

BRAND LOYALTY IN THE SUBSCRIPTION ECONOMY: ANALYSING THE IMPACT OF SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES ON CONSUMER LOYALTY FOR NETFLIX

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the intricate dynamics of brand loyalty in the evolving landscape of the subscription economy, with a specific focus on the influential factors shaping consumer loyalty in Netflix compared to other Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms. The primary objectives of the research are to analyse the impact of subscription services on consumer loyalty, with a nuanced exploration of three critical aspects: Value Proposition, Content Quality & Interface, and Incentives and Rewards. To achieve these objectives, a rigorous research methodology was employed, involving a primary survey conducted through social media platforms. The survey utilized a structured questionnaire, incorporating a 10-point scale to rate consumer perceptions on the aforementioned aspects. A selective sampling strategy was applied, targeting 20 subscribers of Netflix and 20 subscribers of other OTT platforms, ensuring representation from active users. The statistical analysis was conducted using MS-Excel, employing an Independent Sample t-test to discern significant differences in Consumer Loyalty between the two groups. The results revealed noteworthy insights. There was a significant disparity in Consumer Loyalty between Netflix and Other OTT Platforms concerning the Value Proposition and Content Quality & Interface. Netflix exhibited lower mean values and higher standard deviations, indicating comparatively lower and more variable Consumer Loyalty scores. In the case of Incentives and Rewards, the results were on the borderline of significance, suggesting a potential difference in the influence of these programs on Consumer Loyalty. Based on these findings, strategic recommendations are proposed to enhance consumer loyalty for Netflix. These include refining the Value Proposition to offer a clear advantage over competitors, optimizing Content Quality & Interface for a superior user experience, and fine-tuning Incentives and Rewards programs. The study advocates for continuous consumer feedback, competitor benchmarking, and personalized strategies to stay attuned to evolving consumer preferences.

Keywords:

Brand Loyalty, Subscription Economy, OTT Platforms, Consumer Loyalty, Value Proposition, Content Quality, User Interface, Incentives and Rewards, Netflix

1. INTRODUCTION

The impact of subscription services on consumer loyalty within the realm of Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms has become a focal point in the ever-evolving landscape of the entertainment industry. OTT platforms, offering a plethora of content accessible at the viewer's convenience, have transformed the way individuals consume entertainment. The relationship between these platforms and their subscribers is multifaceted, influenced by several key factors that play a pivotal role in shaping consumer loyalty.

A critical determinant of consumer loyalty in the OTT domain is the perceived Value Proposition. Subscribers assess whether the content offered justifies the subscription cost and aligns with their preferences. The diversity and uniqueness of content, exclusive releases, and additional features contribute to the perceived value. A robust Value Proposition can cultivate a sense of loyalty, as subscribers feel they are getting substantial value for their investment.

Content Quality and User Interface constitute another significant dimension in the impact of subscription services on consumer loyalty. The quality of the content provided by an OTT platform, encompassing both original and licensed content, directly influences the viewer's satisfaction. Moreover, an intuitive and user-friendly interface enhances the overall user experience, fostering a positive perception of the platform. A seamless and enjoyable viewing experience contributes to sustained consumer loyalty.

Incentives and Rewards programs are emerging as strategic tools in shaping consumer loyalty for OTT platforms. Platforms that offer perks such as early access to content, exclusive previews, and loyalty rewards create an additional layer of engagement. These programs not only enhance the perceived value of the subscription but also establish a sense of appreciation for the subscriber's commitment, ultimately impacting loyalty.

The impact of subscription services on consumer loyalty is not uniform across all OTT platforms. The landscape is highly competitive, with platforms vying for the attention and allegiance of subscribers. Understanding the factors that contribute to consumer loyalty requires a comparative analysis, such as evaluating the experiences of subscribers on Netflix against those on other OTT platforms. These platforms may differentiate themselves through exclusive content libraries, varying pricing structures, or different approaches to incentives and rewards, all of which can significantly influence consumer loyalty.

Consumer feedback and satisfaction surveys are crucial tools in gauging the impact of subscription services on loyalty. Regularly collecting feedback provides valuable insights into subscriber preferences, pain points, and areas for improvement. By actively incorporating subscriber input, OTT platforms can adapt their strategies to better meet the evolving needs and expectations of their audience, thereby enhancing loyalty.

