

Youth Engagement: A Key Driver in the Growth of OTT Platforms

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Abstract: *The current research project investigates the vital role of young participation in the rapidly expanding realm of streaming platforms (OTT) platforms. Younger audiences have been the primary driver of the rise in popularity of streaming services, while traditional TV networks are facing a decline in viewing. This article examines the mechanisms that have led to this shift in young viewing habits and tastes, and it also addresses the wider ramifications for the media industry. Key findings show that social media integration, accessibility, and a variety of material are essential for drawing in young viewers, suggesting that traditional channels need to change in order to stay competitive.*

Keywords: Youth Engagement, OTT Platforms, Streaming Services, Digital Media, Social Media Integration, Smartphone Usage

I. INTRODUCTION

The landscape of media has evolved significantly in the last few years, with traditional television networks being displaced by streaming platforms (OTT) services that are becoming more and more popular. Younger audiences are most affected by this change in viewing habits and preferences, which has led to the expansion of streaming services like Netflix, Amazon Prime and Disney+. Researcher and industry stakeholders alike must have a thorough understanding of the elements influencing young people's interaction with OTT platforms. In addition to providing insights into how established networks can adjust to the changing patterns of media consumption, this article seeks to clarify the role that young adults have played in the OTT growth.

Television, a staple of modern entertainment and communication, has undergone a remarkable transformation since its inception in the early 20th century. From simple beginnings as a black-and-white, box-like device in the living room to the sleek, high-definition, and interactive screens we know today, television has evolved to become a crucial aspect of our day-to-day existence.

This technological marvel has not only revolutionized the way we consume entertainment but also made a big contribution to shaping our culture, influencing our perceptions, and connecting us across the globe.

Since its introduction and adoption in the 1950s, television has been a prominent part of the Indian lifestyle. Television entered India in 1959, but it was only after the telecast of the Asian Games in 1982 in colour, that television became popular commercially. The rich and middle-class families rushed to purchase television sets shortly after the medium entered popular culture. Many lower-class people went into extreme debt to own this luxury item which later became a necessity

Over time, though, television became more than just a luxury; it became a central fixture in many households, providing not only entertainment but also news, educational content, and a window to the world beyond its immediate surroundings. This transformation from luxury to necessity reflects the long lasting impact television had on society and underscores its role as a cultural cornerstone.

In the early years, gathering around the television set was a communal experience, with families eagerly tuning in to watch their favourite shows together. Whether it was the iconic dramas of the 1980s like "Ramayana" and "Mahabharata" or the modern sitcoms and reality shows of today, television has been a catalyst for bonding, laughter, and shared experiences among family members.

Moreover, television has played a crucial part in forming values and aspirations within Indian families. From showcasing traditional family values and cultural heritage to portraying inspirational lifestyles and societal norms, television programming has had an intense impact on shaping the collective psyche of Indian society. It has influenced fashion trends, language usage, and even dietary habits, reflecting and reinforcing societal ideals and aspirations.

However, the arrival of digital platforms and streaming services has brought about a change in perspective about how Indian families consume television content. While traditional television viewing still holds sway in many households, especially in rural areas, the younger generation increasingly prefers on-demand and personalized viewing experiences offered by digital platforms.

Streaming platforms have transformed the entertainment scene in India, reshaping how people enjoy their favourite movies, shows, and music. From its humble beginnings, the streaming revolution has been fuelled by the widespread availability of high-speed internet and the growing prevalence of smart phones, making entertainment accessible anytime, anywhere. The journey of streaming platforms in India is a dynamic narrative marked by intense competition and rapid innovation.

An article by Times of India (2023) says that according to FICCI EY analysis, the share of regional language content on OTT platforms is projected to more than double from 27% in 2020 to 54% in 2024(Koka, 2023). And in no time this change reflects both the rising emphasis on producing original programming in languages apart from Hindi and the growing demand for vernacular material. OTT platforms are fuelling their rapid rise by effectively bridging the gap between makers and audiences, with over 40 providers producing content in many languages.

The days of following strict schedules for shows that traditional TV networks set are long gone. Alternatively, a wide range of on-demand entertainment, including TV series and movies, is available to users based on their schedules and tastes. Viewers can access information from all around the world using streaming services, regardless of where they are in the world. Because of its accessibility from anywhere in the world, streaming services are able to draw a wide range of viewers and increase their market share beyond what traditional TV networks can.

II. OBJECTIVES

- To understand the growth patterns of streaming platforms and their impact.
- To analyse how audience preferences and viewing habits have shifted with the rise of streaming platforms.
- To make a comparison between the contents on streaming platforms and traditional TV channels

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the key factors driving the growth of streaming platforms?
- How have viewing habits, such as binge-watching and time-shifted viewing, evolved with the availability of streaming platforms?

