ORIGINAL PROGRAMMING CHARACTERISTICS THAT CAUSE SUBSCRIPTION VIDEO ON DEMAND (SVOD) SUBSCRIPTION BEHAVIOR IN INDONESIA

Josephine Natalie
Master of Technology Management, Multimedia Nusantara University, Banten, Indonesia
josephine.natalie96@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the characteristics of original content that can trigger Subscription Video on Demand (SVoD) subscriptions in Indonesia, identify factors that influence the desire to subscribe or unsubscribe from SVoD, and analyze factors that have no effect on the desire to subscribe to SVoD in Indonesia. This study adopted a grounded theory approach and involved 16 informants from Indonesia as research samples. The results showed that the main characteristics of original content that can increase subscription intent or trigger SVoD subscriptions include country of origin, type of impression, genre, feelings evoked, stories that are close to the audience's life, provide insight or knowledge, and quality. Conversely, shows whose content is limited to a region, has story content that is too heavy, spoilers that have been widely circulated, open endings, and an incomplete catalog of SVoD content are characteristics that are not able to trigger someone to subscribe to SVoD. In addition, the original language in the original content produced and the popularity of impressions on the internet also did not have a significant effect in triggering SVoD subscriptions. Other external strategies and factors that can prevent SVoD subscription cancellations and increase SVoD subscriber numbers involve promoting compelling original content synopses, increasing review activities and public relations marketing activities when releasing new original content in exchange for recommendations, and increasing indirect anti-piracy campaigns. This study provides valuable insights on how to increase SVoD subscriptions through the characteristics of original content and external factors influencing subscription behavior in Indonesia.

Keywords: Original programming; Characteristics; SVoD (Subscription Video on Demand); Subscription behavior

INTRODUCTION

After experiencing a surge in interest during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Subscription Video on Demand or SVoD business is now starting to decline. This decline was experienced by several well-known SVoD brands in the world (Casale, 2022). In Indonesia, the surge in SVoD enthusiasts began to decrease as community activities returned to normal. According to Chairman of the Indonesian Technology Startup Association (Atsindo) Handito Joewono, the current state of SVoD customers has experienced saturation in accordance with the growth of optical networks and the stretching of work from home policies. The policy of working and studying at home has now been reduced, causing people's leisure time to be reduced (Bisnis Tekno, 2021). The decrease in the number of subscribers is also influenced by sharing accounts, which are one account that can be used by many people (Mahardika, 2022). Another factor that causes the reduction of SVoD brand users is the intense competition. Currently, not only Netflix and Disney+ dominate the market in Indonesia, but also VIU, iQiyi, and even local SVoD such as Vidio (Rio, 2021). Competition doesn't just happen between SVoD brands. One of the viewing services that can replace SVoD is cinema (Vary et al., 2020; Viu, 2022).

One of the factors that influence a person's interest in subscribing to a particular SVoD is the original programming issued by the company. Every company in the SVoD industry releases original programming as a way to retain and acquire new customers. This original programming is original content belonging to each brand that is worked on and released by the company itself (Baron, 2022). Original programming is one of the main strategies and is central to the success of SVoD brands in competition, and can help drive customer growth because original programming is unique and niche content (Parrot Analytics, 2020).

After the pandemic era, there was a decline in the number of SVoD subscribers. In fact, the number of subscribers is very important to increase income in the SVoD industry. For this reason, the top management (Amaliyah, 2022) of SVoD companies needs to do various ways to increase the number of subscribers through original programming as one of the competitive advantages that can shape subscriber attitudes to decide whether to subscribe or not SVoD. The number of subscribers is very important to increase income in the SVoD industry.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with interpretive paradigm and grounded theory methodology. This study selected informants with purposive sampling techniques. The number of resource persons for this study was 16 people. The research procedure is carried out with interviews to obtain key data. The interview was conducted in a semi-structured manner. Document studies are also carried out to complement research data that have been obtained through interviews.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After going through an interview process followed by open coding, axial coding, and selective coding, the following results were found: (Netflix, 2022)

