

To Study The Impact Of Web Series And Streaming Content On Gen-Z's Psychosocial Well-Being: Exploring Mediating Factors In User Perception

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Abstract:

The swift rise of online series and streaming platforms has changed the way individuals consume entertainment, primarily among Gen Z. This study interconnects web series consumption, psychological effects, user perception, and Gen Z's psychosocial well-being. The aim is to highlight the mediating components that influence user perception and their impact on Gen Z.

Purpose: The study aims to fully evaluate the relationship between web series usage and Gen Z's psychological and social well-being by focusing on the mediating role of user perception.

Methodology: The study conducted a survey using a structured questionnaire to collect primary data from 215 respondents in Mumbai, using a descriptive and analytical methodology. The study evaluated an assortment of factors, including web series consumption frequency, gender, occupation, age, preferred streaming services, viewing structures, and genre preferences.

SPSS Software: The statistical analysis was executed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. ANOVA and t-tests were only a couple of the statistical techniques used to analyze relationships and significance among various variables.

Findings: The study indicated that youth web series consumption had significant emotional effects on them, including the way they view societal norms, content appropriateness, and adverse consequences. Additionally, simplicity, affordability, cost-effectiveness, and storylines with appealing characters were discovered to be strongly influencing variables. Additionally, a significant correlation between the preference for web series and psychosocial well-being emerged, highlighting the interdependence of these factors.

Implications: The study carries policy implications for participants, including streaming services, mental health, and content producers. Understanding the psychological effects of watching web series and the significance of user perception can help with focused treatments, content rules, and maximizing advantages while reducing disadvantages.

Limitations: The study's small sample size was restricted to Mumbai as its main focus. The research's cross-sectional design further limits the assessment of causality.

Originality: By studying the complex relationships between web series usage, psychological effects, user perception, and psychosocial well-being among Gen-Z, this study extends to the body of existing knowledge. It highlights the demand for additional study that gets deep into the connections within and across various groups.

Keywords: Web series usage, psychosocial well-being, Gen-Z, Psychological impact, User Perception

Introduction:

Web series and streaming multimedia platforms have changed the entertainment industry, especially among India's young population. Along with changing how entertainment is consumed, the digital revolution in India has had a significant impact on Gen-Z mental wellbeing. The purpose of this study is to investigate the complex relationships that exist between the consumption of web series, psychological effects, user perception, and the general psychosocial wellbeing of Indian youth. This research aims to shed light on the complex relationship between the consumption of digital information and its effects on the younger generation by examining the mediating factors that affect user perception.

Background of the Study:

In India, the popularity of streaming material and online shows has increased at an unparalleled rate among young people. Due to their accessibility and variety of content options, these platforms are becoming crucial aspects of their daily lives. Concerns have been raised regarding the potential psychological and social repercussions as viewing habits change from traditional television to online platforms. While earlier research has discussed the psychological consequences of media exposure, more thorough studies that look at the mediating factors that affect user perception and the impact on psychosocial well-being are lacking.

Problem Statement:

Web series consumption among Indian youth has increased as a result of the switch from analog to digital media. The effects of this change on psychology and sociocultural, however, are still not fully understood. Understanding how youth's attraction to web series, their interpretation of the material, and the reasons influencing their choices affect their psychosocial well-being is vital. Filling in these gaps will offer insights into the potential drawbacks and advantages of this newly developing kind of entertainment consumption.

Objectives of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to comprehensively investigate the relationship between web series consumption and the psychosocial well-being of Indian youth, focusing on the mediating role of user perception.

1. To evaluate the psychological impact of web series and online content on the youth.
2. To understand the reasons underlying the preference for web series over traditional TV shows.
3. To analyse the overall factors of web series consumption on the psychosocial well-being of Indian youth.

Research Questions:

The study will explore the following research questions in order to fulfil the stated objectives:

1. How do web series and internet content affect the mental health of young Indian people?
2. What are the main factors influencing the selection of web series?
3. What is the overall effect of watching web series on Indian youth's psychological well-being?

