

# A Customer-Centric Study On Youth Attitudes Toward Subscription-Based Entertainment Services: The Impact Of Digital Literacy And Service-Related Characteristics

Honey Thomas<sup>1</sup>, Abyson Kurian<sup>2</sup>, Deepa Tes George<sup>3</sup>, Ancy Akber<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce St. Dominic's College, Kanjirapally, Kottayam, Kerala, India. honeythomas@sdck.in

<sup>2</sup>Research Scholar, K G College Pampady, Kottayam, Kerala, India. m.abysankurian@gmail.com

<sup>3</sup>Research Scholar, K G College Pampady, Kottayam, Kerala, India. deepatesgeorge@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup>P G Student, Department of Commerce, St. Dominic's College, Kanjirapally, Kottayam, Kerala, India. ancyakber2000@gmail.com

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## Abstract

*The study examines the impact of digital literacy on the youth's approach towards subscription-based entertainment services. With increasing digital streaming platforms, it is important to understand how digital literacy of user affects the attitude towards subscription-based entertainment services. Using a structured questionnaire, data was collected from 400 respondents in Kerala through a purposeful sample. Statistical analysis, including correlation and regression, showed that digital literacy significantly affects the youth's approach to subscription-based entertainment services. However, economic, social, technical and psychological service-related characteristics did not significantly reduce the relationship. These findings show that digital proficiency is a major determinant of engagement with digital entertainment services. The study highlights the need for targeted digital literacy interventions to increase users' experiences and adoption rates. Future research should detect other factors, such as the material's quality and the platform, which can interrupt the relationship between youth association with digital literacy and membership-based entertainment services.*

**Keywords:** Digital literacy, subscription-based entertainment, youth attitudes, streaming services, service-related characteristics.

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, subscription-based entertainment services are integral to the lives of youth worldwide. These services offer a plethora of content ranging from movies and TV shows to music and games, providing unprecedented access to entertainment on demand. Understanding the dynamics of youth engagement with such services is crucial for businesses and policymakers alike. Subscription-based entertainment services have grown significantly in recent years, particularly in streaming video, music, and gaming subscriptions. Customers in India are increasingly opting for streaming services over buying or downloading content. Factors influencing the intention to subscribe to these services include perceived benefits such as usefulness and enjoyment, and service-specific investments in personalization and learning (Lim et al., 2022; Puspitasari et al., 2019). Additionally, interest in the application plays a crucial role in encouraging users to use subscription-based music services (Khatri, 2021). India's subscription-based entertainment industry is rapidly expanding, with the media and entertainment sector in 2024 to grow from ₹ 2.55 trillion (US \$ 30.8 billion) to 2026 (ibef, 2024). SVOD (Subscription Video on Demand) membership is expected to reach 125 million by 2025, which is powered by the regional expansion (news minimum, 2024). OTT platforms produced more than 3,000 hours of original material in FY14, with 52% (Markantel Advisor, 2024) in regional languages. OTT membership revenue was US\$0.88 billion in 2023, surpassing US \$ 1.2 billion by 2026 (IBEF, 2024). The digital segment is expected to reach US\$11.3 billion by 2026, ahead of the traditional TV (Markantel Advisors, 2024). These trends highlight the role of digital literacy and service factors in shaping the youth's approach towards subscription-based entertainment. The research investigates youth's usage patterns, attitudes, and digital literacy levels regarding subscription-based entertainment services. By profiling their usage habits and exploring their attitudes, we can gain valuable insights into the factors driving adoption or hindering uptake. Furthermore, assessing the Level of digital literacy among youth will shed light on their ability to navigate and utilize these services effectively. A key focus of this study is to evaluate the impact of digital

literacy on the utilization of subscription-based entertainment services among youth. By discerning how digital literacy influences their engagement with these platforms, we can better understand the role of technological proficiency in shaping entertainment consumption behaviors. Additionally, this research seeks to identify and analyze the service-related characteristics that impede youth adoption of subscription-based entertainment services. By pinpointing these factors, stakeholders can devise strategies to overcome obstacles and enhance the accessibility and appeal of these services to a broader audience.