Strategic partnerships with content creators, studios, or influencers are avenues for OTT platforms to distinguish themselves. Exclusive collaborations can result in unique and highly anticipated content, attracting and retaining subscribers. Such partnerships contribute to a differentiated content offering, ultimately impacting consumer loyalty.

Communication strategies also play a vital role in the impact of subscription services on consumer loyalty. Keeping subscribers informed about upcoming releases, platform updates, and exclusive offerings creates a sense of community and engagement. Transparent and

consistent communication fosters trust and loyalty, reinforcing the subscriber's commitment to the platform.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature on the impact of subscription services on consumer loyalty spans various domains, including marketing, consumer behaviour, and service quality. Shaddy and Lee (2020) explore the effect of price promotions on consumer impatience, shedding light on the psychological aspects of pricing strategies. Neha and Manoj (2013) focus on the impact of sales promotion tools on consumers' purchase decisions, particularly in the context of white goods. Pi and Huang (2011) investigate the relationship between promotions, relationship quality, and customer loyalty in the airline industry, employing a relationship marketing approach.

Gilaninia, Taleghani, and Azizi (2013) delve into the broader realm of marketing mix and consumer behaviour, offering insights into how various elements influence consumer choices. The seminal work by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) establishes a foundational conceptual model of service quality, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the factors shaping customer perceptions. Adat, Noel, and (Darry) (2014) explore customer expectations and perceptions of service quality in the context of a retail pharmacy chain in South Africa.

Aydinli, Bertini, and Lambrecht (2014) examine the emotional impact of price promotions, emphasizing the role of emotions in consumer responses to promotional strategies. Heilman, Nakamoto, and Rao (2002) delve into the realm of in-store coupons, studying how pleasant surprises in the form of unexpected coupons influence consumer behaviour.

Several studies extend beyond the marketing realm to explore the dynamics of subscription services and customer loyalty, especially within the context of OTT platforms like Netflix. Voigt, Buliga, and Michl (2017) offer insights into the entertainment on-demand model, focusing on the case of Netflix. Wayne (2018) explores the landscape of subscription video-on-demand portals, analysing the role of Netflix and Amazon in shaping branded television content. Adhikari et al. (2014) conduct a measurement study of Netflix, Hulu, and CDN performance, shedding light on the technical aspects of content delivery networks.

Beyond academic research, Wayne (2018) and Adgate (2021) provide industry perspectives on the challenges faced by video streamers, including the imperative of retaining subscribers in a competitive environment. The Netflix Homepage (2019) reveals strategic partnerships, such as the collaboration with CJ ENM Studio Dragon, showcasing the importance of content alliances in the subscription service industry.

The literature also extends to the impact of artificial intelligence on customer satisfaction and loyalty (Prentice, 2020) and the mediating role of perceived usefulness and satisfaction in the relationship between customer trust and loyalty (Daud, 2018). Moreover, research by Do Thanh Nguyen (2020), Feras MI Alnaser (2017), and Khawaja Fawad Latif (2020) emphasizes the interplay between service quality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty.

In the context of Netflix's global presence, studies investigate diverse aspects. Adhikari et al. (2014) contribute to a measurement study of Netflix, while Maulida (2022) reports on

Netflix's considerations to restrict password sharing, revealing the evolving strategies employed by the platform.

In summary, the literature review synthesizes diverse perspectives on the impact of subscription services on consumer loyalty, incorporating insights from marketing, service quality, AI, and the specific dynamics of OTT platforms like Netflix. The studies collectively contribute to a holistic understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing consumer loyalty in the subscription economy.

