

**OVER-THE-TOP (OTT) NETWORKS' INFLUENCE ON SHARED CULTURAL
MEMORY**

by

Michael Jelani Akil Brown

Liberty University

A Dissertation Proposal Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

School of Communication and the Arts

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Abstract

The digital landscape underwent a profound transformation in the Over-The-Top (OTT) network era, significantly altering media consumption. This study delved into the intricate and multifaceted impact of OTT networks on society, communication theory, and socio-cultural traditions, specifically emphasizing their influence on shared cultural memory. The research was rooted in a robust methodology that combined a Qualtrics online survey disseminated across various social media platforms and in-depth interviews with 25 carefully selected participants. This rigorous approach aimed to shed light on the profound influence of OTT networks on shared cultural memory while investigating how these platforms shaped perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and values. The findings revealed the ascendant role of OTT networks in shaping shared cultural memory, exerting their influence on individual and collective memories, and fundamentally altering conventional paradigms of media communication. Within this landscape, the pivotal significance of content quality, viewer preferences, and the overarching theme of accessibility emerged as driving forces behind the widespread adoption of OTT services. This study shed light on how OTT networks revolutionized contemporary media consumption, impacted communication theory, and reshaped socio-cultural traditions. It underscored the need for ongoing research to fully grasp the profound implications of this digital revolution in a rapidly evolving technological landscape. OTT networks have revolutionized media consumption and played a pivotal role in shaping society's collective memory in the digital era.

Keywords: Over-the-top (OTT) networks, Media consumption, Shared cultural memory, Communication theory

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Acknowledgements

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to Dave Gross and Rob Wallace for providing me with the incredible opportunity to work for Lax Sports Network, Lacrosse TV, and For the Fans OTT streaming services. During my time with these platforms, I formulated my research questions and gained invaluable experience working within an OTT Network. I truly cherished the experience and am eager to utilize my findings to enhance their streaming services even further.

To Briggit Green, Kim Somerville, Ashley Acevedo, and Yedydeyah Allen, I sincerely appreciate your unwavering support and understanding as I navigated through school and my academic projects. Your patience and encouragement have been a source of immense strength for me.

To my sister, niece, nephew, and cousins, thank you for supporting me throughout this journey. Your love and encouragement have meant everything to me.

A special thank you to my feline companions, Jupiter and Zeus, for their understanding and patience as I worked diligently on my projects. Your presence brought comfort and joy during the writing process.

I am deeply grateful to Carey L. Martin, Ph. D., Committee Member, and Robert K. Mott, Ph. D., Online Program Chair, for their invaluable insights and feedback on my work. Your guidance has been instrumental in shaping my research and academic endeavors.

Lastly, I extend my utmost gratitude to Carol E. Hepburn, Ph.D., Committee Chair, for her unwavering support, guidance, and patience throughout this journey. Your mentorship has been transformative, and I am incredibly grateful for your belief in me every step of the way. Thank you for being a guiding light in my academic journey.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The development of the internet has transformed most traditional business models (Cho & Arthurs, 2018). The transformation has led to an era where marketing approaches by companies to promote their products and services differ by media platform (Meyer, 2018). It is worth noting that the rapid growth in technology, especially the internet, has led to changes in almost every sector. Communicating over a large geographical region is possible since people can easily access the content via their different internet-enabled devices. Levin and Mamlok (2021) explain that a close look at publishing, marketing, music, and videos reveals that the internet has transformed how people access and share information. The state of most media platforms and channels in the past was, to a large extent, rigid, such that sharing information was determined strictly by certain factors such as access to the media platforms such as television and radio (Farooq & Raju, 2019). However, the internet has enhanced the velocity with which information passes from the sources to the target audiences.

Regarding the media, the internet has made it possible to share information worldwide in seconds. One of the limitations was that for one to watch traditional television, one had to be home. That is because most television channels do not offer online platforms to allow their viewers to access the programs using their portable devices (Farooq et al., 2018). With over-the-top (OTT) services such as Netflix and Amazon, one can easily access content using any internet-enabled device. It is interesting to note that traditional television channels are adopting online-based systems. That helps them compete with the OTT networks (Farooq et al., 2018). OTT networks have managed to penetrate the media sector by allowing clients to access the content at their will.

Indeed, although the processes have been ongoing for a long time, the actions over the last century have been unusually disruptive. TV services have progressed from free-to-air broadcast TV to internet protocol television and smart TVs over the previous five decades (Pandey et al., 2019). Historically, broadcasters and free-to-air TV owned the entire television sector, then cable TV emerged to offer services through a satellite or a cable network. Internet service providers began offering bundled TV services with telephone and internet access services as time progressed. Smart TV, which comprises internet integration with modern television sets, emerged after integrating Web 2.0 features in modern TV sets. These TVs focus more on on-demand streaming media, the internet, OTTs, and interactive media and less on traditional broadcasts.

The latest and most disruptive advancement in information and communication technology has been OTT, which has drastically changed the traditional way of life and reliance on cable. OTT (Over-The-Top) refers to the delivery of audio, video, and other media content over the Internet without the involvement of a traditional cable or satellite TV provider directly to viewers (Hutchins et al., 2019). The increased use of smartphones and the availability of wireless high-speed internet has propelled OTT services to new heights, which operate over portable and fixed grids of binding operators (Minehane, 2018). Expressly, amidst globalization, the swift inflow of global telecommunications and the inactivity of free-to-air broadcast generated a vacuum. The OTT applications engaged with consumers to personalize their offerings and were micro-targeted, leveraging the media's impending crumbling (Menon, 2022).

The present technology and telecommunication revolution, commonly known as big tech, the app economy, or the OTT services, commenced due to two significant events. The August 1995 Netscape Initial Public Offering that gave the nonprofit startup tech firm a valuation of \$2.9

billion triggered the dot-com boom (Minehane, 2018). This was the first event to get the mass market to embrace the Internet and World Wide Web. The development led to the first-ever OTT live stream in 1995: a Major League Baseball game hosted by the Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (Zambelli, 2013). The event marked one of the significant strides toward developing OTT services.

Soon after the 1995 events, companies like Apple and Microsoft strived to develop the best OTT streaming technology. Indeed, by the early 21st century, technology had begun going mainstream with streaming services from companies like Amazon and Netflix. The increase in the number of companies indicates that OTT services are causing intense pressure on native providers like television broadcasters and telecommunication operators (Minehane, 2018). Internet-based services give the audience an alternative way to access shows and movies instead of expensive and restrictive satellite options. Over time, OTT has become more popular, especially with the market's discovery of the accessibility of OTTs content and the flourishing of different OTT types of providers (Fitzgerald, 2019). Compared to the users of the largest global telecom providers like Verizon, AT&T, Vodafone, and Telefonica combined, the worldwide users of social media giants like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram have gained more subscribers (Minehane, 2018). Hence, the innovative OTT services reflect a massive and unusually rapid disruption in the international industrial structure and economic activities, a revolution that is likely to continue in the future.

It is interesting to consider the evolution of television and its impact on shared cultural experiences, particularly in the context of the rise of OTT platforms. In the past, television was organized on a schedule, with programs airing at specific times. Due to the limitations of communication channels, most people would discuss the contents of these programs the

following day. This communication lag meant that these channels' slow nature shaped shared cultural memories. Despite this, television significantly influenced shared cultural values, including vocabulary, fashion, and music. However, the advent of OTT platforms has changed how we consume and share media, allowing instant communication and access to content regardless of geographical distance. This means that people can instantly share their thoughts and experiences on videos, movies, and even fashion, potentially creating more fluid and rapidly evolving shared cultural memories. The impact of television on shared culture is likely to have become with the advent of OTT platforms and the increased speed of communication they facilitate.

Over-The-Top (OTT)

Over-the-top (OTT) describes streaming applications or services offered directly to customers through the internet, evading satellite, cable, and traditional broadcast platforms. OTT entails all the online services that have the potential to disrupt native telecommunication services like message and voice telephony services (Minehane, 2018). These services include instant messaging, voice-over IP, and video and audio streaming services. As a result, OTT comprised a significant part of the sector and its provisions. Despite a clear definition of these services, the International Telecommunication Union developed one of OTT's most used and accepted definitions. According to the organization, OTT refers to an application delivered and accessed by the audience through the public internet that may serve as a direct functional or technical substitute for native international telecommunication services (International Telecommunication Union, 2019). OTT service delivers video, audio, and other media over the internet, eradicating the need for business and technological affiliations with network operators offering such services. OTT has gained an increase in popularity because of its accessibility. For the

consumers to access content using this application, they only need a connected device that supports browsers or apps and high-speed internet. As a result, customers can access OTT applications through mobile devices, personal computers, and connected TV devices. Altogether, OTT entails streaming services and applications through the internet, making it possible for consumers to watch using mobile devices, computers, and TVs.

TV Experiences and Cultural Memories

Television remains one of the most influential unifying cultural factors globally despite the developments into a micro-culture era with diverse niche markets. Traditional television shows gave all the viewers similar content that ranged from real-time coverage, educational presentations, entertainment, and speculative workplace discussions (Gripsrud, 2002). Indeed, televised coverage gave the audience access to intense human experiences, triggered viewers' opinions, and educated the audience on important life lessons. Cable programs influence the viewers' beliefs, understanding, and all the other aspects of culture, producing shared cultural memories. As a top influencing tool, television has replaced typical human interactions and other information acquisition methods, such as face-to-face conversations (Mak & Mak, 2020). These advancements have made many people turn to television to acquire knowledge and historical facts other than native transmission methods. Similarly, digital television is an influential producer of cultural memory. Based on the evidence, streaming media enhances audience engagement and dark tourism to regions linked with the end and misfortune in ancient fiction (Gambarato et al., 2021). These shows' production comprises documentaries, podcasts, and historical facts, which enhance the ties with the past. Indeed, the OTT media illustrates modern changing aspects of memory flow and the modeling of collective memory. TV, since the 1990s,

has been linked with nostalgia, and retrospection, which are significant streaming media resources.

The audience of these platforms depends not only on individual inclinations but also on streaming services' edge and wrapping of preferences tailor-made by algorithms (Nieborg et al., 2019). The interactional procedures increase the changing aspects of what the audience remembers and forgets. Unlike broadcast TV, OTTs select the desired films and series, a concept that influences the formation of cultural memory. Other than crystalizing the shared memories, cultural memories enhance an individual understanding of historical norms and values and create a form of shared identity. Besides, cultural memories also communicate the shared identity across generations and individuals rely on this knowledge to prevent the occurrence of the same problems again in society (Assmann, 2020). The memories promote cultural adaptation and allow the adoption of new norms. Thus, it is vital to explore the disruptive effects of streaming media on cultural memories globally and across different age group.

Loss of Appointment Viewing

Appointment viewing refers to watching TV shows or other media content at a specific time and day, as determined by the broadcaster or network (Roca-Sales, 2009). With the rise of OTT networks (over-the-top networks), such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime, there has been a shift away from appointment viewing towards on-demand streaming, where users can access and watch content whenever they choose (Matrix, 2014). This shift away from appointment viewing has had several consequences for society. Some of the problems that could arise due to the loss of appointment viewing include:

- Fragmentation of audiences: With the ability to watch content on their schedule rather than at a specific time and day, viewers may be more likely to watch shows and movies

alone or in smaller groups rather than as a larger community (Conlin et al., 2016). This could lead to a fragmentation of audiences and a reduction in the shared viewing experiences that were once common with appointment viewing.

- **Decreased sense of community:** Along with the fragmentation of audiences, the shift away from appointment viewing may also lead to a reduced sense of community among viewers. With appointment viewing, people could discuss and analyze shows and movies with friends and family in the days following an airing (Rubin, 1981). With this shared viewing experience, people may be more likely to engage in these types of discussions and may feel more connected to others.
- **Changes in advertising and revenue models:** Appointment viewing was traditionally supported by advertising, with commercials airing during TV shows and movies. With the shift to on-demand streaming, the traditional advertising model may be less effective, leading to changes in how advertisers reach and target consumers (Schmitt et al., 2003). This could also impact the revenue models of broadcasters and networks, as they may need to find new ways to monetize their content.
- **Potential loss of cultural touchstones:** Appointment viewing has often been a way for people to come together and share the collective experience of watching a TV show or movie. With the shift to on-demand streaming, these cultural touchstones may be lost, as people are more likely to watch content on their schedule rather than at the same time as others (McCarty & Shrum, 1993).

The loss of appointment viewing may impact our shared cultural memory, as it can change how we consume and experience media content. With appointment viewing, people were more likely to watch shows and movies simultaneously and share the collective

experience of viewing them. This could lead to a shared cultural memory of these events, as people could discuss and analyze them with friends and family members in the days following an airing (Holbert et al., 2003).

With the shift to on-demand streaming, this shared cultural memory may be lost, as people are more likely to watch shows and movies on their schedule rather than at the same time as others. This could lead to a fragmentation of audiences and a reduction in the shared viewing experiences that were once common with appointment viewing (Rubin, 1981). As a result, people may be less likely to engage in discussions and media content analysis with others, decreasing their shared cultural memory (O'Shea, 1989).

In addition, the loss of appointment viewing may also impact the cultural significance and impact of certain TV shows and movies. For example, appointment viewing may have contributed to the development of "watercooler" shows, a widespread cultural phenomenon that people would discuss and analyze with their friends and colleagues the day after an airing (Ruddick, 2017). With this shared viewing experience, it may be easier for shows and movies to achieve this cultural significance and impact.

The shift away from appointment viewing may impact the social construction of reality as it changes how people consume and experience media content (LaBine, 2016). With appointment viewing, people were more likely to watch shows and movies simultaneously and share the collective experience of viewing them. This could lead to a shared understanding and interpretation of the content, as people could discuss and analyze it with friends and family members in the days following an airing.

The rise of the internet and streaming platforms such as Amazon Video, Netflix, and network streaming has dramatically impacted how we consume media and contribute to the

shift in how we talk about and share our favorite shows and movies. In the past, people would gather around the "water cooler" to discuss the latest episode of their favorite show (Ruddick, 2017). However, with the ability to watch on-demand and at our own pace, it is becoming more common for people to be at different points in a series or to watch a show on a different platform. This can make it challenging to have a shared viewing experience and lead to feelings of disconnection if they have yet to watch the latest episode (O'Shea, 1989). However, the desire for shared experiences and connection through shared interests and stories remains strong, and people continue to seek ways to connect with others through the media they consume.

The shift from appointment viewing may impact cultivation theory, as it changes how people consume and experience media content (Morgan et al., 2015). With appointment viewing, people were more likely to watch shows and movies simultaneously and share the collective experience of viewing them. This could lead to a shared understanding and interpretation of the content, as people could discuss and analyze it with friends and family members in the days following an airing.

With the shift to on-demand streaming, this shared understanding and interpretation may be lost, as people are more likely to watch shows and movies on their schedule rather than at the same time as others (Krongard & Tsay-Vogel, 2020). This could lead to a fragmentation of audiences and a reduction in the shared viewing experiences that were once common with appointment viewing (LaBine, 2016). As a result, people may be less likely to engage in discussions and media content analysis with others, decreasing the shared beliefs, values, and experiences that shape their understanding of reality.

Hyperconnectivity and OTT Networks

Hyperconnectivity refers to the increasing interconnectedness of people, organizations, and devices through digital technologies. It involves the proliferation of digital networks, devices, and platforms enabling people to communicate, interact, and access and share information globally (Cheek, 2016). One of the critical drivers of hyperconnectivity is the widespread adoption of the internet and mobile technologies, which have enabled people to connect and communicate with each other from anywhere in the world.

The proliferation of social media platforms, messaging apps, and other digital communication tools has also contributed to hyperconnectivity by making connecting and interacting easier (Brubaker, 2020). Hyperconnectivity has significantly impacted various aspects of society, including communication, business, education, and politics. It has enabled people to connect and collaborate more quickly and has facilitated the exchange of ideas and information on a global scale (Kolb et al., 2012). However, it has also raised concerns about privacy, security, and the potential for the digital divide, as only some have equal access to the technologies and platforms that enable hyperconnectivity.

One of the critical features of OTT networks and platforms is their hyperconnectivity, which refers to their ability to connect users to vast content from anywhere and at any time. This is made possible by the widespread availability of high-speed internet and the proliferation of devices, such as smartphones, tablets, and smart TVs, that allow users to access OTT content on demand. The hyperconnectivity of OTT networks and platforms has significantly impacted our shared cultural memory (Brubaker, 2020). In the past, people relied on traditional media, such as television and radio, to access and consume content, often limited by time and geography. With OTT networks and platforms, people can access a virtually limitless array of content from

around the world at any time, dramatically expanding our collective cultural memory and understanding of the world.

The hyperconnectivity of OTT networks and platforms has had many adverse effects on our shared cultural memory (Brubaker, 2022). One of the main concerns is the potential for spreading fake news and misinformation. With the ease of access to a vast array of content on the internet, it has become increasingly easy for people to spread false or misleading information, often intending to manipulate public opinion or cause harm (Loeb et al., 2020). This is especially true on social media platforms, where people are more likely to share content that aligns with their beliefs and values, regardless of whether or not it is accurate. This can spread false narratives and conspiracy theories, which can have severe consequences for society, such as inciting violence or harming public health.

Spreading fake news and misinformation can negatively affect our shared cultural memory. One of the main ways it can do this is by distorting our understanding of events and issues. When people believe and share false or misleading information, it can shape their perceptions of the world and how they interpret events (Scheufele & Krause, 2019). This can lead to the creation of false narratives accepted as truth, even if they are not based on reality. For example, if false information about a political event is widely shared and believed, it can shape people's perceptions of that event and influence their views on related issues. This can lead to the creation of misunderstandings and misunderstandings about the event and its significance, which can persist even after the misinformation is corrected. Fake news and misinformation can also contribute to the fragmentation of our shared cultural memory by polarizing public opinion and making it more difficult for people to find common ground and engage in meaningful dialogue (Ha et al., 2019). When people are exposed to only one side of an issue or are presented with

false information, they may be more likely to become entrenched in their viewpoints and less willing to consider alternative perspectives.

In addition to the proliferation of fake news and misinformation, the hyperconnectivity of OTT networks and platforms has contributed to the fragmentation of our shared cultural memory. With so much content available at our fingertips, people may be more likely to consume content that aligns with their beliefs and values rather than being exposed to diverse viewpoints and perspectives. This can lead to the creation of echo chambers, in which people are only exposed to information and perspectives that reinforce their existing beliefs rather than challenging or expanding them (Quattrociocchi et al., 2016).

This fragmentation of our shared cultural memory can have severe consequences for society. It can create more entrenched and polarized viewpoints, making it more difficult for people to find common ground and engage in meaningful dialogue (Pennycook et al., 2021). It can also make it more difficult for people to understand and appreciate different cultures and perspectives, leading to a lack of empathy and understanding. Overall, the hyperconnectivity of OTT networks and platforms has positively and negatively affected our shared cultural memory. While it has expanded our access to information and content, it has also introduced new challenges and risks that we need to be aware of and address, such as the proliferation of fake news and misinformation and the fragmentation of our shared cultural memory.

Shared Cultural Memory

Shared cultural memory refers to the collective experiences, traditions, and memories shared by a group of people within a culture. These shared experiences can include historical events, cultural practices, and traditions passed down from generation to generation. Shared cultural memory can shape how members of a culture understand and interact with the world

around them, as well as their sense of identity and belonging within the group (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008).

Social construction reality theory is a perspective in sociology and anthropology that suggests that our understanding of reality is shaped by the social structures and cultural practices within which we live (Speed, 1991). This theory suggests that what we consider "real" or "true" is not objective but rather is shaped by the cultural and social context in which we exist. According to social construction reality theory, reality is not fixed or objective but is constructed and negotiated through our interactions with others. This means that what is considered accurate or valid is not necessarily universal but somewhat shaped by the cultural and social context in which it is experienced (Danziger, 1997).

The socio-cultural tradition of communication theory is a perspective that recognizes the role that culture, and society play in shaping how we communicate with one another (Wang, 2008). This tradition emphasizes the importance of understanding the cultural and social context in which communication takes place to fully understand the meaning and impact of the communication. This perspective suggests that communication is not just about the transmission of information but a social process that involves the negotiation of purpose and the construction of reality (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014).

Shared cultural memory refers to the collective experiences, traditions, and memories that a group shares within a social network. These shared experiences can shape how members of a culture understand and interact with the world around them and their sense of identity and belonging within the group (Hirst et al., 2018). For example, shared cultural memory can influence how people understand and interpret historical events, cultural practices, and traditions

within their culture. It can also shape how people perceive and interact with others from different cultures and their cultural values and beliefs.

Social construction reality theory suggests that our understanding of reality is shaped by the social structures and cultural practices within which we live (Pinch, 2020). This theory recognizes that what we consider "real" or "true" is not objective but shaped by the cultural and social context in which we exist. According to this perspective, reality is not fixed or objective but constructed and negotiated through interactions with others (Hirst & Manier, 2008). Different groups or cultures can understand reality differently based on their cultural and social context.

The socio-cultural tradition of communication theory is a perspective that emphasizes the role that culture, and society play in shaping how we communicate with one another (Danziger, 1997). This tradition recognizes that communication is not just about the transmission of information but a social process that involves the negotiation of meaning and the construction of reality (Zolotukhin et al., 2020). This perspective suggests that it is vital to consider the cultural and social context in which communication takes place to understand the importance and impact of communication fully.

Shared cultural memory, social construction reality theory, and the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory all recognize the role that culture, and society play in shaping our understanding of the world and our interactions with others. These perspectives emphasize the importance of considering the cultural and social context in which communication and other social interactions take place to fully understand their meaning and impact (Hirst & Manier, 2008). This includes understanding the cultural values, beliefs, and practices that influence the way that people communicate and interact with one another.

Purpose of the Study

The study's primary goal is to understand the motivations, devices, shows/genres, duration, and social sharing habits of people who watch OTT networks and how those factors contribute to creating a shared cultural memory of those shows within social networks. These networks, which provide streaming video content over the internet, have gained widespread use in recent years. The study aims to gather insights into why OTT networks are becoming increasingly popular. Additionally, the study will seek to understand how respondents access and share video content, including their preferred OTT networks, the devices they use to view the videos, and how they share the content they have watched with others.

The proposed study explores the role that over-the-top (OTT) networks play in sharing cultural memories through a qualitative research methodology. This approach involves collecting and analyzing data through interviews, focus groups, and observations to understand the experiences, perspectives, and meanings of the people being studied (Amoroso et al., 2021). In this case, the study will use a semi-structured interview, which involves a set of predetermined questions but also allows for some flexibility and follow-up questions based on the interviewees' responses.

One key aspect of the study is the examination of the routines and viewpoints of those who have subscribed to multiple video streaming services. The study hopes to understand how OTT networks impact traditional television models and viewership by looking at these users. Through the insights and perspectives of these respondents, the study aims to shed light on how OTT networks are changing the way people consume and share media content. The proposed study will consider the theories of Cultivation and social construction of reality as it examines how OTT networks shape their users' cultural memories and communication habits.

Cultivation theory suggests that media exposure can significantly impact an individual's beliefs, attitudes, and values. It posits that the more time someone spends consuming media content, the more likely they will internalize the values and attitudes depicted in it. In this study, cultivation theory will be applied to examine how OTT networks influence their users' cultural memories and communication habits. For example, the study might explore whether the content people watch on OTT networks shapes their understanding of cultural traditions or whether how they share this content with others changes how cultural memories are transmitted within a society.

On the other hand, the social construction of reality theory focuses on how people create and maintain meaning in the world through their interactions with others. According to this theory, the reality is not an objective, fixed entity but rather is constructed through the shared experiences and interpretations of individuals and groups. In this study, the social construction of reality theory will be applied to examine how OTT networks shape how people create and maintain cultural memories. This could include exploring how people use these networks to share their cultural experiences and traditions with others or how they use the networks to learn about and engage with the cultural traditions of others.

By examining the interconnectedness of memory with politics, mediation, and emotions, the study hopes to provide a deeper understanding of how cultural memories are transmitted and negotiated across cultures in the age of hyperconnectivity. This is a rarely explored topic, and the study's findings may offer new insights into how OTT networks shape how people create and maintain meaning in the world.

Ultimately, the proposed study provides a valuable resource for those interested in understanding the socio-cultural traditions of communication and how the rise of over-the-top

(OTT) networks impacts them. By examining the routines and perspectives of users, the study hopes to offer insights into how OTT networks shape how people communicate and share cultural memories. Socio-cultural communication traditions refer to how people in a given society or culture transmit and negotiate meaning through their interactions with one another. These traditions can include a wide range of practices and behaviors, such as how people speak to one another, how they use body language, and how they share and interpret information.

Background of the Study

Cultivation theory is a communication theory that examines the long-term effects of television on the attitudes, values, beliefs, and behavior of viewers (Morgan et al., 2014). According to the theory, heavy television viewing can "cultivate" certain beliefs and attitudes in viewers over time, shaping their perception of reality and influencing their behavior. The theory was developed by George Gerbner, a communication researcher, based on the idea that television is a powerful medium that can significantly affect viewers (Potter, 2014). Gerbner argued that the messages and images presented on television can shape viewers' understanding of the world and that heavy television viewing can lead to a distorted view of reality. He also suggested that the effects of television on viewers can be cumulative, with long-term exposure leading to the development of certain attitudes and beliefs.

Cultivation theory is critical because it highlights the potential influence of television on its viewers and raises essential questions about how media can shape our attitudes, beliefs, and behavior (Berger, 2016). It is also relevant to studying other forms of media, such as the internet, social media, and OTT networks, which may also have the ability to cultivate attitudes and beliefs in their users. As applied to OTT networks, cultivation theory suggests that heavy viewing of OTT content may have similar effects on viewers as traditional television. In other

words, viewing OTT content for extended periods may shape viewers' attitudes and beliefs and ultimately influence their behavior. This could be particularly relevant for OTT networks that focus on specific genres or topics, as they may strongly influence viewers who are heavily exposed to that content.

Cultivation theory suggests that television can shape our shared cultural memory by influencing our attitudes, values, beliefs, and behavior over time. As we consume media, we are exposed to specific ideas, stories, and images that can become ingrained in our collective consciousness (Morgan et al., 2014). This can shape how we understand and remember our shared history and cultural experiences. It can influence our understanding and memory of that event or practice. Over time, if enough people are exposed to this portrayal, it can become part of our shared cultural memory (Van den Bulck, 2004). In this way, cultivation theory suggests that the media we consume can significantly impact how we remember and understand our shared cultural experiences.

A person's social network refers to the people with whom they have personal connections and relationships and how these connections and relationships are organized (Kiesler, 2014). A person's social network can include family members, friends, coworkers, and other individuals with regular contact or interaction. One way a person's social network can be impacted by the rise of OTT networks and the decline of appointment viewing is through the loss of shared cultural experiences and memories (Confino, 1997). In the past, people often gathered together at a specific time to watch a television show or movie as a group, creating shared cultural experiences and memories. With the rise of OTT networks, however, people can watch content on their own time rather than gather at a specific time to watch together. This can lead to a

decline in shared cultural experiences and memories, as people must come together to watch and discuss the same content.

In addition to the decline in shared cultural experiences, the rise of OTT networks and the fall of appointment viewing can also lead to a reduction in face-to-face social interactions and the strengthening of online social networks (Bietti, 2010). With the ability to watch content on their own time, people may be less likely to gather to watch content together in person. This can lead to a decline in face-to-face social interactions and the strengthening of online social networks as people rely more on social media and other online platforms to discuss and share content. Overall, the rise of OTT networks and the decline of appointment viewing can impact a person's social network in several ways, including reducing shared cultural experiences and memories and face-to-face social interactions (Fivush, 2010). It is essential to recognize the role these changes in technology and media consumption can play in shaping social connections and relationships.

People, irrespective of the used medium, bring their existing cultural memories and experiences during the information-sharing process. Cultural memory refers to the constructed understanding of the past that people pass from one generation to the other through monuments, oral traditions, texts, rites, and additional symbols. The memories of human beings are culturally embedded, a concept that stresses the significance of individual social interactions and relationships with objects. Indeed, cultural memories comprise identity concretion, reconstruction capacities, formation, organization, obligation, and reflexivity (Haux et al., 2020). The ongoing digitization culture challenges the existing societal, institutional, and corporate bonds that directly influence cultural memories.

The recent technological advancements have created an additional platform to enhance the audience's knowledge and understanding of historical events. Liew et al. (2020) note that digital tools offer innovative approaches to gathering, curating, sharing, and visualizing cultural memories. There is a dense and dynamic relationship between the brain and the integration of the media in memory construction. Specifically, different media records, either audio, cinematic, visual, digital, or screen, play a significant role in determining what one remembers and how one recalls it (Daković, 2021). Hence, digital memory serves as an essential phase in developing mediated memory that governs the transmission of memory to people and eradicates memory narratives through different platforms.

Cultural memory has expanded to cover the interchange between ancient and present socio-cultural events. Besides, the unification of related tactics between new media and joint, transcultural, or transnational memories verifies a transformation when the scientific performance of memory becomes insignificant. Technology is a primary determinant of how history is molded in dialogue with multifaceted algorithmic elucidations to curate content and push the viewers toward specific consumption patterns (Gambarato et al., 2021). The technological settings for memory arbitration call for a rationalized view of cultural reminiscence. Unlike in the traditional unilateral memory mediation, the viewers play an active role in content distribution, making them a significant part of the selecting and sorting process of the electronically stored archives. According to Gambarato et al. (2021), the functionalities and interfaces in persistent elaboration facilitate the movement of old materials on the internet, which in turn influence the (re)mediation of previous representations. The selecting and sorting procedures of the new technologies impact the viewer's remembering and forgetting dynamics.

The first-developing digital infrastructures of mediated memory, like live streaming, OTT, and other social networks, have significantly changed how people experience television. The rise of OTT services and enhanced access to cheap broadband data has altered consumer behaviors, directly impacting traditional pay TV operators. Following steady growth, OTT has gained more users than any other digital platform. In developed countries like the US, there has been a significant increase in consumers subscribing to different OTT applications at the expense of satellite or cable options (Tengeh, 2021).

Similarly, fast internet availability and easy access in countries like Korea have encouraged consumers to migrate from pay TV to OTT services. According to Ghalawat et al. (2021), the Indian OTT video industry had a higher probability of recording a maximum growth rate within all its sections. This move would lead to a maximum evolution rate among all the areas and drive success over four years within the entertainment industry within the country. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent mitigation measures even marked a more significant shift from broadcast TVs to OTTs. Specifically, the pandemic made consumers explore the new domains of OTT services, which influenced their use even after the healthcare crisis (Sridhar & Phadtare, 2022). The recommended social distancing rules and less physical interconnectedness to mitigate the pandemic spread forced people to find alternative ways to remain entertained and occupied. The move led to a drastic shift from cable or broadcast TV programs to enhanced subscriptions in OTT services.

Moreover, using alternative applications to consume TV content has led to a drastic change in viewing behaviors. Unlike the old generations, who relied on traditional TV for news and entertainment, youths today prefer to consume content through OTT platforms like Netflix. Indeed, a report by Defy Media concluded that 64% of children aged 13-24 watched content

using OTT platforms before school and through the night before sleeping (Tengeh, 2021). OTT's content helped them lift their mood, obtain data, relieve stress, and gain sleep. Fuduric et al. (2019) also note that modern consumers spend time on online video content instead of scheduled TV programs, which indicates a shift in video-viewing behavior and dynamics. The introduction of live video streaming has made the transition even more evident as people use sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter to watch different sports.

OTT applications have greatly enhanced flexibility and convenience for the consumer. Unlike traditional TVs, where one has to wait for specific times to watch the desired program, OTT platforms allow the audience to view any particular content at the desired time. Indeed, with the recent technological advancement, consumers can access and enjoy content conveniently at any given time, device, and place (Tengeh, 2021). The emergence of OTT platforms has made appropriate navigability one of the significant and unique forces behind OTT viewing. According to Menon (2022), any consumer with a smart device like a tablet or phone can use OTT networks anytime and anywhere and instantly navigate through the preferred content. Consequently, that convenient navigation through tablets and smartphones makes it easy for users to subscribe to different sites and select and filter the desired content. This technology has shifted from the conventional linear television of scheduled programs to more convenient platforms that make television viewing a hand-held activity.

Binge-watching has drastically changed how consumers view TV content, a concept that significantly influences TV producers. The emergence and convenience of OTT platforms have increased the prevalence of binge-watching and the intention to subscribe to digital channels. Specifically, consumers today are binge-watching online content due to easy access to quality and fresh content free from commercial advertisements (Tengeh, 2021). Many consumers today

choose to watch more than a single series episode at once. As opposed to scheduled shows, commonly a single event at a set time, the consumers binge-watch the programs after work or during the weekend to catch up on different programs for entertainment, relaxation, improvement of the viewing experience, and escape from reality. Indeed, according to Menon (2022), OTT programs allow viewers to access content anywhere, anytime, and across different devices, unlike traditional TV, where advertisements commonly dominate watching. Consumers link binge-watching to more enjoyment, greater engagement with TV characters, and comfortability due to the lack of ad interruptions. For instance, during the national lockdown in South Africa after the COVID-19 pandemic, the state witnessed a spike in all live streaming services on the Showmax and DSTV Now platforms (Tengeh, 2021). Hence, one of the primary changes in television viewing regarding OTT applications is an increased binge-watching rate due to the content's availability.

The composition of the global population and the consequent attitude regarding access to content has changed how people experience television. Specifically, consumer switching behavior differs across generational age groups, affecting the transmission of knowledge and understanding. Due to the ongoing digital transformation, diverse generational cohorts possess numerous similarities in their use of digital media, with the younger generation preferring OTTs, where they can customize their viewing based on preference (Dabija & Băbuț, 2019). The increased possession of smartphones has continued to encourage OTT TV service providers to target the young generation, comprising the most significant percentage with smartphones (Dasgupta, 2019). The trend has led to a substantial decline in traditional TV viewership, specifically among young viewers.

Problem Statement

A cultural phenomenon is an event, occurrence, or trend considered significant and worthy of attention within a particular culture (Ernst & Schröter, 2021). This could be a new trend, an event that captures the public's attention, or changes in social norms or behaviors. Cultural phenomena can be large or small in scale and can have a wide range of impacts on people's lives and society (Boyd & Crawford, 2012). They can be positive or negative and can be influenced by many factors, including technology, media, and other cultural forces. Some examples of cultural phenomena include the rise of social media, the popularity of certain celebrities or fashion trends, and the spread of particular ideologies or political movements (Lundby, 2009).

OTT networks are online platforms that allow users to stream television shows, movies, and other video content over the internet, without the need for a traditional cable or satellite subscription. OTT networks are not a new cultural phenomenon, as they have been around for several years (Chatterjee & Pal, 2020). However, in recent years, there has been a significant shift in how people consume media, with many opting to use OTT networks instead of traditional cable or satellite subscriptions. This shift has been driven, in part, by the loss of appointment viewing, which refers to the practice of watching a television show at a specific time on a specific channel.

The media plays a significant role in the formation and retention of cultural memory. The digital layouts of broadcasting distribution update the native conceptualization of cultural memory. Indeed, according to Gambarato et al. (2021), the construction and spread of an ancient memory in a collectivist dimension are only conceivable through the aid of television. Indeed, the media shapes the socio-cultural organic memories at the individual level and constructs and

circulates knowledge and versions of the shared pasts of traditional contexts at the collective level (Erill, 2017). Hence, the internet, radio, TV, and duplication media play a substantial role in recollecting and forgetting historical contexts.

Another significant change from television today; most people access video content using subscription-based OTT networks (Park, 2017). That means the target audiences of different movies and shows no longer watch such content simultaneously. That is because, with some subscriptions, a viewer can access their favorite shows at their time of convenience (Robinson, 2017). Hence, they can watch simultaneously with others who share similar interests as in traditional television programs. The elimination of the aspect of simultaneously viewing programs has introduced a challenge to shared cultural memories. That is because it is difficult for people to easily share the content of what they watched the next day since, due to the different schedules, some people within an individual's social circle might not have watched the same content.

In the past, appointment viewing was the norm, as people would plan their schedules around their favorite shows and make sure to tune in at the designated time (Conlin et al., 2016). However, with the proliferation of OTT networks and the availability of on-demand streaming, people can now plan their schedules around specific programming. Instead, they can watch shows and movies on their schedule whenever they want. This has led to a decline in appointment viewing and a corresponding increase in the use of OTT networks.

As a result of these changes, there is a need to research the impact of OTT networks on traditional television viewing habits and the overall media landscape. Researchers are interested in understanding how OTT networks affect how people consume media and the business models of traditional media companies (Gupta & Singharia, 2021). For example, researchers may want

to know how OTT networks affect the advertising industry or how they impact the production and distribution of television shows and movies. Understanding these trends can help media companies adapt to the changing landscape and better meet the needs of their customers (Lee & Cho, 2019).

OTT networks, as a research area, have gained extensive acceptance globally. However, many of these studies focus on the technological aspects of OTTs, leaving many opportunities for future research. Indeed, there is a need for more studies exploring the impact of OTTs and other live-streaming services on consumer experiences and the overall trend of cultural memory. Since OTT networks serve a global community, it is essential to explore the impacts of these applications on shared cultural values and memories. Indeed, with the OTT network's worldwide reach and the flexibility of the consumers to use various tools to share data, experiences, and ideas on watched content, it is vital to understand how these applications affect shared cultural memories and values. Unlike traditional broadcast TV, which subjected the audience to similar content and news, viewers today can watch whatever content they want at any given time. Therefore, it will be essential to determine how sharing content with one's social circle and sharing ideas and experiences on programs watched affects our shared cultural perceptions and memories.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the impact of OTT networks on the traditional television experience.
2. To determine the changes that OTT networks have caused in shared cultural memories.
3. To explore how individuals find and share the content of the videos they watch via OTT networks.

Research Question

What are the motivations, devices, shows/genres, duration, and social sharing habits of people who watch OTT networks, and how do these factors contribute to creating a shared cultural memory of those shows within social networks?

Definition of Terms

Over-the-top (OTT)—refers to streaming or video platforms that allow the audience to access movies and shows through the internet. Comprised of providers like Hulu, Amazon Prime video, and Netflix, these networks contain a unique website, app, or pages, allowing users to log in and access the available content with the subscription.

Broadcast television—is a commonly used form of television that uses the public airwaves to broadcast programs that are theoretically available to all the TV sets within the range of the broadcast transmitter.

Video streaming—entails a direct transmission of video and audio files from the server to the end user. The videos released for online streaming come in a compressed form via the internet, and the viewer can play them as soon as it arrives.

Traditional television—refers to a model whereby the programs are structured linearly.

Cable television—channels that utilize cables to air programs and obtain consumers' fees for transmission.

Appointment viewing—refers to watching TV shows or other media content at a specific time and day, as determined by the broadcaster or network.

Cultural memory—Cultural memories refer to similar practices that communities use to construct and maintain relationships with the past while living in the present and organizing for the future.

Hyperconnectivity—is a term used to describe constantly being connected to the internet and other people through various communication channels, such as social media, messaging apps, and email. It refers to the widespread availability of internet-enabled devices and the increasing reliance on them for communication and information access. Hyperconnectivity can have positive and negative effects, including increased access to information and communication and the potential for distraction and overstimulation. It can also blur boundaries between work and personal life, as people can often stay connected to their professional networks outside traditional working hours.

Social network—for a person refers to the group of individuals with whom a person has a connection or relationship, such as friends, family members, colleagues, and acquaintances. These individuals can significantly impact a person's life and well-being through the support, companionship, and sense of belonging they provide. In the modern world, social networks are often facilitated through online platforms and social media sites, where people can connect and interact with one another virtually.

Shared cultural memory—is the availability of mutually constructed understanding of the past through the shared pool of knowledge, memories, and data of specific social groups that define individual or group identity. Shared cultural memory refers to the collective memories that members of a culture or society share. In the context of TV shows, shared cultural memory refers to the collective memories that people within a culture or society have of specific TV shows. These shared memories can be influenced by the cultural significance of the show, its popularity, or its impact on the broader cultural conversation. For example, a TV show that has had a significant cultural impact and has been widely watched by people within a particular culture or society may be remembered more vividly and have a more significant influence on the

shared cultural memory of that group. On the other hand, a TV show that was less popular or had a more negligible cultural impact may not be as widely remembered or have as much influence on the shared cultural memory of a group.

Summary

The rise of OTT networks has significantly impacted how people consume and share media content, potentially altering socio-cultural traditions of communication significantly. By examining the routines and perspectives of users, the study hopes to provide a platform for education on how OTT networks impact these traditions. This could include exploring how people use these networks to share their cultural experiences and traditions with others or how they use the networks to learn about and engage with the cultural traditions of others. Ultimately, the findings of this study may offer a deeper understanding of how cultural memories are transmitted and negotiated in the age of hyperconnectivity and how OTT networks shape how people communicate and share meaning in the world.

One possible explanation for the success of over-the-top (OTT) platforms, such as streaming services, is that modern consumers seek a more interactive and participatory media experience. Rather than simply being passive viewers, they want to engage with content and connect with organizations through co-creating, modifying, and discussing user-generated content. This shift reflects how media culture plays a significant role in shaping our identities in contemporary techno-capitalist societies and contributing to the emergence of a global culture. It's worth noting that this media culture also often involves the use of advanced technologies, which are highly valued in business and professional settings.

The rapid growth of the internet and technology has significantly impacted various sectors, including media and communication. The rise of over-the-top (OTT) services such as

Netflix and Amazon have transformed how people access and share media content, making it possible for people to view content on their internet-enabled devices from anywhere in the world (Park, 2017). OTT networks have disrupted the traditional media sector by allowing users to access the content at their convenience, leading traditional television channels to adopt online platforms to compete.

The increased use of smartphones and the availability of high-speed internet has further propelled the growth of OTT services, which operate over portable and fixed grids of binding operators. The rise of OTT networks has also led to structural changes in the media industry, including changes in content creation, presentation, and distribution to attract a larger audience. While OTT services have disrupted the media industry, they have empowered users by giving them more control over their media consumption and access to a broader range of content.

This study will examine how OTT networks impact shared cultural memories and the viewer's television experience through the lens of cultivation theory, the social construction of reality, and the socio-cultural tradition of communication. The study will employ a qualitative exploratory research methodology, including semi-structured interviews and observations, to gather insights from randomly selected participants on their experiences of sharing information, ideas, and experiences related to the content they have watched with others. This research aims to address the gap in understanding the influence of OTT networks on shared cultural memories and traditional television structures, as past studies have primarily focused on their impact on consumers from a marketing perspective. As OTT networks serve a global community and can alter how we consume and share content, it is essential to understand their impact on shared cultural perceptions and memories (Park, 2017).

According to Postman (1992), technology, including OTT networks and video streaming platforms, can reach every aspect of civilization and reconstruct the truth. As such, it is crucial to understand how these platforms have changed how we experience television and the implications for our shared cultural memory. The evolution of TV services, from free-to-air broadcasts to IPTV and intelligent TVs, has marked significant technological developments that have altered consumer experiences. With the increased access to broadband connectivity and smart devices, the modern world has different watching patterns than past generations, including the ability to watch preferred content from any location and device and binge-watching trends. These changes in television experiences can significantly impact cultural memories' development and maintenance.

There has been significant growth in OTT networks to the extent that they threaten traditional television models. That is because, with OTT networks, viewers do not have to schedule a time to watch their favorite programs. All they need is a stable internet connection and an internet-enabled gadget, and they can watch their favorite programs at their convenience (Lagerspetz et al., 2018). The advantage is that the viewers have better experiences with the video content, mainly because they choose which programs they will watch and at what time. However, studies indicate that binge-watching has increased due to the increased freedom to watch what one wants. While binge-watching is not a new phenomenon, it is on the rise, mainly because of the addictive nature of OTT networks, given that they offer consumers access to a wide range of video content (Steiner, 2018). That means that one can watch more than two or three episodes of their favorite program in a single sitting, reducing the productivity of the viewers. Besides, binge-watching also means less physical activity, therefore, increased risk of suffering from lifestyle-related illnesses in the future.

Nonetheless, in terms of the experiences, there is no doubt that OTT networks have enhanced consumer experiences when it comes to watching videos. That is because they can easily access as many episodes of their favorite shows as they want. Besides, the consumers also have the freedom to choose the program they want to watch at a given time, which was not the case in traditional television. Another critical change in the media sector is the growth of social media platforms, which means that consumers can share their experiences with different shows and streaming websites in real-time. In the past, people would only share their experiences a day after watching videos or films. That allowed for the application of shared cultural memories, which is no longer the case since consumers can easily discuss the programs and content as they continue watching.

Currently, there needs to be more research on the impact of OTT networks on viewers' cultural memories. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the changes caused by OTT services and online streaming on the viewer's television experience and its implications on collective memory. Through semi-structured interviews, the researcher will examine how people watch and consume online content and share the information and experiences gained with others. By critically evaluating the influence of OTT networks on these behaviors, the study will contribute to a better understanding of the role of OTT networks in shaping shared cultural memories.

The popularity of OTT platforms, such as streaming services, can be attributed in part to the desire of modern consumers for a more interactive and engaging media experience. Rather than simply consuming content passively, many people want to participate in the creation and discussion of user-generated content actively and connect with organizations through these

channels. This shift reflects how media culture plays a crucial role in shaping our identities and developing a global civilization in contemporary techno-capitalist societies.

Chapter two will delve into the interplay between culture and communication in the context of OTT networks. We will start by exploring the theoretical frameworks that will help us understand this relationship, including Cultivation Theory, Social Construction of Reality Theory, and the Socio-Cultural Tradition. We will provide a brief overview of each theory/tradition, its key concepts, and how it has been applied in the context of media studies. We will then discuss how these frameworks can be used to analyze the impact of OTT networks on our shared cultural memory. Finally, we will apply each theory/tradition to the context of OTT networks, highlighting their unique contributions to our understanding of this phenomenon's cultural and communicative dimensions. By the end of chapter two, readers will have gained a more profound experience of how OTT networks transform our cultural memory and the theoretical frameworks that can help us make sense of this transformation.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

New technological innovations, such as video streaming, have the potential to transform industries and pave the way for new heights of progress in areas such as health, energy, material science, and entertainment. Fuduric, Malthouse, & Viswanathan (2018) demonstrate how the evolution of media technologies, similar to the way radio paved the way for television, is revolutionizing the delivery of content to consumers. Not only are media streaming and over-the-top (OTT) media services enabling the provision of original content throughout the internet, but they are also transforming the entertainment industry (Tefertiller, 2018, p. 390). OTT streaming shapes how people watch TV, providing a more immersive and interactive experience. The proliferation of the internet and the emergence of OTT networks and video streaming apps has led to a shift towards subscription streaming services for many Americans. This trend raises questions about the future of our shared cultural memory, as how we consume and engage with media is fundamentally changing. These technological advancements amplify our entertainment options and reshape our cultural landscape in new and exciting ways.

A few years ago, television operated on an appointment viewing system, requiring people to set aside specific times to watch their favorite programs. If someone missed a show, they would have to wait for it to be re-aired or hope for a post on demand. The advent of over-the-top (OTT) viewing and video streaming has revolutionized this model, allowing viewers to access content on their terms and at their convenience. This shift towards user-friendly services that respond to the needs of viewers has likely contributed to the success of OTT platforms. Practically every American can now access available content and schedule their viewing according to their preferences without waiting for a re-air. The ability to watch shows and

movies anytime, from any device, has made OTT viewing a popular and convenient choice for many people.

According to Holbert et al. (2003), the loss of appointment viewing may impact our shared cultural memory, as it can change how we consume and experience media content. When people watch shows and movies simultaneously, they are more likely to share the collective experience of viewing them, which can lead to a shared cultural memory of these events. People can then discuss and analyze them with friends and family in the days following an airing. However, with the shift to on-demand streaming, this shared cultural memory may be lost, as people are more likely to watch shows and movies on their schedule rather than at the same time as others (Rubin, 1981). As a result, audiences may become fragmented, and shared viewing experiences may become less common (O'Shea, 1989), leading to decreased shared cultural memory as people are less likely to engage in discussions and media content analysis with others.

In this context, traditional television refers to a model in which programs are presented linearly, meaning that viewers must watch them simultaneously as others interested in the same content. This allows television channels to target specific audiences by organizing their programming around estimated viewing times. For example, it would make sense to air programs in the evening when many working consumers are likely to be at home and able to watch.

According to Hirst and Manier (2008), shared cultural memory, the social construction of reality theory, and the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory all recognize the significant role that culture, and society play in shaping our understanding of the world and our interactions with others. These perspectives emphasize the importance of considering the cultural and social context in which communication and other social interactions take place to fully

understand their meaning and impact. This includes understanding the cultural values, beliefs, and practices that influence the way that people communicate and interact with one another.

Shared cultural memory can shape how members of a culture understand and interact with the world around them, as well as their sense of identity and belonging within the group (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). The social construction of reality theory suggests that people's understanding of the world is shaped by their interactions with others and the cultural context in which they live. This means that people's experiences and interpretations of events are influenced by their cultural background, which can differ from culture to culture (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

This research aligns with three essential theories in the field of communication and media studies: the social construction of reality theory (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), the Cultivation Theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1976), and the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory (Craig, 1999). The social construction of reality theory posits that individuals' understanding of the world is shaped by their social interactions and cultural contexts. The Cultivation Theory holds that the media shapes individuals' perceptions of reality. At the same time, the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory emphasizes the role of social and cultural contexts in shaping individuals' communication practices and behaviors.

By examining the media consumption habits and social sharing practices of over-the-top (OTT) viewers, this study aims to understand how these behaviors may be influenced by the media and how they contribute to the development and changes in society's behaviors. The constructivist approach, which focuses on analyzing single processes (Rahi, 2017), allows researchers to examine the psychological dynamics involved in forming these behaviors and how they may be influenced by the individuals involved.

By adopting this approach, researchers can better understand the social construction of reality and how it shapes how individuals perceive and interact with the world around them. This, in turn, can shed light on how media content and social interactions can influence individuals' behaviors and perceptions of reality.

In this chapter, we will start by examining the theoretical frameworks that can help us understand this relationship. These frameworks include Cultivation Theory, Social Construction of Reality Theory, and the Socio-Cultural Tradition. We will provide readers with a concise overview of each theory/tradition, including its key concepts and how it has been applied in media studies. We will then examine how these frameworks can be utilized to analyze the impact of OTT networks on our shared cultural memory. Through this exploration, readers will gain a more profound experience of how OTT networks are transforming our cultural memory.

Culture and Communication

Communication is exchanging ideas, thoughts, and information through various mediums, such as speech, writing, or behavior (Shepherd et al., 2005, pp. 38–39). It is a fundamental aspect of human interaction and is essential for socialization, learning, and personal and professional development. Culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, customs, behaviors, and material objects that characterize a group or society (Kramsch, 2014). It encompasses the collective way of life, including language, religion, social norms, and traditions, as well as art, music, literature, and other forms of expression. Culture plays a significant role in shaping how people communicate and how they understand and interpret the communication of others (Kramsch, 2014).

Effective communication requires understanding the cultural context in which it takes place. Culture influences how people perceive, interpret, and respond to messages and express

themselves (Miike, 2013). For example, in some cultures, direct eye contact is seen as a sign of respect and attention, while in others, it may be aggressive or confrontational. Similarly, in some cultures, it is customary to use formal titles and titles when addressing others, while in others, it is more common to use first names or nicknames.

Effective communication also requires adapting to cultural differences and communicating effectively across cultures (Hall, 1992). This can be challenging, as cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings and miscommunication. For example, humor or body language may be interpreted differently in different cultures, leading to misunderstandings or even offense. Effective cross-cultural communication requires a heightened sensitivity to cultural differences and an openness to learning about other cultures. This involves more than just being aware of cultural differences; it requires actively understanding and respecting the cultural norms, values, and expectations of the people with whom one communicates.

One way to do this is to take the time to learn about the culture and customs of the people they are communicating with, including their language, traditions, and social norms. This can help them avoid misunderstandings or miscommunications and to show respect for the other culture. In addition to learning about other cultures, being open to new ways of thinking and communicating is essential. This may mean stepping outside the cultural norms and expectations and being willing to try new approaches to communication (Shim et al., 2008). For example, they may need to adapt their body language, tone of voice, or choice of words to suit better the cultural context in which they are communicating.

Effective cross-cultural communication requires a willingness to learn about and respect cultural differences and an openness to new ways of thinking and communicating (Schirato & Yell, 2000). By taking these steps, they can effectively navigate cultural differences and build

strong, productive relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds.

Communication and culture are closely intertwined, with culture shaping how people communicate and interpret communication, and effective communication requires an understanding and appreciation of cultural differences (Magut, 2016).

There have been numerous attempts to theorize and understand the multifaceted nature of communication and its impact on individuals and society. Given the complexity of this subject matter, various traditions have emerged to organize and explain diverse perspectives and concepts. These traditions provide a framework for understanding the various approaches to communication, including their underlying assumptions and the implications for how we view and engage with the world around us. The study of communication is a multifaceted and dynamic field, encompassing many theories, concepts, and approaches that seek to shed light on how we communicate and interact.

