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The Influence of Content Quality and Subscription Cost on Brand Switching Behaviour in OTT Platforms: A Study of Hyderabad

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ABSTRACT

Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms have changed how consumers access films, series, sports, and regional entertainment. As more services compete for subscribers, content quality and subscription cost may influence whether users continue, cancel, or switch between platforms. This paper examines the relationship between content quality, subscription cost, platform user experience, promotional incentives, and brand switching behaviour among OTT users in Hyderabad. It uses a quantitative, descriptive research framework and discusses a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale. To demonstrate how the analysis section can be presented, the numerical tables and charts in this draft use a simulated dataset of 120 illustrative records; they are not actual Google Forms responses and should be replaced with collected survey data before the paper is submitted as empirical research. The illustrative analysis shows how descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression can be used to explore the research questions. The paper concludes with practical suggestions for improving content relevance, pricing flexibility, platform usability, and subscriber retention.

Keywords: OTT platforms, content quality, subscription cost, brand switching behaviour, customer retention, Hyderabad.

1. Introduction

Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms have changed the entertainment market by allowing people to stream content through internet-connected devices instead of relying only on traditional cable or satellite television. In Hyderabad, consumers can choose from international, national, and regional services offering films, original series, live sports, and Telugu-language content. Greater internet access and the convenience of on-demand viewing have increased the importance of OTT services in everyday entertainment.

Competition among platforms makes subscriber retention an important business issue. Consumers can often cancel one service and subscribe to another with relatively little effort. Exclusive content, a wide catalogue, reliable streaming, and useful recommendations may encourage users to remain subscribed. In contrast, higher subscription charges, limited relevant content, technical difficulties, or an attractive competing offer may encourage switching.

This study focuses on content quality and subscription cost while also considering platform user experience and promotional or social influences. It is relevant to Hyderabad because users may value Telugu-language content, dubbed releases, household plans, sports access, and affordable subscription options differently.

2. Aim and Objectives

2.1 Aim of the Study

To examine how content quality, subscription cost, platform user experience, and promotional or social influences relate to brand switching behaviour among OTT subscribers in Hyderabad.

2.2 Objectives

To examine the relationship between content quality and brand switching behaviour.

To assess how subscription cost and pricing structures relate to switching tendencies.

To evaluate the role of platform user experience in subscriber retention.

To understand the influence of promotional offers and social recommendations on switching decisions.

To compare switching tendencies and cost sensitivity between respondents aged 18–29 and 30–50 years.

To analyse the influence of content quality and subscription cost on brand-switching behaviour among OTT users in Hyderabad.

3. Review of Literature

Research on subscription-based digital services commonly examines perceived value, service quality, pricing, and switching costs as factors that may influence customer retention. For OTT providers, content exclusivity and catalogue variety can create a reason to subscribe, while content that does not match a viewer's interests may reduce the perceived value of a service.

Price sensitivity is also important in subscription markets. Consumers compare monthly and annual fees, bundled plans, advertising-supported tiers, and the number of screens available. When a service is considered too expensive relative to its benefits, users may downgrade, cancel, or move to a competitor. The relationship between price and switching is therefore expected to depend on perceived value rather than price alone.

Platform usability can shape the viewing experience. Search functions, recommendation quality, playback stability, accessibility, and cross-device compatibility can reduce friction and make a service easier to use. Promotional offers and recommendations from friends, family, telecom providers, or social media may prompt consumers to try alternatives.

The source draft lists studies attributed to Smith and Kumar (2018), Rao and Sharma (2020), Fernandez et al. (2021), Reddi and Sundaram (2023), Gupta and Verma (2019), Lee et al. (2015), Kim and Hwang (2017), and Mehta et al. (2022). These references have been retained from the supplied draft but should be independently checked against library databases before academic submission.

3.1 Research Gap

The supplied draft identifies a need for more focused research on brand switching among OTT subscribers in regional urban markets such as Hyderabad. Much of the broader discussion of OTT adoption considers usage or general satisfaction, while this study brings content quality and subscription cost together and also considers user experience, promotions, and age-group differences.

