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Consumers' preferences for ethical entertainment consumption: Conceptualization, development, and validation of a scale

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Abstract

Our study describes the conceptualization, development, and validation of a reliable scale to measure the Consumers' Preferences for Ethical Entertainment Consumption (CPEEC) in the context of OTT platforms. Past literature has addressed Ethical Consumption in various contexts that hold significant importance among consumers. However, there is limited literature on the Ethical Consumption in the domain of OTT entertainment, which is a new and burgeoning field of literature. Conceptualizing and developing a measurement scale for CPEEC will help measure the ethicality of entertainment like films, web shows and reality shows. The CPEEC scale is developed and validated by performing 33 in-depth interviews, focus group discussions with 20 participants, and three online surveys with 707 respondents. Our findings highlight that the CPEEC construct is a formative second-order construct that consists of three first-order dimensions. Entertainment executives can use the CPEEC scale to strategize their existing and new content catalogs according to consumer values and beliefs.

Keywords: OTT entertainment, Ethical Consumption, consumers' preferences, ethicality of content, scale development

1. Introduction

With the advent of the COVID pandemic, significant changes in media consumption behavior were observed among consumers across the world. As outdoor entertainment was restricted due to lockdown regulations globally, consumers switched to video streaming services for their entertainment consumption (Gardner,2020). Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms offer fresh content delivery to consumers on their smart devices through the internet (Gupta & Singharia,2021). OTT platforms like Amazon Prime, Netflix, Hulu, HBOMax, and Disney+Hotstar have become extremely popular due to their affordable subscription packages, easy accessibility

and diverse content library (Madhukalya, 2020). These streaming providers allow consumers to watch films, shows, and events at any convenient time and from any location they prefer. The growth of high-speed internet and smart devices have also contributed to the trend of consumers moving away from traditional media sources to digital entertainment (Kalliny, 2012). While the growth of the global OTT marketplace was placed at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 16% before the pandemic, industry trends predict this growth to reach 19% by the end of 2026. The market value of the OTT sector is estimated to reach USD 438.5 billion globally between 2022 and 2026 (Research Dive, 2021). While the USA and UK are global leaders in OTT streaming services (Cowdhury, 2022), emerging markets like India and China are expected to grow exponentially in the next few years. In fact, India is considered to be the fastest-growing OTT market globally, with projected revenue of USD 3 billion in 2022 (ABP Digital Brand Studio, 2022).

In 2021, the Government of India (GoI) announced that OTT providers would have to compulsorily apply the four certifications issued by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) for their existing and new content catalogs (Kumar, 2021; Nair, 2021). These certifications are- U [unrestricted public demonstration via family-friendly content], U/A [demonstration with parental guidance for children under 16 years of age], A [restricted for adult consumption only but no nudity allowed], and S [determined for consumption by specialized audiences exclusively, like Engineers, Doctors, and Scientists] (Mishra, 2019). The CBFC certifications mainly ensure that the exhibition of public entertainment is transparent and accountable to all its stakeholders, be it the audience, media professionals, or production houses (Mitra, 2019). OTT platforms have to telecast or distribute content by strictly adhering to the CBFC certifications in India. These certifications benefit children, adolescents, and families by protecting them from potentially harmful or embarrassing on-screen content. The CBFC board comprises of a chairperson and 23 members, all of whom are appointed by the central government. There have been no known instances where opinions have been solicited from media personnel, end-viewers, psychologists, or educators before creating these certifications. While the purpose of the CBFC certification system is to provide standards for the public exhibition of content, there has been no initiative to incorporate the general people's feedback in understanding what they consider suitable for viewing. CBFC certifications do not focus on the ethicality of entertainment options either, despite the growing importance of ethical entertainment amongst consumers.

Past literature has defined ethicality as the act of conformation to accepted standards of right and wrong (Valenti, 2018). Ethicality is

important in entertainment because it has the potential to educate and inspire the audience through stories that reflect consciousness, responsibility, and accountability toward social communities. Entertainment experiences have been known to impact consumers' cognitive, social, emotional, and physiological states (Katz et al., 1973). The cognitive impacts of entertainment are focused on brain development, language skills, and perceptual growth. The social implications of entertainment are centered on substituting real emotional and interpersonal interactions through on-screen storytelling. Finally, the emotional impacts of entertainment are based on feelings like fun, leisure, affection, and pleasure. Since entertainment has significant effects on consumers, it is essential to ensure that it adheres to a code of ethicality because such a code can influence consumers' decisions and actions in their lifestyle choices. Since the propagation of mass entertainment through OTT platforms has become a global phenomenon, viewers are more likely to use entertainment influences to understand what is good or bad in their perception of the real world.

In fact, past research has specifically highlighted the importance of ethicality in entertainment and its role in influencing consumer's beliefs and choices (Ewart & McLean, 2019; Foster & Minwalla, 2018; Price, 2019; Romanowski & Sheldon, 2020; Scalvini, 2020; Zimand-Sheiner & Lahav, 2019). However, there are multiple overlaps between media ethics, journalism ethics, film ethics, television ethics, and digital ethics in academic literature. Thus, it is not easy to gain a clear delimitation of consumers' preference for ethical entertainment consumption for OTT platforms (Lee et al., 2018; Rentfrow et al., 2011; Shuv-Ami, 2014; Ye et al., 2004). Also, customer retention is the most critical part of any industry, including OTT entertainment (Tang et al., 2021). Without consumer retention, OTT platforms would not be able to get subscription revenues, and thus, catering to consumers is vital in developing the content strategy of OTT platforms. Unless consumers' views are taken into account in content strategies, it is likely that such campaigns will not be successful. To gain competitive advantage in a saturated entertainment market marred by multiple traditional and digital media channels, OTT platforms can take consumer feedback into the loop for co-creating storytelling (Bansal et al., 2023). Hence, this study is designed to consider consumers' ethics, values, and beliefs for developing a measure of entertainment ethics.