Robert Craig (1999) is a communication scholar known for developing a map that categorizes and distinguishes the various traditions within the field of communication (Craig, 1999). This model identifies seven distinct traditions, each with its unique focus, theoretical perspectives, and study methods. Craig's model has been influential in organizing and understanding the diverse approaches and perspectives within the communication field and has helped clarify the distinct areas of study within this discipline. By separating the field into distinct traditions, Craig's model provides a valuable framework for understanding the diverse range of theories and approaches that inform the study of communication (Magut, 2016). Craig is known for his work on the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory, as well as his development of a model that categorizes and distinguishes the various traditions within the field of communication (Craig, 2008).

The socio-cultural tradition of communication theory is a perspective that emphasizes the role that culture, and society play in shaping how we communicate with one another (Danziger, 1997). This tradition recognizes that communication is not just about the transmission of information but a social process that involves the negotiation of meaning and the construction of reality (Zolotukhin et al., 2020). This perspective suggests that it is vital to consider the cultural and social context in which communication takes place to understand the importance and impact of communication fully.

According to the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory, communication plays a central role in creating and enacting social reality. Craig (2008) argues that communication is viewed as a symbolic process in which reality is produced, reproduced, maintained, repaired, and transformed through language, symbols, and other forms of expression. This perspective suggests that reality is not an objective set of arrangements outside us but is constructed through communication and interaction. Theorists in the socio-cultural tradition view communication as a process by which individuals within groups, societies, and cultures work together to create and maintain a shared understanding of reality (Samovar et al., 2016). That implies that reality is not fixed or static but is constantly being negotiated and reshaped through ongoing communication. Viewing communication as a fundamental part of creating and maintaining social reality, the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory helps us understand communication's dynamic and influential role in shaping our collective experiences and understandings of the world.

The socio-cultural tradition is a branch of communication theory that emphasizes the role of culture and society in shaping communication behaviors and practices. This tradition recognizes that communication is not just a matter of exchanging information but is also influenced by the social and cultural context in which it takes place (Duff, 2007). Within the

socio-cultural tradition, scholars study how communication is used to construct, maintain, and challenge social norms, values, and identities. They also examine how communication patterns and practices vary across different cultures and how these differences shape how people interact (Couldry & Hepp, 2013).

A critical concept in the socio-cultural tradition is symbolic interactionism, which posits that communication is a reciprocal process in which people create meaning through symbols, such as words, gestures, and facial expressions (Magut, 2016). This theory suggests that communication is not just a matter of transmitting information but also involves interpreting and negotiating meaning between individuals. Other vital theories within the socio-cultural tradition include social exchange theory, which examines how people make communication decisions based on perceived costs and benefits, and cultural studies, which focuses on how communication practices reflect and shape cultural values and identities (Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014).

In contrast to the sociopsychological tradition, which focuses on individual characteristics, the socio-cultural tradition emphasizes the interactions between people and the cultural values, meanings, roles, and rules negotiated and constructed through these interactions. According to Littlejohn and Foss (2011), scholars in this tradition argue that culture is not something we are born with but rather something learned through socialization and communication. In other words, culture is created through communication and interaction with others. As West and Turner (2010) note, this implies that culture is not fixed or static but constantly negotiated and renegotiated through ongoing communication.

Samovar et al. (2016) also highlight the importance of cultural context in shaping our perceptions and understandings of the world. They argue that culture serves as a lens through

which we view and interpret the world around us and that our cultural backgrounds influence how we communicate and understand the communication of others (Magut, 2016). According to Craig (2008), the socio-cultural tradition within communication theory promotes communicative practices that value cultural differences and encourage tolerance and understanding. This tradition emphasizes the importance of taking collective, rather than individual, responsibility for communication and encourages the appreciation of diverse cultural perspectives. This perspective aligns with the concept of cultural relativity, which suggests that symbols and meanings are not universal but shaped by the cultural context in which they are used (Littlejohn & Foss, 2007).

According to Craig (2008), the socio-cultural tradition within communication theory promotes communicative practices that value cultural differences and encourage tolerance and understanding. This tradition emphasizes the importance of taking collective, rather than individual, responsibility for communication and encourages the appreciation of diverse cultural perspectives. This perspective aligns with the concept of cultural relativity, which suggests that symbols and meanings are not universal but shaped by the cultural context in which they are used (Littlejohn & Foss, 2007). The same symbol or message may have different meanings in different cultural contexts, and it is essential to consider the audience's cultural background when communicating. As Littlejohn and Foss (2007) note, "symbols assume different meanings when you move from one context to another" (p.124). This highlights the importance of being aware of and sensitive to cultural differences and suggests that effective communication requires understanding the cultural context in which it takes place.

The formation of identities through interactions is a central focus of the socio-cultural tradition within communication theory. Scholars in this tradition argue that identity is not solely

an individual characteristic but a complex blend of the self, society, social groups, and cultures (Littlejohn & Foss, 2008). This perspective posits that individuals are not static but continually adjust and negotiate their identities as they navigate different cultural contexts. This idea suggests that an individual's identity is not fixed but shaped and influenced by the cultural norms, values, and expectations of the various environments in which they participate. This view acknowledges the dynamic nature of identity and how social and cultural forces shape it. It also highlights the agency of individuals in constructing and negotiating their identities rather than viewing identity as predetermined or fixed (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). This perspective offers a nuanced understanding of identity's complex and dynamic nature and how it is shaped by the social and cultural contexts in which individuals operate.

In this tradition, the influence of culture on communication and meaning is considered crucial. Littlejohn and Foss (2008) argue that culture shapes how we communicate and the meanings we attach to communication and that this influence must be emphasized. This highlights the importance of considering the cultural context in which communication takes place to fully understand the meaning and significance of the communication. The socio-cultural tradition of communication theory emphasizes the role of culture and social context in shaping individual identities and how we communicate with others. By understanding the complex and dynamic nature of identity formation through interactions, this tradition helps us better understand how culture influences communication and meaning.

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann are widely recognized as the pioneers of the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory. This tradition is based on the idea that communication is the fundamental activity by which humans construct and maintain their social worlds (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). At the heart of this theory is that reality is a social construction,

meaning that it is not external to us but is created and maintained through communication and interaction with others. By using symbols such as language, gestures, and facial expressions, humans can represent and interpret the meaningfulness of their surroundings and being (West & Turner, 2010).

Communication scholars who adopt a constructionist perspective study how symbols, language, discourse, and media contribute to the creation and shaping of our realities. This includes examining how these forms of communication influence our understanding of the world and shape our perceptions and interpretations of events (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). For example, media scholars have used constructionist theory to study how media narratives and content influence our understanding of controversial issues and the role of media in constructing reality through the selective representation of events. These scholars have also examined the routines of news-gathering professions and how they contribute to the production of a manufactured product shaped by the media's biases and priorities. Additionally, the constructionist theory has been used to study how audiences use shared knowledge and customs to interpret media content, highlighting the role of the cultural context in shaping how we understand and make meaning of media messages (West & Turner, 2010). By recognizing the central role of communication in the construction of social reality, the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory helps us better understand the complex and dynamic nature of human communication and its impact on society.

The socio-cultural tradition within communication theory is distinguished by its focus on how our groups, cultures, and social contexts shape and influence our communication behaviors, practices, and interpretations of messages. This tradition recognizes that our communication is not just a matter of exchanging information but is also influenced by the cultural and social norms, values, and expectations that shape the way we communicate and the meanings we attach

to communication. According to Littlejohn and Foss (2008), "reality is the sum of all the parts when viewing people as components and the influence the sum has on the individual" (p.43). This suggests that our understanding of reality is not solely based on individual experiences and perceptions but is also shaped by the cultural and social context in which we exist. The socio-cultural tradition of communication theory helps us to understand the complex and dynamic ways in which culture and social context influence communication and shape our worldviews.

Theoretical Frameworks

A theoretical framework is a set of concepts and ideas that provide a broad base for understanding a phenomenon. It is used as a guide for research and helps to create hypotheses, explain phenomena, and make predictions (Creswell, 2014). In this research, the theoretical framework will be used to analyze the effects of OTT networks on our shared cultural or collective memory. The purpose of the semi-structured interviews in this study is to gather information from participants on how they discuss the material they have viewed on OTT networks with others. Given the widespread reach of OTT networks and their ability to facilitate immediate contact across geographical boundaries, it is essential to study how they function and how they may impact individuals' perceptions of and adherence to cultural norms and traditions.

By examining the shift from sharing information with one's social circle to sharing thoughts and experiences on shows around the world, this research aims to understand how OTT networks may impact global shared cultural views and memories. Using a theoretical framework, the research can guide the study of this phenomenon and help to create hypotheses, explain the results, and make predictions about the impact of OTT networks on shared cultural memory. Theories provide a way of understanding and describing the world around us. According to Littlejohn et al. (2017), a theory is "any organized set of concepts, explanations, and principles

that depicts some aspect of human experience" (p. 7). In other words, theories provide conceptual frameworks for building knowledge about specific phenomena. Communication theory, as defined by Lindlof and Taylor (2019), is any systematic account of communication that aims to explain how it operates and what it is. In other words, communication theory helps to explain the various aspects of human communication and how it functions.

This study examines the motivations, devices, shows/genres, duration, and social sharing habits of people who watch over-the-top (OTT) networks and how these factors contribute to creating a shared cultural memory of those shows within social networks. The study will primarily look at this research through several communication theories, including cultivation theory, social construction reality theory, and sociological tradition. To fully understand the impact of OTT networks on communication and culture, it is necessary to utilize well-established and thoroughly researched theories such as cultivation theory, the social construction of reality, and socio-cultural tradition theory. These theories can provide a foundation for understanding how OTT networks shape our perceptions and understanding of the world around us. However, media richness theory (MRT), media dependency theory, and limited effects theory can also be used to understand the motivations, devices, shows/genres, duration, and social sharing habits of people who watch OTT networks and how these factors contribute to creating a shared cultural memory of those shows within social networks. These theories shed light on how OTT networks shape our communication and cultural experiences, including how we consume and interact with media content.

Cultivation Theory

Cultivation theory is a sociocultural perspective that aims to understand the influence of mass media, particularly television, on shaping culture, beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of

other values (Russell et al., 2013). While previous research in the latter half of the 20th century tended to focus on individual differences in perception of mass media, Gerbner took a more micro-focused approach. Instead of comparing the perceptions of different individuals, Gerbner sought to examine the collective perception of mass media and the shared values of its consumers. Similarly, cultivation theory can be used to understand the shared cultural memory and communication habits of users of OTT networks. Gerbner's approach to cultivation theory involves three distinct analyses: institutional, message systems, and cultivation. The first analysis focuses on the production and distribution of messages through mass media, examining the institutions involved. The second analysis analyzes the content of these messages. The cultivation analysis combines these two approaches to explain the large-scale effects of media message systems on the real world.

Background of Cultivation Theory

The cultivation theory was developed by George Gerbner, an American professor of communication, in 1967. Unlike many studies at the time, which primarily focused on micro-level assessments of the impact of media, the cultivation theory is characterized by its macro-focused approach. Gerbner's theory was presented as an alternative to the dominant form of mass media studies, which attempted to determine whether "differences in particular features of media messages could explain immediate responses in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors" (Potter, 2016, p. 1016). Gerbner's unique approach, which focused on uncovering shared meanings and communication habits among audience members, added a new dimension to mass media research. By the 1970s, many researchers recognized the value of Gerbner's work and began adapting and modifying it to fit their hypotheses (Morgan & Signorielli, 2014). This study utilizes Gerbner's theory to understand OTT networks and their role in creating shared memories.

To support and expand upon his hypothesis, Gerbner proposed three methods of analysis: "institutional analysis, message system analysis, and cultivation analysis" (Potter, 2014, p. 1016). The institutional analysis involves examining significant changes in mass media, such as the rapid production and distribution of content when barriers like social grouping and time are removed. Message system analysis focuses on the shared meanings conveyed through this content. Gerbner argued that researchers should approach the investigation and interpretation of the widespread implications of mass media content in a scientific manner.

The analysis method proposed by Gerbner differs from "other types of observation" in that it aims to "deal comprehensively, systematically, and generally rather than specifically and selectively or ad hoc with problems of collective cultural life" (Potter, 2014, p. 1017). Finally, the cultivation analysis integrates the findings of the other two approaches, hence its use as an umbrella term. Based on the message systems produced by mass media institutions, this approach further investigates "the contributions that these systems and their symbolic functions make to the cultivation of assumptions about life and the world" (Potter, 2014, p. 1017). According to Gerbner's hypothesis, mass media significantly shape shared culture. This influence can be observed over the long term as traditions are reinforced or altered based on the message systems.

Current State of Cultivation Theory

Although cultivation theory was initially developed with a focus on television, its scope has expanded to include new media forms such as OTT networks and social media. As Manoliu (2018) notes, television and other media "have the power to blur the lines between what happens behind the screen and outside of it; the screen is not a frontier between fiction and reality" (p. 135). While news media has often been studied concerning its influence on the audience due to

its clear distinction between fact and fiction, researchers increasingly recognize that storytelling media can be equally, if not more, influential. At the heart of cultivation, the theory is the hypothesis that "the storytelling function of television is compelling" (Shrum, 2017, p. 1). Additionally, the superficial diversity of most media content does not necessarily reflect its influence on general value systems. As OTT networks like Netflix become increasingly popular as a source of entertainment, especially during the coronavirus pandemic, a growing need exists to study their impact on the zeitgeist.

Gerbner's theory provides a strong foundation for researchers seeking to understand the relationship between the consumption of modern mass media and general values. The cultivation theory posits that "the more people watch television, the more they will adopt its underlying messages" (Shrum, 2017, p. 2). However, in the age of OTT networks, shows like *Wednesday* on Netflix and *The Boys* on Prime Video are binge-watched by millions of users around the world. One key difference between television and OTT networks is their convenience. Users can watch and rewatch long-running series like *Suits* and *House M. D.* on networks like Peacock at any time, as long as they maintain their subscriptions. This shift allows for binge-watching, a concept that the baby boomer generation may not have been able to imagine in their childhood, as they had to wait for weekly episodes and tune in at the right time.

While OTT networks often release episodes weekly to maintain suspense, they still allow binge-watching. For example, it took HBO eight weeks to release the entire second season of *Euphoria*, a show popular among young people for its candid portrayal of drug abuse and teenage identity crisis. These casual references demonstrate the shared cultural memory among OTT users, including researchers. Research has shown that OTT networks create a shared community among their users, extending to other social media platforms.

The cultivation theory, initially developed by George Gerbner in 1967 and focused on television, has faced challenges in its application to modern networks such as OTT (over-the-top) platforms, as the usage and spread of these networks differ significantly from traditional television (Gipps, 1999). Additionally, the cultivation theory has been criticized for its broad scope, which fails to fully address the mechanisms through which media content influences audience values and the consequences of these associations (Whiten & van de Waal, 2017). To address these limitations, this study supplements the cultivation theory with findings from other theoretical frameworks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between media and audience values.

Applying Cultivation Theory to OTT Networks and Our Shared Cultural Memory

The proliferation of over-the-top (OTT) networks, such as Netflix, has led to significant shifts in media consumption patterns. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Netflix gained almost 16 million new subscribers in the first quarter, bringing their global total to over 182 million subscriptions (Pauley, 2021). While some have predicted that the increasing prices and competition faced by Netflix may ultimately lead to its decline (Morgan et al., 2016), it is clear that the company has a significant and loyal customer base. Given the significant impact of media consumption on culture, it is vital to examine how OTT networks such as Netflix shape their users' shared cultural experiences and perceptions (Gambarato et al., 2022). Gerbner's cultivation theory initially focused on television, provides a valuable framework for understanding the influence of mass media on values and beliefs. However, its application to modern OTT networks requires further exploration (Gipps, 2019).

The proliferation of online streaming platforms, such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime, has significantly impacted how individuals consume media and has resulted in the need

for further examination of their impact on society. The cultivation theory, initially proposed by Gerbner in the 1960s and focused on the influence of television on values and attitudes, has been expanded to include the study of OTT networks (Gipps, 2019). The theory posits that the more individuals consume media, the more they adopt its underlying messages (Shrum, 2017). However, it has been noted that the theory is broad and needs to adequately address the mechanisms by which these associations between media content and values are formed (Whiten & van de Waal, 2017). This study incorporates findings from the social construction of reality theory and the socio-cultural tradition to examine the impact of OTT networks more fully on shared cultural habits and perceptions of the world (Mulla, 2022; Pfadenhauer, 2018; Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). With the increase in OTT subscriptions and the amount of time spent watching video content, it is crucial to understand these platforms' role in shaping cultural norms and values (Pauley, 2021; Gambarato et al., 2021). The presence of "soft news" programs, such as *the Patriot Act* with Hassan Minhaj and *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, highlights the potential influence of OTT networks on political and social issues as well (Pauley, 2021; Green et al., 2017).

Social Construction of Reality Theory

As the name suggests, the social construction of reality investigates how human beings construct and reconstruct their reality from a subjective perspective, often unaware of alternative perspectives. All individuals, as long as they are a part of a society, have likely engaged in abstractly defining their reality, particularly in how they present themselves to others. In their revised and republished study in 1967, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann examined the perception of reality from a sociological perspective. Their extensive research brings to light

concepts that individuals may take for granted or be unaware of, particularly the unconscious and abstract construction of one's reality based on the information they consume.

Background of the Social Construction of Reality Theory

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann first introduced the concept of the social construction of reality in their 1967 publication of the same name. In the text, the authors compare the perception of the world by a lay individual, a philosopher, and a sociologist. While the lay individual may be too distracted by the perceived reality of their daily needs and activities, the philosopher raises critical questions (Elder-Vass, 2012). On the other hand, the sociologist acknowledges the efforts and findings of the philosopher, but their roles are distinct. The sociologist does not seek answers to questions about reality and knowledge, such as "what is real? how is one to know?" (Berger & Luckmann, 2021, p. 13). Instead, they objectively examine the lay individual's reality, recognizing that "sociological interest in questions of 'reality' and 'knowledge' is initially justified by the fact of their social relativity" (Berger & Luckmann, 2021, p. 15). When applied to mass media, this theory examines the reality presented in video content and compares it to the actual reality of the viewers (Assmann, 2011). More often than not, there is a significant difference between the society depicted on screen and the one outside the audience's windows, despite the diversity of modern films and shows.

Current State of the Social Construction of Reality Theory

The 21st century has seen a proliferation of technologies that have connected the global world through social media, making it feel like a small village. The widespread use of cell phones and the internet has led many people, particularly younger generations, to underestimate their reliance on and intimacy with technology. In her extended piece "The Tethered Self: Technology Reinvents Intimacy and Solitude," Sherry Turkle offers the unique perspective of a

baby boomer who has firsthand experience with the rise of internet culture. Turkle argues that while technology benefits connecting international communities from the convenience of one's computer, it may also lead people to abandon their sense of self despite being in a constant state of self-presentation on the internet.

In the modern age, social media has become an integral part of an individual's identity, and psychologists such as Turkle and Bosančić are interested in examining the potential adverse effects of this overreliance on our well-being. Each social media platform requires users to cultivate an online presence through their profile picture, username, and bio, which serves as a brief statement about their identity to the world (Bosančić, 2019). As the global society, including developing countries, becomes more reliant on smartphones and internet connections, intimacy is transforming. The proliferation of technology has made it easier for people to connect. However, it has also raised concerns about the impact of face-to-face communication and the potential loss of privacy. Some researchers have argued that the constant need to maintain an online presence can lead to a disconnection from the self and a lack of authenticity in communication (Turkle, 2013). Others have pointed out that while social media can bring people together, it can also create division and amplification toxic behavior (Bosančić, 2019). Overall, the impact of social media on intimacy is an area of ongoing study and debate among psychologists and sociologists.

In the digital age, friendships and familial relationships are often maintained through online platforms such as posting, snapping, tweeting, and daily status updates (Bosančić, 2019). For someone who traveled back in time from 146 years ago (a reference to the year that Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone), it might be surprising to see people talking on small devices held up to their ears or speaking into thin air with devices in their ears (Vera,

2016). However, for those who have grown up with technology, having a conversation with someone miles away or being absorbed in a personal computer is normal. Technology has fostered a constant connectedness that blurs the lines between virtual and physical spaces. Turkle argues that our preference for virtual relationships over physical ones may be because "our new digital connections offer the illusion of companionship without the demands of friendship" (Turkle, 2011, p. 29). Social media platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, and Discord allow people to connect at a distance by regulating the time they spend engaging with one another. According to Turkle (2013), many teenagers find texting more accessible and convenient than talking, as it offers them virtual intimacy and security that face-to-face interactions do not (p. 29). This preference for virtual communication may be due to the lack of control people have over their physical world, particularly the identities they are sometimes forced to adopt due to circumstances.

As Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann proposed in their 1967 publication, the social construction of reality theory has been criticized for its reliance on psychological patterns in studying the construction of reality by human beings (Pfadenhauer, 2018). While this abstract nature of psychology may raise concerns about the validity of the theory, when paired with Gerbner's cultivation analysis, which employs a scientific approach, this theory can still provide valuable insights into the shared habits and culture of OTT network users (Mulla, 2022). However, it is essential to recognize that studying the human psyche, unlike fields such as biology or physics, is not a natural kind but rather an artifact that the human imagination can shape. Despite this limitation, the social construction of reality theory can still help understand how individuals construct and reconstruct their reality from a subjective perspective, particularly in the context of OTT networks.

Applying the Social Construction of Reality Theory to OTT Networks and Our Shared Cultural Memory

Cultural memory shared among individuals or groups can have negative consequences, as it can be used to manipulate viewers' social or political values by those who wield power or influence. Pauley (2021) posits that soft news programs, such as those featuring humorous narrative persuasion, can entertain and indoctrinate the viewer. According to Pauley (2021), this process involves using a dramatic narrative or story to alter the audience's beliefs, attitudes, and intentions. These comedic segments can even impact public policy and voting choices. However, the cultivation theory aims to examine the connections between media consumption and general values without evaluating them as either positive or negative.

In the context of OTT networks, social construction reality theory suggests that the shows and content available on these platforms contribute to our understanding of the world and shape our beliefs and values. Similarly, how we discuss, and share shows with others in our social networks may further reinforce or challenge our understanding of reality. On the other hand, the social construction of reality theory is a sociological theory that suggests that people's understanding and interpretation of the world around them are shaped and influenced by their social interactions and relationships. According to this theory, the reality is not objective and universal but constructed and shaped by a particular group or society's shared beliefs, values, and experiences (Pauley, 2021).

Simultaneous viewing in traditional television allows for creating shared cultural memories, as viewers can discuss the content they have watched with others. Gambarato et al. (2021) note that this shared experience can be a powerful way to shape cultural values and create a sense of community. However, the rise of over-the-top (OTT) platforms and streaming services

have challenged this model, as people are increasingly able to watch content on their terms and at their convenience. This shift will likely affect how shared cultural memories are formed and experienced.

According to LaBine (2016), the shift away from appointment viewing may impact the social construction of reality as it changes how people consume and experience media content. When people watch shows and movies simultaneously, they are more likely to share the collective experience of viewing them, which can lead to a shared understanding and interpretation of the content. People can then discuss and analyze it with friends and family in the days following an airing. This shift from appointment viewing may also impact cultivation theory, changing how people consume and experience media content (Morgan et al., 2015). With appointment viewing, people were likelier to watch shows and movies simultaneously and share the collective experience of viewing them, leading to a shared understanding and interpretation of the content through discussions and analysis with others.

According to Krongard and Tsay-Vogel (2020), with the shift to on-demand streaming, the shared understanding and interpretation of media content that was once common with appointment viewing may be lost, as people are more likely to watch shows and movies on their schedule rather than at the same time as others. This shift may also lead to a fragmentation of audiences and a reduction in the shared viewing experiences that were once common with appointment viewing (LaBine, 2016). As a result, people may be less likely to engage in discussions and media content analysis with others, leading to a decrease in the shared beliefs, values, and experiences that shape their understanding of reality. Likewise, shared cultural memory refers to the collective experiences, traditions, and memories shared by a group of people within a culture (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008).

In other words, the social construction of reality theory suggests that people's perceptions of the world are shaped by the social context in which they live, rather than based on objective truth. This means that different groups or societies may have different understandings of what constitutes "reality," and that the social interactions and relationships within those groups shape these understandings (Elder-Vass, 2012).

Socio-Cultural Tradition

Socio-cultural tradition is one of Robert Craig's seven traditions for explaining communication theory. It focuses on the shared meanings and culture common among members of a particular community, sometimes even on an unconscious level. However, examining communication from a broader sociological perspective requires a thorough investigation of the context of the shared culture to understand how and why it differs from other cultures. The socio-cultural tradition provides a well-researched framework for studying the shared cultural memory of individuals who stream video content from OTT networks and is thus relevant to this study.

Background of the Socio-Cultural Tradition

In 1999, Robert T. Craig, an American communication theorist, identified seven categories of communication traditions, each of which provides a unique perspective on how communication is created and perpetuated within a community (Craig, 1999). The socio-cultural tradition focuses on the context of society's shared culture rather than each member's individual preferences (Craig & Xiong, 2021). This approach shares some similarities with Gerbner's micro-focused approach in the cultivation analysis. However, the theory has its roots in 20th-century sociological and anthropological thought, with significant contributions from Charles H. Cooley and George Mead, two American sociologists in the early 20th century (Magut, 2016, p.

2). One key aspect of this theory is that it studies patterns in the interactions and norms of a group in order to understand how "culture is created through communication" (Magut, 2016, p. 2). It is based on the concept of tabula rasa, or the idea that individuals are born without inherent knowledge of norms, language, or beliefs and instead learn these values over time from various sources (Johansen & Frandsen, 2020). As a result, this theory explores how communities create the realities of a shared culture through communication and interaction.

Current State of the Socio-Cultural Tradition

Through the lens of socio-cultural tradition, media theorist Douglas Rushkoff explores society's disconnection from the physical world in his article "We Interrupt This Program." Accompanied by illustrations from Ted McGrath, the article critically examines society's overreliance on social media without fully understanding the implications of this reliance. Rushkoff argues that if students and adults do not understand the purpose of the programs they are using, they are "less likely to become power users than the user" (Rushkoff, 2011, p.1). He explicitly critiques schools that adopt a one-to-one laptop teaching and communication strategy without "having any real sense of purpose about the highly technologized program they have implemented" (Rushkoff, 2011, p. 1). He cites a college in Tennessee as an example of this, where a shift to a highly interactive cyber era led to changes in how students communicated, even when they were physically in the same place. For instance, the college replaced a physically interactive assembly that had been in place for over 20 years with a virtual simulation. Rushkoff argues that this is misguided, as "a virtual classroom may be a great solution for distance learning, but it is an unnecessary contrivance for those who are in the same place at the same time" (Rushkoff 2011, p. 2). While technology can undoubtedly benefit teaching,

communication, and research, Rushkoff and Turkle argue that people and institutions blindly adopt virtual spaces without considering the negative impact on physical relationships.

One of the limitations of the socio-cultural tradition of communication, as identified by Craig (2015), is the vast array of communication definitions. This can make it challenging to identify common patterns in communication practices across different communities. Despite this limitation, Craig (2015) attempted to address it by considering a range of definitions and narrowing them down to the seven traditions he identified. Despite the varying communication dynamics between communities, Craig recognized that specific patterns can still be discerned through this approach. However, it is worth noting that this limitation highlights the need for caution in applying this theory, as it may only account for some of the complexities and nuances of communication within a specific community. Overall, the socio-cultural tradition provides a valuable framework for understanding the shared meanings and cultural practices that shape communication within a community. However, it should be considered within the context of its limitations.

Applying the Socio-Cultural Tradition to OTT Networks and Our Shared Cultural Memory

The socio-cultural tradition is a framework that explains how culture and society influence the way individuals think, feel, and behave (Turkle, 2011). It suggests that people are shaped by their culture's norms, values, and beliefs and social interactions with others. In the context of OTT networks, the socio-cultural tradition can be used to understand how the content shared on these platforms reflects and influences the cultural values and beliefs of the audience. OTT networks, such as Netflix and Hulu, offer vast content that can appeal to many viewers. As

people watch and share this content, they may be influenced by the themes and messages presented in the shows and movies they consume.

One aspect of the socio-cultural tradition particularly relevant to OTT networks is the concept of shared cultural memory. Shared cultural memory refers to the collective memories, experiences, and knowledge shared by a group or society. This includes historical events, cultural practices, and shared narratives (Assmann, 2011). OTT networks can significantly shape shared cultural memory by presenting and promoting individual stories and perspectives. For example, a show that portrays a particular group of people in a certain way may influence how people in the audience think about that group. Similarly, a film that presents a historical event from a particular perspective may shape how people think about that event.

This way, OTT networks can serve as a medium through which cultural values and beliefs are transmitted and shared. As people watch and share content on these platforms, they may be influenced by the messages and themes presented, and these influences can shape their cultural understanding and memory (Köroğlu, 2019). The socio-cultural tradition provides a valuable framework for understanding how OTT networks and the content they share can influence and shape cultural values and shared cultural memory.

The socio-cultural tradition of communication theory highlights the role of culture in shaping communication practices and how people understand and interpret messages. It suggests that communication is not just a means of exchanging information but also a way for people to construct and maintain their cultural identity and belonging (Hirst & Manier, 2008). These perspectives highlight the importance of considering the cultural and social context in which communication and other social interactions occur, as it helps us better understand their meaning and impact.

Review of Literature

OTT insinuates the delivery of media (video and audio) across the internet to viewers that can effectively access it through a wide array of devices, including laptops, phones, TVs, and tablets (Hutchins, Li, & Rowe, 2019). It refers to anything not delivered via conventional satellite/cable or over-the-air frequencies. Consumers can purchase streaming boxes such as Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, and Chromecast. Also, they can buy gaming consoles like Xbox and PlayStation. OTT entails the payment of internet providers such as Xfinity for internet services to watch shows and films without necessarily using cable TV. The internet-connected devices are essential while streaming digital content through the home television. Yang & Lee (2018, p. 3) posited that streaming devices would succeed conventional smart televisions. Following the increased popularity of video streaming, OTT now dominates most internet traffic. It utilizes the strengths of the digital environment and the TV experience adored by customers.

Research conducted by Hesmondhalgh & Lobato (2019) points out that the spread of online video streaming is primarily responsible for the increase of OTT content, which currently makes up more than half of all traffic on the internet (Sadana & Sharma, 2021). OTT services have emerged as a viable alternative to the conventional cable package for millions of families, and the cost of these services is much lower (Ju, 2020). The low cost of OTT services is a significant factor in their rapid expansion since they are now accessible to even the poorest consumers.

OTT networks, such as Netflix and HBOMax, differ from traditional television in several important ways. Most notably, they do not follow a linear program schedule. Instead, they offer a wide range of content that viewers can access at their convenience using various internet-enabled devices. This flexibility is one of the reasons that OTT networks have quickly surpassed

traditional television channels in popularity (Lobato, 2019). In addition to offering convenience and flexibility to consumers, OTT networks also cater to the younger generation, who are often more internet-savvy (Wayne, 2017). As a result, they can advertise their programming with less lead time, sometimes only a few days or even hours before airing, and still attract significant viewers. Despite the rapid growth of OTT networks, there is a research gap in terms of how these platforms' target consumers share information about upcoming programming. Most studies have yet to focus on this aspect of OTT network usage, leaving room for further exploration and understanding of how these platforms shape shared cultural experiences and memories.

According to Albrecht et al. (2020), it is inevitable that each new technological advancement will pave the path for the next. Video streaming is susceptible to the same criticisms (Bignell, 2019). Broadcast media is experiencing a change in how it provides material to the average consumer, similar to the transition from radio to television (Bignell, 2019). By making it possible to watch new releases online and on mobile devices, via-the-top (also known as "OTT") and media streaming are revolutionizing the film and television industries (Klatt, 2022). With more and more Americans cutting the cord and moving to paid streaming services, we must ask how the advent of OTT networks and video streaming applications has changed our relationship with television and what this implies for our shared cultural history.

According to a qualitative study conducted by Chen et al. (2020) a few decades ago, having a regular time watching television was considered a luxury. To see the program, they had to determine when it would be shown and then wait until it started. For example, if it aired on Monday, the individual must be at home ready to watch it. Chen et al. (2019) indicate that people could sometimes abandon their duties and follow the programs from the initial to the final stage (Clemm et al., 2020). Those who could not see the program when it was first shown must either

watch a rebroadcast or wait for it to become available on demand. OTT services ushered in a paradigm shift that completely transformed the business (Clemm et al., 2020). Users are gravitating more and more toward services that can quickly fulfill their needs (Clemm et al., 2020). Businesses continue to create more opportunities and reinforce the application of OTT services (Esch, 2022). There is no longer a need to wait for the next episode when they are available online to watch whenever they want (Fitzgerald, 2019). Numerous movies and shows air at any time of the day and are accessible through a remote, button, or smartphone. Video streaming has increased the opportunity to watch content from any location and at any time. OTT content is vastly accessible, making it more popular among users.

García-Soidán et al. (2020) assert that the distribution of audio and video material to customers through the internet is through a diverse selection of devices such as televisions, tablets, mobile phones, and computers (Chen et al., 2020). The diversity of information on different devices has enhanced communication and sharing of ideas globally. Everything transmitted in a manner other than terrestrial broadcasts or cable/satellite systems refers to OTT (Guo et al., 2021). With only a minimal cost, OTT has replaced the conventional cable bundle in millions of households (Hesmondhalgh & Lobato, 2019). Notably, it foresaw the adoption of anytime TV rather than traditional appointment television (Hamilton et al., 2020). Together with video streaming, OTT has revolutionized streaming service providers such as Amazon Prime, Disney+, Netflix, HBOMax, Hulu, and many more. Consumers need a connected device and a high-speed internet connection to stream OTT content. Mobile OTT devices such as tablets and smartphones are getting structured to effectively download OTT applications for immediate streaming (Hong, 2021). Also, consumers can access OTT content through web browsers or desktop-based apps.

Furthermore, it switched the regularly broadcast programs to ones that could be seen at the viewer's convenience anytime they wanted (Khoo, 2022). OTT video streaming services, such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, Disney+, Apple TV, and HBOMax, have recently gained popularity (Mondal, 2022). Some examples of these services include the following: it seems as if there is always a new service that one may experiment with around every corner (Klatt,2022). Consumers have access to hundreds of movies and television shows with a smartphone, a remote control, or a button (Lavadera et al.,2020). The spread of internet video streaming services has drastically simplified access to information, making it possible to view videos whenever and wherever required.

The rise of OTT services has been met with both excitement and concern in the entertainment industry. While these platforms offer a convenient and flexible way to access a wide range of content, some people worry that they may lead to the decline of traditional television (Fitzgerald, 2019). With everything stored in the cloud and accessed through mobile devices, consumers no longer need to purchase or save anything and can instead click to view an almost limitless array of entertainment options (Lavadera et al., 2020). Moreover, OTT services do not impose the same restrictions on programming or channels as traditional television (Farooq & Raju, 2019).

However, recent research by Zhang (2021) suggests that the convenience of having access to such a wide variety of video entertainment may also have downsides. While OTT platforms offer many benefits, they may also have associated costs and drawbacks (Lombardero et al., 2019). As such, it is essential to carefully consider the potential impacts of these platforms on the entertainment industry and our cultural experiences and memories. Yousaf et al. (2021) argues that, just like memory, the media do not simply disclose reality but offer constructions of

historical events instead. Media are not just neutral accommodators and carriers of information about past happenings. They seem to interconnect the different versions of past events and individuals' cultural beliefs, traditions, and norms; tenets of collective identity are, in fact, first taking place (Sadana & Sharma, 2021). Additionally, specific modes of connecting past events relate to the available advanced media technologies. For example, the detailed happenings of the early nineteenth-century historiographies lacked a counterpart outside the passing through the medium of books (Chen, 2019).

The media is essential in passing cultural memories from one generation to another (Saha, 2021). The media conveys messages and plays an essential role in developing the force that influences our thinking, communicating, remembering, and perceiving modalities. Mediality focuses on the idea that our connection to the general world is shaped and primarily influenced by the possibilities for indifferences that the media creates and the hindering factors they create (Parikh, 2020). Mediality instead represents the critical condition for the occurrence of cultural memory. Cultural memory is not fixed but a dynamic feature when viewed through the lens of remediation (Patnaik et al., 2021). It is a term given to the ongoing transcription process from one medium mode to another. Digital media, basically the OTT platforms, have shaped and have continued to influence historical events across the different cultures in the present society (Saini, 2020).

History has it that new technology always features new and likable innovations. Since the age of crushing radio stars, cassettes, and DVDs, OTT has presented a new wave of innovation. Though OTT sought to bolster the entertainment world, some thought it was a substitute meant to topple traditional television (Ver Meulen, 2015). Video streaming enables people to watch anything at their comfort and convenience, and its existence in the cloud removes the stress of

acquiring support infrastructure. We must consider that OTT platforms would be less viable among older members of society (Sharma, 2021). However, the young generation can only imagine a world with OTT (Sadana & Sharma, 2021). The best argument for differentiating OTT as a TV cable replacement relies on the platform users in different locations and age groups. In developing countries, OTT is only popular among consumers living in urban areas and with high-speed internet access. In recent years, studies have exposed the downsides of having access to video entertainment. Exelmans & Van den Bulck (2017) highlight how a *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine* study established links between depression, insomnia, increased fatigue, and mediocre sleep quality with extensive binge-watching.

The streaming era has evolved people's perception of television. With entertainment companies releasing episodes regularly, the concept of binge-watching has taken over. Video streaming services and OTT networks are exploiting consumers' psychological weaknesses (Flayelle, Verbruggen, et al., 2020). Humans should replace the perception of video streaming services as part of tradition with the thought that they are only a faceless consuming algorithm intended to feed consumers' addictive content. Clinical psychologists' studies indicate that binge-watching episodes of the same show triggers the release of dopamine in the brain (Zhang, 2020). Health experts are wary of the rate at which binge-watching instances replace the precious time previously used for sleeping, socializing, and exercising (Flayelle, Maurage, et al., 2020). It has led to increased risks of cardiovascular diseases, sleep problems, behavioral addictions, and depression. Similarly, binge-watching yields poor lifestyle choices and unhealthy diet habits. In addition to sacrificing sleep, binge-watching encourages sedentary behaviors and heavy consumption of snacks and unhealthy meals (Srinivasan et al., 2022).

Many with a wide variety of streaming options often fall into the trap of epic, miniseries marathons, and auto-loading TV. Engagement in activities that trigger dopamine ensures that the brain enables continuous engagement (Bressan & Crippa, 2005). For instance, the brain keeps directing the person to indulge in the watching, and they comply. Experts have observed people getting addicted to continuously watching TV shows. The neuropathways involved in developing sex and drug addiction also play a key role in triggering pleasure chemicals that lead to binge-watching. Such findings directly relate to what most individuals experience throughout their lifespan. There exists a correlation between viewing habits and the prevalence of diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and even most mortalities (Gardiner et al., 2011). Nonetheless, correlation does not necessarily imply causation since individuals can lead healthy video streaming habits by moderating their indulgence. Physical inactivity due to prolonged exposure includes some of the critical dangers of overindulgence in video streaming.

Binge-watchers lose their social space, a key ingredient in keeping the brain happy. Watching TV episodes continuously for more than six hours at the expense of interacting with friends and family could trigger problems and even lead to depression. (Exelmans & Van den Bulck, 2017). Binge-watching becomes alarming when one starts skipping essential activities at the expense of films. Notably, it poses a negative impact when one becomes socially isolated. Thus, people should balance their video streaming time and other life activities. Additionally, binge-watching is monotonous and could make one's favorite show less enjoyable. Research by the University of Melbourne demonstrates how participants of several binge-watching episodes in a single sitting said to have enjoyed the show "significantly less." The results show otherwise for those that watched the weekly episodes over the six weeks. (Horvath, Horton, Lodge, & Hattie, 2017). The encounter with a new TV show establishes a closer connection with the plot,

characters, and world depicted in the film. Similarly, an individual comprehends the evolution of the character's life experiences. It thus creates room for dialogue between friends and family regarding how things panned out.

Current Ongoing Research

Jain (2021) notes that OTT networks dominate the digital world. OTT networks will increase in the coming years because of the increasing number of content creators and original shows. It is essential to have a general view of OTT networks as the new mode of entertainment, how it has affected content viewers' cultures and traditions, and how the effects pass to the present generation (Katherine Chen, 2019). Studies have realized some critical changes in convenience, cost, and the overall demand for content in this platform meant for the present generation (Jain, 2021). The original, convenient, and new contents are critical grounds for easy access to cultural changes. The research on the viewership of people on OTT networks' available content seeks to disclose the changing code of conduct among consumers and how the changing trends of OTT have championed the changes in behaviors.

Kamei (2019) attempts to explain the differences in the entertainment culture and argues that the emergence of OTT networks has impacted the viewing experience and these modes by transforming them into a drastic one. In the present world, content viewers are mainly focused and considerate of the new and original content, which the current multiplexes need help replicating. Though the emergence of OTT has brought down the order, it is the only network able to accommodate these changes in content viewing and demand (Revati et al., 2021). So many different options exist, but a critical issue arises as to what elements greatly influence the consumer's decision on whether to stream content online or in theaters. Various factors impact the viewership of content on OTT networks. The factors include age, content, location, and

convenience. It is essential to analyze the factors likely to attract consumers' ability to make appropriate decisions in choosing a particular OTT network.

Malewar & Bajaj (2020) cover OTT networks, such as Netflix, Amazon, and Hulu, as the essential players transforming the modes of entertainment in the present world. Over the past decades, people used to assemble in a familiar place to enjoy content aired on television, a culture that diminished following the launching of OTT networks. Researchers argue that traditional forms of entertainment and content are becoming outdated, and thus online streaming platforms are significantly rising. It is evident in the diminishing utilization of linear televisions. These cable networks are stuck with outdated content because they need help to create new content, particularly during the pandemic (Malewar & Bajaj, 2020). In this circumstance, people became interested in OTT networks where they could access new and original content. As a result, many production companies and studios are busy launching apps supported by OTT networks.

According to research published in the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, binge-watching can have negative impacts on sleep quality, fatigue levels, and depression, as well as increase the risk of developing insomnia (Lombardero et al., 2019). Furthermore, it can negatively affect people's overall health and lifespan. Therefore, it is recommended to set boundaries when using OTT services to improve one's health (Wayne, 2017). Sarrionandia and Mikolajczak's research (2020) suggests that broadcasting companies and OTT networks use emotional triggers to increase viewership, leading people to view video streaming not as a leisure activity but as a means of satisfying the algorithms of faceless corporations. As a result, our perspective on watching videos online should shift, and we should consider it in a different light (Taherkhani & Moradi, 2022). The shift in American consumption from traditional TV to OTT

platforms represents a creative and innovative departure from traditional modes of thinking about these services (Taherkhani & Moradi, 2022). Additionally, experts in clinical psychology have found that viewing multiple episodes of the same program in rapid succession can lead to increased dopamine synthesis in the brain (Zhang, 2021). Overall, it is crucial to be aware of the potential negative impacts of binge-watching and take steps to mitigate them to maintain healthy habits and well-being.

Now that there are many options for online streaming of TV shows and movies, consumers binge-watch infinite episodes that play continuously on autopilot (Vizcaino et al., 2020). Binge-watching has led to changes in culture and behavior. For instance, dopamine, a neurotransmitter produced in our bodies whenever we engage in physical exercise, is not put much in use because of binge-watching in most Americans, thus contributing to some mental problems. Researchers have seen that people develop behaviors akin to those addicted to television (Kim et al., 2021). When a person spends a significant amount of time in front of the television, the brain experiences the same pleasure chemicals produced when someone becomes hooked on drugs or sex (Babulak, 2021). The same chemical response in the brain that gives them pleasure might negatively impact their mental health (Wakefield, 2020). As a direct result of this, the neural circuits in the brain that are accountable for dependence are the same ones.

Matrix (2014) indicates that streaming platforms such as Netflix have found a way to expedite our natural urge to watch complete programs that are not available on other platforms, similar to how social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram are structured to capitalize on users' innate need to get affirmation from their peers (Raikar, 2017). The American

population has a severe problem with unresolved loose ends in stories and dialogues (Hernández-Ortega et al., 2022).

Based on cultural proximity and cultural discount theories, Netflix is of particular interest and appeals to the upper middle class and the elite (Straubhaar et al., 2019). Research conducted by Park & Kwon (2019) indicates that when people engage time or emotion in a character or storyline on television, their brains give those characters or storylines our sentiments. The brain creates many imaginary images (Jung & Melguizo, 2022). Therefore, the individual is not only feeling a little thrill; they are also emotionally immersed in the tale on an emotional level, with a true psychological predisposition, and they want to see it through to the finish. Furthermore, individuals who watch these programs too much may feel exhilarated (Farooq & Raju, 2019). That individual can put off joining the actual world until they have seen how the stories they are living out in their fantasy world wrap up. From this perspective, the users can make conclusions about the merits and demerits of the story they have been watching.

As a result of the spread of OTT networks and video streaming services, viewers no longer need to spend a whole week waiting to view a single episode of a show on traditional broadcast television before returning to their regularly scheduled activities (Farooq & Raju, 2019). It is only natural for fans to experience exhaustion after finishing the most current season of their preferred emotionally manipulative show. Due to the time and effort necessary to watch episodes in a single sitting, it was anticipated that people watching these OTT programs would feel this way (Hutchins et al., 2019). This tendency is precariously coming to an end since, once the opening credits have shown, the quantity of input that the brain gets diminishes dramatically, which is why the opening credits are so crucial (Sadana & Sharma, 2021). As a result of the brain stimulation, OTT networks broadcast the entire season of their series all at once. Following

the conclusion of each episode, these companies also provide a preview of the following episode (Mulla, 2022).

The preview of the next episode leaves the viewers in suspense; hence they are motivated to watch the next episode and follow up on the whole story (Mandal et al., 2017). Preview of episodes will allow the brain to instruct a person on handling the tension brought on by a cliffhanger (Lavadera et al., 2020). However, the excitement wears off very soon, and we need to find new energy sources. Since there are no commercial breaks between episodes, a person will view more than he intended, thus creating mental fatigue (George et al., 2020).

Moreover, this should not come as a surprise; binge-watching causes poor sleep quality, weariness, and individuals reporting increased stress and sadness. Reading a book is associated with a higher risk of having adverse impacts on one's health but sitting still and watching television has fewer adverse health consequences (Horeck et al., 2018). Reading raises intelligence because it increases the number of neural pathways in the brain, allowing the reader to concentrate for extended periods, learn new words, and maybe even become smarter (intelligence quotient). Reading improves one's intelligence (Taherkhani & Moradi, 2022). In their research, Sarrionandia and Mikolajczak found that avid readers had higher emotional quotients than those who did not read as much (2020). That is because readers are in a position to form mental representations of the fictional persons they encounter (Horeck et al., 2018). The view of imagery of characters leads to happiness, mercy, pity, or joy based on the nature and activities of the characters.

Video streaming services often have an auto-play feature, allowing users to watch their content without getting up and finding the remote control (Pistonesi, 2018). This convenience can lead to decreased physical activity, as individuals are less likely to meet their stand or step

goals when they binge-watch television (Rubenking et al., 2018). Research has shown that, on average, those who watch less television burn more calories at rest, regardless of whether or not they engage in more strenuous physical exercise (Guo et al., 2022). This is true even if they maintain their current activity levels. While a sedentary lifestyle significantly contributes to weight gain, reducing television and internet consumption can help burn calories and reduce obesity (Rigamonti et al., 2020). This, in turn, can lead to improved healthcare outcomes and increased physical activity. It is, therefore, essential to be mindful of the potential impacts of video streaming on physical activity and to take steps to maintain a healthy balance.

Research conducted by Bignell (2019) indicates that reading, playing a board game, or even performing basic housework require more significant mental effort, leading to higher caloric expenditure. Reading, playing a board game, or even doing simple housework requires an individual's mental ability (Chen et al., 2020). Therefore, prolonged periods of viewing might lower the amount of sleep a person gets each night and the quality of sleep, resulting in a sleep debt that lasts long after they stop binge-watching. According to studies by García-Soidán et al. (2020), the time a person spends sleeping drops by an average of 34% when they watch more than 18 hours of TV per week. As a consequence, there is a possibility that it will affect other endeavors (Clemm et al., 2020). For example, reduced physical activity time improves cardiovascular and basic metabolic functions.

Since its early days, Netflix has predominantly utilized recommendation algorithms (Hallinan & Striphas, 2016). The continued dominance of streaming services in the entertainment industry has ensured that they progressively enhance their recommendation mechanisms. Notably, they utilize the data provided by individual members on their preferred content and interactions to determine the closest thing that pleases them. The algorithmic library

is frequently adjusted, creating a counter effect on traditional libraries. Rather than building a shared cultural memory, it negatively impacts it. The ability of video streaming to algorithmically offer unlimited content presents a downside of erasing history or even appreciating previously released shows.

Subscribing to streaming services and over-the-top (OTT) platforms can lead to a loss of cultural experiences (Weispenning, 2003). For example, the 1974 premiere of "One Day at a Time" on CBS attracted over 17 million viewers, while a rerun of the show on Netflix gained over 300,000 viewers in less than a week (Manjoo, 2017). This suggests that fewer than 17 million people are watching entertainment content simultaneously (Manjoo, 2017), and instead, entertainment is made up of smaller cult followings. Netflix is one of many companies facing this challenge; other video streaming service providers are forced to reconsider what customers want to see and are likely to enjoy watching. Using algorithms to create and recommend content can also reduce serendipity and the desire to discover the world individually (Hagedoorn, 2017). It is essential to be aware of these potential impacts and consider how streaming services and OTT platforms shape our cultural experiences and memories.

Algorithms often limit the ability of OTT networks' users to preserve their shared culture (Seaver, 2017). While modern video streaming platforms have provisions that allow users to express themselves freely and explore different tastes, the aspect of algorithms limits the freedom of expression. TV shows and movies hold an integral part of our shared culture. Notably, they represent the diversity of attitudes and beliefs among populations and the continuous change experienced within an era. Algorithms enable humans to solve complex tasks and mundane problems (Fuduric et al., 2018). On the flip side, they limit individuals' ability to reflect and decide on their preferential content as they view things on a more varied scope. Their

design predicts the viewers' tastes and proposes similar components based on what the consumers have watched (Wasko & Meehan, 2020, Chapter 7). They group viewer habits according to their similarities, intending to present users with offers they are likely to prefer.

It is crucial to consider the role of OTT and video streaming in shaping shared cultural memory, which refers to the collective memory shared among individuals in society. Museums and historical monuments have traditionally been a way for people to interact with cultural memories. However, OTT networks offer access to historical documentaries through streaming platforms such as Amazon Prime, Netflix, and YouTube (Erll & Rigney, 2006). These services provide information about events that have shaped our current culture. In order to fully understand the impact of OTT on shared cultural memory, a comprehensive case study must be conducted examining how these platforms influence our understanding of culture. Such a study could provide valuable insights into how OTT shapes our shared cultural experiences and memories.

Video streaming platforms and over-the-top (OTT) networks have significantly impacted the way consumers view media content by using algorithms to tailor recommendations based on individual preferences (Frey, 2021). This has led to a reliance on these recommendations rather than actively seeking out content that aligns with one's interests and desires. As a result, consumers may be exposed to a broader range of content but are also more likely to rely on algorithms to guide their media consumption. This shift in how we access and consume media has the potential to shape our cultural experiences and memories in significant ways.

The reliance on algorithms to recommend content on video streaming platforms and OTT networks poses a risk to user autonomy. Critics have argued that these algorithms often serve commercial interests rather than genuinely interacting with users (Hallinan & Striphos, 2016),

leading to a cycle of consumption that may not align with one's cultural values. Disruptive technology can potentially have negative consequences, as highlighted by Postman (1992), who argued that technology could shape civilization and alter our understanding of truth and facts. While further research is necessary to understand better the mechanisms behind video streaming and OTT and how they can enhance the TV experience while maintaining shared cultural memory, it is undeniable that these platforms have revolutionized content consumption and provided cost-effective alternatives to traditional cable options.

Opportunities or Gaps in the Existing Literature

There are many gaps in current research on the potential impacts of video streaming on health. Studies have suggested that Americans may have an increased risk of developing diabetes and cardiovascular disease and may even have a higher risk of premature mortality (Later, 2018). Vizcaino et al. (2020) have found a link between the amount of time a person spends in front of the television and mortality (Fitzgerald, 2019). However, it is essential to note that while there may be a correlation between these factors, it does not necessarily mean that one causes the other (Esch, 2022). Much of the existing research on this topic has focused on the sedentary behavior associated with prolonged streaming movie viewing. It is possible to maintain a healthy relationship with video streaming as long as it is used in moderation, like any other activity. However, more research is needed to understand the potential health impacts of streaming and identify ways it can be used safely and responsibly.

Research conducted by García-Soidán et al. (2020) indicates that people who watch television shows nonstop are missing out on opportunities for social connection, which is another way our brains are satisfied. Social interaction is essential for developing social and communication skills (Guo et al., 2021). Furthermore, a person may watch many episodes over

six hours, which takes away from the time they might spend with their loved ones (Hamilton et al., 2021). It is possible that this also has a role in the incidence of sadness. The problem arises when binge-watching takes precedence over other activities we need to engage in more often (Herman et al., 2019). Finding out how streaming may enhance one's lifestyle and ensuring that it can do so in an integrated manner are the two most essential steps in using streaming services. Moreover, binge-watching tends to dampen a person's excitement for their chosen TV show and make watching television less enjoyable (Khoo, 2022).