4. Hypotheses Development

H1: Higher perceived content quality is associated with lower brand switching tendency.

H2: Greater subscription cost sensitivity is associated with higher brand switching tendency.

H3: Better platform user experience is associated with lower brand switching tendency.

H4: Promotional offers and social influence are associated with brand switching behaviour.

H5: Switching tendency and cost sensitivity differ between the 18–29 and 30–50 age groups.

5. Conceptual Framework

Independent variables: content quality; subscription cost and pricing; platform user experience; promotional and social influence.

Content Quality | Subscription Cost | User Experience | Promotions & Social Influence

↓

Brand Switching Behaviour

↑

Age Group (comparison)

Age group is treated as a grouping variable for comparing responses from young adults (18–29 years) and middle-aged subscribers (30–50 years).

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

The study follows a quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional design. A structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale is proposed, where 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 represents strongly agree.

6.2 Population and Sampling

The target population is OTT subscribers living in Hyderabad. The original research plan proposes convenience and snowball sampling through an online questionnaire. For the worked example in this draft, a simulated dataset of 120 records has been generated solely to demonstrate tables, charts, and analysis. It does not represent recruited respondents or verified Google Forms submissions.

6.3 Variables and Measurement

Variable	**Role**	**Operational dimensions**
Content quality	Independent	Original and exclusive content, catalogue variety, streaming quality, Telugu and dubbed content.
Subscription cost	Independent	Affordability, perceived value, pricing flexibility, response to price increases.
Platform user experience	Independent	Navigation, search, recommendations, playback and device compatibility.
Promotional/social influence	Independent	Free trials, bundles, discounts, word of mouth and social media trends.
Brand switching behaviour	Dependent	Cancellation, substitution, downgrading and willingness to move to another platform.
Age group	Grouping variable	18–29 years and 30–50 years.

6.4 Analytical Techniques

The demonstration analysis uses frequency distributions, means and standard deviations, Pearson correlations, and an ordinary least-squares multiple regression model. In a final study using actual responses, scale reliability (such as Cronbach's alpha) should be calculated only for appropriate multi-item scales, and group comparisons should include suitable significance tests and assumptions checks.

6.5 Data Integrity Note

All numerical results in Sections 7 and 8 and all charts are based on simulated illustrative data. They are examples of how genuine survey findings could be reported, not evidence that a survey was conducted. Replace them with the actual Google Forms export and rerun the analysis before presenting the work as completed empirical research.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

7.1 Illustrative Respondent Profile

The simulated example contains 120 records: 78 (65.0%) in the 18–29 age group and 42 (35.0%) in the 30–50 age group. This distribution is used only to demonstrate how demographic data may be summarized.