### **1.1 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

Subscription-based entertainment services have become a cornerstone of modern youth culture, shaping their consumption habits and preferences. Understanding how youth engage with these services is crucial for various stakeholders, including service providers, marketers, policymakers, and educators. By researching youth's usage patterns, attitudes, and digital literacy levels regarding subscription-based entertainment services, this study aims to shed light on key factors driving their adoption or hindering their uptake. As the entertainment landscape continues to shift towards digital platforms, comprehending the role of digital literacy in youth engagement becomes paramount. Furthermore, this research can offer insights into designing targeted interventions to enhance digital literacy among youth, thereby empowering them to make informed decisions in their entertainment consumption. By identifying barriers to adoption, such as cost, accessibility, or content preferences, this study can inform strategies to overcome these challenges and optimize the user experience of subscription-based entertainment services for youth. Ultimately, the findings of this study have implications for fostering a more inclusive, accessible, and engaging entertainment ecosystem that meets the diverse needs and preferences of today's youth.

### **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Despite the spread of subscription-based entertainment services, there remains a gap in our understanding of how youth navigate and engage with these platforms. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating several key areas. Firstly, it aims to profile the usage patterns of subscription-based entertainment services among youth, examining the extent to which they subscribe, the frequency of usage, and the platforms and content types preferred. Secondly, it explores the youth's attitudes towards subscription-based entertainment services, probing their motivations, satisfaction levels, and perceived value propositions. Thirdly, it seeks to assess the level of digital literacy among youth, considering their proficiency in accessing, evaluating, and utilizing digital media content.

Moreover, the study aims to evaluate the impact of digital literacy on the Use of subscription-based entertainment services among youth, elucidating how varying levels of digital competence influence engagement behaviours and preferences. Lastly, it aims to identify and analyze the service-related characteristics that may moderate or restrict the youth's adoption of subscription-based entertainment services. By addressing these research objectives, this study provides actionable insights for stakeholders in the entertainment industry, academia, and policymaking spheres to enhance the accessibility, relevance, and inclusivity of subscription-based entertainment services for youth.

The present study answers the following questions:

1. How do youth engage in subscription-based entertainment services?
2. What are the attitudes of youth towards subscription-based entertainment services?
3. What is the level of digital literacy among youth, and how does it influence their attitude towards subscription-based entertainment services?
4. How do service-related characteristics affect digital literacy and attitude towards subscription-based entertainment services?

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To profile the usage of subscription-based entertainment services among the youth.
2. To explore the attitude towards subscription-based entertainment services among youth.
3. To evaluate the effect of digital literacy on the attitude of youth towards subscription-based entertainment services.

4. To analyse whether service-related characteristics moderate the relationship between digital literacy and youth's attitude towards subscription-based entertainment services.

## 1.4 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted primary and secondary data sources to investigate the relationship between digital literacy and the Use of subscription-based entertainment services among youth in Kerala. Primary data was collected using a structured online questionnaire, which included closed-ended and Likert-scale questions designed to assess digital literacy levels, subscription preferences, and usage patterns. The online format of the survey enabled wider accessibility and encouraged participation from the digitally active youth population. Secondary data was obtained from credible sources such as academic journals, books, industry reports, and online publications to provide background information and support the interpretation of findings. As the total population of youth using subscription-based services in Kerala is unknown, the sample size was determined using Cochran's (1977) formula for unknown populations. Based on this, a sample size of 400 respondents was selected to ensure statistical reliability and generalizability. This decision is supported by previous studies on digital behavior and technology adoption, including those by Hargittai (2010) and Helsper & Eynon (2013), which used similar sample sizes. Due to the absence of a comprehensive sampling frame, the study employed purposive sampling, a widely accepted method when targeting specific groups with relevant characteristics. Participants were pre-screened to confirm that they were active users of subscription-based entertainment platforms, aligning the sample closely with the study's objectives. This approach is validated by similar methodologies used in technology adoption research, where identifying a precise sampling frame is often impractical, as noted by Etikan et al. (2016) and Palinkas et al. (2015). Data collection was conducted online through social media platforms and university networks, allowing broad outreach and representative participation across different regions. The structured questionnaire facilitated efficient data collection for quantitative analysis. For the analysis, SPSS software was employed to perform descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis to explore the association between digital literacy and the Use of subscription-based services. Additionally, reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha and normality tests were conducted to ensure the validity and robustness of the data. Best quantitative research practices guided these statistical procedures, as Field (2018) and Hair et al. (2019) recommended. Overall, the methodology was carefully designed to ensure the collection of relevant, high-quality data and the application of appropriate analytical tools for drawing meaningful conclusions.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW, RESEARCH GAP & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

The table below presents a structured summary of subscription-based entertainment services and relevant key studies for digital literacy. The current literature investigates various aspects such as consumer behavior in membership markets, factors affecting the desire to pay, the impact of digital change and the role of digital literacy in media consumption. While many study market trends, pricing strategies and subscription models highlight customer retention, focusing on how digital literacy affects youth engagement with these services. This table classifies previous research, underlines their major findings, and identifies their relevance to the current study, providing a foundation to address the research difference.

