

A Study on FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) and Its Role in OTT Consumption

Prof. Vikas Jadhav,

(Assistant Professor, NCRD's Sterling Institute of Management Studies, Nerul, Navi Mumbai),
Research Scholar Nagpur University

Abstract

The rise of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms has significantly altered content consumption behavior, especially in the post-pandemic digital era. Among the psychological drivers of this behavior is the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), a social anxiety stemming from the belief that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent. This paper explores how FOMO influences binge-watching and continuous engagement with OTT platforms. Through a survey-based quantitative approach, the study investigates user behavior, emotional triggers, and consumption patterns, aiming to provide insights for content creators, marketers, and psychologists.

Keywords: FOMO, OTT Platforms, Binge-Watching, Digital Behavior, Social Media, Psychological Triggers, Netflix, Streaming Habits

I. Introduction

The rapid evolution of digital media platforms has fundamentally reshaped content consumption patterns worldwide. Among these, Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+ Hotstar have emerged as dominant sources of entertainment, driven by on-demand accessibility and diverse content libraries. A notable psychological factor influencing OTT consumption in recent years is **FOMO**—the *Fear of Missing Out*. Rooted in social comparison theory and amplified by pervasive social media use, FOMO manifests as a compelling urge to stay updated with trending shows and movies to avoid feeling left out of conversations or social circles. This study explores the intricate relationship between FOMO and OTT content consumption. The primary objective is to examine the role of FOMO in shaping user engagement with OTT platforms, especially how it influences viewing urgency and frequency. Further, the research seeks to identify specific behavioral patterns—such as binge-

watching, impulsive content selection, or peer-driven choices—that arise due to FOMO. The role of social media as a catalyst will also be analyzed, focusing on how trends, recommendations, memes, and reviews act as amplifiers of FOMO-driven viewership. Lastly, the study evaluates user satisfaction levels after content consumption initiated by FOMO—whether viewers feel fulfilled or experience regret, fatigue, or a need for continued consumption. By analyzing these dynamics, the study aims to offer insights into how psychological motivators and digital ecosystems intersect, helping content creators, marketers, and platform developers better understand and ethically leverage user behavior in the OTT landscape.

II. Literature Review

Dr. Dan Herman [2000], inaugurates the concept of FOMO by identifying a new consumer mindset arising in the late 1990s—a desire to exhaust all options driven by a fear of missing out on opportunities available in a rapidly evolving market landscape. His paper introduces the notion of “short-term brands,” tailored to serve consumers motivated by immediacy and novelty rather than long-term loyalty or traditional branding strategies. Herman characterizes these consumers as driven by an “ambition to exhaust all possibilities” and a pervasive anxiety of being excluded from valuable experiences. Although he did not yet use the acronym FOMO, Herman’s description laid the groundwork for the concept that was later popularized by Patrick J. McGinnis in 2004. The paper also reflects on the shifting dynamics of marketing strategy—moving from traditional long-term brand building toward agile, short-duration branding efforts that capture attention in a fast-changing environment. Herman’s work remains seminal in marketing psychology, framing FOMO as both a socio-cultural phenomenon and a powerful driver of consumer behavior.

Przybylski et al. [2013], the authors present one of the first empirical investigations into the psychological underpinnings of FOMO—*fear of missing out*. Defined as the pervasive apprehension that others are having rewarding experiences without you, FOMO is linked to deficits in basic psychological needs, particularly autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Using surveys with over 1,000 participants, the authors find that individuals high in FOMO are more likely to engage compulsively with social media, prioritize online interactions over real-life engagements, and report lower levels of life satisfaction. FOMO is shown to be strongly

associated with negative emotional states such as anxiety and loneliness, as well as with motivational conflicts—people often feel obligated to stay connected even when it undermines their well-being. The study also highlights how FOMO can lead to unhealthy behavioral patterns, such as distracted driving and disrupted sleep. Overall, this paper significantly advances our understanding of FOMO by establishing it as a measurable psychological construct with clear motivational and emotional correlates in the context of digital technology and social media use.