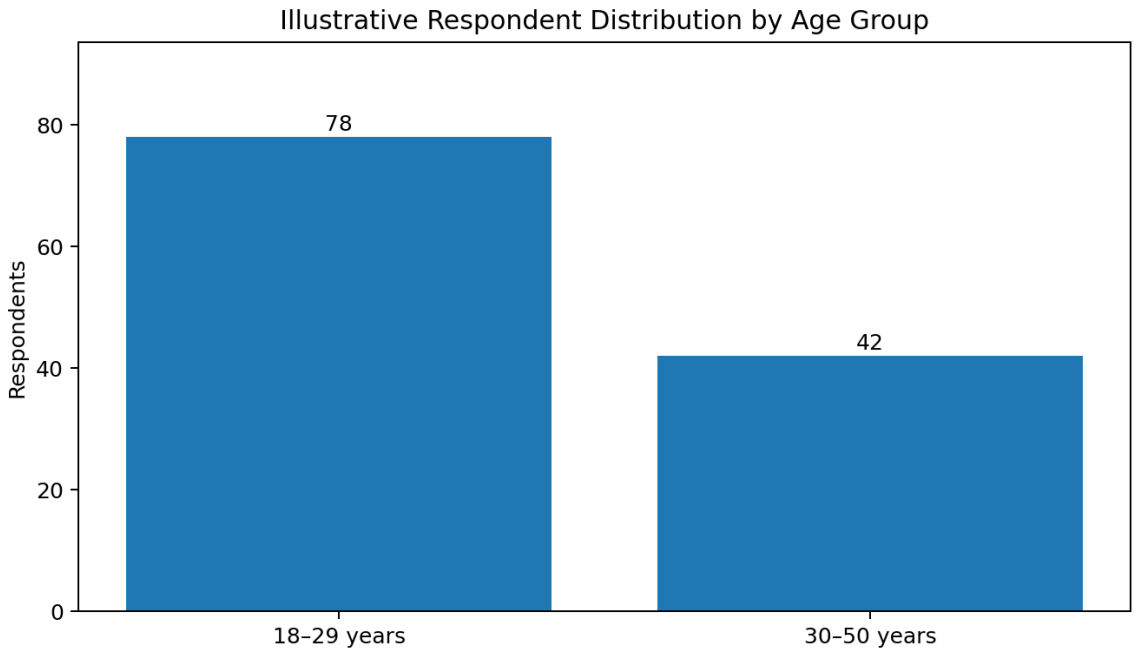


Figure 1. Age-group distribution in the simulated example (illustrative, not actual survey data).

7.2 Preferred OTT Platforms

Most-used platform	Illustrative count	Share
JioHotstar	33	27.5%
Amazon Prime Video	28	23.3%
Aha	21	17.5%
Netflix	16	13.3%
ZEE5	11	9.2%
Other	11	9.2%

In a real survey, the platform distribution can help describe the sample and identify which services are represented. It should not be interpreted as market share for Hyderabad because the example data are simulated and the sampling approach is non-probability based.

7.3 Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Mean (1–5)	Standard deviation
Content quality	3.67	0.83
Subscription cost sensitivity	3.76	0.78
Platform user experience	3.54	0.82
Promotional/social influence	3.23	0.91
Brand switching tendency	3.18	1.03

