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User Gratifications and Behavioural Intention in OTT Platforms: An Integrated UGT-TAM Approach

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Abstract

This research explores how user gratifications impact the intention to use live streaming services on Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms in Kerala. The study employs a synthesis of User Gratification Theory (UGT) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to provide a comprehensive understanding. Furthermore, OTT usage intention was examined through the mediating effect of perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. A sample of 489 respondents was analysed using PLS SEM approach. The results revealed that OTT gratifications, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use significantly influenced usage intention. Furthermore, the indirect effects of perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness were significant. This study suggests that customer-centric OTT packages, duly considering their gratifications, can promote the media entertainment industry. Policymakers and service providers can also analyse the results of this study for the successful delivery of OTT live streaming services.

Keywords: OTT services, OTT gratifications, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, user behaviour intention

1. Introduction

The literature suggests that technological advancements significantly affect the entertainment industry (Polisetty et al., 2023; Priporas et al., 2020). The growing penetration of live streaming services has forced traditional media to adopt innovative content consumption services, commonly known as OTT (Sahu et al., 2021). Over-the-top (OTT) is a service platform that provides Internet-based video content with subscription fees (Hutchins et al., 2019). These services can be accessed through digital devices such as smartphones, smart TVs, desktops, and tablets with internet connectivity (Soren & Chakrabarthy, 2024). Moreover, it enables users to watch live-streaming music, television programs, news and movies (Yang & Lee, 2018). The proliferation of over-the-top (OTT) platforms has transformed customers' viewing habits, leading to competition among service providers to acquire and retain customers.

Low-cost Internet connectivity and subscription-based OTT services have enabled viewers to select and access content of their choice (Hou & Shiau, 2020; Onofrei et al., 2022). Moreover, this tendency is quite common among youngsters, who are increasingly subscribing to video streaming services (Chatterjee et al., 2025). It is also noted that the consumption patterns of viewers may not be certain due to the affordability and availability of digital devices and video content (Chalaby & Plunkett, 2021). Thus, the perceptions and behaviours of consumers might be different, and hence, it cannot be generalised that they would follow similar behavioural patterns. In this context, the present study explores consumers'

behavioural intentions towards over-the-top services in Kerala. It is assumed that subscribers seek emotional and instrumental gratification from watching video content or live broadcasts on digital devices. Therefore, the theoretical frameworks of the technology acceptance model (TAM) (Venkatesh et al., 2012) and uses and gratifications theory (UGT) (Katz et al., 1973) are relevant to examine the perceptions and behavioural intentions of OTT viewers (Camilleri & Falson, 2021; Kaur et al., 2020).

2 Literature review

2.1. OTT services

OTT refers to digital platforms that distribute video content through the internet (Flensburg, 2021; Nagaraj et al., 2021) and have become popular as subscription-based video-on-demand (SVoD) services. It provides live streaming video content services with the support of broadcast operators and content development firms (Gupta & Singharia, 2021). The delivery of services is through commercial video streaming platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hotstar. The literature posits that online video streaming became prominent in the 21st century (Chen, 2019; Sahu et al., 2021; Steiner & Xu, 2020). Major OTT service providers, in collaboration with prominent telecom operators, allow viewers to download content anywhere and anytime based on varied models such as subscription-based, ad-supported, and freemium (Sadana & Sharma, 2021).

2.2. User gratifications in OTT

Gratification refers to the satisfaction of needs in terms of expectations (Katz et al., 1973). People actively consume media to gratify their specific needs (Rubin, 1981). Uses and gratification theory (UGT) asserts that users select a particular medium to gratify their needs (Ruggiero 2000). Previous studies have established the relevance of UGT in entertainment media (Kim & Lee, 2023; Dhir et al., 2017; Menon & Meghana, 2021). Menon (2022) explored six gratification motives–convenient navigability, binge watching, entertainment, relaxation, social interaction, companionship, voyeurism, and information seeking–on viewers continuing purchase intentions. Sahu et al. (2021) identified seven gratification components such as information, relaxation, convenience, entertainment, ease of use, social interaction, and financial benefit for using OTT services in India. Tefertiller and Sheehan (2019) provided five motivational gratifications–stress management, relaxing entertainment, habitual viewing, information seeking, and social interaction–in their study about newer video technologies using smart TVs and web streaming applications. Based on the above, the present study identified **entertainment** (Camilleri & Falzon, 2021; Tefertiller, 2020), **relaxation** (Chen, 2019; Steiner & Xu, 2020), **information seeking** (Tefertiller & Sheehan, 2019; Chen, 2019), **binge watching(**Menon, 2022; Steiner & Xu, 2020), and **convenient navigability**(Menon, 2022; Sahu et al., 2021; Sundar & Limperos, 2013) as lower order components of user gratification in OTT.

