Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

# DTH Vs. OTT PLATFORMS CHANGING CONSUMER PREFERENCES Kusam Ahir

Research Scholar

University Institute of Applied Management Sciences Panjab University.

#### **ABSTRACT**

In recent years, OTT's subscriber base has experienced exponential growth. Much can be attributed to technological advances which contribute to the Internet bringing high-quality content to our screens. This paper in a novel approach tries to understand OTT's attitude and behavior patterns and adaptability factors OTT among consumers. There are certain advantages platforms Time and place convenience, availability of efficient and cheap data connectivity, penetration of smartphones, availability of cheap and free access to these platforms, sheer breadth of content to choose from and quality of content. Nowadays there are different platforms provided to viewers for watching movies and documentaries on personal gadgets. Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hotstar, Zee5 and ALT Balaji, Jio tv are some ofexamples these kinds of platforms which consist of different genres of content like movies and other video content through the internet. These platforms are a combination of content from both cinema and television. There are some productions which are releasing their content on these platforms only. Now viewers can watch any type of content like new movies, web series, documentaries, news and short films according to their convenient timing at reasonable price on these new media platforms. These platforms have turned the entire scenario for television and cinema. In light of the current ecosystem of technological advancements in telecommunication and enhanced capability of devices, the present work brings to the fore the changes in consumers' media consumption. The shift from conventional media to over-the-top (OTT) media, particularly in the lockdown period due to the COVID-19, has resulted in a war between streaming service providers to attract and retain customers. In the light of this change, the present study conducts partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis to examine users' intention to subscribe OTT platform based upon factors like convenience navigability, Binge watching, Companionship, Social Interaction, Entertainment and cost sensation.

Keywords-OTT platform, Consumer Behavior, Binge watch, Social Interaction, Entrainment

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

#### 1. Introduction

Global media and entertainment industry has seen swift changes over the years. The digital disruption has changed the way we experience content. Print, radio, television, cinema, games, events and music: all of these giant industries are experiencing a digital transformation. A decade ago, 'Watching TV' meant sitting in front of a screen, waiting for favorite program to begin at a set time. But with the rapid development of technology coupled with the growth of over-the-top (OTT) options, viewers can now stream content from either a traditional TV package or an online source. OTT platforms have created extensive opportunities for consumers who now have greater control over what, when and how they watch content. The number of self-reported OTT viewers is significant. As per an online study conducted by Nielsen in 61 countries, it was found that nearly two-thirds of global respondents (65%) watch some form of OTT programming, which includes long and short-form content.

As per a World Economic Forum's report the global middle class will grow to an estimated 4.9 billion by 2030, creating a demand for new media services focused on convenience, education, premium content and video-on-demand; particularly in emerging economies. (MICA,2018). The increasing civilization specifically urbanization contributing to an increased demand for offerings designed with people's commutes and busy work lives in mind. While the ageing world population is demanding entertainment aimed for older people, the millennials are preferring services that offer convenience, memorable experience and flexible access to content. Plain old cable TV viewing is outdated, with most shows seeing flat or no growth and many declining. As opposed to this, Over-the-top (OTT) platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime are rapidly gaining popularity. The various OTT platforms offer a wide range of shows and options, ranging from TV series and documentaries, to movies and a wide array of live sports. More and more consumers are moving from the traditional television to various such platforms, which they can easily view on their Smart Televisions, tablets, mobile phones, and many other devices. The future of OTT platforms across the world looks bright with a steady competition from linear TV. To adapt itself to the transformation TV has started innovating by adopting the new age digital platforms to reach out to the audience. Over the last one decade, the traditional linear television promise included OTT platforms as a part of their strategy for future survival.

