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Impact of OTT and Web Series on Youth

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Nowadays, young people prefer using the Internet and are considered as social media junkies. Web series are swiftly taking off and becoming more well-liked in India as a result of the perception that young people are social media addicts. Web series and online streaming content are becoming the heart of the youth. Web series are replacing television and have seen a boom in online streaming and web series content. Regional programming has received significant investment from many large corporations, including Hot Star, Amazon, SonyLiv, Eros Now and Netflix. They are growing in popularity in India since viewers may choose from a variety of web series based on their preferences and interests.

What are OTT Platforms?

OTT stands for "over-the-top" and refers to a technology that streams material over the internet. A customer would sign up for a cable subscription in the past, and their cable TV provider would be in charge of providing and making programming accessible. OTT media services are internet streaming platforms that have recently gained a lot of popularity. Due to the closure of theatres brought on by the Covid 19-led lockdown, the number of paying members to OTT services like Amazon Prime, Netflix, Hotstar, and many others increased by 30%. For a legitimate membership, these platforms are recognised for providing a sizable collection of fresh, unique, and original content and uncommon stories.

Growth of OTT Platforms

The OTT video market is expanding swiftly. Subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) and transactional video-on-demand (TVOD) services have increased the sales of online video memberships. Internet usage has significantly changed the way that television is produced around the world. Web series and streaming entertainment have a big influence on our culture, especially among young people. In India, the industry for online entertainment has expanded significantly in recent years. This is made possible by the range of internet streaming platforms used to provide the content to Indian viewers, the changing lifestyles of those viewers, and the changing types of information they consume. Due to the introduction of faster and less expensive internet services in the form of mobile connections as well as the widespread availability of broadband services, there has been a significant increase in both the number of people visiting websites for content online and the amount of time spent doing so.

Need of OTT Platforms

The OTT platform is not just for watching web series on many platforms; it can also be utilised for education. The terrible Covid-19 pandemic, which forced the closure of all educational facilities in India, only served to accelerate the uptake of e-learning approaches. Online education was viewed as a remedy during the epidemic, but it is amazing to see how virtual classrooms are now accepted as the norm rather than a replacement for emergency

lockdowns. The education system in India is dynamic and meets the academic demands of 260 million students enrolled in over 1.5 million schools, as well as 27.5 million undergraduate and 4 million postgraduate students attending over 42000 institutions. India's population is exploding, putting a tremendous burden on the country's meagre resources to deliver the high-quality education that every child deserves. Recently, a number of Ed-Tech platforms have been developed in order to tackle the problem of education and provide what is needed using contemporary technology. OTTs for education have given teachers and students more authority by supplying them with new resources. It has changed the way that education is provided, enabling it to depart from the traditional four-wall classroom model. Given that OTT platforms are made feasible by Internet technology, India's steadily expanding internet user base provides the ideal atmosphere for Ed-tech platforms to operate. By 2025, there will be 900 million active Internet users in India, a 45 percent increase over the next five years

A. **Availability and Approachability:** The literacy rate of India is directly impacted by the fact that more than 70% of its people reside in rural areas. One of OTT education's major benefits is that students may get high-quality instruction whenever they want, anywhere, since it is not physically dependent on the classroom. Students can access historical data, pause lectures, and take quick notes all at once using an OTT platform. By allowing students to explore and assimilate knowledge more practically, OTTs in education also aid in memory retention and engagement. Compared to many private universities, several education OTTs offer courses at far lower prices. They aim to make education accessible to students from low- and middle-income families while keeping tuition costs reasonable. Many OTT platforms aim to make education more accessible and less of a luxury for the over 85% of Indians who live in poverty. As a result, in addition to enjoying OTT platforms' online series and entertainment offerings. It is accessible to anyone at any time and anywhere for free, at an affordable price, and with easy access. It can be utilised for informational reasons as well as for instructional ones. Byjus, Eduncle, and other instances are a few of them.

Impact of OTT on Youth

The target demographic for web series and other online streaming content is the younger generation, particularly teens and people between the ages of 18 and 30. However, the 30- to 50-year-old age range is the target market. The 'binge-watch' tactic is catered to by these online video streaming services.

