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Changing Entertainment Consumption Patterns: Audience Preferences for Movie Theatres and OTT Platforms in the Post-Pandemic Period

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Abstract - The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed entertainment consumption, resulting in a gradual shift from traditional movie theatres to Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms. This study, titled "Changing Entertainment Consumption Patterns: A Study of Audience Preferences for Movie Theatres and OTT Platforms," examines changing audience preferences and consumption patterns in the evolving entertainment landscape. OTT platforms have gained popularity by providing convenient, affordable, flexible, and personalized access to movies, web series, and other digital content. The availability of high-speed internet, smartphones, smart televisions, and diverse subscription models has further accelerated this transition. The COVID-19 pandemic also acted as an important catalyst by restricting theatre access and encouraging greater adoption of digital entertainment.

The study explored key factors influencing OTT preferences, including convenience, cost, content variety, accessibility, personalized viewing, and on-demand consumption. Particular attention is given to Generation Z, Generation X, and millennials, whose familiarity with digital technologies has contributed to changing entertainment habits. However, movie theatres continue to retain their appeal through immersive audio-visual experiences, social interaction, and a distinctive cinematic atmosphere. The study examines whether OTT platforms are replacing traditional theatres or contributing to their coexistence. A sample of 102 respondents was selected using convenience sampling. The questionnaire covered convenience, cost, content quality, theatrical experience, behavioural changes, and external influences. Data were analysed using percentage analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to identify trends, relationships, and significant factors influencing the shift from traditional cinema to OTT platforms.

Keywords: OTT Platforms, Movie Theatres, Entertainment Consumption, Audience Preferences, Digital Streaming.

1. INTRODUCTION

The way audiences obtain audio-visual stories has changed considerably over the past decade. For much of the twentieth century the cinema hall was the principal place where films were encountered: a scheduled, communal event built around a large screen and a shared atmosphere. Internet-distributed television has loosened each of those conditions. Subscription video-on-demand services, usually grouped under the label Over-The-Top (OTT), deliver films and series directly to phones, laptops and smart televisions, and let the viewer choose the title, the time and the place (Lotz, 2017; Jenner, 2018). In India, cheaper mobile data, wider smartphone ownership and a growing catalogue of regional-language originals have made this model accessible to a very large audience.

The COVID-19 pandemic intensified the change. Closure of cinemas and restrictions on public gatherings pushed many households to try streaming for the first time, and evidence from India and elsewhere points to a marked increase in OTT use during lockdown periods (Gupta & Singharia, 2021; Yaqoub et al., 2022). Once theatres reopened, an obvious question remained: did audiences return, or did the temporary substitute become a lasting habit?

Public discussion often frames the issue as a contest in which streaming displaces cinema. The scholarly record is less one-sided. Cinema offers things that are hard to reproduce at home, such as scale, sound, the occasion of a new release and the company of other viewers, while OTT offers control, variety and lower marginal cost. Whether audiences treat these as rival or complementary

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goods is an empirical question, and one that matters to exhibitors setting prices and formats, to producers deciding on release windows, and to platforms competing for subscriptions.

This study examines how audiences weigh movie theatres against OTT streaming platforms and whether the two media compete or coexist in an increasingly digital entertainment market. It contributes in three ways. It measures evaluations of both media within the same respondents rather than asking for a single stated preference; it links perceived convenience, cost and accessibility statistically to OTT preference in a post-pandemic sample; and it reports an exploratory comparison of age groups, with its limits stated explicitly. The paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 reviews the literature and identifies the research gap, Section 3 sets out objectives and hypotheses, Section 4 describes the method, Section 5 reports results, and Sections 6 to 8 discuss, qualify and conclude.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical lens

Three established frameworks help explain why audiences move between media. Uses and gratifications theory holds that people select media to satisfy particular needs, such as entertainment, escape, social interaction and information (Katz et al., 1973). Applied here, OTT platforms gratify needs for control and variety, whereas theatres gratify needs for occasion and sociability. Technology acceptance research proposes that adoption depends on perceived usefulness and ease of use (Davis, 1989), and the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology adds social influence and facilitating conditions (Venkatesh et al., 2003). These lenses suggest the constructs measured in this study: convenience and accessibility (ease and facilitating conditions), cost (perceived value), content variety (gratification) and external influence (social and contextual conditions).