#### 2. Review of Literature

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

streaming platform subscriptions: a uses and gratification theory perspective" by Devadas Menon, has explained that Over-the-top video streaming (OTT) platforms, by their consummate artistry, are changing how people watch television. According to author no past research has investigated the relationship between OTT streaming platforms' different uses and gratifications (U&G), subscription, and continuation intentions. Using the multi-method approach commonly used in uses and gratification research, i.e., semi-structured interviews and surveys, study identified eight U&Gs for OTT use: convenient navigability, binge watching, entertainment, relaxation, social interaction, companionship, voyeurism, and information seeking. A comprehensive research model was developed based on the U& G theory taking various constructs like convenient navigability, binge watching, and relaxation U&G predict OTT subscription intentions, whereas convenient navigability, binge watching, and entertainment U&G predicts its continuation intentions. Nagaraj, S., Singh, S., & Yasa, V. R. (2021) in paper Factors affecting consumers' willingness to subscribe to over-thetop (OTT) video streaming services in India aimed to identify the reasons for subscribing and not subscribing to OTT services. The main objective is to test the factors affecting consumers' OTT subscription decisions. Consumers were categorized into three groups having only cable/DTH services, only OTT, and having both cable & OTT. Fourteen reasons for subscribing and eleven reasons for not subscribing were identified and reported. Five factors, i.e., content, convenience, features, price & quality were extracted using Exploratory Factor Analysis. The effect of these five factors along with demographics of age, education, occupation is tested on subscription decisions using a logistic regression analysis. All the five factors affected consumer's decisions along with price inversely. Household structure was the major influencer along with age, occupation, and education. Originality/value: The study not only comprehensively attempted to identify the reasons for subscribing and not subscribing OTT services, but also identified five major factors and their effect on consumers' online subscription preferences. The context of the study is the Indian OTT service market which is highly heterogenous and therefore, this descriptive research provides useful insights to the OTT streaming service providers operating in this competitive space. In a paper Comparative Analysis of Consumer Preference Towards Sources of Entertainment with reference To **DTH** And **OTT** by Mahale, Chitre et al. research was conducted to understand the relation between people's preference for entertainment platforms and content availability, content

In a research paper "Purchase and continuation intentions of over -the -top (OTT) video

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

quality, convenience of use, affordability, and customer service of DTH and OTT services. It was found that there was a significant association between people's preference for entertainment platforms and content availability, content quality, convenience of use, affordability, and customer service of DTH and OTT services. In a paper by Patel, Khaida et al.(2020) A Study: OTT Viewership in "Lockdown" and Viewer's Dynamic Watching **Experience** has explained that In the situation of Covid-19 the technology and the Internet, anyone likes to spend their free time in front of the digital screen, where they have many options to see. The ever-increasing viewership of the OTT video streaming services and the big star's inclination towards this platform justifies this. As the cinema halls shut due to Covid-19 and film release has been suspended amid nationwide, this technological shift by internet has created a new kind of viewing experience and that is going to change the collective movie watching experience in cinema hall which result in dent in the footfall whenever the screens open again. This change in viewing experience created by OTT has a greatest fear for cinema hall owners. This research paper frames the attitude of Indian people towards cinema hall through assessing different vantage points that mark shift in watching experience. Research Paper by Waghmare et al. (2021) Growth of Over-The-Top (OTT) video services in India has reported that Growth in the OTT market is expected to be driven by growing internet penetration, rising trend of Bring YourOwn Device (BYOD), increasing adoption of cloud computing, reducing prices of smartphones and data packs. OTT platforms very user friendly and convenient to use than television channels so people mostly prefer OTT platforms over television channels, there is research going on continuously to make navigation of this platform and less time consuming. Another major factor for increase in growth of OTT platform is the freedom of movement that these OTT platforms provide. The consumer is ready to pay more price provided the consumer gets freedom and flexibility to watch anything anywhere. It is predicted that slowly and gradually television platform will start decreasing its demand in the future. Research paper by Yeole et al. (2022) A study on User Perspective on OTT platform in India have found that the availability of content, easy access to variety of shows, user friendly nature and continuity in shows compels the users to subscription of OTT video streaming. Deloitte report encompasses the video streaming subscription around 8 US\$ billion in 2020. The study aimed to pinpoint the features that influence the OTT video streaming and the effect of cost element on user subscription for OTT video streaming.

#### 3. Objective of the Study

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

According to AIB Research, the over-the-top (OTT) video market across the world will continue to grow at a brisk pace and with a surge compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10% through 2022, the OTT market will generate a massive \$51.4 billion. Subscribers enjoy the lower cost of OTT options, globally even while TV has started showing a little decline, in number of subscribers OTT has shown a clear increase in subscription. The objective of the study is –

- To Study the influence of Usage & Gratification on OTT Subscription Intention
- To study the influence of Cost Factor on OTT Subscription Intention
- To know the current trends in television watching amongst Indian Consumers
- To assess the factors that influences the selection criteria of the watching platform of choice (Traditional Television / OTT Video Platform).