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In recent years, the emergence and widespread adoption of streaming platforms have fundamentally altered the landscape of entertainment consumption. With platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+, viewers have unprecedented availability of a wide range of material, available whenever they're ready. This shift towards streaming services has prompted inquiries over the future viability and relevance of traditional TV channels. This literature review aims to explore the various facets of this phenomenon, examining the impact of streaming platforms on traditional TV channels from multiple perspectives.

The impact of streaming platforms on traditional TV networks has been significant. Streaming services, such as over-the-top (OTT) platforms, have gained market power due to the popularity of television viewing and the growth of Internet-based technologies (Hutchins et al., 2019). With the growing time, consumers prefer watching content as per their availability and personalising their choices and TV did not gave them this freedom, which on the another hand streaming platforms does.

These platforms have altered the media consumption landscape, particularly with a focus on live-streamed content like sports (Hutchins et al., 2019). Be it World cup or IPL, the rise of online streaming platforms has made it easier for people to watch matches anytime, anywhere, reaching a wider audience beyond traditional TV viewership. Plus, the

accessibility of smart phones and affordable data plans has likely contributed to this trend. Many online platforms offer interactive features like live chat, polls, and real-time commentary, enhancing the viewing experience and engaging viewers in ways that traditional TV cannot.

Major players like Netflix, alongside factors such as broadband infrastructure and competition, have driven the growth of paid video streaming services (Lee et al., 2021)

Netflix provides a wide variety of content, catering to various tastes and interests. From international movies and TV shows to documentaries and stand-up comedy specials, there's something for everyone. It offers various subscription packages at varying price points, making it accessible to a wide range of consumers. They also provide the option to share accounts, which further enhances affordability. The growth of paid OTT video streaming services is heavily dependent on the availability and quality of broadband internet infrastructure. As internet speeds have increased and become more widely accessible, especially in urban areas, consumers have found it easier to stream high-definition content seamlessly. Improved infrastructure has reduced buffering times and allowed for better streaming experiences, encouraging more people to subscribe to OTT services. Jio's offering of unlimited 5G has the capacity to further accelerate the growth of paid OTT video streaming services by improving internet speeds, reducing buffering times, expanding access to underserved areas, and encouraging increased content consumption.

The way that most industries operate has been drastically altered by the internet. Because more and more of its target audience are using the internet, the entertainment industry has had to drastically alter how it operates. Nowadays' consumers are well-informed and familiar with new developments in technology as well as rising trends in the entertainment industry. The OTT platforms' global expansion can be attributed in large part to this situation. The target demographic in India is also well-versed in the music, movies, TV series, and other genres that are available on various OTT platforms. In India, the youth and salaried markets are increasingly using video streaming services like Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+Hotstar, Zee5, and others. (Jain, 2021)

These platforms provide a large array of content spanning movies, shows, music, and more, catering to diverse tastes and preferences. With an extensive library of both local and international content, they provide viewers with unparalleled access to entertainment from around the globe. Secondly, the convenience and flexibility afforded by OTT platforms resonate well with the hectic lifestyles of the salaried demographic and the tech-savvy youth, who often seek on-demand access to their favourite content anytime, anywhere.

The Over the Top (OTT) platform created a heavy impact on the innovative drive to entertainment sectors. This visual content-based platform provides an option to choose content based on their needs and preferences (M & Babu, 2021)

In conclusion, the rise of streaming platforms has reshaped the media landscape, challenging traditional TV networks and providing viewers with new content consumption options. The shift towards streaming services is driven by factors like convenience, interactivity, and personalized experiences, indicating a substantial transformation in the entertainment industry.

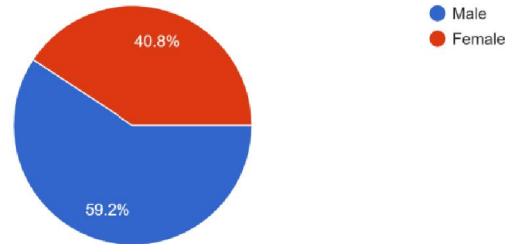
V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research has been adopted to achieve the objectives of the research paper. Both primary and secondary data is used. Secondary data were collected by reviewing various books, news articles, reports, research papers etc. Primary data were collected using survey method. A questionnaire was developed in Google forms using Convenience and Snowball sampling. The research conducted in Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh, the highest populated state of India. Taken the population of different areas (AlamBagh, Aashiyana, Rajni Khand, Charbagh)

In total there were 103 respondents. Although the researcher tried to maximize the number of responses but could not do because the response rate was very low. The summary of the responses was available in the Google form. Also, it had charts prepared on its own on the basis of responses received. These charts were analysed to come to a conclusion.