2.3. Technological acceptance in OTT

The study also relied on Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) constructs to capture the data from respondents. TAM is the most accepted model for technology acceptance and was adapted from the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975). TAM has been used by researchers in various fields to establish users' perceptions towards technology acceptance (Gupta et al., 2021;Nagy, 2018; Polisetty et al., 2023; Scherer et al., 2019) and it has four key constructs: perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, Attitude; and Behavioural intention. The key variables perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and attitude directly or indirectly explain the outcome variable behavioural intention (Camilleri & Falson, 2021; Chatterjee et al., 2021). Perceived ease of use refers to the extent to which a user believes

that a system would be free from effort while using it. Thus, it determines an individual's perception of the usefulness of technology. Perceived usefulness refers to the extent to which one believes that using a particular system would enhance their job performance (Davis, 1989). It also ensures that individuals would use certain technologies once they feel a comparative advantage.

2.4. Usage intention in OTT services

Usage intention in OTT pertains to the behavior exhibited by users following their engagement with personalized and on-demand content (Shin and Park, 2021). Numerous studies have demonstrated the significance of usage intention in OTT (Camilleri & Falson, 2021; Gupta & Singharia, 2021; Menon, 2022). Rose et al. (2020) observed that content quality, user experience and content exclusivity are the determinants of continuous intention to subscribe OTT services. It was also found that factors such as anytime access, localised content, and recording will boost customers OTT subscriptions (Nagaraj et al., 2021). As a result, once viewers are comfortable with the service provided through an OTT platform, they will continue to use it.

3. Conceptual framework and development of hypotheses

3.1. OTT gratifications, perceived ease of use and usage intention

Chen et al. (2023) contend that the impact of gratification on the use of OTT streaming platforms is dependent on their ease of use. Kim et al. (2024) found that perceived enjoyment, along with perceived ease of use, significantly influences OTT usage intention. The ability to access the platform at any time and from any location, coupled with the diverse selection of video titles it offers, are critical factors affecting the adoption and advocacy of OTT platforms (Yeole, 2022). Users experience higher levels of gratification when operating new technology, leading to more positive perceptions of its ease of use (Tsai et al., 2023). The literature supports the notion that the ease of use of OTT platforms and its usage are relevant in terms of user gratification (Kaur et al., 2020; Kim & Kim, 2020; Sahu et al., 2021; Tefertiller & Sheehan, 2019). Prior studies have revealed that consumers' behavioural intention to adopt OTT like new technology platforms is significantly mediated by perceived ease of use (Bhatt, 2022; Gupta et al., 2021; Tefertiller, 2018; Tefertiller, 2020; Yousaf et al., 2021). Based on the above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: OTT gratifications positively influence perceived ease of use

H2: Perceived ease of use positively influences usage intention

H3: Perceived ease of use mediates the relationship between OTT gratifications and usage intention

OTT gratifications, perceived usefulness and usage intention

Lee et al. (2019) identified a positive correlation between factors such as entertainment, content quality, and price value with perceived usefulness, ease of use, and the intention to engage with OTT video streaming services. Chen et al. (2023) further supported this by demonstrating that users' comfort with personal motivation and system quality enhances their usage levels on OTT platforms. This is corroborated by Han et al. (2020), who found that the entertainment features of OTT platforms positively impact perceived usefulness and usage intention. Lee et al. (2019) also established that entertainment, content quality, and price value are positively related to usefulness, ease of use, and the intention to use OTT video streaming platforms. Tsai et al. (2023) suggested that content-based OTT platforms enhance service delivery quality, thereby providing users with a perceived advantage in terms of OTT gratification motives. The literature indicates that OTT gratification motives influence the perceived usefulness of new technology (Gupta et al., 2025; Kaur et al., 2020; Scherer et al., 2019; Soren & Chakraborty, 2024) and

