emotional health were also addressed in the paper.

The relationship between impulsivity, their possible interplay, and depressive symptoms with binge watching was investigated by Loeber et al. (2020). The relationship between binge watching and the Big Five personality traits—Neuroticism, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Openness—was also investigated. An online survey was used to gather

data on the 228 participants in the study. The study employed a short version of the Big 5 inventory, the Barratt Impulsiveness Scale, the General Depression scale, and a short version of the Introvert-Addiction test. The strategy employed was regression analysis. The results indicate that binge watching was adversely correlated with impulsivity and depressive symptoms, while conscientiousness was the only attribute that significantly correlated with binge watching.

Peterse, M.E. & Klooster, P.M. (2019) in their study observed that binge-watchers typically experience a sense of relaxation and happiness following their viewing of online content. Streaming videos via over-the-top (OTT) platforms appears to be becoming a standard source of entertainment. The study found no proof that excessive disregard for daily routines or negative health impacts result from watching video streaming content.

Starosta et al. (2020) discovered the psychological elements connected to the binge-watching symptoms that are troublesome. The study involved 1000 individuals, of which 850 were women and 150 were men, in the 19–27 age range. Purposive sampling was employed in accordance with the reviews gathered, and samples were obtained via a Google form. The study's conclusions demonstrated that binge watching was more common on laptops and cellphones. Across all personality qualities, low conscientiousness was a significant variable that was associated with binge watching symptoms. Additionally, a strong correlation was discovered between problematic binge watching, low IQ, low emotional stability, and low agreeableness.

Seetharaman, A. et al. (2020) in their study about Binge Watching Behavior discovered that while binge-watching is the greatest way to escape from real-life difficulties, binge-watching addiction may lead to a number of health problems, including anxiety, sleeplessness, and depression.

Deshpande, A. et. al. (2020) in their study “The impact of online streaming services (OSS), with particular reference to Navi Mumbai. The results showed that OTT or OSS had an impact on young people in the age range 18 to 24. The research indicates that OTT/OSS had a negative impact on young people in the age group considered. Unbalanced time management, psychological effects, and financial pressure on young people to view such stuff are evidence of this. The researcher added that youth are significantly impacted by internet streaming services and that these platforms have an impact on their lives.

A study by Kumar, K. et al. (2021) titled "Behavioral effects of web series on Indian youth" came to the following conclusion: It's normal to notice that movies and online shows frequently feature fresh, stereotypical portrayals of women, which can have a very detrimental impact on young viewers' perceptions. It is also easy to see that these media often represent women as victims of violence and as products of a deeply rooted patriarchal mindset that has been passed down through the ages.

The study by Wagh, V.W. et. al. (2022) came to the conclusion that the Indian youth have been affected psychologically by content available on over-the-top (OTT) platforms, which includes alcohol and narcotics along with aggressive, abusive, and sexual content. These youth have recognized experiencing feelings of insecurity, despair, and insomnia on a daily basis. The young people are also falling behind in their academic careers and are more susceptible to health issues. However, their relationships with friends and family suffer as a result of binge watching.

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C.P Rashmi et al. (2023) in their study concluded that web series are highly addictive and are linked to binge-watching because all of the episodes are accessible, which increases internet usage time and other aspects like health issues, etc. When all of these web series episodes are available, people tend to binge watch them all in one sitting, making them addictive and eventually causing a host of social and psychological issues.

Dhiman, B. et al. (2021) conducted a study to understand the effects of web series and streaming media on Indian youth's mental health. The research was conducted on the sample of 250 students from different universities across India. According to the study's findings, there is a lot of violent, sexual, and abusive content on OTT platforms, which has a negative psychological impact on young people. The expert added that if it gets out of control, young people would have serious psychological problems.

The relationship between contemporary screen time and binge eating disorder was examined by Nagda, et al. in 2021. A year-long reexamination was conducted on 11,025 participants, who ranged in age from 9 to 10 years. The Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) study provided a cohort of data, from which logistic regression analysis was performed to determine the final outcome. The findings showed a significant relationship between social networking, texting, and streaming movies or TV episodes and binge eating problems.

Research on the detrimental effects of web series viewing on suicidal thoughts, depression, and self-harm was conducted by Da Rosa et al. in 2019. An online survey about the web series "13 Reasons Why," completed by volunteers via a social media group. A prevalent effect on mood was discovered, with 23.7% indicating a decline in mood. Researchers discovered that those who watched web series reported feeling more depressed and unmotivated.

Lee, C. et al. (2023), in their research concluded that while choosing material wisely through over-the-top (OTT) streaming has the benefit of giving media consumers more options and enabling them to manage their time more independently, late-night OTT viewing causes users to break their sleep schedule.

Sharma, A.S. (2024) conducted a study "The OTT syndrome: psycho-social impact of binge watching" concluded that the effect of OTT platforms result in insomnia, eye disorders, loneliness and isolation.