Significance of the Study:

This study has important policy implications for a range of stakeholders, including platform providers, mental health experts, and content creators. By exposing the psychological effects of web series consumption and analysing the function of user perception as a mediating variable, it will contribute to a better understanding of the effects of digital entertainment on the psychosocial well-being of Indian youth. The results will help in the development of focused interventions, content guidelines, and methods to maximize the benefits of web series consumption while reducing any potential drawbacks.

Literature Review:

Psychological impact of web series

This study examines how Western web series affect teens in India's Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities who are enrolled in school. According to initial feedback, students are captivated to the school system demonstrated, which may influence their interest in pursuing higher education overseas even while harmful habits like drug use and violence are not duplicated (Mehrotra, P 2023).

This study examines how web series and online streaming have affected young people in India, paying particular attention to sites like YouTube, Netflix, and Amazon. Through a survey of Haryana students, it investigates their psychosocial consequences and how young people perceive them (Dhiman, 2021). This study, which focuses on Netflix and Hulu, tackles the dearth of research on the psychological effects of binge-watching during the COVID-19 pandemic. It examines the impact of binge-viewing on people while considering its causes, negative effects, and the connection between binge-watching and the amount of time spent watching web series on streaming websites (Raza et al., 2021). This study examines the influence of web streaming, particularly Netflix, on academic performance among youth in Karachi, Pakistan. Through questionnaires distributed via Facebook and email, it investigates the relationship between social media usage and academic success among 110 students aged 12-19. Results indicate significant time spent on social media impacting academic development (Shabbir et al., 2021).

Factors Influencing Choice of Web series

This study focuses into the logic behind why individuals fund movies and web series using crowdsourcing. The study examines the effects of intrinsic drive, inventiveness, shared values, and campaign involvement on trust, risk perception, and participation intention. Findings that are surprising include a connection between perceived danger and campaign participation (Baber, H., & Fanea-Ivanovici, M. 2023). Since 2015, the Norwegian web series "Skam" has become incredibly successful, portraying the digital lives of teens in Oslo in a variety of media channels. Through video snippets, discussions, and Instagram updates, the series examines the media-driven environment that kids are navigating while developing critical analysis (Krüger & Rustad, 2017). "Traveloka's web series "Expedisi menebus janji" makes use of internet-based platforms like YouTube to highlight the affordable price and quantified audience engagement of their app for booking travel services (Hamzah, 2018). This study examines whether online series and streaming content influence adolescent Indians. The study uses quantitative techniques to examine the psychological and behavioural effects on Pune's young internet users (Wagh et al., 2022). "This study examines the move from traditional TV viewing to mobile binge-watching, which leads to in addictive behaviours and has an adverse effect on Gen-Zwellness. It examines if binge-watching has addictive qualities by surveying 90 Mumbai residents between the ages of 18 and 25 (Dhanuka & Bohra, 2019).

The online series "Churails" is used in this study to analyze how Pakistani youth's conceptions of feminism are influenced by Western values. The results of a survey of 150 people aged 16 to 30 show that they support gender equality but are concerned about cultural deterioration and media portrayal (Minhas et al., 2020).

Perception of users

Web series influence Gen-Z perceptions and behaviours, and they are rapidly taking over the entertainment sector. This study examines the implications and offers insights for the entertainment sector, internet content, and society through the application of primary data from surveys (Debasish Rout et al., 2021). "The rise of OTT platforms has influenced way material is consumed, especially among young people. This study explores how web series affect young audiences' behavior changes and provides OTT users with useful information (Chaudhary & Srivastava, 2022). Web series have become more popular as a source of entertainment in the modern digital age, especially among young people in India. This study evaluates whether web series affect Indian millennials' behavior (Kumar, K., & Gangwar, R, 2021). This study examines the cultural values and educational impacts that Netflix has had on Pakistani youth. According to a poll of 200 Netflix subscribers in Karachi, the streaming service is changing historical awareness and cultural values (Abdullah, 2021). The technological advancements, particularly in communication, have led to significant socio-cultural disturbances in the 21st century. This study examines the impact of new media on cultural norms and the ways of life among urban youth in Allahabad, India (Nag, 2020).

Impact of Web series

This study focuses into whether online streaming services like Netflix impact students' academic performance. The usage of social media and academic achievement are negatively correlated, according to surveys of young people in Karachi, Pakistan (Saboor et al., 2021).

