

User Perspectives on Over-The-Top (OTT) Platforms in Kashmir: A Quantitative Analysis

Manzoor Ahmad Dar, Ranbir Singh, Balbir Kumar



Abstract: *Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms are gaining popularity in Kashmir, with Netflix emerging as the most preferred platform. The majority of respondents spend 1-2 hours daily on OTT platforms, with movies being the most preferred content type. The primary motivation for watching content on OTT platforms is its simplicity of use, with Urdu being the most chosen language. The study also found that OTT applications are changing television and movie-watching habits in Kashmir, and that a substantial proportion of users believe that these platforms are changing the Indian television and film industry. Respondents are optimistic about the future of OTT platforms in Kashmir, citing factors such as smartphone penetration, digital quality, cost-effectiveness, and international collaboration. This research provides valuable insights for industry stakeholders, content creators, and policymakers seeking to understand user preferences and capitalize on the growing digital entertainment market in Kashmir. The study offers important implications for the future development of OTT platforms and media consumption patterns in the region.*

Keywords: *Over-the-Top (OTT) Platforms, Kashmir, User Perspectives, Media Consumption, Content Preferences*

I. INTRODUCTION

The advent of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms has significantly transformed the landscape of media consumption, revolutionizing the way people across the globe access and enjoy entertainment content. These digital streaming platforms have emerged as a disruptive force in the entertainment industry, offering users unparalleled convenience and flexibility to access a vast array of movies, TV shows, web series, documentaries, and live events on-demand. Over the past decade, the proliferation of high-speed internet connectivity, the widespread adoption of smartphones, and the increasing availability of affordable data plans have propelled the rapid growth of OTT platforms, ushering in a new era of content consumption.

Among the regions embracing this digital transformation is Kashmir, a picturesque and culturally rich region situated in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent.

Nestled amidst the stunning Himalayan landscapes, Kashmir has a unique sociocultural fabric and has been historically renowned for its art, literature, and traditional forms of entertainment. With advancements in digital technology and changing user preferences, the region has witnessed a growing adoption of OTT platforms as a primary medium for entertainment consumption. This research paper seeks to explore and analyse the user perspectives on Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms in Kashmir through a comprehensive quantitative analysis.

The traditional mode of television broadcasting and movie screenings has undergone a significant paradigm shift with the rise of OTT platforms. Unlike conventional cable and satellite television, OTT platforms utilize the internet to deliver content directly to users, allowing them to access content at their convenience, irrespective of time and location. The popularity of OTT platforms stems from their diverse content offerings, personalized recommendations, and the ability to watch content on multiple devices, including smartphones, tablets, smart TVs, and laptops.

In the context of Kashmir, where access to traditional entertainment mediums may have been limited due to geographic challenges and political unrest, OTT platforms have emerged as a viable alternative for users to indulge in a wide range of entertainment content. The region's population, especially the youth, has embraced the digital revolution, leveraging smartphones and high-speed internet connections to explore the world of entertainment on OTT platforms. Furthermore, the multilingual and multicultural nature of Kashmir has led to a demand for diverse content in different languages, making OTT platforms a valuable resource for content diversity and accessibility.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The advent of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms has transformed the media landscape worldwide, offering users an unprecedented level of convenience and flexibility in accessing entertainment content. These platforms have gained immense popularity, allowing users to stream movies, TV shows, web series, and documentaries on-demand through internet-connected devices. As the popularity of OTT platforms continues to grow, researchers have taken an interest in understanding user perspectives and behaviours to inform content curation, platform design, and industry strategies. This literature review examines relevant studies and research on user perspectives on OTT platforms, with a specific focus on the region of Kashmir, where OTT adoption is on the rise.