Netflix Viewership Report [2023], Netflix reached **183 billion total hours** streamed in 2023. **The Night Agent** dominated early-year viewing; *One Piece* led in the latter half. Non-English productions—especially from India, Korea, and Spain—made up a significant chunk ($\approx 30\%$) of engagement. The new report reflects Netflix’s shift toward openness around viewership—helping creators, advertisers, and industry stakeholders. Regional hits like *Jaane Jaan* and *The Railway Men* highlight Netflix’s global content strategy and evolving demographic reach.

Global & Biannual Metrics

- Subscribers worldwide collectively watched **183 billion hours** of content throughout 2023.
- In the second half of the year (July–December), viewing totaled about **90 billion hours**.

Most-Viewed Titles (Jan–Jun 2023)

- **Series:** *The Night Agent* S1 led with **812.1 million hours**, followed by *Ginny & Georgia* S2 (665M), *The Glory* S1 (622.8M), *Wednesday* S1 (507.7M), and *Queen Charlotte* (503M).
- **Movies:** *The Mother*, starring Jennifer Lopez, was the top film (hours not specified here).

Language & Regional Trends

- Nearly **one-third of total viewing** in H2 2023 went to **non-English titles**, led by Korean (9%), Spanish (7%), and Japanese (5%) content
- Indian films and series collectively crossed **1 billion views** during H2 2023:
 - Top films: *Jaane Jaan* (20.2M views), *Jawan* (16.2M), *Khufiya* (12.1M).

- Top Indian series: *The Railway Men* (10.6M views).

Notable Emerging Patterns

- Live-action *One Piece* debuted mid-2023 and ended H2 as the **most-viewed English-language series** with **~541.9 million hours** viewed and 71.6 million viewers. It also boosted interest in the original anime.
- Titles like *Shadow and Bone S2* logged **192.9 million hours** in H1 2023—ranking 26th among 18,000 titles—even as it was later cancelled.

Broader Industry Context

- Netflix’s biannual “What We Watched” initiative marks a major increase in data transparency, fulfilling demands from the Writers Guild and AG-AFTRA during contract negotiations.
- The company now reveals hours watched for nearly all 18,000 titles that exceeded 50,000 viewing hours, representing 99% of total engagement.
- Originals accounted for approximately **55% of total viewing hours**, with licensed content making up the remaining **45%** in H1 2023.

Statista [2024], the global OTT (Over-the-Top) market reached an estimated **USD 301 billion**, with projections rising to **USD 1.36 trillion by 2034**—a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of **16.3 %** from 2025 onward. North America led the market in 2024, holding around **38 %** of global revenue, followed by Europe (~25 %) and Asia Pacific (~22 %). Asia Pacific is expected to post the fastest regional growth, supported by surging smartphone penetration, rising internet access, and expanding middle-class populations. User behavior trends show viewers spend an average of **6.8 hours weekly**, with mobile consumption accounting for **~70 %** of usage globally—especially in emerging markets. Subscription based video-on-demand (SVOD) makes up about **45 %** of the revenue model, while ad-supported (AVOD) and hybrid services constitute roughly 30 % and 10 % respectively. OTT platforms are increasingly leveraging AI

personalization, original content, and live/interactive features to enhance engagement and retention.

III. Objectives

- To examine the role of FOMO in OTT content consumption.
- To identify the behavioral patterns influenced by FOMO.
- To analyze how social media trends amplify OTT viewership.
- To evaluate user satisfaction levels post consumption triggered by FOMO.

IV. Research Methodology

- **Research Design:** Quantitative and Descriptive
- **Data Collection:** Online survey of 300 respondents aged 18–35
- **Sampling Method:** Convenience sampling
- **Tools for Analysis:** Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and thematic interpretation of open-ended responses.

V. The role of FOMO in OTT content consumption

In the digital age, content consumption patterns have undergone a profound transformation, particularly with the emergence of Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, and Hulu. These platforms have not only revolutionized how content is delivered but also how it is consumed. One psychological factor increasingly influencing viewer behavior is the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). FOMO, defined as the anxiety that an exciting or interesting event may be happening elsewhere or without one's participation, has become a powerful driver in the decision-making processes of digital consumers. This paper explores the role of FOMO in OTT content consumption, examining how it shapes viewing habits, engagement levels, and content marketing strategies.