In contemporary times, consumers are actively deciding what type of entertainment they want to consume, and thus, OTT platforms need to ensure that consumers' preferences are reflected in their storytelling process (Díaz et al., 2018; Hahn, 2022; Narvaez et al., 2000; Prabhu et al., 2020; Wahlen & Laamanen, 2015). There is a gap in this endeavor because the standards provided by CBFC do not reflect either consumers' feedback or a

measure of the ethicality of entertainment content (Cross, 2022; De Ridder et al., 2022; Thompson & Yokota, 2004). This study attempts to understand the construct of Consumers' Preferences for Ethical Entertainment Consumption (CPEEC) with respect to OTT entertainment. It is expected to measure whether the suitability of the content catalog on OTT platforms is aligned with consumers' ethical values. Thus, the main objectives of this study are to (1) explore the dimensions that consumers consider Ethical Entertainment Consumption with the help of qualitative research and (2) to develop the Consumers' Preferences for Ethical Entertainment Consumption (CPEEC) scale for quantitative measurement of this construct. This scale will be provided to industry executives who want to gauge how to position OTT platforms as ethical sources of entertainment that are aligned with consumers' preferences. Based on the findings of the CPEEC scale, entertainment practitioners could identify possible opportunities for improving and positioning content strategies according to the preferences of their target subscribers (Brock & Livingston, 2004). This research is also expected to contribute to the burgeoning literature on consumer preference for ethics, entertainment choices, and OTT platforms.

The remainder of the article is organized as follows. We first provide a conceptual development of consumers' preferences for ethics related to OTT entertainment. We finally present the results and discuss the implications of our work. Next, we offer a detailed description of the scale development process we used to generate, purify and validate the items. We finally present the results and discuss the implications of our work.

2. Conceptual Development

2.1. Ethics in media and Entertainment

Ethicality is essential for entertainment because of the strong impact of films and entertainment shows on the minds and emotions of the viewers (Jamil & Jamil, 2022; Moss-Wellington, 2021). Past literature has highlighted that viewers can be impacted by constant entertainment consumption because they find it difficult to differentiate between truth and fiction (Antle & Kitson, 2021; Bryanov & Vziatysheva, 2021; Kieran, 2002). In entertainment industries worldwide, stereotypes of women, ethnic minorities, and LGBTQA are issues of ethical concern (Ciacci & Sviatschi, 2022; Farias et al., 2021). Ethnic minorities are often poorly depicted in mainstream entertainment and news reporting. Representation of females is also a significant problem in the media industry because of the primary depiction of women supporting their male counterparts in traditional roles. The objectification of women in mainstream media often leads to poor perceptions of body image, unfulfilled social expectations, and negative impacts

on adolescent girls (Maes & Vandenbosch, 2022). Women's bodies are also used as a form of sexual titillation in media and have become a source of concern due to the frequency of such objectification (Felig et al., 2022; Minwalla et al., 2022). Media organizations and advertisers often use sexual imagery to promote their content to increase revenue for their products and services (Reichert, 2007). Concerning LGBTQA groups, there is stigmatization against their mainstream depiction on-screen, and their stories do not get enough importance in films, shows, and even the news (Cheng et al., 2022). Previous studies have shown that product placement, too, is a primary ethical concern for viewers because of the beguiling marketing strategies used under the garb of entertainment (Sharma & Bumb, 2022). Consumers want entertainment to stay authentic instead of using conniving strategies to promote a product (Neale & Corkindale, 2022). Research shows that brands have appeared at least once for every minute, with an average appearance of 5 seconds, and that brand placements are merged into the content of reality shows (Natarajan et al., 2021). There has been an increased demand for reality shows amongst consumers worldwide, with preferences for live broadcasts, unpredictable tasks, fights among participants, and challenging activities for earning basic amenities (Scepanski, 2021). Such shows publicize people's personal lives, intrude upon their privacy, and manipulate their behavior to incite anger, violence, grief, betrayal, and drama (Das et al., 2021). Constant exposure to reality content for an extended period can impact viewers' emotions, and they could get more addicted to the on-screen theatricals (Harley, 2022). Thus, the need for content regulation by OTT broadcasters is necessary to ensure that unnecessary controversies are avoided, and reality content adheres to an ethical code of standards (Dixit, 2022).

2.2. Contexts and background of Ethical consumption in literature

Past literature has defined Ethical Consumption as a cognizant and intentional decision to make consumption choices based on ethical values (Crane et al., 2019). At face value, Ethical Consumption is the act of consumers spending their money on products and services to reflect their personal beliefs. Ethically-inclined consumers are motivated by political, social, environmental, and religious causes when they spend their money on a service or a product (Alsaad, 2021). Despite good intentions, Ethical Consumption has several obstacles, like the need for more information on companies' practices, high prices, poor availability, low hedonic value, and an understanding of ethical behavior. Maneuvering these obstacles often becomes arduous for consumers in their daily lives. Past literature has stressed on factors like respect for human values and rights, the guarantee

of quality, and the end pleasure received from such products or services as motivations for Ethical Consumption. The study by Alsaad et al. (2022) demonstrates that variables like religiosity and moral intensity are highly associated with moral certainty, which has significant ramifications for ethical consumption intention. With 85 percent of the global population identifying with a religious faith, religiosity can be considered as a significant determinant of how consumers perceive Ethical Consumption (Fairchild, 2021). Research also shows that relativistic views, wherein different people have different perceptions of what is ethical, are also positively related to Ethical Consumption behavior (Khan & Abbas, 2023). Consumers who are socially and ecologically conscious and select goods and services consistent with their moral, ethical, and social values are said to engage in ethical consumption. Ethical consumption is characterized by Holbrook and Corfman (1985) as being intrinsically driven, where enjoyment of the experience is a goal in and of itself. The final product or service provides happiness to the individual, and consumption of such products or services impacts society positively in the long run (Caruana et al., 2020). Promoting ethical consumption as a social norm, expanding the distribution of ethical products, and removing barriers toward ethical purchases have been recommended to encourage Ethical Consumption amongst consumers (Casais & Faria, 2022). While Ethical Consumption has been studied in different industries like food (Carolan, 2021), clothing (Eskes, 2021), cosmetics (Luna & Ross, 2021), and green products (Akhtar et al., 2021), there is a need for more studies on conceptualizing Ethical Consumption in the arts and creative industry. The boundaries between art and life are getting increasingly blurred due to the advent of the internet, and art consumption has become a significant part of consumers' daily lives. Ethical art or entertainment consumption embodies esthetic experiences built on the belief that these services have been produced in the context of consumer values, societal reflections, and esthetic quality (Van der Berg, 2020). To expand the existing literature on Ethical Consumption, we position our study as a new conceptualization of the construct with respect to the OTT entertainment industry. Our study is expected to provide new dimensions of Ethical Consumption in a new and underexplored domain like digital entertainment.