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OTT platforms have experienced explosive growth globally. Studies have found that OTT adoption is influenced by factors such as internet penetration, smartphone ownership, and the availability of compelling content (Schwartz, 2017, [9]). In India, the adoption of OTT platforms has witnessed significant growth due to affordable data plans, increased smartphone penetration, and diverse content offerings (Arora & Sabharwal, 2019, [1][11][14][15]). Users in India appreciate the freedom to consume content at their convenience, leading to a shift away from traditional television viewing (Chauhan et al., 2019, [2]). As OTT platforms continue to gain traction worldwide, understanding user perspectives becomes crucial to catering to diverse preferences and sustaining growth.

In India, OTT platforms have witnessed rapid growth and have become an integral part of the media landscape (Kapoor & Nimbalkar, 2019, [3]). A study on the preferences of OTT platforms in India found that users in different regions have distinct content preferences and language choices (Arora & Sabharwal, 2019, [1]). The study revealed that regional content plays a crucial role in attracting and retaining users in specific geographic areas.

The region of Kashmir, with its unique sociocultural and geopolitical context, presents an interesting case for the adoption and use of OTT platforms. In a study examining internet usage patterns in Kashmir, it was found that the region has witnessed increased internet penetration, with a significant number of users accessing the internet via smartphones (Koul & Mir, 2018, [4]). This trend suggests the potential for the adoption of OTT platforms, as smartphones are the primary devices for accessing such content.

As Kashmir is a multilingual region with diverse cultural influences, understanding content consumption patterns becomes essential to curate relevant and appealing content on OTT platforms. A study on content consumption in India found that regional content, including content in regional languages, is gaining popularity (Shrivastava et al., 2020, [10]). This finding underscores the significance of offering regional content on OTT platforms in Kashmir to cater to the preferences of the local population.

As OTT platforms continue to gain prominence, there is a growing concern about their impact on traditional media, such as television and cinema. A study on the impact of OTT platforms in India found that the availability of OTT content leads to a reduction in television viewership (Mangal & Yadav, 2020, [5]). However, this impact is not uniform across all regions, as regional content on OTT platforms may complement rather than compete with traditional media.

Understanding user perspectives on OTT platforms is essential for identifying factors that drive adoption and usage. Research on user preferences for OTT content found that users appreciate the freedom to choose what, when, and how they watch (Manvi & Shivalingaiah, 2019, [6]). Moreover, ease of use and personalized content recommendations were identified as crucial factors contributing to user satisfaction and loyalty (Prasad & Ranjitha, 2020, [8]). Such insights are invaluable for OTT platforms looking to enhance user experiences and improve customer retention. While OTT platforms have gained popularity globally, there are challenges and limitations to consider. Studies have highlighted issues related to piracy, data privacy, and digital literacy (Patil & Kamble, 2021, [7]). Additionally, the impact

of OTT platforms on local content production and employment opportunities in the entertainment industry requires further investigation.

The literature reviewed highlights the global growth of OTT platforms and the factors influencing their adoption. In the context of India, the preferences for regional content and the impact on traditional media are noteworthy. For regions like Kashmir, where digital connectivity is expanding, the adoption of OTT platforms presents opportunities and challenges. Understanding user perspectives and content consumption patterns is essential to tailor content offerings to the preferences of Kashmiri viewers. This quantitative analysis seeks to bridge the existing gaps in the literature by providing valuable insights into user perspectives on OTT platforms in Kashmir. By analysing user preferences, content choices, and the impact on traditional media, this research aims to contribute to the broader understanding of media consumption patterns in the region and offer recommendations for content curation and platform development.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this research is to delve into the user perspectives on OTT platforms in Kashmir using a quantitative approach. The study focuses on four key objectives:

- To evaluate the adoption and usage patterns of OTT platforms among Kashmiri users.
- To identify the most popular content genres and languages preferred by users.
- To analyse the challenges faced by OTT platform users in the region.
- To assess the impact of OTT platforms on traditional media consumption in Kashmir.