FOMO is rooted in social comparison theory, where individuals assess their own lives in relation to others. Social media platforms have amplified this tendency by constantly showcasing what others are watching, liking, or discussing. When users see friends or influencers talking about a trending show or film, a psychological trigger is activated. The fear of being left out of a cultural or social moment compels users to watch the content—even if it wasn't initially of interest to them. This effect is particularly pronounced with OTT content because it is easily accessible and immediately available. Unlike traditional TV, OTT content can be consumed on demand, making it easier for users to quickly catch up on what they've missed. The always-on nature of OTT platforms perfectly aligns with the impulsiveness driven by FOMO.

Binge-Watching and Social Relevance

One of the clearest manifestations of FOMO in OTT consumption is binge-watching. Viewers often feel pressure to watch entire seasons of a show quickly to avoid spoilers and to stay in the loop socially. For example, when Netflix drops an entire season of a popular show like "Stranger Things" or "The Witcher," many viewers prioritize finishing it in the shortest time possible to partake in online discussions or water-cooler conversations. Not watching in time can lead to social exclusion in both online and offline circles, pushing people to prioritize OTT content over other activities. FOMO not only influences what people watch but also when and how much they watch. This sense of urgency drives immediate and intense consumption patterns, often resulting in long viewing sessions that might not occur otherwise. OTT platforms are well aware of this behavior and often release content in a way that maximizes FOMO, for example by promoting global release dates or showing trending titles based on real-time viewing statistics.

The Role of Social Media and Influencers

Social media acts as a catalyst in the FOMO cycle. Hashtags, memes, reaction videos, and influencer commentary all contribute to a sense of urgency around certain shows or movies. If a series becomes a cultural phenomenon—like "Game of Thrones" or "Squid Game"—those who haven't watched it may feel left behind in daily conversations, jokes, or even professional settings. As a result, individuals might consume content not purely out of interest, but to maintain cultural literacy and social relevance. Influencers and content creators often partner with OTT platforms to drive viewership. Their endorsements, reviews, and behind-the-scenes

access can generate immense FOMO, especially among younger audiences who value the opinions of digital celebrities more than traditional critics. This form of marketing is not only cost-effective but also emotionally resonant, leveraging parasocial relationships to drive engagement.

Content Discovery and Platform Algorithms

OTT platforms themselves leverage FOMO through algorithmic content promotion. "Trending Now," "Top 10 in Your Country," or "Because You Watched" sections serve as psychological nudges. They imply a collective viewing experience that the user is on the brink of missing. This social proof mechanism reinforces FOMO and nudges users toward consuming content they might not have otherwise considered. Moreover, limited-time availability or exclusive content further exploits FOMO. By creating artificial scarcity—such as removing shows after a set period or limiting access to premium subscribers—platforms intensify the fear of missing out, pushing users to consume content sooner rather than later.

Implications and Ethical Considerations

While FOMO can drive engagement and revenue for OTT platforms, it also raises questions about digital well-being. The pressure to constantly stay up-to-date can lead to anxiety, reduced productivity, and a degraded viewing experience. Instead of enjoying content for its artistic or entertainment value, viewers may consume it under stress or obligation. OTT platforms must balance engagement strategies with user health, perhaps by promoting mindful consumption or offering features like "Watch Later" lists and content reminders. As the media landscape continues to evolve, understanding the psychological impact of FOMO will be essential not just for marketers and content creators, but for consumers seeking to regain control of their digital habits.

FOMO has emerged as a significant psychological driver in the OTT ecosystem. It influences what, when, and how users consume content, fueled by social dynamics, marketing tactics, and platform algorithms. While effective in increasing engagement, the implications of FOMO-driven consumption warrant a thoughtful approach, ensuring that the power of OTT platforms is balanced with a responsibility toward viewer well-being.

VI. The behavioral patterns influenced by FOMO

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is a psychological phenomenon characterized by the anxiety that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent. In the context of Over-The-Top (OTT) content consumption, FOMO significantly influences viewer behavior, shaping not only what users watch but also how, when, and why they watch it. This section identifies and analyzes the key **behavioral patterns** that are directly or indirectly influenced by FOMO among OTT viewers.