- 1. Binge-Watching:** There are negative consequences of binge-watching web series and other online streaming entertainment on young people. It is believed that binge behaviours are directly linked to unfavourable emotions, body dissatisfaction, academic loss, depressive symptoms and low esteem etc. College students' grades suffer as a result of binge-watching, their social lives are neglected, and their schedules are somewhat dictated by the habit. This leads to depression and loneliness in young people as well as a number of other changes in attitude, behaviour, and social life.
- 2. No Censorship:** Censorship is the act of removing or forbidding the publication of any material deemed to be obscene, politically offensive, or a security risk. The fact that there is no censor board to filter and remove the mature and explicit content in a web series, unlike films presented in theatres, is one of the main problems with OTT platforms. Web series are renowned for their freedom to feature stories with graphic sex and nudity, violence, vulgarity, etc. that are avoided in a televised show (sometimes unnecessarily used). Due to the accessibility of mobile devices and the lack of parental supervision, children are able to access this content and watch things that are inappropriate for their age group. Teenagers continue to use these derogatory terms to appear cool among their

friends. One feels the need to get drunk and wild when he feels sad or furious. This association between profanity and human emotions extends beyond just the usage of these substances on a regular basis. The intake of alcohol and tobacco by teenagers and young adults is rising daily and should be carefully explored.

3. **Increasing rate of crimes:** Web series actively praise illegal activity for amusement. Numerous programmes romanticise violent scenes and, whether intentionally or unintentionally, promote criminal activity. The number of crimes stemming from these online series are increasing daily. The youth who are the future of our nation are following dangerous pathways and developing into threats themselves as a result of these shows' new ideas and methods for committing crimes.
4. **Moving away from study and goals:** Teenagers are becoming addicted to web series, and they spend the majority of their free time consuming them and becoming fixated on the plots and famous actors who appear in them. Some fans even become newsworthy for the bizarre things they do to get their favourite celebrity's attention.
5. **Escape from reality:** Escapism, also known as escaping from reality, is a defensive reaction that involves the use of fiction as a way to avoid conflicts and issues that arise in everyday life. It develops loneliness and depression and active participation in online forums and debates satisfies social demands making to live in illusion and relationships with friends and family will suffer as a result. The expanding influence of other cultures is another effect of web series. Examples include the effect of gratuitous nastiness and graphic violence in Indian online series. Another problem in today's society is the disrepute of our own Indian culture. People are now preoccupied with foreign cultures as a result of this, which has caused them to reject their own.
6. **Isolation:** The most significant thing that COVID took away from individuals was their social life. It has upset everything we once thought to be normal and turned our lives on their head. Weekends used to be for hanging out with friends, relaxing, and having fun—basically, weekends were one big party. Up until a few days ago, working, eating, and working some more had become the new normal for those who were cooped up in their houses. It led to a sharp rise in screen time, due to work or watching TV series/movies and resulted in isolation from family and friends.
7. **Wastage of money:** Today, there are several online streaming services, including Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hotstar, Hulu, MX Player, and others. Additionally, we must routinely and separately pay for each of them in order to watch the information and considered as a status symbol.

Advantages of the OTT platform

Due to the following properties, it is advantageous for young people's educational needs:

1. **Convenience:** OTT systems give users the freedom to access content on their preferred devices whenever and wherever they want.
2. **Variety of content:** OTT services include a tonne of films, TV shows, live events, and original content
3. **Cost-effective:** OTT services usually cost less to subscribe to than traditional cable or satellite television.
4. **Accessibility:** OTT services enable for accessing content from several countries regardless of location.
5. **Flexibility:** OTT platforms allow users to pause, fast-forward, or rewind content in addition to save it for later viewing.

Disadvantages of the OTT platform

1. **Internet Connectivity:** OTT systems need a reliable and quick internet connection to function properly. It may be difficult for users to watch their preferred content due to buffering or excessive loading times if they are using the improper internet access area.
2. **Subscription Costs:** Even though OTT platforms frequently cost less than traditional cable or satellite TV subscriptions, costs can rise if customers sign up for many providers. This can be a problem for youth with limited funds.
3. **Sexual Content:** Some OTT platforms feature sexual content and the usage of derogatory terms, which has an indirect impact on youth upbringing.
4. **Data Privacy:** On OTT platforms, some consumers can worry about their privacy because these services track their viewing patterns and preferences. Users who are concerned about their privacy may find it bothersome that their information may be sold to third parties or used for targeted advertising.

Conclusion

Web series and online streaming content on OTT platforms have been shown to have a significant impact on the young people in India. Young people's interest is piqued by the web series content available on online platforms. The violent, sexual, and abusive content on OTT platforms has an adverse psychological impact on Indian children. Low levels of anger, aggression, anxiety, and melancholy are seen in the children. If it gets out of control, it will seriously affect the youth's mental health. Contrarily, education OTTs are changing the way education is delivered by boosting learning standards and better equipping students for a knowledge-driven society. The fact that millions of students are flocked to Education OTT for valid reasons suggests that online education is here to stay. OTT platforms are therefore necessary, but they must be properly monitored and managed.