A. Significance of the Study:

The findings of this research hold considerable significance for various stakeholders within the media and entertainment industry. Understanding user perspectives and preferences is crucial for OTT platform providers, content creators, and distributors to curate content that resonates with the diverse Kashmiri audience. Moreover, insights into the impact of OTT platforms on traditional media consumption can inform media houses and broadcasters about evolving consumer behaviours, aiding them in adapting their strategies accordingly.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The research design for this study employs a cross-sectional quantitative approach. This approach allows for the collection of data from a diverse sample of OTT platform users in Kashmir, enabling a comprehensive analysis of user perspectives. The quantitative method involves structured data collection, statistical analysis, and numerical interpretation, offering precise and measurable results to address the research objectives effectively.



B. Sampling

a. Population:

The population for this study comprises users of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms in the region of Kashmir. As the study aims to explore user perspectives in this specific demographic, the population is defined as individuals aged 18 years and above who actively use OTT platforms for content consumption.

b. Sample Size:

The sample size is determined to ensure adequate representation of the population and sufficient statistical power for reliable analysis. A sample size of 130 respondents is deemed appropriate for this study, considering the available resources and time constraints.

c. Sampling Technique:

A combination of convenience and stratified random sampling techniques will be employed. The researchers accessed respondents through online platforms, social media groups, and in-person contacts, ensuring a diverse sample from various geographic locations and demographic backgrounds.

C. Data Collection:

a. Questionnaire Design:

Data from the individuals was gathered using a standardised questionnaire. Closed-ended questions and Likert-scale items were included in the survey, providing measurable replies and assuring consistency in data collecting. The questions were developed to align with the research objectives, covering areas such as OTT platform preferences, content consumption patterns, reasons for usage, and impact on traditional media consumption.

b. Pilot Testing:

Before the main data collection, a pilot test was conducted on a small group of respondents to assess the clarity, relevance, and effectiveness of the questionnaire. Necessary adjustments were made based on feedback received to ensure the questionnaire's validity and reliability.

c. Ethical Considerations:

This study was adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring participant confidentiality, informed consent, and voluntary participation. The research findings were presented in aggregate form to maintain the anonymity of participants.

d. Data Collection Process:

Data collection was conducted through both online and offline methods. For online data collection, the structured questionnaire was distributed via email, social media, and relevant online platforms. For offline data collection, the researchers conducted face-to-face surveys in various colleges and universities of the valley.

The quantitative research methodology employed in this study provided comprehensive insights into user perspectives on OTT platforms in Kashmir. Through structured data collection and statistical analysis, the study uncovered prevailing trends and preferences among OTT platform users, offering valuable implications for industry stakeholders, content creators, and policymakers in the region.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The advent of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms has revolutionized the entertainment industry, providing users with easy access to a plethora of content on demand. This research paper delved into the user perspectives on OTT platforms in Kashmir through a quantitative analysis of the data collected from a survey. The study focuses on various aspects such as gender distribution, preferred OTT platforms, time spent on OTT, preferred content, language preferences, reasons for using OTT, and the impact of OTT on television and film industry in India. Additionally, the study examines the future potential of OTT platforms in Kashmir based on user opinions.

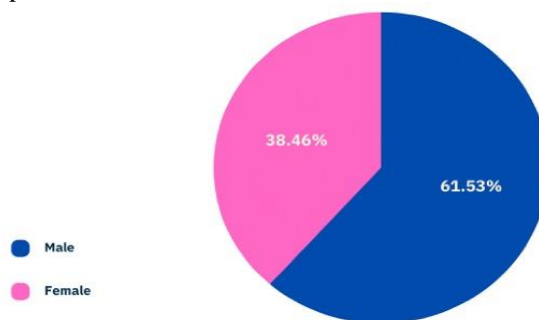


Figure 1: Gender Distribution

Out of the 130 participants surveyed, 80 were male and 50 were female. This indicates a slightly higher representation of males in the study, which is consistent with broader trends in digital media consumption, where male users have historically dominated the viewership.