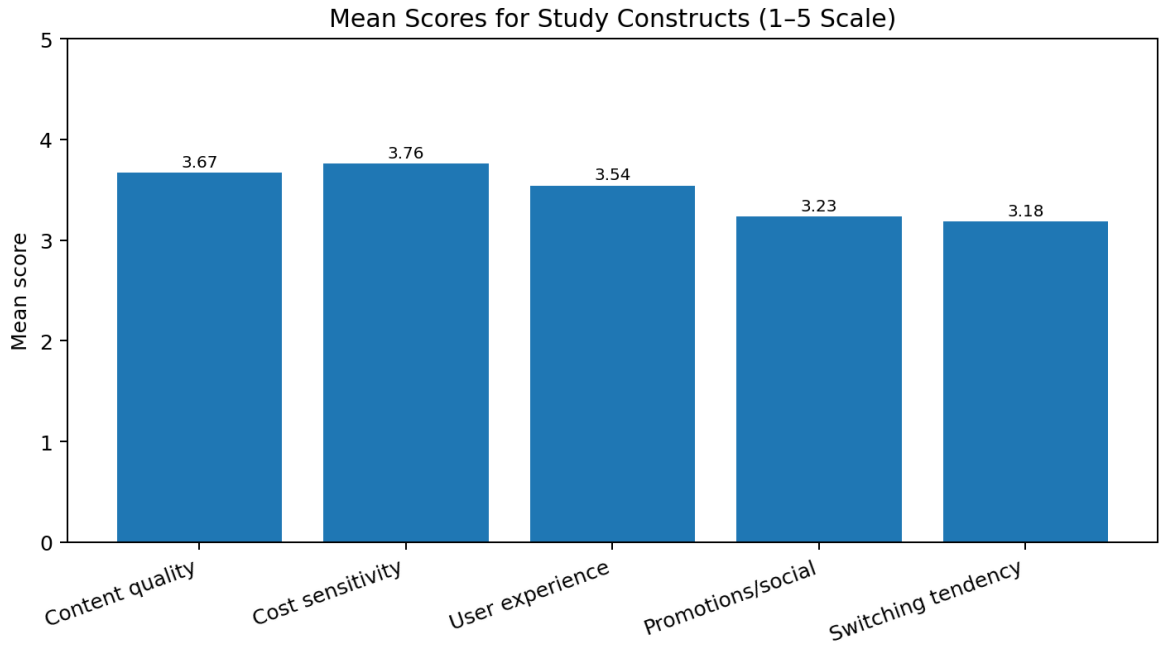


Figure 2. Mean construct scores in the simulated example.

In this example, the mean score for cost sensitivity is 3.76, while content quality averages 3.67. These values illustrate how researchers can compare constructs on the same five-point scale; they must not be treated as findings from actual Hyderabad subscribers.

7.4 Brand Switching Tendency

Switching tendency score	Illustrative respondents	Percentage
1	8	6.7%
2	20	16.7%
3	44	36.7%
4	38	31.7%
5	10	8.3%

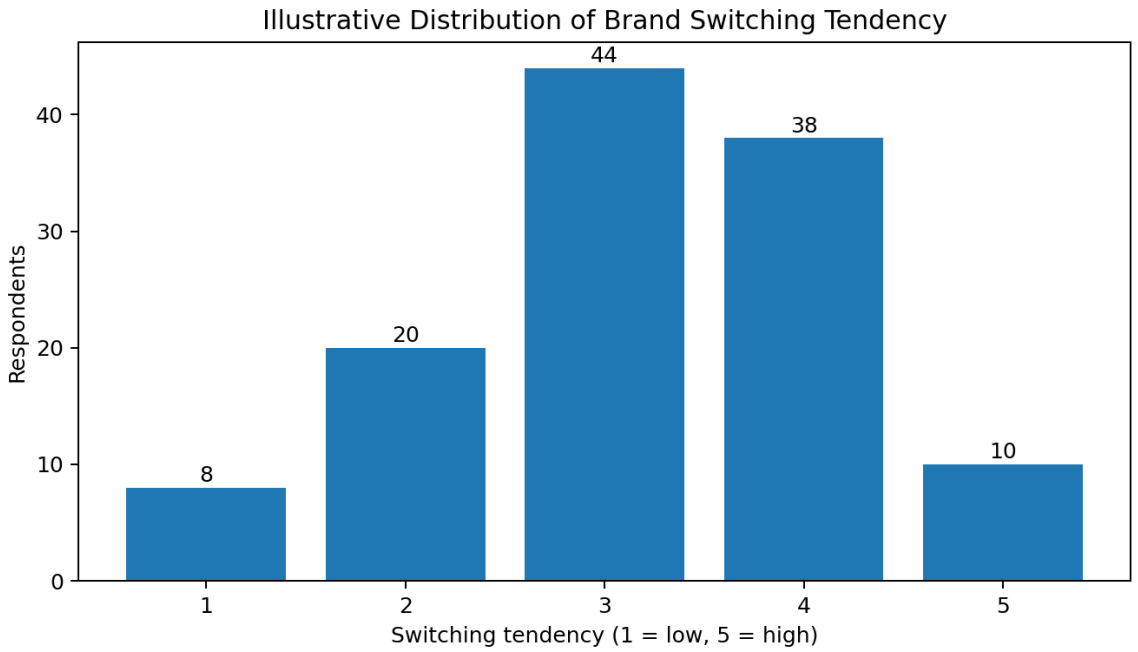


Figure 3. Distribution of switching-tendency scores in the simulated example.

The score distribution demonstrates how a researcher can distinguish lower, middle, and higher stated switching tendencies. In actual analysis, item wording and scale direction must be checked before scores are interpreted.

