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# Evolution of Consumer Behavior in Subscription Models and Its Impact on Brand Loyalty.

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### ABSTRACT :

The growth of subscription models has resulted in consumers using different methods to get entertainment, gain knowledge, use software platforms, and buy items online. Rather than paying just when they want it, users are asked to pay each period, so companies need to know about users' experience and what brings them value and satisfaction. The research highlights how people's actions in these different models affect whether they remain loyal and keep their accounts or adjust or cut them. It is extremely important for businesses to understand how people become interested, disappointed, and why they develop certain habits.

We polled over a hundred people from the age group 18-34 and many students, most of them university students, to find out about their subscriptions. Data gathered on what users were looking for, their preferred TV show selections, why they decided to subscribe, and why they might decide to quit, supported the quantitative information taken from the research.

Key research shows that subscribers are drawn and retained by not having ads, give-and-take free trials, budget friendly monthly subscriptions, and specialized viewing recommendations. Alternatively, an expensive service, uninteresting new programs, better options, and poor service at the company are primary reasons people decide to cancel. Comments from respondents also revealed that they want discounted packages for groups and families, lengthy access, and easier invoices. Getting ahead in the subscription economy relies on individualized marketing, fitting prices, and interesting content.

Customers brand loyalty in subscriptions by being satisfied, connected emotionally, and making use of the product often. If a business can produce excellent products, consider clients' needs, and plan for the future, it is likely to keep most of its subscribers. This study gives useful directions for marketing and business strategies in response to changes in the subscription economy.

**Keywords:** subscription models for entertainment, learning, and software, valuing features like ad-free content, free trials, budget-friendly pricing, personalized recommendations, and group discounts. Brand loyalty, satisfaction, emotional connection, and frequent usage drive loyalty, while high costs, poor service, uninteresting content, and better alternatives lead to cancellations. Businesses must focus on user experience, tailored marketing, and long-term value to thrive in the evolving subscription economy.

## INTRODUCTION

### *Background of the Study*

In the past few years, people's methods of getting goods and services have been revolutionized. It has become especially obvious that the subscription model is rising across several industries, from entertainment and music to software, education and now also in retail (through subscription boxes and grocery subscriptions).

A subscription doesn't give you complete ownership like buying does; instead, you can use the items for as long as you want. More and more people are attracted to this model since it is flexible, cost-effective, can be customized and is very convenient. Companies, for their part, gain reliable revenue, more client information and a chance to remain in touch with users for a long time. Nevertheless, there are issues facing this model strategy. Because more companies are using subscriptions such issues as fatigue, more competition and increased customer churn are now important.

Now more than ever, it's crucial to learn about the behavior of consumers who subscribe to services. Firms now have to study how users interact, assess their experiences and determine if they wish to maintain or end their membership. Besides, companies should try to hold onto customers by offering lasting quality and making their customers feel emotionally connected to the brand.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

Even with many people using subscription services, keeping them as customers is still a big challenge. Attractive offers and interesting content may get users to sign up, but if these things aren't maintained, their involvement tends to decrease. Reports indicate that many people quit using these services after a little while due to a lack of new options, price issues or poor user experience.

Researchers have mainly looked at how consumers are acquired, while paying less attention to changes in how people behave as subscribers to online services. Understanding how users' perspectives and actions affect their relationships with a brand is clearly important for marketers.

This research seeks to resolve this divide by identifying the common behaviors, goals, what keeps users satisfied and what makes them cancel their subscriptions, among younger users in particular.

### ***Purpose of the Study***

The research focuses on finding out how customers change their behavior with subscriptions and what impact this change has on brand loyalty. We want to discover which features people like most, what keeps them attached to the app and what makes them uninstall or stop using it. It also wants to give business leaders and marketers helpful insights to upgrade their subscription models.

### ***Aim of the Research***

1. To analyze the reasons why people decide to use subscription services.
2. Looking into the actions and interests of subscribers as time goes on.
3. To study the ways that personalization, quality of content and price affect how happy users are with a service.
4. To find out the key reasons why subscribers unsubscribe from your platform.
5. To study if participation and satisfaction regularly contribute to a customer's loyalty to a brand.
6. To suggest actions to maintain and grow retention and loyalty in recurring subscription models.