2.3. Existing scales and need for a new Consumers' preference for Ethical Entertainment scale(CPEEC)

Past academic literature offers a few measurement scales that help us gain a preliminary understanding of our construct. First, the scale on Ethical Consumption Behavior (ECB) developed by Toti and Moulins (2016) gives an overall measure of the concept without any specific integration in

different contexts. This scale highlights that ethical consumption consists of three primary dimensions—social, political, and environmental. This scale also suggests that consumers can take incremental actions that do not require a heavy investment with respect to financial burden or commitment time. Second, the Consumer Ethics Scale (CES) by Muncy and Vitell (1992) divides consumer ethics into three primary categories: (1) downloading or purchasing fake goods, (2) being mindful of the environment, and (3) acting morally. Third, the Socially Responsible Purchase and Disposal (SRPD) scale developed by Webb et al. (2008) lists criteria such as

1. making appropriate purchases that reflect corporate social responsibility,
2. recycling, and
3. avoiding or reducing the use of products with negative environmental impacts.

Fourth, the Rating Ethical Content Scale (RECS) by Gomberg et al. (2004) is the closest to our enquiry of research. This scale judges stories for positive content based on ethical sensitivity, judgment, focus, and action. This scale helps evaluate the entertainment content designed for children by taking the opinions of parents, educators, and psychologists into account.

While past scales have addressed the holistic conceptualization of Ethical Consumption Behavior, more research is needed for our purpose because we want to study this construct specifically concerning OTT entertainment only. Also, various dimensions in previous scales do not reflect contemporary society's ethical notions. For example, "downloading music on the internet rather than buying it" or "recording movies on television and not going to the theatre" cannot be considered unethical in current times as these are legally-permissible options that consumers can avail with the advent of OTT streaming services. OTT entertainment is staged, fictional, and exaggerated but has the power to generate and mold the ethical perspectives of viewers. By exploring this idea, the RECS scale addresses the importance of ethicality in children's content. While the RECS came closest to our aim of analyzing ethical entertainment content, this scale only focused on children's entertainment choices. It is expected that our research will be an improvement over the RECS, which only deals with ethical content for children. Unlike the RECS, our study design will consider the perspectives of adult viewers (over the age of 18 years) to understand what they consider as ethical entertainment. By developing a new measurement of Consumers' Preferences for Ethical Entertainment Consumption (CPPEC), this study provides insights into measuring consumers' perception and motivation toward consuming entertainment on OTT platforms. Consumers are no longer passive entertainment recipients; instead, they

actively pursue choices that align with their values (Brock & Livingston, 2004). Thus, OTT platforms have to ensure that their content aligns with consumers' stance on ethics. Therefore, we used OTT subscribers' perspectives to understand what would motivate them to consume content on these platforms and how they wanted their content to be aligned with their values. Concerning their entertainment choices in such a scenario, our scale will highlight consumers' preferences and values and help entertainment executives design and strategize OTT content accordingly.

Based on this overview, the main Research Questions (RQs) of our study are:

1. How do subscribers conceptualize their preferences for Ethical Entertainment Consumption on OTT platforms?
2. To what extent is the construct of Consumers' Preferences for Ethical Entertainment Consumption measurable?

3. Selection of Domain- OTT industry

We chose the OTT entertainment sector to ground our research for this study. The selection of the OTT sector was based on two main criteria. First, the growth of OTT platforms in India is the highest in the world and is predicted to be worth USD 15 billion by 2030. With India slated to become the sixth-largest OTT market globally by the end of this decade, OTT entertainment forms a significant part of the Indian audience's consumption choices. Second, we aimed to develop a scale based on what consumers consider ethical OTT entertainment. Thus, we wanted to select participants who were conscious of what kind of ethical reflection they would like to see on-screen (Do, 2022; Soi, 2021). We selected the participants based on parameters like gender, education, age, and demographic location. Most OTT players classify their subscribers based on age groups: 18-30years, 30-45years, and above 45 years (Bhatt, 2019). Besides, the cultural landscape of India is represented by several different social norms, ethical values, traditions, belief systems, value systems, and political systems associated with the ethno-linguistically diverse Indian society (Singh & Khan, 2002). Indian history is strongly connected to the influence of immigration and colonization. Thus, languages, religions, beliefs, and customs differ from place to place within the country (Singh & Khan, 2002). Therefore, we wanted a good mix of these different consumer segments to ensure we acquired a comprehensive overview of what constitutes ethical entertainment consumption on OTT. Thus, we intended to collect data from various demographic groups familiar with OTT platforms' entertainment options (Sundaravel & Elangovan, 2020).

4. Scale development methodology

4.1. Stage 1- Definition of construct and content purview

We conducted a detailed literature review to find items from past academic studies on media and entertainment ethics as well as ethical consumption (Churchill, 1979; Diamantopoulos, 2005). Next, we conducted qualitative studies due to the limited theoretical understanding of what items need to be included in the Consumers' preferences for Ethical Entertainment Consumption (CPEEC). Our objective was to find the morals, beliefs, and values that consumers want in their OTT entertainment choices. We wanted to select participants who could make a meaningful contribution to the topic of Ethical Entertainment Consumption. Thus, the criteria for participant selection for the interviews were:

1. They had at least one year of usage and entertainment consumption experience on OTT platforms.
2. They are legal adults (minimum 18 years of age and above).
3. They provided explicit consent to participate in our research.
4. They had paid subscriptions to at least one international OTT platform (example: Netflix, Amazon Prime, HBO Max) and one local OTT platform (example: Zee5, Voot, MxPlayer)
5. They had taken a course in ethics at a middle-school or high-school level using approved lesson materials, an accredited course curriculum, and licensed teachers.

The qualitative study participants were recruited through social media and personal contacts. We followed a snowball sampling to recruit more participants via our initial recruits. We got 53 participants who consented to participate in our study. We divided these 53 participants into two groups- one set of participants for interviews that would be conducted online due to COVID-19 protocols and the other participants who were willing to participate in face-to-face focus group discussions. The primary reason for conducting interviews and focus group discussions was to ensure that we collected data from multiple sources and comprehensively understood the central phenomena. We used these two qualitative methods together to enhance the validity of our study, gain a detailed insight into participants' perspectives, increase the robustness of the study design and find multiple perspectives of a research problem (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Using two different data collection methods, we aimed to bring congruence of information from several participants' diverse experiences and worldviews (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Fontana & Frey, 2005).