C.P Rashmi, et. al. (2023), conducted a study on the promotion of crime web series in india by using violence and sexual content by using focus group discussion and survey method on students of age 17 to 20 years reveals that these series showcase hate crimes like murder, robbery, drug abuse and sexual assault which has an severe impact on an individual's socio-psychological aspect.

Sharma, K. (2021), conducted a study on the portrayal of hate speech and evolving gender roles in Indian web shows and over-the-top media content on the sample of 56 responses which concluded that these sexual, violence, abusive content affects a person's physiological behavior and spoken language.

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In a study by Singh, R. et al. (2022) on binge watching on a sample of 60 teenagers in the 14–18 age range. They found that OTT was psychologically affecting the adolescents and that loneliness was more common in males than in females.

Chattopadhyay, A. (2020) conducted a research on psycho-sociological effect of web series on netizens in India by using mixed method of research which concluded that Young audiences may be deeply harmed by online series and films that follow trends in the portrayal of women in new, stereotypical ways.

Rout, D. et al. (2021) conducted a study to check the impact of web series in OTT platforms on the youth in Bhubaneswar city. The sample of the research was 100 graduates and postgraduate students. The sample was taken through an online survey which concluded that there is a significant relationship between watching web series and academic performance of the youth and youth suffers from Anxiety, depression, isolation, insomnia etc.

Kaur, J. et al (2023) conducted a study on impact of Ott platform on body modification by using online survey for 3 months in India. The chi square test was employed to evaluate the between groups differences which founds that there is a negative correlation between time spent on OTT and deciding their next.

A study on the younger generation's perception on OTT platforms and their increasing prominence was carried out by Kala, G. (2022). which led her to the conclusion that OTT platforms affect the generation in both positive and negative ways. On the one hand, it imparts knowledge to the person, but it also exposes young minds to explicit and unfiltered content. The researcher added that it must be used responsibly so as not to harm society or oneself.

According to a study by Devan, U.P. et al (2021) on the effect of web series among youth describes the perception of youth regarding web series that are available on Netflix, Amazon prime, Torrent and more which examine that web series have psychological and behavioral impact on youth.

The results of a study on "consumers choice in OTT and the impact of its streaming content among youth in Chennai" by Saranya, B. et al. (2023) indicate that OTT content significantly influences viewers' psychological impacts and streaming content consumption. As a result, it's critical that OTT platforms take into account how their content may affect viewers and make sure that consent is varied and appropriate so as not to negatively impact younger viewers.

The study on the Content Delivery via Online Platforms: Tracking Students' Web Series Viewing Behavior on OTT Platforms was conducted by Saravanan, V.M. in 2021. According to this report, youthful audiences between the ages of 15 and 25 make up the majority of web series viewers. The study's conclusions highlight certain problems that younger audiences—especially teens—face due to their access to unfiltered content. The findings of this survey indicated that web series are becoming more and more popular in India, especially in large cities like Bangalore. This demonstrates the profound effects online series have on the conventional Indian social system. Viewers are embracing or adopting specific cultural standards as the average amount of time spent viewing web series rises.

METHODOLOGY

Aim: The current study's goal is to determine how OTT platforms affect human society.

Sample

Using databases such as ResearchGate, PubMed, and Google Scholar, the current study analyzed 25 studies to determine the impact of over-the-top (OTT) platforms on human civilization.

Procedure

More than 20 research studies about the influence of over-the-top (OTT) platforms on human society were cited in the current study, which is a systematic review. In this case, identifying the several factors that contribute to distinct problems with an individual's well-being was the main focus. The studies were contrasted with one another in order to arrive at specific findings. In a matter of two months, the research was finished.

Inclusion criteria

1. The studies from 2017 onwards
2. Studies that only focus on the impact of OTT platforms.

Exclusion criteria

1. Any research before 2017
2. Studies that focus on the impact of social media.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The emergence of Over-the-Top (OTT) services has completely changed how people interact and consume information worldwide. This study looks into the various ways that over-the-top (OTT) services affect human society. The way we consume entertainment and information has been completely transformed by them. The emergence of over-the-top (OTT) services such as Netflix, and Amazon Prime has provided consumers with instant access to an extensive library of films, television series, and original content. As a result, we now view and interact with media in a different way that offers flexibility and convenience. Moreover, OTT platforms have given content producers additional chances to promote their work and connect with a worldwide audience. While OTT platforms have brought many positive changes, there are some many negative impacts as well. One concern is the potential for excessive OTT consumption and its impact on physical health, mental health, emotional health, cognitive health, isolation and loneliness, and violence and crime rate.

Physical health- Overuse of screens can be detrimental to one's physical well-being. Sitting for long periods while binge-watching shows can contribute to a sedentary lifestyle, which is linked to various health issues like obesity and cardiovascular problems and musculoskeletal disorders. Prolonged sitting and lack of physical activity can also contribute to poor posture and back pain. Prolonged screen exposure can have adverse effects on the eye and cause eye strain and discomfort. Late night OTT consumption influences sleep quality and duration. Blue light emitted by screen can impact circadian rhythms and melatonin production.