usage intention. Siagian et al. (2022) demonstrated that perceived usefulness increases users' behavioral intention in digital payment platforms. Camilleri and Falzon (2021) also found that the perceived usefulness of streaming technologies influences viewers' intention to use them. However, Kim et al. (2024) did not find a positive association between perceived usefulness and usage intention in OTT usage. Furthermore, studies have suggested a strong linkage between perceived usefulness and usage intention in OTT (Camilleri & Falzon, 2021; Chatterjee et al., 2021; Polisetty et al., 2023). Additionally, research has contended that new technological features and users' behavioral intentions are mediated by perceived usefulness (Chen & Aklikokou, 2020; Chen et al., 2023; Gupta et al., 2021; Tefertiller, 2020). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H4: OTT gratifications positively influence perceived usefulness

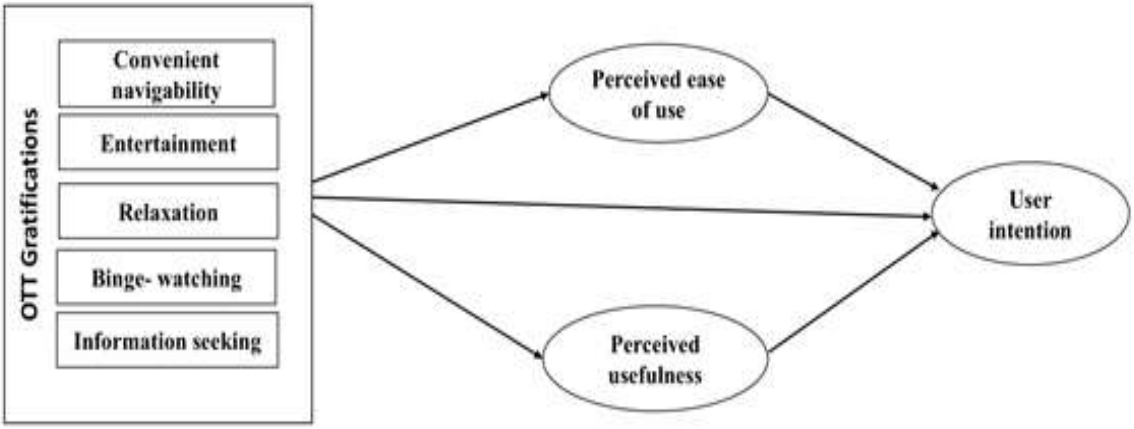
H5: Perceived usefulness positively influences usage intention

H6: Perceived usefulness mediates the relationship between OTT gratifications and usage intention

OTT gratifications and Usage intention

Menon (2022) identified convenient navigability, binge-watching, and entertainment gratifications as significant predictors of OTT usage intention. Tefertiller (2020) argued that entertainment gratification plays a crucial role in the adoption and usage of web streaming. Furthermore, advancements in technology that facilitate convenient navigability and binge-watching influence users' preferences for OTT platforms (Steiner and Xu, 2020). Basuki et al. (2022) posited that the convenience and flexibility experienced by users can significantly influence their intention to utilize OTT services. In contrast, Sahu et al. (2021) did not find evidence supporting the effect of new OTT content on usage intention. The literature has shown that users' gratification motives significantly influence new technology usage (Camilleri &Falzon, 2021; Steiner and Xu, 2020; Tefertiller & Sheehan, 2019). Based on the above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7: OTT gratifications positively influence usage intention



Conceptual model proposed for the study

4. Materials and Methods

The primary objective of this research was to explore the behavioral intentions of users of OTT platforms in Kerala. The survey instrument was designed by integrating the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT). The constructs examined in this study encompass OTT gratification motives, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and users' behavioral intentions. OTT

