



Economic sustainability of the Indian OTT industry: Opportunities and challenges

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Abstract

Over the past 20 years, there has been an important change in how material is accessed, and as technology keeps improving in practically every field, this transition is also apparent in the popularity of media and entertainment services. Instead of sticking to the more conventional forms of media, people now choose Over-The-Top, or OTT, platforms that enable them to watch the material of their choosing online. The industry of entertainment is benefiting as consumers become willing to spend more and more to customize their streaming service at their convenience. Consumers in the entertainment sector accept OTT platforms in big numbers. The Indian OTT industry continued to grow quickly because of growing smartphone usage, especially among young people and adolescents, an increase in technologically advanced devices, more affordable internet plans, top-notch content, and an expanding urban population. This is a conceptual research paper that focuses on the censorship among streaming services which affects the culture of the societies.

Keywords: OTT, binge watch, sustainability, smart cities, VODs

Introduction

The acronym "OTT" (over the top) is on the rise in popularity as well as interest when considering the availability of the most modern video content on different kinds of media in the modern digital age. For the younger age group, where the preference for internet-based media consumption is well understood, this is particularly pertinent. Those days of the entire family gathering in front of the television in the late hours to watch timeless creations like *The Ramayana* & *The Mahabharata* are long gone. The launch of 5G connectivity and ongoing advancements in the IT sector have enhanced the future possibilities for the OTT platform. Customers are thus going to get greater assistance in this industry. The most significant viewership for OTT service providers is anticipated to be made up of young consumers, who are no longer digital natives and lack the patience to wait for films, TV episodes, etc. to air. Similarly to how people would prepare the masala-daar, immediate, and ready-to-eat Maggi noodles, they are eager to see what's inside. In India, users have a choice of a large variety of multimedia streaming apps that allow the release of web content. The modern trend of binge viewing has expanded more widely as an outcome of OTT providers. A large proportion of consumers in the industry of entertainment choose OTT platforms. Due to higher Smartphone usage, particularly among adolescents and young people, a rising number of smart devices, more inexpensive internet plans, superior content, and a growing population living in urban areas, the Indian OTT market continued to develop swiftly.

Smart along with sustainable cities are those that are creative and forward-thinking and employ information and communication technology (ICTs) as well as additional assets to improve the general happiness of its residents. By using various innovations and instruments, the city seeks to increase efficiency, enhance the effectiveness of governmental operations and amenities, and ultimately raise its standards of living for its residents. The city additionally ensures that it keeps evolving to suit its citizens' various

needs in terms of finances, social life, culture, and environmental sustainability for decades to come. The UNECE's idea of developing environmentally conscious, people-smart communities seeks to reconsider what it takes to be smart in the context of urban development. It stresses the need to develop surroundings that enhance cities' capabilities, with particular emphasis on sustainability. The goal is to achieve this by establishing an equal society and improving everyone's standard living conditions that live in communities. This involves addressing social needs, closing economic as well as capacity gaps, and encouraging creative environments in cities. Growth in information and communication technologies during the first decade of the 21st century has left a significant impact on how people live. These innovations in technology can completely impact not only our everyday lives but also sustainable development.

Numerous aspects of environmental sustainability depend on ICTs. One of the biggest goals they have is to promote networking and international communication, enabling experts to collaborate with others from all over the globe without requiring them to leave their residences. This capacity is particularly essential since it ensures that expertise and abilities may be transferred to individuals who may not have been able to obtain them because of a lack of ICTs. The creation of several innovations, such as web conferencing, that allow students from different socioeconomic groups to learn without the expense of paying for travel expenses, has also changed the landscape of education as a result of ICTs.

This advancement has significantly contributed to inclusive education since people with disabilities can use ICTs to engage in communication and schooling that might not be readily accessible in the communities where they live. Furthermore, ICTs have helped foster sustainable development by promoting international company connections and e-commerce. Such connections could stimulate economic expansion and create novel job opportunities.

Economic Reductions and Performance Gains:

Telecommunications apps have altered how customers and companies interact with vendors and partners, leading to considerable cost savings & and increased productivity. Communication has become simple and fast thanks to these effective technologies, which remove the need for tedious and costly old methods. Additionally, the proliferation of web searches has opened up enormous information repositories that were never before accessible without significant time and capital investments. The knowledge sector's businesses have gained the greatest advantage from this because they can get important information quickly without spending a lot of disposable income on research. Additionally, as a direct consequence of the proliferation of streaming services, the resources needed to produce actual media have recently drastically lowered. Businesses can leverage streaming platforms more frequently to distribute their products than to spend money on costly advertisement media.

Growing markets and prospective customers: The use of digital methods of interacting and exchanging information has changed how organizations function by allowing them to reach out to markets that are emerging and clients who had previously been out of reach. Such platforms have successfully eliminated regional barriers, enabling enterprises to interact with worldwide consumers and broaden the number of customers they serve outside of their home regions. Due to this greater accessibility to a broader audience, businesses are now given new opportunities to create additional cash streams and unlock latent potential. Additionally, some internet chat software, have gone so far as adding a payment feature. The way small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) do trade has been completely reshaped by this groundbreaking invention. They are now more prepared to conduct commerce with customers across the world. In conclusion, the use of electronic messages and exchanges has shifted how exchanges are conducted and extended the reach of enterprises by connecting them with fresh markets and customers. Additionally, millions of customers in developing nations who are currently shut out of traditional monetary services stand to benefit tremendously from the availability of other means of payment on Internet platforms.

Domestic and international funding: One of the biggest sources of support for localized creative sectors in multiple nations is the significant financial commitments made by national as well as foreign businesses, particularly in the quickly increasing VOD industry. Businesses that run VOD services, invest an immense amount of money—millions or even trillions of dollars—to produce material in languages other than English in a variety of nations. The robust monetary support provided by these companies serves as essential for promoting the continued growth and success of the local artistic sector.