#### 4. Research Methodology-:

#### 4.1 Scale

In this study, we examine only the Usage & Gratification and Cost of OTT platforms leading to subscription Intention. It is observed that most motivations were similar to previous uses and gratification research on television, such as entertainment, relaxation, social interaction, companionship, voyeurism, information seeking, convenience, and arousal. Besides this, qualitative data analysis revealed three new themes a) Convenience navigability, b) bingewatching, c) improved viewing experience, and (d) dissatisfaction with traditional T.V, which is not identified by past researchers, probably unique to online streaming platforms. The factors are labelled as: Convenience, Binge-watching, Entertainment, Social interaction, Companionship. The Scale developed by Devdas Menon in his research paper Purchase and continuation intentions of Over -The -Top (OTT) video streaming platform subscription: A Uses and Gratification theory perspective has been used. However few items like Voyeurism and Information seeking have been dropped as most of the past literature focused on rest of the items. Another major factor Cost Sensation has been taken from the paper A study on User perspective on OTT platform in India by Yeole et al.(2022). The research utilized multidimensional structure representing five constructs from Uses & Gratification (Devdas

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

Menon, 2022) and Cost Sensation (Yeole et al.2022). Thus final research model in this study utilized an adopted scale of total 6 constructs to measure the Purchase/ Subscription Intention towards OTT platform.

#### **4.2 Research Model**

In this paper Uses & Gratification theory and Cost Sensation has been used to examine their impact on Subscription Intention for OTT platform. A multidimensional structured questionnaire has been used including 3 constructs (namely Convenience navigability, Entertainment and Binge Watching) from Usage (uses) 2 Constructs (namely Companionship and Social Interaction) for Gratification have been used and Cost Sensation too was major part of research to know the impact on OTT subscription Intention.

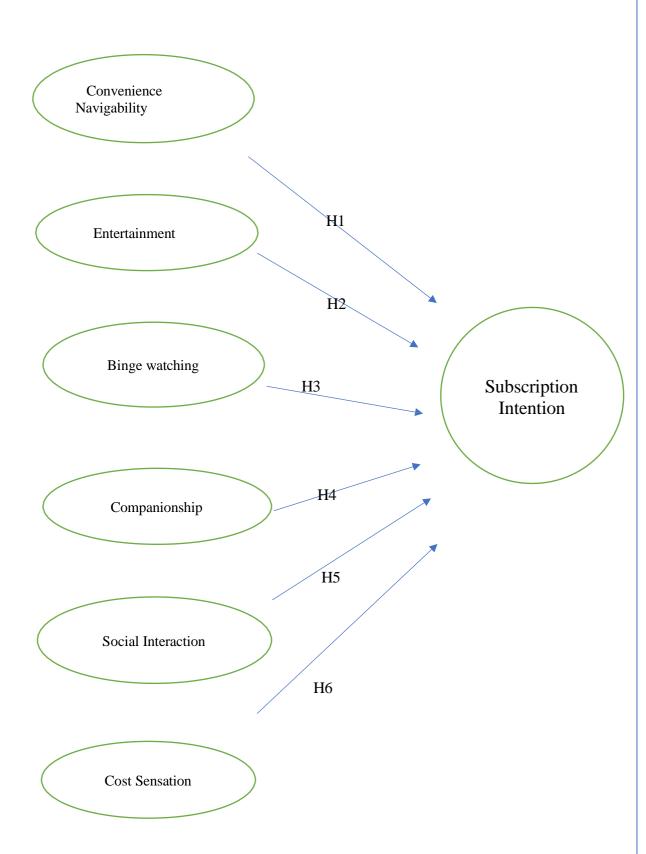


Figure 1 (Proposed Research Model)

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

PI- Purchase Intention, BW-Binge Watch, CM-Companionship, CN-Convenience Navigability, Cost-Cost Sensation, EN-Entertainment, SI-Social Interaction