Characteristics of informants

Table 1 Characteristics of informants

No	Name	Domicile	Subscription Status	
			Subscribe	**Unsubscribe**
01	Adri (24)	Bekasi, Jawa Barat	-	iQiyi, Netflix, Viu
02	Rani (55)	Jakarta	Netflix (Since 2021) Disney Hotstar (Since 2022) Viu (Since 2022)	Prime Video
03	Emil (24)	Jakarta	Netflix (Since 2019) Disney Hotstar (Since 2019) Vidio (Since 2022)	MolaTV
04	Hanee (23)	Tangerang, Banten	Netflix (Since March 2022) Viu (6 bulan) Disney Hotstar (1 year)	WeTV
05	Alex (26)	Jakarta Pusat	Netflix (Since 2022)	-
06	Yasmin (24)	Cengkareng, Jakarta Barat	Netflix (Since 2018) Viu (Since 2018) Disney Hotstar (Since 2018)	iQiyi WeTV
07	Sandra (50)	Bekasi, Jawa Barat	Netflix (2 year) Disney Hotstar (1 month) Viu (1 year)	iQiyi

08	Irina (26)	Kediri, Jawa Timur	Netflix (Since 2020) Disney Hotstar (Since 2022)	Viu
09	Maria (22)	Bekasi, Jawa Barat	Never subscribe	
10	Cindy (27)	Palembang, Sumatera Selatan	Netflix (3 month)	-
11	Bama (22)	Cawang, Jakarta Timur	-	Netflix, Disney Hotstar
12	Celinia (22)	Bekasi, Jawa Barat	Never subscribe	
13	Alfiansyah (23)	Malang, Jawa Timur	Netflix (since 2020) Disney Hotstar (since 2021)	-
14	Raissa (19)	Jakarta	Netflix (3 year)	-
15	Felicia (24)	Jakarta Barat	Never subscribe	
16	Renne (27)	Jakarta Pusat	Netflix (since 2018) Viu (since 2021) Prime Video (since 2023)	Disney Hotstar

Characteristics of the Country

Table 2 Characteristics of the Country

No	Country	Number of codes
1	Korea Selatan	11
2	Amerika	8
3	Jepang	5
4	Indonesia	2
5	Spanyol/Thailand/Tiongkok/ Britania-Irlandia-Kanada	1

The most common country code found in the coding process is South Korea, followed by America, Japan, Indonesia, and several other countries.

Characteristics of the Genre

Table 3 Characteristics of the Genre

No	Genre	Number of codes
1	Action	7

2	Misteri	5
3	Horor	5

The most common genre code found in the coding process was action, followed by mystery and horror, and other genres.

Characteristics of the audience's feelings

Table 4 Characteristics of the audience's feelings

No	Feelings of the Audience	Number of codes
1	Exciting	7
2	Tense	3
3	Entertained	3
4	Curious	2
5	Empathy, sympathy	2
6	Gripping	1

The audience feeling codes that emerged most in the coding process were excitement, tension, amusement, curiosity, empathy or sympathy, and suspense.

Characteristic of Proximity to Daily Life

Table 5 Characteristic of Proximity to Daily Life

No	Types of Proximity	Number of codes
1	Realistic stories	7
2	Everyday story	6
3	Based on a true story	4
4	Similar culture	4
5	Hobby theme	2

The most common type of closeness to everyday life codes found in the coding process were realistic stories, everyday stories, based on true stories, having a similar culture, and discussing hobbies.
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Message Characteristics of the Spectacle

Table 6 Message Characteristics of the Spectacle

No	Types of Messages from	Number of codes

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	Spectacle	
1	Insight/science	6
2	Moral message	5
3	Meaningful	1

The most common types of message codes found in the coding process were insight/ knowledge gained from watching, moral messages, and meaningful watching.

Characteristics of Spectacle Quality

Table 7 Characteristics of Spectacle Quality

No	Types of Proximity	Number of codes
1	Good cast acting	7
2	Accurate story	5
3	Story to the point	3
4	There is a plot twist	3
5	Good cinematography	3
6	Good music	2
7	High quality	2
8	Unique story characters	2
9	Story is not cliché	2

The most widely found viewing quality codes in the coding process are good cast acting, accurate story, story to the point, there is a plot twist, good cinematography, followed by various other qualities.

Examples of Original Programming Cast

Table 8 Examples of Original Programming Cast

No	The Cast	Number of codes
1	Song Hye Kyo/Cha Eun Woo	2

Examples of original programming actors that are found during the coding process are Song Hye Kyo and Cha Eun Woo. Both are from South Korea.

Other Factors Supporting Subscription

Table 9 Other Factors Supporting Subscription

No	Supporting Factor		Number of codes
1		Trailer/teaser	8
2		Low price	4
3		Free trial	3
4	Promotion	Telkomsel bundle	2
5		Social media	1
6		Poster	1
7		Synopsis	1
8	Recommendation	Friends	6
9		Family	3
10	Principle	Resisting piracy	2
11	Time	Free time	2

Other factors supporting subscription that were found in the coding process were trailers/teasers, friends' recommendations, the principle of rejecting piracy, and free time.