A concurrent process of interviewing and transcribing was followed for this study. First, we conducted in-depth interviews with 28 participants. The interviews were organized over video calls. We asked each participant to describe the term "Consumers' Preferences for Ethical Entertainment Consumption" in their own words. The interviewers ensured that the participants gave their views through free-flowing conversations. Follow-up questions were asked if the interviewer wanted to clarify certain aspects or get more information on a particular point. No new insights were generated after these 28 interviews. However, we also had to ensure that information redundancy had been reached. We interviewed 5 additional participants and received no further information. So, in total, we conducted 33 interviews. Each interview lasted for 35-50 minutes.

Next, we conducted 3 focus group discussions to supplement the data collected from our interviews. 20 participants were recruited for the three focus group discussions. The first group consisted of 7 participants, the second group consisted of 6 participants, and the third one also had 7 participants. We provided the participants with the initial definition and components of CPEEC as we generated from the interviews. They were asked to discuss the term amongst themselves. The same two moderators supervised all 3 focus group discussions. One moderator took extensive notes, and the other moderator encouraged the discussion to flow naturally and stay on point. Each discussion lasted about 50-60 minutes, and we stopped our data collection process when the items started repeating, and no new insights could be found from the focus groups.

A Grounded Theory (GT) Approach was used to find the main themes from the qualitative data because we could move between data collection and information interpretation simultaneously (Strauss & Corbin, 1997). Initially, we read the transcripts and identified the main words or phrases that denoted the primary characteristics of the participants' perspectives. These words and phrases are termed as codes. We created many preliminary codes to highlight anything we found necessary for our research objectives. Then, we looked for any redundancy in the codes and removed them to make the list of codes succinct. We found the main concepts from this code list by combining similar codes that allowed our data to be grouped. We then combined these categories after removing redundancies and identifying the main subject of our research to form main categories that are a broad group of similar concepts we had generated in the previous step. Then, we created a collection of categories, also called a theory, which addressed our study's primary aim by conceptualizing our chosen phenomena. We chose GT as our data coding process as we wanted to understand the core phenomena of Ethical Consumption in OTT entertainment and wanted the insights to be generated from the data without preconceived

notions. We conducted this simultaneous transcribing and coding to ensure that our data was saturated and that we could stop the data collection process because new ideas were not being generated.

From the interviews, we found 36 items. An additional list of 10 new items was generated from the focus groups. From the extant literature review, we got 19 items. Combining the qualitative studies' results and the literature review, we created the initial list of 65 items.

4.1.1. Demographic Profile of qualitative participants

The sample of individuals participating in the qualitative studies consisted of 53 participants, of which 27 are men and 26 are females, with an age range between 21-67 years. 33 participants participated in the interviews and 20 in the focus group discussions. The participants had different levels of education and multiple professional backgrounds to create diversity in the data collection method (Kitzinger, 1995). The details of the participants are shown in Table 1.

4.2. Stage 2: Face validity and content validity

We appointed four content developers working on OTT platforms and three media professors based in India and shared the list of 65 items with them. We gave these experts the definition of CPEEC generated from our qualitative study. We asked the experts to evaluate the 65 items generated in the initial pool. The experts marked each item as "important," "not important," or "undecided" based on their expertise, knowledge, and work experience. The experts removed 31 items because they thought these were not significant enough to conceptualize CPEEC. Next, we conducted cognitive interviews before administering draft survey questions to our target population. We asked the respondents to verbalize their mental process while providing answers to the item pool. We appointed 8 MBA students for the cognitive interviews. These participants differed from those who participated in the qualitative studies in Stage 1. These cognitive interviews helped elicit the item pool's appropriateness (Churchill, 1979). 9 items were further dropped after cognitive interviews for lack of clarity or importance. The initial list was reduced to 25 items after stage 2.

4.3. Stage 3– scale refinement and purification

In stages 1 and 2, we reviewed, removed, and modified all the items we generated through our qualitative studies. Then, we conducted a pilot test with 205 participants we appointed through the third-party platform Zoho (based on the selection criteria in Stage1). The details of the pilot

Table 1. Profile of qualitative participants.

Interview participant pseudo name	Age	Gender	Education
P1	67 years	Female	Engineering Graduate
P2	65 years	Female	High school pass out
P3	62 years	Female	High school pass out
P4	61 years	Male	English Literature (Graduation)
P5	57 years	Male	Mathematics(Graduation)
P6	55 years	Male	High school pass out
P7	52 years	Female	Geography(Master's)
P8	51 years	Male	Tamil Literature(Master's)
P9	50 years	Female	Economics(Graduation)
P10	48 years	Female	Chemistry(Graduation)
P11	46 years	Female	Zoology(Graduation)
P12	44 years	Male	History(Master's)
P13	42 years	Male	Fine Arts(Graduation)
P14	41 years	Male	Communication(Graduation)
P15	39 years	Female	Medical Sciences(Graduation)
P16	38 years	Female	History(Graduation)
P17	36 years	Male	Mathematics(Graduation)
P18	35 years	Female	Law(Graduation)
P19	35 years	Female	Business Administration(Master's)
P20	33 years	Female	Medical Sciences(Graduation)
P21	33 years	Male	Engineering(Graduation)
P22	32 years	Male	Engineering(Graduation)
P23	32 years	Male	Accountancy(Master's)
P24	31 years	Male	Bengali Literature(Master's)
P25	30 years	Female	Hospitality Management(Graduation)
P26	30 years	Male	Archaeology(Graduation)
P27	28 years	Female	English Literature(Doctorate)
P28	27 years	Male	Philosophy(Doctorate)
P29	25 years	Male	Food Sciences(Doctorate)
P30	24 years	Female	Dairy Sciences(Master's)
P31	23 years	Male	Fine Arts(Graduation)
P32	21 years	Male	Botany(Graduation)
P33	21 years	Female	Dental Sciences(Graduation)