7.5 Correlation Analysis

Construct	Content quality	Cost sensitivity	User experience	Promotions/social	Switching tendency
Content quality	1.00	-0.23	0.03	-0.10	-0.44
Cost sensitivity	-0.23	1.00	-0.06	0.04	0.45
User experience	0.03	-0.06	1.00	-0.09	-0.34
Promotions/social	-0.10	0.04	-0.09	1.00	0.34
Switching tendency	-0.44	0.45	-0.34	0.34	1.00

In the simulated dataset, the correlation between cost sensitivity and switching tendency is r = 0.45; the correlation between content quality and switching tendency is r = -0.44; and the correlation between user experience and switching tendency is r = -0.34. Correlation indicates association, not causation. These illustrative coefficients must be recalculated from actual survey responses.

7.6 Multiple Regression (Illustrative)

Predictor	Unstandardized coefficient
Intercept	3.179
Content quality	-0.398
Cost sensitivity	0.467
User experience	-0.356
Promotions/social	0.299

The illustrative model has $R^2 = 0.487$, meaning that the model explains approximately 48.7% of the variation in the simulated switching-tendency score within this constructed dataset. The coefficients are included to demonstrate reporting format only. No p-values or claims of statistical significance are reported because this draft is not a validated empirical analysis.

7.7 Age-Group Comparison

Age group	Illustrative n	Mean cost sensitivity	Mean switching tendency
18–29 years	78	3.74	3.08
30–50 years	42	3.79	3.38

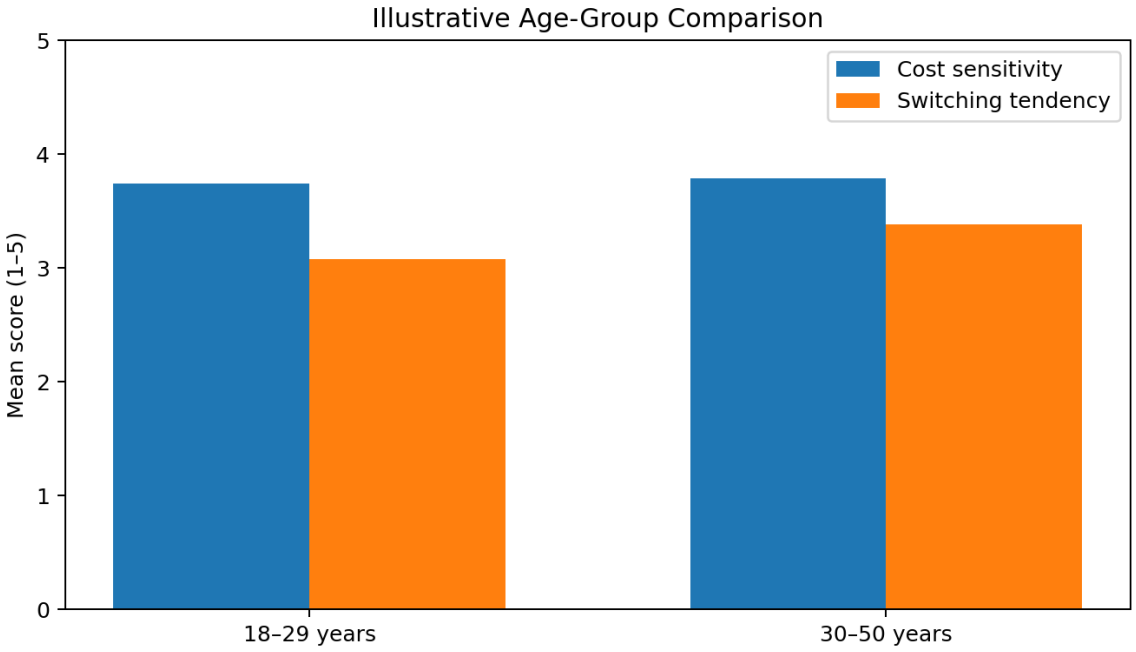


Figure 4. Age-group comparison in the simulated example.

The age comparison demonstrates a possible presentation format for demographic analysis. A final report should test group differences using an independent-samples t-test or an appropriate non-parametric alternative, report confidence intervals and effect sizes, and avoid generalizing beyond the sample.