Factor Not in Favor of SVoD Subscription

Table 10 Factor Not in Favor of SVoD Subscription

No	Factor	Number of codes
1	Region limited viewing	3
2	Story is too heavy	2
3	Spoiler	2
4	Open ending	2
5	SVoD content is not varied	2

External factors do not support SVoD subscriptions that are found during the coding process, including region-limited viewing, stories that are too heavy, spoilers, open endings and SVoD content that is not varied.

Uninfluential Factors in SVoD Subscription

Table 11 Uninfluential Factors in SVoD Subscription

No	Factor	Number of codes
1	Native language of the program	5
2	Viral/hype on the internet	2

Factors that have no influence in encouraging SVoD subscriptions include the original language, original programming, and viral/hype of watching on the internet.

Discussion
Country Characteristics

Countries producing original programming that emerged as subscription-triggering characteristics. The eight countries are South Korea, America, Japan, Indonesia, Spain, Thailand, China, and English-language British-Irish-Canadian collaborative content. Of these eight countries, the characteristics that emerged most as triggers were original programming from South Korea, America, Japan, and Indonesia.

The reasons that cause interviewees to like original programming from South Korea are emotional bonds, structural uniqness, variety shows, and many old fans. The emotional bond inherent in Indonesian society with South Korean original programming can occur because of the feeling of one continent, namely the Asian continent and eastern customs so that the culture in South Korean content can be well received in Indonesia. The cultural similarities are reflected in the family life and romance contained in South Korean original programming. Structural uniqueness of original programming made in South Korea can be enjoyed by the interviewees because of its good production. South Korean screenwriters are considered capable of making the end of the episode tense before continuing, so that the audience feels curious to watch the next episode. South Korean original programming is considered to be able to raise diverse time and place settings but in accordance with reality at that time or place so as to provide insight for the audience. Original programming made in South Korea has a number of advantages that are not owned by original programming produced by other countries such as America and Indonesia. The uniqueness includes usually only lasting one season with a number of episodes between 16 and 24, allowing viewers to more easily enjoy and quickly immerse themselves in the storyline, and making it easier to watch continuously or marathons (Fujita, 2014). The structure of South Korean original programming is also ideal for developing strong and concise storylines that are easy to understand, include exposition, character development, conclusion, and provide the right amount of time for the audience's emotional investment (Lee, 2018). South Korean original programming also excels in the field of variety shows. South Korean variety shows such as Running Man are very interesting and inspiring to follow, and have characteristics inherent in each show. In addition, the habit of watching shows from South Korea has long entered Indonesia, estimated since the early 2000s so that it has been embedded in the lives of Indonesians (Pertiwi, 2022). Some interviewees mentioned that they have been following South Korean dramas for a long time and have made it their hobby. Since the emergence of SVoD, the hobby of watching Korean dramas has become more channeled in a legal and better quality way.

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Apart from South Korea, the majority of interviewees liked original programming from the United States because of political stories, accents, and catalog completeness. In terms of political stories, the United States has films and political stories that are easier for Indonesians to understand because they are both republics. Unlike the British political story which is in the form of a kingdom. In addition, the American English accent used is the most popular English accent of all types of accents. It is spread all over the world because American movies, music, television series, and more than 350 million North Americans including Canadians use it. It is the accent that most people, both native and non-native speakers, can easily understand (Esl, 2014). In addition, American movie studios have produced many famous movie franchises over the years such as Marvel, Star Wars, Kingsman, and others. Broadcast rights for shows with enduring popularity are highly desirable for many SVoDs as they allow them to quickly establish themselves with a competitive catalog and can be watched by viewers on a continuous or marathon basis (Rustage, 2022).

The majority of interviewees like original programming made in Japan because of anime. Japan is famous for its animation or commonly referred to as anime, which is high quality and favored by various groups. Japanese anime stories are very diverse, unique, and have a variety of different genres (Rinaldi, 2023). Many research sources like Japanese anime and make this factor a trigger to try using SVoD and show interest in subscribing.