"This study examines the utilization and consequences of online streaming services among Indian youth (ages 16 to 24)." The study examines the transition away from traditional TV, focusing on a Navi Mumbai peer group, and is driven using smartphones and Jio's influence (Deshpande et al., 2020). This study examines trends in entertainment apps among college-age teenagers aged 15 to 28 in order to examine the impact of e-entertainment innovation. The knowledge acquired provides useful advice for the developing mobile entertainment market (Kondewar, 2019).

Methodology:

i. Research design:

The research conducted was descriptive and analytical, so a Survey method was used. A Survey was conducted through a structured questionnaire tested for reliability and data was collected throughout Mumbai.

ii. Primary data:

Primary data was collected randomly through the structured questionnaire in Mumbai, by using simple random sampling.

iii. Sample size:

The study was limited to those participants who willingly elected to complete the instruments in their entirety. There was a total of 215 respondents.

The sample to which the questionnaire was administered was based on random sampling techniques. The sample distribution was given in Table 1. Socio-Demographic profile

Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	79	36.7	36.7	36.7
Valid Male	136	63.3	63.3	100.0
Total	215	100.0	100.0	

Occupation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Housewife	24	11.2	11.2	11.2
Self Employed	70	32.6	32.6	43.7
Valid Service	52	24.2	24.2	67.9
Students	69	32.1	32.1	100.0
Total	215	100.0	100.0	

Age (in years)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-30 years	31	14.4	14.4	14.4
31-40 years	48	22.3	22.3	36.7
Valid 41-50 years	45	20.9	20.9	57.7
50 years and more	26	12.1	12.1	69.8
Less than 20	65	30.2	30.2	100.0
Total	215	100.0	100.0	

Which is your favorite online platform for streaming video content?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
ALT Balaji	6	2.8	2.8	2.8
Amazon Prime Video	19	8.8	8.8	11.6
Disney + Hot Star	4	1.9	1.9	13.5
Valid MX Player	6	2.8	2.8	16.3
Netflix	78	36.3	36.3	52.6
Viki	3	1.4	1.4	54.0
Voot	53	24.7	24.7	78.6
You Tube	46	21.4	21.4	100.0
Total	215	100.0	100.0	

How much time you generally spend on watching web series or other video content online every day?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative
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				Percent
	1-2 hours	73	34.0	34.0
	2-3 hours	36	16.7	16.7
Valid	3-4 hours	104	48.4	48.4
	4-5 hours	2	.9	.9
	Total	215	100.0	100.0

Choice of content on the basis of genre

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	All type	2	.9	.9
	Based on true story	29	13.5	13.5
	Comedy	44	20.5	20.5
	Crime and Action	58	27.0	27.0
	Documentary	51	23.7	23.7
Valid	Original / Exclusive content like web series , short films	9	4.2	4.2
	Romance, Thriller and Horror	22	10.2	10.2
	Total	215	100.0	100.0

How Frequently do you watch web series

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Daily	166	77.2	77.2
	Monthly	3	1.4	1.4
Valid	Occasionally	17	7.9	7.9
	weekly	29	13.5	13.5
	Total	215	100.0	100.0

Table 1. Source: Primary data

iv. Sample design:

When conducting the study, the researcher followed the rules and used a straightforward random sample strategy. The respondents who did not express a desire to participate in the study were not included in the analysis, as was advised during the study.

v. Area of research:

Mumbai.

vi. Secondary data:

The secondary information or data was collected from newspapers, research articles, magazine and websites.

vii. Research instruments

A summated closed end questionnaire was used with different viewpoints of respondents. In this questionnaire, all the questions were positively framed to study the impact of independent variables like age, gender and profession on the dependent variable.

viii. Statistical analysis

Efficient and effective data analysis is the result of effective data preparation. This was found to be very crucial between the completion of the field work and the statistical processing of the collected data. On the basis of data sheet, tables and graphs were prepared for the analysis.

Hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant psychological impact of web series and online content on the youth.

H_a: There is a significant psychological impact of web series and online content on the youth.

H₀: There is no significant difference in the reasons underlying the preference for web series and traditional TV shows among the audience.

H_a: There is a significant difference in the reasons underlying the preference for web series and traditional TV shows among the audience.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the consumption of web series and the psychosocial well-being of Indian youth.