2.2 Growth of OTT and the role of convenience, cost and content

Studies of the Indian market consistently relate OTT growth to affordability, convenience and breadth of content. Johnson (2022) describes OTT services as internet-based platforms that let users watch what they want at any time, links their expansion to smartphone penetration and inexpensive data, and notes that variety, price and convenience shape adoption. Deb (2022), studying urban viewers in Kolkata after the pandemic, reports that OTT services appeal because of low cost, ease of access and a wide range of content, and that they are especially attractive to binge-watching audiences. Sheikh et al. (n.d.) reach a similar conclusion for Generation Z viewers of Bollywood films in Ahmedabad, adding that personalised, on-demand content matches the preferences of younger viewers and that a cinema visit carries costs beyond the ticket. Internationally, Okumuş (2022) argues that platforms such as Netflix and Disney+ have changed viewing habits in Turkey by giving users control over what, when and how they watch, in contrast to the fixed schedules of television and cinema, and that investment in original and local content has sharpened competition for attention.

2.3 The pandemic as an accelerator

The pandemic features in nearly every recent account of OTT adoption. Gupta and Singharia (2021) analyse streaming consumption during the Indian lockdown, and Yaqoub et al. (2022) examine the cinema industry and OTT platforms in China, distinguishing push factors (health concerns, mobility restrictions, rising ticket prices) from pull factors (convenience, flexibility, personalised viewing). Okumuş (2022) records the combination of falling cinema revenue and rising digital subscriptions. A recurring limitation, however, is that these studies capture a period in which cinema access was restricted. Deb (2022) therefore raises, and leaves open, the issue of whether the shift is lasting or situational.

2.4 What cinema still offers

The same literature rarely concludes that theatres are obsolete. Deb (2022) and Sheikh et al. (n.d.) both emphasise sound quality, atmosphere and the social, immersive character of cinema, qualities that home viewing does not fully replicate. Yaqoub et al. (2022) describe a competitive yet coexisting relationship between cinema and OTT. Basu et al. (2022) approach the question from the opposite side, examining how immersive technology might bring cinema-like engagement to OTT viewing, and observe that consumer satisfaction depends on expectations formed through earlier theatre experiences. Earlier work on film distribution had already shown that the sequencing of channels matters commercially (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2007), which anticipates today's debates on release windows.

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2.5 Audience segments

Younger viewers are widely identified as the main drivers of OTT adoption, owing to their comfort with digital and mobile technologies (Yaqoub et al., 2022; Sheikh et al., n.d.). Johnson (2022) reports gender-related differences in content choice and consumption patterns, although the findings are mixed. The evidence on segments therefore remains inconclusive and largely descriptive.

2.6 Research gap

Four gaps emerge from this review. First, much of the evidence treats OTT and cinema as alternatives and measures preference for one of them, rather than measuring evaluations of both within the same respondents. Second, the permanence of the pandemic-era shift is asserted more often than tested. Third, the demand-side drivers (convenience, cost, accessibility) are seldom linked statistically to stated OTT preference in post-pandemic samples. Fourth, studies from the Indian context that jointly examine behaviour change, perceived drivers and the continuing value of theatres remain limited. The present study addresses these gaps with a single instrument that records perceptions of both media and uses paired and relational tests to examine them.

3. OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

3.1 Objectives

1. To examine how perceptions of convenience, cost and content availability shape audience preference between movie theatres and OTT platforms.
2. To assess changes in theatre attendance, viewing frequency and overall consumption behaviour associated with OTT adoption.
3. To evaluate the factors associated with OTT adoption, including technological accessibility, lifestyle change and the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. To compare respondents' evaluations of OTT-related and theatre-related factors and to examine the relationship between them, so as to establish whether the two media are perceived as substitutes or as complements.

3.2 Hypotheses

The hypotheses follow from the review. If the media are valued for different gratifications (Katz et al., 1973), respondents' evaluations of the two should differ rather than coincide (H1). If OTT adoption displaces cinema-going, it should show up in reported attendance and viewing behaviour (H2). If acceptance theories apply (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003), perceived convenience, cost and accessibility should explain stated OTT preference (H3).