Focus group discussion (FGD) number	Participant list	Age	Gender	Education
FGD1	R1	21	Female	Graduation(animation)
FGD1	R2	25	Male	Masters' (English Literature)
FGD1	R3	27	Male	Masters' (Commerce)
FGD1	R4	35	Female	Graduation (Engineering)
FGD1	R5	39	Female	Graduation(Engineering)
FGD1	R6	44	Male	Graduation (Medical Sciences)
FGD1	R7	48	Male	High school pass out
FGD2	R8	57	Female	Masters' (History)
FGD2	R9	60	Male	Masters' (Statistics)
FGD2	R10	28	Female	Graduation(Engineering)
FGD2	R11	32	Male	Graduation (Law)
FGD2	R12	35	Male	Masters' (Accounts)
FGD2	R13	38	Female	Graduation(Anthropology)
FGD3	R14	46	Female	Graduation(Business Studies)
FGD3	R15	49	Female	High school pass out
FGD3	R16	59	Male	Graduation (Commerce)
FGD3	R17	50	Male	High school pass out
FGD3	R18	23	Female	Graduation (Bengali Literature)
FGD3	R19	27	Female	Graduation (Engineering)
FGD3	R20	25	Male	Graduation (Engineering)

participants are showed in Tables 2–4. With this survey, we deleted 4 items that did not meet the psychometric cutoff of factor loadings > 0.55 (Hair et al., 2010). We used this additional scale purification step to ensure that

Table 2. Age range of pilot study participants.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	18 - 29	90	43.9	43.9	43.9
	30 - 44	88	42.9	42.9	86.8
	45 - 59	15	7.3	7.3	94.1
	60 - 75	12	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	205	100.0	100.0	

Table 3. Gender profile of pilot study participants.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Female	85	41.5	41.5	41.5
	Male	120	58.5	58.5	100.0
	Total	205	100.0	100.0	

Table 4. Education profile of pilot study participants.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Completed 10th grade	6	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Completed 12th grade	17	8.3	8.3	11.2
	Completed 5th grade	4	2.0	2.0	13.2
	Completed graduation	81	39.5	39.5	52.7
	Completed Masters	82	40.0	40.0	92.7
	Completed PHD. or above	11	5.4	5.4	98.0
	Did not attend school	1	.5	.5	98.5
	Prefer not to say	3	1.5	1.5	100.0
	Total	205	100.0	100.0	

participants from our relevant sample population could highlight the most important items on our list and remove the ones they considered insignificant.

Next, we aimed to examine the factorial structure of the concept of CPEEC, without any preconceived knowledge about the number of components that would be extracted. For this step, we collected data from 253 respondents (based on the selection criteria in Stage1) and asked them to mark their preferences on a 5-point Likert scale, with a score of 1 signifying "strongly disagree" and 5 representing "stronglyagree." The complete details of the EFA participants are shown in Tables 5–7. We used Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) with Promax rotation for the purification process (Hair et al., 2010). We checked if Bartlett's chi-square was significant (<0.5) and that the result of the KMO test was close to 1 to ensure our sample was adequate (Hair et al., 2010). Our sample showed that Bartlett's chi-square was estimated at p-value <0.000, and the KMO test had a value of 0.926, highlighting that our sample was sufficient for this analysis (as shown in Table 8). According to Hair et al. (2010), the minimum ratio of 5:1 for participants to the number of items is adequate, and our sample fulfilled these criteria. We then performed Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Axis Factoring (PAF). We did not choose principal components analysis (PCA) because it is known to inflate the sizes of the

Table 5. Age-group profile of EFA participants.

Age group		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	18-24	61	24.1	24.1	24.1
	25-31	66	26.1	26.1	50.2
	32-38	62	24.5	24.5	74.7
	39-45	41	16.2	16.2	90.9
	46-52	13	5.1	5.1	96.0
	53-59	7	2.8	2.8	98.8
	60+	3	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	253	100.0	100.0	

Table 6. Gender profile of EFA participants.

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Male	141	55.7	55.7	55.7
	Female	112	44.3	44.3	100.0
	Total	253	100.0	100.0	

Table 7. Education profile of EFA participants.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Completed 5th grade	3	1.2	1.2	1.2
	Completed 10th grade	10	4.0	4.0	5.1
	Completed 12th grade	34	13.4	13.4	18.6
	Completed graduation	106	41.9	41.9	60.5
	Completed masters	85	33.6	33.6	94.1
	Completed Ph.D. or above	11	4.3	4.3	98.4
	Did not attend school	4	1.6	1.6	100.0
	Total	253	100.0	100.0	

Table 8. KMO and Bartlett's test for EFA.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		.926
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. Chi-square	2155.226
	df	136
	Sig.	.000

components through the inclusion of error variance. This, in turn, can lead to the over-inclusion of components (Conway & Huffcutt, 2003; Goldberg & Velicer, 2006; Snook & Gorsuch, 1989). Since we are interested in transforming items into a factor structure, we used PAF. Next, we determined the number of factors using the following:

a. Eigenvalue $>$ 1: Eigenvalues measure the variance accounted for by each factor in our construct structure. It is believed that eigenvalues greater than 1 result in stable dimensions (Kaiser, 1960). In our study, 3 factors had values greater than 1.
b. Scree Plot: The scree plot is a graphical representation that estimates the number of factors to retain in our construct. The cutoff line for the number of factors is determined when a line elbows off from a straight

dotted line (Pett et al., 2003; Preacher & MacCallum, 2003). In this case, we got 3 dimensions that accounted for the most variance.

Post the factor structure we received, we applied an oblique rotation to it because it allowed the factors to correlate. The rotation options included Direct Oblimin and Promax. We chose Promax because it is more robust (Hendrickson & White, 1964; Thompson, 2004). We decided to retain: (i) those items with a factor loading greater than 0.55, (ii) factors with a minimum of 3 items, (iii) no cross-loadings, and (iv) Cronbach alpha >0.7. Based on these criteria, we removed 5 items, and our list had 16 items at the end of the EFA. The 16 items characterized 3 main dimensions- with 6, 5, and 5 items in each of the dimensions, respectively. We categorized the 3 dimensions as: "interest in new storytelling strategies," "acknowledgment of social issues," and "encouragement of family-friendly content" (as shown in Table 9).

Table 9. Details of EFA.