3. RESEARCH GAP

The research gap for the study lies in the existing literature's limited exploration of nuanced differences in consumer loyalty factors between Netflix and other OTT platforms. While studies generally acknowledge the significance of value proposition, content quality, interface satisfaction, and incentives in influencing consumer loyalty in subscription-based services, there is a dearth of in-depth comparative analyses between Netflix and its competitors. Specifically, the literature lacks a comprehensive understanding of how the value proposition differs in impact on loyalty between Netflix and other OTT platforms. Additionally, there is insufficient exploration into the potential variations in the influence of content quality and interface satisfaction on consumer loyalty across different platforms. Furthermore, existing research falls short in examining the distinct impact of incentives and rewards programs on consumer loyalty in the context of Netflix compared to other OTT platforms. Therefore, the identified research gap emphasizes the need for a more focused investigation into the specific dynamics of consumer loyalty factors within the subscription economy, with a particular emphasis on the comparative case of Netflix and other OTT platforms.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Investigate whether there is a discernible difference in consumer loyalty between Netflix and other OTT platforms, specifically in relation to their respective value propositions.
2. Assess the impact of content quality and interface satisfaction on consumer loyalty, exploring potential variations in the influence of these factors between Netflix and other OTT platforms.
3. Examine the relationship between the presence of incentives and rewards programs and consumer loyalty, aiming to identify distinctions in the impact of these programs on subscribers of Netflix compared to other OTT platforms.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Frame:

- **Objective:** To analyse the impact of subscription services on consumer loyalty for Netflix, specifically focusing on the variables of Value Proposition, Content Quality & Interface, and Incentives and Rewards.
- **Scope:** The study concentrates on OTT content users, comparing 20 subscribers of Netflix with 20 subscribers of other OTT platforms.

- **Time Frame:** The study was conducted over a period of 2 weeks, ensuring sufficient data collection and analysis.

5.2 Sampling Frame:

- **Population:** OTT content users on social media platforms.
- **Sampling Technique:** Selective Sampling.
- **Sample Size:** 40 participants (20 Netflix subscribers, 20 subscribers of other OTT platforms).
- **Criteria:** Participants must have actively used their respective OTT platforms in the past six months.

5.3 Data Collection:

- **Survey Method:** Primary survey conducted through a Social Media based Survey.
- **Instrument:** A structured questionnaire incorporating a 10-point scale to rate consumer perceptions on Value Proposition, Content Quality & Interface, and Incentives and Rewards.
- **Data Collection Period:** Conducted over a designated time frame, ensuring a representative sample.

5.4 Statistical Tools & Techniques:

- **Statistical Analysis Software:** MS-Excel.
- **Statistical Test:** Independent Sample t-test.
- **Variables:** Dependent variable - Consumer Loyalty; Independent variables - Value Proposition, Content Quality & Interface, and Incentives and Rewards.
- **Hypothesis Testing:** Comparison of means to assess differences in consumer loyalty between Netflix and other OTT platforms based on the three identified aspects.

5.5 Data Analysis:

- **Data Entry:** Survey responses will be entered into MS-Excel for organization and analysis.
- **Descriptive Statistics:** Calculating means and standard deviations for each variable.
- **Inferential Statistics:** Conducting an Independent Sample t-test to determine significant differences in consumer loyalty between Netflix and other OTT platforms.

5.6 Limitations:

- **Sample Representativeness:** The study's findings may not be generalizable to the entire population of OTT content users.
- **Self-Reporting Bias:** Reliance on self-reported data from survey participants may introduce bias.
- **Platform-Specific Factors:** Limitations may arise due to unique features of individual OTT platforms.
- **Temporal Factors:** Changes in consumer perceptions over time may affect the study's relevance.
- **Technology and Skill Dependency:** The use of MS-Excel assumes a basic level of technological proficiency, potentially excluding certain participants.

- **Scope of Survey:** The study is limited to three specific aspects (Value Proposition, Content Quality & Interface, Incentives and Rewards) and may not cover all dimensions of consumer loyalty.

6. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

1. Value Proposition:

- **H0:** There is no difference in Consumer Loyalty between subscribers of Netflix and subscribers of Other OTT Platforms concerning the Value Proposition.
- **H1:** There is a significant difference in Consumer Loyalty between subscribers of Netflix and subscribers of Other OTT Platforms, suggesting that the Value Proposition has a varying impact on loyalty across these platforms.

2. Content Quality & Interface:

- **H0:** There is no difference in Consumer Loyalty between users of Netflix and users of Other OTT Platforms based on their satisfaction with Content Quality & Interface.
- **H1:** There is a significant difference in Consumer Loyalty between users of Netflix and users of Other OTT Platforms, indicating that the quality of content and user interface affects loyalty differently across these platforms.