- **$H1_0$:** There is no significant difference between respondents' evaluations of OTT-related factors and theatre-related factors.
- **$H1_a$:** There is a significant difference between respondents' evaluations of OTT-related factors and theatre-related factors.
- **$H2_0$:** OTT adoption has no significant association with theatre attendance and viewing behaviour.
- **$H2_a$:** OTT adoption has a significant association with theatre attendance and viewing behaviour.
- **$H3_0$:** Convenience, cost and accessibility do not significantly explain OTT preference.
- **$H3_a$:** Convenience, cost and accessibility significantly explain OTT preference.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Design

A descriptive and analytical cross-sectional design was adopted. Primary data were gathered through a structured, 22-item Likert-scale questionnaire administered online to 102 respondents selected by convenience sampling. The instrument covered convenience, cost, content quality, theatrical experience, behavioural change and external influences. Analysis combined percentage analysis, composite descriptive statistics, a paired-samples t-test, Pearson correlation, multiple-factor regression and Cronbach's alpha.

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4.2 Population, sample and data collection

The target population comprises audiences who watch films both in theatres and on OTT platforms. Data were collected through an online form in early April 2026 from 102 respondents using convenience sampling, which is practical when a sampling frame is unavailable and is common in exploratory consumer research, although it limits generalisation (Etikan et al., 2016). Place of residence was not recorded, so the urban or metropolitan character of the sample cannot be confirmed. All questionnaire items other than contact number were compulsory, so the scale items contain no missing values. The sample size is adequate for the bivariate and single-predictor analyses reported here but modest for subgroup comparison. The respondent profile and an exploratory age-group comparison are reported in Section 5.8.

4.3 Instrument

The questionnaire opened with items on gender, age group, occupation, viewing frequency and preferred theatre language, followed by 22 statements. The statements were written by the authors to operationalise the constructs identified in Section 2.1 and are listed in full in the Appendix. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932; 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), where higher scores indicate stronger agreement. Items were grouped into three composites: OTT-related factors (11 items covering convenience, cost, content variety, streaming quality and accessibility), theatre-related factors (4 items covering new-release preference, experience, social value and engagement) and shift or transition indicators (7 items covering changes in frequency, multi-platform subscription, pandemic influence and future intention). Items on the share of respondents holding a view were summarised as percentage agreement, defined as the proportion answering Agree or Strongly Agree. Content validity rests on the mapping to the literature; no separate pilot test or factor analysis is reported.

4.4 Reliability

Internal consistency was assessed with Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951), with values of 0.70 or above conventionally regarded as acceptable (Nunnally, 1978). Because alpha is sensitive to the number of items and does not establish unidimensionality (Taber, 2018), it is interpreted with caution.

4.5 Analytical techniques

Percentage analysis described the distribution of agreement. Composite means and standard deviations summarised each construct. A paired-samples t-test compared OTT-related and theatre-related composites for the same respondents (H1); composite scores formed from Likert items are treated as approximately interval, which is common practice and generally robust for samples of this size (Norman, 2010). Pearson's correlation examined the association between the two composites. Multiple-factor regression, with convenience, cost and accessibility as predictors, estimated the variance in OTT preference explained (H3). H2 is assessed descriptively using the behavioural indicators in Table 2. Statistical significance was assessed at the 5% level. Effect sizes were interpreted against the conventions of Cohen (1988); the paired effect size is reported as $d_z = t/\sqrt{n}$ (Lakens, 2013). For the age-group comparison, Mann–Whitney U tests (Mann & Whitney, 1947) were used, with the rank-biserial correlation as effect size (Kerby, 2014).

5. RESULTS

5.1 Perceptions of convenience, cost, content and theatre experience

Table 1. Percentage agreement on key dimensions (n = 102)

Dimension	Statement (as worded in the questionnaire, abridged)	Agreement (%)
Convenience	OTT platforms are more suitable than visiting movie theatres	68
Convenience	OTT platforms save time compared to visiting theatres	64
Convenience	Watching movies at home provides more comfort than theatres	66
Cost	Cost of watching on OTT is lower than going to theatres	71
Cost	Theatre ticket prices are too high	69

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Dimension	Statement (as worded in the questionnaire, abridged)	Agreement (%)
Cost	OTT subscriptions provide good value for money	65
Content	OTT offers a more diverse selection of content than theatres	63
Content	Satisfied with the streaming quality of OTT platforms	60
Content	Prefer watching newly released movies in theatres	52
Theatre experience	Theatre experience is still unmatched	62
Theatre experience	Theatres feel more deeply engaging than home viewing	61
Theatre experience	Social factors (friends/family outings) influence theatre-going	58

Note: Agreement = Agree or Strongly Agree. Four of the 22 items (internet reach, overall OTT preference, content quality, and "theatres becoming less important") are used in the composites but are not shown here.