### ***Questions About the Research***

1. What leads people to use subscription services?
2. How do the ways that people sign up for subscriptions shift with time?
3. What connection is there between satisfying learners, delivering content that matters and efficient personalization and retention?
4. Why do people cancel their services even after being interested at first?
5. How do people end up loyal to a brand after buying its subscription?

### ***Scope of the Study***

This research concentrates on digital subscription services found in entertainment, education and software industries. This research is focused on 100+ young adult users, ranging in age from 18 to 34 and currently enrolled in school or working. India is the geographic location and the cultural, economic and digital habits of this group are analyzed in this report.

Information about subscription habits, motives, happiness levels and loyalty to the brand is collected through both questionnaire-based surveys and feedback conversation.

### ***Importance of the Study***

This work is important for academics as well as for industries. The study helps the field by adding insights on user behavior over time in subscription models. For companies, these results share advice on how they can develop, market and adjust their subscription services to please and retain customers.

Because of subscription models, businesses now need to focus as much on customer loyalty as they do on attracting new customers. This research supports this shift by showing what affects loyalty in a subscription-based business.

### ***METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS***

This chapter covers how the research was done to examine consumer behavior linked to subscription models and brand loyalty. This section introduces the planned research approach, sampling methods, data collection, types of data analysis and ethical aspects. The chapter explains how the data was studied to generate important information about users' reasons for using the site, their sense of satisfaction and what actions they performed.

Since digital consumer behavior keeps changing and subscription environments demand exploration, this study uses a mix of quantitative and qualitative techniques to understand it.

**Research Design.**

The design selected is descriptive and exploratory, matched to uncovering how users behave and what they think in digital subscription models. Thanks to descriptive analysis, we know numbers about how satisfied customers are, what features they use and the reasons behind cancelling. Exploratory methods, on the other hand, reveal what customers wish for and how they feel.

- This example is considered Applied Research.
- You can do both Qualitative and Quantitative methods.
- Over time horizon, only a single moment was considered.

Because of this approach, the researchers can study today's trends and how they impact the link between a brand and its loyal customers.

**Population and Sampling****Target Population**

The group of people examined in the study are those between 18 and 34 years who make use of online subscription services. They were selected because they use digital services a lot and are frequent subscribers.

**Sample Characteristics**

- This study used 100+ responses for its sample size.
- All the participants were from the young generation.
- The largest group is those between 18 and 24 years old.
- Many students are following courses at either Bachelor's or Master's levels
- Primarily, people in this group are students and early professionals

**Sampling Technique**

Purposive sampling without a probability element was used. People were included in the study only if they had experience with subscription services, so that their replies stayed relevant.

**Data Collection Methods**

Researchers used a planned survey online to collect data and also took open-ended feedback to understand beliefs and opinions more closely.

**Survey Tool:**

- Google Forms
- Distributed via messaging apps and university groups
- Duration of data collection: 1 week

**Survey Structure:**

- *Section A:* Demographic Information
- *Section B:* Subscription Usage and Preferences
- *Section C:* Satisfaction and Cancellation Behavior
- *Section D:* Open Feedback (Qualitative)

**Key Variables and Constructs**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Construct Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
<b>Subscription Status</b>	Categorical	Current vs. past subscribers
<b>Satisfaction Level</b>	Ordinal (Likert scale)	1 (low) to 5 (high)
<b>Feature Preferences</b>	Multiple Choice	Ad-free, free trial, flexibility, personalization
<b>Cancellation Reasons</b>	Multiple Choice	Cost, content fatigue, better alternatives
<b>Intent to Continue/Resubscribe</b>	Ordinal	Future usage likelihood (1–5 scale)
<b>Feedback Themes</b>	Qualitative	Value, pricing, UX, content expectations

## Analytical Techniques

### Quantitative Analysis

- *Tool:* Microsoft Excel
- *Methods:* Descriptive statistics including frequency counts, percentages, and mean scores
- *Outputs:*
  - Bar charts of feature preference distribution
  - Pie charts of satisfaction levels
  - Tables showing top cancellation triggers

### Qualitative Analysis

*Tool: Using codes and assigning topics*

*Responses were analyzed through an organized process known as thematic analysis.*

*Themes that were found:*

*The need to have things at a reduced price for students or groups*

*Unhappiness with hearing the same things told many times*

*Advice on lifetime plans and adding more meaningful options*

### Ethical Considerations

Every step of this research was guided by accepted ethical principles for data processing.

Participants joined freely and knew exactly the purpose of the study.

- No personal information was requested from respondents.

