

A Comparative Study on Generation Z vs. Millennials: Differences in OTT Usage

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Abstract

Over-the-top (OTT) platforms have redefined how audiences consume media content. With the digital boom and increased internet penetration, Generation Z (born 1997–2012) and Millennials (born 1981–1996) have become two key consumer segments for OTT services. This study explores the differences in usage patterns, content preferences, subscription behavior, and engagement levels with OTT platforms between these two generational cohorts. Using a mixed-method approach, the study provides insights into evolving digital media consumption trends and their implications for marketers and OTT providers.

Keywords: Generation Z, Millennials, OTT Platforms, Streaming, Digital Consumption, Media Behavior, Content Preferences

I. Introduction

In the digital age, the consumption of entertainment has undergone a profound transformation, with OTT platforms becoming the dominant medium for viewing content. Services such as Prime Video, Disney+, Netflix, Amazon and YouTube have revolutionized media access, offering on-demand content across genres, devices, and geographies. Among the most active users of these platforms are Millennials (born 1981–1996) and Generation Z (born 1997–2012). Despite their shared digital fluency, their behaviors, preferences, and motivations for using OTT platforms vary considerably. This study aims to provide a comparative analysis of these two generational cohorts in the context of OTT usage. The primary objective is to analyze and compare the OTT consumption habits of Generation Z and Millennials, considering factors such as frequency, duration, and content type. A key focus is to examine the distinct content preferences and favored viewing formats—such as short-form vs. long-form content—and the devices used by each generation. The research also investigates the extent to which social media

and peer influence affect content discovery and viewing choices. With the increasing diversification of OTT business models, another objective is to explore trends in subscription behaviors, including the willingness to pay for content and the tendency to share accounts. By understanding these behavioral patterns, content creators, marketers, and OTT service providers can better cater to the expectations and needs of each generation. This study seeks to bridge the gap in current research by highlighting how generational differences shape the future of digital entertainment consumption.

II. Literature Review

Smith [2021], the author explores the evolving relationship between media consumption and generational identity, offering a comprehensive analysis of how different age cohorts engage with digital technologies and content platforms. Published by Oxford University Press, the book provides theoretical and empirical insights into the media habits of generations ranging from Baby Boomers to Generation Z. Smith emphasizes that media consumption is shaped not only by access to technology but also by the social, cultural, and economic contexts in which each generation matures. A key argument in the book is that Generation Z exhibits a distinctly fluid and participatory media behavior, often blurring the line between consumer and creator, particularly on platforms like TikTok and YouTube. Meanwhile, Millennials are characterized by a transitional media experience—adapting from analog to digital and from traditional broadcast formats to on-demand streaming. Smith’s work is instrumental in understanding how generational values, media literacy, and technological familiarity influence preferences, making it a valuable resource for analyzing patterns in OTT usage and broader media consumption trends.

Netflix [2022], it released a significantly revised version of its renowned internal culture memo—renamed “Netflix Culture — Seeking Excellence.” The update introduced key changes to reflect evolving corporate priorities amid subscriber losses and growing scrutiny. A new section urges employees to “spend our members’ money wisely,” signaling tighter fiscal discipline and reduced discretionary spending. Another major addition is the “Artistic Expression” clause, which asserts that staff may be asked to work on content they find objectionable and that Netflix may not be the right fit if such content conflicts with personal

values. The memo also refines core values. It retains the high-performance ethos of the old “keeper test” but emphasizes continuous feedback and accountability under a new framework titled “People Over Process”. The cultural shift reflects Netflix’s evolution from a startup culture of radical freedom to a more structured model, balancing creativity with cost awareness and accountability.