Convenience and cost drew the strongest support for OTT, with agreement between 64% and 71%. Content variety (63%) and streaming quality (60%) were also rated favourably. At the same time, 52% still preferred theatres for new releases, and clear majorities regarded the theatre experience as unmatched (62%) and more deeply engaging than home viewing (61%). Perceptions of cost should be read as perceived rather than actual expenditure.

5.2 Behavioural change and the pandemic

Table 2. Behavioural change and pandemic influence (n = 102)

Indicator	Agreement (%)
I visit movie theatres less frequently than before	67
I watch movies more frequently now because of OTT platforms	70
I subscribe to multiple OTT platforms regularly	59
The COVID-19 pandemic influenced my shift towards OTT platforms	65
OTT platforms are the future of entertainment consumption	68
I would continue using OTT platforms even if theatre experiences improve	63

Behavioural indicators point to expanded consumption and reduced theatre frequency. Nearly two-thirds attributed part of their shift to the pandemic, and a similar share said they would keep using OTT even if theatre experiences improved, which suggests that the habit has persisted beyond the circumstances that triggered it. These are self-reported perceptions and intentions and do not by themselves show permanence.

5.3 Reliability and descriptive statistics

The 22-item instrument achieved Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.921$, indicating high internal consistency. Because a single overall alpha does not show that all items measure one construct, subscale reliabilities are recommended for future work.

Table 3. Composite descriptive statistics (n = 102)

Composite	Items	Mean	SD
OTT-related factors	11	3.41	0.77
Theatre-related factors	4	3.78	0.81
Shift/transition indicators	7	3.35	0.77

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All three composites lie above the scale midpoint of 3.00, indicating general agreement. Theatre-related factors recorded the highest mean, followed by OTT-related factors and shift indicators.

5.4 Paired-samples t-test (H1)

Table 4. Paired-samples t-test: OTT-related vs theatre-related composites

Statistic	Value
Mean difference (OTT − Theatre)	−0.37
t	−4.169
Degrees of freedom	101
p (two-tailed)	< 0.001 (0.0000647)
Effect size ($d_z = t/\sqrt{n}$)	−0.41

The difference is statistically significant, so $H1_0$ is rejected. The negative sign indicates that respondents rated theatre-related factors higher than OTT-related factors, with a small-to-moderate effect size. The result establishes a difference between the two evaluations and its direction; it does not show that OTT is preferred. It also assumes that the two composites are measured on comparable scales and that the items are consistently coded.

5.5 Correlation between OTT and theatre evaluations

The Pearson correlation between OTT-related and theatre-related composites was positive and significant ($r = 0.347$, $p < 0.001$), a medium association by Cohen's (1988) conventions that shares roughly 12% of variance ($r^2 \approx 0.12$). Respondents who rated OTT attributes highly also tended to rate theatre attributes highly. Had the media been perceived as pure substitutes, a negative or null association would be expected. Correlation does not imply causation.

5.6 Regression analysis (H3)

Table 5. Regression of OTT preference on convenience, cost and accessibility

Statistic	Value
R^2	0.27
Model significance	p < 0.001
Intercept	1.35
Coefficient (combined predictor)	0.68

The fitted model is: OTT Preference = 1.35 + 0.68 (Convenience + Cost + Accessibility).

The model is significant and explains 27% of the variance in OTT preference, which rejects $H3_0$. The positive coefficient shows that higher combined scores for convenience, cost and accessibility are associated with stronger OTT preference. Because the predictors enter as a combined index, the model does not separate their individual contributions, and 73% of the variance remains unexplained, indicating that other influences such as content taste, peer influence and device ownership also matter.