3. Incentives and Rewards:

- **H0:** There is no difference in Consumer Loyalty between subscribers of Netflix and subscribers of Other OTT Platforms in relation to the presence of Incentives and Rewards programs.
- **H1:** There is a significant difference in Consumer Loyalty between subscribers of Netflix and subscribers of Other OTT Platforms, suggesting that the influence of Incentives and Rewards programs on loyalty varies between these platforms.

7. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

7.1 Analysis of Consumer Loyalty w.r.t Value Proposition

	<i>Consumer Loyalty based on Value Proposition for Netflix</i>	<i>Consumer Loyalty based on Value Proposition for Other OTT Platforms</i>
Mean	4.85	6.1
Variance	4.134210526	1.778947368
Observations	20	20
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	33	
t Stat	-2.298874553	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.013990519	
t Critical one-tail	1.692360309	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.027981038	
t Critical two-tail	2.034515297	

The results of the independent sample t-test for the Value Proposition variable reveal a statistically significant difference in Consumer Loyalty between subscribers of Netflix and

those of Other OTT Platforms (t-stat = -2.29, $p = 0.02$, two-tailed). With a critical t-statistics value of 2.03 and a corresponding p-value of 0.02, falling below the 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis (H_1). This implies that the impact of the Value Proposition on Consumer Loyalty significantly differs between Netflix and Other OTT Platforms subscribers. Examining the mean and standard deviation values further supports this conclusion.

Netflix subscribers exhibit a mean Consumer Loyalty of 4.8 with a standard deviation of 2.03, while Other OTT Platforms subscribers have a higher mean of 6.1 and a lower standard deviation of 1.33. The lower mean for Netflix indicates comparatively lower Consumer Loyalty, and the higher standard deviation underscores greater variability in loyalty scores, reinforcing the assertion that the Value Proposition has a distinct and less favourable impact on Consumer Loyalty for Netflix in comparison to Other OTT Platforms.

7.2 Analysis of Consumer Loyalty w.r.t Content Quality & Interface

	<i>Consumer Loyalty based on Content Quality & Interface for Netflix</i>	<i>Consumer Loyalty based on Content Quality & Interface for Other OTT Platforms</i>
Mean	7.3	6.05
Variance	4.957894737	1.839473684
Observations	20	20
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	31	
t Stat	2.144147244	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.019986395	
t Critical one-tail	1.695518783	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.039972791	
t Critical two-tail	2.039513446	

The results of the independent sample t-test for the Content Quality & Interface variable indicate a statistically significant difference in Consumer Loyalty between users of Netflix and users of Other OTT Platforms (t-stat = 2.14, $p = 0.04$, two-tailed). With a critical t-statistics value of 2.14 and a corresponding p-value of 0.04, below the 5% level of significance, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1). This suggests that the impact of Content Quality & Interface on Consumer Loyalty varies significantly between users of Netflix and users of Other OTT Platforms.

Furthermore, examining the mean and standard deviation values reinforces this finding. The mean Consumer Loyalty based on Content Quality & Interface for Netflix users is 7.3 with a standard deviation of 2.23, while for Other OTT Platforms users, it is 6.05 with a lower standard deviation of 1.36. The higher mean for Netflix implies higher Consumer Loyalty, and the higher standard deviation suggests greater variability in loyalty scores, indicating that the quality of content and user interface has a more favourable and diverse impact on Consumer Loyalty for Netflix compared to Other OTT Platforms.

7.3 Analysis of Consumer Loyalty w.r.t Incentives and Rewards

	<i>Consumer Loyalty based on Incentives and Rewards for Netflix</i>	<i>Consumer Loyalty based on Incentives and Rewards for Other OTT Platforms</i>
Mean	6.25	7.4
Variance	1.671052632	4.884210526
Observations	20	20
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	31	
t Stat	-2.008712456	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.026672939	
t Critical one-tail	1.695518783	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.053345877	
t Critical two-tail	2.039513446	

The results of the independent sample t-test for the Incentives and Rewards variable show a marginally significant difference in Consumer Loyalty between subscribers of Netflix and subscribers of Other OTT Platforms (t-stat = -2.00, p = 0.05, two-tailed). While the critical t-statistics value is -2.00, exactly on the threshold, and the p-value is 0.05, loosely significant at the 5% level, we cautiously interpret this as suggestive evidence to reject the null hypothesis (H₀) in favour of the alternative hypothesis (H₁). This implies that there may be a meaningful difference in Consumer Loyalty between subscribers of Netflix and subscribers of Other OTT Platforms concerning the presence of Incentives and Rewards programs.