gratification motives were conceptualized as a higher-order latent construct, comprising five lower-order components: Entertainment, Relaxation, Information Seeking, Binge-Watching, and Convenient Navigability (Camilleri & Falzon, 2021; Menon, 2022; Steiner & Xu, 2020; Tefertiller, 2020; Tefertiller & Sheehan, 2019). Entertainment was evaluated using a four-item scale from Rubin (1983) and Dhir et al. (2017), reflecting perceived enjoyment that influences the adoption of new media technologies (Kaur et al., 2020). Relaxation was assessed with five indicators from Rubin (1983) and Tefertiller and Sheehan (2019), representing a state of mental ease derived from OTT usage (Sahu et al., 2021). Information-seeking gratification was measured using three indicators from Rubin (1983), assessing users' capabilities to download, store, and view content on OTT platforms. The diversity of content is a critical factor for OTT platforms (Menon, 2022). Binge-watching, which allows for the continuous viewing of multiple episodes, serves as a motivator for usage intention (Gupta & Singharia, 2021). Five indicators from Menon (2022) and Steiner and Xu (2020) were employed to measure binge-watching gratification. Convenient navigability, which ensures content accessibility and affordability, was measured using five indicators from Menon (2022) and Sundar and Limperos (2013). Perceived ease of use was assessed using six indicators from Tefertiller (2020), capturing the effortless acceptance of technology (Davis, 1989). Perceived usefulness was evaluated using three indicators from Camilleri and Falson (2020), representing the relative advantage over previous technologies (Roger, 2003). Usage intention was measured using five indicators from Camilleri and Falson (2020) and Hsu and Lin (2015). The survey items were based on a seven-point Likert scale. The study targeted OTT streaming users in Kerala who had engaged with at least two platforms for a minimum of three months, focusing on individuals aged 16-50 for the final sample.

Data collection and study participants

A well-structured questionnaire was developed, and data were collected using purposive sampling. The questionnaire underwent pilot testing among students (excluded from the survey results) to mitigate common method bias (MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012). Data collection was facilitated through Google Forms, which were disseminated via Instagram, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Facebook, and selective emails. Respondents were selected from current users of streaming media devices in Kerala, aged over 16 years. Initially, participants were queried about their awareness of streaming media devices. If affirmative, they were requested to complete questionnaires regarding their usage perceptions. The minimum sample size was determined using G* Power software version 3.1.7.9 (Faul et al., 2007), indicating a minimum requirement of 92 participants with a statistical power level of 0.80, five predictors, and an alpha level of 0.05. Out of 540 collected samples, 489 were utilized after excluding missing or erroneous data. Table 1 presents the demographic profile and analysis of respondents' preferences for OTT sites.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents(N=489)

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	215	43.97
Female	274	56.03
Education		
Primary	42	8.59
Secondary	74	15.13
Higher education	195	39.88

Professional education	115	23.52
Others	63	12.88
Occupation		
Government	56	11.45
Private	144	29.45
Professionals	62	12.68
Others	227	46.42
Age level		
16-26	266	54.40
26-36	113	23.11
36-46	57	11.66
above 46	53	10.84
Monthly income		
Upto 25000	245	50.10
25000-50000	110	22.49
50000-75000	69	14.11
Above 75000	65	13.29
Devices used for watching OTT		
Smart phone	257	52.56
Laptop	80	16.36
smart television	96	19.63
Tablets	56	11.45
Most preferred OTT platform		
Disney Hotstar	192	39.26
Amazon Prime	127	25.97
Netflix	112	22.90
others	58	11.86
Average time spend in OTT platform		
Less than one hour	164	33.54
1-2 hrs	197	40.29
2-3 hrs	74	15.13
above 3 hrs	54	11.04
Most preferred content		
Movies	269	55.01
Reality shows	87	17.79
News	75	15.34
Others	58	11.86
Usage of number of OTT platforms		
At least two platforms	263	53.78
2-3 platforms	142	29.04
More than 3	84	17.18
Amount spend for monthly subscription		
Upto Rs.300	271	55.42

Rs.300-R500	154	31.49
Above 500	64	13.09

5. Data Analysis and Results

Data were scrutinized for missing values and outliers. Missing values were eliminated in accordance with the methodologies outlined by Grove, Burns, and Gray (2013) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2013). Univariate outliers were identified using Z-scores, with items exceeding ± 1.96 being classified as outliers and subsequently removed from the dataset (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Multivariate normality was assessed through skewness and kurtosis ratios, with values within ± 2.00 indicating a normal distribution (IBM, 2022). The analysis was conducted using SPSS Version 25.0. The hypothesized relationships between constructs were evaluated utilizing Smart PLS SEM version 4 software (Ringle et al., 2014; Hair et al., 2020). This involved a two-stage approach comprising (1) measurement model evaluation and (2) structural model assessment.