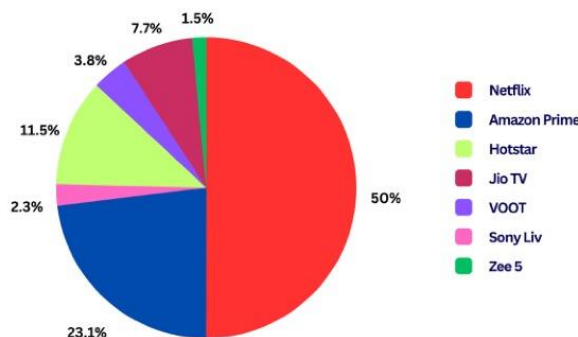


Figure 2: Preferred OTT Platforms

The participants were asked about their most preferred OTT platforms from a list of options. The results are as follows:

Netflix: Netflix emerged as the most favoured OTT platform, with 65 respondents (50% of the total participants) selecting it. The popularity of Netflix can be attributed to its vast and diverse content library, including a wide range of international movies, TV shows, and original series.

Amazon Prime: Amazon Prime ranked second, with 30 respondents (23% of the total participants) favouring it. Amazon Prime's extensive collection of movies, web series, and exclusive content, along with additional benefits like free shipping on Amazon products, might have contributed to its popularity.



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Hotstar: Hotstar, known for live sports streaming and popular TV shows, was the choice of 15 respondents (11.5% of the total participants). Its emphasis on sports content and regional programming might have appealed to the users in Kashmir.

Jio TV, VOOT, Sony Liv, Zee 5: These platforms received relatively lower preference, with 10, 5, 3, and 2 respondents, respectively. Jio TV's inclusion of live TV channels and VOOT's focus on reality shows and regional content might have contributed to their moderate popularity. Sony Liv and Zee 5's limited content offerings may have affected their rankings.

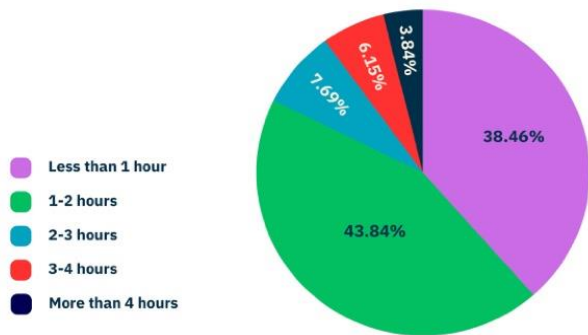


Figure 3: Time Spent on OTT

Participants were asked about the amount of time they spend watching content on OTT platforms daily. The responses were as follows:

Less than one hour: 50 respondents (38.5% of the total participants) indicated spending less than one hour on OTT daily.

1-2 hours: 57 respondents (44% of the total participants) reported spending 1-2 hours daily on OTT.

2-3 hours: 10 respondents (7.7% of the total participants) stated spending 2-3 hours daily on OTT.

3-4 hours: 8 respondents (6.2% of the total participants) mentioned spending 3-4 hours daily on OTT.

More than 4 hours: 5 respondents (3.8% of the total participants) reported spending more than 4 hours daily on OTT.

The data indicates that the majority of participants spend around 1-2 hours daily on OTT, showcasing the platform's popularity as a source of entertainment.

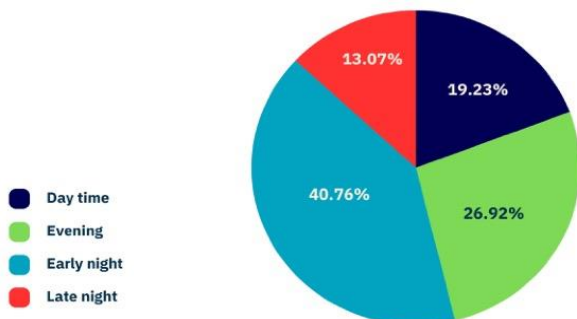


Figure 4: Preferred Time for Watching Content on OTT

Participants were asked to specify their preferred time for watching content on OTT platforms. The results were as follows:

Daytime: 25 respondents (19.2% of the total participants) preferred watching content during the daytime.