H_a: There is a significant relationship between the consumption of web series and the psychosocial well-being of Indian youth.

Analysis:

H₀: There is no significant psychological impact of web series and online content on the youth.

ANOVA						
		Sum Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Impact of Web series [DO YOU THINK THESE WEB SERIES INFLUENCE THE SOCIETY?]	Between Groups	56.051	4	14.013	39.828	.000
	Within Groups	73.884	210	.352		
	Total	129.935	214			
Impact of Web series [DID YOU FIND LANGUAGE AND CONTENT OF WEB SERIES OBJECTIONABLE?]	Between Groups	57.555	4	14.389	48.053	.000
	Within Groups	62.882	210	.299		
	Total	120.437	214			
Impact of Web series [DO YOU THINK THE USE OF ABUSING LANGUAGE AND OBJECTIONABLE CONTENT HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE YOUTH?]	Between Groups	27.795	4	6.949	19.857	.000
	Within Groups	73.488	210	.350		
	Total	101.284	214			

Table 2. Source: Primary data

Interpretation

The results of the data analysis using ANOVA are very significant when it comes to the psychological impact of online content and web series on adolescents. The impact of web series on society, the adoption of offensive language and content, and the harm that such content causes to young people were all aspects that varied significantly across groups. Strong evidence is presented against the null hypothesis with the large F-values and extremely low p-values (all p 0.001). The results suggest that web series do truly impact young people psychologically, influencing their views of societal norms, content, and adverse effects. The statistics emphasize the need for more study into the manner in which watching web series may affect youth psychological health.

H0: There is no significant difference in the reasons underlying the preference for web series and traditional TV shows among the audience.

T-Test

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reasons for choosing web series over TV shows [Convenience over television and cinema hall]	215	2.83	.550	.037
Reasons for choosing web series over TV shows [Cost Effectiveness]	215	2.84	.496	.034
Reasons for choosing web series over TV shows [Understandable and attractive story line]	215	2.73	.650	.044
Reasons for choosing web series over TV shows [Affordable Medium]	215	2.82	.520	.035

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Reasons for choosing web series over TV shows [Convenience over television and cinema hall]	75.451	214	.000	2.828	2.75	2.90

Reasons for choosing web series over TV shows [Cost Effectiveness]	84.031	214	.000	2.842	2.78	2.91
Reasons for choosing web series over TV shows [Understandable and attractive story line]	61.610	214	.000	2.730	2.64	2.82
Reasons for choosing web series over TV shows [Affordable Medium]	79.437	214	.000	2.819	2.75	2.89

Table 4. Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

The results obtained from the t-test study focusing on the factors that influence viewers' preference for web series over conventional TV shows are highly significant. The mean scores for several factors, such as convenience compared to television and movie theatres, cost-effectiveness, simple to understand and compelling plots, and affordability, are all significantly greater than 0, with p-values for all of them being less than 0.001. It also suggests that because of these factors, the public may in fact prefer web series to traditional TV shows. The significance of the findings is reinforced by the fact that the confidence intervals of the mean differences are constantly larger than zero. In conclusion, the data clearly rejects the null hypothesis by indicating distinct variances in audience preferences for web series versus conventional TV episodes.

H0: There is no significant relationship between the consumption of web series and the psychosocial well-being of Indian youth.

ANOVA

	Sum Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Factors Influencing Choice of Web series [Unlimited variety of choice]	8.190	2	4.095	11.316	.000
Between Groups	76.713	212	.362		
Within Groups	84.902	214			
Total					
Factors Influencing Choice of Web series [Motivation and inspiration content]	13.246	2	6.623	19.723	.000
Between Groups	71.191	212	.336		
Within Groups	84.437	214			
Total					

Table 4. Source: Primary data

Interpretation

Results of the ANOVA analysis applied to study the relation between web series viewing and Indian youth's psychological wellbeing are highly significant. Significant mean square values for between-groups variations can be observed for the factors affecting the choice of web series, such as the unlimited variety of options and the motivational/inspiring content. The consumption of web series and the psychosocial well-being of Indian adolescents do definitely have a significant link, as shown by the particularly low p-values for both

components ($p < 0.001$). The findings indicate that these characteristics have a significant impact on the manner in which young people choose the content of web series that in turn affects their psychosocial well-being. The results of this study suggest there is a significant relationship between the consumption of web series and