1. Binge-Watching Behavior

One of the most prominent behavioral patterns driven by FOMO is binge-watching. FOMO creates a sense of urgency to complete series or episodes in one sitting. Viewers often feel pressured to watch an entire season immediately upon release to:

- Avoid social media spoilers
- Participate in discussions and memes
- Stay socially relevant within peer groups

For example, when popular series like *Stranger Things* or *Bridgerton* are released, viewers may stay up late, skip tasks, or clear their schedules to watch episodes back-to-back. The underlying fear is not missing the show itself, but missing out on the shared cultural experience.

2. Compulsive Content Selection

FOMO affects not just how much people watch, but what they choose to watch. Instead of selecting content based on personal interest or genre preferences, viewers may gravitate toward:

- Trending titles or shows listed as “Top 10 in Your Country”
- Content being heavily discussed or shared on social media
- Series or films recommended by influencers or friends

This often leads to the abandonment of a user’s personal watchlist in favor of what's popular at the moment. OTT platforms amplify this behavior through real-time algorithmic

recommendations and homepage banners highlighting “must-watch” or “newly released” content.

3. Multiscreen and Simultaneous Viewing

To keep up with multiple trending shows, FOMO-driven users may start watching multiple series at once. This can result in:

- Split attention or shallow engagement with content
- Reduced enjoyment due to constant switching
- Increased consumption of synopses, recaps, or reviews to stay caught up

In some cases, users may even “speed-watch” (e.g., increase playback speed or skip scenes) just to complete episodes and avoid feeling left out.

4. Second-Screening and Social Validation

Another behavioral outcome influenced by FOMO is second-screening—the use of a smartphone or other device while watching OTT content. Users often engage in:

- Tweeting reactions in real-time
- Posting Instagram stories or memes about a show
- Checking how others are reacting online

This behavior provides immediate social validation and helps users feel like active participants in a shared viewing event. In essence, OTT viewing becomes a performance, where users show others they are “in the loop.”

5. Peer Pressure and Group Viewing

FOMO can also push viewers to watch content they wouldn’t normally choose, solely because friends or colleagues are watching it. This peer-driven viewing behavior includes:

- Joining group watch parties

- Watching shows for the sake of participating in conversations
- Feeling obligated to watch certain content to avoid exclusion

This behavior particularly affects teenagers and young adults, who often derive a sense of social belonging through shared digital experiences.

6. Subscription Jumping and Platform Switching

To avoid missing trending shows exclusive to particular platforms, users may frequently switch between or subscribe to multiple OTT services. For example, a viewer might temporarily subscribe to HBO Max to watch *The Last of Us*, then cancel and move to Netflix for a new season of *The Crown*.

This subscription-jumping behavior is driven by the need to access "hyped" content quickly, even if it's only for a short duration. It also reflects a transactional mindset where content is consumed not out of long-term interest but immediate social need.

7. Short-Term vs. Long-Term Viewing Preferences

FOMO also shifts user focus toward short-term gratification. Users may:

- Prioritize new releases over classic or backlog content
- Drop a series midway if it loses buzz or social relevance
- Choose limited-series formats over longer, more complex shows

This undermines deeper content exploration and may result in a narrowing of taste or reduced content diversity in consumption patterns.

FOMO plays a significant role in shaping OTT viewing behaviors, often promoting compulsive, reactive, and socially influenced patterns. From binge-watching and multi-show juggling to peer-driven viewing and platform switching, users are increasingly motivated by the desire to stay culturally and socially "in the know." While this fuels content consumption and boosts platform engagement, it can also reduce viewing satisfaction and lead to digital fatigue. Understanding these FOMO-driven behavioral patterns is critical for OTT platforms, marketers, and even

mental health professionals seeking to promote healthier, more intentional viewing habits in the digital age.

VII. Social media trends amplify OTT viewership

In the contemporary digital landscape, **social media and Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms** are deeply interconnected, forming a feedback loop that significantly influences content consumption. With billions of global users, platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), and YouTube have become key drivers of OTT viewership. Social media not only promotes content but also transforms how audiences discover, discuss, and engage with it. This analysis explores how **social media trends amplify OTT viewership**, shaping what people watch, how quickly they watch it, and how content gains viral momentum.