**Table 1**  
**Summary of Literature Review**

Author(s) & Year	Focus	Key Insights	Relevance
Taylor (2003)	Subscription switching	Pricing inefficiencies; switching costs impact behavior	Consumer behavior focus, no digital literacy
Romaniuk & Sharp (2003)	Brand salience & churn	High recall reduces churn; visibility aids retention	Retention study, lacks digital literacy

Wang et al. (2005)	Willingness to pay	Convenience, value, and service quality drive subscriptions	Adoption focus, no digital literacy
Punj (2013)	Shift to subscriptions	Income & education impact willingness to pay; demographics matter	Demographic insights, lacks digital literacy
Cesareo & Pastore (2014)	Music piracy vs. subscriptions	Piracy attitudes affect adoption; moral views influence payments	Consumer attitudes, no literacy analysis
Deye (2015)	Digital literacy & learning	Digital skills enhance learning effectiveness	Digital literacy focus, not entertainment
Mihailidis (2015)	Digital curation & literacy	Literacy improves media analysis & content engagement	Supports literacy's role in digital behavior
Martinovic et al. (2018)	Digital literacy & youth	Youth need digital skills for online platforms	Relevant for youth engagement with subscriptions
Suryakala (2019)	Subscription business models	Customer retention is key for success	Business focus, lacks consumer digital literacy
Sivamol & Suresh (2019)	OTT preferences in India	High digital content use; affordability & recommendations matter	Indian youth insights, lacks literacy analysis
Lozic (2020)	Netflix & Spotify models	Subscription platforms use data for engagement	Platform strategy focus, no user literacy data
Azzahro et al. (2020)	Willingness to pay for streaming	Accessibility & content quality drive payment decisions	Adoption insights, lacks digital literacy aspects
Khatri (2021)	Growth of streaming in India	Streaming preferred over traditional media due to personalization	Indian market insights, lacks digital literacy analysis
Tinmaz et al. (2022)	Digital literacy research	Identifies key digital competency themes	Strong foundation for digital literacy study
Ann Sophia & Anilkumar (2023)	Subscription retention	Platforms focus more on retention than acquisition	Business focus, lacks literacy-based adoption insights
Tang & Wei (2023)	Netflix vs. Tencent Video	Data-driven recommendations enhance user retention	Engagement strategies, lacks literacy analysis
Pratama & Narimawati (2023)	Digital transformation in media	Subscription models evolve with tech advancements	Industry trends, lacks youth literacy insights
Amin et al. (2023)	Digital Literacy Scale	Confirms digital literacy factors affecting online engagement	Framework for assessing literacy in entertainment use
Ranasinghe (2024)	Subscription consumer behavior	Pricing, engagement, and psychology influence adoption	Subscription choice insights, lacks literac

## 2.2 RESEARCH GAP

Despite widespread research on membership-based entertainment services and digital literacy, intervals remain. Pre-studies have examined subscription adoption (Panj, 2013; Azaharo et al., 2020), Brand Soliance (Romanyuk & Sharp, 2003), and factors affecting the role of digital literacy in education (Amin et al., 2023; Tinmaz Att al., 2022). However, limited research suggests how digital literacy affects youth engagement with membership services. Most studies focus on financial models (Khatri, 2021; Tang and V, 2023) or adopt general technology, which given the direct impact of digital literacy on membership use. Research at India's membership market (Sivamol & Suresh, 2019; Khatri, 2021) highlights pricing and material relevance, but how digital literacy shapes young behavior, lacks insight. This study fills the

difference by analyzing how digital literacy affects youth adoption, service-related characteristics for membership-based entertainment services, providing valuable insight to businesses and policymakers.