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5.7 Summary of hypothesis testing

Table 6. Hypothesis outcomes

Hypothesis	Evidence	Decision
H1	$t(101) = -4.169$, $p < 0.001$; theatre composite higher	$H1_0$ rejected; difference significant, favouring theatre-related factors
H2	Majorities report fewer theatre visits (67%) and more frequent viewing (70%)	Supported descriptively; an inferential test was not reported
H3	$R^2 = 0.27$, $p < 0.001$	$H3_0$ rejected

5.8 Respondent profile and age-group comparison

Table 7. Respondent profile (n = 102)

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	60	58.8
Gender	Female	42	41.2
Age group	Below 18	3	2.9
Age group	18–30	85	83.3
Age group	30–40	8	7.8
Age group	40–50	3	2.9
Age group	Above 50	3	2.9
Viewing frequency	Daily	20	19.6
Viewing frequency	Weekly	47	46.1
Viewing frequency	Occasionally	24	23.5
Viewing frequency	Rarely	11	10.8
Preferred theatre language	Hindi	26	25.5
Preferred theatre language	English	26	25.5
Preferred theatre language	Kannada	24	23.5
Preferred theatre language	Telugu	15	14.7
Preferred theatre language	Tamil	8	7.8
Preferred theatre language	Malayalam	3	2.9

Table 7 profiles the 102 respondents. Men made up 58.8% of the sample and women 41.2%. The sample is strongly concentrated in the younger bands: 85 respondents (83.3%) were aged 18–30, 8 (7.8%) were aged 30–40, and the remaining nine were below 18 (n = 3), 40–50 (n = 3) or above 50 (n = 3). Of the sample, 81 respondents (79.4%) described themselves as students. Nearly two-thirds (65.7%) watched films daily or weekly.

Because every group other than 18–30 is small, the age bands were collapsed for inference into 18–30 (n = 85) and above 30 (30–40, 40–50 and above 50 combined; n = 14). The three respondents below 18 are reported descriptively only. The questionnaire recorded age in bands, not in generational cohorts, so the comparison refers to age groups and not to Generation Z, millennials or Generation X. Composite scores for the two groups were compared with Mann–Whitney U tests, which do not assume normality and suit unequal and small groups (Table 8).

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Table 8. Composite scores by age group (Mann–Whitney U compares 18–30 with above 30)

Composite	Below 18 (n = 3) M (SD)	18–30 (n = 85) M (SD)	Above 30 (n = 14) M (SD)	U	p
OTT-related factors	3.27 (1.19)	3.38 (0.72)	3.63 (0.94)	430.5	0.099
Theatre-related factors	4.00 (1.09)	3.76 (0.82)	3.91 (0.76)	537.5	0.564
Shift/transition indicators	3.29 (1.03)	3.27 (0.75)	3.80 (0.75)	354.0	0.015

Respondents aged 18–30 and those above 30 did not differ significantly in their evaluations of OTT-related factors ($p = 0.099$) or theatre-related factors ($p = 0.564$). The groups did differ on the shift or transition indicators: respondents above 30 reported a larger shift towards OTT ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 0.75$) than those aged 18–30 ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.75$), $U = 354$, $p = 0.015$, rank-biserial $r = 0.41$. This result does not support the view that only the youngest viewers have moved to OTT, but it should be read cautiously. The above-30 group is small and heterogeneous, three tests were run without formal correction ($p = 0.015$ is just below a Bonferroni-adjusted threshold of 0.017), and the sample was drawn by convenience. The analysis is exploratory and does not allow generalisation about generations.

6. DISCUSSION

Majorities of respondents regarded OTT platforms as more suitable than theatres (68%) and cheaper (71%), reported visiting theatres less often (67%) and watched more often because of streaming (70%). Yet theatre-related factors obtained a higher composite mean ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 0.81$) than OTT-related factors ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.77$), a statistically significant difference ($t(101) = -4.169$, $p < 0.001$). The two composites were positively correlated ($r = 0.347$, $p < 0.001$), a regression model of convenience, cost and accessibility explained 27% of the variance in OTT preference ($R^2 = 0.27$), and the instrument showed high internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.921$).

These results portray a market in transition, not in replacement. Respondents consistently credit OTT platforms with convenience, lower cost and variety, which is in line with prior Indian and international findings (Deb, 2022; Johnson, 2022; Okumuş, 2022; Sheikh et al., n.d.). Behavioural indicators also agree with the literature on pandemic acceleration (Gupta & Singharia, 2021; Yaqoub et al., 2022): most respondents attend theatres less often and watch more content overall.