Evening: 35 respondents (26.9% of the total participants) indicated their preference for the evening as the viewing time.

Early Night: 53 respondents (40.8% of the total participants) favored early night as their preferred viewing time.

Late Night: 17 respondents (13.1% of the total participants) mentioned late night as their preferred time to consume content on OTT platforms.

The data shows that early night is the most preferred time for OTT content consumption among the respondents.

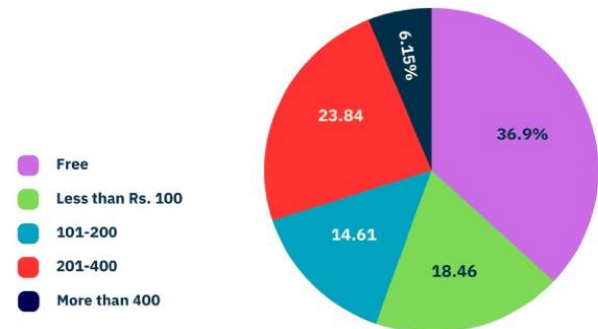


Figure 5: Monthly Expenditure for Watching Content on OTT

Participants were asked about their monthly expenditure on OTT platforms. The responses were as follows:

Free: 48 respondents (36.9% of the total participants) reported using free OTT platforms.

Less than 100 Rupees: 24 respondents (18.5% of the total participants) stated spending less than 100 Rupees monthly on OTT.

101 to 200: 19 respondents (14.6% of the total participants) indicated spending between 101 to 200 Rupees monthly on OTT.

201 to 400: 31 respondents (23.8% of the total participants) mentioned spending between 201 to 400 Rupees monthly on OTT.

More than 400: 8 respondents (6.2% of the total participants) reported spending more than 400 Rupees monthly on OTT.

The data reveals that a significant number of participants use free OTT platforms or have a modest monthly expenditure, which suggests cost-consciousness among users.

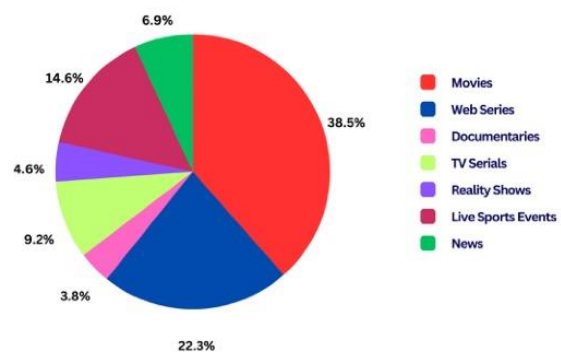


Figure 6: Preferred Content on OTT

Participants were asked about their preferred content on OTT platforms. The responses were as follows:

Movies: 50 respondents (38.5% of the total participants) favored movies as their preferred content on OTT.

Web Series: 29 respondents (22.3% of the total participants) indicated web series as their preferred content.

Documentaries: 5 respondents (3.8% of the total participants) preferred documentaries.

TV Serials: 12 respondents (9.2% of the total participants) favored TV serials.

Reality Shows: 6 respondents (4.6% of the total participants) indicated a preference for reality shows.

Live Sports Events: 19 respondents (14.6% of the total participants) preferred live sports events.

News: 9 respondents (6.9% of the total participants) indicated news as their preferred content on OTT.

The data suggests that movies and web series are the most preferred content choices among the participants.