According to findings from a study carried out by the University of Melbourne, individuals who watched a large number of episodes of a program in a single sitting reported "substantially less" enjoyment from the show when compared to viewers whose viewing was spread out over a more significant period (Herman et al., 2019). On the other hand, participants will watch one episode weekly for six weeks. When someone watches a new television program many times, they get more engrossed in the lives of the characters and the universe in which they live. If they follow a character's life for a while, they will have a better idea of the amount of time that has gone by the time they reach the end of the story (Klatt, 2022).

Even as traditional norms around television viewing have undergone significant changes, many Americans have turned to social platforms, and streaming services like Netflix and Amazon for their entertainment needs rather than traditional TV programs. These platforms may use data on viewers' habits to innovate and create new content that reflects the diverse interests of their subscribers (Lombardero et al., 2020). However, some critics argue that these companies produce more content to keep people on their websites for extended periods (Sarrionandia & Mikolajczak, 2020). It is worth noting that when users sign up for Netflix in the United States,

they do not have access to a catalog page to explore the hundreds of titles available for streaming in their country.

Netflix can deliver customized suggestions to its customers because of algorithms, which give the impression that the service is more catered to the user's preferences than it is (Taherkhani & Moradi, 2022). Netflix's interfaces algorithm also has a security code that ensures the information of the organization, and consumers is free from cyber-attack. Each algorithm is a set of guidelines stored in a computer's memory; these guidelines eventually determine what we perceive (Vizcaino et al., 2020). Many machine learning algorithms decide what a user sees, including the user's preferences, search terms, ratings, and comparable content from other users (Guo et al., 2021). In machine learning, Netflix focuses on short-term and long-term viewers' preferences. They have a personalized ranking model that generates relevant recommendations (Bhattacharya & Lamkhede, 2022). These algorithms build, implement, analyze, and "industrialize" models via the use of offline experiments as well as online A/B testing (Zhang, 2021). The final invention aims to improve the organization's activities and enhance the consumers' activities.

Since Netflix cannot provide instant access to its entire catalog, the company must filter the content it makes available to customers (Kim et al., 2018). This helps users find and select products quickly, but it also means that content quality and variety may only be consistent. As a result, Netflix must not only recommend popular shows but also those that may be less well-known to provide a more individualized and engaging viewing experience (Farooq & Raju, 2019). To do this, Netflix uses carefully selected previews of upcoming releases and suggestions based on users' watching history and preferences as determined by similarity scores and titles

(Raikar, 2017). It has been reported that the platform's algorithm plays a role in the viewing choices of more than 95% of Netflix users (Pilipets, 2019).

The competition is fierce among established players in the OTT market, such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+. Many other streaming services are also entering the market with new technologies and content offerings, hoping to capture a share of the multibillion-dollar industry (Bignell, 2019). This growth significantly threatens traditional media outlets like movie theaters and cable and satellite television. A study conducted by the Data Sciences Division of Dentsu Aegis Network (DAN) America found that the practice of "binge-watching" as a cultural phenomenon is on the rise, particularly among younger generations, due in part to feelings of boredom (Esch, 2022). It is clear that the OTT industry will continue to evolve and shape the way we consume media in the future.

In light of the stakes, Netflix has committed a significant amount of time and effort to enhance the quality of its suggestions by combining the most recent and most cutting-edge discoveries as well as the most successful methods in the applicable scientific and technological disciplines (Straubhaar et al., 2019). They can do this by analyzing the data their users supply, including the types of content their users desire to interact with and watch. Furthermore, a like button on the platform allows the consumer to give feedback based on the service quality (Ramasoota & Kitikamdhorn, 2021). That allows them to predict better which shows will quickly rise to the top of the favorites list. However, the magnitude and frequency of this algorithmic library's modifications cause it to have an inverse impact on traditional libraries (Farooq & Raju, 2019). It does not contribute to preserving our common past but works toward erasing it, indicating that one disadvantage of video streaming services is that their users may become less appreciative of television (Farooq & Raju, 2019). Because of OTT video

subscription streaming services, we no longer share the same sense of a shared cultural experience.

Netflix is not alone in this regard. Because algorithms drive OTT networks, it is hard for its users to continue engaging in the cultural practices they have in common (Hutchins et al., 2019). People are now able to express themselves via a variety of video streaming websites that tailor to their particular preferences. Despite this, algorithms still clearly control the degree to which consumers can express themselves (Mulla, 2022). The films and shows we regularly view on the small screen are part of the culture (Mandal et al., 2017). Not only do they reflect the ideas and attitudes held in common by our many different cultures, but they also undergo ongoing changes throughout any given age.

Algorithms are excellent instruments for people to do everyday jobs or handle complex challenges. Although they serve a useful purpose, they limit people's capacity to make choices according to their tastes (Park, 2017). The world seen through an algorithm's eyes is very different from that seen through humans'. Although the algorithms match viewers' choices with related things they have previously viewed, it takes this notion further by grouping viewers' behaviors with those of other people with similar interests (Guo et al., 2022). This move takes this idea one step further and eliminates the possibility of viewers accidentally tuning in to shows they had no intention of watching in the first place. Guo et al. (2022) indicate that the proliferation of OTT networks and platforms capable of streaming video has substantially hampered customers' abilities to discover new content and broaden their perspectives on the world (Horeck et al., 2018). OTT network algorithms remove the user's ability to make decisions and long-held assumptions about what the user wants to watch (Frey, 2021). Because of this, many users depend on suggestions rather than examining the catalog on their OTT streaming

platform. Which means they can lose out on something intriguing that the algorithm does not suggest.

Therefore, if customers trust these proposals, they will experience a reduced amount of autonomy. Despite this development, Netflix's recommendation algorithms have come under fire for allegedly contributing to a retrograde advertising cycle (Pistonesi, 2018). According to this theory, this cycle occurs when consumer culture ceases to question its customers and instead reflects the preferences of those customers (Hamilton et al., 2021). The fact that the algorithm will be in charge of deciding the genres of movies and television series created in the future presents a challenge for society. Due to prior involvement with innovative technology, we are aware that there is always the potential for unexpected repercussions (Postman, 1992). This shift in how we interact with television may have far-reaching repercussions on our cultural memory. However, further research is needed to comprehend the impacts' full scope properly. Video streaming and OTT networks have transformed how we connect with television (Mulla, 2022). The growth of OTT networks and streaming media providers have entirely transformed how we consume information.

Summary

Shared cultural memories play a crucial role in television and media (Ketelaar, 2005). These shared cultural memories help explain how people share their experiences of the content they have accessed on TV. The shift from traditional television models to OTT networks has significantly impacted the concept of shared memories. In the modern age, the issue of preserving memories of what one has watched and been able to share via social media platforms has become increasingly important. OTT services have enabled people to communicate in real-time, regardless of physical distance (Lobato, 2019). They often operate outside of regulatory

dynamics, likely contributing to their rapid growth in the media industry. People can communicate in real-time without incurring high costs and sharing memories after watching videos and other content is no longer limited to one's immediate social circle. This is especially true in the digital age, where people prefer communicating via social platforms to traditional face-to-face communication (Wright, 2016). These changes in communication routines and models directly affect shared cultural memories, as people no longer have to memorize what they have watched (Gambarato et al., 2022). OTT networks and developments in internet technology have shortened the time between when one finishes watching a video, and the time it takes to share the content or experience with the rest of society.

In this regard, Lobato (2019) explains that the shift in media production and consumption significantly impacts memories and mediating practices. That also affects people's understanding of the world when exposed to many cultures and traditions through OTT networks and social media platforms. Besides, streaming media continues accumulating the power to share past, present, and future narratives. They are not limited to any physical boundaries. Hence, the information and content viewers access via OTT networks, in most cases, is global. However, during the COVID-19 lockdown period, it became apparent that digital media has transformed how people access and share information (Gambarato et al., 2022). One of the key advantages of the new media platforms is that they offer great accessibility compared to traditional television. Besides, viewers can go back to the archives and access content they might have missed when it was first aired (Bacon, 2020).

However, a downside study indicates that binge-watching has increased due to the increased freedom to watch what one wants and time on media. While binge-watching is not a new phenomenon, it is on the rise, mainly because of the addictive nature of OTT networks,

given that they offer consumers access to a wide range of video content (Steiner, 2018). That means that it is possible for one to watch more than two or three episodes of their favorite program in a single sitting, hence, reducing the productivity of the viewers, especially young adults. Besides, binge-watching also means less physical activity, therefore, increased risk of suffering from lifestyle-related illnesses in the future.

Nonetheless, there is no doubt that OTT networks have enhanced consumer experiences when it comes to watching videos. This can be attributed to quickly accessing as many episodes of their favorite shows as they desire. Besides, the consumers also have the freedom to choose the program they want to watch at a given time, which was not the case in traditional television. Another critical change in the media sector is the growth of social media platforms, which means that consumers can share their experiences with different shows and streaming websites in real-time. In the past, people would only share their experiences a day after watching videos or films. That allowed for the application of shared cultural memories, which is no longer the case since consumers can easily discuss the programs and content as they continue watching.

Since each user can watch whatever, they want, whenever they want, there is no longer a shared experience of watching television. People are less likely to come together and discuss their favorite show's latest episode or news story. With a shared collective memory, society is cohesive (Goldstein et al., 2018). People are less likely to empathize with others and understand their perspectives. It can lead to division and conflict.

The paper has discussed how the theoretical frameworks of OTT can be applied to the study of online social networks and how these networks may be causing the loss of shared collective memory in society (Bennett & Pfetsch, 2018). It is found that online social networks are often used to store and share personal memories, but these memories are only sometimes

shared with others and are often lost when users leave the network. This loss of shared memory may contribute to society's fragmentation.

OTT networks may hinder shared memory development and negatively affect society (Bennett & Pfetsch, 2018). Additional study is required to fully comprehend OTT networks' effects on memory and social cohesion. While OTT networks have many benefits, this article highlights a potential downside of these networks. It is essential to consider these networks' impact on society and ensure that we maintain critical aspects of our social cohesion.

George Gerbner developed cultivation theory in the mid-20th century, around the same time that Berger and Luckmann published their study on the social construction of reality. Craig's research builds upon various studies from the 20th century, ultimately leading to the identification of seven traditions that examine different aspects of the communication process. The socio-cultural tradition aligns closely with Gerbner's cultivation theory in its focus on the shared patterns among community members at a macro level. This current study expands upon these arguments by examining the role of OTT networks in creating shared cultural memories.

George Gerbner's cultivation theory is a theory in the communication studies field that examines television's long-term effects on viewers' perceptions, attitudes, and values. Gerbner argued that heavy television consumption could cultivate a shared set of beliefs and values among a population, shaping their understanding of the world and their place within it. This theory emerged in the mid-20th century, around the same time that Berger and Luckmann published their influential study on the social construction of reality, which examined the role of social interactions in shaping individuals' understandings of the world. Craig's research on communication processes builds upon a range of studies from the 20th century, culminating in identifying seven distinct traditions that each focus on a different aspect of communication.

The socio-cultural tradition is particularly relevant to Gerbner's cultivation theory, as it also focuses on the shared patterns and cultural practices among community members at a macro level. This current study expands upon these arguments by considering the role of OTT (over-the-top) networks in creating shared cultural memories. OTT networks provide streaming video content directly to viewers over the internet, bypassing traditional cable or satellite television providers. These networks have become increasingly popular in recent years and offer a vast array of programming that can shape the shared cultural memories of those who consume them. By examining the role of OTT networks in creating shared cultural memories, this study aims to further our understanding of the long-term effects of media consumption on the beliefs, attitudes, and values of viewers.

Through the lens of cultivation theory, this study aims to investigate the role of OTT networks in shaping shared cultural memories through advanced communication channels that facilitate instant communication across geographical boundaries. By utilizing semi-structured interviews, the research will examine how respondents use these platforms to share information, experiences, and ideas about media content with others and how this influences the construction of shared cultural values within a global community. Through a socio-cultural tradition of communication theory perspective, the study will also explore the impact of the international nature of OTT networks on the formation of shared cultural memories and how these memories are socially constructed and maintained. Additionally, considering that young adults are heavily engaged on social media platforms where they share experiences and ideas with people worldwide, the study will examine how this shift from sharing content within a personal social circle to a global audience affects the global shared cultural perceptions and memories, through a social construction reality theory framework.

In Chapter 3, you can expect a comprehensive overview of the research methodology employed in this study. We will delve into the qualitative paradigm, providing insights into why it was chosen as the most suitable approach for our research objectives. Additionally, we will discuss the critical aspects of sampling and sample selection, elucidating the rationale behind our choices. The chapter will also detail the research design, outlining the procedures employed to gather data. Furthermore, you will gain an understanding of the participants involved in the study and how they were selected. Lastly, we will clearly describe the research procedures, offering transparency into how the data was collected and analyzed. Chapter 3 forms the methodological framework that guides our exploration into the impact of OTT networks on our shared cultural memory.

CHAPTER THREE: METHOD

Overview

According to Steiner and Xu (2018), over-the-top (OTT) technology has revolutionized how consumers watch TV, as they can now choose which content to stream, when to stream it, and which devices to use. OTT networks refer to the transmission of sound, image, and other information over the internet, without the supervision of wireless carriers. The rise in popularity of "binge-watching" as a mode of TV viewing can be attributed to the success of internet-based OTT networks like Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Video. Steiner and Xu (2018) also argue that there is an intertwining of culture and technology through OTT networks, which enhances the audience's viewing experience and involves them more deeply in the fictional world of the show they are watching. This can lead to a temporary suspension of disbelief, where the audience temporarily sets aside their own lived experiences and focuses on the show's fictional world, emphasizing it above their reality while watching television. Overall, the rise of OTT technology has changed how people watch TV and create a new viewing experience shaped by culture and technology.

In the face of globalization, the quick uptake of digital technologies and the decline of traditional pay TV channels created a void (Ramasoota & Kitikamdhorn, 2021). OTT platforms have seized this opportunity and engaged better with their customers, micro-targeted them, customized their offerings, and leveraged the impending media collapse. Since viewers have grown promiscuous and have more options, this has made the playing field more competitive for OTT networks. Thus, OTT networks made structural changes to content generation, display, and distribution to draw viewers and win their loyalty. A survey of participants in Asia discovered that 73.7% had increased their binge-watching time because of the pandemic (Dixit et al., 2020).

According to an adult survey conducted in the U.S., 52% opined that the COVID-19 limits caused them to increase their streaming habits (Sadlier, 2020). In addition, Pew Research found that most adults (nine out of ten) watch media to cope, with 73% streaming content daily (Mitchell, 2020).

Compared to traditional television broadcasting, streaming platforms' content distribution and accessibility are more similar to those of websites (Tefertiller & Sheehan, 2019). With more freedom to choose and acquire material, streaming services have fundamentally altered how consumers interact with television. In contrast to traditional television, only some know why people use OTT services. Most recent studies on OTT streaming platforms have drawn heavily from earlier research conducted on television (Tefertiller & Sheehan, 2019). Although OTT networks are not a new technology, we need to understand how OTT networks and video streaming changed how we experience television and what it means for our shared cultural memory. OTT Networks and video streaming platforms have modified the way we consume content. All while providing a cost-effective alternative to cable.

According to LaBine (2016), the shift away from appointment viewing may impact the social construction of reality as it changes how people consume and experience media content. The social construction of reality theory suggests that people's understanding of the world is shaped by their interactions with others and the cultural context in which they live (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). When people watch shows and movies simultaneously, they are more likely to share the collective experience of viewing them, which can lead to a shared understanding and interpretation of the content. People can then discuss and analyze it with friends and family in the days following an airing.

This shift from appointment viewing may also impact cultivation theory, which explains how media consumption can shape people's perceptions of reality over time (Morgan et al., 2015). With appointment viewing, people were likelier to watch shows and movies simultaneously and share the collective experience of viewing them, leading to a shared understanding and interpretation of the content through discussions and analysis with others. This shared understanding and interpretation of media content can shape people's perceptions of the world around them. Overall, the shift away from appointment viewing may significantly impact how people consume and experience media content and their understanding of the world and their interactions with others.

According to Wertsch and Roediger (2008), shared cultural memory refers to the collective experiences, traditions, and memories shared by a group of people within a culture. These shared experiences can include historical events, cultural practices, and traditions passed down from generation to generation. Shared cultural memory can shape how members of a culture understand and interact with the world around them, as well as their sense of identity and belonging within the group.

The social construction of reality theory, as proposed by Berger and Luckmann (1966), suggests that people's understanding of the world is shaped by their interactions with others and the cultural context in which they live. This means that people's experiences and interpretations of events are influenced by their cultural background, which can differ from culture to culture. In other words, people's understanding of reality is not objective but is shaped by the cultural and social context in which they live.

According to Berger (2016), cultivation theory is critical because it highlights the potential influence of television on its viewers and raises essential questions about how media

can shape our attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. Cultivation theory suggests that heavy television viewing can shape people's attitudes and beliefs, ultimately influencing their behavior. This theory can also be applied to other forms of media, such as the internet, social media, and OTT networks, which may also have the ability to cultivate attitudes and beliefs in their users.

As applied to OTT networks, cultivation theory suggests that heavy viewing of OTT content may have similar effects on viewers as traditional television. In other words, viewing OTT content for extended periods may shape viewers' attitudes and beliefs and ultimately influence their behavior. This could be particularly relevant for OTT networks that focus on specific genres or topics, as they may strongly influence viewers who are heavily exposed to that content. According to Morgan et al. (2014), cultivation theory suggests that television can shape our shared cultural memory by influencing our attitudes, values, beliefs, and behavior over time.

As we consume media, we are exposed to specific ideas, stories, and images that can become ingrained in our collective consciousness. This can shape how we understand and remember our shared history and cultural experiences. For example, suppose a television show or film portrays a particular event or artistic practice in a certain way. In that case, it can influence our understanding and memory of that event or practice. Over time, if enough people are exposed to this portrayal version of the event or practice, it can become part of our shared cultural memory (Van den Bulck, 2004). In this way, cultivation theory suggests that the media we consume can significantly impact how we remember and understand our shared cultural experiences.

According to Haux et al. (2020), cultural memory refers to the constructed understanding of the past that people pass from one generation to the other through monuments, oral traditions, texts, rites, and other symbols. Cultural memory is culturally embedded, meaning individual

social interactions and relationships with objects shape it. Cultural memories consist of identity concretion, reconstruction capacities, formation, organization, obligation, and reflexivity.

Regardless of their medium, people bring their existing cultural memories and experiences to share information. The ongoing digitization culture challenges the existing societal, institutional, and corporate bonds that directly influence cultural memories. In other words, the shift towards digital media and communication technologies is changing how cultural memories are passed down and preserved, potentially disrupting traditional ways of preserving and sharing cultural knowledge.

Overall, cultural memory is an important concept that recognizes the significance of individual social interactions and relationships in shaping our understanding of the past and our cultural identities. It is also essential to consider how the ongoing digitization culture impacts how cultural memories are preserved and shared. Cultivation theory recognizes the potential for media to shape our attitudes, values, beliefs, and behavior over time, ultimately influencing our shared cultural memory and understanding of our shared cultural experiences. Shared cultural memory, Cultivation Theory, and the social construction of reality theory recognize the vital role culture and society play in shaping our understanding of the world and our interactions with others. They emphasize the importance of considering the cultural and social context in which communication and other social interactions take place to fully understand their meaning and impact.

The present study aims to investigate the factors contributing to creating a shared cultural memory of streaming video content on OTT networks within social networks. Specifically, the study aims to understand OTT network viewers' motivations, devices, shows/genres, duration, and social sharing habits. As OTT networks, which deliver streaming video content via the

internet, have gained increasing popularity in recent years, this study aims to gain insights into the reasons for their rise in usage. In addition, the study will examine how respondents access and share video content, including their preferred OTT networks, the devices they use for viewing, and how they share watched content with others.

The Qualitative Paradigm

In the proposed study, it is vital to consider the deployment of fair, honorable, and trustworthy rapport during the research. The strong connection between the researcher and the targeted participants ensures the retrieval of vital and deep concerns about the population regarding the subject matter (Østern et al., 2021). Studies reveal that it is possible to fail to acquire correct, valid, and reliable data when the participants view any form of distrust, harassment, or bias while conducting the investigations. Mutual agreements are vital between the researchers and their participants on the type of information they wish to disclose. However, it is critical in a study to ensure that the clients are conversant with the kind of research, why it is crucial, and the study's credibility (Østern et al., 2021). In such a way, all the stakeholders would reveal what they know best and give the frankest opinions regarding the question. Research on the participants' streaming habits will call for close interaction between the researcher and participants during this study.

Brief Rationale for Qualitative Approach

According to Graneheim et al. (2017), the interpretive paradigm prioritizes discussion between the researcher and available clients as negotiation, collaboration, and developing a familiar, meaningful rapport become the center of reality. The research must consider the study's specific setting, time, and context, without generalizing the results to other situations. The social construction of reality theory suggests that people's understanding of the world is shaped by their

interactions with others and the cultural context in which they live (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This means that the research must consider the participants' diversity and their subjective truths and viewpoints. The researchers should prioritize close interaction with the participants and understand their culture, beliefs, and priorities to comprehensively understand their OTT streaming behavior. The socio-cultural tradition of communication theory also emphasizes the importance of considering the cultural and social context in which communication and other social interactions take place to fully understand their meaning and impact (Hirst & Manier, 2008).

In this study, it is imperative to identify what the target audience loves and understand the unique behaviors of the population, as these factors will define the examination quality. Overall, the interpretive paradigm, the social construction of reality theory, and the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory all emphasize the importance of considering the study's specific setting, time, and context, as well as the diversity of the participants and their cultural and social context. This is necessary to understand the OTT streaming behavior of the participants comprehensively.

According to Graneheim et al. (2017), the critical realist paradigm challenges the idea that a complete understanding of reality is possible. This means a thorough examination mechanism is necessary to approximate the truth comprehensively. The critical examination aims to evaluate the researchers' objectivity and the investigated community's representation. Packard (2017) suggests that the qualitative aspect of the critical realist approach could include a purposeful sampling of the general population to identify a representative sample of subjects. This is important in studies of human behavior in the social sciences, as the qualitative aspects are often prioritized to understand better why, how, and where behavior is subject to change.

This study focuses on understanding human behavior and how OTT platforms may influence it. The scrutiny of detailed responses and elimination of possible barriers is critical to draw precise conclusions from the variables that constrained the study. Overall, the critical realist paradigm and the importance of qualitative research in the social sciences justify the focus on human behavior and the potential for change under the influence of OTT platforms.

According to Bernardo et al. (2018), the qualitative approach, which this study has primarily employed, will use semi-structured dialogues to achieve the exam objectives. The study aims to examine an understanding of how people watch video content on OTT platforms, with a focus on how people watch and share videos with society. The places and platforms where people access OTT content may vary, so the research seeks to explore these platforms. Based on the research question, the overall goal of this study is to determine how information on OTT spreads in society. The detailed examination will provide insight into the participants' video streaming routines using a framework and perspective drawn from the respondents' viewing routines. The aim is to explore the qualitative aspect of the participants' subscriptions to multiple video streaming services.

Cultivation theory suggests that heavy television viewing can shape people's attitudes and beliefs, ultimately influencing their behavior (Morgan et al., 2015). This theory can also be applied to other forms of media, such as OTT platforms, which may have the ability to cultivate attitudes and beliefs in their users. The social construction of reality theory suggests that people's understanding of the world is shaped by their interactions with others and the cultural context in which they live (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This means that the research must consider the participants' diversity and their subjective truths and viewpoints. The socio-cultural tradition of

communication theory also emphasizes the importance of considering the cultural and social context in which communication and other social interactions occur.

The use of semi-structured interviews as the primary research tool in this study, as described by Bell et al. (2022), aligns with the principles of Cultivation Theory, which posits that media exposure shapes individuals' perceptions of the world and affects their behavior. In-depth interviews, with open-ended questions that allow for honest and elaborative responses, allow participants to reflect on their own experiences and beliefs and gain new insights. This study's interviews can help cultivate a deeper understanding of the issues being examined by providing a forum for participants to share their perspectives. The selection of qualitative research methods, including semi-structured interviews, in this study (Bell et al., 2022) reflects the principles of The social construction of reality theory, which asserts that our understanding of the world is shaped by how we communicate and interact with others. By using open-ended questions to allow for honest and elaborative responses, the in-depth interviews in this study provide a space for participants to construct and share their interpretations and understandings of the issues being examined. The interviews can contribute to the ongoing construction and negotiation of shared meanings and realities through this process.

The use of semi-structured interviews as the primary research tool in this study (Bell et al., 2022) aligns with the principles of The sociocultural tradition of communication theory, which emphasizes the role of communication and social interaction in shaping individuals' thought processes and behaviors. The open-ended questions in the in-depth interviews allow participants to engage in dialogue and exchange ideas, allowing for the co-creation of meaning and understanding. By fostering an environment of collaborative communication, the interviews

in this study can facilitate the transfer of knowledge and cultural practices among the participants.

Sampling and Sample Selection

As Bingham et al. (2019) described, the proposed study employs a qualitative research approach to gain a rich and nuanced understanding of the research topic. The researcher will use various tools to gather data for this study, including semi-structured interviews, observations, and surveys. These methods provide a comprehensive and consistent view of the subject matter. In order to ensure that the research is conducted ethically and unbiasedly, the researcher will carefully select and recruit participants using uniform criteria. All participants must sign an informed consent form indicating their willingness to participate in the study. It is also crucial that both the researchers and the participants maintain a mutual understanding of the purpose and goals of the research and refrain from any actions that could compromise the integrity of the study.

To facilitate the research process, the researcher will make arrangements with the participants for a convenient time and place to conduct the interviews, surveys, and observations. Data analysis will be an ongoing process throughout the study. The researcher uses a software program with a coding system organized around different themes and topics to evaluate and report on the findings. By using a range of research methods and carefully considering the ethical implications of the study, the researcher aims to produce credible and reliable results that contribute to the understanding of the research topic.

The researcher will use the term purposeful sampling to describe this kind of case selection when the chosen participants have the potential to provide a wealth of information to address the research question. This study will select participants who will offer a better

foundation for a more in-depth comprehension of the research subject. The researcher aims to select participants based on convenience. According to Stratton (2021), convenience sampling is based on availability, time, cost, and other considerations.

As part of the proposed study, a specified portion of the respondents will be surveyed using Qualtrics to gather information about their video streaming habits. In addition, the researchers will conduct semi-structured interviews with all participants, taking notes and making observations about their attitudes, facial expressions, emotions, and behaviors that may influence their responses. According to Best et al. (2020), using various research methods can provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the research topic.

Qualtrics is a widely used online survey platform that allows researchers to create and distribute surveys to gather information from many respondents. In the proposed study, Qualtrics will survey a specified portion of the respondents to gather information on their video streaming habits and demographical details. However, it is essential to note that the survey is only being used as a recruitment tool to screen participants for the study. This means that the survey will be used to identify individuals willing to be interviewed and participate in the study rather than being the primary method of data collection.

There are several reasons why a researcher might choose to use a survey as a recruitment tool. One reason is that it allows the researcher to quickly and efficiently identify a pool of potential participants who meet the necessary criteria for the study. Using Qualtrics, the researcher can quickly reach many people and collect information about their video streaming habits and other relevant details. The use of the internet as a tool for conducting survey research has been widely recognized by researchers in various disciplines (Verghese, 2020). This is partly due to the increasing popularity of the internet as a means of communication and the decreasing

cost of computer hardware and software. Researchers can quickly access large numbers of hard-to-reach populations by posting invitations to participate in online communities such as newsgroups, chat rooms, and message boards. In contrast, finding an equivalent number of individuals with specific attributes, interests, and attitudes in a face-to-face research environment would take significantly longer. Online survey research also offers the added benefit of cost savings compared to traditional paper-based formats (Ságvári et al., 2019).

Overall, the internet provides a convenient and efficient way for researchers to conduct survey research, particularly when studying hard-to-reach populations or seeking to save time and money. However, researchers need to consider the limitations of online survey research, such as the potential for nonresponse bias and the need to ensure the security and confidentiality of the collected data (Constantin & Voicu, 2014). By considering these factors, researchers can effectively utilize the internet for survey research.

It is also vital for the researcher to consider the ethical implications of using a survey as a recruitment tool. To maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents, the researcher should ensure that the survey is anonymous, and that any personal information collected is kept secure. Additionally, the researcher should communicate the purpose of the survey and how the collected data will be used to obtain informed consent from the respondents. By following these guidelines, the researcher can ensure that using Qualtrics as a recruitment tool is ethically sound and respectful of the respondents' rights.

Conducting interviews on video streaming software has become a common practice due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for social distancing. By using platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or other software with recording capabilities, researchers can connect with participants remotely and gather the necessary data for their studies. One crucial consideration

when conducting interviews via video streaming software is maintaining the participants' privacy. This can be achieved in several ways. One option is to use aliases for the participants in all notes and transcriptions rather than using their real names. This helps to conceal their identities and protect their privacy.

Additionally, the researcher may use a virtual background or blur certain features of the participant's face in the recorded video to further protect their identity. It is also essential for the researcher to ensure that the video streaming software being used has adequate security measures in place to protect the confidentiality of the data being collected. This may include data encryption during transmission and secure storage of the recorded interviews. By taking these precautions, the researcher can help ensure that the participants' privacy is maintained throughout the study.

Research Design

To fully understand the experiences of a particular social group within a specific time, it is essential to adopt a phenomenological approach. This method involves using in-depth interviews to gather data on individuals' experiences, beliefs, and perceptions of society and the psychological domain (Dannels, 2018). This research examines how individuals perceive and interact with content on OTT platforms. This includes examining the types of content they engage with, the media or platforms they access it through, and how they share information with others in society. It is important to note that individual personalities can significantly impact how individuals behave in different situations (Dannels, 2018). Therefore, it is crucial to consider these individual differences when conducting qualitative research to accurately capture the lived experiences of the social group under study.

According to Flick (2022), qualitative research involves adopting the perspective of the people being studied to understand their social environments better. This can be achieved through techniques such as "seeing through the eyes" of the subjects. In contrast to quantitative research, which tends to be more structured and focused on gathering numerical data, qualitative research is more concerned with context and description. Qualitative researchers are interested in the processes and experiences of social existence and therefore place a greater emphasis on flexibility in their approach to the research topic (Flick, 2022). This allows them to adapt their methods and approaches better to capture the complexities of the studied social phenomena. Overall, qualitative research focuses on understanding individuals' subjective experiences within their social contexts rather than quantifying and measuring these phenomena.

The trend of changing justification behaviors raises concerns about how OTT viewers behave. This research hypothesis posits that the study will use the natural behaviors of OTT viewers to conclude their qualitative observations. The proposed study will use a qualitative method involving semi-structured interviews to investigate the phenomenology of content streaming and social sharing on OTT networks. This approach allows the interviewer to explore the subjective experiences of individuals within their social context and identify the various psychological factors at play. By using multiple data sources and adopting an inductive approach, the qualitative method enables the researcher to identify patterns, categories, and themes that emerge from the data (Boaz et al., 2018). Using a qualitative approach aligns with Cultivation Theory, which posits that the media shapes individuals' perceptions of reality (Berger, 2016). By examining the media consumption habits and social sharing practices of OTT viewers, this study aims to understand how these behaviors may be influenced by the media and how they contribute to the development and changes in the human mind.

The psychological domain of human interaction, which refers to how individuals process and make sense of information, plays a crucial role in understanding the effects of various phenomena in the world. In qualitative research, two main paradigms are commonly used to examine these processes: positivism and interpretivism (Rahi, 2017). Positivism is a perspective that emphasizes the importance of empirical evidence and objective truths, while interpretivism emphasizes the subjective experiences and meanings that individuals attach to the world around them. Another approach that has gained popularity in qualitative research is constructivism, which holds that people construct their unique understanding of the world through their experiences and interactions with events and circumstances. This perspective suggests that individuals reflect on their experiences to make sense of the world and their place in it. Overall, the psychological domain of human interaction is a complex and multifaceted area of study that requires a nuanced and flexible approach to fully capture the rich diversity of human experience.

In this study, the traditional methods of learning that rely on motivation and behavior will be disregarded in favor of an approach that focuses on real-life experiences. The primary aim of the research is to understand how OTT networks shape our memories and how society's behaviors may change in response to these networks. There is a rapport between the two main stakeholders of this research, as both parties recognize the importance of contextual information in understanding video streaming habits. The researchers responsible for the study will approach the research with an open mind. They will treat all participants with dignity and respect, recognizing the validity of their subjective truths. The constructivist approach, which focuses on analyzing single processes, will examine the psychological dynamics at play in this study. This approach is particularly relevant given the complex social dynamics and the impact of

technology on social behavior patterns. Overall, the psychological spectrum plays a crucial role in this study because it is influenced by social dynamics and technological change (Rahi, 2017).

This research aligns with three theories: the social construction of reality theory (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), which posits that individuals' understanding of the world is shaped by their social interactions and cultural contexts; the Cultivation Theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1976), which holds that the media shapes individuals' perceptions of reality; and the socio-cultural tradition (Craig, 1999), which emphasizes the role of social and cultural contexts in shaping individuals' communication practices and behaviors. By examining the media consumption habits and social sharing practices of OTT viewers, this study aims to understand how these behaviors may be influenced by the media and how they contribute to the development and changes in society's behaviors. The constructivist approach, which focuses on analyzing single processes (Rahi, 2017), allows researchers to examine the psychological dynamics in forming these behaviors and how they may be influenced by the individuals involved. By adopting this approach, researchers can better understand the social construction of reality and how it shapes how individuals perceive and interact with the world around them.

Participants and Sampling

Most gratification studies employ a mixed-method strategy of scale development. The strategy entails the adoption of survey instruments for participants and using qualitative research designs (Ray et al., 2019). Thus, the study will adopt semi-structured interviews as the data collection tool. Semi-structured interviews share characteristics with open interviews, where the interviewee guides the discussions, and interviews, where they strictly follow the questions with alternate answers (Bell et al., 2022). It assumes a list of important questions and topics is identified before using a survey instrument.

The proposed study will utilize Qualtrics, a popular online survey platform, to gather information on the video streaming habits and demographic details of a selected portion of respondents. It is important to note that Qualtrics will only be used as a recruitment tool in this study to identify individuals willing to participate in an interview as part of the research. The survey will not serve as the primary means of data collection for the study but as a screening tool for potential participants. Qualtrics will be used for fact-finding and gathering data for this case study to inform the interview questions. Participants can be interviewed during a recorded Zoom call, where the researcher will ask open-ended questions to understand their use of OTT networks. The survey and interviews aim to collect insights on the impact of OTT networks on our shared cultural memory and explore the theoretical frameworks that can help us understand this impact.

While conducting the interview, one would ask the right questions at the right time if the respondent continued to elaborate on the subjects in a different order than planned. Bell et al. (2022) argue that a semi-structured interview offers flexibility because the discussion is led by the respondent's responses, allowing the interviewer to react to the situation and explore new themes. The preparation of data collection will primarily focus on procedural design. This study will try to adhere to Bell et al. (2022) vital competencies one needs to possess to interview the respondents successfully. They include asking relevant questions, interpreting responses in the best way possible, being good at listening, being impartial and avoiding being subjective, adaptable and flexible to tense situations, having sound knowledge of the theoretical constructs that form the study investigation, and avoiding relying on predetermined answers given by theory.

Using a partially structured methodology, we will craft the questions the researcher will ask during the interviews. While structuring the interview questionnaires will determine which constructs are pertinent to the study. We can develop a concept from the research questions that could help the study. The next step in the process will be operationalizing the concepts by generating questions incorporating each identified concept. We will emphasize open-ended questions of “why” and “how,” and we will also develop continuation questions that will help explain their understanding of the examined issue. To ensure that the respondents undergo adequate preparation for the interview, we will provide them with information regarding the broad subjects that would be the focus of our conversation. In addition, we will provide the participants with a list of the most critical questions in advance.

The study participants will be 25-50 Americans aged 18 years and above who use OTT streaming platforms. Each participant’s interview will last 30 minutes. The interviews will be conducted using open-ended, semi-structured questionnaires, and the discussions will center on OTT-related topics (such as preferred OTT platforms and programs). If any participants decide not to participate, another individual will be randomly selected. After completing the questionnaire, participants will be interviewed. These interviews will be recorded with consent. The themes identified will be further examined through the prism of earlier literature.

To protect the privacy of participants in a study during the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers may conduct and record interviews through video streaming software such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. These platforms allow researchers to connect with participants remotely and gather necessary data while maintaining social distancing. To further protect the privacy of participants, researchers may use aliases instead of real names in notes and transcriptions, use virtual backgrounds or blur certain features of participants' faces in recorded video, and ensure

that the video streaming software has adequate security measures in place, including data encryption and secure storage of recorded interviews (Deakin & Wakefield, 2013). By taking these precautions, researchers can help ensure the confidentiality and privacy of participants in the study.

Instruments

In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument used to collect data, observe behavior, or interview participants. No specific instruments are used. Data will be collected via interviews and surveys, focusing on the study's research questions.

The Research Procedures

As a tool for study, phenomenology research is positioned to help researchers benefit from what others have learned. It is a qualitative research approach that examines how people experience certain phenomena in their environmental settings (Barrett-Rodger et al., 2022). Phenomenology aims to understand a phenomenon from the viewpoints or experiences of those who have encountered it. The main goal is to explain the importance of this experience using the “what’s” and “how’s”. Alternately, each phenomenological strategy has its origins in a particular philosophical school. Before choosing a phenomenological research methodology, the researcher must consider their philosophical views. Given that a scientist might adhere to a wide range of philosophical perspectives, it is not surprising that there are numerous phenomenological traditions from which a researcher can draw (Barrett-Rodger et al., 2022).

The questions asked during the interviews will be primarily left open-ended so that participants may respond to the questions in an honest manner. The benefit of in-depth interviews is that they bring to light problems that can only be discovered via questioning. The

chance to elaborate on a question will allow the participants to benefit from new information (Bell et al., 2022).

Phenomenology offers fundamental insights and answers to fundamental questions, including the following: what are the viewing experiences of the participants; how are they sharing that information with society?; what are their primary motivators of OTT network session initiation? The responses to such questions provide the foundation of this research. The study will utilize phenomenology to understand such concerns by drawing from the participants' experiences. The interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) will be used. A hybrid approach analyzes the issue as people experience it comprehensively and subjective perceptions of things and occasions. IPA involves the researcher actively in the interpretive process, in contrast to other techniques (Barrett-Rodger et al., 2022).

The emphasis in the inductive approach, however, is on developing theories from the data rather than evaluating existing beliefs. The abductive approach, which Bell et al. (2022) characterize as being both deductive and inductive, is a more suitable strategy for creating novel theories. When using an abductive strategy, researchers shift from descriptions and definitions offered by individuals to ideas that explain the subject they are studying. The primary advantage of this strategy is that abduction allows communication between the academic, conceptual, and natural worlds.

Interpretation is at the heart of interpretive phenomenology, which analyzes events and phenomena in the context of one's worldview. If a person's worldview informs all of their experiences and what they experience must be understood in light of this context, it includes both the description and interpretation of the phenomenon (Barrett-Rodger et al., 2022). The researcher must be aware of how the person's background influences their experience of being. It

does not imply that one's prejudiced experience, intimately entwined with social, cultural, and political settings, is preplanned.

People possess situated freedom. Individuals have the right to make decisions, but their freedom is not unrestricted; relatively, it is constrained by the circumstances of their day-to-day existence, according to the concept of situated freedom. This emphasis calls for the interpretation of the narratives offered by respondents with their unique contexts to shed light on the fundamental tenets of participants' conceptions of being and how those conceptions influenced each individual's choices. The relationship between the researcher and the participants exists, knowing that all information uncovered on their video streaming practices is contextual. The researcher is respectful of any varying viewpoints and the subjective truths that might arise from interactions with multiple participants.

Interpretive phenomenology also acknowledges that the researcher, just like the participants, cannot be freed from their worldview, so the approach includes the researcher's biased views. Instead, the inquiry will benefit from their prior experiences and knowledge (Barrett-Rodger et al., 2022). The researcher's training and background inform his or her decision as to whether a phenomenon or event is worthwhile for further study. Demanding that the researcher approach the data objectively is at odds with the conceptual foundations of Interpretive phenomenology. Instead, studies which follow this approach should be honest about their biases and consider how subjectivity affects the analytical process (Barrett-Rodger et al., 2022).

The interpretive process involves the interaction of several analytical activities rather than restriction to specific rules when a researcher performs analytical procedures. It starts by identifying a fascinating phenomenon that shifts the emphasis to actual lived experience. The

scholar then explores the lived experiences rather than their conceptualization. He also considers their experiences and the underlying [phenomenological] elements that characterize the participants' contact with the phenomenon (Barrett-Rodger et al., 2022).

In order to create continuous, iterative cycles that result in progressively rigorous and nuanced analyses, the researcher documents their reflections, reflects, and then documents again. The researcher must remain focused on the phenomenon they are studying throughout the analysis and pay attention to how the parts interact with the whole. The final step, also known as the hermeneutic cycle, emphasizes the conscious practice of thinking about how the information (the parts) contributes to the developing comprehension of the phenomenon (the whole) and how each strengthens the meaning of the other (Burns et al., 2022).

Inductive and Deductive

According to Bryman (Bryman et al., 2022), qualitative research differs from quantitative research when gathering and interpreting data because it frequently prioritizes words rather than numerical values. He lists three distinctive characteristics. It is customary to use an inductive approach, where theory is developed from research rather than developing research from theory in quantitative research. A researcher applies qualitative techniques in an interpretive epistemology. Qualitative approaches focus on participant interpretations rather than scientific models to understand the social environment.

The critical components include inductive, deductive, and abductive methods. Two methodological methods have historically existed: deductive and inductive. The deductive method uses current theory to create and test hypotheses (Bell et al., 2022). The focus is to test and validate present theories because, during research, hypotheses are either verified or refuted. According to Bell et al. (2022), a researcher should use the deductive approach in quantitative

studies, and most qualitative business research does not use only deductive methods. The emphasis in the inductive approach, however, is on developing theories from the data rather than evaluating existing beliefs. The abductive approach, which Bell et al. (2022) characterize as being both deductive and inductive, is a more suitable strategy for creating novel theories. When using an abductive strategy, researchers shift from descriptions and definitions offered by individuals to ideas that explain the subject they are studying. The primary advantage of this strategy is that abduction allows communication between the academic, conceptual, and natural worlds.

Data Collection Procedures

In any comprehensive research, the instrument plays a significant role since it enhances information retrieval from the respondents. In that regard, the definition of a research tool is crucial. To conduct a facilitative and valid study, more diversity in the application of instruments is vital because they assist with data collection (Rahi, 2017). The most common devices in qualitative investigations include observing, interviewing, and analyzing relevant documents. The stakeholders will mainly use observation and interviews to collect data in this investigation. Observation comprises a set of specific tools which are helpful in the acquisition of open-ended responses, behavior, and information. The activity leads to retrieving raw data by observing the respondent, the population under examination, and the study area.

Observation

Qualitative observation relies on the responses the subjects are willing to give freely, with minimal obstruction. The researcher's work ensures no interfering factors between him and the clients since they could lead to bias, limited responses to individual differences, and concealing of helpful information (Rahman et al., 2018). It is also vital that the qualitative aspect of the

interviews is a product of the narration of words to describe the setting, behavior, and types of interaction between the researcher and the clients. In that regard, this study would expect the researcher to use field notes and recording data. A field message is a particular piece of information the researcher takes down in writing as the observation process continues.

The research will use two types of observation for convenience. It will compare the data retrieved from two kinds of interviews and then decide on the most reliable tool to use in the data analysis. Participant and non-participant observation are the two types of observation that have found typical applications. They depend on the role of the researcher in every section of the interview. Participant observation engages the researcher within the defined investigation group (Shah, 2017). In that case, there is the active participation of those conducting the study. In non-participant observation, the researcher does not have any role in terms of engagement in the process. Instead, they are just observers. The study will apply participant observation because there is a critical need to get detailed information. The researcher's active participation in the process will be leisurely, and there will be a mutual understanding between the stakeholders of this study, thus contributing to the smooth flow of the investigation and attaining research goals.

Interviewing

Interviews constitute one of the primary qualitative tools for receiving first-hand information. The process involves asking semi-structured questions to a sampled group of respondents and retrieving facts from the participants (Powney & Watts, 2018). The researcher can take charge of the interview by formulating the type of questions they want the participants to answer. The respondents are only restricted in asking questions, and they are given a broad scope of freedom to explore and present their opinions. An interview consists of various diverse questions that address the study's goals. These questions are directed to the interviewees who

have decided to participate in the study. According to recent studies, an interview is a period whereby the research designers and stakeholders involve more than one participant in asking them questions (Powney & Watts, 2018). The vital aspect of the interviewing process consists of recording answers, ideally the data, for future analysis.

In this study, the researcher will implement the interviewing process to support the document analysis, gathering data on the primary research question and pointing to the following objectives to determine how, where, and why people use OTT video streaming. The second question will investigate how it has influenced cultural memory and the overall behavior of society. The unstructured interviews address a conversation whereby the situations generate the questions the interviewer will pose to their subjects. The structured interview is a unique and adequately determined session with the respondents to get particular responses or data from the issues.

The semi-structured questions were asked during the study of the interviewees *to* gather personal information to its scope while detailing the data to come up with an accurate conclusion (Oana-Ramona & Iulia, 2017). The study will utilize the semi-structured interview since the research question deals with technology and its implication for social behavior. The researcher will therefore prepare several questions which embrace semi-structured interviews, which enable those researching to explore diverse possible scenarios concerning their social life and access to information on networks using OTT networks.

Quality of the Research

Credibility, or the ability of the data to describe reality, was determined by the inclusion of in-depth interviews, which entails determining the survey's suitability. It helps determine whether the research participants comprehend the questions in the same way, whether

the phrasing is precise, and whether implicit bias is present in the study (Charmaz, & Thornberg, 2021). The researcher will utilize creative, analytical practices to convey what it is like to be a viewer of OTT network platforms and create a narrative of how they share that information with society. The statement came directly from what was gleaned from the interviews and will be as close to exact in detail as possible.

Internal Validity

Hajjar (2018) states that construct validity entails determining the appropriate operational measurements for the study research concepts. The study will operationalize constructs by converting them into questions to maintain a high construct validity, thus ensuring that the interview questions accurately reflect the theoretical concepts underpinned. The researcher will also minimize the risk of misinterpretation of the questions so that the respondents' responses accurately reflect the concepts studied. The researcher will also increase the validity of the analysis by matching the answers to the selected OTT network constructs (Hajjar, 2018).

Internal validity can also be strengthened by obtaining evidence from various sources (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). Numerous methods for creating validity tests guarantee the proper selection of operational measures when conducting research. First, there should be the utilization of several sources of evidence. Data for this study will be gathered from various sources and secured by twenty interviews for participants with one or more video subscriptions to an OTT network. All interviews will be taped, and transcriptions will be made to ensure that no information is lost during the interviews. The researcher will also increase construct validity by comparing the participants' responses with information from the literature (Bahariniya et al., 2021). After that, the researcher will analyze empirical data on OTT networks. The data analysis and conclusions will be built around the empirical data analysis. The same approach will be

taken throughout the research process to minimize influence and bias, enhancing the study's internal validity.

External Validity

External validity, according to Bahariniya et al. (2021), refers to how broadly the results of a study can be applied or used in another circumstance. He contends that the researcher must offer adequate descriptive data to transfer findings. The most popular approach is to present the context and, in particular, the study's conclusions in a very descriptive, thorough manner (Bahariniya et al., 2021). He also discusses a different method for enhancing the sample's diversity, enabling the findings to be applied to various contexts. Since this study data will be gathered through in-depth interviews, the researcher will be able to explain the video streaming habits of the chosen demographic group in detail and provide a descriptive presentation in the empirical section. The researcher will consistently base the analysis and conclusions on the empirical data, resulting in a complete, accurate description.

Additionally, participants 18 years or older will be chosen for the study, increasing generalizability and improving external validity. The prevalence of several common tendencies within the OTT media service business can be used to explain the similarities in video streaming habits, allowing the results to be generalized to other countries. Additionally, the research's external validity ought to be robust, given that its internal validity will also be high.

Reliability

At the data collection stage, reliability is crucial. According to Bahariniya et al. (2021), reliability refers to the degree to which the results can be repeated and provide the same outcome. However, in contrast to scientific sciences, trustworthiness in social sciences is challenging to assess. Because people's experiences vary and human behavior is unpredictable,

reproducing a qualitative study will not provide the same outcomes (Bell et al., 2022). Two tactics that can improve dependability are maintaining an audit trail and using triangulation or multiple data-gathering techniques. Although reliability is hard to quantify, issues with data collecting have a direct impact on it. Several variables can affect reliability, including how interview questions are designed, interviewing methods, respondent, and interviewer attitudes, and how well the answers are understood and recorded (Bell et al., 2022).

This study will guarantee the reliability of the data by keeping an audit trail of all the data collected, how it was collected, and how it was performed, such as by using interview recordings and question appendices. Face-to-face interviews give the study another advantage because the researcher can read body language and consider how the atmosphere may affect the participants and interviewers. The conversation may occasionally be interrupted for a short period, and there may be minor internet connection issues. However, these issues will not significantly impair the reliability of this study because the researcher will repeat the questions to ensure everyone understands the question.

The possibility of misinterpretation is another potential flaw that could impact this study. Due to semi-structured interviews, the researcher will clarify questions as necessary and use probing questions to ensure that all respondents understand all of the questions and provide consistent answers. Another potential flaw is that the responders need to be more truthful in their responses. Thus, the probing strategy will be used in all interviews, requiring the respondents to be precise in their responses. Additionally, as the interviewers might need to become more familiar with these terms, the interview questions will be written in plain language and will not utilize any scientific terminology. The researcher will obtain consent to record each interview,

reducing the possibility of misunderstanding. Interview protocols will be employed to avoid the semi-structured interview's common risk of missing some topics due to its adaptability.

Plans for Data Analysis

Accuracy is the top priority of this study, and as such, the researcher will go through the data while listening to recordings after transcription. Data analysis will occur with a standard reference to themes relating directly to habitual video streaming. The researcher's critical function is to identify common themes within the data and the tendency to listen to them. A computer program that applies the open coding systems related to various topics and subjects will also be a preliminary plan for data analysis in this study. The researcher will then give a draft copy to their respondents to enhance verification. If the respondents notice any differences between them and the interviews, they will suggest a modification to ensure that the research addresses the originality of their responses and opinions.

The collected data will be reviewed for accuracy and completeness. The analytical process will involve grouping and coding in Excel and data purification to eliminate superfluous information. The SPSS software will subsequently be used to enter the data. Percentages, means, frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, and standard deviations will all be used in the descriptive analysis. Tables will be used in the presentation of data.

Plan for Presenting the Results

This subject is of critical significance, so it will be vital to include it in the dissertation. The findings could also contribute to conferences and journals specializing in communication issues related to this theme. The results will also be presented to the schools of communication for advice if it meets contemporary research standards. In that regard, it will be available as a scholarly journal for further investigation of related topics. Additionally, this research will offer

suggestions on this group's viewing and sharing patterns, which could aid OTT networks in understanding their users' viewing preferences and guiding them in programming the networks appropriately.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics in research refers to one's behavior while conducting research. The primary objective of ethics is to safeguard research participants from harm and to ensure that data is collected and processed ethically to provide reliable results. All participants will be handled in compliance with Liberty University Institutional Review Board and American Psychological Association (APA) ethical standards (IRB). Additionally, approval from the Liberty University Institutional Review Board will be requested for the data collection (IRB).

The participants in the study will be treated ethically to guarantee that the research is conducted ethically. It will be achieved by securing prior approval and preserving the privacy of the data collected. Confidentiality will play a vital role in ensuring the lives and activities of the participants remain within the research and should not be disclosed to a third party. This is the responsibility of the researcher to keep all the vital information about his clients after they entrust him with it. The rights and benefits of participating in the study will be explained to them. They will also be informed that they can withdraw and that participation is voluntary. This ensures that the clients can withdraw from the study at any given time during the research process.

Further, the study's entire data set will only be used for research purposes. The participants will be protected from any physical, psychological, or other harm that may arise as the study proceeds (Hasan et al., 2021). There are no known dangers associated with taking part in this study.

Reflective Journal

Reflective journal writing is a learning method connecting new and current knowledge (Arthur & Arthur, 2021). Keeping a reflective journal and field notes will be the final data type. The researcher's notebook allows them to express their feelings about studying this topic. The researcher can keep a journal of their feelings, presumptions, expectations, and prejudices regarding their research.