### 2.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

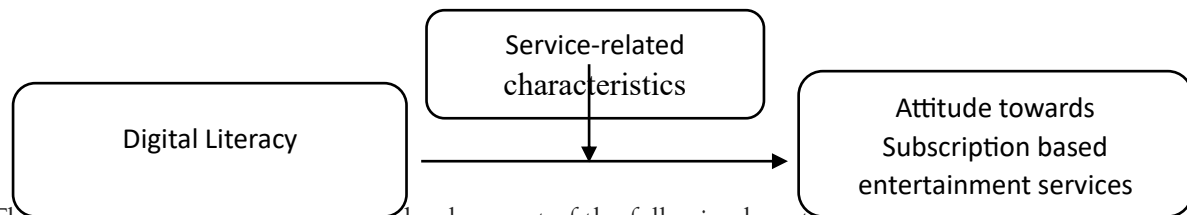
The crucial variables for studying the effect of digital literacy on the subscription-based entertainment services among youth have been found as:

Independent variable: Digital Literacy

Dependent variable: Attitude towards subscription-based entertainment services

Moderating variable: Service-related characteristics:- Economic, Social, Technological, Psychological

**Figure 1. Conceptual Model**



The conceptual model leads to the development of the following hypotheses:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Digital literacy positively influences the youth's attitude towards subscription-based entertainment services.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Service-related characteristics moderate the relationship between digital literacy and the youth's attitude towards subscription-based entertainment services.

### 3. DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS

**Table 2**

**Normality Test**

	Attitude of Youth	Digital Literacy	Service-related Characteristics
<b>Skewness</b>	-.538	-1.242	-.259
<b>Kurtosis</b>	1.519	2.844	.368

Source : Compiled by Researcher

Preliminary normality checks were performed and all the variables had acceptable skewness and kurtosis. Hair et al. (2010) and Bryne (2010) state that data is considered normal if skewness is between -2 to +2 and kurtosis is between -7 to +7.

**Table 3**

**Reliability Test**

Sl. No	Factors (Constructs)	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Attitude of Youth	12	.857
2	Digital Literacy	16	.891
3	Service-related characteristics	10	.788

Source: Authors' calculation

The Alpha values for all the three factors are above 0.70, the threshold suggested by Nunnally (1978). Thus it can be concluded that the scale has internal consistency and reliability.

**Table 4**

**Respondents Demographics**

Variable	Category	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Male	51.2%
	Female	48.8%
<b>Education</b>	Secondary	2%
	Higher Secondary	18.5%
	Graduate	35.5%
	Postgraduate	44%

<b>Income</b>	Above 10,000	15
	10,000 – 30,000	43.5
	30,000 – 50,000	22.5
	Above 50,000	19

**Table 5**

**Cross tab: Demographic variable and Use of subscription-based entertainment services**

Gender * Usage Crosstabulation								
			Usage					Total
			Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Irregularly	Rarely	
Gender	Male	Count	71	35	33	28	38	205
		% of Total	17.8%	8.8%	8.3%	7.0%	9.5%	51.3%
	Female	Count	47	38	27	34	49	195
		% of Total	11.8%	9.5%	6.8%	8.5%	12.3%	48.8%
Educational Level * Usage Crosstabulation								
			Usage					Total
			Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Irregularly	Rarely	
Educational Level	SSLC	Count	3	2	0	2	1	8
		% of Total	0.8%	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%	2.0%
	Plus Two	Count	28	16	9	11	10	74
		% of Total	7.0%	4.0%	2.3%	2.8%	2.5%	18.5%
	Graduat ion	Count	46	29	26	10	31	142
		% of Total	11.5%	7.3%	6.5%	2.5%	7.8%	35.5%
	Postgrad uation	Count	41	26	25	39	45	176
		% of Total	10.3%	6.5%	6.3%	9.8%	11.3%	44.0%
Family Income (Monthly) * Usage Crosstabulation								
			Usage					Total
			Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Irregularly	Rarely	
Family Income (Monthly)	Below 10,000	Count	20	6	16	5	13	60
		% of Total	5.0%	1.5%	4.0%	1.3%	3.3%	15.0%
	10,000 - 30,000	Count	48	30	17	21	58	174
		% of Total	12.0%	7.5%	4.3%	5.3%	14.5%	43.5%
	30,000 - 50,000	Count	25	27	14	21	3	90
		% of Total	6.3%	6.8%	3.5%	5.3%	0.8%	22.5%
		Count	25	10	13	15	13	76
		% of Total	6.3%	2.5%	3.2%	3.8%	3.3%	19.3%

	Above 50,000	% of Total	6.3%	2.5%	3.3%	3.8%	3.3%	19.0%
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Males (51.3%) slightly outnumber females (48.8%) in subscription-based entertainment usage. More males (17.8%) use these services daily than females (11.8%), while weekly and monthly usage is similar across genders. However, more females (12.3%) than males (9.5%) rarely use these services, suggesting lower engagement, possibly due to different entertainment preferences or lifestyles.