Kantar Media [2023], it identified significant shifts in OTT usage among younger demographics, highlighting that approximately 20% of video viewers had cut the cord, especially in digitizing markets like India. Connected TV (CTV) viewership surged, positioning OTT platforms as a viable replacement for traditional television, especially among Gen Z and Millennials. The study emphasized Gen Z’s growing affinity for digital-only streaming, which reflects their preference for on-demand, mobile-first, and often short-form content. This group is leading the migration away from linear TV, with digital-only consumption particularly high among younger age brackets. Simultaneously, Millennials are embracing OTT via hybrid viewing habits, utilizing both traditional platforms and newer VOD models. While Generation Z readily adopts ad-supported and free-tier services, Millennials display greater loyalty to subscription-based, ad-free services. CTV’s rise—including smart TVs and connected devices—was noted as a driving force converting casual viewers into Frequent OTT users, particularly among Millennials who favor longer-form, immersive content. These trends underscore how both generations are accelerating the shift toward OTT, but with different usage patterns and platform preferences.

Pew Research Center. [2023], it says that 97 % of U.S. adults aged 18–29 reported using the internet, remaining virtually universal among younger age groups. Usage among 30–49-year-olds stood at 98 %, while older adults also reported high usage: 96 % in the 50–64 bracket and 88 % for individuals aged 65 and older. This data reflects continued growth in internet adoption, especially among older adults. The gap in tech use between generations has narrowed: even among seniors (65+), 88 % now report using the internet. Since 2021, that figure increased significantly—from roughly 75 % to 88 %. In younger groups, usage has plateaued at near-saturation levels (97 %–99 %). The findings underscore how generational differences in technology adoption have diminished over time. While Gen Z and Millennials were early adopters, older generations are rapidly catching up—making digital tools and online platforms

increasingly ubiquitous across all age cohorts. This report provides essential context when considering generational patterns in OTT media consumption, digital content discovery, and platform preferences—highlighting that access is no longer a dividing factor among adult cohorts.

III. Objectives

- To analyze and compare the OTT consumption habits of Generation Z and Millennials.
- To examine content preferences and viewing formats of both generations.
- To evaluate the impact of social media and peer influence on OTT choices.
- To identify trends in subscription models and willingness to pay for content.

IV. Research Methodology

Research Design: Quantitative and qualitative methods.

Sample Size: 500 respondents (250 Gen Z, 250 Millennials)

Data Collection:

- Online surveys
- Focus group discussions
- Secondary data from industry reports

Data Analysis Tools: SPSS, Excel, and thematic analysis for qualitative data

V. Analyze and compare the OTT consumption habits of Generation Z and Millennials

The rise of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms has significantly transformed the way audiences consume media content, offering on-demand access to television shows, movies, web series, and documentaries. Among the key user groups fueling the growth of OTT services are Generation Z (those born roughly between 1997 and 2012) and Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996). Despite both groups being digitally savvy and active OTT users, their consumption habits vary in meaningful ways. This section explores and compares how each generation engages with OTT platforms in terms of frequency, platform preference, device usage, time spent, and overall viewing behavior.

One of the most striking differences between Generation Z and Millennials is the frequency of OTT content consumption. Generation Z tends to consume content in shorter, more frequent bursts, often integrating OTT viewing into their daily routines. This cohort is more likely to watch content multiple times a day, especially in idle moments such as commuting, between study sessions, or before bed. Their consumption is spontaneous and less structured.

Millennials, on the other hand, generally prefer longer, more intentional viewing sessions. Binge-watching entire seasons over weekends or in the evenings is more common among Millennials. While they may not access OTT platforms as frequently throughout the day, their sessions often last longer and are more immersive. This indicates a tendency toward structured consumption patterns among Millennials versus the more fragmented but high-frequency engagement of Gen Z.

Platform Preferences

Both generations use popular OTT platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, and Hulu, but preferences differ in platform loyalty and the kind of content they seek. Generation Z is more experimental and open to exploring new platforms, especially those that offer free or short-form content, like YouTube, TikTok, and emerging niche streaming services. They are less brand-loyal and more drawn to platforms that offer immediate gratification and shareable content.

Millennials, conversely, show greater loyalty to established OTT platforms, often maintaining paid subscriptions to multiple services. Their platform choices are influenced more by content libraries, genre availability, and user interface features. Millennials are also more likely to remain subscribed to a platform long-term based on their viewing history and content preferences.