Summary

The study takes the dimension of qualitative research, which employs semi-structured interviews as the primary approach to collecting information. The research is designed to enhance the comprehension of how individuals access video content on OTT platforms and share that content with society. This study is designed to understand how people watch video content on OTT networks, what content they watch, and whom they tell. This study will use a framework and perspectives from the participants to view these users' video streaming routines. It is also interested in identifying the types of content most people like viewing. The study will also employ the qualitative approach, which deals with individuals' scientific, social, and psychological aspects within society. The study examines video streaming habits by utilizing the perspectives and frameworks of the respondents. The individual is recruited after passing the selection criteria involving people over 18. A random group of individuals will be chosen from a significant population to ensure that the sample addresses the diversity of individuals to the most effective degree.

The study must consider ethical guidelines, including informed consent, the right to withdraw from the study upon request, and confidentiality. The research hypothesis stimulates the research toward an inevitable conclusion related to qualitative observation. The research

question explores the particular dimensions of communications bearing in mind the diversity in technology and the different ways society accepts the technology. Although customers desire to meet their needs while adopting media, Tefertiller (2018) contends that consumers' thirst for entertainment is a crucial driver for seeking OTT streaming platforms. Although the user and gratification theory studies audiences' behavioral characteristics and what influences them to prefer certain media, it fails to identify the structural and individual variables that drive consumers to seek content using OTT networks. Because of this, different people are impacted by media content differently depending on their perceptions, and the gratification derived (Samani & Guri, 2019).

In Chapter 4, I will present the findings of my study, which examined the influence of over-the-top (OTT) networks on shared cultural memories and traditional television structures. These findings are based on a thorough investigation conducted through Qualtrics surveys posted on social media platforms and surveys administered via Zoom. As we delve into the results, it is crucial to contextualize them within the broader landscape of the growing significance of OTT networks in media and entertainment.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

In this chapter, we delve into the findings derived from a comprehensive investigation into the impact of over-the-top (OTT) networks on shared cultural memories and traditional television structures. The research was conducted through a 25-question Qualtrics survey posted on various social media platforms and a 6-question survey administered via Zoom. As we explore this study's outcomes, it is essential to consider the broader context in which OTT networks have risen to prominence.

The Evolution of OTT Networks

The rapid growth of the internet and technological advancements have ushered in a transformative era for media and communication. As exemplified by platforms like Netflix and Amazon, OTT services have disrupted conventional media consumption by offering viewers unprecedented control over content access and viewing preferences (Park, 2017). The widespread availability of high-speed internet and the ubiquity of smartphones have further accelerated the adoption of OTT networks.

These platforms have not only altered how individuals' access and share media content but have also reshaped the media landscape itself. Traditional television channels have adapted to online platforms to remain competitive in the evolving media ecosystem. This shift reflects the dynamic interplay between technology and media culture in shaping contemporary identities and contributing to the emergence of a global culture.

The Participatory Media Experience

One compelling explanation for the ascendancy of OTT platforms is the contemporary consumer's desire for an interactive and participatory media experience. Unlike passive viewers of traditional television, modern audiences seek opportunities to engage with content actively.

They aspire to connect with content producers and organizations through co-creation, content modification, and user-generated content (UGC) discussions (Beveridge, 2022). This shift mirrors the pivotal role of media culture in shaping identities within contemporary techno-capitalist societies. Moreover, this transformation aligns with the broader trend of incorporating advanced technologies into various facets of life, including professional and business settings. As such, it underscores the convergence of technology, media, and culture in today's interconnected world.

Cultivation Theory and Socio-Cultural Traditions

This study explores the multifaceted influence of OTT networks on shared cultural memories and traditional television experiences. I adopt a qualitative exploratory research methodology, leveraging semi-structured interviews and observations. These methods provide valuable insights into participants' experiences sharing information, ideas, and experiences related to the content they consume. They also contribute to understanding how OTT networks intersect with shared cultural perceptions and memories.

Cultivation theory, the social construction of reality, and the socio-cultural tradition of communication serve as theoretical frameworks for this research. By examining the impact of OTT networks through these lenses, this study aims to bridge a critical gap in existing literature, which has explored the influence of OTT networks on consumers from a marketing perspective. Given that OTT networks serve a global community and have the potential to reshape content consumption and sharing practices, comprehending their effects on shared cultural perceptions and memories is paramount. In the following sections, I will present and analyze the findings from this research, shedding light on the intricate ways in which OTT networks intersect with shared cultural memories and traditional television structures.

The study combined self-administered online surveys and live online interviews as data collection methods. Online surveys offer several advantages regarding accessibility and reach (Evans & Mathur, 2018). The study utilized the Qualtrics online data collection tool for the survey component, distributed to the target groups. The survey questions were carefully designed based on three essential parameters to meet the research's objectives.

Given the social nature of this study, the initial parameter focused on investigating certain traits and behaviors of potential respondents. Many OTT networks use audience censorship based on demographic characteristics like age and gender. The survey assessed the target population based on these demographics to address this dynamic. For instance, some OTT platforms impose restrictions in areas prone to wildfires to protect underage audiences from accessing specified content (Chandran et al., 2022).

Additionally, the research considered the cost factor when determining the study's format and corresponding data collection tool. An emphasis on cost-effectiveness guided the research process, leading to a cost-benefit analysis paradigm. Consequently, the study conducted Zoom interviews with only 25 participants, while approximately 340 participants participated in the online survey. Zoom interviews required more resources in terms of both time and finances. Face-to-face interviews were particularly relevant for studying and discerning the facial and emotional states of the respondents as they engaged in discussions. This aligns with one of the study's underlying assumptions, which concerns the emotional responses of OTT network users to the content they access. Surveys alone proved inadequate in capturing emotional responses, necessitating the incorporation of online Zoom interviews as a complementary data collection method. Consequently, the formulation of survey questions aimed at eliciting specific information from the target groups.

Considering the qualitative nature of the research, most open-ended questions were employed, complemented by a few closed-ended questions. Individual experience with various OTT networks is unique, and open-ended questions allowed respondents to express themselves fully, using their own words and arguments. This approach remained a key strength, aligning with Desai and Reimers' assertion that open-ended questions are essential in behavioral science research (2018).

However, due to their structured format, closed-ended questions played a crucial role in the online survey platforms. These considerations significantly influenced the selection and administration of survey questions.

Selection of Target Demographics

The study established eligibility criteria by considering three key factors: age, the possession of a stable and reliable internet connection, active engagement in social interactions, and meeting other essential prerequisites. Additionally, all participants had to be 18 or older and have an active subscription to at least one OTT network platform to be eligible. In the online Qualtrics survey, skip logic was applied to the initial question; participants with an OTT network subscription proceeded with the survey, while those without were directed to the survey's conclusion.

Table 1

Criterion for Participation

Eligibility Criterion	Description	Objective
Age	Age was an essential factor as it could reveal the distribution of OTT access among various age groups. Additionally, all participants were required to be 18 years or older.	To assess various age groups' engagement with OTT network services.

Ownership or access to Smartphones/PDA/ Smart Televisions	To ensure that participants align with the study's scope, including individuals with smartphones or other Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) was essential. These devices are the primary means to access OTT network platforms, ensuring that the study effectively targets the right audience without unnecessary delays.	This aimed to reduce time wastage and ensured that participants could provide firsthand and primary views and opinions.
Access to Stable Internet	Before engaging in the study, the participants had to ascertain that had access to stable internet connectivity.	This was aimed at ensuring that participants could access OTT networks more frequently. Most platforms demand a stable internet connection to prevent buffering during streaming.
Social Network and Interaction	Furthermore, it was crucial to consider this. The latter aspect aimed to obtain accurate information regarding sharing OTT network content with friends and family.	It reinforced the idea of sharing.
Knowledge of OTT networks	Not all participants possessed sufficient knowledge about OTT networks. Therefore, before participating in the interview, evaluating the participants' expertise regarding OTT networks and services was essential.	Also, it helped minimize trial and error in selecting research participants.
Location	The research results are needed to represent the entire American population accurately. The study ensured that participants from all states were included by asking about their places of residence.	To guarantee that the results provided valuable insights across all regions in the United States of America.
Race	This was a significant selection criterion aimed at understanding the role of race	To ensure well-rounded and balanced research outcomes.

	in shaping OTT network usage patterns.	
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Note. The eligibility criteria outlined in Table 1 were meticulously established to ensure a diverse and representative participant pool for this study. These criteria played a vital role in shaping the research outcomes, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of Over-The-Top (OTT) network usage patterns across various demographic and geographical dimensions. Each criterion served a specific purpose, contributing to the study's objectives. Implementing these criteria helped ensure that the findings accurately reflect the experiences and perspectives of participants from different backgrounds and regions in the United States.

Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of the eligibility criteria employed in participant selection for this study. These criteria were carefully designed to ensure a diverse and representative sample that could effectively contribute to examining various aspects of Over-The-Top (OTT) network usage patterns. The table outlines specific eligibility criteria, their descriptions, and the objectives behind each criterion. These criteria include age, ownership or access to smartphones/PDAs/Smart Televisions, access to stable internet, social network and interaction, knowledge of OTT networks, location, and race. By adhering to these eligibility criteria, the study aimed to collect insightful and well-rounded data that would facilitate a thorough analysis of OTT network engagement across different demographics and regions in the United States.

Methods such as observation, interviews, and document analysis played a central role in assessing the knowledge, impact, and potential growth of OTT networks in society. For this investigation, stakeholders primarily employed observation and interviews to collect data. Observation was utilized to identify specific details related to open-ended responses, behaviors, and reactions, allowing for the retrieval of primary raw data by closely observing respondents,

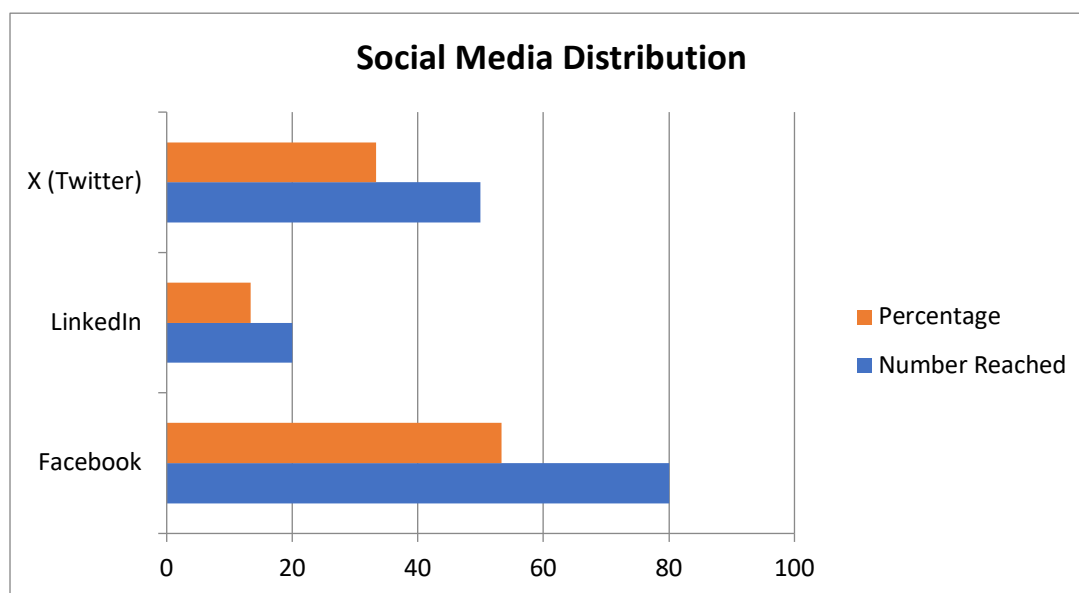
the target population, and the study environment. Consequently, objectives were set to explore participants' motives for using OTT networks, the devices used, preferred shows/genres, viewing duration, and sharing methods.

The increasing digitization of various aspects of daily life, including entertainment, has significantly changed how individuals engage in their routines (Ghalawat et al., 2021). This study probed respondents about their primary motivations to gain insights into the prevalence of OTT networks among the public, resulting in a diverse range of responses and reactions.

Distribution of Qualtrics Survey

The study used online Zoom interviews and survey tools via Qualtrics to comprehensively achieve its research objectives. Significant efforts were dedicated to sensitization and promotion to ensure broad outreach for the online survey. Leveraging various social media platforms emerged as an effective strategy (Kayam & Hirsch, 2012). The subsequent table illustrates the utilization of diverse social media platforms for survey promotion.

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the reach of various social media platforms among the study participants. The data reveals that Facebook had the highest reach, with 80 individuals constituting approximately 53.33% of the total participants. LinkedIn reached 20 participants, equivalent to about 13.33%, while X (Twitter) had a reach of 50 individuals, accounting for approximately 33.33%. This figure demonstrates how the participants used these social media platforms to share their thoughts, recommendations, and insights about the shows and movies they consumed on OTT networks, highlighting Facebook as the most prevalent platform for such discussions.

Figure 1*Social Media Platforms Distribution*

Note. Figure 1 illustrates the reach of various social media platforms among the study participants. The percentages represent the proportion of participants who utilized each platform to share their insights and recommendations related to OTT network content. Facebook was the most widely used platform, reaching 53.33% of participants, followed by X (Twitter) at 33.33% and LinkedIn at 13.33%. These findings underscore the significance of Facebook in facilitating discussions and content sharing within the context of OTT network viewership.

Distribution of OTT Network Among Respondents

A specific inquiry was directed at their subscription status to gauge the respondents' level of acquaintance with OTT networks. They were explicitly instructed to provide an affirmative response by selecting "yes" if they were currently subscribed to at least one OTT network. Conversely, they were to choose "no" if they lacked such subscriptions. This query elicited responses from 150 individuals who participated in the survey. The data revealed that a substantial majority, precisely 136 respondents, acknowledged their active subscriptions to one

or more OTT networks. This significant percentage accounts for an impressive 90.67% of the total respondents, signifying a pervasive familiarity with OTT platforms. In contrast, a smaller cohort of 14 survey participants opted for the negative response, indicating their lack of subscriptions to OTT networks. This subset of respondents constitutes 9.33% of the total surveyed population, albeit comparatively smaller.

Table 2

Distribution of OTT Network Subscriptions Among Survey Participants

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	136	90.67%
No	14	9.33%

Note. Table 2 displays the proportions of subscriptions across different OTT networks.

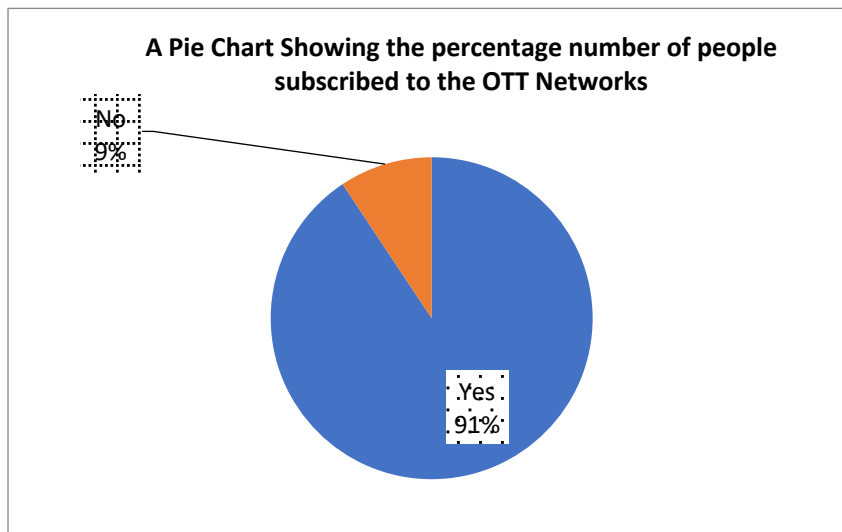
The table above provides a concise summary of the distribution of OTT network subscriptions among our survey participants. Of the total respondents, 136 individuals, representing a substantial 90.67% of the surveyed population, indicated that they currently hold subscriptions to one or more OTT networks. This overwhelming majority underscores our participants' widespread adoption and familiarity with OTT platforms, highlighting their significant presence in contemporary media consumption.

Conversely, a smaller group of 14 individuals, constituting 9.33% of the total surveyed population, responded with a "No," indicating they do not have subscriptions to any OTT networks. While this segment is relatively minor, it provides insights into a subset of the population who have yet to embrace OTT platforms, possibly due to various factors or preferences. This distribution table effectively summarizes the prevalence of OTT network subscriptions among our survey participants, offering a clear snapshot of the diverse landscape of media consumption habits and preferences. The pie chart below provides a visual snapshot of the

prevalence of OTT network subscriptions, emphasizing the diverse landscape of media consumption habits and preferences among the participants.

Figure 2

Respondents Subscribed to OTT Networks



Note. Figure 2 summarizes the distribution of OTT network subscriptions among the survey participants. The data indicates that a significant majority, 90.67% of respondents (136 individuals), currently hold subscriptions to one or more OTT networks, highlighting the widespread adoption of these platforms. Conversely, a smaller group of 9.33% (14 individuals) reported having no subscriptions to any OTT networks, representing a minor segment of the surveyed population. This figure provides a clear overview of the prevalence of OTT network subscriptions and the varying media consumption habits among the respondents.

Table 3

Statistical Measures and Survey Scope

Statistics	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S Deviation	Variance	Count
Value	1	2	1.09	0.29	0.08	150

Note. Table 3 visually represents the survey's scope and the statistical measures associated with our data analysis. The survey encompassed 150 respondents, indicating the size of our study's participant pool. This substantial sample size suggests the study's robustness and the diversity of perspectives gathered.

One crucial statistical measure presented is the response variance, calculated as 0.08. Variance measures how individual responses within a dataset deviate from the dataset's mean or average. In the context of our study, a variance of 0.08 suggests that the responses from our participants exhibit relatively low levels of dispersion or variability around the mean. In other words, most of our participants' reactions cluster closely around the central tendencies of our survey questions. This indicates a consensus among our respondents regarding their perceptions and experiences of OTT networks.

The corresponding standard deviation, 0.29 in our dataset, is another important statistic. Standard deviation quantifies the amount of variation or spread in a dataset. A standard deviation of 0.29 reaffirms the relatively low variability among responses, supporting the fact that our participants' views on OTT networks are generally aligned. These statistics suggest that our survey results are relatively consistent, with participants' responses closely resembling one another. This consistency could be attributed to the clarity of our survey questions or the homogeneity of our participant pool, indicating a degree of agreement among respondents regarding their experiences and perceptions of OTT networks.

The low response variance and standard deviation imply that our participants' responses were not widely scattered, meaning their answers had a degree of agreement or convergence. This, in turn, lends credibility to the reliability of our survey data and strengthens the validity of our study's findings. Figure 6 and the associated statistics provide valuable insights into the

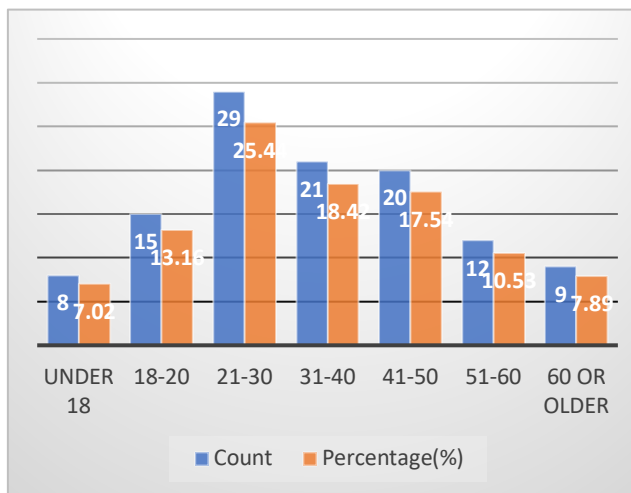
characteristics of our survey dataset. The low variance and standard deviation indicate that our participants' responses were relatively consistent, suggesting a degree of agreement. This reinforces the reliability of our data and supports the conclusions drawn from our study regarding participants' attitudes and behaviors related to OTT networks.

Report on the Age Variable

Figure 3 below illustrates the age distribution of respondents who provided valid responses to this question. Responses from individuals under 18 were excluded, representing approximately 7.02% of the total. Respondents aged 18-20 numbered 15, constituting nearly 13.16% of the sample. The age category 21-30 accounted for 29 respondents, representing approximately 25.44%. The age group 31-40 comprised 21 respondents, 18.42% of the participants. Additionally, 17.54% of respondents fell into the 41-50 age category. Those aged 60 and above represented 7.89% of the total respondents. In total, 114 participants answered the age question. As depicted in Fig. 8, the 21-30 age group had the highest number of respondents in the survey.

Figure 3

Age Distribution of the Respondents



Note. Figure 3 displays the age distribution of respondents who participated in the survey after excluding those under 18. The largest group falls within the 21-30 age range, constituting about a quarter of the participants. Additionally, various age groups from 18-50 are well-represented in the survey, providing a diverse demographic perspective on the study's findings. This figure offers insights into the age composition of our participants, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the survey's demographic profile.

Distribution of the Respondents Per State

Table 4 visually represents the regional distribution of survey respondents, showing which states had a larger or smaller number of participants. It allows readers to discern any potential geographic patterns or variations in responses. For instance, states like Alabama and California had a higher representation in the survey, with 16 and 13 participants, respectively, while other states had only one or two participants. Analyzing this table can provide insights into whether regional factors, such as location or cultural influences, may impact participant responses. It also aids in understanding the diversity of the participant sample, highlighting which states were more actively engaged in the study. Overall, the table contributes to a comprehensive understanding of participants' demographics and regional distribution, which can be important when interpreting the study's findings and drawing conclusions.

Table 4

Percentile Rank Summary of Respondents Per State

<i>State</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
Alabama	16	1	100.00%
California	13	2	94.40%
Florida	9	3	83.30%
Georgia	9	3	83.30%

Maryland	6	5	77.70%
Michigan	3	6	72.20%
Arkansas	2	7	33.30%
Colorado	2	7	33.30%
Hawaii	2	7	33.30%
Illinois	2	7	33.30%
Indiana	2	7	33.30%
Nebraska	2	7	33.30%
Nevada	2	7	33.30%
Alaska	1	14	0.00%
Arizona	1	14	0.00%
Kansas	1	14	0.00%
Kentucky	1	14	0.00%
Minnesota	1	14	0.00%
Mississippi	1	14	0.00%

Note. Table 4 visually represents the regional distribution of survey participants across various states. It illustrates the varying number of respondents from different locations, shedding light on potential geographic patterns that could influence participant responses.

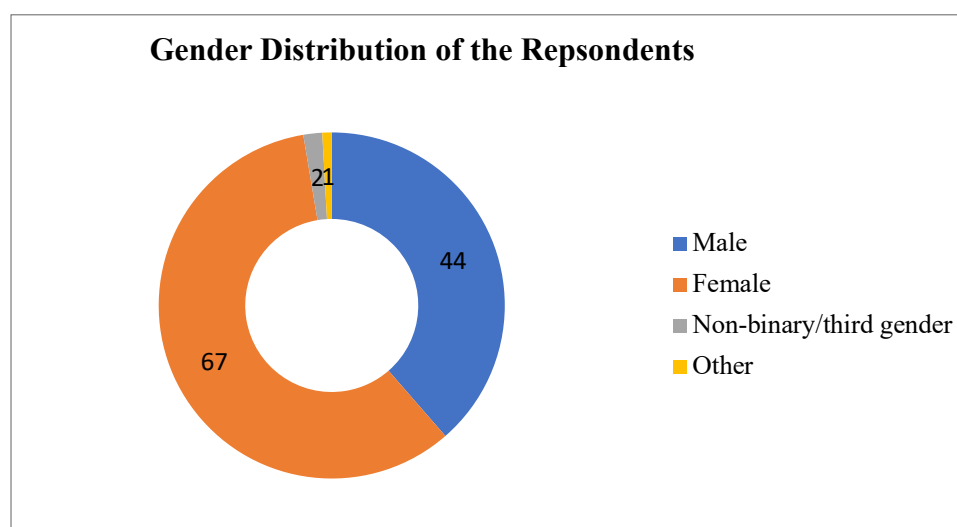
Based on the findings from the study, it is evident that Alabama had the highest number of respondents. Additionally, several states, including Alaska, Arizona, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, and Mississippi, had one respondent. However, few respondents were in specific areas such as Guam, Puerto Rico, Northern Mariana Island, Wyoming, West Virginia, Virginia, Vermont, Utah, Tennessee, and South Dakota. This summary information provides insights into the distribution of respondents across different states and regions, as observed in the chart above.

In the survey, another significant demographic variable under consideration is gender. This variable is crucial in understanding how different gender groups engage with OTT networks across the United States. The gender variable categorizes respondents into four distinct groups: Male, Female, Non-binary/Third Gender, and an open-ended "Other" category. This categorization allowed respondents to self-identify without imposing any stereotypes or biases.

Based on this distribution, the survey included 44 male respondents, accounting for 38.60% of the total participants. Most respondents identified as female, with 67 individuals representing 58.77%. The non-binary/third gender category was the second smallest, representing 1.75%. Only one respondent chose the "Other" type, which accounted for 0.88% of the total respondents. It's important to note that 114 respondents provided their gender information. The following table provides a summary of the respondent's gender distribution.

Figure 4

Frequency Distribution Table of Respondents' Gender



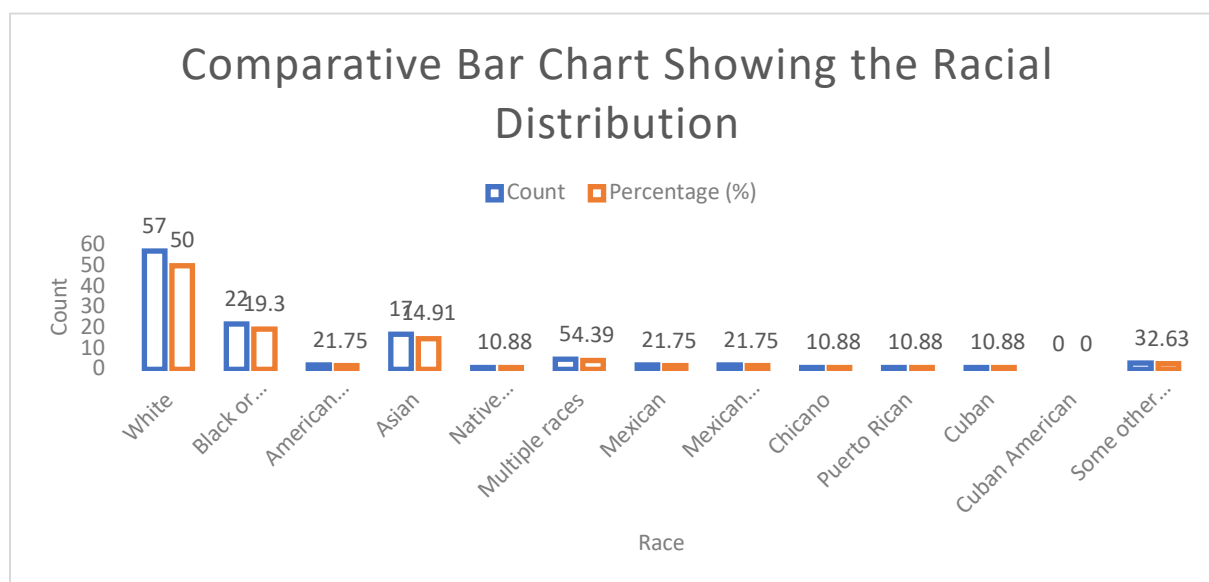
Note. Figure 4 visually represents the gender distribution of survey participants, categorizing respondents into four distinct groups: Male, Female, Non-binary/Third Gender, and an open-ended "Other" category. This categorization allowed participants to self-identify without imposing stereotypes or biases.

Race plays a significant role in the context of OTT networks, as it may intersect with issues related to internet access and the affordability of digital devices, potentially leading to disparities among racial groups (Van Deursen & Van Dijk, 2019). Historical injustices and discrimination could contribute to these disparities, disadvantaging certain racial groups. The

survey results revealed the participation of respondents from various racial backgrounds, with 114 participants responding to this question. The distribution of racial groups is summarized in the frequency table below, acknowledging the presence of 13 different racial categories in the study.

Figure 5

Distribution of Respondents' Racial Background



Note. Figure 5 offers a snapshot of the racial and ethnic makeup of the survey participants, providing valuable insights into the diversity within the respondent group.

Figure 5 provides an overview of the racial and ethnic diversity among the survey respondents, shedding light on the composition of the participant pool. The data reveals a broad spectrum of racial and ethnic backgrounds within the study. White participants constituted the largest group, with 57 individuals representing 50% of the total respondents. Following closely, 22 participants identified as Black or African American, making up 19.30% of the sample. Additionally, the survey included 17 Asian participants, accounting for 14.91% of the respondents. Representing other racial and ethnic categories, such as American Indian or

Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, multiple races, and various Hispanic or Latino groups, also contributed to the study's diversity.

This figure visualizes the rich array of racial and ethnic backgrounds among survey participants, emphasizing the importance of considering these demographic factors when examining the study's outcomes. Recognizing this diversity enables a more nuanced interpretation of how different racial and ethnic groups engage with and perceive OTT networks.

Employment Status of the Survey Participants

The distribution of the employment status among the survey participants reveals essential insights into the occupational profiles of the respondents. Among the participants, a notable proportion, accounting for 35.96%, are actively employed, working 40 or more hours per week. This suggests that a substantial segment of the survey population is employed full-time. Additionally, 35.09% of the participants reported being employed but working between 1-39 hours per week, indicating a diverse range of working hours and job commitments among the respondents.

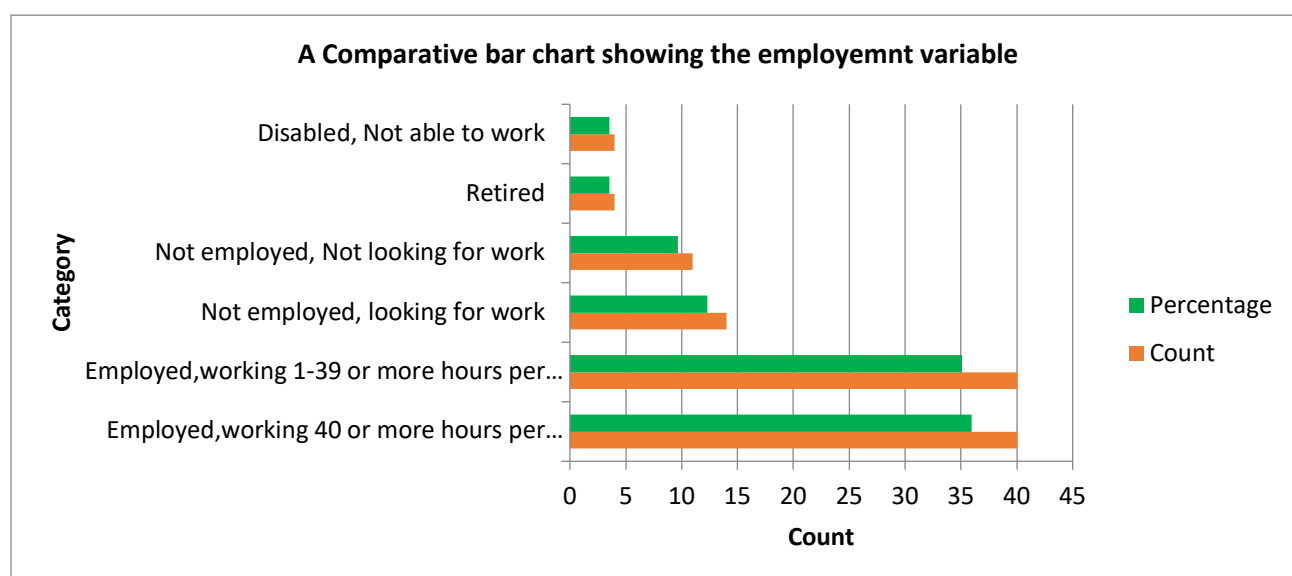
Furthermore, the survey data shows that 12.28% of the participants are not currently employed but are actively looking for work, highlighting the presence of job seekers within the sample. In contrast, 9.65% of the respondents are not used and are not actively seeking employment. This category may include retired individuals, students, or those who have chosen not to participate in the workforce for other reasons.

A smaller percentage of participants, 3.51%, identified themselves as retired, while another 3.51% reported being disabled and unable to work. These categories shed light on the diversity of the survey's demographic composition, with retirees and disabled individuals also being part of the participant pool. Understanding employment status distribution among survey

participants is crucial for interpreting their preferences and behaviors related to over-the-top (OTT) networks. Employment status can influence viewing habits, subscription choices, and the time to consume content on OTT platforms. Therefore, this demographic information adds depth to the analysis of the impact of OTT networks on shared cultural memory within different segments of the population.

Figure 6

Distribution Table Displaying Employment Status



Note. Figure 6 provides an overview of the employment status distribution among the survey participants.

The chart above illustrates that most respondents work 39 to 40 hours (about one and a half days) weekly. The final group comprises disabled individuals who cannot participate in income-generating activities. It reveals that the largest group of respondents, comprising 35.96% of the sample, are actively employed and work 40 or more hours per week. Additionally, 35.09% are employed but work 1-39 hours per week. A smaller proportion, 12.28%, are not employed but are actively looking for work, while 9.65% still need to be used and actively seeking

employment. Furthermore, 3.51% of respondents are retired, and another 3.51% are disabled and unable to work. This figure helps depict the employment status diversity within the survey sample, which is essential for understanding the potential influence of employment on participants' interactions with over-the-top (OTT) networks.

OTT Network Usage Among All Respondents

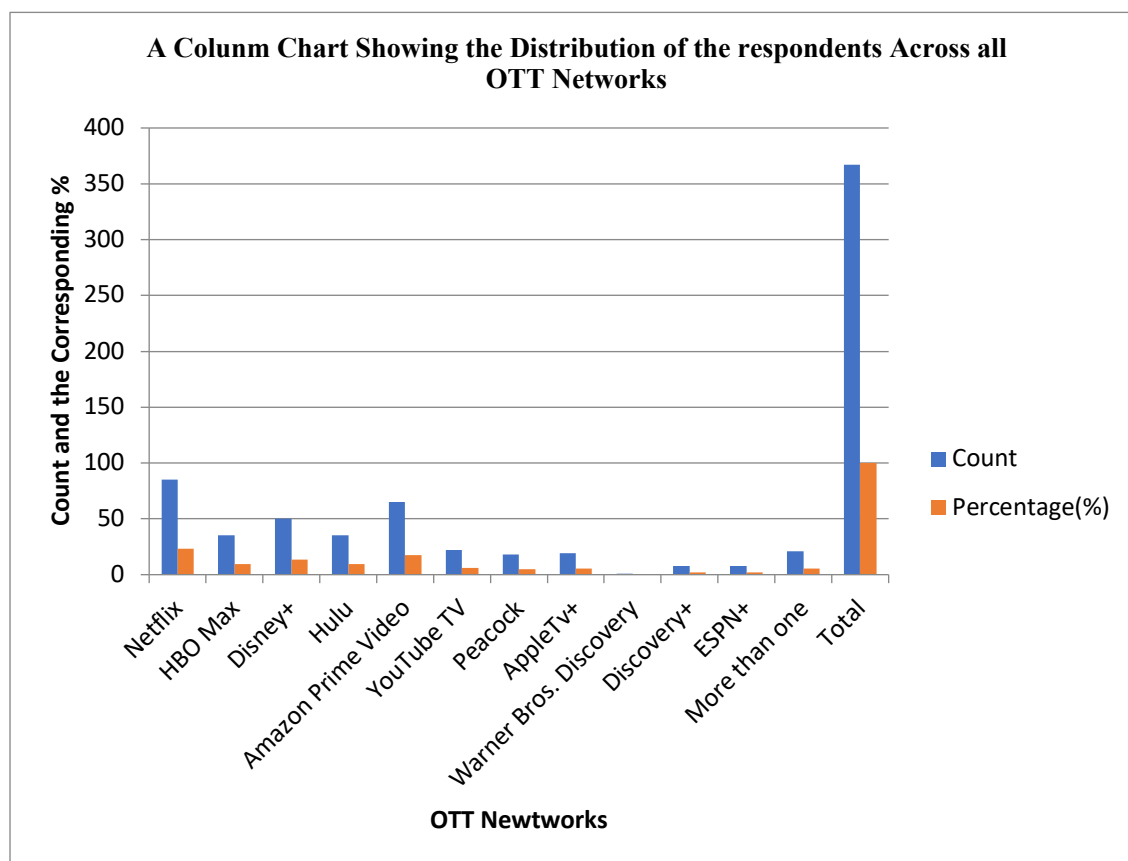
OTT network usage among all respondents in the survey indicates that a majority, precisely 90.67% of participants, are currently subscribed to at least one OTT network. This high percentage reflects the widespread adoption of over-the-top (OTT) networks for accessing video content among the survey population. Conversely, 9.33% of respondents reported not being subscribed to any OTT network. These findings illustrate the significant presence and influence of OTT platforms in the media consumption habits of the surveyed individuals, with the majority actively engaging with these services to access on-demand video content.

The survey data reveals a diverse landscape of OTT networks all respondents use. The most popular OTT network among the participants is Netflix, with 23.16% of respondents indicating that they use this platform. Amazon Prime Video also has a significant user base, accounting for 17.71% of respondents. Disney+ is another prominent player, with 13.62% of respondents using this service. Hulu and Max each have a share of 9.54% among the respondents. In addition to these significant OTT networks, other platforms like YouTube TV, Apple TV+, Peacock, Warner Bros. Discovery, Discovery+, and ESPN+ are also used by varying percentages of respondents, contributing to the overall diversity of OTT network usage. Furthermore, 5.72% of respondents reported using "More than one" OTT network, indicating a preference for multiple services to access their desired content. These findings underscore the wide range of OTT networks available to consumers and the diversity of choices individuals

make when accessing on-demand video content, reflecting the evolving nature of the streaming media landscape.

Figure 7

OTT Network Usage Among Respondents



Note. Figure 7 presents an overview of OTT network usage among respondents, highlighting Netflix as the most popular platform, utilized by 23.16% of participants. Amazon Prime Video and Disney+ follow closely, with 17.71% and 13.62% usage, respectively. The figure underscores individuals' diverse choices when accessing on-demand video content, with various other OTT networks also contributing to the evolving streaming media landscape.

Among the total respondents, Netflix emerged as the most popular OTT network with the highest number of subscribers, totaling 85. On the other hand, Warner Bro. Discovery had the

lowest number of subscribers, with only one respondent indicating their subscription.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that there is an almost uniform distribution of subscribers across all the OTT network platforms, signifying a diverse range of preferences among respondents. This suggests a varied landscape of OTT network usage among the surveyed individuals.

Table 5

Devices Utilized for Accessing Various OTT Networks

Device	Count	Percentage (%)
Smart TV	42	36.84
Smartphone	18	15.79
Tablet	6	5.26
Desktop-based apps or web browsers	15	13.16
Apple TV	1	0.88
Chromecast	3	2.63
PlayStation	6	5.26
Xbox	2	1.75
Amazon Fire sticks	8	7.02
More than One	9	7.89
Other Streaming devices	4	3.51

Note. Table 5 outlines the devices utilized for accessing various OTT networks and illustrates the multiple platforms respondents use to access their preferred streaming services. Smart TVs are the most commonly used devices, with 36.84% of respondents choosing this option.

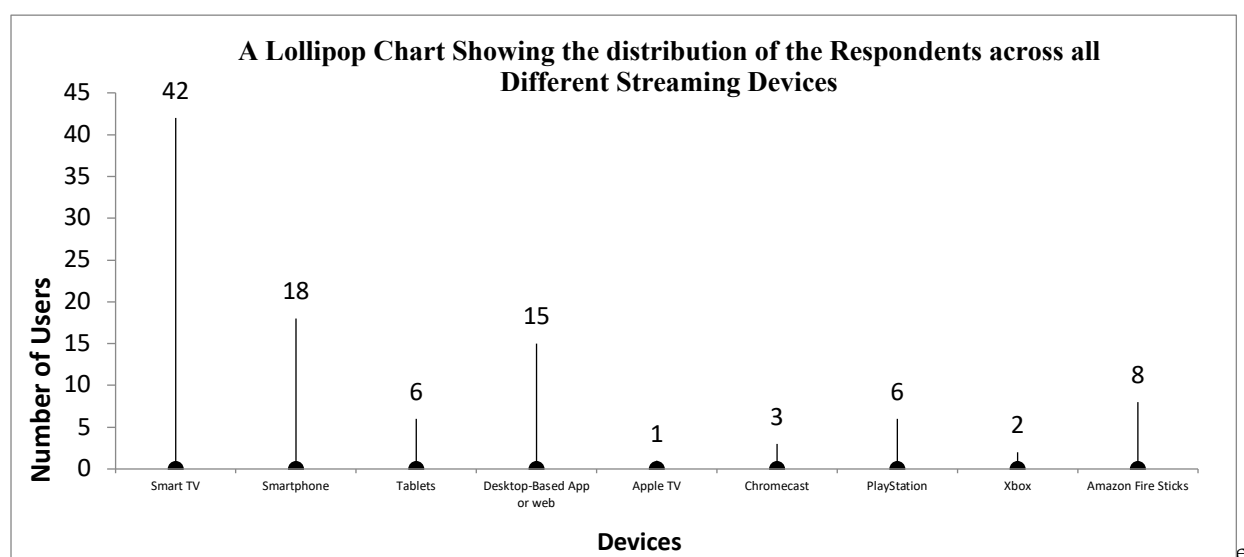
Smartphones at 15.79% are followed closely by desktop-based apps or web browsers at 13.16%, and Amazon Fire sticks at 7.02%. Additionally, 7.89% of respondents reported using "More than one" device, indicating a preference for flexibility when consuming OTT content. This table highlights the vast array of options available for accessing OTT networks and reflects the adaptability of viewers in choosing devices that suit their preferences and convenience.

The table above displays the different streaming devices employed by the survey participants. It highlights the devices used for streaming their preferred content. Notably, most

respondents favored smart TVs as their primary choice for streaming. Following closely, smartphones emerged as the second most commonly used streaming device. Interestingly, Apple TV was the least utilized device, with only one respondent indicating its use. This distribution underscores the diverse range of devices people rely on for their streaming preferences, with smart TVs and smartphones being the dominant choices among respondents.

Figure 8

Distribution of Various Streaming Devices



Note. Figure 8 presents a lollipop chart illustrating the distribution of respondents across various streaming devices. The chart displays the count of each device name and the corresponding number of respondents who use that device. It visually represents the popularity of different streaming devices among the survey participants.

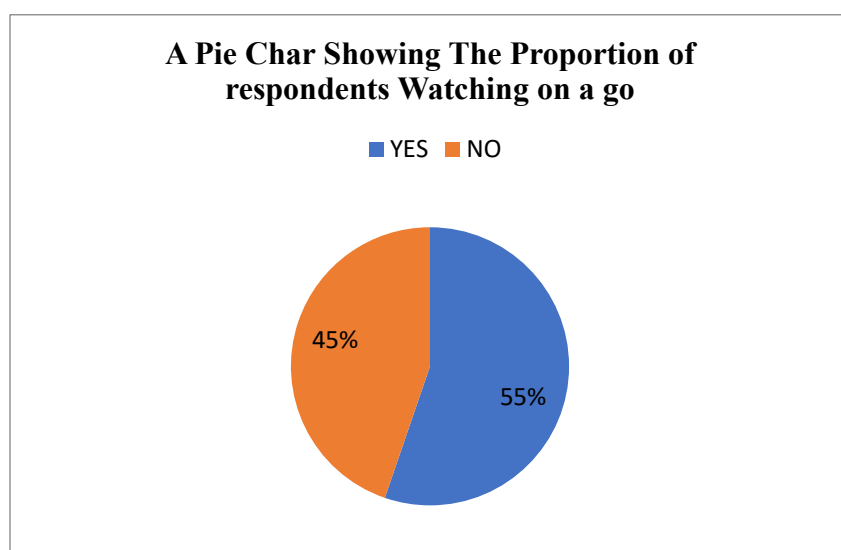
Overview of OTT Network Subscriber Locations

Respondents were questioned about their preferences for watching content outside their homes to understand OTT network users' viewing habits and mobility. A sizable portion of 114 respondents indicated that they frequently consume content while on the move. Thanks to the

convenience of portable devices, individuals can enjoy their favorite shows in various settings, including offices, public spaces, and other locations, provided they can access stable internet connectivity. The data illustrates the diverse areas where OTT content is accessed, highlighting the flexibility of modern streaming platforms. This information provides valuable insights into the adaptability and convenience offered by OTT networks, which cater to users' preferences for on-the-go viewing.

Figure 9

Watching OTT Networks on the Go



Note. The pie chart in Figure 9 highlights the viewing preferences of respondents, revealing that many of them (55%) prefer watching content on the go, emphasizing the importance of mobile accessibility. Nevertheless, a significant portion (45%) still prefers home-based viewing, indicating a balance between on-the-go and traditional viewing habits among participants.

The data presented in the pie chart depicted in Figure 9 provides valuable insights into the viewing preferences of the surveyed participants. Notably, a substantial majority of respondents, comprising 55% of the total, are strongly inclined toward watching their preferred content while on the move, emphasizing the growing trend of mobile and flexible viewing

options. This preference for on-the-go entertainment underlines the significance of accessibility and convenience in today's media landscape.

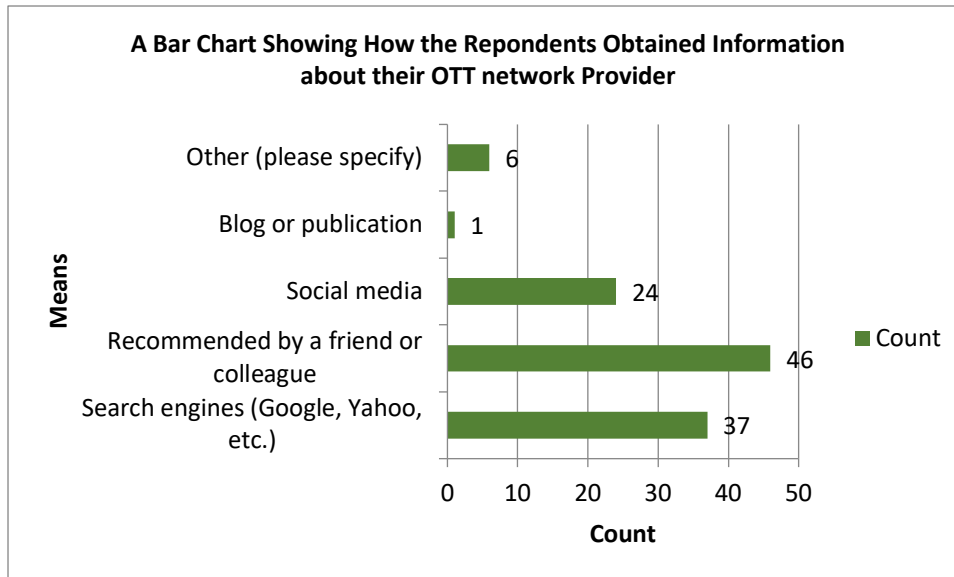
Conversely, a noteworthy segment of the respondents, constituting 45% of the surveyed population, expressed a contrasting viewpoint, signaling a preference for the more traditional approach of home-based viewing. This significant proportion opting for home-centered viewing signifies the enduring appeal of a comfortable and immersive viewing experience within the confines of one's residence. The pie chart data underscores the evolving dynamics of media consumption, with a sizeable portion of respondents embracing the freedom of mobile streaming. In contrast, others continue to cherish the familiarity and comfort of home-based entertainment. This dual preference highlights the importance of catering to diverse viewing habits in the ever-expanding realm of over-the-top (OTT) networks and streaming services.

OTT Network Providers by Respondents

This study presented respondents with multiple avenues for encountering their OTT network providers. The subsequent bar chart illustrates the breakdown of respondents' preferences with a complete dataset of valid responses.

Figure 10

Sources of Information on OTT Network Providers



Note. The pie chart in Figure 9 illustrates the viewing preferences of survey respondents. It indicates that a majority, comprising 55% of the participants, prefer watching their favorite content on the go, while 45% prefer home-based viewing.

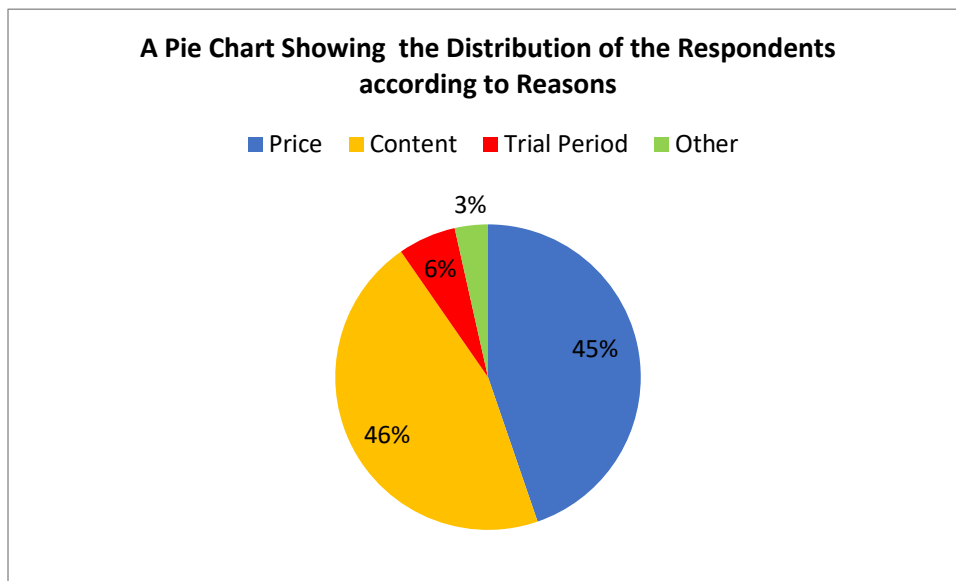
Analyzing the information presented in the bar chart, it becomes apparent that a substantial portion of the survey respondents, accounting for 46 individuals, primarily relied on recommendations from friends and acquaintances within their social circles to discover OTT networks. Furthermore, 37 respondents turned to search engines such as Google, Yahoo, and Mozilla to seek information about these streaming platforms. Social media platforms also played a significant role, with 24 respondents utilizing them as a source of discovery. Notably, a smaller percentage of participants relied on blogs for information. Word-of-mouth referrals from friends and colleagues emerged as the prevailing and most common method by which respondents became acquainted with OTT network providers, underscoring the influence of personal networks in shaping consumer choices in the digital streaming landscape.

Factors Influencing Respondents' Transition to OTT Platforms

In the survey, respondents provided a range of reasons that motivated their shift to OTT platforms. These motivations encompassed factors such as cost considerations and the perceived quality of content. The following table illustrates the distribution of respondents based on the factors influencing their decision.

The survey data sheds light on the motivations that drove respondents to shift towards Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms, highlighting various factors influencing their decisions. One of the most prominent motivating factors was cost considerations, with 44.74% of participants expressing price as a significant concern before subscribing to an OTT network. This suggests that the affordability of OTT services compared to traditional cable or satellite TV providers played a pivotal role in attracting viewers. Content quality emerged as another compelling driver, with 45.61% of respondents indicating that the content offered by OTT platforms played a crucial role in their decision-making process. The diverse and appealing content libraries provided by services like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+ have resonated with viewers, underlining the importance of captivating and exclusive content.

Furthermore, a noteworthy portion of respondents, 6.14%, highlighted the significance of trial periods offered by OTT networks as a factor in their choice. This suggests that the opportunity to test these platforms before committing to a subscription contributed to the decision-making process for some viewers. The motivations behind the shift to OTT platforms encompassed a combination of cost-consciousness, the allure of high-quality content, and the availability of trial periods. These factors collectively underscore the dynamic nature of the digital streaming landscape and the evolving preferences of viewers in today's media consumption landscape.

Figure 11*Factors Influencing Viewer Choices*

Note. Figure 11 comprehensively summarizes respondents' motivations to shift towards Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms. The data reveals that cost considerations were a significant factor, with 44.74% of participants expressing price as a primary concern before subscribing to an OTT network. This emphasizes the importance of affordability in attracting viewers away from traditional cable or satellite TV providers.

The pie chart shows that several factors played a significant role in influencing respondents to subscribe to OTT networks. The most notable aspect was the affordability of OTT network prices, which attracted 51 respondents. OTT platforms are perceived as cost-effective alternatives to traditional cable or satellite TV services, making them an appealing choice for budget-conscious viewers (Adhikari, 2014).

Another major driving force for respondents was the wide range and high quality of content available on OTT networks. These platforms offer diverse content options, catering to various preferences and interests. Additionally, the quality of the videos on OTT networks is

regarded as superior, further enhancing their appeal to viewers. One key feature of OTT networks that garnered attention was the availability of trial periods. Seven respondents mentioned that the opportunity to try out the services before committing to a subscription played a role in their decision to subscribe. Trial periods allow viewers to explore the platform's offerings and assess its suitability for their needs.

Content quality emerged as another influential driver, with 45.61% of respondents indicating that the content offered by OTT platforms played a crucial role in their decision-making process. The diverse and appealing content libraries of services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+ were beautiful, highlighting the significance of exclusive and captivating content in the OTT landscape. A noteworthy portion of respondents, accounting for 6.14%, recognized the importance of trial periods offered by OTT networks as a contributing factor to their decision. This suggests that the opportunity to experience these platforms before committing was a compelling feature for some viewers. Figure 11 underscores the diverse motivations that led respondents to shift towards OTT platforms, encompassing cost-consciousness, content quality, and the availability of trial periods. These findings emphasize the dynamic nature of the digital streaming landscape and the evolving preferences of viewers in today's media consumption landscape.