Higher education correlates with increased usage, with graduates (35.5%) and postgraduates (44.0%) forming the majority. Daily usage is highest among graduates (11.5%) and postgraduates (10.3%), indicating greater digital exposure. However, 11.3% of postgraduates rarely use these services, possibly due to time constraints. Those with only SSLC (2.0%) show minimal engagement, highlighting a digital divide. Middle-income households (10,000–30,000 INR) dominate usage (43.5%) but also have the highest percentage of rare users (14.5%), suggesting affordability concerns. Lower-income users (below 10,000 INR) still engage (5.0% daily users), likely due to budget-friendly options. Surprisingly, high-income groups (above 50,000 INR) do not have the highest daily usage (6.3%), possibly due to alternative entertainment choices or limited leisure time.

**Table 6**

Correlation Analysis			
		Attitude of Youth	Digital Literacy
Attitude of Youth	Pearson Correlation	1	.508**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	400	400
Digital Literacy	Pearson Correlation	.508**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	400	400
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The correlation analysis shows a moderate positive relationship between Digital Literacy and Attitude of Youth ( $r = 0.508$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that as digital literacy increases, the attitude of youth tends to improve. The significant p-value (0.000) confirms that this relationship is statistically significant.

**Table 7**

Regression Analysis							
Model	Predictors	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	$\beta$ (Beta Coefficients)	t-value	p-value (Sig.)
Step 1	Digital Literacy	0.508	0.258	-	0.552	2.312	0.021
Step 2	Digital Literacy + Service-Related Characteristics	0.509	0.26	0.002	Digital Literacy: 0.552	2.312	0.021
					Service Characteristics: 0.004	0.013	0.99

Step 3	Digital Literacy + Service-Related Characteristics + Interaction Term	0.509	0.26	0	Digital Literacy: 0.552	2.312	0.021
					Service Characteristics: 0.004	0.013	0.99
					Interaction Term: -0.010	-0.13	0.897

Predictors : Digital Literacy, Service-related Characteristics, Interaction term Dependent variable : Attitude of Youth A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to examine (1) the effect of Digital Literacy on Attitude of Youth and (2) whether Service-Related Characteristics moderate this relationship. In Step 1, Digital Literacy was a significant predictor of Attitude of Youth ( $\beta = 0.552$ ,  $p = 0.021$ ), explaining 25.8% of the variance ( $R^2 = 0.258$ ). This confirms that higher Digital Literacy leads to a more positive attitude toward subscription-based entertainment services. In Step 2, adding Service-Related Characteristics did not significantly improve the model ( $\beta = 0.004$ ,  $p = 0.990$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = 0.002$ ), suggesting these factors do not directly influence Attitude of Youth. In Step 3, an interaction term (Digital Literacy  $\times$  Service-Related Characteristics) was added to test whether the impact of Digital Literacy on Attitude of Youth changes depending on Service-Related Characteristics. The results show that the interaction term was not significant ( $\beta = -0.010$ ,  $p = 0.897$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = 0.000$ ), meaning that Service-Related Characteristics do not alter the relationship between Digital Literacy and Attitude of Youth.

## FINDINGS

According to the study, young people's attitude towards subscription-based entertainment services are greatly influenced by their level of digital literacy, with higher levels of digital literacy translating into more favourable attitudes. However, economic, social, technological, and psychological aspects of services did not significantly influence youth attitudes directly or moderate the association between attitude and digital literacy. This implies that rather than external service-related factors, youth attitudes regarding subscription-based entertainment are largely influenced by their degree of digital literacy.

## CONCLUSION AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

According to the study, youth attitudes towards subscription-based entertainment services are significantly influenced by digital literacy, with a more positive perception resulting from higher levels of digital literacy. However, the relationship between digital literacy and attitude is not moderated by service-related characteristics like economic, social, technological, and psychological factors, nor do they significantly impact youth attitudes. These results imply that rather than external service-related factors, youth attitudes towards subscription-based entertainment services are primarily shaped by their digital proficiency. Therefore, increasing digital literacy could be crucial for raising young people's usage of digital entertainment platforms. Other possible influences on youth attitudes, like content quality, platform usability, and persalized recommendations, can be investigated in future studies. Furthermore, future research could look into whether service-related characteristics mediate the relationship between youth attitudes and digital literacy, as they did not exhibit a moderation effect. Through longitudinal research, a deeper understanding of how changing trends in digital literacy affect young people's behaviour over time may also be possible.

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