Device Usage

The devices used for OTT consumption reveal another generational divide. Generation Z primarily uses smartphones and tablets to stream content, reflecting their mobile-first digital upbringing. For Gen Z, convenience and accessibility outweigh screen size or audio quality. The

portability of smartphones aligns with their preference for on-the-go, bite-sized content consumption.

Millennials, although comfortable with mobile devices, prefer watching OTT content on smart TVs, laptops, or desktop computers. They value a cinematic or immersive viewing experience, which larger screens and better sound systems provide. Millennials are also more likely to invest in home entertainment systems, highlighting their inclination toward high-quality, long-format consumption.

Content Discovery and Consumption Behavior

Generation Z heavily relies on social media, influencers, and peer recommendations for content discovery. Their OTT consumption is closely tied to trends, memes, and viral content. The interactive nature of platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat directly shapes what they choose to watch on OTT platforms. Gen Z is also more inclined to watch clips, highlights, and compilations rather than full-length episodes or movies.

Millennials, while also influenced by social media, tend to depend more on OTT platform recommendations, user reviews, and curated lists. They often explore content within their favorite genres and are more likely to complete series and revisit content. Their viewing behavior reflects a more traditional approach to entertainment, albeit in a digital format.

Time of Viewing

Time-of-day preferences also differ between the two generations. Generation Z's consumption peaks in short intervals throughout the day—early morning, lunchtime, and late evening. Their habits are closely aligned with multitasking and background viewing. Millennials, however, are more likely to watch OTT content during specific blocks of time, particularly in the evenings or on weekends. They tend to plan their viewing sessions around their work and family responsibilities.

Subscription and Payment Behavior

OTT consumption is also influenced by how each generation approaches payment and subscriptions. Generation Z often relies on shared accounts, free trials, or ad-supported models

due to limited financial independence. They are more price-sensitive and less willing to commit to long-term paid subscriptions.

Millennials, with more stable incomes, show a higher willingness to pay for premium services. They prioritize ad-free experiences, exclusive content, and multi-device access, and are more likely to manage multiple subscriptions simultaneously. Their behavior reflects a greater investment in content quality and platform value.

While both Generation Z and Millennials are key consumers of OTT content, their habits differ significantly. Generation Z favors mobile, short-form, socially influenced content with a flexible, high-frequency approach to consumption. Millennials, by contrast, prefer structured, long-form viewing experiences on larger screens with higher subscription loyalty. Understanding these behavioral patterns is critical for OTT platforms aiming to design user experiences, content strategies, and monetization models that effectively target each demographic. As the media landscape continues to evolve, tailoring offerings to the unique habits of these generational groups will remain essential for sustained engagement and growth.

VI. Content preferences and viewing formats of both generations

Understanding the content preferences and viewing formats of Generation Z and Millennials is essential for OTT (Over-the-Top) platforms aiming to deliver relevant, engaging, and personalized user experiences. While both generations are digitally native and actively engage with streaming content, their preferences for what they watch and how they watch it differ significantly. These distinctions are influenced by cultural factors, technological familiarity, attention spans, and lifestyle patterns. This section explores and compares the content genres, storytelling formats, and viewing styles preferred by Generation Z and Millennials.

Content Preferences

Genre Preferences

Generation Z is drawn to content that is fast-paced, diverse, and socially relevant. This generation has grown up with constant exposure to global digital content and tends to prefer genres such as:

- Comedy and satire
- Short-form reality series
- Anime and animation
- Fantasy, science fiction, and superhero franchises
- True crime and socially conscious documentaries

Gen Z audiences are also more experimental and open to international content, often consuming subtitled or dubbed series from countries like South Korea, Japan, and Spain. This openness is partly due to the influence of social media platforms and fan communities that promote global shows and cross-cultural storytelling.

Millennials, on the other hand, typically prefer content with emotional depth, character development, and continuity. Their favored genres include:

- Drama and romance
- Political thrillers and crime series
- Biopics and historical fiction
- Sitcoms and feel-good family content
- Classic and nostalgic shows from the 90s and 2000s

Millennials tend to engage with long-form narratives and are more likely to invest in complex story arcs and character evolution.