#### 4.3 Hypothesis-:

- **4.3.1-** Convenience Navigability-Convenience refers to the accessibility and suitability of watching OTT video streaming content from anywhere, anytime (Sahu G. et al.2021). It also includes the advantages of watching content on smart devices (mobile phones, tablets etc.) and the affordance of saving, downloading and watching later (Kim MS 2017). Navigability is defined as the affordance that allows the users to move through the medium (Sundar & Limperos, 2015). OTT platforms allow users to navigate through the medium and filter and choose their desired contents. In the study by Devdas Menon, convenience and navigability gratifications loaded together and formed new gratification, 'convenient-navigability'. Hence, Convenient navigability has been defined as the technological affordance of OTT that allows users to navigate, filter, and choose their desired content and watch anywhere, anytime. So, the hypothesis is-
  - 1) Convenience Navigability has a positive impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.
- **4.3.2- Binge Watching-**Binge watching is the practice of watching television content for a prolonged period, usually in a single sitting (**Shim H. et al.2018**). OTT platforms have the advantage as it allows users to continuously watch multiple episodes of a programme named as 'series' at a stretch. When OTT platforms introduced as "apps,' they made convenience of watching favourite shows anytime, anywhere, using smartphones and tablets. So, the hypothesis is
  - 2) Binge Watching has a positive impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.
- **4.3.3- Entertainment** Entertainment uses, and gratification refers to the perceived fun and enjoyment while engaging in media usage (**Park N.et al. 2009**). Past research has confirmed that entertainment gratification significantly influences the subscription intentions of OTT video streaming platforms (**D.K et al.1999 & Tefertiller et al.,2019**). Therefore, the hypothesis is -
- 3) Entertainment has a positive impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.
- **4.3.4- Companionship-** Television often addressed as a best companion to viewers as it alleviates their boredom and tension of being alone. The early studies of television (**Rubin et al., 1983**), located companionship, as important television viewing motivations. Modern-day subscription-

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

based video has made people use OTT platforms to occupy their time when no one else to talk or be with. So, the hypothesis is-

- 4) Companionship has a positive impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.
  - 4.3.5- Social Interaction- Social interaction is defined as the activity of communications with others with an aim to create and maintain relationships (Park N.et al., 2009) & (Malik et al., 2015). Haridakis & Hanson, in their study on YouTube, identified social interaction as one of the unique gratifications from YouTube. Viewing and sharing videos on YouTube often create interpersonal interaction in the form of comments, likes, and dislikes. So, the hypothesis is-
- 5) Social Interaction has a positive impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.
  - **4.3.6- Cost sensation** Customers are price sensitive these days. So cost is considered an important factor for OTT subscription intention. So, the hypothesis is-
- 6) Cost Sensation has a negative impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.
- **4.4- Data Collection-** Data collection was carried out with OTT platform users. A total of 687 participants took part in survey. Data collection was done sending questionnaire (Google form) on WhatsApp. Participation in the survey was completely voluntary.
- **4.5 Data Anaylsis-** The data analysis was performed on SPSS software and Smart PLS 3.

#### 4.6 Results-

#### Validity and Reliability-

**Discriminant Validity-** Discriminant validity explains that there is no correlation or very low correlation between measures of unrelated constructs. According to Fornell (1981) the constructs achieve the discriminant validity as the diagonal values of the construct are

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

greater than the horizontal and vertical values. In the below table except convenience construct all the constructs have achieved discriminant validity.

### **Discriminant Validity Index-**

	BINGE WAT	COMPANIO	CONVENIE	COST	ENTERTAIN	PURCHASE	SOCIAL INT
BINGE WAT	0.789						
COMPANIO	0.228	0.821					
CONVENIE	0.543	0.265	0.638				
COST	0.467	0.441	0.405	0.752			
ENTERTAIN	0.450	0.393	0.394	0.551	0.854		
PURCHASE I	0.567	0.351	0.545	0.545	0.570	0.896	
SOCIAL INT	0.259	0.372	0.450	0.518	0.444	0.369	0.942

Table 1

	Cronbach's Alpha
BINGE WATCHING	0.703
COMPANIONSHIP	0.758
CONVENIENCE	0.712
COST	0.842
ENTERTAINMENT	0.876
PURCHASE INTENTION	0.877
SOCIAL INTERACTION	0.873

Table 2

In the above table Cronbach Alpha, which must be more than 0.7 measuring internal consistency proves well.

