"Exploring adoption of Connected TV for OTT Streaming – A Synthesis of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT)"

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Abstract

The study aims to explore the factors that affect the use of Over-the-top (OTT) streaming services on Connected TVs. Customers have started using OTT streaming along with DTH (Direct to Home) and Cable Network. Connected TVs have become an essential part of Indian households due to their affordability and improved internet accessibility. The emergence of OTT streaming platforms has contributed to the increased market presence of connected TVs in India. Additionally, there has been significant development in internet infrastructure, such as broadband connectivity and the transition to 5G mobile technology, which has enabled connected TV users to access a variety of streaming content worldwide. The study also focuses on the adoption and usage of OTT streaming on Connected TV/Smart TVs, given the rising popularity of OTT content.

Keywords: Over-the-Top (OTT), Connected Television (TV), Smart Television, Fifth Generation (5G), DTH (Direct to Home)

1. Introduction

Televisions enabled with internet also allowing to access various free and paid platforms like YouTube, OTT platforms are known as Connected TV's (PC Mag). While traditional televisions were dependent on broadcasting services like cable network and DTH, Connected TVs on the other hand provides more features along with DTH (Direct to Home) and cable services. The viewing experience of customers are enhanced on Connected TVs in comparison to traditional TV's

Xiaomi, Samsung, and LG are the top three players in Indian market and 93% of the televisions sold in India are Connected TV's (ET Telecom.com March 2024). 52% of people access OTT streaming platforms on their Connected TV's (Statista Aug 2023).

Covid-19 has brought massive change in the outlook of entertainment industry, specially with preference to OTT streaming platforms. This was primarily owing to the Covid-19 lockdown and most of the industries declaring work from home options for employees due to pandemic. OTT streaming services provided customers with global content, different variety of content genres, attractive pricing options with minimum cut-off subscription starting from one month. This has helped customers to access and experience OTT platforms with disposable ample time due to lockdown. Post pandemic, the trends have been favourable for OTT streaming platforms, enabling customers to try experience multiple platforms and continue with personal preferences.

The impact of Connected TV and OTT Streaming has played an important role in OTT subscription and adoption of Connected TV for streaming services. Customers have access to OTT streaming and traditional satellite broadcasting at one place. Traditional broadcasters and OTT platforms are collaborating their offerings to customers to offer better value and pricing. This paper focusses on the adoption of customers to OTT streaming on Connected TVs. The penetration of Connected TVs in India is around 53% (Ormax Media 2023), this study aims in identifying variables driving the consumption of OTT streaming specially on Connected TV.

1.1 Overview of OTT market in India

India has currently 481 million OTT audience, achieving 13.5% growth in the year 2023 (Ormax Media Dec 2023). 102 million audience have paid subscription which includes membership of platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney Hotstar etc. Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru are cities with more than 6 million active subscription each (Financial Express Nov 2023). Post pandemic (Covid-19) there has been steady increase to the access of OTT platform and continued subscription. With global web series, shows and movies presence on multiple platforms, audience have wider choice and access to entertainment at their fingertips. Audiences' expectations from OTT streaming platforms are high and the service providers are trying to ensure that there are new content releases every week. Other factors include penetration of broadband networks due to work from home option, launch of 5G network, collaboration of DTH providers and Telecom companies offering bundle packs to consumers along with OTT subscription and the competitive pricing by the streaming companies. The young demographics are increasingly subscribing to Streaming platforms and online TV (Panda and Pandey, 2017).

This article focusses on the adoption of Connected TVs for OTT viewing. Two factors which are considered for study are the technology aspect and the gratifications arising from the streaming platforms. Given the higher penetration of OTT accessibility on mobile phones, it becomes important to identify the impact of Connected TV's on OTT viewership.

2. Technology acceptance of Connected TV for OTT streaming

India will emerge as the third largest connected tv in the world by 2024 (Financial Express Feb 2024). It is also one of the most preferred devices for OTT streaming. Currently the household penetration of Connected TVs in India is 32 million. Initially the OTT was limited to access on Mobile and Tablet devices, but given the content and expansion of audience base, it becomes crucial to understand the viewers adoption of connected TVs to OTT streaming. Technology also enables streaming on older devices through add on devices like amazon firestick and google chrome. Considering this aspect it will be important to study the adoption of streaming services on connected TVs.