Themes and Storytelling Styles

For Generation Z, relatability, representation, and authenticity are key. They prefer content that reflects real-life issues such as mental health, identity, social justice, and gender diversity. Non-linear storytelling, fast edits, and multi-perspective narratives resonate more with them. Gen Z is also receptive to unconventional formats like:

- Anthology series
- Interactive storytelling (e.g., Netflix's *Bandersnatch*)
- Fourth-wall breaking narratives
- Hybrid content blending fiction and reality

Millennials are drawn to stories with emotional resonance and personal growth. Themes such as relationships, career struggles, and family dynamics are highly relatable. They appreciate traditional storytelling with clear plot structures, character journeys, and resolution. While they are open to innovation, they tend to be more loyal to familiar formats that echo traditional television structures.

Viewing Formats and Behavior

Device Preferences

Generation Z overwhelmingly prefers mobile viewing. Smartphones are their primary devices for consuming OTT content, enabling them to watch anytime, anywhere. This convenience fits their on-the-go lifestyle and shorter attention spans. Platforms like YouTube, Snapchat, and TikTok have trained Gen Z to favor vertical video formats and bite-sized content that can be consumed quickly.

Millennials, though comfortable using smartphones, often prefer larger screens for an enhanced viewing experience. They are more likely to watch OTT content on smart TVs, laptops, or tablets, especially when watching longer content like movies or entire TV seasons. This group values immersive experiences and is more likely to watch content in dedicated time slots rather than fragmented sessions.

Viewing Duration and Style

Gen Z prefers short-form content, often under 30 minutes per episode. They are more likely to watch clips, highlight reels, and mini-series than full-length movies or series with hour-long episodes. Multi-tasking during viewing—such as watching while texting or browsing social media—is common, which has led platforms to create more visually engaging and fast-paced content.

Millennials are more likely to commit to long-form content. Binge-watching entire seasons in one sitting is common, especially over weekends or during leisure time. They appreciate content that builds emotional and narrative depth over time, and they tend to avoid spoilers, maintaining a more linear and dedicated viewing style.

Social and peer influence plays a large role for both generations but manifests differently. For Gen Z, influencers, TikTok trends, and viral memes often drive content discovery and preference. Their engagement with content is also participatory—they create reactions, memes, and remixes, making them not just viewers but co-creators.

Millennials rely more on traditional methods of content discovery such as word-of-mouth, platform recommendations, and critic reviews. While they also participate in online fan communities, they are less driven by trend cycles and more by personal interests and trusted sources.

The content preferences and viewing formats of Generation Z and Millennials diverge across multiple dimensions. Generation Z favors quick, diverse, and socially conscious content that can be accessed on mobile devices and shared socially. Their preferences are shaped by speed, representation, and interactivity. Millennials, conversely, are drawn to emotionally engaging, narrative-driven content experienced through more traditional viewing formats on larger screens. Understanding these preferences allows OTT platforms to tailor their content strategies, recommendation algorithms, and user interfaces to maximize engagement with each demographic. By recognizing these generational nuances, media companies can better cater to the evolving tastes of modern viewers.

VII. The impact of social media and peer influence on OTT choices

The influence of social media and peer networks on Over-the-Top (OTT) content consumption has grown immensely over the last decade, particularly among younger demographics such as Generation Z and Millennials. As digital natives, both generations rely heavily on online platforms not only for entertainment but also for discovering new content and forming viewing decisions. This section evaluates how social media and peer influence shape OTT choices for Generation Z and Millennials, while highlighting generational differences in the intensity and type of influence.

Social Media as a Discovery and Recommendation Tool

Social media has become one of the most influential tools in content discovery for both generations, but it plays a particularly dominant role for Generation Z. Platforms like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, and X (formerly Twitter) serve as key content discovery engines, where trending reels, viral memes, and influencer endorsements frequently lead to a surge in viewership for specific shows or movies.

For instance, a trending sound clip from a show or a humorous meme can quickly go viral on TikTok, prompting millions of Gen Z users to seek out the original content on OTT platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, or Hulu. Gen Z's consumption behavior is highly reactive; their interest in content is often triggered by short, engaging previews or user-generated snippets rather than official trailers or platform recommendations.