5.1. Measurement Model Evaluation

To evaluate the measurement model, Confirmatory Factor Analysis was performed, followed by reliability and validity testing of constructs. Construct reliability was measured through Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951) and composite reliability (Janadari, Subramaniam, & Wei, 2016). Results(Table 2) showed Cronbach's alpha values exceeded the minimum (0.70) suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), and composite reliability scores were above 0.60 as per Henseler and Sarstedt (2013), establishing model reliability. Convergent validity was assessed using item loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Hair et al., 2014). Item loadings exceeded 0.708, and AVE values were above 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017), confirming convergent validity. Discriminant validity was assessed utilizing the HTMT (heterotrait-monotrait) ratio, with the findings (Table 3) indicating that the values were below the recommended threshold of 0.85, as proposed by Henseler et al. (2015) and Hair et al. (2017). Consequently, the reliability and validity of the model were substantiated.

Table 2: Measurement Model

Components	Items	Loadings	Composite Reliability	AVE	Cronbach's alpha
Binge-watching	BW1	0.873	0.924	0.710	0.898
	BW2	0.855			
	BW3	0.783			
	BW4	0.848			
	BW5	0.871			
Convenient navigability	CNV1	0.853	0.923	0.705	0.897
	CNV2	0.783			
	CNV3	0.865			
	CNV4	0.814			
	CNV5	0.880			
Entertainment	ENT1	0.869	0.885	0.667	0.819
	ENT2	0.729			
	ENT3	0.888			

	ENT4	0.933			
Relaxation	RLX1	0.821	0.909	0.667	0.875
	RLX2	0.792			
	RLX3	0.817			
	RLX4	0.860			
	RLX5	0.793			
Information seeking	INF1	0.906	0.936	0.830	0.898
	INF2	0.934			
	INF3	0.893			
Perceived ease of use	PEOU1	0.796	0.919	0.654	0.894
	PEOU2	0.757			
	PEOU3	0.835			
	PEOU4	0.805			
	PEOU5	0.824			
	PEOU6	0.831			
Perceived usefulness	PU1	0.903	0.924	0.751	0.890
	PU2	0.848			
	PU3	0.863			
	PU4	0.852			
User intention	UI1	0.826	0.917	0.689	0.887
	UI2	0.804			
	UI3	0.852			
	UI4	0.867			
	UI5	0.797			
OTT gratification Motives	ENT	0.783	0.787	0.857	0.558
	RLX	0.838			
	BW	0.851			
	CNV	0.693			
	INF	0.769			

Table: 3. Measurement Model: HTMT ratio

	BW	CNV	ENT	RLX	INF	PEOU	PU	UI
BW	--							
CNV	0.259	--						
ENT	0.642	0.218	--					
RLX	0.723	0.217	0.657	--				
INF	0.618	0.257	0.496	0.606	--			
PEOU	0.493	0.124	0.464	0.436	0.518	--		
PU	0.498	0.337	0.545	0.482	0.425	0.601	--	
UI	0.798	0.321	0.703	0.618	0.688	0.576	0.635	--

5.2. Structural Model Assessment

Structural assessment helps establish path relations between constructs and estimate predictive capability of endogenous variables (Hair et al., 2017). Structural model assessment includes path coefficients, coefficient of determination(R2), and predictive relevance (Q2 predict, RMSE, and MAE). Collinearity was checked using variance inflation factor (VIF) values, with all values within the threshold of 5 (Hair et al., 2020). For hypothesis testing, bootstrapping with 10000 subsamples was used (Hair et al., 2017). The significance of path coefficients was evaluated using a two-tailed t-test at 5% level (Hair, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2011). The results (Table 4) indicated that OTT gratifications showed positive effect on perceived ease of use (β=0.521, t=13.208, p< 0.001), supporting H1. The relationship between OTT gratifications and perceived usefulness (β=0.376, t=80.727, p< 0.001) was significant, supporting H4. OTT gratifications were most influential in determining OTT usage intention (β= 0.727, t=23.064, p< 0.001), supporting H7. Perceived ease of use on usage intention (β=0.106, t=2.186, p< 0.001) and perceived usefulness on usage intention (β=0.130, t=2.784, p< 0.001) showed positive relationships, supporting H2 and H5.