Additionally, examining the mean and standard deviation values contributes to this interpretation. The mean Consumer Loyalty based on Incentives and Rewards for Netflix subscribers is 6.2 with a standard deviation of 1.29, while for Other OTT Platforms subscribers, it is 7.4 with a higher standard deviation of 2.21. The lower mean for Netflix suggests lower Consumer Loyalty, and the lower standard deviation indicates less variability in loyalty scores. This could imply that the influence of Incentives and Rewards programs on Consumer Loyalty is less pronounced for Netflix subscribers compared to subscribers of Other OTT Platforms, although the result is on the borderline of statistical significance.

8. CONCLUSION

The results of the conducted analyses provide valuable insights into the factors influencing consumer loyalty in the context of subscription-based services, focusing on Netflix and other OTT platforms. The study examined three critical aspects: Value Proposition, Content Quality & Interface, and Incentives and Rewards. The findings reveal that there is a significant difference in Consumer Loyalty between Netflix and Other OTT Platforms concerning the Value Proposition and Content Quality & Interface. Specifically, Netflix appears to lag behind in these aspects, as evidenced by lower mean values and higher standard deviations, suggesting lower and more variable Consumer Loyalty scores compared to Other OTT Platforms. Regarding Incentives and Rewards, the results are on the threshold of significance, implying a potential difference in the influence of these programs on Consumer Loyalty between Netflix and Other OTT Platforms. However, caution is warranted due to the borderline significance level. Overall, these outcomes underscore the importance

of considering platform-specific factors when analysing consumer loyalty dynamics, with implications for strategic improvements in the subscription-based service industry.

9. STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

The results of the analysis provide strategic insights for subscription-based services, particularly for Netflix, and suggest areas for improvement to enhance consumer loyalty.

1. **Enhance Value Proposition:**

The study indicates a significant difference in Consumer Loyalty based on the Value Proposition between Netflix and Other OTT Platforms. To boost loyalty, Netflix should focus on refining its value proposition, ensuring that subscribers perceive a clear and compelling advantage over competitors. This could involve exclusive content, innovative features, or personalized offerings that align with consumer preferences.

2. **Optimize Content Quality & Interface:**

The observed difference in Consumer Loyalty based on Content Quality & Interface highlights the importance of investing in superior content delivery and user interface design. Netflix should prioritize continuous improvement in content quality, ensuring a diverse and high-quality library. Additionally, refining the user interface for a seamless and engaging experience can positively impact consumer loyalty.

3. **Fine-Tune Incentives and Rewards Programs:**

While the results for Incentives and Rewards are on the borderline of significance, the higher mean and standard deviation for Other OTT Platforms suggest a potential opportunity for Netflix to optimize its rewards programs. Strategically fine-tuning incentives, such as exclusive previews, discounts, or loyalty tiers, can enhance the perceived value of the subscription and positively influence Consumer Loyalty.

4. **Competitor Benchmarking:**

Regularly benchmarking against competitors is crucial. Understanding how Netflix compares to Other OTT Platforms in terms of consumer loyalty factors allows for strategic adjustments and helps identify best practices that can be adopted or adapted to strengthen Netflix's market position.

5. **Continuous Consumer Feedback:**

Establishing a feedback loop with subscribers is essential. Regularly collecting and analysing consumer feedback can uncover evolving preferences and identify areas for improvement. This ongoing dialogue enables Netflix to stay agile and responsive to changing consumer needs.

6. **Personalization and Customization:**

Personalized recommendations and tailored experiences can contribute to higher Consumer Loyalty. Netflix should invest in data analytics to understand individual subscriber preferences and provide content and features that resonate with their unique tastes, enhancing the overall subscription experience.

7. Communication Strategies:

Clear communication about updates, new features, and upcoming content can enhance subscriber engagement. Developing effective communication strategies ensures that subscribers feel informed and connected, fostering a sense of loyalty.

8. Strategic Partnerships:

Exploring partnerships with content creators, influencers, or other brands can provide exclusive content or promotional opportunities, adding value to the subscription service. Strategic alliances can differentiate Netflix and attract a broader audience.

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