The majority of sources also like SVoD original programming produced by Indonesia because of the interesting adaptation content and higher quality Indonesian content on SVoD. Original programming content from Indonesia adapts many novels with a large number of readers, which can increase the number of SVoD subscribers. Not only adaptations of novels, adaptations of feature films can also attract customers to subscribe to SVoD. Some interviewees also indirectly compared the quality of Indonesia's original programming content in the past, which was dominated by screen soap operas, with series that are now circulating on SVoD. According to the research results of the academic-based Television Broadcast Program Quality Index in Indonesia conducted by the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI) in 2019, the quality of television broadcast programs in Indonesia in the last five years is still low (Hendarto, 2021).

Characteristics of Types of Spectacle

The types of shows preferred by the majority of the interviewees were dramas/series, feature films/cinema, animation, documentaries, variety shows, and reality shows.

Series (or sometimes referred to as drama) refers to a show that has many interrelated episodes that tell the same storyline. Each episode has the same duration and the story in each episode forms one main storyline that can be completed in several episodes (Merriam-Webster, 2023a). Dramas/series usually have a longer duration so that the audience does not get separated from the plot too quickly. In addition, because the duration is longer than a freelance movie, there are many different characters with their own charms that make the audience not bored when following the series (Fortress, 2021). Series are the most popular viewing option that can trigger subscriptions among sources. Series can trigger subscription by creating a cliffhanger ending. Due to the long duration of series, the stories discussed can be detailed and deep. From several interviews, it appears that series can also build a deep connection between the audience and the storyline. Not infrequently, there is a sense of empathy and sympathy that is successfully built by series compared to movies because the duration of the series is longer. This happened when several interviewees watched the series The Glory. Series can also build a close relationship with the audience so that they can extend their subscription to find out the end of

the story in the next episode or season, as happened in the series Island, Alice in Borderland, and The Glory which is divided into two parts. Some interviewees decided to extend their subscription to finish watching series that were still not over or had not yet appeared.

Although series with several episodes play a big role in SVoD's success, the category of cinema and freelance films is not left behind to attract the attention of consumers (Westcott & Singh, 2023). From interviews with sources, SVoD bought many cinema film licenses, both those that did not air in Indonesia and those that had dropped the screen. This makes some speakers decide to subscribe to SVoD in order to watch films they have not or have already watched.

Four interviewees mentioned animation as a viewing format that can trigger subscriptions. Animated films are types of films made with animation techniques, can be intended for children as well as all types of ages. Animation is a technique of making images move and change shape so that they look attractive and come alive (Dictionary.com, 2023).

Documentary can be interpreted as a program designed to provide facts regarding certain events or topics (Merriam-Webster., 2023). In the SVoD catalog, documentaries are one of the preferred types of viewing because many viewers are interested in true stories and personal experiences raised in documentaries. Documentaries are also a means to increase knowledge and provide knowledge related to certain topics, as well as inspire and motivate. In terms of SVoD companies, documentaries have lower production costs than fiction films or drama series, making them an attractive choice for SVoD companies that want to increase the amount of original programming without spending too much money (Murray, 2021). In interviews, there were several interviewees who liked the type of documentary watching and were interested in subscribing to SVoD because of the documentaries provided. Although many are interested in the documentary format, there are some sources who feel that the documentary format is not entirely interesting.

A variety show is a type of spectacle with an array that combines things like comedy, sketches, games, songs, shows, and other entertainment in one show, usually hosted by a host or host (Merriam-Webster, 2023b). One example of an SVoD variety show mentioned in the interview is Running Man. There are speakers who decided to subscribe to SVoD to watch the Running Man variety show from South Korea. Running Man is a variety show that is worldwide because of its interesting games, funny and entertaining show participants, and guest stars who can follow the show well (MacDonald, 2020).

Reality shows are one type of show that is widely produced by SVoD services because the format is easy to produce, relatively low cost, and has appeal in showing the real lives of people around the audience (Clover, 2020). At the end of 2019, Netflix increased the number of original programming reality shows from only 4 titles in 2018 to 32 titles the following year (Mann, 2020). Reality shows usually show everyday life without a scenario, with characters generally coming from ordinary society, not actors or actresses (Oka, 2020).

Genre characteristics

The genres that the majority of speakers like are action, mystery, horror, and action.

The action genre is a genre of film or spectacle that focuses on physical action such as fighting, chasing, explosions, and other action actions. Usually, this genre features the main character facing dangerous challenges and enemies. This genre does not focus too much on psychology and philosophy matters, but rather aims to provide an interesting experience for the audience (Aliya, 2021). The action genre is favored because of the physical action that is interesting and entertaining for the audience. In addition, this genre also features heroes who face dangerous challenges and enemies (Kholid, 2020). Some sources who like the action genre revealed that the genre would be better when combined with other genres such as the action genre that uses a military background, or wrapped in comedy. Many speakers argue that the action genre without any other supporting genres actually makes the action not dancek.