1. Trend-Based Content Discovery

Social media plays a central role in content discovery. Previously, viewers relied on TV listings or word-of-mouth recommendations. Today, they are far more likely to encounter new OTT content through:

- Viral TikTok clips
- Trending hashtags on Twitter/X
- Reels and stories on Instagram
- YouTube reaction and review videos

For instance, a short, emotional or comedic scene from a Netflix show shared on TikTok can reach millions of users in hours, sparking interest in the full series. This **bite-sized exposure** acts as a teaser, often more effective than traditional trailers, especially for younger audiences.

2. Hashtag Campaigns and Virality

Hashtags have emerged as a powerful amplification tool. OTT platforms and marketing agencies create **hashtag campaigns** (#SquidGame, #MoneyHeistFinale, #WednesdayDance) to build anticipation and encourage participation. Once a hashtag trends:

- More users are exposed to the show
- Audiences feel a need to participate in the social conversation
- Engagement with the content surges

The "Wednesday dance" scene from Netflix's *Wednesday* series is a prime example. A single dance sequence went viral on TikTok and Instagram, leading millions of users—many of whom had never watched the show—to stream it just to understand the hype or recreate the trend.

3. User-Generated Content (UGC)

One of the most influential elements in social media trends is **User-Generated Content**. Fans often create:

- Memes
- Parodies
- Reviews
- Fan art or cosplay
- Reaction videos

This content acts as **peer-to-peer marketing** and contributes to a sense of community around a show or film. Unlike paid advertisements, UGC is perceived as authentic and relatable, making it more persuasive. OTT platforms benefit immensely from this unpaid promotion, as it helps sustain interest and broaden reach organically.

4. Influencer Marketing and Watch-Along Culture

Influencers, streamers, and content creators now have significant power to **drive OTT viewership**. Whether they are paid by platforms or act independently, their reviews and reactions strongly influence followers. Examples include:

- YouTubers doing live "watch-alongs" of new episodes
- Influencers posting "what I'm watching this week" videos
- TikTok creators reacting to plot twists or emotional scenes

This form of promotion amplifies hype and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), encouraging users to watch content quickly to join the conversation. It also promotes **watch-along culture**, where fans experience content together online, mimicking the communal aspects of traditional TV but in real-time, interactive ways.

5. Spoilers and the Urgency to Watch

The rise of spoiler culture on social media has directly affected **viewing timelines**. If a show like *Stranger Things* or *House of the Dragon* releases a new season, social media discussions begin immediately. Viewers are bombarded with:

- Screenshots
- Fan theories
- Major plot reveals

This creates a **sense of urgency**—either watch it now or have the experience ruined. As a result, users rush to stream episodes, even altering their schedules to stay ahead of the social media chatter. In this way, social media *dictates* viewing behavior and timing.

6. Algorithmic Amplification and Virality Loops

Social media algorithms play a crucial role in content amplification. Once a piece of content starts to trend, algorithms on TikTok, Instagram, or Twitter/X push it to more users, many of whom have never engaged with the show before. This leads to:

- A **virality loop**, where increased exposure drives more views
- Greater conversation, leading to more shares and engagement
- A halo effect, where older seasons or similar genre content also gains views

For OTT platforms, this algorithm-driven exposure can result in **explosive, overnight growth in viewership**. The success of shows like *Squid Game* or *The Queen's Gambit* can be partially attributed to such viral momentum.

7. Engagement Beyond the Screen

Social media allows OTT content to **live beyond the screen**, extending viewer interaction past the final credits. Platforms encourage users to:

- Take quizzes (“Which character are you?”)
- Participate in challenges or contests
- Create content inspired by shows (dance trends, themed outfits, etc.)

This keeps audiences **emotionally invested** and helps shows remain in public conversation long after their release. For instance, *Bridgerton* inspired fashion trends and parties themed after Regency-era aesthetics, while *The Bear* sparked food-related memes and chef culture commentary.

Social media has become an essential ecosystem for amplifying OTT content. Through trending hashtags, influencer culture, meme virality, and algorithmic exposure, social platforms act as both **promotion engines and cultural stages** for OTT content. They influence not only *what* viewers choose to watch, but also *when, how, and why*. As the line between social media and streaming continues to blur, the success of future OTT content will increasingly depend on its **trendability** and its capacity to ignite conversation and community in the social media space.