2.1 Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived ease of Use (PEU)

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is one of the early research model on technology adoption and it is widely used in research for technology adoption. The model measures behavioural intentions and intentions to use technology (Scherer et al., 2019). Perceived Usefulness (PU) refers to the degree to which the individual believes that would augment his or her task. Perceived ease of Use refers to the degree which an individual believes that a particular process will be free of effort (Davis, 1989). Many prior researches have indicated positive relationship between Perceived Usefulness and Perceived ease of Use (Davis et al., 1989, Wallace and Sheetz, 2014, Niehaves and Plattfaut, 2014).

H1. Perceived ease of use will have a positive and significant impact on their perceived usefulness for watching OTT on Connected TVs

H2. Perceived ease of use will have a positive and significant impact on their intentions to use Connected TVs for OTT streaming

H3. Perceived usefulness will have a positive and significant impact on their intentions to use Connected TVs for OTT streaming

2.2 Uses and Gratification of OTT streaming on Connected TVs

Joo et al., 2018 elaborates that technology acceptance of individuals depends on their intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. TAM, however did not have variables to measure intrinsic motivations, which was introduced by Venkatesh et al. (2012) in extended UTAUT2 model. UGT assumes people engage with media for enhancing their gratification. UGT holds heuristic value and is positivistic in approach (Katz et al., 1973). UGT has been extensively used to understand the various purpose of media and understanding customers usage motivation.

UGT was also viewed as an extension of needs and motivation theory (Katz et al., 1973). UGT measures were used to understand individuals' intention to watch television program and to identify engagement of people with digital media

(Stafford et al., 2004). Many studies indicate that individual use technology for different purposes, to fulfil their social and psychological needs (Dhir et al.,). Gratifications could also result from digital media platforms and Social Networking Site (SNS) like Facebook, Twitter (presently 'X') and LinkedIn (Capriotti et al., 2020, Bevan-Dye, 2020).

Privacy refers to right to ones' personality and letting them to be alone from unwarranted publicity (Warren & Brandeis 1890). OTT streaming platforms provide multiple content genres to their audience, which makes it challenging to access the service by all members of a family. The member can create his/her profile based on his age and preference. Some of the content available are Adult (A), U/A (Under parental guidance), U (Unrestricted) to name a few. Individuals have their own preference of genres wherein the content may not be relevant for all viewers at the same time. The privacy offered in personal devices like mobile phone and tablet is higher than connected TVs since it will be open to anyone to join and watch the content.

Ritualized use refers to goal directed use of media (Emil Steiner and Kun Xu 2018) and is more habitual and used for recreation (Jihyuk Joo et al.,), this includes relaxation and companionship.

> H4. Privacy will have a positive and significant impact on their intentions to use Connected TVs for OTT streaming
> H5. Ritualized Use will have a positive and significant impact on their intentions to use Connected TVs for OTT streaming

The study assumes that respondents:

- respondents have access to OTT streaming platforms
- use connected TVs, mobile and tablets for watching OTT streaming
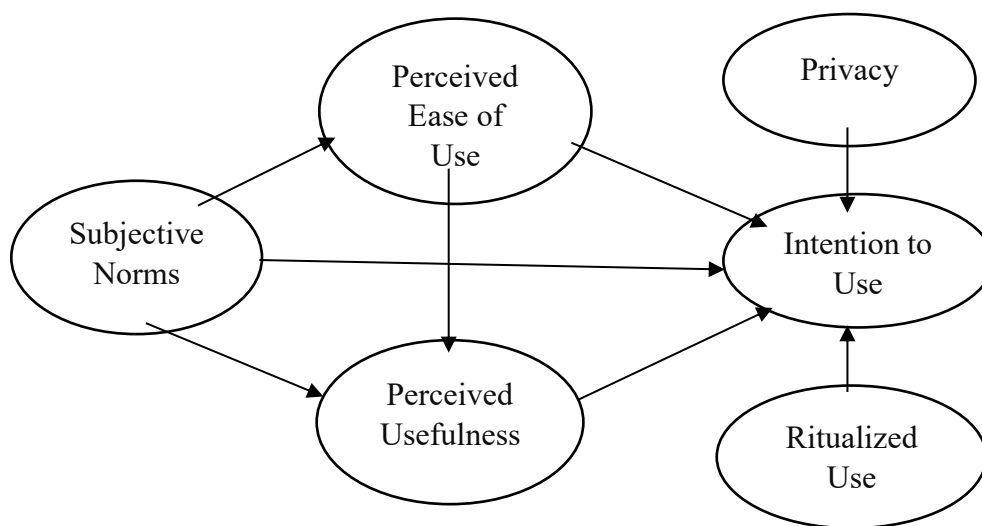- have accessed OTT platform atleast once in a month