The mystery genre is a genre of spectacle or stories about the occurrence of something mysterious, then to be revealed by the main character. The mysteries that appear the most in mystery stories are crimes that need to be solved, usually something big like murder or

kidnapping (Fadli, 2022). Many speakers like this genre because it raises curiosity, full of plot twists that make watching more interesting.

The horror genre is a type of story genre whose plot is built in such a way that it is able to give a sense of horror to the audience. Horror can be about spirits who like to terrorize, but it can also contain serial killers who give the impression of horror. The reason why people love the horror genre is because they feel entertained by the fear and tension produced by the film (Santoso, 2020). One of the horror original programming mentioned by the source is Kingdom, Netflix's original programming from South Korea. Speaker Yasmin and Speaker Irina mentioned Kingdom as a horror genre spectacle that can be enjoyed. The Kingdom series is a unique zombie horror series and was praised for its novel and creative approach when the film market began to saturate with zombies. The series combines conspiracy and political intrigue with the spread of a mysterious plague that resembles a zombie outbreak in general (Beck, 2020).

Characteristics of the audience's feelings

Many interviewees mentioned liking shows that make them feel exciting. Exciting shows are shows that capture the audience's attention. Exciting shows can be movies, series, or variety and reality shows on any platform. Viewers like exciting shows because they can relieve boredom and provide entertainment, and can also provide new experiences and increase knowledge Kusuma, (2023). An exciting show must pay attention to the story plot and characters, choose a genre that suits the preferences of most viewers, and pay special attention to technical details such as picture and sound quality (Agustyananto, 2021). In addition to shows that can create a sense of excitement, interviewees also like tense shows and shows that can make them feel entertained when watching original programming provided by SVoD. In addition, interviewees also like shows that arouse curiosity, generate empathy and sympathy, and can make viewers feel a sense of suspense.

Characteristic of Proximity to Daily Life

Some of the things that indicate a show is close to everyday life are realistic stories, everyday stories, based on true stories, having similar cultural factors, and discussing hobbies that people like.

Message Characteristics of spectacle

Six interviewees mentioned that insights or knowledge can be taken from the original programming they watch. The interviewees liked new and interesting experiences that they had never known before. Shows that contain educational elements can help viewers to understand difficult or abstract concepts in an easier and more enjoyable way. They can also help viewers to understand other people's perspectives and broaden their horizons about the world.

Characteristics of Spectacle Quality

The quality factor that triggers interviewees to choose original programming is good acting. The acting of the actors is considered important when choosing a show because the acting of the actors can affect the quality and impression of the show. Good acting can make the audience more involved in the story and feel the emotions displayed by the actors. Good acting can also make it easier for the audience to understand the characters played by the actors (Fandy, 2022). Through interviews with interviewees, there are several actors and actresses mentioned as triggers for subscription. Although not all of them are directly a trigger for subscription, it can be seen that the names of actors and actresses that come to mind are actors whose quality has been recognized such as Song Hye Kyo and Cha Eun Woo from South Korea, and Abimana Aryasatya from Indonesia. In addition to good acting, the quality of original programming is assessed by the interviewees through stories that are accurate and to the point, there are plot twists in the story, good cinematography and music, made with high quality, unique story characters, and stories that are not clichéd.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research, it is known that the characteristics and factors of original programming that can trigger SVoD subscription behavior in Indonesia include the country of origin of original programming, the type of original programming format, the genre of original programming, the closeness of original programming to the audience's reality, the insight or knowledge provided by original programming, and the quality of original programming. These six aspects of original programming determine the audience's feelings, which then lead to SVoD subscription intentions. The countries of origin of original programming that can trigger SVoD subscription behavior include South Korea, the United States, Japan, and Indonesia. The type of format that triggers the most SVoD subscription behavior in Indonesia is drama/series. The genre that triggers the most SVoD subscription behavior in Indonesia is action. Audience feelings when watching original programming that can trigger subscription intentions are those that can create a sense of excitement.

In addition, based on this research, it was found that the characteristics and factors of original programming from SVoD that cannot trigger SVoD subscription in Indonesia are original programming whose story content is too heavy, spoilers from the show that have been widely circulated on the internet, and original programming that has an open ending. In addition, users also dislike SVoDs whose content is region-limited or incomplete.

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