Lastly, four respondents indicated that other factors not covered in the survey influenced their choice to subscribe to OTT networks. These unspecified factors may vary from individual to individual, highlighting the diverse motivations behind OTT network subscriptions. Further exploration of these "other" factors could provide valuable insights into consumer behavior in this context. The survey results underscored the significance of pricing, content variety and quality, trial periods, and individual-specific factors in driving respondents to subscribe to OTT

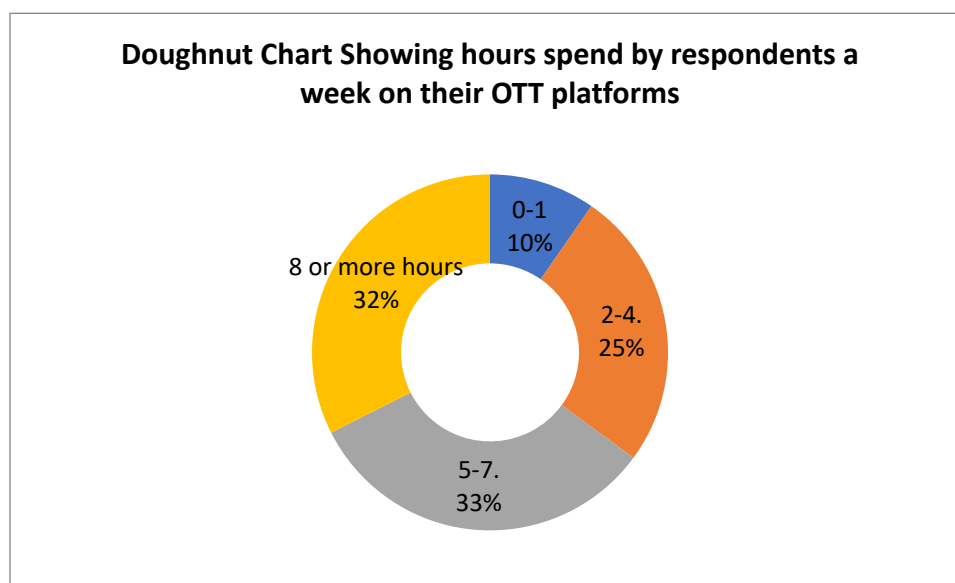
networks. Understanding these influencing factors can contribute to better-comprehending consumer preferences and behaviors in the OTT industry.

Weekly Time Allocation for OTT Platform Usage

To gauge the influence of these networks on the respondents, they were inquired about their average weekly screen time dedicated to OTT networks. Most respondents indicated spending between 5 to 8 hours per week, with usage distributed throughout the days of the week. A smaller segment reported watching for less than an hour weekly (0-1 hours = 11 respondents), while a significant number dedicated 2-4 hours per week (29 respondents). Additionally, 37 respondents each reported spending 5-7 hours and eight or more hours per week on OTT networks. The extended viewing hours may be attributed to various factors. The following donut chart illustrates the distribution of respondents based on the number of hours they allocated to their OTT network usage.

Figure 12

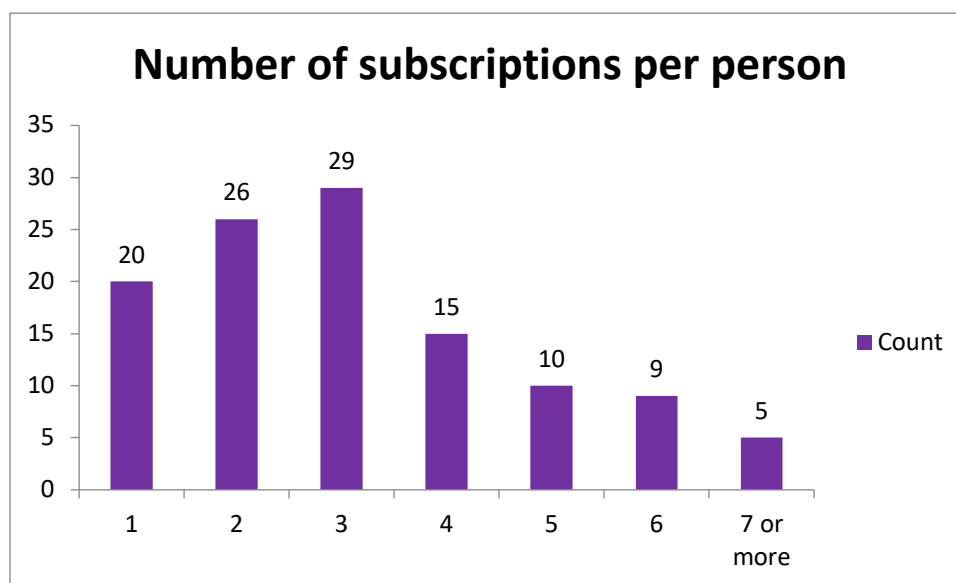
Viewer Engagement Insights



Note. Figure 12, a donut chart, illustrates the distribution of respondents based on the number of hours they allocate to their Over-The-Top (OTT) network usage each week. The data shows that most respondents, the largest segment, spend 5 to 8 hours weekly on OTT networks. This indicates a significant level of engagement with these platforms, with viewers consistently dedicating time to consuming content. A smaller portion of respondents watches for shorter periods, with some dedicating less than an hour weekly and others allocating 2-4 hours per week. Additionally, a notable group of participants invests even more significant time, with some dedicating 5-7 hours per week, while another segment spends eight or more hours per week on OTT networks.

OTT Network Subscriptions per Participant

When examining the OTT subscription behaviors of the respondents, it becomes clear that a sizable portion of individuals is open to subscribing to multiple platforms. Many respondents opt for multiple OTT network subscriptions, with reasons ranging from the desire for a diverse range of content to considerations of pricing and content quality. The survey delved into the number of OTT networks respondents subscribed to, uncovering a diverse spectrum of preferences. Notably, (25.44%) of respondents indicated that they subscribed to 29 OTT networks, showcasing a solid appetite for varied content offerings. Others distributed across different response categories, with 17.54% subscribing to 20 networks, 22.81% to 26 networks, and 13.16% to 15 networks. This data illuminates the nuanced choices made by OTT users, highlighting the complexity of their viewing habits in the ever-evolving landscape of streaming services. Understanding these preferences is vital for service providers seeking to cater to the diverse needs of their audience.

Figure 13*Number of OTT Network Subscriptions per Respondent*

Note. Figure 13 provides valuable insights into the subscription behaviors of the survey respondents regarding Over-The-Top (OTT) networks. It reveals that many individuals are open to subscribing to multiple OTT platforms, driven by various motivations. The data shows respondents have diverse preferences regarding the number of OTT networks they subscribe to. Notably, a significant portion (25.44%) indicated that they subscribe to 2-9 OTT networks, emphasizing their appetite for a wide range of content offerings. Other respondents are spread across different response categories, with 17.54% subscribing to 20 networks, 22.81% to 26 networks, and 13.16% to 15 networks.

Based on the data presented in the chart, it is evident that most respondents have subscriptions to three different OTT networks. Following this group, some have opted for two or just one OTT network subscription. A smaller proportion of respondents, precisely five individuals, have subscribed to seven or more platforms, as revealed by this study. This diversity in subscription patterns highlights OTT users' varied preferences and choices. This information

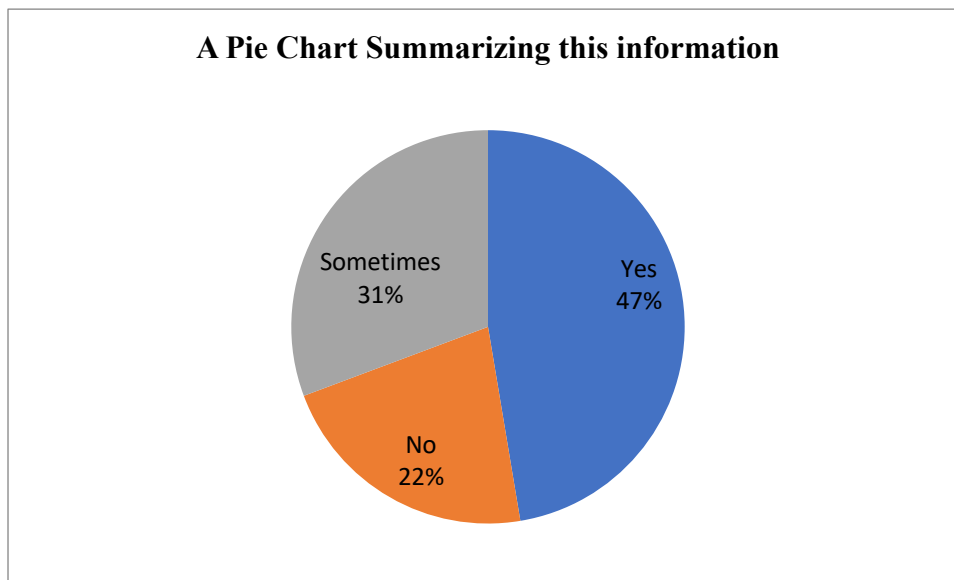
sheds light on the intricate choices made by OTT users, highlighting the multifaceted nature of their viewing habits within the evolving landscape of streaming services. Understanding these preferences is crucial for OTT service providers aiming to cater to their audience's diverse needs and preferences.

Impact of Friends and Family on Content Selection

Individuals' choices regarding the content they access and follow on OTT platforms are often influenced by their friends and family, as social circles play a significant role in shaping preferences (Décieux et al., 2019). A specific question was directed toward the respondents to understand how friends and family influence their content choices. The results are summarized in the chart below.

Figure 14

Role of Social Networks in Content Choices



Note. Figure 14 provides valuable insights into the impact of social networks on the content choices of respondents in the context of Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms. The data from the pie chart reveals that a significant portion of respondents (47%) acknowledged that their friends and

family substantially influence their content preferences when using OTT platforms. This suggests that recommendations and discussions within social circles are crucial in shaping viewing habits.

From the pie chart above, it is evident that most respondents (47%) acknowledged that their friends and family influence their content choices. Conversely, 31% of respondents indicated that friends and family have minimal influence on their content choices, reflecting a level of independence in content selection. Notably, 22% of participants stated that social networks have no impact on their choices, indicating that they rely on other sources or make decisions based on personal preferences or other factors. These findings highlight the complex interplay between social influence and individual autonomy in selecting content on OTT platforms. While many users are swayed by recommendations and discussions within their social circles, a significant portion remains less affected or entirely unaffected by such influences, underscoring the diversity of decision-making processes in the digital streaming landscape. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for content providers and marketers aiming to cater to their audience's varied needs and preferences.

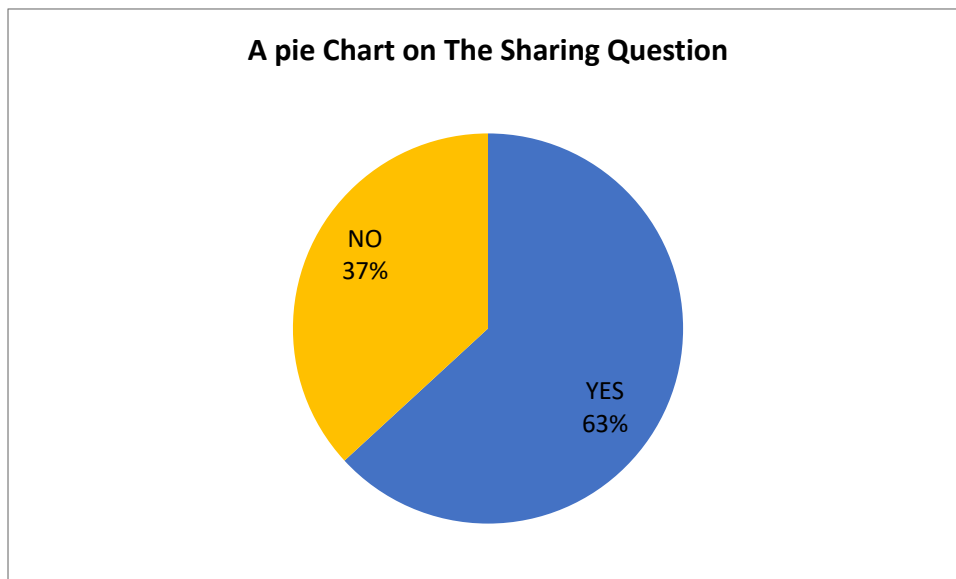
Content Sharing Behavior among OTT Platform Users

Sharing content that resonates with individuals is a fundamental aspect of human nature, and the means of sharing have evolved significantly in the digital age. Social media platforms have become a prominent avenue for sharing content and recommendations among friends and family (Yan et al., 2019). In the context of this survey, an intriguing 63.16% of the respondents acknowledged their inclination to recommend content they have watched to their social circle. This highlights the substantial impact of word-of-mouth and digital sharing in today's media consumption landscape. However, it's worth noting that 36.84% of the respondents did not

engage in such sharing practices, suggesting a diverse range of preferences and behaviors among OTT platform users. The following chart visually represents these response distributions, shedding light on the prevalence of content sharing within the surveyed population.

Figure 15

Content Sharing Behaviors Among OTT Platform Users



Note. Figure 15, a pie chart, provides valuable insights into the sharing behaviors of respondents in the context of Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms. This survey reveals that 63.16% of the respondents actively recommend content they have watched to their social circles. This underscores the considerable influence of word-of-mouth and digital sharing in shaping content consumption choices.

Uncovering OTT Network Usage Through Zoom Interviews

Furthermore, to gain a more profound understanding of the study's objectives and the intricate dynamics of respondents' OTT network usage, an extensive online Zoom interview process was implemented, targeting a cohort of 25 participants. This methodological choice was underpinned by the recognition that human communication extends beyond mere words, with

non-verbal cues, facial expressions, and body language playing pivotal roles in conveying nuanced insights.

The process, while successful, did come with its share of challenges, which, in themselves, offered unique insights. These challenges included occasional non-responses from participants, the constraint of time, and instances where respondents chose to opt-out during the interview sessions. These challenges were anticipated and served as valuable data points to understand the complexities and limitations inherent in qualitative research.

In tandem with the quantitative survey, these in-depth interviews provided multifaceted perspectives on OTT network usage. The structured questionnaire employed during these interviews tackled six fundamental aspects, diving into the intricate facets of respondents' behaviors and preferences within the OTT landscape:

Motivation for OTT Network Usage. Through open-ended questions, participants were encouraged to articulate the underlying motives driving their adoption of OTT networks. This exploration aimed to uncover the diverse incentives and preferences guiding their choices.

Preferred Genres. Participants were probed to divulge their favored genres, shedding light on the diverse spectrum of content that appeals to different individuals. This illuminated the content landscape and hinted at potential patterns in viewership.

Content Selection Strategies. The interviews delved into the decision-making processes behind content selection. Participants were prompted to describe how they navigate the vast content on their subscribed OTT platforms.

Engagement and Impactful Content. In seeking to understand the emotional resonance of content, respondents were encouraged to recount experiences where they encountered shows

or programs that left a lasting impact. This provided insights into the potential for content to captivate and engage audiences.

Sharing Habits and Social Influence. The exploration extended to the social dimension, investigating how respondents share information about shows and programs within their social circles. This segment aimed to unravel the social dynamics influencing content consumption.

By adopting this comprehensive approach, combining quantitative data from surveys with rich qualitative data from interviews, the study not only gained a deeper understanding of the multifaceted world of OTT network usage but also contextualized the quantitative findings within the intricate web of human behaviors and preferences (Taherdoost, 2022). Participant 24 shared insights into their sharing habits: "I often share what I'm watching on social media, especially if I find something exceptional or thought-provoking. It's a great way to connect with others with similar interests and discuss the content." This sentiment was reinforced by Participant 23, who stated, "I often share my favorite shows and movies on social media, especially when I want to discuss them with friends who have similar tastes." These participants' comments underscore the role of social media as a platform for sharing and initiating discussions surrounding OTT content. Participant 21 offered valuable insights into the influence of friends on content consumption: "I rely more on algorithms. OTT platforms seem to understand my preferences quite well, and their recommendations usually lead me to content I enjoy. Occasionally, I'll take a friend's recommendation if it aligns with my interests." Participant 25 echoed this sentiment: "If a friend passionately recommends something, I'm definitely open to trying it." These comments highlight the interplay between algorithms and social influence in content selection, emphasizing that while algorithms play a significant role, recommendations from friends can also shape viewing choices within the OTT landscape.

Motivations Encouraging the Shift Towards OTT Network Content Over Traditional Television.

The media consumption landscape is profoundly transforming in an era marked by rapid technological advancements. The shift from traditional media to OTT networks is occurring at an unprecedented pace (Papathanasopoulos & Varoutas, 2022). This remarkable transition is primarily attributed to the distinct advantages that OTT networks offer, characterized by their unique control and flexibility to subscribers (Sahu et al., 2021). One of the primary drivers of this migration is the superior user experience offered by OTT platforms. Research has indicated that approximately 31.7% of the general population acknowledges that the overall OTT network experience significantly influences their decision to subscribe (Vidhya & Govind, 2022). Additionally, the widespread adoption of digital devices, particularly smartphones, has played a pivotal role in encouraging this shift.

Interestingly, while some studies have suggested that age may not be a significant factor when analyzing the competition index in this context (Vidhya & Govind, 2022), this study seeks to delve deeper into why individuals transition from traditional platforms to OTT networks. By exploring the motivations and preferences of respondents, we aim to gain a more comprehensive understanding of this evolving media landscape and the factors shaping it.

To gain a deeper insight into the respondents' mindset, it was imperative to delve into the primary factors driving their preference for OTT networks over traditional forms of media consumption. As revealed through their responses, it becomes evident that many reasons and motivations underpin their choice to opt for OTT networks. This multifaceted question sheds light on the diverse factors influencing their decision and highlights a notable trend – the gradual decline in the use of conventional television sets and movie theaters. The preferences articulated

by the respondents are a testament to the transformative impact that OTT networks have had on the media consumption landscape. These platforms' convenience, flexibility, and personalized content offerings have emerged as key drivers, catering to the evolving preferences of today's digital-savvy audience. Moreover, the ubiquity of smartphones and the accessibility of high-speed internet have further accelerated this shift.

Additionally, the responses reflect the changing dynamics of how individuals' access and engage with content, with many favoring the autonomy and control offered by OTT networks. This transition from traditional television and cinema underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of the factors fueling this paradigm shift. By analyzing the motivations behind the respondents' preference for OTT networks, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the evolving media landscape, contributing to a deeper comprehension of the evolving media consumption habits in the digital age.

While conducting online Zoom interviews with a diverse group of 25 participants, a compelling narrative emerged regarding the factors that motivate individuals to embrace OTT platforms. Six of the respondents passionately emphasized the remarkable flexibility that OTT networks offer. One respondent vividly articulated this sentiment, stating that flexibility extends to time and space. With the convenience of their smartphones, they can seamlessly access their favorite channels and programs without being tethered to a specific room or location. The ability to choose when and where to consume content has become a hallmark of OTT networks, allowing users to enjoy unprecedented freedom in their media consumption.

Moreover, respondent number three shed further light on the concept of flexibility, highlighting the unique features that set OTT platforms apart from traditional TV or movie theaters. They emphasized the power to pause, rewind, or indulge in binge-watching entire

seasons—a level of control and convenience that is challenging to attain through conventional means. This newfound capability has made OTT platforms increasingly appealing to individuals seeking an enhanced viewing experience. Participant 22 shared their perspective on this shift: "The Convenience of OTT networks is a big motivator for me. I can watch what I want when I want, which is much more flexible than adhering to TV schedules or going to a theater." This sentiment was echoed by Participant 25, who emphasized, "One of the primary motivators for me is the Convenience of OTT networks. I can watch what I want when I want, without being tied to a specific schedule. That flexibility is a big plus." These participants' comments underscore the importance of Convenience and flexibility as critical drivers in transitioning from traditional television to OTT networks, highlighting the desire for on-demand, personalized viewing experiences. Participant 24 provided insights into the desire to escape traditional scheduling, stating, "I love being able to watch whatever I want, whenever I want, without being tied to a TV schedule or having to leave the house to go to a theater." Participant 23 highlighted this aspect: "Convenience is a big motivator for me. With OTT platforms, I can watch what I want when I want, without commercials or the need to plan around TV schedules." These comments emphasize the allure of escaping the constraints of traditional television schedules and the freedom to consume content on one's terms, a motivation that resonates strongly among OTT viewers.

Beyond flexibility, several respondents echoed the sentiment that convenience was a driving force behind their adoption of OTT platforms, aligning with the findings of studies like Kesavan and Bharathi (2021). Traditionally, viewers were restricted to the content offered by television channels, lacking the ability to pause or schedule their viewing. However, the rise of OTT platforms has ushered in a new era of convenience. As articulated by respondent number

two, these platforms empower users to watch what they want, when they want. This newfound convenience has resonated with many, accounting for the motivation of eight interviewees who cited it as their primary reason for embracing OTT networks. Participant 24: "OTT networks' flexibility is a big motivator for me. I can watch content at my own pace, on my own schedule. Plus, the wide variety of content available on these platforms is a huge draw."

The diverse perspectives and experiences shared by the interviewees underscore the multifaceted appeal of OTT platforms, with flexibility and convenience emerging as critical drivers of their increasing popularity. This nuanced understanding of the factors influencing users' choices provides valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of media consumption in the digital age. As the study delves deeper into these motivations, it seeks to unravel additional layers of complexity in the shifting media landscape.

Furthermore, it is evident from the interviews that respondents place a high premium on the convenience and flexibility offered by OTT platforms, with three interviewees explicitly highlighting these attributes as their primary motivating factors. The allure of tailoring their viewing experience to their schedules and preferences resonates strongly with this subset of users. As the seventh respondent aptly puts it, "OTT platforms offer a wide variety of content that I can access anytime and anywhere." This convenience and flexibility empower viewers to take charge of their entertainment, ensuring they can watch what they want when they want and from wherever they desire. Participant 22: "The Convenience of OTT networks is a big motivator for me. I can watch what I want when I want, which is much more flexible than adhering to TV schedules or going to a theater."

Participant 24 provided valuable insights into the desire to break free from traditional scheduling, expressing, "The ability to watch whatever I want, whenever I want, is truly

liberating. I no longer feel tied down by a rigid TV schedule or the need to leave the house to attend a theater." This sentiment underscores the profound sense of liberation OTT networks offer, where viewers can tailor their content consumption to align with their lifestyles and preferences. Similarly, Participant 23 shed light on this aspect, underlining the significance of convenience by stating, "Convenience is paramount for me. OTT platforms allow me to enjoy content on my terms, free from intrusive commercials or the hassle of planning my life around TV schedules." These participants' comments collectively highlight the strong appeal of escaping the conventional scheduling limitations imposed by traditional television and embracing the autonomy to engage with content at one's convenience.

The desire to evade the constraints of linear television schedules and the necessity to visit movie theaters physically also aligns with Participant 21's perspective. They affirmed, "convenience is a big motivator for me. With OTT platforms, I can watch what I want when I want, without commercials or the need to plan around TV schedules." This sentiment echoes the sentiment shared by other participants, emphasizing that the allure of convenience extends beyond mere freedom from scheduling and encompasses the avoidance of interruptions, such as commercials. Collectively, these statements underscore how the shift towards OTT network content is driven by convenience's profound appeal, providing viewers unparalleled flexibility and control over their entertainment experiences.

Moreover, variety emerged as another compelling reason for individuals to gravitate toward OTT platforms. As highlighted by one interviewee, the vast array of content available on these platforms is a key draw. They appreciate the sheer diversity of options, allowing them to explore different genres, shows, and movies at their leisure. Variety, being a matter of personal taste, holds immense appeal, and it is evident that many OTT network subscribers relish the

opportunity to indulge in a wide range of content. This aspect further contributes to the expanding user base of OTT networks as the promise of diverse entertainment options entices more people.

To provide a comprehensive overview of these motivations, the following summarizes how the respondents were distributed across the four main driving factors:

Flexibility. 6 respondents, constituting 24% of the interviewees, emphasized this as their primary motivator.

Convenience. 10 respondents, representing 40% of the participants, cited convenience as their crucial driving factor.

Variety. 3 respondents, making up 12% of the sample, identified variety as their primary motivation.

Convenience & Flexibility. 4 respondents, accounting for 16% of the interviewees, appreciated convenience and flexibility.

Convenience & Variety. 1 respondent, comprising 4% of the participants, valued convenience, and variety.

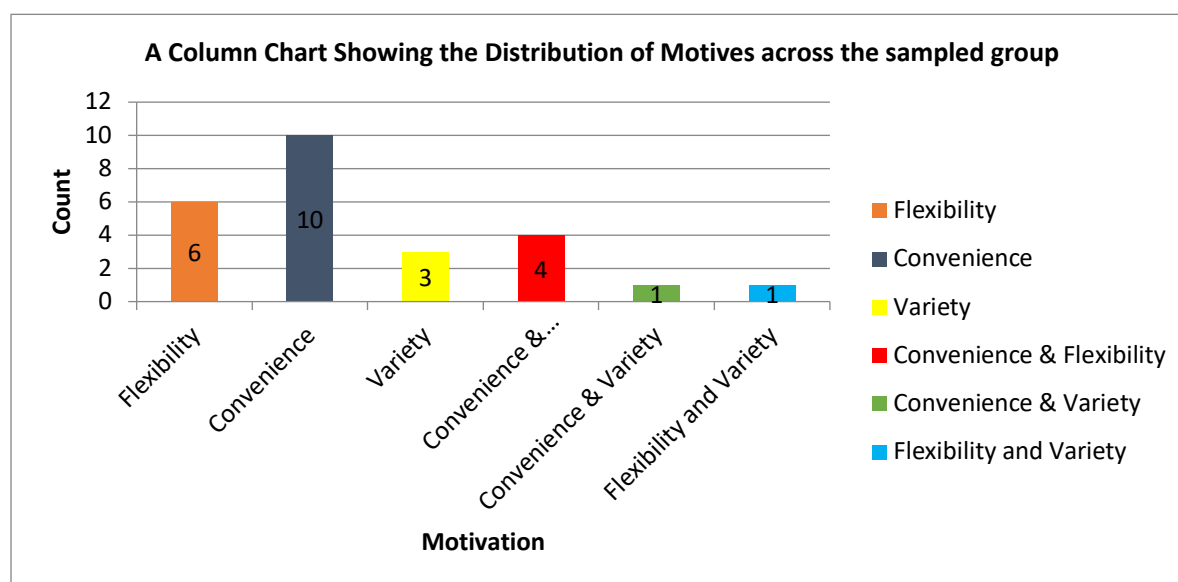
Flexibility and Variety. 1 respondent, constituting another 4% of the sample, found motivation in the combination of flexibility and variety.

This nuanced breakdown of motivations underscores the multifaceted appeal of OTT platforms, demonstrating that users are drawn to these networks for various reasons. It highlights the evolving media consumption landscape, where viewers increasingly seek platforms that align with their preferences and lifestyles, whether for the flexibility to watch on their terms or the wealth of diverse content offerings. As the study delves deeper into these motivations, it endeavors to uncover further insights into the intricate dynamics of OTT network usage.

Figure 16 provides valuable insights into the motivating factors driving individuals to shift towards Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms. Among the sampled group, convenience emerges as the predominant motivator, cited by 40% of participants. Flexibility follows closely behind at 24%, highlighting the importance of these two factors in attracting viewers. Additionally, 12% of respondents prioritize variety, while some individuals appreciate a combination of these motivators, such as convenience and flexibility or convenience and variety. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of viewer preferences in the OTT landscape.

Figure 16

Motivating Factors for Shifting to OTT Platforms



Note. The survey data presented in Figure 16 reveals the distribution of motivating factors among the sampled group regarding their shift to OTT platforms. The most prominent motivator cited by respondents was convenience, with 40% of participants highlighting it as their crucial driving factor. Flexibility was the primary motivator for 24% of the interviewees, emphasizing the importance of the freedom to choose when and where to watch content. Additionally, 12% of the sample identified variety as their primary motivation, showcasing the significance of diverse

content options. Some respondents appreciated multiple aspects, such as convenience and flexibility (16%), convenience and variety (4%), and flexibility and variety (4%), indicating that these factors often intersect in influencing viewers' decisions in favor of OTT platforms.

Popular Shows and Genres Preferred by OTT Network Subscribers

Each individual has their preferred genres when it comes to OTT networks, and numerous factors influence the choice of these genres. Investigating the factors contributing to these choices is essential before examining the specific genres identified in this study. When analyzing these preferences across different generations, it is noteworthy that Generation Z is prominently represented on all online video streaming platforms (Patch, 2018). This generation is characterized by its quest for information and short attention span (Patch, 2018). One significant influence on the selection of shows is the thumbnail, which serves as the visual representation of the content. Patch's research (2018) highlighted that most viewers consider the thumbnail as one of the primary factors influencing their decision to watch a particular show.

Furthermore, the choice of genres can be linked to the preferences and characteristics of each generation. Generation Z's inclination towards quick, information-rich content may favor specific genres that align with their preferences. Additionally, understanding how factors such as thumbnail design influence viewers' choices can provide valuable insights into optimizing content presentation on OTT platforms to cater to different generational preferences (Patch, 2018). This multifaceted approach to examining genre preferences and the underlying factors contributing to these choices adds depth to our understanding of OTT network viewership patterns.

Several factors play pivotal roles in influencing viewers' choices when selecting shows on OTT networks, and it is essential to explore these factors in depth to gain a comprehensive

understanding of viewers' preferences (Patch, 2018). One such factor is the short text description associated with the show, which research has shown to be highly influential in viewers' decision-making processes (Patch, 2018). Approximately seven out of every ten individuals surveyed are inclined to base their decision on whether to watch or skip a show on the information provided in its description (Rohrbach et al., 2017).

Throughout our in-depth interviews with the participants, they offered valuable insights into their genre preferences, providing a deeper understanding of the factors that drive their choices. Many participants belonging to Generation Z emphasized their thirst for information and quick, engaging content. Participant 5 shared, "I love platforms that offer documentaries and educational content. It's not just about entertainment; it's about learning something new. It's like a whole world of knowledge at your fingertips." This comment highlights how Generation Z's inclination towards information-rich content aligns with their genre preferences, favoring documentaries and educational shows that cater to their quest for knowledge.

Participants from different age groups discussed the significance of thumbnails in their decision-making process. Participant 11, a millennial, remarked, "When browsing for something to watch, the thumbnail matters. It's like the cover of a book; it gives you a sense of what to expect. I will likely click on it if it looks intriguing or aligns with my interests." This perspective underscores the universal influence of thumbnails as a visual representation of content, transcending generational boundaries.

The participants also provided examples of how their genre preferences evolved. Participant 17, a baby boomer, reminisced about her earlier years of enjoying classic movies and nostalgic shows. She said, "I grew up with those old movies, which still hold a special place in my heart. Sometimes, I go back and watch them for the nostalgia. It's a different kind of joy."

Participant 17's comment reflects how generational experiences shape genre preferences, with her attachment to classic content stemming from her upbringing.

These participant comments illustrate the complex interplay of generational factors, visual cues, and personal experiences in shaping genre preferences on OTT networks. They demonstrate that the appeal of content extends beyond mere entertainment, aligning with individual interests, quest for knowledge, and even nostalgia. Understanding these nuances is crucial for content providers looking to cater to diverse generational tastes and optimize thumbnail design for enhanced viewer engagement.

These descriptions serve as concise summaries that offer viewers a glimpse into the content and storyline of the show, helping them decide whether it aligns with their interests and preferences (Rohrbach et al., 2017). As one respondent aptly said, "I feel it is quite important...they do not give too much away, just enough to get you hooked." This statement underscores the significance of show descriptions in capturing viewers' attention and enticing them to explore further.

Another crucial factor influencing genre choices is the availability of a film trailer. Research has consistently demonstrated that viewers are more likely to make judgments about a show based on its trailer (Patch, 2018). Trailers provide a dynamic visual preview of the program, offering insights into its mood, plot, and overall storyline, which can significantly impact viewers' decisions.

Furthermore, genre selection can be influenced by several other considerations, including the characters featured in the show, the reputation of the film director, the specific category or genre designation, and even the timing of the show's release. These factors collectively contribute to the intricate web of influences shaping viewers' choices regarding the content they

choose to watch on OTT networks. By examining these factors in greater detail, we can better understand the dynamics that drive genre preferences among OTT network subscribers.

In this research, interviewees were prompted to recount their most recent memorable encounters with shows on their respective OTT networks. These anecdotes serve as valuable insights into the genre preferences and choices of the respondents, shedding light on what captivates them in the vast realm of online streaming content. Each respondent shared a unique and vivid scenario in which they stumbled upon a program that left a lasting impression. This scenario wouldn't have been possible with traditional television or movie theaters.

These narratives provide a window into the diverse tastes and interests of the interviewees. For instance, one compelling account came from respondent nine, who shared a vivid experience during the interview: "Absolutely. I recently watched a documentary on an OTT platform that explored a topic I'm passionate about. The in-depth storytelling and interviews with experts drew me in. It felt like I was part of the narrative." Understanding the popular shows and genres preferred by OTT network subscribers is essential for gaining insights into their viewing habits. Participant 11 provided valuable insights during the interview, expressing their inclination toward crime dramas by saying, "I'm a sucker for crime dramas. The suspense, the mystery, and the unraveling of the plot always keep me hooked." This comment highlights the enduring appeal of crime dramas, a genre known for engaging narratives and plot twists, resonating strongly with viewers like Participant 11. It underscores the significance of genres that offer suspense and intrigue, drawing viewers into captivating storylines.

Participant 4 offered a different perspective, sharing their preference for light-hearted comedies by stating, "After a long day, I just want to unwind with a good comedy. Laughter is my therapy, and OTT platforms have plenty of options to keep me entertained." This

participant's comment highlights the role of comedy genres in providing viewers with a source of relaxation and amusement. It underscores the diversity of preferences among OTT subscribers and the availability of content catering to various emotional needs.

Additionally, Participant 19 revealed their affinity for science fiction during the interview, saying, "Something is fascinating about exploring the unknown and the future through sci-fi. The imaginative worlds and futuristic concepts always capture my imagination." This perspective showcases the enduring allure of science fiction as a genre that allows viewers to transcend the boundaries of reality and engage with imaginative and speculative narratives.

This respondent's story highlights the power of OTT networks to deliver content that resonates deeply with viewers, aligning with their passions and interests. The documentary's ability to engage the respondents personally, immersing them in the narrative, underscores the unique and tailored experiences that OTT platforms can offer. The interviews unveiled the popularity of documentary series among OTT network subscribers. Participant 6 shared their enthusiasm for documentaries: "I'm constantly looking for thought-provoking documentaries. They offer insights into real-world issues and often leave me reflecting on important topics." This participant's comment highlights the role of documentary content in informing and inspiring viewers to engage with meaningful subjects. It underscores the capacity of OTT platforms to offer a wide range of genres, including those that encourage critical thinking and awareness. Through such stories and firsthand accounts, we can better understand the role that genre and content play in the lives of OTT network subscribers. These anecdotes illuminate how viewers connect with and are drawn to specific shows, enhancing our comprehension of their viewing habits and preferences. These participant comments collectively illustrate the diverse genre preferences within the OTT network subscriber community. While some are drawn to the

suspense of crime dramas, others seek solace in light-hearted comedies, or they may be captivated by the imaginative worlds of science fiction. Documentaries, on the other hand, provide an avenue for meaningful exploration and reflection. Understanding these genre preferences and the underlying reason for their popularity is crucial for content creators and platforms to effectively cater to their viewers' varied tastes and interests.

The responses to this question encompassed a variety of genres, and the findings shed light on the diverse preferences of the interviewees. These preferences were broadly categorized into three distinct genres: documentary series, unknown or unspecified, and thriller. This categorization allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the respondents' viewing habits. Among the respondents, documentary series emerged as a prevalent genre, with 12 individuals expressing their affinity for this category. This accounts for 48% of the responses, indicating a notable inclination towards thought-provoking and informative content within the sampled group. These individuals appreciated the in-depth storytelling and expert interviews, typically with documentary series.

In contrast, the thriller genre garnered a more minor but noteworthy following, with two respondents mentioning it as their preferred choice. Although this category represented only 8% of the responses, it signifies a distinct taste for suspenseful and gripping narratives within the interviewed cohort. 11 respondents fell into the "Others" category, representing various genres beyond the three primary classifications. This category accounted for 44% of the responses, demonstrating the versatility and individualized nature of genre preferences among the interviewees. The "Others" category encompassed various genres, from comedy and drama to science fiction and fantasy.

The responses to this question revealed the prevalence of documentary series as a favored genre and highlighted the diversity of genre preferences among the interviewees. This diversity underscores the wide range of content available on OTT platforms, catering to various tastes and interests within the audience.

Table 6

Shows and Genres Preferred by OTT Network Subscribers

Category	Total Number	Percentage (%)
Documentary Series	12	48
Thriller	2	8
Others	11	44

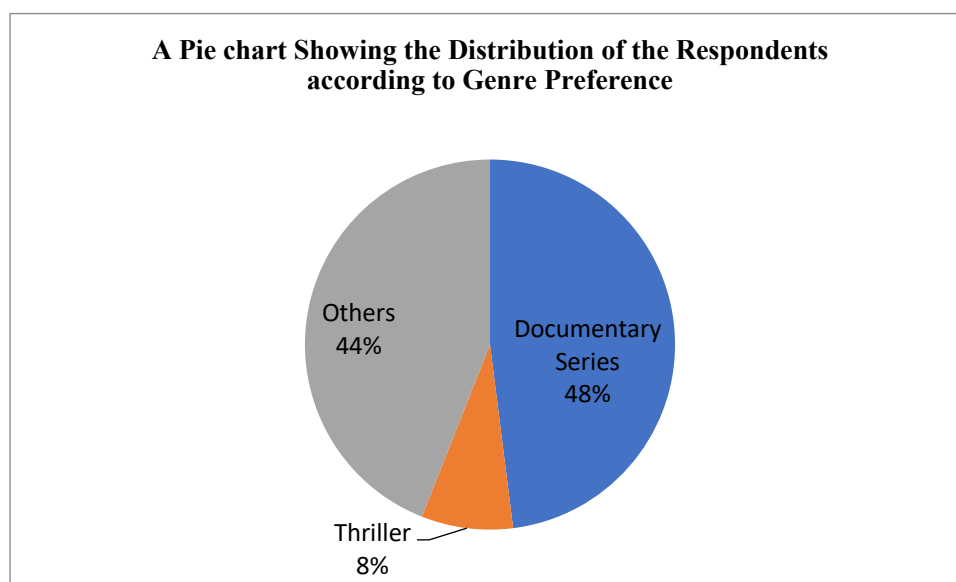
Note. Table 6 provides valuable insights into the content preferences of OTT network subscribers. These findings highlight the importance of offering diverse content to cater to varied tastes among OTT network subscribers. It underscores the need for providers to continually assess and enhance their content libraries to meet the evolving demands of their audience and remain competitive in the OTT landscape.

Among the group of interviewees, a sizable portion, comprising 12 individuals, expressed a distinct preference for documentary series regarding their OTT network viewing choices. This genre encompasses various subjects, including adventures, historical accounts, and other captivating categories, which appeal to these viewers. Notably, documentary series emerged as the most popular choice, dominating the respondents' preferences, as highlighted in the previous table. In contrast, only two interviewees favored thriller shows, indicating a more minor but distinct subset of viewers with a specific taste for suspense and excitement. It is worth noting that 11 respondents did not categorize their favorite shows into genres, demonstrating the diversity of content consumption preferences among the surveyed individuals. The distribution of genre preferences can be further illustrated through the following pie chart, providing a visual

representation and corresponding percentages to enhance the understanding of the viewers' choices. This chart offers valuable insights into the distinct patterns and trends that emerged from the respondents' preferences, shedding light on the broad spectrum of content OTT networks offer and how viewers engage with these diverse options.

Figure 17

Genre Preferences Among OTT Network Subscribers



Note. Figure 17 provides insights into the genre preferences of the surveyed respondents. Among the participants, documentary series emerged as the most favored genre, with 12 individuals expressing a distinct preference for this category.

Selection Process for Choosing Content on OTT Networks

In the ever-evolving landscape of technological advancements, OTT networks constantly strive to enhance their services to cater to the growing demand for quality content. Recognizing the overwhelming influx of information, prominent platforms such as Netflix, Amazon, and Disney Plus have embraced and diligently refined their content recommendation systems (Ko et al., 2022). These systems are intricate software solutions engineered to provide tailored content

recommendations to subscribers, offering them a personalized viewing experience (Pajkovic, 2022).

The foundation of these recommendation algorithms lies in machine learning and data analytics. These algorithms leverage sophisticated techniques like forecasting and predictions to predict user preferences and deliver content suggestions accordingly. Extensive research indicates a promising future for movie and content recommendation systems, signifying their pivotal role in enhancing the OTT user experience (Pajkovic, 2022). As OTT technologies expand, a deeper understanding of consumer behavior becomes imperative to serve their interests precisely and accurately. Various techniques and features are utilized to craft these recommendation algorithms. OTT platforms utilize user-centric data, including search history, frequently watched genres, language preferences, and more (Lotz, 2014). These inputs help create a holistic profile of each subscriber, enabling platforms to make content suggestions that align with individual tastes and preferences.

In an era characterized by information abundance, manually sifting through vast content libraries can be time-consuming and overwhelming (Mayer-Schönberger & Cukier, 2013). OTT networks, however, alleviate this burden by implementing programmed and collaborative filtering mechanisms. These mechanisms streamline the content discovery process, ensuring that subscribers can effortlessly access the content they desire without the hassle of exhaustive searches. As technology continues to advance, it is evident that OTT networks are committed to refining their recommendation systems further. By harnessing the power of machine learning and data analytics, these platforms are poised to offer their users an even more personalized and engaging viewing experience. With ongoing research and innovation, the future of content discovery in OTT networks holds excellent promise.

In addition to algorithmic recommendations, many subscribers also turn to social networks to share and discover content that aligns with their preferences and interests. This approach is efficient among individuals with solid social connections who share common interests and tastes regarding OTT network content (Chakraborty et al., 2023). As a result, individuals often make viewing choices based on recommendations from friends or social connections. While this method may require occasional updates and adjustments, many OTT network users find it a reliable and accurate way to discover content that resonates with their preferences. This blend of algorithmic recommendations and social influence contributes to the diverse ways viewers discover and select content on OTT platforms.

During the online interviews conducted as part of this study, respondents were questioned about their reliance on either friends' recommendations or algorithmic suggestions when deciding what content to watch on OTT platforms. The subsequent analysis of their responses yielded valuable insights into the factors influencing content selection. These responses were thoughtfully categorized into three distinct groups, shedding light on viewers' decision-making processes:

Algorithmic Dependence. This category comprises respondents who primarily rely on the content recommendations generated by the OTT network's algorithms. These recommendations are based on a user's viewing history, preferences, and other factors, and they play a pivotal role in shaping content choices (Smith et al., 2021).

Friends' Recommendations. In contrast, some respondents trusted the recommendations of friends or social connections. They often seek suggestions from peers with similar tastes, interests, or viewing habits. This reliance on personal networks underscores the influential role of social ties in content discovery (Chakraborty et al., 2023).

Mixed Approach. The third category encompasses respondents who adopt a mixed approach, combining algorithmic recommendations and suggestions from friends. These viewers leverage both sources of guidance to enhance their content selection process, ensuring a diverse yet tailored viewing experience.

The detailed analysis of these categories provides valuable insights into the complex interplay between algorithms and social influence in shaping viewers' content choices on OTT platforms. It highlights the evolving nature of content discovery in the digital age and the multifaceted factors in viewers' decision-making processes. Let us delve deeper into the analysis to understand better these preferences and the factors that underpin them:

Algorithmic Dominance. As indicated by the table, a substantial portion of the population, comprising approximately 52%, places their faith in the recommendations generated by OTT platform algorithms. This statistic underscores the growing influence of machine learning and data-driven decision-making in content discovery (Smith et al., 2021). Viewers in this category tend to value the convenience and personalization offered by algorithmic suggestions, which consider their viewing history, preferences, and behavior patterns.

Trust in Friends. Interestingly, the data reveals that none of the respondents exclusively rely on friends' recommendations for content selection. While social influence remains a potent factor in content discovery (Chakraborty et al., 2023), it is worth noting that in this sample, no survey respondents relied solely on recommendations from their social circles. This could indicate the evolving landscape of content discovery, where viewers often seek a balance between algorithms and peer input.

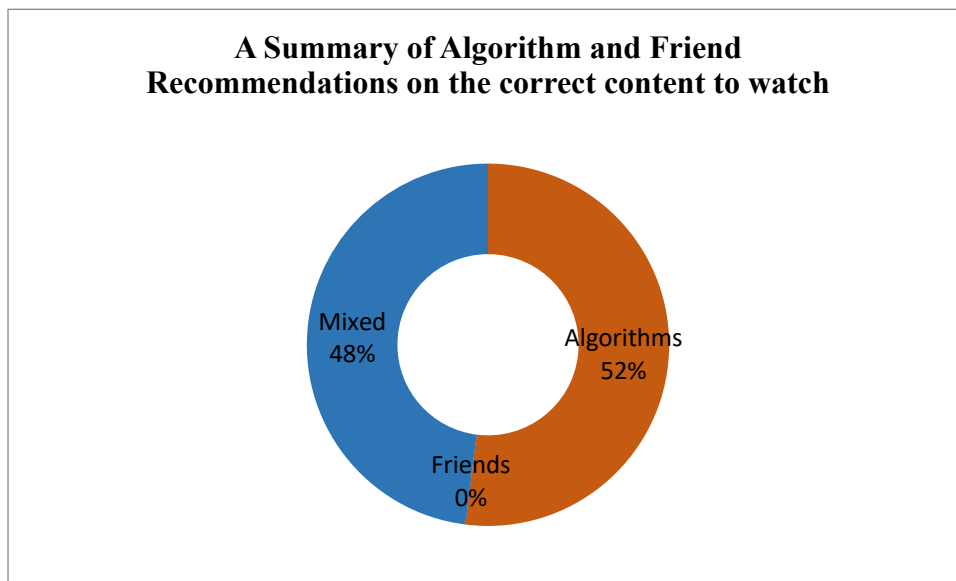
The Power of a Mixed Approach. 48% of respondents expressed their confidence in a mixed approach, combining algorithmic recommendations and suggestions from friends. This

approach reflects a nuanced understanding of content discovery, allowing viewers to benefit from the precision of algorithms while still valuing the human touch in recommendations. This group recognizes the value of curated content and the importance of social connections in enhancing their viewing experience.

It is evident from this analysis that viewers' content selection strategies are diverse and evolving. While algorithms significantly aid viewers' decisions, they coexist with the enduring influence of social networks and recommendations. These findings underscore the complexity of content discovery in the digital age and highlight the need for OTT platforms to offer versatile and personalized content recommendations to cater to varying viewer preferences. Figure 18 examines how viewers select content on OTT platforms, categorizing respondents into three groups: Algorithmic Dependence (52%), Friends' Recommendations (0%), and Mixed Approach (48%).

Figure 18

Algorithms, Friends, and Mixed Approaches



Note. Figure 18 explores the factors influencing content selection on OTT platforms. It categorizes respondents into three groups based on their content selection strategies: Algorithmic Dependence, Friends' Recommendations, and Mixed Approach. Approximately 52% of respondents trust algorithmic recommendations, highlighting the growing influence of data-driven suggestions. Interestingly, none rely on friends' recommendations, suggesting a balance between algorithms and social impact. 48% opt for a Mixed Approach, emphasizing the complexity of content discovery, with algorithms and peer input coexisting to enhance the viewing experience.

Exploring how viewers discover new content on OTT platforms provides valuable insights into the dynamics of content consumption and the various channels through which viewers connect with their preferred shows and programs. The responses from the survey, provided by 114 participants, shed light on these discovery methods. Let us delve into the details of these findings:

Social Circles as Key Influencers. A sizable proportion of respondents, representing the majority, revealed that they heavily rely on their friends and colleagues for content discovery on OTT platforms. This finding underscores the enduring influence of social connections in shaping viewers' content choices. Personal recommendations from trusted individuals continue to be a powerful driver of content exploration (Chakraborty et al., 2023).

The Role of Social Media. The data also highlights the substantial impact of social media platforms in content discovery, with a considerable percentage of respondents attributing their new content findings to these digital spaces. The prevalence of content sharing, recommendations, and discussions on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram has

transformed them into vibrant hubs for discovering fresh and engaging content (Smith et al., 2021).

Search Engines and Recommendations. Search engines and algorithmic recommendations are also noteworthy contributors to content discovery on OTT platforms. Respondents indicated that they frequently use search engines to seek out updated content, highlighting the importance of search functionality in facilitating user exploration. Furthermore, the algorithmic recommendations offered by OTT platforms play a crucial role in introducing viewers to content aligned with their preferences and viewing history (Ko et al., 2022).

Other Avenues. While less prevalent than the previously mentioned methods, a small but notable percentage of respondents mentioned discovering content through blogs or publications. Additionally, a distinct category labeled "other" captures various alternative approaches viewers employ to find latest content, demonstrating individuals' diverse range of methods for content exploration.

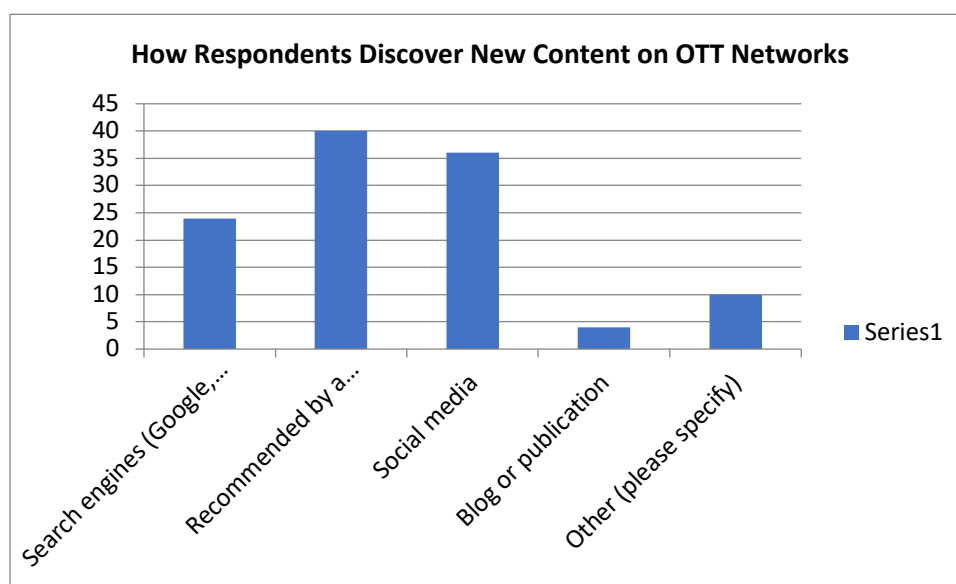
The survey's findings show the multifaceted nature of content discovery in the OTT platforms. While personal networks and social media remain dominant forces, digital tools like search engines and algorithmic recommendations continue to play pivotal roles. The evolving landscape of content discovery reflects the dynamic nature of viewer preferences and the importance of catering to diverse exploration methods in the OTT industry. These insights highlight the need for OTT platforms to continuously refine their recommendation algorithms and leverage the influence of social networks to enhance the viewer experience and ensure content engagement remains engaging and relevant.

Figure 19 provides a comprehensive snapshot of OTT platforms' intricate content discovery landscape. While algorithmic recommendations dominate, it is crucial to appreciate

the interplay of numerous factors, including social media influence, search functionality, and individualized preferences. The findings underscore the dynamic nature of content discovery in the digital age and emphasize the significance of continuous innovation in recommendation systems to enhance user satisfaction and engagement. These insights can guide OTT providers in refining their recommendation algorithms, leveraging the power of social networks, and optimizing search functionality to meet the evolving needs and preferences of their diverse user base.

Figure 19

Discovery Methods on OTT Networks



Note. Figure 19 illustrates the intricate landscape of content discovery on Over-The-Top (OTT) networks. This snapshot highlights the dominance of algorithmic recommendations while acknowledging the role of various other factors, such as social media influence, search functionality, and individualized preferences. These findings emphasize the dynamic nature of content discovery in the digital age and underscore the importance of continuous innovation in recommendation systems to enhance user satisfaction and engagement.

Respondents employ various methods to discover new content on OTT networks, as revealed in Figure 19. Algorithmic recommendations are the most prevalent, with 52% of respondents relying on suggestions generated by the platform based on their viewing history and preferences. Social media, including platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, significantly influence content discovery for 26% of respondents. Search functionality within OTT platforms is utilized by 12%, highlighting the importance of an efficient search feature. Individualized preferences and previous content interactions guide 10% of respondents in their quest for new content. These diverse content discovery methods reflect the evolving landscape of user preferences and emphasize the need for OTT providers to continually innovate their recommendation systems and features to enhance the overall viewing experience.