Figure 1. Conceptual Model and Hypothesis Formulation

3. Methodology

The study was done through an online survey which was disseminated among higher education students of various autonomous colleges in Bangalore. Simple random sampling was used in the process of data collection. The targeted respondents received the survey questionnaire through google forms and was shared on the different student groups. Likert five point scale was used for survey items. The study complied will all the policies and guidelines from all the stakeholders involved.

3.1 Instrument Measures

Perceived ease of use
PEOU1 It is an easy to access the online streaming services of live or recorded programs
PEOU2 I find it easy to access online streaming services through Connected TV/Smart TV

Perceived Usefulness
PU1 Connected TVs/Smart TVs allow me to view what I want in a faster way than traditional TV subscriber services
PU2 Connected TV/Smart TV enhance my experience of online streaming platforms
PU3 I can watch online streaming services on Connected TV/Smart TV if there is a good Wi-Fi or network connection

Ritualized Use
RU1 I watch online streaming services on Connected TV/Smart TV to break the routine
RU2 I watch online streaming services on Connected TV/Smart TV in my free time
RU3 Watching online streaming services on Connected TV/Smart TV is a form of entertainment

Privacy
PR1 I have the freedom to watch my favourite content on Connected TV/Smart TV
PR2 Viewer profile on OTT streaming platform helps me to manage privacy

Intentions to use
IU1 I will continue using Connected TV/Smart TV for OTT streaming
IU2 I shall continue subscription to OTT streaming platforms

Data Analysis and Results

This study analysed the data using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) technique. This study extended TAM model in OTT context, so PLS-SEM is suitable for data analysis (Hair et al., 2017). These study analysis complex relationships between constructs with presence of mediation (Sarstedt et al., 2020) and moderation (Usakli & Rasoolimanesh, 2023). This study followed the guidelines of Hair et al. (2023) for PLS-SEM analysis. There are two major investigations involved in PLS-SEM a) measurement of items to constructs which is referred as 'Measurement Model Investigation' (MIV) and b) measurement of constructs-to-constructs relationship which is referred to 'Structural Model Investigation' (SIV). Both MIV and SIV have several steps of investigation to assess the proposed model empirically.

Measurement Model Investigation (MIV)

At first, the individual loadings for all the items are verified with value criteria above 0.5 to have good internal consistency. Second, the reliability of the items is verified with criteria of Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability value above 0.7 to prove the items are measuring exactly what is expected to measure without any deviation. Third, the validity of the constructs is measured with value criteria of i) Average Variance Extracted (AVE) above 0.5 to have good variance in constructs which is referred as 'Convergent validity', ii) Square root of AVE values of all constructs should have high unique values when cross correlated with other constructs to have uniqueness between the constructs is referred as 'Discriminant validity' formulated by Fornell & Larcker (1981), iii) the cross correlation between constructs should be less than 0.9 to have distinct and unique measurement of each constructs is referred as 'Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) discriminant validity' (Henseler et al., 2016). Refer Table 2 all the items have loadings value above 0.5, Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability above 0.7, and Average Variance Extracted values above 0.5 for all constructs indicates that the constructs of this study are reliable. Refer table 3 and table 4 all constructs are distinct to each other with low cross correlation between them indicates that the constructs of this study are distinct to each other and valid.

Structural Model Investigation (SMV)