Statements	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Construct
OTT content should highlight the significance of mental health awareness (IntNewStory1).	**.781**			**Interest in New Storytelling Strategies**
Manipulation of drama in OTT entertainment is unethical (IntNewStory2).	**.758**			
Biopics on lesser-known real-life heroes are an ethical decision to bring these talented people of our country to the limelight (IntNewStory3).	**.689**			
Independent OTT shows should highlight social problems around us (IntNewStory4).	**.612**			
I like watching OTT content that promotes new artistic talents over run-off-the-mill strategies (IntNewStory5).	**.607**			
Developing sustainable lifestyle through OTT shows/films is an ethical entertainment choice (IntNewStory6).	**.596**			
I think the dignified representation of national service professions (like doctors, army, and police) on OTT is ethical (AckSocial1).		**.685**		**Acknowledgment of Social Issues**
Highlighting environmental issues through OTT entertainment content would be a moral decision (AckSocial2).		**.653**		
Highlighting the notion against alcohol/substance abuse in entertainment is an ethical choice that OTT sites can make (AckSocial3).		**.618**		
More representation of LGBTQ groups in mainstream entertainment would be a moral decision (AckSocial4).		**.585**		
Using immersive media on OTT is an ethical decision as it improves the engagement level for viewers to absorb their social realities (AckSocial5).		**.556**		
I avoid issues like religious controversies in my entertainment consumption (EncrgFamilyContent1).			**.782**	**Encouragement of Family-Friendly Content**
I don't enjoy content with explicit sexual imagery (EncrgFamilyContent2).			**.701**	
I do not think showing excessive violence on OTT makes for an ethical watch (EncrgFamilyContent3).			**.652**	
I do not like using jingoism/ extreme patriotism in OTT entertainment (EncrgFamilyContent4).			**.647**	
I don't particularly appreciate watching content that shows the inauthentic fabrication of real issues (EncrgFamilyContent5).			**.556**	

4.3.1. Demographic Profile of pilot study participants

Tables 2–4, as stated above, show the demographic profile of the participants who participated in the pilot study, with respect to their age groups, gender, and education, respectively. The responses were collected from 205 respondents, of which 41.5 percent are females, and 58.5 percent are males. 43.9% of the participants were aged between 18-29 years, 42.9% belonged to the age group of 30-44 years, and 13.2% were over 45 years of age. 13.2% of participants were school pass-outs, 39.5% had completed graduation, 40% participants had a master's degree, 5.4% had Ph.D. or higher degrees, and the rest, 2%, did not disclose their educational qualifications.

4.3.2. Demographic Profile of EFA participants

Tables 5–7, as stated above, highlight the demographic profile of the participants who participated in the EFA stage with respect to their age groups, gender, and education, respectively. The responses were collected from 253 respondents, of which 55.7 percent are males and 44.3 percent are females. 24.1% of the participants were aged between 18-24years, 26.% of the participants belonged to the age group of 25-31 years, 24.5% participants were in the age group of 32-38 years, 16.2% were in the age group 39-45 years, 5.1% belong to 46-52 years, 2.8% belong to the group 53-59 years, and 1.2% were above 60 years. 41.9% of participants had completed their college graduation degrees, 33.6% had masters' degrees, 4.3% had Ph.D. or higher degrees, and the rest, 18.6%, had not gone to college.

4.3.3. Results of EFA analysis - the Three-Factor solution

The factor solution consisted of 3 factors extracted by principal axis factor analysis (PAF), which we had obliquely rotated with a Promax algorithm (kappa = 4). The three rotated factors accounted for 54.2% of the total variance of our latent construct CPEEC.

Based on the coefficients of the factor pattern matrix and their corresponding items, we interpreted each of the factors and named them. The coefficients of the pattern matrix are considered similar to standardized regression coefficients because they show the contribution of each item to the variance of the factor on which it loads (Russell, 2002). Contrastingly, the structure matrix shows the degree of association between items and their corresponding factor where the factors are correlated, and the loadings overlap amongst each other. As a result, structure matrix loadings are considered biased estimates of the relationships between items and factors (Russell, 2002). To remove this bias, we used the pattern matrix for our interpretation.

FACTOR # 1 (interest in new storytelling strategies). This factor or subscale explained 44.995% of the most significant proportion of total variance. This group of items depicts beliefs about the new trends in OTT entertainment that consumers consider ethical. Six items loaded on factor 1, with pattern coefficients ("factor loadings") between .683 and .781. This factor demonstrates a high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .887, which strongly suggests that this group of items is tapping into a common underlying concept. We observed no meaningful change in Cronbach's alpha if any of the items were deleted, and thus we retained all of them. The item-total correlations varied between .63 and .736, with four items above being above 0.7. The items *"OTT content based on mental health awareness"* and *"Biopics on lesser-known real-life heroes"* loaded the highest on this factor. We labeled this factor as **interest in new storytelling techniques** because it shows consumers' interest in new entertainment content catered to their ethical beliefs. Thus, this factor is established as an important dimension of CPEEC.

FACTOR # 2 (acknowledgment of social issues). This factor consists of four items and explained 6.27% of the total variance. This cluster of items depicts consumers' interest in representing social issues in OTT entertainment. Five items were loaded on factor 2, with pattern coefficients between .556 and .685. This factor demonstrates an internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha of .828, which strongly suggests that this group of items highlights a common concept. There was no significant change in Cronbach's alpha if any of the items were deleted, and thus we retained all five of them. The item-total correlations varied between .591 and .619, with four items above being above 0.6. Two items, *"Highlighting environmental issues through OTT entertainment"* and *"emphasis on LGBTQA groups in mainstream OTT entertainment,"* loaded highest on factor 2. We named this factor *"***acknowledgment of social issues,"** which establishes consumers' interest in knowing more about what is happening around them, with a particular focus on societal issues that need consideration.

FACTOR # 3 (encouragement of family-friendly content). The five items that loaded on factor 3 explained 3.009% of the total variance. This cluster of items depicts beliefs primarily about family-friendly content that OTT subscribers consider moral regarding their viewing choices. The five items loaded on factor 3, with pattern coefficients between .556 and .786. This factor demonstrates a high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .813, which strongly suggests that these items represent a common underlying concept. There was no significant change in Cronbach's alpha if any of the items were deleted. Thus, we retained all five of them. The item-total

correlations varied between .553 and .646, with three items above being above 0.6. The items *"OTT content without sexual imagery"* and *"Realistic content without manipulation"* loaded the highest on factor 3. We named this factor as **"encouragement of family-friendly content,"** which establishes a salient dimension of CPEEC from the viewpoint of subscribers. It shows an increased preference for entertainment options that a family can enjoy together without discomfort or embarrassment.

4.4. Stage 4 - Finalization of scale

Surveys with these 16 items were circulated via a non-probability purposive sampling to gain access to a larger pool of respondents. We initiated the study via the third-party survey site Zoho to collect respondents (based on the selection criteria in Stage1) across different demographic groups. The self-administered questionnaires were sent to 500 people. We got complete responses from 249 people at a 49.8 percent response rate.