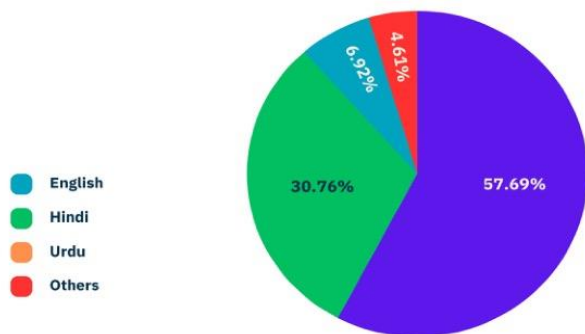


Figure 7: Preferred Language on OTT

Participants were asked about their preferred language on OTT platforms. The responses were as:

English: 9 respondents (6.9% of the total participants) favoured English content on OTT.

Hindi: 40 respondents (30.8% of the total participants) preferred Hindi content.

Urdu: 75 respondents (57.7% of the total participants) indicated Urdu as their preferred language on OTT.

Others: 6 respondents (4.6% of the total participants) preferred other languages.

The data indicates that Urdu is the most preferred language for content consumption on OTT platforms in Kashmir.

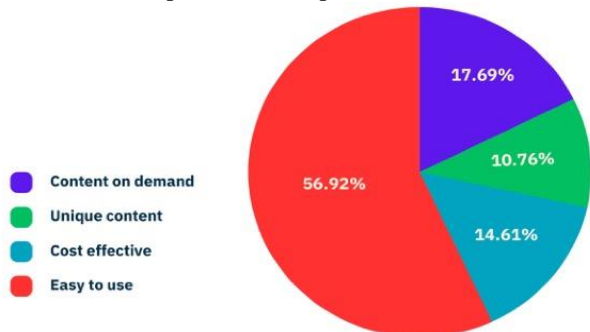


Figure 8: Reasons for Watching Content on OTT

Participants were asked about the reasons behind their preference for OTT platforms. The responses were as follows:

Content on Demand: 23 respondents (17.7% of the total participants) cited the availability of content on demand as their primary reason for using OTT platforms.

Unique Content: 14 respondents (10.8% of the total participants) indicated that unique and exclusive content attracted them to OTT platforms.

Cost-Effective: 19 respondents (14.6% of the total participants) mentioned that cost-effectiveness was a major factor influencing their choice of OTT platforms.

Easy to Use: 74 respondents (56.9% of the total participants) stated that the ease of use and user-friendly interfaces of OTT platforms were the reasons behind their preference.

The data highlights that ease of use is the most significant factor attracting users to OTT platforms.

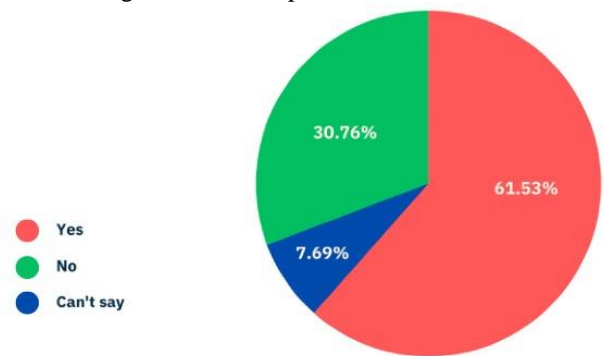


Figure 9: Impact of OTT on Television and Film Industry in India

Participants were asked about their views on whether OTT applications were changing their television and movie watching habits. The responses were as follows:

Yes: 80 respondents (61.5% of the total participants) believed that OTT applications were changing their television and movie watching habits.

No: 40 respondents (30.8% of the total participants) did not perceive any change in their habits due to OTT applications.

Can't say: 10 respondents (7.7% of the total participants) were unsure about the impact of OTT on their viewing habits.

The data indicates that the majority of respondents acknowledge the transformative influence of OTT platforms on their television and movie watching habits.