At first, the variance inflation factor of all items and constructs are verified with value criteria less than 3.3 indicates that the items and constructs of this study are collinearity free. Second, the partial least squares algorithm technique is applied to test the hypothetical relationship between the constructs. The path coefficient of all the hypothesis using partial least squares algorithm with 5000 subsamples bootstrapping technique are analysed with 95% of confidence interval. All the hypotheses H1-H8 are significantly supported with ρ-value < 0.05 (refer Table 5). The hypothesis H1 path SJN $\rightarrow$ PUS (β=0.495 t-statistics=12.235, ρ= <0.05), H2 path SJN $\rightarrow$ PUS (β=0.376, t-statistics=7.806, ρ= <0.05), H3 path SJN $\rightarrow$ IU (β=0.52, t-statistics=11.453, ρ= <0.05), H4 path PEU $\rightarrow$ PUS (β=0.22, t-statistics=3.851, ρ= <0.05), H5 path PEU $\rightarrow$ IU (β=0.233, t-statistics=6.057, ρ= <0.05), H6 path PUS$\rightarrow$ IU (β=0.123, t-statistics=2.025, ρ= <0.05), H7 path PRV $\rightarrow$ IU (β=0.234, t-statistics=7.513, ρ= <0.05), H8 path RITU $\rightarrow$ IU (β=0.176, t-statistics=4.815, ρ= <0.05). Third, the coefficient of determination (R^2) of dependent variables are examined with value criteria's such as 0.25-0.499 (low effect), 0.50-0.7499 (medium effect) and > 0.75 (strong effect). Refer figure 2 the R^2 value of IU having R^2 = 0.684 with medium explanatory power, PEU having R^2 =0.255 with low explanatory power and PUS having R^2 = 0. 271. Fourth, the effect size (f^2) of each independent variable is verified with value criteria's such as 0.02-0.149 (small effect), 0.15-0.3499 (medium effect) and > 0.35 (strong effect). The effect size of the significant paths SJN $\rightarrow$ PUS (f^2=0.325; effect=medium), SJN $\rightarrow$ PUS (f^2=0.146; effect=low), SJN $\rightarrow$ IU (f^2=0.515; effect=strong), PEU $\rightarrow$ PUS (f^2=0.05; effect=low), PEU $\rightarrow$ IU (f^2=0.118; effect=low), PUS$\rightarrow$ IU (f^2=0.34; effect=low), PRV $\rightarrow$ IU (f^2=0.164; effect=medium), and RITU $\rightarrow$ IU (f^2=0.088; effect=low).

Table 2: The item loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted and Variance Inflation factor

Construct	Items	Item Loadings	Item Variance Inflation Factor	Construct Variance Inflation Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Intention to Use	IU1	0.936	3.245		0.889	0.932	0.82
	IU2	0.915	3.108				
	IU3	0.863	1.987				
Perceived Ease of Use	PEU1	0.832	1.786	1.454	0.843	0.906	0.762
	PUE2	0.863	1.895				
	PEU3	0.877	1.841				
Perceived Usefulness	PUS1	0.878	2.519	1.406	0.908	0.935	0.784
	PUS2	0.832	1.625				
	PUS3	0.907	2.765				
Privacy	PRV1	0.866	1.453	1.057	0.821	0.893	0.735
	PRV2	0.823	1.718				
	PRV3	0.78	1.664				
Ritualized Use	RITU1	0.894	2.89	1.103	0.772	0.863	0.678
	RITU2	0.907	2.998				
	RITU3	0.907	3.109				
	RITU4	0.831	1.967				
Subjective Norm	SJN1	0.892	1.999	1.664	0.853	0.91	0.77
	SJN2	0.843	2.039				
	SJN3	0.897	2.606				

Table 3: Fornell & Larker's (1981) discriminate validity results

Constructs	Perceived Usefulness	Perceived Ease of Use	Subjective Norm	Privacy	Ritualized Use	Intention
Perceived Usefulness	**0.885**					
Perceived Ease of Use	0.406	**0.873**				
Subjective Norm	0.484	0.495	**0.878**			
Privacy	0.169	0.204	0.17	**0.858**		
Ritualized Use	0.068	0.088	-0.18	0.036	**0.824**	
Intention	0.521	0.603	0.703	0.397	0.119	**0.905**

Table 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) discriminant validity results

Constructs	Perceived Usefulness	Perceived Ease of Use	Subjective Norm	Privacy	Ritualized Use	Intention
Perceived Usefulness						
Perceived Ease of Use	0.46					
Subjective Norm	0.542	0.57				
Privacy	0.198	0.238	0.182			
Ritualized Use	0.111	0.115	0.235	0.122		
Intention	0.576	0.694	0.784	0.459	0.137	

Table 5: The hypothesis relationship test with 5000 sub-samples with bootstrapping technique