4.4.1. Demographic profile of CFA participants

Tables 10–12 show the demographic profile of the participants in CFA. The responses were collected from 249 respondents, of which 52.6 percent are males, 41.4 percent are females, and 6 percent are non-binary. 23.3% of the participants are between 18-24years, 26.9% of the participants belong to the age group 25-31 years, 24.5% of participants were in the age group 32-38 years, 14.9% were in the age group 39-45 years, 6.4% belong to 46-52 years, 2.8% belong to the group 53-59 years, and 1.2% were above 60 years. 40.2% were graduates, 34.1% had master's degrees, 6.4% participants had Ph.D. or higher degrees, 17.3 percent had completed 12^{th} standard, and the rest 2% did not specify their education level. Table 13 shows that the KMO-Bartlett's value is 0.916, representing an adequate sample size.

4.4.2. Assessment of reliability and dimensionality

The final CPEEC scale consists of 13 items in total. In the CFA stage, we removed all items with factor loadings below 0.55 (Hair et al., 2010). We removed 3 items from the list: 1. "Using immersive media on OTT is the right decision as it improves the engagement level for viewers," 2. "I do not like using jingoism/extreme patriotism in OTT entertainment," 3. "I don't particularly appreciate watching content that shows the inauthentic fabrication of real issues." Thus, our CFA model had 13 items in total. We again analyzed the internal consistency of these extracted three factors with the help of Cronbach's alpha. The values of Cronbach's alpha for the different dimensions of CPEEC gave satisfactory values for "interest in new

Table 10. Age profile of CFA participants.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	18-24	58	23.3	23.3	23.3
	25-31	67	26.9	26.9	50.2
	32-38	61	24.5	24.5	74.7
	39-45	37	14.9	14.9	89.6
	46-52	16	6.4	6.4	96
	53-59	7	2.8	2.8	98.8
	60+	3	1.2	1.2	100
	Total	249	100	100	

Table 11. Gender profile of CFA participants

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Male	131	52.6	56.0	56.0
	Female	103	41.4	44.0	100.0
	Total	234	94.0	100.0	
Missing	System	15	6.0		
Total		249	100.0		

Table 12. Education profile of CFA participants.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid		15	6.0	6.0	6.0
	Completed 5th grade	2	.8	.8	6.8
	Completed 10th grade	10	4.0	4.0	10.8
	Completed 12th grade	30	12.0	12.0	22.9
	Completed graduation	96	38.6	38.6	61.4
	Completed masters	82	32.9	32.9	94.4
	Completed Ph.D. or above	11	4.4	4.4	98.8
	Did not attend school	3	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	249	100.0	100.0	

Table 13. KMO and Bartlett's test for CFA.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy.		.916
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1820.356
	df	120
	Sig.	.000

storytelling strategies" (0.887), "acknowledgment of social issues"(0.796), and "encouragement of family-friendly content" (0.717). The internal reliability of each factor is greater than the cutoff value of 0.7 proposed in past literature (Hair et al., 2010; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

4.4.3. Convergent and discriminant validity

The details of CFA are exhibited in Table 14. As stated in past literature, we developed the measurement model consisting of all the factors and their items. Models having cutoff values of more than 0.90 for the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and less than 0.08 for the Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) are said to have a good fit (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). In our case, the CFI value is 0.943, and the RMSEA value is 0.066 (as shown in Table 15). The composite reliability of each construct is 0.886,

Table 14. Details of CFA.

Construct	Items	Standard loadings	AVE	Square root of AVE	CR
Interest in New Storytelling Strategies	IntNewStory1	0.71	0.5636	0.7507	0.886
Interest in New Storytelling Strategies	IntNewStory2	0.76			
Interest in New Storytelling Strategies	IntNewStory3	0.78			
Interest in New Storytelling Strategies	IntNewStory4	0.79			
Interest in New Storytelling Strategies	IntNewStory5	0.76			
Interest in New Storytelling Strategies	IntNewStory6	0.7			
Acknowledgment of Social Issues	AckSocial1	0.71	0.5041	0.7100	0.803
Acknowledgment of Social Issues	AckSocial2	0.71			
Acknowledgment of Social Issues	AckSocial3	0.72			
Acknowledgment of Social Issues	AckSocial4	0.7			
Encouragement of Family-Friendly Content	EncrgFamilyContent1	0.73	0.5139	0.7169	0.76
Encouragement of Family-Friendly Content	EncrgFamilyContent2	0.73			
Encouragement of Family-Friendly Content	EncrgFamilyContent3	0.69			

Table 15. Model fit for scale.

Model fit index	Degrees of freedom (d.f.)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Estimate	101	0.942	0.908	0.066	0.041

0.803, and 0.760, which are greater than the cutoff value of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2010). The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) indicators are 0.563, 0.503, and 0.500, in recommendation with the cutoff value of 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2010). Since the AVE values are greater than 0.5, the standardized factor loading of all items is greater than 0.5, and composite reliability is greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2010), the convergent validity is established successfully. Also, the Square Root of AVE for each dimension is greater than each column in the Pearson correlation table, establishing the discriminant validity of our scale.

The final scale of CPEEC consists of three dimensions and 13 items. Post completion of the validation stage, we can see that Factor 1 (interest in new storytelling strategies) has 6 items, Factor 2 (acknowledgment of social issues) has 4 items, and Factor 3 (encouragement of family-friendly content) has 3 items. The details of the final scale are exhibited in Table 16.

5. Discussion

While past literature has addressed media and entertainment ethics in detail, there was a lack of specific research exploring the concept of Consumers' Preferences for Ethical Entertainment Consumption in academic literature. Thus, the main aim of our study was to build a reliable, valid, and parsimonious scale for measuring this construct against the backdrop of OTT entertainment platforms. The measure we developed, CPEEC, comprises 13 items capturing three dimensions: "interest in new storytelling strategies," "acknowledgment of social issues," and "encouragement of

Table 16. Final CPEEC scale structure.