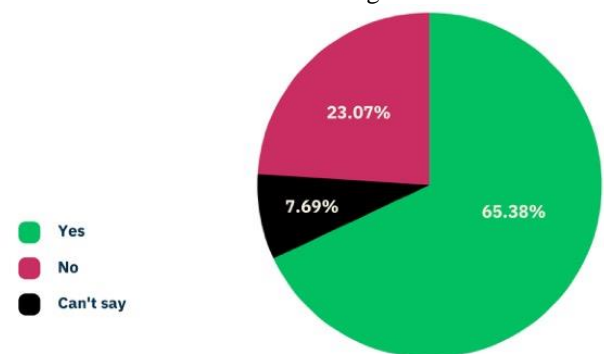


Figure 10: Impact of OTT on the Indian Television and Film Industry

Participants were asked about their opinions on whether OTT applications were changing the Indian television and film industry. The responses were as follows:

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Yes: 85 respondents (65.4% of the total participants) believed that OTT applications were changing the Indian television and film industry.

No: 15 respondents (11.5% of the total participants) did not perceive any significant change in the industry due to OTT applications.

Can't say: 30 respondents (23.1% of the total participants) were unsure about the impact of OTT on the Indian television and film industry.

The data suggests that the majority of respondents believe that OTT platforms have a transformative effect on the Indian television and film industry.

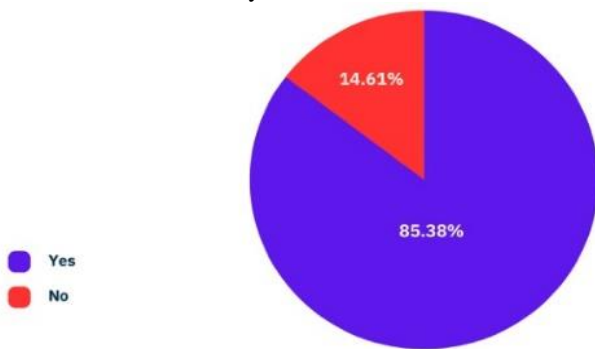


Figure 11: Future Potential of OTT Platforms in Kashmir

Participants were asked about their views on whether OTT platforms have a future in Kashmir. The responses were as follows:

Yes: 111 respondents (85.4% of the total participants) were optimistic about the future potential of OTT platforms in Kashmir.

No: 19 respondents (14.6% of the total participants) were sceptical about the future of OTT platforms in the region.

Those who answered 'Yes' were further asked to define the reasons behind their belief:

Smartphone Penetration: 70 respondents (63% of respondents who answered 'Yes') cited the widespread smartphone usage in Kashmir as a reason for the future potential of OTT platforms. The increasing availability and affordability of smartphones have facilitated access to OTT content.

Digital Quality: 20 respondents (18% of respondents who answered 'Yes') emphasized the improvement in digital quality as a reason for the future growth of OTT platforms. As digital infrastructure continues to improve, the streaming experience is becoming more seamless and enjoyable.

Cost-Effective: 14 respondents (12.6% of respondents who answered 'Yes') highlighted the cost-effectiveness of OTT platforms as a driving factor for their prospects in Kashmir. OTT subscriptions often offer a more affordable alternative to traditional cable or satellite TV packages.

International Collaboration: 7 respondents (6.3% of respondents who answered 'Yes') believed that international collaborations and partnerships in the entertainment industry would boost the growth of OTT platforms in Kashmir.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into user perspectives on Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms in Kashmir, based on a quantitative analysis of data collected

from a diverse sample of respondents. The findings shed light on the prevailing trends and preferences among OTT platform users in the region, offering significant implications for industry stakeholders, content creators, and policymakers.

The study reveals that among the various OTT platforms, Netflix stands out as the most preferred platform among users in Kashmir. Amazon Prime and Hotstar also enjoy considerable popularity. The results indicate that OTT platforms have successfully penetrated the market in Kashmir, with Netflix emerging as the leading choice among users.

Regarding content consumption patterns, the majority of respondents spend 1-2 hours daily watching content on OTT platforms, signifying significant engagement with these services. Additionally, a notable proportion of users spend less than one hour per day, indicating that OTT platforms cater to individuals with varying time availability. However, a smaller percentage of respondents watch content for 2-3 hours daily or more, suggesting that some users are highly invested in digital content consumption.