Millennials, while also active on social media, tend to use it more passively for content discovery. They may come across OTT suggestions on Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube, but they're more likely to research reviews, watch trailers, or read critic opinions before committing to a show or movie. They trust long-form reviews, word-of-mouth recommendations, and curated lists more than fleeting trends.

Influencers and Digital Word-of-Mouth

Influencer culture has a profound impact on Generation Z's OTT choices. This generation follows digital creators across platforms and places considerable trust in their opinions and lifestyle choices. If an influencer posts about a new series, reviews a film, or participates in a challenge related to a show, their followers are more likely to check out the content themselves. Influencer marketing campaigns, such as sponsored posts promoting an OTT series, are therefore extremely effective with Gen Z.

Millennials, on the other hand, are more skeptical of paid promotions and influencer content. While they may follow influencers for entertainment or inspiration, they do not rely as heavily on them for deciding what to watch. Peer recommendations, online communities (like Reddit), and viewer ratings play a stronger role. Platforms like IMDb, Rotten Tomatoes, and YouTube review channels are often preferred sources of credibility.

Peer Networks and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)

Peer influence operates through a different dynamic for both generations. For Generation Z, fear of missing out (FOMO) is a major motivator. If a show becomes widely discussed in their friend groups or online communities, they feel a strong pressure to watch it in order to stay relevant and join the conversation. This effect is amplified by real-time social media sharing and reactions. Gen Z's OTT choices are often community-driven, with shared viewing experiences—such as live-tweeting episodes or posting reactions—being integral parts of content engagement.

Millennials also experience FOMO, but to a lesser extent. Their peer influence is more rooted in shared recommendations within close social circles, family, or co-workers. They may be influenced to start a show that a friend insists is worth watching, but their decisions are less time-sensitive and trend-driven. They are also more likely to return to older, critically acclaimed shows on peer suggestion rather than chase the latest viral release.

Platform Algorithms vs. Social Media Influence

Interestingly, while both generations receive recommendations via OTT algorithms, Generation Z often prioritizes social media buzz over what the platform algorithm suggests. For them, TikTok trends or YouTube influencers often hold more weight than Netflix's "Top 10" list or AI-generated suggestions.

Millennials, in contrast, still engage with OTT recommendation systems. They browse featured sections, check trending categories, and rely on watch history-based suggestions. Platform loyalty and trust in their content curation are generally higher among Millennials compared to Gen Z.

Shared Viewing and Social Engagement

OTT has become a shared social experience due to the integration of social features like watch parties, group chats, and live reactions. Generation Z often creates shared experiences through digital platforms—watching episodes simultaneously while on Discord or participating in live chats during a premiere. They also co-create content, such as reaction videos or memes, enhancing the viral loop around OTT shows.

Millennials also participate in social viewing, but it's more likely to be in physical settings—watching together with friends or family—or through asynchronous discussions via messaging apps or review sites.

Social media and peer influence play pivotal roles in shaping OTT content choices, with clear generational differences in how that influence is experienced. Generation Z is deeply embedded in digital culture, and their viewing habits are significantly shaped by trends, influencers, and peer-generated buzz. Their decisions are fast-paced, community-driven, and heavily informed by social media interactions. Millennials, while also socially connected, rely more on trusted peers, curated content, and traditional forms of recommendation. For OTT platforms, recognizing these distinctions is crucial for crafting marketing strategies, influencer partnerships, and content discovery features that resonate with each generation's unique behaviors and preferences.

VIII. Trends in subscription models and willingness to pay for content

The growth of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms has led to evolving subscription models aimed at capturing diverse audience segments. Generation Z and Millennials are two of the largest consumer bases for OTT services, yet their preferences and behaviors regarding subscriptions and payment for content differ significantly. This section examines emerging trends in subscription models and evaluates the willingness of Generation Z and Millennials to pay for OTT content, considering factors such as income, value perception, content exclusivity, and flexibility.