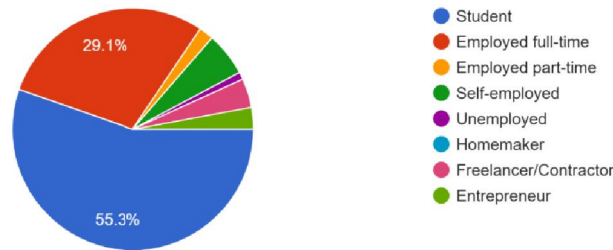
VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Gender
103 responses



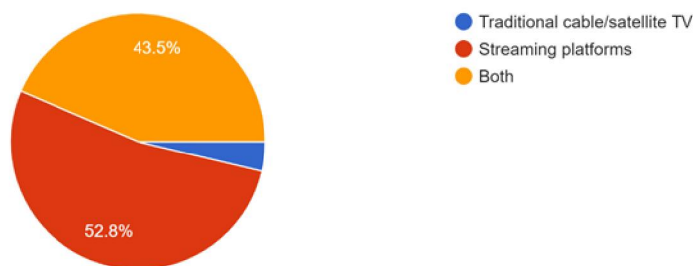
There were 103 respondents out of which 59.2% are males and 40.8% are females, which means most of our respondent who are a part of our research study are males.

Occupation
103 responses



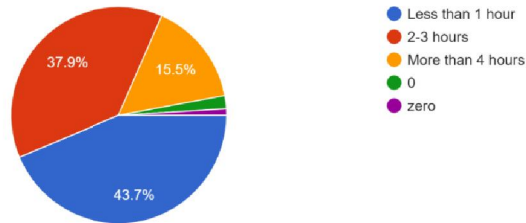
55.3% of the total respondents were students, 29.1% were employed full-time.

How do you primarily watch content?
103 responses



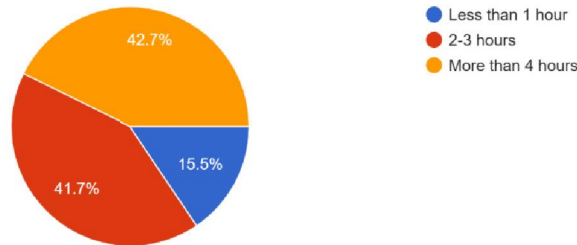
52.8% of the total respondents primarily use streaming platforms (OTT) to watch content, 43.5% of respondents use both and only 3.7% said that they use television to watch content. It means most of the respondents use streaming platforms.

On average, how many hours per week do you spend watching television content?
103 responses



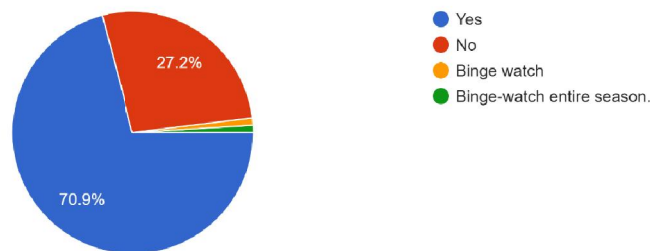
43.7% of the total respondents watch television less than 1 hour, 37.9% watch television between 2-3 hours, 15.5% respondent watch television for more than 4 hours, and only 2.9% said that they watch for 0 hours.

How many hours per week do you typically spend streaming content online?
103 responses



42.7% respondents use these streaming platforms (OTT) for more than 4 hours, 41.7% respondents use between 2 -3 hours, and only 15.5% respondents use it for less than 1 hour. It means most of the respondents use it for more than 4 hours.

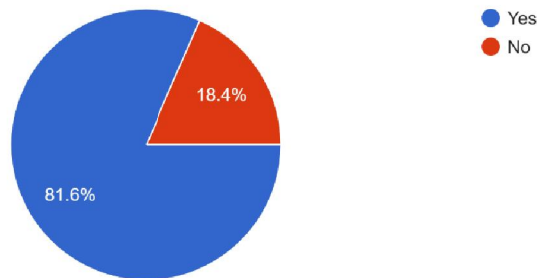
Do you prefer binge-watching entire seasons of shows on streaming platforms or watching episodes weekly on traditional TV networks?
103 responses



70.9% respondents said yes that they prefer binge-watching the seasons of shows on streaming platforms whereas, 27.2% said no that means they prefer watching weekly episodes on traditional TV networks.