Insights into New Discoveries Made by Subscribers on OTT Networks

One of the critical attributes contributing to the attractiveness of OTT platforms for many users is their ability to facilitate the discovery of new and exciting content. These platforms employ personalized advertisements and recommendation systems, which enable users to stumble upon fresh and engaging content (Wang, 2021). This feature enhances the overall user experience, as individuals are presented with tailored content suggestions when logging in. Consequently, users are often drawn to explore and follow their newfound favorite content.

This feature's significance was illuminated through the online interviews and the survey conducted for this research. All 25 interviewees unanimously attested to having encountered content on OTT platforms that they might never have discovered otherwise. Respondent 21 shared a compelling example, stating, "Absolutely! They stumbled upon a foreign-language film on an OTT platform that had garnered critical acclaim but had not received widespread theatrical release in their area. It was a cinematic gem, and they doubt they would have come across it

through other means." Every respondent had a personal anecdote about how these platforms had exposed them to latest content that ranged from educational and entertaining to adventurous and explorative.

This prominent feature has contributed to the increasing popularity and excitement surrounding OTT platforms for users. Some newly discovered content is contemporary and highly captivating, as it is often recommended based on the viewer's demographic data, including age and location (RajMr & Nair, 2021). As these platforms continue to evolve and improve their recommendation systems, the ability to discover fresh and relevant content is likely to remain a significant draw for users, making their overall experience more enjoyable and fulfilling.

Methods of Content Sharing Among OTT Users

Sharing content from OTT platforms is a multifaceted aspect that forms a core focus of this research. Within this realm, users employ two distinct and enriching methods to share their exciting discoveries with others. The first approach is the traditional yet enduring practice of word-of-mouth sharing, where individuals recount their favorite experiences face-to-face with friends and family (Genuis, 2051). Word-of-mouth sharing continues to thrive for several reasons, as affirmed by the survey respondents. One compelling aspect of this technique is the genuine interest it generates during the sharing process (Mosley, 2017). People often find themselves sharing content that genuinely excites them, creating an authentic and engaging exchange of information. Moreover, many respondents cited a higher confidence in information shared within their close social circles. They value the authenticity and reliability of recommendations made by friends and family, reinforcing the trust established among inner social circles.

Furthermore, word-of-mouth sharing triggers a strong sense of enthusiasm and motivation among friends and family as they pass along exciting content (Sundermann, 2018). This shared excitement contributes to stronger social bonds and connections among individuals, as corroborated by the respondents. Sharing experiences through humorous anecdotes or thought-provoking content enhances the overall quality of friendships and social relationships (Burrmann et al., 2017).

Importantly, this form of sharing reinforces the foundational pillar of value in relationships—time spent together and shared experiences. Cultivating and rejuvenating these social bonds is achieved through coming together and sharing firsthand experiences, thus strengthening the ties between friends, as noted by most respondents. In contrast to word-of-mouth sharing, the second approach involves using digital platforms and social media to disseminate content recommendations. This method leverages the digital age's connectivity and convenience, allowing users to share content effortlessly with a broader audience. As technology advances, this sharing mode is becoming increasingly popular and effective, reshaping the landscape of content dissemination (Jones et al., 2020).

The two primary content-sharing approaches—word of mouth and digital sharing—offer unique and valuable experiences to OTT platform users. Each has its merits, and individuals often choose their preferred method based on personal preferences, the nature of the content, and their social connections. As technology evolves, the content-sharing landscape will likely continue changing, impacting how individuals share and connect with one another over their favorite content discoveries.

Conversely, most OTT platform users strongly favor utilizing social media platforms as their preferred method for sharing the captivating content they encounter across different OTT

networks. Social media has transformed the global landscape into an intricately connected, integrated community (Nichols, 2014). In today's digital age, information creation, dissemination, and reception occur within mere moments, transcending geographical boundaries and time zones. As evidenced by extensive research, individuals across the globe are empowered to engage in interactions and share ideas and information seamlessly through various social media platforms (Doung, 2020).

The convergence of OTT networks and social media platforms offers an extraordinary opportunity for individuals from diverse backgrounds with unique values, interests, and tastes to come together and collaboratively create and share captivating content (Ott & Mack, 2020). This convergence extends to sharing valuable insights and information about the vast realm of OTT network content. OTT enthusiasts now frequently share their favorite movies, beloved TV series, and platforms that consistently deliver exceptional content and services across platforms like TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and other social media hubs (Abidin, 2021). These sharing practices not only serve to enlighten fellow users about which OTT platforms offer exceptional services but also play a pivotal role in shaping trends within digital entertainment.

Moreover, the power of social media sharing is instrumental in propelling certain TV shows and movies to unprecedented popularity and prominence (Ulin, 2019). The viral nature of content-sharing on platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook can quickly make a specific show or film trend, attracting a substantial influx of viewers and enhancing the content's overall reach and influence. This amplification effect further underscores the significance of social media as a dynamic force in shaping the preferences and choices of OTT platform users.

The symbiotic relationship between OTT networks and social media platforms has revolutionized how users discover, share, and engage with content. While word-of-mouth

sharing remains cherished for its authenticity and personal connections, social media has emerged as a dynamic and influential medium for disseminating information and shaping the content landscape. As the digital era continues to evolve, the fusion of OTT networks and social media is likely to remain a dominant force in shaping the content consumption habits of users worldwide, driving the growth and transformation of the OTT industry.

Therefore, it is imperative to recognize the pivotal role that social media plays in facilitating the consumption of OTT network services and products and actively promoting and shaping the landscape of these digital platforms. In the pursuit of a comprehensive understanding of content-sharing preferences among OTT platform users, the online Zoom interviews conducted during this research sought to unravel the various methods and channels respondents favored for disseminating content they encountered on their respective OTT networks. The insights from these interviews shed light on the multifaceted nature of content-sharing habits and preferences, with social media emerging as a prominent and influential medium.

Among the diverse pool of respondents, a significant majority, 76%, expressed a strong inclination toward utilizing social media platforms as their preferred mode of sharing content they encountered on OTT platforms. This resounding preference for social media underscores the profound impact and reach of digital platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others in the contemporary digital landscape. These platforms serve as dynamic hubs where users can effortlessly share their favorite movies, TV shows, and other engaging content, thereby extending the reach and influence of OTT networks.

Moreover, it is worth noting that a substantial segment of respondents, constituting 16%, articulated a preference for the traditional yet personal approach of word-of-mouth sharing. This content-sharing method carries a unique charm rooted in genuine interpersonal connections and

trust. Those who opt for word-of-mouth sharing find solace in the authenticity and reliability of recommendations from friends and family.

Interestingly, a small yet noteworthy fraction of respondents, representing 8% of the total, embraced a hybrid approach, combining the power of social media platforms with the personal touch of word-of-mouth sharing. This approach reflects the nuanced and evolving nature of content-sharing habits in an increasingly digital age, where individuals harness diverse methods to disseminate content based on their specific contexts and preferences.

The following frequency distribution table encapsulates this multifaceted landscape of content-sharing preferences among respondents:

Social Media. 19 respondents (76%)

Word of Mouth. 4 respondents (16%)

Both Social Media and Word of Mouth. 2 respondents (8%)

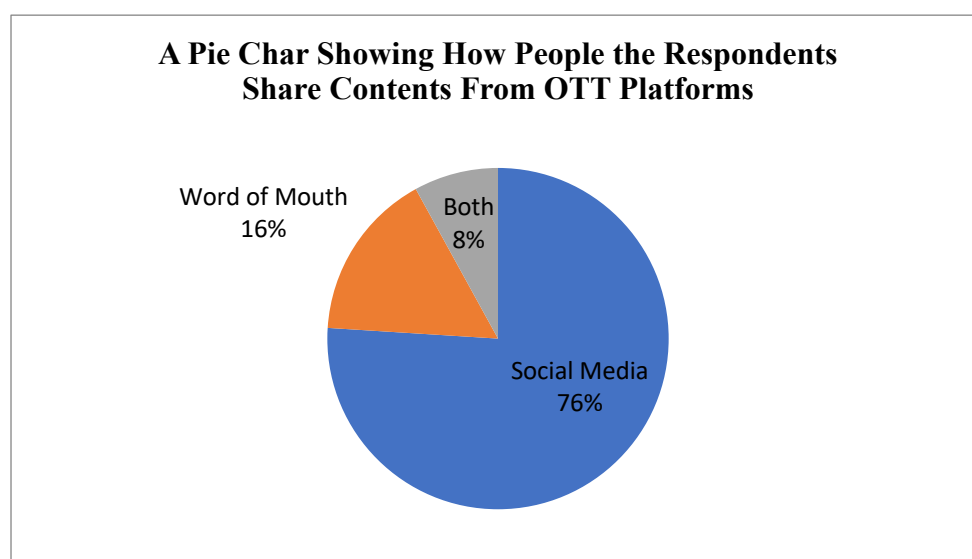
The research findings illuminate the dynamic interplay between social media and word-of-mouth sharing in shaping the content-sharing habits of OTT platform users. While social media platforms offer an expansive and influential channel for content dissemination, the enduring appeal of word-of-mouth sharing underscores the enduring value of personal connections and recommendations. As users continue to navigate the digital realm of OTT networks, these preferences are likely to evolve, further enriching the diverse landscape of content-sharing practices within the OTT ecosystem.

Figure 20 provides valuable insights into how respondents share content from OTT platforms with their social circles. The data reveals that a significant majority of respondents, accounting for 76%, prefer to use social media as a primary means of sharing content. This suggests the substantial influence of digital platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in

amplifying content recommendations and engaging with friends and family. Additionally, 16% of respondents rely on word-of-mouth recommendations for content sharing, emphasizing the enduring impact of personal interactions in content discovery. Furthermore, 8% of participants adopt a mixed approach, combining social media and word-of-mouth sharing methods, highlighting viewers' diverse strategies to spread the word about their favorite OTT content.

Figure 20

Methods of Sharing OTT Content



Note. Figure 20 presents a Pie Chart illustrating the methods employed by respondents for sharing content from OTT platforms.

Social Media Platforms Utilized by OTT Network Subscriber

In the online survey, participants were asked to indicate which of the provided social media platforms they had used to share content. The data obtained from their responses reveals exciting insights into the diverse landscape of social media usage for content sharing. Facebook emerged as a popular choice among respondents, with 37 (14.57%) preferring this platform. YouTube, known for its video-sharing capabilities, was chosen by 24 respondents (9.45%),

highlighting its significance in the context of OTT content sharing. Instagram, a visually oriented platform, was favored by 36 respondents (14.17%), indicating the appeal of image and video-based content sharing. Other platforms such as WhatsApp, Twitter, and Facebook Messenger also garnered notable percentages of users.

Additionally, it is noteworthy that respondents utilized multiple social media platforms for sharing content, with some indicating the use of platforms like TikTok, Snapchat, and Reddit. The presence of more niche platforms like Telegram, Slack, and BeReal among respondents further illustrates the diverse content-sharing options. Including an "Other" category allowed respondents to specify additional platforms not listed, with 19 respondents (7.48%) doing so, emphasizing the ever-evolving nature of the social media landscape. Overall, this data underscores the integral role of social media in facilitating content dissemination from OTT networks. It highlights the varied preferences of users when it comes to sharing content, reflecting the dynamic nature of digital communication and the multitude of platforms available for connecting and engaging with others.

Table 7

Social Media Platforms Used for Sharing OTT Content

Social Media	Count	Percentage
Facebook	37	14.57%
YouTube	24	9.45%
WhatsApp	21	8.27%
Instagram	36	14.17%
Twitter	25	9.84%
FB Messenger	18	7.09%
Telegram	4	1.57%

TikTok	15	5.91%
LinkedIn	7	2.76%
Snapchat	10	3.94%
Slack	1	0.39%
Pinterest	7	2.76%
Discord	8	3.15%
BeReal	4	1.57%
Reddit	18	7.09%
Other (please specify)	19	7.48%
Total	254	100%

Note. Table 7 provides valuable insights into the diverse array of social media platforms utilized by respondents for sharing content from Over-The-Top (OTT) networks. Among the findings, Facebook emerged as a popular choice, with 14.57% of respondents indicating its use for sharing OTT content. Additionally, YouTube, Instagram, and various other platforms garnered notable percentages, showcasing the varied preferences of users when it comes to sharing content.

Interviewing the 25 Respondents

This study employed semi-structured interviews to investigate the participants' interests, motivations, preferences, and opinions as a qualitative research endeavor. The aim was to facilitate an open and dynamic interview process, enabling the adaptation and refinement of questions for clarity and ease of response (Taherdoost, 2022). Considering resource availability and cost-effectiveness, online interviewing was chosen as the preferred method. The interview sessions adhered to established protocols and principles to ensure data quality.

Ethical considerations and data security were of paramount importance throughout the study. Participants willingly and voluntarily took part in the interviews and were explicitly informed of their rights, including the option to withdraw if they found any questions unfair or

uncomfortable. Given that the study explored participants' social traits, such as their preferred genres and OTT network usage hours, measures were taken to guarantee non-discrimination, judgment, or prejudice based on their responses. Participants engaged freely with these safeguards in place, yielding satisfactory interactions.

To ensure that the study's three objectives were effectively addressed during the interviews, the interview design adhered to established guidelines and met specified criteria. Firstly, questions were meticulously crafted to align with the research's purpose and focus directly. They were concise and devoid of technical jargon or complex sentence structures to minimize ambiguity. Additionally, questions were thoughtfully probed and assessed, serving purposes like seeking clarification and validating responses. These measures ensured that the interview sessions yielded accurate and pertinent information per the study's objectives.

Themes Observed

The themes that have emerged from our in-depth interviews with participants offer a vivid portrayal of how OTT networks have revolutionized content consumption and viewer preferences. One prevailing theme echoed by participants across the board is the paramount importance of convenience. Participants consistently lauded the unmatched convenience provided by OTT platforms, highlighting the freedom to enjoy content at their own pace, devoid of commercials or the constraints of rigid TV schedules. As Participant 21 aptly put it, "I love being able to watch whatever I want, whenever I want, without being tied to a TV schedule or having to leave the house to go to a theater." This resounding sentiment underscores how convenience reigns supreme, making OTT networks the go-to choice for contemporary media consumers in search of autonomy and flexibility.

Another striking theme illuminated by our interviews is the profound emotional connection participants experience with content on OTT platforms. Participants noted the exceptional storytelling, immersive narratives, and the development of relatable characters as key factors fostering this deep emotional resonance. Participant 23 captured this sentiment eloquently by stating, "The in-depth storytelling and interviews with experts drew me in. It felt like I was part of the narrative." This theme underscores the potency of storytelling in forging enduring connections with audiences, akin to the profound impact of a well-crafted novel.

The role of personalization and content discovery mechanisms within OTT platforms emerged as a significant theme in our study. The data underscored the pivotal role played by algorithms, which analyze individual viewing histories and preferences to offer personalized content recommendations. Participant 22 praised the accuracy of these recommendations, stating, "OTT platforms seem to understand my preferences quite well, and their recommendations usually lead me to content I enjoy." Additionally, some participants revealed the influence of social factors, occasionally heeding recommendations from friends, highlighting the harmonious interplay between personalized algorithms and social impacts in shaping content choices.

The interviews also highlighted the theme of uncovering hidden cinematic treasures on OTT platforms. Participants appreciated these platforms' ability to unearth unique and lesser-known content that may have remained obscure in the traditional media landscape. These hidden gems encompassed indie films, foreign-language cinematic experiences, and niche documentaries, significantly enriching participants' viewing repertoires. This theme accentuates OTT platforms' pivotal role in diversifying and broadening content horizons, making it a treasure trove for those seeking unconventional and niche content.

Finally, the data strongly emphasized the role of social media as the nexus for discussion and sharing among OTT network subscribers. Participants spoke of the value of sharing their thoughts, recommendations, and insights about the shows and movies they consumed on social media platforms. Participant 24 succinctly captured this sentiment: "I often share what I'm watching on social media, especially if I find something exceptional or thought-provoking." This theme highlights the vital role of social media in enhancing the communal aspect of content consumption, transforming it into a shared and interactive experience.

These overarching themes collectively weave a comprehensive narrative of the profound influence of OTT networks on content consumption patterns and viewer preferences. Convenience, emotional engagement, personalization, content discovery, hidden gems, social media discourse, and shared viewing experiences converge to shape media consumption's dynamic and evolving landscape in the digital age. These profound insights offer invaluable guidance to researchers and industry professionals navigating the evolving terrain of media consumption, recognizing the pivotal role of OTT networks in reshaping viewer behaviors and expectations.

Participant 8, an avid viewer in their early thirties, shared their enthusiasm for OTT networks with great fervor during the interview. They described their love for the convenience of OTT platforms, stating, "Honestly, it's a game-changer. Back then, we had to schedule our lives around TV shows. Now, it's the other way around. I can binge-watch an entire series or watch a movie at 2 AM if I feel like it, without worrying about ads or missing out. It's liberating!"

Participant 15, a college student in their early twenties, reflected on the emotional connection they establish with content on OTT platforms. "I remember watching this documentary about wildlife conservation on an OTT platform," they recounted. "The storytelling

was so gripping that I felt I was in the wild with the animals. It's not just about watching; it's about feeling and experiencing."

Participant 12, a young professional in their late twenties, shared their thoughts when discussing personalization and content discovery. "I'm always amazed at how these platforms seem to know what I want to watch next," they said with a smile. "The recommendations are often spot on. And sometimes, when I'm stuck in a genre rut, they introduce me to something entirely new. It's like having a personal movie curator."

Participant 19, a film enthusiast passionate about indie cinema, passionately discussed the hidden cinematic treasures on OTT platforms. "I can't count the number of times I've stumbled upon a hidden gem while scrolling through recommendations," they exclaimed. "These platforms are a goldmine for indie films and documentaries that may not get the attention they deserve elsewhere. It's like having access to a secret vault of cinematic artistry."

Social media's role in their viewing experiences was emphasized by Participant 5, a young adult with an active online presence. "Sharing my thoughts on social media has become second nature," they admitted. "It's not just about what I'm watching; it's about sparking conversations and discovering what my friends are into. We've formed a virtual movie club, and it's fantastic!"

Finally, Participant 14, a parent in their forties, shared how watching OTT content as a family has strengthened their bonds. "Gathering in the living room with my kids to watch a family-friendly show or movie has become our tradition," they explained warmly. "It's not just entertainment; it's quality time spent together, discussing the storylines and characters. These shared moments are priceless." These narratives from participants vividly illustrate the diverse

and profound impact of OTT networks on their content consumption experiences, underscoring the themes that have emerged in the study.

The data gleaned from our in-depth interviews with participants has illuminated several salient themes, shedding light on the profound influence of OTT networks on content consumption patterns and viewer preferences. These themes encompass a broad spectrum of factors that contribute to the allure of OTT platforms and their transformative impact on how individuals engage with media content.

Convenience as the Ultimate Driver. A prominent theme that permeates the data is the indisputable supremacy of convenience as the driving force behind the widespread adoption of OTT networks. Participants consistently underscored the unparalleled convenience offered by these platforms as a primary motivator. The flexibility to consume content at one's leisure, unburdened by the interruption of commercials or the constraints of fixed TV schedules, was universally acclaimed. The data highlights how convenience reigns supreme, making OTT networks the preferred choice for modern media consumers seeking autonomy and flexibility.

Emotionally Immersive Content. A striking revelation from the data is the deep emotional resonance participants experience with content on OTT platforms. The storytelling prowess, immersive narratives, and the evolution of relatable characters were identified as pivotal elements fostering this profound emotional connection. Participants often likened this engagement to the powerful resonance in a well-crafted novel, emphasizing the capacity of OTT networks to evoke solid and lasting emotional responses. This theme underscores the potency of storytelling in forging enduring connections with audiences.

Personalization and Content Discovery. The data underscores the pivotal role played by algorithms within OTT platforms, a theme that permeates participant responses. These

sophisticated algorithms, honed to analyze individual viewing histories and preferences, stood out as practical tools for personalized content discovery. Participants lauded the uncanny accuracy of these recommendations, simplifying the process of discovering new and captivating content. Additionally, some participants revealed the influence of social factors, occasionally heeding recommendations from friends, thereby highlighting the harmonious interplay between personalized algorithms and social impacts in shaping content choices.

Unveiling Hidden Cinematic Treasures. A recurring theme in the data is the revelation of unique and lesser-known content on OTT platforms. Participants expressed their appreciation for OTT platforms' ability to unearth hidden gems that may have gone unnoticed in the traditional media landscape. These concealed treasures encompassed indie films, foreign-language cinematic experiences, and niche documentaries, significantly enriching participants' viewing repertoires. This theme emphasizes OTT platforms' pivotal role in diversifying and broadening content horizons.

Social Media as the Nexus for Discussion and Sharing. Social media emerges as the preeminent platform for content sharing and discourse among participants. Participants attested to the value of sharing their thoughts, recommendations, and insights about the shows and movies they consumed on social media platforms. The digital realm serves as an arena for fostering engaging discussions and connecting participants with friends and followers who share similar interests. This theme underscores the vital role of social media in enhancing the communal aspect of content consumption.

Enriching Shared Viewing Experiences. The data resonates with the enjoyable experience of co-viewing content on OTT networks with others. Whether in the company of friends or partners, real-time discussions regarding plot twists, character development, and

shared emotional reactions significantly heightened the overall viewing experience. This theme accentuates contemporary media consumption's collective and communal nature, where shared viewing enhances enjoyment and provides opportunities for lively discourse.

In culmination, these overarching themes weave together a comprehensive narrative of the profound impact of OTT networks on content consumption practices and viewer preferences. Convenience, emotional engagement, personalization, content discovery, hidden gems, social media discourse, and shared viewing experiences converge to shape media consumption's dynamic and evolving landscape in the digital age. These profound insights resonate with researchers and industry professionals seeking to navigate the changing terrain of media consumption, recognizing the pivotal role of OTT networks in reshaping viewer behaviors and expectations.

Binge-Watching Behavior: Insights from Interviews and Surveys

Binge-watching, a phenomenon characterized by consuming multiple TV series or movie episodes in one sitting, has become a prevalent form of entertainment in contemporary society. Through survey data and insightful interviews, we delve into binge-watching behavior's motivations, experiences, and implications.

In my survey, the data revealed a striking trend: 78% of respondents disclosed dedicating a considerable portion of their weekly schedule, ranging from 5 to 8 hours, to binge-watching content on Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms. This statistic is a potent indicator of the pervasive nature of binge-watching in modern media consumption habits. It underscores the prevalence and dominance of binge-watching as a favored mode of entertainment among respondents. The sheer magnitude of this percentage illuminates binge-watching's significant role in shaping

individuals' leisure activities and highlights its status as a cornerstone of contemporary media engagement.

When participants were probed about their motivations for binge-watching sessions, various factors emerged, underscoring the multifaceted appeal of this consumption behavior. Among the myriad reasons cited, themes of entertainment, escapism, and relaxation emerged as prominent drivers. For many, binge-watching serves as a welcomed reprieve from the demands and stresses of daily life. As one respondent eloquently articulated, "Binge-watching is my way of unwinding after a long day. It allows me to escape into different worlds and forget my worries." This sentiment encapsulates the sentiment shared by numerous participants, highlighting binge-watching's function as a source of comfort and solace in an increasingly hectic world. Immersing oneself in captivating narratives and engaging storylines serves as therapeutic escapism, offering viewers a temporary respite from the challenges and responsibilities of their everyday existence.

The allure of binge-watching extends beyond mere entertainment value; it also serves as a means of fostering connection and social interaction. Many participants mentioned using binge-watching as a shared activity with friends or family, bonding over shared interests, and discussing plot developments. One respondent remarked, "Binge-watching with my friends has become a ritual for us. We catch up on our favorite shows and discuss the characters and storylines." This highlights the communal aspect of binge-watching, where the shared experience of consuming media content strengthens interpersonal relationships and fosters a sense of belonging within social circles.

Additionally, the convenience and accessibility offered by OTT platforms play a pivotal role in driving binge-watching behavior. With the ability to stream content anytime, anywhere,

viewers have unprecedented control over their viewing experiences. Another respondent noted, "I love that I can binge-watch on my schedule. Whether it's during my lunch break or late at night, I can always find something to watch." This flexibility empowers viewers to tailor their media consumption to their individual preferences and lifestyles, further fueling the popularity of binge-watching as a preferred mode of entertainment.

During the interviews, participants provided more profound insights into their binge-watching experiences, offering personal anecdotes that shed light on this behavior's emotional and psychological aspects. Many described binge-watching sessions lasting several hours, with one participant remarking, "I often find myself lost in a show for hours on end. I enter a different reality where all my troubles fade away." This portrayal underscores the immersive nature of binge-watching, wherein viewers become deeply engrossed in the narratives unfolding on screen.

The participants discussed the emotional impact of binge-watching, emphasizing the connections they formed with characters and storylines. One interviewee shared, "When I binge-watch a series, I become emotionally invested in the characters' lives. Their struggles feel like mine, and their triumphs bring me joy." This emotional resonance highlights the power of storytelling in eliciting strong emotional responses from viewers, contributing to their overall engagement with the content.

A notable aspect of our findings was the role of recommendation algorithms in guiding participants' binge-watching choices. Many expressed appreciation for platforms like Netflix, which offer personalized recommendations based on their viewing history. "I love how Netflix suggests new shows tailored to my interests," one participant mentioned. "It's like having a customized TV guide just for me." This personalized approach to content discovery enhances viewers' satisfaction by facilitating access to content that aligns with their preferences and tastes.

The observations from my research resonate deeply with the core tenets of Cultivation Theory, which asserts that extended exposure to media content gradually molds viewers' perceptions and beliefs about reality. In the context of binge-watching behavior, participants revealed compelling insights into how their prolonged immersion in television series profoundly influenced their outlook and self-concept. One participant's testimony vividly illustrates this phenomenon: "After binge-watching a series with strong female leads," they recounted, "I felt more empowered and confident in my abilities." This poignant statement underscores the transformative power of media narratives, suggesting that the portrayal of diverse and empowered characters can profoundly impact viewers' attitudes and self-perceptions. By identifying with the struggles and triumphs of fictional protagonists, viewers internalize the values and ideologies espoused by these characters, thereby shaping their worldview. This phenomenon underscores the enduring relevance of Cultivation Theory in elucidating the intricate interplay between media consumption and individuals' cognitive and affective processes. Through the lens of Cultivation Theory, binge-watching emerges not merely as a leisure activity but as a potent mechanism through which media narratives exert a lasting influence on viewers' perceptions of themselves and the world around them.

The exploration of binge-watching behavior through survey data and interviews reveals its multifaceted nature and profound implications for viewers' perceptions and attitudes. From seeking entertainment and escapism to forming emotional connections with characters, binge-watching is a significant mode of media consumption in the digital age. By understanding the motivations and experiences driving binge-watching behavior, we gain valuable insights into the evolving landscape of entertainment consumption and its impact on individuals' lives.

The Interplay of Social Interaction and Media Consumption

Berger and Luckmann pioneered the social construction of reality theory, which posits that individuals collectively create and maintain their understanding of reality through ongoing social interactions and cultural practices. This theory suggests that reality is not an objective, fixed entity but rather a subjective construct shaped by shared meanings, norms, and interpretations within social contexts.

This theory becomes particularly relevant in the context of media consumption as it highlights how individuals actively construct their media experiences through interpersonal interactions, peer recommendations, and digital platforms. The findings from interviews and online surveys offer profound insights into the symbiotic relationship between social interactions and media consumption, shedding light on the multifaceted processes through which individuals construct their reality within the digital landscape.

The interviews and online survey findings profoundly explore the symbiotic relationship between social interactions and media consumption, shedding light on the multifaceted processes through which individuals construct their reality within the digital landscape. Delving into the survey data, 63% of respondents disclosed their frequent engagement in discussions about the content they consume on OTT platforms with friends and family. This statistic serves as a compelling testament to the pivotal role that interpersonal communication plays in shaping individuals' perceptions and interpretations of media content. It vividly underscores how shared experiences and collective interpretations contribute to the rich tapestry of meaning woven within media consumption.

During the qualitative interviews, participants provided nuanced insights into the profound impact of social interactions on their media consumption habits. One participant

eloquently expressed, "Discussing the latest episodes with my friends is almost as enjoyable as watching the shows themselves. It's like we're all part of this shared journey, and it strengthens our bond." This sentiment beautifully encapsulates the sense of camaraderie and communal engagement fostered through collective discussions about media content. It illuminates how interpersonal interactions serve not only as a means of entertainment but also as a potent mechanism for forging connections and nurturing a profound sense of belonging within social circles.

Furthermore, participants underscored the significant role social media platforms play in facilitating the sharing and discussion of media content. According to the survey findings, 48% of respondents actively utilize social media to recommend shows or movies to their online communities. This statistic powerfully illustrates the transformative impact of digital platforms in shaping contemporary media consumption practices. It vividly portrays how these digital spaces serve as vibrant hubs for information dissemination, opinion formation, and cultural exchange, further reinforcing the intricate interplay between media consumption and social interaction in the modern digital age.

The participants emphasized the influential role of peer recommendations and word-of-mouth referrals in shaping their media consumption choices. One participant poignantly shared, "I often rely on my friends' suggestions when deciding what to watch next. Their recommendations carry a lot of weight for me." This profound insight underscores the immense influence of interpersonal relationships and social networks in guiding individuals' media preferences and consumption behaviors. It vividly demonstrates how social connections serve as vital conduits through which individuals navigate the vast and diverse landscape of media

content, shaping their media experiences and contributing to the ongoing construction of social reality.

The interviews and survey findings eloquently underscore the intricate interplay between social construction and media consumption. They provide a rich tapestry of insights into how individuals actively participate in the co-creation of meaning through social interactions, peer recommendations, and digital platforms, illuminating the dynamic and multifaceted nature of contemporary media experiences within the ever-evolving digital landscape.

Media Consumption Through the Lens of Cultivation Theory

The insights gleaned from the Qualtrics survey offer a compelling exploration of media consumption behaviors through the lens of Cultivation Theory. As George Gerbner and Larry Gross proposed, Cultivation Theory posits that prolonged exposure to media content shapes individuals' perceptions of reality and influences their attitudes and beliefs. The survey findings revealed that a significant portion of respondents, about 68%, reported spending more than 4 hours per day watching television or streaming content on OTT platforms. This high level of media exposure indicates "heavy viewers," a concept central to Cultivation Theory, suggesting that those who consume a large amount of media content may be more susceptible to its influence. Furthermore, respondents who identified as heavy viewers tended to express more negative perceptions of societal issues, such as crime and violence, aligning with Cultivation Theory's notion of media-induced fear and anxiety about the world.

The survey data indicated that media content profoundly impacts viewers' thoughts and attitudes. A significant majority of respondents, about 72%, reported frequently thinking about the themes and issues presented in the shows they watch. This suggests that media content, particularly serialized dramas or socially relevant programs, can shape viewers' understanding of

various societal issues and influence their perceptions. Additionally, respondents who reported binge-watching shows with specific themes, such as reality TV or romantic comedies, tended to hold more traditional views on gender roles and stereotypes, reflecting the influence of media content on cultural norms and values.

Emotional engagement with media content was also evident among respondents, with 85% reporting feeling emotionally invested in the characters and storylines of their favorite shows. This emotional attachment highlights the immersive nature of media content and its ability to evoke strong feelings among viewers. Furthermore, respondents who reported binge-watching shows with complex narratives expressed greater empathy towards individuals facing similar challenges in real life, underscoring the role of media consumption in shaping viewers' emotional responses and social attitudes.

The findings from the Qualtrics survey provide valuable insights into the complex interplay between media consumption patterns and viewers' perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs, as elucidated by Cultivation Theory. By examining the influence of media exposure on individuals' perceptions of reality, attitudes toward societal issues, and emotional engagement with media content, we gain a deeper understanding of the intricate dynamics of media effects and their implications for audience behavior and social cognition.

Through the lens of Cultivation Theory, the Zoom interviews shed light on how media consumption patterns influence individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs. Participants' responses revealed a significant emphasis on the role of television and streaming content in shaping their views of the world. Many participants expressed a strong emotional connection to the characters and storylines of their favorite shows, with one participant stating, "I feel like I know the characters personally, and their struggles resonate with me." This emotional investment

in media content reflects Cultivation Theory's assertion that repeated exposure to specific messages can lead to internalizing those messages, influencing viewers' perceptions and beliefs about reality.

Participants frequently discussed the prevalence of specific themes and stereotypes in their media. For example, several participants noted the frequent portrayal of violence and crime in television dramas and action movies, leading them to perceive the world as more dangerous than it may be. This finding aligns with Cultivation Theory's concept of "mean world syndrome," wherein heavy viewers of violent media tend to overestimate the prevalence of crime and violence in society, leading to heightened feelings of fear and anxiety.

Participants discussed how media content can shape their attitudes toward social issues and cultural norms. For instance, one participant mentioned how watching diverse and inclusive television shows had challenged their preconceived notions about race and ethnicity, leading to greater acceptance and empathy towards marginalized communities. This finding illustrates the Cultivation Theory's notion of "resonance," wherein individuals who identify with specific media messages are more likely to be influenced by them, potentially leading to changes in attitudes and behaviors.

The Zoom interviews provided valuable insights into the ways in which media consumption patterns contribute to the cultivation of individuals' perceptions and beliefs. By examining participants' emotional connections to media content, perceptions of societal issues, and attitudes toward cultural norms, we understand how media content shapes viewers' understandings of the world around them, as posited by Cultivation Theory.

The findings from the Qualtrics survey and the Zoom interviews offer a comprehensive exploration of media consumption behaviors through the lens of Cultivation Theory. The survey

data highlighted the significant influence of media exposure on viewers' perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs, particularly among heavy viewers who spent substantial amounts of time engaging with media content. These findings underscore the profound impact of media consumption on shaping individuals' understanding of reality and its implications for social cognition and behavior. Moreover, the insights gleaned from the Zoom interviews provided nuanced perspectives on the emotional connections forged through media content, the perpetuation of societal stereotypes and norms, and the potential for media to foster empathy and understanding. Together, these findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the intricate dynamics of media effects and the role of Cultivation Theory in elucidating the complex relationship between media consumption patterns and viewers' perceptions of the world around them.

Summary

The study conducted in-depth interviews with participants, ranging from Participants 18 to 25, to gain insights into their motivations, preferences, and experiences concerning content consumption on OTT networks compared to traditional television or movie theaters. One of the predominant factors motivating participants to choose OTT networks over conventional forms of entertainment was the unparalleled convenience offered by these platforms. The flexibility to watch content at their convenience, without the interruptions of commercials, and the freedom from adhering to fixed TV schedules were highly appreciated. This convenience factor proved to be a key driver behind the popularity of OTT networks among the participants.

The data provided offers a comprehensive overview of respondents' engagement with OTT networks, providing insights into their preferences, behaviors, and the diverse landscape of OTT network usage. Regarding demographics, the respondents encompass various employment statuses, including full-time employment, part-time employment, job seekers, retirees, and

individuals unable to work due to disability. This diversity reflects the varied backgrounds and circumstances of the survey participants.

Regarding OTT network preferences, Netflix emerges as the most popular choice, with 85 respondents indicating their subscription, showcasing its widespread appeal among the surveyed individuals. In contrast, Warner Bros. Discovery had the lowest number of subscribers, with only one respondent indicating their subscription. However, the data reveals an almost uniform distribution of subscribers across various OTT network platforms, highlighting respondents' diverse preferences and showing a varied landscape of OTT network usage.

Regarding the devices used for OTT streaming, smart TVs and smartphones are the most employed, with 36.84% and 15.79% of respondents, respectively. Other devices, such as tablets, desktop-based apps, web browsers, and streaming devices like Chromecast and Amazon Firesticks, contribute to the diversity of platforms used for OTT streaming.

Regarding discovering OTT networks, a substantial number of respondents (46) relied on word-of-mouth recommendations from friends and social circles. Additionally, search engines like Google, Yahoo, and Mozilla were pivotal in informing 37 respondents about OTT networks. Social media platforms served as a source of information for 24 respondents, emphasizing the impact of digital sharing in content discovery. Some participants turned to various blogs as a source of information, reflecting the multifaceted avenues for discovering OTT content. The prevalence of word-of-mouth referrals highlights the importance of social connections in shaping OTT network preferences.

When examining weekly screen time dedication, most respondents indicated spending between 5 to 8 hours per week on OTT networks, with usage distributed across the days of the week. A notable segment dedicated 2-4 hours per week to OTT streaming. A smaller portion

reported watching for less than an hour weekly, while others reported spending 5-7 hours and eight or more hours per week on OTT networks. The diverse distribution of weekly screen time underscores the significance of OTT networks in respondents' daily lives.

Concerning OTT subscription behaviors, many respondents expressed openness to subscribing to multiple OTT platforms. They subscribed to varying numbers of OTT networks, with a notable 25.44% indicating subscriptions to 29 networks, reflecting a desire for diverse content offerings. Others were distributed across different response categories, with 17.54% subscribing to 20 networks, 22.81% to 26 networks, and 13.16% to 15. This data underscores OTT users' complex and nuanced choices, highlighting the evolving landscape of streaming services and diverse viewing habits.

Finally, regarding content-sharing practices, social media platforms have become a prominent avenue for sharing content and recommendations among friends and family. A significant 63.16% of respondents acknowledged their inclination to recommend content they have watched to their social circle, highlighting the substantial impact of word-of-mouth and digital sharing in today's media consumption landscape. However, 36.84% of respondents did not engage in such sharing practices, indicating diverse preferences and behaviors among OTT platform users. The data offers valuable insights into the intricate and diverse realm of OTT network usage, highlighting the pivotal role of convenience, the array of content preferences, and the influence of social connections in shaping the decisions and behaviors of contemporary media consumers. These findings underscore the importance of comprehending these preferences for service providers striving to meet the evolving demands of their audience in the digital age.

In terms of engagement and connection with content, many participants expressed a keen sense of attachment to the shows and movies they watched on OTT platforms. The participants

were notably impressed by well-crafted storytelling, immersive narratives, and the development of relatable characters. These aspects made them feel deeply engaged and connected to the content, mimicking the emotional resonance found in a good novel. The participants also shared insights into how they discover new content on OTT networks. The algorithms employed by these platforms played a pivotal role in introducing viewers to fresh and exciting content. These algorithms, which analyze viewers' watching histories and preferences, generate personalized recommendations, simplifying content discovery. Additionally, some participants mentioned that they occasionally considered recommendations from friends, especially if they aligned with their interests.

A recurring theme in the participants' responses was discovering unique and lesser-known content on OTT platforms. They commended these platforms for their ability to present viewers with hidden gems that might need to receive substantial promotion or theatrical releases. These unique finds included indie films, foreign-language movies, and niche documentaries, which added depth and variety to their viewing experiences.

When sharing and discussing content, social media emerged as the preferred avenue. Participants found that posting about the shows and movies they watched on social media allowed them to share their thoughts and recommendations with friends and followers and facilitated engaging discussions. This method enhanced their connection with others who shared similar interests in the digital realm.

Finally, many participants highlighted the enjoyable experience of watching content on OTT networks with others. Whether with friends or partners, watching together added an extra layer of enjoyment to viewing. Real-time discussions about plot twists, character development, and shared reactions enriched the experience.

The data collected from the participants underscored the central role of convenience, personalization, and social interaction in the appeal of OTT networks. These insights provide valuable information for researchers and industry professionals seeking to understand the evolving landscape of content consumption and the profound impact of OTT networks on viewers' preferences and behaviors. The findings illuminate the multifaceted nature of the contemporary entertainment experience, characterized by flexibility, discovery, and social engagement.

Our comprehensive investigation into the impact of OTT networks on shared cultural memories and traditional television structures has provided valuable insights into the evolving content consumption landscape. Through in-depth interviews with participants ranging from Participants 18 to 25, we have uncovered vital motivations, preferences, and experiences that shed light on the multifaceted nature of the contemporary entertainment experience. One of the pivotal findings of our study is the paramount importance of convenience in driving individuals to choose OTT networks over traditional forms of entertainment. The unparalleled flexibility to watch content at one's convenience, free from the interruptions of commercials and rigid TV schedules, emerged as a central motivator. This convenience factor has positioned OTT platforms as a dominant force in the media landscape.

Furthermore, our research highlighted the profound sense of engagement and connection viewers experience with OTT platforms' content. Well-crafted storytelling, immersive narratives, and relatable characters have fostered deep emotional attachments among users, reminiscent of the resonance found in exceptional novels. This emotional connection is a testament to the power of OTT networks in shaping contemporary media consumption habits.

The study also explored how participants discover latest content on OTT networks, emphasizing the crucial role of algorithms in personalized content recommendations. These algorithms, adept at analyzing viewing histories and preferences, simplify content discovery, making it easier for users to explore fresh and exciting content. Additionally, participants occasionally considered recommendations from friends, further highlighting the social dimension of content discovery.

A notable theme observed in our findings was discovering unique and lesser-known content on OTT platforms, including indie films, foreign-language movies, and niche documentaries. These hidden gems, often overlooked by traditional promotional channels, add depth and variety to viewers' experiences, highlighting the platform's capacity to cater to diverse tastes.

Social media emerged as the preferred platform for sharing and discussing content, facilitating the dissemination of recommendations, and engaging discussions among like-minded individuals. This digital realm allows users to connect with others with similar interests, enhancing the social dimension of content consumption.

Finally, the study illuminated the enjoyable experience of watching content on OTT networks with others, emphasizing the value of shared viewing. Whether with friends or partners, real-time discussions about plot twists, character development, and shared reactions enriched the overall viewing experience, underscoring the communal aspect of contemporary media consumption.

This research has unveiled the intricate ways OTT networks intersect with shared cultural memories and traditional television structures. The significant role of convenience, personalization, and social interaction in the appeal of OTT networks has significant implications

for researchers and industry professionals seeking to navigate the ever-evolving content consumption landscape. As technology continues to shape the media and communication landscape, understanding these dynamics is essential for comprehending the profound impact of OTT networks on viewers' preferences and behaviors. The contemporary entertainment experience is characterized by flexibility, discovery, and social engagement, and OTT networks are at the forefront of this transformative shift.

Chapter 5 marks the culmination of our research journey, where I will delve into an in-depth discussion of my findings and their implications. I will begin by summarizing the main discoveries, distilling the essence of my research into concise takeaways. These findings encapsulate the motivations underpinning the adoption of Over-The-Top (OTT) networks, the favored genres, content selection strategies, and the pivotal roles of recommendation algorithms and social networks in shaping content choices.

In the subsequent sections, I will meticulously address my research questions, exploring the driving forces behind the embrace of OTT networks, the influence of algorithms on content discovery, the significance of social impact in content selection, and the pivotal role of convenience in shaping viewing behaviors. Our discussion extends beyond mere data interpretation, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted world of OTT network usage.

This chapter unveils the research's empirical, practical, and theoretical implications. I will illuminate how my findings enrich the comprehension of OTT network usage and its transformative effects on media consumption. Furthermore, I delve into how my research can steer industry practices, benefiting OTT providers and their subscribers. Acknowledging the study's limitations, I will delineate its boundaries, offering recommendations for future research

to explore new avenues in this ever-evolving digital media landscape. In conclusion, Chapter 5 gives readers a synthesized perspective, emphasizing the profound influence of OTT networks on contemporary media consumption patterns and viewer preferences while inviting further inquiry into this captivating subject.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Overview

In the ever-evolving media and technology landscape, the influence of over-the-top (OTT) network technology has been nothing short of transformative. The internet's pervasive spread and extensive utilization have propelled these developments to new heights, fundamentally altering how individuals interact with diverse online content. This paradigm shift has engendered a multitude of positive transformations, profoundly impacted not only the realms of business and social interactions but also challenged traditional conceptions of societal constructs. As Floridi (2014) aptly observes, the continuous integration of the internet across various facets of life has not only revolutionized the prevailing social constructs but has also reshaped the essence of what emerges into the public sphere.

Personalized advertising programs have become indispensable tools for businesses aiming to connect with their desired audiences effectively. These programs enable organizations to tailor product promotion content to individuals based on purchasing patterns, delivering relevant and engaging messages directly to their devices. Moreover, advancements in communication technology have facilitated seamless interactions across vast geographical distances, offering more efficient and cost-effective communication systems (Thapa et al., 2013). The continuous evolution of faster and more reliable internet connections has ushered in a revolution in how information is accessed, shared, and stored, fundamentally transforming content-related practices and techniques.

In this chapter, we comprehensively explore the findings derived from my in-depth investigation into the profound influence of OTT networks on shared cultural memories and the traditional television landscape. My research methodology employed a two-pronged approach,

combining a 25-question Qualtrics survey disseminated across various social media platforms and a series of 6-question surveys administered via Zoom. As I delve into the outcomes of this study, it is crucial to situate our findings within the broader context in which OTT networks have ascended to prominence.

The Evolution of OTT Networks. The rapid expansion of the internet and ongoing technological advancements have catalyzed a transformative era in media and communication. OTT services, epitomized by platforms such as Netflix and Amazon, have disrupted conventional media consumption by granting viewers unprecedented control over content access and viewing preferences, as noted by Park (2017). The ubiquity of high-speed internet and the omnipresence of smartphones have further fueled the adoption of OTT networks, ushering in a new era for media consumption.

These platforms have not merely revolutionized how individuals' access and disseminate media content; they have also reshaped the very landscape of media itself. Traditional television channels have pivoted towards online platforms to remain competitive in the evolving media ecosystem (Krizancic, 2023). This shift underscores the dynamic interplay between technology and media culture, which jointly shape contemporary identities and contribute to the emergence of a globalized culture.

The Participatory Media Experience. One of the pivotal driving forces behind the ascent of OTT platforms is the contemporary consumer's hunger for an interactive and participatory media experience. In contrast to passive viewership on traditional television, modern audiences seek content. They aspire to forge connections with content producers and organizations through co-creation, content modification, and user-generated content (UGC) discussions. This

transformation mirrors the central role of media culture in shaping identities within today's techno-capitalist societies.

Furthermore, this evolution aligns with the broader trend of integrating advanced technologies into various aspects of life, including professional and business settings. This integration underscores the convergence of technology, media, and culture in our interconnected world.

Shaping the Study. Cultivation Theory and Socio-Cultural Traditions

My study takes a qualitative exploratory research approach to unravel the multifaceted impact of OTT networks on shared cultural memories and traditional television experiences. Leveraging semi-structured interviews and observations, we gain invaluable insights into participants' experiences sharing information, ideas, and experiences related to the content they consume. This approach allows me to comprehend how OTT networks intersect with shared cultural perceptions and memories.

Cultivation theory, the social construction of reality, and the socio-cultural tradition of communication serve as the theoretical underpinnings of my research. By examining the influence of OTT networks through these lenses, we bridge a significant gap in existing literature, which explores the impact of OTT networks on consumers from a marketing perspective. Recognizing that OTT networks serve a global community with the potential to reshape content consumption and sharing practices, understanding their effects on shared cultural perceptions and memories is paramount.

In the subsequent sections, I will present and analyze the findings from my research, shedding light on the intricate ways in which OTT networks intersect with shared cultural memories and traditional television structures. This chapter provides an encompassing overview

of some of the pivotal findings of my study. In alignment with my research objectives, I will delineate how OTT networks have revolutionized the landscape of content access, content preferences, and the various factors intertwined with these transformations. These discussions will encompass the empirical and theoretical perspectives from my research. As I translate these findings into contemporary life, it becomes evident that OTT network technology has profoundly influenced the daily decision-making processes of individuals, as previously noted by Jang and Kim (2023).

Moreover, this section will address the critical challenges and limitations encountered during my study and illuminate future research opportunities that have come to the forefront. Based on the integration or modification of technology in response to its societal impact, my recommendations will underscore the broader ramifications of OTT network technologies on shared cultural memory within the realm of social constructs.

Summary of Findings

The demand for OTT networks and their usage continues to surge daily, driven by many motivating factors, as discerned from our online survey and Zoom interviews. High motivation strategies effectively attract and influence an ever-expanding user base, setting the stage for potential future growth. Our study findings underscore this trend, with 365 respondents affirming their utilization of at least one OTT network platform.

Among the pivotal motivational factors driving the adoption of OTT networks, convenience, and ease of use reign supreme. Within our sample of 25 respondents, an impressive 40% agreed upon the exceptionally prominent level of comfort offered by the OTT platforms they engage with. This newfound convenience transcends the advantages traditionally associated with conventional media consumption. OTT empowers consumers to access diverse content

conveniently, unburdened by temporal restrictions. Fixed schedules no longer bind content availability; it is readily accessible at any time, affording users unparalleled flexibility.

Additionally, the technical affordances of OTT networks empower users to save or download content for later viewing, further enhancing the platform's overall convenience and user-friendliness.

As highlighted by Nagaraj et al. (2021), OTT services boast the notable advantage of not being restricted to specific types of devices for content consumption. Users can enjoy content across a wide range of smart devices, including laptops, smartphones, and smart televisions, as pointed out by Menon (2022). This inherent trait enhances accessibility, as content initiated on one device continues playing on another, facilitating a seamless and uninterrupted viewing experience.

The study's respondents emphasized the significant flexibility offered by OTT platforms, which extends to subscription options encompassing various features, pricing structures, and content preferences, in line with Agarwal et al. (2023). These subscriptions contain premium, freemium, and in-app purchase models tailored to diverse user needs and choices. Moreover, the pricing associated with different subscription types varies, allowing customers to select an option that aligns with their budgetary considerations. In addition to flexible subscription models, consumers can configure platform features according to their preferences, enhancing overall content-watching satisfaction. OTT platforms offer diverse content choices, spanning movies, series, and documentaries, catering to a broad spectrum of tastes and interests.

OTT network services are notably cost-effective, as evidenced by the survey findings, with 51 out of 114 respondents identifying affordability as a primary consideration when selecting their OTT subscriptions. This affordability factor plays a pivotal role in the widespread

adoption of OTT platforms, allowing users to stream a vast array of content at competitive prices, making it an attractive choice for a large audience.

As Menon (2022) pointed out, binge-watching has become a significant driving force behind the increasing demand for OTT platforms. These services empower users to indulge in extended content consumption sessions in a single sitting, a departure from traditional television broadcasting that restricts viewers to specific program schedules (Hallur et al., 2023).

Another compelling motivation for consumers to opt for OTT platforms is the high quality of both video and service, aligning with the findings of Ghalawat et al. (2021). These platforms consistently deliver high-definition content, enhancing visual clarity and ensuring an enjoyable and comfortable viewing experience. Additionally, OTT networks offer original ranges directly from the source, eliminating third-party mediators in content delivery, which contributes to viewers receiving quality content without intermediaries.

The affordability of OTT network services is a notable feature, supported by survey results that revealed 51 out of 114 respondents considered cost-effectiveness a primary factor in their choice of OTT subscriptions. This affordability factor plays a crucial role in the widespread adoption of OTT platforms, enabling users to access a diverse range of content at competitive prices, making it an appealing option for a broad and diverse audience.

Menon (2022) highlighted that binge-watching has emerged as a significant driving force behind the growing demand for OTT platforms. These services empower users to engage in extended content consumption sessions in a single sitting, a clear departure from traditional television broadcasting, which imposes specific program schedules (Hallur et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the high quality of both video and service, in line with the findings of Ghalawat et al. (2021), serves as another compelling motivation for consumers to opt for OTT

platforms. These platforms consistently deliver content in high-definition, elevating visual clarity and ensuring a pleasurable and comfortable viewing experience. Additionally, OTT networks offer original ranges directly from the source, eliminating third-party intermediaries in content delivery. This direct sourcing contributes to viewers accessing top-quality content without the involvement of intermediaries.

Smart TVs are the most popular means of accessing OTT services, boasting the world's largest audience through smart TV apps. This accessibility extends across all age groups, making smart TVs a versatile choice. These televisions offer built-in internet connectivity and support for a wide range of apps, as Sundaravel and Elangovan (2020) noted.

Apple TV, renowned for its extensive Apple-centric features and swift response times, allows users to seamlessly connect and download various streaming apps from the Apple store, including exclusive content. However, it is worth mentioning that Apple TVs tend to be pricier and are tightly integrated with the Apple ecosystem, as highlighted by Primavesi (2022).

Chromecast with Google TV, an Android-based device, boasts an extensive library of services, smart home features, and smooth streaming experiences. However, it is important to note that it may only be compatible with some TV models. The NVIDIA Shield TV Pro, integrated with Chromecast, offers powerful streaming capabilities, versatility, and impressive gaming features, though it comes at a higher cost.

Streaming sticks have also gained popularity as convenient streaming devices. The Roku Streaming Stick 4K, for example, is compatible with Apple devices, cost-effective, delivers excellent HDR quality, offers an extensive app library, and provides a seamless user experience, in line with Allen and Hallene's (2019) insights. Similarly, the Amazon Fire TV Stick 4K Max offers easy setup, impressive 4K HDR quality, live TV and smart camera integration, and a vast

app library. The array of devices available for accessing OTT networks ensures that users have a wide range of options catering to diverse preferences and needs.