The more distinctive findings concern the continuing value of theatres. The theatre composite scored significantly higher than the OTT composite, and 62% regarded the theatre experience as unmatched. This is consistent with the view that cinema provides immersion and social occasion that home viewing lacks (Deb, 2022; Yaqoub et al., 2022), and with the uses and gratifications premise that different media satisfy different needs (Katz et al., 1973). The positive correlation between the composites reinforces the point: valuing streaming did not coincide with devaluing cinema. Reduced frequency of attendance, then, appears to reflect a rational reallocation between two valued options, and not a loss of appreciation for cinema.

The regression finding that convenience, cost and accessibility together explain about a quarter of OTT preference is consistent with technology acceptance arguments that ease and facilitating conditions drive adoption (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003), while also showing that these practical factors are only part of the explanation. Finally, the 52% who still choose theatres for new releases suggests that the type of content moderates the choice: event releases favour theatres, while catalogue viewing and series favour streaming. This supports the coexistence perspective and resonates with long-standing evidence that the sequencing of release channels affects value (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2007).

The age-group result, in which respondents above 30 reported a larger shift towards OTT than those aged 18–30, runs against the common expectation that younger viewers lead the change. Given the small above-30 group and the absence of correction for multiple tests, it is better treated as a hypothesis for larger studies than as a finding about generations.

The findings should not be read as showing that the pandemic-era shift is permanent. Persistence is indicated by stated intention, with 63% saying they would continue using OTT even if theatre experiences improved, but longitudinal data would be needed to confirm it.

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7. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

7.1 Managerial implications

For exhibitors, the evidence favours competing on experience rather than on convenience: premium large-format screens, superior sound, comfortable seating, food and beverage options and event-style screenings address the attributes respondents value most, while value-oriented pricing responds to the 69% who consider tickets expensive. The 63% who would keep using OTT even if theatres improved indicate, however, that experience upgrades will complement rather than reverse streaming habits. For OTT providers, content diversity, streaming quality and personalisation are the attributes that sustain loyalty, and the 59% who hold several subscriptions suggest strong competition for each household's budget. For producers and distributors, differentiated release strategies, with large-scale titles in theatres followed by streaming and mid-scale titles released more flexibly, may suit audiences who use both formats. Bundled or cross-promotional offers between exhibitors and platforms are a further option.

7.2 Theoretical implications

The study supports a complementarity reading of media choice within uses and gratifications theory, and shows that technology acceptance constructs explain part, but not most, of stated platform preference.

7.3 Limitations

Several limitations apply.

The sample of 102 was drawn by convenience sampling, is dominated by students (79.4%) and by respondents aged 18–30 (83.3%), and did not record place of residence, so the results cannot be generalised to all audiences. Responses are self-reported perceptions and intentions rather than observed behaviour or actual spending, and because all constructs were collected from the same respondents in one sitting, common-method bias cannot be excluded (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The cross-sectional design supports association, not causation. The instrument was developed by the authors without a separate pilot test or factor analysis, and the composites contain unequal numbers of items (11, 4 and 7), which may affect comparability. The regression uses a combined predictor and omits demographic controls. H2 is supported only descriptively. The age-group comparison in Section 5.8 is exploratory because the older groups are very small, and the study does not analyse subgroups by gender or income, although prior work suggests these may matter.

7.4 Future research

Future studies could use larger probability-based samples, report subscale reliabilities and separate regression coefficients, extend the age-group comparison with a sample balanced across age bands, add gender, income and region as moderators, examine genre and release type, and use panel or longitudinal designs to test whether the post-pandemic pattern endures. Qualitative work could explore why viewers keep attending theatres for selected films.

8. CONCLUSION

This study examined how audiences balance movie theatres and OTT platforms. Respondents credit streaming with greater convenience, lower perceived cost and wider choice, and many report visiting theatres less often while watching more content. Yet theatre-related factors were rated significantly higher than OTT-related factors, evaluations of the two media were positively related, and a majority still preferred theatres for new releases. Entertainment consumption is therefore changing, but the evidence does not indicate that OTT has replaced cinema or that preference has moved exclusively to streaming. A co-existence model, in which audiences choose according to content, occasion and circumstance, is the interpretation best supported by the data. Exhibitors and platforms are likely to benefit from strategies that emphasise their distinct strengths instead of imitating each other.

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