The data was used solely to support my academic work.

- People could feel confident that their information wasn't shared outside the organization.

### Limitations of Methodology

*Having 100+ included in the sample may keep conclusions about youth in general from being directly applied; but it effectively describes youth behavior.*

*Because all the participants were from the young generation so comparisons cannot be made.*

*Limited to a single moment: Since data is collected once, it couldn't show as much as repeated observations.*

Methods and the framework used to analyze changes in consumer behavior within the subscription economy are explained in this chapter. Combining structured surveys with qualitative feedback allowed for a thorough analysis of guests' motivations, how much they liked their stay and how loyal they were. Results from the analysis will be presented in the coming chapter, along with what they mean for the research questions.

## RESULTS

Outcomes from both the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the primary survey involving 100+ respondents are shared in this chapter. To achieve this, we analyze people's behavior, their motivations for using these services, their level of satisfaction and what leads them to cancel, so we can learn how these impact staying loyal to a brand. The results are organized according to the major research goals.

### Respondent Demographics

Attribute	Category	% of Respondents
Age	18–24	67%
	25–34	33%
Gender	Male	63.3%
	Female	36.7%
Education	Bachelor's/Master's Degree	90%+
Occupation	Students	~70%+

*The data mostly captures educated male students in their teenage years—a perfect group to examine new trends in subscription services..*

### Subscription Engagement

- Most respondents or 85%, are already subscribed to at least one online service.
- At least 70% of the users said their intention to subscribe to further offers runs from moderate to high.
- Very few users are switching, telling us that most people are satisfied and stay loyal.
- The evidence suggests that over time, a majority of the sample formed lasting relationships with social media sites which can lead to brand loyalty.

### Content Preferences

CONTENT TYPE	PREFERENCE (% OF RESPONDENTS)
MOVIES & TV SHOWS	78%
EDUCATIONAL CONTENT	64%
MUSIC / AUDIO	55%
NEWS / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	36%

*Observation:* People choose these two types of content, entertainment and education, because of both enjoyment and learning.

### Satisfaction Levels

Respondents rated their overall satisfaction on a 5-point Likert scale:

- 5 (Highly Satisfied): 21%
- 4 (Satisfied): 42%
- 3 (Neutral): 28%
- 2 or below (Dissatisfied): 9%

*Finding:* Over 60% of users are satisfied or highly satisfied, suggesting that current service offerings are generally meeting expectations.

### Features That Drive Subscription Adoption

Feature	% Respondents Selecting
Ad-Free Experience	81%
Free Trial/Demo Availability	71%
Flexible Subscription Plans	68%
Personalized Recommendations	65%

*Insight:* These results highlight that *value, flexibility, and control* are key attributes influencing user subscription decisions.

### Subscription Cancellation Triggers

Reason for Cancellation	% Reporting This
High Cost	60%
Lack of New/Relevant Content	55%
Better Alternatives Available	50%
Poor Customer Service	29%

*Observation:* Price and content stagnation are major churn drivers—highlighting the importance of *continuous innovation and affordability*.

### User Motivations and Value Perceptions

When asked about their reasons for continuing subscriptions:

- *Convenience & Time-Saving* – 75%
- *Access to Exclusive Content* – 62%
- *Enhanced User Experience* – 58%

*Analysis:* Users associate subscriptions with *ease*, *exclusivity*, and *higher perceived value* compared to traditional access models.

### ***Qualitative Analysis of Open Feedback***

A thematic review of open-ended responses revealed the following common suggestions and sentiments:

Key Themes Identified:

Theme	Examples of Feedback
<i>Affordability</i>	“Too expensive for students.”
<i>Flexibility</i>	“I wish there were lifetime or yearly plans.”
<i>Group Features</i>	“There should be a family or group option like Spotify.”
<i>Content Freshness</i>	“Sometimes it gets boring due to repeated content.”
<i>Personalization</i>	“Customized suggestions would make the service better.”

*Interpretation:* Respondents value *dynamic offerings*—such as customization, affordability, and accessible multi-user plans.