Table: 4. Path Analysis

Paths	Path Coefficients	T-statistic	p value	Results
OTT Gratifications → Perceived Ease of Use	0.521	13.208	< 0.001	Supported
OTT Gratifications → Perceived Usefulness	0.376	8.727	< 0.001	Supported
OTT Gratifications → User Intention	0.727	23.064	< 0.001	Supported
Perceived Ease of Use → User Intention	0.106	2.186	< 0.001	Supported
Perceived Usefulness → User Intention	0.130	2.784	< 0.001	Supported

The R^2 values (Table 5) for the endogenous constructs—perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and user intention—were 27.1%, 40.2%, and 72.0%, respectively. This indicates that the model possesses above moderate explanatory power, in accordance with the guidelines of Hair et al. (2011). The model's predictive relevance was evaluated using the PLS predict procedure as recommended by Shmueli et al. (2019). The results, presented in Table 6, revealed that the Q^2 Predict Value for endogenous constructs (perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and user intention) were positive (Hair et al., 2017). Furthermore, the Mean Absolute Error (MAE) values for items of endogenous constructs, detailed in Table 7, were lower than the Root Mean Squared residual error (RMSE) values of the path model. Consequently, the model demonstrated moderate predictive relevance.

Table: 5. Co-efficient of Determination

Paths	R^2	Adjusted R^2
Perceived ease of use	0.271	0.270
Perceived usefulness	0.402	0.399
User Intention	0.720	0.718

Table: 6. Predictive relevance of the Model

Constructs	Items	Q^2 Predict	$RMSE_{PLS-SEM}$	$RMSE_{LM}$
Perceived ease of use	PEOU1	0.219	1.374	1.361
	PEOU2	0.058	1.512	1.511
	PEOU3	0.199	**1.397**	**1.402**
	PEOU4	0.115	**1.461**	**1.467**
	PEOU5	0.177	**1.394**	**1.399**
	PEOU6	0.091	1.556	1.545
Perceived usefulness	PU1	0.292	**1.137**	**1.141**
	PU2	0.230	1.185	1.176
	PU3	0.267	**1.106**	**1.110**
	PU4	0.088	1.291	1.273
User intention	UI1	0.434	**1.106**	**1.118**
	UI2	0.418	**1.181**	**1.191**
	UI3	0.578	1.076	1.036
	UI4	0.503	**1.039**	**1.049**
	UI5	0.391	1.258	1.223

Mediation effect

Mediation analysis was conducted to evaluate the mediating roles of perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness in the relationship between OTT gratifications and user intention. The results, as presented in Table 7, indicated a significant indirect effect of perceived ease of use (β=0.057, t=2.800, p<0.5) and perceived usefulness (β=0.069, t=2.579, p<0.05) on the relationship between OTT gratifications and user intention. Additionally, the direct effect of OTT gratifications on usage intention was significant (β=0.727, t=23.064, p<0.01). Given that both direct and indirect effects were significant and positive, complementary partial mediation was observed. Consequently, hypotheses H3 and H6 were supported.

Table: 7. Specific Indirect effect

Paths	Path Coefficients	T-static	p value	Results
OTT gratifications -> PEOU -> UI	0.057	2.800	0.005	Supported
OTT gratifications -> PU -> UI	0.069	2.579	0.010	Supported

6. Discussion

This study investigated OTT usage intention of viewers in Kerala by integrating UGT and TAM. The UGT approach explains intrinsic factors (Camilleri & Falzon, 2021; Kaur et al., 2020; Tefertiller, 2020), while TAM explains extrinsic factors of ICT adoption (Gupta et al., 2021; Nagy, 2018; Polisetty et al., 2023). The study found users' OTT gratifications comprised entertainment, relaxation, information sharing, binge-watching, and convenient navigability. This study is the first in Kerala to examine OTT user gratifications on user intention using both UGT and TAM. The model was tested on users of 16-50 age groups in Kerala using a cross-sectional study.