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

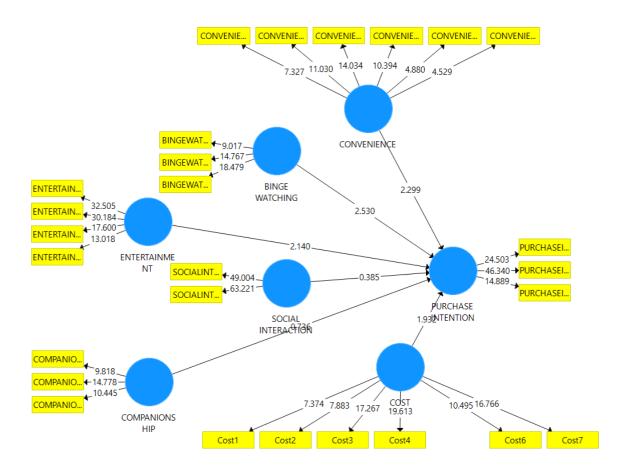


Figure 2 Structural Model

#### **Path Coefficients**

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation	T Statistics (	P Values
BINGE WATCHING -> PURCHASE INTENTION	0.225	0.212	0.089	2.530	0.012
COMPANIONSHIP -> PURCHASE INTENTION	0.062	0.071	0.085	0.736	0.462
CONVENIENCE -> PURCHASE INTENTION	0.243	0.259	0.106	2.299	0.022
COST -> PURCHASE INTENTION	0.188	0.196	0.098	1.932	0.054
ENTERTAINMENT -> PURCHASE INTENTION	0.260	0.237	0.122	2.140	0.033
SOCIAL INTERACTION -> PURCHASE INTENTION	-0.035	-0.035	0.090	0.385	0.700

Table 3

**Discussion-** The present study has worked on six measures that could lead to OTT subscription intention, 5 of which have been taken from a single research paper (**Devdas** 

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

**Menon**) while one factor (Cost Sensation) taken from another paper (**Yeole et al.**). Research study has worked to study the relationship between factors Binge watching, Companionship, Convenience, Cost Sensation, Entertainment and Social Interaction with the intention to subscribe the OTT platform. P-values are meant to explain the of the hypothesis proves significant or not with values must be less than 0.05. Following is the detail-:

- Convenience Navigability is defined as the technological affordance of OTT that allows users to navigate, filter, and choose their desired content and watch anywhere, anytime. In research done on the User & Gratification theory in context to OTT platform it is revealed that convenience has positively predicted OTT platforms' subscription intention (Gupta,20211). It is also observed in the preset study that there exists a positive relationship amongst Convenience Navigability and OTT Purchase (Subscription) Intention.
- In recent research it is observed that Video-on-demand platforms encourage binge-watching (BW) to stimulate consumers' paid subscription. Compared with non-Binge Watchers, Binge Watchers offers enhanced attractiveness, identification, involvement, and parasocial interaction, which results in more impulsive paid subscription behavior (Song,2024). Hence, it is proved that Binge Watching has positive and significant relationship with Purchase (Subscription) Intention of OTT platform.
- Entertainment is actually taken as perceived fun and enjoyment while engaging in media usage in context of Online Platform. (Sheehan, 2019) It is observed that television increasingly competes with other media— such as video games, mobile applications, and other web-based media— to provide entertainment, and so audiences turn to television for a more clearly defined form of entertainment. From the present study it is observed that Entertainment has a positive relationship with Purchase (Subscription) Intention of OTT platform.
- In a research paper by Yan,2023 it has been observed that Peer influence has a negative impact on the consuming activities of individuals, including their value perception, affective experience, and desire to repurchase. The most apparent manifestation of peer influence is an increase in consumption knowledge and assistance in the process of developing one's own unique consumption patterns (Yiming Yan,2023). In terms of internal states, normative influence (social expectations) from known others has been found to have a negative effect on shopper mood (Chebat et al., 2014). In food