The study also reveals insights into users' preferred time for content consumption, with the early night emerging as the most preferred time, followed by evening and daytime. Late night is the least preferred time, suggesting that users prefer to consume content during their leisure hours and unwind with digital entertainment.

The findings on expenditure patterns show that a significant proportion of users access OTT platforms for free, possibly through trial offers or shared accounts. Among those who spend on OTT services, a majority falls into the 201 to 400 rupees per month spending bracket, indicating a willingness to invest in content consumption. However, only a few users spend more than 400 rupees monthly on OTT platforms.

Movies are the most preferred content type, reflecting the enduring popularity of cinematic experiences among the audience. Web series and live sports events also enjoy significant popularity, while other content types like documentaries, reality shows, and news have relatively lower preferences.

Regarding language preferences, Urdu is the most preferred language on OTT platforms, highlighting the importance of regional language content to cater to the linguistic diversity in Kashmir. Hindi and English follow as the second and third most preferred languages, respectively, while a smaller group of respondents prefers other languages.

The study highlights that the ease of use is the most compelling reason for watching content on OTT platforms, followed by the convenience of on-demand content and cost-effectiveness. The results suggest that users value the user-friendly nature of OTT platforms and the ability to access content at their convenience.

Regarding the impact on traditional media consumption, a significant majority of respondents believe that OTT applications are changing their television and movie-watching habits. However, a notable proportion either does not perceive this impact or is unsure about it, indicating that traditional media still holds relevance for some users.

Moreover, a considerable proportion of users believe that OTT applications are changing the Indian television and film industry, indicating the transformative effect of digital streaming on content production and distribution. Nevertheless, a significant number of respondents remain uncertain about the impact or do not believe that OTT platforms are changing the industry, suggesting the need for further awareness and analysis.

In conclusion, the overwhelming majority of respondents express optimism about the future of OTT platforms in Kashmir. Factors such as smartphone penetration, digital quality, cost-effectiveness, and international collaboration are cited as reasons for this belief. The results indicate a positive outlook for the growth of digital content consumption in the region, offering significant opportunities for content creators, industry stakeholders, and policymakers to capitalize on the potential of OTT platforms in Kashmir.

Overall, this research contributes valuable insights into user perspectives on OTT platforms in Kashmir and offers a foundation for future studies exploring the dynamic media consumption landscape in the region. The findings serve as a valuable resource for industry stakeholders seeking to cater to user preferences and capitalize on the growing digital entertainment market in Kashmir [12][13].

DECLARATION STATEMENT

Funding	No, we did not receive.
Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts of interest to the best of our knowledge.
Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate	No, the article does not require ethical approval and consent to participate with evidence.
Availability of Data and Material	Not relevant.
Authors Contributions	All authors having equal contribution for this article.

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Manzoor Ahmad Dar, a distinguished scholar in Journalism and Mass Communication, currently serves as a Research Scholar at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at IKG Punjab Technical University in Jalandhar, Punjab, India. Holding a Master's degree in Journalism and Mass Communication, Manzoor has made significant strides in his academic journey, culminating in the awarding of his MPhil in 2021. Manzoor has contributed to various scholarly publications, reflecting his expertise and dedication to advancing knowledge in his field. His work not only enriches academic discourse but also aims to foster a more informed and balanced understanding of contentious regional issues through the lens of media studies.



Dr. Ranbir Singh, an accomplished academic with an MA and NET in Journalism and Mass Communication, has been awarded a PhD in the same field. Currently, he serves as the Professor and Head of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at IKG Punjab Technical University in Jalandhar, Punjab, India. With extensive expertise in media studies, Dr. Singh has significantly contributed to academic research and education. His leadership in the department underscores his commitment to advancing the field and mentoring the next generation of journalists and communicators.



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