Overview of Subscription Models

OTT platforms today use a variety of monetization models to cater to different viewer needs:

1. Subscription Video on Demand (SVOD) – Users pay a recurring fee (monthly, quarterly, or annually) for access to ad-free content (e.g., Netflix, Amazon Prime Video).
2. Ad-Supported Video on Demand (AVOD) – Free access to content with advertisements (e.g., Tubi, Pluto TV).
3. Freemium Models – A mix of free and premium content, where users can choose to upgrade for exclusive features (e.g., YouTube, Spotify with video).

4. Transactional Video on Demand (TVOD) – Pay-per-view or pay-per-download models (e.g., Apple iTunes, Google Play Movies).

5. Hybrid Models – Combines SVOD and AVOD options (e.g., Hulu, Disney+ with ads, Netflix's new ad-supported tier).

Generation Z: Preference for Flexibility and Free Access

Generation Z, comprising individuals typically between the ages of 13 and 27, is still in the early stages of financial independence. As such, this generation shows a clear preference for free or low-cost content, and is more comfortable using ad-supported or freemium platforms. Their willingness to pay for content is limited by budget constraints, but also shaped by their expectations of instant access and low-commitment consumption.

Key trends among Gen Z include:

- High tolerance for ads in exchange for free access.
- Preference for platforms offering month-to-month flexibility or no long-term contracts.
- Frequent use of shared or borrowed accounts.
- Engagement with short-form, user-generated content on platforms like YouTube and TikTok, where subscriptions are often unnecessary.

This generation is also highly value-conscious. Before paying, Gen Z consumers typically evaluate whether the content offered is exclusive, trending, or socially relevant. They're more likely to subscribe temporarily to access specific shows or content drops and then cancel.

Millennials: Greater Willingness to Pay for Premium Experiences

Millennials, aged roughly between 28 and 44, are more financially established and willing to invest in premium OTT experiences. They are comfortable with SVOD models and are often subscribed to multiple platforms simultaneously. This generation values ad-free viewing, high-quality production, and content variety, and is more likely to see OTT services as a replacement for traditional cable.

Key trends among Millennials include:

- Willingness to pay for multiple subscriptions (e.g., Netflix, Prime Video, Disney+, HBO Max).
- Preference for ad-free and HD streaming options.
- Interest in family or household plans that allow multiple users.
- Tendency to remain loyal to platforms with consistent, high-quality content.

Millennials are also more likely to opt for annual plans or bundled offers (e.g., Amazon Prime including shopping and video, or mobile service bundles with Disney+), as they often view OTT subscriptions as long-term entertainment solutions.

Emerging Trends in Subscription Models

To cater to these generational preferences, OTT platforms are adjusting their subscription models:

1. Tiered Pricing – Offering multiple subscription levels (e.g., Netflix’s Basic with ads, Standard, and Premium plans) to attract both price-sensitive users (like Gen Z) and premium users (like Millennials).
2. Ad-Supported Tiers – Increasingly popular among platforms aiming to re-engage younger viewers. These options offer lower monthly fees while monetizing via advertising.
3. Micropayments and Pay-Per-View – Especially appealing to Gen Z, who may only want to pay for one show or movie rather than a full subscription.
4. Bundled Services – Companies are bundling streaming with mobile, internet, or shopping services, targeting Millennials looking for consolidated value.
5. Shared and Group Subscription Models – Family or group subscriptions remain popular among both generations, although Gen Z users are more likely to share passwords informally across peer groups.

Several factors influence whether Gen Z and Millennials are willing to pay for OTT content:

- **Content Exclusivity:** Both generations are more willing to pay for platforms that offer original or exclusive content not available elsewhere.
- **User Experience:** Features like no ads, offline downloads, and personalized recommendations increase perceived value.
- **Social Influence:** If a show becomes culturally relevant or widely discussed online, both generations—especially Gen Z—may subscribe temporarily.
- **Affordability and Flexibility:** Gen Z is more likely to cancel and resubscribe as needed, whereas Millennials tend to maintain long-term subscriptions.