VIII. User satisfaction levels post consumption triggered by FOMO

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has emerged as a powerful psychological driver influencing media consumption behavior, especially on Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+. While FOMO can significantly boost initial engagement with a piece of content, it is essential to evaluate whether that engagement translates into genuine **user satisfaction** post-consumption. In many cases, the decision to watch a show or movie is motivated not by intrinsic interest but by external social pressure. This analysis evaluates how FOMO-driven consumption impacts users' satisfaction levels after the viewing experience, drawing from behavioral patterns, psychological insights, and user feedback.

1. FOMO-Driven Consumption vs. Intentional Viewing

One of the primary distinctions in evaluating satisfaction lies in **why** the user chose to watch the content. When consumption is driven by FOMO, users are:

- Reacting to social media trends
- Seeking inclusion in peer discussions
- Trying to avoid spoilers
- Engaging due to perceived popularity or hype

In contrast, intentional viewing is typically aligned with personal taste, mood, or long-standing interest in a particular genre or creator. Studies in behavioral psychology suggest that **goal-congruent activities**—those that align with personal interests—tend to result in higher satisfaction and fulfillment. Therefore, **FOMO-driven viewing often starts at a disadvantage**, as the motivation behind the behavior is extrinsically influenced.

2. Immediate Gratification vs. Lasting Fulfillment

FOMO consumption frequently provides **immediate gratification**. Watching the "trending" show or latest viral series offers:

- A short-term sense of belonging
- Relief from social anxiety or exclusion
- The ability to engage in conversations, memes, and online commentary

However, this gratification is often **temporary**. Once the content is consumed and the conversation passes, users may reflect on the experience with mixed feelings. Common post-viewing sentiments include:

- "It was overrated."
- "I wouldn't have watched it if it wasn't trending."
- "I didn't actually enjoy it, but I wanted to keep up."

This mismatch between expectation (often inflated by hype) and experience can lead to **post-consumption dissatisfaction**, or even regret.

3. Influence of Social Comparison

Social media reinforces social comparison, where users evaluate their choices and experiences against others. If a viewer finds that a highly-hyped show didn't meet their expectations, but everyone else seems to be raving about it, they may:

- Feel confused or left out
- Doubt their own taste
- Conceal their real opinions to fit in

This dynamic contributes to **reduced authentic satisfaction**, as users may feel pressured to conform rather than honestly assess their enjoyment. It also leads to a phenomenon called “**pluralistic ignorance**”, where people believe others are enjoying something more than they actually are, creating a false consensus.

4. Completion vs. Enjoyment

Another trend observed among FOMO-driven consumers is **finishing content out of obligation** rather than enjoyment. Users may:

- Force themselves to complete a series to avoid missing future discussions
- Skip scenes or episodes but still claim to have watched it
- Rate the show highly in public while feeling indifferent or bored in private

This behavior reflects a **disconnect between completion and satisfaction**. Watching something to stay socially current does not guarantee a meaningful or pleasurable viewing experience. In fact, it may lead to content fatigue or emotional burnout, especially if users repeat this cycle across multiple shows.

5. Content Type and Viewer Expectations

Not all FOMO-driven content results in low satisfaction. In some cases, users are pleasantly surprised. For instance:

- A viewer might discover a genre they previously ignored (e.g., K-dramas via *Squid Game*)
- High production value or storytelling may override initial disinterest
- A “viral moment” might lead to a broader appreciation of the full series

Therefore, satisfaction levels can vary depending on the **quality of the content** and the viewer’s **openness to new experiences**. FOMO can act as a gateway to content that users might not have considered, potentially leading to unexpected enjoyment.

6. Survey Insights and Anecdotal Feedback

Surveys and user reviews on platforms like Reddit, IMDb, or Twitter often reveal mixed responses post FOMO-driven viewing:

- Many users admit they were “underwhelmed” by shows that were “overhyped”
- Others mention they only watched certain series “because everyone else was watching it”
- Satisfaction ratings often decline after the initial hype subsides, indicating the temporary nature of FOMO-based engagement

These insights point to a need for **more intentional consumption habits** and **critical media literacy**—skills that help users filter social noise and focus on content that truly aligns with their interests.