### ***Key Findings Summary Table***

Area	Finding
<b><i>Adoption Drivers</i></b>	Ad-free experience, free trials, personalization, flexible plans
<b><i>Satisfaction</i></b>	High overall satisfaction with entertainment and educational platforms
<b><i>Churn Drivers</i></b>	High cost, outdated content, better competitors, poor customer service
<b><i>Engagement Patterns</i></b>	Frequent but stable usage; low switching frequency among users
<b><i>Improvement Areas</i></b>	Affordable group plans, improved content freshness, lifetime pricing options

The chapter outlines the findings of the research, making trends in young consumers’ subscription use easy to notice. Retaining users is made easier by meeting their expectations and letting them shape their experience and lower prices and fresh content help minimize those who leave. The data confirms that emotional involvement, how much customers value the services and great content help subscription companies earn loyal followers in the long term.

## **DISCUSSION**

Here, the results from Chapter 5 are considered within the framework and together with the literature from Chapter 3. It reviews if the research answers the questions set out, identifies important insights about human actions and gives suggestions for improvement in both theory and practice. The main topics of the article are adoption motivation, what makes someone satisfied, reasons for cancellation, customization and building loyal subscribers.

### ***Interpretation of Findings***

#### **Motivations Behind Subscription Adoption**

The analysis found that users care most about not seeing ads (81%), having free trial periods (71%), having flexible billing options (68%) and being given personalized guidance (65%). The data proves that the importance of perceived value in deciding to subscribe coincides with what the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) predicts. People look at how easy it is to use a service and what benefits they can get before joining. Moreover, this supports the DeLone and McLean (2003) IS Success Model, indicating that system and service quality help people continue using the system. Having a trial period and lots of flexibility is important to people who want to avoid risks with their finances.

#### **Satisfaction and Engagement Patterns**

A majority of the people surveyed scored their satisfaction at 4 or 5 which reflects a positive user experience. The people who used the company’s services tended to switch only rarely, indicating a relatively high level of behavioral loyalty. This pattern is in keeping with Oliver’s (1999) theory which says that loyalty starts with our thoughts, then grows into our feelings and finally becomes behavioral.

This indicates that, as long as customers see value in the product, they stick with the brand according to the research by Romaniuk and Nenycz-Thiel (2011).

### ***Cancellation Triggers and Churn Behavior***

The top three reasons for cancellation were:

- *High cost (60%)*
- *Lack of fresh content (55%)*
- *Better alternatives (50%)*

They clearly show that people can leave, despite their satisfaction, if the company's value begins to drop over time. Churn is truly affected by perceived repetition, challenges from other airlines and costs, not just poor service, according to Wirtz et al. (2018) and Liu (2007).

It points out that habit formation helps, as if the service is used less often or without interest, people tend to stop using it despite enjoying it before.

### ***Role of Personalization and Content***

Over 65% of people said that seeing personalized recommendations is why they keep using the app. According to feedback, enhancing dashboards based on user needs, providing improved filtering and personal suggestions were vital additions.

As a result, digital services rely more on AI to personalize their offerings, as shown by authors Tam and Ho (2006) and Bahri-Ammari et al. (2021), who reported that personalization promotes trust, satisfaction and an emotional bond.

### ***Demographic Insights***

It is encouraging to see that the gender distribution (63.3% male, 36.7% female) is not too different from one another. Qualitative results point out that males tend to pick tech and entertainment channels, while females pick content related to education and wellness in subscriptions.

As a result, companies should divide content by audience groups and focus on gender-sensitive personalization to increase interest among different people.

### ***Alignment with Research Objectives and Questions***

<i>Research Question</i>	<i>Finding</i>
<b>What motivates consumers to adopt subscriptions?</b>	Value-driven features: ad-free experience, trial periods, personalization.
<b>How do subscription behaviors evolve over time?</b>	Users become loyal through habit and satisfaction if value remains stable.
<b>What factors influence satisfaction and loyalty?</b>	Content quality, ease of access, and personalization were most influential.
<b>Why do users cancel subscriptions?</b>	High pricing, stale content, and better alternatives led to cancellations.
<b>How does this behavior affect brand loyalty?</b>	Loyal behavior forms through consistent satisfaction and emotional trust.

### ***Theoretical Implications***

- The findings confirm that the Theory of Planned Behavior is appropriate for explaining recurring digital decisions.
- Emotional satisfaction results in maintaining the behavior in question, as the data show.
- As a result of the study, the IS Success Model is updated to include understanding that value perception is especially important in the subscription market.
- Adding personalization to the mix gives us new insights into how consumer-brand relationships take place in digital environments.