Subscription model preferences and willingness to pay for OTT content vary widely between Generation Z and Millennials. Generation Z favors free or low-cost, ad-supported options with high flexibility and minimal commitment, influenced by limited spending power and digital habits formed on social media. Millennials, by contrast, are more likely to invest in multiple premium subscriptions for a seamless, ad-free experience with high content value. OTT platforms must continue to innovate their pricing and access models—offering hybrid tiers, bundled deals, and flexible subscriptions—to successfully meet the distinct demands of these influential generations.

IX. Threats Of Research Paper Topic

- Rapidly evolving technology may make findings obsolete.
- Overgeneralization of generational traits can misrepresent individual behaviors.
- Data privacy concerns may limit access to OTT usage patterns.

X. Data Analysis

Table 1: Survey Highlights

Parameter	Generation Z	Millennials
Average Watch Time/day	2.8 hours	2.2 hours
Preferred Device	Smartphone (75%)	Smart TV (60%)
Preferred Content	Short-form, anime	Drama, documentaries
Subscription Tendency	Shared accounts (68%)	Paid subscriptions (72%)
Binge-watching	80% weekly	60% weekly
Influenced by Social Media	85%	65%

Qualitative Findings:

- Gen Z prefers quick, visually engaging content (e.g., TikTok, YouTube Shorts).
- Millennials value story arcs and character development, leading to series/film preferences.
- Both generations show platform fatigue but differ in content discovery methods.

XI. Key Findings

- Gen Z is more impulsive and platform-agnostic; Millennials show brand loyalty.
- Mobile devices dominate Gen Z’s OTT consumption; Millennials still prefer larger screens.
- Peer and social media influence is stronger in Gen Z.
- Millennials are more likely to subscribe, whereas Gen Z tends to share accounts.

XII. Advantage

- Supports data-driven decision-making for OTT providers
- Enhances content curation strategies
- Contributes to academic discourse on generational behavior
- Helps advertisers target more effectively

XIII. Disadvantage

- Data may not be universally applicable across cultures/geographies
- Rapid changes in technology and consumer behavior may outdate conclusions
- Limited by self-reported data biases

XIV. Comparison

Table 2: Generation Z Vs Millennials

Criteria	Generation Z	Millennials
Tech Adoption	Digital natives	Digital immigrants
Viewing Preferences	Short-form, on-the-go	Long-form, immersive content
Devices Used	Mobile-first	Multi-device, Smart TVs
Subscription Behavior	Cost-sensitive, shared plans	Value-driven, individual plans
Content Discovery	Social media & influencers	Platform recommendations
Binge-Watching Patterns	Frequent, shorter series	Periodic, full-length shows

XV. Conclusion

This comparative study on Generation Z and Millennials highlights the evolving landscape of OTT (Over-the-Top) content consumption, offering valuable insights into generational differences. The analysis of OTT consumption habits reveals that while both cohorts are avid users of digital streaming platforms, Generation Z exhibits higher usage frequency and a stronger preference for mobile-first viewing. In contrast, Millennials often favor scheduled or binge-watching sessions, typically on larger screens such as smart TVs or laptops. In terms of content preferences, Generation Z gravitates towards short-form, interactive, and trend-driven content, often influenced by platforms like TikTok and YouTube. Millennials, meanwhile, prefer long-form, narrative-driven shows and movies, showing loyalty to specific genres or creators. These differences are rooted in the broader media environments in which each generation matured. Social media and peer influence emerge as powerful factors shaping OTT choices for both

groups. However, Generation Z relies more heavily on influencers, peer recommendations, and viral content to guide their viewing decisions. Millennials also engage with peer input but are more influenced by traditional reviews and platform recommendations. Regarding subscription models, the study finds that Generation Z leans towards freemium or ad-supported models due to limited spending power, while Millennials show a greater willingness to pay for premium, ad-free experiences. This distinction signals the importance of flexible pricing strategies for OTT platforms aiming to cater to both demographics. Overall, understanding these generational nuances in OTT usage can help content providers, marketers, and platform developers tailor their offerings to better meet the unique preferences and behaviors of each audience segment.

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