Path relationship	Hypothesis	Beta Coefficient	T-Statistics	P-Values	F-square
Subjective Norm → Perceived Ease of Use	H1	0.495**	12.235	0	0.325
Subjective Norm → Perceived Usefulness	H2	0.376**	7.806	0	0.146
Subjective Norm → Intention	H3	0.52**	11.453	0	0.515
Perceived Ease of Use → Perceived Usefulness	H4	0.22**	3.851	0	0.05
Perceived Ease of Use → Intention	H5	0.233**	6.057	0	0.118
Perceived Usefulness →Intention	H6	0.123**	2.925	0.004	0.034
Privacy → Intention	H7	0.234**	7.513	0	0.164
Ritualized Use → Intention	H8	0.176**	4.815	0	0.088

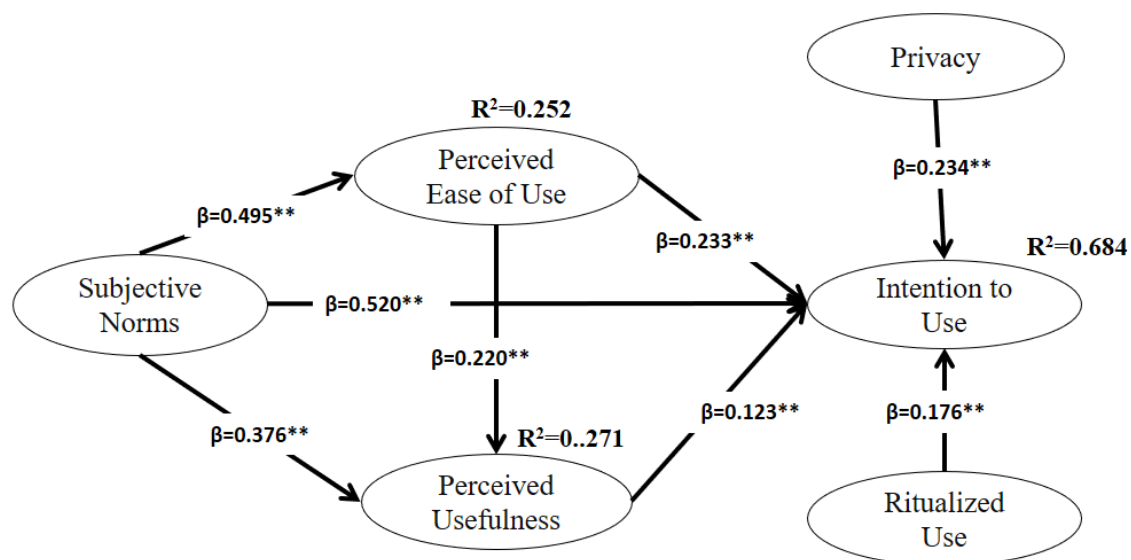Note: ** significant at 95% with ρ-value < 0.05

Figure 2. PLS-SEM output

Mediation analysis:

The mediation analysis becomes necessary when the third variables intervene between the two variables. The mediation effect takes place when the presence of third variables disrupts the relationship between two directly related constructs. In this study the PEU and PUS variables are mediating between SJN and IU. Refer figure 3 shows this study has multiple mediation model. This study followed guidelines of Zhao, Lynch, and Chen (2010) for mediation analysis. There are two mediating variables PEU (M1) and PU (M2). The PEU (M1) act as a mediator between two paths SJN→PUS and SJN →IU. The PUS (M2) act as a mediator between two paths SJN→IU and PEU→IU. According to guidelines of Zhao et al (2010) for mediation analysis the paths coefficient of i) a1, a2, and a3, ii) a4, a5, and a3, iii) a1, a3, and a4 and iv) a6, a5 and a2 were analysed using 10000 bootstrapping subsamples with 95% of confidence interval. Refer table 6 and 7 shows all the paths are significant with p-values <0.05. There is a presence of partial mediation with all paths being positively significant.
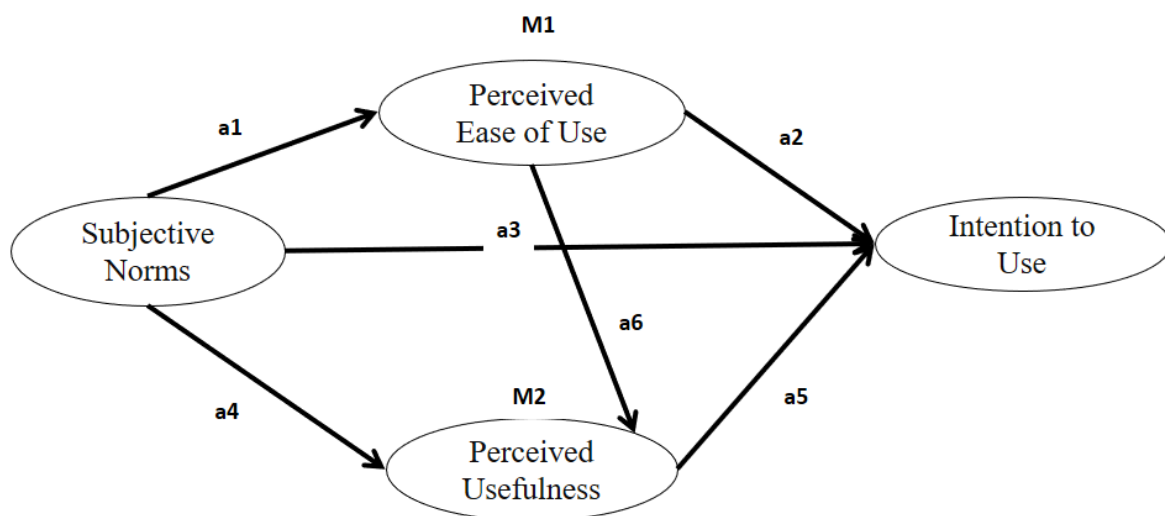