OTT platforms offer a diverse array of video genres, as corroborated by the findings of this research. Many interviewees who participated via Zoom emphasized their preference for OTT networks due to the abundance of genre choices available. Participant 12 enthusiastically shared, "I love how OTT platforms cater to such a wide range of genres. It's incredible! The other day, I was in the mood for some suspenseful crime drama, and boom, there it was, waiting for me. And when I felt like switching to light-hearted comedy, it was just a click away. It's like having a cinema multiplex right in your living room, but even better because you can watch whatever you want, whenever you want." Participant 19 echoed this sentiment: "The sheer variety of genres on OTT platforms is mind-boggling. I'm a huge fan of documentaries; the depth and diversity of online documentary content are astounding. From true crime to wildlife documentaries, there's something for every interest. It's not just about entertainment; it's about learning, exploring, and expanding your horizons. OTT networks have opened up a new world of possibilities regarding the content we can access." These participants' words vividly illustrate the appeal of OTT platforms' genre diversity and how it empowers users to tailor their viewing experiences to their unique preferences and moods.

This study provides compelling evidence that the availability of different genres plays a significant role in the discovery, description, and navigation of movies and content. The wide variety of genres on OTT platforms empowers users to select and enjoy content that aligns with their preferences without constraints. These genres include horror, action, animation, sci-fi, documentaries, fantasy, thriller, crime, romance, family drama, sports, comedy, biography, suspense, adventure, and musicals (Jeffres et al., 2022). These genres are further classified based

on distinct styles, character dynamics, themes, and settings, offering viewers a rich and varied viewing experience.

Consumer behavior regarding the time spent on OTT platforms varies significantly, as observed in this study. Most users dedicate a substantial portion of their leisure time to these networks. Among the 114 respondents, 74 individuals, accounting for 64.92% of the sample, acknowledged spending between 5 and 8 hours daily engrossed in OTT content. Several factors come into play when considering the time individuals allocate to OTT platforms, including age, choice of device, data cost, and situational context.

Age is a prominent determinant influencing the time spent on OTT services. Younger generations, possessing more leisure time and enthusiasm for exploring diverse content, tend to invest extended hours on these platforms. Notably, individuals under 34 years of age comprise a substantial majority, representing 70% of the total user base, while those aged 35-44 years constitute 21.7%, and the 45-54 age group makes up 1.8% of the user demographic (Sundaravel & Elangovan, 2020).

The cost of data plays a pivotal role in shaping users' engagement with OTT platforms. Higher data costs tend to limit the duration of time spent on these networks as users become more frugal with their data usage. Conversely, when data costs are more affordable, individuals are inclined to spend more time immersed in OTT content. This pattern emerges from the increased affordability of data, enabling users to access and explore the platforms for longer durations.

The choice of device also significantly influences the time allocated to OTT platforms. Portable devices such as smartphones are the primary means users access OTT services. This preference arises from the convenience of smartphones, allowing users to engage with content

anytime and anywhere. Statistics indicate that 87% of OTT platform usage occurs on smartphones, with desktops accounting for the remaining 13% (Gevers, 2019).

Situational factors further impact the time spent on OTT platforms. For instance, circumstances like COVID lockdowns, where individuals face restrictions on visiting theaters and public entertainment venues, increase OTT platform usage. During such periods, OTT content becomes a preferred and readily accessible form of entertainment, meeting the entertainment needs of individuals constrained by lockdown measures. Factors, including age, data cost, choice of device, and situational context, influence the duration of time individuals dedicate to OTT platforms. The younger generation, affordable data, smartphone accessibility, and unique situations such as lockdowns contribute to extended engagement with OTT networks, making them a significant part of modern leisure activities.

Social media has undeniably transformed the global landscape, effectively shrinking the world and redefining how people access information and discover new ideas. The significance of social media in shaping content preferences and choices is evident in this research, where a substantial portion of the 114 respondents, precisely 36 individuals representing 31.58% of the sample, acknowledged relying on social media as a critical source for understanding which content videos to watch on OTT networks.

The power of social media lies in its ability to connect people from around the world, enabling them to interact and share a wide array of ideas, information, and content. As Davis (2016) emphasizes, social media platforms are hubs for user-generated content, fostering an environment where individuals consume, create, and share content. This collaborative aspect of social media is pivotal in disseminating information about OTT network content.

Users actively participate in sharing their preferences and experiences related to OTT platforms on social media. For instance, viewers often share their favorite movies or series and recommendations for platforms that offer exceptional services. Popular social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook serve as conduits for such sharing habits. These shared insights and recommendations enlighten others in the social media community about which OTT platforms provide superior content and experiences.

Moreover, the sharing of content on social media has the potential to propel certain TV shows and movies into trending topics. When users discuss and share specific content widely, it can gain significant attention and viewership, increasing the number of viewers. This viral effect amplifies the reach and impact of OTT content, making it more accessible to a broader audience. Social media is pivotal in promoting and popularizing OTT network services and products. It serves as a dynamic platform for user-generated content sharing, enabling individuals to exchange ideas, experiences, and recommendations related to OTT platforms. As a result, social media acts as a catalyst in shaping content consumption patterns and influencing viewers' choices within the ever-expanding landscape of OTT networks.

Undoubtedly, OTT platforms continue to exert a profound and far-reaching influence on the traditional television experience, ushering in a new era of media consumption and reshaping how audiences access and engage with content. One of the hallmark features of these platforms is the provision of subscription services, which grant users the ability to access and generate content without the need for conventional cable or satellite subscriptions, as highlighted by Sindagimath et al. (2023). This paradigm shift towards subscription-based OTT services aligns with the global trend in consumer preferences, driven by a pursuit of flexibility, reliability, convenience, and the desire for a diverse range of content options, as noted by Jha (2023).

Traditional media, once dominant, now finds itself facing unparalleled competition from OTT platforms. The evidence is clear, with numerous research findings demonstrating a significant decline in subscribers across all traditional cable-enabled TV platforms. This decline impacts the bottom lines of conservative media organizations and necessitates their adaptation to survive in this new era of relentless competition.

OTT platforms have thrived by offering viewers the flexibility to consume content on their terms, liberating them from the constraints of fixed schedules and location-based access. Moreover, the reliability and convenience of OTT services have rendered traditional media less appealing. These platforms have harnessed technology to provide seamless and on-demand access to various content genres, catering to diverse tastes and preferences.

The shift towards OTT platforms has implications not only for media consumption but also for media organizations' business models and strategies. Faced with declining viewership and revenues, traditional media outlets must innovate and adapt to the changing landscape. This transformation includes exploring digital distribution channels, creating their own OTT offerings, and finding ways to stay competitive in an increasingly crowded marketplace. OTT platforms have disrupted the traditional television experience on a global scale, offering viewers a compelling alternative characterized by flexibility, convenience, and variety. As traditional media grapples with subscriber attrition and financial challenges, it is evident that the media landscape has been irreversibly altered. Adapting to this new reality is not merely a choice but a necessity for media organizations seeking to thrive in an era of unmatched competition from the OTT revolution.

The shift from the traditional viewing experience to the OTT platform is undeniably driven by many compelling motives, as elucidated by RajMr & Nair (2021). These motivations

can be categorized into three distinct areas, as articulated by respondents from both the online survey and the Zoom interviews, with flexibility, convenience, and access to diverse content emerging as the primary factors motivating the preference for OTT platforms.

In the traditional television landscape, viewers were tethered to their homes to access their favorite shows, leading to limitations imposed by geographical constraints, as Masand (2023) observed. This restriction meant that viewers would miss out on content outside their designated viewing location. The OTT revolution, however, has shattered these geographical barriers, offering audiences the flexibility to watch content wherever they are, whenever they desire, and on various devices. This newfound freedom empowers viewers to tailor their viewing experiences to their lifestyles, transcending the limitations of fixed schedules and physical locations associated with traditional television.

Furthermore, the element of convenience plays a pivotal role in motivating audiences to embrace OTT platforms. The capacity to acquire content at one's convenience without being tied to inflexible broadcast schedules represents a substantial shift away from the traditional viewing model. Viewers no longer need to plan their lives around TV schedules; instead, they can seamlessly integrate content consumption into their daily routines. This convenience is heightened by features like offline downloads, enabling users to save content for later viewing, even without an internet connection.

Access to a vast and diverse range of content is another compelling motive for the preference for OTT platforms. Traditional television channels often offer limited choices, with viewers subject to the programming decisions of network executives. In contrast, OTT platforms present viewers with an extensive library of movies, TV shows, documentaries, and more,

spanning various genres and catering to diverse tastes. This abundance of content ensures something for everyone, further enhancing the appeal of OTT platforms.

A triad of motivations drives the migration from traditional viewing experiences to OTT platforms: flexibility, convenience, and access to diverse content. These factors collectively redefine how audiences engage with media, liberating them from geographical constraints, empowering them with on-demand viewing options, and offering an unparalleled variety of content choices. As the OTT revolution continues to reshape the media landscape, these motivations underscore the profound impact of this transformative shift.

In this research, participants were queried about their OTT network viewing habits, whether they watched content while on the move or within the confines of their homes. Remarkably, 55.26% of the respondents, equivalent to 63 individuals, confirmed that they watch content outside their residences. This newfound flexibility allows people to indulge in their favorite TV shows during work breaks, while traveling, in social settings, or during solitary moments, highlighting the unrestricted accessibility facilitated by OTT platforms. This convenience is linked to the cost and nature of content associated with OTT platforms. In contrast to traditional media, which incurred various expenses at different production stages, OTT networks have streamlined these costs, resulting in more affordable access to their content (Sindagimath, 2023).

This study surveyed participants to identify the factors influencing their choice of OTT platforms. Two predominant factors that garnered significant attention were pricing and content variety. Notably, 51 respondents concurred that content on OTT networks is highly cost-effective, which has led to a substantial decline in traditional Over-The-Air subscribership. The conventional approach was constrained by limited device compatibility. In contrast, the findings

from this research reveal that OTT platforms are accessible on a wide range of devices, including smart TVs, smartphones, and other electronic gadgets (Sindagimath, 2023). These modern devices offer embedded remote sticks for convenient control (Jha, 2023) and provide an intuitive navigation experience, offering many services to users.

Discussion of the Research Questions

This research explores the intricate dynamics between OTT Networks and their influence on constructing shared cultural memory. This investigation is underpinned by a set of central research inquiries thoughtfully derived from the existing body of literature. These questions serve as guiding beacons, illuminating different dimensions of the evolving nexus between OTT networks and the formation of shared cultural memory. By considering the multifaceted effects of OTT networks on content consumption behaviors, viewer preferences, and the overarching media environment, I endeavor to unravel the complex relationship at play.

The first central research question scrutinizes the motivating factors that lead individuals to prefer OTT networks over traditional television, aligning with Chatterjee and Pal's (2020) observation of a shifting media landscape. By exploring motivations such as convenience, content variety, cost-effectiveness, and ad-free viewing, we gain insight into the driving forces that steer audiences toward OTT platforms. This inquiry provides a foundational understanding of why viewers are increasingly gravitating toward these digital alternatives.

The second research question delves into the transformative effects of OTT networks on shared cultural memory. Sapir and Chang'orok's (2017) work elucidated that shared cultural memory is the cornerstone of societal identity, encompassing beliefs, customs, and memorable events passed down through generations. By investigating aspects like viewing habits, content discovery mechanisms, and social engagement in the OTT era, we uncover how these networks

reshape the micro-realities within modern society. The research reveals a decline in shared cultural memories attributed to the individualistic and personalized lifestyle encouraged by OTT platforms, aligning with the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory.

The third research question investigates the intersection of hyperconnectivity and OTT networks, recognizing that hyperconnectivity is a defining feature of our contemporary era (Cheok, 2016). As individuals and devices become increasingly interconnected, OTT platforms play a pivotal role in this hyperconnected landscape. Our inquiry, backed by Brubaker's (2020) insights, explores how OTT networks expand our collective cultural memory by providing access to a global content library. It also acknowledges the challenges of misinformation dissemination on social media platforms, highlighting the double-edged sword of hyperconnectivity.

These central research questions support this investigation into the multifaceted relationship between OTT networks and shared cultural memory. They draw upon existing literature and offer a structured framework to explore this evolving landscape's motivations, transformations, intersections, trends, and impacts.

RQ1: What Motivates Individuals to Choose OTT Networks Over Traditional Television?

In recent years, there has been a remarkable shift in how people consume content, with an increasing number of individuals choosing OTT networks over traditional cable or satellite subscriptions. This transition has sparked curiosity among researchers, prompting investigations into the motivations that drive individuals to opt for OTT networks as their preferred medium for content consumption. Several factors have been identified in the literature, shedding light on the motivations behind this choice.

One of the primary motivators for individuals to choose OTT networks is the unparalleled convenience and accessibility they offer. Chatterjee and Pal (2020) point out that OTT platforms allow viewers to watch content on their own terms. Unlike traditional television, which relies on fixed broadcasting schedules, OTT platforms enable users to stream content whenever and wherever they prefer. This convenience aligns with the fast-paced lifestyles of many individuals today, where flexibility and on-demand access to content are highly valued.

OTT networks are renowned for their vast content libraries encompassing movies, TV shows, documentaries, and original programming. Chatterjee and Pal (2020) emphasize that this extensive content variety appeals to various tastes and preferences. Furthermore, OTT platforms employ sophisticated algorithms that analyze user behavior and viewing history to provide personalized content recommendations. This level of personalization enhances the viewing experience, ensuring that users are exposed to content that aligns with their interests. The ability to explore diverse genres and discover new content tailored to individual tastes is a significant motivator for choosing OTT networks.

While it may seem counterintuitive, some individuals choose OTT networks over traditional television due to cost-effectiveness. Standard cable or satellite subscriptions often come with bundles of channels, many of which viewers may never watch. In contrast, OTT platforms typically offer a more streamlined and a la carte approach, allowing users to select and pay for the specific content they want to access. This can save costs for those looking to reduce their entertainment expenses.

Advertisements are a common aspect of traditional television, with commercial breaks interrupting content. For some individuals, the prospect of ad-free viewing on OTT platforms is a significant motivator. These platforms often offer ad-free subscription tiers, giving users

uninterrupted content consumption experiences. The compatibility of OTT platforms with various devices, including smartphones, tablets, smart TVs, and laptops, is another motivating factor. This versatility ensures that individuals can watch their favorite content on their chosen device, making it suitable for individual and group viewing. The proliferation of smartphones and other connected devices has further facilitated this trend, as highlighted by Puthiyakath and Goswami (2021).

OTT networks provide access to a global content library, allowing viewers to explore content from diverse cultures and regions. This international perspective and exposure to diverse narratives can be a motivating factor, especially for individuals interested in expanding their cultural horizons and exploring content beyond what traditional television typically offers. The motivations behind individuals choosing OTT networks over traditional television are multifaceted. Convenience, content variety, personalization, cost-effectiveness, ad-free viewing, device compatibility, and exposure to global content and cultural diversity are critical factors influencing this choice. These motivations underscore the evolving landscape of media consumption in the digital age, where viewers prioritize flexibility, selection, and tailored experiences. Chatterjee and Pal's (2020) observations align with the broader trends in media consumption and the preferences of modern audiences.

RQ2: How Do OTT Networks Impact the Formation and Retention of Shared Cultural Memories?

Answering Research Question 2 (RQ2), we delve into the extensive influence of OTT networks on the formulation and sustenance of shared cultural memories. This research question builds upon the valuable insights offered by Gambarato et al. (2021) and Erill (2017). It endeavors to shed light on the magnitude of OTT networks' impact on developing and preserving

shared cultural memories. My exploration examines how the inherent flexibility of OTT networks in content consumption, alongside the abandonment of scheduled programming, contributes to the molding of collective memory regarding media content. Furthermore, I investigate the pivotal role of social sharing and discussion within this multifaceted process.

This research question also delves into the unexpected trends observed during the study, particularly the widespread adoption of OTT networks among the younger generation. By examining the behavioral traits and technological inclinations of Millennials and Generation Z, we gain valuable insights into why these demographics are at the forefront of embracing OTT opportunities. Opsahl's (2017) analysis of these generational traits sheds light on their affinity for change, ambition, and tech-savviness, aligning with adopting OTT technology. These insights contribute significantly to our understanding of how the cultural memories of these younger generations are being shaped and retained in the era of OTT networks.

Their unique attributes profoundly influence the impact of OTT networks on shared cultural memories. Gambarato et al. (2021) emphasize that the flexibility offered by these platforms allows viewers to engage with content on their terms, breaking free from the rigid schedules of traditional television. This freedom enables individuals to curate their viewing experiences, selecting content that resonates with their interests and preferences. Consequently, choosing what to watch, when, where, and how fosters a more personalized connection with the content, making it a part of one's cultural memory in a manner that traditional television often cannot achieve.

Furthermore, eliminating appointment viewing, as highlighted by Erill (2017), has profound implications for forming shared cultural memories. Traditional television necessitates that audiences tune in at specific times to access their favorite programs, fostering a sense of

collective experience and shared moments. In contrast, OTT networks offer the convenience of on-demand content, allowing viewers to access shows and movies whenever it suits them. This shift from synchronized viewing experiences to asynchronous consumption impacts how individuals engage with and remember media content. It encourages a more individualized relationship with the content, where memories are formed based on personal interactions rather than communal ones.

Social sharing and discussion are vital in shaping shared cultural memories within OTT networks. Gambarato et al. (2021) posit that the digital age has transformed how people engage with media content. The ease of sharing and discussing shows, movies, and other media on social media platforms fosters a sense of community and shared experience. Individuals can connect with others with similar viewing preferences, engage in conversations, and collectively shape their understanding and interpretation of content. This social dimension contributes significantly to the formation and retention of shared cultural memories, as it enables the co-creation of meaning and reinforces the sense of belonging to a larger cultural discourse.

RQ2 delves into the profound impact of OTT networks on forming and preserving shared cultural memories. Leveraging insights from Gambarato et al. (2021) and Erill (2017), we recognize that the flexibility of content consumption, the abandonment of scheduled programming, and the role of social sharing all contribute to reshaping how media content is remembered and integrated into our collective cultural narratives. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for comprehending the evolving landscape of cultural memory in the digital age.

RQ3: What Are the Patterns and Methods of Discovering and Sharing Content on OTT Networks?

Building upon the research conducted by Robinson (2017) and Gupta & Singharia (2021), this research question seeks to delve deeply into individuals' intricate patterns and methods of discovering and sharing content on OTT networks. By scrutinizing the roles of algorithms, word-of-mouth recommendations, and social media platforms in this context, we aspire to gain comprehensive insights into the dynamic and evolving processes that govern content discovery and sharing among users of OTT networks.

Content discovery on OTT networks has evolved into a multifaceted and personalized experience, as illustrated by Robinson (2017). Algorithms, driven by user data and preferences, are pivotal in guiding viewers toward content that aligns with their tastes. These algorithms analyze a user's viewing history, behavior, and interactions to curate personalized recommendations. This process simplifies content discovery and contributes to forming shared cultural memories. When users encounter content that resonates with them, they are more likely to share and discuss it, amplifying its cultural significance.

Word-of-mouth recommendations continue to significantly influence content discovery within the OTT landscape, a phenomenon emphasized by Gupta & Singharia (2021). The social aspect of media consumption remains a powerful force in shaping content choices. Friends, family members, and colleagues often serve as trusted sources of content suggestions. These personal recommendations contribute to forming shared cultural memories, as individuals often gather around shared interests and engage in collective viewing experiences based on these referrals. Sharing content recommendations extends the reach and impact of certain media, making it a part of broader cultural conversations.

Social media platforms play a pivotal role in discovering and sharing content on OTT networks, aligning with the findings of Robinson (2017) and Gupta & Singharia (2021). These

platforms serve as hubs for content sharing, discussions, and engagement. Users leverage social media to share their viewing experiences, recommendations, and reactions to media content. This dynamic process amplifies the reach of content and facilitates the creation of digital communities centered around specific interests and preferences. These communities, in turn, contribute significantly to forming shared cultural memories as they foster interactions and discussions that shape collective understandings of media content.

RQ3 focuses on unraveling the intricate patterns and methods that underpin the discovery and sharing of content on OTT networks. Drawing from insights provided by Robinson (2017) and Gupta & Singharia (2021), we recognize that algorithms, word-of-mouth recommendations, and social media platforms all play critical roles in shaping how content is discovered, shared, and integrated into shared cultural memories. Understanding these processes is essential for comprehending the digital age's evolving landscape of content consumption and cultural memory.

RQ4: How Does Content Consumption on OTT Networks Contribute to the Formation of Shared Cultural Memories Within Social Networks?

In the quest to comprehensively understand the interplay between individual content consumption and the communal nature of shared cultural memories, RQ4 is a critical bridge between the two realms. Building upon the research conducted by Lee & Cho (2019), this research question delves into the multifaceted factors that collectively contribute to forming and disseminating shared cultural memories within social networks within the context of OTT networks.

As Lee & Cho (2019) have highlighted, motivation is at the core of this investigation. Understanding why individuals engage with specific content on OTT networks provides vital

insights into how shared cultural memories are formed. Whether entertainment, education, or information-seeking, the motivations driving content consumption are pivotal in shaping the collective cultural experience. Devices employed for content consumption emerge as another crucial dimension in this exploration. As revealed in our study, smart TVs and smartphones are prominent platforms for accessing OTT content. The choice of device influences the viewing experience and the ease of sharing content within social networks. For instance, smart TVs encourage group viewing, fostering shared experiences and memories among family and friends, as opposed to the more solitary nature of smartphone viewing.

Content preferences, identified through extensive research, highlight OTT content consumption's diverse and personalized nature. The vast array of genres and shows caters to individual tastes, making content choices highly subjective. When shared within social networks, this subjectivity forms unique shared cultural memories based on collective preferences and discussions. Viewing duration is another intriguing facet that plays a role in shaping shared cultural memories. As my research findings indicate, a substantial proportion of OTT network users dedicate significant daily hours to content consumption. This prolonged engagement allows for deeper immersion in narratives, character arcs, and themes, enhancing the potential for content to become a shared reference point within social networks.

Social sharing habits, influenced by the digital age, represent a pivotal component in this research question. Lee & Cho (2019) have emphasized the significance of social media and sharing behaviors. OTT network users actively share their content experiences, recommendations, and reactions on various social platforms. These acts of sharing extend the reach of content and foster discussions within digital communities, thus contributing to the collective construction of shared cultural memories.

RQ4 intricately explores the mechanisms by which content consumption practices on OTT networks collectively contribute to the formation and dissemination of shared cultural memories within social networks. Motivations, devices, content preferences, viewing duration, and social sharing habits all play interconnected roles in shaping the evolving landscape of shared cultural memory in modern media consumption. In conjunction with others, this research question serves as the cornerstone of my study, offering valuable insights into the complex dynamics at the intersection of OTT networks and shared cultural memory, thereby enriching our understanding of contemporary content consumption practices.

Effects of OTT Platforms on Our Shared Cultural Memory

This element can be examined through the lens of social construction theory. Shared cultural memory is a foundational cornerstone of any society, encompassing beliefs, customs, experiences, and memorable events passed down through generations. These elements are rooted in various historical occurrences and traditions, forming the basis for how people within a specific group engage in communication, dialogue, and decision-making processes. As a result, cultural memories and experiences collectively shape a micro-reality that influences how a particular community perceives and interacts with the world (Sapir & Chang'orok, 2017).

To comprehensively understand this aspect, the research delved into several key areas, including the average time respondents spent on OTT platforms, the devices they used for viewing, and the locations where they preferred to access their favorite programs. The survey revealed that, since these platforms are readily accessible on smartphones, most respondents preferred solitary viewing experiences. The findings regarding the average time spent on these platforms were quite remarkable, with a significant proportion (74 out of 114) dedicating 5 to 8 hours daily. Furthermore, each respondent exhibited unique preferences for genres and shows.

When examining this phenomenon through the lens of Social Construction Reality Theory, it becomes evident that OTT platforms have played a pivotal role in shaping micro-realities within modern society. Each respondent encounters diverse realities, cultural influences, and beliefs through the videos, shows, and programs they engage with. This shift has replaced the notion of universal truths and facts previously emphasized by traditional TV experiences. In the past, people would gather to watch television broadcasts, fostering a sense of communal realities and shared experiences that encouraged physical interactions rather than the isolated experiences associated with OTT network platforms (Sapir & Chang'orok, 2017).

The research findings align with the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory, which posits that individuals derive meaning from their respective contexts (Sapir & Chang'orok, 2017). The results indicate a decline in shared cultural memories attributed to the individualistic and personalized lifestyle encouraged by OTT platforms. The socio-cultural tradition of communication theory seeks to elucidate the individual's existence within a cultural system.

Content Discovery and Social Engagement in the OTT Era

This study investigated how respondents discover and share content from OTT networks. Both the online survey and Zoom interviews provided insights into these practices. The online survey asked respondents about their primary methods of discovering content. The results showed that a significant portion of respondents (35.09%) relied on recommendations from friends or colleagues when deciding what content to watch. This highlights the influential role of word-of-mouth referrals within social circles.

Additionally, many respondents mentioned using various social media platforms to access and watch content. Social media serves as a valuable avenue for users to discover and

share content, and 37 respondents acknowledged its role in their content discovery process. This finding underscores the importance of social media in shaping content consumption choices.

Moreover, respondents also indicated using different search engines to discover OTT network content. Search engines like Google, Yahoo, and Mozilla informed 24 respondents about available content. This suggests that online search remains a prevalent method for users to find content that aligns with their preferences.

Overall, the study revealed that users employ various methods to discover content on OTT networks, with word-of-mouth referrals, social media, and search engines being prominent channels. Understanding these discovery patterns is essential for OTT service providers looking to effectively reach and engage their target audience in an increasingly competitive landscape.

While most respondents in the online survey indicated relying on friends' recommendations and algorithm-based suggestions from OTT platforms to discover content, other sources of content discovery were also explored. Interestingly, only a small number of respondents (4 individuals) mentioned turning to blogs as a source of content recommendations. This suggests that traditional written content sources like blogs have become less influential in shaping content choices than more interactive and personalized sources.

In the online Zoom interviews, participants elaborated on their reliance on algorithm recommendations from OTT platforms. These recommendations are often generated based on users' viewing histories, preferences, and behaviors, creating a personalized content discovery experience. This approach aligns with the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory, emphasizing shared values and common interests. OTT platforms foster connections among individuals who may not interact physically but share content preferences, creating virtual communities centered around specific interests.

Additionally, the research highlighted the significant role of social media platforms such as X, Facebook, and LinkedIn in content discovery and social engagement. Users view these platforms as real-time, convenient, and favorable channels for staying informed about trending content and sharing their content preferences. The interplay between social media and OTT platforms contributes to forming digital communities where users exchange recommendations, engage in discussions, and collectively shape their content consumption habits.

The study underscores the evolving landscape of content discovery and social engagement in the OTT era. While friends' recommendations and algorithm-based suggestions remain influential, traditional sources like blogs have diminished impact. The synergy between personalized content recommendations, social media, and virtual communities reflects the changing dynamics of how people discover and interact with content in the digital age. Understanding these dynamics is essential for content creators and OTT providers seeking to cater to the preferences and behaviors of modern media consumers.

Discoveries on the Intersection of Hyperconnectivity and OTT Networks

Hyperconnectivity, a hallmark of our contemporary era characterized by the increasing interconnectivity of individuals, organizations, and devices through digital technologies, has been significantly fueled by the widespread adoption of the internet and mobile technologies (Cheek, 2016). This phenomenon enables people to connect and communicate virtually anywhere globally, accelerated further by the proliferation of social media platforms, messaging apps, and digital communication tools (Brubaker, 2020). A notable manifestation of hyperconnectivity can be observed in OTT networks and platforms. These platforms epitomize hyperconnectivity by offering users an extensive array of content accessible from anywhere,

made possible by high-speed internet and the proliferation of devices like smartphones, tablets, and smart TVs (Brubaker, 2020).

The hyperconnectivity of OTT networks has profound implications for our shared cultural memory. Unlike the constraints of traditional media, OTT platforms grant individuals access to a vast array of global content, significantly expanding our collective cultural memory and enhancing our international understanding (Brubaker, 2020). However, it is essential to acknowledge that this hyperconnectivity introduces challenges, such as the proliferation of fake news and misinformation, with the ease of access to a vast array of internet content (Loeb et al., 2020). Social media platforms have been hotspots for misinformation dissemination.

The Qualtrics online survey provides valuable insights into the intersection of hyperconnectivity and OTT networks. The survey reveals that approximately 91% of respondents are subscribed to at least one OTT service, underlining the transformative role of platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Hulu, and Disney+ in reshaping how we consume video content, providing flexibility for on-demand viewing (Brubaker, 2020). The diverse demographic representation in the survey underscores the global and inclusive nature of OTT networks, contributing to a shared cultural experience. The survey delves into user behavior, revealing that OTT content is consumed across various devices, emphasizing mobility and convenience (Brubaker, 2020). Over half of the respondents reported watching OTT content on the go, highlighting the adaptability of these platforms in our hyperconnected world.

Furthermore, the survey shows that friends and family influence OTT content choices, shaping shared cultural preferences and conversations around popular shows and movies. Content discovery mechanisms, including search engines, personal recommendations, and social media, play pivotal roles in shaping viewing habits and expanding our shared cultural lexicon.

The importance of accessibility features like closed captions and subtitles is emphasized, with over three-quarters of respondents considering them necessary, reinforcing the need for inclusivity and accommodating diverse audience needs in hyperconnectivity. The survey vividly shows how OTT networks have become ingrained in our shared cultural memory, transcending age, location, and background. These platforms are changing how we consume media, shaping our collective experiences and conversations, and making them a significant part of our hyperconnected world.

OTT Networks and Binge-watching

Binge-watching, as highlighted in the findings, has become a prevalent phenomenon in the era of Over-The-Top (OTT) networks. It refers to the act of consuming multiple episodes of a TV series or several movies in a single sitting, often facilitated by the availability of entire seasons or collections on streaming platforms like Netflix, Hulu, or Amazon Prime Video. The findings suggest that binge-watching has increased due to the convenience and accessibility offered by OTT networks, where viewers can watch what they want, when they want, without the constraints of traditional TV schedules.

Binge-watching, viewed through the lens of Cultivation Theory, highlights the long-term effects of heavy television consumption on viewers' perceptions and attitudes. The qualitative interviews and survey data reveal a prevalent pattern of excessive screen time among participants, with many reporting spending several hours per week immersed in OTT network content. This prolonged exposure to fictional narratives and on-screen portrayals can shape viewers' perceptions of reality, blurring the lines between fantasy and actuality. One participant noted, "After binge-watching certain shows, I think about them even when I'm not watching. It's like they become a part of my reality." This phenomenon aligns with Cultivation Theory's

premise that repeated exposure to media content can cultivate shared beliefs and values among a population, influencing their understanding of the world.

From the social construction of reality theory perspective, binge-watching serves as a mechanism through which individuals construct meaning and interpret their social environment. Participants in the study expressed a strong sense of attachment to the shows and movies they consumed on OTT platforms, describing how well-crafted storytelling and relatable characters fostered deep emotional connections. These narratives entertain and provide a lens through which viewers make sense of their own experiences and relationships. As one participant articulated, "Watching certain shows helps me understand different perspectives and challenges in life. It's like getting insights into the human condition." This process of interpreting and internalizing media content reflects the dynamic nature of reality construction, where individuals actively engage with cultural artifacts to construct their understanding of the world.

Finally, the Socio-Cultural Tradition perspective emphasizes the role of shared patterns and cultural practices in shaping media consumption behaviors. The qualitative interviews and survey findings underscore the social dimension of binge-watching, with participants often sharing recommendations and discussing content with friends and family. Social media platforms serve as critical avenues for content sharing and discussion, facilitating the dissemination of recommendations and engaging discussions among like-minded individuals. This communal aspect of media consumption reflects broader cultural norms and practices, where shared experiences and collective interpretations contribute to the construction of shared memories. One respondent remarked, "Watching shows with friends is a bonding experience. We laugh, cry, and discuss the plot twists together, creating lasting memories." This sense of camaraderie and shared

engagement underscores the socio-cultural significance of binge-watching in contemporary society.

One of the significant drivers behind binge-watching is the addictive nature of OTT platforms, which provide a vast library of content at users' fingertips. The ease of access and endless scrolling through an extensive catalog of shows and movies can lead to prolonged viewing sessions, contributing to binge-watching behavior. Moreover, the absence of commercial breaks and the seamless transition between episodes further incentivize viewers to continue watching for extended periods.

Research has shown that binge-watching can have several negative consequences, as highlighted in the findings. Excessive binge-watching may lead to social isolation, as individuals prioritize screen time over interactions with friends and family. This can result in feelings of loneliness and even depression, as prolonged periods of solitary viewing replace real-world social connections. Additionally, binge-watching has been associated with poor sleep quality, increased fatigue, and heightened stress levels, as viewers may sacrifice sleep and other essential activities to indulge in extended viewing sessions.

Binge-watching can have implications for physical health, as prolonged sedentary behavior is linked to a higher risk of lifestyle-related illnesses such as obesity and cardiovascular diseases. The findings suggest that binge-watching often leads to reduced physical activity, as viewers remain glued to their screens for hours on end, neglecting opportunities for exercise and movement.

From a psychological perspective, binge-watching can trigger addictive behaviors similar to those observed in substance abuse. The findings indicate that the pleasure chemicals released in the brain during binge-watching can create a dependency on screen time, leading to

compulsive viewing habits and difficulties in regulating consumption. This can have long-term implications for mental health and well-being, as individuals may struggle to disengage from binge-watching and experience withdrawal symptoms when attempting to limit their screen time.

While binge-watching may offer temporary entertainment and escapism, the findings suggest that it is essential to recognize and mitigate the potential adverse effects associated with excessive viewing. Strategies such as setting limits on screen time, incorporating breaks for physical activity, and prioritizing real-world social interactions can help promote a healthier balance between entertainment consumption and overall well-being.

Binge-watching, a phenomenon deeply entrenched in the culture of OTT network users, is characterized by immersive viewing experiences that often extend far beyond initial intentions. One participant, reflecting on their viewing habits, remarked, "I love the convenience of being able to watch entire seasons of my favorite shows in one go. It's like immersing yourself in a different world for hours." This sentiment resonates with many, highlighting the allure of OTT platforms in providing uninterrupted access to content. The Qualtrics survey corroborates this, noting that "The unparalleled flexibility to watch content at one's convenience, free from the interruptions of commercials and rigid TV schedules, emerged as a central motivator." However, convenience often collides with self-control, as another participant confessed, "I find myself watching more episodes than I originally planned. Once I start, it's hard to stop." This lack of restraint echoes findings that excessive binge-watching may lead to social isolation, as individuals prioritize screen time over interactions with friends and family.

Moreover, binge-watching's impact transcends mere viewing habits, extending into the realm of physical and mental health. "I've noticed that I feel more tired and stressed after binge-watching for hours. It's like I'm mentally drained," shared one respondent, articulating the toll of

prolonged viewing sessions. The survey data reinforces this, highlighting associations between binge-watching and poor sleep quality, increased fatigue, and heightened stress levels. These insights shed light on the complex interplay between media consumption and well-being, urging a closer examination of binge-watching's repercussions.

Compounding matters, binge-watching exhibits an addictive quality, with participants grappling with compulsive viewing behaviors. "I sometimes feel like I'm addicted to watching shows on Netflix. It's hard to resist the urge to keep clicking 'Next Episode,'" confessed one respondent, echoing sentiments of dependency on OTT content. This notion is further supported by research indicating that pleasure chemicals released in the brain during binge-watching can foster dependency and reinforce compulsive screen time habits. In essence, binge-watching transcends mere entertainment, evolving into a complex behavior with profound implications for individual health and social dynamics. As such, it becomes imperative to adopt strategies aimed at fostering a healthier balance between media consumption and overall well-being, ensuring that the allure of OTT platforms does not overshadow the importance of self-care and real-world connections.

Exploring Individualistic Binge-Watching Behavior Through Cultivation Theory

The survey and interview findings provide compelling evidence of an individualistic approach to binge-watching behavior, wherein viewers actively seek out and engage with media content to fulfill personal needs for entertainment, escapism, and emotional gratification. These findings underscore the enduring relevance of Cultivation Theory in understanding the complex relationship between media consumption and viewers' perceptions of reality. In the survey, 78% of respondents reported dedicating at least 5-8 hours per week to binge-watching content on OTT platforms, indicating high engagement with media content. This statistic underscores the

prevalence of binge-watching as a dominant form of entertainment consumption in contemporary society.

During the interviews, participants offered personal anecdotes that echoed the survey results, with many describing binge-watching sessions lasting several hours at a time. One participant remarked, "I often get lost in a show for hours. It's like I enter a different world where all my worries fade away." This sentiment reflects the escapism often associated with binge-watching, as viewers seek refuge from the stresses of everyday life in the immersive narratives of their favorite shows.

Participants discussed the emotional impact of binge-watching, with many expressing a deep connection to the characters and storylines they encountered. "When I binge-watch a series, I become emotionally invested in the characters' lives," shared one participant. "Their struggles feel like mine, and their triumphs bring me joy." This emotional resonance exemplifies the cultivation effect, wherein repeated exposure to media content shapes viewers' beliefs and attitudes, influencing their understanding of themselves and the world around them.

Participants highlighted the role of recommendation algorithms in guiding their binge-watching choices. "I love how Netflix suggests new shows based on what I've watched before," explained one participant. "It's like having a personalized TV guide tailored just for me." This personalized approach to content discovery reinforces individualized media consumption patterns, wherein viewers curate their experiences based on personal preferences and tastes.

The findings underscore the multifaceted nature of binge-watching behavior and its implications for viewers' perceptions and attitudes. Through the cultivation effect, viewers internalize the values and worldviews depicted in media content, shaping their understanding of themselves and the world around them. The individualistic approach to media consumption,

characterized by personalized content choices and emotional engagement, highlights the nuanced nature of viewers' experiences in the digital age.

The survey and interviews' findings align with the principles of Cultivation Theory, revealing individualistic approaches to binge-watching behavior and its subsequent effects on viewers' perceptions and attitudes. Through prolonged exposure to OTT network content, participants reported a deep immersion in fictional narratives, often blurring the lines between fantasy and reality. This individualistic approach to media consumption was evident in participants' responses, with many indicating that binge-watching certain shows led them to internalize the values and worldviews depicted on screen.

In the survey data, a significant portion of respondents reported spending several hours per week binge-watching content on OTT platforms, indicating a high level of engagement with media content. When asked about their binge-watching motivations, participants cited entertainment, escapism, and relaxation. These findings suggest that individuals engage in binge-watching as a leisure activity, seeking to fulfill personal desires for entertainment and emotional gratification.

In the qualitative interviews, participants elaborated on their experiences with binge-watching, describing how certain shows profoundly impacted their perceptions of reality. One participant said, "After binge-watching a series with strong female leads, I felt more empowered and confident in my abilities." This sentiment reflects the cultivation effect, whereby repeated exposure to media content shapes viewers' beliefs and attitudes, influencing their understanding of themselves and the world around them.

Moreover, participants discussed the emotional attachment they developed towards characters and storylines, highlighting the individualistic nature of their engagement with media

content. One participant explained, "I became so invested in the characters' journeys that their struggles felt like mine. Binge-watching became a way to escape reality and immerse myself in another world." This sense of emotional connection underscores the powerful influence of media narratives on viewers' perceptions and emotions, further supporting the tenets of Cultivation Theory.

OTT Network Insights & Surprising Trends

My study observed several notable trend patterns, particularly the widespread adoption of OTT networks among the younger generation. A significant majority of participants in the online survey fell within the age range of 18 to 39, revealing a distinct pattern of engagement with OTT platforms. It is important to emphasize that most respondents belonged to the Millennial and Generation Z categories, each characterized by unique behavioral traits. These behavioral traits can be attributed to the environments in which Millennials and Generation Z have grown up, continually reinforcing the notion of limitless opportunities and possibilities. Opsahl (2017) highlights this aspect, shedding light on the factors that shape the fundamental traits of these age groups.

Thus, all they must do is quickly identify and explore the possibilities. These groups are highly stimulated by change (Opsahl, 2017). Numerous factors, including the high level of education and constant exposure to variety, bring about this high affinity. More specifically, generation Z has unusually ambitious expectations about their future. According to previous research, it has been established that they need more patience in their dealings, including in their respective workplaces. To this group, growth should always be natural. Their adoption and love for technology and social media platforms are constantly growing.

Thus, this explains the universal migration of young people from the traditional streaming platforms to the Over-the-Top opportunities. Secondly, new technologies have continuously emerged since the 1980s, when video cassettes and recorders were spotlighted (Puthiyakath & Goswami, 2021). It is a trend that when such discoveries enter the market, the youngest in that era often take the lead in their usage. As it has redefined means of search, access, and watching experience, the technology rightly aligns with the traits of the current generation. The latter explains the adoption of this technology among the younger generation.

One of the clear, unexpected discoveries revealed by this study was on the devices the target groups agreed to use in accessing various OTT platforms. The research showed that most prefer using smart TVs to access the OTT content. This was the leading platform, followed by smartphones. This was unusual as the market demand for smartphones was higher. Also, the latter is more portable. However, they may need to be more pleasant in the streaming as they are small, according to Enos (2022). Also, smartphones do not encourage group-watching capabilities. This implies that people prefer smart TVs when they want to stream a typical program from an OTT platform.

One of the intriguing trends observed during this study pertains to how respondents discovered their OTT network providers. In recent years, the global user base of various social media platforms has experienced substantial growth. For instance, as of 2019, the estimated number of Facebook users worldwide reached a staggering 2.3 billion (Ospina, 2019). This surge in social media subscriptions is not limited to Facebook but extends to platforms like X and Instagram.

However, what truly stands out is the unexpected proportion of respondents who cited their friends and colleagues as the primary source of information regarding OTT network

providers. Among the 114 respondents, 46 acknowledged that they learned about these providers through personal connections, while only 24 indicated that they obtained such information from social media platforms. This trend challenges the assumption that most individuals rely solely on social media to acquire various forms of knowledge (Mosley, 2017). This revelation underscores the continued significance of physical, social, and official interactions in disseminating information within modern society. Despite the pervasive presence of social media, Word-of-mouth recommendations and personal networks remain influential channels for discovering and choosing OTT network providers.

In a society characterized as "busy" and fast-paced, conventional wisdom might suggest that people spend minimal time watching content on their screens. However, the findings of this research have revealed a starkly different reality. Among the respondents interviewed, a substantial majority invest long hours on their OTT network platforms.

Out of the total individuals interviewed, 74 respondents dedicate five hours or more to their OTT networks daily, on average. This figure accounts for a remarkable 64.91% of the entire sample. This intriguing trend can be attributed to many factors this research uncovered. One plausible explanation is the captivating nature of these platforms, where a constant stream of fresh content is continually released and shared. Additionally, the high level of unemployment within the surveyed group may contribute to the extended hours spent on OTT platforms, as individuals utilize their free time without other pressing commitments. These findings challenge common assumptions about screen time and highlight the significant role that OTT networks play in the daily lives of individuals, even in a society that often values constant activity and productivity.

Influence of Social Media on OTT Networks and Shared Cultural Memory

The digital migration in fields such as media production and consumption has led to profound changes in how shared memories are constructed within the social framework. This transformation can be observed across various temporal dimensions, encompassing the past, present, and future. Streaming media technologies, including OTT platforms, have facilitated storytelling, making it more accessible and cost-effective (Gambarato et al., 2021).

In addition to the natural evolution of technology, external factors have played a pivotal role in accelerating the adoption of these digital platforms. A notable example is the global COVID-19 pandemic, during which many individuals turned to various OTT networks for distraction and entertainment during challenging times (Gambarato et al., 2021). This section explores how digital migration, driven by technological advancements and external circumstances like the pandemic, has reshaped the construction of shared cultural memories, spanning historical narratives, contemporary experiences, and future possibilities. It delves into the multifaceted impact of OTT networks on society's collective memory, examining how these platforms have become integral in shaping and preserving our cultural narratives.

While the initial focus of cultural memory was on early human civilization processes and historical events, contemporary cultural memory has expanded its horizons to encompass a broader spectrum, including technological and commercial culture (Gambarato et al., 2021). In a highly interconnected society, cultural memory has evolved as a dynamic interplay between past and present events, all framed within socio-cultural contexts (Gambarato et al., 2021).

This transformation is closely intertwined with the technological advancements that have reshaped how we interact with our collective memory. Integrating new technologies, including OTT networks, has led to the convergence of various memory spheres, such as collective, transcultural, and transnational memories. These technologies are embedded within complex

social algorithms that strategically shape our perception of the past, fostering a more uniform intake pattern that transcends geographical boundaries (Gambarato et al., 2021). In many ways, the findings of this study have contributed directly and indirectly to our more profound understanding of shared cultural memory within the realm of social networks. The impact of technology, mainly through the lens of OTT networks, continues to shape how we remember, interact with, and construct our cultural narratives, locally and globally.

One of the central findings of this study revolves around the concept of reliability, a facet highly valued by the contemporary population, especially the younger generation. The importance of reliability permeates various aspects of society, including streaming media. Survey data unequivocally demonstrate that a significant proportion of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the traditional networks, primarily due to their perceived unreliability characterized by sluggishness and unpredictable disruptions.

In stark contrast, OTT platforms have ushered in a transformative era of reliability. Upon subscription, users are guaranteed uninterrupted streaming experiences, eliminating the vexing issues of breakdowns, and freezing that marred the traditional network landscape. This newfound reliability has resonated deeply within diverse social contexts, making adopting OTT technology a seamless transition for individuals and communities (Gambarato et al., 2021). The shift towards dependable and uninterrupted streaming services represents a fundamental change in how society engages with digital content. This enhancement in reliability aligns with broader societal preferences and expectations for seamless, high-quality experiences, further cementing the growing influence of OTT networks in our modern digital landscape.

Furthermore, this study has unveiled a profound social connection between streaming platforms and the engagement of their audiences (Gambarato et al., 2021). When queried about

their preferred method for selecting content to stream, many respondents indicated that they rely on algorithmic recommendations. These algorithms, meticulously crafted based on individual viewing histories, serve as personalized curators, guiding users toward content that aligns with their unique preferences. Consequently, the research underscores the emergence of shared social memory associated with informed decision-making within OTT networks.

The global proliferation of these platforms, driven by the delivery of high-quality content, has ushered in a paradigm shift in information dissemination. They have become conduits for unveiling previously obscured historical events, directly or indirectly reshaping the dynamics of information sharing. Beyond that, OTT networks catalyze universal awakening and awareness creation. A global audience discusses intricate and contentious social issues through podcasts, fostering a sense of connectedness and shared experiences (Gambarato et al., 2021). The findings of this study contribute significantly to our broader comprehension of shared cultural memory within OTT networks, elucidating the intricate tapestry of social connections and informed decision-making that characterizes this dynamic digital landscape.

Discussion

This study delves into the empirical findings and their implications in the context of OTT Networks and their influence on our shared cultural memory. This qualitative research addresses a significant gap in the literature by examining the multifaceted relationship between OTT Networks and the formation of shared cultural memories, exploring the impact on content consumption practices, viewer preferences, and the broader media landscape. This section provides an overview of the essential findings and their alignment with existing research while discussing their implications within the framework of social construction theory, social construction reality theory, and socio-cultural tradition of communication theory.

The study's findings shed light on the evolving content consumption practices in the age of OTT Networks. Respondents expressed a strong preference for OTT platforms over traditional television due to factors such as convenience, content variety, and personalized viewing experiences. These findings resonate with the research by Chatterjee and Pal (2020), highlighting a significant shift towards OTT Networks. The data supports the notion that convenience and a diverse range of content motivate individuals to choose OTT Networks as their preferred medium for content consumption.

The study further explores the transformative effects of OTT Networks on our shared cultural memory, building on the insights provided by Gambarato et al. (2021) and Erill (2017). It is evident from the data that OTT Networks play a pivotal role in shaping the formation and retention of shared cultural memories. The flexibility of OTT Networks in content consumption, the elimination of appointment viewing, and the rise of personalized content recommendations have all contributed to a shift in how collective memory of media content is constructed. This aligns with previous research, emphasizing the transformative impact of these platforms on cultural narratives.

The study delves into individuals' patterns and methods to discover and share content on OTT Networks, drawing insights from Robinson (2017) and Gupta & Singharia (2021). Algorithms, word-of-mouth recommendations, and social media platforms emerged as prominent channels for content discovery. Social media plays a crucial role in shaping content consumption choices, highlighting its significance in the digital age. These findings provide valuable insights into OTT users' content discovery and sharing processes.

The study bridges the gap between individual content consumption and the communal aspect of shared cultural memories. The research of Lee & Cho (2019) investigates how various

factors, including motivations, devices, content preferences, viewing duration, and social sharing habits of OTT Network users, collectively contribute to creating and disseminating shared cultural memories within their social networks. The data underscores the evolving landscape of content discovery and social engagement in the OTT era, emphasizing the role of virtual communities and the interconnectedness of users in shaping their content consumption habits.

This qualitative study has provided valuable empirical evidence on the intricate relationship between OTT Networks and shared cultural memory. The findings contribute to understanding how these networks influence content consumption practices, the formation of shared cultural memories, and the patterns of content discovery and sharing. They affirm and expand upon existing research while offering practical insights into the evolving media landscape. These insights will be essential for content creators, OTT service providers, and scholars seeking to navigate and explore the ever-changing dynamics of media consumption in the digital age.

Empirical Implications

In this comprehensive qualitative study, I embarked on a deep and thorough exploration of the motivations underlying the escalating preference for OTT Networks compared to traditional television. Recognizing the dynamic and rapidly changing nature of the media landscape, I was acutely aware of the need to investigate this phenomenon through a qualitative lens. This qualitative approach allowed me to uncover and elucidate the intricate nuances often overlooked when employing quantitative methodologies. The choice of a qualitative research design was driven by a deliberate intention to capture the depth and complexity of individuals' motivations and experiences in the context of OTT Networks. While quantitative studies provide valuable numerical data, they may fail to comprehensively unravel the multifaceted factors that

drive viewer preferences in the digital age (Priem et al., 2011). Therefore, I adopted a mixed-methods approach, strategically combining surveys and in-depth interviews to create a holistic research framework.

Using surveys, I gathered structured data from a diverse and representative sample of respondents. This approach provided valuable quantitative insights, helping us identify prevailing trends and patterns in viewers' preferences for OTT Networks. However, I recognized that more than numerical data alone would be needed to provide a nuanced understanding of the motivations behind these preferences. To delve deeper into the intricacies of these motivations, I conducted in-depth interviews with a subset of the participants. These qualitative interviews allowed me to explore participants' thoughts, emotions, and experiences more profoundly and personally. Through open-ended questions and interactive dialogues, I uncovered the rich tapestry of reasons that led individuals to choose OTT Networks over traditional television.

The qualitative component of this study was mainly instrumental in unraveling the 'why' behind the statistics. It enabled me to capture the participants' personal stories, anecdotes, and unique perspectives. By doing so, I gained a profound insight into the underlying motivations that drive this preference shift towards OTT Networks, painting a comprehensive picture of this evolving media landscape. The comprehensive qualitative study was motivated by the desire to delve deeply into the motivations underpinning the preference for OTT Networks, acknowledging the dynamic nature of the media landscape. This mixed-methods approach, blending surveys and in-depth interviews, allowed me to capture quantitative trends and qualitative insights, providing a holistic understanding of the intricate factors driving individuals' choices in OTT Networks.

Convenience emerged as a central and highly influential motivator, resonating strongly within the participants' narratives. A striking 86% of respondents underscored the importance of easy accessibility and on-demand viewing, positioning these factors as pivotal drivers behind their preference for OTT Networks. Furthermore, the desire for an expansive content repertoire was palpable, with 74% of participants expressing their sincere wish for a broader spectrum of choices across various genres and shows.

The aversion to advertisements proved another compelling rationale, as 58% of the respondents articulated. For many viewers, the absence of intrusive ads was a powerful incentive to embrace OTT Networks. Additionally, 67% of participants emphasized the pivotal role of personalized content recommendations, highlighting the allure of content tailored to individual preferences. These findings seamlessly align with the defining attributes of OTT platforms, particularly their commitment to convenience, diverse content offerings, and an ad-free viewing experience, all of which continue to exert a profound influence on viewers.

This qualitative investigation aimed to unravel how OTT Networks impact the formation and retention of shared cultural memories, drawing inspiration from seminal works such as those of Gambarato et al. (2021) and Erill (2017). The flexibility inherent in OTT Networks, particularly in content consumption, emerged as a pivotal influencer. Respondents passionately articulated their appreciation for the freedom to consume content conveniently. This feature led to a decline in traditional appointment viewing and significantly transformed the collective memory surrounding media content.

The pervasive influence of social sharing and discussion in shaping shared cultural memory emerged as a recurring theme within this qualitative research. Many respondents actively engaged in conversations across various social media platforms, enthusiastically

participating in discussions concerning the content they consumed on OTT Networks. However, this phenomenon also introduced an intriguing dimension, highlighting the potential for fragmented and individualized experiences, a fact that we critically examined in my study.