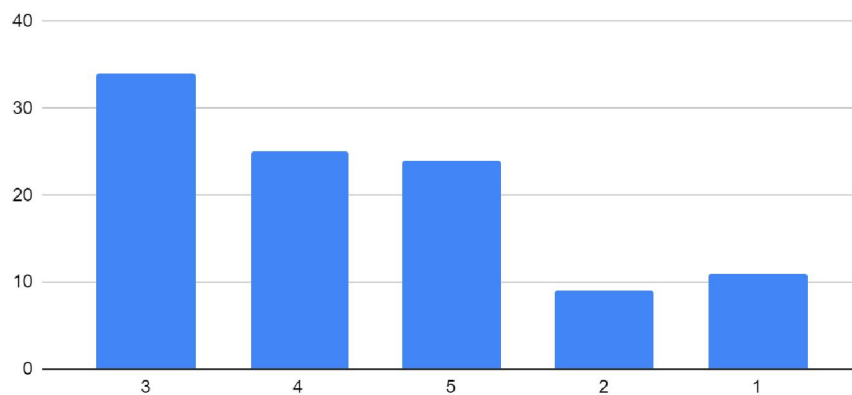
Do you believe that the availability of on-demand content on streaming platforms has changed your viewing habits compared to scheduled programming on traditional TV networks?

103 responses



81.6% of the total respondents agree that yes the availability of on-demand content on streaming platforms has changed their viewing habits compared to schedule programming on traditional TV networks, whereas only 18.4% do not agree. That means majority of agree to the change in their viewing habits.

Count of To what extent has the popularity of sports contributed to the dominance of the streaming platform of streaming platf...

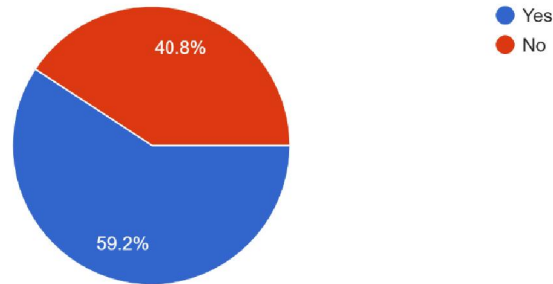


Count of To what extent has the popularity of sports contributed to the dominance of the streaming...

To what extent the popularity of sports has contributed to the dominance of the streaming platform of streaming platforms over TV channels, to which 34 out of 103 respondents think till level 3 it has contributed, whereas 25 respondents think till level 4 it has contributed, and 24 respondents think till level 5, and only 11 respondents feel till level 1 and 9 respondents feel till level 2.

Have you ever canceled a traditional TV subscription in favor of solely using streaming platforms?

103 responses



59.2% of the total respondents said that yes they cancelled a traditional TV subscription in favour of solely using streaming platforms, whereas 40.8% said no that they haven't.

VII. FINDINGS

The data analysis found that out of 103 respondents, 54 respondents primarily use streaming platforms (OTT) to watch content, 44 respondents use both and only 2 said that they use television to watch content. Thus, majority of the respondents use streaming platforms, citing convenience and content variety as primary reasons.

The most important finding of our research study was that out of 103 respondents, 73 respondents said yes that they prefer binge-watching the seasons of shows on streaming platforms whereas, 28 said no that means they prefer watching weekly episodes on traditional TV networks. Thus we can make out of this study that yes streaming platforms have evolved the viewing habits of the people, as the content is available 24*7, you can pause/play anytime.

Another finding says, out of total 103 respondents, 72 respondents think that original content is the key factor driving the growth of streaming platforms, while 65 respondents think that content library is the factor, 37 respondents think that user interface/experience has driven its growth, 36 respondents think that pricing has succeeded the growth of streaming platforms, whereas only 21 respondents think that availability of offline downloads has driven their growth.

As per finding of our research study that out of total 103 respondents, 63 respondents think that accessibility of sports content has influenced the preference for streaming platforms, 56 respondents think that convenience of sports content has influenced their preference, 46 respondents think that global access of sports content has influenced their preference, whereas only 29 respondents think that interactivity of sports content has influenced the preference for streaming platforms. There is no doubt that sports, IPL has made the users more likely addicted towards streaming platforms, and the interactivity they offer is unmatched for TV, with now various languages available for commentary people switch to streaming platforms rather to watch on TV.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The rise of streaming platforms has permanently changed how people watch television, with significant effects on established TV networks. These platforms have captured the attention of viewers all over the world with their ease of use, adaptability, and huge variety of content offers, upending the dominance of traditional broadcast networks. Traditional TV networks are facing unprecedented problems in maintaining their audience base and advertising revenues as viewers increasingly choose on-demand services. However, the television industry now has a chance to innovate and adapt as a result of this upheaval. Traditional TV channels need to embrace digital transformation, expand their content offerings, and improve viewer engagement with interactive features if they want to stay relevant. Furthermore, partnerships between traditional broadcasters and streaming platforms may open the door to hybrid models that combine the best features of both approaches. In the end, the expansion of streaming services emphasizes the necessity.

IX. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Constraints of resource and time.
2. The study was limited to some respondents.
3. The collection of data done through online mode, lack of face-face interaction with the respondents.

The researcher wants other talented and enthusiastic researchers to write papers on studies that compare several nations or areas may fall under this category. Analyze how social media marketing and influencers contribute to the growth of streaming platform subscriptions.

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