Figure 3. Multiple mediation model

Table 6 Specific indirect effect

Path relationships	Path	Beta	t-statistics	P Values
Subjective Norm -> Perceived Ease of Use -> Intention	a1,a2,a3	0.114	5.448	0
Perceived Ease of Use -> Perceived Usefulness -> Intention	a1,a2,a3	0.029	2.06	0.04
Subjective Norm -> Perceived Ease of Use -> Perceived Usefulness -> Intention	a1,a2,a3	0.014	2.039	0.042
Subjective Norm -> Perceived Usefulness -> Intention		0.047	2.689	0.007
Subjective Norm -> Perceived Ease of Use -> Perceived Usefulness		0.112	3.699	0

Table 7 Total indirect effect

Path relationships	Paths	Beta	t-statistics	P Values
Perceived Ease of Use -> Intention	a6, a5	0.029	2.06	0.04
Subjective Norm -> Intention	a1, a2	0.174	5.95	0
Subjective Norm -> Perceived Usefulness	a1, a6	0.112	3.699	0

Discussion:

The findings in the study explains that Subjective Norm (SJN), Perceived Usefulness (PUS), Perceived Ease of Use (PEU), Privacy (PRV) and Ritualized Use (RITU) impacts significantly impacts towards adoption of Smart TV in watching OTT streaming services.

This study concludes the variables SJN, PUS, PEU, PRV and RITU are significant towards OTT adoption. The path relationship such as SJN → PUS, SJN → PUS, SJN → IU, PEU → PUS, PEU → IU, PUS→ IU, PRV → IU, and RITU → IU is also significant which indicates strong predictive power of proposed model. The variables like PUS and PEU are mediating partially between SJN and IU.

Limitations and future directions

This study has attempted to understand the scope of OTT streaming through smart TVs. There are few limitations which can be addressed in future studies. Detailed study can be carried out to understand the impact of OTT streaming genres available to users like. User behaviour can be further understood in terms of the duration and purpose of streaming. Comparative analysis can be carried out to measure the relationship between Pay TV and OTT streaming. Rating of content like A, U/A, U, PG etc. can be explored as many of the streaming are providing log in credentials under adult and kids.

Conclusion:

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the adoption of Connected TVs for OTT streaming services, combining insights from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT). The research confirms that factors such as Subjective Norms (SJN), Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEU), Privacy (PRV), and Ritualized Use (RITU) significantly influence users' intentions to adopt Connected TVs for streaming. The study also highlights the mediating roles of PEU and PU in the relationship between SJN and Intention to Use (IU), emphasizing the importance of both external influences and intrinsic motivations. The structural equation modeling reveals strong predictive power, particularly in the paths connecting subjective norms to user intentions. Additionally, the findings underline the critical role of privacy and personalized content in fostering user engagement on shared devices like Connected TVs. These results suggest that the rapid penetration of Connected TVs in India, coupled with the integration of 5G and broadband infrastructure, has positioned these devices as central hubs for OTT consumption. This study not only enriches the

understanding of technological adoption in entertainment but also offers valuable insights for stakeholders in tailoring user-centric strategies to enhance the adoption and sustained use of Connected TVs for OTT streaming.

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