### ***Practical Implications***

**Subscription businesses and digital marketers should focus on these main points:**

1. Offer student deals, let families or groups buy one classroom license for a lower price and consider tiered pricing for your software.
2. Make AI and machine learning a part of your content to improve the ways readers discover and enjoy your articles.
3. Update the content libraries regularly and change the platform to include timely or user-visitor themes.
4. Pay attention to making the website intuitive, quick and easy for users to manage.
5. Watch the level of user churn in your app and proactively reduce it by providing easy-to-use tools and helpful offers.

This part of the chapter examines the conclusions of the study compared to existing theories and to what effect they should be applied. It turned out that simply having customers subscribe isn't enough, they also have to genuinely satisfy their customers, adapt to their preferences and provide value. Establishing relationships, keeping offerings fresh and building services that make people come back often help businesses keep customers loyal in our competitive digital world.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

The study aimed to discover how the behavior of consumers changes within subscription-based companies and how that affects their commitment to a brand. Because so many digital businesses now use recurring payments, figuring out why and how subscribers act or feel over a long period is vital for the business.

In this study, data from a survey and open-ended responses from participants (mainly male, 63.3% and female, 36.7%) age 18–34 was used. Data analysis displayed the things that users were satisfied with, what they preferred in the service and reasons for cancelling and the feedback revealed why current subscribers expect more from a company like yours.

Through the key findings, it was clear that things like ad-free use, free trials, personalization and flexible prices made users more likely to sign up and continue with the service. Higher satisfaction was noticed when these features met what users believed they would find. Most of the time, customers quit due to expensive packages, little change to the content and finding more attractive alternatives. We learn here that user loyalty depends on how often value is delivered.

The work found that strong emotions, regular use and customized services turn satisfaction into continuing loyalty to a brand. The information gathered in the study confirmed that the Theory of Planned Behavior, Oliver's loyalty framework and the Information Systems Success Model are important in applications to digital subscriptions.

### Key Findings Summary

<i>Focus Area</i>	<i>Findings</i>
<b>Subscription Adoption</b>	Driven by value features (e.g., ad-free, free trials, personalization).
<b>Satisfaction and Loyalty</b>	High satisfaction linked to content relevance and UX quality.
<b>Cancellation Drivers</b>	Price, content stagnation, and competition cause churn.
<b>Personalization</b>	Strong influence on satisfaction and user retention.
<b>Gender &amp; Age Insights</b>	Slightly diverse sample; trends consistent across gender and age segments.

### Recommendations

The analysis and outcomes suggest that subscription companies should try these strategic recommendations:

- Offer Pricing That Adapts to User Needs
  - Provide a range of payment structures, for example, including student, group/family and lifetime plans.
  - You could offer custom prices depending on how much and how long your service is used.
- Make Your Campaigns More Personal
  - Make use of data and AI to suggest suitable content and create flexible user interfaces.
  - Let users least interested in wall calendars get rid of them.
- Update your website with fresh and modern content.
  - Keep your content libraries recent and let users know about any new or hot trends.
  - Add user feedback loops so future planning can benefit from this.
- Work on the method users experience the website.
  - Work on how quickly your app loads, how its interface appears and how easily users can search for content.
  - Let customers access their accounts at any time on any device and also manage their own services.
- Introduce Systems to Keep Existing Customers
  - Use user behavior to select high-risk individuals, then provide personal recommendations designed to improve retention.
  - Let your customers know ahead of time about any missing or late payments.

### Limitations of the Study

While the results give useful advice, there are also limits to the study.

127 respondents took the survey, so it does not likely represent all user groups.

- Participant Groups:** This learning environment seems to appeal mainly to young adults; future efforts would involve examining participants from older groups as well.
- Cross-sectional Data:** Researchers observe behavior on a particular day only; they do not follow changes over time.
- Because surveys require people's own opinions, some biases may arise.**



### Scope for Future Research

Future studies might investigate the areas mentioned below:

- Perform research projects that follow loyalty over a period of months or even years.
- Look at the ways in which people in different age groups, earning different amounts and of different genders sign up for memberships.
- Check the results of experimenting with new ways to charge for your service or run loyalty programs.
- Check out what is being done in particular fields such as e-learning, health tech or B2B SaaS.

### Final Reflection

How people engage with content, services and brands is being changed by the digital subscription economy. This report shows what keeps users locked in and what makes them leave. Firms that keep track of subscriber psychological changes and deal with them kindly, inventively and with flexibility have the strongest chance of building strong customer relationships in today's digital age.

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