8. Findings of the Study

The illustrative sample includes 78 records in the 18–29 group and 42 in the 30–50 group.

Cost sensitivity has an illustrative mean score of 3.76 out of 5.

Content quality has an illustrative mean score of 3.67 out of 5.

The illustrative correlation between cost sensitivity and switching tendency is 0.45.

The illustrative regression model has $R^2 = 0.487$; this describes only the simulated records.

The example demonstrates a reporting structure for analysing content quality, cost, usability, promotions, and age-group differences

These are findings from a constructed example dataset, not genuine findings about OTT subscribers in Hyderabad. They must be replaced after actual data collection.

9.Suggestions of the Study

Content Quality and Subscription Cost in OTT Platforms

The study titled "The Influence of Content Quality and Subscription Cost on Brand Switching Behaviour in OTT Platforms Hyderabad" examines how content quality and subscription prices influence customers' decisions to continue using or switch between OTT platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+ Hotstar. It focuses on understanding whether customers prefer platforms that provide better content at affordable prices.

The study framework suggests that consumers evaluate OTT platforms through both entertainment value and cost. Exclusive releases and relevant regional content can improve perceived value, while price increases may encourage users to reassess whether a subscription is worth keeping. Usability and promotional exposure may also shape the decision to continue or switch.

The simulated analysis section shows how a final paper could report descriptive results and relationships between variables. However, no substantive conclusion about the Hyderabad market can be drawn from simulated records. Actual responses are needed to determine which factors are most strongly associated with switching in the target population.

10. Conclusion

Brand switching is an important issue for OTT services because consumers can compare platforms and change subscriptions with relative ease. Content quality, subscription cost, user experience, and promotional influences provide a useful framework for examining why users stay with or leave a platform. OTT providers may strengthen retention by delivering relevant content, transparent and flexible pricing, a reliable interface, and offers that create genuine value. This draft provides a 11.2 Future Research

Future work should collect responses from verified OTT subscribers across different localities, occupations, and age groups in Hyderabad. Researchers may compare actual survey responses with cancellation or renewal behaviour where ethically and lawfully available. Further studies could examine household sharing, bundled telecom plans, sports subscriptions, regional content preferences, and changes in switching intention over time.

professional structure and example analysis workflow; final empirical conclusions should be written only after the simulated figures are replaced with results from actual survey responses.

Scope for Further Research

Future research can be conducted with a larger sample of OTT users across different cities in India to obtain a broader understanding of brand-switching behaviour. Further studies can examine additional factors such as platform usability, personalized recommendations, exclusive content, advertisements, and customer satisfaction. Researchers can also compare different OTT platforms to understand which factors influence customer loyalty and switching decisions the most. A long-term study could help identify changes in customer preferences over time. These findings may help OTT service providers improve content quality, develop affordable subscription plans, and retain customers more effectively.

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Appendix A : Suggested Google Forms Questionnaire

Use the following items to collect genuine responses. For agreement statements, use a five-point scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

1. Age group: 18–29 / 30–50 / Other

2. Which OTT platform do you use most frequently?

3. How often do you watch OTT content?

4. The platform offers content that matches my interests.

5. The platform provides a good variety of films and series.

6. Telugu or regional-language content affects my platform choice.

7. Exclusive content encourages me to maintain my subscription.

8. The video and audio quality meet my expectations.

9. The subscription price is affordable for me.

10. The subscription offers good value for money.

11. Price increases make me consider cancelling or switching.

12. I prefer flexible monthly or low-cost plans.

13. Advertisements affect my willingness to subscribe.

14. The app is easy to navigate.

15. Search and recommendations help me find relevant content.

16. Streaming quality and playback reliability influence my loyalty.

17. I can use the platform easily across my devices.

18. Discounts or free trials encourage me to try another platform.

19. Friends, family, or social media influence my OTT choices.

20. I have cancelled or switched an OTT subscription in the past year.

21. I would switch if another platform offered better content.

22. I would switch if another platform offered a lower price.

23. I intend to continue using my main OTT platform over the next six months.