Emergency and disaster response: The efficacy of these services in regions affected by disasters is heavily dependent on technological advances in communication. They serve as vital resources for organizing charitable efforts in such challenging circumstances. In addition, it

appears that these platforms have proven especially helpful for people living in dictatorial systems, offering them an outlet to express themselves and express their thoughts.

The control or restriction of content accessible through OTT (Over-The-Top) platforms is commonly referred to as censorship. OTT platforms are web-based video streaming services that distribute content without using cable providers or conventional television networks.

Both censorship as well as sustainability are important issues with potential impacts on society, the freedom of speech, and the environment. They are two distinct yet linked instances.

Censorship and the Freedom of Expression: Censorship is the act of restricting or limiting the free flow of ideas, information, or artistic production by institutions of authority, groups, or people. It may appear in a variety of ways, as well as corporate, self-, and censorship by governments.

The right to freedom of expression gives individuals the freedom to express their thoughts, opinions, and creativity without fearing being censored or facing any penalty. In democratic societies, it is frequently protected by regulation.

Environmental Censorship: it is the suppression of knowledge about issues with the environment such as waste, deforestation, or warming temperatures by governments. Economic goals, political objectives, or concerns about public opinion can all serve as reasons for this repression.

Media and Sustainability: An independent, open media is essential for educating the public regarding the problems along with sustainability solutions. Concerns about the environment, climate change, and company sustainability initiatives are all issues that journalists look into and report on.

Online activism and digital censorship: In the age of technology, social media and online platforms have grown into effective tools for lobbying and raising consciousness about ecological and sustainability concerns.

On OTT platforms, censorship can occur in various shapes and be motivated by a variety of things, including laws, cultural values, and the service's policies. Over-the-top (OTT) platform censorship in its primary forms is as follows:

1. Governmental Rules: The material that can be transmitted via OTT platforms is limited by restrictions in several countries. Inappropriate language, hate speech, assault, and political material may be protected under these rules. Governments may have the power to censor or delete information that violates these laws, and they might additionally require platforms to seek licenses or permissions for them to operate.

2. Content Ratings: To let viewers know whether shows and films are suitable for certain age groups, several OTT platforms implement content rating systems. This aids in allowing parents and viewers to arrive at educated viewing decisions.

3. **Self-Censorship:** OTT platforms frequently establish their own set of rules and restrictions concerning content. They can self-censor information to adhere to local laws or to uphold an organization's specific reputation. This may entail changing speech, adding material warnings, or editing or eliminating particular sections.
4. **Geo-blocking:** Because of licensing agreements or content laws, certain items may be restricted in some areas. This implies that different users may not have the opportunity to view the same content depending on their location.
5. **User-generated material:** It is also allowed on some OTT sites. These platforms frequently contain regulations and techniques to filter and limit information that violates their rules, such as hate speech or material that is copyrighted.
6. **Disagreements:** OTT platforms' censorship conclusions might give rise to disputes. They may get controversy for deleting or changing information since it may be perceived as restricting free speech or creative expression. It is constantly difficult to strike a balance between the necessity to safeguard against dangerous knowledge and the need for free speech.

It's crucial to remember that the degree of restriction on OTT platforms differs across platforms as well as among nations. According to societal, legal, and cultural norms, what is considered appropriate or offensive material can also vary substantially. As authorities, platforms, and society struggle with issues such as freedom of speech, diversity in culture, and the impact of technology on media consumption, the relationship between censorship & OTT platforms continues to change. The problem of censoring is difficult and controversial and it has a complicated link to sustainability. While there are some limited advantages to censorship in particular instances, it frequently presents serious legal, moral, and human rights issues.

It's critical to handle this subject delicately and take into consideration both points of view.

1. **Preventing Misinformation:** Censorship may be used to stop the spread of inaccurate information that might harm the environment or the health of everyone. Censoring incorrect data, for instance, regarding the environment or the safety of specific items, could help in averting ecological and health problems.
2. **Protecting Vulnerable Ecosystems:** In certain instances, governments can limit the release of information regarding the location of ecosystems that are at risk or under preservation to stop environmentally damaging operations like poaching, mining, or logging.
3. **National Security:** When there is a danger to national security, such as during a war or in the case of an enormous environmental disaster, censorship may be warranted. Limiting the dissemination of specific data

can aid in upholding law and order and safeguarding individuals in such situations.

The limitations and possible adverse consequences of censorship must be understood, nonetheless, from the perspective of sustainability:

1. **Access to Information and Freedom of Expression:** Censorship frequently undermines basic human rights, such as access to knowledge and the liberty of expression. Limiting these rights could impede the creation of sustainable solutions and policies by obstructing political and public conversation.
2. **Abuse of Power:** Those in situations of authority can readily employ suppression to stifle opposition, sway public sentiment, or hide their crimes. Such abuse of censorship may hinder accountability and openness, which can damage sustainability.
3. **Innovation & Progress:** Innovation and scientific advancement, which are essential for tackling sustainability concerns, depend on an uninterrupted flow of information and a variety of perspectives. By limiting speech, censorship may hinder innovation.
4. **Economic Impact:** Censorship may have a detrimental effect on the economy by discouraging foreign investment, hindering the development of the media and technology sectors, and decreasing the scope for global cooperation on sustainability efforts.

In conclusion, censorship must be used responsibly and transparently to prevent violating fundamental rights and innovation, even though it can sometimes be justified in certain situations to safeguard the surroundings or the well-being of the people. Alternative strategies, including fact-checking, boosting media literacy, and encouraging open discussion, tend to be more in line with the ideas of sustainability while maintaining individual rights.

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