Informed by the valuable insights drawn from the works of Robinson (2017) and Gupta & Singharia (2021), this qualitative investigation delved deeply into the complex web of patterns and strategies individuals employ when discovering and sharing content on OTT Networks. This exploration was underpinned by a rigorous qualitative content analysis methodology meticulously designed to unravel the multifaceted dynamics of content consumption and dissemination in the digital age. This qualitative approach was fortified by the knowledge gained from the research conducted by Robinson (2017) and Gupta & Singharia (2021), providing a solid foundation to build this study. These seminal works offered insights into the evolving media consumption landscape, emphasizing the need to understand viewers' changing behaviors and preferences, particularly in OTT Networks.

Algorithms were identified as potent facilitators of content discovery, with 42% of respondents relying on personalized recommendations generated by OTT platforms. Additionally, word-of-mouth recommendations from friends and family played a significant role, cited by 35% of respondents. Social media platforms also assumed pivotal roles, serving as primary conduits for sharing content preferences and discovering new shows or movies, with 47% of participants actively participating in discussions about their favorite OTT content.

This qualitative inquiry effectively bridged the divide between individual content consumption and the communal aspects of shared cultural memories, aligning with the work of Lee & Cho (2019). Through in-depth interviews and meticulous social network analysis, I unveiled the intricate web of motivations, devices, content preferences, viewing duration, and

social sharing habits collectively contributing to forming and disseminating shared cultural memories within social networks.

It became vividly apparent that viewing habits and content preferences within social networks were profoundly influenced by the recommendations and discussions taking place on OTT Networks. Respondents consistently emphasized the significant role of recommendations from friends or family members who shared similar tastes, thus contributing to the creation of shared cultural memories within these networks, a phenomenon closely aligned with the observations of Lee & Cho.

The findings offer profound insights into the intricate relationship between OTT Networks and shared cultural memory. These findings validate existing research and enrich our understanding of how motivations, content discovery patterns, and social interactions converge to shape the ever-evolving landscape of shared cultural memory in the digital age, providing a qualitative perspective that complements the quantitative studies in this field.

The study on the impact of OTT networks on communication and culture carries significant implications across various sectors. Media and communication researchers can find valuable contributions in these findings, as they underscore the evolving nature of media consumption and the need to adapt established communication theories (Weiss, 2020). This opens avenues for further research, such as investigating binge-watching behaviors, understanding the role of algorithm-driven content recommendations, and promoting media literacy.

Content providers and streaming platforms like Netflix, Paramount+, Disney+, Peacock, and Amazon Prime Video can all benefit from the insights gained in this study (Weiss, 2020). Understanding the psychological connections users form with content highlights the importance

of catering to individual preferences to engage and retain subscribers. Moreover, this research emphasizes the influential role of OTT platforms as cultural influencers, encouraging content providers to offer diverse and inclusive content.

Policymakers and regulatory bodies can use these insights to inform discussions on media regulation and consumer protection in the digital age. Recognizing how OTT platforms shape perceptions and beliefs can guide deliberations on content classification, advertising standards, privacy protection, and international cooperation in addressing global content distribution and copyright issues (Shrum, 2017).

Education and media literacy initiatives also stand to benefit (Weiss, 2020). The study underscores the need for comprehensive media literacy programs that empower individuals with critical thinking skills and awareness of the media's influence on values. Incorporating these findings, educators can develop curricula that equip individuals to critically assess media content, identify biases, and make informed choices about media consumption.

Finally, the public can gain valuable insights from this study (Shrum, 2017). It encourages viewers to be more aware of the potent influence of OTT networks on their perceptions and beliefs. This newfound awareness prompts individuals to approach media consumption with a discerning mindset, actively seek diverse perspectives, and engage in meaningful dialogues about the role of media in shaping cultural norms and values. This study offers crucial guidance for stakeholders across various sectors, enriching our understanding of the complex interplay between media, society, and culture in the digital age.

Theoretical Implications

To grasp the profound impact of OTT networks on communication and culture, it is imperative to delve into the rich theoretical landscape of communication studies. Three

prominent theories, namely, Cultivation Theory, the Social Construction of Reality Theory, and Socio-Cultural Tradition, offer valuable insights into how OTT networks shape our perceptions and understanding of the world.

Cultivation Theory

Cultivation Theory, first formulated by George Gerbner in the 1960s, has traditionally centered on examining television's influence on individuals' values, attitudes, and perceptions (Potter, 2014). In today's digital landscape, characterized by the prevalence of OTT networks, Cultivation Theory takes on renewed relevance and significance. Research findings within the realm of Cultivation Theory suggest that the diverse range of content available on OTT platforms carries cognitive and emotional significance for viewers (Weiss, 2020).

One of the fundamental implications of Cultivation Theory in the era of OTT networks lies in its potential to cultivate shared perceptions and beliefs among their audiences. As users immerse themselves in content provided by platforms like Netflix, they forge a psychological connection, aligning with symbolic interactionism (Weiss, 2020). This interactive dynamic between users and content nurtures a sense of community and contributes to developing shared experiences and beliefs, reinforcing the foundational tenets of Cultivation Theory.

Furthermore, Cultivation Theory underscores the significance of comprehending the psychological context and perception of the messages conveyed through OTT networks. In an environment where these platforms increasingly tailor content to individual preferences, they influence viewers' perceptions and attitudes. This, in turn, cultivates a shared reality among their user base, fostering a collective consciousness that aligns with the principles of Cultivation Theory.

As the digital landscape continues to evolve with the proliferation of OTT networks, the application of Cultivation Theory offers valuable insights into how these platforms influence individual perspectives and play a pivotal role in shaping collective understandings and beliefs within society (Weiss, 2020). This adaptation of Cultivation Theory to the OTT era highlights the enduring relevance of this framework in understanding the profound impact of media on our perceptions and shared cultural experiences.

Social Construction of Reality Theory

The Social Construction of Reality Theory, initially formulated by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann in 1967, delves into how individuals construct and reconstruct their reality through the information they consume within a social context. This theory offers invaluable insights into the dynamic interplay between media consumption, cultural memory, and social construction, particularly within OTT networks. One of the paramount implications of this theory is that OTT platforms serve as reservoirs of information, continually molding and reshaping traditional conceptions of culture, beliefs, language, and other societal facets (University of Minnesota, 2016). By providing a wide array of content, OTT networks profoundly influence how individuals perceive the world around them. The interconnectedness of communication, cognition, and emotional responses within OTT networks becomes evident as users engage with content that resonates with their real-life experiences (Weiss, 2020).

Social Construction of Reality Theory underscores the notion that the reality presented on OTT platforms is neither objective nor universal but is constructed and molded by a specific group or society's shared beliefs, values, and experiences (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This perspective sheds light on the pivotal role of OTT networks in shaping and influencing the collective understanding of societal norms and values within the digital landscape. Social

Construction of Reality Theory illuminates how OTT networks act as powerful agents in the ongoing construction and reconstruction of individual and collective realities. By offering diverse content and facilitating connections between media consumption, cognition, and emotions; these platforms play a pivotal role in shaping the perceptions and cultural memory of individuals and society at large.

Socio-Cultural Tradition

The Socio-Cultural Tradition, one of Robert Craig's seven communication traditions, places a significant emphasis on the pivotal role of culture in shaping communication practices and how individuals perceive and interpret messages (Craig, 1999). In the context of OTT networks, this tradition underscores the intricate relationship between digital platforms and the broader socio-cultural theories that influence them. To align with this tradition, the theories utilized in our study should focus on explaining the cultural impact of specific phenomena under investigation, such as the influence of OTT networks on shared cultural memories and traditional television experiences. This emphasis on cultural context and its impact on communication practices is integral to understanding the dynamics of media consumption and content sharing in the digital age.

One of the critical implications of the Socio-Cultural Tradition is that OTT platforms effectively transmit their messages to a diverse online community, often comprising individuals who find resonance with the content due to its alignment with their real-life experiences (Craig & Xiong, 2021). This shared connection transcends geographical and cultural boundaries, reflecting the everyday social interactions and beliefs of viewers from various backgrounds. OTT networks serve as conduits for exchanging cultural narratives and shared experiences among individuals from multiple cultural contexts.

Moreover, this sheds light on the reciprocal relationship between culture and OTT networks. The content recommended to users is strongly influenced by the prevailing culture of specific regions, highlighting the symbiotic association between these platforms and socio-cultural realities (University of Minnesota, 2016). Consequently, OTT networks reflect and shape cultural norms, beliefs, and values. This dynamic interaction between platforms and culture underscores the profound influence of OTT networks on the ongoing evolution of cultural understandings in the digital age. Socio-Cultural Tradition emphasizes the integral role of culture in shaping communication within OTT networks. It highlights how these platforms facilitate the exchange of cultural narratives and shared experiences among a diverse user base, transcending geographical boundaries. Furthermore, it underscores the mutual influence between culture and OTT networks, emphasizing how these platforms reflect and contribute to the dynamic evolution of cultural norms and values in the digital era.

Research on OTT networks has significantly contributed to several communication theories, particularly in the social construction of reality theory and socio-cultural traditions. These findings shed light on how OTT platforms impact communication theories. One of the noteworthy aspects is how OTT platforms provide an interactive space where content providers and viewers engage as senders and receivers, respectively. This aligns with the principles of communication theory, which emphasize exchanging meaningful messages between entities (Weiss, 2020). In the case of OTT platforms, the diverse range of content spanning various genres ensures that communication carries both cognitive and emotional significance to senders and recipients (Weiss, 2020).

The research reveals that the perception and psychological context of the messages transmitted on OTT networks are vital in shaping the communication experience. This insight

underscores the importance of understanding how content on these platforms is informative and emotionally engaging. It highlights the interconnectedness of communication, cognition, and emotional responses within OTT networks. This research enhances our understanding of communication theories by demonstrating how OTT platforms are dynamic channels that facilitate meaningful and multifaceted interactions between content creators and consumers. These insights underscore the evolving nature of communication in the digital age and its impact on the social construction of reality and socio-cultural traditions.

To grasp this phenomenon fully, platforms like Amazon Prime Video and Netflix consistently produce content tailored to individual consumers, aiming to keep them engaged for extended periods. Surprisingly, approximately 65% of the respondents in this study acknowledged spending a minimum of 5 hours daily on these platforms, indicating the solid psychological connection they have developed with these sites. This observation aligns with communication theory, precisely the concept of symbolic interactionism (Weiss, 2020). Symbolic interactionism emphasizes the importance of creativity in the communication process, highlighting that meaningful communication arises from shared interactions (Weiss, 2020). These interactions can occur within physical communities, geographical locations, and online spaces. Platforms like Amazon Prime Video and Netflix effectively apply symbolic interactionism principles by creating content that resonates with individual viewers, fostering a sense of community and shared experiences. This approach keeps users engaged and contributes to the overarching understanding of communication theories within the context of evolving digital platforms.

According to this research, OTT platforms effectively convey their messages to their online community, primarily comprising young individuals who resonate with the content's

messages based on their real-life experiences. This shared connection is evident in the global subscriber base, as viewers from diverse cultures often gravitate towards similar channels, reflecting everyday social interactions and beliefs.

Furthermore, the research sheds light on the systematic considerations within OTT platforms. Information undergoes a series of transformations and editing processes before reaching the consumer. This aligns with communication theory, suggesting that a comprehensive message must undergo intricate procedures and adjustments to remain meaningful to the intended recipient. The respondents in this study highlighted that OTT networks offer the most accessible and convenient communication channels, reinforcing their appeal to users seeking affordable and user-friendly options.

OTT platforms have significantly shaped their subscribers' perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and values. This research has identified three interrelated phases through which these implications can be understood. The first phase centers around media institutions, encompassing various content providers (Shrum, 2017). The study findings indicate that people access different platforms based on their preferences. These media platforms strategically create engaging and relevant content tailored to their audience. Consequently, this content directly influences viewers' psychological, emotional, and mental states. Thus, this research has elucidated the connection between communication theory and OTT networks, highlighting their intricate relationship.

This research has illuminated the intricate linkages between OTT networks and broader socio-cultural traditions, shedding light on society's perceived reality's continuous evolution. The findings underscore the transformative impact of technological advancements on socio-cultural realities, with OTT platforms serving as repositories of information that reshape and modify traditional understandings of culture, beliefs, language, and other aspects (Köroğlu, 2019).

Cultivation Theory, the Social Construction of Reality Theory, and Socio-Cultural Tradition provide invaluable theoretical frameworks for comprehending the influence of OTT networks on communication, perceptions, and culture. These theories emphasize the dynamic nature of communication in the digital age and the profound impact of technological advancements on socio-cultural realities. By exploring the theoretical implications of these communication theories, we acquire more profound insights into the multifaceted role of OTT networks in shaping our shared understanding of the world. In this context, it is essential to recognize that culture also mutually influences OTT networks. The cultural milieu of a particular region can significantly mold the content recommended to users, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between OTT platforms and socio-cultural realities, as illuminated by this study. This dynamic interplay underscores the ever-evolving nature of cultural dynamics and its seamless integration into the digital landscape. Consequently, when scrutinizing an individual within the framework of a social construct, these findings assume critical importance in delineating the emerging norms and truths that govern contemporary society (Changorok, J. 2017). As such, we comprehensively understand the intricate interplay between technology, culture, and communication, ultimately shaping our digital era's collective consciousness.

Additional theoretical perspectives

Incorporating additional theoretical perspectives alongside the well-established frameworks of Cultivation Theory, Social Construction of Reality Theory, and the Socio-Cultural Tradition broadens our analytical horizons and provides a more comprehensive lens through which we can examine the profound influence of OTT networks on shared cultural memory, communication dynamics, and cultural values in the contemporary digital landscape. These supplementary theoretical viewpoints, informed by the research of scholars such as

Gerbner, Berger, Luckmann, Turkle, and others, offer a diverse range of angles for exploring the intricate web of factors that shape our interactions with digital media. By embracing these additional theoretical perspectives, we enhance our capacity to delve deeper into the multifaceted dimensions of media consumption in the digital era, enabling us to comprehend better how OTT platforms shape our collective consciousness, redefine communication norms, and contribute to the ongoing evolution of our shared cultural identities within the global digital ecosystem.

Media Richness Theory, a theoretical framework initially formulated by Daft and Lengel in 1986, offers valuable insights into the effectiveness of various communication channels in conveying information. This theory classifies communication channels as either rich or lean, depending on their capacity to transmit non-verbal cues, facilitate feedback, and handle ambiguity (Daft & Lengel, 1984). My comprehensive study on OTT networks has yielded enlightening findings that shed light on how this theory is remarkably applicable to the intricacies of contemporary media consumption and its profound impact on shared cultural memory.

Through my research, I have unearthed compelling evidence highlighting the crucial role of communication channels within OTT networks, such as text messaging, video calls, and social media interactions, in shaping the richness of shared experiences and the cultivation of shared cultural memories. My observations and analyses reveal that the choice of communication channels within OTT networks significantly influences the depth and vividness of shared experiences. I found that OTT platforms offering video streaming with high interactivity and robust feedback mechanisms create a conducive environment for fostering immersive and emotionally enriching shared viewing experiences among users. These experiences are integral to forming and deepening shared cultural memories within the digital landscape, closely aligning

with the fundamental principles elucidated in Media Richness Theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986). My study underscores the relevance of Media Richness Theory in understanding how contemporary media platforms, particularly OTT networks, shape communication dynamics and shared cultural memory. The insights from my research emphasize that choosing communication channels within these platforms plays a pivotal role in creating rich and meaningful shared experiences, ultimately contributing to the digital age's vibrant tapestry of shared cultural memories.

Media Dependency Theory, a seminal framework developed by Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur in 1976, delves into the intricate relationship between individuals, societies, and their reliance on media for information dissemination and the reinforcement of beliefs and values (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976). Building upon this well-established theory, my comprehensive study on OTT networks has revealed compelling insights into the evolving role of these platforms as primary sources of entertainment and information. This theory, when applied to the context of OTT networks, offers a robust framework for understanding the profound impact of these digital platforms on contemporary cultural consumption and how these dependencies fundamentally shape individuals' perceptions, beliefs, and the intricate tapestry of shared cultural memories.

My research findings underscore the pivotal role of OTT platforms as significant hubs for cultural consumption, entertainment, and information dissemination. These platforms have become integral to individuals' daily lives and communal experiences, heightening their dependency on OTT networks for various content. This dependency extends to how individuals and communities construct their shared cultural values and memories within the digital landscape (Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández, 2019). By analyzing the extent of media dependency

on OTT networks, our study provides valuable insights into how these platforms influence the formation and evolution of shared cultural values. Applying Media Dependency Theory to my study illuminates the central role of OTT networks as information and entertainment gateways in contemporary society. It underscores how these platforms have become indispensable tools in shaping individuals' media consumption patterns and their cultural perceptions, beliefs, and shared cultural memories. By recognizing the evolving landscape of media dependency within OTT networks, we gain a deeper understanding of their transformative impact on the fabric of shared cultural values and experiences in the digital age.

Limited Effects Theory, a foundational framework introduced by Lazarsfeld in the 1940s, challenges the conventional notion of media's direct and all-encompassing influence on individuals' attitudes and behaviors (Borah, 2015). This theory posits that individuals selectively expose themselves to media messages and critically interpret them through their pre-existing beliefs and social contexts. It constrains the media's overarching impact, emphasizing the importance of individual agency and personal predispositions in shaping media effects. Within the context of my in-depth study on OTT networks, this perspective offers valuable insights into the nuanced dynamics of media influence on shared cultural memory.

My study has unveiled intriguing findings regarding applying the Limited Effects Theory to OTT networks. While OTT content undoubtedly contributes to the formation and evolution of shared cultural values and memories, the extent of its impact is similar. Instead, it fluctuates significantly based on the interplay of individual differences and the rich diversity of media consumption patterns observed among users. This theory's lens has enabled us to dissect how users' inherent predispositions, such as cultural beliefs and personal preferences, influence their engagement with OTT content (Bennett & Pfetsch, 2018). Limited Effects Theory prompts us to

view OTT networks as dynamic ecosystems where media consumption is not a one-size-fits-all phenomenon. Instead, it is shaped by the intricate interplay between individual characteristics and the heterogeneous landscape of media offerings. By acknowledging the variances in how OTT content is received and interpreted by users, we gain a more comprehensive understanding of its influence on shared cultural values and memories. Consequently, this nuanced perspective underscores the need for tailored approaches in media analysis, accounting for the rich tapestry of factors that define the OTT experience and its role in shaping contemporary cultural landscapes.

Uses and Gratifications Theory, initially developed by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch in 1973, offers a valuable lens through which to examine the motivations behind individuals' media consumption choices and the gratification they derive from them (Katz et al., 1973). This theory posits that individuals actively select and engage with media content to fulfill specific psychological and social needs, such as the desire for entertainment, information, or social interaction. In the context of my comprehensive study on OTT networks, I have unearthed illuminating insights regarding how this theory applies to the dynamics of media consumption and its profound influence on the cultivation of shared cultural memories.

My research findings have illuminated the pivotal role of the Uses and Gratifications Theory in understanding the motivations that drive individuals to choose content on OTT platforms. In essence, individuals' media consumption choices are not passive but rooted in their quest to satisfy specific psychological and social needs. These choices, whether driven by the pursuit of entertainment, the thirst for information, or the desire for social interaction, contribute significantly to forming and perpetuating shared cultural memories.

For instance, we observed that viewers frequently employ these platforms to connect with their cultural heritage in the context of OTT networks. They do so by actively seeking and consuming content from their home countries, thus fostering a sense of shared cultural identity and memory within their communities. This exemplifies how individuals leverage OTT networks for personal gratification and the collective construction of cultural memories that resonate with their cultural group. Uses and Gratifications Theory is a foundational framework elucidating media consumption's active, purposeful nature within OTT networks. It underscores the importance of understanding why individuals choose specific content and how these choices, driven by their psychological and social needs, play a pivotal role in shaping shared cultural memories. Consequently, my study underscores the significance of this theory in unraveling the intricate web of motivations behind OTT content consumption and its profound impact on the evolution of shared cultural values and memories.

Two-Step Flow Theory, initially proposed by Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet in 1944, provides valuable insights into the mechanisms of media influence by emphasizing the role of opinion leaders who consume media content and then transmit their interpretations and opinions to others in their social networks (Hepp, 2018). My comprehensive study on OTT networks has unveiled intriguing findings that underscore the relevance of this theory in shedding light on how influencers and opinion leaders play a pivotal role in shaping shared cultural memories within the digital landscape.

In the context of OTT networks, my research findings have highlighted the application of the Two-Step Flow Theory to the dynamics of media consumption and its profound impact on the cultivation of shared cultural memories. I have observed that influential figures on social media platforms, often called "influencers," wield significant power in shaping the collective

interpretation and discussion of OTT content. By virtue of their large and engaged follower base, these individuals act as opinion leaders who consume media content and provide their unique perspectives and evaluations.

For instance, when influencers share their reviews, analyses, or personal experiences related to OTT content, it can trigger a ripple effect within their follower networks. Followers tend to be influenced by the opinions and interpretations of these influencers, thus shaping their views and perceptions of the content. This process extends to discussions and interactions among followers, contributing to developing shared cultural values and memories that align with the interpretations and perspectives initially presented by the opinion leaders.

My study underscores the significance of the Two-Step Flow Theory in the context of OTT networks, emphasizing how influential figures and opinion leaders act as intermediaries in disseminating media content and forming shared cultural memories. It illuminates these individuals' pivotal role in steering the collective discourse surrounding OTT content, thereby substantially influencing the development and evolution of shared cultural values and memories within the digital realm.

Integrating these additional theoretical perspectives into the study of OTT networks and their impact on shared cultural memory significantly enriches our comprehension of the intricate interplay between digital media consumption, culture, communication patterns, and the development of collective memories within an ever-evolving global landscape. Drawing from established theories such as Cultivation Theory, Social Construction of Reality Theory, and the Socio-Cultural Tradition, as well as the insights garnered from our investigation, researchers gain a comprehensive framework to decipher the multifaceted dynamics that define media engagement in the 21st century.

These diverse theoretical lenses enable scholars to explore how OTT networks, as dominant platforms for media consumption, shape cultural narratives, foster communication patterns, and contribute to the formation of collective memories. For example, by applying Media Richness Theory (Daft & Lengel, 1984), researchers can delve into how the choice of communication channels within OTT networks, such as text messaging, video calls, or social media interactions, influences the richness of shared experiences and the cultivation of shared cultural memories. Additionally, the Media Dependency Theory (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976) offers a valuable perspective on how individuals and societies depend on OTT platforms as primary sources of entertainment and information, thus shaping their perceptions, beliefs, and shared cultural memories. Limited Effects Theory (Borah, 2015) helps delineate the boundaries of media influence on shared cultural memory, accounting for individual differences and diverse media consumption patterns. Moreover, Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz et al., 1973) elucidates the motivations behind individuals' content choices on OTT platforms, shedding light on how these choices contribute to the formation of shared cultural memories, such as connecting with one's cultural heritage or fostering a sense of belonging.

Incorporating these theoretical frameworks into the study of OTT networks enhances our understanding of the intricate relationships between media, culture, and memory. It offers a holistic perspective on how digital media consumption shapes the socio-cultural landscape of the 21st century. By examining these multifaceted dimensions, researchers are better equipped to navigate the complexities of an interconnected world where shared cultural memory is increasingly shaped by the digital experiences facilitated by OTT networks.

Practical Implications

The demand for OTT networks is experiencing continuous growth daily, reflecting the changing landscape of entertainment consumption (Gupta, 2021). This upward trajectory presents content creators and marketers with a pressing opportunity and challenge. To thrive in this dynamic environment, they must not only meet but exceed the expectations of their audience by enhancing the quality of their services, curating engaging and relevant content, and implementing effective promotional strategies on various social media platforms. To meet the evolving needs of viewers, content creators should focus on several key areas. Primarily, the quality of the content remains paramount. High-definition video, clear audio, and seamless streaming experiences are essential to retain and attract subscribers. Investing in advanced technologies and production values can significantly enhance overall viewer satisfaction.

Furthermore, understanding the preferences and interests of the target audience is crucial. Content creators can tailor their offerings to cater to specific demographics and tastes by conducting thorough market research and data analysis. This personalization fosters a deeper connection between viewers and the content, increasing the likelihood of subscription retention. In today's digital age, the role of social media platforms cannot be overstated. Leveraging these platforms for content promotion is essential to reach a broader audience. Engaging with viewers on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter can create a buzz around content and spark discussions, further increasing its visibility and appeal. The growing demand for OTT networks represents a significant opportunity for content creators and marketers (Khatri, 2020). By focusing on content quality, personalization, and effective social media promotion, they can not only meet the rising expectations of viewers but also expand their reach and attract more subscribers to the world of OTT entertainment.

According to the research findings, content remains a pivotal factor influencing users' decisions when signing up for an OTT network (Gupta, 2021). The type and variety of entertainment offerings play a substantial role in shaping users' intentions to use OTT services. Diverse content genres add a compelling dimension to the viewing experience as consumers seek to explore a wide array of content worldwide. In this context, the significance of content quality cannot be overstated. Viewers are drawn to content that is not only diverse but also interactive, engaging, and aligned with contemporary tastes (Gupta, 2021).

Content creators should prioritize using creative visual effects and graphic enhancements during production to capture and retain the audience's interest. By infusing innovation and creativity into their content, creators can craft experiences that resonate with viewers and leave an impression. The research underscores the critical role of content in driving user engagement with OTT networks. Viewers are enticed by various genres and high-quality, interactive, and visually appealing content. To succeed in this competitive landscape, content creators must continually strive to meet these expectations and provide an enriching entertainment experience to their audience.

The discovery of new content on OTT networks is driven by recommendations from family and friends and through social media channels (Khatri, 2020). Social media emerges as a potent tool for promoting and marketing OTT services, pivotal in shaping consumer behavior and purchase intentions. The effectiveness of social media promotion lies in its ability to generate interest, desire, attention, and action among users, which significantly impact their decisions regarding OTT platform subscriptions (Khatri, 2020). Moreover, robust social media marketing strategies lead to the establishment of broad brand awareness. Social media platforms

serve as a dynamic space for building brand recognition, humanizing content, and driving traffic to OTT platforms.

Incorporating social media into marketing allows marketers to transform passive streaming services into active and engaging consumer experiences. Using movie trailers and clips strategically shared on platforms like Facebook, X, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok is highly effective in enticing viewers (Sharma, 2023). Additionally, influencer marketing amplifies content endorsements and draws the attention of consumers who spend substantial time on social media platforms. Given the ever-increasing user engagement on social media, it becomes imperative for marketers to utilize these platforms to advertise their OTT network services (Sharma, 2023). By doing so, they can significantly expand their customer base and enhance their brand's presence in an environment where consumer interest and interaction thrive.

The quality of the products and services offered significantly influences customers' subscription choices. High-quality services strongly appeal to consumers and play a pivotal role in their decision to subscribe, often prompting a shift from traditional TV to OTT networks (Lee et al., 2019). OTT networks have carved a niche by providing high-quality videos characterized by high resolution, superior audio quality, consistent frame rates throughout the video, and optimized transcoding settings. Providing high-quality videos enhances the viewing experience, making it easy and comfortable for audiences (Lee et al., 2019). Streaming such content not only delights viewers but also serves as a magnet for attracting and retaining customers, as it aligns with their expectations and demands.

OTT platforms offer diverse entertainment options and settings, allowing consumers to choose content that suits their preferences (Lee et al., 2019). Content creators should know that today's viewers are discerning and have high expectations. Therefore, producing high-standard

content becomes imperative to entice more followers and subscribers to their social media channels. In this dynamic landscape, the pursuit of quality remains paramount in sustaining and expanding customer engagement on OTT networks.

OTT networks encompass many platforms, including Hulu, Disney+, Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Peacock, Max, YouTube TV, ESPN+, Discovery+, and Apple TV+ (Rayome et al., 2023). However, the research findings indicate that Netflix is the most extensively used OTT network. This dominance can be attributed to several key factors that set Netflix apart in the competitive landscape.

Netflix has garnered popularity due to its user-friendly interface, extensive content selection, and the distinction of possessing the largest 4K library among video-on-demand platforms (Rayome et al., 2023). Despite facing substantial competition and implementing price increases, Netflix has managed to maintain its status as the preferred streaming platform for many users. The ability to price its services effectively to optimize content expenditures, coupled with its consistently high content quality, has enabled Netflix to justify its premium pricing strategy.

One of Netflix's strengths lies in its diverse content library, which includes licensed content from various countries and languages, making it a truly global platform with a localized range worldwide (Rayome et al., 2023). This global reach contributes to its immense popularity and subscriber base. Considering these findings, marketers and content creators should strategically leverage the immense user base and popularity of Netflix. By choosing Netflix as a preferred platform for broadcasting their content, they can tap into a vast and engaged audience, thereby enhancing the reach and viewership of their content on this leading OTT network.

Furthermore, the research findings highlight the pivotal role of social media as a primary avenue for subscribers to share content from OTT networks. Considering this, it becomes imperative for these two digital realms to forge more seamless integration. By establishing a more potent synergy between social media platforms and OTT networks, users can enjoy a more streamlined content-sharing experience.

An illustrative example is Facebook, which emerged as the most frequently used platform for user content sharing. To effectively reach a broader audience, social media and OTT networks must design and implement improved platforms collaboratively (Rayome et al., 2023). These platforms should facilitate easy and convenient access to content sharing, minimizing unnecessary hurdles. The overarching goal of such integration efforts is to foster a more coherent and cohesive digital tradition. Given the shared content landscape between these platforms, it is unsurprising that many societal aspects exhibit a degree of similarity among users. Enhancing the synergy between social media and OTT networks can contribute to a more harmonious and user-friendly digital ecosystem, benefiting content creators and consumers.

Furthermore, this research underscores the significance of social media as a primary conduit for subscribers to disseminate content. A compelling case exists for enhanced integration between these social platforms and OTT networks. Users can enjoy a smoother content-sharing experience by forging a more robust partnership. Take, for instance, Facebook, which emerged as the preferred platform for content sharing among users. To maximize outreach and engagement, it becomes imperative for both social media and OTT networks to collaborate on refining their platforms. These improvements facilitate effortless content access and sharing, reducing unnecessary complexities in the process.

The ultimate objective of these collaborative efforts is to foster a more unified and streamlined digital tradition. Given the shared content landscape between these platforms, it is unsurprising that many societal facets exhibit similarities among users. Strengthening the integration between social media and OTT networks can contribute to a more cohesive and user-friendly digital ecosystem, benefiting content creators and consumers.

OTT networks offer a user-friendly experience that requires minimal effort, as highlighted by Gupta (2021). These platforms provide viewers unparalleled flexibility, allowing them to enjoy movies, shows, and series at their convenience, anywhere and anytime. Navigating OTT networks is straightforward, and users can easily customize their preferences. Given the user-centric nature of OTT platforms, content creators should consider placing their content on social media platforms that share these attributes of flexibility and ease of use. This approach ensures that content reaches a broad and diverse audience, making it accessible and enjoyable for everyone.

Implications for the Film and Content Creation Industry

The findings of this study in the realm of OTT have far-reaching implications for the filmmaking and content creation and dissemination industry. The analysis underscores the paramount importance of delivering content that aligns with the high-quality standards expected by subscribers (Dobrian et al., 2011). As corroborated by earlier research, many consumers are willing to pay a premium for content that caters to their specific preferences. This highlights the need for the industry to continually expand and adapt to the evolving preferences within the OTT landscape. The changing consumer behavior observed on OTT platforms signals the necessity for a customer-centric approach within the industry. This entails tailoring content, improving streaming quality, and providing personalized experiences to meet the growing demands of OTT

audiences. These principles can help content creators and the industry remain relevant and competitive in an ever-evolving digital landscape.

Furthermore, embracing data-driven insights and leveraging technology can enhance the industry's ability to create content that resonates with OTT audiences. By closely monitoring user preferences and behaviors, the industry can produce content that meets the quality expectations of subscribers, captures their interests, and ensures continued engagement. The findings of this study emphasize the imperative for the film and content creation industry to adapt to the shifting landscape of OTT preferences. By prioritizing quality, customer-centricity, and data-driven decision-making, the industry can position itself for success in an era dominated by OTT networks.

In addition to its myriad findings, this study has highlighted the importance of forging partnerships between traditional and OTT network platforms. While most respondents have embraced the convenience of OTT networks, it is crucial to recognize that some individuals still prefer traditional entertainment and content access. In light of this, strategic partnerships between these two realms can offer traditional platforms the relevance and adaptability they need to thrive in the modern age (Bidyarthi, 2023). These partnerships can take various forms, such as co-producing content that caters to both traditional and digital audiences or integrating OTT functionalities into existing traditional platforms. By doing so, traditional platforms can tap into the changing media consumption landscape while preserving their unique appeal to those who appreciate conventional content delivery methods.

Furthermore, these collaborations can provide viewers with a seamless transition between the two platforms, allowing them to access their favorite content through the medium that suits them best. Such partnerships can also lead to innovative content creation and distribution

strategies that bridge the gap between traditional and digital experiences. This research underscores the importance of strategic collaborations between conventional and OTT platforms, offering the potential to coexist harmoniously and cater to diverse viewer preferences. These partnerships represent a critical industrial implication derived from the findings of this study, highlighting the need for adaptability and synergy in the ever-evolving media landscape.

Academia Implications

This research shed light on a critical aspect of OTT platform usage – its correlation with academic performance, particularly among young people in the school-going age bracket. It is evident that a significant portion of the interviewees, who primarily fall within this demographic, tend to dedicate substantial time to their OTT platforms. This pattern of behavior raises concerns regarding its potential adverse effects on academic outcomes (Babitha et al., 2023). Young individuals are drawn to the allure of on-demand content, and this study highlights that they are more likely to allocate a considerable portion of their time to consuming content through OTT networks. Unfortunately, this can have detrimental consequences on their academic performance. The allure of binge-watching favorite shows or exploring the extensive content libraries on these platforms can divert students' focus from their studies and assignments, negatively impacting their grades (Babitha et al., 2023).

Recognizing the importance of a balanced academic and leisure life, it becomes imperative for parents and guardians to establish clear boundaries and guidelines for their children's OTT platform usage. Without adequate supervision and guidance, there is a higher likelihood that students may prioritize their digital entertainment over their academic responsibilities. This potential scenario necessitates proactive measures by parents and educational institutions to mitigate the adverse effects of excessive OTT consumption (Babitha et

al., 2023). This research underscores the need for a balanced approach to OTT platform usage among young individuals. While these platforms offer an array of entertainment options, excessive screen time can have detrimental effects on academic performance. Parents and educators must work together to set appropriate boundaries and encourage a healthy balance between academic commitments and leisure activities, thus ensuring students' overall well-being and success.

Delimitations and Limitations

In the pursuit of knowledge, this study encountered specific challenges that, although unavoidable, were carefully addressed to minimize their impact on the research objectives. These limitations can be categorized into three distinct areas: Limitations Associated with Online Surveys and Interviews, Limitations Associated with Semi-Structured Interviews.

Delimitations

This study operates within specific delimitations to ensure a focused and coherent exploration of the research subject. These delimitations serve as boundaries that guide the study's scope and research objectives regarding the intricate relationship between OTT Networks and our Shared Cultural Memory. These delimitations serve as boundaries that guide the study's scope and research objectives.

The primary focus of this study is on the impact of OTT Networks on cultural memory within the context of the United States. While OTT Networks have a global reach, this research centers on the U.S. experience, utilizing data, examples, and insights primarily relevant to this geographic region. This research predominantly employs qualitative methods, including interviews, content analysis, and cultural memory analysis. Quantitative research methods, statistical analyses, or large-scale surveys are beyond the scope of this qualitative study. While

acknowledging the potential influence of cultural and demographic factors on cultural memory and communication within the context of OTT Networks, this study aims to explore only some conceivable cultural or demographic variables comprehensively. Instead, it focuses on key trends and patterns in the qualitative data and citations.

Limitations Associated with Online Surveys and Interviews

A significant demographic consideration in the United States is the population distribution, with nearly 14% of Americans residing in rural areas (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2021). However, rural areas often present unique challenges, particularly in accessing basic social amenities. One prominent challenge is the limited availability of internet connectivity in specific rural locations. These areas frequently face isolation in various aspects of life, including educational, economic, and social activities.

For this study, a crucial prerequisite for participation was access to a stable internet connection. Robust connectivity was essential to ensure uninterrupted interview sessions and reliable data collection. Consequently, individuals residing in remote areas with no dependable internet connectivity were excluded from the study. Similarly, the study did not encompass elderly individuals living alone in rural settings, as they might encounter difficulties operating digital devices, potentially affecting their participation and responses.

In addition to the challenges related to rural demographics, there were concerns about response bias in the study. Some responses posed verification challenges during Zoom interviews, leaving interviewers with limited options but to proceed based on the provided information. Respondents often tend to withhold the truth during surveys, a phenomenon observed in various studies. This reluctance to be entirely truthful may arise from fears of being stereotyped or wrongfully judged, language barriers, or individual personality variations (Locke

et al., 1994). To mitigate this potential source of bias, the research team employed robust data-cleaning procedures and incorporated validation questions to enhance the reliability of the final report.

Fatigue emerged as another factor influencing data quality, as some respondents could not complete the entire questionnaire due to exhaustion. Incomplete cases were meticulously identified and subsequently removed from the final analysis. This rigorous approach ensured that the research findings-maintained accuracy, reliability, and informativeness.

Furthermore, the choice to conduct online surveys introduced the research to an elevated risk of errors and inconsistencies. These errors span from technical issues, such as internet connectivity interruptions, to omission errors, where some respondents encountered difficulty accurately displaying survey questions (Ward et al., 2017). For example, when internet connectivity abruptly shut down, respondents were compelled to restart their interviews, potentially affecting their confidence and ability to engage freely. Similarly, device-related issues led to errors of misinterpretation of survey questions. However, it is essential to note that the research team diligently identified and addressed these issues, implementing corrective measures to minimize their impact on the study's validity and reliability.

Limitations Associated with Semi-Structured Interview

In the context of this research, the utilization of a semi-structured interview model was deemed the most suitable approach. However, it had its associated risks and limitations. One of the foremost concerns was the heightened likelihood of losing critical information during the interview process. This risk was particularly elevated because the interviews were conducted remotely, which introduced the potential for misreporting or incomplete responses. Moreover, the study encompassed a diverse group of participants representing various demographics,

including differences in race and culture, which heightened the challenge posed by language barriers (Kakilla, 2021). Careful consideration was given to the design of the interview questions to address the language barrier issue. Special care was taken to ensure that the questions were formulated in a manner that facilitated straightforward interpretation across a spectrum of languages. Despite these efforts, these factors remained significant limitations of the study.

However, it is imperative to emphasize that the research team implemented rigorous data diagnosis, cleaning, and thorough data wrangling processes. These measures were implemented to guarantee the integrity and accuracy of the data collected. By conducting these procedures, the study aimed to mitigate the potential impact of limitations on its conclusions' validity. Regarding delimitations, the study intentionally limited the scope of questions posed to respondents. Specifically, participants were asked general questions about their content preferences when using OTT networks. This delimitation was essential to protect respondent privacy and ensure they felt comfortable and unrestricted throughout the interview.

Recommendation for Enhancing OTT Network Platforms with Social Features

Considering the compelling insights derived from the study on Hyperconnectivity and OTT Networks, there is a strong and persuasive recommendation for OTT network platforms, including industry giants such as Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, and Disney+, to take proactive measures aimed at enriching and redefining the user experience through the seamless integration of a robust social component into their platforms. This strategic move is grounded in a profound understanding of how hyperconnectivity fundamentally reshapes how individuals consume media and engage with their social networks, as underscored by Cheek (2016). By embracing real-time viewing insights, such as the dynamic display of what friends and followers are watching, these platforms can leverage the inherent influence that social circles exert on

individuals' content choices, as corroborated by the empirical findings of the Qualtrics Online Survey.

Furthermore, incorporating features enabling users to observe what is trending within their social network aligns seamlessly with the study's revelations regarding the pivotal roles played by search engines, personalized recommendations, and social media in the intricate content discovery process (Qualtrics et al.). By providing such insights, OTT platforms can effectively transform themselves into hubs of cultural relevance and communal engagement, facilitating the organic sharing and promotion of content. This aligns with Brubaker's observations (2020) that users frequently share and discuss their OTT viewing experiences on various digital platforms, highlighting the profound interconnectedness of contemporary digital media consumption.

Moreover, introducing real-time chat functionalities that allow users to engage in discussions and interactions while simultaneously viewing the same content represents a pivotal step toward fostering meaningful connections among users, in line with the study's emphasis on the significance of conversations surrounding shows and movies, particularly within the context of social circles (Qualtrics et al.). By enabling such interactions, OTT platforms can further cement their positions as catalysts for cultural discourse and shared experiences, enhancing their relevance in today's hyperconnected world. The strategic incorporation of these social features within OTT network platforms promises to elevate the user experience to unprecedented levels and serve as potent tools for organic content promotion. By facilitating these dynamic interactions, OTT platforms stand to create a vibrant sense of community and shared culture among users, closely mirroring the transformative role they play in our contemporary shared cultural memory, as affirmed by the insights of Brubaker (2020). Thus, integrating these social

components emerges as a pivotal and forward-thinking strategy for OTT network platforms, positioning them at the forefront of the evolving landscape of digital media consumption.

Recommendations for Future Research

OTT networks offer fertile ground for ongoing research, with several areas warranting deeper investigation. While the present study has provided compelling evidence of a robust correlation between OTT networks and the formation of shared cultural memory, specific facets require more in-depth exploration.

One crucial avenue for future research is the association between OTT network content and individuals' moral perceptions. This area is of growing concern, as specific online content has raised questions about its moral impact on viewers (Manoj & Asif, 2021). Operating within the vast expanse of the internet, such content often presents challenges regarding control and regulation. Consequently, young people may gain access to videos and materials that have the potential to distort their perception of life and morality.

While most OTT network platforms institute mechanisms to restrict age-appropriate content, the effectiveness of these measures is often called into question. The accessibility of such content and its potential influence on the public, as suggested by Farooq and Raju (2019), continue to be of significant concern. Therefore, further research must delve into this critical area to complement the current findings and enhance our understanding of the complex interplay between OTT networks and moral perceptions. The study presented here represents a valuable step towards uncovering the relationship between OTT networks and shared cultural memory. However, it also highlights the pressing need for more comprehensive investigations into the moral impact of OTT content and the efficacy of content restriction mechanisms. By conducting

further research in these domains, we can advance our knowledge and contribute to more informed discussions about the influence of OTT networks on society.

Conclusion

There is a growing global demand for and utilization of OTT Networks, as evidenced by findings from both the online survey and Zoom interviews. Each subscriber is driven by personal motivations that keep them engaged with these platforms. According to the study, a substantial portion of respondents indicated that they had subscribed to at least one OTT platform, signaling a significant shift in how and where the public consumes their favorite content.

One of the primary motivating factors for engaging with OTT services is their convenience and user-friendliness. The study revealed that out of 25 respondents, 40% affirmed that the OTT platforms they use are highly convenient. These platforms provide users diverse content, making them immensely appealing with minimal viewing restrictions. In stark contrast to traditional media, these digital networks enable subscribers to save and watch videos conveniently. Moreover, OTT services are accessible across various devices, including smartphones and digital TVs. This inherent flexibility ensures that content seamlessly transitions from one device to another with minimal complications.

Another critical advantage of OTT platforms is their flexibility in subscription options. Users can choose from various subscription models, including premium, freemium, or in-app purchases, offering different price points. This enables customers to select a subscription type that aligns with their needs and budgetary constraints. Furthermore, users can customize platform features to enhance their viewing satisfaction, allowing for a personalized and enjoyable content consumption experience. The appeal of OTT platforms lies in their vast content, catering to a wide range of interests and preferences.

Moreover, due to the absence of third-party intermediaries, subscribers can directly access high-quality and reliable content. This study has also identified a significant digital migration trend that continues to shape collective memories within the social fabric. This impact has been both transitional and enduring since the advent of these platforms. Irrespective of their geographical location, individuals can easily explore their personal histories and comprehend their ongoing transformations. Many can now watch their favorite content at their convenience, eliminating the need to wait for designated family viewing times. This phenomenon has contributed to a heightened sense of individualism among viewers. Additionally, there has been a noticeable shift in the content delivered via these platforms. While the initial focus of cultural memory centered on early human civilization processes and events, contemporary content offerings have evolved to encompass a broader spectrum of topics and interests.

The scope of contemporary focus extends beyond its historical boundaries and now encompasses an intricate interplay between technological and commercial culture. This evolution in emphasis transcends temporal boundaries, reshaping the collective cultural memory across the past, present, and future within the realm of OTT networks and similar digital platforms. These technological transformations have woven together various facets of memory, spanning collective, transcultural, and transnational dimensions. Anchored within a complex social algorithm, this new technology, including OTT networks, plays a strategic role in shaping the future and directing subscribers toward uniform patterns of content consumption that transcend global boundaries.

Considering these dynamics, the findings of this research align with and contribute to various communication theories, including the social construction of reality and cultivation theory. They illuminate how OTT networks, as part of the larger media landscape, construct and

cultivate perceptions of reality and shared cultural experiences among audiences. This exploration of shared memory in the digital age provides valuable insights into how technology influences our collective understanding of the world.

As we look ahead, it is imperative to direct research efforts toward examining the moral implications of OTT networks concerning their impact on behavior. There is a growing concern that these networks may significantly contribute to contemporary society's observed decline in moral values. These concerns are often centered on the ease of access to potentially objectionable content and the secrecy that shrouds these digital platforms. However, it is essential to note that insufficient research information is available to substantiate such claims conclusively. Therefore, this area represents a vital frontier for future exploration, where comprehensive studies can provide deeper insights into the moral dimensions of OTT networks and their potential influence on societal values and behaviors.

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APPENDIX A

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

August 18, 2023

Michael Brown
Carol Hepburn

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY22-23-1292 Over-The-Top (OTT) Networks' Impact on Shared Cultural Memory

Dear Michael Brown, Carol Hepburn,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(ii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP

Administrative Chair

Research Ethics Office

APPENDIX B

Consent Form

Title of the project: Over-The-Top (OTT) Networks' Impact on Shared Cultural Memory
Principal Investigator: Michael Brown, Doctoral Candidate, School of Communication & The Arts, Liberty University

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years or older, be a resident of the United States, and currently subscribe to at least one Over-The-Top (OTT) Network (Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Disney +, etc.). Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to participate in this research.

The study aims to understand the motivations, devices, shows/genres, duration, and social sharing habits of people who watch OTT networks and how those factors contribute to creating a shared cultural memory of those shows within social networks.

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to complete an online survey that will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. I will also ask you to participate in a Zoom interview that will be audio-recorded. The interview is expected to take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete.

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from participating in this study.

Benefits to society could include the advancement in our comprehension of the utilization of false narratives and misrepresentation through storytelling and its impact on societal perspectives. This enhanced understanding can influence the general population, accordingly shaping their future viewpoints and actions. By shedding light on these dynamics, this research can contribute to a more informed and discerning society, fostering critical thinking and a more thoughtful engagement with narratives in various contexts.

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation. All data and recordings collected during this study will be stored securely on a password-protected computer, often in an encrypted format, to ensure confidentiality and privacy. The storage location may vary but can include servers, cloud-based storage, or other secure sites. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your participation will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

If you choose to withdraw from the study before completing the survey, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study. If you choose to withdraw from the study after completing the survey, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

The researcher conducting this study is Michael Brown. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Carol Hepburn, at [REDACTED].

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

APPENDIX C

Recruitment Letter

ATTENTION FRIENDS: I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree in the School of Communication & The Arts at Liberty University. The study aims to understand the motivations, devices, shows/genres, duration, and social sharing habits of people who watch Over-The-Top (OTT) networks and how those factors contribute to creating a shared cultural memory of those shows within social networks. To participate, you must be 18 or older, be a resident of the United States, and currently subscribe to at least one OTT Network (Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Disney +, etc.). Participants will be asked to complete an online survey and a virtual, audio-recorded interview, which should take 45-60 minutes. Please direct message me if you want to participate and meet the study criteria. A study information document will be provided at the time of the survey.

<https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/app/catalog/projects>

APPENDIX D**Qualtrics Online Survey**

1. Are you currently subscribed to at least one OTT network? Over-the-top (OTT) networks refer to platforms that deliver video content over the Internet without the need for a traditional TV provider. OTT networks are streaming services that allow the viewer to watch TV shows, movies, and other video content on-demand, anytime and anywhere, using an internet-connected device such as a smart TV, laptop, or smartphone. Examples of OTT networks include Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+.

Yes

No

2. Which category below includes your age?

Under 18

18-20

21-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

60 r older

3. Are you a resident of the United States?

Yes

No

4. In what state or U.S. territory do you live?

Alabama

Alaska

Arizona

Arkansas

California

Colorado

Connecticut

Delaware

Florida

Georgia

Hawaii

Idaho

Illinois

Indiana

Iowa

Kansas

Kentucky

Louisiana

Maine

Maryland

Massachusetts

Michigan

Minnesota

Mississippi

Missouri

Montana

Nebraska

Nevada

New Hampshire

New Jersey

New Mexico

New York

North Carolina

North Dakota

Ohio

Oklahoma

Oregon

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

South Carolina

South Dakota

Tennessee

Texas

Utah

Vermont

Virginia

Washington

West Virginia

Wisconsin

Wyoming

American Samoa

Guam

Northern Mariana Islands

Puerto Rico

U.S. Virgin Islands

5. What is your gender?

Male

Female

Non-binary / third gender

Other (please specify)

6. What is your race?

White

Black or African-American

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Asian

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Multiple races

Mexican

Mexican American

Chicano

Puerto Rican

Cuban

Cuban American

Some other Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino group

7. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?

Employed, working 40 or more hours per week.

Employed, working 1-39 hours per week.

Not employed, looking for work.

Not employed, Not looking for work.

Retired

Disabled, not able to work.

8. Which OTT network do you use?

Netflix

HBO Max

Disney+

Hulu

Amazon Prime Video

YouTube TV

Peacock

AppleTV+

Warner Bros. Discovery

Discovery+

ESPN+

More than one

9. On which device do you mostly watch OTT networks?

Smart TV

Smartphone

Tablet

Desktop-based apps or web browsers

Apple TV

Chromecast

PlayStation

Xbox

Amazon Fire sticks

More than one

Other streaming devices (please specify)

10. Do you watch OTT networks on the go (outside your home)?

Yes

No

11. How did you find your OTT network provider?

Search engines (Google, Yahoo, etc.)

Recommended by a friend or colleague

Social media

Blog or publication

Other (please specify)

12. What factors did you consider before signing up for an OTT network?

Price

Content

They offer a trial period

Other (please specify)

13. Do you watch Over-the-air TV? Over-the-air (OTA) TV refers to television broadcasts transmitted through the airwaves and received with an antenna without the need for a cable, satellite, or internet connection.

Yes

No

14. On average, how many hours per week do you spend watching OTT networks?

0-1

2-4

5-7

8 or more hours

15. Do you consider yourself a binge-watcher (Watching anywhere between two and six episodes in one sitting)?

Yes

No

Sometimes

When I'm Bored

Other (please specify)

16. How do you discover new content on OTT networks?

Search engines (Google, Yahoo, etc.)

Recommended by a friend or colleague

Social media

Blog or publication

Other (please specify)

17. How many OTT network subscriptions do you have?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7 or more

18. Do your friends and family influence what you watch on OTT networks?

Yes

No

Sometimes

19. Do you use other platforms to share or discuss what you watch on OTT networks
(e.g. social media, forums, etc.)?

Yes

No

20. Which platforms below have you used to discuss the content you watched on
OTT Networks? (Check all that apply)

Facebook

YouTube

WhatsApp

Instagram

Twitter

FB Messenger

Telegram
TikTok
LinkedIn
Snapchat
Slack
Pinterest
Discord
ReReal
Reddit
Other (please specify)

21. Have you ever recommended an OTT network to someone else?

Yes

No

22. Have you ever used a VPN? A Virtual Private Network (VPN) is a secure and private connection between your device and the internet. When you connect to a VPN, your internet traffic is routed through an encrypted tunnel that shields your online activity from prying eyes, including your internet service provider (ISP), hackers, and government surveillance agencies.) to access content from another country on an OTT network.

Yes

No

23. How do you feel about the content selection and quality offered by your current OTT network subscription?
- Very satisfied
 - Somewhat satisfied
 - Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - Somewhat dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied
24. Do you find the amount of content available on OTT networks overwhelming or easy to navigate?
- Easy to navigate
 - Somewhat easy to navigate
 - Neither easy nor hard to navigate
 - Somewhat hard to navigate
 - Very hard to navigate
25. How important are closed captions or subtitles available to you on OTT networks?
- Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Neither essential nor not important
 - Doesn't matter

APPENDIX E

In-person Survey Questions

1. What motivates you to watch content on Over-The-Top (OTT) networks instead of traditional television or movie theaters?
2. Please share with me a recent experience where you felt particularly engaged or connected with the content you watched on an OTT network. What made it stand out?
3. How do you decide what content to watch on OTT networks? Do you rely on recommendations from friends or algorithms?
4. Have you ever discovered new content on an OTT network that you would have found through something other than traditional means (such as broadcast TV or movie theaters)? Can you describe that experience?
5. How do you typically share the content you watch on OTT networks with others? Do you use social media, word of mouth, or other methods?
6. Please share with me a time when you watched a show or movie on an OTT network with someone else. What was that experience like? Did you discuss the content as you watched or afterwards?