The study findings suggest OTT gratifications significantly influence perceived ease of use, meaning users with higher gratifications perceive OTT usage as easier. They expect flexibility to interact with the system once they feel ease of use. This finding aligns with previous studies (Kaur et al., 2020; Kim & Kim, 2020; Sahu et al., 2021), where researchers established that TAM was influenced by extrinsic forces such as motivation, usefulness, and adoption. The study found the strongest impact of user gratifications on perceived usefulness in OTT. Technological affordance and advancement generate new gratifications for users, such as availability, accessibility, and anytime-anywhere watching, which they perceive as highly useful. This result corroborates existing literature (Gupta et al., 2025; Kaur et al., 2020; Soren & Chakraborty, 2024) and confirms that respondents perceived usefulness while watching programs on OTT platforms.

The study found UGT gratifications significantly influenced perceived usefulness. Users will perceive OTT streaming services as most useful for their gratifications. Less complicated usage of OTT services will be more useful to users, ensuring wider acceptance of OTT streaming media devices. The study found OTT gratification motives had the strongest effect on users' intention. Menon (2022) asserted that new gratification motives could exert the strongest influence on subscription intention. This finding is supported by prior studies (Steiner and Xu, 2020; Tefertiller & Sheehan, 2019; Tefertiller, 2020), who confirmed that despite technological advances, user activity and preference still exist.

The study found a significant mediating effect of perceived ease of use between OTT gratifications and user intention. Although OTT streaming services are new, their awareness and popularity has increased, and users still consider ease of use. The study also validated the significant mediating effect of perceived usefulness between OTT gratifications and user intention, ensuring the importance of perceived ease of use and usefulness in technology adoption. However, perceived usefulness had a more powerful mediating effect on users' behavioural intention than perceived ease of use. A useful platform is more effective than a user-friendly service as users are reluctant to operate it, even if simple. The TAM constructs increase users' gratification on purchase intention due to technological advancements in OTT platforms. User gratification motives promote user intention when OTT services are easy to use and deliver useful value.

7. Theoretical and practical Implications

The existing literature on OTT usage intention (Gupta & Singharia, 2021; Menon, 2022; Steiner and Xu, 2020; Tefertiller, 2020) and OTT user gratification motives on usage intention (Allam & Dinana, 2021; Menon, 2022) has not yet examined the influence of OTT user gratifications on usage intention by integrating UGT and TAM constructs. Furthermore, the context-specific insights derived from this study make a significant contribution to the existing domain of OTT technology adoption. This study proposes an enhanced model that investigates the impact of user gratifications on OTT usage intention by applying TAM constructs, specifically perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. Additionally, this study

contributes to the extant literature that seeks to enrich OTT usage intention by incorporating users' gratification motives in the context of emerging technologies.

Currently, various service providers (Jio, Vodafone, etc.) in the market offer competitive packages to attract OTT users. Viewers prefer secure, reliable, and low-cost subscription packages to enjoy uninterrupted OTT streaming services. Consequently, policymakers can recommend customer-centric OTT packages, duly considering their gratifications, which will promote the media entertainment industry. Moreover, service providers can offer certain additional features, such as enhanced entertainment quality, user-friendly platforms, regularly updated video content, and ad-free subscription-based platforms. As a result, consumers continue to engage with OTT platforms as they perceive the ease of use and usefulness of the services.

8. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study examined the influence of user gratification motives on the intention to use over-the-top (OTT) services among users in Kerala. While this research offers significant theoretical and practical insights, it is not without limitations. The current study adopted a narrow perspective on OTT usage intention among viewers. Future research should adopt a more comprehensive approach to understanding the causal effects of user gratification motives on user intention by incorporating constructs from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). Additionally, the socio-economic and demographic profiles of viewers may also affect the factors influencing their usage intention. For instance, younger individuals are more attuned to technological advancements in the entertainment industry, and gender-specific group comparisons could also be explored. Consequently, further research may involve in-depth investigations into OTT users' perceptions and beliefs regarding the latest technological advancements in media platforms.

9. Conclusion

Despite the increasing global popularity of over-the-top (OTT) content, research on user gratification in OTT usage remains in its early stages. Moreover, there is a notable lack of both theoretical and practical studies concerning the use of OTT within local contexts. This study addresses this gap by integrating the theoretical frameworks of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) to examine the usage intentions of OTT viewers in Kerala. The findings indicate that users significantly value perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness in influencing their user gratification and usage intentions. The results of this research will be beneficial for service providers and policymakers in targeting specific demographic groups.

10. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author has declared that there are no potential conflicts of interest in the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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