Discussion:

The increasing popularity of internet content and the exponential growth of web series have impacted the entertainment landscape, especially among youth in India. This study analyzes the multifaceted relationships between the viewing of web series, psychological effects, user perception, and the overall mental and social health of Indian youths. Concerns regarding the impact on social and cultural factors and mental health have grown with the rapid shift from conventional broadcasting to digital the media. Although earlier studies have addressed the psychological effects of media, this study concentrates on the mediating mechanisms that impact user perceptions and their subsequent impacts on psychological and social wellness.

The analysis presents persuasive proof that the null hypotheses are false. The ANOVA results highlight the psychological impact that web series and internet content have on youths. Web series do obviously modify perceptions and influence youth opinions, as indicated by the wide variations between groups in elements like the portrayal of society, objectionable content, and inappropriate language.

The results of the t-test indicate that convenience, affordability, cost-effectiveness, and interesting narratives are important factors in people choosing web series over conventional television programs. The significance of these data leads a few to believe that these traits play an important role in influencing viewership decisions regarding web series viewing.

The ANOVA results additionally highlight the key role for factors like choice variety and inspiration/motivational content in determining the psychological and social health of Indian youth. The low p-values indicate that these factors have a major effect on youth choices about the content of web series, which subsequently in ultimately improves their overall psychological and social health.

Overall, the study's recommendations for policy for content producers, mental health experts, and platform providers were exactly make it important. This research offers a structure for interventions, content guidelines, and tactics that maximize the advantages while restricting any drawbacks by providing understanding of the psychological consequences of web series consumption and the role of mediation of user perception. This study includes an in-depth comprehension of the association between web series viewing and the psychological and social health of Indian youths, encouraging key players to make intelligent decisions regarding the path of digital entertainment because it will impact future generations.

Recommendation/Suggestion

Content Regulation and Guidelines: Considering the significant psychological impact of web series on Indian youth, it is recommended that content creators and platforms adhere to stricter content guidelines. Regulations should be in place to prevent the portrayal of harmful behaviours, offensive language, and objectionable content that could negatively influence young viewers.

Promotion of Positive Themes: Content creators should focus on producing web series that promote positive themes such as motivation, inspiration, and societal values. By incorporating such themes, web series can contribute to the psychological well-being of the audience, providing them with content that uplifts and empowers.

Educational Initiatives: Given the popularity of web series among youth, educational initiatives can be developed that use engaging web series content to educate and raise awareness about important issues such as mental health, social responsibilities, and ethical behaviour

Psychosocial Support Services: Streaming platforms can collaborate with mental health experts to provide access to psychosocial support services for viewers. This could include links to mental health resources, helplines, and guidance on maintaining a healthy balance between online entertainment and real-life well-being.

Media Literacy Programs: Implementing media literacy programs for young viewers can help them develop critical thinking skills to analyse and interpret the content they consume. These programs can educate viewers about identifying stereotypes, distinguishing between fiction and reality, and understanding the potential impact of media on their perceptions.

Conclusion:

This study extends to the collection of existing information by examining the complex interactions between web series consumption, psychological consequences, user perception, and psychosocial well-being among Indian youths. It highlights points out the need for more research which focuses on the relationships between different groups and those throughout them.

A comprehensive literature study highlights a number of important findings. Studies examine the psychological effects of web series on youth while examining issues like education and ambitions for study abroad. Other studies examine into the relationship between streaming and academic achievement. Themes like intrinsic drive and shared values, which frequently affect trust and risk perception, are also revealed by other factors influencing content choice. Another crucial area of investigation is how users are perceived, including behavior changes and societal influences. Additionally, the technique used takes a descriptive and analytical approach, collecting primary data from 215 respondents in Mumbai using a structured questionnaire.

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant impact that web series has on Indian youth's psychological health. The results highlight the need for more targeted interventions, content regulations, and measures to maximize advantages while restricting potential disadvantages. This research provides way for a more thorough comprehension of the impacts of the digital entertainment location on the younger generation and is an essential resource for platform providers, mental health users, and content producers.

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