



Mains Practice Question

Q. What are the implications of Unregulated OTT platforms in India? Suggest some recent policy measures introduced by the government. (250 words)

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Approach

- Start your answer by giving a brief about the OTT Platform.
- Discuss the applications of OTT platforms.
- Discuss various implications of the OTT platform.
- Conclude your answer by giving various government initiatives to regulate OTT Platforms.

Introduction

- **About:**
 - OTT, or over-the-top platforms, are audio and video hosting and streaming services which started out as content hosting platforms, but soon branched out into the production and release of short movies, feature films, documentaries and web series themselves.
 - These platforms offer a range of content and use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to suggest to users the content they are likely to view based on their past viewership on the platform.
 - Most OTT platforms generally offer some content for free and charge a monthly subscription fee for premium content which is generally unavailable elsewhere.
- **Status of OTT in India:**
 - India is currently the world's fastest growing OTT (over-the-top streaming) market and is all set to emerge as the world's sixth largest by 2024.
 - At present, the OTT platform's valuation stands at 35 billion INR, with nearly 500 million internet users, expected to grow at 8% per year.
 - E.g., Netflix, Hotstar, Amazon Prime Video, ALT Balaji etc.

Body

- **Applications of OTT Platforms:**
 - **Multiple monetization options:** Such as pay-per-view, lifetime access, subscriptions, and free trials for beginners.
 - **Various streaming methods:** Including on-demand and live streaming
 - **Community building tools:** Such as live chat, likes and comments, and profile building.
 - **Content regulation options:** Like tools for determining how many times a video can be streamed, or who can access the content.
 - **Integrations:** Connections with various video technologies like Roku, Chromecast, and more.
- **Implications of OTT Platforms:**
 - **May affect social-political harmony:** Since there is no censor board to review the content, there are chances that the content may affect social or political harmony and hurt people's sentiments on certain issues.
 - **Threat to Culture and Tradition:** The modern and fresh content releasing on OTT platforms has been accepted and appreciated by the people in India. However, there still

are a few who have not been able to accept this unique content.

- **Psychological Impact:** The content available on OTT platforms is filled with violence, sexual, and abuse and has caused psychosocial effects on Indian youth.
- **Increased screen time:** Given that there are plenty of web series, movies, and shows released every week, users are more likely to waste their time on OTT Platforms.
 - People who are spending more time on live video streaming are inclined to be addicted to online content rather than being socially active in real life.

▪ **Government Initiatives to Regulate OTT Platforms in India:**

- **Information Technology Rules (2022):** In February 2022, the government had notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021 to regulate OTT platforms.
 - The rules establish a soft-touch self-regulatory architecture with a Code of Ethics and three-tier grievance redressal mechanism for OTT platforms.
- **Draft Telecommunication Bill (2022):** The Draft telecommunication bill 2022 the government has included internet-based and OTT communication services such as WhatsApp calls, Facetime, Google Meet etc. under telecom services, that would require internet-based communications a license to offer services.

Conclusion

The recent regulation related to OTT platforms are the step in right direction, as it will prevent the underage population from watching certain type of content and enhance transparency.

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