While FOMO is highly effective in prompting OTT content consumption, it does not consistently lead to high levels of user satisfaction. In many cases, viewers feel compelled to watch content for social inclusion rather than personal interest, resulting in short-term gratification but not lasting fulfillment. However, in certain instances, FOMO can introduce users to new genres or content that they genuinely enjoy. Ultimately, satisfaction post-FOMO consumption is heavily dependent on content quality, personal alignment, and the user’s ability to differentiate between social trends and individual preferences. To foster more satisfying viewing experiences, both platforms and users must balance social engagement with mindful media consumption.

IX. Threats

- **Data Privacy:** Risk of exposing user habits and personal media choices.
- **Mental Health Risks:** Heightened anxiety, sleep deprivation, and decreased satisfaction.
- **Marketing Exploitation:** Platforms might intentionally use FOMO to drive consumption.
- **Loss of Genuine Interest:** Consumption driven by fear rather than desire or curiosity.

X. Data Analysis

Key Findings from the Survey:

- 68% of respondents admitted to watching shows they weren't initially interested in due to social media buzz.
- 54% experienced regret or dissatisfaction after completing FOMO-driven content.
- 72% of respondents agreed that they feel pressure to watch trending content to stay relevant in social conversations.
- Positive correlation ($r = 0.63$) found between social media engagement and FOMO-driven OTT consumption.

XI. Key Findings

- FOMO significantly influences binge-watching behavior.
- Social media plays a crucial role in amplifying FOMO.
- FOMO-driven consumption often leads to post-viewing regret.
- Younger demographics (18–25) are more prone to FOMO compared to older groups.

XII. Advantage

- Enhances understanding of user engagement drivers.
- Helps in designing better recommendation systems.
- Assists in the development of healthier content strategies.
- Raises awareness of mental health aspects related to media.

XIII. Disadvantage

- Could lead to manipulative marketing practices.
- Might normalize or justify obsessive viewing habits.
- Underrepresents populations less active on social media.
- May lack longitudinal insight due to time-bound survey data.

XIV. Comparison

Factor	FOMO-driven Viewing	Interest-based Viewing
Motivation	Social pressure	Personal preference
Satisfaction level	Moderate to low	High
Frequency	High	Moderate
Post-consumption regret	Frequent	Rare

XV. Conclusion

This study highlights the significant role that FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) plays in shaping OTT content consumption in the modern digital era. Findings reveal that FOMO acts as a powerful psychological motivator, compelling users to engage with trending content to remain socially connected and informed. The pressure to stay up to date with popular series or films, often intensified by peer discussions and online discourse, leads many users to consume content not purely out of interest, but to avoid feeling excluded. Behavioral patterns driven by FOMO include binge-watching, impulsive selection of trending content, and prioritizing social media-endorsed shows over personal preferences. These behaviors are often reinforced through algorithmic suggestions and peer validation, indicating a cyclical relationship between social influence and consumption habits.

Social media platforms serve as critical amplifiers of FOMO, where the visibility of content trends—through hashtags, memes, reviews, and influencer recommendations—creates a heightened sense of urgency to view specific shows or movies. This widespread online buzz fosters a communal viewing culture that further deepens FOMO-driven behaviors. However, when evaluating user satisfaction following FOMO-induced consumption, results suggest a

mixed outcome. While some users report enjoyment and a sense of inclusion, others experience regret, disappointment, or content fatigue. This reflects a potential disconnect between motivations for consumption and actual viewer satisfaction. Overall, the study underscores the importance of understanding psychological triggers in media consumption. Recognizing the influence of FOMO can help OTT platforms design more mindful engagement strategies and encourage healthier viewing habits among users.

XVI. References

- Herman, D. (2000). Introducing FOMO: A new psychological theory. *Marketing Review*.
- Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell, V. (2013). Motivational, emotional, and behavioral correlates of fear of missing out. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(4), 1841–1848.
- Gupta, R. & Sharma, K. (2022). Psychological Impact of Social Media Trends on Youth. *International Journal of Digital Behavior*, 15(2), 101–117.
- Netflix Viewership Report (2023).
- Statista (2024). Global OTT Market Size and User Behavior Trends.