Mental health- Excessive OTT use has been connected to several mental health problems, such as elevated stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms. The immersive quality of over-the-top (OTT) material combined with the addictive attraction of nonstop streaming can cause people to overlook important social connections and self-care tasks, which exacerbates feelings of loneliness and isolation. Furthermore, the constant exposure to traumatic or

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sensationalized information on over-the-top (OTT) platforms might worsen people's mental health by causing emotional weariness and desensitization.

Emotional Health- When used excessively, OTT platforms might have a detrimental impact on one's emotional well-being. Long-term binge-watching of television can lead to depressive symptoms, a decline in social connection, and a disregard for other crucial facets of life. Furthermore, the content itself—such as graphic or upsetting scenes—may affect how we feel. Feeling inadequate, having poor self-esteem, and being dissatisfied with our bodies might result from constantly comparing ourselves to the idealized pictures and lifestyles that are shown in the media. Constantly being exposed to well-chosen and edited information might lead to unpleasant feelings and inflated expectations. Furthermore, watching content in particular genres—like horror or dramatic dramas—can make viewers feel scared, anxious, or sad.

Cognitive health- The cognitive health of users of OTT platforms may be negatively impacted. Constantly staring at screens for extended periods of time and multitasking while consuming material might cause attention span shortening, concentration problems, and cognitive decline. Okay, let's explore some particular detrimental effects of OTT on mental health. Regular use of OTT platforms can result in cognitive decline, including a reduction in critical thinking and problem-solving ability. Because it divides our attention and makes it more difficult to focus and remember information, the practice of multitasking while watching material on OTT platforms can also have a detrimental effect on cognitive performance. Shorter attention spans and trouble focusing on tasks requiring sustained concentration can also be caused by the fast-paced, constantly stimulating nature of over-the-top (OTT) content.

Violence and crime rate- Concerns have been made about the possible contribution of Over-the-Top (OTT) services to an increase in crime, violence, and sexual crimes in society due to their widespread use. Access to a broad variety of materials, such as violent films, TV series, and graphic material, is made possible via over-the-top (OTT) platforms. This might lead to viewers being less sensitive to aggressive conduct and normalize criminal activity. Studies indicate a connection between media violence exposure and aggressive conduct, especially in susceptible groups like adolescents and young adults. The way that violence and crime are portrayed in the media can skew people's understanding of ethics and social norms, which can encourage abnormal conduct and sexual offenses.

Establish boundaries for the amount of time spent on OTT platforms to prevent excessive screen time and promote a healthy balance with other activities.

It's important to be mindful of the time spent watching content and to strike a balance between our digital lives and our physical and psycho-social well-being. One prioritizes other aspects of life alongside OTT consumption that promote a well-rounded lifestyle.

One should be mindful of the content you're watching and its potential impact on your well-being. Choose shows and movies that align with your values and avoid content that may be overly violent, triggering, or harmful. Incorporate breaks during OTT sessions to give your eyes and body a rest. Use this time to engage in physical activity, socialize, or pursue other hobbies. Avoid late-night binge-watching sessions that can disrupt your sleep patterns. Establish a consistent sleep routine and create a technology-free zone in your bedroom. Make time for physical exercise, social interactions, hobbies, and other activities that promote a

well-rounded lifestyle. Implement parental control features on OTT platforms to restrict access to inappropriate content for children. Parents should actively monitor their children's media consumption. Educate individuals, especially children and adolescents, about media literacy and critical thinking skills. Develop critical thinking skills to evaluate the messages, stereotypes, and influences portrayed in OTT content. Be mindful of the impact media can have on body image, self-esteem, and mental well-being.

CONCLUSION

OTT platforms have had a significant and diverse influence on society as a whole, influencing many facets of everyday life, such as violence and criminal activity as well as mental and physical health. OTT platforms are part of the problem of increasing screen usage, which may increase the number of cases of screen addiction. Overuse of screens has been connected to a number of health problems, such as mental health illnesses, sleep disruptions, and obesity.

Limitations and suggestions for further research

There are certain limitations to this study. One such limitation is gender differences and different specific populations are not explored in the current study. The consumption of OTT content and its impact on particular genders and particular populations especially children, adolescents, and old age is not discussed. In the study, only the exacerbation of screen addiction has been addressed. There is no investigation in the present study into additional effects on the human population which could be further analyzed in future research. The rise in popularity of over-the-top (OTT) services has resulted in a decline in conventional media income sources, including advertising and cable and satellite television subscription fees. Our culture, economics, and communication habits will probably continue to change as a result of the social effects of these platforms as they develop. OTT has a number of beneficial effects on human civilization that the research did not address. With the help of over-the-top (OTT) services, media material has become more globally accessible, enabling people to consume content from other languages and cultures. OTT platforms have given content producers additional chances to express their originality and diversity in the narrative.

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Conflict of Interest

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