Statements	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Construct
OTT content should highlight the significance of mental health awareness (IntNewStory1).	**.71**			**Interest in New Storytelling Strategies**
Manipulation of drama in OTT entertainment is unethical (IntNewStory2).	**.76**			
Biopics on lesser-known real-life heroes are an ethical decision to bring these talented people of our country to the limelight (IntNewStory3).	**.78**			
Independent OTT shows should highlight social problems around us (IntNewStory4).	**.79**			
I like watching OTT content that promotes new artistic talents over run-off-the-mill strategies (IntNewStory5).	**.76**			
Developing sustainable lifestyle through OTT shows/films is an ethical entertainment choice(IntNewStory6).	**.7**			
I think the dignified representation of national service professions (like doctors, army, and police) on OTT is ethical(AckSocial1).		**.71**		**Acknowledgment of Social Issues**
Highlighting environmental issues through OTT entertainment content would be a moral decision(AckSocial2).		**.71**		
Highlighting the notion against alcohol/substance abuse in entertainment is an ethical choice that OTT sites can make(AckSocial3).		**.72**		
More representation of LGBTQ groups in mainstream entertainment would be a moral decision(AckSocial4).		**.7**		
I avoid issues like religious controversies in my entertainment consumption (EncrgFamilyContent1).			**.73**	**Encouragement of Family-Friendly Content**
I don't enjoy content with explicit sexual imagery(EncrgFamilyContent2).			**.73**	
I do not think showing excessive violence on OTT makes for an ethical watch((EncrgFamilyContent3).			**.69**	

family-friendly content." We also established the reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity of that the CPEEC scale. Our scale provides a detailed theoretical groundwork about how consumers choose content for entertainment consumption. With the CPEEC measurement scale, industry executives would find it easier to design content strategies that could cater to consumers' preferences.

5.1. Academic implications

Our study makes three main contributions to the literature on Ethical Consumption. First, we developed a three-dimensional scale for CPEEC to classify the various preferences that consumers talked about concerning ethical OTT entertainment. Specifically, this study delves into the construct of Ethical Consumption concerning the underexplored domain of OTT entertainment. The dimensions of this study give new insights into what

ethical characteristics consumers expect from digital entertainment platforms.

Second, this study extends earlier research on measuring Ethical Consumption through its conceptualization in the entertainment industry. Earlier scales, like the ECB scale (Toti & Moulins, 2016) claimed that social, political, and environmental dimensions primarily characterize the construct of Ethical Consumption. The SRPD scale (Webb et al., 2008) highlighted Ethical Consumption with dimensions like recycling, green purchase, and corporate social responsibility. While these scales explored an overall view of Ethical Consumption and how consumers make their ethical purchase decisions, our study extends the discussion of the construct in the domain of digital entertainment to give a new interpretation of Ethical Consumption that differs widely from those explored in past scales. The CES (Muncy & Vitell, 1992) is based on consumers' judgments about buying counterfeit products, environmental awareness and doing the right things. However, OTT platforms allow viewers to download content with a subscription. Thus, the relevance of the dimensions of this scale also needs to be analyzed in the context of current times. While the RECS (Gomberg et al., 2004) measures the ethicality of entertainment content for children, our study takes the idea further and develops a scale that considers adult OTT subscribers' preferences. Besides, Brock and Livingston (2004) suggested the need for an entertainment scale as viewers become more active in their choices and do not remain passive consumers of whatever they see on-screen. Our research takes these past scales that were relevant to our central construct and adds new insights into these findings by developing a new CPEEC scale. Our scale does not restrict the conceptualization of Ethical Consumption to specific dimensions or against the backdrop of practices that are irrelevant now. Instead, it adds to the burgeoning literature on ethical OTT entertainment, which has largely been ignored and unexplored in academic literature till recently.

Third, the findings of this research indicate that CPEEC's three dimensions strongly advocate for the development of a moral code in the OTT industry. While the focus of industry protocols has been on the appropriateness of the public exhibition of content, OTT platforms provide subscriptions for private viewing. In such a scenario, the imposition of public age-based certifications might not be appropriate for OTT content, and instead, the focus should be on what consumers want to watch. Prior studies in entertainment ethics have identified the importance of adherence to moral codes (Borden & Good, 2010; Roberts & Black, 2021; Valenti, 2018). If OTT entertainment reflects the ethical values of consumers, they are expected to be more likely to consume entertainment on these platforms. Our study provides three dimensions based on consumers' preferences for

ethical entertainment and is expected to start a detailed academic discourse on this topic.

5.2. Managerial implications

This study provides several implications for industry experts in the digital entertainment sector. First, our scale is reliable, valid, and parsimonious and can be used by entertainment practitioners to design their strategies according to consumers' moral codes. Second, as the results of our study show, consumers are inclined toward entertainment sources that are not manipulative, false, and indecent. Considering these preferences, OTT platforms can develop their advertising campaigns by using the CPEEC scale to analyze if the campaigns are designed according to consumers' desirability from their content choices. It would be helpful for OTT platforms because advertising campaigns that abide by ethical principles increase trust in the brand's credibility (Spais, 2014). Third, our scale can be used for developing stronger relationships between subscribers and OTT platforms through an improved focus on consumers' preferences and values in their content strategies. Fourth, our study provides a useful measure to encourage industry practitioners to strategize the positioning of their services as ethical options in a saturated entertainment market marred with competition. Fifth, the CPEEC scale can be used by OTT platforms to provide positive experiences for their subscribers. Lastly, consumers can also use the CPEEC scale to provide feedback to OTT service providers by analyzing how well the content catalogs cater to their preferences. Subscribers on these sites can also choose their preferred content by assessing their ethical content via this measurement scale.

5.3. Limitations and future research directions

First, we used a sufficient number of samples, as mandated by past studies, but the sample size could be further expanded for more generalizability and relevance. Second, the data were collected in a cross-sectional design, and future researchers could test the changes in the construct through longitudinal data collection that provides time-based variations. Third, this scale of CPEEC can be reviewed and validated in other major OTT markets like the USA and UK. Fourth, the distinct cultural fabric of Indian society is very different from the cultural background in the West. Future researchers could develop a scale in the context of other cultural backgrounds by following this study as a guide.

Fifth, this research does not explore individual variations in perceptions of ethical entertainment consumption to analyze if the construct is equally

crucial for all consumers under all circumstances and needs more in-depth investigation in the future. Sixth, we identified only three dimensions of CPEEC. Future research can look into a broader exploration of this concept. Finally, academicians need to compare the outcomes of age-based certifications with those of ethicality of content. Such studies will be critical as both age-based certifications and the ethicality of OTT content will be important in OTT regulations in the future.

Disclosure statement

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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