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

- consumption, the effect of the presence of companions on the amount of intake can be either positive or negative, depending on individual goals and social norms (Herman et al., 2003). Hence alternate hypothesis is approved, Companionship has negative impact on Purchase (Subscription)Intention of OTT platform.
- It is observed in the present study that there is insignificant negative relationship between cost and purchase intention which is supported by (B. E. 2019) in which it is observed that consumer if perceive price to be fair then high price and purchase intention have positive relationship. Price sensitivity matters a lot to individuals. Cost effect makes the platform stronger than usual; it brings cost sensitivity to users and encourages to the platform (yeole et.al 2022), however it is observed that the greater the customer satisfaction the more the current service provider induces more intention to continue using the service(Quan et.al.2022). This finding is consistent with previous studies that found positive relationships among perceived price fairness, purchase intention (Sheng et al., 2007) and repurchase intention (Homburg et al., 2005). Hence it is proved that cost sensation has an insignificant impact on Purchase (Subscription) Intention of OTT platform.
- In the previous studies it is proved that social Interaction is the motivation of behaviour. However, it is observed in the study by (Liang, T.P 2011), users tend to interact more frequently with friends of stronger relationships and are more receptive to their viewpoints. Perceived risk and Trust are the factors that may shake the purchase Intention even though there is a social interaction specifically on e-commerce platform (Park, M.S.2014, Forsythe 2003). It is observed that subscription services are based on continuous contract behavior, not on one-time purchase, personal needs, such as economic or convenient factors, serve as more important factors than any stimulus of acquaintances or communities (Kim et.al.2020). Hence it is proved that Social Interaction has an insignificant impact on Purchase (Subscription) Intention of OTT platform.

It is clear that Binge Watching, Convenience and Entertainment have found to have significant relationship with the Intention to Subscribe to OTT platform. In simple terms people intend to subscribe OTT platform as it provides the feature of watching at stretch, Convenient to watch OTT at their mobile handsets etc., and for entertainment purpose.

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

However, Companionship, Cost Social Interaction have found to be insignificant and therefore are not considered in decision making regarding intention to subscribe.

#### **Results of Hypothesis Testing**

Sr.No.	Hypothesis	Support
1.	Convenience Navigability has a positive impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.	YES
2.	Binge Watching has a positive impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.	YES
3.	Entertainment has a positive impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.	YES
4.	Companionship has a positive impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.	NO
5.	Social Interaction has a positive impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.	NO
6.	Cost Sensation has a negative impact on the intention to subscribe to OTT.	NO

Implications of the study- It is true that major global players like Disney Hotstar, Netflix and Amazon Prime have captivated millions of Indian viewers during and post Covid-19 majorly. It is becoming challenging for OTT platform to retain the viewers and to keep them entertaining. OTT platforms can keep their customers engaged and indulge by offering them content that is locally produced or matching with the taste of Indian Consumers. Besides this keeping in view the cost sensitivity OTT platforms can be offered at discounted subscription rate in the form of specific periodic plans and additional OTT Platform subscription. Nokia-in its yearly Report Nokia-MBiT report has highlighted that portable phone had ended up the most overwhelming medium of OTT utilization in India with their far-reaching flexibility of get to. Thus, in the current situation it is suggested that OTT players increase their clients base by receiving dispersion models like joining forces with portable phone administrators to present advancements like mobile only pack.

Volume 01, Issue 01, December 2024

Limitations and Scope for future research- Although the research study has made the significant contribution to know the motives behind subscription intention of viewers but it has few limitations as such the Participants in the survey were limited to one country i.e. India and majorly from Delhi and Chandigarh. The number of participants (687 participants) was quiet less to generalize the results. Future research thus can be extended to different regions as well countries or can be done across the countries, cultures etc. Only six factors were considered to know the subscription intention. Future researchers can to get the better results can do the research across the countries and cultures. Besides this other factors too can be considered like User's preferred platform, choice of program, Device options etc. Besides this longitudinal research too can be done by see the effect of OTT platform on consumer changing behavior over a period of time.

Conclusion- To conclude, OTT platforms have gained much popularity in the few years specifically amongst youngsters. Past literature and present study have proved OTT subscription is highly influenced with the factors like Binge watching, Entertainment and Convenience while Social Interaction Companionship and Cost have no or very less impact on subscription intention. The present study will help the marketing teams of OTT platforms to know the motivational forces behind the consumer choices.

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